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# SAINTS' LIVES AND MIRACLE STORIES IN BEDE, THE *OLD ENGLISH BEDE* AND *ÆLFRIC* BETWEEN TRANSLATION AND REWRITING

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# PREFACE

The aim of the present study is to explore the ways in which selected hagiographic sections of Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* have been rendered in the anonymous Old English translation of the *Historia ecclesiastica*, and in the *Homilies* and in the *Lives of Saints* written by Ælfric of Eynsham.

The analysis is focused on five different saintly figures, each embodying a different model of sanctity in Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica*: St. Alban, the martyr; Æthelthryth, virgin queen and abbess; Oswald, king of Northumbria, warrior, and saint; Fursey, a model of monastic *peregrinatio* who has several visions of the otherworld, and Dryhthelm, a layman who embraces monastic life after experiencing a vision of the interim space between heaven and hell.

For every saintly figure, I develop a comparative analysis between the source text (Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica*) and the two target texts (the *Old English Bede* and Ælfric's *Homilies* and *Lives of Saints*); each of them, in their own way, is representative of a different stage in the development of the English pre-Conquest literary system. These holy men and women and the accounts of their lives acquire an identity of their own in each of the two target texts, thus becoming a reflection not only of the source text, but also of the cultural context that produced the translations themselves. As André Lefevere points out concerning the value of a translation for its target context,

> For readers who cannot check the translation against the original, the translation, quite simply, *is* the original. Rewriters and rewritings project images of the original work that often impact many more readers than the original does. (Lefevere 1992: 109-10)

The relationship between Latin and the vernacular corresponds to what Gianfranco Folena (1991: 12) defines as 'synchronic bilingualism and biculturalism'. According to the Italian scholar, the Middle Ages are characterized by two types of translation: vertical or horizontal. The former refers to the difference between Latin, the language of the learned, and the vernacular of the *illitterati*, whereas the latter describes the more egalitarian relationship existing in translation between vernaculars. The cases discussed in this study testify to Folena's idea of vertical translation.

This study combines a philologically oriented approach to the study of medieval literature with the theoretical framework developed in the interdisciplinary field of *Translation Studies*. In the Middle Ages, translation played a key role in the construction of vernacular languages and identities, just as it plays a crucial role in the globalised world of today. The descriptive, non-normative approach to the study of translation postulated by Translation Studies lends itself to the examination of contemporary translational phenomena as well as to those of the past, because it is based on the idea that the theory, practice, and significance of translation within a literary system may vary depending on the socio-historical circumstances by which and for which it is produced. For this reason, Itamar Even-Zohar (1978) argues that the analysis of specific translational phenomena can be a very useful tool towards a better understanding of the cultural system which produces the translation itself.

This descriptive approach therefore allows me to address issues concerning the relationship between the ideas of translation and rewriting. It also shows that the boundary between the two ideas is far from being rigidly fixed, because perceptions of fidelity, the main parameter that defines translation as opposed to rewriting, are themselves subject to change and cannot be reduced to the mere notion of semantic equivalence. As Lawrence Venuti (1995: 37) points out, "canons of accuracy are culturally specific and historically variable". This study provides several instances of this *mouvance*.

With regard to the specific texts examined here, the theoretical framework provided by *Translation Studies* also allows us to observe the evolution of the hagiographic genre, of its aims, and narrative strategies, within two very different contexts of production: historiography for the *Historia ecclesiastica* and its Old English translation, homiletics for Ælfric.

# INTRODUCTION

**Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum***

The *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* (hereafter HE) is undoubtedly one of the most important historiographic works of the Middle Ages, as shown by the large number of extant manuscripts (more than 160) and by their wide dissemination throughout Europe.[1] Bede completed it in 731, just four years before he died in 735; it is the last of a long list of scholarly works composed by "the servant of God", as Bede defines himself in the dedicatory preface of the HE to King Ceolwulf.[2]

The Venerable Bede (672/673-735) was a monk and scholar who spent almost his entire life within the walls of the monastery of Monkwearmouth-Jarrow in the north-east of England, located between modern Newcastle upon Tyne and Sunderland. At the age of seven, his family gave him as an oblate to the abbot of Monkwearmouth, Benedict Biscop, and he thus dedicated his life to learning, writing, and teaching. What is known about Bede's life mostly comes from his own writings, besides the letter written by one of his students a few years after his death.[3] In the closing chapter of the HE, Bede gives a short account of his life and includes a list of all the works he composed:

> Haec de historia ecclesiastica Brittaniarum, et maxime gentis Anglorum, prout uel ex litteris antiquorum uel ex traditione maiorum uel ex mea ipse cognitione scire potui, Domino adiuuante digessi Baeda famulus Christi et presbyter monasterii beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli, quod est Ad Viuraemuda et In Gyruum. Qui natus in territorio eiusdem monasterii, cum essem annorum VII, cura propinquorum datus sum educandus reuerentissimo abbati Benedicto, ac deinde Ceolfrido, cunctumque ex eo tempus uitae in eiusdem monasterii habitatione peragens, omnem meditandis scripturis operam dedi,

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[1] The main editions of the HE are: Plummer (1896), Colgrave / Mynors (1969), Lapidge / Crépin / Monat / Robin (2005, Sources Chrétiennes 489-91), and Lapidge (ed.) / Chiesa (transl.) (2008-2010). Besides the introductory sections and the commentaries in the aforementioned editions, see also the historical commentary to Colgrave / Mynors's edition by Wallace-Hadrill (1988). Secondary literature on Bede and the HE is immense. A list of preliminary reading may include Whitelock (1961), the collected volumes edited by Thompson (1935) and Bonner (1976), as well as the collected *Jarrow Lectures* edited by Lapidge (1994) and the volume edited by Houwen and MacDonald (1996); for historical analysis, see for example Mayr-Harting (1972) and Goffart (1988). Three very recent works on Bede and the HE are N. Higham, *(Re-)Reading Bede* (2006), G. Hardin Brown, *A Companion to Bede* (2009), and S. DeGregorio (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Bede* (2010).

[2] "Baeda famulus Christi et presbyter" (HE *Praef.* 1).

[3] *Epistula Cuthberti de obitu Bedae* (Colgrave / Mynors 1969: 580-6).

atque inter obseruantiam disciplinae regularis, et cotidianam cantandi in ecclesia curam, semper aut discere aut docere aut scribere dulce habui. Nono decimo autem uitae meae anno diaconatum, tricesimo gradum presbyteratus, utrumque per ministerium reuerentissimi episcopi Iohannis, iubente Ceolfrido abate, suscepi. Ex quo tempore accepti presbyteratus usque ad annum aetatis meae LVIII haec in scripturam sanctam meae meorumque necessitate ex opusculis uenerabilium patrum breuiter adnotare, siue etiam ad formam sensus et interpretationis eorum superadicere curaui. (HE V.24.106-25)

Bede's scholarly production is very prolific as well as wide ranging in scope and subject. He wrote treatises on metre, orthography, and rhetoric; a long list of commentaries to the Old and New Testaments; a collection of homilies; several lives of saints and poems; treatises on nature and time; and historical works, such as the *Lives of the Abbots of Monkwearmouth- Jarrow*, the *Chronicles* and, finally, the HE.

The HE, as the title itself suggests, mainly treats the history of the Church in England and its relations with the see of Rome, from the time when Britain was still a Roman province to the events that took place in Bede's own age. The narrative is divided into five books: Book I deals with the history of the Roman domination over Britain and with Augustine's mission in Kent at the time of Pope Gregory the Great; Book II gives an account of the establishment of Christianity in Kent and in other parts of England, until the death of King Edwin; Book III treats the missionary endeavours of the Irish monks and bishops in Northumbria, from their non-canonical practices that eventually led to the Synod of Whitby (664) to the conformation of the English Church to the Roman orthodoxy; Book IV depicts the golden age of the English Church, with the exemplary tales of many holy men and women, among whom are Æthelthryth, Hild, Cuthbert, Archbishop Theodore, and Hadrian; finally, Book V describes the episcopate of Bishop John of Beverley, as well as the expansion of Christianity from England to Ireland, Frisia, Germany, as well as among the Picts.

Besides quoting extensively from papal letters and acts of synods for the most official and canonical matters included in the HE, Bede also relies on the accounts of oral witnesses; moreover, he includes several accounts of miracle stories and lives of saints that are based partly on written sources and partly on oral tradition.[4] For this reason, some scholars have noted in the HE the coexistence of Bede the theologian, Bede the historian, and Bede the hagiographer (Colgrave 1935: 228), as if the three

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[4] On Bede and miracles, see also Colgrave (1958), Rosenthal (1975), Berlin (1990), McCready (1994), and Crépin (2005, v. 1: 42-7).

aspects of his narrative interests are separate authorial personalities and Bede accordingly employs three different narrative styles (Woolf 1966: 41). While this may to some extent be true, it should also be underlined that, as Mayr-Harting (1991: 48) points out, within the medieval mindset events were not solely explained on the basis of a cause-and-effect relationship, and people were trained "to see the spiritual significance which lay behind any occurrence or literal statement". In the words of Benedicta Ward,

> In a pre-scientific world which did not depend on the modern notion of causation, what distinguished a miracle from other events? For us, the interesting question about a miracle is 'how?': how was this effect caused, how did it work, what were the mechanics of this event? […] For Bede and his contemporaries, the important question was not 'how?', but 'what?' and 'why?'. It was not the mechanics of the miracle that mattered, but its significance. For Bede the world was shot through with divinity, and a miracle was not just any inexplicable event but an event that was also a sign of God's relationship with man. (Ward 1976: 71)

This general idea is, of course, all the more legitimate within the context of an *ecclesiastical* history designed by its author to establish the English Church within the context of the universal Church. The numerous miracles of healing, visions, and accounts of the holy lives of the saints of England thus fit in very well with Bede's purpose of portraying the legitimization of Christianity among the *gens Anglorum*, because they provide the narrative with local *exempla*, with models of sanctity that parallel the stories of the holy men and women on the Continent. In this way, these stories contribute to establishing English identity, but at the same time they also metaphorically shorten the distance between the Roman model and the remote, insular landscape of Anglo-Saxon England.

Michael Lapidge's new edition of the HE is based on the following six manuscripts, the oldest and most authoritative witnesses:

- B: London, British Library, Cotton Tiberius A.xiv (s. $IX^{in}$);
- C: London, British Library, Cotton Tiberius C. II (s. $IX^{2/4}$);
- K: Kassel, Gesamthochschulbibliothek, Qu. Theol. 2 (s. $VIII^2$);
- L: St Petersburg, Publichnaja Biblioteka, Q. v. I 18 (s. $VIII^2$);
- M: Cambridge, University Library, Kk.5.16 (s. $VIII^{med}$);
- O: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 43 (s. X-XI).

The mss. B, L, and M were written in Northumbria: ms. L was no doubt written in Bede's scriptorium, and ms. M also seems to have associations with Monkwearmouth-Jarrow. The mss. C, K, and O have Southumbrian origins. These manuscripts can be

divided into two recensions on the basis of a short list of structural differences. Since Plummer (1896), the two classes have been known as C and M (*c* and *m* in Colgrave / Mynors's edition of 1969); Lapidge (2008-2010) however, in his excellent new edition of the HE refers to the two classes as χ and μ. Considering the size of the work, the differences between the two recensions are rather small and testify to the care with which the HE has been transmitted; for instance, the prayer *Praeterea omnes […] inueniam* is located after the preface in *m* / μ, and at the end of the work in *c* / χ.[5] Lapidge's stemma, based on the six oldest manuscripts of the HE, proposes that the *c* / χ type derives from the *m* / μ type. For the scope of the present study, the differences between the two recensions are not relevant because they do not concern the chapters here examined. Reference will therefore be made to Lapidge's edition, unless otherwise stated.

**The Old English version of Bede's HE**

Bede's HE was translated anonymously between the last quarter of the 9th century and the first quarter of the 10th century. This window of c. 50 years is based on the palaeographical evidence of the earliest manuscript, as explained in detail by Sharon Rowley in her recently published and much awaited monograph (2011), the first in a long time entirely devoted to the study of this work. The *Old English Bede* (hereafter OEB) survives in five manuscripts and three excerpts:

- Z: London, British Library, Cotton Domitian A.IX, f. 11 (Ker 151); this leaf contains the three oldest excerpts of the OEB (corresponding to HE IV.5, I.27, II.3) and therefore provides the *terminus ad quem* for its dating (c. 883-930); it was probably made in London.

- T: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Tanner 10 (Ker 351); this manuscript dates to the first quarter of the 10th century; it shows a connection with Winchester and is defective, starting at OEB 54.2 (corresponding to HE I.13), and ending at OEB 442.23 (corresponding to HE V.15). This is the manuscript on which Thomas

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[5] Plummer (1896: lxxxiv-cxxviii) and Colgrave / Mynors (1969: xl-xli) indicate six structural differences. This list is confirmed by Lapidge, who also adds three further differences not noted by the previous editors of the HE (Lapidge 2008-2010 v. 1: xciv and ff.).

Miller based his edition of 1890-1898, currently the most recent scholarly edition of this work.

- C: London, British Library, Cotton Otho B.XI (Ker 180); this manuscript was badly damaged in the fire of the Cotton Library in 1731 and therefore only contains fragments corresponding to HE III-V. It dates to the mid-10th century and was written at Winchester. A copy of this manuscript in its undamaged state prior to the fire was made by Laurence Nowell in the 16th century (now British Library Additional MS. 43703).

- O: Oxford, Corpus Christi College 279, part ii (Ker 354); of unknown origin, this manuscript dates to the early 11th century. It is defective, beginning at OEB 56.28 (corresponding to HE I.14), and ending at OEB 462.4 (corresponding to HE V.17).

- B: Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 41 (Ker 32); this manuscript dates to the beginning of the 11th century and is of southern provenance. This manuscript is complete. An inscription on f. 488 tells that the manuscript was donated to Exeter Cathedral by Bishop Leofric (d. 1072).

- Ca: Cambridge, University Library Kk.3.18 (Ker 23); this manuscript was written in Worcester in the second half of the 11th century and is complete.

The bulk of the translation was undertaken by one main translator, but the list of chapter headings and a section of Book III were translated by two others (Whitelock 1974; Rowley 2011: 28). The chapters of the OEB analyzed in the present study are the work of the main translator, and for this reason in the following pages I shall refer to "the translator" in the singular. Lapidge (2008; 2009) has recently demonstrated that the copy of the HE used by the translator belonged to the $c$ / $\chi$ type.

In his edition, Miller (1890-1898) divided the manuscripts of the OEB into two groups, the first comprising mss. T and B, the second mss. C, O, and Ca. The main difference between the two branches of the stemma lies in the treatment of the section corresponding to HE III.16-20. T and B contain the entire section with only a minor omission (corresponding to the second part of HE III.17), but, as Dorothy Whitelock (1974) points out, mss. C, O, and Ca omit the chapters corresponding to HE III.19-20

and present a different translation of HE III.16-17.[6] Miller concludes that the section was missing from the original translation, and that at a later stage the missing chapters were translated independently in the two different branches. Potter (1930), Campbell (1952), and Whitelock (1974), on the other hand, claim that T-B contain the original translation, and that C-O-Ca present a different translation that was made to fill a lacuna in their archetype (Whitelock 1974: 264). Another detail further complicates the picture; as Whitelock (1974) explains, B and Ca (belonging to the two different branches of Miller's stemma) present a list of chapter headings at the beginning of the translation. In both cases, the list omits the section corresponding to HE III.17-20, even the one in ms. B, where there is no lacuna. This leads Whitelock to question the existence of a separate archetype, and hence of a separate branch, for mss. T and B; she proposes that the manuscript used to compile the list may have presented the lacuna corresponding to HE III.17-20, and that the list may have been inadvertently copied into a manuscript that did not present the lacuna (Whitelock 1974: 277).

Besides initiating the debate on the stemma of the extant manuscripts, Miller's study (1890-1898) also demonstrated that the OEB was originally translated in Anglian, a Mercian dialect, though Grant (1989: 4) underlines that in doing so, Miller also downplayed the shift towards late West Saxon that characterizes the manuscripts. Moreover, Miller intervenes in rearranging the structure of the OEB so as to parallel that of the HE, as was customary for the editorial practice of his day. This concerns in particular the *Libellus Responsionum*, which all manuscripts of the OEB have at the end of Book III but which Miller moves back to Book I, so as to mirror the original position found in the HE.[7] This change is mentioned in the introduction to the text (Miller 1890-1898: xxiii), but is not made visible in the edition, thus obliterating a very significant difference between source and target texts. So, despite its many qualities, Miller's edition may sometimes give a misleading impression as to the actual points of similarity between the OEB and its source the HE,[8] and it further complicates the understanding of an already complicated text.

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[6] It should be pointed out at the outset that the present study analyzes the translation of HE III.19, containing the visions of Fursey, and it therefore makes reference to the edition compiled by Miller on the basis of mss. T and B. The re-translation of HE III.16-17 does not affect the chapter here considered.

[7] Rowley (2001; 2011) offers a detailed analysis of the different position of the *Libellus Responsoinum* in the OEB and of the implications of this shift.

[8] On this matter, see also Rowley 2011: 25-8.

The Old English translator does not reproduce his Latin source in its entirety, but selects the source material with impressive consistency. There can be said to be a double level of fidelity in the translator's attitude to his work: from the point of view of vocabulary and syntax, the OEB mirrors its source text so closely as to sometimes border on over-literalness; but from the point of view of content, the translator is quite selective, reducing the text by nearly one quarter (Potter 1930), and is extremely consistent in his abridging procedure, as he also eliminates all cross-references to the omitted passages. This tendency was discussed in detail by Dorothy Whitelock (1962) in her seminal study; she observes that the OEB omits letters (with the exception of the *Libellus Responsionum*), council decrees, documents, and poems; it also passes over Bede's historical accounts not directly related to England, as well as the Paschal controversy between Rome and the Celtic Church,[9] and in general all narratives concerning Rome; finally, it leaves out most of Bede's geographical and linguistic comments. These omissions, and the shift of focus they determine in the translation, have been variously interpreted by scholars. Whitelock (1962: 74) sees in these omissions "the great decline of scholarship since the days of Bede" and concludes that the intended audience for the translation must also have been inferior to that of the HE. This is also confirmed, writes Whitelock (1962: 75), by the explanatory comments added by the translator "where Bede could count on being instantly understood", such as with Biblical references. However, as Gregory Waite (1984) notes, the principles of selection applied by the Old English translator may not necessarily denote an inferior readership, or a decline in learning. Basing his assumptions on a detailed analysis of word-formation and vocabulary in the OEB, Waite does not rule out the possibility that the OEB may have been designed for teaching purposes. He notes that

> The literary worth of the OE Bede has not in the past been sufficiently appreciated. It is largely through the close analysis of vocabulary and word-formation that the real significance of the work can be assessed, for the OE Bede itself might be described as a study in vocabulary – that of the Latin of Bede's Historia, and of the Old English literary language of the late ninth century. (Waite 1984: 132)

This hypothesis would certainly account for the first level of fidelity previously mentioned, concerning syntax and vocabulary, and I hope that the following chapters will further this claim, although this reading does not attempt to fully explain the

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[9] On the treatment of the Paschal controversy, see Rowley (2005; 2011).

omissions in terms of content. Nicole Discenza (2002) appears to build on the interpretation proposed by Whitelock by arguing that the omissions contribute to re-centring the text towards English history and authority, and that they also mark Bede as the sole authority as opposed to the many Roman voices that populate the HE. In several publications, Rowley (2001; 2005; 2010; 2011) suggests that the OEB revises Bede's salvation history of England and also presents the Britons in a less negative light than Bede. A most interesting interpretation is proposed by George Molyneaux (2009). He argues that the OEB reworks the content of the HE so dramatically because it is designed to educate its readers in the knowledge of Christian behaviour, and for this reason it puts *exempla* to the forefront:

> In the OEB, historical narrative is used to provide links between examples, such that the text does not become simply a disjointed collection of character sketches. Narrative that neither forms part of an example nor links together examples is, however, often omitted or substantially abbreviated. […] The translator appears to have regarded the HE as valuable primarily as a store of examples to inculcate Christian behaviour, not as an account of a single gens Anglorum with a special relationship with God. (Molyneaux 2009: 24; 28)

The hagiographical narratives analyzed in the present study may provide further elements in support of Molyneaux's thesis.

Another issue deserves mention in this short introduction, namely the relationship between the OEB and the programme of cultural renovation promoted by King Alfred on the one side, and the existence of a Mercian tradition of translation independent from that of King Alfred on the other. As Rowley (2011: 37) points out, "there is no contemporary documentary evidence connecting the OEHE [the Old English Historia Ecclesiastica] with King Alfred", and the lack of any prefatory material, typical of Alfred, also seems to point in the same direction. The earliest attribution of the text to Alfred was made by Ælfric of Eynsham in his homily on Gregory the Great,[10] followed in the 12th century by William of Malmesbury, in *De*

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[10] "Manega hálige bec cyðað his drohtnunge and his halige líf. and eac historia anglorum ða ðe Ælfred cyning of ledene on englisc awende. Seo bóc sprecð genoh swutelice be ðisum halgan were; Nu wylle we sum ðing scortlice eow be him gereccan. for ðan ðe seo foresæde bóc nis eow eallum cuð. þeah ðe heo on englisc awend sy;" (CH II.9.6-11). While it is generally believed that Ælfric used the OEB as a source only for the episode of the slave boys included in this homily, and in all other instances he relied directly on Bede's HE (Whitelock 1962: 58-9; Godden 2000: 405-6), Mechthild Gretsch thinks otherwise. She argues that "There are no genuinely idiosyncratic phrases or very rare and eccentric words common to both texts, and the verbal similarities are, perhaps, best explained as the result of two authors translating the same text into a language which (it must be stressed time and again) was far from having the lexical and syntactical resources of Modern English" (Gretsch 2005: 59-60).

*Gestis Regum Anglorum* (Stubbs 1887: 132). This thesis was initially supported by scholars, until Miller's analysis of the Mercian dialectal influences began to question the attribution. The most recent scholarly contributions to the debate tend to assert the independence of the OEB from any such traditions.[11]

**Word pairs in the OEB**

One of the most distinctive features of the style of the OEB is the widespread use of word pairs to translate a single Latin word. Two basic criteria allow the identification of such binomial expressions: (1) the two members must refer to the same concept and (2) they must be placed at the same level of syntactic hierarchy. For instance:

*narrant* (HE IV.17.16): *cyðað 7 secgað* (OEB 316.27-28, 'proclaim and say').

Scholars have approached the frequent use of binomial expressions in the OEB in various ways[12]: for example, James Hart (1901: 150-4) explained it as a form of *amplificatio*; Sherman Kuhn (1947; 1972) found a connection with the glossing tradition; Dorothy Whitelock (1962: 75-6) described this feature as a mannerism, whereas Inna Koskenniemi (1968: 109) saw it as a pathological trait of the translation: "Word pairs may, of course, become a pathologic feature if they are used excessively, as is occasionally done in [the *Old English*] *Bede*". Among recent contributions to the subject, Gregory Waite (1984) arranges the word pairs of the OEB into classes according to semantic fields; Franco De Vivo (1999), on the other hand, focuses on synonymic word pairs.

The two members of a binomial expression are often linked together by synonymy. For this reason, the study of word pairs must inevitably address the problematic issue concerning the difference between tautology, synonymy, and near-synonymy, a slippery territory often subject to personal, rather than objective, evaluation. The underlying question is: to what extent is the message carried by the two

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[11] For a detailed analysis of the ongoing debate, see Waite (1984) and Rowley (2011).

[12] The debate over the nature and function of doublings in the OEB started at the end of the 19th century. See Kellner (1895), Paetzel (1913), and Van Draat (1916). At a more general level, Toury (1982) and Buzzoni (2001: 219-21) underline that the use of binomials in translations is widespread in particular among young literary systems, so it is far from being a unique trait of the literary system of Anglo-Saxon England.

members of a pair simply redundant, as opposed to informative? In his book *Linguistic Semantics*, John Lyons (1995) distinguishes between synonymy and near-synonymy. According to his proposed analysis, the main criterion that enables the recognition of synonymy is identity of meaning, and this is extremely rare (Lyons 1995: 61); similarity of meaning alone is therefore not sufficient. Near-synonyms, on the other hand, are "expressions that are more or less similar, but not identical, in meaning". This category, according to Lyons, accounts for "many of the expressions listed as synonymous in ordinary or specialized dictionaries", among which are, for example, 'mist' and 'fog', 'stream' and 'brook', 'dive' and 'plunge' (Lyons 1995: 60). The broad concept is the same, and yet each of the words mentioned above carries its own defined set of connotations.

With this distinction in mind, I argue that word pairs in the OEB are often characterised by synonymy, or semantic equivalence, but there is also a considerable number of binomial expressions that may be labelled as near-synonymic; in the latter case, the two members may still belong to the same semantic field, but one member is a literal translation of the Latin, and the other adds something to the text, even if just a shade of meaning.

Identity of meaning, and hence semantic redundancy, is the focus of the analysis carried out by De Vivo (1999: 43-5). He considers synonymic word pairs and divides them into three types: (1) Word pairs that give a loan word, or a loan translation, in addition to a native translation, for instance *martyrio* (HE I.7.104): *þrowunge 7 martyrdome* (OEB 40.24, 'passion and martyrdom'). (2) Word pairs characterized by a relation of practical synonymy, where elsewhere in the text the two members of the pair are used independently of each other to translate the very same Latin word: *obsecro* (HE Pref.80): *bidde 7 halsige* (OEB 6.1, 'beg and entreat'). (3) Finally, there are word pairs in which the members are linked together by hyponymy, for example *prodiderat* (HE I.7.30) which is translated as *cyðde 7 openade* (OEB 36.9, 'declared and confessed').

In addition, there are also other types of word pairs which can be identified with other criteria than synonymy or near-synonymy. As pointed out by Waite (1984: 20-7), a lot of doublings are directly taken over from the Latin. Some of these Latin doublings are also semantically equivalent, others are not; for instance:

> *suis ducibus ac ministris* (HE III.3.30): *his aldormonnum 7 his þegnum* (OEB 158.21, 'to his ealdormen and thanes).

Word pairs often accompany syntactic change; they bring together in a parallel expression different parts of speech from the Latin sentence, thus rearranging semantic material that is already contained in the source text. For instance:

> *donaria pecuniarum* (HE III.5.34): *ða gife 7 þa feoh* (OEB 162.16, 'the gifts and money').

Finally, word pairs can also be formulaic:

> *otiosum* (HE V.6.17-8): *idel 7 unnyt* (OEB 400.4, 'idle and useless').

My classification of word pairs takes into account the studies carried out by Waite (1984) and De Vivo (1999) and is structured as follows:

1.  SYNONYMIC WORD PAIRS, following De Vivo (1999);

2.  ADDITIONAL WORD PAIRS, in which one member of the pair translates the Latin, while the other adds new information that does not have an explicit counterpart in the source text; the two members may also describe two consecutive actions, or present a cause-effect relationship. These word pairs are often near-synonymic.

3.  REDISTRIBUTION, in which the information conveyed by the word pair is already contained in the source text, but undergoes syntactical rearrangement to take the shape of a word pair, as noted by Waite (1984). These word pairs are not necessarily linked together by either synonymy or near-synonymy.

The OEB is very rich in word pairs, hence in the following chapters a good number of examples will be analysed according to my proposed classification. As a preliminary observation, word pairs can be said to fulfil a twofold function in the OEB: on the one hand, they are actual translational tools, as they allow the translator to explain with more than one word those Latin words that do not have a precise Old English correspondent; on the other hand, word pairs also fulfil a stylistic function. They are often employed by the translator to emphasize certain traits of the narrative, as will be shown in detail in the following chapters. I therefore agree with Waite's observations on the role and function of word pairs in the OEB:

> The doublings in the OE Bede are to be considered primarily a stylistic device, but at the same time they were an invaluable lexical aid to a translator groping for the "right" word. The lexicographer will find much of interest in the collocations he encounters, but must always consider how far they are a product of context, and to what extent they result from a desire to amplify, emphasize, explain, or produce a pleasing sentence rhythm and structure. (Waite 1984: 27)

**Ælfric of Eynsham and his homiletic production**

In 1959, Peter Clemoes concluded his seminal article on the chronology of Ælfric's works with an image that beautifully captures the imposing variety of the works composed by the abbot of Eynsham, and that I think represents the best possible introduction:

> The conception that modelled Ælfric's writings was in fact that which molded the Gothic cathedral later. His main structure, as it were, consisted of two series of homilies combining Temporale and Sanctorale, later extended and completed with more Temporale homilies. *De Temporibus Anni*, the *Grammar* and *Colloquy*, and his letters for Wulfsige and Wulfstan and to the monks of Eynsham buttressed this edifice; *Lives* and Old Testament narratives enriched it with stained glass windows; "occasional" pieces such as the Letter to Sigeweard gave it the synthesis of sculpture on the West Front. The master-mason of this cathedral was the best educated man of his time, who had the creative vitality to be his country's foremost teacher. (Clemoes 1959: 57-8)

Ælfric was born c. 950 and was educated in the school of St Æthelwold in Winchester, where he also received the tonsure.[13] Around 987 he moved to the newly-founded monastery of Cerne Abbas in Dorset, where he was involved both as a priest and as school-master. Here Ælfric composed most of his works, including the *Catholic Homilies* and the *Lives of Saints*, becoming one of the main authorial figures of the Benedictine Reform. He spent nearly 20 years in this monastery, engaged in his teaching and writing activities, until c. 1005 he left Cerne to become abbot of Eynsham, the monastery refounded by his patron Æthelmær on the site of an older minster, where the ealdorman himself withdrew to pursue a life of prayer and devotion, perhaps also following recent turmoil at court. Ælfric died at Eynsham c. 1010.

According to the chronology compiled by Peter Clemoes (1959), Ælfric composed the core of his homiletic, theological, and didactic works at Cerne; during his years in Dorset he wrote the two series of *Catholic Homilies*, the *De Temporibus Anni*, the pastoral letter for Wulfsige, the *Grammar* and *Glossary*, the *Lives of Saints*, the *Colloquy*, and the Biblical paraphrases. In the final years of his life, when he was abbot of Eynsham, Ælfric wrote pastoral letters for Wulfstan, the *Life of St Æthelwold*, and the letter to the monks of Eynsham, besides revising his collections of homilies. Ælfric wrote the bulk of his work in the vernacular, and his prolific activity as a writer

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[13] Detailed information on Ælfric's life and works is provided, among many others, by Dietrich (1855; 1856); Clemoes (1966); Hurt (1972); White (1974 [1898]), Gneuss (2002), and Magennis / Swan (eds.) (2009).

contributed to the standardization of Old English vocabulary (Hofstetter 1988). Only the *Life of St Æthelwold*, the *Colloquy* and some letters were composed in Latin. The *Grammar*, the *Glossary*, and the *Colloquy* were written by Ælfric with his pupils in mind.

**The Catholic Homilies**

Ælfric produced the two series of *Catholic Homilies* (hereafter CH) in close succession, c. 990-995, and dedicated them to Sigeric, archbishop of Canterbury.[14] Each series is composed of forty homilies on a range of topics that goes from Gospel readings to saints' lives, to doctrinal and moral themes. Malcolm Godden (1973) has shown that the First Series is designed for direct delivery to the congregation, whereas the Second Series provides a collection of material from which the preacher can pick and choose at his discretion, for example by selecting a particular episode out of a number of two-part homilies. As Lapidge (1996) points out, the CH comprise texts for the two overlapping cycles of feasts of the liturgical year, the *temporale* and the *sanctorale*. The *temporale* refers to those feasts of the liturgical year associated with Easter, and which therefore fall on different days each year, whereas the feasts of the *sanctorale* are always celebrated on a fixed day of the solar calendar. So, for example, Christ's birth is always celebrated on 25th December, whereas Palm Sunday and Pentecost, depending on the date of Easter, vary each year (Lapidge 1996: 115). Within the *sanctorale*, some feasts are universally celebrated, whereas some others, in fact the majority, bear a more local character and may vary from church to church, depending on which saints were venerated. This study will analyze a homily of the *temporale*, the one about Dryhthelm, which is built around the account of the otherworld experienced by this holy man, for whom clearly there was no feast on the *sanctorale*, but whose *exemplum* is used within the context of a feast of the *temporale*.

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[14] There are two main editions of the *Catholic Homilies*. The first edition was published by Thorpe in 1844 and 1846, whereas the second scholarly edition of the First Series was published by Clemoes (1997), and that of the Second Series by Godden (1979). The second edition also comprises a very detailed Introduction, Commentary and Glossary published by Godden (2000).

As Godden (2000: xxiii) points out, the intended audience for the CH includes both readers and listeners, and it takes into account different levels of literacy, from the learned laity best represented by Ælfric's patrons Æthelmær and Æthelweard, to more or less well-educated members of the clergy, who could have read the pieces for their own personal advancement in learning, as well as from the pulpit to address and instruct the congregation. That the homilies address various types of audiences at once is immediately made clear by the fact that each collection is preceded by two prefaces, one in Latin and one in Old English. As Mary Swan (2009: 252-4) observes, Ælfric makes a clear distinction between those who belong to what could be defined as a Winchester-based circle of learning, and those who are left outside of this circle, and he addresses both types of audiences[15]:

> EGO ælfricus alumnus adelwoldi beneuoli et uenerabilis presulis salutem exopto domno archiepiscopo sigerico in domino; Licet temere uel presumptuose tamen transtulimus hunc codicem ex libris latinorum. Scilicet sancte scripture in nostram consuetam sermocitationem ob ędificationem simplicium qui hanc norunt tantummodo locutionem. Siue legendo, siue audiendo. (CH I, Latin Preface, ll. 3-8)

> Þa bearn me on mode ic truwige ðurh godes gife. þæt ic ðas boc of ledenum gereorde to engliscre spræce awende. na þurh gebylde micelre lare. ac for ðan ðe ic geseah 7 gehyrde mycel gedwyld on manegum engliscum bocum. ðe ungelærede menn ðurh heora bilewitnysse to micclum wisdome tealdon. 7 me ofhreow þæt hi ne cuðon ne næfdon ða godspellican lare on heora gewritum. buton ðam mannum anum ðe þæt leden cuðon. 7 buton þam bocum ðe ælfred cyning snoterlice awende of ledene on englisc. (CH I, Old English Preface, ll. 44-55)[16]
> ['Then it occurred to me, I trust through God's grace, that I should translate this book from the Latin language into the English tongue, not from confidence of great learning, but because I saw and heard much error in many English books, which unlearned men consider as great wisdom on account of their simplicity. And it grieved me that they did not know nor have the teaching of the Gospels in their writings, except for those men alone who knew Latin, and except for the books that King Alfred wisely translated from Latin into English.']

Monks were also addressed in the homilies, and not just the secular clergy. As Godden (2000: xxvi) points out, some of the Old Testament readings discussed by Ælfric were never used in the Mass, but belonged to monastic liturgy; moreover, in some instances the subjects discussed in the homilies seem to imply a deep understanding of subtle

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[15] Moreover, Wilcox (1994: 66-7) underlines that the implied audience of the prefaces is also reflected in their actual contents and not just in the different languages used to address such audience: "Comments in Latin are aimed at a learned audience which is more likely to be interested in details of sources and questions of Ælfric's translation technique. In this way, the Latin prefaces parallel in function the occasional Latin notes which are embedded in Ælfric's works and which are intended for a learned audience" (Wilcox 1994: 67).

[16] Translations from the Old English are my own, unless otherwise stated.

theological matters, whereas in others the uneducated are explicitly addressed. In the words of Godden,

> much of this mixture no doubt reflects Ælfric's own situation as a monk of Winchester and a learned scholar setting out to mediate the world of Christian learning to the ordinary laity and clergy of his time. (Godden 2000: xxvii)

To sum up, there can be said to be a tripartite audience for Ælfric's CH - the laity, the secular clergy, and monks, as well as various levels of literacy and education within each category.

Ælfric discusses his sources for the CH in the preface to the first series. He mentions Augustine, Jerome, Bede, Gregory the Great, Smaragdus, and Haymo of Auxerre (CH I, Latin Preface, 14-6); these are the only authors he explicitly acknowledges, though an accurate list does not end with the names found in the preface, as Ælfric sometimes also mentions his debt to a particular source in the exposition of a homily, and often he simply does not mention his source at all. Thus Ælfric makes use of various other sources that are not explicitly mentioned in the homilies, such as anonymous lives of saints, or other patristic authors. These are what Joyce Hill (2005) calls ultimate sources: the words of the patristic authors, however transmitted. She argues, though, that the way these words have been transmitted, the intermediate stage of transmission of patristic thought, is precisely what modern source study has failed to analyze. A study of the immediate sources, then, may cast light on the actual process of composition behind Ælfric's homilies. Four main collections of material represent Ælfric's immediate sources for the CH: the homiliaries of Paul the Deacon, Haymo of Auxerre, and Smaragdus, as well as an anonymous collection of hagiographic material called the Cotton-Corpus Legendary (Godden 2000: xli; Hill 2005).[17] Hill (2005) stresses the decisive role of intermediate transmitters carried out by these collections; she argues that the road followed by the sources is more important than a mere "archaeological" approach.[18] Medieval literacy was characterized by commitment to

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[17] Ælfrician source studies began with Max Förster's contribution (1894). On Haymo of Auxerre and Paul the Deacon, see Smetana (1959; 1961); on Smaragdus, see Hill (1992); on the Cotton-Corpus Legendary, see Zettel (1982). A more general perspective on the subject is offered by Clayton (1985) and Hill (1993).

[18] "A culture of *compilatio* is about bringing textual material together, and the instruments are previous intermediaries through whom the chains of authority are gradually assembled. Source-study, with its modern tendency to focus on ultimate sources (because they are the 'real authors') tends to pull the elements apart, so that we cannot grasp the cultural and practical conditions from which a text emerged. [...] source-study of this kind, that stops when a respectable ultimate source is identified, is the sort that Frantzen objected to: the collection of 'facts', which usefully increases the number of identifications, but

derivation and interdependence of authority; Ælfric was also participating in this intertextual system of discourse, especially because the main characteristic of the Carolingian exegesis on which he relies is intertextuality. Traditionally, Carolingian exegesis

> was a particular genre of composition, in which the object was the transmission of consensual authority, achieved in practical terms mostly through the creation of *compilationes* or *catenae*, in which the reader encounters, not the writer's own words, but the words of the authorities who are thus the guarantors of the orthodoxy of the interpretation offered. It is, then, a fundamentally intertextual approach, made all the more so because the authorities on whom the Carolingians drew were themselves profoundly intertextual. (Hill 2005: 158)

It should be noted, however, that the two homilies from the CH analyzed in this study represent an exception to the general rule just outlined, because they are both variously indebted to Bede's HE rather than to Ælfric's Carolingian sources.

There are about 30 manuscripts containing parts or the whole of the two collections, which also testify to the various stages of revision made by Ælfric. Clemoes (1997) analyzes six different phases in the evolution of the First Series (hereafter CH I), the first three concerning actual textual revision, the last three concerning a reorganization of the material. Clemoes (1997) based his edition of CH I on the earliest manuscript still extant, called ms. A: London, British Library, Royal 7 c.xii, ff. 4-218 (Ker 257). This manuscript is arguably the first fair copy of CH I and contains corrections in Ælfric's own hand. The only manuscript containing both Series, as well as all the prefaces, is ms. K, Cambridge, University Library, Gg.3.28 (Ker 15), which was also the base text for Thorpe's edition of 1844-6 and was used by Clemoes for the parts missing in ms. A. Moreover, ms. K is the only one to contain a full set of the Second Series (hereafter CH II). It is "either a product of Ælfric's own scriptorium or a remarkably faithful copy of such a manuscript" (Godden 1979: xliii), and is the main text for Godden's edition. For CH II, Godden describes two main recensions and several authorial changes.

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which, in cultural terms, becomes repetitive in simply demonstrating, over and over again, which intellectual tradition, in a broad sense, the author in question was indebted to. By contrast, it is a searching engagement with immediate sources, however derivative they might be from a modern perspective and however much we might therefore be culturally conditioned to discount them, that takes us away from the *what* to the more interesting questions of the *how* and *why*" (Hill 2005: 170).

**The *Lives of Saints***

The *Lives of Saints* (hereafter LoS) can be considered Ælfric's third collection of homilies, although it differs in scope and structure from the first two. As Ælfric himself points out in the Latin preface to the LoS, this collection of homilies deals with those saints that are usually remembered by monks, but not by the secular church:

> Nam memini me in duobus anterioribus libris posuisse passiones uel uitas sanctorum ipsorum, quos gens ista caelebre colit cum ueneratione festi diei, et placuit nobis in isto codicello ordinare passiones etiam uel uitas sanctorum illorum quos non uulgus sed coenobite officiis uenerantur. (LoS, Latin Preface, ll. 5-9)

This collection therefore consists only of the feasts of the *sanctorale*, for which there are 29 items (Lapidge 1996: 118); in addition, it also contains seven non-hagiographical items.[19] The collection of the LoS was edited and translated by Walter Skeat in 1881 and it is based on the only extant manuscript containing all the pieces of the LoS (London, BL, Cotton Julius E.vii; Ker 162), collated with some 18 manuscripts containing various excerpts of the collection (Skeat 1881-1900). None of these manuscripts comes from Ælfric's own scriptorium, therefore it is difficult to recreate Ælfric's intentions in the same way as it has been done for the Catholic Homilies (Wilcox 2006: 238). It should also be noted that the LoS had a more limited manuscript dissemination than the Catholic Homilies (Wilcox 2006: 241).

As Hill underlines, Cotton Julius E.vii contains three works by Ælfric which are not part of the LoS: the *Interrogationes Sigewulfi*, *De Falsis Deis*, and *De Duodecim Abusivis*; their inclusion in the manuscript after the LoS may, however, be still indebted to Ælfric. The same cannot be said for the following four items, which scholarship has established as of non-Ælfrician origin: the Seven Sleepers (LoS 23), Mary of Egypt (LoS 23b), Eustace (LoS 30), and Euphrosyne (LoS 33) (Hill 2006: 28-9).[20]

The Old English preface gives another significant point of difference with the first two collection of homilies, as the dedicatees in this case belong to the laity and not to the clergy. It thus appears that Ælfric wrote the LoS under the request of his lay patrons Æthelmær and Æthelweard:

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[19] The non-hagiographical items are: the Nativity (LoS 1), Ash Wednesday (LoS 12), the Prayer of Moses (LoS 13), the Memory of the Saints (LoS 16), On Auguries (LoS 17), From the Book of Kings (LoS 18), and Maccabees (LoS 25) (Hill 1996: 237). See also Magennis (2005: 104-5).

[20] Hugh Magennis (1986) analyses these four items in detail.

> Ælfric gret eadmodlice Æðelwerd ealdorman and ic secge þe leof . þæt ic hæbbe nu gegaderod on þyssere béc þæra halgena þrowunga þe me to onhagode on englisc to awendene . for þan þe ðu lof swiðost and æðelmær swylcera gewrita me bædon . and of handum gelæhton eowerne geleafan to getrymmenne . mid þære gerecednysse . þe ge on eowrum gereorde næfdon ǽr. (LoS, Old English Preface, 35-41)
> ['Ælfric humbly greets ealdorman Æthelweard and I say to you, beloved, that I have now collected in this book the passions of those saints which I thought fitting to translate into English, because you, beloved, and Æthelmær fervently asked me such writings, and took them from my hands to strengthen your faith with the narrative that you did not previously have in your language'.]

The collection was intended for private reading, but later it also served for preaching purposes (Hurt 1972).

Ælfric's principal source for the LoS is the Cotton-Corpus Legendary (Zettel 1982), supplemented with other sources for the five English saints included in the collection: Alban, Æthelthryth, and Oswald, are based on Bede's HE – and are the object of the present study; the account of the life of Swithun is derived from the *Libellus de Miraculis S. Suithuni Episcopi* of Landferth, whereas the life of Edmund relies on the *Passio Sancti Eadmundi* by Abbo of Fleury (Needham 1966: 18-9).

In this collection Ælfric makes extensive use of a loosely alliterative pattern, a feature that is already present in some of the homilies of the Second Series, starting with the homily on Cuthbert (CH II.10, Godden 2000: xxxvi), but that is only employed with a certain regularity in the LoS. As Dorothy Bethurum notes,

> whatever Ælfric wrote, it was not classical Old English poetry. And yet it is impossible not to see that he composed in short units, lines or half-lines, that there is a fairly regular recurrence of stress, four beats to a line, and that the two half-lines are usually, though not always, bound together by a casual sort of alliteration. (Bethurum 1932: 515)

In his detailed analysis of Ælfric's alliterative style, John C. Pope underlines that this pattern differs from actual poetry in terms of rhythms and strictness of pattern (Pope 1967: 105), and that Ælfric may simply have applied something "already indigenous in sermons" (Pope 1967: 111). Wilcox interestingly argues that

> It is as if he [Ælfric] wanted his works to seduce the reader with their rhetorical power, but not too seduce too far to the extent that pleasure in the rhetoric might distract from their edifying point. (Wilcox 2006: 255)

It is in view of this alliterative pattern that Skeat's edition of the LoS is printed in metrical lines.

**The Saints and Their Stories**

It has been observed that "On n'est jamais saint que pour les autres" (Delooz 1962: 22); sanctity only exists through other people's legitimization. One might thus say that sanctity, like beauty, lies in the eye of the beholder. The stories told by those who see, or claim to have seen, the suffering, the miracles, or the exemplary life led by holy men and women, represent the essential component of the idea of sanctity. The transmission of these stories, be it as written texts or as oral performances, offers an inventory of *exempla* whose repetitive narrative patterns are particularly reassuring and efficacious; moreover, they often contribute to the creation or the propaganda of a cult.[21]

Each of the saintly figures analyzed in the present study may be said to embody a different model of sanctity within Bede's work, starting from the late-antique model *par excellence* of the martyr's *Passio* (St Alban), through the different stages of evolution of the idea of sanctity that developed during the Middle Ages, represented by figures such as the virgin (Æthelthryth), the ascetic (Fursey; Æthelthryth; Dryhthelm), the visionary (Fursey; Dryhthelm), the royal saint (King Oswald) once Christianity was legitimised and people no longer died for professing their faith in public. Some of these attain sanctity only *post mortem*; others, in contrast, embody something that might be defined as an ideal of living sainthood (Benvenuti 2005: 49). Martyrs, for instance, are a model of sanctity because they die on account of their faith. St Alban performs miracles as a testimony of his faith right before his execution, but without the tortures he happily endures, and his beheading perpetrated by the wicked persecutor, his story would not be a *Passio*. In his case, just like with any other martyr, miracles are not enough to determine sanctity, and his death is the focal point of the narrative. St Alban's sanctity is therefore acknowledged by the beholders only after his death. It should be noted, however, that in one point the account of St Alban's *Passio* differs from the traditional model of *Passiones*: in comparison with more famous martyrs, the narrative concerning St Alban is a sober, moderate one. Bede does not indulge in gruesome details, and

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[21] Seminal works in the field of hagiography include the studies of the Bollandist Hippolyte Delehaye (1934 ; 1962); see also Peter Brown's *The Cult of the Saints* (1981); and André Vauchez's history of sanctity in the Middle Ages (1989 [1981]); a more recent, but very comprehensive contribution is offered by Anna Benvenuti (et al., 2005). See also the posthumous collection of essays by Claudio Leonardi (2011) edited by A. Degl'Innocenti and F. Santi.

consequently neither do the Old English translator or Ælfric – even though, as will be shown in the next chapter, a more emphatic style can be noticed in the OEB in comparison to the HE, when the translator is describing the tortures endured by the British martyr.

Ideas of sanctity evolved along with Christianity itself. The martyr was, in a way, superseded by a different model of self-sacrifice, that of the ascetic, in which physical death is replaced by "social" death and by mortification of the body. Æthelthryth, the virgin wife of King Ecgfrith, is praised by Bede for her determination in preserving her virginity through not one, but two marriages, and for her exemplary, ascetic way of life once she is finally allowed by her second spouse to take the veil. Despite her somewhat unconventional path to the cloister, which involved stubbornly rejecting to consummate two marriages, one of which was to a king, Æthelthryth is the epitome of a life of abnegation and self-denial. Her untainted virginity and the renunciation of her role in society as a queen, wife, and mother, make her into a saint, as proved by the incorrupt state of her body sixteen years after her death. Oswald, King of Northumbria, gains his holy status after dying in battle against the heathen Penda; miracles of healing take place where he lost his life, and his relics also have miraculous effects. Bede becomes the impresario of Oswald's saintly fame, by devoting to this royal figure and to his pious way of life a very large number of chapters (eleven) in Book III of the HE. And yet Oswald's sanctity does not quite fit the model of martyrdom, not even in the sense of spiritual martyrdom; all the narratives make it quite clear that Oswald did not die a martyr's death, despite falling in battle against a pagan army (Gunn 1993). Oswald is rather a model of *rex iustus* (Vauchez 1989 [1981]: 118), a king who contributed to the dissemination of Christianity and who conducted an exemplary life characterized by devotion, humility, and generosity. In both cases – Oswald and Æthelthryth – the most visible sign of their sanctity is represented by the incorruptibility of their bodies (or parts thereof); thanks to these miraculous events, the sanctity of these figures is given official acknowledgement and their cult is established. Another type of living sainthood is offered by the visionary. The lives of the Irish monk Fursey and of the Northumbrian layman Dryhthelm, with their otherworldly journeys to the interim space between heaven and hell, are among the most influential examples of vision literature prior to Dante. The monk Fursey undertakes a life of *peregrinatio*, or

voluntary exile for Christ, and experiences several visions during his lifetime, whereas Dryhthelm is taken on a journey to the otherworld during an illness; afterwards he leaves his family and embraces monastic life.

The first four saints' lives considered here (those of St Alban, Æthelthryth, Oswald, and Fursey), present the traditional patterns expected of hagiographic narratives, despite their being set in a historiographic context. The narratives, for instance, present most, if not all, of the defining moments in the life of a saint. Régis Boyer (1981) has summarized these phases as: origins; birth of the saint and miracles accompanying the event; childhood; education; piety; martyrdom; *inuentio*; *translatio*; miracles. The only life that appears to depart prominently from this conventional model is that of Dryhthelm, because he does not quite live the life of a saint; he is simply an ordinary layman living a pious life and following Christian precepts. The decisive moment in this narrative is Dryhthelm's vision of the otherworld. Thanks to this spiritual miracle, he starts a new life as a cloistered monk, leaving behind the secular world and spending the rest of his mortal existence in penance and seclusion, thus showing that holiness can be attained by everybody.

As Charles Altman (1975) points out, hagiographic narratives are built around oppositions which can be either diametrical or gradational. This structure is also reflected in the texts examined here. The diametrical opposition of martyrs to persecutors characterizes the legend of St Alban, and this feature is particularly evident in Ælfric's narrative. The other narratives are structured around a gradational opposition, in which

> Action is not bad, like vice, it is simply not *as* good as contemplation. Instead of treating the secular as opposed to the spiritual, this second system treats the secular as a stop on the way to the spiritual, or perhaps I should say *step*, for the new metaphor is clearly the ladder, with its implied continuity between less and more value. (Altman 1975: 1)

Diametrical opposition can thus be said to be one of the defining features of the *Passio*, as opposed to the *Vita*. Whereas a very clear dichotomy characterizes the narratives devoted to Alban, the same cannot be said for the accounts of the life of Oswald, which present a gradational structure. This structural criterion, then, also contributes to discharging the hypothesis that Oswald might be portrayed as a martyr. The story lacks the fundamental diametrical opposition that characterizes the *Passio*. Oswald is not fighting against a heathen army purely on account of his faith; in fact, Stancliffe (1995)

even argues that Oswald might actually have been the aggressor in the battle where he lost his life. Moreover, his missionary activity alongside Bishop Aidan is very successful well before his death; the narrative does not contain a persecution scene, or torture, and Oswald does not die a martyr's death. In other words, the account of the life of Oswald lacks the three basic elements of the martyr legends (Altman 1975: 2), which in turn are the structural core of Alban's *Passio*: a dialogue scene, in which the persecutor attempts to persuade a Christian to worship the idols; the actual persecution and martyrdom scenes; and finally, a support system for each side.

Another significant point of contact between the Lives here considered is that of the body as a sanctified object (Vauchez 1989 [1981]: 430). The corporeal takes centre stage in hagiographic narratives (Benvenuti 2005: 105), and the cases examined in this study are no exception. The body carries the signs of the spiritual; this is true of Æthelthryth's virginal body, whose neck scar closes up completely after her death, thus becoming a further sign of sanctity, but it is also true of the scar Fursey shows on his face. This scar is a perpetual memento of the fault he committed, but it also makes him into a living testimony of God's powers and of the dangers of sin. Holiness is also manifest in St Alban's body, capable of enduring torture. The epitome of the body as a sanctified object is, however, the incorrupt body (Angenendt 1991), though the cases here examined show two different dynamics: whereas Oswald's hand does not decay because Bishop Aidan blessed it, Æthelthryth's body is incorrupt on account of her own merits alone, without the intercession of a blessing, and the same can be said of Fursey's intact body.

Incorrupt bodies are the clearest sign of holiness; the second clearest sign of holiness can be said to be the miraculous powers shown by relics. The narratives here considered offer a varied catalogue of what is technically known as contact, or second-class, relics, that is to say, items that have in some way been in contact with the saint's body, as opposed to actual body parts, or first-class-relics. Third-class relics, on the other hand, are items, such as a piece of cloth, that become relics when they touch a first- or second-class relic. For instance, the robes worn by Æthelthryth or her stone coffin, the chips of wood from the cross erected by Oswald and the soil of the battlefield impregnated with his blood, are second-class relics that become the object of popular devotion and contribute to the dissemination of cult. As Vauchez (1989 [1981]: 471-85)

observes, the range of miracles performed through the saints in the early Middle Ages depends on direct contact between the saint's tomb and the diseased person, or at least between a second-class relic and the suffering person. This is exactly the type of healing miracle that is described in the narratives here examined. In time, however, direct contact with a relic no longer represented a *conditio sine qua non* of healing; praying to the saint for intercession also became acceptable, and this inevitably brought an increase in the typology of healings. But the narratives considered here still testify to an early phase of development, in which, as previously mentioned, the contact with or the presence of a relic is absolutely necessary for a miracle to be performed. This will become particularly evident in the chapter devoted to Oswald.

**Translation or Rewriting?**

If, at least at first glance, one could say that Bede's accounts of miracles, spiritual experiences and models of sanctity undergo a process of actual translation in the *Old English Bede*, the same cannot be said for Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies* and *Lives of Saints*, where in fact such episodes rely on Bede as a source but are expanded or condensed to meet the needs of the homiletic genre, and are thus perhaps closer to the idea of rewriting than to the concept of translation *per se*. As Dorothy Bethurum (1932: 519) rightly points out, Ælfric's renderings of his sources are rarely literal; he "omitted all that did not contribute to effective story-telling", thus showing himself independent of his sources and at the same time more interested in producing a text that suited the audience for which his writings were intended (Clemoes 1966: 187). The amount of omissions in the OEB and the attitude of the Old English translator towards his source have already been outlined in many scholarly contributions; they can be summarized as an interest for English matters and moral *exempla*, combined with a Latinate diction that mirrors the source text very closely. As for Ælfric, he expounds his approach to sources in the Preface to CH I:

> Nec ubique transtulimus uerbum ex uerbo. sed sensum ex sensu. cauendo tamen diligentissime deceptiuos errores. ne inueniremur aliqua heresi seducti seu fallacia fuscati; (CH I, Latin Preface, 11-4)

As can be seen, Ælfric makes reference to the Jeromian "word for word, sense for sense" dichotomy and states that he follows the "sense for sense" approach, which in Jerome and in classical theories was considered appropriate for non-Biblical writings.[22] The same model is also adopted by King Alfred in the preface to the translation of the *Cura Pastoralis*: "hwilum word be worde, hwilum andgit of andgiete" (Sweet 1871: 6-7, 'sometimes word for word, sometimes sense for sense'). In general, Ælfric's attitude towards translation holds true to his prefatory statement. He often reorganizes the narrative structure of the Bedan source, showing a preference for chronological narrations as opposed to Bede's frequent use of analepsis and prolepsis. He also summarizes or entirely omits those sections of his source that he is not interested in reproducing, and thus displays a very definite, target-oriented approach towards the act of translation.[23] And yet there are some exceptions to this general rule, as Ælfric sometimes also reproduces sections of the source text in detail. As will be shown in the next chapters, his approach to the source text occasionally oscillates between rewriting and translation; his style, however, is far from the Latinate diction of the OEB, and therefore even the passages that are closest to his sources still show a certain degree of independence. Despite his numerous authorial interventions, Ælfric still conceptually presents his homiletic production as a translation. Joyce Hill (2003: 243), for instance, observes that he always makes use of words belonging to the semantic field of translation, such as *transferre*, *translatio*, *interpretari*, and *interpretatio*, which contain the ideas of "carrying over" as well as that of exegesis:

> As far as Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies* are concerned, the *translatio* or *interpretatio*, the mediation, the exegesis, the carrying over, had a complex function for it interpreted divine scripture, it was an act of interlingual translation, and it was also a carrying over from one culture to another – a complex and highly literate ecclesiastical tradition being transmitted across the diglossic divide, as a reforming act, to an audience which, though it may have included secular priests, was essentially uneducated in the concepts and

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[22] "ego non solum fateor, sed libera voce profiteor me in interpretatione Graecorum absque Scripturis Sanctis, ubi et verborum ordo mysterium est, non verbum e verbo, sed sensum exprimere de sensu." (Jerome, Ep. 57,5,2). Rita Copeland (1991: 42-53) offers a survey of Jerome's translation theory and the classical heritage. Paolo Chiesa (1987) also provides a very comprehensive discussion of the subject.

[23] Ann Nichols (1971) argues that Ælfric's choice of *brevitas* as a guiding principle for constructing his homilies is dictated by his pastoral concern for the unlearned members of his audience. While this theory may no doubt be valid, it does not seem to take into account the fact that even the LoS sermons testify to Ælfric's use of his brief style, and the intended readership for the third collection of homilies was far from being uneducated. Thus Ælfric's use of *brevitas* may also be related to the requirements of the homiletic genre and of oral delivery, a context in which a linear narrative structure and few clear details are usually more effective than lengthy, convoluted expositions on a subject.

language from which the 'translation', the 'carrying over' was being made. (Hill 2003: 245)

A fundamental difference characterizes the two Old English texts examined here: the OEB presents itself as an actual translation of its source text, to the point that, as previously mentioned, many critics associate this work with the programme of translations promoted by King Alfred or to a Mercian tradition of translation; Ælfric's homilies, on the other hand, belong first and foremost to the homiletic genre, and translation or rewriting of parts of their sources is embedded in the narrative tissue.

For these reasons, the hagiographic episodes here considered have come to acquire an identity of their own in each of the two target texts, and have therefore become a reflection not only of the source text, but also of the cultural contexts that produced the translations themselves. This is particularly evident in Ælfric's homilies for the reasons mentioned above, but it is also true of the OEB, where the careful, consistent selection of the source-material and a subtle, accomplished knowledge of the Latin language on the part of the translator have contributed to shaping a text that indeed deserves attention as a literary work in itself, and not simply as an over-literal translation or as the product of a cultural *milieu* that has declined, as it has been described in the past (Whitelock 1962; Bately 1988).

In order to question the translational dimension of these hagiographic texts, some of the ideas recently proposed in the field of translation theory may provide useful interpretive tools. Rather than judging the performance of the translator on the basis of what the translation / rewriting omits or does not render in detail of the source text, the adoption instead of a descriptive approach might shed light on the reasons that produced a certain rendering of the source text in a certain target context, without being judgemental about the exactness of the translation. With this in mind, translation and rewriting can be seen as belonging to a *continuum*, whereby a certain degree of fluidity, rather than rigid taxonomy and prescriptiveness, might better mirror the reality of acts of translation. The question could equally be approached by taking into account de Saussure's dichotomy between *langue* and *parole*: the relationship between a translation and its source text locates itself at the level of *parole*, because this relationship has to do with a specific experience rather than with abstract notions, and therefore each case

should be considered individually as a unique relationship between source and target contexts (Even-Zohar 1975: 75). As Siri Nergaard rightly points out,

> the shifts in translation cannot only be explained as mistakes or subjective interpretations, but as shifts that are culturally and socially determined by the discourses of the age and, therefore, in any case informative about the relation between the source- and the target-cultures. (Nergaard 2007: 33-43)

Nergaard (2005) has recently proposed a very broad definition of translation that encompasses all modes of textual transformation that appear to be in any way translational, even those at the far end of the spectrum beyond the limit previously mentioned of rewriting as opposed to translation proper. In this sense, any *text* - in the broadest sense of the word - presenting itself as a reworking an antecedent text, may be labelled as a translation. Nergaard argues that it would be more profitable and more true to the nature of translation to consider each single case separately, and to somehow redefine the idea itself of translation every single time, rather than relying on a set of pre-established rules.[24] This perspective is reminiscent of André Lefevere's approach to translation (1992), but is also more radical in its proposed application. While this theory may be stimulating, I would not go as far as to agree completely with Nergaard's very broad definition of translation. Her provocative stance, however, does show that the debate is still very much alive. Nergaard's article comes as an answer to Umberto Eco's proposed classification (2000; 2003), which is based on the assumption that translations are a form of interpretation, but that in turn not all forms of interpretation can be considered a translation (Eco 2004: 123). He builds a taxonomy of possible forms of interpretation, among which translation is also found.[25] Despite its articulated nature,

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[24] "Senza prendere Jakobson e la sua suddivisione alla lettera, credo che sia utile, per non dire necessario, nella traduttologia – vale a dire nella riflessione teorica – aprire a diversi tipi di traduzione, semplicemente perché esistono, perché vengono fatte. Allargando il concetto si rischia ovviamente che ogni tipo di interpretazione diventi traduzione e che il concetto perda tutta la sua specificità. Ma nonostante questi rischi […] crediamo sia importante riconoscere tutti i tipi di trasformazione che in qualche maniera sono traduttivi. Sono favorevole ad una definizione debole del tradurre […], e piuttosto per una definizione specifica *ad hoc* per ogni singolo testo, per ogni singola operazione di trasposizione" (Nergaard 2005: 15-33).

[25] Eco's taxonomy is organized as follows (Eco 2003: 236):
1. Interpretazone per trascrizione
2. Interpretazione intrasistemica
    2.1. Intrasemiotica, all'interno di altri sistemi semiotici
    2.2. Intralinguistica, all'interno della stessa lingua naturale
    2.3. Esecuzione
3. Interpretazione intersistemica
    3.1. Con sensibili variazioni nella sostanza
        3.1.1. Interpretazione intersemiotica

Eco's classification still allows a certain degree of flexibility and takes into account the different shapes interpretation can take depending on the medium, as well as the relation between the medium and its source. Defending this system against Nergaard's criticism, it may be argued that Eco's model represents a useful reference tool to locate different interpretive cases within certain parameters that are fixed and always recognizable. This approach should not be considered prescriptive simply because it entails a set of parameters. It is simply a theoretical framework that can be useful even with a descriptive approach in mind, and one with which each case can still be discussed separately and not *a priori*. One of the key ideas in Umberto Eco's definition of translation is that of fidelity. Eco's idea of fidelity is synonymous with passionate engagement, commitment to identifying the deepest meaning of the text, and the ability of the interpreter to negotiate with the tenets of the target culture to find the best possible solution. Fidelity is thus synonymous with honesty, respect, and loyalty (Eco 2003: 364), and varies from text to text, as there may be different levels of engagement between a text and its interpreter / translator, and none of these can be evaluated prescriptively or *a priori*.

## A Polysystemic Approach

The theoretical assumptions underlying this type of investigation find their premises in an interdisciplinary field known as *Translation Studies*,[26] with special regard to Itamar Even-Zohar's approach and his Polysystem Theory (Even-Zohar 1978;

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        3.1.2. Interpretazione interlinguistica, o traduzione tra lingue naturali
        3.1.3. Rifacimento
     3.2  Con mutazione di materia
        3.2.1     Parasinonimia
        3.2.2     Adattamento o trasmutazione.

[26] The term *Translation Studies* was coined by James Holmes in the seventies to refer to a group of young scholars from the Netherlands and Belgium who first started to advocate a descriptive, non-normative approach for the study of translation. In 1976, the Israeli scholar Itamar Even-Zohar introduced the ideas of Polysystem Theory to the Dutch/Belgian group at a conference in Leuven. Since then and mostly during the eighties, the European and Israeli groups have merged together to the point of being indistinguishable (Gentzler 1993: 106). The work of Gideon Toury, also from Tel Aviv University, slowly shifted the main focus of *Translation Studies* from theory to descriptive work (Gentzler 1993: 134). In time, the works of scholars such as André Lefevere and Susan Bassnett (1990; 1991; 1998; 2011) have evolved towards a cultural studies model, investigating "the ideological pressures on the translator and strategies that the translator has for influencing the intellectual milieu" (Gentzler 1993: 140). Lefevere (1992), for instance, explores the relationship between authority, patronage, and translation.

1981; 1981a; 1990), as well as the studies undertaken by Gideon Toury (1980; 1981) and André Lefevere (1992). Broadly speaking, the field of *Translation Studies* adopts a non-normative, descriptive approach to the study of translation, in which a major role is played by the target cultural context, its constraints and expectations. In the words of Toury,

> When one's purpose is the descriptive study of literary translations in their environment, the initial question is not whether a certain text is a translation (according to some preconceived criteria which are extrinsic to the system under study), but whether it is regarded as a translation from the intrinsic point of view of the target literary polysystem, i.e., according to its position within the polysystem. (Toury 1981: 17)

This theoretical approach considers translation as an active part of literary systems and does not exclude them as marginal phenomena. All kinds of literature, even in its lowest, most non-canonical expressions, are here considered as elements of a whole; this is what Even-Zohar refers to as a *polysystem*. The value and the position of translated literature within a certain literary polysystem is not rigidly fixed, rather it shifts and varies across time, and it is strongly affected by socio-cultural constraints and dynamics of power. In some literary systems translations can play a very marginal role, but their position may change every time the underlying socio-cultural dynamics undergo some kind of modification. As a consequence, translated literature can play a major role at a definite stage of development of a literary system, but at a later stage it can also be pushed to the margins of the system itself. This theoretical approach clearly entails the adoption of a target-oriented approach: even the choice of the texts to be translated reflects the situation governing the home polysystem, nevermind the way in which the polysystem redefines - in a distinctive way every time - the boundary between translation and rewriting.

Even-Zohar (1990) identifies three major conditions under which translations usually play a significant role within a polysystem: (1) when a literature is young, in the process of being established; (2) when a literature is either peripheral, or weak, or both; (3) when there are turning points, crises, or literary vacuums in a literature. As regards the literary system in which the OEB was produced, one could go as far as to say that all three conditions coexisted. Regardless of the actual existence of a direct relationship between the OEB and the programme of cultural renewal promoted by King Alfred, before the age of these prose translations, a long period of cultural stagnation reigned over Anglo-Saxon England in the wake of devastating Viking invasions that destroyed

most of the monastic centres of culture of the age of Bede. This decline is confirmed by the very small number of manuscripts produced in England in that period.[27] King Alfred's programme aimed at providing a basis for the re-establishment of learning and culture after this long period of political instability and cultural decline; the literary polysystem of that age can therefore be seen as still quite weak, in the process of being defined, and represents a major turning point after decades of cultural vacuum.

The theoretical framework of *Translation Studies* also allows inclusion in the investigation of the literary production of the third great moment of cultural expansion in pre-Conquest England, that is to say the Benedictine revival, of which Ælfric is one of the main voices. This is another significant moment of cultural redefinition during which translated literature played an important role within the polysystem, albeit a less defining one than during Alfred's reign.

Even-Zohar also observes that the idea itself of translation shifts and varies across time and depends on the role played by translated literature at any given time:

> Even the question of what is a translated work cannot be answered a priori in terms of an a-historical out-of-context idealized state: it must be determined on the grounds of the operations governing the polysystem. Seen from this point of view, translation is no longer a phenomenon whose nature and borders are given once and for all, but an activity dependent on the relations within a certain cultural system. (Even-Zohar 1990: 51)

In this light, then, Ælfric's homilies can be considered a translation because this is how their author perceived them to be, though the actual method of composition from our point of view may be better described as a combination of translation, rewriting, and creation of new material. According to Even-Zohar, this loose definition of the idea of translation is usually dominant when translation plays a key role within the polysystem, as is certainly the case for the period of the Benedictine Reform:

> The distinction between a translated work and an original work in terms of literary behaviour is a function of the position assumed by the translated literature at a given time. When it takes a central position, the borderlines are diffuse, so that the very category of "translated works" must be extended to semi- and quasi-translations as well. (Even-Zohar 1990: 50)

As Massimiliano Bampi (2007: 48-9) observes, this approach to the study of translation can be applied to the field of Medieval Studies precisely because of its intrinsic flexibility and of the significance attributed by it to the historical dimension. With this

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[27] In the 9th century, book production and scholarly activity virtually disappeared from England (Lapidge 1996a: 409-54; 2005: 44-8), as confirmed also by Gneuss who counts less than 20 manuscripts written in England in this period (1986: 37; 2001).

in mind, the borders of Eco's proposed classification may also be loosened, to better accommodate his schema to a literary system in which the theoretical assumptions behind the idea of translation were different from those of today.

# CHAPTER 1 – ST ALBAN

The story of the conversion and execution of the most famous British martyr is told by Bede at the beginning of Book I (chapter 7); it is also found in the corresponding chapter in the OEB[28] and in Ælfric's *Lives of Saints* (LoS 19).[29] Bede's narrative later became the basis for the entry concerning St Alban in the *Old English Martyrology* (Kotzor 1981: 2.126-7). The episode goes back to the time when Britain was still a Roman province and as such, was subject to the laws concerning the persecutions of Christians that were in effect until 313 AD. Very scant information is available from this period and, as Lapidge (2008-2010 v. 1: xvii) notes, it is probably for this reason that Bede devotes an entire chapter to record the life and heroic death of the only martyr that Britain could boast: the presence of the local martyr St Alban legitimizes Britain's belonging to the universal Church and that alone is enough compensation for the lack of any other detailed account about the Christianity of those distant centuries.[30]

Bede based his account on the *Passio S. Albani*, and Ælfric in turn relied entirely on Bede for the composition of his sermon. The text of the *Passio* must have been created before the mid-6th century because Gildas, writing around the same time, also refers to it in chapters 10 and 11 of *De Excidio Britanniae* (Sharpe 2001: 30-1). [31]

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[28] Book I of the OEB is preserved in its entirety only in mss. Ca and B; the beginning of Book I –and consequently, the chapter devoted to St Alban - is missing from mss. C, T, and O (Miller 1890-98: xiii-xx; Rowley 2011: 31).

[29] The following abbreviations will be used in the text:
HE: *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* (Lapidge 2008-2010), followed by book number, chapter number, and lines.
OEB: The Old English Version of Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* (Miller 1890-98), followed by page and line numbers.
LoS: Ælfric's *Lives of Saints* (Skeat 1881-1900), followed by homily and line numbers.

[30] Wallace-Hadrill (1988: 13) argues that the story of St Alban serves a different purpose to the one suggested by Lapidge: rather than connecting Britain with the universal Church, St Alban's martyrdom links the Christianity of Roman Britain with that of the Anglo-Saxon age.

[31] "Magnificavit igitur misericordiam nostram suam nobiscum deus volens omnes homines salvos fieri et vocans non minus peccatores quam eos qui se putant iustos. Qui gratuito munere, supra dicto ut conicimus persecutionis tempore, ne penitus crassa atrae noctis caligine Britannia obfuscaretur, clarissimos lampades sanctorum martyrum nobis accendit, quorum nunc corporum sepulturae et passionum loca, si non lugubri divortio barbarorum quam plurima ob scelera nostra civibus adimerentur, non minimum intuentium mentibus ardorem divinae caritatis incuterent: sanctum Albanum Verolamiensem, Aaron et Iulium Legionum urbis cives ceterosque utriusque sexus diversis in locis summa magnanimitate in acie Christi perstantes dico. Quorum prior postquam caritatis gratia

Wilhelm Meyer (1904) was the first to produce an in-depth study of the *Passio*, and in fact Plummer, writing at the end of the 19th century, declared himself unable to identify Bede's source for HE I.7.[32] The *Passio* survives in three very corrupt manuscripts from the 8-9th centuries, two of which are preserved in Turin and Paris, while the third witness is an excerpt preserved in copies in Autun, London, and Einsiedeln (Levison 1941: 344-5; Morris 1968: 15).[33] The source used by Gildas and Bede probably belongs to the textual tradition of the Paris manuscript.[34] According to Meyer (1904), Levison (1941), and Morris (1968), the Turin manuscript contains the earliest redaction of the *Passio*, followed by the excerpt and finally by the Paris manuscript. Two recent studies by Sharpe (2001; 2002), however, revise the textual history of the *Passio* and attribute the earliest dating to the excerpt rather than to the Turin manuscript. This is significant for the dating of the persecution in which the events relating to St Alban take place. Gildas and Bede attribute the events narrated in the *Passio* to the persecutions carried out by Diocletian (303-5 AD) because their source, represented by the Paris manuscript, says so. The Turin manuscript, on the other hand, makes reference to the persecution under Severus (c. 202-210 AD); by analysing this occurrence and the details of imperial organization it contains, Morris (1968: 16) dates St Alban's martyrdom to the year 209. However, Sharpe's more recently proposed stemma relegates this reading in the Turin manuscript to a revision of the work that took place in the Merovingian period (Sharpe 2001: 35); for this reason, Sharpe argues, the Turin manuscript of the *Passio* cannot be authoritative enough to suggest a definite dating for St Alban's martyrdom. According to Sharpe (2001: 35; 2002: 113-4), then, there are no sufficient elements to provide an

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confessorem persecutoribus insectatum et iam iamque comprehendendum, imitans et in hoc Christum animam pro ovibus ponentem, domo primum ac mutatis dein mutuo vestibus occuluit et se discrimini in fratris supra dicti vestimentis libenter persequendum dedit, ita deo inter sacram confessionem cruoremque coram impiis Romana tum stigmata cum horribili fantasia praeferentibus placens signorum miraculis mirabiliter adornatus est, ut oratione ferventi illi Israeliticae arenti viae minusque tritae, stante diu arca prope glareas testament in medio iordanis canali, simile iter ignotum, trans Tamesis nobilis fluvii alveum, cum mille viris sicco ingrediens pede suspensis utrimque modo praeruptorum fluvialibus montium gurgitibus aperiret et priorem carnificem tanta prodigia videntem in agnum ex lupo mutaret et una secum triumphalem martyrii palmam sitire vehementius et excipere fortius faceret" (Winterbottom 1978: 92).

[32] "It is tolerably certain that this chapter of Bede is based on some earlier acts of St. Alban, but so far these have not been discovered. Various lives of St. Alban are catalogued by Hardy, Cat. i.3-34, but they are all later than Bede" (Plummer 1896, II: 17).

[33] Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale, MS. D.V.3 (s. viii[ex]); Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS. lat. 11748 (s. ix[ex]-x[in]); London, BL MS. Add. 11880 (s. ix[1]); Autun, Séminaire, MS. 34 (s. ix/x); London, Gray's Inn, MS. 3 (s. xii[1]); Einsiedeln, Stiftsbibliothek, MS. 248 (s. xii). See also Rollason (1989: 12).

[34] Even though Sharpe (2001: 35) does not rule out the possibility that the *Passio* known by Gildas was related to the version now available in the excerpts.

accurate dating and the question remains unanswered. Levison (1941: 350) is also quite doubtful about the possibility of dating Alban's martyrdom with precision, apart from ruling out the possibility that the British martyr suffered under the Diocletian persecution.

The *Passio* as told by Bede can be summarized as follows:

At the time of the persecutions of the Christians, the pagan St Alban gives shelter to a priest. Having observed the priest's way of life, St Alban converts to Christianity; in order to protect his teacher, the newly-converted St Alban takes the priest's clothes and offers himself to the Roman soldiers who are searching for the priest. St Alban is taken to the judge; he unyieldingly refuses to worship the idols and for this reason is tortured and sentenced to death. A multitude of people rush to the place chosen for the execution and block a bridge, making it impossible for anyone to proceed. St Alban then lifts his eyes to heaven, and the river miraculously gives way so that the blessed martyr can cross the river bed and hasten to his death. The executioner sees the miracle, immediately converts to Christianity and refuses to kill St Alban. The martyr and the crowd climb a beautiful hill and there St Alban asks for water. Immediately a spring appears from the ground, and then disappears again. St Alban is then beheaded and his executioner's eyes immediately fall to the ground with the martyr's head. The soldier who refused to kill St Alban is also executed. Following these miraculous events, the judge ends the persecution and honours the blessed martyrs that he himself sent to death.

## Persecution & Introduction (HE I.7.1-4; OEB 34. 8-12; LoS 19.1-15)

The introductory section of the chapter of the HE on St Alban (I.7) begins with a reference to the persecution of Christians by emperor Diocletian, which Bede covers in chapter I.6, and is followed by a quote from a poem by Venantius Fortunatus in praise of St Alban:

Siquidem in ea passus est sanctus Albanus, de quo presbyter Fortunatus in laude uirginum, cum beatorum martyrum qui de toto orbe ad Dominum uenirent mentionem faceret, ait: Albanum egregium fecunda Brittania profert. (HE I.7.1-4)

The very same structure can be found in the OEB which replicates the source text quite closely – indeed so closely that its translator turns into Old English prose even the verse taken from Fortunatus's poem, and does not quote the Latin original followed by its translation (OEB 34.9-12).[35]

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[35] "Swylce eac on þa tid on Breotone wæs ðrowiende Scs Albanus; be þam Fortunatus presbyter on fæmnena lofe, ða he gemynegode þara eadigra martyra, ða þe of eallum middangearde to Drihtne coman, cwæð he: Þone æðelan Albanum seo wæstmberende Bryton forðbereð" (OEB 34.9-12).

As for LoS 19, it seems natural to expect a rather different *incipit* from that of its source text. Here the topic must be introduced and its historical context must be outlined, whereas in the HE the *Passio* represents a pause within the historical narrative, and for this reason requires no specific introduction. In order to introduce the subject, Ælfric summarizes the information on Diocletian provided by Bede in chapter I.6; he reworks the passage quite freely, only choosing the most essential information on the subject of the persecution; all the references that do not have a connection with Britain are thus omitted. A difference in tone is also immediately perceptible in so far as Diocletian is described from the beginning in very negative terms, something that Bede does not do. The introduction is entirely devoted to the description of the wicked, murderous emperor Diocletian, thus setting the tone of the narrative from the very first lines and making it clear to the audience who the villain is, even before knowing anything about his positive counterpart, St Alban.[36] In Ælfric's *Passio* a clear-cut division between good and evil thus permeates the entire narration; in fact this dichotomy stands out as the main stylistic feature of the text.[37] Diocletian is first of all a *hæðen casere* (LoS 19.1, 'heathen emperor'), *cwealm-bære* (LoS 19.2, 'death-bearing'), a *reðe cwellere* (LoS 19.5, 'cruel murderer'); we are informed that the emperor is pagan even before knowing his name, and the semantic field related to murder and evil is indelibly associated with him and with the idea of paganism. Once the audience has been provided with a suitable lenses through which to read the story, and following the brief mapping of the historical background explaining St Alban's martyrdom, Ælfric resumes the narrative as it is in his source and anticipates the main element of the story, namely that the noble martyr St Alban was killed in that persecution. In other words, the

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[36] "Sum hæðen casere wæs ge-haten Dioclitianus / se wæs to casere gecoren þeahðe he cwealm-bære wære . / æfter cristes acennednysse twam hund gearum . / and syx and hund-eahtatigum ofer ealne middan-eard . / and he rixode tewntig geara reðe cwellere . / swa þæt he acwealde and acwelan hét / ealle ða cristenan þe he of-axian mihte . / and forbærnde cyrcan . and berypte ða unscæððigan . / and þeos arleasa ehtnyss unablinnendlice eode / ofer ealne middan-eard ealles tyngear. / oðþæt heo to engla lande eac swylce becom . and þær fela acwealde ða þe on criste gelyfdon . / an ðæra wæs albanus se æþela martyr . / seðe on þære ehtnysse eac wearð acweald / for cristes geleafan . swa swa we cyðaþ hér " (LoS 19.1-15).

[37] Far from being simplistic, this very clear-cut characterization has the effect, in the words of Ruth Waterhouse (1978:132), "to endow the protagonists with symbolic qualities". As Gabriella Corona has pointed out, "The epithets with which Ælfric qualifies the characters in his hagiographical writings leave no doubt as to their moral standing. Indeed, Ælfric's comments are aimed at imparting a moral lesson to his audience, guiding them towards a tropological interpretation of the text" (Corona 2009: 302).

beginning of the sermon already contains the outline of the entire narrative: the wicked emperor kills the hero.

In the OEB and in LoS 19, St Alban is introduced in the narrative by the same adjective, *æðele*, meaning 'noble': "þone æðelan Albanum seo wæstmberende Bryton forðbereð" (OEB 34.11-12, 'fruitful Britain generates the noble Alban'); "albanus se æþela martyr" (LoS 19.13, 'the noble martyr Alban'). This adjective in the OEB is a direct translation of the Latin *egregius* from Fortunatus's poem, and it might perhaps be considered a tacit reference to Fortunatus's line in LoS 19. As Gretsch (2005: 58) has pointed out, a similarity of this kind between the OEB and LoS 19 could be attributed to the rather limited lexical resources of the OE language and not to an intentional and direct reference to the OEB on the part of Ælfric.

**St Alban gives shelter to a Christian (HE I.7.5-7; OEB 34.12-5; LoS 19.16-22)**

In this passage, the OEB follows the HE quite closely, but the rather dense structure of the complex Latin sentence[38] is rendered into Old English in two separate sentences;[39] the Latin, however, remains visible through the syntax of the Old English sentence. It is the translation in LoS 19[40] that departs from the source text more evidently: the temporal clause "cum perfidorum principum mandata aduersum Christianos seuirent" (HE I.7.5-6) is expanded by Ælfric to a more ample description of the actual persecution:

> On þam dagum becom seo cwealmbære ehtnyss / to engla lande fram ðam arleasan casere. / and þa cwelleras cepton ðæra cristenra gehwǽr / mid ormetre wodnysse. (LoS 19.16-9)
> ['In those days the death-bearing persecution came to England from the wicked emperor, and the executioners seized the Christians everywhere with great fury.']

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[38] "Qui uidelicet Albanus paganus adhuc, cum perfidorum principium mandata aduersum Christianos saeuirent, clericum quendam persecutores fugientem hospitio recepit." (HE I.7.5-7).

[39] "Wæs he Albanus hæðen ða gyt, þa ðara treowleasra cyninga beboda wið cristenum monnum grimsedon. Ða gelamp þæt he sumne Godes mann preosthades, se wæs ða reþan ehteras fleonde, on gestliðnysse onfeng." (OEB 34.12-5).

[40] "On þam dagum becom seo cwealmbære ehtnyss / to engla lande fram ðam arleasan casere. / and þa cwelleras cepton ðæra cristenra gehwǽr / mid ormetre wodnysse . Þa ætwand him an preost. / Se arn digollice to albanus huse . / and ðær ætlutode his laðum ehterum . / and albanus hine under-feng þeahðe he gefullod nære ." (LoS 19.16-22).

Moreover, there is a change of perspective that affects the dynamics of the entire scene: in the HE (I.7.5-7) and in the OEB (34.14-5) the grammatical subject of the sentence(s) is St Alban, who gives shelter to the *clericus* (HE I.7.6); in Æ, on the other hand, the grammatical subject is the priest himself, who runs away from his persecutors and hides himself at St Alban's house (LoS 19.19-21). Ælfric thus gives the priest a more active role and alters the dynamics of the scene. Such alteration can also be seen in the shifting of St Alban's description as a heathen to the end of the passage, in opposition to the HE and the OEB where this information is delivered at the very beginning:

> Qui uidelicet Albanus paganus adhuc, cum perfidorum principum mandata aduersum Christianos seruirent, clericum quendam persecutores fugientem hospitio recepit. (HE I.7.5-7)

> Wæs he Albanus hæðen ða gyt, þa ðara treowleasra cyninga beboda wið cristenum monnum grimsedon. Ða gelamp þæt he sumne Godes man preosthades, se wæs ða reþan ehteras fleonde, on gestliðnysse onfeng. (OEB 34.12-5)
> ['Alban was still a heathen, when the instructions of the faithless kings raged against Christian men. Then it happened that he gave shelter to a man of God's priesthood who was fleeing from the cruel persecutors'.]

> Þa ætwand him an preost. / Se arn digollice to albanus huse. / and ðær ætlutode his laðum ehterum. / and albanus hine under-feng þeahðe he gefullod nære. (LoS 19.19-21)
> [Then a priest fled from them, who ran secretly to Alban's house and there hid from his hateful persecutors'.]

From a lexical point of view, two elements deserve mention: the Latin *paganus* (HE I.7.5) is translated quite straightforwardly in the OEB with *hæðen* (OEB 34.12, 'pagan'), whereas Ælfric opts for a circumlocution with the concessive clause *þeahðe he gefullod nære* (LoS 19.22, 'though he was not baptized'). In LoS 19, the adjective *hæðen* and its cognates bear a very negative connotation and are always employed to define the negative pole of the dichotomy upon which the *Passio* is rhetorically built. In this light one might venture to say that Ælfric deliberately chooses not to qualify St Alban as a *hæðen*, an adjective that he only attributes to Diocletian, and, further on in the text, to the judge and his soldiers, and for this reason conveys the idea expressed by the Latin *paganus* with a neutral expression. The Latin *clericum* (HE I.7.6) is translated in the OEB with the phrase *sumne Godes mann preosthades* (OEB 34.14, 'a man of God's priesthood') and in Æ with *preost* (LoS 19.19, 'priest'). It is interesting to note that this time it is the OEB that departs from the source text whereas Ælfric's account

contains a more literal rendering. As Miller (1890-1898 II: 17) and Waite (1984: 285) underline, this is the reading of ms. Ca, whereas the other witnesses containing this chapter (mss. B and CS)[41] have *preost*.

## St Alban's conversion (HE I.7.7-12; OEB 34.15-21; LoS 19.23-29)

The HE presents here a quite articulated sentence describing the moment of St Alban's conversion to Christianity;[42] this concatenation of clauses is replicated in the OEB, but coordination is preferred to subordination.[43]
In this section the past participle *respectus* (HE I.7.9) is translated into Old English with the word pair *gesawen 7 gemildsad* (OEB 34.18, 'looked upon and favoured'). This word pair belongs to what I define as the additional type of word pairs, because the first member translates the Latin, whereas the second member expresses the figurative meaning of the Latin participle and is an actual addition. The use of a word pair in this case could be related to the fact that the very literal first translation (*gesawen*) is actually not quite the meaning of the Latin, hence a further explanation is required to unfold the meaning of the original.

As regards LoS 19, this section gives again more prominence to the priest rather than to St Alban by changing the grammatical subject of the sentences and by translating the passage in the active form rather than the passive, thus departing from the source text where the action revolves around St Alban:

> Þa be-gan se preost swa swa he god lufode / his gebedu singan and swyðe fæstan. / and dæges and nihtes his drihten herian. / and betwux ðam secgan ðone soðan geleafan / þam arwurþan albane . oþþæt he gelyfde / on ðone soðan god . and wiðsoc þam hæðen-scype . / and wearð soþlice cristen . and swyðe geleaffull. (LoS 19.23-9)
> ['Then the priest began, just as he loved God, to sing his prayers and fast exceedingly, and praise the Lord day and night, and meanwhile to teach the honourable Alban the true

[41] CS is used by Miller (1890-98) to identify the variant readings from ms. C in Smith's (1722) edition of the HE. See also Waite (1984: 10).

[42] "Quem dum orationibus continuis ac uigiliis die noctuque studere conspiceret, subito diuina gratia respectus exemplum fidei ac pietatis illius coepit aemulari, ac salutaribus eius exhortationibus paulatim edoctus relictis idolatriae tenebris Christianus integro ex corde factus est" (HE I.7.7-12).

[43] "And mid þy ðe he hine þa geseah on singalum gebedum 7 wæccum dæges 7 nihtes beon abysgadne, þa wæs he semninga mid þam godcundan gyfe gesawen 7 gemildsad. 7 he sona bysene his geleafan 7 arfæstnesse onhyrigean ongan; 7 swylce eac sticcemælum his þam halwendan. trymnyssum wæs gelæred, þæt he forlet þa ðystro deofulgylda 7 of inneweardre heortan cristen wæs geworden" (OEB 34.15-21).

faith, until he believed in the true God and renounced heathenism and truly became a Christian and exceedingly devout'.]

In the HE (I.7.7-8) and in the OEB (34.15-6), the reader sees St Alban observing the priest, whereas in LoS 19 (23-4) we observe the priest with him, and that also contributes to the shift of focus of the passage from St Alban onto the priest. The description of the priest's daily devotions is also remarkably expanded in comparison to the OEB and its faithful reproduction of the source text: if the HE simply makes reference to "orationibus continuis ac uigiliis die noctuque studere" (HE I.7.8) – similar to the OEB, "on singalum gebedum ond wæccum dæges ond nihtes" (OEB 34.16, 'day and night in continual prayers and vigils') – Ælfric develops this image into "his gebedu singan and swyðe fæstan and dæges and nihtes his drihten herian" (LoS 19.24-5, 'to sing his prayers and fast exceedingly and to praise the Lord day and night'). The twofold image of the source text is thus replaced by a threefold expansion, where the priest *sings* his prayers, abstains from food, and praises the Lord day and night. The newly-acquired fasting practice is especially worthy of notice, because Ælfric is always very cautious when it comes to praising extreme ascetic practices, and fasting among them in particular.[44] Sermon 13 of the *Lives of Saints* (*De oratione Moysi*) contains a tirade against extreme fasting in which we are told, among other recommendations, that people should fast very moderately because the people in England are not as strong as in the southern regions (where apparently people can fast more easily), or as they were at the time of the first hermits:

> Nu ge-setton ða halgan fæderas þæt we fæston mid gerade . / and ælce dæg eton mid ge-dafenlicnysse . / swa þæt ure lichama . alefed ne wurðe / ne eft ofer fæt to idelum lustum . / Þes eard nis eac ealles swa mægen-fæst . / her on uteweardan þære eorðan bradnysse . / swa swa heo is to-middes on mægan-fæstum eardum . / þær man mæg fæstan freolicor ðonne hér . / Ne nu nis mancynn swa mihtig . swa menn wæron æt fruman . (LoS 13.102-10)[45]
> ['Now the holy Fathers have established that we fast with prudence and eat suitably every day, so that our body does not become enfeebled, nor again too fat unto idle lusts. In addition, this region is not so abundant in strength, here on the outer edge of the extent of

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[44] Other examples in the next chapters will show this tendency. For an overview of Anglo-Saxon monastic attitudes towards food and drink, see Foot (2006: 232-39); a general discussion of fasting practices in the early Middle Ages is offered by Carolyne Walker Bynum (1987: 31-69).

[45] See also Clayton (2009). Concerning this passage, Cross (1962: 5-8) underlines that Ælfric seems to rely on a common belief among late antique and early Christian thinkers, according to which men of his age were inferior to the men of the beginnings both at a physical and at a moral level. The world is approaching its final decay, and the greater weaknesses of mankind, as opposed to what men could achieve in the past, are part and parcel of the present age.

the earth, as is the one in the middle, in the strength-abundant regions, where one can fast more easily than here. Nor is mankind so strong now as men were at the beginning'.]

In view of this explanation, I consider the fasting of the priest in LoS 19 as an example of the idealised, distant past, used by Ælfric to make a comparison with his present times. His narrative is set at the time of the persecutions, the priest is one of the first Christians and moreover he is the reason why St Alban converts and becomes the first and only British martyr. It therefore makes perfect sense that the priest is described as one of the idealized Christians of the beginning, one of the models who set the standard for future generations. The priest is thus expected to fast a lot. As will be shown later, however, the expectation to fast on the part of Ælfric does not necessarily apply to the saintly figures of more recent times. The similarity between this passage in LoS 19 and Benedictine monastic practices is quite striking, and possibly not unintentional. The image of the *clericus* that emerges from Ælfric's account seems to be more explicitly directed towards a depiction of the life of the monk as a model of living sainthood. In this way, Ælfric's *Passio* is characterized by the presence of both main models of early sanctity, the martyr (St Alban) and the monk.[46] In this context it is also significant that the active form of the sentence, together with the attribution of the subject function to the priest, give shape to a more defined and assertive image of the priest as a teacher than in the HE, where St Alban is *edoctus* (HE I.7.11), as opposed to LoS 19 where the priest *teaches* St Alban the true faith (LoS 19.26). Moreover, in the HE, St Alban imitates the priest's example because of God's intervention (HE I.7.9-10: "diuina gratia respectus exemplum fidei ac pietatis illius coepit aemulari"). On the other hand, in LoS 19 St Alban only receives the teaching and there is no intervention of God's grace. The importance of monastic teaching is thus quite explicitly outlined in Ælfric's version.

The only sentence of this passage in LoS 19 where St Alban is the grammatical as well as logical subject of the sentence is, quite significantly, the one describing his actual conversion to Christianity. The image of his abandoning the darkness of heathenism (HE I.7.11: "relictis idolatriae tenebris") is preserved in the OEB (34.20: "he forlet þa ðystro deofulgylda", 'he abandoned the darkness of idolatry'), but it is translated in a simple, unadorned way in the sermon (LoS 19.28: "and wiðsoc þam hæðen-scype", 'and renounced heahtenism'). Perhaps Ælfric omitted the metaphor

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[46] See Benvenuti (2005: 49).

because it was too elaborate to suit the purposes of his *Passio*.[47] This does not necessarily imply that Ælfric never makes use of rhetorical strategies in his translations; rather one could say that he moulds the source text to transform it into an authorial translation with a personality of its own. An example of this can be found in the linear "Christianus integro ex corde factus est" (HE I.7.11-2), which is translated in the OEB as "of inneweardre heortan cristen wæs geworden" (OEB 34.21, 'and with all his heart [he] became a Christian'). In this case Ælfric opts for an amplification of the concept:

> oþþæt he gelyfde / on ðone soðan god and wiðsoc þam hæðen-scype . / and wearð soþlice christen . and swyðe geleaffull. (LoS 19.27-9)
> ['Until he believed in the true God and rejected heathenism and truly became a Christian and exceedingly devout'.]

## To protect his guest, St Alban offers himself to the soldiers (HE I.7.12-9; OEB 34.22-8; LoS 19.30-9)[48]

For the first time in this chapter, the translator of the OEB leaves out a relative clause of the source text from his translation, in which Bede mentions that the time for the priest's martyrdom has not yet come (HE I.7.14: "cui necdum fuerat locus martyrii deputatus"); perhaps this piece of information was deemed unimportant in the context of the overall narration or for the interests of his readers, but at the same time it should also be noted that this comment could divert the attention of the reader from the main focus of the passage and is thus omitted. If Bede, with this clause, signals that the priest

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[47] As Clemoes (1966: 187) points out, "Always he omitted, transposed or added to his original to suit the audience for which his work was intended […]. Wherever he could he simplified and explained difficult material, such as allegorical exegesis". See also Bethurum (1932: 519) and Hurt (1972).

[48] "Cumque praefatus clericus aliquot diebus apud eum hospitaretur, peruenit ad aures nefandi principis confessorem Christi, cui necdum fuerat locus martyrii deputatus, penes Albanum latere, unde statim iussit milites eum diligentius inquirere. Qui cum ad tugurium martyris peruenissent, mox se sanctus Albanus pro hospite ac magistro suo ipsius habitu, id est Caracalla qua uestiebatur, indutus militibus exhibuit atque ad iudicem uinctus perductus est" (HE I.7.12-9).

"Mid þy ða se foresprecena Godes man fela daga mid him wæs on gestliðnesse, þa becom þæt to earan þæs manfullan ealdormannes, þæt Albanus hæfde ðone Cristes andettere digollice mid him. Ða het he hraðe his þegnas hine secan 7 acsian. Ða sona þæs þe hi coman to þæs martyres huse, þa Scs Albanus for ðam cuman, þe he gefeormade, gegyrede hine ða his munucgegyrelan; 7 eode him on hond. 7 hi hine gebundenne to him læddon" (OEB 34.22-8).

"Þa wunode se preost mid ðam arwurðan were . / oðþæt se ealdor-mann ðe ehte ða cristenan / hine ðær geaxode . and hine ardlice het / to him gefeccan mid fullum graman . / Þa comon ða ærendracan to albanes huse . / ac albanus eode ut to þam ehterum / mid ðæs preostes hakelan swylce he hit wære . / and hine nolde ameldian ðam manfullum ehterum. / He wearð þa gebunden and ge-broht sona / to ðam arleasan deman" (LoS 19.30-9).

will also suffer martyrdom at some point in the future, the OEB does not mention the fact at all, and neither does Ælfric.

The verb *inquirere* (HE I.7.16) is translated in the OEB with the additional word pair *secan 7 acsian* (OEB 34.25, 'to seek and question [him]'), in which the first member translates the Latin, and the second makes explicit another shade of meaning expressed by the Latin verb. In this case, the twofold rendering of the Latin infinitive in the Old English compensates for the absence of the Latin adverb *diligentius*, thus intensifying the image with a word pair rather than with an adverb and a verb.

The overall structure of this section in LoS 19 is more linear and simple than the source text. It is interesting to point out that the OEB and LoS 19 agree in their translation of the Latin *principis* (HE I.7.13) with *ealdor-mann* (OEB 34.23; LoS 19.31, 'nobleman'); however, the interpretive choices of the two translators diverge when it comes to the rendering of the adjective *nefandi* which accompanies the aforesaid noun. If the translator of the OEB opts for a linear translation with the adjective *manful* (OEB 34.23, 'evil, infamous'), the same cannot be said for Ælfric, who first attaches a relative clause to the noun (LoS 19.31: "ðe ehte ða cristenan", 'who persecuted the Christians'), and then expands the negative connotation of the judge by pointing out that he orders the search for the priest "mid fullum graman" (LoS 19.33, 'with great fury/wrath'). The two translations also diverge in the rendering of the Latin noun *habitus* (HE I.7.18), which is translated as *munucgegyrelan* in the OEB (34.27, 'monastic dress') and as *hakelan* in the sermon (LoS 19.36, 'cloak/upper garment'); in this case the OEB contains a more explicitly qualified characterization of the dress as opposed to the translation in LoS 19; in view of Ælfric's general monastic bias, this may be surprising, but on the other hand one might also blame the translator of the OEB of being excessively zealous, in so far as the attribution of monastic garments to the *clericus* might be interpreted as anachronistic. In LoS 19 the negative connotation of the judge just mentioned is also extended to his soldiers: Bede mentions the *milites* twice in the text (HE I.7.15, 18), whereas Ælfric builds a threefold repetition, the connotation of which becomes increasingly more negative as the action unfolds: the first occurrence of *milites* is translated with *ærendracan* (LoS 19.34, 'messengers'), but the second time that the soldiers take an active part in the action they are described by Ælfric as *ehtere* (LoS 19.35, 'persecutors'). When St Alban is finally taken to the judge, they become

*manfullum ehterum* (LoS 19.37, 'wicked persecutors'). In the HE the soldiers do not carry negative connotations, and the translator of the OEB adheres to his source by choosing to translate *milites* with the neutral *þegnas* (OEB 34.25, 'soldiers'); Ælfric, on the other hand, charges the image with an increasingly negative connotation that transforms the messengers of l. 34 into the persecutors of l. 35 and into the wicked persecutors of l. 37.

## St Alban refuses to worship the idols (HE I.7.20-32; OEB 34.29–36.13; LoS 19.39-52)[49]

Two synonymic word pairs can be found in this section of the OEB, both of which are employed to translate verbs: *eum iussit pertrahi* (HE I.7.25) is rendered in Old English with *het hine ða teon 7 lædan* (OEB 36.3, 'he ordered him to be dragged and taken'), and *prodiderat* (HE I.7.30) with *cyðde 7 openade* (OEB 36.9, 'declared and confessed'); in both cases the members of the word pairs are linked together by

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[49] "Contigit autem iudicem ea hora, qua ad eum Albanus adducebatur, aris assistere ac daemonibus hostias offerre. Cumque uidisset Albanum, mox ira succensus nimia quod se ille ultro pro hospite quem susceperat militibus offerre ac discrimini dare praesumsisset, ad simulacra daemonum quibus assistebat eum iussit pertrahi, «quia rebellem», inquiens,«ac sacrilegum celare quam militibus reddere maluisti, ut contemtor diuum meritam blasphemiae suae poenam lueret, quaecumque illi debebantur supplicia tu soluere habes, si a cultu nostrae religionis discedere temtas». At Sanctus Albanus, qui se ultro persecutoribus fidei Christianum esse prodiderat, nequaquam minas principis metuit, sed accinctus armis militiae spiritalis palam se iussis illius parere nolle pronuntiabat" (HE I.7.20-32).
"Ða gelamp hit on þa ilcan tid, þe Albanus to him gelæded wæs, þæt se dema stod æt his godgyldum 7 deoflum onsægdnesse bær. Mid þy ðæ he geseah Scm Albanum, þa wæs he sona yrre geworden, forþam he mid his sylfes willum geþristade, þæt he hine sylfne on geweald sealde swylcere frecednysse for þam cuman, þe he on gestliðnysse geformode. Het hine ða teon 7 lædan to þam deofolgyldum, ðe he æt stod; cwæð him þus to: Forðon ðe ðu þone mangengan 7 þone wiþfeohtend 7 þone forhycgend ura goda ðu me helan woldest, swyðor þonne minum ðegnum secgean, þonne wite ðu þæt þu scealt ðam ylcan wite onfon, ðe he geearnode, gif ðu gewitan ðencest fram þam bigange ure æfestnysse. And Scs Albanus ða mid his sylfes willan cyðde 7 openade þam ehterum Godes geleafan, þæt he cristen wære. 7 he ne wæs ondredende ða beotunge þæs ealdormannes, ac he begyrded wæs mid wæpnum þæs gastlican camphades; 7 he openlice sæde þæt he his bebodum hyrsumian ne wolde" (OEB 34.29-36.13).
"[…] þær he ða defollican lác / his godum offrode mid his gegadum eallum. / Þa wearð se dema deofollice gram / sona swa he beseah on þone soðfæstan martyr . / forðan þe he under-feng ðone fleondan preost . / and hine sylfne sealde to slege for hine . / het hine þa lædan to ðam hæðen-gilde and cwæþ . / þæt he sylf sceolde ða swaran wita onfón / þe he þam preoste gemynte gif he mihte hine gefón . / butan he hraðe gebuge to his bysmorfullum godum . / ac albanus næs afyrht for his feondlicum þeow-racan . / forðan þe he wæs ymb-gyrd mid godes wæpnum / to þam gastlicum gecampe . and cwæð þæt he nolde / his hæsum gehyrsumian . ne to his hæðengilde bugan" (LoS 19.39-52).

hyponymy. This section of the OEB also contains an interesting reworking of the following passage of the source text:

> «quia rebellem», inquiens,«ac sacrilegum celare quam militibus reddere maluisti, ut contemtor diuum meritam blasphemiae suae poenam lueret […]» (HE I.7.25-7).

*Contemtor* (HE I.7.26), is grouped together with the word pair employed by the judge to describe the priest at HE I.7.25 (*rebellem* […] *ac sacrilegum*), thus giving shape in the Old English to a quite vigorous threefold description: *þone mangengan 7 þone wiþfeohtend 7 þone forhycgend* (OEB 36.5, 'the evil-doer, the adversary, the scorner').

The passage describing the worship of the heathen gods (HE I.7.21: "aris assistere ac daemonibus hostias offerre") undergoes a notable change in Ælfric's translation, where the attribution of demonic traits shifts from the idols to the actual sacrifice offered by the judge: "þær he defollican lac his godum offrode mid hie gegadum eallum" (LoS 19.39-40, 'where he was offering devilish sacrifices to his gods with his companions'). The deities are named with the more neutral term *god* in contrast to the Latin *daemon*, which normally carries a negative connotation. Moreover, the ceremony described by Ælfric is attended by the judge's associates ("mid hie gegadum[50] eallum"), a detail that has no equivalent in the source text and which describes a public act of devotion as opposed to the private act of worshipping mentioned by Bede and faithfully reproduced by the translator of the OEB, "se dema stod æt his godgyldum 7 deoflum onsægdnesse bær" (OEB 34.30, 'the judge stood by his idols and offered sacrifices to the devils'). It seems that Ælfric wants to downplay the personal heathenism of the judge and make his religion an aspect of his civic function; moreover, refusing to participate in a public act of worship implies that St Alban is going against the official religion rather than becoming a victim of the whims of an over-religious judge. In a way, this indirectly adds emphasis to St Alban's refusal to join in.[51]

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[50] The very same phrase is used again by Ælfric in his translation of Basil's *Hexameron* to refer to the angels who fall from heaven with Satan: "*afeoll se deofoll of ðære healican heoronan mid his gegadum*" (Norman 1848: 16).

[51] In her very useful analysis of the use of direct and indirect speech in the *Lives of Saints*, Ruth Waterhouse (1976: 84) draws attention to the fact that in this passage Ælfric's use of indirect speech allows him to distort the image of the judge, so as to present him more negatively than Bede does. This is particularly evident in the rendering of "nostrae religionis" (HE I.7.29) as "his bysmorfullum godum" (LoS 19.48, 'shameful gods').

However, as has been pointed out above, Ælfric's translation does not always diverge in such an evident manner from the source text; on the contrary, sometimes portions of the text that faithfully reproduce the Latin can be found, and in doing so, show some similarities with the OEB. For example, Bede's "accintus armis militiae spiritalis" (HE I.7.31) has been translated as "ac he begyrded wæs mid wæpnum þæs gastlican camphades" in the OEB (36.11-2, 'but he clothed himself with the weapons of spiritual warfare'), and as "he wæs ymb-gyrd mid godes wæpnum to þam gastlicum gecampe" in LoS 19.50-51 ('he was girded about with God's weapons to the spiritual battle').[52]

## St Alban is questioned by the judge and refuses again to worship the idols (HE I.7.32-45; OEB 36.13-29; LoS 19.53-72)

In this passage the judge enquires after Alban's family and name, and the martyr, at first, refuses to answer the questions:

> Tum iudex: «cuius», inquit, «familiae uel generis es? ». Albanus respondit: «Quid ad te pertinet qua sim stirpe genitus? Sed si ueritatem religionis audire desideras, Christianum iam me esse Christianisque officiis uacare cognosce». Ait iudex: «Nomen tuum quaero, quod sine mora mihi insinua ». At ille: «Albanus», inquit, «a parentibus uocor, et Deum uerum ac uiuum, qui uniuersa creauit, adoro semper et colo». (HE I.7.32-9)

As can be seen, Alban is trying to avoid any form of personal identification. According to Alison Elliott, the abandonment of personal names in favour of the assertive identification under the generic definition "Christianus sum", is "one of the clearest indications of the collective ethos of passion literature" (Elliott 1987: 20). This motif, she argues, "has become a topos, a significant and desirable element in the narration", one which even Bede is inclined to maintain. "The martyrs denied (and were expected

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[52] On St Alban as soldier of Christ, see Hill (1981: 61): "the military metaphor is evoked most commonly by the use of *cempa* (with *campian* and *gecamp*), *sigefæst* and *sige*, with *gewinn* occasionally being used. The title *Godes cempa* (or *cempa* alone, understood by Skeat as "the Christian warrior") might also be used of the saints at other stages in their lives, sometimes when they were threatened with death without actually being killed, and to designate those who, in the wider definition of martyrdom, demonstrate their faith in othe ways".

to deny) a private and personal identity in order to embrace a public one" (Elliott 1987: 22).

The direct speech and the very linear structure of this passage[53] are maintained in both the OEB[54] and LoS 19.[55] As for the presence of word pairs in the OEB, this passage is no exception. Two instances of word pairs in this section seem to carry out a function in the text that goes beyond their merely being a monotonous stylistic feature of a pedantic translation, as word pairs have sometimes been described in the past.[56] The Latin *iudex* (HE I.7.33) is translated with the additional word pair *se ealdorman 7 se dema* (OEB 36.13, 'the nobleman and judge'), which implicitly reminds the audience of the double connotation of this figure in the text and echoes the other Latin denomination used elsewhere by Bede, *princeps* (HE I.7.13;31). Further on in the text is a synonymic word pair in which the two members are linked together by a relation of hyponymy: Bede's *simulacris* (HE I.7.44) is translated as *onlicnyssum 7 deofolgyldum* (OEB 36.28, 'images and idols'); here the concept is explained and reduced to its main constituents, so as to make it more easily intelligible. A most interesting reworking of

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[53] "Tum iudex: «cuius», inquit, «familiae uel generis es? ». Albanus respondit: «Quid ad te pertinet qua sim stirpe genitus? Sed si ueritatem religionis audire desideras, Christianum iam me esse Christianisque officiis uacare cognosce». Ait iudex: «Nomen tuum quaero, quod sine mora mihi insinua ». At ille: «Albanus», inquit, «a parentibus uocor, et Deum uerum ac uiuum, qui uniuersa creauit, adoro semper et colo». Tum iudex repletus iracundia dixit: «Si uis perennis uitae felicitate perfrui, diis magnis sacrificare ne differas». Albanus respondit: «Sacrificia haec, quae a uobis redduntur daemonibus, nec auxiliari subiectis possunt nec supplicantium sibi desidera uel uota complere – quin immo quiccumque his sacrificia simulacris obtulerit, aeternas inferni poenas pro mercede recipiet»" (HE I.7.32-45).

[54] "Ða cwæð he se ealdorman 7 se dema him to Saga me hwylces hiredes 7 hwylces cynne þu si. And þa andswarede him Scs Albanus: Hwæt limpeþ þæs to ðe of hwylcum wyrtruman ic acenned si? Ac gif ðu wylle gehyran þæt soþ minre æfestnysse, þonne wite þu me cristene beon: 7 ic cristenum þenungum ðeowian wylle. Þa cwæð he se dema: gesaga me þinne naman, hwæt ðu haten sie. Þa cwæð he: Albanus ic eom geciged fram minum yldrum; 7 þone soðan God 7 þone lifigendan, se gescop heofon 7 eorðan 7 ealle gesceafta, ic symble bigange, 7 me to him gebidde. Þa wæs he se dema yrre geworden; cwæð him to: Gif ðu wille *þysses* lifes gesælignysse mid us brucan, ne yld þu þæt þu þam myclan godum mid us onsecge. Ða andswarede Scs Albanus: Ða onsægdnysse, þa ðe fram eow deoflum wæron agoldene, ne magon hi ðam underðeoddum gefulltumian, ne heora lustas ne heora willan gefyllan. Ac gyt soþre is, swa hwylc man swa þissum onlicnyssum 7 deofolgyldum ansægdnysse bereð, se forðan mede on fehð, þæt is ecum tintregum helle wites" (OEB 36.13-29).

[55] "Þa axode se dema ardlice and cwæð . / Hwylcere *mæg*ðe eart þu . oððe hwylcere *m*anna . / Ða andwyrde albanus þam arleasan þus . / Hwæt belympð to þe hwylcere *mæg*ðe ic sy. / ac gif ðu soð wylt gehyran ic þe secge hraðe . / þæt ic cristen eom and crist æfre wurðige . / Se dema him cwæð to . Cyð me þinne naman / butan ælcere yldinge . nu ic axie ðus . / Se godes cempa cwæð to þam cwellere þus . / Ic hatte albanus . and ic on þone hælend gelyfe . se ðe is soð god . and ealle gesceafta geworhte . / to him ic me gebidde and hine æfre wurðige . / Se cwellere andwyrde þam arfæstan were . / Gif ðu þæs ecan lifes gesælþe habban wylt . / þonne ne scealt ðu elcian þæt ðu offrige / þam mærum godum . mid mycelre underðeodnysse . / Albanus him andwyrde . Eowre godas (sic) offrunga ne magon / þe ge deoflum offriað eower gehelpan . / ne eowerne willan gefreemman . ac ge underfoð to medes / ða ecan wita on ðære widgillan helle" (LoS 19.53-72).

[56] See for example Bately (1988).

the source text is in the Latin *qui universa creauit* (HE I.7.39), which the translator of the OEB turns into the threefold *se gescop heofon 7 eorðan 7 ealle gesceafta* (OEB 36.20-1, 'He created heaven and earth and all the creatures'). This translation is related to a widespread formulaic expression, variations of which can also be found in poetry, from *Genesis A* to *Cædmon's Hymn* (O'Donnell 2005: 47-53).[57] The exact phrasing of this expression could have a liturgical origin. For example, it can be found in the closing lines of the nocturn of the Old English Benedictine Office:

> Ure fultum is God, þe gesceop and geworhte heofonas and eorðan, and ealle gesceafta:
> God us gefultumige to ure þearfe, swa his willa sy. Amen. (Ure 1957: 102)
> ['Our help is God, who created and fashioned the heavens and the earth and all creation:
> may God help us in our need, as his will may be. Amen'.]

The loose adaptation of stylistic features that normally pertain to Old English poetry is a well-known characteristic in Ælfric's *Lives*.[58] Alliteration and echoic repetition[59] contribute to define Ælfric's style as one echoing the diction of Old English poetry; one example of this can be found in the lexical choices made by Ælfric when he translates

> «cuius», inquit, «familiae uel generis es? ». Albanus respondit: «Quid ad te pertinet qua sim stirpe genitus? ». (HE I.7.33-4)

Bede makes use of three different nouns belonging to the same semantic field, namely *familia*, *genus* and *stirps*; the translator of the OEB closely follows the source text and also adopts three different nouns that reflect the different meanings of the Latin (OEB 36.14-5: *hiredes, cynnes, wyrtruman*, 'family, tribe/race, stock'), whereas Ælfric translates the passage as follows:

> Hwylcere *m*ægðe eart þu . oððe hwylcere *m*anna . / Ða andwyrde albanus þam arleasan þus . / Hwæt belympð to þe hwylcere *m*ægðe ic sy. (LoS 19.54-6)
> ['Of what lineage are you, or of what rank among men? Then Alban replied to the wicked man thus: of what concern is it to you, what lineage I am from?']

Here the two nouns in the first line alliterate, and in addition Ælfric prefers to repeat *mægðe* twice rather than using a synonym to translate the two different words of the

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[57] "her ærest gesceop ece drihten, / helm eallwihta, heofon and eorðan, / rodor arærde and þis rume land / gestaþelode strangum mihtum, / frea ælmihtig." (*Genesis A*, ll. 112-16a, ed. Doane 1978: 113). "He ærest sceop eorðan bearnum / heofon to hrofe, halig scyppend; / þa middangeard, moncynnes peard, / ece drihten, æfter teode / firum foldan, frea ælmihtig." (Cædmon's *Hymn*, ll. 5-9, ed. O'Donnell 2005: 208).
[58] See Hurt (1972).
[59] Kintgen (1974).

source text, thus creating an echoic effect, but losing the sense distinctions of the HE at the same time.

Another instance of the effective use of alliteration to give prominence to some key-concepts of the narrative can be found at LoS 19.61 which translates, or rather expands, Bede's *at ille* (HE I.7.37) when introducing St Alban's reply to the judge: "se godes *c*empa cwæð to þam *c*wellere þus" ('God's soldier/champion addressed the murderer thus'). The poles of the dichotomy that characterise the entire text (the martyr vs. the persecutor, good vs. evil, the *exemplum* vs. the impious behaviour[60]) are here juxtaposed and connected thanks to alliteration, thus making the contrast even more vivid and iconic. Readers are constantly reminded of the rhetorical opposition between St Alban and his persecutor, or in other words between the conduct that should be pursued in life and the one that must be shunned. For example, further on in the text Bede introduces the judge's address to St Alban with the words "tum iudex repletum iracundia dixit" (HE I.7.39-40). The corresponding sentence in Ælfric's translation is "se cwellere andwyrde þam arfæstan were" (LoS 19.65, 'the murderer answered the honourable man thus'). Here we can more clearly recognize the positive and the negative poles of the dichotomy as stemming from a deliberate rhetorical strategy. Ælfric could have chosen to translate the Latin *iudex* with the Old English *dema*, as indeed he did elsewhere in the text. But in this case he explicitly departs from the source text and puts in the forefront the negative connotation of this character.

It should also be noted that Bede makes the judge say that St Alban must worship the gods "Si uis *perennis* uitae felicitate perfrui" (HE I.7.40). LoS 19 follows the HE and translates *perennis*: "Gif ðu þæs *ecan* lifes gesælþe habban wylt." (LoS 19.66, 'if you wish to have the prosperity of eternal life'), whereas the OEB has "Gif ðu wille *þysses* lifes gesælignysse mid us brucan" (OEB 36.23, 'if you wish to enjoy happiness with us in this life'), thus replacing the eternal life of the source text with *this* life in the translation. This could be just a mistake, but it could also be argued that the idea of eternal life does not quite fit in with the Roman public religion; by using a demonstrative, the translator of the OEB opts for a safe solution, in which the idea of eternal life is not addressed and instead the judge simply underlines that if St Alban

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[60] See Boyer (1981).

goes back to the official religion, his life will be saved and he will be reintegrated in society.

**St Alban is tortured and sent to death (HE I.7.45-52; OEB 36.29-38.5; LoS 19.73-83)**

In this passage Bede describes the tortures endured by St Alban before being put to death. The corresponding section of the OEB stands out as being particularly rich in word pairs, as a juxtaposition of the Latin and Old English immediately shows:

His auditis iudex nimio furore commotus caedi sanctum Dei confessorem a tortoribus praecepit, autumans se uerberibus, quamuerbis non poterat, cordis eius emollire constantiam. Qui cum tormentis adficeretur acerrimis, patienter haec pro Domino – immo gaudenter – ferebat. At ubi iudex illum tormentis superari uel a cultu Christianae religionis reuocari non posse persensit, capite eum plecti iussit. (HE I.7.45-52)

Ða se dema þas word gehyrde, ða wæs he mid miclum *wylme 7 yrre* onstyred; *het ða 7 bebead* hraðe *swingan 7 tintregian* ðone Godes andettere. *Tealde 7 wende* þæt he mid swinglan sceolde *þa beldu 7 þa anrednesse* his heortan anescian, ða he mid wordum ne mihte. Ða he ða *mid grimmum swinglum 7 tintregum* wæced wæs, 7 he ealle þa witu, ðe him man dyde, *geþyldelice 7 gefeonde* for Drihtne *abær 7 aræfnde*. Þa se dema þæt *ða oncneow 7 þa ongæt*, þæt he hine *mid tintregum 7 mid swinglan* oferswiðan ne mihte, ne from þam bigonge ðære cristenan æfestnysse acyrran, þa het he hine heafde beceorfan. (OEB 36.29-38.5)
['When the judge heard those words, he was stirred with great rage and fury. He commanded and ordered at once to scourge and torture the confessor of God. He considered and supposed that by scourging he would weaken the constancy and steadfastness of his heart, when he could not by words. Then he was afflicted with fierce scourging and tortures, and all the tortures inflicted on him he bore and endured with patience and joy for the Lord. When the judge understood and perceived that he could not conquer him with tortures and scourging, nor turn him away from the observance of the Christian religion, then he ordered to have him beheaded'.]

Thanks to the large number of word pairs used in the passage the narrative pace becomes slower and the reader is forced to linger on the image. The intensification in the number of word pairs could be seen as a stylistic device that the translator of the OEB applies to underline the importance of this moment within the narrative (the actual beginning of St Alban's martyrdom), or maybe even to underline the length of time for which St Alban had to endure torture. Except for two instances (*þa beldu 7 þa anrednesse*, *tealde 7 wende*), all the word pairs expand the assertive power of the

persecutor and the images of violence. A list of the word pairs used in the passage is given below:

- *furore* (HE I.7. 46): *wylme 7 yrre* (OEB 36.30, 'rage and fury'; *wylm* literally means 'that which wells');

- *tortoribus* (HE I.7. 46-7): *swingan 7 tintregian* (OEB 36.31,'scourge and torture');

- *praecepit* (HE I.7. 47): *het 7 bebead* (OEB 36.30-1, 'commanded and ordered');

- *autumans* (HE I.7.47): *tealde 7 wende* (OEB 36.32, 'considered and supposed');

- *constantiam* (HE I.7.48): *beldu 7 anrednesse* (OEB 36.32-3, 'constancy and steadfastness');

- *tormentis* (HE I.7.49): *swinglum 7 tintregum* (OEB 36.34, '[with] scourging and tortures');

- *ferebat* (HE I.7.50): *abær 7 aræfnde* (OEB 38.1-2, 'bore and endured');

- *patienter [...] gaudenter* ( HE I.7.49-50): *geþyldelice 7 gefeonde* (OEB 38.1, 'with patience and joy');

- *tormentis* (HE I.7.50): *mid tintregum 7 mid swinglan* (OEB 38.3, 'with tortures and scourging');

- *persensit* (HE I.7.51): *ða oncneow 7 þa ongæt* (OEB 38.2, 'when he understood and perceived').

They can all be considered as synonymic, except for *geþyldelice 7 gefeonde* which is a case of redistribution. The nouns *tortoribus* (HE I.7.46-7) and *tormentis* (HE I.7.49,50) are translated with the same word pair. Given the consistency of the translator in treating this word pair, *swingan 7 tintregian* and its variations might seem to be a set or a formulaic phrase, but a search of the Old English Corpus shows no other occurrences than those in the OEB.

The fact that this moment is significant for the entire narration is also signalled in LoS 19,[61] where the section begins with *hwæt* (LoS 19.73); this interjection usually carries out a phatic function and therefore serves the purpose of catching the reader's attention, implicitly creating a sense of expectation for what is about to happen. The

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[61] "Hwæt ða se dema deofollice yrsode . / and het beswingan þone halgan martyr . / wende þæt he mihte his modes anrædnysse / mid þam swingelum gebigan to his biggengum . / ac se eadiga wer wearð þurh god gestrangod . / and ða swingle forbær swyðe geþyldiglice . / and mid glædum mode gode ðæs þancode . / Ða geseah se dema þæt he oferswyðan ne mihte / þone halgan wer mid þam hetelicum witum / ne fram criste gebigan . and het hine acwellan / mid beheafdunge for ðæs hælendes naman" (LoS 19.73-83).

characterization of figures and events according to the dichotomy good vs. evil is again one of the most visible stylistic features of Ælfric's translation. The Latin *furore* (HE I.7.46), which, as we have already seen, is emphatically translated in the OEB with a synonymic word pair, is given a clearly negative connotation in Ælfric's translation (LoS 19.73-4: "Hwæt se *d*ema *d*eofollice yrsode . / and het beswingan þone halgan martyr", 'Lo, the judge became diabolically angry, and ordered to scourge the holy martyr'), where the semantic field pertaining to the negative pole of the dichotomy is expressed by the adverb *deofollice* – thus creating an alliterating half-line – and is contrasts to the *halgan martyr* of the following line (LoS 19.74). Another example of this antithetical tendency can be seen further on in the text, where Ælfric translates the Latin "At ubi iudex illum tormentis superari uel a cultu Christianae religionis reuocari non posse" (HE I.7.50-1) with

> Ða geseah se dema þæt he oferswyðan ne mihte / þone halgan wer mid þam hetelicum witum / ne fram criste gebigan. (LoS 19.80-2)
> ['Then the judge saw that he could not overcome the holy man with severe torments, nor turns him away from Christ'.]

Ælfric here expands the demonstrative pronoun *illum* with *þone halgan wer*, and adds a further negative connotation to the noun *tormentis* with the insertion of an adjective (*mid þam hetelicum witum*), thus juxtaposing once again the poles of the dichotomy and connecting them with alliteration, albeit irregular alliteration (þone *h*algan *w*er mid þam *h*etelicum *w*itum).

**St Alban is led to his execution (HE I.7. 53-60; OEB 38.6-13; LoS 19.84-92)**

Bede, with the customary attention to historical and geographical precision that characterizes his style in the HE, provides his readers with a detailed geographical description of the place where St Alban is going to be executed (HE I.7.53-5), but neither translation reproduces the entire section.[62] Ælfric's translation in particular

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[62] "Mid ðy he þa to deaðe gelæded wæs, þa com he to swiðstremre eá, seo floweþ neah ðære ceastre wealle. 7 he geseah ðær micle menigo monna æghwæðeres hades; 7 wæron missenlicræ yldo7 getincge men. Seo menigo monna butan tweon mid godcundre onbryrdnysse wæs geciged to þenunge ðæs eadigan

omits the geographical description of the place almost entirely, thus adapting his source to the conventions of the hagiographical setting that is traditional for *Passiones* and hagiographic narratives in general. As Boyer (1981) points out, in hagiographical writings time and space are only loosely evoked and are not a constitutive element of the narrative because this genre usually transcends such information in an attempt to recreate an ideal world.[63]

Despite the large number of word pairs employed in the OEB, its translator does not maintain one Latin construction that could have been easily transformed into a synonymic word pair: Bede's *beatissimi confessoris ac martyris* (HE I.7.57) is condensed to *ðæs eadigan martyres* (OEB 38.10, 'Of the blessed martyr'). On the other hand, the same sentence also offers a good example of close rendering of the source text: the translator of the OEB reproduces the repetition of the Latin *obsequium*, with which Bede first refers to St Alban and then to the judge, thus creating a beautifully contrasting image:

> Cumque ad mortem duceretur, peruenit ad flumen quod muro et harena, ubi feriendus erat, meatu rapidissimo diuidebatur, uiditque ibi non paruam hominum multitudinem utriusque sexus, condicionis diuersae et aetatis, quae sine dubio diuinitatis instinctu *ad obsequium* beatissimi confessoris ac martyris uocabatur, et ita fluminis ipsius occupabat pontem, ut intra uesperam transire uix posset. Denique cunctis paene egressis iudex *sine obsequio* in ciuitate substiterat. (HE I.7.53-60)

Because everybody went to honour St Alban (HE I.7.57: *ad obsequium*), the judge is left alone in the city, *sine obsequio* (HE I.7.60). The noun *obsequium* has more than one meaning; it can refer to a group of followers or servants, or to provisions of food, or to the liturgy for the dead.[64] Bede is here making use of the first meaning. In the OEB, the very same echoic effect is created thanks to the repetition of the noun *ðegnung* (OEB 38.10,13, 'Service to a lord or master; also service of food /meal'), which also carries

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martyres. 7 hi swa ðæs streames brycge abysgade wæron þæt hi hwene ær æfenne oferfaran ne mihten; 7, neah ðon eallum utagangendum, þæt se dema butan ðenunge abád on þære ceastre" (OEB 38.6-13). "Þa dydon þa hæðenan swa swa hi het se dema . / and leddon ðone halgan to beheafdigenne . / ac hi wurdon gelette lange æt anre brycge . / and stodon oð æfnunge for ðam ormætan folce . / wæra and wifa . þe wurdon onbryrde . / and comon to ðam martyre and him mid eoden . / Hit gelamp ða . swa þæt se geleaflesa dema / ungereordod sæt . on ðære ceastra oð æfen / butan ælcere ðenunge unþances fæstende " (LoS 19.84-92).

[63] At the same time, however, space can also acquire new significance thanks to the interest in relics and in the sanctification of the place where the saint lived and died. In the words of Benvenuti (2005: 114), "se i luoghi segnano il percorso di santità, la santità contribuisce alla sacralizzazione dello spazio" (see also Boyer 1981).

[64] Du Cange defines the noun obsequium as follows: (1) famulorum at amicorum comitatus, pompa; (2) officium ecclesiasticum praesertim pro mortuis; (3) victus, vestitusque.

the double meaning of 'service' and 'food'. Ælfric, on the other hand, chooses not to reproduce the iteration of the noun in his translation but instead to rephrase the first section that describes the crowd honouring St Alban:

> and stodon oð æfnunge for ðam ormætan folce . / wæra and wifa . þe wurdon onbryrde . / and comon to ðam martyre and him mid eoden. (LoS 19.87-9)
> ['and stood until evening because of the great crowd of men and women who were inspired and came to the martyr and went with him'.]

As for the reference to the judge being left *sine obsequio*, here Ælfric does indeed translate it with the corresponding OE noun *þegnung*, and yet the image he creates is different from his source because he plays on the ambiguity offered by the two meanings of the noun *ðegnung* ('service', 'provision of food'):

> Hit gelamp ða . swa þæt se geleafleasa dema / ungereordod sæt . on ðære ceastra oð æfen / butan ælcere ðenunge unþances fæstende. (LoS 19.90-2)
> ['It so happened that the faithless judge sat unfed in the city until evening, without any meal, fasting unwillingly'.]

The judge is left sitting *unfed*, forced into fasting; *butan ælcere ðenunge* (LoS 19.92) means that he is without anybody to attend to his meals, which by extension does indeed imply that he is in town *sine obsequio*.

Another difference concerns the people on the bridge: in the HE they obstruct St Alban from crossing (HE I.7.58-9: "ut intra uesperam transire uix posset"), whereas the OEB has the plural *hi*, but leaves it ambiguous as to whether it is the execution party (including both St Alban and the executioners) who are impeded, or the watching people:

> Seo menigo monna butan tweon mid godcundre onbryrdnysse wæs geciged to þenunge ðæs eadigan martyres. 7 *hi* swa ðæs streames brycge abysgade wæron þæt hi hwene ær æfenne oferfaran ne mihten; (OEB 38.9-12)
> ['Without any doubt, the multitude of men was summoned as a retinue for the blessed martyr by divine inspiration. And they were so detained by the bridge over the river that they could not cross until a little before evening'.]

In LoS 19 the plural pronoun is again used, but here clearly refers to the executioners:

> Þa dydon þa hæðenan swa swa hi het se dema . / and leddon ðone halgan to beheafdigenne . / ac *hi* wurdon gelette lange æt anre brycge . / and stodon oð æfnunge for ðam ormætan folce. (LoS 19.84-7)
> ['Then the heathen did as the judge ordered them and led the saint to his execution, but they were long delayed at a bridge and stood until evening because of the great crowd'.]

**First miracle and conversion of the soldier (HE I.7.60-79; OEB 38.13-30; LoS 19.93-109)**

The OEB follows the relevant section of the HE quite closely,[65] and only very few instances of reworking can be found in this section. The translator of the OEB inserts the explanatory comment "þe ic ær sæde" (OEB 38.15, 'which I mentioned before'), perhaps for the sake of clarity;[66] in addition, the translator omits Bede's reference to the sword lying on the ground after the conversion of the soldier:

> Dum ergo is ex persecutore factus esset collega ueritatis et fidei, ac *iacente ferro* esset inter carnifices iusta cunctatio […]. (HE I.7.70-1)

The indecision of the other soldiers is also left out:

> Ða wæs þæs man ðurh Godes gyfe of ehtere geworden soðfæstnesse freond ond Cristes geleafan. (OEB 38.23-4)
> ['Then, by God's grace, this man was turned from persecutor to a friend of the truth and of the faith of Christ'.]

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[65] "Igitur sanctus Albanus, cui ardens inerat deuotio mentis ad martyrium ocius peruenire, accessit ad torrentem et, dirigens ad caelum oculos, ilico siccato alueo, uidit undam suis cessisse ac uiam dedisse uestigiis. Quod cum inter alios etiam ipse carnifex, qui eum percussurus erat, uidisset, festinauit ei, ubi ad locum destinatum morti uenerat, occurrere, dicuino nimirum ammonitus instinctu, proiectoque ense quem strictum tenuerat, pedibus eius aduoluitur, multum desiderans ut cum martyre uel pro martyre, quem percutere iudebatur, ipse potius mereretur percuti. Dumergo is ex persecutore factus esset college ueritatis et fidei, ac iacente ferro esset inter carnifices iusta cunctatio, montem, qui opportune laetus gratia decentissima quingentis fere passibus ab harena situs est, uariis herbarum floribus depictus – immo usquequaque uestitus – in quo nihil repente arduum, nihil praeceps, nihil abruptum, quem lateribus longe lateque deductum in modum aequoris natura complanat, dignum uidelicet eum pro insita sibi specie uenustatis iam olim reddens, qui beati martyris cruore dicaretur" (HE I.7.60-79).
"And ða Scs Albanus, on ðam wæs byrnende wilsumnes modes, þæt he recenust to þrowunge become, eode ða to þære burnan þe ic ær sæde, 7 hie Eagan ahóf upp to heofonum, þa sona adrugode se stream 7 beah for his fotum, swa þæt he mihte dryge ofer gangan. Þa his wundor ða geseah betwuh oðre se sylfa cwellere ðe hine slean sceolde, þa wæs he sona mid godcundre onbryrdnysse innan monad, þæt he wearp þæt sweord onweg þæt he on handa hæfde, 7 him to fotum feoll; 7 he geornlice bæd 7 wilnade, þæt he mid ðone martyr oððe for hine þrowian moste, ðe he ær slean sceolde. Ða wæs þes man ðurh Godes gyfe of ehtere geworden soðfæstnesse freond ond Gristes geleafan. And þa astah se arwurðesta Godes andettere mid þa menigeo on þa dune upp, seo wæs ða tidlice grene 7 fæger 7 mid misenlicum blostmum wyrta afed 7 gegyred æghwyder ymbutan. Wæs þæt þæs wyrðe, þæt seo stow swa wlitig 7 swa fæger wære, þe eft sceolde mid ðy blode ðæs eadigan martyres gewurðad 7 gehalgod weorðan" (OEB 38.13-30).

[66] When introducing such insertions as the one discussed above the translator of the OEB shifts between the use of the first person pronoun *ic* and the use of the third person pronoun, where the distance between the translator and the author of the source text is made clear (see for example OEB 144.9: *cwæð he Beda*, or 216.23: *cwæð se þe ðas booc wrat*). See Chapter 3 for a more detailed discussion.

On the other hand, Ælfric exploits the power of this narrative element just by adding one simple detail, the sword left shining on the ground amidst the bewilderment of the other soldiers:

> and þæt swurd læg þær scynende him ætforan . / and heora nan nolde naht eaðe hine slean. (LoS 19.105-6)
> ['and the sword lay there, shining before them, and none of them would easily slay him'.]

The passage contains three synonymic word pairs: the Latin *desiderans* (HE I.7.68) is translated as *bæd 7 wilnade* (OEB 38.21-2, 'prayed and wished'); the participle *uestitus* (HE I.7.75) is rendered as *afed 7 gegyred* (OEB 38.27, 'painted and adorned'), and the noun *uenustatis* (HE I.7.78) as *swa wlitig 7 swa fæger* (OEB 38.28, 'so beautiful and so fair').

As regards Ælfric's translation,[67] the beginning of this section is also marked out by the adverb *hwæt* (LoS 19.93, 'lo'); we may suppose that he intends to signal another important moment in the story through this phatic insertion, namely St Alban's first miracle. It is interesting to see how the actual dynamics of this miracle change from Bede to Ælfric, what is left unsaid and what is explicitly pointed out. In the HE we read that St Alban looks up to heaven and as a consequence the river dries up:

> Igitur sanctus Albanus, cui ardens inerat deuotio mentis ad martyrium ocius peruenire, accessit ad torrentem et, *dirigens ad caelum oculos*, ilico siccato alueo, uidit undam suis cessissem ac uiam dedisse uestigiis. (HE I.7.60-4)[68]

The reader is led to interpret St Alban's gaze as a silent prayer. In Bede's description the intervention of God is therefore implicit. The same cannot be said for Ælfric's translation:

> Hwæt ða albanus efstan wolde to slege . / and eode to þære éá þaða he ofer þa brycge ne mihte . / and beseah to heofonum þone hælend biddende . / and seo ea þær-rihte adruwode him ætforan . / and him weg rymde . swa swa he ge-wilnode æt gode (LoS 19.93-7)
> ['Lo then Alban wanted to hasten to his death and went to the stream when he could not go over the bridge, and looked up to heaven, praying the Saviour, and it immediately dried up before him, and it gave way, just as he had desired of God'.]

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[67] "Hwæt ða albanus efstan wolde to slege . / and eode to þære éá he ofer ða brycge ne mihte . / and beseah to heofonum þone hælend biddende . / and seo ea þær-rihte adruwode him ætforan . / and him weg rymde . swa swa he ge-wilnode æt gode . / Þa wearð se cwellere þe hine acwellan sceolde / þurh þæt wundor abryrd . and awearp his swurd / arn ða ardlice þaða hi ofer ða ea comon . / and feoll to his fotum mid fullum geleafan . / wolde mid him sweltaan ærðan þe he hine sloge . / He wearð þa gean-læht mid anrædum geleafan / to ðam halgan were þe he beheafdian sceolde . / and þæt swurd læg þær scynende him ætforan . / and heora nan nolde naht eaðe hine slean . / Ð a wæs ðær gehende þam halgan wære / án myrige dún mid wyrtum amet . / mid eallre fægernysse and eac ful smeðe"(LoS 19.93-109).
[68] The OEB closely reproduces this passage (OEB 38.13-7).

Here the action of looking up to heaven is accompanied by the explanation of its meaning, which is also repeated after the actual miracle has been performed. God's agency is thus explicitly mentioned twice. The importance attributed by Ælfric to this moment in the action can also be seen in the chiastic, albeit irregular, alliteration that characterises St Alban's prayer: "and *b*eseah to *h*eofonum þone *h*ælend *b*iddende" (LoS 19.95) .

Both translations show scarce interest for geographical descriptions: the detailed description of the hill where St Alban is going to die (HE I.7.73-8) has been limited in the OEB to the praise of its beauty, with no mention of its physical structure and its geographical position (OEB 38.26-8); the same happens in LoS 19, where Bede's quite lengthy account is transformed into an even shorter reference to the intrinsic beauty of the place (LoS 19.108-9):

> [montem], qui opportune laetus gratia decentissima quingentis fere passibus ab harena situs est, uariis herbarum floribus depictus – immo usquequaque uestitus – in quo nihil repente arduum, nihil praeceps, nihil abruptum, quem lateribus longe lateque deductum in modum aequoris natura complanat […]. (HE I.7.73-9)

> [on þa dune], seo wæs ða tidlice grene 7 fæger 7 mid misenlicum blostmum wyrta afed 7 gegyred æghwyder ymbutan. (OEB 38.25-7)
> ['the hill was then seasonably green and fair with flowers of manifold plants and painted and adorned on all sides'.]

> Ða wæs ðær gehende þam halgan wære / án myrige dún mid wyrtum amet . / mid ealle fægernysse and eac ful smeðe. (LoS 19.107-9)
> ['Then was there for the holy man a pleasant hill, adorned with plants, with all fairness and also very smooth'.]

**Second miracle, and execution of St Alban and the soldier (HE I.7.79-96; OEB 38.30-40.16; LoS 19-110-26)**

The section of the story where St Alban prays to God to give him water and a river springs up at his feet[69] (HE I.7.79-87) is rendered quite closely in both

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[69] "In huius ergo uertice sanctus Albanus dari sibi a Deo aquam rogauit, statimque incluso meatu ante pedes eius fons perennis exortus est, ut omnes agnoscerent etiam torrentem martyri obsequium detulisse; neque enim fieri poterat ut in arduo montis cacumine martyr aquam, quam in fluuio non reliquerat, peteret, si hoc oportunum esse non uideret. Qui uidelicet fluuius ministerio persoluto, deuotione completa officii testimonium relinquens reuersus est ad naturam" (HE I.7.79-87).

translations. Instead of reproducing the complexity of the Latin syntax, the translations follow the unfolding of the events in a more linear structure, but no conspicuous omission is made.[70] In this section, Bede makes a clear reference to St Alban's prayer to God, so that the dynamics of the miracle are explicitly outlined (HE I.7.80: "sanctus Albanus dari sibi a Deo aquam rogauit"), and the translations maintain this (OEB 38.30-1: "bæd Scs Albanus fram Gode him wæter seald beon", 'and soon St Alban prayed to God that he might send him water'; LoS 19.111: "and bæd sona æt gode þæt he him sealde wæter", 'and soon prayed God to send him water'). One interesting addition has been made in the OEB where, just before the description of St Alban's martyrdom, we find the geographical reference to the exact location of the hill that Bede mentions earlier in the HE (HE I.7.73-4: "qui opportune laetus gratia decentissima quingentis fere passibus ab harena situs est") and that the OEB does not locate in the same place as the HE:

> Wæs seo stow hwætwugu on healfre mile fram þære ceastre wealle, 7 fram þære burnan þe he ær drigum fotum ofereode. (OEB 40.2-4)
> ['The place was about half a mile from the city wall and from the stream that he previously crossed dry shod'.]

One possible explanation for this redistribution of information in the OEB could be that in the translator's eyes it was more important to give the exact location of the place only when St Alban is about to suffer his martyrdom and therefore the translator decided to cut Bede's reference from its original context and juxtapose it to the description of the martyrdom. And yet the location in the OEB is not quite the same as the one described by Bede: in the HE it is 500 paces from the *harena* in the city;[71] in the OEB it is half a

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[70] "On þysse dune ufanweardre bæd Scs Albanus fram Gode him wæter seald beon to sumre his þenunge. 7 þa sona hraðe beforan his fotum wæs wyl upp yrnende, þæt ealle menn ongytan mihtan, þæt ðæt wæter to his þenunge sended wæs, þe he ær to Gode wilnade. 7 nu seo wylle 7 þæt wæter, gefylledre wilsumnesse 7 ðære ðenunge þæs eadigan martyres wæs forlætende ða cyþnysse þære ðenunge, 7 hwearf eft to gecynde. Wæs seo stow hwæthwugu on healfre mile fram þære ceastre wealle, 7 fram þære burnan þe he ær drigum fotum ofereode" (OEB 38.30-40.4).
"Þa eode albanus ardlice ðyder . / and bæd sona æt gode þæt he him sealde wæter / uppan ðære dune . and he dyde swá . / Þær arn þa wylspryncg æt albanes fotum / æt men mihton tocnawan his mihte wið god . / þa ða se stream arn of ðære sticolan dune " (LoS 19.110-5).
[71] Bede at first mentions that the execution is about to take place in the *harena* (HE I.7.54) outside the city walls, but then, without any explanation, the martyr and the crowd of followers climb a nearby hill and Bede underlines that this place is particularly suitable to receive St Alban's blood (HE I.7.73-9). The location of the execution thus changes during the narrative without any apparent reason. By referring to the regulations concerning executions in the Roman Empire in the 3rd century, according to which non-Romans were sentenced to die fighting gladiators or animals in the amphitheatre, Morris (1968: 18) argues that St Alban was initially mistaken for a non-citizen and hence sentenced to die in the *harena* mentioned by Bede. Once taken to the amphitheatre, however, the officials discovered that St Alban was

mile from the city wall and half a mile from the place where St Alban crossed the river. Interestingly, the translator of the OEB also omits the first reference to the amphitheatre that Bede inserts just before the description of the first miracle: "Cumque ad mortem duceretur, peruenit ad flumen quod muro et *harena, ubi feriendus erat* […]" (HE I.7.53-4). In the OEB the only point of reference is the wall:

> Mid ðy he þa to deaðe gelæded wæs, þa com he to swiðstreme eá, seo floweþ *neah ðære ceastre wealle* […]. (OEB 38.6-7)
> ['As he was being led to his death, he came to a stream with a strong current that flows near the city wall'.]

The translator of the OEB must have considered the reference to the amphitheatre as unnecessary, as indeed it is from a certain angle, considering that it is not a determining element of the narrative.

Lines 87-91 of the HE[72] describe St Alban's death and contain a quotation from the Epistle of James (1.12): "accepit coronam uitae, quam repromisit Deus diligentibus se" (HE I.7.88). The reference to the victorious martyr is translated in the OEB[73]:

> 7 þær he onfeng beah 7 sige eces lífes, þone ylcan sige God behét eallum þam ðe hine lufian willað. (OEB 40.5-6)
> ['and there he received the crown and victory of eternal life, the victory which God has promised to all those who will love him'.]

As can be seen, the noun *coronam* is translated with a word pair of the additional type, *beah 7 sige*, followed by the adjective *ece*, which is also an expansion. The first member of the pair translates the Latin *corona*, whereas the second should be interpreted as an explicative element that clarifies that this *corona* should be seen metaphorically as a sign of victory. Ælfric[74] summarizes the image of the martyr

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in fact not only a Roman but also of high rank, and for this reason the execution took place elsewhere. Morris (1968: 18) also adds that "appearance at the amphitheatre is also a more probable explanation of large crowds trying to get across the bridge than divine inspiration". As fascinating as it might sound, this very thorough explanation entirely relies on the dating of St Alban's martyrdom proposed by Morris (1968), one which Sharpe (2001; 2002: 114) has very clearly shown to be unlikely.

[72] "Decollatus itaque martyr fortissimus ibidem accepit coronam uitae, quam repromisit Deus diligentibus se. Sed ille, qui piis ceruicibus impias intulit manus, gaudere super mortuum non est permissus; namque oculi eius in terram una cum beati martyris capite ceciderunt" (HE I.7.87-91).

[73] "Ðær wæs þa heafde beslagen se strengesta martyr Scs Albanus, 7 þær he onfeng beah 7 sige eces lífes, þone ylcan sige God behét eallum þam ðe hine lufian willað. Ac se cwellere, se ðe his arlease hande aðenede ofer þone arfæstan sweoran ðæs martyres 7 his heafod of asloh, ne wæs he forlæten þæt he ofer him deadum gefege: ac him ða eagan of his heafde ascuton 7 ætgædere mid þæs martyres heafde on eorðan feollan" (OEB 40.4-11).

[74] "He wearð þa be-heafdod for ðæs hælendes naman / uppan ðære dune . and to his drihtne ferde / mid sigefæstum martyr-dome . and soðum geleafan / ac his slaga ne moste gesundful lybban . / forðam þe him burston út butu his eagan . / and to eorðan feollon mid albanes heafde . / þæt he mihte oncnawan hwæne he acwealde" (LoS 19.116-22).

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winning his battle over death and receiving the crown of victory with the lines "and to his drihtne ferde / mid sigefæstum martyr-dome" (LoS 19.117-8, 'and went to his Lord by means of victorious martyrdom'). As regards the punishment inflicted on St Alban's slayer,

> Sed ille, qui piis ceruicibus impias intulit manus, gaudere super mortuum non est permissus; namque oculi eius in terram una cum beati martyris capite deciderunt. (HE I.7.89-91)

Ælfric reworks Bede's explanation of this event so as to make it more intelligible; his words create the image of a powerful saint and function as an admonition or as an implicit authoritative warning to the readers: if Bede only writes that "gaudere super mortus non est permissus" (HE I.7.90), in LoS 19 we find:

> ac his slaga ne moste gesundful lybban . / forðam þe him burston út butu his eagan . / and to eorðan feollon mid albanes heafde . / þæt he mihte oncnawan hwæne he acwealde. (LoS 19.119-22)
> ['But his slayer was not allowed to live in health, because both his eyes burst out of him and fell to the earth with Alban's head, so that he might realize whom he had killed'.]

A few remarks must also be devoted to the section relating the execution of the soldier:

> Decollatus est ibi etiam tum miles ille, qui antea superno nutu correptus sanctum Dei confessorem ferire recusauit; de quo nimirum constat quia, etsi fonte baptismatis non est absolutus, sui tamen est sanguinis lauacro mundatus ac regni caelestis dignus factu ingressu. (HE I.7.92-6)

The OEB[75] presents a close rendering of the source text; only one synonymic word pair can be found; it translates the Latin *decollatus est* (HE I.7.92) as *wæs…beslegen 7 gemartyrad* (OEB 40.11, 'was slain and martyred'), with two verbs linked together by hyponymy. In this case the synonymic word pair carries out an explicative function because it declares that the execution of the soldier must be interpreted as a martyrdom alongside St Alban's death, though the method of killing (decapitation) is dropped, and it also emphasizes the moment in the narrative. The fact that both executions are given equal value, that is to say that the soldier is a martyr just like St Alban, is particularly evident in Ælfric's translation. For example, Bede's *miles ille* (HE I.7.92) is translated as *þone soðfæstan cempan* (LoS 19.123, 'the faithful soldier'); it is significant that the

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[75] "Ða wæs eac swylce heafde beslegen 7 gemartyrad se mon, se ðe wæs ær ðon mid þam uplican mihte geðread, þæt he wiðsoc þæt he ðone Godes andettere sloge. Be þam ðonne cuð is, þeah ðe he mid wætere fulluhtes bæþes aðwegen ne wære, þæt he wæs hwæðere mid þy bæðe his blodes geclænsad 7 ðæs heofonlican rices wyrðe geworden" (OEB 40.11-6).

adjective chosen to qualify the soldier, *soðfæst*, has been used before in the text to describe St Alban (LoS 19.42). Moreover, the repetition of the verb *beheafdian* (LoS 19.123-4: "Hi beheafdodon syððan þone soðfæstan cempan / þe nolde beheafdian ðone halgan wer.", 'afterwards they beheaded the righteous soldier who did not want to behead the holy man') also contributes to the parallelism between St Alban and the soldier in so far as the latter suffers the very same punishment that he had refused to inflict on St Alban, who in his turn had also offered himself to save the priest; the saint and the soldier are therefore sharing the same suffering on earth and will receive the same reward in heaven. The equiparation of the two figures continues in the following line (LoS 19.125: "and he læg mid albane gelyfed on god.", 'and he lay dead with Alban, believing in God'), which does not have a counterpart in the source text and should therefore be seen as an expansion.

**End of the persecution and conclusion (HE I.7.96-111; OEB 40.16–42.2; LoS 19.127-54)**

The concluding passage of Bede's chapter on St Alban can be divided into 3 sections:

(1) end of the persecution (HE I.7.96-100);

(2) date and place of the martyrdom (HE I.7.100-6);

(3) other martyrs who died in the same persecution (HE I.7.107-11).[76]

The OEB closely reproduces this sequence,[77] but the same cannot be said for LoS 19 where the order of the sections is different and which in addition has two interpolations

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[76] "*(1)* Tum iudex, tanta miraculorum caelestium nouitate perculsus, cessari mox a persecutione praecepit, honorem referre incipiens caedi sanctorum, per quam eos opinabatur prius a Christiane fidei posse deuotione cessare. *(2)* Passus est autem beatus Albanus die decimo kalendarum Iuliarum iuxta ciuitatem Verolamium, quae nunc a gente Anglorum Verlamacaestir appellatur; ubi postea, redeunte temporum Christianorum serenitate, ecclesia est mirandi operis atque eius martyrio condigna extructa. In quo uidelicet loco usque ad hanc diem curatio infirmorum et frequentium operatio uirtutum celebrari non desinit. *(3)* Passi sunt ea tempestate Aaron et Iulius, legionum Vrbis ciues, aliique utriusque sexus diuersis in locis perplures, qui diuersis cruciatibus torti et inaudita membrorum discerptione lacerati, animas ad supernae ciuitatis gaudia perfecto agone miserunt" (HE I.7.96-111).

[77] "Ða wæs se dema æfter ðyssum mid þa neownysse swa monigra heofonlicra wundra swyþe gedrefed 7 gefyrhted, het þa sona blinnan fram ehtnysse cristenra manna, 7 ongan arweorþian ða þrowunge þara haligra martyra, þurh ða he ær wende þæt he hi acyrran meahte fram æfestnysse þæs cristenan geleafan.

that do not have a counterpart in the source text. Starting with the OEB, this passage presents the following synonymic word pairs: *perculsus* (HE I.7.97) becomes *gedrefed 7 gefyrhted* (OEB 40.18, 'troubled and frightened'); *est* […] *extructa* (HE I.7.104) is translated as *wæs* […] *geworht 7 getimbrad* (OEB 40.25, 'made and built'), whereas *eius martyrio* (HE I.7.104) is expanded as *his þrowunge 7 martyrdome* (OEB 40.26, 'his passion and martyrdom'); the members of the first and third word pair are near-synonyms, whereas the underlying relation in the second pair is one of hyponymy. Finally, the reference to the miracles performed at the site of St Alban's death (HE I.7.106: "frequentium operatio uirtutum") is translated as "wyrcnes heofonlicra mægena gelomlice beoð mærsade, 7 monigfealde wundra gelimpað" (OEB 40.28-9, 'the performance of heavenly miracles are frequently celebrated and manifold wonders take place'). Here the second clause expands the idea conveyed by the source by repeating it another time, most probably for the sake of emphasis.

As regards LoS 19, the section concerning the end of the persecution is characterized by a more fluid narrative tone than the corresponding passage in the HE; the very compact

> Tum iudex, tanta miraculorum caelestium nouitate perculsus, cessari mox a persecutione praecepit, honorem referre incipiens caedi sanctorum […]. (HE I.7.96-8)

is transformed into a more explicit and detailed description:

> Eft ða ða cwelleras comon to heora hlaforde . / and hi sædon þa syllican tacna ðe albanus worhte . / and hu se wearð ablend þe hine beheafdode . / ða het he geswican þære ehtnysse and arwurðlice spræc / be ðam halgum martyrum […]. (LoS 19.127-31)
> ['Later, when the executioners went to their lord and related the wonderful signs operated by Alban and how the one who beheaded him was blinded'.]

From this point Ælfric presents the remaining sections without following the order of the source text. The section on the end of the persecution (LoS 19.127-32) is

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Wæs he þrowigende se eadiga Albanus ðy teoðan dæge Kalendarum Iuliarum neah ðære ceastre, ðe Romane heton Uerolamium, seo nu fram Angelðeode Werlameceaster oþþe Wæclingaceaster is nemned. Ða wæs sona, æfter þon þæt smyltnes com cristenra tida, þæt ðær wæs cyrice geworht 7 getimbrad wundorlices geweorces 7 his þrowunge 7 martyrdome wyrþe. On ðære stowe nu soðlice oð ðysne andwardan, dæg untrumra manna hælo 7 wyrcnes heofonlicra mægena gelomlice beoð mærsade, 7 monigfealde wundra gelimpað. Wæron eac swylce þrowiende on ða tíd Ááron 7 Iulilius, þa wæron burhwarumen on Ligeceastre, 7 eac oðre monige æghwæðeres hades on missenlicum stowum, ða wæron missenlicum cwealmnyssum ðrǫste 7 ungeheredre leoma toslitnysse wundade. Fulfremde compe heora sawle to gefean sendon þære upplican ceastre heofona rices wuldres" (OEB 40.16-42.2).

followed by the reference to other martyrs (LoS 19.133-7)[78] and by an interpolation which evokes once again the end of the persecution and the ensuing times (LoS 19.138-42).[79] Here Ælfric inserts the passage about the site of St Alban's martyrdom (LoS 19.143-6),[80] and he concludes the *Passio* with a brief historical outline on the events that followed the episode of St Alban (LoS 19.147-51)[81] and with a concluding formula in praise of God (LoS 19.151-4). To sum up, the final part of Ælfric's translation treats the source text quite freely and gives shape to a text that only vaguely echoes the HE, although at a closer look the single sub-sections are still indebted to Bede.

For example, section (3) of the HE, concerning the other martyrs who lost their lives in the persecution, is summarized by Ælfric (LoS 19.133-7), who omits the reference to their origins and devotes a short description to express the pain they suffered (LoS 19.136: "for cristes geleafan ge-cwylmede on witum", 'killed among sufferings because of their faith in Christ') in comparison with the more vivid description in the HE (HE I.7.109-10: "diversis cruciatibus torti et inaudita membrorum discerptione lacerate"). It is interesting to observe that the references to the place and the date of St Alban's martyrdom (HE I.7.100-4) are omitted in Æ, only the reference to the church built in his memory is mentioned: "hi worhton eac þa wurðlice cyrcan þam halgan albane ðær he bebyrged wæs" (LoS 19.143-4, 'then they also made a worthy church for the holy Alban where he was buried'); Ælfric compensates for the missing references by mentioning that the church was built where St Alban was buried. The substance of the message, however less precise, is still there – only in a more condensed, more easily readable form. The subsequent line also condenses the reference to the many miracles and to the healing of the sick that have occurred at the church (LoS 19.145: "and þær wurdon gelome wundra gefremode", 'and there miracles were often performed'), as opposed to the richer description of the HE (HE I.7.105-6: "In quo uidelicet loco usque ad hanc diem curatio infirmorum et frequentium operatio uirtutum

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[78] "On ðære ylcan ehtnysse wurdon ofslagene . / ááron . and Iulius . and oðre manega / wera . and wifa . wide geond engla land . for cristes geleafan ge-cwylmede on witum . / ac hi ferdon sige-fæste to þam soðan life " (LoS 19.133-7).

[79] "Seo ehtnys geswác ða . and eoden þa cristenan / of wudum and of wæstenum þær hi wæron behydde . / and comon to mannum and cristen-dom ge-edniwodon . / and gebetton cyrcan þe to-brocene wæron . / wunodon ða on sybbe mid soðum geleafan " (LoS 19.138-42).

[80] "Hi worhton eac þa wurðlice cyrcan / þam halgan albane ðær he bebyrged wæs . / and þær wurdon gelome wundra gefremode . / þam hælende to lofe ðe leofað á on ecnysse" (LoS 19.143-6).

[81] "Þis wæs geworden ær ðæt gewinn come / ðurh hengest . and horsan þe hyndon ða bryttas . and se cristen-dom wearð ge-unwurðod syððan . / oðþæt augustinus hine eft astealde / be gregories lare þæs geleaffullan papan" (LoS 19.147-51).

celebrari non desinit"). And even if it seems that Ælfric wants to economize and hasten to the conclusion of his piece, he still finds the space to remind his readers that the miracles performed in St Alban's name owe their existence to God and that their ultimate function is to praise Him: "þam hælende to lofe ðe leofað a on ecnysse" (LoS 19.146, 'to the praise of the Saviour who lives ever in eternity'). Ælfric the teacher never misses the opportunity to make his readers wiser. In this light, the concluding lines in praise of God make Ælfric's scope even more explicit by exalting the figure of the preacher in the most rhetorically significant position of the text, that is to say its very end. This concluding remark seems to be devoted to recalling not so much the figure of the martyr, but that of the *clericus* who, thanks to his teachings, paved the way for St Alban's conversion:

> Sy wuldor and lof þam welwillendan scyppende / seðe ure fæderas feondum æt-bræd . / and to fulluhte gebigde þurh his bydelas. AMEN. (LoS 19.152-4)
> ['Be glory and praise to the benevolent Creator, who delivered our fathers from their enemies, and converted them to baptism by means of his preachers'.]

## Concluding remarks

As pointed out by Rowley (2011: 79), in the OEB "a full, detailed and accurate translation of Bede's account of St Alban, casts British Christianity in a strikingly positive light". In this the translator follows the footsteps of his source for the reason outlined at the beginning of the chapter. This translation of St Alban's *Passio* adheres to the Bedan source in every respect, with the exception of very few elements. Among these is without doubt the omission or simplification of most of the historical and geographical information provided by Bede, and this is very typical of the translator of the OEB. The one signature element of the translator that is found prominently in this particular chapter is the stylistic employment of word pairs to emphasize certain moments in the narrative. The most striking example is surely the passage describing the beginning of the tortures inflicted on St Alban, where the number of word pairs used specifically in the semantic field of violence can be nothing but a deliberate rhetorical strategy that obliges the eye to pause on the amplified images.

Ælfric reworked his source in a very interesting manner and there are several points that should be considered. In general, there can be said to be a tendency, on the

part of Ælfric, to bring back St Alban's *Passio* to its hagiographical core. Bede's historical perspective is silently put aside, and the actual hagiographical narrative takes centre stage. Only in one respect does Ælfric's interpretation depart from the canon of the hagiographic genre: the lack of any particularly violent description of St Alban's suffering before being executed, one of the most exploited and typical elements of the genre. It should also be underlined, however, that this element is missing even from Bede's own source, as the *Passio Albani* is already void of any particularly gruesome details. The omission of most of the geographical and historical references also contributes to taking the narrative back to its hagiographical core and to sketching a more universalized landscape than that which we encounter in the HE. The narrative is unmistakably set in Britain and at the time of emperor Diocletian, but other than that we are only informed of the building of the church in honour of St Alban. Even the locations of St Alban's very own *via crucis* fade away, only the beauty of the hill is briefly pointed out. The historical information we are given encapsulates the actual narrative of the *Passio*, but it does not interfere with it. It is relegated to the beginning and the to conclusion of the piece, when the hagiographical narrative has yet to unfold, or has already been uncovered.

St Alban's *Passio* as told by Ælfric is also a tale of opposites, and this is the rhetorical detail that emerges most evidently when comparing it with the HE and the OEB. The selfless martyr stands against the ruthless persecutor, the true faith battles the heathens and their fury. Quite predictably, paganism and evil go together and this is made very clear in the rhetorical construction of the piece, as already pointed out several times in the previous pages, and this filter makes a strong contribution towards the readjustment of the narrative within a very neat hagiographical structure. Moreover, the solitude of the judge who is left alone, unattended, in the city, while everybody else is following St Alban to his execution, is rhetorically emphasized not only by the crowd that follows the martyr, but also, and perhaps more subtly, by a deeper form of companionship – the bond that unites St Alban with his executioner who refuses to kill the holy man. The execution of the martyr is repeated again with the execution of the soldier; the same verbs and the same sentence structure are used to describe the two events; St Alban and the soldier are equal in their merits and the souls of the two men also share the same heavenly reward.

71

A trait that is unique to Ælfric's *Passio* is the significance attributed to the *clericus* who triggers St Alban's conversion and martyrdom. St Alban leaves behind his heathen ways after careful observation of the *clericus*'s ascetic practices. The seemingly deliberate connection with monastic practices is made even more powerful when this unidentified ascetic figure becomes St Alban's teacher. The importance of this didactic role within the narrative (and beyond) is emphasized by Ælfric's closing remarks on the power assigned to teachers as intermediaries between God and the people.

# CHAPTER 2 – ÆTHELTHRYTH

The life of Æthelthryth, the virgin wife of King Ecgfrith and abbess of Ely, is narrated by Bede in Book IV, chapter 17, followed in the next chapter (HE IV.18) by a hymn in her honour that he wrote *ante annos plurimos* (HE IV.18.2), and which Bede appends to the prose account, thus giving it the shape of an *opus geminatum*.[82] In the OEB, only the prose chapter is translated: the hymn is omitted altogether. Ælfric's version of Æthelthryth's life belongs to his third collection of homiletic pieces, the *Lives of Saints* (LoS 20), and is also based only on Bede's prose chapter. Bede's sources are unknown, but Wallace-Hadrill (1988: 159) argues that he might have used an Ely Life of the saint; in addition, Bede himself writes that he had an illustrious oral source to prove the trustworthiness of his account, namely Bishop Wilfrid, Æthelthryth's teacher and spiritual guide:

> sicut mihimet sciscitanti, cum hoc an ita esset quibusdam uenissent in dubium, beatae memoriae Vilfrid episcopus referebat […]. (HE IV.17.9-11)

It also appears that Bede could rely on the account of several unnamed people concerning the incorrupt state of the virgin's body when it was translated to her new resting place, sixteen years after her death. Bishop Wilfrid was present too, together with the doctor, Cynefrith, who is the other named witness in the story and who tried to alleviate Æthelthryth's suffering during the illness that brought her to her death.

> Cumque corpus sacrae uirginis ac sponsae Christi aperto sepulchro esset prolatum in lucem, ita incorruptum inuentum est, ac si eodem die fuisset defuncta siue humo condita, sicut et praefatus *antistes Vilfrid et multi alii* qui nouere testantur; sed certiori notitia *medicus Cynifrid*, qui et morienti illi et eleuatae de tumulo adfuit, qui referre erat solitus […]. (HE IV.17. 61-6)

Roughly contemporary to Bede's HE is Eddius Stephanus's *Life of Wilfrid* (c. 720). The biography of the Bishop of York provides a few useful details that confirm Bede's account of the bond that existed between Æthelthryth and Wilfrid:

> In diebus autem illis Ecfrithus rex religiosus cum beatissima regina Aethiltrythae, cuius corpus vivens ante impollutum post morterm incorruptum manens adhuc demonstrat, simul in unum Wilfritho episcopo in omnibus oboedientes facti, pax et gaudium in

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[82] A brief account of her life and of the sources that include it is provided by Blair (2002: 507-8) in his *Handlist*.

populis et anni frugiferi victoriaeque in hostes, Deo adiuvante, subsecutae sunt. […], Ecfritho rege in concordia pontificis nostri vivente, secumdum multorum testimonium regnum undique per victorias triumphales augebatur; concordia vero inter eos sopita et regina supradicta ab eo separata et Deo dicata, triumphus in diebus regis desinit. (Colgrave 1927: 40, chapter xix)

Eddius Stephanus also writes that Wilfrid received the estate at Hexham from Æthelthryth when she was still married to King Ecgfrith (Colgrave 1927: 44, chapter xxii).

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* also records the year in which Æthelthryth established her monastery (673 AD), as well as the year in which she died, 679 (Blanton 2007: 31-2), although Blanton (2007: 32) does not rule out the possibility that the two references were drawn from Bede and inserted in the Chronicle at a later stage.

The story as related by Bede could be summarized as follows:

Æthelthryth is the daughter of Anna, King of the East Angles. She is first given in marriage to ealdorman Tondberht, but he dies shortly afterwards and then she is married to King Ecgfrith. She lives with him for twelve years and manages to remain a virgin throughout both marriages with the help and guidance of Bishop Wilfrid, whom Ecgfrith tries to bribe so that he may persuade Æthelthryth to consummate the marriage, but to no avail. Æthelthryth repeatedly asks her husband to allow her to take the veil, until he finally grants her permission. She enters monastic life at Coldingham and receives the veil from Bishop Wilfrid. A year later she builds a monastery on the family estate at Ely and she becomes abbess, leading an exemplary life of devotion and self denial. Seven years later Æthelthryth dies of a tumour on her neck and is buried in a wooden coffin alongside the other brethren and sisters of the double monastery. She is succeeded by her sister Seaxburg. After sixteen years a stone coffin is prepared in the church for Æthelthryth's remains and a translation ceremony is organized. On opening the grave, Æthelthryth's body is discovered to be incorrupt, and even the gaping wound in her neck has been replaced by a small scar. The body is washed and dressed with fresh clothes and buried in the new grave. The clothes in which she was first buried as well as the wooden coffin have healing powers, especially against daemonic possessions and eye diseases.

As regards the poetic component of Bede's *opus geminatum*, it should be noted that, as already mentioned, neither the OEB nor LoS 20 make any reference whatsoever to its existence. Ælfric's silence on the matter can be easily explained considering that the hymn does not add anything that might actually be useful to the composition of the *Vita* hence Ælfric simply devoted his attention to the more informational section of the *opus geminatum*, the prose chapter.[83] In the words of Paul Szarmach (2009: 139), "the hymn is a poetic gloss on the prose, and almost as if an afterthought". The translator of the OEB also quietly moves on to the subject of the following chapter, but in defence of

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[83] Gretsch (2005: 215) also argues that Ælfric does not mention the hymn for narratological reasons.

the translator and of the homilist, it should be underlined how difficult and complex Bede's poem actually is. The hymn is composed of elegiac verses in which the beginning and end of each of the twenty-seven couplets coincide, thus creating a circular effect; if this were not enough, the hymn also has an acrostic structure, according to which the first twenty-three couplets begin alphabetically, whereas the beginning of the last four couplets creates the word "amen" (Szarmach 2009: 136; Lapidge 2008-2010 v. 2: 623). Æthelthryth appears halfway through the poem, following a display of virgin martyrs. As Wallace-Hadrill (1988: 160) underlines,

> it is not vanity that moves Bede to insert his poem on Æthelthryth but a desire to link her through verse, in a traditional way, with the succession of virgins that had always marked the history of the Church. She thus becomes a new link between the Early Church and Bede's Church.

The following are the first four couplets of the hymn in which Æthelthryth is mentioned, which appear in the middle of the poem (couplets 13-16), preceded by a list of illustrious virgins:

> *N*ostra quoque egregia iam tempora uirgo beauit;
>    Aedilthryda nitet nostra quoque egregia.
> *O*rta patre eximio, regali et stemmate clara,
>    nobilior Domino est, orta patre eximio.
> *P*ercipit inde decus reginae et sceptra sub astris;
>    plus super astra manens percipit inde decus.
> *Q*uid petis, alma, uirum, sponso iam dedita summo ?
>    sponsus adest Christus; quid petis, alma, uirum? (HE IV.18.31-8)

As Szarmach (2006: 55) notes, of the six excerpts of poetry included by Bede in the HE, only the first, Gregory's Epitaph, is translated in the OEB, whereas all the others are omitted by the translator. Szarmach (2006: 67) argues that the translator must have changed his mind about the inclusion of poetry in the OEB, quite possibly when confronted with the difficulty of Bede's hymn in honour of Æthelthryth:

> Here the 'poetic turn of mind' is a 'turn and run' – but who can blame the OE translator? The literary moment is one of those in literary history where the chance to advance a poetic system beyond itself was declined in favor of discretion, the better part of poetic valor. (Szarmach 2006: 66)

The *incipit* of Bede's prose chapter clearly shows that his interest primarily lies in three focal points: first, this woman of royal descent went through two marriages and still remained a virgin, and this can only be a sign of God's intervention; second, Æthelthryth lived an exemplary life of devotion and abnegation as the abbess of Ely;

finally, her virtue is confirmed by the incorruptibility of her body and by the miraculous healings that take place at her grave.

The first passage of the chapter contains all the main themes that will be developed further. The entire chapter presents a very well crafted overlap of separate moments in time: the narrative sequence does not follow a chronological order, rather it is characterized by a careful use of analepsis and prolepsis (Gretsch 2005: 216-7). The use of these narrative techniques allows Bede to emphasise certain elements of the story over others. For example, in the opening section of the chapter (HE IV.17.1-9) the chronological order is rearranged in such a way as to give prominence to Æthelthryth's second marriage to King Ecgfrith, and to her virginity. This aspect of Bede's narrative is toned down by Ælfric, whose *Vita* follows a more linear, chronological sequence; as usual, he freely adapts his sources to suit not only his targeted audience, but also his own narrative style. In the OEB, on the other hand, we find the customary close rendering of the source text.

**Outline of the story (HE IV.17.1-20; OEB 316.9-318.2; LoS 20.1-30)**

If we turn our attention to the first section of the chapter (HE IV.17.1-20), we can see that the translator of the OEB keeps all the information provided by Bede and closely reproduces the complex syntactic structure of the source text, which, as previously mentioned, is characterized by an artful juxtaposition of analeptic and proleptic references. The translator takes very few liberties: he sometimes breaks the long Latin sentences into two or three in the OE but without altering the syntax of the source text, and he sometimes translates implicit constructs of the Latin with a relative clause. The opening sentence of the chapter is a good example of both tendencies:

> Accepit autem rex Ecgfrid coniugem nomine Aedilthrydam, filiam Anna regis Orientalium Anglorum, cuius saepius mentionem fecimus, uiri bene religiosi ac per omnia mente et opera egregii. (HE IV.17.1-4)

> Onfeng Ecgfrið se cyning gemæccan 7 wif, þære noma wæs Æðeldryð, Annan dohtor Eastengla cyninges, þæs we oft ær gemyndgodon. Wæs se mon god 7 æfest, 7 þurh eal ge ón móde ge on dædum æðele. (OEB 316.9-12)
> ['King Ecgfrith had received as his consort and wife the daughter of Anna, king of the East Angles, whom we already often mentioned, whose name was Æthelthryth. He was a good and pious man, and wholly noble both in mind and in deed'.]

76

As can be seen at the beginning of the passage, the translation reproduces the source text so closely that it even replicates its word order wherever possible. The noun in the ablative, *nomine*, is necessarily transformed into a relative clause, but after that the Old English even reproduces the apposition in the Latin text, "filiam Anna regis Orientalium Anglorum". The translator breaks the sentence when Bede turns to describing the qualities of King Anna. The phrase "uiri bene religiosi" (HE IV.17.3) is translated with a word pair, "Wæs se mon god 7 æfest" (OEB 316.11, 'he as a good and pious man'); in this case the translator redistributes the information provided by the source text; he opts for a word pair composed of two synonymous adjectives qualifying the king, rather than reproduce the adverb + adjective cluster of the source text, but without changing the end result, which is the praise of King Anna's Christian qualities.[84]

Sometimes the translation mirrors the source text so closely that it borders on being too literal, as in the translation of "uenisset in dubium" (HE IV.17.10) with "cwom in tweon" (OEB 316.18 'came in doubt').[85] In this section there are also quite a

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[84] Paul Szarmach has noted that the use of *se mon* as the grammatical subject of this sentence may lead to more than one interpretation, as the subject may refer to Anna as well as to Ecgfrith, whereas Bede clearly refers this praise to Anna. By comparing source text and translation, however, I would still tend to interpret the sentence in the OEB as a comment to Anna's pious character, and not Ecgfrith's. The translator simply breaks the long Latin sentence into smaller units, but very carefully maintains the syntactical order of the source text, and so *se mon* can only refer to Anna. Szarmach underlines that "As a character statement about Ecgfrith the sentence serves as an attempted smokescreen for, as we learn somewhat later, Ecgfrith tries to bribe Bishop Wilfrid to get Æðeldreda to consummate their marriage. To have an authoritative statement about Ecgfrith's probity at the beginning at least modulates Ecgfrith's approach to Wilfrid" (Szarmach 2009: 142).

[85] "Quam et alter ante illum uir habuerat uxorem, princeps uidelicet Australium Gyruiorum uocabulo Tondberct. Sed illo post modicum temporis, ex quo eam accepit, defuncto, data est regi praefato. Cuius consortio cum xii annis uteretur, perpetua tamen mansit uirginitatis integritate gloriosa, sicut minime sciscitanti, cum hoc an ita esset quibusdam uenisset in dubium, beatae memoriae Vilfrid episcopus referebat, dicens se testem integritatis eius esse certissimum, adeo ut Ecgfridus promiserit se ei terras ac pecunias multas esse donaturum, si reginae posset persuadere eius uti conubio, quia sciebat illam nullum uirorum plus illo diligere. Nec diffidendum est nostra etiam aetate fieri potuisse, quod aeuo precedente aliquoties factum fideles historiae narrant, donante uno eodemque Domino, qui se nobiscum usque in fine saeculi manere pollicetur. Nam etiam signum diuini miraculi, quo eiusdem feminae sepulta caro corrumpi non potuit, indicio est quia a uirili contactu incorrupta durauerit" (HE IV.17.4-20).
"Brohte heo ær oðer wer him to wífe Suðgyrwa aldormon, þæs noma wæs Tondberht; ac æfter medmiclum fæce, þæs þe he hy to wífe onfeng, he forðferde. Ða wæs heo seald 7 forgifen þæm foresprecenan cyninge. Þæs gemanan myd þy heo wæs twelf winter brucende, hwæðre heo mid ecre onwalhnesse mægðhades wuldorlice áwunade; swa swa me seolfum frinendum, mid þy sumum monnum cwom in tweon hwæðer hit swa wære, þa þære eadgan gemynde Wilferþ biscop sægde; 7 cwæð, þæt he wære se cuðesta geweota hire clænnisse 7 hire mægðhades, to ðon þætte Ecgfrið se cyning him geheht ge lond ge micel feoh to gesyllene, gif he ða cwene gesponan 7 gelæran meahte, þæt heo brucan wolde his gesynscypes; forþon he geare wiste þæt heo nænigne wæpnedmon ma lufade þonne hine. Nis þæt to geórtrywanne, þæt in usse eldo þæt beon meahte, þætte forðgongendre eldo oft geworden getreow spell cyðað 7 secgað, þurh anes Drihtnes gifes 7 þæs ilcan, se ðe hine gehatende wæs mid us eac wunian aa oð

few instances of synonymic word pairs used to translate a single word of the source text. These are:

- *coniugem* (HE IV.17.1): *gemæccan 7 wif* (OEB 316.9, 'consort and wife'); trying to find an explanation for the use of a word pair in this case, Szarmach (2009: 144) concludes that "a doublet here may mean to say that the marriage between Ecgfrith and Æðeldreda began as one between two sexually capable people who were ready and willing to assume the sexual burden at the time, i.e. theirs was a licit marriage";
- *data [est]* (HE IV.17.7): *seald 7 forgifen* (OEB 316.15, 'bestowed and given' );
- *integritatis eius* (HE IV.17.11): *hire clænnisse 7 hire mægðhades* (OEB 316.20-1, 'her purity and her virginity'); the two nouns can be considered near-synonyms, because the one is a moral quality, the other a physical state;
- *persuadere* (HE IV.17.13): *gesponan 7 gelæran* (OEB 316.22-23, 'persuade and induce');
- *narrant* (HE IV.17.16): *cyðað 7 secgað* (OEB 316.27-28, 'proclaim and say').

From a stylistic point of view, it is impossible not to note that the passages describing the two marriages all display passive constructions; Æthelthryth is given from one man to the other as if she were an object; indeed, from a purely grammatical perspective she is never the subject of the sentence, but always the direct object - she suffers the actions perpetrated by male subjects.[86]

In Ælfric's *Vita*, the first lines introduce the topic by summarizing the most important elements of the narrative:

> We wyllað nu awritan þeah ðe hit wundorlic sy / be ðære halgan sancte æðeldriðe þam engliscan mædene . / þe wæs mid twam werum and swa-ðeah wunode mæden . / swa swa þa wundra geswuteliað þe heo wyrcð gelome. (LoS 20.1-4)
> ['We will now write, however wonderful it may be, about the holy saint Æthelthryth, the English virgin, who had been with two men and nevertheless remained a virgin, as the miracles show which she often works'.]

The above-mentioned phrase exalting King Anna's qualities as a good Christian ("uiri bene religiosi ac per omnia mente et opera egregii", HE IV.17.3-4) is expanded into a

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weorulde ende. Wæs eac swelce þæs godcundan wuldres sweotol tacnung, þæt þære ilcan fæmnan lichoma bebyrged brosnian ne meahte, þæt heo from werlicre hrinenesse ungewemmed áwunade" (OEB 316.12-318.2).

[86] Karkov (2003: 399) and Blanton (2007: 37) also underline that in this narrative the woman is left with no agency whatsoever and that what remains is a series of male voices. For a survey of modern criticism on Æthelthryth, see Gretsch (2005: 211-12).

two-line comment which extends King Anna's worthiness to his entire family: "swyðe cristen man swa swa he cydde mid weorcum / and eall his team wearð gewurðod þurh god" (LoS 20.6-7, 'a very religious man as he showed by his deeds, and his entire family was honoured by God'). This makes explicit a point that Bede leaves implicit, namely the suggestion that Æthelthryth was inspired in her holiness of life by her father's example. The first piece of information provided in the HE concerns the fact that Æthelthryth was the wife of King Ecgfrith, who was in fact her second husband; only later does the text include a reference to her first husband. As already mentioned, Bede clearly gives prominence to the royal marriage, and for this reason he reverses the chronological order in his narrative. Ælfric, on the other hand, presents the events in a linear succession, mentioning in order all the men who claimed authority over Æthelthryth: her father (LoS 20.5-7), her first husband –whose name is omitted (but is supplied in Skeat's face-page translation without mentioning that it is taken from Bede, LoS 20.8-13), and finally her royal husband Ecgfrith (LoS 20.13-6):

> Anna hatta hyre fæder east engla cyning .
> swyðe cristen man swa swa he cydde mid weorcum .
> and eall his team wearð gewurðod þurh god .
> Æðeldrið wearð þa for-gifen anum ealdor-menn to wife.
> ac hit nolde se ælmihtiga god þæt hire mægð-had wurde
> mid hæmede adylegod . ac heold hi on clænnysse
> forðan þe he is ælmihtig god and mæg don eall þæt he wile .
> and on manegum wisum his mihte geswutelað .
> Se ealdor-man gewat þa ða hit wolde god .
> and heo wearð forgifen ecfride cyninge .
> and twelf gear wunode unge-wemmed mæden
> on þæs cyninges synscype . swa swa swutele wundra
> hyre mærða cyðaþ . and hire mægð-had gelome. (LoS 20.5-17)
> ['Her father was called Anna, king of the East Angles, a very religious man as he showed by his deeds, and his entire family was honoured by God. Æthelthryth was given in marriage to a certain ealdorman, but God Almighty did not want that her virginity should be destroyed by sexual intercourse, but preserved her in purity, because he is God Almighty and he can do all that he will, and in manifold ways he shows his power. The ealdorman died when God would, and she was given in marriage to King Ecgfrith, and for twelve years she lived, an uncorrupted virgin, married to the king, as evident miracles frequently make known her glory and her virginity'.]

In the middle of this passage there is a remark that does not have a counterpart in the HE (LoS 20.9-12: "ac hit […] he wile"). Here, Ælfric underlines that it is only because of God's will that Æthelthryth remained a virgin. Once again, Æthelthryth has no personal volition whatsoever. Even the fact that she refuses to consummate the marriage

is narrated in a disempowering way: the wording of this sentence implies that she did not do anything to prevent intercourse, but rather God instead decided that she should remain a virgin, because "he mæg don eall þæt he wile" (LoS 20.11, 'he can do all that he wishes to do'). In this passage Ælfric twice reminds his readers of the direct connection between Æthelthryth's virginity and the miracles performed through her after her death (at ll. 3-4 and 16-17), something that Bede only mentions later in the text (HE IV.17.18-20). Whereas Bede at least allows her to be actively involved in keeping her virginity (HE IV.17.8-9: "perpetua tamen *mansit* uirginitatis integritate gloriosa"), Ælfric underlines once again that Æthelthryth loved only the Saviour and that her retained virginity is a consequence of His grace being bestowed upon her: "Heo lufode þone hælend þe hi heold unwemme" (LoS 20.18, 'she loved the Saviour who kept her untainted'). Ælfric does not mention the fact that some people doubted the veracity of the story (HE IV.17.9-10), but nevertheless he does mention the illustrious sources of his narrative by writing that Bishop Wilfrid told Bede of King Ecgfrith's numerous attempts at persuading his holy wife to consummate the marriage, even by bribing the bishop himself to exercise his influence upon her (LoS 20.20-3), the underlying assumption being that she had the right to refuse consummation, but also that this decision carried with it serious dynastic and political implications.

Bede's comment, in which he legitimizes Æthelthryth's martyr-like preservation of her virginity by writing that one should not doubt that miracles which happened in the past could also take place in the present (HE IV.17.14-18), is maintained by Ælfric,[87] and is introduced by the line "Nu cwæð se halga beda þe þas boc gesette ." (LoS 20. 24, Now the holy Bede who wrote this book says'), which shows Ælfric's concern for asserting the authority for the story. This is a somewhat vague reference to the *Historia ecclesiastica*, considering that the book is not explicitly named. But this vague reference seems to be sufficient to legitimize the narrative; this might suggest that the intended audience for this piece was well-acquainted with Bede's writings, to the

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[87]This seems to be in contrast with the attitude towards miracles Ælfric expresses elsewhere in his homiletic production. As pointed out by Godden (1985), in his *Homily for Ascension Day* Ælfric states that the age of physical, visible miracles has ended: instead, the present, spiritual miracles affect the moral self. St Gregory and Bede also express similar ideas, but they never commit to any statement that external miracles have ceased. Ælfric's statements on this matter, Godden writes, have generally more in common with the teachings of Augustine. And yet in this case Ælfric follows Bede's comment without disputing it.

point that *þas boc* can only be the *Historia ecclesiastica* and could be mistaken with any other work by Bede.

In the HE the passage ends with a quote from Matthew (28.20), which Ælfric further explains with a reference to God's saints:

> Domino, qui se nobiscum usque in finem saeculi manere pollicetur (HE IV.17.17-8).

> god þe æfre þurh-wuna / mid his gecorenum halgum . swá swá hé sylf behét. (Æ ll. 29-30)
> ['God, who ever continues with his chosen saints just as he himself had promised'.]

In this way, the Biblical reference in the HE is adapted to the immediate context of the *Vita* – the story of one such saint who lived in their country - and is therefore made into a more pertinent comment.

## Æthelthryth takes the veil (HE IV.17.21-30; OEB 318.2-13; LoS 20.31-40)

This passage relates that the queen begged her husband's leave to take the veil for a long time, before she eventually managed to persuade him.[88]
The objectifying tendency observed at the beginning of the narrative changes in this section, where Æthelthryth is given a more active role: in this passage she is an active subject, and the shift can also be seen in both OE texts.

The translator of the OEB produces a very literal translation of this section;[89] as in the previous passage, he only allows himself to break the very long, all-encompassing Latin sentence that includes nearly the entire passage (HE IV.17.21-6) into smaller units, but never disrupts the *consecutio* devised by Bede (OEB 318.2-9). The section

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[88] "Quae multum diu regem postulans, ut saeculi curas relinquere atque in monasterio tantum uero regi Christo seruire permitteretur, ubi uix aliquando impetrauit, intrauit monasterium Aebbae abbatissae, quae erat amita regis Ecgfridi, positum in loco quem Coludi urbem nominant, accepto uelamine sanctimonialis habitus a praefato antistite Vilfrido. Post annum uero ipsa facta est abbatissa in regione quae uocatur Elge, ubi constructo monasterio uirginum Deo deuotarum perplurimum mater uirgo et exemplis uitae caelestis esse coepit et monitis" (HE IV.17.21-30).

[89] "Bæd heo swiðe longe þone cyning, þæt heo moste weoruldsorge 7 gemænne forlætan, 7 heo forlete in mynstre þæm soðan cyninge Criste þeowian. Þæt heo þa æt nehstan ma þurhteah ða eode heo in Æbban mynster þære abbudissan, seo wæs Ecgfiðes fáðe þæs cyninges; þæt is geseted in þære stowe, þe mon nemneð Coludis byrig. 7 heo þær haligrefte onfeng 7 Godes þeowhade from þæm foresprecenan biscope Wilferðe. Þa wæs emb an ger æfter þissum þæt heo wæs abbudisse geworden, in þæm þeodlonde þe is geceged Elige, þær heo mynster getimbrode Gode wilsumra fæmnena. 7 heo fæmne moniga modor ongon beon, ge mid bysenum heofonlices lifes ge eac mid monungum" (OEB 318.2-13).

presents only one redistributive word pair used to translate a genitive of specification: *saeculi curas* (HE IV.17.21) thus becomes *weoruldsorge 7 gemænne* (OEB 318.3, 'worldly care and thought'). The noun *curas* is translated with two synonyms, probably to amplify the idea, whereas the specification expressed by the genitive case in the Latin is here absorbed into the compound of the first member.

In addition, this passage in the OEB presents the translation of a Latin ablative absolute construct with an OE word pair composed of two nouns that develop the idea expressed by a Latin ablative absolute, and which are connected by an explicit verb translating the past participle of the Latin text: "accepto uelamine sanctimonialis habitus" (HE IV.17.25-6) becomes "7 heo þær haligrefte onfeng 7 Godes þeowhade" (OEB 318.8, 'and there she received the veil and service of God'). This translational choice is worth mentioning not only because of its structure, in which the ablative absolute is transformed into an explicit clause followed by an explicative expansion, but also because it is echoed by a very similar expression in the chapter about Dryhthelm (HE V.12). The passage describing the moment when Dryhthelm receives the tonsure presents the ablative absolute "acceptaque tonsura" (HE V.12.23); this is translated again as "he þer Godes þiohade 7 scare onfeng" (OEB 424.11, 'there he received the service of God and the tonsure'). In both cases, the concept of receiving the tonsure or the veil is rendered with a set phrase composed of the verb *onfón*, followed by the direct object (veil / tonsure), and by the additional object *Godes þeowhade*, literally meaning that with the tonsure or veil they also received the condition of servitude to God. This example shows that the use of word pairs can be an actual translational pattern for the translator of the OEB, and that certain set word pairs are used to render the same concept in different contexts, regardless of the exact Latin wording. It also shows that word pairs are flexible, because their members do not necessarily take a fixed position within the word pair itself.

As regards Ælfric, he simplifies the closing lines of this section, which in the HE are characterized by the oxymoronic juxtaposition of the ideas of motherhood and virginity. In the HE, Bede subtly suggests that Æthelthryth accomplishes her duties as queen - to provide a line of descent to the throne - within the monastery, where she becomes the virgin mother of many virgins devoted to God:

> ubi constructo monasterio uirginum Deo deuotarum perplurimum mater uirgo et exemplis uitae caelestis esse coepit et monitis. (HE IV.17.28-30)

As Szarmach (2009: 148) notes, "To a great extent Bede's story of Æðeldreda operates on sexual paradoxes, and the phrase *mater uirgo* says it all, paradoxically". The oxymoronic sentence is maintained in the OEB (318.10-13) whereas it is toned down by Ælfric, who opts for a less paradoxical phrasing by omitting any reference to her virginity and by toning down the idea of motherhood thanks to the use of the adverb *modorlice* (LoS 20.39) instead of the attribution of the noun *modor*:

> and heo syððan wearð gehadod / eft to abudissan on elig mynstre. / ofer *m*anega *m*ynecena . and heo hi *m*odorlice heold / mid *g*odum gebysnungum to þam *g*astlican life. (LoS 20.37-40)
> ['and afterwards she was appointed as abbess in the monastery of Ely, over many nuns, and she directed them as a mother with her good example in the spiritual life'.]

On the other hand, one notices the underlying emphasis in these sentences, obtained with the alliteration in m- dictated by the adverb *modorlice* itself and with the alliteration in g- in the following line, suggesting that the idea of motherhood is retained more subtly.

**Æthelthryth's ascetic practices (HE IV.17.30-46; OEB 318.14-32; LoS 20.40-50)**

In this section Bede recounts the ascetic practices that characterised Æthelthryth's life as an abbess. Æthelthryth used to wear only woollen clothes, she never wore linen; she would only take a warm bath before the major religious festivities and even then she would bathe last of all; she was also very moderate with food, as she only ate once a day, and she would often spend the entire night in prayer at church. After this portrait of her monastic virtues, Bede reports that Æthelthryth prophesied her own death.

This passage is closely reproduced by the translator of the OEB. Very few elements depart from the source text. In the section concerning Æthelthryth's ascetic habit of only bathing for the most important festivities of the year, the translator adds a word pair to repeat the main verb of the sentence, because the syntax of the Old English does not allow the same degree of flexibility as in the Latin. Hence the sentence

raroque in calidis balneis praeter imminentibus sollemniis maioribus, uerbi gratia paschae pentecostes epiphaniae, *lauari uoluerit*, et tunc nouissima omnium, lotis prius suo suarumque ministrarum obsequio ceteris quae ibi essent famulus Christi; (HE IV.17.31-5)

is translated as

Ond seldon in hatum baðum heo *baðian wolde*, buton þam hyhstan symbelnessum 7 tidum æt Estran 7 æt Pentecosten 7 þy twelftan dege ofer Geochol. 7 þonne heo ærest þurh hire þegnunge 7 hire þinenna þa oðre Cristes þeowas, þa ðe þær wæron, onþwegne, þonne wolde heo ealra nyhst hy *baþian 7 þwean*. (OEB 318.15-20)
['And she would seldom bathe in hot water, except for the highest feast-days and periods, at Easter and Pentecost and the twelfth day after Christmas. And she first, by her service and by that of the maid-servants, washed the other servants of God who were there, then she would last of all bathe and wash herself'.]

As can be seen, the OE *baðian wolde* corresponds to the Latin *lauari uoluerit*; further on in the text the translator adds a synonymic word pair composed of the two verbs *baþian 7 þwean*. This once again shows that word pairs are a productive means of expression for the translator of the OEB, even when there is no corresponding Latin expression. It should also be noted that the Latin *epiphaniae* (HE IV.17.33) is translated with a periphrastic expression, *þy twelftan dege ofer Geochol* (OEB 318.16-7, 'the twelfth day after Christmas'), perhaps for reasons of clarity.

Further on, the passage offers another example of a single Latin expression translated with a word pair: *sollemnia* (HE IV.17.36) is rendered as *symbelnessum 7 tidum* (OEB 318.21, 'feast-days and periods'). The two nouns forming the pair are linked together by a relation of hyponymy, as the second member presents a more general meaning than the first one, which translates the Latin. It is also interesting to note how on two occasions the translator of the OEB takes some liberties in paraphrasing Latin verbs: *manducauerit* (HE IV.17.37) is translated with the periphrastic construct *mete þycgan* (OEB 318.22, 'to take food'); this is the only time in the OEB in which the verb *to eat* is translated with this periphrastic construction rather than with the verb *etan*, as Waite points out in his glossary to the OEB (Waite 1984: 237). The passive *rapta est* (HE IV.17.43) is rendered with the active form *geleorde heo* (OEB 318.27, 'she departed') and this alters the perspective: Bede writes that Æthelthryth is carried off to the Lord, whereas his translator uses the verb *geleoran*, which still means 'to die', but in the more active sense of departing rather than being passively carried off. I consider these to be minor but deliberate stylistic choices made

by the translator, because he opts for more autonomous renderings rather than closely reproducing the source texts with more literal choices.

In LoS 20, the order of the ascetic practices listed in this passage is reversed. Whereas Bede mentions, in order, (1) clothing, (2) bathing, (3) food, and (4) devotional practices,[90] Ælfric rearranges the material as follows[91]:

(1) Food: It should be noted that Bede uses the verb *manducauerit* (HE IV.17.37) to explain that Æthelthryth ate only once a day, whereas LoS 20 has "to anum mæle fæstende . butan hit freols-dæg wære ." (LoS 20.42, 'fasting but for one meal a day, unless it were a feast-day'): she fasted except for one meal per day, unless it was a feast day. The emphasis here is different, and considering that Ælfric is habitually attentive towards fasting and the excesses it may lead to, this change cannot be accidental. Ælfric deliberately rephrases his source in a way that puts the fasting practised by the abbess of Ely to the forefront, even if without explicit praise. In this way, the sermon could have functioned as a model for moderate, and not extreme, asceticism, albeit in a very understated way; after all, we are told that Æthelthryth did eat once a day, and on the basis of what Ælfric wrote elsewhere concerning fasting, he may have interpreted Æthelthryth's fasting habits as an acceptable form of devotional practice as opposed to more extreme patterns which he always and very openly condemns as inappropriate. As previously discussed in the case of St Alban, Ælfric has a very clear and consistent view on how fasting should be dealt with. It should never be taken to extremes; on the contrary it should be governed by temperance, the mother of all virtues in Ælfric's view (Clayton 2008). Lack of temperance eventually leads one to undertake a course of action that God would not approve of. As Mary Clayton argues (2009: 362-7), excessive fasting, even if undertaken for the noblest Christian purposes, may cause death, and as this is considered by Ælfric as a form of suicide, it can neither be praised, nor accepted, nor made the object of propaganda from the pulpit or in pious readings, as the *Lives of*

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[90] "De qua ferunt quia, ex quo monasterium petiit, numquam lineis sed solum laneis uestimentis uti uoluerit, raroque in calidis balneis praeter imminentibus sollemniis maioribus, uerbi gratia paschae pentecostes epiphaniae, lauari uoluerit, et tunc nouissima omnium, lotis prius suo suarumque ministrarum obsequio ceteris quae ibi essent famulis Christi; raro praeter maiora sollemnia uel artiorem necessitatem plus quam semel per diem manducauerit; semper, si non infirmitas grauior prohibuisset, ex tempore matutinae synaxeos usque ad ortum diei in ecclesia precibus intenta persteterit" (HE IV.17.30-39).

[91] "Be hire is awrytan þæt heo wel drohtnode / to anum mæle fæstende . butan hit freols-dæg wære . / and heo syndrige gebedu swyðe lufode / and wyllen weorode . and wolde seld-hwænne / hire lic baðian butan to heahtidum . / and ðonne heo wolde ærest ealle ða baðian / þe on ðam mynstre wæron . and wolde him ðenian / mid hire þinenum . and þonne hi sylfe baðian" (LoS 20.41-48).

*Saints* were probably initially planned to be used. Giles Constable (1996) notes that moderation has always been called upon to temper the harshest forms of asceticism, but up until the Early Middle Ages this opinion had been expressed by very few voices, among which are Solomon, Cicero, St Paul, and Cassian, whose writings are mentioned in the Benedictine Rule. Ælfric certainly belongs to this minority. In this sense Ælfric's age may be seen as transitional, because in it new voices against intemperate asceticism slowly added up until, from about the eleventh century, a new form of spirituality stressed the importance of moderation and gradually started to look at extreme ascetic practices with a more critical eye (Constable 1996: 16-8). In the chapter on St Alban I quoted a passage from Sermon 13 in the *Lives of Saints* which openly addresses the issue of moderate fasting. This is not the only occasion when Ælfric discusses the subject up front rather than using *exempla*. Another similar reflection can also be found, as pointed out by Clayton (2009: 362), in a composite text called *De octo uitiis et de duodecim abusiuis gradus*, the beginning of which reads as follows:

> Omnia nimia nocent et temperantia mater uirtutum dicitur. Þæt is on Englisc: Ealle oferdone þingc deriað and seo gemetegung is ealra mægna modor. Se oferlyfa on æte and on wæte deð þone man unhalne, and his sawle Gode læðetteð, swa swa ure Drihten on his godspelle cwæð. Eft þærtogeanes, ungemetgod fæsten and to mycel forhæfdnyss on æte and on wæte deð þone man unhalne and on mycelre frecednysse gebringð, swa swa us secgað bec, þæt sume men fæstan swa þæt hi geswencton hy sylfe forþearle, and nane mede næfdon þæs mycclan geswinces, ac þæs þe fyrr wæron from Godes miltsunge. Eaðe mæg se mann findan hu he hine sylfne amyrre, ac we sceolan witan þæt nan sylfcwala, þæt is agenslaga, ne becymð to Godes rice. (Morris 1867-8: 296)
> ['Omnia nimia nocent et temperantia mater uirtutum dicitur. That is in English: all excessive things are harmful and temperance is the mother of all virtues. Excess in food and drink makes a person unhealthy and makes his soul hateful to God, just as our Lord sad in his Gospel. Yet, in contrast, intemperate fasting and too much abstinence in food and drink makes a person unhealthy and brings great danger, just as books tell us, that some people fasted so that they afflicted themselves very severely and had no reward for their great toil, but were the furthest from God's mercy on account of it. A man can easily find out how he may ruin himself, but we should know that no suicide, that is self-slayer, goes to God's kingdom'.]

Although Clayton (2008; 2009) focuses primarily on the issues of suicide and temperance in Ælfric's writings, I would like to build upon her reflections on temperance and on Ælfric's dislike for any deviations from this Christian virtue, to argue that the abbot of Eynsham also had a very clear view concerning the degree to which fasting can be acceptable, as opposed to when it borders on inappropriateness.[92]

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[92] As Clayton (2009: 365-6) underlines, some of the readings recommended by the Benedictine Rule may provide parallels to Ælfric's idea of moderate fasting. Besides Cassian's *Conlationes*, some interesting

Eating one meal a day thus seems to be proper, moderate behaviour especially when opposed to the more extreme paths taken by other over-zealous believers, which Ælfric is not so keen on supporting.[93]

(2) Devotional practices: Once again, Ælfric seems to place a slightly different emphasis on devotion; here, prominence is attributed to the solitude of her devotional practice (LoS 20.43: "and heo *s*yndrige gebedu *s*wyðe lufode", 'and she greatly loved solitary prayer') rather than to its duration, as we have in Bede (HE IV.17.38-9: "ex tempore matutinae synaxeos usque ad ortum diei in ecclesia precibus intenta persteterit"). This change may also indicate Ælfric's attention to toning down those aspects of Æthelthryth's asceticism that might be too extreme. Bede emphasizes a truly ascetic devotional schedule, according to which the abbess would usually spend the night in prayer in the church, whereas Ælfric turns away from this picture and elegantly underlines the significance of this moment with a hint of alliteration, but at the same time also makes a general comment rather than relying on the details of her extreme asceticism.

(3) Clothing: This is just a passing remark in LoS 20 (l. 44: "and *w*yllen *w*eorode", 'and wore woollen clothes'), albeit underlined by alliteration. In the HE, this is the first of the practices listed, possibly because it visually emphasizes the contrast between the former royal, wealthy status she relinquished and the new life she has embraced.

(4) Bathing: Ælfric writes that she would only take a bath on major festivities, but does not list them as Bede does (HE IV.17.33: Easter, Pentecost, Epiphany). Ælfric also omits the specification that Bede is referring in particular to the use of hot water, a detail maintained also by the translator of the OEB:

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reflections can be drawn from the *Vitae Patrum*, especially in Book 10 of the *Verba Seniorum*, interestingly entitled *De discretione*: "Narravit quidam Patrum quia senex aliquis erat in cella studiose laborans, et vestiebatur matta: qui cum perrexisset ad abbatem Ammonam, vidit eum abbas Ammonas utentuem matta, et dixit ei: Hoc tibi nihil prodest. Et dixit ei ille senex: Tres cogitations mihi molestae sunt: […]; tertia, ut includam me in cella, ut nullum videam, *et post biduum comedam*. Dicit ei abbas Ammonas: Nihil tibi ex his tribus expedit facere, sed magis sede in cella tua, et *comede parum quotidie* […], et ita poteris salvus esse." (PL 73, 915B). Another very similar example can be found further on in the text: "Interrogavit abbas Joseph abbatem Pastorem, dicens: *Quomodo opus est jejunare?* Et dixit abbas Pastor: Ego volo ut quotidie manducans subinde paululum subtrahat sibi, ne satietur. Dicit ei abbas Joseph : Ergo quando eras juvenis, non jejunabas biduanas levando? Et dixit ei senex: Crede mihi, quia et triduanas, et hebdomadam; sed et haec omnia probaverunt senes magni; et invenerunt quia *bonum est quotidie manducare, per singulos dies parum minus*; et ostenderunt nobis viam hanc regalem, quia levior est et facilis" (PL 73, 920D).

[93] Other examples of this tendency will be shown in Chapters 3 and 4.

raroque *in calidis balneis* praeter imminentibus sollemniis maioribus […] lauari uoluerit. (HE IV.17.31-3)

Ond seldom *in hatum baðum* heo baðian wolde, buton þam hyhstan symbelnessum 7 tidum […]. (OEB 318.15-7)
['And she would seldom bathe in hot water except for the highest feast-days and periods'.]

and wolde seld-hwænne / hire lic baðian butan to heahtidum. (LoS 20.44-5)
['and would seldom bathe her body except at high festivals'.]

Bede here describes the ascetic practice of using cold water for baths and only allowing hot water very sparingly. This might very well represent a hagiographical *topos*, however it is interesting to observe that Eddius Stephanus attributes the very same ascetic practice to Bishop Wilfrid, Æthelthryth's spiritual guide:

Corpus quoque ab utero matris suae integrum, sicut coram fidelibus testatus est, sine pollutione custodivit, quod in aqua benedicta et sanctificata nocturnis horis indesinenter aestate et hieme consuetudinarie lavavit, usquedum papa Johannes beatae memoriae et apostolicae sedis pro aetate sua huius laboris resolutionem habere praecepit. (Colgrave 1927: 44, Chapter 21)

Commenting on this passage, Colgrave (1927: 166) underlines the religious significance of baths as a reminder of baptism; bathing in cold water was also considered as a form of penance, as can be seen with Cuthbert bathing in secret in the sea,[94] or as will be shown in Chapter 4.2 with Dryhthelm praying standing in the river even in winter (HE V.12.183-200). Lapidge (2008-2010 v. 2: 621) notes in his commentary to the HE that similar recommendations can also be found in Jerome's letters, for instance in Letter CXXV *ad Rusticum*:

Balnearum fomenta non quaereas, qui calorem corporis ieiuniorum cupis frigore extinguere. (quoted in Lapidge 2008-2010 v. 2: 621)

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[94] This is a very popular episode in the life of Cuthbert, described in the Anonymous Life as well as by Bede in his Prose and Verse Lives, but not included in the HE. During a visit to the monastery at Coldingham, Cuthbert used to spend the night praying alone in the cold sea, hidden from the world, until one night a brother followed him and saw two otters drying the feet of the holy man when he came out of the water. Later, Cuthbert discovered that somebody had spied on him, and made the monk promise not to tell anyone what he had seen until after his death: "At ille egressus monasterio sequente exploratore descendit ad mare, cuius ripae monasterium idem superpositum erat. Ingressusque altitudinem maris, donec ad collum usque et brachia unda tumens assurgeret, peruigiles undisonis in laudibus tenebras noctis exegit. Appropinquante autem diluculo, ascendens in terram denuo coepit in litore flexis genibus orare. Quod dum ageret, uenere continuo duo de profundo maris quadrupedia quae uulgo lutraetae uocantur. Haec ante illum strata in arena, anhelitu suo pedes eius fouere coeperunt, ac uillo satagebant extergere. Completoque ministerio, percepta ab eo benedictione patrias sunt relapsa sub undas" (Colgrave 1940: 188-90). The passage quoted is taken from Bede's Prose Life.

By omitting this detail, Ælfric offers a slightly different scenario, one in which the ascetic practice consists of not washing oneself at all, except on special occasions. The omission might have been prompted for reasons of *brevitas*, just as Ælfric also leaves out the list of festivities. But, Colgrave underlines that not bathing at all was also a form of penance[95]:

> it was apparently a form of asceticism to abstain from baths of any sort. Thomas of Ely, for instance, says of Sexburg, sister and successor of Æthilthryth of Ely, that she fled "from the use of baths as though from a poisoned seedbed" (Thomas of Ely, *Anglia Sacra*, ed. Wharton 1691, I.596), while St Audrey herself was "so pure of heart that she had no need to wash her body" (*Liber Eliensis*, ed. Stewart, p. 50). (Colgrave 1927: 166)

However, Ælfric does maintain the reference to the humble practice of her bathing last of all, after having helped wash all the others in the convent[96]:

> and *w*olde seld-hwænne / hire lic baðian butan to heahtidum . / and ðonne heo wolde ærest ealle ða baðian / þe on ðam mynstre wæron . and wolde him ðenian / mid hire þinenum . and þonne hi sylfe baðian. (LoS 20.44-8)
> ['and would seldom bathe her body except at high festivals, and then she would first bathe all those that were in the monastery and she would serve them with the maid-servants and then would bathe herself'.]

Finally, Æthelthryth's prophecy of her own death is postponed in LoS 20 and is reduced to a quick remark, "swa swa heo ær witegode" (LoS 20.50, 'just as she previously foretold'), in comparison with the detailed account of what she foretold in the HE (IV.17.39-43).

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[95] The *Liber Eliensis* makes an interesting compromise between the two penitential options by quoting first Bede's passage and then adding that Æthelthryth did not need baths anyway because she was already so pure at heart: "[…] raroque in calidis balneis preter imminentibus maioribus sollempnitatibus, verbi gratia, pasche, pentecostes, epiphanie, lavari voluerit et tunc novissima omnium, lotis prius suo suoarumque ministrarum obsequio ceteris que ibi essent famulabus Christi. Que enim lota erat corde, non necesse erat ut lavaretur corpore" (Blake 1962: 34, Chapter 16).

[96] Waterhouse notes that "The reversal in the relative ordering of the early information about the woolen clothing and the bathing and the later information about the uncorrupt bodyand the new winding bands, the washing of the uncorrupted body, and of the relationship between the one who served and those served points to a thematic level of hypersignification whereby her actions in life are mirrored by others performed after her death and for her uncorrupt body as part of the confirmation of her saintly status" (Waterhouse 1996: 341). Lazzari (2006: 140) underlines the symbolic value of this ascetic practice, especially because it is reminiscent of Christ washing the feet of the Apostles, and interestingly argues that Ælfric moves the reference to Æthelthryth's bathing habits to the end of the list in order to give it more emphasis.

**Æthelthryth's incorrupt body (HE IV.17.47-73; OEB 318.33-320.30; LoS 20.50-95)**

This section deals with the translation of Æthelthryth's body sixteen years after her death, and with the search for a suitable stone coffin for its new location. Bede mentions once again the opening of the tomb and the discovery of the abbess's incorrupt body, and adds the names of the people who witnessed the event. Among them is Bishop Wilfrid, and also Cynefrith, the doctor who tried to cure her. From here, Bede takes the story back to the time when Æthelthryth was suffering from the illness that eventually killed her; Cynefrith tells that he was ordered to cut the tumour, but that his actions produced only a temporary improvement in the patient, who died soon after that. Bede is here playing with the narrative tools at his disposal and leaps back and forth across time so as to re-enact Æthelthryth's death a second time in the narrative (Szarmach 2009: 140), when her sister decides that it is time to translate her body to a more suitable location. The abbess dies a first time,[97] and Bede gives only limited information by saying that she died seven years after she became the abbess of Ely and that she was buried with the other sisters and brethren in a wooden coffin, according to her specific instruction. When Æthelthryth dies narratively for a second time (HE IV.17.65-73),[98] Bede describes the circumstances of her death in more detail and through the voice of one of the most reliable witnesses, the doctor who treated her, assisted in this by the silent presence on the scene of Bishop Wilfrid, which of course enhances the trustworthiness of the account. It is also interesting to point out that not only does Bede make Æthelthryth die twice during the narrative, but he also repeats the discovery of her incorrupt body so that it takes place three times.[99] It is clear, therefore,

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[97] "Rapta est autem ad Dominum in medio suorum post annos septem ex quo abbatissae gradum susceperat, et aeque, ut ipsa iusserat, non alibi quam in medio eorum iuxta ordinem quo transierat ligneo in locello sepulta" (HE IV.17.43-6).

[98] "Sed certiori notitia medicus Cynifrid, qui et morienti illi et eleuatae de tumulo adfuit, qui referre erat solitus quod illa infirmata habuerit tumorem maximum sub maxilla. «Iusseruntque me» inquit «incidere tumorem illum, ut efflueret noxius umor qui inerat. Quod dum facerem, ita ut multi putarent quia sanari posset a languore. Tertia autem die prioribus aggrauata doloribus et rapta confestim de mundo, dolorem omnem ac mortem perpetua salute ac uita mutauit»" (HE IV.17.65-73).

[99] "Nam etiam signum diuini miraculi, quo eiusdem feminae sepulta caro corrumpi non potuit, indicio est quia a uirili contactu incorrupta durauerit" (HE IV.17.18-20); "Cumque corpus sanctae uirginis ac sponsae Christi aperto sepulchro esset prolatum in lucem, ita incorruptum inuentum est, ac si eodem die fuisset defuncta siue humo condita" (HE IV.17.61-3); "«Cumque post tot annos eleuanda essent ossa de sepulchro, et extento desuper papilione omnis congregatio, hinc fratrum inde sororum, psallens circumstaret, ipsa autem abbatissa intus cum paucis ossa elatura et dilutura intrasset, repente audiuimus abbatissam intus clara uoce proclamare: «Sit gloria nomini Domini». Nec multo post clamauerunt me

that these are the true key moments in the life of the abbess of Ely. Her painful death may be considered the closest equivalent to martyrdom,[100] and her incorrupt body is proof of her virginity. This is the moment that turns a virtuous abbess into a saint.

In the OEB, the translation of this section presents the following word pairs:

- *quaerere lapidem* (HE IV.17.51): *faran 7 þone stan secan* (OEB 320.3-4, 'to go and seek a stone'); the verb *faran* does not have an equivalent verb in the source text and is therefore an addition;

- *facere* (HE IV.17.52): *geheawan 7 gewyrcan* (OEB 320.4-5, 'cut and make'); the members of this synonymic pair are linked by a relation of hyponymy in which the first member presents a narrower meaning than the second;

- *incorruptum* (HE IV.17.62): *swa ungebrosnad 7 swa ungewemmed* (OEB 320.16, 'unspotted/unpolluted and incorrupt'); this word pair is composed of two past participles – the first translates the Latin, whereas the second represents an expansion of the meaning conveyed by the Latin giving the moral or spiritual meaning of the lack of physical corruption;

The remaining word pairs all present synonymous members:

- *iter* (HE IV.17.59): *þæt heora ærende wæs 7 heora siðfæt* (OEB 320.11, 'that their mission and their journey was');

- *prosperatum* (HE IV.17.59): *gehradod 7 gesyndgad* (OEB 320.11, 'caused to prosper and made prosperous);

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intus, reserato ostio papilionis, uidique eleuatum de tumulo et positum in lectulo corpus sacrae Deo uirginis quasi dormientis simile. Sed et discooperto uultus indumento monstrauerunt mihi etiam uulnus incisurae, quod feceram, curatum, ita ut mirum in modum pro aperto et hiante uulnere, cum quo sepulta erat, tenuissima tunc cicatricis uestigia parerent. Sed et linteamina omnia, quibus inuolutum erat corpus, integra appauerunt et ita noua, ut ipso die uiderentur castis eius membris esse circumdata»" (HE IV.17.73-87).

[100] As Loredana Lazzari (2006: 141) points out, "Contrariamente a quanto era accaduto per le vergini cristiane, Etheldreda non subì i tormenti del martirio, ma dovette affrontare quelli della malattia […]. Come ricorda Beda, nell'inno dedicato alla verginità, inserito dopo le notizie su Etheldreda, le vergini martiri della chiesa di Roma – Agata, Agnese, Cecilia, Eufemia, Eulalia e Tecla – non erano solo vergini, ma anche martiri, ferme nella loro fede e nel rifiuto di un matrimonio con un pagano, nonostante le pressioni e le persecuzioni cui furono sottoposte a causa della loro ostinazione a perseverare nella loro fede. Questo tipo di persecuzioni ovviamente non trovavano spazio nel mondo anglosassone, tanto meno nella vita di Etheldreda che si svolse in scenario totalmente diverso da quello delle vergini martiri romane". Fell (1994) also analyzes the differences and similarities between Æthelthryth's story and those of the standard virgin martyrs mentioned by Bede in his hymn as an introductory frame to Æthelthryth. She concludes that, despite the obvious narrative differences – absence of a tyrannical father or husband, no conversion from paganism, no excruciating tortures –, "the main reason for Æðelþryð's hold on the Anglo-Saxon imagination is clearly that she was the nearest they could produce to the virgin martyrs of the early church" (Fell 1994: 21).

- *testantur* (HE IV.17.64): *cyðon 7 sægdon* (OEB 320.18, 'made known and said');

- *leuius* (HE IV.17.70): *leohtor 7 wel* (OEB 320.25, 'easier and well');

- *rapta* (HE IV.17.72): *gerisen 7 genumen* (OEB 320.28, 'carried off and seized').

The relative clause concerning the name of Cambridge is maintained, although it may sound rather unnecessary: *quae lingua Anglorum Grantacaestir uocatur* (HE IV.17.55-6) becomes *seo is on Englisc Grantacester geceged* (OEB 320.8, 'it is called in English Grantchester'). This clause would have easily lent itself to some modification in the OE, considering that the translator often updates geographical references or omits those that are unnecessary in the translation. In this case, it seems as if the translator blindly reproduced the source text, without questioning the relevance of this information in the target context. The passage also offers another good example of the way in which the translator makes use of relative clauses to translate implicit constructions in the Latin: the very compact relative clause "qui et morienti illi et eleuatae de tumulo adfuit" (HE IV.17.65-6) thus becomes "se æt hire wæs, þa heo forðferde 7 eft þa hire lichoman mon of byrgenne uphof" (OEB 320.19-20, 'who was with her when she died and again when her body was taken up from the grave').

From this section onwards Ælfric's text presents the events in a rigorous chronological order and Bede's material is re-distributed accordingly. The actual content does not strongly depart from the Latin source; the events narrated are simply rearranged to follow a chronological sequence. Thus, we are now presented with Æthelthryth's own words in acceptance of her disease, followed by the passage in which the doctor tries to alleviate her suffering. After three days, Æthelthryth dies and is buried in a wooden coffin amongst her sisters (LoS 20.49-69). These sections correspond to ll. 88-95, 67-73, and 45-46 of the HE respectively. Since Bede's chapter is the starting point for the present comparative study, I shall now briefly comment on the single corresponding sections in LoS 20, even if the sequence is rearranged and a few leaps in the text will have to be taken. The section describing Æthelthryth's succession by Seaxburh, the translation of her bones, and the discovery of the marble coffin (HE IV.17.47-60), is relocated to later in the text, starting at LoS 20.70. Most of the information contained in the source text is retained by Ælfric: he does not mention the name of King Eorcenberht, husband of abbess Seaxburh, but he does mention that

Æthelthryth's sister was queen at Canterbury before she became the abbess of Ely (LoS 20.70-2). Lines 52-56 of the HE ("Qui ascensa naui […] uocatur"), describe the voyage undertaken by some brethren of the community in search of a suitable stone coffin, and the reason for such a voyage, namely the absence of suitable stones in the marshy areas around Ely. This passage is summarized by Ælfric, who gives a short explanation for the reason for the journey and conveys the idea of a voyage by water by using the verb *hreowan*, 'to row' (LoS 20.78, "Hi hreowan þa to grantan-ceastre .", 'then they rowed to Grantchester'), rather than explicitly mentioning the use of a ship as in HE (IV.17.52: "qui ascensa naui"). The description of the sarcophagus (LoS 20.79-83) is more emphatic in the Old English: whereas Bede writes that the brethren

> inuenerunt […] locellum de marmore albo pulcherrime factum, operculo quoque similis lapidis aptissime tectum. (HE IV.17.56-8)

Ælfric devotes five lines to the praise of the beauty of the coffin:

> swa þæt hi þær gemetton ane mære þruh / wið þone weall standende . geworht of marm-stane / eall hwites bleos bufan þære eorðan . / and þæt hlyd ðær-to gelimplice gefeged . / eac of hwitum marm-stane swa swa hit macode god. (LoS 20.79-83)
> ['so that they found there a glorious coffin, standing against the wall, made of marble, all of white colour, above ground, and the lid fittingly joined, also of white marble, as if God had made it']

The events narrated at ll. 61-73 of the HE (the body has not decayed, the doctor recollects the moments when he cut the tumour and when Æthelthryth died) are redistributed by Ælfric in two separate sections of his sermon. The first section occurs at LoS 20.61-7 and describes the doctor's operation, Æthelthryth's temporary improvement and her death, but here we do not find direct speech as in Bede (HE IV.17.64-73). As Ruth Waterhouse (1976: 90) rightly observes, Cynefrith's voice is absent in Ælfric's account of the story. The cutting of the tumour is not related in the doctor's own words and with direct speech, as it is in the HE, but is introduced by indirect speech and does not originate from Cynefrith himself but from 'some of them' (Waterhouse 1976: 89):

> sed certiori notitia medicus Cynifrid, qui et morienti illi et eleuatae de tumulo adfuit, qui referre erat solitus […] «Iusseruntque me […]». (HE IV.17. 65-7)

> þa wæs þær sum læce on ðam geleaffullum heape . / cynefryð gehaten and hi cwædon þa sume / þæt se læce sceolde asceotan þæt geswell. (LoS 20.61-3)
> ['In that faithful group was a doctor called Cynefrith, and some of them said that the doctor should incise the swelling'.]

Waterhouse (1976) argues that, in Ælfric's chronologically arranged narrative, the only passage of direct speech spoken by Æthelthryth would immediately be followed by the one spoken by Cynefrith, and for this reason

> Ælfric has decided to sacrifice this aspect [and use indirect speech instead] in order to maintain a consistent emphasis on the saint. He has preferred to avoid the risk of having a secondary spokesman rival the main character. (Waterhouse 1976: 90)

One lexical choice deserves mention here: Ælfric translates the Latin *noxius umor* (HE IV.17.68-9) with *wyrms* (LoS 20.64, 'corrupt matter'), whereas the OEB has *seo sceðende wǽte* (OEB 320.23, 'noxious fluid'). In this case, the OEB offers a very literal translation, whereas Ælfric is more independent in his translation and chooses a noun that he includes in the *Grammar* to translate Latin nouns belonging to the same semantic field as *umor*, such as *uirus*, *lues*, and *tabes*.

The second section (HE IV.17.61-4), describing the incorrupt state of Æthelthryth's body after she had been dead for sixteen years, occurs at LoS 20. 86-92, but it is conflated with the subsequent passage in Bede's chapter (HE IV.17.73-87). Here we are told that when Æthelthryth's bones were about to be taken out of her grave, a tent was erected over the tomb and the brothers and sisters of the community were waiting outside, singing psalms. The Latin *congregatio*, "hinc fratrum inde sororum, psallens circumstaret" (HE IV.17.75) is rendered by Ælfric as "Hi sungon ða ealle sealmas . and lic-sang ." (LoS 20.88, 'then they all sang psalms and hymns for the dead'): he does not explicitly mention the two separate groups of brothers and sisters, but opts for a more vague address, and the congregation is singing psalms as well as hymns for the dead. At the time of its foundation, Ely was a double monastery, and Bede accordingly records that monks as well as nuns were present at the exhumation of their abbess's body. However, Ely was refounded in 970 during the Benedictine Reform and became a male monastery.[101] It is most probably for this reason that Ælfric

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[101] "In its early days a double house for monks as well as nuns, subject to the rule of abbesses, the monastery was left in a ruinous state following depredations by the Danes in East Anglia round about 870, later becoming, for a short while in the mid-tenth century, a community of canons, and perhaps canonesses too, under non-celibate leadership. Then in 970, as part of the monastic reform movement spearheaded by Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury and Æthelwold, Bishop of Winchester in the reign of King Edgar, the house was refounded as a well-endowed Benedictine monastery and any canons unwilling to become monks were ejected." (Fairweather 2005: xiii; see also Stafford 1983: 195, and Griffiths 1992: 43). Even though women were not included in this reformed institution, other solutions were available. As Fairweather (2005: xiv) points out, "from the early eleventh century there was an abbey of nuns at Chatteris, only about ten miles away, for which Hervey, the first Bishop of Ely, was to take upon himself paternal responsibility […]. We also hear of the occasional isolated woman living a

obliterates all references to Ely as a double monastery. In a way, he updates the scenario in which he set Æthelthryth's *Vita*. Considering how close Ælfric's teacher Æthelwold was to Ely (Fell 1994: 21), and how important a role he played in the Benedictine Reform, this silent shift may thus be explained easily and does not look at all surprising.

**The elevation of her bones (HE IV.17.73-95; OEB 320.30-322.24)**

The first section of this passage (HE IV.17.73-87) relates the elevation of Æthelthryth's bones through Cynefrith's voice; in the second part (HE IV.17.87-95), Bede inserts Æthelthryth's own words commenting on her disease.

At the beginning of the passage, the translator of the OEB translates the Latin *ossa* in the temporal clause "cumque post tot annos eleuanda essent ossa de sepulchro" (HE IV.17.73-4) as *lichoma* (OEB 320.30: "Mid þy þa æfter swa monegum gearum hire lichoma wæs of byrgenne up ahæfen", 'when, after many years, her body was taken out from the grave'): Bede's word choice seems very appropriate, considering that at this stage in the narrative all they expect to find are the bones of Æthelthryth, given she had been dead for sixteen years. The word choice in the OEB ('body' instead of 'bones') could have been influenced by the subsequent events in the narrative; the translation of *ossa* with *lichoma* could therefore be seen as having an anticipatory role in the narrative, even if perhaps it was perhaps not done intentionally. The text also presents a few additions that do not have a counterpart in the source text.[102] The first is "æfter monna gewunan" (OEB 322.2, 'according to the custom of men'), following the translation of "ossa elatura et dilutura" (HE IV.17.76-7), which could be seen as an explanatory note, added to comment on a practice that may have been considered unusual by the readers of the OEB.[103] The second addition occurs in the translation of the Latin "quasi dormientis simile" (HE IV.17.81), where the second term of

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dedicated religious life in and around Ely, financed by her own, or if necessary the monastery's, resources. Benefactors to the house, and recipients of miracles at the shrines of the saints, were often women. And St Æthelthryth and her kinswomen, whose shrines were the focus of much heart-felt devotion throughout the Middle Ages, were indubitably female".

[102] "Ond seo abbudisse in þæt geteld eode 7 fea monna mid heo, þæt heo þa bán woldon up adon 7 inþwean 7 gefeormian æfter monna gewunan" (OEB 320.33-322.2)

[103] A search in the Old English Corpus shows that this is most probably not a widely-used set phrase.

comparison is provided: "7 wæs slæpendum men gelicra þonne deadum" (OEB 322.7-8, 'she was more similar to a person asleep than to a dead one').[104] Further on in the text, the Latin adjective *iuuenculam* (HE IV.17.91) is translated with a temporal clause, "þa ic geong wæs" (OEB 322.19-20, 'when I was young').

From a lexical perspective, an interesting point is offered by the passage in which Æthelthryth explains that she deserves her illness on account of her vanity, because she used to wear necklaces and jewels when she was young:

> Scio certissime quia merito in collo pondus languoris porto, in quo iuuenculam me memini superuacua moniliorum pondera portare; et credo quod ideo me superna pietas dolore colli uoluit grauari, ut sic absoluar reatu superuacuae leuitatis, dum mihi nunc *pro auro et margaretis* de collo rubor tumoris ardorque promineat. (HE IV.17.90-5)

> Ic wat cuðlice, þæt ic be gewyrhtum on minum sweoran bere þa byrðenne þisse aðle 7 þisse untrymnesse, in þæm ic gemon mec geo beran, þa ic geong wæs, þa iidlan byrðenne gyldenra sigila. Ond ic gelyfo, þætte me forðon seo uplice arfæstnis wolde mec hefigade beon mid sáre mines sweoran, þæt ic swa wære onlesed þære scylde þære swiðe idlan leasnisse, mid þy me nu *for gólde 7 for gimmum* of swiran forðhlifað seo readnis 7 byrne þæs swiles 7 wærces. (OEB 322.17-24)
> ['I certainly know that I deserve to bear on my neck the burden of this disease and illness,as I remember that I once used to bear, when I was young, the idle burden of golden jewels. And therefore I believe that the divine providence wanted me to be afflicted with a pain in my neck, so that I would be released from the guilt of my very idle fickleness, when now instead of gold and gems, the redness and burning of the tumour and pain stand out from my neck'.]

> Heo cwæð ic wat geare þæt ic wel wyrðe eom . / þæt min swura beo geswenct mid swylcere untrum-nysse . / forðan þe ic on iugoðe frætwode minne swuran / mid mænig-fealdum swur-beagum . and me is nu geþuht / þæt godes arfæstnyss þone gylt aclænsige . / þonne me nu þis geswel scynð *for golde* . / and þæs hata brine *for healicum gymstanum.* (LoS 20.54-60)
> ['She spoke: I know that I well deserve that my neck be afflicted with a severe illness, because in my youth I adorned my neck with manifold necklaces, and now I think that God's providence may cleanse my guilt since this swelling shines instead of gold, and this burning heat instead of sparkling gems'.]

As can be seen the Latin *margaretis* (HE IV.17.94-5), is translated in the OEB with the noun *gimmum* (OEB 322.23, 'gems'), and in LoS 20 with *gymstanum* (LoS 20.60, 'gems'); in the HE, Æthelthryth says she used to wear necklaces made of gold and pearls; in the OEB and in LoS 20, on the other hand, the jewels are made of gold and gems. The difference is of course very slight, and yet one might wonder why the translator of the OEB and Ælfric changed the pearls into gems. Only twice does Bede

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[104] "Vidique eleuatum de tumulo et positum in lectulo corpus sacrae Deo uirginis quasi dormientis simile" (HE IV.17.80-1). "Þa geseah ic lichoman þære halgan Godes fæmnan up ahęfenne of byrgenne 7 on bedde gesetedne: 7 wæs slæpendum men gelicra þonne deadum" (OEB 322.6-8).

make reference to pearls in the HE. The first occurrence can be found at the very beginning of the work, when Bede is describing Britain and its natural life; among the creatures that inhabit the rivers are mussels which produce colourful pearls, Bede writes, of excellent quality:

> Capiuntur autem saepissime et uituli marini et delfines necnon et ballenae, exceptis uariorum generibus concyliorum, in quibus sunt et musculae, quibus inclusam saepe *margaritam omnis quidem coloris optimam inueniunt*, id est rubicundi et purpurei et hyacinthine et prasini sed maxime candidi. (HE I.1.18-23)

This time the translator of the OEB does not depart from the source text and translates the Latin *margaritam* with the OE *meregrotan*:

> 7 her beoþ oft fangene seolas 7 hronas and mereswyn; 7 her beoþ oft numene missenlicra cynna weolcscylle 7 muscule, 7 on þam beoð oft gemette *þa betstan meregrotan ælces hiwes*. (OEB 26.7-9)
> ['and here are often caught seals, whales, and porpoises; here various kinds of shellfish and mussels are often taken, and in these are often found the best pearls of every hue'.]

In this naturalistic account, the translator had no choice but to give an accurate translation of the species mentioned by Bede (even though he omits the list of colours); this shows that Old English vocabulary already had a word corresponding to the Latin *margarita*. The translator of the OEB employs it once, but he does not make use of it the second time pearls are mentioned in his source text. As regards Ælfric, it should be noted that his *Glossary* provides OE translations for the Latin nouns denoting pearls as well as gems: "*gemma* gymstan; *margarita* meregrota" (Zupitza 1880 [1966]: 319.6-7). Given that both translators knew the exact word to translate the Latin *margarita*, and neither of them used it to describe the necklace worn by Æthelthryth, one might wonder why they both changed this detail. First, alliteration could be considered; *for gólde 7 for gimmum* alliterates,[105] thus adding to the loosely alliterative quality of parts of this chapter in the OEB, as has already been pointed out by Paul Szarmach (2009: 143-4).[106] The translator could not have obtained the same effect by using *meregrota*. Alliteration, however, would not explain Ælfric's choice, as *for golde* and *for healicum gymstanum*

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[105] See, for example, the *Dream of the Rood*: "Eall þæt bēacen wæs / be*g*oten mid *g*olde;   *g*immas stodon / fægere æt foldan scēatum [...] Geseah ic wuldres trēow, / wædum geweorðode,   wynnum scīnan, / *g*egyred mid *g*olde;   *g*immas hæfdon / bewrigene weorðlīce   wealdes trēow" (the *Dream of the Rood*, ll. 6b-8a; 14-17; Swanton 1987 [1970]: 93).

[106] Szarmach (2009: 143) notes that the translator reproduces the alliteration of "illa infirmata habuerit tumorem *m*aximum sub *m*axilla" (HE IV.17.66-7) in his "heo hæfde micelne *sw*ile on hire *sw*eoran." (OEB 320.21-2, 'she had a large tumour on her neck'), and that the sw- alliteration is also repeated in "þa heo þrycced wæs 7 *sw*enced mid *sw*ile 7 sare hire *sw*iran" (OEB 322.15-6, 'when she was oppressed and afflicted with the tumour and pain in her neck').

appear at the end of two consecutive verse-lines, hence they do not alliterate with each other. Second, the two translators might have privileged a more "visual" rendering of the passage, playing on the redness of the tumour that now adorns Æthelthryth's neck in lieu of a necklace. With this in mind, *gimmas/gymstanas* might suggest the dark-red hues of garnets, which call to mind tumours more readily than might pearls, and which were also widely used in Anglo-Saxon jewellery. Pearls, on the other hand, are a type of ornament that is not attested in Britain until after the eleventh century.[107] This, in a way, is also confirmed by an article written in 1947 by Wendell Clausen, in which he argues that Bede's account of the excellent quality of British pearls in HE I.1 is nothing but a mistaken literary borrowing and as such without any historical value. Clausen (1947: 277-9) shows that Bede's literary source for the passage in question, Julius Solinus's *Collectanea Rerum Memorabilium*, wrongly reported a section of Pliny's *Natural History* (9, 116). What started as a negative comment on the British production of pearls in Pliny thus became a dazzling review in Solinus, and Bede relied on it as he was not acquainted with Book 9 of the *Natural History*. As Clausen notes,

> Even among the Romans of the first century A.D. it was common knowledge that the island's pearls were but a negligible source of revenue for the imperial *fiscus*. The Roman historian Tacitus speaks disdainfully of British pearls as being *subfusca ac liventia* […], and insinuates that they were in no way comparable to pearls gathered from the waters of the Persian Gulf. (Clausen 1947: 277)

It thus seems that Bede's knowledge of the existence of excellent pearls in British rivers is of a literary rather than practical nature. In view of this, then, it might be possible to argue that the translator of the OEB may have perceived the two references to pearls as belonging to two different types of accounts, the former of the literary type, and hence untouchable, the latter of the oral type, and hence subject to modifications if necessary. Moreover, idealised introductory depictions of a country do not necessarily have to be factual, and, in addition, the translator's depiction of Æthelthryth's jewels might in part have been prompted by what the translator himself considered as a necklace fit for a queen, or by what was in use at the time. In the case of the OEB, then, the transformation of pearls into gems could be explained as a combination of all these

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[107] I am very grateful to Prof. Leslie Webster, formerly Keeper of the Department of Prehistory and Europe at the British Museum, who kindly confirmed this to me in a private communication. E. Coatsworth and M. Pinder's *The Art of the Anglo-Saxon Goldsmith* (2002: 132-56) devotes an entire chapter to non-metallic additions to jewels. Pearls are never mentioned, whereas garnets are cited as widely used as non-metallic additions to jewellery. This is also confirmed by an earlier investigation conducted by Ronald Jessup (1974).

factors: garnets' visual resemblance to red tumours, the constraints of alliteration, and practicality. The first and third factors might also explain Ælfric's translational choice; perhaps the translation in the OEB might also be taken into account, since Ælfric's word choice is closer to the OEB than to Bede's wording.[108]

As regards the OEB, the section contains the following synonymic word pairs translating a single Latin word:

- *extento* (HE IV.17.74): *aþenedon heo 7 aslógon* (OEB 320.31, 'they stretched out and erected');

- *dilutura* (HE IV.17.77): *inþwean 7 gefeormian* (OEB 322.1-2 'to wash and clean');

- *tenuissima tunc cicatricis* (HE IV.17.84): *seo þynneste dolgswaeð 7 seo læsseste* (OEB 322.11-12, 'the thinnest and smallest scar');

- *premeretur* (HE IV.17.89): *þrycced wæs 7 swenced* (OEB 322.15, 'was oppressed and afflicted');

- *languoris* (HE IV.17.91): *þisse aðle 7 þisse untrymnesse* (OEB 322.18-9, 'of this disease and illness').

In addition, the adjectives *integrus* and *novus* in *integra apparuerunt et ita noua* (HE IV.17.86) are paired in the OE with a third adjective, *clæne*: *swa onwalge 7 swa neowe 7 swa clæne æteawdon* (OEB 322.13, '[the cloths] appeared as whole and new and clean'), thus creating a close succession of adjectives that expands the meaning of the source text. It should also be noted that "de collo rubor tumoris ardorque promineat" (HE IV.17.95) is re-phrased in such a way as to create a succession of two word pairs: *seo rednis 7 bryne þæs swiles 7 wærces* (OEB 322.24, 'the redness and burning of the tumour and pain'). The reference to pain is explicitly added, and does not have a corresponding expression in the source text; this of course adds emphasis to the depiction of the gravity of the disease.

In LoS 20, Ælfric reproduces the direct speech made by Æthelthryth but locates it earlier in the sermon, at LoS 20.54-60, following the chronological sequence of the events narrated rather than Bede's rearranged order.

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[108] Alcuin does not include this detail in his *Song of York*, whereas the *Liber Eliensis* follows the HE and mentions pearls rather than gems (Blake 1962: 38, Chapter 20).

**Her relics have healing powers (HE IV.17.95-114; OEB 322.25-324.12; LoS 20.107-19)**

The last section of Bede's chapter about Æthelthryth (HE IV.17.95-101) begins by describing the healing powers of Æthelthryth's relics, in particular of the linen cloths and of the first coffin that contained her body.[109]

The translator of the OEB reproduces this passage in detail and even adds a relative clause to specify which garments have healing powers, namely the ones that have been in contact with Æthelthryth's body for sixteen years and that were removed when the saint was placed in the new coffin.[110] Whereas Bede simply wrote "tactu indumentorum eorundem" (HE IV.17.96), the OEB has "mid þa gehrinenisse þara ilcena gegyrelena, þe mon of hire lichoman dyde" (OEB 322.25-6, 'by touching the same clothes that were taken from her body'). Ælfric also added a relative clause for the same purpose: "þæs reafes ænigne dæl . / þe heo mid bewunden wæs ." (LoS 20.115-6, 'any part of the robe in which she had been wound'). On four occasions in this chapter Bede makes reference to the garments worn by the abbess of Ely. The second time he uses the noun *linteamen* (HE IV.17.85), which denotes the linen cloths used to cover the body; the translator of the OEB follows his source text and translates accordingly with *scyte* (OEB 322.12, 'sheet, linen cloth'), which also suggests the idea of winding cloths. The other three references are about actual clothing, even when the abbess is already dead.[111] Ælfric, on the other hand, refers to proper clothing only when the abbess is living (LoS 20.44: "and wyllen weorode", 'and wore woollen clothes'); in the remaining three occurrences, he pairs a noun meaning 'clothing / garment' with the verb *bewindan*, 'to wind around / wrap', thus suggesting winding cloths rather than clothes:

> þa ge-wæda . þe heo bewunden wæs mid. (LoS 20.94)
> ['the clothes in which she had been wound']

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[109] "Contigit autem tactu indumentorum eorundem et daemonia ab obsessis effugata corporibus et infirmitates alias aliquoties esse curatas. Sed et loculum, in quo primo sepulta est, nonnullis oculos dolentibus saluti fuisse perhibent, qui cum suum caput eidem loculo apponentes orassent, mox doloris siue caliginis incommodum ab oculis amouerent" (HE IV.17.95-101).

[110] Hwæt þa gelomp mid þa gehrinenisse þara ilcena gegyrelena, þe mon of hire lichoman dyde, þætte deofulseoce men 7 monige oðerre untrymnesse oft gehælde wæron. Swelce eac seo þrúh, in þære heo ærest bebyrged wæs, monegum monna þe heora eagan sárgedon 7 hefigodon, wearð to hælo, þonne heo heora heafod 7 heora eagan to onheldon 7 him to gebædon: 7 sona seo ungescrepnes þæs sares 7 þære hefignesse from heora eagan gewat" (OEB 322.25-31).

[111] *Uestimentum* (HE IV.17.31) vs. *hrægl* (OEB 318.15, 'dress, clothing'); *indumentum* (HE IV.17.96) vs. *ge-gyrela* (OEB 322.25, 'dress, clothing'); *uestibus* (HE IV.17.102) vs. *hrægl* (OEB 322.33).

and mid niwum gewædum bewundon arwurðlice. (LoS 20.98)
['and wound it honourably with new garments'.]

þæs reafes ænigne dæl . / þe heo mid bewunden wæs. (LoS 20.116)
['any part of the robe in which she had been wound']

Ælfric does not explicitly mention that the cloths in which the abbess was buried were made of linen, as Bede and the OEB do (HE IV.17.85, "et linteamina omnia, quibus inuolutum erat corpus"; OEB 322.12-3: "ge eac ealle þa scytan, þe se lichoma mid bewunden wæs"). In LoS 20 we find the noun *ge-wæda*, which simply denotes a garment without specifying the material (Bosworth/Toller 1898-1972: 463). Skeat's facing-page translation of this was likely influenced by Bede, since he translates *ge-wæda* as 'linen clothes'. The contrast is quite significant, given that linen was exactly the type of fine fabric that Æthelthryth refused to wear the moment she embraced monastic life (HE IV.17.29-30: "ex quo monasterium petiit, numquam lineis sed solum laneis uestimentis uti uoluerit"). In the HE and in the OEB, one has the impression that Æthelthryth has reacquired her regal status after her death, and therefore her clothes are equally made of fine, noble fabric. On the other hand, as Christine Fell (1994: 24) has argued, one might also note that Æthelthryth's desire for humility and abnegation in her life is not respected after her death, when her body is adorned in fresh clothes, is taken out from the place of communal burial that she explicitly chose, and is given a stone sarcophagus instead of a plain wooden coffin. The contrast between the use of wool and linen is made explicit by Bede and by the translator of the OEB, but Ælfric silently omits it in his sermon.

The passage in the OEB is characterised by two word pairs used to translate a single Latin expression: the first translates the present participle *dolentibus* (HE IV.17.99) into two synonymous verbs, *sárgedon 7 hefigodon* (OEB 322.29 'suffered pain and were afflicted'); the second renders *suum caput* (HE IV.17.99) as *heora heafod 7 heora eagan* (OEB 322.29-30, 'their heads and their eyes'), and hence it is an additional word pair. The passage containing this doublet describes the miracles occurring at the burial place of Æthelthryth. Bede writes that eye diseases were miraculously healed by resting one's head in prayer on the coffin of the virgin queen. But the translator adds that the eyes must also touch the coffin. This addition could be explained in terms of consistency with what is previously mentioned in the text, but it could also be an explicit instruction: perhaps, for the healing powers of the holy coffin

to work properly, direct contact between the diseased eyes and the coffin is necessary, in which case Bede's reference to just resting one's head would be too generic. The head may also simply work as an inverted synecdoche for the eyes, though.

The translation of the Latin phrase "doloris siue caliginis" (HE IV.17.100) also deserves mention. In the OEB it becomes "seo ungescrepnes þæs sares 7 þære hefignesse" (OEB 322.30-1, 'the discomfort of the pain and of the affliction'): the idea of pain is amplified with a synonymic word pair and by way of compensation darkness is not mentioned. Ælfric also mentions the healing powers of Æthelthryth's garments and coffin, but in a much less detailed way, with no explicit reference to exorcisms or eye diseases.[112] At the same time, however, he also reinforces his statement by quoting Bede a second time as his source: "swa swa se lareow beda / on ðære bec sæde . þe he ge-sette be ðysum ." (LoS 20.118-9, 'as Bede the teacher said in the book which he wrote about her'). This section is preceded in the sermon by a reflection on Æthelthryth's virginity and on how this is proved by the incorruptibility God granted to her body. This comment is not derived from Bede's chapter, it is Ælfric's own addition, and it seems to address explicitly the fundamental themes of the sermon, as if it provided guidelines on how to interpret the whole piece:

> Hit is swutol þæt heo wæs ungewemmed mæden . / þonne hire lichama ne mihte formolsnian on eorðan . / and godes miht is geswutelod soðlice þurh hi . / þæt he mæg aræran ða for-molsnodon (sic) lichaman . / seðe hire lic heold hál on ðære byrgene / git oð þisne dæg . Sy him ðæs á wuldor. (LoS 20.107-13)
> ['It is clear that she was an untainted virgin, seeing that her body did not moulder in the earth, and God's might is truly manifested in her, that he can raise corruptible bodies, he kept her body whole in her grave even to this day. For this reason be everlasting glory to him'.]

The concluding lines of the chapter relate the preparation of Æthelthryth's body for its new coffin; Bede places particular emphasis on the fact that the coffin perfectly fitted the body, as if this were a miracle in itself (HE IV.17.104-7). The final paragraph provides geographical information about the location of Ely (HE IV.17.108-14).

This section is closely reproduced in the OEB and no major omissions or modifications can be found. Only once does the translator make use of a near-synonymic word pair to translate a single Latin word, and this occurs where the verb

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[112] "Þær wæron ge-hælede þurh ða halgan femnan / fela adlige menn . swa swa we gefyrn gehyrdon . / and eac ða þe hrepodon þæs reafes ænigne dæl . / þe heo mid bewunden wæs . wurdon sona hale . / and manegum eac fremode seo cyst micclum . / þe heo ærest on læg" (LoS 20.113-18).

*lauerunt* (HE IV.17.101) is translated as *þwogon 7 baðodon* (OEB 322.32, 'washed and bathed'). The same word pair also appears earlier in the text (OEB 318.20), thus showing that in this chapter the translator consistently renders the verb *lauo* with the same synonymic word pair. The implicit construct "nouis indutum uestibus" (HE IV.17.102) is translated with an explicit clause in the OE: "7 mid neowum hræglum gegyredon" (OEB 322.33, 'and clothed it in new robes'). At this point in the narrative Bede mentions that the coffin is still held in great veneration in the present (HE IV.17.103-4: "usque hodie in magna ueneratione habetur"); the translator of the OEB does not alter this reference, nor does he omit it, as he writes "7 þær nu gena oð þisne ondweardan dæg in micelre arwyrðnesse is hæfd" (OEB 322.35, 'and there it is still kept with great reverence to the present day'); considering that the translator generally tends to update the geographical and historical details that are not relevant or do not apply to the target context for which he is writing, this might be a sign that the cult of Æthelthryth was still thriving at the time when the translation was produced.

This passage is also maintained in Ælfric's sermon: the burial is made even more solemn by mentioning the singing that accompanies the body to its new resting place ("blyssigende mid sangum", LoS 20.99, 'rejoycing with hymns').[113] The purpose of this ritualised translation of the body is explicitly mentioned by Ælfric, where he explains that the body is still resting in the same place (following HE IV.17.103-4) "on *m*ycelre arwurðnysse . *m*annum to wundrunge ." (LoS 20.101, 'with great reverence, for men to marvel at')

The concluding paragraph describing the geographical position of Ely is also maintained in its entirety in the OEB. The translator even reproduces the use of first-person plural verbs, rather than distancing himself from the role of the narrator as he sometimes does; the interpolated clauses "ut diximus" (HE IV.17.110) and "ut praefati sumus" (HE IV.17.114) are thus respectively translated as "swa swa we cwædon" (OEB 324.7, 'as we previously said') and "swa swa we foresprecende wæron" (OEB 324.11-2, 'as we have already stated'). Ælfric's sermon, on the other hand, does not present any geographical description of the location of Ely, an unnecessary detail for Ælfric's Benedictine audience.

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[113] "And hi þwogon ða syððan þone sawl-leasan lichaman . / and mid niwum gewædum bewundon arwurðlice . / and bæron Into ðære cyrcan . blyssigende mid sangum . / and ledon hí on ðære þryh . þær ðær heo lið oð þis . / on mycelre arwurðnisse . mannum to wundrunge" (LoS 20.97-101).

**The concluding section of Ælfric's *Vita* (LoS 20.120-35)**

Ælfric concludes his *Vita* with an *exemplum* drawn from chapter 16 of the *Historia Monachorum in Aegypto* by Rufinus of Aquileia (Jackson 2000: 238). In this *exemplum* he briefly summarizes the story of a pious layman who had three sons and lived for thirty years with his wife in chastity, before finally entering a monastery, and from there went to heaven. Nothing is mentioned about the path undertaken by the wife after the separation.[114]

Several elements of this brief narrative stand out in clear contrast with Æthelthryth's *Vita*. First of all, Ælfric chooses to give prominence to an *exemplum* concerning a man to conclude a text he has just entirely devoted to a woman. Second, the social status of this man is clearly not as privileged as that of a queen who abandoned her husband in order to become an abbess; this episode addresses *woruld-menn* (LoS 20.120, 'laymen'), as Ælfric specifies. Third, this man had offspring and later lived in chastity in apparent accord with his wife, and only after thirty years did he become a monk: he did not refuse to fulfil the obligations of married life, as Æthelthryth did.

Paul Szarmach (2000) rightly observes that this coda, specifically addressing laymen and focusing the narrative on the man rather than the wife, may have been added by Ælfric with his lay patrons in mind:

> For his male patrons Æðelmær and Æðelweard, to whom the *Lives of Saints* is dedicated and for whom he offers explicitly monastic saints, the message seems pointed enough, and the omission of mention of the wife emphasizes the importance of chaste husbands all the more. (Szarmach 2000: 579)

It is quite possible that Ælfric added this final aside in response to the non-monastic, male members of his audience, so as to provide them with an *exemplum* they could more easily relate to,[115] rather than the extraordinary life of a virgin queen turned

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[114] "Oft woruld-menn eac heoldon swa swa us bec secgað / heora clænnysse on synscipe for cristes lufe / swa swa we mihton reccan gif ge rohton hit to gehyrenne . / We secgað swa-ðeah be sumum ðegne . / se wæs þryttig geara mid his wife on clænnysse . / þry suna he gestrynde . and hi siððan buta / ðrittig geara wæron wunigende butan hæmede . / and fela ælmyssan worhton . oð þæt se wer ferde / to munuclicere drohtnunge . and drihtnes englas / comon eft on his forð-siðe . and feredon his sawle / mid sange to heofonum . swa swa us secgað bec . / Manega bysna synd on bocum be swylcum . / hu oft weras and wíf wundorlice drohtnodon . / and on clænnysse wunodon . to wuldre þam hælende . / þe þa clænnysse astealde . crist ure hælend . / þam is á wurðmynt . and wuldor on ecnysse" (LoS 20.120-35).

[115] Catherine Cubitt (2009) underlines that Æthelweard and Æthelmær's commission of the Lives of Saints "is suggestive that they may have adopted forms of monkish devotion into their personal piety.

abbess, a much more difficult model to follow and perhaps also to understand. In this sense, the coda might also serve another purpose. As Robert K. Upchurch (2004) points out, Ælfric has a very orthodox view of the duties involved in marriage as opposed to monastic and clerical celibacy. Following Augustine, he considers sex in marriage as mandatory for the sake of procreation, but taking this precept further than Augustine himself did, he also thinks that once the female enters the menopause, intercourse is no longer permitted and couples should live in chastity (Upchurch 2004: 49 and ff.), thus making Augustine's recommendation mandatory. According to Ælfric, permanent abstinence should be observed within marriage, and not simply temporary abstinence (Upchurch 2004: 48). Moreover, separation of a married couple for the sake of monastic life can only be undertaken with the consent of both parties, as mentioned for example in Theodore's *Penitential* (Lazzari 1998: 611). The coda to the life of Æthelthryth gives this exact picture.

Phillip Pulsiano (1999) proposes a somewhat harmonizing interpretation of this *exemplum* and of the contrasting diversity with which the main motifs of Æthelthryth's *Vita* are treated. He writes:

> Having provided an extended example of female sanctity, Ælfric broadens his frame to include a male audience, startling them into the recognition that while they stand apart from the experiences of the woman and the saint, they nevertheless can share a common bond in chastity. (Pulsiano 1999: 40)

However, I think that Pulsiano's reading of this *exemplum* does not fully account for the sense of implied criticism of Æthelthryth's conduct that seems to emerge between the lines. As Peter Jackson (2000) and Loredana Lazzari (2006) have shown, with this brief counter-narrative Ælfric offers his audience an *exemplum* of *chastity*, and not virginity, within the bonds of marriage, something both St Paul and Augustine described as the ideal conduct for married couples. Moreover, Jackson (2000: 240 and ff.) has shown that Ælfric made his ideas about marriage the object of several homilies, and even though virginity is by far the most desirable condition, Ælfric writes that once the matrimonial path is undertaken, man and wife should live according to the Christian

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They were not alone in this. The vision of Earl Leofric of Mercia (d. 1057) describes his nightly prayer vigil, his attendance at mass twice a day and his recitation of the office." (Cubitt 2009: 183). Their commitment to monastic values might partly explain why Æthelmær withdrew from public life to the newly-founded monastery at Eynsham around the year 1005 and spent seven to eight years there, even though the retirement may have been caused by loss of favour at court. (Jones 1998: 9-15).

precepts that regulate it, and that includes having children and leading a chaste life afterwards. As Jackson (2000: 246) points out,

> It is worth noting, perhaps, that though in these discussions Ælfric in no way claims that lifelong virginity is impossible for the laity, he does tend to view it as the special prerogative of priests and monastics. Historians of medieval marriage have sometimes argued that as celibacy came to be ever more strictly enforced on the clergy, so marriage was seen, by contrast, as the proper state for the laity. In the course of the 10th and 11th centuries, the male clergy, as it were, 'colonized' celibacy; and even in the few chaste marriages to be given ecclesiastical approval, it was a man, and a royal man at that – such as Henry II of Germany, or Edward the Confessor – whose role was celebrated at the expense of his wife's.

Seen in this light, then, Æthelthryth's *Vita* seems to offer quite a controversial picture.[116] Whereas Bede celebrates the paradox of a virgin who became the mother of many virgins, Ælfric does not seem to be at ease with this scenario as it goes against his views regarding marriage and chastity. Yet, at the same time, the life of Æthelthryth marks the blessed beginning of a monastery that had recently been refounded in the wake of the Benedictine reform. Æthelthryth was then "a difficult and inescapable figure for him" (Jackson 2000: 252). For this reason I agree with Jackson's interpretation of the added coda as a sort of compromise (Jackson 2000: 238), inserted by Ælfric to balance the message of the piece and remind his audience that Æthelthryth is a blessed exception, but that in order to follow the recommended norm, married people should behave quite differently from her, and much more like the *exemplum* offered by the coda.[117]

Ælfric was not alone in being not quite at ease with Æthelthryth's story, as Alcuin also slightly modified the events in his narrative about the holy abbess, included in his *Song of York*, to accommodate the more conventional view of a virgin spouse who convinces her royal husband to live a chaste, spiritual marriage, following the example of St Cecilia, rather than taking the veil and entirely neglecting her conjugal duties[118]:

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[116] As Stephanie Hollis (1992: 73) points out, "As a hagiographic celebration of a married woman rejecting both the power of a husband and the marriage bond itself, the exemplary thrust of the life of Æthelthryth is in direct opposition to ecclesiastical ambitions regarding the institution of marriage. Somewhat irregular in relation to the orthodoxy of the time in which it was formulated, the life of Æthelthryth became increasingly awkward as an *exemplum*.

[117] Interestingly, Gretsch (2005: 227) argues that Ælfric might have added the coda to silently acknowledge two other female saints of the Ely community, Seaxburh and Eormenhild (Æthelthryth's sister and niece respectively), who had been wives and mothers before taking the veil.

[118] On the other hand, the account of Æthelthryth's life contained in the *Old English Martyrology* maintains the main points of the narrative as they can be found in the HE, albeit in a very concise form (Kotzor 1981: 2.127-9).

> Nam licet illa foret thalamo coniuncta superbo, / regia bis senos pariter iam sponsa per annos, / intemerata tamen permansit virgo per aevum, / inter iura thori vincens incendia carnis. / Virginis alma fides, regis patientia mira! / Vincitur hic precibus, sed amore Tonantis et illa; / ambo sacris Fidei ferventes ignibus intus, / permansere simul coniunx cum coniuge casti. (Godman 1982: 756-63)[119]

As we know from Bede's account, Æthelthryth never really attempted to convert her husband to a purely spiritual marriage; moreover, considering the dynastic issue it would appear as a very unlikely scenario. But this is Alcuin's way to deal with this controversial figure. Ælfric, on the other hand, takes a different road and adds the coda about an exemplary chaste marriage. According to Jackson (2000: 257), he had two reasons for doing that:

> First, to reassert that the proper function of the laity – both men and women – is to marry, and that the true purpose of marriage is childbearing, not lifelong abstinence. Second, to affirm that any decision to renounce intercourse after procreation must be the free choice of both parties.

In doing this, Ælfric does not diminish the significance of Æthelthryth's story and of the miracles that take place through her relics, but an attentive, learned audience (especially one familiar with dynastic issues at court, as his patrons were) may have picked on Ælfric's subtle problematization.[120]

**Concluding remarks**

Bede is undoubtedly very fond of this saintly figure, as Wallace-Hadrill has pointed out (1988: 160). Æthelthryth is the closest England has to the early Christian martyrs. A woman who manages to follow her calling to serve God, going against the married life male authority had destined her to, bears a striking resemblance to the *Passiones* of the young women who became the first martyrs. Her story provides the audience with a fitting example of what the ideal of martyrdom has evolved into: the

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[119] Alcuin devotes ll. 751-85 to a summary of Bede's account of the life of the holy abbess. See also Hollis (1992: 73).

[120] "When Ælfric in the late tenth century was writing his Lives of Saints for his lay audience, he had in mind not a single homogeneous audience (for one thing he specifically addressed both readers and hearers) but a multiple audience with differing backgrounds and experiences, and varying sensitivities to language that would have enabled some to perceive merely the more obvious and others also the more subtle aspects of his hortatory message" (Waterhouse 1996: 333).

age of persecutions against Christians is over, and so is the privilege to bear testimony to God by giving up one's life in His name. Spiritual martyrdom becomes then the highest form of testimony, and giving up one's life by sacrificing it to God in a monastery acquires the same value as that of the painful deaths experienced by martyrs at the time of the persecutions (Benvenuti 2005: 49). Such an illustrious example of self-denial and complete devotion to God further legitimizes Bede's depiction of England as belonging to the universal Church; in this sense it is connected to the story of the only British martyr, St Alban, and creates a sense of continuity. The idea of spiritual martyrdom is further enhanced thanks to the depiction of the abbess's very strict asceticism, something that may also be reminiscent of the earliest and purest examples of Christianity. Moreover, Bede describes Æthelthryth as a *mater uirgo*, thus almost attributing Marian qualities to the holy abbess and elevating her to an even higher dimension of sanctity. What Bede is doing in the HE is acknowledging the establishment of a cult.[121] This can be seen in the rearrangement of the chronological order of the narrative, which allows Bede to give prominence to the elements that he deemed most important. So Æthelthryth dies two deaths, and the discovery of her incorrupt body is mentioned three times, with the last one being a detailed account of the elevation. As Thacker (2002: 64) observes concerning Bede's life of Æthelthryth, elevation and translation of a saintly body are the key moments that set the seal upon a cult.[122]

The OEB does not alter the picture offered by Bede, on the contrary it faithfully reproduces the source text as well as the scope of Bede's hagiographical narrative. In fact, Bede's emphasis on the passages devoted to Æthelthryth's illness and to the elevation of her incorrupt body is further enhanced by the increased number of word pairs that rhetorically expands those key moments.

Ælfric also acknowledges the cult of Æthelthryth with his *Vita*, even though the abbess of Ely provides a controversial model and he is compelled to insert the coda as a counterweight. However, I think that Ælfric also tries to balance the paradoxes of this narrative also from within, and not just by appending the final *exemplum* about chaste

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[121] As Susan Ridyard (1988: 5) rightly points out, "Cults did not simply develop: they were developed. And their development owed less to divine acknowledgement than to successful advertising".
[122] Thacker also underlines that there is a connection between the rites of saint-making at Ely with those of Gaul, and in particular of Faremoûtiers (Thacker 2002: 54-60).

marriage. He does this by downplaying Æthelthryth's agency and stressing the role played by God's will in maintaining her virginity within marriage (Szarmach 2000: 579). Æthelthryth's lack of agency is very clear also in Bede's narrative, but, as previously observed, she does acquire a more assertive role by avoiding the consummation of not one, but two marriages. In Ælfric's *Vita*, on the other hand, even this element of the narrative is presented in a disempowering way. It is not Æthelthryth who manages to remain a virgin - God decides for her. By repeatedly marking God's agency through the first, controversial stages of Æthelthryth's life, when she turns away from her marital obligations and becomes a paradoxical model of saintly behaviour, Ælfric seems to attempt the ultimate form of compromise. What happened to Æthelthryth may be against all Christian precepts with regard to marriage, but it is God's will, because "he mæg don eall þæt he wile" (LoS 20.11, 'he can do all that he wishes to do'). Æthelthryth certainly represents a difficult saint to deal with for Ælfric, one whose *Vita* he feels it necessary to juxtapose with an *exemplum* that fulfils all the precepts that he advocates from the pulpit. To some extent, Æthelthryth fails to exemplify his ideal, so that he has to provide his audience with a more suitable model. But by stressing God's agency at the beginning of the abbess's spiritual path, and consequently seeing Æthelthryth's desire to turn away from her marriage vows as the fulfilment of His will rather than her unchristian, unwifely behaviour, Ælfric provides the story with a more subtle form of compromise.

# CHAPTER 3 – OSWALD

Bede devotes nearly half of Book III of the HE to the life and post-mortem miracles of Oswald, the holy King of Northumbria.[123] It is with the stories of the battles and the faith of this holy man that Bede shifts the focus of the HE from Kent to Northumbria, thus paving the way for the account of the Synod of Whitby, summoned by Oswald's brother and successor Oswiu, and for the reconciliation of the Roman and Celtic Churches, which was a matter of burning interest for Bede. Eleven chapters in Book III of the HE narrate Oswald's life, his devotion, his defeat against Penda, the heathen King of Mercia, and the miracles performed through variuos relics.[124]

Before plunging into the three accounts of Oswald examined here, it may be useful to summarize the main events in his life. Oswald was born in the 7th century, when Northumbria did not yet exist as such and the territory was divided into two kingdoms, Bernicia and Deira. He was the son of Æthelfrith, the king of Bernicia, who, for the first time, annexed the kingdom of Deira and thus ruled over the whole of Northumbria. When his father was killed by the Deirans, the young Oswald fled to the kingdom of Dál Riada in western Scotland and then spent 17 years in exile amongst the Irish people of that kingdom (Stancliffe 1995: 33). After the death of his father's slayer Edwin, Oswald managed to win back his kingdom by fighting against the pagan Cædwallon; he ruled for eight years, during which he established Christianity in his kingdom. In 642 Oswald was killed in battle against the Mercians and the British (Stancliffe 1995: 33). His head and arms were cut off and hung on stakes by his slayers. According to Bede, the arms were preserved at Bamburgh and the head was buried at Lindisfarne, whereas the remaining bones were buried at Bardney (Blair 2002: 549-50). In the 12th century, Symeon of Durham writes that the head was taken by the monks from Lindisfarne, together with Cuthbert's coffin, when they left the monastery.[125] The head of Oswald is traditionally believed to have rested in Cuthbert's coffin in Durham

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[123] In addition, Bede also mentions a miracle performed through the intercession of King Oswald, in which the members of a monastery are saved from the plague, with the exception of a young boy who has a vision of the Apostles before dying (HE IV.14). Ælfric does not include this miracle in his narrative.
[124] These are chapters 1 to 3, 5 to 7, and 9 to 13; chapters 4 and 8 do not deal with Oswald.
[125] On the migration of Oswald's relics, see also Folz (1980).

Cathedral since 998, and the iconography of St Cuthbert carrying the head of the holy king in one hand reflects this belief. When Cuthbert's tomb was opened, in 1827 and 1899, a second skull (with no body, but with a large cut on it) was indeed found; according to Richard N. Bailey (1995: 195-209), despite the existence of other Continental claimants to Oswald's skull, the one in Durham does seem entitled to authenticity.

Bede's written sources on Oswald are unknown. In the narrative he often refers to oral sources, some of whom are still living at the time of Bede's writing, but he never mentions a written account of any kind. As Stancliffe (1995: 35) points out, "much of Bede's information on Oswald will have come from ecclesiastical cult sites with an interest in stories portraying Oswald as a saint" – in other words, Bede's account of Oswald was not only biased by his own intention to portray a saintly king, but it may also have been biased by his sources, who might also have had an agenda of their own. Bede is undoubtedly a very accurate historian, but no historian is exempt from having an agenda, and Bede's agenda in this case is clearly that of portraying the life of the holy king who put Northumbria on its glorious path to Christianity. As Tugène (1976: 121) and Stancliffe (1995: 61) observe,

> Bede concentrates on Oswald's possession of four Christian virtues: his faith, his humility; his generosity to the poor and strangers; and his concern to establish and extend the church. (Stancliffe 1995: 61)

Besides the HE, there can be found other sources that deal with Oswald and his life; Stancliffe (1995: 34) mentions Adomnán's *Life of Columba*, as well as Irish and Welsh annalistic entries, but Bede's account is by far the most detailed. Two of the earliest mentions of Oswald dependent on the Bedan narrative are those contained in Alcuin's *Song of York*[126] and in the *Old English Martyrology*[127] (Biggs *et al.* 2001: 366-8). But Oswald's legacy was fruitful in particular on the Continent and in the later Middle Ages, mostly in Germany.[128]

The events narrated by Bede can be summarized as follows:

> Bede gives an account of the rulers of Bernicia and Deira after the death of Edwin, of how both of them rejected Christendom, and of how they were killed by Cædwalla king of the Britons. The tyranny of Cædwalla over the people of Northumbria is put to an end

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[126] Godman (1982: 236-506; 1600-48).
[127] Kotzor (1981: 2.171-72).
[128] On the dissemination of the cult of St Oswald, see the Jarrow Lecture devoted to the subject by Peter Clemoes (1983), as well as A. M. Jansen's more recent contribution (1996).

by Oswald. A cross is erected by Oswald and his soldiers before the battle against Cædwalla; Oswald prays for protection and victory, and the enemy is defeated. Later, Bothelm's broken arm is healed by the moss taken from Oswald's cross.

Oswald gives the island of Lindisfarne to Bishop Aidan in order to establish his episcopal see and Aidan's missionary activity proves very successful. Bede also tells of the unsuccessful attempt at the evangelization of Northumbria made by Aidan's predecessor.

On Easter day, Oswald and Aidan are sitting at the same table, when Oswald is informed that a multitude of poor have no food. The king then orders that all the food of the Easter banquet be taken to the poor.

The preaching of Bishop Birinus and the conversion of the West Saxons are narrated, to which Oswald also contributed. After nine years, Oswald is killed by the Mercians at the battle of Maserfelth. The spot where he is killed miraculously heals sick people and animals. Bede relates three of the miracles performed through the soil at Maserfelth: that of the sick horse, that of the paralytic girl, and that of the house in flames. Three further miraculous events connected to Oswald's relics are then described. The first concerns the translation of Oswald's bones to the monastery of Bardney. In the second miracle, a sick boy is cured by resting on Oswald's tomb. The last miracle tells the story of an unworthy Irish scholar who is given a second chance at a pious life through Oswald's relics.

The OEB reproduces the entire narrative in detail. Ælfric relies entirely on this large section of the HE for his sermon in honour of St Oswald, which is contained in his third collection of homilies, the *Lives of Saints* (LoS 26). Given the large amount of source material at his disposal, Ælfric necessarily makes excellent use of the stylistic feature for which he is often remembered, his *brevitas*. As will become obvious in the following sections of this chapter, Ælfric summarizes frequently and freely makes omissions; he mostly avoids political or historical asides that have little or no relevance for the scope of his work and for his audience, but he also omits two miracle stories out of a total of eight. He also rearranges the events to have a more chronological sequence than is found in the HE.

The table below shows the correspondences between Ælfric's sermon and the chapters of the HE used by him as sources. The elements in square brackets in the right-hand column are those not included by Ælfric, and blank spaces in the same column are for those sections of the sermon in which Ælfric does not rely on the HE at all. As can be seen, very little material in the sermon is completely independent from Bede's HE:

| LoS 26 | HE III.1-13 |
|---|---|
| ll. 1-3: introduction | - |
| ll. 4-16: exile | III.1 |
| ll. 17-44: cross; miracle | III.2 |
| ll. 45-69: Aidan | III.3.1-32 |
| - | [III.3.33-52: conversion; Iona] |
| ll. 70-86: Aidan's conduct | III.5.1-39 |
| - | [III.5.40-64: Aidan's election] |
| ll. 87-108: Easter banquet; relics | III.6.1-29 |
| - | [III.6.30-5: Bernicia and Deira] |
| ll. 109-13: praise of O's conduct | - |
| ll. 114-8: O's pious life | III.12.21-4 |
| ll. 119-43: Birinus; Cynegisl | III.7.1-26 |
| - | [III.7.27-76: Cenwealh] |
| ll. 144-57: O's death | III.9.1-12 |
| ll. 158-75: O's last words; relics | III.12.24-36 |
| ll. 176-99: translation at Bardney | III.11.1-32 |
| - | [III.11.33-78: exorcism] |
| ll. 200-20: miracles at Maserfelth | III.9.13-52 |
| ll. 221-38: miracle of house on fire | III.10 |
| ll. 239-68: O's fame; Irish miracle | III.13 |
| ll. 269-71: comment | - |
| - | [III.12.1-16: miracle of sick boy] |
| ll. 272-76: O's merits | III.12.16-9 |
| ll. 277-88: conclusion | - |

## Oswald becomes king (HE III.1; OEB 152.5-154.18; LoS 26.4-16)

Bede gives an account of the rulers of Bernicia and Deira after the death of Edwin, of how both of them rejected Christendom, and of how they were killed by Cædwalla king of the Britons, *impia manu sed iusta ultione* (HE III.1.18-9). After one year, the tyranny of Cædwalla over the people of Northumbria is put to an end by Oswald, who is exiled among the Picts during Edwin's reign.

HE III.1.1-17 (OEB 152.5-20)

The first two sentences of the chapter in the HE are very elaborate from a syntactic point of view. The translator of the OEB does not attempt to reproduce the complex succession of clauses of the source text; instead of mirroring the syntax of the Latin, he operates a redistribution of the information conveyed by the Latin:

114

At interfecto in pugna Eduino, suscepit pro illo regnum Deirorum, de qua prouincia ille generis prosapiam et primordia regni habuerat, filius patrui eius Aelfrici uocabulo Osric, qui ad predicationem Paulini fidei erat sacramentum imbutus. Porro regnum Berniciorum (nam in has duas prouincias gens Nordanhymbrorum antiquitus diuisa erat) suscepit filius Aedilfridi, qui de illa prouincia generis et regni originem duxerat, nomine Eanfrid. (HE III.1.1-8)

Ða Eadwine þa wæs on þam gefeohte ofslegen, þa feng to Dera rice his fæderan sunu Ælfrices, Osric wæs haten, forþon of þære mægþe he Eadwine hæfde cneorisse 7 rices fruman. Se Ósric þurh Sce Paulines lare þæs bisceopes mid þam gerynum Cristes geleafan gelæred wæs. Þonne feng tó Beornica rice Æþelfriþes sunu, Eanfrið wæs haten, forþon he wæs þare mægþe cyningcynnes. In þas twa mægþa Norþanhymbra ðeod iu geara todæled wæs. (OEB 152.5-12)
['When Edwin was killed in the battle, then succeeded to the throne of Deira the son of his uncle Ælfric, called Osric, because Edwin was by origin from that family and there first reigned. Osric had been instructed in the mysteries of Christ's faith by the teaching of Bishop Paulinus. Then the son of Æthelfrith, called Eanfrith, came to the throne of Bernicia because he belonged to the royal family of that people. The people of Northumbria was of old divided into these two tribes'.]

The ablative absolute opening the Latin chapter (*At […] Eduino*) is transformed into a temporal clause (*Ða […] ofslegen*), and this is immediately followed by the main clause and its apposition (*þa feng […] haten*); the interpolated relative clause of the source text (*de qua […] habuerat*) is moved to the end of the sentence (*forþon […] fruman*), and the closing relative clause of the Latin (*qui […] imbutus*) is transformed into a new sentence in the Old English (*Se Ósric […] wæs*). The same treatment is given to the second, long Latin sentence, in which the main clause is interrupted by two interpolated clauses (*nam […] erat*; *qui […] duxerat*). The clauses are reorganized in a more linear manner in the Old English: the main clause (*Þonne […] sunu*) is followed by two clauses (*Eanfrið […] cyningcynnes*), whereas the remaining Latin interpolation in brackets is transformed into a new sentence (*In þas […] wæs*).

Bede mentions the son of Æthelfrith, Eanfrith,who came to the throne after his father (HE III.1.8-9), and the same happens in the OEB (152.10). Eanfrith was exiled to Scotland with his brothers Oswy and Oswald during the reign of Edwin,[129] and Bede reports this fact, without naming the three brothers explicitly, but instead by using a plural noun and a verb in the plural:

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[129] Stancliffe (1995: 40) stresses the significance that Oswald's long exile might have had on his education, considering he spent among the Picts seventeen years of his life. She underlines how Irish culture may have offered a different model of kingship from that of the Anglo-Saxons, as Irish leaders were also expected to cultivate moral, non-martial qualities that did not necessarily represent a staple of Anglo-Saxon kingship prior to their conversion to Christianity.

Siquidem tempore toto qui regnauit Eduini, *filii praefati* Regis Aedilfridi, qui ante illum regnauerat, cum magna nobilium iuuentute apud Scottos siue Pictos *exulabant*, […]. (HE III.1.8-10)

In the OEB, on the other hand, only Eanfrith is explicitly mentioned and not his brothers:

7 eallre þære tide þe Eadwine cyning wæs, þæt he se Eanfrið Æþelfriþes sunu mid micelre æþelinga geogeðe ge mid Scottum ge mid Pehtum wracodon; (OEB 152.12-3)
['and during the time of Edwin's reign, Eanfrith the son of Æthelfrith was in exile among the Scots and the Picts with a large group of young nobles'.]

The verb is still in the plural because the subject of the sentence also includes the *æþelinga geogeðe* (OEB 152.13, 'group of young nobles') who were exiled with Eanfrith, but the OEB clearly makes reference to only one of the sons, the one who took the throne immediately after the end of the exile and who was explicitly mentioned in the text just a few lines above.

The OEB presents a simplification of the Latin periphrastic construction describing the baptism they received "ibique ad doctrinam Scottorum cathecizati et *baptismatis sunt gratia recreati*" (HE III.1.11-2): "7 þær þurh Scotta lare Cristes geleafan onfengon, *7 gefullade wæron*" (OEB 152.14-5, 'and there through the teaching of the Scots they received Christ's faith and were baptized'), in which the rhetorical expansion is left out. In this passage we could say that the translator shows a general tendency to repeat names and make lineage connections clear to his readers; an example of this can be found in the translation of "Qui ut mortuo rege inimico" (HE III.1.12), which becomes "7 sona þæs þe Eadwine ófslegen wæs hiora feond" (OEB 152.15-6, 'and as soon as their enemy Edwin was slain'); here the translator replaces *rege inimico* with the name of the enemy, Edwin. In this way the sentence is undoubtedly clearer. The passage is also characterised by a slight rephrasing of the verbal cluster "patriam sunt redire permissi" (HE III.1.12-3), which is translated more directly as "þa hwurfan hi ham to hiora eðle" (OEB 152.16, 'they returned home to their native land'). In the Old English, the exiled are not *given permission* to go back, they simply do it; one should also note that *patriam* is asserted twice in the Old English: *ham to hiora eðle* (OEB 152.16, 'home to their land'). Another simplification of the Latin takes place immediately after this, where the translator omits the apposition and the ensuing relative clause in the sentence "accepit *primus eorum, quem diximus*, Eanfrid regnum Berniciorum" (HE III.1.13) and simply writes "7 se Eanfrið feng to Beornica rice"

(OEB 152.16-7, 'and Eanfrith ascended to the throne of Bernicia'). It might be supposed that the translator preferred to have the actors in the scene explicitly named for the sake of clarity, rather than using periphrastic appositions that might simply confuse the reader. In the following sentence,

> Qui uterque rex, ut *terreni tegni* infulas sortitus est, sacramenta *regni caelestis*, quibus initiatus erat, anathematizando prodidit, ac se priscis idolatriae sordibus polluendum perdendumque restituit. (HE III.1.14-7)

> Óno hwæt æghwæþer þara cyninga, syðþan hi rice hæfdon, forletan þa geryno þæs heofonlican rices mid þam hi gehalgede wæron, 7 eft hwurfan to þam ealdan unsyfernessum deofolgylda. 7 hi sylfe þurh þæt forluran. (OEB 152.17-20)
> ['Lo, both kings, when they ascended the throne, relinquished the sacraments of the kingdom of heaven through which they were sanctified, and went back to the old impurity of idolatry, and by that they ruined themselves'.]

the translator omits the explicit contrast between *terreni regni* and *regni caelestis* (HE III.1.14-5) by leaving out the translation of the adjective *terrenus*. Rather, he adds emphasis to the text by translating "quibus initiatus erat" (referred to baptism HE III.1.15,) as "mid þam hi gehalgede wæron" (OEB 152.18-9, 'through which they were sanctified'): Eanfrith and his retainers were not simply *initiated* to the sacraments of the heavenly kingdom, they were *sanctified* by them. Added emphasis can also be seen, in my opinion, in the translation of the gerundive *perdendumque* (HE III.1.17) as a separate relative clause at the end of the sentence: "7 hi sylfe þurh þæt forluran" (OEB 152.20, 'and by that they ruined themselves').


HE III.1.17-37 (OEB 152.21-154.18)

The translator maintains the openly negative judgement expressed by Bede concerning the apostasy of the two sovereigns:

> Nec mora utrumque rex Brettonum Caedualla *impia manu sed iusta ultione* peremit. Et primo quidem proxima aestate Osricum, dum se in oppido municipio temerarie obsedisset, erumpens subito cum suis omnibus imparatum cum toto exercitu deleuit. (HE III.1.18-22)

> 7 sona butan yldincge æghwæþerne Cadwalla Bretta cyning *mid arleasre hond, ac hwæðre mid rihte wrace* heo kwealde. Ond ærest þy neahstan sumera in municep þære byrig on ungearone þone Osric mid his fyrd becwom, 7 hine mid ealle his weorode adilgade. (OEB 152.21-154.1)
> ['And at once without delay, Cædwalla king of the Britons killed both, with impious hand, though with just vengeance. And first the following summer, in the town of Municep, he came with his army on Osric by surprise and destroyed him and his entire army'.]

It should also be noted that the Latin "in oppido municipio" (HE III.1.20)[130] is misinterpreted by the translator, who reads the Latin *municipium* as a proper name (Plummer 1896 vol. II: 121; Lapidge 2008-2010 v. 2: 492) and therefore translates "in municep þære byrig" (OEB 152.23, 'in the town of Municep'). The translator also adds the noun *fyrd* 'army' when translating the Latin "cum suis omnibus" (HE III.1.21), "mid his fyrd" (OEB 152.24, 'with his army'), probably for reasons of clarity.

Further on the text presents a problematic translation. In the passage

> Dein cum anno integro prouincias Nordanhymbrorum non ut rex uictor possideret, sed quasi tyrannus saeuiens disperderet ac *tragica* caede dilaceraret, tandem Eanfridum inconsulte ad se cum XII lectis militibus postulandae pacis gratia uenientem simili sorte damnauit. (HE III.1.22-6)

the adjective *tragicus* (HE III.1.24) is translated as *traisc*:

> Æfter þon he eall ger onwalg Norþanhymbra mægðe ahte, nales swa swa sigefæst cyning, ac swa swa leodhata, þæt he grimsigende forleas ond heo on gelicnesse þæs *traiscan* wæles wundade. Þa æt nyhstan cwom Eanfrið buton geþeahte, his weotena twelfa sum, to him, þæt he wolde sibbe 7 friðes wilnian. (OEB 154.1-5)
> ['After ruling over the whole of Northumbria for a year, not as a victorious king, but as a tyrant, he furiously destroyed it and wounded it as if with tragic carnage. Then at last Eanfrith came without thought to him with twelve nobles, seeking for peace and alliance'.]

All manuscripts present the reading *traisc* except for manuscript B, where the form *traiscan* has been emended with the superscript *troianiscam*.

Waite (1984: 96) considers the adjective *traisc* as a hapax; Bosworth/Toller (1898-1972: 1012) confirm this analysis, and a search conducted in the Old English Corpus also shows that the only other occurrence of this adjective also belongs to the OEB. This second occurrence can also be found in a passage describing the ravages of a king, but whereas the above mentioned description of a tragic battle refers to the British (and hence pagan) King Cædwalla, the second time the adjective is used to qualify the ravages of Cædwalla of Wessex, a Christian king, in the Isle of Wight:

> Postquam ergo Caedualla regno potitus est Geuissorum, cepit et insulam Vectam, quae eatenus erat tota idolatriae dedita, ac *stragica* caede omnes indigenas exterminare ac suae prouinciae homines pro his substituere contendit, […]. (HE IV.14.99-102)

> Æfter þon þa þe Ceadwala wæs gemægenad 7 gestrongod on Westseaxna rice, þa geeode he eac 7 onfeng With þæt ealond, þæt eal wæs oð þa tid deofolgildum geseald. Ond he gelice þy *troiscan* wæle ealle þa londbigengan wolde ut amærian 7 his agenra leoda monnum gesettan. (OEB 306.18-22)

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[130] This is a reference to York according to Plummer (1896 vol. II: 121), Colgrave / Mynors (1969: 213), and Lapidge (2008-2010 v. 2: 492).

['Afterwards, when Cædwalla became powerful and strengthened himself in the kingdom of Wessex, he conquered and took the Isle of Wight, which until then was completely given to idolatry. And he like the Trojan [?] disaster wanted to exterminate all the inhabitants and replace them with men of his own people'.]

As Lapidge (2008-2010 v. 2: 610) notes, the Latin *stragicus* is present in all manuscripts of the HE, but this adjective is not attested elsewhere. Lapidge and Plummer (1896 II: 229) therefore tend to regard it as a mistake and suggest that the correct reading may be *tragicus*. The Old English translator renders *(s)tragicus* as *troisc*, thus supporting the hypothesis that the Latin adjective may have been misspelt. Bosworth/Toller (1898-1972: 1012) see the two forms, *traisc* and *troisc*, as related, and analyse them as an adjective formed from a proper name. As pointed out by Waite (1984: 71), the suffix *–isc* is widely used in the formation of ethnic adjectives. The ethnic interpretation ('Trojan') seems to be supported by the superscript emendation found in manuscript B (*troianiscam*), previously mentioned.

In her study of the OEB, Sharon Rowley (2011: 92-7) underlines the ambiguities surrounding the spelling of this adjective in the manuscripts of the OEB, which, as previously mentioned, is by no means homogeneous – but always connected to 'Trojan', as also suggested by Bosworth/Toller (1898-1972: 1012), and she draws attention to the interpretive implications connected with the use of this adjective by the translator. Given that the adjective is used to describe the ravages of a British king in Book III and those of the King of Wessex in Book IV, Rowley (2011: 96) argues that

> representing tyranny and slaughter on the part of kings both heathen and Christian, British and English, as 'like the Trojan slaughter' suggests a reading of history that does not fall neatly along a trajectory whereby a Chosen people justly displaces the unworthy natives.

In other words, Rowley is arguing here that the reading of salvation history on the part of the translator of the OEB might be at variance with that of Bede. She concludes that the occurrences analysed suggest

> that scribes as readers, and Bede's English translator himself interpreted these moments as being 'like the Trojan disaster'. By doing so, they reflect not merely a glimpse of Classical learning, but a pointed simile that interrupts the narrative of salvation history. Although these references do not seem to tap into any alternate myth of origins, they call attention to the continued, devastating warfare between the tribes living in Britain. And rather than clarifying any confusion between the virtue of Cædwalla, the English king of Wessex and the tyranny of Cædwallon, the British king who killed Oswald, it collapses that difference. (Rowley 2011: 97)

The point is, in my opinion, that the difference collapses in the HE as well, and not solely in the OEB, and that therein may lie be a more simple explanation. The Old English translator simply approaches *tragicus* with his usual consistency, just as he is consistent on several other occasions. He encounters the adjective *tragicus* twice in his source text, and twice he translates it with the same Old English adjective, despite spelling variations. I would suggest that Bede uses the adjective in the same way in both instances, and that the Old English translator reproduces the parallel usage found in Bede. This example, then, might show the difficulty of the translator (or of the scribe, or both) in dealing with an adjective deriving from Bede's education the meaning of which might not have been completely clear, rather than the conscious desire on the part of the translator to portray the ravages as being like those of the Trojan war. Seen in this light, *traisc / troisc / troianisc* could represent simply a tentative rendering of something the translator did not quite understand. In other words, it looks as if the translator was trying to make sense of a word he did not know, and did the best he could. The adjective *tragicus* of course derives from the idea of tragic drama, and Bede probably derived it from Isidore of Seville's usage,[131] which refers to tragic drama as a thing of the past, describing the deeds of wicked kings; hence the adjective is related to fatal or dreadful events, as indeed the ravages of the two Caedwallas were. However, as Jocelyn Price (1983, 1984) observes, Old English knowledge of classical theatre was mostly academic, specialized, and on the whole very scant (Price 1984: 118). Her survey of theatrical vocabulary in Old English shows that the adjective *tragicus* is glossed as *scop* in an 11th century copy of Boethius's *De Consolatione Philosophiae* as well as in another Latin–Old English glossary of the 11th century (Price 1983: 59-67). In view of this, the possibility that Bede derived his usage of *tragicus* from his knowledge of Isidore, and that the translator simply might not have understood the meaning of this adjective, should not be ruled out.

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[131] In his *Etymologies*, Isidore of Seville explains the idea of tragedy: "Tragoedi dicti, quod initio canentibus praemium erat hircus, quem Graeci tragos~g uocant. Vnde et Horatius: Carmine qui tragico uilem certauit ob hircum. Iam dehinc sequentes tragici multum honorem adepti sunt, excellentes in argumentis fabularum ad ueritatis imaginem fictis." He then goes on to explain the idea of comedy, and compares the two genres: "Sed comici priuatorum hominum praedicant acta; tragici uero res publicas et regnum historias. Item tragicorum argumenta ex rebus luctuosis sunt; comicorum ex rebus laetis" (Etymologiarum libri XX.8.7.5, ed. Lindsay 1911). On Isidore's idea of tragedy, see Henry A. Kelly (1993: 36-50). Bede knew the works of Isidore of Seville very well and often made use of them, as pointed out by Lapidge (2005: 213-5), Love (2010: 47), and Kendall (2010: 103) among many others.

As regards the use of word pairs, it should be noted that the first half of this chapter, characterized by a quick narrative pace, contains none. The second half only contains four, and they all seem to emphasize the key moments in the narrative: the noun *pacis* (HE III.1.26) becomes *sibbe 7 friðes* (OEB 154.5, 'peace and concord'); the two nouns are near synonyms, because they express two different shades of meaning, hence this can be considered as a synonymic word pair. As underlined by Bosworth/Toller (1898-1972: 868; 338), *sibbe* denotes 'peace' as the opposite of war, as "freedom from disturbance or molestation", whereas *friþ* "seems to have been used for the king's peace or protection in general, and to be the right of all within the pale of the law", and thus seems to carry a more legal or technical connotation. A search in the Old English Corpus shows that this pair appears six times. The verb *damnauit* (HE III.1.26) is translated as *geniðrade 7 ofslog* (OEB 154.6, 'condemned and slew'), where the second verb adds something to the text by making explicit the action that in the Latin remains untold. The adjective *infaustus* (HE III.1.26) is also rendered with a word pair as *Þis ungesælige gear 7 þæt godlease* (OEB 154.6-7, 'this unfortunate and wretched year'); the second adjective seems to explain the reason why that year is considered to be *infaustus*, namely because the apostasy deprived them of God; I would therefore consider this word pair as belonging to the additional type. Finally, the verb *interemtus est* (HE III.1.36) is translated with the synonymic word pair *ofslog 7 acwealde* (OEB 154.17, 'slew and killed'), in which the two members seem to be near-synonyms. This word pair emphasizes the moment of Oswald's victory over the Britons.

When describing the miserable year of the apostasy, Bede writes that

> Infaustus ille annus et omnibus bonis exosus usque hodie permanent, tam propter apostasiam r*egum Anglorum* , qua se fidei sacramentis exuberant, quam propter uaesanam Brettonici regis tyrannidem. (HE III.1.26-30)

In the OEB, *regum Anglorum* is translated as *cyninga* (OEB 154.8, 'of the kings'):

> Þis ungesælige gear 7 þæt godlease gen to dæge laðe wunað, ge fore fleame *cyninga* from Cristes geleafan – 7 eft to deofolgyldum cerdon, – ge for wedenheortnisse þæs leodhatan Bretta cyninges. (OEB 154.6-9)
> ['This unfortunate and evil year remains odious to this day, both for the flight of the kings from Christ's faith – and they turned again to idolatry – and for the fury of the tyrannical king of the Britons']

As can be seen, the translator omits the specification present in the Latin, thus making the reference to the English apostasy less prominent in the text. In the same sentence, *apostasiam* (HE III.1.28) is translated less specifically as *fleame* (OEB 154.7, 'flight'),

whereas *fidei sacramentis* (HE III.1.28) becomes *from Cristes geleafan* (OEB 154.8, 'from Christ's faith') and this, in addition, is also followed by a further explanation that finds no counterpart in the Latin, *7 eft to deofolgyldum cerdon* (OEB 154.8, 'and they turned again to idolatry'), to further reassert the "flight" from Christianity.

The first chapter of the HE devoted to Oswald corresponds to ll. 4-16 of Ælfric's sermon.[132] This section is preceded by a short introductory passage in which the subject of the piece is immediately stated: Ælfric first evokes Augustine's mission, and then moves on to Oswald and his great faith:

> Æfter ðan ðe Augustinus to Engla lande be-com . / wæs sum æðele cyning Oswold gehaten / on norðhymbra lande gelyfed swyþe on god. (LoS 26.1-3)
> ['After Augustine came to England there was a noble king named Oswald in the land of the Northumbrians, who believed greatly in God'.]

Ælfric thus opens his sermon in praise of Oswald by bringing together the two great moments of the English initiation to Christianity, the beginning of the conversion of the South by the emissaries from Rome, and the conversion of the northern kingdoms by King Oswald and the Irish mission. The two stages of the conversion are here smoothly joined together, as if they were part of one great plan, and no reference is made to the contrasts between Rome and the Irish to which Bede devoted so many pages in the HE. It seems that such divergences are no longer relevant to Ælfric, and that it is more significant to see the overall picture, a picture of conversion and devotion. Bede's emphasis on the superiority of the Roman Church is erased in Ælfric's sermon, because in his age the debate between Rome and the non-conformist Celtic Church was no longer an issue, and for his lay audience "belief in God is far more important than are details of differing religious practice" (Waterhouse 1996: 337). Moreover, the juxtaposition of Augustine and Oswald contributes to a silent legitimization of the conversion promoted by the pious king. As Waterhouse (1996: 336-7) points out,

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[132] "Se ferde on his iugoðe fram freondum and magum / to scot-lande on sæ . and þær sona wearð gefullod / and his geferan samod þe mid him siþedon . / Betwux þam wearð ofslagen eadwine his eam / norðhymbra cynicg on crist ge-lyfed . / fram brytta cyninge ceadwalla geciged . / and twegen his æftergengan binnan twam gearum . / and se ceadwalla sloh and to sceame tucode / þa norðhymbran leode æfter heora hlafordes fylle . / oþ þæt oswold se eadiga his yfelnysse adwæscte . / Oswold him com to . and him cenlice wiðfeaht / mid lytlum werode . ac his geleafa hine getrymde . / and crist him gefylste to his feonda slege" (LoS 26.4-16).

Augustine's mission in Kent must have been widely known among Ælfric's lay audience, judging by the unelaborated reference to it at the beginning of the sermon.

Ælfric gives no reasons for Oswald's exile among the Picts, in fact he does not even refer to his stay in Scotland as being an exile at all: we are simply told that Oswald and his companions went there "on his iugoðe" (LoS 26.4, 'in his youth'), that he and his companions went by sea, and that once there they were all baptized (LoS 26.4-6). That Oswald went to Scotland *on sæ* (LoS 26.5), 'by sea', should be considered as an addition, as this piece of information does not appear in Bede. This passage covers ll. 8-12 of HE III.1, whereas the explanation of the dynastic successions that led to the exile (explained by Bede at HE III.1.1-8) are completely absent from the sermon. Ælfric's account is, on the whole, quite elliptical: at ll. 7-12 he summarizes the slaying of Edwin's successors on the part of Cædwalla and completely omits the apostasy of these kings (HE III.1.16-31). It should also be noted that Ælfric refers to Edwin as Oswald's uncle ("eadwine his eam", LoS 26.7, 'Edwin his maternal uncle'), thus implying close loyalty, whereas the corresponding apposition in the HE describes Edwin as Oswald's enemy (*rege inimico*, HE III.1.12). The elliptical tone of this section changes quite abruptly at LoS 26.13-6, where a close correspondence to the Latin can be noted, with the exceptions of the boasting of the superiority of Cædwalla's army and of the geographical reference included by Bede at the end of the chapter (HE III.1.34-5), which Ælfric moves to a later stage in the sermon. But the references to the paucity of Oswald's army and to the divine assistance in the battle are both present in LoS 26:

> Oswold him com to . and him cenlice wiðfeaht / mid lytlum werode . ac his geleafa hine getrymde . / and crist him gefylste to his feonda slege. (LoS 26.14-6)
> ['Oswald came to him and fought boldly against him with a small army, but his faith strengthened him, and Christ helped him slaying his enemies'.]

This corresponds to part of the concluding lines of Bede's chapter:

> Quo post occisionem fratris Eanfridi *superueniente cum paruo exercitu*, *sed fide Christi munito*, infandus Brettonum dux cum immensis illis copiis, quibus nihil resistere posse iactabat, *interemtus est* in loco, qui lingua Anglorum Denisesburna, id est Riuus Denisi, uocatur. (HE III.1.33-7)

**Oswald's cross (HE III.2; OEB 154.19-158.2; LoS 26.17-44)**


A cross is erected by Oswald and his soldiers before the battle against Cædwalla; Oswald prays for protection and victory, and the enemy is defeated. Bede describes the field where the cross was erected and where Oswald knelt down to pray, as well as the devotional practices instituted by the monks of Hexham as a sign of devotion to the holy king. He then he goes on to narrate the miracle concerning Bothelm, one of the brethren at Hexham, whose broken arm is healed by the moss taken from Oswald's cross.


HE III.2.1-21 (OEB 154.19-156.8; LoS 26.17-33)

The beginning of the chapter in the HE is closely reproduced by the Old English translator, both from a lexical and from a syntactic point of view:

> Ostenditur autem usque hodie et in magna ueneratione habetur locus ille, ubi uenturus ad hanc pugnam Osuald signum sanctae crucis erexit, ac flexis genibus Deum deprecatus est, ut in tanta rerum necessitate suis cultoribus caelesti succurreret auxilio. (HE III.2.1-5)

> Is seo stow gen to dæge æteawed 7 is in micelre arwyrðnesse hæfd, þær se Oswald to þissum gefeohte cwom, 7 þær þæt halige tacn Cristes rode arærde 7 his cneo bęgde 7 God wæs biddende, þæt he in swa micelre nedþearfnisse his bigengum mid heofonlice fultome gehulpe. (OEB 154.19-24)
> ['The place is still shown today and is held in great honour, where Oswald went to battle, and there erected the holy sign of Christ's cross and bent his knees and prayed to God that he may assist his worshippers with divine help in such great need'.]

The subsequent section of the narrative describes the erection of the cross[133] and Oswald's praying to God for victory (HE III.2.5-13). In it, the implicit clause *fide feruens* (HE III.2.6) is transformed into an explicit main clause: "Ond he se cyning seolf wæs wallende in his geleafan" (OEB 154.24-5, 'and the king himself was fervent in his faith'), thus making the image more emphatic in the text. The translator renders the verb *tenuerit* (HE III.2.8) with the word pair *heold 7 hæfde* (OEB 154.26-7, 'held and had'), which could be considered as synonymic and which also appears to be formulaic, as shown in the Old English Corpus.

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[133] Wallace-Hadrill (1988: 88) and Stancliffe (1995: 63) underline the Constantine imagery suggested by the erection of the cross. This detail further substantiates the idea that here Bede may be depicting Oswald as an embodiment of the ideal Christian king. However, as Stancliffe accurately points out, Oswald represents " 'an' rather than 'the' embodiment, because an ideal can be embodied in various ways, and no single individual is likely to shine in all of them equally." (Stancliffe 1995: 63 n. 146). In other words, Stancliffe argues that Bede does not have a single ideal of the Christian king, but that there might be more than one model – and Oswald is definitely one of them.

A more complex use of word pairs can be seen in the translation of "elata in altum uoce cuncto exercitui proclamauerit" (HE III.2.9-10), which in the Old English becomes "he his stefne up ahóf 7 cleopode to him eallum þæm weorode 7 cwæð" (OEB 154.28-9, 'he raised his voice and summoned all the army and spoke'). In this case it is quite difficult to determine which two verbs form the word pair and which verb is left out. Syntactically speaking, the pair should be found in the adjacent verbs *ahóf 7 cleopode*, but both can be found in the Latin as well; semantically speaking, the actual word pair is *cleopode* […] *7 cwæð*, because both Old English verbs translate the Latin *proclamauerit*. I would thus consider the latter as the actual word pair expanding a single Latin verb. The translator might have avoided keeping the two members of the word pair together for euphonic reasons, as doing so would have generated an unpleasant succession of conjunctions.

The Latin "Deum omnipotentem uiuum ac uerum" (HE III.2.10-1), already a word pair, is carefully translated as "þone ælmihtigan God þone lifiendan 7 þone soðan" (OEB 154.30-1, 'the living and true almighty God').[134] The translation of "hoste superbo ac feroce" (HE III.2.11-2), "from þæm oferhygdigan feonde 7 þæm reðan" (OEB 154.31-2, 'from this proud and cruel enemy'), shows a different type of syntactic treatment in the Old English.[135] The Old English construct *adj + noun 7 adj* is frequently used by the translator to expand a single adjective with a word pair in those cases when the Latin does not present two adjectives connected to the same referent. The implicit clause "sic incipiente diluculo" (HE III.2.14) becomes an explicit temporal clause in the Old English: "7 sona on morne, swa hit dagian ongan" (OEB 154.34 'and soon in the morning, when it began to dawn'); the same treatment is reserved to the

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[134] "«Flectamus omnes genua, et Deum omnipotentem uiuum ac uerum in commune deprecemur, ut nos ab hoste superbo ac feroce sua miseratione defendat; scit enim ipse quia iusta pro salute gentis nostrae bella suscepimus». Fecerunt omnes ut iusserat, et sic incipiente diluculo in hostem progressi, iuxta meritum suae fidei uictoria potiti sunt. In cuius loco orationis innumerae uirtutes sanitatum noscuntur esse patratae, ad indicium uidelicet ac memoriam fidei regis. Nam et usque hodie multi de ipso ligno sacrosanctae crucis astulas excidere solent, quas cum in aquas miserint, eisque languentes homines aut pecudes potauerint siue asperserint, mox sanitati restituuntur" (HE III.2.10-21).

[135] "Uton ealle began usser cneo 7 gemænelice biddan þone ælmihtigan God þone lifiendan 7 þone soðan, þæt he us eac from þæm oferhygdigan feonde 7 þæm reðan mid his miltsunge gescylde: forðon he wat þæt we rihtlice winnað for hælo usse þeode. Þa dydon heo ealle swa he heht, 7 sona on morne, swa hit dagian ongan, þæt he fór on þone here þe him togegnes gesomnad wæs, 7 æfter geearnunge his geleafan þæt heo heora feond oferswiðon 7 sige ahton. In þære gebedstowe æfter þon monig mægen 7 hælo tacen gefremed wæron to tacnunge 7 to gemynde þæs cyninges geleafan. Ond monige gen to dæge of þæm treo þæs halgan Cristes mæles sponas 7 scefþon neomað; 7 þa in wæter sendað, þæt wæter on adlige men oððe on neat stregdað oððe drincan syllað; 7 heo sona hælo onfoð" (OEB 154.29-156.8).

125

implicit phrase "in hostem progressi" (HE III.2.14) which also undergoes expansion: "þæt he fór on þone here þe him togegnes gesomnad wæs" (OEB 154.34-156.1, 'he advanced towards the army that was summoned against him'). Another expansion by means of a word pair can be seen in the translation of "uictoria potiti sunt" (HE III.2.15) with "þæt heo heora feond oferswiðon 7 sige ahton" (OEB 156.2, 'they overcame their enemy and obtained the victory'). The first member of the word pair provides a more emphatic translation of the idea conveyed by the Latin verb, and the action described could also be seen as the step preceding the actual gaining of victory. Another word pair can be found in the translation of *uirtutes sanitatum* (HE III.2.16) as *monig mægen 7 hælo tacen*[136] (OEB 156.3, 'many marvels and signs of healing'). In this case a word pair construct has been used to translate the ideas conveyed by a noun and its specification in the genitive plural. The translator also makes use of a synonymic word pair in the translation of the noun *astulas* (HE III.2.18), which becomes *sponas 7 scefþon* (OEB 156.5-6, 'chips and shavings').

Ælfric's interest in the scene is shown by his reproduction of the passage in detail (LoS 26.17-33), and his slowing down of the narrative pace. In particular, it is Oswald's exhortation to his army that the sermon includes nearly word for word:

> Flectamus omnes genua, et deum omnipotentem uiuum ac uerum in commune deprecemur, ut nos ab hoste superbo ac feroce sua miseratione defendat; scit enim ipse quia iusta pro salute gentis nostrae bella suscepimus. (HE III.2.10-3)

> Uton feallan to ðære rode / and þone ælmihtigan biddan þæt he us ahredde / wið þone modigan feond þe us afyllan wile . / god sylf wat geare þæt we winnað rihtlice / wið þisne reðan cyning . to ahredenne ure leode. (LoS 26.19-23)
> ['Let us fall down to the cross and pray to the Almighty that he will save us against the proud enemy who wants to kill us. God himself knows that we fight justly against this cruel king in order to save our people'.]

Oswald's victory over the heathen enemy is repeated twice in the sermon and, from a semantic point of view, the two lines containing the repetition seem to be built around a chiastic structure:

> *and gewunnon þær sige* swa swa se wealdend heom uðe .
> for oswoldes geleafan . *and alédon heora fynd*. (LoS 26.26-7)
> ['and there won the victory, as the Ruler granted them
> on account of Oswald's faith, and subdued their enemies'.]

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[136] I tend to consider the noun *tácn* as a near-synonym of *mægen* because, as Luiselli Fadda (2005: 63) observes, it usually translates the Latin *portentum / ostentum / prodigium*; it thus belongs to the semantic field of miracles and marvels and it does not add anything to the meaning of the word pair.

As can be seen, the idea of victory is repeated in the on-verse of line 26 and in the off-verse of line 27, whereas the off-verse of line 26 and the adjacent on-verse of line 27 give the spiritual reasons for that victory, namely God's protection and Oswald's faith. Ælfric's reference to the imposing size of Cadwalla's army, and to the sovereign's boasting of its invincibility (LoS 26.28-9: "mid his micclan werode / þe wende þæt him ne mihte nan werod wiðstandan", 'with his great army / who believed that no army could withstand him'), are taken from the closing passage of HE III.1.35: "cum inmensis illis copiis, quibus nihil resistere posse iactabat". Ælfric maintains the reference to the healing powers of the cross, both for men and cattle (LoS 26.30-3: "and wurdon fela gehælde / untrumra manna and eac swilce nytena þurh ða ylcan rode swa swa us rehte beda .", 'and many ill men were healed, and also cattle, through the same cross, just as Bede told us'), but does not specify the way in which healing can be attained through the cross, namely by putting some chips of the wood in water and either drinking it or being sprinkled with it. The passage also contains the first explicit reference to Bede, but not to the HE ("swa swa us rehte beda .", LoS 26.33, 'as Bede told us'). It is more important to name the source than to give details on how the cross can actually heal the sick. It is also worth bearing in mind that this story might have been so well known that Ælfric could have deemed these details unnecessary.

HE III.2.22-63 (OEB 156.8-158.2; LoS 26.34-44)

The translator omits the Latin translation of Heavenfield (HE III.2.22-3: "quod dici potest latine Caelestis Campus"). In addition, the translator completely skips the passage relating the location of the field with respect to the Roman wall, as well as the reference to the devotional practices linked to the place and to the church that was built there (HE III.2.26-41). The translator connects the general statement about the miracles that take place at Heavenfield (HE III.2.26: "caelestia usque hodie forent miracula celebranda") with the *exemplum* of the miracle Bede relates later in the chapter

> Nec ab re est unum e pluribus, quae ad hanc crucem patrata sunt, uirtutis miraculum enarrare. (HE III.2.41-3)

> 7 þær gen to dæge heofonlic wundor mærsode beoð. Nis forðon ungerisne, þæt we aan mægen 7 aan wundor of monegum asecgan, þe æt þissum halgan Cristes mæle geworden wæs. (OEB 156.11-5)
> ['and there still to this day heavenly marvels are celebrated. It is therefore not unfitting to tell one miracle and wonder out of many, which happened at this holy cross of Christ'.]

The translator makes use of a synonymic word pair to translate the noun *miraculum* (HE III.2.43), *aan mægen 7 aan wundor* (OEB 156.13, 'one miracle and wonder'), which represents another lexical variation within the semantic field of miracles.

The relative clause *qui nunc usque superest* as well as the subsequent temporal reference *ante paucos annos* (HE III.2.45), are both omitted in the Old English,[137] thus detaching the narrative from Bede's own time.[138] The first omission is particularly logical as it refers to Bothelm, the monk whose arm was healed by the moss that covered Oswald's cross, who was obviously not alive when the translation was made. The translator usually updates chronological and geographical references that no longer have a connection with his age, and the case mentioned here indeed falls into this pattern. Another synonymic word pair can be found in the translation of the verb *contriuit* (HE III.2.47) as *geðræste 7 gebræc* (OEB 156.18, 'hurt and fractured'); in this case, the first member of the pair expresses a more general meaning ('hurt'), which envelops the more specific meaning of the second member ('fractured'). The sentence following in the translation presents an addition, the temporal clause *þonne he eft ham come* (OEB 156.23, 'when he came home again'), which seems to have been added for the sake of clarity to make Bothelm's request more explicit. Further on in this passage, the translator reproduces the Latin in a very literal way in the sentence

> Qui cum sedens ad mensam non haberet ad manum, ubi oblatum sibi munus reponeret, misit hoc in sinum sibi […]. (HE III.2.57-8)

> Þa sæt he æt beode, næfde þa æt honda hwær þæt brohte lac gehealdan scolde; sende þa in his bosm. (OEB 156.27-9)

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[137] As noted by Plummer (1896 vol.II: 123).

[138] "Quidam de fratribus eiusdem Hagustaldensis ecclesiae, nomine Bothelm, qui nunc usque superest, ante paucos annos, dum incautius forte noctu in glacie incederet, repente corruens brachium contriuit, ac grauissima fracturae ipsius coepit molestia fatigari, ita ut ne ad os quidem adducere ipsum brachium ullatenus dolore arcente ualeret. Qui dum die quadam mane audiret unum de fratribus ad locum eiusdem sanctae crucis ascendere disposuisse, rogauit ut aliquam sibi partem de illo ligno uenerabili rediens adferret, credere se dicens quia per hoc, donante Domino, salutem posset consequi. Fecit ille ut rogatus est, et reuersus ad uesperam, sedentibus iam ad mensam fratribus, obtulit ei aliquid de ueteri musco, quo superficies ligni erat obsita" (HE III.2.44-56).

"Wæs sum Godes þeow of þæm broðrum þære cirican æt Agostaldes éa, þæs noma wæs Bothelm. Þa eode he sume neahte on íse unwærlice, þa gefeoll he semninga on his earm ufan, 7 þone swiðe geðræste 7 gebræc, 7 mid þa hefignesse þæs gebrocenan earmes swiðe geswenced wæs swa þæt he for þy sáre ne meahte furðon his hond to muðe gedon. Ða gehyrde he sumne þara broðra sprecan, þæt he wolde feran to þæm halgan Cristes mæle, þa bæd he hine þæt he him þæs arwyrðan treos hwylcnehwego dæl brohte, þonne he eft ham come; cwæð þæt he gelyfde, þæt he þurh þæt meahte hælo onfon þurh Drihtnes gife. Þa eode se broðor, swa swa he hine bæd, 7 cwom eft on æfenne ham. Þa broðor æt beode sæton. Þa brohte him sumne dæl ealdes meoses, þe on þam halgan treo aweaxen wæs" (OEB 156.15-27).

['As he sat at table, he did not have anything at hand to keep the offered gift in; then he put it in his bosom'.]

The phrase *ad manum* (HE III.2.57) becomes *æt honda* (OEB 156.28, 'at hand'), and *oblatum* […] *munus* (HE III.2.57) is translated as *þæt brohte lac* (OEB 156.28, 'the offered gift'); interestingly, in this last instance the translator maintains the implicit construct rather than turning it into a relative clause (as he usually does), and reproduces the participial phrase of the Latin, which was probably not idiomatic. The adjective *sanum* (HE III.2.61) is very conventionally translated with the synonymic word pair *swa hale 7 swa gesunde* (OEB 158.1-2, 'as whole and as sound'), which a search in the Old English Corpus shows to be a common formulaic expression, whereas the translation of the noun *languoris* (HE III.2.62) as *bryce ne daro* (OEB 158.2, 'fracture or injure') could be seen as a "negative" synonymic word pair, in which the conjunction *7* is replaced by the negative conjunction *ne*. The first member has a more specific meaning than the second - the word pair is linked by hyponymy. Thanks to the close succession of phrases linked by the conjunctions *7* and *ne*, the translator emphasizes the miraculous healing experienced by Bothelm through Oswald's cross more than is found in the source text:

Þa gemette he his earm 7 his hond swa hale 7 swa gesunde swa him næfre bryce ne daro gedon wære. (OEB 158.1-2)
['Then he found that his arm and his hand were as whole and sound as if they had never had any fracture or injury'.]

ita sanum brachium manunque repperit, ac si nihil umquam tanti languoris habuissent. (HE III.2.61-3)

Ælfric (LoS 26.34-44) inverts the order of the section about Heavenfield with that about the miracle of the broken arm, and it is interesting to observe that he maintains the references to the location of Heavenfield with respect to the Roman wall and he also mentions that a church was later built there (LoS 26.40-4).[139] He does not report the Latin name of the place, nor the devotional practices that are linked to it. However he is not so selective as the translator of the OEB, who only reports the name of the field and

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[139] "Sum man feoll on íse þæt his earm tobærst . / and læg þa on bedde gebrocod forðearle / oð þæt man him fette of ðære foresædan rode / sumne dæl þæs meoses þe heo mid beweaxen wæs . / and se adliga sona on slæpe wearð gehæled / on ðære ylcan nihte þurh oswoldes geearnungum . / Seo stow is gehaten heofon-feld on englisc . / wið þone langan weall þe þa romaniscan worhtan / þær þær oswold oferwann þone wælhreowan cyning . / and þær wearð siþþan aræred swiðe mære cyrce / gode to wurðmynte þe wunað á on ecnysse" (LoS 26.34-44).

the reason why it bears this name (OEB 156.8-15), but does not mention the devotional practices connected to the place, not the church that was built there.

Ælfric's account of the miracle of healing is much summarised (LoS 26.34-9), but the main details are all present. Interestingly, LoS 26 and the OEB agree in their translation of the verb *erat obsita* (HE III.2.56), 'was covered', with a form of the verb *weaxan*, 'to grow' (*aweaxen wæs*, OEB 156.27; *beweaxen wæs*, LoS 26.37). Bede carefully underlines that the healing powers of Oswald's cross work even without any official ritual, gesture, or prayer to God; Bothelm put the moss in his pocket and forgot about it, and it healed his arm overnight. The monk had already shown his faith when he asked for a piece of the cross to be fetched to him, and that seems to be enough of a sign of devotion in Bede's narrative. Ælfric, on the other hand, omits the whole passage and simply writes that the monk was healed in his sleep.

**The arrival of Bishop Aidan (HE III.3; OEB 158.3-160.5; LoS 26.45-69)**

King Oswald asks the kingodm of Dál Riada to send a bishop to Northumbria to ensure the conversion of his people, and they send Bishop Aidan, a monk from Iona. Oswald gives him the island of Lindisfarne on which to establish his episcopal see. Aidan's missionary activity proves very successful, also thanks to the direct help of the king himself, who, being fluent in the Irish language, can translate for the bishop when he preaches the new faith.

HE III.3.1-21 (OEB 158.3-14; LoS 26.45-59)

The opening sentence is translated in detail in the OEB.[140] The translator opts for a two-fold rendering of the present participle *desiderans* (HE III.3.1) with the word pair

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[140] "Idem ergo Osuald, mox ubi regnum suscepit, desiderans totam cui praeesse coepit gentem fidei Christianae gratia imbui, cuius experimenta permaxima in expugnandis barbaris iam ceperat, misit ad maiores natu Scottorum, inter quos exulans ipse baptismatis sacramenta cum his qui secum erant militibus consecutus erat, petens ut sibi mitteretur antistes, cuius doctrina ac ministerio gens quam regebat Anglorum dominicae fidei et dona disceret et susciperet sacramenta" (HE III.3.1-8).
"Ono ða se ilca cyning Oswald sona, þæs þe he rice onfeng, lufade 7 wilnade, þætte eall seo þeod, þe he fore wæs, mid þære gife þæs cristnan geleafan wære, þæs geleafan ondcyðnesse he swiðust onfeng in sigegefeohtum ellreordra cynna. Þa sende he to Scotta aldormonnum ærendwręcan, betweoh þa ðe he

*lufade 7 wilnade* (OEB 158.3-4, 'loved and desired'). The Old English text presents an explicatory addition in the translation of the verb *misit* (HE III.3.4), which becomes *þa sende he* […] *ærendwrecan* (OEB 158.6-7, 'then he sent messengers'); perhaps the sense of the Latin verb could not have been conveyed by the Old English verb alone without a direct object. It should be noted, however, that Ælfric makes use of the verb *sendan* without a direct object, thus mirroring the Latin diction (*sende ða to scotlande*, LoS 26.48). But to whom did Oswald send the message?

> misit *ad maiores natu* Scottorum (HE III.3.4)

> Þa sende he to Scotta *aldormonnum* ærendwręcan (OEB 158.6-7)
> ['Then he sent messengers to the chief men of Scotland'.]

> Sende ða to scotlande . þær se geleafa wæs ða / and bæd *ða heofodmenn* (LoS 26.48-9)
> ['Then he sent to Scotland, where the faith was then, and prayed the governors'.]

Bede's *ad maiores natu Scottorum* refers to secular leadership and may also imply senior ecclesiastical figures, whereas Ælfric's *ða heofodmenn* seems to refer only to secular leadership, as confirmed by Bosworth/Toller (1898-1972: 514); moreover, a search in the Old English Corpus shows that, with very few exceptions in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, this noun is most exclusively used by Ælfric.[141] In his *Grammar* (Zupitza 1966 [1880]: 49.17-50.4), *heafodmann* is used to translate the Latin *summas*,[142] a noun that usually denotes secular leadership or nobility. This seems to be confirmed by Godden (2000: 723), who translates *heafodmann* as 'ruler, governor' in his Glossary to the *Catholic Homilies*. The same translation can also be found in Needham's edition of Ælfric's *Life* of St Oswald (1966: 99). On the other hand, the Old English translator's *Scotta aldormonnum* seems to reproduce Bede's ambiguity, because it might equally refer to secular noblemen as well as to someone in a position of authority in a monastery. This second meaning is confirmed by the translation of "corripiebatur quidem sedulo a fratribus ac *maioribus* loci" (HE V.14.4), as referring to a monk whose conduct is reprimanded by his brethren and superiors, which in the OEB

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longre tide wrecca wæs, 7 from þæm he fulwihtes geryno onfeng mid his þegnum, þe him mid wæron. Bæd he þæt heo him biscop onsende, þæs lare 7 þegnunge Ongolþeode, þe rehte, þæs Drihtenlecan geleafan gife leornade 7 þæm geryne onfenge fulwihtes bæðes" (OEB 158.3-11).

[141] For instance, the homily about Fursey (CH II.20) shows the usage of this noun in Ælfric: "Þurh feower ðing losiað manna sawla. þæt is þurh leahtras. and þurh deofles tihtinges. and þurh lareowa gymeleaste. and þurh yfele gebysnunge. unrihtwisra heafodmanna" (CH II.20.180).

[142] "On langne *as* befeallað fela naman: COMMVNIS GENERIS *hic et haec summas et hoc summate* (*summas* ys hêafodman oððe firmest manna), *optimas* ðegn, *primas* fyrmest manna, *infimas* wacost manna." (Zupitza 1880 [1966]: 49.17-50.4).

is translated as "Wæs he lomlice fram ðam broðrum þread 7 ðæm *ealdormonnum* þære stowe" (OEB 442.4-5, 'he was frequently admonished by the brethren and the superiors of the place').[143]

The translator adds that Oswald had been in exile *longre tide* (OEB 158.7, 'for a long time'), a detail that has no counterpart in the source text. He also adds that the *sacramenta* (HE III.3.8) Oswald would like to have imparted to his people is in fact one in particular, baptism, thus departing from his source text: "7 þæm gerynge onfenge fulwihtes bæðes" (OEB 158.11, 'and received the sacrament of the bath of baptism'). The translator omits Bede's comment on Aidan's somewhat non-canonical kind of Christian fervour (i.e. Irish and not Roman), and replaces it with a more general reference to his love for God, which, in a way, repeats the idea immediately preceding in the text: instead of translating "habentemque zelum Dei, quamuis non plene secundum scientiam" (HE III.3.10-1), the translator maintains the first half of this passage, and then abruptly departs from it: "7 he hæfde Godes ellewodnisse 7 his lufan micle" (OEB 158.13-4, 'and he had the ardour of God and his great love').[144] The subsequent passage, in which Bede describes the main issues of the Paschal controversy, is also omitted in the translation (HE III.3.11-21).

Ælfric follows his source quite closely in this passage,[145] but instead of explaining Oswald's request for missionaries from Scotland by reminding his readers that Oswald himself became a Christian while he was in exile in that land, he omits this reference completely (corresponding to HE III.3.4-6) and simply writes that he sends to Scotland because that is where the faith is at the time[146]: "sende ða to scotlande . þær se geleafa

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[143] Dictionary of Old English; query: *ealdor-mann*; result # 1.A.5.a.

[144] Plummer (1896 vol. II: 124).

[145] "Hwæt ða oswold ongann . embe godes willan to smeagenne . / sona swa he rices geweold . and wolde gebigan / his leoda to geleafan . and to þam lifigendan gode . / sende ða to scotlande . þær se geleafa wæs ða . / and bæd ða heofodmenn þæt hi his benum getiþodon . / and him sumne lareow sendon þe his leoda mihte / to gode geweman . and wearð þæs getiþod . / Hi sendon þa sona þam gesæligan cyninge / sumne arwurðne bisceop aidan gehaten . / se wæs mæres lifes man on munuclicre drohtnunge . / and he ealle woruld-cara awearp fram his heortan / nanes þinges wilnigende butan godes willan . / Swa hwæt swa him becom of þæs cyninges gifum . / oððe ricra manna þæt he hraðe dælde . / þearfum . and wædlum mid wellwillendum mode" (LoS 26.45-59).

[146] The most obvious explanation as to why Oswald asked the Irish to send a bishop, rather than the Church in Kent, or even Rome, is that he grew up and became a Christian among the Picts. Stancliffe, however, also underlines a further reason that made the Irish mission so successful and that was first suggested by Patrick Wormald in an unpublished paper of 1976: "The Irish, he argues, had already had some experience of adapting Christianity to a barbarian society, and they were therefore able to present

wæs ða" (LoS 26.48, 'then he sent to Scotland, where the faith was at the time'). The translator of the OEB is not alone in omitting any reference to the Paschal controversy (HE III.3.11-21), because Ælfric does the same too; instead of including it, he expands Bede's laudatory description of Aidan's qualities by praising the bishop's commitment to monastic life, which was a live issue in his own day, most especially his disregard for worldly cares. Thus, the Latin "summae mansuetudinis et pietatis ac moderaminis uirum habentemque zelum Dei" (HE III.3.9-11) is expanded as follows:

> se wæs mæres lifes man on munuclicre drohtnunge . / and he ealle woruld-cara awearp fram his heortan / nanes þinges wilnigende butan godes willan . / Swa hwæt swa him becom of þæs cyninges gifum . / oððe ricra manna þæt he hraðe dælde . / þearfum . and wædlum . mid wellwillendum mode. (LoS 26.54-9)
>
> ['he was a famous man in the monastic way of life, and he rejected all worldly cares from his heart, desiring nothing excepte God's will. Whatever he received of the king's gifts or of rich men, he quickly distributed to the poor and needy with benevolent mind'.]

This actually corresponds to a passage from chapter III.5 of the HE:

> Nihil enim huius mundi quaerere, nil amare curabat. Cuncta quae sibi a regibus uel diuitibus saeculi donabantur, mox pauperibus qui occurrerent erogare gaudebat. (HE III.5.8-10)

It seems that Ælfric here attributes to Aidan those qualities that in Bede and also later in the sermon will be decisive in describing Oswald as the pious saintly king. One might wonder if here Ælfric is drawing a silent parallel between the bishop and the king, to further substantiate the positive depiction of King Oswald.

HE III.3.22-52 (OEB 158.15-160.5; LoS 26.60-9)

In this passage, the Latin phrase *locum sedis episcopalis* (HE III.3.22)[147] is translated with a word pair, rather than using an accusative followed by a genitive: *stowe 7 biscopseðl* (OEB 158.15-6, 'a place and a bishop's see'); the word pair, then, allows the translator to redistribute the information already provided by the source text.

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Christianity to the Anglo-Saxons in a more readily admissible form. For instance, they understood the needs of a kin-based society, and one might add that they had already adapted the organisational side of the church to a tribal and rural society" (Stancliffe 1995: 82).

[147] "Venienti igitur ad se episcopo, rex locum sedis episcopalis in insula Lindisfarnensi, ubi ipse petebat, tribuit, qui uidelicet locus accedente ac recedente reumate bis cotidie instar insulae maris circumluitur undis, bis renudato litore contiguus terrae redditur; atque eius ammonitionibus humiliter ac libenter in omnibus auscultans, ecclesiam Christi in regno suo multum diligenter aedificare ac dilatare curauit" (HE III.3.22-8).

"Þa he ða se biscop to þæm cyninge cwom, þa sealde he him stowe 7 biscopseðl in Lindesfarena ea, þær he seolfa bæd 7 wilnade. Ond he se cyning his monungum eaðmodlice 7 lustlice in eallum þingum hyrsum wæs; 7 he Cristes cirican in his rice geornlice timbrede 7 rærde" (OEB 158.15-19).

A synonymic word pair can be found in the translation of the verb *petebat* (HE III.3.23) as *bæd 7 wilnade* (OEB 158.16, 'asked and desired'). *Humiliter ac libenter* (HE III.3.26) is also translated as a word pair, *eaðmodlice 7 lustlice* (OEB 158.17, 'humbly and gladly'); the same happens to *aedificare ac dilatare* (HE III.3.28), which becomes *timbrede 7 rærde* (OEB 158.17-8, 'built and erected'), as well as to *suis ducibus ac ministris* (HE III.3.30), which is translated as *his aldormonnum 7 his þegnum* (OEB 158.21, 'to his governors and retainers'), and finally to *possessiones et territoria* (HE III.3.39), replicated in *aehte 7 land* (OEB 158.29, 'possessions and land'). As can be seen, the Latin text here presents a lot of word pairs that the translator simply maintains. The OEB does not contain the description of Lindisfarne (HE III.3.22-6), and the same omission is a characteristic of LoS 26 too.

The verb *praedicare* (HE III.3.35) is translated with the word pair *bodedon 7 lærdon* (OEB 158.25, 'preached and taught'), a standard formula that is used nearly every time the translator is dealing with the verb *praedico* or a synonym.[148] This word pair is also repeated a little further on in the text in a relative clause that does not have a counterpart in the Latin ("þe hí bodedon 7 lærdon", OEB 158.28, 'that they preached and taught'), as if the translator wanted to stress the importance of this event in the narrative. The verb *donabantur* (HE III.3.38-9) is translated with the synonyms *gef 7 sealde* (OEB 158.29, 'gave and bestowed').

It is also interesting to observe that the translator re-arranges the sentence

> inbuebantur praeceptoribus *Scottis paruuli Anglorum una cum maioribus* studiis et obseruatione disciplinae regularis (HE III.3.40-2),

so as to create a word pair: "7 Scottas lærdon *geonge 7 ealde* on reogollicne þeodscipe" (OEB 158.30, 'and Scots young and old he instructed in monastic discipline'). The translator here does not maintain the adjective *Anglorum*, and in addition he merges

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[148] "Exin coepere plures per dies de Scottorum regione uenire Brittaniam atque illis Anglorum prouinciis, quibus regnauit Osuald, magna deuotione uerbum fidei praedicare et credentibus gratiam baptismi, quicumque sacerdotali erant gradu praediti, ministrare. Construebantur ergo ecclesiae per loca, confluebant ad audiendum uerbum populi gaudentes, donabantur munere regio possessiones et territoria ad instituenda monasteria, imbuebantur praeceptoribus Scottis paruuli Anglorum una cum maioribus studiis et obseruatione disciplinae regularis" (HE III.3.33-42).
"Of þære tide monige cwoman dæghwamlice of Scotta lande on Breotone; 7 on þam mægþum Angelþeoðe, þe Óswald ofer cyning wæs, mid micelre willsumnesse Cristes geleafan bodedon 7 lærdon. 7 þa þe sacerhades wæron, him fulwihte þenedon. Þa wæron eac cyricean timbrede on monegum stowum, 7 þider gefeonde coman Angel cynnes folc Gódes word to gehýranne, þe hí bodedon 7 lærdon. 7 se cyning him gef 7 sealde æhte 7 land mynster to timbrianne; 7 Scottas lærdon geonge 7 ealde on regollicne þeodscipe, forþon þe þæt munecas wæron, þa þe hider coman to læranne" (OEB 158.22-31).

together the nouns *studiis et observatione* by translating them with one noun only, *þeodscipe*, rather than making use of another word pair.

The translator opts for a word pair also in the translation of *de insula* (HE III.3.44), which becomes *of þam ealande 7 of þam mynstre* (OEB 160.1, 'from the island and monastery'); the second member of the pair expresses a more specific meaning than the first.[149] However this word pair sounds somewhat unnecessary, given that the following sentence goes on to stress the importance of the monastery in the area. Another word pair is represented by the translation of the noun *arcem* (HE III.3.47) as *ealldordom 7 heanesse* (OEB 160.3, 'authority and supremacy'); in some ways this word pair also covers the function of the following coordinate clause in the Latin, which is not translated in the OE ("regendisque eorum populis praeerat", HE III.3.47-8). The translator also omits the geographical information concerning this area (HE III.3.48-9), but he does maintain the reference to the fact that the Irish monks were given the land of Iona because they converted the Picts to Christianity (HE III.3.49-52). Finally, another word pair is used for the translation of *tradita* (HE III.3.51) as *sealdan 7 geafon* (OEB 160.4, 'bestowed and gave'); the two members of the word pair seem to be synonymous.

In the sermon (LoS 26.60-9), Oswald rejoices at the arrival of Aidan, something that Bede does not comment upon:

> Hwæt ða oswold cyning his cymes fægnode . / and hine arwurðlice underfeng . his folce to ðearfe . / þæt heora geleafa wurde awend eft to gode / fram þam wiþersæce þe hi to gewænde wæron. (LoS 26.60-3)
> ['Lo, then King Oswald rejoiced at his coming, and received him with honour as a benefit to his people, that their faith might be turned again to God from the apostasy to which they had been turned'.]

On the other hand, Ælfric does not include the passage concerning Lindisfarne (HE III.3.22-6) in his sermon, but instead focuses his attention on the passage in which

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[149] "Nam monachi erant maxime, qui ad praedicandum uenerant. Monachus ipse episcopus Aidan, utpote de insula quae uocatur Hii destinatus, cuius monasterium in cunctis paene septentrionalium Scottorum et omnium Pictorum monasteriis non paruo tempore arcem tenebat, regendique eorum populis praeerat. Quae uidelicet insula ad ius quidem Brittaniae pertinet, non magno ab ea freto discreta, sed donatione Pictorum, qui illas Brittaniae plagas incolunt, iamdudum monachis Scottorum tradita, eo quod illis praedicantibus fidem Christi perceperint" (HE III.3.43-52).
"Wæs eac munuc se ylca bysceop Aidan; wæs he sended of þam ealande 7 of þam mynstre þe Híí is nemned. Ðæt mynster on eallum Norðscottum 7 eallum Peohta mynstrum mycelre tide ealldordom 7 heanesse onfeng; ac hwæþere hit Peohtas sealdan 7 geafon Scotta munucum, forþon þe hi ær þurh heora lare Cristes geleafan onfengon" (OEB 158.31-160.5).

Oswald becomes Aidan's interpreter, and it is interesting to observe that Ælfric is very specific in stating that Aidan was not fluent in the Northumbrian language (*norðhymbriscum gereorde*, LoS 26.69), whereas Bede and his translator more generally refer to the English language (*Anglorum linguam*, HE III.3.29-30; *Englisc*, OEB 158.20):

> Vbi pulcherrimo saepe spectaculo contigit, ut euangelizante antistite, qui *Anglorum linguam* perfecte non nouerat, ipse rex suis ducibus ac ministris interpres uerbi existeret caelestis, quia nimirum tam longo exilii sui tempore linguam Scottorum iam plene didicerat. (HE III.3.28-32)

> 7 oft fægre wæfersyne gelomp, þa se biscop codcunde lare lærde se ðe *Englisc* fullice ne cuðe, þæt he se cyning seolfa, se ðe Scyttisc fullice geleornad hæfde, his aldormonnum 7 his þegnum þære heofonlecan lare wæs walhstod geworden. (OEB 158.19-22)
> ['and often a fair sight occurred, when the bishop, who was not fluent in English, was teaching the word of God, then the king himself, who was fluent in Irish, became the interpreter of the heavenly doctrine for his ealdormen and his thanes'.]

> Hit gelamp þa swa þæt se geleaffulla cyning / gerehte his witan on heora agenum gereorde / þæs bisceopes bodunge mid bliþum mode . / and wæs his wealhstod for-þan þe he wel cuþe scyttisc . / and se bisceop aidan ne mihte gebigan his spræce / to *norðhymbriscum gereorde* swa hraþe þa git. (LoS 26.64-9)
> ['It so happened that the believing king explained to his counsellors in their own tongue the bishop's preaching with joyful mind and became his interpreter, because he knew Irish well and Bishop Aidan could not turn his language into the Northumbrian tongue quickly enough'.]

Ælfric is silent on the subjects of further preaching, building of churches, and Iona that conclude this chapter in the HE. He completely omits this passage from his narrative, showing that his interest in Oswald lies more in the sanctity of this royal figure than in the dynamics of conversion connected to him.

## Aidan's merits (HE III.5; OEB 160.6-164.18; LoS 26.70-86)

Aidan's way of life is described, with particular emphasis on his disregard for worldly possessions, his commitment to devotional practices and learning, and his fervour in preaching. Bede also tells of the unsuccessful attempt at the evangelization of Northumbria made by Aidan's (unnamed) predecessor.

HE III.5.1-39 (OEB 160.6-162.20; LoS 26.70-86)

   The ablative absolute *accepto gradu episcopatus* (HE III.5.3) is summarized in the OEB by referring to Aidan as *Aidan se bisceop* (OEB 160.7, 'Bishop Aidan'). The Old English text does not report the reference to the abbacy under which Aidan became a bishop (HE III.5.3-4). The phrase *huius mundi* (HE III.5.8) is expanded with a relative clause, "ða ðe þyses middangeardes wæron" (OEB 160.12-3, 'that which was of this world'). This passage offers two examples of word pairs translating a single Latin verb: *erogare* (HE III.5.10) becomes *réhte 7 sealde* (OEB 160.15, 'share out and bestow'), and *confortaret* (HE III.5.16) *strangede 7 trymede* (OEB 160.22, 'strengthened and confirmed'). In both cases the paired verbs could be considered as synonymous.

   Bede's comment on the moral corruption of his own times in comparison to Aidan's is maintained in the Old English: "In tantum autem uita illius a nostri temporis segnitia distabat" (HE III.5.18) thus becomes "7 swa swiðe his lif tosced fram ussa tida aswundenesse" (OEB 160.25, 'and his life differed so exceedingly from the sluggishness of our time'). The translation of the subsequent sentence is anticipatory, because the relative clause "on swa hwilcre stowe swa hi cóman" (OEB 160.26-162.1, 'from whichever place they came'), belongs to the following sentence in the Latin text ("ubicumque locorum deuenissent", HE III.5.22). The concluding section of the same sentence is also considerably rephrased: whereas the Latin reads "meditari deberent, id est aut legendis scripturis aut psalmis discendis operam dare" (HE III.5.20-1), the translator elaborates as follows:

> þæt hi sceoldan oððe sealmas leornian oððe oþre halige gewrito oððe þridde on halgum gebedum standan. (OEB 162.1-3)[150]
> ['that they must either learn psalms or holy writing, or thirdly stand in holy prayers'.]

Bede mentions a more general idea, that of being engaged in studies (*meditari*), followed by two specifications: reading the scriptures, or learning the psalms. The OEB, on the other hand, lists three (not two) specific devotional practices: that of (1) learning the psalms, or (2) the scriptures, or (3) standing in prayer. This third practice in particular does not have a literal counterpart in the Latin; on the other hand, it could also be argued that the Old English *on halgum gebedum standan* is an expansion of the idea conveyed by the verb *meditari*, which does not have a direct translation. Nevertheless, it still adds to the sense, revealing that prayers were recited standing rather than kneeling.

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[150] Also noted by Plummer (1896 vol. II: 139).

Further on in the text, the verb *corrigebat* (HE III.5.31) is translated with the word pair *hiæ onspræc 7 heo gebette* (OEB 162.14, 'accused them and corrected them').[151] The two verbs might be connected by a cause and effect relationship: Aidan rebuked the rich so as to correct them; for this reason, this word pair belongs to the additional, rather than to the synonymic, type. The noun *esca* (HE III.5.32), on the other hand, is translated with the word pair *mete 7 swæsendo* (OEB 162.15, 'food and meal'[152]), which is composed of two synonyms. The translator also reworks a phrase composed of a noun and a specification in the genitive plural, to build a word pair: *donaria pecuniarum* (HE III.5.34) is thus rendered as *ða gife 7 þa feoh* (OEB 162.16, 'the gifts and money'); in the same sentence, he also omits the phatic clause *ut diximus* (HE III.5.35). This comment is worthy of notice; in it, Bede tells that Bishop Aidan rebuked the rich if they did not act as they should; he also adds that he never gave anything to the rich besides food, and that he used to give the gifts and the money received from the rich to the people in need. As Godden (1990) has observed, it is puzzling that Bede felt the need to specify that Aidan never reciprocated the gifts he received from wealthy people:

> What [Bede] is describing is Aidan's provocative and perhaps courageous refusal to engage in the traditional ritual of exchanging gifts as a social act; instead, he calmly accepted gifts so that he might use them for charitable purposes and gave nothing but food and drink in exchange. The issue is the conflict between a secular tradition of gift-exchange and a Christian tradition of charity. (Godden 1990: 47)

The same type of opposition is maintained in the OEB as well. Ælfric, on the other hand, omits the section altogether.

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[151] "Numquam diuitibus honoris siue timoris gratia, siqua deliquissent, reticebat, sed aspera illos inuectione corrigebat. Nullam potentibus saeculi pecuniam, excepta solum esca, siquos hospitio suscepisset, umquam dare solebat, sed ea potius, quae sibi a diuitibus donaria pecuniarum largiebantur, uel in usus pauperum, ut diximus, dispergebat, uel ad redemtionem eorum, qui iniuste fuerant uenditi, dispensabat. Denique multos, quos pretio dato redemerat, redemtos postmodum suos discipulos fecit, atque ad sacerdotalem usque gradum erudiendo atque instituendo prouexit" (HE III.5.30-9).
"Ond he þes biscop ricum monnum no for are ne for ege næfre forswigian nolde, gif heo on hwon agylton, ac he mid heardre þrea hiæ onspræc 7 heo gebette. Ond nænigum ricum men æfre ænig feoh sellan wolde, nemne mete 7 swæsendo þæm þe hine sohton; ac he ma ða gife 7 þa feoh þe him rice men sealdon, oðþe þearfum to áre gedælde oðþe to alysnesse gesealde þara monna, þe unrihtlice bebohte wæron. Ond he monigne þara, þe he mid weorþe alysde, him to discipulum genom, 7 þa æfter fæce to sacerhade mid his geornisse getyde 7 gelærde" (OEB 162.12-20).
[152] Miller (1898: 163) translates this word pair as 'food and entertainment', but this translational choice obliterates the synonymic nature of the two Old English nouns.

Ælfric treats his source with much freedom and, as previously mentioned, he anticipates a passage of this chapter, but he is also sometimes very close to his source. This can be seen for instance in "and sylf swa leofode swa swa he lærde oðre" (LoS 26.74, 'and he himself lived as he taught others'), which follows the Latin "non aliter quam uiuebat cum suis ipse docebat" (HE III.5.7). Some of the *exempla* mentioned by Bede are maintained, even if placed in a different sequence, and some others are completely omitted. Aidan's custom of travelling on foot is briefly mentioned, and so is his moderation in life (LoS 26.80-2, corresponding to HE III.5.4-6;10-7); Ælfric summarizes the long description of Aidan's evangelization of the laity in one poignant line: "and munuclice leofode betwux ðam læwedum folce" (LoS 26.81, 'and lived as a monk among lay people'). Aidan's constant devotion to learning and praying is also maintained, but only the first, more general of Bede's *exempla* is mentioned (LoS 26.75-9, corresponding to HE III.5.18-21), whereas the one concerning banquets is omitted (HE ll. 22-26):

> He lufode forhæfednysse . and halige rædinge . / and Iunge men teah georne mid lare . / swa þæt ealle his geferan þe him mid eodon / sceoldon sealmas *leornian* . oððe sume *rædinge* . / swa hider swa hi ferdon . þam folce *bodigende*. (LoS 26.75-9)
> ['He loved abstinence and holy reading, and zealously drew to him young men with doctrine, so that all the companions who went with him had to learn psalms or some reading, wherever they went, preaching to the people'.]

In comparison with the corresponding passage in the OEB previously discussed, Ælfric makes reference to both dimensions of learning, orality and literacy; more importantly, he adds a third element that Bede does not mention, but that Ælfric clearly considers important: the idea of preaching.

Ælfric is completely silent on the extended fasting practices that religious men and women observed at the time, following the teaching of Aidan

> Cuius exempli informati, tempore illo religiosi quique uiri ac feminae consuetudinem fecerunt per totum annum, excepta remissione quinquagesimae paschalis, quarta et sexta sabbati ieiunium ad nonam usque horam protelare. (HE III.5.26-9)

Considering how attentive Ælfric always is to maintain or omit references to fasting practices, the absence of this passage is significant, especially because Bede gives a very detailed description of the protracted episodes of fasting put in practice by those *religiosi uiri ac feminae*. Ælfric may have considered this as too rigid a practice, and therefore not to be repeated. The sermon also contains no trace of Aidan's rebukes to the rich and to his custom of redeeming slaves and converting them to Christianity (HE

139

III.5.30-9). Instead, Ælfric connects the figure of Aidan with that of Oswald by closing the display of the bishop's Christian virtues with a quick reference to the king's humility and piousness:

> þa wearð se cyning oswold swiðe ælmes-georn . / and eadmod on þeawum . and on eallum þingum cystig . / and man ahrærde cyrcan on his rice geond eall . / and mysterlice gesetnyssa mid micelre geornfulnysse. (LoS 26.83-6)
> ['then King Oswald became very eager in almsgiving and humble in manners, and generous in all things, and churches were built everywhere in his kingdom and monastic foundations with great zeal'.]

HE III.5.40-64 (OEB 162.21-164.18)

Aidan's predecessor in Northumbria is described by Bede with the adjective *austerioris* (HE III.5.42, 'more austere/severe' than Aidan); the translator opts for an adjective characterised by a pejorative connotation that is not present in the Latin: *reðe* (OEB 162.23), 'fierce, cruel'. The rest of the passage is translated with the customary attention to the syntactic structure of the source text that is one of the main characteristics of the OEB. With the exception of the omission of the relative clause "quae uirtutum mater est" (HE III.5.60), no omissions or modifications of the source text can be found, except for the following word pairs:

- *uerbum fidei* (HE III.5.41-2): *Cristes geleafan 7 fulwihte* (OEB 162.22, 'Christ's faith and baptism'): far from being synonymic, this word pair presents a very interesting reformulation because neither of the two members is a direct translation of the Latin: *uerbum* is simplified to *Christes*, and the idea of baptism is not present in the Latin, even though it is in accordance with the idea expressed elsewhere in these chapters that the people of Northumbria were not yet Christian and therefore would have had to have been baptized by the Irish bishop.

- *ministraret* (HE III.5.42): *þegnian 7 healdan* (OEB 162.22-3, 'minister and maintain'); the verb *þegnian* corresponds to the Latin *ministrare*, whereas *healdan* could be considered as a more general translation of the same concept. I would therefore see the relationship between the two OE verbs as one of hyponymy.

- *praedicans* (HE III.5.43): *bodade 7 lærde* (OEB 162.24, 'preached and taught'). The Latin present participle is translated with two active verbs, the second of which seems to express a more general meaning than the first. As previously

140

mentioned, this word pair is a standard way to translate the verb *praedico* and it occurs several times in the OEB.

- *tractatum* (HE III.5.48): *smeaunge 7 geþeahte* (OEB 162.30, 'discussion and deliberation'); the word pair seems to offer two slightly different translations of the Latin *tractatum*, and they seem to imply a relationship of cause and effect, or at least of two consecutive moments in time: *smeagung*, in fact, denotes a discussion in the sense of an inquiry (Bosworth/Toller 1898-1972: 887), whereas *geþeaht* conveys the idea of a resolution or deliberation (Bosworth/Toller 1898-1972: 453).

- *desiderantes*: (HE III.5.49): *þæt him leofre wære 7 heo wilnadon* (OEB 162.31, 'that they preferred and desired'). The present participle is translated with a relative clause in which the two shades of meaning expressed by the word pair seem to be synonymous.

Ælfric omits this passage completely. This omission is not surprising, given that the events reported in this section – and in particular the unsuccessful mission of Aidan's predecessor – are not directly connected with Oswald; moreover, they might cast a somewhat negative light on the image of Oswald, who continued Augustine's mission and promoted Christianity in Northumbria.

### The Easter meal (HE III.6; OEB 164.19-166.22; LoS 26.87-108)

Bede praises Oswald's Christian qualities and then relates the famous episode of the Easter banquet with Aidan; on Easter day the two men are sitting at the same table, when Oswald is informed that a multitude of poor is left with no food. The king then orders all of the food of the Easter banquet be taken to the poor, and to break into pieces the silver dish in front of him and distribute it to the needy. On seeing such Christian behaviour, Aidan takes Oswald's right hand and says that it will never decay, and his prophecy is fulfilled after the king's death.

In this chapter the OEB presents a very interesting reshaping of the lines describing the moment when Aidan and Oswald say grace before starting to eat:

> Denique fertur quia tempore quodam, cum die sancto paschae cum praefato episcopo consedisset ad prandium, positusque esset in mensa coram eo discus agenteus regalibus epulis refertus, et iamiamque essent manus ad panem benedicendum missuri, […]. (HE III.6.11-5)

The OEB describes a whole different scenario:

> Secgað men, þæt þæt gelumpe in sume tid þy halgan Eastordæge, þæt he mid þy foresprecenan biscope sæte æt his undernswæsendum 7 him wæs hefen beod to; 7 þær stod micel seolfren disc on, ond se wæs mid cynelicum mettum gefylled. Ond se biscop nom hlaf 7 bletsode 7 þæm cyninge sealde. (OEB 164.29-166.1-2)
> ['People say that it occurred once on the holy Easter day, that he sat with the aforementioned bishop at his early meal, and the table was set before him; and there was a large silver dish filled with a meal fit for a king. And the bishop took the bread and blessed it and gave it to the king'.]

The translation evokes the moment in the Eucharist of the breaking of bread: a silent parallel is drawn here, according to which if Aidan is Christ, Oswald is an apostle. In the HE the bread is about to be blessed, and both Aidan and Oswald raise their hands to ask the blessing; in the OEB only the bishop performs the action, and he actually blesses the bread, breaks it and gives it to Oswald. This passage is omitted in Ælfric's sermon, as the homilist jumps directly to the key moment of this episode, namely the breaking of the silver dish:

> Hit gelamp on sumne sæl þæt hi sæton ætgædere . / oswold . and aidan . on þam halgan easterdæge . / þa bær man þam cyninge cynelice þenunga / on anum sylfrenan disce [...]. (LoS 26.87-91)
> ['It happened some time that they sat together, Oswald and Aidan, on the holy Easter day. Then the royal meal was brought to the king on a silver dish'.]

Oswald donates the food and the silver dish of the banquet to the poor, and Aidan blesses the king's hand in return.[153] The OEB is here characterised by another

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[153] "Denique fertur quia tempore quodam, cum die sancto paschae cum praefato episcopo consedisset ad prandium, positusque esset in mensa coram eo discus argenteus regalibus epulis refertus, et iamiamque essent manus ad panem benedicendum missuri, intrasse subito ministrum ipsius, cui suscipiendorum inopum erat cura delegata, et indicasse regi quia multitudo pauperum undecumque adueniens maxima per plateas sederet, postulans aliquid elemosynae a rege. Qui mox dapes sibimet appositas deferri pauperibus, sed et discum confringi, atque eisdem minutatim diuidi praecepit. Quo uiso pontifex, qui assidebat, delectatus tali facto pietatis, apprehendit dexteram eius et ait: «Numquam inueterescat haec manus»" (HE III.6.11-23).
"Secgað men, þæt þæt gelumpe in sume tid þy halgan Eastordæge, þæt he mid þy foresprecenan biscope sæte æt his undernswæsendum 7 him wæs hefen beod to; 7 þær stod micel seolfren disc on, ond se wæs mid cynelicum mettum gefylled. Ond se biscop nom hlaf 7 bletsode 7 þæm cyninge sealde. Þa eode semninga his þegna sum inn, þæm he hæfde beboden þæt he scolde þearfena 7 earmra monna ærendo wreccan, ond sægde þæm cyninge þæt æghwonan cwome micel menigeo þearfena, þæt se weorðig ful

discrepancy: if in the Old English Aidan took the king's hand (*genom*) and kissed it (*cyste*, OEB 166.10),[154] in the HE Aidan only *adprehendit dexteram eius* (HE III.6.22), without kissing it.

The translation of the phrase in the genitive case "Derorum et Berniciorum prouinciae" (HE III.6.30) is more explicitly explained in the OEB thanks to the use of an apposition: "þa twa mægða Norðhymbra, Dere 7 Beornice" (OEB 166.17-8, 'the two provinces of Northumbria, Deira and Bernicia'). It should also be noted that the name of Acha (HE III.6.33) is not mentioned by the translator.

This chapter presents the following word pairs:

- *inopum* (HE III.6.16): *þearfena 7 earmra* (OEB 166.3, 'of the poor and miserable'), in which the first member suggests the literal fact that they were in need, the second the emotional misery which was the result; this word pair is therefore additional.

- *dapes* (HE III.6.19): *þone mete 7 þa swæsendo* (OEB 166.6, 'food and meal'), in which the two members are synonymous; the same pair was also used in the translation of the previous chapter to translate the Latin *esca* (HE III.5.32).

- *discordabant* (HE III.6.31): *ungeþwære 7 ungesibbe wæron* (OEB 166.18, 'were discordant and hostile'); here the translator renders the idea of discord with two adjectives rather than with a verb. *Ungesibbe* can be interpreted as an addition, as it mentions the idea of peace among kinsmen as missing from the two kingdoms of Northumbria, which is not expressed by the Latin.

- *populum* (HE III.6.32): *in ane sibbe 7 in án folc* (OEB 166.19), literally meaning 'in one kinship and in one people'. The first member could have been used by the translator to echo the adjective *ungesibbe* of the preceding word pair, thus creating a beautiful contrast.

- *conpaginatae* (HE III.6.32): *geteoh 7 geþwærade* (OEB 166.19, 'drawn together and reconciled'); the past participle is here translated with two active verbs. The first member of the word pair could describe the action of drawing the different

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sæte 7 hine ælmessan bædon. Þa het se cyning sona neoman þone mete 7 þa swæsendo, þe him to aseted wæs, 7 beran þam þearfum; 7 eac bebead, þæt mon þone disc tobræce to styccum 7 þæm þearfum gedælde. Þa se biscop þæt þa geseah, þe him big sæt, þa licode him seo arfæste dæd þæs cyninges, genom hine þa big þære swiðran honda 7 cyste, 7 þus cwæð: Ne forealdige þeos hond æfre" (OEB 162.21-166.11).

[154] Plummer (1896 vol. II: 140).

peoples together that precedes the actual moment expressed by the Latin participle, when the peoples become one.

Ælfric makes use of most of this chapter, with the sole exception of the concluding reference to the unification of Bernicia and Deira and to King Edwin (HE III.6.30-5). However, he does not insert the material in the same order as it is presented by Bede: in fact, first he mentions the episode of the silver dish (LoS 26.87-103) and only later does he elaborate on the information provided at the beginning of the chapter (HE III.6.1-8; LoS 26.104-8).

> Huius igitur antistitis doctrina rex Osuald cum ea, cui praeerat, gente Anglorum institutus, non solum incognita progenitoribus suis regna caelorum sperare didicit, sed et regna terrarum plus quam ulli maiorum suorum ab eodem uno Deo, qui fecit caelum et terram, consecutus est, denique omnes nationes et prouincias Brittaniae, quae in quattuor linguas, id est Brettonum Pictorum Scottorum at Anglorum, diuisae sunt, in dicione accepit. (HE III.6.1-8)

> Oswoldes cynerice wearð gerymed þa swyðe . / swa þæt feower þeoda hine underfengon to hlaforde . / peohtas . and bryttas . Scottas . and angle . / swa swa se ælmihtiga god hi geanlæhte to ðam . / for oswoldes geearnungum þe hine æfre wurðode. (LoS 26.104-8)
> ['Then Oswald's kingdom became greatly extended, so that four peoples received him as their lord, the Picts, the Britons, the Scots, and the Angles, as God Almighty united them on account of Oswald's merits, who ever honoured him'.]

In this passage, Ælfric summarizes the section in which Bede links Oswald's earthly kingdom with the heavenly one (HE III.6.1-8) by referring to his merits (LoS 26.108), and mentions the four peoples over which he ruled. But Ælfric talks of people rather than languages: "quae in quattuor linguas […] diuisae sunt" (HE III.6.6-7), "feower þeoda" (LoS 26.105, 'four peoples').

As previously mentioned, the episode of the silver dish is almost completely included in the sermon, with the exception of the scene in which Aidan and Oswald say grace before their meal. This is probably one of the most significant moments in the Bedan narrative, because the dish scene may be seen as equally iconic as the widely known episode of St Martin dividing his cloak in half to help a poor man. Ælfric also omits the details of the place where the undecayed hand is kept, probably because it was no longer at Bamburgh in Ælfric's time. In the sermon Aidan does not kiss Oswald's hand. This detail seems therefore to be confined to the version found in the OEB.

**The conversion of the West Saxons (HE III.7; OEB 166.23-172.2; LoS 26.119-43)**

This chapter slightly departs from the main subject of the first half of Book III to narrate the preaching of Bishop Birinus and the conversion of the West Saxons. Oswald stands as godfather to King Cynegisl at his christening. The two rulers endow Birinus with the see of Dorchester. Cenwealh, son of Cynegisl, only embraces his father's religion after his exile at the court of King Anna and chooses first Agilbert and later Leuthere as successors of Birinus.

HE III.7.1-26 (OEB 166.23-168.14; LoS 26.119.43)

In the opening sentence of the chapter the translator omits the relative clause "qui antiquitus Geuissae uocabantur" (HE III.7.1-2), probably because he deemed it unnecessary alongside many other instances of names of places and peoples that are left out. In the same sentence the present participle *praedicante* (HE III.7.3) is translated with the word pair that always corresponds to the verb *praedico* in the OEB, namely *bodade him 7 lærde* (OEB 166.24, 'preached and taught'); this word pair is also repeated further on in the text (OEB 166.30, "bodade 7 lærde"), and it corresponds to another instance of the same Latin verb (*praedicare*, HE III.7.11).

The translator also omits the details of Birinus's consecration as a bishop (HE III.7.6-8: "unde et iussu eiusdem pontificis per Asterium Genuensem episcopum in episcopatus consecratus est gradum. Sed Brittaniam perueniens, […].”): "þa het se papa hine to bioscope gehalgian, 7 hine to Breotone sende" (OEB 166.27-8, 'then the Pope ordered him to be consecrated as bishop, and he sent him to Britain.'). As can be seen, the implicit clause "Brittaniam perueniens" (HE III.7.8), which in the Latin opens the subsequent sentence, is attached to the previous one in the translation. This allows the translator to be even more specific than Bede and to say that the newly-consecrated bishop arrived in Wessex, rather than in Britain; this detail is actually more logical than the Latin, considering that the bishop never reached Britain because he stayed in Wessex among the heathen people of that region. These slight changes enable the translator to explain the situation more clearly. For the same reason, the translator also clarifies the implicit clause "quam ultra progrediens" (HE III.7.11), by repeating the

supposed destination of his journey ("þonne he fyrr in Breotone feran scolde", OEB 166.30-1, 'than to go further into Britain'):

> Vnde et iussu eiusdem pontificis per Asterium Genuensem episcopum in episcopatus consecratus est gradum. Sed Brittaniam perueniens, ac primum Geuissorum gentem ingrediens, cum omnes ibidem paganissimos inueniret, utilius esset ratus est ibi potius uerbum praedicare quam ultra progrediens eos, quibus praedicare deberet, inquireret. (HE III.7.6-12)

> Þa het se papa hine to bioscope gehalgian, 7 hine to Breotone sende. Þa com he ærest upp in Westseaxum 7 heo þær hæðne gemette, þa ðuhte him nyttre 7 betre, þæt he ðær Godes word bodade 7 lærde, þonne he fyrr in Breotone feran scolde. (OEB 166.27-31)
> ['then the Pope ordered him to be consecrated as bishop, and he sent him to Britain. When he first arrived in Wessex and found heathens there, he thought it more useful and better to preach and teach the word of God there, than to go further into Britain'.]

It should also be noted that the superlative *paganissimos* (HE III.7.10) is toned down to a simple *hæðne* (OEB 166.29) in the translation. Moreover, the adjective *utilius* (HE III.7.10) is transformed into a word pair, *nyttre 7 betre* (OEB 166.30, 'more useful and better'); the first member is the actual translation of the Latin adjective, whereas the second is an addition expressing a qualitative judgement that does not have a counterpart in the source text. Another addition, probably also made for the sake of clarity, can be found in the translation of "cum sua gente" (HE III.7.14): "mid his þeode Westseaxum" (OEB 168.1-2, 'with his people the West Saxons'). When narrating Cynegil's baptism, the translator rearranges the sequence of events: in the HE, Oswald first stands as Cynegils's godfather and then marries his daughter (HE III.7.16-20), thus following the chronological order of events; in the OEB the two items are given in the reverse order (OEB 168.4-6), and one might wonder whether this rearrangement is just casual, or whether it implies that the translator judged the marriage a more important or better known event than the baptism. The text contains another word pair translating the verb *accepit* (HE III.7.31) as *onfeng he him 7 nom* (OEB 168.5, 'he received and took him'), in which the two members are synonymous.

The sentence

> Donauerunt autem ambo reges eidem episcopo ciuitatem quae uocatur Dorcic ad faciendam inibi sedem episcopalem. (HE III.7.20-1)

is translated in the OEB as follows:

> Ða sealdon 7 gefon þa cyningas begen þæm biscope eardungstowe 7 biscopseðl on Dorcotceastre. (OEB 168.7-8)

['Then the kings both bestowed and gave the bishop a dwelling place and bishop's seat at Dorchester'.]

The translator summarizes the Latin sentence thanks to the use of a word pair: instead of translating the implicit clause "ad faciendam inibi sedem episcopalem" (HE III.7.21), the translator does not translate the noun *ciuitatem*, but compensates for this omission by translating *sedem episcopalem* with a word pair, *eardungstowe 7 biscopseðl* (OEB 168.7-8, 'dwelling place and bishop's seat'), in which the first member represents an expansion of the source text. Moreover, the passage contains a second word pair in the translation of the verb *donauerunt* (HE III.7.20) as *sealdon 7 gefon* (OEB 168.7, 'bestowed and gave'). The first member of the word pair seems to express a more specific meaning (the actual transfer of ownership), than the second member, which is the actual translation of the Latin verb; however it should also be noted that this is a standard word pair, used to translate Latin verbs belonging to the semantic field of giving (Waite 1984: 122). The translation of the metaphorical "migrauit ad dominum" (HE III.7.23) is preceded by a more linear rendering of the same idea: "Ond he þær his dagas geendade 7 to Drihtne ferde" (OEB 168.10-1, 'and there he ended his days and went to the Lord'). Another word pair translates the past participle *translatus* (HE III.7.25) with the verbs *upadón 7 lædan* (OEB 168.12, 'to take up and bring'); the word pair unfolds the two main actions of a *translatio*, namely the exhumation of the body and the transportation to the new resting place. The two actions also denote two successive moments in time.

The events connected with the conversion of the West Saxons are also reported by Ælfric (LoS 26.119-43), although the narration of these events is of course less detailed than in the HE. For example, Ælfric does not say that Birinus's mission was initially planned to reach the British people, rather than those of Wessex. Ælfric also omits Oswald's marriage to Cynegil's daughter. However, the circumstances relating to the attribution of the see of Dorchester are included in the sermon. In this case, Ælfric follows the order of events as it is in the HE, without rearranging the material. He does, however, leave out of his narrative the entire second half of this chapter (HE III.7.26-74), in which Bede gives an account of the kingdom of the West Saxons under Cenwealh, son of Cynegils, and most especially of his dealings with the episcopal see,

presumably because it has little or no connection to the life of Oswald. The narration of these events allows Ælfric to put Oswald in a positive light in a different context from that of Northumbria and of Aidan's influence, as this time the king assists a bishop from Rome in the Christianization of another part of England.

HE III.7.27-76 (OEB 168.15-172.2)

This section contains a periphrastical translation of the Latin "bello petitus" that also contains a synonymic word pair (HE III.7.31): "þa teah Penda hine fyrd 7 here" (OEB 168.20, 'then Penda led his army and host against him').[155] Moreover, the translator adds a third stage in the sequence describing the conversion of Cenwealh: in the HE, he "fidem cognovit ac suscepit ueritatis" (HE III.7.33-4), but in the OEB "he þær onget soðfæstnisse geleafan 7 onfeng 7 gefulwad wæs" (OEB 168.22-3, 'there he learnt the true faith and received it and was baptized'). The three verbs used by the translator describe three consecutive moments; in my opinion, the verb *cognouit* corresponds to the first verb of the Old English triplet, and the word pair composed by the second and third verbs corresponds to the verb *suscepit*. This means that the second member of the word pair provides a more direct explanation of the metaphorical expression conveyed by the Latin *suscepit veritatis*: in pragmatic terms, the fact that the king received the true faith means that he was baptized.

It is also worthy of notice that the translation of the phrase "bona ac santa sobole felix" (HE III.7.35) presents the syntactic arrangement usually employed by the translator when a noun is accompanied by more than one adjective (*adj + noun + 7 adj*); this construct is here adapted to accommodate all three adjectives, which are arranged following the exact same order of the Latin: "goodes tudres 7 haliges gesælig" (OEB 168.24, 'fortunate in good and holy offspring'). Further on in the text, the translator reworks the sentence in which Bede says that Agilbert started preaching in Cenwealh's kingdom; "coniunxitque se regi, sponte *ministerium praedicandi* assumens

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[155] "Repudiata enim sorore Pendam regis Merciorum, quam duxerat, aliam accepit uxorem; ideoque bello petitus ac regno priuatus ab illo, secessit ad regem Orientalium Anglorum, cui nomen erat Anna, apud quem triennio exulans fidem cognouit ac suscepit ueritatis. Nam et ipse, apud quem exulabat, rex erat uir bonus, et bona ac sancts sobole felix, ut in sequentibus docebimus" (HE III.7.30-6).
"Forlet he án, Pendan swustor, þa he hæfde ær him to wífe broht, nom him oðer wiif. Þa teah Penda hine fyrd on 7 here, 7 hine his rices benom. Ða gewat he to Eastengla cyninge, se wæs Anna haten. Mid þon he þreo ger wæs wrecca, 7 he þær onget soðfæstnisse geleafan 7 onfeng 7 gefulwad wæs. Forðon þe se cyning, þe he mid wrecca wæs, wæs god wæpnedmon 7 goodes tudres 7 haliges gesælig, swa we æft heræfter ongitan magon" (OEB 168.18-25).

(HE III.7.40-1) becomes in the Old English "Ond he þa wilsumlice hine geþeodde to þæm cyninge 7 *hine godcunde lare lærde*" (OEB 168.30-1, 'and then he readily joined the king and taught him the divine teaching'). Whereas Bede writes that the bishop took on the task of preaching, the translator makes the bishop teach the Christian doctrine to the king alone. The translator usually employs the verbs *bodian* and *læran* to translate the Latin *praedico*, but here he clearly depicts a different scene, one that shifts from (presumably) public preaching to private instruction.

The Latin name of Winchester and the adjoined relative clause are not present in the OEB (HE III.7.49-50; OEB 170.4-5). The translation of "rediit Galliam" (HE III.7.51) is expanded with the addition of an explicative clause: "gewat þa of Breotone 7 hwearf eft in his agene leode in Gallia rice" (OEB 170.6-7, 'he left Britain and returned to his own people in the kingdom of Gaul'). Finally, the translation contains a synonymic word pair translating the Latin *gessit* (HE III.7.76) with the synonyms *heold 7 ræhte* (OEB 172.1, 'held and ruled').

**Miracles at Maserfelth (HE III.9; OEB 176.22-180.11; LoS 26.144-57; 200-220)**

After nine years, Oswald is killed by the Mercians at the battle of Maserfelth. The spot where he is killed miraculously heals sick people and animals: people take the soil from this spot, put it in water, and drink it. So much soil is taken, that a very large hole results from the devotional activity. Bede relates two of the miracles performed through the soil at Maserfelth: that of the sick horse and that of the paralytic girl. A horse that is about to die is miraculously saved when it rolls over the spot where Oswald was slain. On seeing this, the owner of the horse signposts the place. Later, a paralytic girl is healed on the same spot.

HE III.9.1-26 (OEB 176.22-178.17; LoS 26.144-57; 200-3)

The phrase *apostasia demens* (HE III.9.3) is translated without the adjective as *awegoncernis* (OEB 176.24, 'apostasy'). The translator omits the sentence concerning the decision of not counting the year of the apostasy (HE III.9.4-7, "Siquidem […]

adnotari"), probably because Bede already devotes to this subject the end of HE III.1. Instead, the text goes on to relate the end of Oswald's reign.[156] The adjective *grauis*, used by Bede to describe the battle in which King Oswald lost his life (HE III.9.8-9, *graui proelio*), is emphasised in the translation with a synonymic word pair: *hefig gefeoht 7 micel* (OEB 176.26, 'heavy and great battle'), in which the translator makes use of usual pattern adj + noun + 7 adj. In the same sentence the translator rearranges the order of "pagana gente paganoque rege Merciorum" (HE III.9.9), which he translates as "from þæm ilcan hæðnan cyninge 7 þære hæðnan þeode Mercna" (OEB 176.27-8, 'by the same heathen king and by the heathen people of Mercia'), presumably because the responsibility for the battle lies first with the king and then with his people.

In the passage describing the location of the battle in which Oswald was killed, the translator leaves out *lingua Anglorum* in the relative clause "qui lingua Anglorum nuncupatur Maserfelth" (HE III.9.11; OEB 176.29, "þe nemned is Maserfeld", 'which is called Maserfield'), probably because this detail is unnecessary in the translation. But, the rest of the information is maintained, including Oswald's age when he died and the date of the battle. The translation of the relative clause "ubi pro patria dimicans a paganis interfectus est" (HE III.9.15) presents some interesting elements: the translator writes "þe he for his eðle mid his leodum cómpade 7 from þæm hæðnum ofslegen wæs" (OEB 178.3-4, 'where he fought with his people for his land and was slain by the heathen'), in which the implicit clause expressed by the present participle *dimicans* becomes an explicit clause (*þe* […] *cómpade*), linked to the following clause by the conjunction *7*. We also find the expansion *mid his leodum*, which does not have a counterpart in the Latin and that gives the sentence further emphasis.

The section describing the miraculous healing powers of the spot where Oswald was killed reads as follows:

> Vnde contigit ut puluerem ipsum, ubi corpus eius in terram corruit, multi auferentes et in aquam *mittentes* suis per haec *infirmis* multum commodi adferrent. (HE III.9.17-9)

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[156] "Quo completo annorum curriculo occisus est, commisso graui proelio, ab eadem pagana gente paganoque rege Merciorum, a quo et prodecessor eius Eduini peremtus fuerat, in loco qui lingua Anglorum nuncupatur Maserfelth, anno aetatis suae xxxviii, die quinto mensis Augusti" (HE III.8.8-12). "Þa se ryne þyssa geara gefylled wæs, slog mon Oswald. Wæs hefig gefeoht 7 micel gefremed from þæm ilcan hæðnan cyninge 7 þære hæðnan þeode Mercna, from þæm his foregenga eac Eadwine ofslegen wæs, in þære stowe þe nemned is Maserfeld. Hæfde he Oswald lichomlicre yldo seofon 7 þritig wintra, þa hine mon slóg þy fiftan dæge Augustus monðes" (OEB 176.25-31).

> Ðonon gelomp þætte þa seolfan moldan, þær his lichoma gefeol, monige men neomende wæron, 7 in wæter *dydon 7 sealdon* heora *untrummum monnum 7 neatum* drincan; 7 him sona wél wæs. (OEB 178.5-8)
> ['Thence it happened that the very soil where his body fell, was taken by many men, put in water and given to sick men and cattle to drink, and they were soon well'.]

The present participle *mittentes* (HE III.9.18) becomes an additional word pair in the OEB: *dydon 7 sealdon* (OEB 178.7, 'put and given'); the Old English word pair distinguishes between two separate phases: the earth is first put in water and then given to the sick to drink, whereas the Latin only mentions the first phase. Another additional word pair is used to specify the substantivized adjective *infirmis* (HE III.9.19): *untrumum monnum 7 neatum* (OEB 178.7-8, 'to sick men and cattle'), likely used in order to recall the same expression employed a few lines above, in which the OE *untrumra monna 7 neata* (OEB 178.5, 'of sick men and cattle') corresponds to *infirmorum et hominum et pecorum* (HE III.9.16). In the passage introducing the miracle stories, the relative clause "quae a maioribus audiuimus" (HE III.9.26) is omitted in the translation:

> Et multa quidem in loco illo uel de puluere loci illius facta uirtutum miracula narrantur; sed nos duo tantum, quae a maioribus audiuimus, referre satis duximus. (HE III.9.24-6)

> Ond monig wundor mægena earon sægd, þæt in þære stowe gelumpon ge bi ðære moldan, þa ðe in þære stowe genumene wæron. Ac us genihtsumað nu þæt we tuu án oðþe þreo gehyran. (OEB 178.14-7)
> ['And many miraculous wonders are said to have occurred at the place, as well as by means of the soil taken from that place. But it is not enough for us to hear only two or three'.]

Once again, the translator might have deemed this detail unnecessary in the context of the translated narrative. Moreover, *duo* (HE III.9.25) is rendered more vaguely with *tuu án oðþe þreo* (OEB 178.16-7, 'two or three'); given that the chapter only contains two miracle stories connected to the place where Oswald was killed, Lapidge (2008-2010 v. 2: 519) notes that the translator seems to have also taken into account the miracle narrated in the following chapter, as if the miracles all belonged to the same category or section, which is indeed a very logical observation.[157]

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[157] Plummer (1896 vol. II: 153). As Lapidge (2008-2010 v. 2: 519) points out , "Pare più ragionevole supporre che Beda computi come un'unità i due miracoli che ebbero luogo nel punto dove Oswald trovò la morte, mentre quello compiuto mediante la borsa che conteneva la terra venga da lui considerato come un'altra unità: in questo modo si creerebbe un'opposizione binaria – il luogo stesso da un lato, la polvere ricavata dal luogo nell'altro – che trova rispondenza in queste parole dell'autore: *in illo loco uel de puluere loci illius* (ll. 24-5)".

Ælfric (LoS 26.144-57) mentions the duration of Oswald's reign in laudatory terms, and he also adds that he was slain because he was defending his people;[158] he does mention that he ruled for nine years and he adds his age at the time of his death, but he omits every reference to the apostasy and the revised attribution of years to erase the apostasy from historical records:

> Hwæt þa oswold cyning his cynedom geheold / hlisfullice for worulde and mid micclum geleafan . / and on eallum dædum his drihten arwurðode . / oð þæt he ofslagen wearð for his folces ware . / on þam nigoðan geare þe he rices geweold . / þa þa he sylf wæs on ylde eahta and þrittig geara. (LoS 26. 144-49)
> ['Lo, King Oswald held his kingdom gloriously for the world and with much faith, and he honoured his Lord in all his deeds until he was slain while defending his people, in the ninth year of his reign, when he himself was thirty-eight years old'.]

In this section Ælfric adds that, during the battle, the Christians fell and thus the pagan enemy approached Oswald, who is described as holy. In the following line the same idea is repeated with the same verb (*genealæcan*), but from the point of view of Oswald, to whom the pagan army is synonymous with death:

> Hi comon þa to gefeohte to maserfelda begen . / and fengon to-gædere oð þæt þær feollon þa cristenan . / and þa hæðenan genealæhton to þam halgan oswolde . / þa geseah he genealecan his lifes geendunge. (LoS 26.155-58)
> ['They both came to battle at Maserfield and fought together until the Christians fell and the heathen came close to the holy Oswald. He saw the end of his life coming close'.]

Ælfric also makes a passing reference to the passage in Bede's narrative concerning the healing powers of the earth at Maserfield (HE III.9.13-26):

> Eac swilce þær he feol on þam gefeohte ofslagen / men namon ða eorðan to adligum mannum . / and dydon on wæter wanhalum to þicgenne . / and hi wurdon gehælede . þurh þone halgan wer. (LoS 26.200-3)
> ['Also from whence he fell slain in the battle, men took the soil to sick people and put it in water for the sick to taste, and they were healed through the holy man'.]

Here he mentions the miraculous healing powers of the earth taken from the spot where Oswald was slain, but is silent on the practice of administering the same curative to animals as well as on the hole that eventually resulted in the place from which believers took the earth. Quite interestingly, at the end of this passage Ælfric refers to Oswald as a holy man and directly connects the miracles of healing with him (LoS 26.203: "and hi wurdon gehælede . þurh þone halgan wer .", 'and they were healed through the holy man'). In the eyes of Ælfric, it seems therefore that Oswald is just as holy as the other

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[158] Chaney (1970) interprets Oswald's killing as a sacrifice to Woden. Similarly, he connects various aspects of the Bedan narrative about the holy king to Anglo-Saxon paganism. Ridyard (1988: 234-5), Rollason (1989: 127), and Stancliffe (1995: 64), however, tend to tone down Chaney's interpretation.

religious figures whose miraculous powers he praises in the other sermons of his collection.

HE III.9.27-52 (OEB 178.18-180.11; LoS 26.204-20)

The two miracles of this section are translated in detail by the Old English translator. The passage is characterised by the following word pairs:

- The present participle *augescente* (HE III.9.30) is translated with two active verbs, as the translator usually does when dealing with implicit clauses: *weox 7 miclade* (OEB 178.21, 'grew and increased'); in this context the two verbs could be seen as synonymous.

- The verb *se torqueret* (HE III.9.34) becomes *wond 7 þræste* (OEB 178.24-5, 'rolled and twisted'); the two Old English verbs are synonymous.

- The adjective *sanum* (HE III.9.38) is translated with the synonymic word pair *hal 7 gesund* (OEB 178.30, 'whole and sound'), which is consistently used by the translator to render the Latin *sanus*. For example, the same word pair appears further in the text, where the past participle *sanatam* (HE III.9.49) is translated as *hál 7 gesund* (OEB 180.11, 'whole and sound').

The ablative absolute "posito ibi signo" (HE III.9.41-2) is translated with a binomial expression, "Ond he þær tacen asette 7 þa stowe gemearcode" (OEB 178.33-4, 'and there he put a sign and marked the spot'). The translator opts to render the implicit construction of the Latin with two explicit clauses linked together by the conjunction *7*. The second clause has an explicatory function and represents an addition. Strictly speaking, the two Old English clauses expand the Latin implicit phrase as a whole, and not just a single word. Another expansion of the source text can be found in the translation of "quo dum adueniret" (HE III.9.43) as "þa he ða cwom to þæm men þe he secan wolde" (OEB 178.34-5, 'when he arrived to the people he wished to visit'). A similar treatment is also given to "neptem patrisfamilias" (HE III.9.44), which is again transformed into a main clause with the addition of a relative clause: "wæs nift þæs higna aldres þe he sohte" (OEB 180.1, 'she was the niece of the head of the household that he was visiting'). The sentence referring to the moment in which the sick girl is carried to the field is introduced by Bede with the expression "Quid multa?" (HE III.9.47), which alerts the reader that the climactic conclusion of the story is

approaching. The translator creates a similar effect by translating this Latin expression with *Hwæt* (OEB 180.4), the phatic interjection par excellence. Moreover, in the same sentence the implicit construction "inponentes eam carro" (HE III.9.47-8) is translated with an explicit clause to which an expansion is attached: "hy gearwodon sona wægn 7 asettan þa fæmnan inn" (OEB 180.4-5, 'they soon prepared a cart and put in the woman'). The translation of *obdormiuit* (HE III.9.49) also presents an expansion: "ða wæs heo werig; onslep þær hwon" (OEB 180.7, 'she was tired; there she slept a little'). Finally, the verb *reuersa est* (HE III.9.52) is translated with a near-synonimic word pair as *hwearf 7 eode* (OEB 180.11, 'returned and went').

The two episodes are related in detail by Ælfric (LoS 26.204-20); only the passage concerning the signposting of the place where the horse was healed (corresponding to HE III.9.40-3) is omitted.[159]

## Another miracle (HE III.10; OEB 180.12-182.8; LoS 26.221-38)

This short chapter describes another miracle produced by the soil of the place where Oswald was killed: a house is burnt to ashes with the exception of the pillar from which hung a bag containing the blessed soil.

The miracle story contained in this short chapter is reproduced in detail by the Old English translator. He shows his usual attentiveness in maintaining the syntax and the vocabulary of its source, with the exception of the cases listed below. The phrase *de natione Brettonum* (HE III.10.1) is transformed into a clause in the OEB: *sægdon men þæt he wære Bretta leod* (OEB 180.12-3: 'they say that he was of the British people').

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[159] "Sum wegfarende man ferde wið þone feld . / þa wearð his hors gesicclod . and sona þær feol . / wealwigende geond ða eorðan wodum gelicost . / mid þam þe hit swa wealweode geond þone widgillan feld . / þa becom hit embe lang þær se cyning oswold / on þam gefeohte feoll swa swa we ær foresædan . / and hit sona aras . swa hit hrepode . þa stowe . / hal eallum limum . and se hlaford þæs fægnode . / Se ridda þa ferde forð on his weg / þider hé gemynt hæfde . þa wæs þær . an mæden / licgende on paralisyn lange gebrocod . / He began þa to reccenne hu him on rade getimode . / and mann ferode þæt mæden to þære foræsedan stowe . / Heo wearð ða on slæpe and sona eft awóc / ansund eallum limum fram þam egeslican broce . / band þa hire heafod and bliðe ham ferde . / gangænde on fotum swa heo gefyrn ær ne dyde" (LoS 26.204-20).

Further on in the text, the translator omits the relative clause *quod futurum erat* (HE III.10.8).

The chapter contains the following word pairs:

- The infinitive *conicere* (HE III.10.4) is translated with two synonymous verbs, *þencan 7 ræsian* (OEB 180.16, 'think and consider').

- The noun *uiriditatis* (HE III.10.5) is expanded into *grennis 7 fægernis* (OEB 180.17, 'greenness and fairness'); here the translator repeats a word pair used recently, where he translates the Latin *uiridius ac uenustius* (HE III.10.4) as *grenra 7 fægera* (OEB 180.15). So the word pair at l. 17 could be explained by the presence of this double expression in the Latin denoting the same referent. It should also be noted, however, that the beauty of fields is also connected with holiness in the chapter on Dryhthelm (HE V.12; see Chapter 4.2).

- *ad medellam* (HE III.10.8) becomes *to læcedome 7 to hælo* (OEB 180.20, 'as a remedy and a cure'). This word pair is composed of two near-synonyms.

- The implicit clause *flammis impleri* (HE III.10.17) is expanded, probably for emphasis, in two separate clauses expressing the same idea: *þa gelomp þæt þæt hus eall wæs in fyren 7 ongon semninga byrnan* (OEB 180.28-9, 'then it happened that the entire house was on fire and it suddenly began to burn').

- The verb *remansit* (HE III.10.21) is translated with two synonymous verbs, *astód 7 awunade* (OEB 182.2, 'continued and remained').

Ælfric (LoS 26.221-38) pays close attention to this narrative and follows it very closely in his sermon.[160] He does not say that the horseman is from Britain, as Bede does, and he also omits the reflection that brought the man to realize the holiness of the place (HE III.10.4-6); in general he summarizes the beginning of the story, omitting all unnecessary details, but the rest of the narrative is closely reproduced. Ælfric even maintains Bede's closing remark in which he underlines that the fame of these miracles

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[160] "Eft siððan ferde eac sum ærendfæst ridda / be ðære ylcan stowe , and geband on anum claþe / of þam halgan duste þære deorwurðan stowe . / and lædde forð mid him þær he fundode to . / þa gemette he gebeoras bliðe æt þam huse . / he aheng þa þæt dust on ænne heahne post / and sæt mid þam gebeorum blissigende samod . / Man worhte þa micel fyr to middles ðam gebeorum . / and þa spearcan wundon wið þæs rofes swyðe . / oð þæt þæt hus færlice eall on fyre wearð . / and þa gebeoras flugon afyrhte aweg . / Þæt hus wearþ ða forburnon buton þam anum poste / þe þæt halige dust on ahangen wæs . / se post ana ætstod ansund mid þam duste . / and hi swyðe wundrodon þæs halgan weres geearnunga / þæt þæt fyr ne mihte þa moldan forbærnan . / and manega menn siððan gesohton þone stede / heora hæle feccende . and heora freonda gehwilcum" (LoS 26.221-33).

spread far and wide, and that many people came to the field, seeking help for themselves or for their loved ones. The care and precision with which Ælfric tells these miracle stories is quite unusual, and to some extent distant from his characteristically brief style. These three miracle narratives seem to lend themselves to close reproduction because they are not particularly long, do not present lengthy digressions, and they are already arranged in chronological order. Yet, at the same time, Ælfric was probably very interested in maintaining these stories, otherwise he would not have devoted such lengthy passages of translations to them. Perhaps these particular miracle stories had not yet faded from memory and still circulated orally. Despite speculations on their dissemination, these miracle stories are certainly iconic for the propaganda of Oswald's cult, and for this reason Ælfric allowed his source to speak without interfering too much.

## Oswald's bones are translated to Bardney (HE III.11; OEB 182.9-186.20; LoS 26.176-99)

Two further miraculous events connected to Oswald's relics are described here by Bede. The chapter opens with the story of the translation of Oswald's bones to the monastery of Bardney: despite his sanctity, the monks are hostile to the foreign king and therefore they refuse to let in the carriage with the bones,and leave it outside the monastery. The sanctity of the relics is made clear to the monks overnight, thanks to the projection of a beam of light from the carriage that was transporting them; the monks change their minds and receive the relics with the honour they deserve. The bones are washed and placed in a new shrine, and the water used to wash them is poured in a corner; the soil that receives the water later proves more effective against demonic possession than the more traditional exorcism, as confirmed by a miracle story.

HE III.11.1-32 (OEB 182.9-184.6; LoS 26.176-99)

The beginning of this chapter is closely reproduced in the OEB. In the translation, the first person singular verb *reor* (HE III.11.1) is rendered with the impersonal form

*nis to forswigienne* (OEB 182.9, 'it cannot be omitted'). In the same sentence, the word pair *wundor 7 mægen* (OEB 182.9-10, 'miracle and marvel') corresponds to another word pair in the Latin, *uirtutis ac miraculi* (HE III.11.2), but reverses its order; on other occasions in the text the Old English word pair does not have a similar counterpart in the Latin (as shown in HE III.2). Another synonymic word pair, *funden 7 gemeted* (OEB 182.10, 'found and discovered'), is used to translate the participle *inuenta* (HE III.11.3). The translator omits Bede's direct address to his readers *ut in sequentibus dicemus* (HE III.11.6), which was probably deemed unnecessary to the development of the narrative. The same happens to the ablative absolute *incumbente uespera* (HE III.11.11). The actual miracle concerning Oswald's bones, and the translation of the relics in the monastery,[161] are closely reproduced in the translation of the text and no relevant omissions or modifications of the source text can be found. Bede also writes that the soil over which the water used to wash the bones was poured is said to be effective against demonic possession

> Ex quo tempore factum est, ut ipsa terra, quae lauacrum uenerabile suscepit, ab abigendos ex obsessis corporibus daemones gratiae salutaris haberet effectum. (HE III.11.30-2)

The Old English translator, on the other hand, also reminds his readers that the soil is also effective against other types of disease, and therefore translates the passage as follows:

> Of þære tide wæs geworden, þætte seo seolfe eorðe, þe þæt arwyrðe bæð onfeng, meahte to hælo feondseocra monna 7 oðera untrymnessa. (OEB 184.4-6)
> ['From that time it happened that the very soil that received this venerable water had the power to heal demoniacs and other illnesses'.]

According to what Bede writes, the soil from the battlefield and the shavings from the cross have healing powers against diseases, whereas the soil impregnated with the water is effective against possession in particular. The translator seems to have blurred the distinction here. Bede, probably deliberately, endows Oswald with particular types of miracles to reflect the fact that he recalled his people from apostasy – thus most of the miracles performed through his relics save people from madness, or from their own carelessness or sinful folly, or from fire (i.e. Hell), or from fever (which was associated with fire). But this becomes slightly less clear in the OEB, and seems almost absent from Ælfric.

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[161] Thacker (1995: 104-5; 2002) notes the similarity of this translation ritual with those of Æthelthryth and Cuthbert and underlines that this tradition has Gallic parallels.

Ælfric (LoS 26.176-99) maintains this passage and all its details, but he includes it in the sermon right after the narration of the saint's death, so as to achieve a more linear, chronological structure. In the sermon, therefore, this becomes the first miracle; moreover, the Bardney episode is quite fittingly preceded by a reference to the incorrupt state of the king's right hand preserved at Bamburgh (LoS 26.169-75), so Ælfric deals with Oswald's relics all in one go.

In this passage, Ælfric underlines that Oswald is a saint with much more emphasis than in the HE: "Hwæt þa god geswutelode þæt he halig sanct wæs ." (LoS 26.182, 'Lo, then God showed that he was a holy Saint'). Ælfric is more direct in his attribution of sanctity in comparison with Bede, who in turn also refers to Oswald as a saint, but never in such laudatory terms as in Ælfric's sermon.[162] However, Ælfric does not mention the gold and purple banner that was placed over Oswald's tomb. The sermon presents an addition that does not have a counterpart in the Latin, but that might be reminiscent of the expanded translation in the OEB previously discussed, concerning the soil blessed by the water that was effective only against demonic possession in Bede, but that successfully cured possession as well as other diseases in the OEB. Ælfric writes that

> and þær wurdon gehælede þurh his halgan geearnunge / fela mettrume menn fram mislicum coþum. (LoS 26.192-3)
> ['and there were healed, through his holy merits, many sick men from various diseases'.]

and then he follows Bede and describes the healing powers of the earth in the spot where the water used to wash the bones was poured afterwards:

> and seo eorðe siþþan / þe þæt wæter underfeng wearð manegum to bote . / Mid þam duste wurdon afligde deofla fram mannum . / þa þe on wodnysse ær wæron gedrehte. (LoS 26.196-9)
> ['and the very soil that received the water became a remedy to many. With the dust devils were put to flight from men who before were afflicted with madness'.]

In both Old English texts, therefore, the soil of the spot in which the water was poured is effective not only against demonic possession, but also against other unspecified forms of disease.

Even though Ælfric is clearly interested in the miraculous healing powers of Oswald's relics, he does not include the miracle story contained in the second part of this chapter, in which Bede shows the relics in action against demonic possession. The efficacy of

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[162] This can be seen, for example, at HE III.11.13: "quia etsi sanctum eum nouerant"; HE III.11.23: "se eadem sanctae ac Deo dilectae reliquiae"; HE III.11.26: "regia uiri sancti persona".

the king's remains in this particular matter has already been stated in general terms, so it is possible to consider this episode as a repetition, and as such its omission is not particularly striking.

HE III.11.33-78 (OEB 184.7-186.20)

When translating the opening passage of this episode, in which Bede introduces the sources for this story, the translator leaves out the relative clause informing the audience that abbess Æthelhild was still living at the time of writing ("quae usque hodie superest", HE III.11.35). That the translator of the OEB always updates historical and geographical information to suit his target context is one of the most evident and well known features of his style. Further on in the text, the ablative absolute "benigne susceptus" (HE III.11.49) is transformed by the translator into an explicit clause: "þa wæs he fremsumlice onfongen" (OEB 184.22-3, 'he was kindly received'). Further in the text the infinitive *clamare* (HE III.11.50-1) is translated with the synonymic word pair *cleopian 7 hlydan* (OEB 184.24-5, 'cry out and make a loud noise'); a similar word pair (*cleopode* […] *7 cwæð*, OEB 154.28-9, 'cried out and spoke'), is used to translate the Latin *proclamo* in chapter HE III.2.9. This shows consistency in the way the translator approaches his text.

In the following sentence, the infinitive "secum uenire" (HE III.11.55) is rendered with an explicit clause: "þæt he sceolde mid heo gán" (OEB 184.31, 'that he should go with her'). The same happens with the present participle "cum uenientes" (HE III.11.56) which is translated as a temporal clause, "þa heo þa ðider cwómon" (OEB 184.32, 'when they came there').

One translational choice is particularly worthy of notice in the passage describing the moment when the priest is trying to drive the devil out of a possessed man. Bede writes that

> Vbi cum uenientes uiderunt multos adfuisse, qui uexatum tenere et motus eius insanos comprimere conati nequaquam ualebant, *dicebat presbyter exorcismos*, et quaeque poterat pro sedando miseri furore agebat; sed nec ipse, quamuis multum laborans, proficere aliquid ualebat. (HE III.11.56-60)[163]

and this is how the translator renders it:

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[163] As Wallace-Hadrill (1988: 104) rightly observes, "exorcism, a proper remedy of the Church, failed where a miracle performed by Oswald (through water used to wash his bones) succeded".

Þa heo þa ðider cwómon, þa gesawon heo þær monige men æt him beon, þa ðe georne ongunnon, þæt heo his wedenheortnisse gestilden; ac heo ne meahton. *Song he se massepreost 7 rædde orationem, þa ðe wið þære aðle awritene wæron*, 7 þa þing dyde, þe he selust wið þon cuðe; 7 he hwæðre noht on þon fremede. (OEB 184.32-186.1)
['When they arrived there, they saw that many people were with him, who earnestly attempted to calm his madness, but they could not. The priest sang and read orations that had been written against this disease, and did everything he knew against it, but still accomplished nothing'.]

First, the verb *dicebat* is translated with a word pair, *song […] 7 rædde* ('sang and read'); but more interestingly, the noun *exorcismus* is translated in the OEB with another Latin noun, *oratio*, which has a less specific meaning than *exorcismus*. An *oratio* is not necessarily recited to drive devils out of a possessed man. Bede himself makes use of this noun later in the same section (HE III.11.75), when the priest prays for the man after he was cured from the possession, and the translator again employs the noun *orationem* (OEB 186.17). The more general meaning attributed to *oratio* in this Old English context, in contrast with the very specific *exorcismus* of the HE, is also confirmed by the relative clause attached to it, which does not find correspondence in the source text; in it, we are told that these prayers were *written*, and not recited, specifically against this type of *disease* (OE *ádl*), and not against daemonic possession in particular. The added clause allows the translator to underline that the priest relies on written prayers for his exorcism; it thus looks as if the translator may have wanted to avoid any assumption that this was a magic charm, so he emphasizes written prayers rather than exorcism. In addition, one should also note that the translator treats *orationem* as if it were a plural noun, as can be seen by the relative clause being conjugated in the plural (*awritene wæron*).

Further on in the text, the translator opts for a more explicit rewording of the very compact, implicit clause "Et cum illa adferens, quae iussa est, intraret atrium domus" (HE III.11.63-4), which refers to the box containing Oswald's relic that the nun takes to the possessed man; in the Old English the box is explicitly mentioned, and the interpolated relative clause is omitted: "þa heo þa mid þa cyste in þone cafertún eode þæs huses" (OEB 186.5, 'when she arrived with the chest in the courtyard of the house').

The Old English text contains two further instances of word pairs. The first translates the verb *premebant* (HE III.11.73) as *swencton 7 þrycton* (OEB 186.15, 'distressed and oppressed'). The sense of oppression conveyed by the Latin verb is

160

amplified in the Old English thanks to the use of two synonymous verbs. The second synonymic word pair is used to translate the superlative *quietissimam* (HE III.11.76) as *hal 7 gesund* (OEB 186.18, 'whole and sound'); in this case the translator puts into practice a translational choice that might be defined as dynamic equivalence, because instead of translating the adjective qualifying the night, the translator has opted for attributing a quality to the man instead. The effect is the same, but it is obtained in two different ways.

**The healing powers of Oswald's burial place (HE III.12; OEB 186.21-188.26; LoS 26.114-8; 158-75; 272-6)**

A sick boy is cured by resting on Oswald's tomb. Bede then praises the king's exemplary Christian conduct and concludes with a reference to the severed head and arms of the sovereign. The head was buried in the church at Lindisfarne, whereas the incorrupt hand and arm are preserved at Bamburgh.

The second to last chapter devoted to Oswald begins with the story of the healing of a boy performed at the king's tomb. The OEB maintains this miracle narrative, whereas Ælfric does not. In other words, the sermon does not mention either of the miracles that have some connection with Bardney.

As regards the treatment of this episode in the OEB, it should be noted that when the monk is instructing the boy on how to overcome his disease and tells him to go to Oswald's tomb, Bede simply writes "ad sepulchrum Osualdi" (HE III.12.6). The translator addresses Oswald's sanctity more directly and writes "to þæs halgan Oswaldes lice" (OEB 186.26-7, 'to the body of the holy Oswald'), as if to underline that it is the saint's body, and not his tomb, that can help to heal the boy.

In order to update the chronological frame of his translation and to avoid details that would no longer make sense in the target context, the Old English translator omits the relative clause "quod eo adhuc tempore quo mecum loquebatur" (HE III.12.14-5); in the same sentence, he keeps Bede's own voice ("qui referebat mihi", HE III.12.13; "þe me

sægde", OEB 186.33, 'who said to me'), but he also makes it clear that it is Bede who is speaking by adding "cwæð Beda" (OEB 186.33, 'Bede spoke'). This trick allows the translator to reproduce Bede's source statement with little change, but at the same time he makes it clear to the audience that Bede is referring to his own, now distant, present time:

> Quod ita esse gestum, qui referebat mihi frater inde adueniens adiecit, quod eo adhuc tempore quo mecum loquebatur, superesset in eodem monasterio iam iuuenia ille, in quo tunc puero factum erat hoc miraculum sanitatis. (HE III.12.13-6)

> Cwom sum broðor þonon, *cwæð Beda*, þe *me* sægde þæt hit þus gedon wære: 7 eac sægde, þæt se ilca broðor þa gyt in þæm mynstre lifigende wære, in þæm cneohtwesendum þis hælo wundor geworden wæs. (OEB 186.33-188.2)
> ['A brother came from there, Bede spoke, who told me that it so happened, and he also said that the brother to whom this miracle occurred as a boy was still living in the monastery'.]

This strategy, however, is not put into place every time Bede engages his persona in the narrative, as can be seen further on in the text, where the relative clause *quo diximus* (HE III.12.32) is not only maintained in the OEB, but is also enriched by an expansion: "þe we ær cwædon æt Beardan ea" (OEB 188.20-1, 'at Bardney, which we previously mentioned').

Sharon Rowley (2011a) addresses the issue of how the translator deals with Bede's voice within the HE, and observes that interpolations of the translator's own perspective into the text, like those discussed here, are particularly numerous in the chapters about St Oswald and Fursey, and that in general this tendency mostly

> seems to relate to stories involving surviving witnesses; it therefore also appears to manifest awareness of both historical truth and historical difference. (Rowley 2011a: 108)

In Rowley's words,

> the palimpsested HE is visible through the Latinate forms and references to Bede in the Old English upper text. […] In most cases, the OEHE mimics Bede in his use of varied persons and tenses across the narrative of the HE; however, in some cases it calls attention to the fact of translation. (Rowley 2011a: 108-9)

In the HE, oral witnesses play a very important role and they are probably just as significant as the numerous papal letters Bede quotes in full. They are just two different types of evidence, but for Bede they both have the same historical value. What the translator does with most of the Roman written sources is very well known and has been analyzed in great detail: he omits altogether everything that does not have a direct connection with England. As for the oral sources, they mostly account for local events

and cover the hagiographical narratives, therefore it appears that the translator was very much aware of the significance of these witness statements in the stories. Bede himself vouches for most of his sources and that is further proof of their moral, as well as spiritual, standard, and of their reliability. Taking away Bede's voice from the narrative would mean to erase the voice that guarantees that the stories can be trusted. By emphasizing that voice, on the other hand, the translator achieves two goals: he takes distance from the actual accounts, thus making his audience aware of the historical hiatus between Bede's time and the translation's time; but at the same time, this strategy gives even more strength to Bede's voice – he becomes the main oral source of his own account. In this sense, the OEB represents an excellent example of Lawrence Venuti's idea of foreignizing translation (Venuti 1995).

In this chapter the translator only makes use of word pairs on two occasions: he translates *multum ualere* (HE III.12.17-8) with the synonyms *swiðade 7 genge wæren* (OEB 188.4, 'prevailed and were effective'), and the verb *persteterit* (HE III.12.22) with *astóde 7 awunade* (OEB 188.8-9, 'continued and remained'), which is also a synonymic word pair. In the following section of this chapter Bede praises Oswald's almost monastic way of life, and the OEB closely reproduces it. The same can be said for the account of the king's famous last words, a prayer to God for his army. The translation of the instructions given by Oswald's pagan slayer concerning the dead king's hand and arm deserves attention:

> Porro caput et manus cum brachiis a corpore praecisas iussit rex, qui occiderat, in stipitibus suspendi. (HE III.12.32-3)

> Heht se cyning, se ðe hine slog, his heafod on steng asetton; 7 his hond mid þy earme, þe of his lichoman aslegen wæs, het to ahoon. (OEB 188.20-2)
> ['The king who slew him ordered to set his head on a pole; and he ordered to hang his hand with the arm that was cut from his body'.]

As can be seen, the translator assigns one verb to each direct object. The Latin clearly refers to both hands and arms, as the nouns are in the plural (*manus*, *brachiis*), whereas in the Old English we only find one arm and one hand (*hond*, *earme*).

As previously mentioned, Ælfric does not include the miracle story of the sick boy in his sermon. In addition, he does not keep Bede's praise of the king's pious way of life as one unit, but rather breaks it into two parts (LoS 26.114-18; 158-61): he mentions

Oswald's devotional practices earlier in the sermon (LoS 26.114-8), and leaves the king's last words for a later stage in the narrative (LoS 26.158-61), following a more chronological sequence in reporting Bede's account. Ælfric does not report the entire saying as it is mentioned by Bede and by the OEB, but instead opts for a shortened version of it:

> Deus miserere animabus, dixit Osuald cadens in terram (HE III.12.29-30)

> Drihten God miltsa þu sawlum ussa leoda, cwæð se halga Oswald, þa he on eorðan sáág. (OEB 188.16-8)
> ['May the Lord God have mercy on the souls of our people, said the holy Oswald as he sank to the ground'.]

> God gemiltsa urum sawlum. (LoS 26.161)
> ['May God have mercy on our souls'.]

Ælfric also translates the passage in which Bede comments on Oswald's worthiness (HE III.12.16-20) and makes explicit reference to Bede:

> Nu cwæð se halga beda þe ðas boc gedihte . / þæt hit nan wundor nys . þæt se halga cynincg / untrumnysse gehæle nu he on heofonum leofað . / for ðan þe he wolde gehelpan þa þa he her on life wæs . / þearfum and wannhalum . and him bigwiste syllan. (LoS 26.272-76)
> ['Now the holy Bede who wrote this book said that it is no wonder that the holy king should heal illnesses now that he lives in heaven, because when he was alive he wished to help the poor and the infirm, and give them food'.]

> Nec mirandum preces regis illius iam cum Domino regnantis multum ualere apud eum, qui temporalis regni quondam gubernacula tenens magis pro aeterno regno simper laborare ac deprecari solebat. (HE III.12.16-20)

Ælfric includes the entire passage in which Bede explains what happened to the severed head and hands of Oswald (LoS 26.162-75) at an earlier stage in the sermon, but it should be noted that in it we only find Oswald's right arm and hand, rather than both arms and hands as seen in the HE. So LoS 26 seems to agree more with the version contained in the OEB than with the HE itself. The sermon also gives a further piece of information by saying that the right hand was the one that did not decay, and also that it is the same hand that was blessed by Bishop Aidan (LoS 26.171). In other words, a progression can be seen in the way the relics are portrayed in the three texts: the HE mentions Oswald's head, hands and arms; the OEB refers to his head, his hand and his arm (in the singular); and finally Ælfric talks about his head, his *right* arm, and his *right* hand. It looks as if Ælfric's version may change the story to conform more exactly to

the earlier narrative of Aidan blessing Oswald's right hand. The three versions should be read in succession to notice the differences:

> Porro *caput at manus cum brachiis a corpore praecisas* iussit rex, qui occiderat, in stipitibus suspendi. Quo post annum deueniens cum exercitu successor regni eius Osuiu abstulit ea, et *caput* quidem in cymiterio Lindisfarnensis ecclesiae, in regia uero ciuitate manus *cum brachiis* condidit. (HE III.12.32-6)

> Heht se cyning, se ðe hine slog, *his heafod* on steng asetton; *7 his hond mid þy earme*, þe of his lichoman *aslegen wæs*, het to ahoon. Þa cwom æfter géres fæce mid herige se æfterfylgend his riices Osweo his mæg 7 heo þær genom: 7 his heafod mon lædde to Lindesfearena eae, 7 þær in cirican bebyrgde; *7 his hond mid þy earme* in þære cynelican ceastre in Bebbanbyrig gehealdene syndon. (OEB 188.20-6)
> ['The king who slew him ordered to set his head on a pole; and he ordered to hang his hand with the arm that was cut from his body. Then after a year Oswiu his kinsman succeeded to the throne and came with an army and took them away; his head was taken to the island of Lindisfarne and buried there in the church; his hand with the arm are preserved in the royal town of Bamburgh'.]

> Þa het se hæþena cyning *his heafod* of-aslean . / and *his swiðran earm* . and settan hi to myrcelse . / Þa æfter oswoldes slege feng oswig his broðor / to norðhymbra rice . and rád mid werode / to þær his broðor heafod stod on stacan gefæstnod . / *and genam þæt heafod* . *and his swiðran hand* . / and mid arwurðnisse ferode to lindisfarnea cyrcan . / þa wearð gefylled swa we her foresædon / þæt his swiðre hand wunað hal mid þam flæsce . / butan ælcere brosnunge *swa se bisceop gecwæð* . / *Se earm* wearþ geléd arwurðlice on scrine / of seolfre asmiþod . on sancte petres mynstre / binnan bebban-byrig . be þære sæ strande . / and lið þær swa andsund swa he of-aslagen wæs. (LoS 26.162-75)
> ['Then the heathen king ordered his head to be cut off and his right arm and set them up as a trophy. After the death of Oswald, his brother Oswiu ascended to the throne on Northumbria and rode with an army to the place where his brother's head was fastened on a stake, and took the head and his right hand and took them with honour to the church at Lindisfarne. Then it was fulfilled, as we said before, that his right hand remained whole with the flesh without a sign of corruption as the bishop said. The arm was laid reverently in a shrine wrought of silver in the monastery of St Peter at Bamburgh, by the sea shore, and lies there as sound as when it was cut off'.]

**Oswald's fame outside of England (HE III.13; OEB 188.27-192.19; LoS 26.239-68)**

Bede celebrates the fame this saintly king has known abroad, especially among the Frisians and the Irish; proof of the devotion to Oswald in Ireland is found in the last miracle included by Bede, which reports the story of an unworthy Irish scholar given a second chance at a pious life through Oswald's relics.

The OEB follows its source text in detail in the section describing the fame of King Oswald (HE III.13.1-13). The only omission that can be noticed concerns the reference to Bishop Wilfrid (HE III.13.16), which is absent from the Old English. Ælfric also devotes a short passage to this subject, (LoS 26.239-41), but then turns immediately to the *exemplum* represented by the miracle that occurred involving the Irish scholar. In the same sentence, the Old English translator translates the noun *reliquias* (HE III.13.7) as *banum* (OEB 190.2, 'bones'), rather than employing the corresponding Latin loan word that he adopts on other occasions (Waite 1984: 163).[164] If done intentionally, this change may show that the translator gives perhaps more importance to the saint's body than to the relics that came in contact with it.

The second part of the chapter is entirely devoted to this miracle. In this section the OEB shows a large number of word pairs:

- *mortalitatis* (HE III.13.114): *wóles 7 monncwilde* (OEB 190.9, 'mortality and pestilence'); the two members are synonyms.

- *uastauit* (HE III.13.115): *fornom 7 forhergade* (OEB 190.10, 'devastating and ravaging'); this word pair is also synonymic.

- *querebatur* (HE III.13.122): *þus wæs spreocende 7 seofiende to me* (OEB 190.18-9, 'speaking and lamenting'); the second member of the pair is an addition that does not have a counterpart in the Latin, but it does reiterate the idea that the man was very ill and weak, thus echoing what the text has already stated.

- *molestia* (HE III.13.123): *þeos aðl 7 þeos hefignes* (OEB 190.19-20, 'illness and affliction'). The two nouns are synonymous, but the second member ('heaviness, affliction') might carry a more metaphorical function than the first ('illness'), as well as a suggestion of the emotional unhappiness caused by the combination of illness and fear of the consequences of his sins.

- *uitiorum* (HE III.13.17): *synnum 7 leahtrum* (OEB 190.25, 'sin and vice/illness'). The two nouns are synonymous and thus reinforce the idea of sin

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[164] "Denique reuerentissimus antistes Acca solet referre quia cum Romam uadens apud sacntissimum Fresonum gentis archiepiscopum Vilbrordum cum suo antistite Vilfrido moraretur, crebro eum audierit de mirandis, quae ad reliquias eiusdem reuerentissimi regis in illa prouincia gesta fuerint, narrare" (HE III.13.4-8).

"Forðon Acca se arwyrða biscop gewunode oft secgan, þa he to Rome wæs ferende, 7 mid Willbrord þone halgan biscop Fresena wæs wuniende, þæt he hine gelomlice herde secgan in þære mægðe bi þæm wundrum, þe æt þæm banum þæs arwyrðan cyninges gedon wæron" (OEB 188.30-190.3).

expressed by the Latin; but since *leahter* can also mean 'illness', there may be suggestions here of moral disease.

- *auxilium* (HE III.13.134): *fultum 7 bene* (OEB 190.32, 'help and prayers'). In this case the second member of the pair disambiguates the Latin by explicitly stating that the type of help that is intended here is that of prayer. The word pair is thus characterized by hyponymy.

- *claruerit* (HE III.13.138): *scan 7 beorhte* (OEB 192.4, 'shone and glowed'). This pair is composed of two synonyms, and it can also be found in the chapter on Fursey (Chapter 4.1).

- *respondebat* (HE III.13.145): *andsworode 7 cwæð* (OEB 192.11, 'answered and spoke'). This word pair is constantly used in the OEB to translate *verba dicenda* in general.

- *integram* […] *fidem* (HE III.13.145): *fæstne geleafan 7 onwalhne* (OEB 192.12, 'firm and complete faith'). The two adjectives are synonymous and the word pair presents the structure adj + noun + 7 adj usually employed by the translator when the word pair is built around more than one adjective.

- *conualescens* (HE III.13.148): *getrumade 7 gewyrpte* (OEB 192.14-5, 'recovered and was better'). The present participle is here translated with two explicit synonymous verbs.

- *praedicabat* (HE III.13.151): *sægde 7 bodade* (OEB 192.17, 'said and preached'), also a synonymic word pair..

The sermon does not include a specific reference to the cause of the scholar's infirmity, the plague, but the rest of the miracle is reported in detail (LoS 26.242-68). Bede's account here presents two layers of direct speech, as the priest tells the whole story of the miracle and in the narrative we also find the dialogue that took place between the priest himself and the scholar. In the sermon the narrative is not told in the voice of the monk himself and only the dialogue between the two voices is reproduced (the same happens in the OEB as well, as Waterhouse [1976: 88] has noted). But even if Ælfric simplifies the narrative structure by omitting the first layer of direct speech, he still makes it very clear that the story is known through the priest's account. This can be seen at l. 241, "swa swa sum massepreost be anum men sæde ." ('as a certain priest told

about a man'; l. 242, "Se preost cwæð þæt […]" ('the priest said that'); and l. 247, "þa clypode he þone preost þe hit cydde eft þus ." ('then he called the priest who afterwards made it known thus').

At the end of the miracle story, Ælfric adds a short exhortative reflection that addresses the main themes of the *exemplum* and gives direction as to the interpretation of the episode:

> For-þy ne sceall nan mann awægan þæt he sylf-wylles behæt / þam ælmihtigan gode . þonne he adlig bið / þe læs þe he sylf losige . gif he alihð gode þæt. (LoS 26.269-71)
> ['For no man ought to repudiate that which he promised of his own will to God Almighty when he is ill, lest he should lose himself if he denies that to God'.]

This short comment on the miracle story is followed by another brief passage in praise of Oswald's qualities (LoS 26.272-6), taken from the previous chapter of the HE (HE III.12.16-9), in which Bede is mentioned as the source of the pasage itself ("Nu cwæð se halga beda þe ðas boc gedihte .", LoS 26.272, 'Now the holy Bede who wrote this book spoke'). Ælfric concludes the sermon with the following passage:

> Nu hæfð he þone wurðmynt on þære ecan worulde . / mid þam ælmihtigan gode for his godnysse . / Eft se halga cuðberht þa þa he git cnapa wæs . / geseah hu godes ænglas feredon aidanes sawle / þæs halgan bisceopes . bliðe to heofonum / to þam ecan wuldre þe he on worulde geearnode . / Þæs halgan oswoldes bán wurdon eft gebroht / æfter manegum gearum to myrcena lande / into gleawceastre . and god þær geswutelode / oft feala wundra þurh þone halgan wer . / Sy þæs wuldor þam ælmihtigan gode . / ðe on ecnysse rixað a to worulde. AMEN. (LoS 26. 277-88)
> ['Now he has honour in the eternal world with Almighty God on account of his goodness. Afterwards the holy Cuthbert, when he was still a boy, saw how the angels of God took Aidan's soul, the holy bishop, happily to heaven to the eternal world that he earned on this world. After many years the bones of the holy Oswald were taken to Glouchester into the land of the Mercians, and there God often showed many miracles through the holy man. For this be glory to the Almighty God who reigns in eternity over the world. Amen'.]

The reference to St Cuthbert who, as a child, saw the soul of Bishop Aidan being carried to heaven (LoS 26.279-82), is condensed from Bede's *Prose Life of Cuthbert*,[165] and may seem rather out of context, considering that Aidan is not mentioned in the concluding passages of the sermon and also in view of the fact that Ælfric is here praising Oswald, his merits, and his power of intercession to God. However, this interpolation might serve the purpose of further legitimizing Oswald by connecting the figure of Aidan, whom Oswald assisted in his missionary endeavours and to whom the

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[165] Although this episode can be found in all three Lives of Cuthbert – ch. I.5 in the *Anonymous Life*, ch. 4 in Bede's *Metrical Life*, and ch. 4 in Bede's *Prose Life* – Thacker (1995: 125) argues that Ælfric relied on the one contained in Bede's *Prose Life*.

king gave Lindisfarne to establish his see, and St Cuthbert, the holy man who took Aidan's see, and who became the model of Northumbrian sanctity for generations to come. Ælfric also briefly mentions this story also in the homily dedicated to St Cuthbert in his second collection of the *Catholic Homilies*:

> Eft se halga cuðberhtus ða ða hé wacode mid hyrdemannum on felda on his geogoðe, geseah heofonas opene, and englas gelæddon Aidanes biscopes sawle mid micclum wuldre into þære heofonlican myrhðe; (CH II.10: 48-51)
> ['Afterwards the holy Cuthbert, when in his youth he was keeping watch with herdsmen on the fields, saw the heavens opening, and angels leading the soul of Bishop Aidan into the heavenly bliss in great glory'.]

As Godden (2000: 417) points out, Bede's account of this vision in the *Prose Life* "presents the event as a conversion experience for Cuthbert, leading him to seek the monastic life".[166] Seen in this light, this short reference in the concluding section of Oswald's life may acquire further meaning, as it more explicitly connects Cuthbert's commitment to monastic life with the *exemplum* and the vision provided by Bishop Aidan, who came to Northumbria at the request of King Oswald. In this way, Ælfric alludes to the *fil rouge* connecting the life of this saintly king and that of the most important figure of Northumbrian Christianity, St Cuthbert.

## Concluding remarks

The Bedan account of the life and death of King Oswald establishes this figure as the epitome of royal sanctity, but despite his violent death perpetrated by the pagan enemy, he is never portrayed as a martyr dying for his faith. His merits can be ascribed to his pious life, to his desire to promote Christianity, and to his faith – but not to his death. Oswald is never explicitly called a martyr by Bede, as opposed to St Alban, for whom Bede employs the imagery and the vocabulary of martyrdom. Moreover, Oswald is not mentioned in Bede's *Martyrology*, whereas St Alban and St Æthelthryth are given places among those who gave up their life in the name of Christ (Folz 1980: 54). This

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[166] "Haec dicens uir Domini Cuthbertus, non parum corda pastorum ad reuerentiam diuinae laudationis accendit, agnouitque mane facto antistitem Lindisfarnensis aecclesiae Aidanum magnae utique uirtutis uirum, per id temporis quo uiderat raptus de corpore, coelestia regna petisse, ac statim commendano suis pecora quae pascebat dominis, monasterium petere decreti" (Colgrave 1940: 166).

important aspect of Bede's portrayal of Oswald has been analyzed in detail by Victoria Gunn (1993). She writes:

> Nowhere in the *Historia ecclesiastica* does Bede specifically designate Oswald as a martyr. In essence, it would seem that Bede is attempting to generate the image of martyrdom whilst failing to bring it to its full conclusion. (Gunn 1993: 59)

In addition, Gunn writes, the miracles performed through Oswald's relics are always connected to his faith and to his achievements in life, but never to his death. The same type of emphasis can also be noticed in Ælfric's sermon, as well as in the OEB. For Ælfric, Oswald is a saint, not a martyr (Gunn 1993: 65). This may be in contrast with the title of Ælfric's sermon, which reads *Natale Sancti Oswaldi regis et martyris*. As Lazzari notes, however, the titles attributed to the sermons in the manuscript used by Skeat for his edition of the *Lives of Saints*,[167] may be a later scribal addition.[168] In the sermon, in fact, Ælfric follows Bede and never explicitly calls Oswald a martyr. Even assuming that the title is a scribal addition, this is still significant, because it suggests that Oswald was perceived as a martyr, despite the care shown by both Bede and Ælfric in never assigning to this saintly figure the attributes of martyrdom.

Oswald's sanctity is thus a difficult one to locate, as it does not quite fit into the traditional saintly categories that, by the time of the Benedictine Reform, divided saints into formalized groups, especially in the litanies. As Thacker observes (1995: 124-5), the sequence of saints as mentioned in litanies comprised apostles, martyrs, confessors, and virgins, and Oswald could only be accommodated into one of these categories, that of martyrs. In other words, despite the fact that Oswald is never explicitly characterized as a martyr by Bede, nor by Alcuin or Ælfric, Thacker (1995: 125) argues that he slowly became to be perceived as a martyr. The same opinion is also expressed by Stancliffe:

> Thus, while some of Bede's contemporaries may have regarded Oswald's status as similar to Edwin's, and in time both certainly became regarded as 'martyrs', Bede himself regarded Oswald, and Oswald alone, as a saint-king – and a saint thanks to the life he lived as a king, not to a life lived after laying aside royal power, nor yet thanks to dying a martyr's death. (Stancliffe 1995: 41)

As regards the OEB, the close reading of the translation of the chapters about Oswald has shown that the Old English translator does not alter the overall picture offered by Bede. The translator's tendency to simplify the narrative material is

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[167] MS. BL Cotton Julius E.vii.
[168] Loredana Lazzari, lecture given at the XII Seminario Avanzato in Filologia Germanica, University of Torino, 13th September 2011.

confirmed in these chapters as well: the information that does not have relevance for his audience is generally omitted, and those narrative elements that may result in difficulties are clarified, even if that means departing from the source text. Word pairs in these pages have offered some interesting examples of reworking of the source material that are far from being a slavish doubling of the Latin, such as the phrase *uerbum fidei* (HE III.5.41-2) translated as *Cristes geleafan 7 fulwihte* (OEB 162.22, 'Christ's faith and baptism'), or *flammis impleri* (HE III.10.17) expanded into "þa gelomp þæt þæt hus eall wæs in fyren 7 ongon semninga byrnan" (OEB 180.28-9, 'then it happened that the entire house was on fire and it suddenly began to burn'), to better emphasize the image of the house suddenly catching fire. The translator, most interestingly, departs from his source when he describes the iconic scene of the Easter banquet in which Aidan kisses Oswald's hand (HE III.6.11-5; OEB 166.1-2). As previously underlined, this scene in the OEB seems to echo the Last Supper, and in this way Oswald's role as a disciple of Aidan comes to acquire a more explicit narrative legitimization. Moreover, the chapters about Oswald provide the translator with the opportunity to reassess the balance between orality and literacy with his target audience in mind. This happens in the description of the failed exorcism (HE III.11.56-60; OEB 184.32-186.1), where the translator clearly states that the priest is reading a formula that was written somewhere. Asserting the written dimension allows the translator to clarify that the exorcism he is relating has nothing to do with magic, the oral genre par excellence. Finally, it has been underlined that the translator tends to emphasize Bede's voice when it asserts the reliability of the oral witnesses he quotes in the miracle stories, as opposed to most of the Roman written sources that are completely omitted in the translation.

Ælfric's sermon necessarily condenses the long narrative devoted to Oswald by Bede. It begins by connecting the first phase of the conversion of England with that promoted by Oswald and Aidan, thus obliterating the differences between the Roman and Celtic Churches and highlighting their communal drive towards evangelization. The concluding section of the sermon provides a further legitimization of Oswald's missionary enveavour by connecting Aidan with St Cuthbert, thus producing a harmonious picture at the centre of which is the figure of this saintly king. Ælfric also stresses Aidan's commitment to monastic life and to his disregard for worldly cares, but

he crucially omits any reference to the fasting practices described by Bede. This omission may have been prompted by Ælfric's need to condense the narrative, but in view of the examples regarding his treatment of fasting discussed in the previous chapters, I would consider this particular omission as far from being accidental. It is also worthy of notice that Ælfric concludes the description of Aidan's Christian virtues with a reference to the king's own piousness, as if to imply that the king's virtues derive from Aidan, or even to draw a silent parallel between the two figures, so as to reinforce his statement in favour of Oswald's holiness. The treatment of two episodes that are not essential in the story of Oswald's life also reveals Ælfric's intention to portray the missionary endeavours of this king in the best possible light. On the one hand, Ælfric omits the unsuccessful mission of Aidan's predecessor to Northumbria, but on the other he describes the conversion of the West Saxons and the role played by Oswald within it. Both episodes equally represent a slight detour from the main subject of the sermon, but Ælfric only omits the one episode that may cast a somewhat negative light on Oswald's role as the promoter of Christianity

# CHAPTER 4 – VISIONS OF THE OTHERWORLD

The otherworldly journeys experienced by Fursey and Dryhthelm are among the earliest accounts of the *locus* that later became known as Purgatory (Dinzelbacher 1981:13). They are reputed among the most influential examples of vision literature prior to Dante, and for this reason they have been studied extensively, for example by Jacques Le Goff (1982 [1981]) in his seminal - and controversial - work on the birth of Purgatory, but also by Maria Pia Ciccarese (1984; 1987) and, in more recent years, by Claude Carozzi (1983; 1994) to name but a few.[169]

Fursey is a holy man from Ireland who undertakes a life of *peregrinatio*, or voluntary exile for Christ. After establishing a monastery in Ireland, he leaves everything and goes to East Anglia, where he is welcomed by King Sigeberht and establishes another monastery. Pagan attacks force him to move to France, where he founds another monastic institution before dying around the year 650. During his life, Fursey has four visionary experiences; the second of these episodes offers a very detailed account of the otherworld and of the accursed souls that attempt to harm Fursey during his journey.

Dryhthelm was a layman who died around the year 692 (Lapidge 2008-2010 v. 2: 674); in his *Vita* he experiences a four-fold vision of the otherworld, in which he is accompanied by an angelic guide and granted access to the ante-chambers to hell and heaven; he also approaches the pit of hell and the kingdom of heaven. Finally he is led back to his body, and from that moment onwards lives a life of penance as a monk.

Bede devotes two separate chapters of the HE to the visions of Fursey (HE III.19) and Dryhthelm (HE V.12); these are also included in the OEB. Despite their undeniable similarities, the two accounts do not present any form of connection or cross-reference; in fact, the picture of the otherworld contained in the two narratives is far from being homogeneous. The interim space between heaven and hell visited by

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[169] On early medieval visions of the otherworld, see Holdsworth (1963), Orlandi (1983), Gardiner (1989), Zaleski (1987; 1996), Dunn (2000), Kabir (2001), Rabin (2009), Rowley (2010).

Fursey and Dryhthelm is so different in the two accounts that it almost seems to be two different places, and it should be stated at the outset that Bede does not appear to be uncomfortable with the coexistence of two divergent pictures of the otherworld in the same work. After all, ideas concerning the fate of those souls who do not quite deserve to go straight to heaven, but who also have been good enough to avoid the torments of hell, are still fluctuating at the time of Bede, and will remain in this undefined state for many centuries to come (Le Goff 1982 [1981]; Foot 2009: 90).

Whereas Bede does not mention any written sources for the account of the visions experienced by Dryhthelm, he does refer to a written source for his account of the life of Fursey. This is the *Vita Fursei* (hereafter VF),[170] a Latin prose text which was composed anonymously in northern France in the second half of the 7th century, soon after Fursey's death in the year 649-650 (Brown 2001: 16).[171]

Ælfric relates the otherworldly experiences of Fursey and Dryhthelm in two consecutive homiletic pieces contained in the Second Series of his Catholic Homilies. The homilies for the Tuesday in Rogationtide (hereafter CH II.20 and CH II.21) are in fact a composite text for the same liturgical occasion; taken as a whole, they present several narrations of otherworldly visions and can be divided into three separate sections, each of them ending with the word *amen*. The first section of the homily treats the life of Fursey (CH II.20), whereas the second section tells the story of Dryhthelm

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[170] Edited by Krusch in *MGH, Script. rerum Merov. 4* (1902: 434-40) and Ciccarese (1984). Oliver Rackham's recent study (2007) is a transcription and translation of the earliest extant manuscript, London, British Library, Harley MS. 5041, ff. 79-100. Though worthy of notice as the only extant translation of the VF, Rackham (2007) does not collate the text and does not provide an apparatus of the complex manuscript tradition of the VF, thus not accounting for some important changes in the tradition of this text that are reflected in the accounts of Fursey's life written by Bede and Ælfric. Krusch (1902) edited only the beginning and end of the VF (the sections covering his life and journeys), but omitted the entire central section of the VF concerning Fursey's visions. Ciccarese (1984) supplies the edition of the beginning of the VF as well as of the visions not included by Krusch. In other words, a complete edition of the VF can be obtained by taking together Ciccarese (1984), for the beginning and the visions, and Krusch (1902) for the concluding section. In the present study, the sigla VF therefore indicates the works of both Ciccarese (1984) and Krusch (1902). Sections of the VF quoted from Ciccarese (1984) will hereafter be indicated as VFC, those quoted from Krusch (1902) as VFK. Krusch (1902) provides a list of c. 40 manuscripts of the VF, to which Ciccarese (1984: 248, n. 52) adds one further witness; Levison also signals another witness in the appendix to vol. IV of MGH SRM (Carozzi 1994: 678). The three oldest witnesses of the VF date to the 9th century: London, British Library, Harley MS. 5041, ff. 79-100 (H); Roma, Biblioteca Casanatense, MS. 641 (B IV, 18), ff. 97-104 (C); Roma, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS. Sessorianus 40, ff. 185-199 (S). Krusch (1902) bases his edition on ms. H (which he calls A1), whereas Ciccarese (1984) collates the three witnesses previously mentioned. The manuscript tradition of the VF divided into two branches before the 9th century; mss. H and C represent one branch, ms. S the other (Ciccarese 1984: 248-51).

[171] See also Plummer (1896 vol. II: 169), Wallace-Hadrill (1988: 112), Grützmacher (1899), Warren (1918), Dunn (2007), Yoon (2007).

(CH II.21); the third and concluding section of the homily contains the story of Imma (CH II.21), a short miraculous account showing the redemptive power of Mass also taken from Bede's HE (HE IV.20). In addition, the stories of Dryhthelm and Imma are interpolated into the sermon with a quick overview of some of the most vivid images of the otherworld contained in Book IV of Gregory the Great's *Dialogues*. As Malcolm Godden points out (1973; 2000), it is not clear whether Ælfric intended the three episodes to be read together, or if he meant to provide his readers with separate, interchangeable episodes on the same topic.[172] Taken together as a unit, the different episodes share a preoccupation with the life to come and with reporting reliable visions of what awaits every soul after death, despite their intrinsic diversity. It should also be noted that Ælfric begins his discourse with a vigorously negative comment on the *Visio Pauli*, an apocryphal vision of the otherworld very popular at the time, but which was made the object of very bitter criticism by Augustine (Godden 2000: 530). It seems therefore that Ælfric assembled together as many reliable accounts of the otherworld as he could in order to compensate for the unreliability of the *Visio Pauli*.

Although, as previously mentioned, Bede devotes three separate chapters of the HE to each of the three figures included in the composite homily (Fursey, Dryhthelm, and Imma), Ælfric chose not to make use of the HE as his source for Fursey, but rather turned instead to the anonymous *Vita Fursei* (Godden 2000: 529) contained in the Cotton-Corpus Legendary (Zettel 1982). In this case, then, Ælfric does not use the HE as his main source.[173] However, he does rely on the HE for the accounts of Dryhthelm and Imma. As will be shown by the following analysis, the two narratives on Fursey are quite different from one another, to the point of complementing each other in many

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[172] As Godden (1973: 212) observes, each of the three homilies is treated as a separate piece by the scribe of ms. K (Cambridge, University Library, Gg.3.28), but the length of the second and third pieces is far less than the usual. Godden therefore argues that "Aelfric meant these three items to be combined in some way to form only one or two homilies" (Godden 1973: 212). In Thorpe's edition (1844-46), each of the homiletic pieces is a separate item (nos. xxii, xxiii, and xxiv); Godden, on the other hand, numbers the homily on Fursey as CH II.20 and groups together the pieces on Dryhthelm and Imma as CH II.21, but the two different numberings share the same liturgical occasion (Tuesday in Rogationtide). Since there are several two-part homilies in the Second Series, and none in the First Series, Godden (1973) concludes that in the Second Series Ælfric is no longer addressing directly the lay congregation, but instead he is assembling "a collection of homiletic material which preachers are to select from and adapt in various ways for their own listeners, and probably to study for their own benefit too" (Godden 1973: 216). The present analysis provides further support to the hypothesis that these homiletic pieces are interchangeable according to the type of audience the preacher is addressing.

[173] Bede's account of the life of Fursey is the main source for the entry on Fursey in the *Old English Martyrology* (Kotzor 1981: 2.16-7).

respects. In fact, I argue that the reason why Ælfric relied on the VF rather than on the HE is because Bede omits from his account of the life of Fursey those aspects that are most necessary for Ælfric's moralistic purposes. Even if Ælfric did not use the HE as his main source for the sermon on Fursey, there can still be said to be a connection between the Bedan narratives and this composite sermon, because its three main subjects all appear in the HE, and for two of them (Dryhthelm and Imma) Bede is the only source available.

# 4.1 FURSEY

In order to investigate the ways in which the life of Fursey is treated in the OEB and in Ælfric's Second Series homily for Tuesday in Rogationtide (CH II.20), the term of comparison for Ælfric's homily is Bede's own Latin chapter on Fursey (HE III.19), rather than the OEB, because, as previously outlined, Ælfric did not use the HE as his main source and instead used the anonymous *Vita Fursei*, which is also Bede's source. For this reason, the three accounts of Fursey's life will first be treated separately, to highlight differences and similarities between each of them and their source (the HE vs. the VF; the OEB vs. the HE; CH II.20 vs. the VF); finally, a concluding section will discuss them together and pay particular attention to the differences between HE III.19 and CH II.20.

The anonymous Latin VF can be summarized as follows:

Fursey leaves his home in Ireland to undertake the study of the Scriptures and subsequently builds a monastery.

One day, on his way home, he falls ill and has a first unspecified vision in which he sees three angels; they make him return to his body with the promise that they will come back. Once returned to his body, Fursey recounts what happened and is confined to his bed for two days; on the third day he has a second vision: the three angels return to take him with them. On his way up he hears the horrible voices of demons approaching them, described as ugly, unshaped shadows. The demons attack Fursey with darts, but the angels protect him and fight the demons back. The battle continues on a verbal level with the demons and the angels disputing on Fursey's merits and wrongdoings. When the demons are defeated, one of the angels commands Fursey to look back upon the world; Fursey sees a dark valley and four fires. The angels explain that those are the fires of falsehood, avarice, discord, and injustice, and that they will burn each man according to their sins. The four fires merge together and draw near Fursey, but he is protected by the angels and passes safely through the parted flames. The dispute between angels and demons resumes, and once again the angels win.

Fursey sees two holy men from his region among other blessed souls, as well as four choirs of angels singing in praise of the Lord. The two souls are granted permission to talk to Fursey and command him to return to his body. Instead, Fursey questions them about the end of the world, and the two souls continue to rebuke the vices of the clergy and to offer remedies for the atonement of deadly sins; they finally exhort Fursey to be steadfast in his missionary activity. On his way back to his body, Fursey is wounded on the jaw and shoulder by an unrighteous soul that the demons throw at him from the conflagration of the four fires. The angels explain to Fursey that he has been burnt because, at the time when the man was on his deathbed, Fursey accepted a garment from him without being aware of the fact that the man had not repented for his sins. Therefore Fursey was involuntarily tainted by the man's sins, and for this reason he also has a share of his punishment. Then the angels give him instructions for the salvation of those who

repent at the hour of death. Fursey is finally brought back to his body, but he is reluctant to return to his earthly life; the angels instruct him to sprinkle his body with water to be relieved from all pain, except from the burns caused by the soul of the sinner, which will always be visible on his jaw and shoulder.

Fursey returns to life in his bed, surrounded by his family and neighbours, and tells them what he saw. When water is poured on him, the marks of the burns become visible to all. After these events he undertakes his missionary activity all over Ireland.

On the first anniversary of his vision he falls ill and has another vision, the third one. An angel gives him advice on his missionary work and announces that he would have to preach God's word for another twelve years. Fursey first sets out to a small island on the Irish coast and shortly thereafter leaves his country to go to East Anglia, where King Sigeberht gives him a site upon which to build a monastery. After twelve years he falls ill once again and has a fourth vision in which angels exhort him in his missionary work. He hastens to build a monastery in the place that Sigeberht gave him and then decides to withdraw himself from the world; for this reason he retreats with a brother to a secluded place for a year, where they spend their time working and praying.

When the province is threatened by a heathen invasion, he leaves his brethren and his monastery and sails to Gaul; there he is welcomed by the Merovingian king and by the nobleman Earconwald and founds a monastery at Lagny-sur-Marne. He dies shortly thereafter and his body is buried at Péronne, where Earconwald is building a church. After 30 days his body does not show any sign of decay and is moved from the porch of the church to the altar, where it remains for four years; his body, still incorrupt, is finally placed in a side chapel.

## Bede's treatment of the VF

With the chapter on Fursey, Bede offers a summarized account of the life of the Irish monk,[174] in which the audience is frequently reminded of the existence of a much more detailed narrative of his visions and travels, a *libellus de uita eius* (HE III.19.31; 46; 151) which also should be read in order to know the full story. The VF, however, is not the only source for Bede's writing; he also mentions an oral source for his knowledge of Fursey's life, namely the memories of a brother of his own monastery who knew a trustworthy, pious man who saw Fursey with his own eyes and heard the story of his visions from Fursey in his own words:

> Superest adhuc frater quidam senior monasterii nostri, qui narrare solet dixisse sibi quondam multum veracem ac religiosum nomine, quod ipsum Furseum uiderit in prouincia Orientalium Anglorum, illasque uisiones ex ipsius ore audierit [...]. (HE III.19.110-14)

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[174] See for example Carozzi (1994: 100, n. 7).

With this in mind, it is perhaps easier to understand the reason why Bede's text treats the written source with a certain degree of freedom and why the chronological sequence is rearranged in a way that allows Bede to link Fursey's life more explicitly with the exposition on the kingdom of East Anglia contained in the previous chapters.

Bede's chapter begins with a reference to Fursey's arrival in England from Ireland and to the accomplishments of his missionary work (HE III.19.1-23). We are told that Fursey builds a monastery on a site, located near the woods and the sea, offered to him by King Sigeberht; in this passage Bede adds the name of the site where the monastery was founded (Wallace-Hadrill 1988: 113):

> Erat autem monasterium siluarum et maris uicinitate amoenum, constructum in castro quodam quod lingua Anglorum Cnobheresburg, id est Vrbs Cnobheri, uocatur; quod deinde rex prouinciae illius Anna ac nobiles quique augustioribus aedificiis ac donariis adornarunt. (HE III.19.19-23; now Burgh Castle, near Great Yarmouth, Norfolk).

The VF only gives a vague description of the location of the site, and does not mention its name:

> Quod vir Deo plenus intellegens, loco monasterii a praedicto sibi rege traditum adceleravit construere. Quod monasterium in quodam castro constructum, silvarum et maris vicinitate amoenum rex gentis illius Anna ac nubiles quique tectis et muneribus adornarunt. (VFK 437.10-14)

Only when Bede makes clear Fursey's connection with King Sigeberht does he turn back to the actual beginning of Fursey's life and to the order of events contained in the VF. According to Wallace-Hadrill, this somewhat unclear arrangement of the material could be explained by assuming that "Bede had already drafted his account of Fursa in East Anglia before the *Vita S. Fursei* reached his hands" (Wallace-Hadrill 1988: 114). By emphasizing his accomplishments in England, which on the whole constitute but a minor part of Fursey's missionary life and visionary experience, Bede ensures that the account of Fursey's life he inserts in Book III fits in with the general purpose of the HE. In other words, he gives Fursey's life a new focus, and he makes the reader look at it from an English point of view.

Bede's chapter begins to follow the sequence of events as it is presented in the VF from "erat autem uir iste" (HE III.19.24) onwards. He tends to summarize the often lengthy descriptions of the VF, only seldom quoting verbatim from it and rather showing a tendency to paraphrase his source material. Bede's additions to the text are very few and one of these is located at the beginning of his summary of Fursey's

infancy, where he added that Fursey was "de nobilissimo genere Scottorum" (HE III.19.24); the rest of the sentence echoes the VF by replicating the use of comparative forms:

> nobilis quidem genere sed nobilior fide. (VFC 1.1-2)

> de nobilissimo genere Scottorum, sed longe animo quam carne nobilior. (HE III.19.24)

The account of the first vision follows the summarizing tendency of the previous paragraphs: Bede only briefly mentions Fursey's illness and omits the description of the angels, but keeps the reference to what the angels sang (VFC 3.4-5):

> Referre autem erat solitus, quod aperte eos inter alia resonare audiret: 'Ibunt sancti de uirtute in uirtutem', et iterum 'Videbitur Deus deorum in Sion'. (HE III.19.34-6)

The opening words of this sentence ("Referre autem erat solitus") are not taken from the VF and they convey the idea of an oral account of the visionary experience mentioned here, as if somebody had recounted what they witnessed in the past, something they might possibly have heard more than once (*erat solitus*). A few lines above, Bede reminds his readers for the first time of the existence of a *libellus* where the events are explained in detail (HE III.19.31). One might therefore venture to say that Bede's mention of Fursey's first visionary experience is framed into a double reference to his sources, namely the *libellus* on the one side (mentioned explicitly in the text) and the oral witness on the other (which seems to be implied in Bede's own words).

Fursey's reluctant journey back to his body, as well as his conversation with the angels who promised to return to him soon, is completely omitted in Bede's chapter. In the HE, the narration leaps forward to the second vision experienced by Fursey; its first development, comprising the vision of angels and demons, their description, the first attacks of the demons, and the lengthy dispute on Fursey's wrongdoings (VFC 5-7) are summarized by Bede in an extremely dense and compact paragraph, in which he also exhorts his readers to look at the *libellus* if they wish to have a fuller account of the events mentioned:

> Qui reductus in corpore, et die tertia rursum eductus, uidit non solum maiora beatorum gaudia sed et maxima malignorum spirituum certamina, qui crebris accusationibus improbi iter illi caeleste intercludere contendebant, nec tamen, protegentibus eum angelis, quicquam proficiebant. De quibus omnibus siqui plenius scire uult, id est, quanta fraudis sollertia daemones et actus eius et uerba superflua et ipsas etiam cogitationes quasi in libro descriptas replicauerint, quae ab angelis sanctis, quae a uiris iustis sibi inter angelos apparentibus laeta uel tristia cognouerit, legat ipsum de quo dixi libellum uitae eius, et multum ex illo, ut reor, profectus spiritalis accipiet. (HE III.19.36-47)

Bede clearly must have attributed a special meaning to the sections on the four fires and the ensuing explanation of their meaning on the part of the angels (VFC 8) because, as Ciccarese also observes (1984: 254), in this passage he follows the VF quite closely rather than offering a summary of it (HE III.19.48-75). The structure of Bede's version shows a predilection for indirect speech, and in this sense it departs from the VF where an actual dialogue takes place between one of the angels and Fursey. Moreover, Bede's treatment of the passage in which the angels explain the meaning of the four fires shows that he was relying on a manuscript of the VF that belongs to the branch of its manuscript tradition represented by ms. S (Ciccarese 1984: 252-3). This passage in the H-C branch of the VF has a very clear structure, according to which each fire is generated from the preceding one, because each sin paves the way for the next. This is also the version contained in Ciccarese's edition:

> Hi sunt quattuor ignes qui mundum succendunt, postquam in baptismo omnia peccata dimissa sunt, post confessionem et abrenuntiationem diabolo et operibus eius et pompis. Mentientes ea quae promiserunt accendunt ignem mendacii. Alter uero ignis cupiditatis est, *qui de mendacio incenditur* promissionis et saeculum abrenuntiationis. Tertius uero ignis dissensionis est *qui de cupiditate nascitur*. Quartus uero ignis est immisericordiae, *qui* et ipse *de dissensione oritur* et inde sunt impietas fraus, per quam infirmi sine miseratione spoliantur, contentiones inuidiae et his similia. (VFC 8.6-16)

Bede, however, offers a different depiction of the four fires: the explanation of each fire is introduced by a temporal subordinate starting with *cum*, but most importantly here we do not find the interlocked generation of the fires encountered in the H-C branch of the VF, and the fourth fire changes from *immisericordia* to *impietas*:

> Et interrogans angelos, qui essent hi ignes, audiuit hos esse ignes qui mundum succedentes essent consumturi: unum mendacii, cum hoc quod in baptismo abrenuntiare nos Satanae et omnibus operibus eius promisimus minime inplemus; alterum cupiditatis, cum mundi diuitias amori caelestium praeponimus; tertium dissentionis, cum animos proximorum etiam in superuacuis rebus offendere non formidamus; quartus impietatis, cum infirmiores spoliare et eis fraudem facere pro nihilo ducimus. (HE III.19.53-62)

Bede's version is in fact more similar to the reading contained in ms. S:

> Unus mendatii cum hoc quod in baptismo abrenuntiare Satanae et omnibus operibus eius promiserunt minime implent. Alter cupiditatis cum mundi diuitias amori caelestium praeponunt. Tertius dissensionis cum animos proximorum etiam in superuacuis rebus offendere non formidant. Quartus impietatis cum infirmiores spoliare et eis fraudem facere pro nihilo ducunt. (Ciccarese 1984: 286, n. 9)

Ciccarese (1984: 252-3) rules out the possibility that Bede himself might be responsible for this change and that a branch of the manuscript tradition of the VF might have

absorbed this change at a later stage; instead, she thinks that the two different versions of this passage date to an early stage of the manuscript tradition of the VF. Since Bede follows his source almost verbatim for the entire chapter, Ciccarese considers it highly unlikely that he might have departed so abruptly from his source only in this passage and then resumed following it; in addition, she remarks that nowhere else is the text of ms. S indebted to Bede's version of the story.[175]

In Cassian's *Conlationes*, each sin is said to grow out of the previous one (Bloomfield 1952:70).[176] In view of this, the interrelation of the four fires in the VF might echo this early conception of interdependence of the sins, which later became less popular to non-experts. Apart from avarice, the other three sins are not capital sins. Carozzi (1994: 120) attempts to draw a connection between these sins and the four cardinal virtues (fortitude, prudence, temperance, justice). However, it should be noted that the cardinal virtues did not originate as an explicit counterpart to the various lists of sins that have been developed since late Antiquity, because sins and virtues had independent origins; as Bloomfield (1952: 67) observes, other lists of virtues, called *remedia*, came into being to oppose the various sins. Carozzi (1994: 120-1) also notes that *mendacium*, *dissensio*, and *immisericordia* are listed in Cassian's *Conlationes* as by-products of *philargyria* or avarice,[177] and for this reason he interprets the first, third and fourth fires as somehow originating from the second one. This is, in my opinion, a very interesting connection, though the text states very clearly that the first sin is falsehood and that avarice derives from it. In this context, falsehood is considered the very first sin because it has to do with the betrayal of the promises taken at baptism. Failing to live up to these promises thus represents the origin of sin, from which all other sins originate. In this somewhat non-canonical depiction of the interrelations

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[175] "L'inserimento di una parafrasi libera in un tessuto di citazioni letterali sarebbe un unicum davvero abnorme; più logico è allora pensare che Beda abbia trascritto il tutto da un manoscritto già contenente il passo parafrasato. In tal caso, dovremmo concluderne che le modifiche testuali presenti in S – e nel ramo della tradizione da S rappresentato – non solo risalgono ad epoca precedente ad S, ma sono addirittura anteriori a Beda, che pure scrive non molto più di mezzo secolo dalla composizione di VF" (Ciccarese 1984: 254).

[176] "Haec igitur octo uitia licet diuersos ortus ac dissimiles efficientias habeant, sex tamen priora, id est gastrimargia, fornicatio, filargyria, ira, tristitia, acedia quadam inter se cognatione et ut ita dixerim concatenatione conexa sunt, ita ut prioris exuberantia sequenti efficiatur exordium. Nam de abundantia gastrimargiae fornicationem, de fornicatione filargyriam, de filargyria iram, de ira tristitiam, de tristitia acediam necesse est pullulare" (Cassian, *Conlationes* V.10, ed. Petschenig 2004 [1886]).

[177] "De gastrimargia namque nascuntur comesationes, ebrietates: de fornicatione turpiloquia, scurrilitas, ludicra ac stultiloquia: de filargyria mendacium, fraudatio, furta, periuria, turpis lucri adpetitus, falsa testimonia, uiolentiae, inhumanitas ac rapacitas [...]" (Cassian, Conlationes V.16).

between sins, avarice becomes the first by-product of falsehood, rather than being the root of all sins, as the Scriptures and the doctrine on the capital sins have stated.[178] Discord and injustice, on the other hand, might be considered as actual by-products of avarice, as Cassian himself wrote.

In the subsequent passage, describing the four fires merging together and drawing near Fursey, Bede opts for an almost verbatim quote from the VF, especially with regards to the speech delivered by the angel:

> Cumque appropinquassent, pertimescens ille dicit angelo: "Domine, ecce ignis mihi appropinquat". At ille: "Quod non incendisti" inquit, "non ardebit in te; nam etsi terribilis iste ac grandis esse rogus uidetur, tamen iuxta merita operum singulos examinat, quia uniuscuiusque cupiditas in hoc igni ardebit. Sicut enim quis ardet in corpore per illicitam uoluptatem, ita solutus corpore ardebit per debitam poenam". (HE III.19.63-70)

> Timensque ignem minacem sancto angelo secum loquenti ait: "Ignis mihi adpropinquat". Cui respondit angelus: "Quod non accendisti non ardebit in te. Licet enim terribilis est et grandis iste ignis, tamen secundum merita operum singulos examinat, quia uniuscuiusque cupiditas in isto igne ardebit. Sicut corpus ardet per inlicitam uoluntatem, ita et anima ardebit per debitam poenam. (VFC 8.19-26)

On the other hand, Bede shows no particular interest in the disputes between the angels and demons concerning Fursey's merits and sins (VFC 9-10), so once again he summarizes the lengthy sequence of accusations into a very compact reference; the same can be said for the long conversation between Fursey and the blessed souls (VFC 11-15)

> Sequuntur aduersus ipsum accusationem malignorum, defensiones spirituum bonorom, copiosor caelestium agminum uisio; sed et uirorum de sua natione sanctorum, quos olim sacerdotii gradu non ignobiliter potitos fama iam uulgante compererat, a quibus non

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[178] Avarice has always held a special place in the all-but-fixed ranking of the eight chief sins as well as in the ensuing theological debate, largely because St Paul in the first letter to Timothy (I Tim 6.10) referred to it as the *radix omnium malorum* and thus put it in competition against pride, which in its turn was also designated as the beginning of all sins in Ecclesiasticus 10.15 (*initium peccati omnis superbia*). The debate that followed on which sin, pride or avarice, should hold primacy over the other capital sins seemed to find a somewhat conciliatory solution with the interpretation offered by Augustine in *De Genesi ad litteram* (11.15), where avarice is more generally interpreted as greed for the unnecessary and is prompted by pride, in this way closing the circle: "Merito initium omnis peccati superbiam Scriptura definivit, dicens: *Initium omnis peccati superbia*. Cui testimonio non inconvenienter aptatur etiam illud quod Apostolus ait: *Radix omnium malorum est avaritia*; si avaritiam generalem intellegamus, qua quisque appetit aliquid amplius quam oportet, propter excellentiam suam, et quemdam propriae rei amorem". See also *De libero arbitrio* 3.17.48: "Avaritia enim, quae graece φιλαργυρία dicitur, non in solo argento vel in nummis, unde magis nomen duxisse resonat; argento enim nummi vel mixto argento frequentius apud veteres fiebant: sed in omnibus rebus quae immoderate cupiuntur intellegenda est, ubicumque omnino plus vult quisque quam sat est." (Newhauser 2000: 143). Gregory the Great also endorsed the same interpretation when he underlined that avarice is not only aimed at pecuniary gains, but it is also the yearning for *more* at all levels (Hom 16 PL 38: *Avaritia enim non solum pecuniae est, sed etiam altitudinis*), and thus is closer to pride than one might first think. See also Casagrande / Vecchio (2000: 3-35).

pauca, quae uel ipsi uel omnibus qui audire uellent multum salubria essent, audiuit. (HE III.19.76-81)

The passage describing the burning received by Fursey from the soul of the sinner represents another detailed phase of the narrative, though Bede's rendering of his source is quite free (HE III.19.86-99). Fursey's vision of the otherworld pivots around the idea of going through fire. Fire has the power to purify from sin (Le Goff 1982 [1981]: 12), and this is one of the main characteristics of the early conceptions of purgatory. Fursey goes through this ordeal twice, and the second time he does not go through it unharmed, because he has sinned. The burns he receives punish and purify him at the same time, before sending him back to the world, in a sort of baptism by fire (Carozzi 1994: 126-7). Also in this case the dialogue between the angel and the ensuing explanation of the incident follow the VF quite closely by reproducing all the dialogic exchange between the characters and quoting almost verbatim from the corresponding section in the VF (VFC 16). Conversely, the instructions for the salvation of those who repent at the moment of their death, as well as Fursey's awakening back in his body (VFC 16-17) are only briefly mentioned by Bede (HE III.19.99-105). However, he underlines how the marks caused by the burns remain visible throughout Fursey's entire life; here Bede's writing echoes the VF, though Bede does not explain that the marks become visible when water is poured on Fursey's body, as foretold by the angels:

Mirumque in modum quod anima sola sustenuit in carne demonstrabatur. (VFC 17.24-5)

Mirumque in modum quid anima in occulto passa sit, caro palam praemonstrabat. (HE III.19.104-5)

At this point Bede inserts the reference to his oral source which has been previously discussed; but before mentioning it, he points out to his readers that Fursey would only tell his visionary experiences to those who truly desired to repent:

Ordinem autem uisionum suarum illis solummodo, qui propter desiderium conpunctionis interrogabant, exponere uolebat. (HE III.19.107-9)

This detail does not belong in the VF, where on the contrary it is said that Fursey announced his visionary experiences all over Ireland:

Egressus inde verbum Dei praedicabat ea quae viderat vel audierat omnibus populis Scottorum adnuntiabat. (VFK 436.5.6)

Considering that in the HE this passage is followed by the reference to Bede's oral source, one might venture to ascribe it to the oral account itself. Moreover, in light of

184

the emphasis attributed by Bede to Fursey's years in East Anglia at the beginning of his chapter, it is interesting to observe that in his lengthy reference to his oral source Bede does not forget to mention that the meeting between Fursey and the monk's acquaintance took place during the holy man's stay in East Anglia:

> Superest adhuc frater quidam senior monasterii nostri, qui narrare solet dixisse sibi quondam multum ueracem ac religiosum hominem, quod ipsum Furseum uiderit in provincia Orientalium Anglorum, illasque uisiones ex ipsius ore audierit […]. (HE III.19.110-14)

The VF goes on to explain that the holy man received a third vision and that he undertook such a successful missionary activity all over Ireland that he decided to withdraw himself to a small island to avoid his many followers (VFK 436.12-437.5). Bede completely omits the third vision, which he presumably deemed of little significance in comparison to the previous one, and he also chooses not to mention Fursey's retreat on the island. In the HE, therefore, the holy man leaves his country and goes to East Anglia to avoid the many people who gathered around him:

> Cum ergo, ut ad superiora redeamus, multis annis in Scottia uerbum Dei omnibus adnuntians tumultus irruentium turbarum non facile ferret, relictis omnibus quae habere uidebatur, ab ipsa quoque insula patria discessit, et paucis cum fratribus per Brettones in prouinciam Anglorum deuenit [...]. (HE III.19.118-22)

In the VF, Fursey's journey to England is but a second stage of his *peregrinatio*. It thus appears that Bede is more interested in showing his audience only the superior grade of *peregrinatio*, the one that necessarily entails a journey overseas and a perpetual exile from country and family (Charles-Edwards 1976: 44).[179] In the 6th and 7th centuries, this type of *peregrinatio* also makes the Irish monk into a much welcomed missionary of God in those unknown territories where his faith leads him (Hughes 1960: 144).

Fursey's fourth vision and the establishment of the monastery in East Anglia (VFK 437.6-13) are made the object of a very brief reference in Bede's chapter, since these two sections of the VF have been anticipated at the beginning of his account (HE III.19.123-4). Bede's attention is here devoted to Fursey's retreat from worldly cares (VFK 437.14-438.7). The presentation of this section shows once again Bede's

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[179] As Michelle Brown (2001: 20) points out, the *peregrinatio* has a special meaning in secular Irish law, because "it represented the most severe level of deterrent, alongside capital punishment. To remove oneself, or to be expelled, from the social structures of kingship and kindred was to fall outside of any means of legal or economic support. You became, in effect, an outlaw, but were also freed of any attendant obligations, other than to the Lord, in the case of those religious who so chose. Such an option also freed one, in spiritual terms, from what early sources describe as one of the greatest of earthly sorrows: the attachment to loved ones and the fear and grief of separation in life or in death.".

tendency to paraphrase his source, but it is in contrast to the subsequent passage, where Fursey's final journey to Gaul and his foundation of the monastery reproduce the VF's word choice very closely (HE III.19.125-38; VFK 438.8-14).

Bede's closing section on Fursey's death and burial (HE III.19.139-52) departs from his written source only when it mentions the *libellus* and the more detailed account that readers will find in it:

> Quae cuncta in libello eius sufficientius, sed et de aliis conmilitonibus ipsius, quisque legerit, inueniet. (HE III.19.151-2)

All the information on Fursey's burial places corresponds to what can be found in the VF (VFK 438.14-440.3).

## Fursey in the OEB

HE III.19.1-36; OEB 210.3-212.11

In the opening section the syntax of the OEB mirrors the Latin quite closely.[180] The translator adds an explicatory phrase when translating *Hibernia* (HE III.19.2): "Hibernia Scotta ealonde" (OEB 210.3-4, 'Ireland, the island of the Scots'); this might be an example of the translator's didactic tendency to explain those references in the text that he might consider to be too erudite for his audience. A synonymic word pair, *beorht 7 scinende* (OEB 210.5, 'bright and shining'), translates the Latin adjective *clarus* (HE III.19.3). This translational choice was made purposely, in order to create a circular effect with the closing line of the chapter, as I will demonstrate later.

It should also be noted that the Latin *a rege* (HE III.19.6) is translated as *foresprecenan cyninge* (OEB 210.9, 'by the aforementioned king') probably with the intention to create an explicit connection with the preceding chapter.

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[180] "Verum dum adhuc Sigebert regni infulas teneret, superuenit de Hibernia uir sanctus nomine Furseus, uerbo et actibus *clarus* sed et *egregiis* insignis uirtutibus, cupiens pro Domino, ubicumque sibi oportunum inueniret, peregrinam ducere uitam" (HE III.19.1-5).
"Mid ðy ðe Sigeberht þa gytá rice hæfde, cwom of Hibernia Scotta ealonde halig wer sum, þæs noma wæs Furseus. Se wæs in wordum 7 dædum *beorht 7 scinende*, swelce he wæs in æðelum mægenum *mære* geworden" (OEB 210.3-6).

Bede's bilingual reference to the name of the site where Fursey founded his monastery in East Anglia ("in castro quodam quod lingua Anglorum Cnobheresburg, id est Vrbs Cnobheri, uocatur", HE III.19.20-1) is reduced to the simple mention of its English name in the OEB (210.24: "seo is nemned on Englisc Cnoferesburg", 'which is called in English Cnoferesburg'). A word pair translates the verb *adornarunt* (HE III.19.23) as *frætwade 7 weorðade* (OEB 210.26, 'adorned and honoured'); I consider this word pair as additional, because the first member translates the Latin, whereas the second member expresses the purpose of adorning, namely to show honour. The two verbs are not synonymous, rather they appear to be connected by a cause-and-effect relationship. The OEB shows a rather consistent tendency to quote proper names more often than the Latin; for example Bede's *uir iste* (HE III.19.24) becomes *þes wer Furseus* (OEB 210.26, 'this man Fursey'). The connective phrase *Quid multa?* (HE III.19.28) is omitted in the OEB, possibly because it is a phrase which does not contribute towards the intelligibility of the text. Further on in this section, the translator renders Bede's *monasterium* (HE III.19.29) as *syndrig wiic* (OEB 212.1, 'a separate dwelling'); This translation does not interpret *monasterium* as an actual monastery, rather it seems to imply a solitary retreat for contemplative life, whereas Bede and the VF clearly refer to a monastery:

> *Monasterium* in quodam construxit loco, ubi undique religiosis confluentibus uiris, aliquos etiam parentum pia sollicitudine euocare curauit. (VFC 2.3-6)

> Procedente tempore et ipse sibi *monasterium*, in quo liberius caelestibus studiis uacaret, construxit. (HE III.19.29-30)

> Þa wæs forðgongendre tide, þæt he him *syndrig wiic* getimbrade, in þæm he freoslice meahte lifian. (OEB 212.1-2)
> ['After some time he built for himself a separate dwelling in which he could live in freedom'.]

The wording in the OEB might have been influenced by the fact that Bede emphasizes the solitary devotional practices undertaken by Fursey, as opposed to the community of religious men described in the VF, though Bede mentions a monastery and not a hermitage. For example, Cuthbert's hermitage on Great Farne is called a *mansio* (HE IV.26.14), which the Old English translator renders as *wíc 7 wununesse* (OEB 366.13). Bede also employs the same noun, *mansio*, to describe the separate dwelling in which Bishop Chad lived, not far from his church, together with seven or eight brethren:

Fecerat uero sibi *mansionem* non longe ab ecclesia remotiorem, in qua secretius cum paucis, id est septem siue octo, fratribus, quoties a labore et ministerio uerbi uacabat, orare ac legere solebat. (HE IV.3.25-8).

The translator renders this noun as *sundorwíc*:

Getimbrede he eac *sundorwíc* noht feor from þære cirican, bi ðæm he deagolice mid feawum broðrum, þæt is seofonum oðþo eahtum, he gewunade, þæt he him gebæd, 7 his bec rædde, swa oft swa he from þæm gewinne þære þegnunge godcundre lare æmetig wæs. (OEB 262.13-7)
['He also built a separate dwelling not far from the church, in which he lived privately with a few brethren, that is seven or eight, in which he prayed or read his books as often as he was at leisure from the labour of service in teaching the doctrine'.]

Moreover, the translator of the OEB makes a clear distinction between the separate dwelling Fursey built for himself in Ireland and the monasteries he founded in East Anglia and Gaul, because where Bede employs the word *monasterium* with reference to the two monastic communities founded abroad by Fursey (HE III.19.17;19;123;125;134;137), the corresponding translation in the OEB is always *mynster* ('monastery' OEB 210.21;23; 218.4;6;11;17).

The description of Fursey's first vision contains an expansion of the source text in which a synonymic word pair can also be found:

Angelicorum agminum et aspectus intueri et laudes beatas meruit audire. (HE III.19.33-4)

Ond he gegearnode, þæt he þa eadigan herenesse eac gehyrde, *hu heo God lofodon 7 heredon*. (OEB 212.6-7)
['And he deserved to hear the blessed praise, how they loved and praised God']

Further on in the text, the Latin verb *resonare* (HE III.19.35) is translated with the synonymic word pair *hleoðrian 7 singan* (OEB 212.9, 'exclaim and sing').

The lines from the angels' singing in praise of the Lord are from Psalm 83.8. The translator quotes the Latin form and then translates it, rather than simply replacing the Latin with the Old English:

Ibunt sancti de uirtute in uirtutem; uidebitur Deus Deorum in Sion: halige gongað of mægene in mægen; bið gesegen haligra God in wlite sceawunge. (OEB 212.9-11)
['Ibunt sancti de uirtute in uirtutem; uidebitur Deus Deorum in Sion: the saints shall go from virtue to virtue; the God of saints shall be seen in beauty of contemplation'.]

The translator renders *Sion* with *in wlite sceawunge*, which Plummer (1896 vol. 2: 171) also underlines in his notes; he glosses it 'in beauty of vision' but does not offer an explanation for it. *In wlite sceawunge* does not appear to be a set phrase in Old English, because a search in the Old English Corpus shows no occurrences other than the one

discussed here. This expression seems to carry out an explanatory function, especially because the Latin is not omitted in the translation, so in this case the Old English works as a kind of gloss. It should also be noted that all the manuscripts of the OEB contain this phrase as well as the Latin. Most of the glossed Anglo-Saxon psalters gloss *in Sion* in Psalm 83.8 with either *in sion* or *on sion*, but some do not provide any gloss, probably considering the name as self-explanatory.[181] The only exception is the Regius Psalter (s. x[1]): it presents a Latin gloss of *in Sion*, in *s[u]p[er]no regno*, which Röder (1904) does not include in his edition, perhaps because it is in Latin and not in Old English. Similarly to the OEB, this gloss also seems to fulfil an explanatory intent. The Cambridge Psalter (s. xi) provides an interesting double glossing of *in Sion* in Psalm 64.2.[182] As Wildhagen (1910: 152) notes, in this Psalm *in sion* is glossed as *on sion ł on lifes sceawunge* ('in Sion or in contemplation of life'), thus providing a parallel interpretation to the one found in the OEB. Interestingly, Ælfric also offers a similar reading of the significance of Sion. In the First Series Homily for Palm Sunday (CH I.14), he refers to Sion in these words: "Sion ís an dun; 7 heo ís gecweden *scawungstow*" (CH I.14.93, 'Sion is a mountain, and it is called place of contemplation'). With regard to this interpretation, Godden comments that

> Haymo, following Jerome and Augustine, simply identifies Sion with Jerusalem. But the etymological explanations are Ælfric's own contribution. Jerusalem as *uisio pacis* is a commonplace; Sion as *sceawung-stow* perhaps draws on Jerome's *Liber Interpretationis Hebraicorum Nominum* (CCSL 72, 39.25): *Sion specula vel speculator sive scopulus*. Thorpe translates *sceawung-stow* 'a place of contemplation', but it occurs as a gloss for *specula* 'a watchover or lookout'[183] and Ælfric's point is perhaps rather than Sion or the earthly church is the vantage-point or 'place of looking' for looking towards the Heavenly Jerusalem, which is itself the *visio pacis*, the object of sight. (Godden 2000: 114)

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[181] *In sion* in Psalm 83.8 is glossed as *in sion* in the Vespasian Psalter (Wright/Campbell 1967); *on sion* can be found in the Canterbury Psalter (Harsley 1889), in the Cambridge Psalter (Wildhagen 1910), in the Paris Psalter (Colgrave 1958a), in the Arundel Psalter (Pulsiano 1994), in the Vitellius Psalter (Pulsiano 1994), and in the Stowe Psalter (Pulsiano 1994). No gloss is provided in the Lambeth Psalter (Lindelöf 1909), in the Bosworth Psalter (Pulsiano 1994), in the Junius Psalter (Brenner 1908), and in the Salisbury Psalter (Sisam 1959), whereas the Tiberius Psalter (Pulsiano 1994) is very corrupt at Psalm 83.8 and therefore proved impossible to read from the microfiche facsimile. For a survey on the Anglo-Saxon glossing tradition, see Lendinara (1999).
[182] "Te decet ymnus deus in sion et tibi reddetur uotum in hierusalem" (Psalm 64.2).
[183] "*in specula .i. in consideratione* on sceawungstowe". This gloss comes from a single leaf in Oxford, Bodleian Library Lat. Misc. a.3.f.49 and is part of the glossary in Harley 3376 (s. x/xi) (Meritt 1961: 447).

The fact that the translator of the OEB provides a very similar interpretation of the meaning of Sion at least one century before Ælfric, might indicate that this etymological interpretation already circulated before the age of Ælfric.

HE III.19.36-75; OEB 212.11-214.15

In the account of the fighting and the disputes between demons and angels, Bede employs the noun *certamen*: "uidit non solum maiora creatorum gaudia sed et maxima malignorum spirituum certamina […]" (HE III.19.38-9). The noun *certamen* might be seen to contain both articulations of the strife between angels and demons, which as we know from the VF first takes the shape of an actual battle and then turns into a verbal dispute. The noun can refer to a physical or an intellectual strife, therefore Bede manages to condense the double imagery of the physical and metaphorical battle into a single noun. In the OEB *certamina* is translated with a synonymic word pair, *gefleoto 7 gewinn* (OEB 212.14, 'contention and battle'), that reproduces the twofold imagery of the dispute conveyed by the Latin:

> Þa geseah he nales þæt an þa maran gefean þara eadigra gasta, ac swylce eac þa mæstan gefleoto 7 gewinn þara wærgra gasta. (OEB 212.12-4)
> ['Not only did he see the greater joy of the blessed spirits, but also the greatest contention and battle of the accursed spirits'.]

Another synonymic word pair can be found in the translation of the verb *intercludere* (HE III.19.39-40) with *forsette 7 fortynde* (OEB 212.16, 'obstructed and hindered'); the word pair gives more emphasis to the concept expressed by the Latin verb. In this section the Old English translator omits the passage in which Bede mentions the VF (HE III.19.41-9), skipping the entire reference and resuming the translation with the description of the dark valley and the four fires.

The section describing the four fires contains the following word pairs:

- *Deflectens* (HE III.19.51): *begde 7 locode* (OEB 212.20, 'bent down and looked'); this additional word pair describes two consecutive actions, because Fursey first bends down and then looks downwards.
- *Consumturi* (HE III.19.55): *forbærnende 7 forneomende* (OEB 212.25, 'to burn up and destroy'); this word pair and the next five are of the synonymic type.
- *Extenderunt* (HE III.19.63): *þeoddon 7 somnodon* (OEB 214.2, 'joined together and united').

- *Adunati sunt* (HE III.19.63): *geanede 7 gesomnade* (OEB 214.3, 'united and gathered').

- *Pertimescens* (HE III.19.64): *ondrædende 7 forht* (OEB 214.4, 'frightened and fearful').

- *Dicit* (HE III.19.64): *ondsworede 7 cwæð* (OEB 214.6, 'answered and spoke').

- *Examinat* (HE III.19.68): *demeð 7 bærneð* (OEB 214.9, 'judges and burns'); these verbs are used when the angels explain the meaning of the gates of fire encountered by the holy man in his otherworldly journey. During his vision, Fursey is told that everyone is tested by the fire according to their merits and wrongdoings. If one has not sinned,one is not burnt. By employing a word pair in lieu of a single verb, the translator connects the judgement phase with the punishment and purification attained through the fire, thus making explicit reference to the underlying cause-and-effect relation. As Le Goff (1982 [1981]: 53-4) notes, the fire of the interim space between heaven and hell is at the same time punishment, purification, and ordeal. This word pair seems to bring together these three undistinguished meanings of the purgatorial fire.

In this case it should be noted that the number of word pairs increases when the text reaches one of its most powerful moments, namely the description of the four fires encountered by Fursey during his vision.

The OEB follows Bede in the description of the four fires, therefore we do not find the combined generation of one sin from the other which characterizes the VF. In the description of the third fire, the verb *praeponimus* (HE III.19.58) presents a loosely periphrastic translation with the phrase *foresettað 7 us leofran lætað* (OEB 212.28, 'prefer and allow (to be) dearer to us'), which cannot be classified strictly as a word pair. The depiction of the fourth fire contains an explicatory addition that is characterized by a synonymic structure: *on heora æhtum 7 on heora godum* (OEB 214.1, 'to their possessions and to their gods').

When the conflagration of the four fires draws near, Fursey's address to the angel presents an interesting addition. The Latin "Domine, ecce ignis mihi adpropinquat" (HE III.19.64-5) is translated as "min domne, hwæt is þis fyr? Me swiðe nealæceð" (OEB 214.5, 'my lord, what is this fire? It is drawing very close to me'). The explicit question makes Fursey's address more direct and colloquial.

HE III.19.76-117; OEB 214.15-216.30

This passage does not depart from the source text, but rather follows the Latin quite closely. The following synonymic word pairs can be found:

- *Verba* (HE III.19.81): *word 7 spræce* (OEB 214.24, 'words and speech');
- *Torrebant* (HE III.19.88): *bærndon 7 þræston* (OEB 214.31-2, burnt and were tortured');
- *Exponere* (HE III.19.109): *cyþan 7 secgan* (OEB 216.20-1, 'relate and tell');
- *Interrogabant* (HE III.19.109): *frugnon 7 ahsodon* (OEB 216.21, 'questioned and asked').

The translation of Bede's reference to his oral source deserves mention:

> Superest adhuc frater quidam senior monasterii nostri, *qui narrare solet* dixisse sibi quondam multum ueracem ac religiosum hominem, quod ipsum Furseum uiderit in provincia Orientalium Anglorum, illasque uisiones ex ipsius ore audierit […]. (HE III.19.110-14)

> Is nu gena sum ald broðor lifiende usses mynstres, *se me sægde, cwæð se þe ðas booc wrat*, þæt him sægde sum swiðe æfest monn 7 geþungen þæt he ðone Furseum gesege in Eastengla mægðe, 7 þa his gesihðe æt his seolfes muðe gehyrde. (OEB 216.22-6)
> ['A brother of our monastery still living today told me, said he who wrote this book, that a very pious and excellent man told him that he had seen Fursey in the province of the East Angles, and heard his visions from his own mouth'.]

This is another example of the tendency on the part of the translator of the OEB to shift between the first and the third person singular when referring to Bede. The translator manages to add a personal note, as if Bede was writing in the first person, and to distance himself at the same time. It shows that he is trying to keep Bede's persona separate from the voice of the translator, but in doing so he articulates the text in a way that is by no means close to the source text.


HE III.19.118-152; OEB 216.31-218.32

The OEB follows its source quite closely. No feature of the translation departs from the source text in such an evident way as to deserve mention, apart from the fact that the final reference to the VF ("Quae cuncta in libello eius sufficientius, sed et de aliis conmilitonibus ipsius, quisque legerit, inueniet", HE III.19.151-2) is completely omitted.

The section contains the following word pairs:

- *Adnuntians* (HE III.19.119): *bodode 7 lærde* (OEB 216.32, 'preached and taught').

- *Praedicans* (HE III.19.123): *bodade 7 lærde* (OEB 218.3, 'preached and taught'); this synonymic word pair occurs very frequently in the OEB and in this case it is used twice in very close proximity; in fact, the verb *bodian* renders *adnuntians* and *læran praedicans*, but the Old English translator seems to emphasise that they are inseparable.

- *Rite* (HE III.19.124): *mynsterlice 7 þeawlice* (OEB 218.4-5, 'monastically and properly'); this word pair is synonymic and the two members are linked together by hyponymy because *þeawlice* has a broader meaning than *mynsterlice*.

- *Monasteriis* (HE III.19.134): *cirican 7 mynstrum* (OEB 218.14, 'churches and monasteries'); this word pair is additional because here the translator presumably distinguishes between parish and monastic churches, whereas the HE refers only to the destruction of the latter.

- *Constat* (HE III.19.148): *scinað 7 beorhtað* (OEB 218.32, 'shine and cast light'). This word pair clearly echoes the very same one used at the beginning of the chapter to translate the adjective *clarus* (HE III.19.3).[184] This word pair implies two different kinds of shining: *scinað* refers to something bright to look at, whereas *beorhtað* refers to something that gives light. Perhaps the Old English translator wants to encompass the idea that Fursey's merits are both like an object that shines in itself and also that they "cast light" on what is around them. The semantic field of light thus encircles the chapter on Fursey. Considering that the word pair closes the chapter, because Bede's final reference to the Latin source is completely omitted in the translation (the section in square brackets in the quote, see n. 184), it appears that the translator purposely creates a circular effect, in which the opening and closing images of the chapter coincide.

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[184] "Sed et post annos quattuor constructa domuncula cultiore receptui corporis eiusdem ad orientem altaris, adhuc sine macula corrputionis inuentum, ibidem digno cum honore translatum est, ubi merita illius multis saepe *constat* Deo operante claruisse uirtutibus. *[Haec et de corporis eius incorruptione breuiter attigimus, ut quanta esset uiri sublimitas, legentibus notius existeret. Quae cuncta in libello eius sufficientius, sed et de aliis conmilitonibus ipsius, quisque legerit, inuieniet.]*" (HE III.19.145-52).
"Þa wæs æfter feower wintrum eft, þæt mon oðre cirican getimbrede: 7 him eallum þuhte þæt hit gerisenre wære, þæt his lichoman mon gesette to eastdæle þæs wigbedes. Þa gena he buton womme gebrosnunge wæs gemeted, 7 heo hine þa ðær mid wyrðre áre gesetton. Ond þær his geearnunge oft þurh godcunde wyrcnesse mid miclum mægenum *scinað 7 beorhtað*" (OEB 218.26-32).

**Fursey in Ælfric's homily**

The homily begins with an attack on the *Visio Pauli*,[185] one of the most widely-known apocryphal accounts of the otherworld (Silverstein/Hillhorst 1997: 11):

> Men ða leofostan Paulus se apostol ealra ðeoda lareow awrat be him sylfum þæt hé wære gelædd up to heofonum. oð þæt hé becom to ðære ðriddan heofonan. and he wæs gelæd to neorxnawánge. and þær ða gastlican dygelnysse gehyrde and geseah. ac hé ne cydde na eorðlicum mannum ða ða hé ongean com. hwæt hé gehyrde. oððe gesawe. ðisum wordum writende be him sylfum; Scio hominem in christo ante annos quattuordecim. Raptum usque ad tertium cęlum; Et iterum: Quoniam raptus est in paradisum. Et audiuit archana uerba. quę non licet homini loqui; Þæt is on englisc. Ic wat ðone mann on criste. þe wæs gegripen nu for feowertyne gearum. and gelæd oð ða þriddan heofenan. and eft hé wæs gelæd to neorxnawange. and ðær gehyrde ða digelan word þe nán eorðlic mann sprecan ne mót; Humeta rædað sume men. ða leasan gesetnysse. ðe hí hatað paulus gesihðe. nu hé sylf sæde. þæt he ða digelan word gehyrde. þe nán eorðlic mann sprecan ne mót; (CH II.20.1-16)
>
> ['Men most beloved, Paul the apostle, teacher of all the people, wrote about himself that he was taken up to heaven until he arrived to the third heaven and he was led into paradise, and there he heard and saw the spiritual secrets, but he did not make known to earthly men, when he came back, that which he heard or saw, writing these words about himself: [...]. That is in English: I know a man in Christ who was taken fourteen years ago and led to the third heaven, and afterwards he was led to paradise, and there he heard the secret words that no earthly man ought to speak. How do some men read the false composition, which they call the vison of Paul, when he himself said that he heard the secret words that no earthly man ought to speak?']

Ælfric presumably finds the motivation to question the authenticity of the *Visio Pauli* in St Augustine's *Tractates on the Gospel of John* (Godden 2000: 530); Augustine was in fact a fierce opponent of the *Visio Pauli* (Silverstein 1935: 4; Le Goff 1982 [1981]: 44-8). Ælfric contrasts the secrecy of Paul's vision with the truth of the vision of Fursey: whereas Paul was forbidden to share what he saw with other people, Fursey instead was not urged to keep his visions secret, therefore his account of the otherworld is more trustworthy than Paul's apocryphal narrative. Ælfric thus provides his audience with an orthodox, local *exemplum* to replace the unreliable account of the *Visio Pauli*[186]:

> We wyllað nu eow gereccan oðres mannes gesihðe. ðe unleas is. nu se apostol paulus his gesihðe mannum ameldian ne moste. (CH II.20.16-8)
>
> ['We shall now relate to you the vision of another man, which is true, since the apostle Paul was not allowed to announce his vision to men'.]

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[185] On the *Visio Pauli*, see Silverstein (1935), Luiselli Fadda (1974), Healey (1978), Ciluffo (1983), Zaleski (1987: 26-8), Silverstein / Hilhorst (1997).

[186] Ælfric often shows his concern for orthodoxy in his homiletic production. On this topic, see for example Hill (1993: 30).

After this introduction, Ælfric shapes his account of Fursey according to the *Visio Fursei* itself rather than according to Bede's chapter in the HE. Nevertheless, when Ælfric describes Fursey for the first time, he hastens to inform his audience that the holy man came from Scotland (that is, Ireland): "Sum *scyttisc* preost wæs gehaten Furseus" (CH II.20.19, 'a certain Scottish priest was called Fursey'). The reference to Fursey's geographical provenance is not contained in the VF, but Bede does mention it: "Erat autem uir iste de nobilissimo genere *Scottorum*" (HE III.19.24). Therefore we must conclude that in this case Bede's chapter may have instigated Ælfric's word choice (Godden 2000: 531). He then follows the VF in praising Fursey's virtues, in describing his infancy and his departure from his family, but he also adds that from that moment Fursey "on oðrum earde. ælðeodig leornode" (CH II.20.24, 'and learned, a foreigner, in another country'); the use of the adjective *ælðeodig* might perhaps be interpreted as an explicit reference to the beginning of Fursey's lesser grade of *peregrinatio* (Charles-Edwards 1976: 45). Ælfric translates the Latin *monasterium* (VFC 2.3) with *mynster* (CH II.20.24, 'monastery'); he, like Bede, interpreted it as the reference to the foundation of an actual monastery, rather than to the construction of a hermitage as the translator of the OEB presumably did. A juxtaposition of the two translations shows how different the two interpretations are:

> Þa wæs forðgongendre tide, þæt he him syndrig wiic getimbrade, in þæm he freolslice meahte lifian. (OEB 212.1)
> ['After some time he built for himself a separate dwelling in which he could live in freedom'.]

> Æfter ðisum ærærde mynster. and þæt mid eawfæstum mannum gesette. (CH II.20.24-5)
> ['Afterwards he erected a monastery and established it with pious men'.]

In the OEB, the translator depicts a scene of seclusion and contemplative life, whereas Ælfric writes of the establishment of a monastery with other brethren. In the OEB, the translation of Bede's *monasterium* as *syndrig wiic* might have been prompted, as already mentioned, by Bede's subsequent reference to Fursey's studies and by his silence on the presence of other brethren with him: "Procedente tempore et ipse sibi monasterium, in quo liberius caelestibus studiis uacaret, construxit" (HE III.19.29-30). The VF, on the other hand, leaves no doubt as to the presence of other people:

> ac sufficienter instructus monasterium in quodam construxit loco ubi undique religiosis confluentibus uiris. (VFC 2.3-5)

With regard to the description of Fursey's first vision and his return to the earth (CH II.20.25-56), Ælfric closely follows the VF and the sequence of events it contains (VFC 2-5). He only omits a few details concerning the circumstances in which Fursey experienced the vision, but the description of the angels, of what the holy man sees and hears, and of his awakening, show a good degree of attention towards his source. Conversely, the treatment of Fursey's second vision (VFC 5-17) is characterized by more freedom.

Ælfric summarizes the arrival of the three angels and omits the passage where Fursey is scared by the approaching voices of demons (CH II.20.57-73). The vivid description of their horrible appearance,

> Corpora autem daemoniorum, in quantum animae illius apparere poterant, plena deformitate et nigredine, collo extento, macie squalentia ac omni horrore plena, capite in similitudinem caccabi intumescente. Quando uero uolabant uel quando pugnabant, nullam corporis formam nisi horribilem et volaticam umbram uidere poterat. Sed quis prudentium lectorum ignorat haec etiam de immundis spiritibus ad terrorem uidentis animae fieri? Et facies eorum numquam potuit uidere propter horrorem tenebrarum, sicut nec sanctorum angelorum propter nimiam claritatem. (VFC 6.8-18)

is condensed by Ælfric into a single phrase: "Hwæt ða comon ða awirigedan deoflu *on atelicum hiwe* ðære sawle togeanes" (CH II.20.60-2, 'Lo, then came the accursed devils with horrible appearance towards the soul'). This may suggest that Ælfric is not interested in impressing his readers with a powerful description of the accursed spirits. On the other hand, Ælfric seems to be very keen on following in detail the accusations of the demons and the ensuing replies of the angels (VFC 7; CH II.20.64-92). Nothing is omitted from the long dispute on Fursey's merits and wrongdoings. However, from a lexical point of view there are two cases in which Ælfric departs from his source text. In the lengthy dialogue between angels and demons, the VF presents a rather monotonous structure, whereby each speaker is introduced with the tag "x *dixit*" followed by direct speech. Ælfric maintains this structure, but on two occasions he opts for a much simplified rendering of the introductory formula: the Latin "Cumque uictus satanas sicut contritus coluber caput releuasse uenenosum, dixit" (VFC 7.1-2) thus becomes "Þa deofla eft cwædon" (CH II.20.74, 'The devils spoke again'); and further on in the text, "Victus inimicus uiperea restaurat uenena dicens" (VFC 7.15-6) is translated as "Se ealda sceocca eft cwæð" (CH II.20.83-4, 'the old devil spoke again'). In the Latin both introductory formulas associate a serpent imagery with the devil and in both cases this

gets lost in the Old English rendering; moreover, *satanas* is translated by Ælfric with the plural form *deofla*: the reference to the ruler of hell is dismembered into a plurality of demons; and this must be deliberate, since there is no alliterative patterning here.

With respect to the section on the four fires (CH II.20.93-111), the audience is not presented with the interlocked type of propagation that characterizes the H-C branch of the manuscripts of the VF. As in the HE, Ælfric's version of this passage follows the variant reading of the S branch of the VF:

> Þæt an fyr ontent þæra manna sawla. ðe leasunge lufedon; Þæt oðer ðara ðe gitsunge filigdon; Þæt ðridde þæra þe ceaste and twyrednysse styredon; Þæt feorðe fyr forbærnð þæra manna sawla þe facn and arleasnysse beeodon. (CH II.20.99-102)
> ['That one fire burns the souls of those men who loved falsehood; the second, of those who followed avarice; the third, of those who stirred conflict and discord; the fourth fire burns the souls of those men who cultivated fraud and wickedness'.]

The OEB and Ælfric agree in their word choice for the description of the fourth fire (*arleasnysse*, 'wickedness'), though this should not be taken as evidence for possible contamination between the two texts.

The second part of the dispute between angels and demons is recounted in detail (VFC 9-10; CH II.20.112-71). This section presents the same dialogic structure as the previous one, and once again Ælfric translates his source without any evident change or omission of material. Also in this section he avoids explicitly naming Satan: on two more occasions (VFC 9.6; 9.27) he translates it with different epithets, the first time with *sceocca* (CH II.20.116, 'demon'), the second with *deofol* (CH II.20.130, 'devil'). Whereas Ælfric provides a detailed account of the debate between angels and demons, the same cannot be said for the exhortations of the two priests (VFC 11-15; CH II.20.172-202), which are heavily reduced and re-written in a way that puts the role of teachers and clerics to the forefront (Godden 2000: 530, 536).

The passage describing Fursey being burnt by the unrighteous soul is translated by Ælfric without any omission of details (CH II.20.203-27). The conflagration of the four fires is called 'penal fire'[187] (*witniende lig*), a denomination that does not find a counterpart either in the VF or in Bede: "Hi becomon ða eft to ðam witniendlicum fyre"[188] (CH II.20.203, 'then they arrived again at the penal fire'). As Godden (2000: 536) points out, Ælfric also gives his readers an additional piece of information

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[187] The idea of attaining purification through fire is a widespread and ancient one. See Carozzi (1983; 1994) for a detailed account of the subject.

[188] The same expression also occurs at l. 208.

regarding the unrighteous soul, namely that he came from the same town as Fursey: "se wæs his tunman ær on life […]" (CH II.20.209, 'formerly in life he was his neighbour').

The concluding section of Ælfric's homily on Fursey presents a heavily summarized account of the preaching and travelling undertaken by the holy man after his visionary experiences. His third and fourth visions are omitted from the narrative and so are the geographical references to East Anglia and Gaul and his two periods of isolation from worldly cares. The fact that Ælfric mentions Scotland alongside Ireland as Fursey's first missionary endeavours, "He ferde ða geond eal yrrland and Scotland bodiende ða ðing þe he geseah and gehyrde" (CH II.20.252: 'then he travelled all over Ireland and Scotland announcing the things that he had seen and heard') has been interpreted as an error (Godden 1979: 366).

## Concluding remarks

The analysis of the different retellings of Fursey's life just outlined shows that each text presents a different Life of Fursey by emphasizing or omitting certain passages, or by adjusting the narrative pace in a way that clearly orientates the reader's perspective onto the narration itself.

In the case of Bede, his text is extremely dense and compact and presents an overall brisk narrative pace. His written source is highly summarized, with the exception of those few verbatim quotations from the VF that correspond to the climax of the narration. Bede's text shows not only his customary fondness for historical and geographical precision, but also the great significance he gives to his sources, both written and oral.

Three aspects of Fursey's life emerge most evidently from Bede's chapter: his visionary experiences, his years in East Anglia with Sigeberht, and the concept of *peregrinatio*.

As regards Fursey's visions, one might observe that Bede prefers quoting these in detail rather than including the lengthy theological, or quasi-legal, debates between angels and demons. Perhaps the preponderance of the visions in Bede's chapter might also have

something to do with Bede's oral source and with those parts of Fursey's experiences that he remembered most vividly.

The second and third most relevant aspects of Bede's chapter are linked together in so far as the missionary activity undertaken by Fursey is closely connected with royal figures, first in East Anglia and then in Gaul. This fits in quite well with Bede's general attitude towards conversion and evangelization in the HE, where adherence to Christianity is always prompted from the higher ranks of society down to the lower classes and never presents a bottom-up structure. Moreover, the connection between *peregrinatio* and royal figures seems to be a necessary requirement for the fulfilment of this superior form of voluntary exile. In the words of Charles-Edwards,

> The association between king and monastery was generally close in seventh century England; the association between king and *peregrinus* was even closer. The *peregrinus* left his homeland to serve a heavenly lord; he enjoyed also the protection of royal lordship. (Charles-Edwards 1976: 45)

By emphasizing Fursey's accomplishments in England, which on the whole constitute only a minor part of his missionary life, and by re-arranging the narrative sequence accordingly, Bede ensures that his account of Fursey's life fits in with the general purpose of the *Historia Ecclesiastica*. In other words, he gives Fursey's life a particular focus.

Moving on to the translation of Bede's chapter in the OEB, the text is characterized by the generally lesser importance attributed to geographical references, historical facts and sources, as well as by a tendency to add explanatory remarks wherever they are deemed necessary. From a stylistic point of view, the translation follows its source text very closely, even to the point of trying to replicate the Latin syntactic structure of the sentences; the text also seems to show an increased number of word pairs as the climax of the narrative draws nearer.

Ælfric gives shape to a different Life of Fursey, one which follows its source in detail, especially when translating the sections concerning the visionary experiences and the theological debate between angels and demons – but one which also departs most vigorously from it in avoiding narrating Fursey's *peregrinatio* across three countries and his successful missionary activity. It seems therefore clear that Ælfric and Bede present us with two quite different agendas and two equally different contexts of use. In the case of Ælfric, his focus does not lie in the historical or missionary side of Fursey's

199

*Vita*, but rather in the moral and penitential *exemplum* that his visionary experiences may offer to those who would hear the homily during Rogation, the time of the liturgical year devoted to atonement and to the invocation of God's mercy for man's sins (Godden 2000: 529).[189] A few examples will clarify these conclusions.

If one looks more closely at the narrative sequence of Fursey's vision, it is easy to agree with Claude Carozzi (1994: 111), who noted that the account of this otherworldly journey is far from being a comprehensive one.

This is particularly evident in the case of Ælfric's rendering of the visions, because he shows a clear tendency to emphasise the penitential moments described in his source. In the VF, the soul is made the object of two moments of fierce theological contention between angels and demons. These quasi-legalistic debates (Ciccarese 1984: 242) are about Fursey's wrongdoings and merits in life. Ælfric retains all the disputes between angels and demons of the VF. Some of the accusations made by the demons question the integrity of Fursey's life, not so much as a man, but rather as a monk. The demons bring forward a long list of accusations, most of which are discarded by the angels[190]:

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[189] "Of all the topics and themes Ælfric might have addressed, he chose to compose or to select passages which fulfilled the mandate of the Rogationtide liturgy. This mandate is to encourage blessings and bounty, to stop war, to heal the sick, and to abate the fiery anger of God. Rogationtide coheres in its progression and reiteration of themes, themes distinct from those of, for example, the Easter liturgy. During the Rogationtide Mass, the Christian seeks blessedness through progressive and varied striving. This striving (for penance, forgiveness, understanding, and mercy) is re-enacted physically during the Rogationtide services. Rogationtide liturgy serially invokes suffering, resignation, wisdom, and joy. A celebrant moves from place to place, moment to moment, prayer to prayer, in a constant ritual peregrination." (Harris 2007: 169). Milton McC. Gatch also underlines that Ælfric turns to narratives of the afterlife particularly "in connection with penance and amendment of life", mostly for the liturgical occasions connected with Lent and Rogation, "or in connection with instruction by means of the examples of the saints" (Gatch 1977: 76).

[190] "Hwí wille ge lettan ure siðfæt? Nis þes man dælnimend eoweres forwyrdes; Ða wiðerwinnan cwædon þæt hit unrihtlic wære. þæt se man ðe yfel geðafode sceolde buton wite to reste faran. ðonne hit a-writen is. þæt ða beoð eal swa scyldige ðe þæt unriht geðafiað. swa swa ða ðe hit gewyrcað; Se engel ða feaht ongean ðam awyrigdum gastum. to ðan swiðe þæt ðam halgan were wæs geðuht þæt þæs gefeohtes hréam. and ðæra deofla gehlyd. mihte beon gehyred geond ealle eorðan; Þa deofla eft cwædon. ydele spellunge he beeode. ne sceal hé ungederod þæs ecan lifes brucan; Se halga engel cwæð; Buton ge ða heafodleahtras him on befæstnian. ne sceal hé for ðam læssan losian; Se ealda wregere cwæð; Buton ge forgifon mannum heora gyltas. ne forgifð se heofenlica fæder eow eowere gyltas; Se engel andwyrde; On hwam awræc þes man his teonan? Se deofol cwæð; Nis na awriten þæt hí wrecan ne sceolon. ac buton ge forgyfon of eowerum heortum wið eow agyltendum; Se engel cwæð. us bið gedemed ætforan gode; Se ealda sceocca eft cwæð; Hit is awriten. buton ge beon swa bilewite on unscæððignysse swa swa cild. næbbe ge infær to heofenan rice; Þis bebod hé nateshwon ne gefylde; Se godes engel hine beladode. and cwæð; Miltsunge he hæfde on his heortan. ðeah ðe hé manna gewunan heolde; Se deofol andwyrde; Swa swa he þæt yfel of ðam menniscum gewunan underfeng. underfo he eac swa þæt wite fram ðam upplican

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- Fursey practised evil discourse;
- He did not forgive sins;
- He was not meek;
- He received evil from men;
- He did not execute his master's will;
- His spirit is unclean;
- He did not love his neighbour as himself;
- He loved worldly things;
- He did not correct the unrighteous.

These rebukes could certainly appeal to laymen as well as clerics, but the specific duties of forsaking worldly things and correcting sinners seem to be more pertinent to a tonsured or ecclesiastical life. Here the demons are referring to the only sin Fursey can actually be blamed for: he accepted a garment from a dying man, without being aware that the man had not repented of his sins. Therefore Fursey had involuntarily taken part in the man's sins; for this reason Fursey is burnt by the soul of this unrighteous man and will bear the marks of this burning on his body. In this way he is purged from his sin. Ælfric generally deals with his sources with freedom; he is usually more interested in producing a text that suits his audience, and his own agenda, rather than one that mirrors his source in every respect. Nevertheless, in this case Ælfric translates the disputes in detail. This is even more remarkable if we consider how this episode is treated in the HE: the theological disputes are completely omitted by Bede, whose interests clearly lie elsewhere in the narrative. Bede exhorts his readers to read the VF themselves if they want to know more about the subject (HE III.19.41-7). He is clearly assuming that his audience can have access to the VF, which most surely implies that he was writing mainly for a monastic audience. If we look at the OEB, the translator takes Bede's lack of interest even further, by omitting both references to the existence of a more comprehensive account of Fursey's life.

Ælfric also keeps another lengthy section of the *Vita* in which the souls of two priests deliver a long exhortatory speech to Fursey (VFC 11-15). Bede ignores this section almost completely:

deman; Se halga engel cwæð; We beoð ætforan gode gesémde; Þa wiðerwinnan wurdon ða oferswiðe. þurh ðæs engles gewinne. and ware" (CH II.20.64-92).

Sequuntur aduersus ipsum accusationes malignorum, defensiones spirituum bonorum, copiosor caelestium agminum uisio; sed et uirorum de sua natione sanctorum, quos olim sacerdotii gradu non ignobiliter potitos fama iam uulgante conpererat, a quibus non pauca, quae uel ipsi uel omnibus qui audire uellent multum salubria essent, audiuit. (HE III.19.76-81)

In the previous case, Ælfric follows his source in detail. In this case, on the other hand, Ælfric's rendering is not at all literal. He summarizes most of the lengthy speech, which covers four chapters of the VF. But, Ælfric follows his source in detail when it comes to the rebukes directed towards teachers, priests and monks:

Ofer ðam *láreowum* is godes yrre swyðost astyred. for ðan ðe hí forgymeleasiað. þa godcundan bec. and ymbe ða woruldðing eallunge hogiað; *Biscopum and sacerdum* gedafenað. þæt hí heora lare gymon. and ðam folce heora ðearfe secgan; *Mynstermannum* gedafenað. þæt hí on stilnysse heora líf / adreogon; Þu soðlice cyð þine gesihðe on middanearde. and beo hwiltidum on digelnysse. and hwíltidum betwux mannum; Ðonne ðu on digelnysse beo. heald þonne geornlice godes beboda. and eft ðonne þu ut færst betwux mannum. far for / heora sawla hælu. na for woruldlicum gestreonum; Ne beo ðu carful ymbe woruldlicum gestreonum. ac miltsa eallum ðinum wiðerwinnum mid hluttre heortan. and agyld gód for yfele. and gebide for ðinum feondum; Beo ðu swa swa getreowe dihtnere. and nan ðing ðe ne geahnige. buton bigleofan and scrude; Aféd ðinne lichaman mid alyfedum mettum. and ælc yfel forseoh; (CH II.20.183-98)
['Over the teachers is God's anger most excited, because they neglect the divine books, and only care about worldly things. It is appropriate to bishops and priests that they observe their doctrine, and say to the people their need. It is appropriate to monks that they lead their lives in stillness. Make known your vision in the world, and be sometimes in privacy, and sometimes among men. When you are in privacy, hold zealously to the commandments of God; and again, when you go out among men, go for the salvation of their souls, not for worldly profit. Do not care about worldly gains, but be merciful to all your adversaries with pure heart, and return good for evil, and pray for your enemies. Be as a faithful steward, and appropriate nothing to yourself, except for food and clothing. Feed thy body with allowed food, and despise every evil.']

By omitting certain passages of the source and by expanding others, the focus of the narrative shifts from a more general reflection on sin and on how to live a righteous life, to the righteous conduct teachers, priests and monks should have.[191]

In addition, the final exhortations of the angels who lead Fursey back to his body are clearly directed to further explain Fursey's own penitential experience. They also offer practical advice to priests and monks on confession, and on what to do with the corpse and the possessions of sinners. Once again, Ælfric translates this section in detail:

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[191] As regards the emphasis placed by Ælfric on the necessity for good teachers, see also Clayton (1996: 164-66).

Boda nu eallum mannum dædbote to dónne. and andetnysse to sacerdum. oð ða endenextan tide heora lifes. ac swa ðeah nis to underfonne nanes synfulles mannes æhta on his geendunge. ne his lic ne sy on haligre stowe bebyrged. ac beo him gesæd ær hé gewite ða teartan witu. þæt his heorte mid ðære biternysse beo gehrepod. þæt hé eft mage æt sumon sæle beon geclænsod. gif he his unrihtwisnysse huru on his forðsiðe behreowsað. and genihtsumlice ælmessan / dælð; Ne underfo se sacerd swa ðeah nan ðing þæs synfullan mannes æhta. ac hí man dæle ðearfum æt his byrgene; (CH II.20.218-27)
['Preach now to all men make penance and confession to priests, until the last hour of their lives; but yet the possessions of no sinful man must be accepted on his death, nor should his body be buried in a holy place; but before he departs let him be instructed about the painful torments, that his heart may be touched with the bitterness, that he may at some time be purified, if at least at his death he repents of his unrighteousness, and distribute alms in abundance. Nevertheless the priest should not accept anything of the sinful man's possessions; let them be distributed to the poor at his grave'.]

Et plura locutus, quid erga salutem eorum qui ad mortem poeniterent esset agendum, salubri sermone docuit. (HE III.19.99-101)

Ond he wæs se engel monig þing sprecende to him, 7 mid halwende worde lærde, hwæt ymb þara hælo to donne wære, þa ðe æt þam deaðe heora synna hreowe dydon. (OEB 216.9-12)
['And the angel told him many things, and with salutary words taught him, what should be done for the salvation of those who repented of their sins at the moment of death'.]

Bede and the OEB, on the other hand, only include a scanty reference to these final exhortations. One could say that Ælfric provides his readers with the very information that Bede did not include in his chapter. Ælfric gives prominence to the rebukes and the practical advice directed to priests and monks, and most especially those regarding the practice of confession. This, combined with the symbolic imagery of Fursey's otherworldly journey, might suggest that Ælfric had an ecclesiastical audience in mind: an audience who would draw practical profit from this homily, and an audience who would be equipped with the cultural tools to understand in full the complex baptismal symbolism of this narrative.

# 4.2 DRYHTHELM

The story of Dryhthelm as told by Bede in the HE can be summarized as follows:

> A man named Dryhthelm, the head of a household in a district of Northumbria who always led a very pious life, dies one night following an incurable illness. In the morning, though, he comes back to life and suddenly sits up, scaring all those who had been mourning his death. He explains to his wife that he has been granted permission to come back but that now he must live a different life. After dividing his possessions between his children, his wife, and himself, and donating his part to the poor, he enters the monastery of Melrose and retires to a secret retreat, where he lives in penance until his death. In his vision, Dryhthelm is guided by an angelic figure to a very deep valley in which one side is in flames, and the other is battered by snow and hail. Souls of men are tossed from one side of the valley to the other without respite. Dryhthelm begins to think that these might be the torments of hell, but his guide tells him he is mistaken. The angel guides him further down the valley into the darkness and disappears, leaving Dryhthelm alone in the face of terrible globes of fire that shoot up and fall back into a pit, producing a horrible stench; the flames are full of human souls. He also sees a crowd of evil spirits taking five souls into the pit, as the laughters of the devils and the cries of despair of the damned resonate in the darkness. Some of the evil spirits come from the pit towards Dryhthelm, but do not dare to touch him, until a shining light grows nearer and scatters the spirits away. This light is the angel, who leads Dryhthelm away from the valley into a much brighter place until they find themselves on top of a great wall. Dryhthelm sees a bright plain, full of the sweet scent of flowers, in which men in white robes sit around. He begins to think that this might be heaven, but his guide replies that he is again mistaken. Walking past the plain, Dryhthelm sees a brighter light than before, smells a better scent, and hears the sound of people singing; he hopes to be led thence, but the angel turns round and takes him back to the plain. The angel explains to Dryhthelm what he saw: the dark valley is the place where sinners who repented on the point of death are punished until judgement day, when they will join the kingdom of heaven; the pit is the mouth of hell, from which nobody will ever be released. The bright plain is the place for those souls that practised good works, but that were not yet in such a state of perfection as to be directly admitted into the kingdom of heaven; those who are already perfect when they die, on the other hand, go straight to the kingdom of heaven, which is near the place that Dryhthelm wished to see. After this explanation, Dryhthelm finds himself back in his body. Dryhthelm tells his vision to the monk Hæmgisl as well as to King Aldfrith of Northumbria. During his new life as a monk, Dryhthelm punishes himself with very harsh penances, including standing in the river Tweed in prayer, no matter what the season.

**Introduction and outline of the story (HE V.12.1-26; OEB 422.19-424.16; CH II.21.1-20)**

Bede introduces the chapter on Dryhthelm with a remark on how the miracle he is about to narrate is just as extraordinary and worthy of mention as those that occurred

in the past, the only difference being that this one took place in Britain: "his temporibus miraculum memorabile et antiquorum simile in Brittania factum est" (HE V.12.1-2). The sentence is maintained in the OEB without any notable change and the same can be said for the subsequent passage, where even Bede's emphatic, chiastic juxtaposition of images of corporeal and spiritual life and death is faithfully reproduced by the translator of the OEB. Bede writes that

> namque ad excitationem *uiuentium* de *morte animae* quidam aliquandiu *mortuus* ad *uitam* resurrexit *corporis*. (HE V.12.2-4)

and the Old English translator presents his readers with the very same rhetorical construction:

> Forðon ðe to awehtnesse *lifgendra monna* of *saule deaðe* sum mon wes sum face *dead* 7 eft to *life lichoman* aras [...]. (OEB 422.20-2)
> ['Because, in order to awake the living from the death of the soul a certain man was dead for some time and afterwards rose to the life of the body'.]

Here Bede contrasts the concepts of the life and death of the soul with the death and life of the body: those who are alive in the body are experiencing the death of the soul; a man who was dead in the body comes back to bodily life to bring back the life of the soul in those who have lost it.

However, there is one passage in this section of the HE that is given a different shape in the OEB, namely the concluding sentence at HE V.12.5: "e quibus hic aliqua breuiter perstringenda esse putaui", which becomes "þara sume we her hredlice areccan 7 áasecgan 7 aawritan willað" (OEB 422.22-3, 'some of which we shall here briefly report, say, and write'). The translator of the OEB changes the first person singular of the Latin verb *putaui* (Bede writing in the first person) into a first person plural modal verb *we... willað* (OEB 422.3). As mentioned in the previous chapters, the translator of the OEB often separates his own persona from that of Bede, but here the Old English texts displays a more conventional first person plural verb. In addition, from a semantic point of view the Latin verb cluster "breuiter perstringenda esse putaui" undergoes a significant process of re-adjustment; the verb *perstringo* usually means 'to summarize', but in the OEB we find a threefold translation that has little to do with the idea conveyed by the Latin verb: *areccan 7 aasecgan 7 aawritan* (OEB 422.22-3, 'report,

say, and write').[192] The first two verbs describe the action of narrating, thus evoking the idea of oral delivery; the third verb puts forward the idea of writing down. If, therefore, Bede signals that his account is but a summarized version of the actual story, the Old English translator gives a greater emphasis to the act of retelling and writing down the story, rather than briefly summarizing it. The translation of the closing lines of the subsequent chapter of the HE (HE V.13) presents a similar reworking of a fairly generic Latin verb into an additional word pair:

> Hanc historiam, sicut a uenerabili antistite Pecthelmo didici, simpliciter ob salute legentium siue audiendum *narrandam esse* putaui. (HE V.13.73-5)

> Þis spell ic leornade fram Pehthelme ðæm arwyrðan bioscope, ond ic hit for þære hælo, ðe hit leornade oðþe geherde, hluttorlice *awrat 7 sægde*. (OEB 442.6-8)
> ['I learnt this narrative from the venerable Bishop Pehthelm, and I wrote it and told it plainly for the salvation of those who shall learn it or hear it'.]

Also in this case the Old English translator explicitly brings together the ideas of orality and literacy. Though these translations may simply be prompted by hypercorrectness, similar cases in the previous chapters[193] seem to suggest that the Old English translator intentionally places greater emphasis on literacy, and hence on the idea of writing down, than Bede does. A better-known instance of this tendency can be found in the translation of the chapter concerning Cædmon (HE IV.22). When Bede describes the process of learning, rumination and poetic production, he refers to a context of oral production and reception:

> At ipse cuncta, quae audiendo discere poterat, rememorando secum et quasi mundum animal ruminando, in carmen dulcissimum conuertebat, suauisque resonando doctores suos uicissim *auditores* sui faciebat. (HE IV.22.57-60)

The OEB, on the other hand, contains a very clear reference to writing:

> Ond he eal, þa he in gehyrnesse geleornian meahte, mid hine gemyndgade; 7 swa swa clæne neten eodorcende in þæt sweteste leoð gehwerfde. 7 his song 7 his leoð wæron swa wynsumu to gehyranne, þætte seolfan þa his lareowas æt his muðe *wreoton 7 leornodon*. (OEB 346.1-5)
> ['And he remembered all that he could learn by hearing, and, ruminating like a clean animal, turned it into the sweetest poem. His song and his poem were so delightful to hear, that even his teachers wrote down and learnt from his mouth'.]

Ælfric shapes the introductory section of the homily on Dryhthelm in a different way from his source; he explicitly names Bede and the HE as his source for the

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[192] The threefold translation of *pestringenda esse* is only found in ms. T; mss. B, O, and Ca have *areccan* and *awritan*, but not *asecgan*.
[193] See for example Chapter 3.

resurrection experience he is about to relate, something that happened on *ðisum iglande* (CH II.21.2, 'on this island'):

> Beda ure lareow awrát on ðære bec þe is geháten historia anglorum. be sumes mannes æriste. on ðisum iglande. þisum wordum reccende; (CH II.21.1-3)
> ['Bede our teacher wrote in the book called historia anglorum about a certain man's resurrection in this island, relating it in these words'.]

Ms. D contains the verb *writende* instead of *reccende*. Also in this homily, then, the verbs *writan* and *reccan* appear to be considered equally suitable to render the Latin *perstringo*. What Ælfric relates is not the actual episode that we find in the HE, but a simplified version of it. Ælfric seems to underline that what follows are the exact words of Bede, regardless of the fact that he *told* or *wrote* them, when technically, in fact, they are not.

In the OEB we find the first synonymic word pair of this chapter in the translation of the Latin *paterfamilias* (HE V.12.5), which is rendered as *hioscipes fæder 7 higina aldor* (OEB 422.24, 'the father of a family and head of a household'). The Old English translator follows the HE quite closely; both texts inform their readers that this man was the head of a household and also tell that he lived in the Cunningham district of Northumbria (HE V.12.6-7; OEB 422.24-6). Ælfric gives a somewhat different presentation of Dryhthelm, insofar as he first gives the name of the man and states that he is a thane, followed by his provenance (albeit a less geographically precise one than in the HE, perhaps because Ælfric's West Saxon audience would have little detailed knowledge of Northumbria). Ælfric also anticipates the description of his personality, something that Bede relegates to the end of the chapter together with the first and only reference to his name (as noted by Godden 2000: 539). In Ælfric, therefore, the protagonist of this miraculous account is qualified from the very beginning by his name, his social status, a fairly vague geographical reference and a lengthy praise of his Christian qualities:

> On ðam timan wæs sum ðegen drihthelm gehaten on norðhymera lande bylewite on andgyte. gemetegod on þeawum. eawfæst on life. and his hiwrædene to þam ylcan gewissode; (CH II.21.3-6)
> ['At that time there was a thane called Dryhthelm in the land of the Northumbrians, simple of mind, of moderate customs, of pious life, and he directed his family to the same'.]

After the brief introductory section, Bede jumps directly to the core of the story, namely Dryhthelm's illness and near-death experience. The past participle in the clause

"qui infirmitate corporis tactus" (HE V.12.8) is translated in a more emphatic manner in the OEB thanks to a synonymic word pair: "Ða wearð he licumlicre untrumnesse *gehrinen 7 gestonden*" (OEB 422.26-7, 'then he was seized and afflicted by bodily infirmity'). We also find a periphrastic expansion of the Latin phrase *ad extrema* (HE V.12.9), which is translated as "oððet he to ðem ytemestan dege gelæded wæs" (OEB 422.27-8, 'until he was brought to his last day'). Ælfric's rendering, on the other hand, is closer to the conciseness of the Latin, if not even more concise than Bede himself: the progression of the illness is underlined in the HE by the phrase "et hac crescente per dies" (HE V.12.8), which is paralleled by the Old English translator (OEB 422.27, "7 seo deghwemlice weox", 'it grew daily'), but not by Ælfric, who omits this reference and makes Dryhthelm die more quickly. In Ælfric, the reader is not given the impression that the illness grew worse day after day as underlined by Bede: "Ða wearð he geuntrumod and to ende gebroht" (CH II.21.6, 'then he fell sick and was brought to his end'). However, Ælfric also adds something to the text that does correspond either to the Latin or to the OEB: when Dryhthelm dies, Ælfric tells his readers that "his lic læg ealle þa niht inne beset" (CH II.21.7, 'his body lay all night watched inside' ); the body has thus been watched over during the night. In describing the moment when Dryhthelm comes back to life, the HE and the OEB both explain that he awakens and suddenly sits up (HE V.12.10, "repente residens"; OEB 422. 29, "7 semninga up heh asæt", 'and suddenly sat up'), a detail that Ælfric does not include in his narrative. One could say that this is not essential for the unfolding of the events, and yet it undoubtedly gives a powerful visual image which in addition may also explain why all the people watching over the body run away in terror. Dryhthelm's awakening is therefore not a quiet, peaceful one, rather it is very sudden and abrupt. Later in the text Bede offers the reverse perspective of this image when Dryhthelm himself is told that it is time for him to go back to his body, and he finds himself back in it without even realizing how or when it happened (HE V.12.158-9: "sed inter haec nescio quo ordine repente me inter homines uiuere cerno"). Readers are thus offered the very same image from two opposite points of view, external and internal; the two perspectives are bound together by the same idea of immediacy and abruptness that characterizes both dynamics, which in a way makes the story more consistent. The witnesses around the body experience that which Dryhthelm himself is experiencing. Everybody runs away, scared by what

they see, except for Dryhthelm's wife, "quae amplius amabat" (HE V.12.12); the two Old English renderings of this passage are practically identical: "butan his wiif an, ðe hine swiðust lufade" (OEB 422.31); "buton þam wife anum, þe hine swiðost lufode" (CH II.21.9-10), 'except for his wife, who loved him most'. Here it is perhaps worth noticing that the Latin adverb *amplius*, a comparative implying that 'she loved him more than the others did', is not quite the same as the Old English superlative *swiðust*, which might also mean 'more than she loved anyone else'. The direct speech delivered by Dryhthelm to his wife is reproduced quite faithfully by the Old English translator as well as by Ælfric, albeit the latter in a more compact form:

> Quam ille consolatus, "Noli" inquit "timere, quia iam uere surrexi a morte qua tenebar, et apud homines sum iterum uiuere permissus; non tamen ea mihi, qua ante consueram, conuersatione sed multum dissimili ex hoc tempore uiuendum est". (HE V.12.13-7)

> Ða frefrede he hio 7 cueð. Ne welle þu ðe ondredan, forðon þe ic soðlice from deaðe aáras 7 eam eft forlæten mid monnum liifgan, nales hweðre þy liife þe ic ær liifde, ah swiðe ungelice of ðisse tíide me is to lifigenne. (OEB 424.1-5)
> ['Then he comforted her and said: Be not afraid, because I truly arose from the dead and I have been allowed to live among men, but not the life that I lived before, but from now on I must live very differently'.]

> He ða hi gefrefrode. and cwæð; Ne beo ðu afæred for þam þe ic aras of deaðe; Me is alyfed eft to libbenne mid mannum. na swa þeah swylcum life swa ic ær leofode; (CH II.21.10-3)
> ['Then he comforted her and said: Be not afraid because I arose from the dead; I have been permitted to live again among men, though not the same life that I lived before'.]

From a grammatical point of view it is perhaps worth noticing that the translator of the OEB inserts a very Latinate-looking expression to translate the phrase *uiuendum est* (HE V.12.16-7), a periphrastic construction that is used to express the idea of duty; in the OEB we find an expression that seems to mirror the Latin phrase very closely: "me is to lifigenne" (OEB 424.4-5), whereas Ælfric inserts another verb, thus creating a more idiomatic construction: "Me is alyfed eft to libbenne" (CH II.21.11-2). The Latin verb *permissus* (HE V.12.15) is translated with two different Old English verbs in the target texts considered here: Ælfric opts for *alyfed* (CH II.21.11, 'allowed, permitted'), as one might expect, but the Old English translator employs the verb *forlæten* (OEB 424.3), which could mean 'allowed', but perhaps also 'left, abandoned', thus suggesting that the next life would be preferable to this one.

The section describing the division of Dryhthelm's possessions between his wife, his children, and the poor, is reproduced quite faithfully in both Old English texts:

Statimque surgens abiit ad uillulae oratorium, et usque ad diem in oratione persistens, mox omnem quam possederat substantiam in tres diuisit portionem, e quibus unam coniugi, alteram filiis tradidit, tertiam sibi ipse retentas statim pauperibus distribuit. (HE V.12.17-21)

Ond ða sona áaras 7 eode to ðære cirican þes tunes 7 oð lutterne dæg in gebede stod. Ond sona æfter þon ealle his æahte in þreo todælde; enne dæl he his wiife sealed, oðerne his bearnum, þone þriddan, þe him gelomp, he instep þearrfum gedelde. (OEB 424.5-8)
['And then at once he got up and went to the church of the town and stood in prayer till broad daylight. And soon afterwards he divided all his possessions into three parts; he gave one part to his wife, the other to his children, the third, which fell to him, he gave at once to the poor'.]

He aras þærrihte. and eode to cyrcan. and þurhwunode on gebedum ealne þone merigen; Dælde syððan his æhta on þreo. ænne dæl his wífe. oðerne his cildum. þriddan þearfum; (CH II.21.13-5)
[He immediately got up and went to the church and remained in prayer all morning. Then he divided his possessions in three parts, one part for his wife, the other for his children, the third to the poor'.]

The reference to the geographical location of Melrose (HE V.12.22-3: "ad monasterium Mailros, quod Tuidi fluminis circumflexu maxima ex parte clauditur") is maintained by the Old English translator (OEB 424.9-11, "7 to Mailros ðem mynstre cuoom, þet is of ðem mestan dæle mid ymbebegnesse Tuede streames betyned.", 'and he came to the monastery of Melrose, which is for the most part surrounded by a bend of the river Tweed'), despite the fact that he is often very little concerned with geographical precision and frequently feels entitled to omit many such details included the source text. This time it is Ælfric who leaves out the geographical reference and only mentions the name of the monastery (CH II.21.16-7: "and beah to þam mynstre þe is magilros gehaten", 'and he entered the monastery which is called Melrose'); perhaps he took it for granted that everybody knew the location of Melrose.

Bede writes that after his arrival at Melrose, Dryhthelm received the tonsure and retired to a secluded dwelling provided by the abbot:

acceptaque tonsura locum secretae mansionis, quam praeuiderat abbas, intrauit, et ibi usque ad diem mortis in tanta mentis et corporis contritione durauit, ut multa illum quae alios laterent uel horrenda uel desideranda uidisse, etiamsi lingua sileret, uita loqueretur. (HE V.12.23-4)

7 he þer Godes þiohade 7 scare onfeng, 7 in dygle aáncorstowe ęode, þe se abbud him foreseah; 7 þer oð ðone dæg his deaðes in swa micelum gedrehtnessum 7 forhefdnessum modes 7 lichoman áheardade 7 awunade, þette men mehtan ongeotan, þæt he monig ðing ge egslice ge willsumlice geseh, þe oðre meoðon, þeh ðe sio tunge swigade, þet his liif wes sprecende. (OEB 424.11-17)

['And there he received God's service and tonsure and went to a secluded hermitage which the abbot provided him; and there, until the day of his death, he endured and continued in great contrition and continence of mind and body, so that men could see that he had seen many things, both dreadful and desirable, which are hidden from others, though his tongue was silent, but his life was speaking'.]

The noun *tonsura* (HE V.12.23) is the object of a passing remark in the Latin, whereas the translator of the OEB gives it more prominence by expanding the concept with a synonymic word pair: *Godes þiohade 7 scare* (OEB 424.11, 'God's service and tonsure'). The actual reference to the tonsure (*scare*) is thus anticipated by a more straightforward explanation of its meaning: to become God's servant (*þiohade*, from *þeówan* 'to serve'). The separate dwelling provided for him by the abbot (*locum secretae mansionis*, HE V.12.23-4) is referred to in the OEB as *dygle aáncorstowe* (OEB 424.12, 'secret hermitage'). We have already encountered the image of a monk retiring to a secluded life in the chapter dedicated to Fursey, but in that case the separate dwelling was referred to as *syndrig wiic* (OEB 212.1, 'separate dwelling'), a reworking of the Latin *monasterium* (HE III.19.29).

The text continues in the OEB with two synonymic word pairs; the first translates the Latin *contritione* (HE V.12.25) as *gedrehtnessum 7 forhefdnessum* (OEB 424.13, 'contrition and continence'); the second renders the verb *durauit* (HE V.12.25) as *aheardade 7 awunade* (OEB 424.14, 'endured and continued'). Both word pairs seem to reduplicate the concept expressed by the Latin word so as to make it more emphatic. In particular, the latter seems to contain both meanings of the Latin verb *durauit*, which might mean either 'he hardened (himself)' or 'he remained/endured'. Ælfric gives a slightly different outline of what follows after Dryhthelm received the tonsure: here Dryhthelm first places himself under the authority of the abbot, and then, thanks to his teachings, also leads a somewhat secluded life, separated from the monastery:

and wearð besceoren. and þam abbode aðelwolde underþeodd. and be his lare his lif adreah on sumere digelnysse on micelre forhæfednysse modes and lichaman. oð his lifes ende; (CH II.21.17-20)
['and he received the tonsure and was subject to Abbot Æthelwold, and according to his teaching he lived some of his life in seclusion in great continence of mind and body, until the end of his life'.]

In Ælfric's account, therefore, prominence is given to the idea of obedience to authority and to teaching, something that Bede does not mention at all. As Godden (2000: 539)

points out, "the notion of a monk having a special status and privacy within the monastery was perhaps a delicate issue for Ælfric".

**The valley (HE V.12.27-46; OEB 424.18-426.5; CH II.21.21-33)**

In this section begins the actual narration in Dryhthelm's own voice. The OEB follows the HE quite closely in the description of the figure accompanying Dryhthelm as well as with regard to the direction followed by the two of them – even though the latter contains an explanatory addition that clarifies the direction taken, which according to the Latin is "contra ortum solis solstitialem" (HE V.12.30-1). In the OEB it is firstly defined as being "ongen norðeast rodor" (OEB 424.20, 'towards the north-eastern part of the sky'), and then we find the actual translation of the Latin as an expansion: "swa sunnan upgong bið æt middum sumere" (OEB 424.20-1, 'where the sun rises at midsummer'). The passage also contains two synonymic word pairs: the Latin *aspectu* (HE V.12.29) is translated as *gesihðe 7 onsione* (OEB 424.18-9, 'aspect and look'), whereas the phrase *ut uidebatur mihi* (HE V.12.30) is rendered with the twofold *þes ðe me ðuhte 7 gesegn wes* (OEB 424.20, 'as I thought and it seemed').

Ælfric again anticipates the information about Bede's sources in this initial phase of the homily, rather than leaving it to the end as Bede does:

> He sæde his gesyhðe þære leode cyninge ælfride. and gehwylcum eawfæstum mannum þus reccende; (CH II.21.21-2)
> ['He told his vision to the king of that people, Aldfrith, and to some pious men, thus narrating'.]

Here we are informed that Dryhthelm tells his vision to king Aldfrith and to "gehwylcum eawfæstum mannum" (CH II.21.21-2, 'to some pious men'), thus condensing what Bede relates in much more detail and only towards the end of the chapter (HE V.12.160-77).

The spelling of the name of the king included in the narrative may at first appear to be ambiguous. Bede clearly refers to Aldfrith, king of the Northumbrians and successor of Ecgfrith: "Narrabat autem uisiones suas etiam regi Aldfrido" (HE V.12.172-3). As for the OEB, ms. T has "Sægde he eac swylce his gesihðe *Aldfriðe*

ðæm cyninge" (OEB 434.16-7, 'He also told his vision to King Aldfrith'), whereas the other manuscripts show some variations: B has *ealfryðe*, O has *ealdfriðe* with a superscript *l*, and Ca has *ealdfriðe*. Raymond J. S. Grant (1989: 426) notes that "T has initial *a* as a result of Anglian retraction of *æ* while B has *ea* as a result of [West Saxon] fracture of *æ* before *l* + consonant". [194] O and Ca also present *ea* as a result of fracture of *æ*. The name is spelt differently in CH II.21:

> He sæde his gesyhðe þære leode cyninge ælfride. (CH II.21.21)
> ['He told his vision to the king of that people, Aldfrith'.]

Ms. P has *ælfride*, K is defective, and D is not clearly legible beyond the first four letters, which read *ælfr-*; finally, L has *Æthelrede þam æþelan kyninge* (Æthelred the noble king), and G has *Ælfrede*; the last two manuscripts date to the 12th century and for this reason they can be left out of the present discussion. [195] As can be seen, the spelling in the manuscripts of Ælfric's Homilies all present *æ* in lieu of the Latin *a*. [196] In addition, they all lack medial *d* as in ms. B of the OEB. A search conducted in the PASE Database shows that recorded spellings of the name Aldfrith vary a lot. [197] Aldfrith is recorded 78 times, and forms such as *Alfridus*, *Ealdferth*, and also *Aelfrid* (recorded in the *Annales Cambriae*, 704B) appear, in which medial *d* is lost and the initial sound oscillates between *a*, *æ*, and *ea*. If scribes of the Catholic Homilies had the Latinized spelling in mind, the final *ð* could easily become *d*; furthermore, the two graphemes are so similar that they can just be mistaken for one another. All this shows

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[194] "*æ* is retracted [*æ* > *a*] before *l* followed by a consonant in Angl. texts, including the early glossaries. [...] In Kt. and W-S, on the other hand, [...] *ea* rapidly asserts itself as the prevailing spelling" (Campbell 1997 [1959]: 55).

[195] P: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Hatton 115 (s. xi^ex); K: Cambridge, University Library, MS. Gg.3.28 (s.x^ex-xi^in); D: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MSS. Bodley 340 and 342 (s. xi^in); L: Cambridge, University Library, MS. Ii.i.33 (s. xii^2); G: London, British Library, MS. Cotton Verpasian D.xiv (s. xii^med).

[196] "By a very early change Prim. Gmc. *a* > *æ* in OE and OFris. when not followed by a nasal consonant" (Campbell 1997 [1959]: 52). As regards the difference between the spelling *æ* in the manuscripts containing CH II.21 and the West-Saxon form *ea* found in the manuscripts B, O, and Ca of the OEB, it should be noted that in manuscripts from the 11th century, a general monophthongization of diphthongs takes place, as underlined by Campbell: "diphthongs short and long were monophthongized, so that *ēa* > *ǣ* and *ēo* > *ō*. Monophthongs first begin to be indicated by spelling soon after 1000" (Campbell 1997 [1959]: 135). The dating of the manuscripts containing CH II.21 falls into this time range, therefore one might tentatively assume that *æ* and *ea* are graphic equivalents. Campbell provides a further example of this tendency: "lW-S manuscripts sometimes have *-ēow-*, *-ēaw-* where *-ēw-*, *-ǣw-* might be expected: in Thorpe's ed. of Ælfric's Homilies occur *flēowð* flows, *spēowþ* succeeds [...], beside more usual *flēwð*, *spēwþ* [...]. These forms give rise to a few inverted spellings, e.g. *glǣwne* a.s.m. wise, [...] for *glēawne*. S-B, §126.I.a.2, regard these spellings as due to the general eleventh-century monophthongization of diphthongs, and consequent inverted spelling: *ēa*, *ēo* became *ǣ*, *ē*, and hence *ēaw*, *ēow* are graphic equivalents of *ǣw*, *ēw*" (Campbell 1997 [1959]: 115).

[197] 'Aldfrith 1', *Prosopography of Anglo-Saxon England*, http://pase.ac.uk, accessed January 2012.

that in general the spelling of this name is rather fluid. For this reason I would still consider the spellings in the manuscripts of CH II.21 as variations of the name Aldfrith, rather than as the reference to a different king. Sharon Rowley, for example, argues that Ælfric purposely updates the name of the king, from Aldfrith to Alfred (the Great), so as to provide his account with the authority of a more recent king.[198] In view of the spelling variations just discussed, however, I consider this shift unlikely. Given that Ælfric clearly states at the outset that he took this story from Bede, and that his account is firmly placed in Northumbria, Alfred the Great would be far from becoming an authoritative element in the story; rather, it would sound quite anachronistic. In addition, it is unlikely that Ælfric would have prompted this change in the text considering how highly he generally values the teaching of orthodoxy and of correct knowledge, and also in view of the fact that this homily is all about providing his audience with trustworthy accounts of the otherworld.[199] It is difficult to envisage that the homily would acquire further authority by mentioning a West Saxon king who apparently got involved with a miracle story that took place in Northumbria, and who had not yet been born at the time when Bede wrote the HE. In addition, it should also be noted that when Ælfric mentions King Alfred in the homily on Gregory the Great, all manuscripts have *Ælfred cyning* (CH II.9.7, 'King Alfred'); this is a different spelling from that found in CH II.21 (*ælfride*). The same spelling for the name of King Alfred can also be found in the Old English Preface to the First Series of Catholic Homilies (*ælfred kyning*, CH I, Old English Preface, l. 55). Moreover, the PASE Database shows that *ælfrid*, with an *i* in the second syllable, is not among the recorded spellings for the name of Alfred the Great.[200]

Ælfric also condenses the allusive, undefined description (Carozzi 1994: 232) of Dryhthelm's guide (HE V.12.28-9: "Lucidus […] aspectu et clarus erat indumento, qui me ducebat") to a somewhat more hasty, clear-cut definition: "Me com to an scinende

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[198] "[Ælfric] shortens Bede's account, and has Dryhthelm report his vision freely as soon as he awakens. Later, Dryhthelm also tells his vision 'to the king of the people, Alfred, and to all devout men' [...]. in addition to reiterating that (unlike Paul) Dryhthelm willingly told people his vision, Ælfric adds the authority of King Alfred to the transmission of the miracle. In doing so, he updates his source, referring to a king not only more recent, but also better known than Bede's Northumbrian king, Æthelred [*sic*]. Clearly, Ælfric combines and adapts his sources to masterful effect for tenth-century audiences and issues" (Rowley 2010a: 226).

[199] "Aelfric never wrote any historical works himself, but his writings are infused with an enthusiasm for historical information and historical accuracy" (Godden 1978: 107).

[200] 'Alfred 8', *Prosopography of Anglo-Saxon England*, http://www.pase.ac.uk, accessed January 2012.

engel […] and gelædde me to eastdæle suwigende" (CH II.21.22-4, 'A shining angel came to me [...] and led silently led me eastwards'). The visual image described by Bede, in which the reader is left to infer that the guide is, in fact, an angel, is replaced by a much more linear, straightforward account of the essential narrative elements.

Dryhthelm proceeds to describe the valley in which he found himself walking with his guide:

> Cumque ambularemus, deuenimus ad uallem multae latitudinis ac profunditatis, infinitae autem longitudinis, quae ad laeuam nobis sita unum latus flammis feruentibus nimium terribile, alterum furenti grandine ac frigore niuium omnia perflante atque uerrente non minus intolerabile praeferebat. (HE V.12.31-6)

The OEB reproduces the description in every detail:

> Mid ðy wit ða hwiile eodan, bicuomon wít to sumere dene, sio wæs micelre brædo 7 deopnese 7 ungeaendadre længe, wes unc on ða wynstran healfe geseted. Oðer dæl wæs wallendum lægum full suiðe egesfullice, oðer wes nohte þon læs unaarefndlice cele hægles 7 snawes. (OEB 424.21-6)
> ['While we were going, we came to a valley of great breadth and depth and of infinite length, which was on our left. One side was extremely terrible, full of boiling flames, the other was not less intolerable through the cold of hail and snow'.]

However the translator of the OEB fails to provide an Old English counterpart for the Latin *perflante atque uerrente* (HE V.12.35), and this is strange, considering that it could very easily have been transformed into a word pair. Ælfric also follows the Latin quite closely:

> Ða become wyt to anre dene seo wæs ormætlice deop and wid. and fornean on lenge ungeendod; Seo wæs weallende mid anðræcum ligum on anre sidan. on oðre sidan mid hagole and grímlicum cyle. blawende butan toforlætennysse; (CH II.21.24-8)
> ['Then the two of us came to a valley which was enormously deep and wide and almost endless in length. It was boiling with horrible flames on one side, on the other with hail and terrible cold, blowing without intermission'.]

He only omits the location of the valley with respect to the position of the speaker (HE V.12.33, "ad leuam nobis sita") and he gives a somewhat less emphatic account of the icy side of the valley. The Latin "alterum furenti grandine ac frigore niuium omnia perflante atque uerrente non minus intolerabile praeferebat" (HE V.12.34-5) is rendered by Ælfric as "on oðre sidan mid hagole and grímlicum cyle blawende butan toforlætennysse" (CH II.21.27-8, 'on the other with hail and terrible cold, blowing without intermission').

The souls are tossed from one side of the valley to the other and this description is closely followed by the OEB; Dryhthelm begins to wonder whether these might be the

torments of hell, but his guide replies that what he is seeing is not hell.[201] The Latin "in medium flammarum inextinguibilium" (HE V.12.41) is more emphatically translated with a synonymic word pair: *in middan þæs byrnendan fyres 7 ðæs unadwæscedan leges* (OEB 424.31-2, 'in the middle of the burning fire and of the unquenchable flame'). Ælfric tones down the rendering of this distressing image and makes it less visually emphatic than the Latin:

> Seo dene wæs afylled mid manna sawlum. þa scuton hwiltidum of þam weallendum fyre. into ðam anþræcum cyle. and eft of ðam cyle into þam fyre. buton ælcere toforlætennysse; Ða þohte ic þæt þæt wære seo helle þe ic oft on life embe secgan gehyrde. ac min lateow andwyrde þærrihte minum geþance. and cwæð nis þis wite seo hel ðe þu wenst; (CH II.21.28-33)
> ['The valley was full of souls of men that at times shot from the burning fire into the terrible cold, and again from the cold into the fire without any intermission. Then I thought that that was hell, which I often heard being described in life, but my guide immediately answered my thought and said This torment is not hell as you think'.]

Since he repeats once again the phrase *butan ælcere toforlætennysse* (CH II.21.30-1, 'without any intermission') within only a few lines of its first occurrence in the text, one is inclined to think that Ælfric wanted to emphasize that the souls are not allowed a single moment of rest, they plunge straight from one torment into the opposite one. Instead of lingering on the description of the valley as found in the HE, Ælfric carries on with his summarizing tone and only reports Dryhthelm's reflections. The OEB, on the other hand, reproduces the passage very carefully, even mirroring the syntactic arrangement of the subordinate clauses. In this section the two verbs describing the act of thinking are both translated with a word pair: the verb *cogitare coepi* (HE V.12.44) is translated as *ongan ic þencan, 7 wende* (OEB 426.2, 'I began to think and imagined'); and *putas* (HE V.12.48) becomes *talest 7 wenest* (OEB 426.5, 'suppose and imagine').

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[201] "Vtrumque autem erat animabus hominum plenum, quae uicissim huc inde uidebantur quasi tempestatis impetus iactari. Cum enim uim feruoris immense tolerare non possent, prosiliebant miserae in medium rigoris infesti; et cum neque ibi quippiam requiei inuenire ualerent, resiliebant rursus urendae in medium flammarum inextinguibilium. Cumque hac infelici uicissitudine longe lateque, prout aspicere poteram, sine ulla quietis intercapedine innumerabilis spirituum deformium multitude torqueretur, cogitare coepi quod hic fortasse esset infernus, de cuius tormentis intolerabilibus narrari saepius audiui. Respondit cogitationi meae ductor, qui me praecedebat, «non hoc» inquiens «suspiceris; non enim hic infernus est ille, quem putas»" (HE V.12.36-48).
"Wes gehweðer manna saula full, þa wrixendlice on tua healfe gesegene weeran, swa swa mid unmætnesse micelles stormes, worpene beon. Þonne hio þæt mægn þere unmetan hætton áarefnan ne mehtan, þonne stældan heo eft earmlice in middle þæs unmætan ciles. 7 mid þy heo ðær nænige reste gemetan mihtan, þonne stældon heo eft in middan þæs byrnendan fyres 7 ðæs unadwæscedan leges. Mid þy heo ða þæs ungesælgan wrixles feor 7 wide, swa geseon meahton, butan fyrstmearce ænigre ræste mid þa unriman mængo sweartra gasta þreste wæron, þa ongan ic þencan, 7 wende þæt hit hel wære, be ðam tintregum unaræfnendlicum ic oft sæcgan herde. Þa ondswarede he minum geðohte se min latteow, se ðe me foreeode, 7 þus cwæð: Nis ðis seo hel, swa ðu tallest 7 wenest" (OEB 424.26-426.5).

It thus seems that Dryhthelm's reflection is underlined by the repetition of this twofold articulation.

**The mouth of hell (HE V.12.49-65; OEB 426.6-26; CH II.21.34-44)**

When Dryhthelm and his guide move on to a much darker and more terrifying place – which will later turn out to be the mouth of hell – the fear of Dryhthelm in the face of such a frightful spectacle is made more palpable in the OEB thanks to the use of a synonymic word pair: the Latin *perterritum* (HE V.12.49) is more emphatically translated as *gefyrhted 7 gebreged* (OEB 426.7, 'frightened and terrified'):

> At cum me hoc spectaculo tam horrendo perterritum paulatim in ulteriora produceret, uidi subito ante nos obscurari incipere loca, et tenebris omnia repleri. Quas cum intraremus, in tantum paulisper condensatae sunt, ut nihil praeter ipsas aspicerem, excepta dumtaxat specie et ueste eius, qui me ducebat. (HE V.12.49-54)

> Mid þy ic ða wæs mid þisse ongryslican wæferseone swiðe gefyrhted 7 gebreged, þa lædde he me styccemælum forð on fyran lond. Þa geseah ic sæmninga beforan unc onginnan ðeostrian ða stowe 7 miclum þeostrum all gefylled. Mid ðy wit ða in ða þeostro íneodon, 7 heo styccemælum swa micel 7 swa ðicco wæron, þæt ic noht geseon meahte, nemne þæt seo ansien scan 7 þa hrægl leoht wæron, se ðe mæc lædde. (OEB 426.6-12)
> ['When I was much frightened and terrified by this horrible sight, he led me gradually to a more remote land. Then suddenly I saw before the two of us that the place began to darken and a great darkness filled everything. While we went into the darkness, it gradually became greater and thicker, that I could not see anything, except for the appearance and the robe of he who guided me, which were bright and shining'.]

If darkness together with fear permeate the accounts in the HE and the OEB, in Ælfric's narrative only darkness remains – but without any expression of Dryhthelm's distress and anguish:

> Se engel me lædde þa furþor to anre þeostorfulre stowe. seo wæs to þan swiðe mid þiccum þeostrum oferþeaht þæt ic nan þing geseon ne mihte. buton mines latteowes scinende hiw. and gewædu; (CH II.21.34-7)
> ['The angel led me further to a dark place, which was covered in such thick darkness that I could not see anything except for the shining appearance and the robe of my guide'.]

The passage of the HE describing hell begins with a quote from Book VI of the *Aeneid* (vi.268), "sola sub nocte per umbras" (HE V.12.52; Lapidge 2008-2010 v. 2: 678). This quote quite fittingly evokes the beginning of another very illustrious journey

to the pagan underworld. Dryhthelm sees a great number of flaming globes emerging from a pit and then falling back into it again:

> Et cum progrederemur 'sola sub nocte per umbras', ecce subito apparent ante nos crebri flammarum tetrarum globi ascendentes quasi de puteo magno rursumque decidentes in eundem. (HE V.12.54-7)

> 7 mid ðy wit ða forðgongende wæron under ðæm scuan þære ðeostran nihte, ða æteowdan sæmninga beforan unc monige heapas sweartra lega, ða wæron up astigende swa swa of miclum seaðe, 7 eft wæron fallende 7 gewitende in ðone ilcan seað. (OEB 426.12-16)
> ['And as we proceeded under the shadow of the dark night, there suddenly appeared before the two of us many masses of black flames, that were rising up as out of a great pit, and again falling and retiring into the pit'.]

> Efne þa færlice æteowdon gelomlæcende ligas. sweartes fýres upastigende [...]; (CH II.21.37)
> ['Then suddenly frequent flames of dark fire appeared rising up'.]

Claude Carozzi (1994) underlines the volcanic imagery in this description of hell; this motif also recurs in Gregory the Great's *Dialogues* (IV.36),[202] as well as in Bede's own *De natura rerum*. In these two texts mount Aetna strongly resembles hell:

> Quod uero se ad Siciliam duci testatus est, quid sentiri aliud potest, nisi quod prae ceteris locis in eius terrae insulis eructuante igne tormentorum ollae patuerunt? (*Dial*. IV.36.72-4, ed. Pricoco / Simonetti 2005-2006: 274).

> Inde montis aetnae ad exemplum gehennae ignium tam diutinum tam durat incendium, quod insularum Aeolidum dicunt undis nutriri, dum aquarum concursus spiritum se cum in imum profundum rapiens, tamdiu suffocat, donec uenis terrae diffusus fomenta ignis accendat. (Bede, *De natura rerum* ch. 50, ed. Jones 1975: 233).

Book III of the *Aeneid* contains a description of the landscape surrounding mount Aetna that presents some interesting similarities with the landscape evoked by Bede in this passage, especially with regard to the globes of flames rising up from the bottom and falling back again:

> Portus ab accessu ventorum immotus et ingens
> ipse, sed horrificis iuxta tonat Aetna ruinis
> interdumque atram prorumpit ad aetherea nubem
> turbine fumantem piceo et candente favilla
> attolitque globos flammarum et sidera lambit,
> interdum scopolos avolsaque viscera montis
> erigit eructans liquefactaque saxa sub auras
> cum gemitu glomerat fundoque exaestuat imo. (Vergil, *Aeneid* III.570-77; ed. Paratore/Canali 1979)

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[202] Pricoco/Simonetti (ed. and transl.) (2006 vol. 2), hereafter *Dial.*

Bede also mentions the vertical motion of the globes of fire. Considering that Bede begins this paragraph with a direct quote from the *Aeneid*, it is perhaps plausible to see another echo of Vergil in the description of hell, albeit only an indirect one.

As regards the treatment of this learned passage in the two Old English texts, Ælfric completely omits the direct quote from Book VI of the *Aeneid*, and also neither of the Old English texts qualifies the flames as having the shape of globes; the translator of the OEB only describes them as being a great number of black flames ("monige heapas sweartra lega"*,* OEB 426.14); he omits any description of their shape and rather focuses on the determination of their quantity with an almost redundant expression. The present participle *decidentes* (HE V.12.56) is translated with an additional word pair, *fallende 7 gewitende* (OEB 426.15-6, 'falling and retreating'), which expands the image of the source text towards a more detailed description of the course of travel taken by the flames. Ælfric, on the other hand, focuses on the darkness of the flames (CH II.21.37-8). That flames in hell are dark is something Ælfric also underlines in the First Series homily for the 21st Sunday after Pentecost (CH I.35);[203] it is widely known that fire in hell is very hot, but that it burns in darkness and does not produce light (Gardiner 1989: xv). Thus Ælfric re-shapes the learned reference of his source by referring to a widely known characteristic of hell and omitting the parallels with the Vergilian Hades. Suddenly Dryhthelm finds himself alone, "in medio tenebrarum et horridae uisionis" (HE V.12.56). Once again, Ælfric leaves out every reference to Dryhthelm's state of fear but maintains the reference to the darkness surrounding him: "and min latteow me þær ana forlet on þam þeostrum middum" (CH II.21.38-9, 'and mi guide left me alone there in the midst of the darkness').

Upon closer inspection, the flames appear to be full of human souls and Bede compares them to sparks flying up with the smoke:

> At cum idem globi ignium sine itnermissione modo alta peterent, modo ima baratri repeterent, cerno omnia quae ascendebant fastigia flammarum plena esse spiritibus hominum, qui instar fauillarum cum fumo ascendentium nunc ad sublimiora proicerentur, nunc retractis ignium uaporibus relaberentur in profunda. (HE V.12.59-64)

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[203] "Witodlice þæt hellice fyr hæfþ unásecgendlice hætan 7 nan leoht. ac ecelice byrnð on sweartum þeostrum" (CH I.35.195-7).

This image is retained in both Old English texts and it is quite interesting from a lexical point of view because the Latin noun *fauilla* is translated in two different ways, as can be seen from a juxtaposition of the two translations:

> 7 mid ðy þa ilcan heapas þara fyra butan blinne hwilum upp astigon in heanesse, hwilum niðer gewiton in ða niolnesse ðæs seaðes, geseah ic 7 sceawade; ealle ða heanesse þara úpastigendra lega fulle wæron monna gasta, þa on onlicnesse upastigendra *yselena* mid rece, hwilum in heanesse beoð up worpene, hwilum eft togenum ðara fyra ðearsmum wæron eft aslidene in neolnesse 7 in grund. (OEB 426.18-24)
> ['And while those globes of fire incessantly shot up on high and sank down into the abyss of the pit, I saw and perceived that the tips of the rising flames were full of souls of men, which, like ashes rising with smoke, at times were cast up on high, at times, as the smoke went back, slipped back into the abyss and into the depth'.]

> Ic þa beheold þone ormætan lig. þe of þære neowelnysse astah; Se lig wæs mid manna sawlum afylled. and hi asprungon upp mid þam fyre swa swa *spearcan*. and eft ongean into þære nywelnysse. (CH II.21.39-42)
> ['Then I saw a huge flame that came out of the abyss. The flame was full of souls of men, and they shot up with the fire, like sparks, and then back into the pit'.]

Miller (1890-1898: 427) translates this passage in the OEB as "like ashes ascending with smoke", thus showing a clear preference for one of the semantic possibilities offered by the noun *ysel/ysle*. In fact, as Bosworth/Toller (1898-1972: 1800) shows, the noun was used to denote "a spark, cinder, an ash, ember". More specifically, the OED refers to the dialectal form *ysel* as "floating sparks from a conflagration; extinct sparks". The noun therefore shows semantic ambiguity insofar as it can describe both a burning spark and extinct spark. As regards the Old English *spearca*, Bosworth/Toller (1898-1972: 899) gives a much less ambiguous definition by translating it solely as 'spark'; this is confirmed by the modern usage of the noun, defined by the OED as "a small particle of fire, an ignited fleck or fragment". To sum up, the two Old English nouns denote the very same natural element and yet their connotation seems to be different: on the one hand, the OEB seems to describe those *fauillae* as extinct sparks, whereas in Ælfric's account those same sparks are still burning. This might be seen as an insignificant detail, but from a visual point of view the two texts seem to describe two successive moments in the dynamics, the ignited spark and the extinct one, thus originating two very different images, one in which the human souls are like fire (bright, red, hot), the other in which they are like ashes (dark, grey, cold). The OEB seems closer to the HE *fauilla*, 'dust', but Ælfric's rendering is more vivid and terrifying, suggesting that the souls are still burning even as they fly upwards. The passage in the OEB contains two word pairs: the verb *cerno* (HE V.12.58) is translated

as *geseah ic 7 sceawade* (OEB 426.21, 'I saw and perceived'); this word pair is synonymic. The second instance occurs in the translation of *in profunda* (HE V.12.64), which is rendered as *in neolnesse 7 in grund* (OEB 426.24, 'into the abyss and into the depth'). Here the additional word pair offers a more detailed description of the place than its Latin counterpart, in terms of direction and exact location.

The references to the foul smell that characterises this second phase of the journey are maintained in both Old English texts; even Ælfric reproduces the source text without summarising it:

> Sed et fetor incomparabilis cum eisdem uaporibus ebulliens omnia illa tenebrarum loca replebat. (HE V.12.64-5)

> Swelce eac unaræfnedlic fullness wæs mid þæs fyres þrosme uppawallende, 7 ealle ða stowe ðara þiostra gefylde. (OEB 426.25-6)
> ['And an unbearable foulness was boiling up with the smoke of the fire, and filled all the place of darkness'.]

> and þær sloh út of þære nywelnysse ormæte stenc mid þam æðmum. se afylde ealle þa þeosterfullan stowe; (CH II.21.42-4)
> ['and there came out of the abyss such a heavy stench together with the vapour that it filled all the dark place'.]

## Dryhthelm is threatened by evil spirits (HE V.12. 63-92; OEB 426.26-428.23; CH II.21.44-57)

While still alone in the darkness, Dryhthelm watches a group of evil spirits dragging five souls into the pit; he is able to identify three of them, a *clericus*, a *laicus*, and a *femina* (HE V.12. 75-6). The scene is characterised by a pervasive sense of fear and by an overlapping of confused auditory perceptions (HE V.12.67-70):

> Et cum diutius ibi pauidus consisterem, utpote incertus quid agerem, quo uerterem gressum, qui me finis maneret, audio subitum post terga sonitum immanissimi fletus ac miserrimi, simul et cachinnum crepitantem quasi uulgi indocti captis hostibus insultantis. Vt autem sonitus idem clarior redditus ad me usque peruenit, considero turbam malignorum spirituum, quae quinque animas hominum merentes heiulantesque ipsa multum exultans et cachinnans, medias illas trahebat in tenebras; e quibus uidelicet hominibus, ut dinoscere potui, quidam erat adtonsus ut clericus, quidam laicus, quaedam femina. (HE V.12.66-76)

The OEB follows its source text very closely.[204] A synonymic word pair translates the Latin verb *trahebat* (HE V.12.73) as *teon 7 lædan* (OEB 426.33, 'drag and bring'). Ælfric presents a much simplified version of his source text: only the sequence of events is maintained, but Dryhthelm's confused perception of the sounds surrounding him is completely omitted. The homily also presents an explanatory comment attached to the passage in which the evil spirits are dragging the five souls into the pit:

> Ða ða ic þær lange stod. ormod and ungewiss mines færeldes. þa gehyrde ic þæt þa deoflu gelæddon fif manna sawla hreowlice gnornigende and grimetende into þam sweartum fýre; Sum ðæra wæs preost. sum læwede man. sum wimman. and þa deoflu scegdon hlude hlihnende þæt hi ða sawla for heora synnum habban moston. (CH II.21.44-9)
> ['When I stood there for a while, despairing and uncertain of my course, I heard that the devils were taking five souls of men wretchedly lamenting and howling into the dark fire. One of them was a priest, one a layman, one a woman, and the devils said, laughing loudly, that they had to have their souls on account of their sins'.]

The homily thus makes clear that the souls are dragged into the pit on account of their sins. Ælfric's tendency to offer a more straightforward, simplified version of the account can also be seen in the way he defines the evil spirits that inhabit this passage. Bede refers to them as *maligni spiritus* (HE V.12.71;76) and as *obscuri spiritus* (HE V.12.80-1) and the Old English translator does the same (*wergan gastas*, OEB 426.32, 'accursed spirits', and OEB 428.3; *þiostran gastas*, OEB 428.8, 'dark spirits'), whereas Ælfric makes explicit reference to the fact that these accursed spirits are devils: the noun *deofol* occurs three times ('devil', CH II.21.45;48;57), in contrast with *awyrigedan gastas* which only occurs once in the text ('accursed spirits', CH II.21.50).

The evil spirits come back from the pit and threaten Dryhthelm with their tongs, but they do not succeed in harming him in any way; while Dryhthelm is trying to find a way to escape, his guide, as bright as a star, approaches him and scatters the accursed spirits:

> Interea ascenderunt quidam spirituum obscurorum de abysso illa flammiuoma, et accurrentes circumdederunt me, atque oculis flammantibus et de ore ac naribus ignem putidum efflantes angebant; forcipibus quoque igneis, quos tenebant in minibus, minitabantur me comprehendere, nec tamen me ullatenens contingere, tametsi terrere, praesumebant. Qui cum undiqueuersum hostibus et caecitate tenebrarum conclusus, huc

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[204] "Mid ðy ic þa longe þær forth stod, 7 me wæs uncuð, hwæt ic dyde oððe hwider ic eode oððe hwelc ende me come, ða geherde ic sæmninga micelne swæg me on bæcling unmætes wopes 7 earmlices, swelce eac micel gehled 7 ceahetunge swa swa ungelæredes folces 7 biosmriendes gehæftum heora feondum. Þa he ða se sweg me near wæs 7 to me becom, þa geseah ic mænigo þara wergra gasta .v. manna saula grornende 7 heofende teon 7 lædan on midde þa þeostra, 7 heo on ðon swiðe blissedon 7 ceahheton. Þara manna sum wæs, þæs ðe ic gewiton meahte, bescoren preost, sum wæs læwde, sum wæs wifmon" (OEB 426.26-428.3).

illucque oculos circumferrem, si forte alicunde quid auxilii quo saluarer adueniret, apparuit retro uia qua ueneram quasi fulgor stellae micantis inter tenebras, qui paulatim crescens, et ad me ocius festinans, ubi appropinquauit, disperse sunt et aufugerunt omnes qui me forcipibus rapere quaerebant spiritus infesti. (HE V.12.80-92)

This passage is characterised by a palpable sense of fear on the part of Dryhthelm. Dryhthelm's distress and the danger represented by the evil spirits are emphasised in the OEB thanks to a more frequent use of word pairs:

Betwioh ðas þing ða upp common sume ðara þiostra gasta of ðere niolnesse, 7 of ðære witestowe, 7 mec utan ymbsaldon. Hæfdon heo fyrene eagan 7 full fyr of heora muðe 7 of heora nasum wæron ut blawende; ond fyrene tangan him on handa hæfdon, 7 mæc nerwdon, 7 me tobeotedon þæt heo mid þam gegripan woldon, 7 in ða forwyrd sendan. Ond þeah ðe heo mec swa bregdan 7 fyrhton, ne dorston heo mec hwæðre ongehrinan. Mid ðy ic ða wæs æghwonan mid ðam feondum ymbsald 7 mid ða blindnesse þara ðeostra utan betyned, ða áhof ic mine eagan upp 7 locade hider 7 geond, hwæðer me ænig fultum toweard wære, ðæt ic gehæled beon meahte. Þa æteowde me æfter þæm wege, þe ic ær com on, betwioh ða þeostra swa beorht scinende steorra. 7 ðæt leoht wæs weaxende mare 7 mare, 7 hraðe to me wæs efstende; 7 sona ðæs ðe hit me nealehte, ða wæron tostencte 7 onwæg flugon ealle ða awergdan gastas, ða ðe me ær mid heora tangan tobeotodan. (OEB 428.7-23)
['Meantime some of the dark spirits came out of the abyss and place of torment, and surrounded me. They had fiery eyes and and were blowing fire from their mouths and their noses; in their hands they had fiery tongs and they beset me, and threatened to seize me with them and send me to my death. And though they terrified and frightened me, they did not dare touch me. While I was surrounded everywhere by enemies and enclosed from without with the blindness of darkness, then I lifted my eyes and looked hither and thither, whether any help was coming, that I could be saved. Then along the road from which I came, from the darkness appeared as it were a bright shining star, and that light was growing more and more and was quickly approaching me; as soon as it came near to me, all the accursed spirits which had previously threatened me with their tongs, separated and flew away'.]

One might exclude from this consideration the word pair employed to translate the Latin *de abisso* (HE V.12.81) as *of ðere niolnesse 7 of ðære witestowe* (OEB 428.8, 'out of the abyss and place of torment'), which has an explanatory function in so far as it disambiguates Bede's somewhat generic reference to an abyss by explicitly pointing out that it is also a place of torment. The remaining word pairs, on the other hand, do not seem to provide the reader with any further information – they are purely repetitions of the concept and therefore they could be interpreted as being emphatic, if not even rhetorical: the Latin *minitabantur me conprehendere* (HE V.12.84) is translated with two synonymic word pairs, one for each Latin verb of the phrase: "mæc nerwdon 7 me tobeotedon (translating *minitabantur*) þæt heo mid þam gegripan woldon, 7 in ða forwyrd sendan" (OEB 428.11-2, 'they beset me, and threatened to seize me with them and send me to my death'). This complex verbal construction is followed by another

synonymic word pair: the verb *terrere* (HE V.12.85) is expanded as *bregdan 7 fyrhton* (OEB 428.13, 'terrified and frightened'). The text also presents a periphrastic construction that slows down the narrative pace, thus giving more emphasis to the image described. When Dryhthelm looks around to seek for help, the Latin reads "*huc illucque oculos circumferrem, si forte alicunde quid auxilii quo saluarer adueniret*" (HE V.12.87); the translator of the OEB presents his readers with a twofold interpretation of the verb *circumferrem*: "ða ahof ic mine eagan upp 7 locade hider 7 geond" (OEB 428.16-7, 'then I lifted my eyes and looked hither and thither'). In general, the OEB is characterised by a redundancy of explanatory comments and additions throughout the text. As Dorothy Whitelock (1962) points out, the logical connections within the narrative are usually made more explicit, and the translator also tends to explain those references that he deemed to be too literate or difficult for his audience. And yet here the text offers an example of the reverse tendency: while the HE reveals that the bright figure advancing toward Dryhthelm is, in fact, his angelic guide, the translator of the OEB leaves out one relative clause that in the source text has the function of reminding the reader of the logical connections between actions and characters. The Latin "Ille autem, *qui adueniens eos fugauit*, erat ipse qui me ante ducebat" (HE V.12.93-4) is translated in the OEB as "wæs ðæt se min latteow, se ðe mec lædde" (OEB 428.23, 'it was my guide who had conducted me'); the Old English is clearly missing the relative clause.

In contrast with the emphatic descriptions of the HE and the OEB, Ælfric offers, as usual, a more linear exposition of the events. He also adds another explanatory note when he points out that the evil spirits cannot seize Dryhthelm because he is protected by God: "ac hi ne mihton þurh godes gescyldnysse me hreppan" (CH II.21.53-4, 'but they could not touch me through God's protection'). Once again, the sense of fear is absent from Ælfric's account; moreover, Dryhthelm is able to identify his guide straight away when he reappears, whereas in the HE it is only after the evil spirits have been scattered that the narrator makes clear the connection between the shining figure and Dryhthelm's guide. In addition, there is a contrast between the gradual return of the shining spirit in the HE (HE V.12.89-90: *paulatim crescens*, paralleled in the OEB 428.20 by *weaxende mare 7 mare*, 'growing more and more'), and the sudden return in Ælfric's account (CH II.21.55: *færlice*, 'suddenly'):

> Betwux ðam ascuton þa awyrigedan gastas sume of þære nywelnysse wið min. mid byrnendum eagum. and of heora muðe and nosþryrlum stod stincende steam. and woldon

me gelæccan mid heora byrnendum tangum. ac hi ne mihton þurh godes gescyldnysse me hreppan; Efne þa færlice æteowode min latteow swa swa scinende steorra feorran fleogende and wið min onette; Ða toscuton ða deoflu sona þe me mid heora tangum gelæccan woldon; (CH II.21.49-57)
['In the meantime some of the accursed spirits shot up from the abyss against me, with burning eyes, and from their mouths and nostrils came a foul steam, and they wanted to seize me with their burning tongs, but they could not touch me through God's protection. Behold then suddenly my guide appeared as shining as a star flying from afar and came towards me. Then the devils who wanted to seize me with their tongs scattered at once'.]

## Away from the darkness (HE V.12.93-113; OEB 428.23-430.14; CH II.21.57-65)

Dryhthelm and his guide leave darkness behind them and proceed south-eastwards into the light. They come to a wall, exceedingly high and long, and Dryhthelm quite inexplicably finds himself on top of it (HE V.12.93-102).[205]

As regards this passage, the OEB follows its source text from both a syntactic and a semantic point of view, only departing from it where the translator adds a clearer reference to the direction taken by the two travellers[206]: if Bede writes that

qui mox conuersus ad dextrum iter quasi contra ortum solis brumalem me ducere coepit. (HE V.12.94-5)

the OEB reads

Þa cerde he ða sona on ða swiðran hond, 7 mec ongon lædan *suðeast* on ðon roðor, swa swa on wintre sunne upp gongeð. (OEB 428.23-5)
['Then he turned at once to the right and began to lead me south-east on the sky, where in winter the sun rises'.]

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[205] "Ille autem, qui adueniens eos fugauit, erat ipse qui me ante ducebat; qui mox conuersus ad dextrum iter quasi contra ortum solis brumalem me ducere coepit. Nec mora, exemtum tenenbris in auras me serenae lucis eduli. Cumque me in luce aperta duceret, uidi ante nos murum permaximum, cuius neque longitudini hinc uel inde neque altitudini ullus esse terminus uideretur. Coepi autem mirari, quare ad murum accederemus, cum in eo nullam ianuam uel fenestram uel ascensum alicubi conspicerem. Cum ergo peruenissemus ad murum, statim nescio quo ordine fuimus in summitate eius" (HE V.12.93-102).
[206] "Wæs ðæt se min latteow, se ðe mec lædde. Þa cerde he ða sona on ða swiðran hond, 7 mec ongon lædan suðeast on ðon roðor, swa swa on wintre sunne upp gongeð. Þa were wit sona of ðam þeostrum abrogdene, 7 he mec lædde in fægernesse smoltes leohtes. Mid ðy he mec ða in openum leohte lædde, þa geseah ic beforan unc þone mæstan weall, þæs længo on twa healfe ne his heanesse ænig ende gesen wæs. Þa ongan ic wundrian, for hwon wit to þam walle eodan, mid ðy ic on him nænige duru ne eahþyrl ne uppastignesse onhwenan on ængre halfe geseon meahte. Mid ðy wit ða becoman to ðam walle, þa sona instæpe, ne wat ic hwelcre endebyrdnesse, wæron wit on his heanesse on ðam alle ufonweadrum" (OEB 428.23-430.2).

Ælfric, on the other hand, maintains the reference to the change of direction and atmosphere, but is completely silent about the description of the wall as well as about Dryhthelm's surprise when he finds himself on its top:

> Se engel me lædde þærrihte to eastdæle on miccles leohtes smyltnysse into anre byrig. (CH II.21.57-9)
> ['The angel led me immediately to the eastern quarter into a city, into the peace of a great light'.]

Instead, he naturalizes it with the phrase "into anre byrig" (CH II.21.59, 'into a city'); of course a *byrig* would have a wall, so Ælfric does not need to explain it, but it is interesting that he chooses to make the vision more realistic; at the same time, this could be a more explicit reference to the heavenly Jerusalem of the book of Revelations (21.12). Further on in the text Ælfric does mention a wall ("Binnan þam weallum wæron [...]", CH II.21.61-2, 'within the wall were [...]'), and the fact that his walls are plural fits in very well with the idea of an enclosed settlement as a *byrig*. Beyond the wall Dryhthelm sees a beautiful meadow, very bright and inhabited by men in white robes; he begins to wonder whether this might be the kingdom of heaven, but his guide replies that it is not.[207] The translation of this passage in the OEB is rich in word pairs, a list of which is given below:

- the noun *lux* (HE V.12.106) is expanded into the synonymic pair *leoht 7 beorhtnes* (OEB 430.6, 'light and brightness'), probably to give more emphasis;
- the phrase "innumera hominum *albatorum* conuenticula" (HE V.12.108-9) is translated in the following way: "unrime gesomnunge *hwitra manna 7 fægra*" (OEB 430.9, 'countless gatherings of men, white and fair'), thus making clear that whiteness, a quality here attributed to the men rather than to their clothing,

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[207] "Et ecce ibi campus erat latissimus ac laetissimus, tantaque fragrantia uernantium flosculorum plenus, ut omnem mox fetorem tenebrosi fornacis, qui me peruaserat, effugaret ammirandi huius suauitas odoris. Tanta autem lux cuncta ea loca perfuderat, ut omni splendore diei siue solis meridian radiis uideretur esse praeclarior. Erantque in hoc campo innumera hominorum albatorum conuenticula sedesque plurimae agminum laetantium. Cumque inter choros felicium incolarum medios me duceret, cogitare coepi quod hoc fortasse esset regnum caelorum, de quo praedicari saepius audiui. Respondit ille cogitatui meo, «Non», inquiens, «non hoc est regnum caelorum quod autumas»" (HE V.12.102-13).
"7 þa geseah ic ðær þone rumestan feld 7 þone fægerestan, 7 se wæs eall swetnesse anre full growendra blostmena. Ond seo wundrigende swetnesse þæs miclan swicces sona ealle ða fullnessa þes fullan ofnes 7 þes þeostran, þe mec ær ðurhseah, onwæg aflemde. Ond swa micel leoht 7 beorhtnes ealle þa stowe geondscan, þæt he ealles dæges beorhtnisse oðþe ðære middæglican sunnan sciman wæs beorhtre gesewen. Wæron on ðissum felda unrime gesomnunge hwitra manna 7 fægra 7 monig seðel gefeondra wæroda 7 blissigendra. Mid ðy he mec ða lædde betwih midde ða þreatas þara gesæligra woruda, þa ongan ic þencan 7 me huru þuhte, þæt þær wære heofona rice, be ðam ic oft secgan herde. Þa ondswarode he minum geðohte 7 cwæð: Nis ðis, cwæð he, heofona rice, swa swa ðu tallest 7 wenest" (OEB 430.2-14).

has positive connotations and is therefore associated with beauty; also in Ælfric this attribute pertains to the men rather than to their robes: "ungerime meniu hwittra manna on mycelre blisse" (CH II.21.62-3, 'countless multitudes of white men in great joy');

- the present participle contained in the implicit clause *plurimae agminum laetantium* (HE V.12.109) is rendered with two synonymous present participles in the Old English: *monig seðel gefeondra wæroda 7 blissigendra* (OEB 430.10, 'many a seat of hosts rejoicing and exulting'); in this way the idea of joy and happiness is expressed in a more emphatic way;

- the act of thinking expressed by the verb *cogitare coepi* (HE V.12.110-11) is repeated twice (*ongan ic þencan 7 me huru þuhte*, OEB 430.11-2, 'I began to think and indeed it seemed to me'), once absolutely, the other time in an impersonal construction: the first referring to the act of thinking, the second to the impression gained as a result of that activity;

- a typical synonymic word pair, widely used by the translator of the OEB, can be found in the translation of the verb *respondit* (HE V.12.112) as *ondswarode he [...] 7 cwæð* (OEB 430.13, 'he answered and said');

- the verb *autumas* (HE V.12.113) is rendered as *talest 7 wenest* (OEB 430.14, 'conclude and suppose'); this word pair also occurs earlier in the text (OEB 426.5) to translate the Latin verb *putas* (HE V.12.48).

The passage also contains several examples of noun phrases characterised by the repetition of the structural arrangement *adjective-noun-7-adjective*:

- *þone rumestan feld 7 þone fægerestan* (OEB 430.2-3, 'a field most spacious and most fair');

- *þæs fullan ofnes 7 þæs þeostran* (OEB 430.5, 'of the foul and dark furnace');

- *hwitra manna 7 fægra* (OEB 430.9, 'of white and fair men');

- *gefeondra wæroda 7 blissingendra* (OEB 430.10, 'of hosts rejoicing and exulting').

Considering that these parallel expressions all belong to the passage describing the brightness and beauty of the plain, one might think that the translator of the OEB deliberately inserts these parallel expressions for reasons of style or possibly even in

order to give a loose sense of echoic repetition at the structural (not semantic) level of the text.

Ælfric offers a somewhat different account of this phase of Dryhthelm's journey. Conciseness and simplicity are the defining features of his narrative, but in this passage there are also a few elements that diverge from the source text. Firstly, as previsouly mentioned, Ælfric informs his audience that the angel takes Dryhthelm "into anre byrig" (CH II.21.59, 'into a city') and that inside this city there is a very broad field. Secondly, the olfactory perceptions inserted by Bede to express how different this place is from the dark, fearsome valley are replaced by Ælfric with a visual image; instead of the fragrance of flowers, we now have the greenness of the plants:

> tantaque flagrantia uernantium flosculorum plenus, ut omnem mox fetorem tenenbrosi fornacis, qui me peruaserat, effugaret admirandi huius suauitatis odoris. (HE V.12.103-6)

> þærbinnan wæs swyðe smeðe feld and brad. *mid blowendum wyrtum and grennysse eal afylled*. and mid beorhtan leohte þonne ænig sunne scinende; Binnan þam weallum wæron ungerime meniu hwittra manna on mycelre blisse; Ic ða betwux þam werodum ðam engle flygende. þohte þæt hit wære heofonan rice. ac min latteow cwæð þæt hit swa nære; (CH II.21.59-65)
> ['Therein was a very smooth and broad field, filled with blossoming plants and greenness, and shining with a light brighter than any sun. Within the wall were countless multitudes of white men in great joy. Then, among the multitudes and following the angel, I thought that this was the heavenly kingdom, but my guide said that it was not'.]

## The entrance to the kingdom of heaven (HE V.12.113-23; OEB 430.15-26; CH II.21.65-9)

Dryhthelm comes to a place of even greater brightness than the shining meadow; he is hoping to be admitted inside, but his guide turns round and leads him back:

> Cumque procedentes transissemus et has beatorum mansiones spirituum, aspicio ante nos multo maiorem luminis gratiam quam prius, in qua etiam uocem cantantium dulcissimam audiui; sed et odoris flagrantia miri tanta de loco effundebatur, ut is, quem antea degustans quasi maximum rebar, iam permodicus mihi odor uideretur, sicut etiam lux illa campi florentis eximia, in comparatione eius quae nunc apparuit lucis, tenuissima prorsus uidebatur et parua. In cuius amoenitatem loci cum nos intraturos sperarem, repente doctor substitit; nec mora, gressum retorquens ipsa me, qua uenimus, uia reduxit. (HE V.12.114-23)

> Mid ðy wit ða wæron forðgongende 7 oferferdon þas wunenesse þara eadigra gasta, þa geseah ic beforan unc micle maran gefe leohtes 7 beorhtnesse þonne ic ær geseah, in ðære

ic eac swylce þa swetestan stæfne geherde Godes lof singendra. Swylce eac of ðære stowe swa micel swetnes wundorlices stænces wæs onsended, þæt sio swætnis, þe ic ær bregde 7 me micel þuhte, in ða witgemetnisse þæs æfteran leohtes 7 beorhtnesse wæs lytel 7 medmicel gesæwen. Swylce eac swelce þæt leoht 7 seo biorhtnes þæs blostmiendan feldes wæs medmicel gesewen in ðære stowe wynsumnesse. Mid ðy ic unc wende inngongende bion, ða somninga se min latteow gestod 7 butan eldenne wæs eft his gong cerrende: 7 mec eft lædde ðy selfan wæge, ðe wit ær coman. (OEB 430.15-26)

['While we were proceeding and had got past the dwellings of the blessed spirits, I saw before the two of us a much more gracious light and brightness than I had seen previously, in which I also heard the sweetest voice singing God's praise. Moreover, from that place came such a great sweetness of wonderful smell, that the sweetness I had previously experienced and had considered so great, seemed little and moderate in comparison with the ensuing light and brightness. Also the light and brightness of the blossoming field seemed little in the delight of that place. When I thought the two of us were going in, suddenly my guide stood still and without delay he was already turning back, and he led me back by the same road from which we came'.]

In this section of the text most of the word pairs in the OEB are used to expand the images of light and brightness. For instance, the Latin *luminis* (HE V.12.115) is translated as *leohtes 7 beorhtnesse* (OEB 430.16-7, 'light and brightness'). The translator of the OEB also inserts an explanatory addition to specify that the melodious voices heard by Dryhthelm (HE V.12.116-17: "[…] in qua etiam vocem cantantium dulcissimam audiui") are singing in praise of God: "[…] in ðære ice ac swylce þa swetestan stæfne geherde *Godes lof* singendra" (OEB 430.17-8, 'in which I also heard the sweetest voice singing God's praise').

Three synonymic word pairs belong to this section of the text:

-   the adjective *permodicus* (HE V.12.119) is translated in the OEB as *lytel 7 medmicel* (OEB 430.21, 'little and moderate');

-   the word pair *leohtes 7 beorhtnesse* (OEB 430.21, 'light and brightness') is normally employed to translate the Latin *lux*, but in this particular occurrence one should notice that the Latin text does not provide the expected noun – one finds *odor* instead (HE V.12.119);

-   for the third time in this section, the noun *lux* (HE V.12.119) is translated as *þæt leoht 7 seo biorhtnes* (OEB 430.22, 'the light and brightness').

As regards Ælfric's account, no direct comparison is drawn between the glorious view experienced by Dryhthelm in his fourth station and the previous one; nevertheless, all three sensory perceptions (sight, sound, smell) are maintained; this is the first olfactory experience that Ælfric reproduces in his narrative. The text does not mention Dryhthelm's desire to enter this glorious place (HE V.12.121-2: "in cuius amoenitatem

loci cum nos intraturos sperarem"), but the sudden change in the direction of their journey is signalled thanks to the particle *hwæt* (CH II.21.68), the attention-seeking device *par excellence*:

> He lædde me ða gyt furðor. and ic geseah þær ætforan us myccle mare leoht. and ic þær wynsume stemne ormætes dreames gehyrde and wundorlices brædes swæc of ðære stowe utfleow; Hwæt ða min latteow lædde me ongean to þære blostmbæran stowe. (CH II.21.65-9)
> ['Then he led me further, and there I saw before us a much greater light, and I heard the pleasant voice of a great melody, and from that place flew out a flavour of wonderful smell. Lo, then my guide took me again to the blossoming place'.]

The fourth station of Dryhthelm's journey is, at the same time, the most glorious as well as the least defined place. His guide will later explain that this place is the kingdom of heaven, and yet the very climax of the narrative is the most vaguely characterised station of all. Dryhthelm proceeds from a valley to the entrance of a pit; he then comes to a meadow and then approaches the entrance of something that is not at all defined in the text; we are offered a series of sensory perceptions: Dryhthelm sees the light, hears voices, and smells perfumes. We are only told that this is a *locus* (HE V.12.122), but Bede does not offer any further physical or descriptive characterisation of it. We are left with a place that, in comparison with the other *loci* of the narrative, is in fact a place that human words cannot describe.

**Explanation of the vision (HE V.12.124-59; OEB 430.27-434.3; CH II.21.69-100)**

At the end of the otherworldly journey, the angelic guide instructs Dryhthelm on what he just saw before accompanying him back to his body and his earthly life. [208] The angelic guide begins by revealing the significance of the first place they encountered, the dark valley of heat and cold.[209]

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[208] On the fourfold division of the otherworld, see Foxhall Forbes (2010).

[209] "Et ait: «Vallis illa, quam aspexisti flammis feruentibus et frigoribus horrenda rigidis, ipse est locus in quo examinandae et castigandae sunt animae illorum, qui differentes confteri et emendare scelera quae fecerunt, in ipso tandem mortis articulo ad paenitentiam configiunt, et sic de corpore exeunt; qui tamen, quia confessionem et paenitentiam uel in morte habuerunt, omnes in die iudicii ad regnum caelorum perueniunt. Multos autem preces uiuentium et elemosynae et ieiunia et maxime celebratio missarum, ut etiam ante diem iudicii liberentur, adiuuant»" (HE V.12.126-35).

At this point in the narrative the translator of the OEB repeats a synonymic word pair extensively used before: the Latin *spiritum candidatorum* (HE V.12.125) is translated as *ðara hwittra gasta 7 fægra* (OEB 430.28, 'of the white and fair spirits'). Whiteness and beauty seem to be two sides of the same coin. A little further on in the text, the Latin verb *uidisti* (HE V.12.126) is emphatically doubled into *sceawadest 7 gesawa* (OEB 430.29, 'beheld and saw'). The first reference to the valley in the guide's speech (*vallis illa*, HE V.12.126) is expanded into *seo stow þær seo denu wæs* (OEB 430.30-1, 'the place where the valley was'), most probably for the sake of clarity. Once again, emphasis could be the reason for the expansion of *scelera* (HE V.12.129) into *synna 7 mandæda* (OEB 432.1, 'sins and crimes'), as well as that of *preces* (HE V.12.133) into *bene 7 gebeda* (OEB 432.5, 'prayers and supplications'). Ælfric also offers an example of a synonymic word pair by translating the Latin verb *ait* (HE V.12.126) with the very standardised formula *andwyrde and cwæð* (CH II.21.71, 'answered and said'). Ælfric offers a slightly different characterization of the valley: whereas Bede stresses the heat and the cold as the main features of that place, or possibly as memory aids for his readers, Ælfric chooses only to mention fire (but not ice), and to remind his audience that this is a form of punishment:

> Seo *mycele byrnende* dene þe þu ærest gesawe is *witnungstow*. on þære beoð þæra manna sawla gewitnode and geclænsode. þe noldon heora synna þurh andetnysse. and dædbote gerihtlæcan. on gehalum þingum. hæfdon swa þeah behreowsunge æt heora endenextan dæge. and swa gewiton mid þære behreowsunge of worulde. and becumað on domes dæge ealle to heofonan rice; Eac hi sume þurh freonda fultum and ælmysdæda. and swyðost þurh halige mæssan. beoð alysede. of ðam witum ær þam mycclum dome; (CH II.21.71-9)
>
> ['The great burning valley that you saw first is a place of punishment, in which the souls of men are punished and cleansed, who would not correct their sins through confession and penance while healthy, though they were penitent on their last day, and departed from the world with repentance, and they will all enter the kingdom of heaven on judgement day. Some of them are released from the punishment before the great judgement through the aid of friends and almsgiving and above all through the holy mass'.]

One might see this rendering of the source text as a simplification of its original message; only its most immediate attribute is maintained (i.e. fire), and the ultimate

"Cwæð he: Seo stow þær seo denu wæs ðe þu gesawe wallende lege 7 strongum celum egeslice beon, þæt is seo stow, in ðære siondon to ádemanne 7 to clænsienne þæra manna saula, þa ðe eldende wæran to andettenne 7 to betenne heora synna 7 mandæda, þa hio gefremedan: 7 hwæðre æt nehstan in ða seolfan tid heora deaðes to reowe geflugon, 7 swa of lichoman eodon. Þa hwæðre, forðon þe heo andetnesse 7 hreowe in þam seolfan deaðe hæfdon, ealle in domes dæge to heofona rice becumað; 7 monige eac swylce lifigendra manna bene 7 gebeda 7 ælmesse 7 fæsten 7 ealra swiðust mæssesong gefultumeð, þæt heo ær domes dæge generede beoð" (OEB 430.30-432-7).

function of this place is also made explicit. This might suggest that the doctrine of penal fire had already acquired widespread recognition even among the laity and the illiterate by the time Ælfric wrote this homily, and it could explain why the reference to the cold has been left behind when the homily reaches the crucial moment of delivering the divine / official interpretation of Dryhthelm's vision.

In the HE, the guide explains that the valley is the place in which the souls of those who only repent before death are examined and punished accordingly:

> Vallis illa, […], ipse est locus in quo *examinandae et castigandae* sunt animae illorum, qui differentes confiteri et emendare scelera quae fecerunt, in ipso tandem mortis articulo ad paenitentiam confugiunt, et sic de corpore exeunt; (HE V.12.126-31)

One element of this passage deserves special attention with respect to the way it has been rendered in the Old English texts. From a lexical point of view, the translation of the two gerundives *examinandae et castigandae* (HE V.12.128) is quite interesting: the Old English translator reads them as *to ademanne 7 to clænsienne* (OEB 430.32, 'to test and to cleanse'), whereas Ælfric has *gewitnode and geclænsode* (CH II.21.73, 'punished and cleansed'). In other words, Bede mentions judgement and subsequent punishment/correction; or rather, as Carozzi underlines, *examinandae* should here be interpreted in the sense of putting somebody to the proof, and testing their merits and wrongdoings (Carozzi 1994: 245). The translator of the OEB renders this as judgement and subsequent purification; Ælfric seems to have merged the two together and talks about correction *and* purification. The judgement /testing phase is left out; at the same time, correction and purification are put together so as to highlight the close connection between the two: only through punishment will purification be achieved. Bede's emphasis is quite negative; it does not really seem to offer space for redemption. The souls undergo trial and are punished according to their wrongdoings. In the OEB we find a glimpse of hope, in so far as the idea of punishment is replaced by purification. Ælfric opens up to redemption by clearly stating that the way to purification must go through punishment: in other words, penance is the way. As regards the ways in which souls can be helped reaching purification, it is interesting to observe that Bede mentions four: "preces uiuentium et elimosynae et ieiunia et maxime celebratio missarum" (HE V.12.133-5). The OEB does the same, and the preponderance attributed to prayer is signalled by a synonymic word pair: "lifigendra manna *bene 7 gebeda* 7 ælmesse 7 fæsten 7 ealra swiðust mæssesong" (OEB 432.5-6, 'by the prayers and supplications of

living men, and by almsgiving and fasting, and above all by the office of mass'). Ælfric, however, only quotes three: "þurh freonda fultum and ælmysdæda and swyðost þurh halige mæssan" (CH II.21.77-8, 'through the aid of friends and almsgiving and above all through the holy mass'). Fasting is not mentioned as a helpful practice, and the reference to prayer is turned into a more generic 'through the aid of friends'. The omission of this penitential practice is quite significant, especially in light of the analysis recently proposed by Mary Clayton (2009) of Ælfric's warnings against intemperate asceticism, with special regard to fasting, mentioned in the previous chapters. Ælfric's silence on fasting as a useful penitential practice appears to me as a deliberate choice made by the homilist to avoid the dangers of extreme interpretation or misunderstanding of his message on the part of over-zealous secular believers.

In contrast with the lengthy explanation of the valley, only one brief sentence is devoted to hell itself; one might assume that the place of eternal torment as a locus is well established in the collective imagery, hence the anticlimax in the narrative. Only three defining characteristics of hell are evoked by Bede: its flames, its stench and the eternity of its torments for those who fall into the pit:

> Porro puteus flammiuomus ac putidus, quem uidisti, ipsum est os gehennae, in quo quicumque semel inciderit, numquam inde liberabitur in aeuum. (HE V.12.135-8)

This statement is maintained in both Old English texts:

> 7 wite ðu þæt se legfamblawenda seað 7 se fula, þone ðu gesawe, þæt wæs helle tintreges muð, in ðone swa hwelc mon swa ænige siðe in befalleð, næfre he þonan in ecnisse genered bið. (OEB 432.7-10)
> ['And you should know that the foul, fire-vomiting pit which you saw, was the mouth of the torment of hell, and whoever falls into it at any time, will never be rescued throughout eternity'.]
>
> Witodlice seo swearte nywelnyss þe ðu gesawe mid þam ormætum þeostrum and fulum stence. seo is helle muð. and se ðe æne þæron befylð. ne wyrð he næfre on ecnysse ðanon alysed; (CH II.21.80-3)
> ['Truly the dark abyss that you saw with the thick darkness and foul stench, that is the mouth of hell, and those who fall therein once, will never be freed from there throughout eternity'.]

In Ælfric's homily, the flames of the Latin text (*flammiuomus*, HE V.12.136) are twice replaced by darkness (*swearte*; *þeostrum*, CH II.21.80;81).

The explanation of the third place visited by Dryhthelm is reproduced quite closely in the OEB.[210] The syntactic and logical structures of the Latin are maintained in the Old English, and no instance of word pairs has been found; the text only presents one adjective that does not have a counterpart in the HE and that has probably been added for reasons of clarity: Bede writes that the meadow is the place "in quo recipiuntur animae eorum qui in bonis quidem operibus de corpore exeunt" (HE V.12.140-1), whereas the translator of the OEB also specifies that the souls of those who enter the bright meadow are righteous: "in ðære beoð onfangne *soðfæstra* saula, ða þe on godum wiorcum of lichoman gongað" (OEB 432.12-3, 'in which are accepted the souls of the righteous who depart from the body while doing good works'). If expansion is one of the main stylistic features of the OEB, Ælfric's narrative presents quite the opposite tendency: Bede's description of the bright plain (HE V.12.138-40) is condensed into just two adjectives (*wynsume* and *blostmbære*, CH II.21.83, 'pleasant and blossoming'). However, the passage explaining the reasons why the pious souls are not yet residing in the kingdom of heaven (HE V.12.141-4) is reproduced in detail also by Ælfric (CH II.21.84-7):

> Þeos wynsume and ðeos blostmbære stow. Is ðæra sawla wunung ðe on gódum weorcum geendodon. And swa ðeah næron swa fulfremede þæt hí ðærrihte moston into heofenan rice. ac swa ðeah hí ealle becumað to cristes gesihðe. and myrhðe. Æfter ðam micclum dome; (CH II.21.83-7)
> ['This pleasant and blossoming place is the dwelling of the souls that died in good works, though they were not so perfect that they might go immediately into the kingdom of heaven, but they will all come to the vision of Christ and hoy after the great judgement'.]

The fourth place visited by Dryhthelm, as his guide explains, is located near the kingdom of Heaven.[211] The translator of the OEB interprets this description in a less

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[210] "Locus uero iste florifer, in quo pulcherrimam hanc iuuentutem iucundari ac fulgere conspicis, ipse est, in quo recipiuntur animae eorum qui in bonis quidem operibus de corpore exeunt; non tamen sunt tantae perfectionis, ut in regnum caelorum statim mereantur introduce; qui tamen omnes in die iudicii ad uisionem Christi et gaudia regni caelestis intrabunt" (HE V.12.138-44).
"Sio blostmberende stow þonne, in ðære þu ðæt fægreste weorud in giogoðhadnesse gesawe scinan 7 wynsumian, þæt is seo stow, in ðære beoð onfangne soðfæstra saula, ða þe on godum wiorcum of lichoman gongað, 7 hwæðre ne beoð swa micelre fullfremednesse, þæt hio sona sion in heofona rice gelædde. Ealle ða hwæðre in domes dæge to Cristes gesihðe 7 to gefean þæs heofonlican rices ingongað" (OEB 432.10-16).
[211] "Nam quicumque in omni uerbo et opere et cogitatione perfecti sunt, mox de corpora egressi ad regnum caeleste peruenint; ad cuius uicinia pertinent locus ille, ubi sonum cantilenae dulcis cum odore suauitatis ac splendore lucis audisti" (HE V.12.144-8).
"Forðon swa hwelc swa in eallum worde 7 wiorce 7 ín geðohte fullfremede beoð, sona ðæs ðe of lichoman gongað, becumað to ðam heofonlican rice. To ðæs rice nioweste belimpeð sio stow, þær ðu ðone sweg ðæs weðan songes mid ðy swicce ðære swetnisse geherdest, 7 þa beorhtnesse þæs miclan leohtes gesawa" (OEB 432.16-21).

literal way than usual, perhaps only for reasons of clarity, but perhaps also to give a more emphatic account of such a glorious place. The relative clause

> locus ille, ubi sonum cantilene dulcis cum odore suauitatis ac splendore lucis *audisti* (HE V.12.146-8)

is structured around the verb *audisti* and describes an auditory perception; the preposition *cum* adds two further sensory perceptions, smell and sight. In the OEB, on the other hand, the Latin clause is dismembered into two parallel clauses; in this way, sound and sight are given equal weight, the narrative pace is slower and the image is expanded in the text:

> sio stow, þær ðu þone sweg ðæs weðan songes mid ðy swicce þære swetnisse *geherdest*, 7 þa beorhtnesse þæs miclan leohtes *gesawa* (OEB 432.19-21)
> ['the place, where you heard the sound of the pleasant song with the odour of sweetness, and you saw the brightness of the great light'.]

Ælfric also renders the Latin sentence in a very similar way to the OEB by separating visual from auditory perceptions and by giving both equal weight and equal room in the text:

> Witodlice ða ðe fulfremede beoð on geðohte. on worde. on weorce swa hráðe swa hí of worulde gewitað. swa becumað hí to heofenan rice; Of ðam ðu *gesawe* þæt micele leoht mid ðam wynsumum bræðe. and þonon ðu *gehyrdest* ðone fægeran dream; (CH II.21.87-91)
> ['Truly those who are perfect in thought, word, and work, will come to the kingdom of heaven as soon as they depart from the world; from that you saw the great light with the pleasant scent, and you heard the fair melody'.]

In addition, Ælfric rearranges the sequence *uerbo et opere et cogitatione* (HE V.12.144-5) – describing the extent to which perfection must be undertaken in life – into *on geðohte, on worde, on weorce* (CH II.21.88, 'in thought, word, and work'). This rearrangement certainly creates a more logic sequence (thoughts-words-deeds), because thought precedes any word or deed, and deeds are often the consequences of words, but it might also have a connection with the sequence used in the liturgy for the general confession. For example, this formula also appears in the anointing of the sick, as noted by Bernard Fehr (1921: 54-6).

Dryhthelm is then informed that he must go back to his body, but before leaving his guide exhorts him to pursue righteousness in life in order to enjoy eternal life in

heaven; suddenly Dryhthelm finds himself back in his body and he is very much displeased about it.[212] Here ends the first-person narrative. The guide's instructions

> si *actos* tuos curiosius discutere, et *mores sermonesque* tuos in rectitudine ac simplicitate seruare studueris, (HE V.12.149-51),

are rearranged in the OEB so as to create a close succession of elements linked together by the conjunction *7*. More precisely, the Latin *si actos tuos curiosius discutere* is omitted in the translation and the noun *actos* is juxtaposed to *mores sermonesque*:

> gif ðu *ðine dæde 7 þeawas 7 þin word* in rihtnesse 7 in bilewitnisse geornlice haldan wilt (OEB 432.22-3)
> ['if you will zealously maintain your actions, behaviour and words in righteousness and purity'.]

In this way, the instructions are united under one verb, whereas Bede has two. In his version Ælfric does not include a translation of *sermonesque*: the guide exhorts Dryhthelm only to direct/correct his deeds and his conduct ("gif ðu wylt *ðine dæda and þeawas* gerihtlæcan", CH II.21.91-2, ''if you will correct your actions and behaviour'). This passage in the OEB also contains two word pairs: the verb *cernis* (HE V.12.152) is translated with the synonymic pair *gesawe 7 sceawadest* (OEB 432.25-6, 'saw and beheld'), and *agnoscerem* (HE V.12.154) is rendered as *geahsian 7 gewitan* (OEB 432.27, 'to enquire and know'). In the first case the synonymic word pair simply repeats the concept twice, thus allowing more emphasis; in the second case, the word pair seems to describe the two successive stages implied in the Latin verb: first you ask, then

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[212] " «Tu autem, quia nunc ad corpus reuerti et rursum inter hominess uiuere debes, si actos tuos curiosius discutere, et mores sermonesque tuos in rectitudine ac semplicitate seruare studueris, accipies et ipse post mortem locum mansionis inter haec quae cernis agmina laetabunda spirituum beatorum. Namque ego, cum ad tempus abscessissem a te, ad hoc feci ut quid de te fieri deberet agnoscerem». Haec mihi cum dixisset, multum detestatus sum reuerti ad corpus, delectatus nimirum suauitate ac decore loci illius quem intuebar, simul et consortio eorum quos in illo uidebam. Nec tamen aliquid ductorem meum rogare audebam; sed inter haec nescio quo ordine repente me inter hominess uiuere cerno." (HE V.12.148-59).
"Ac ðu þonne, forðon þu nu scealt eft to lichoman hweorfan 7 eft betwih mannum lifgan, gif ðu ðine dæde 7 þeawas 7 þin word in rihtnesse 7 in bilewitnisse geornlice haldan wilt, þonne onfehstu æfter deaðe þa wunenesse stowe betwih ða blissiendan weorud þara eadigra gasta, ðe ðu nu nehst gesawe 7 sceawadest. Ond eac wite ðu, þa ic sume tid fram ðe gewat, to ðon ic ðæt dyde, þæt ic wolde geahsian 7 gewitan hwæt be ðe beon scolde. Mid ðy he ða to me cwæð, þæt ic eft to lichoman hweorfan scolde, þa wæs ic ðæs swiðe wundrigende 7 onscuniende 7 me lað wæs. Forðon þe ic lustfullede þære stowe swetnesse 7 wlite, ðe ic ðær geseah, 7 eac somod þara gemænan 7 eadignesse brucan, ðe ic on ðære stowe sceawade. 7 ic hwæðre minne lateow ne dorste owiht biddan. Ah nu betwih ðas ðing, ne wat ic hwelcre ændebyrdnisse, ic mec nu geseo betwih monnum lifigan" (OEB 432.21-434.3).
"Þu soðlice. nu ðu to lichaman gecyrst. gif ðu wilt ðine dæda and ðeawas gerihtlæcan. ðonne underfehst ðu æfter forðsiðe þas wynsuman wununge. þe ðu nú gesihst; Ða ða ic ðe ana forlét on ðam ðeostrum. to ðy ic dyde swa. þæt ic wolde witan ymbe ðin fær. hu se ælmihtiga embe ðe wolde; Þa ða se engel ðus gereht hæfde. ða oflicode me ðearle þæt ic eft to ðam lichaman sceolde fram ðære stowe wynsumnysse. and ðæra halgena geferrædene. ne dorste ic swa ðeah nán ðing wiðcweðan; Æfter ðisum ic wearð gebroht. and geedcucod betwux mannum" (CH II.21.91-100).

you know. In addition, the translator of the OEB offers a particularly emphatic interpretation of the Latin passage expressing Dryhthelm's discomfort in having to return to his body: the Latin "multum detestatus sum" (HE V.12.155) is translated as "þa wæs ic ðæs swiðe wundrigende 7 onscuniende 7 me lað wæs" (OEB 432.29-30, 'then I marvelled much and detested it, and I hated it'). As regards Ælfric, one feature that deserves mention is the treatment of the impersonal construction "quid de te fieri deberet" (HE V.12.154), which is rendered in a much more personal form and with an explicit subject as "hu se ælmihtiga embe ðe wolde" (CH II.21.96, 'what the Almighty wished concerning you'). The two Old English texts differ in their renderings of Dryhthelm's disorientation when he awakens in his body. Bede expresses quite clearly the sense of surprise, distress and bewilderment that Dryhthelm experiences, and this is paralleled in the OEB; moreover, in both texts Dryhthelm perceives himself to be back in his body:

> sed inter haec nescio quo ordine repente me inter hominess uiuere cerno. (HE V.12.158-9)

> Ah nu betwihn ðas ðing, ne wat ic hwelcre ændebyrdnisse, ic mec nu geseo betwih monnum lifigan. (OEB 434.1-3)
> ['Meantime, I do not know in which roder, I saw myself living among men'.]

Ælfric, on the other hand, opts for a more impersonal rendering of this passage, one in which prominence is given to the external agency that leads Dryhthelm's soul back to his body and in which his distress is not in the least mentioned:

> Æfter ðisum ic wearð gebroht and geedcucod betwux mannum; (CH II.21.99-100)
> ['Afterwards I was brought and revived among men'.]

**Bede's sources (HE V.12.160-80; OEB 434.4-26)**

The passage following the end of Dryhthelm's first person narrative is devoted by Bede to the presentation of his sources for the episode. We are thus informed that Bede came to know of Dryhthelm's otherworldly journey through Hæmgisl, a monk who also lived at Melrose and who used to visit Dryhthelm and ask him questions about his near-death experience:

> Haec at alia quae uiderat idem uir Domini , non omnibus passim desidiosis ac uitae suae incuriosis referre uolebat, sed illis solummodo qui uel tormentorum metu perterriti uel spe

gaudiorum perennium delectati profectum pietatis ex eius uerbis haurire uolebant. Denique in uicinia cellae illius habitabat quidam monachus nomine Haemgisl, presbyteratus etiam, quem bonis actibus adaequabat, gradu praeminens, qui adhuc superset et in Hibernia insula solitaries ultimam uitae aetatem pane cibario et frigida aqua sustentat. Hic saepius ad eundem uirum ingrediens, audiuit ab eo repetita interrogation, quae et qualia essent quae exutus corpora uideret; per cuius relationem ad nostrum quoque agnitionem peruenere, quae de his pauca perstrinximus. Narrabat autem uisiones suas etiam regi Aldfrido, uiro undecumque doctissimo; et tam libenter tamque studiose ab illo auditus est, ut eius rogatu monasterio supra memorato inditus ac monarchica sit tonsura coronatus, atque ad eum audiendum saepissime, cum illas in partes deuenisset, accederet. (HE V.12.160-77)

The value of this episode – but most importantly also the reliability of Bede's account[213] – is increased even more by the reference to another, more illustrious source: King Aldfrith, who, Bede writes, used to visit Dryhthelm whenever he was in that region. As Wallace-Hadrill points out, however, Bede's narrative is mainly derived from Hæmgisl's *relatio*, whereas "Aldfrith's knowledge of it was derived *viva voce* and not from the *relatio*" (Wallace-Hadrill 1988: 185).

This section is entirely absent from Ælfric's narrative; however, as previously noted, Ælfric does provide some of the information contained in it by briefly mentioning Dryhthelm's interlocutors at the beginning of his homily, though he does not name Hæmgisl, who is merely included among "gehwylcum eawfæstum mannum" (CH II.21.21-2, 'to certain pious men'). After all, Ælfric's only direct source is Bede himself, rather than the witnesses mentioned in the HE; and he acknowledges it at the very *incipit* of his homily: "Beda ure lareow awrát on ðære bec þe is geháten historia anglorum […]" (CH II.21.1-2, 'Bede our teacher wrote in the book called Historia anglorum'). After having clearly stated where he took this episode from, Ælfric does mention Bede's primary sources, that is to say two of the oral witnesses, though one can see that Ælfric mentions them in such a way as to offer a subtly different picture from what can be read in the HE. Bede clearly refers to Hæmgisl as his primary source and then mentions that King Aldfrith was also acquainted with Dryhthelm. It is clear that Bede attributes a greater value to the direct account of Dryhthelm's experience that he received from Hæmgisl rather than to the illustrious royal witness; the text seems to suggest that Bede did not obtain a direct account of the king's acquaintance with Dryhthelm. Moreover, Bede usually tends to give more prominence to morally valuable

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[213] Bede frequently quotes more than one source, thus making the miraculous account more credible (Mayr-Harting 1991: 48).

witnesses for the oral accounts that he inserts in the HE, and in this case Hæmgisl is a reliable one on account of his pious life. In Ælfric's narrative, on the other hand, the first and only oral witness explicitly mentioned in the text is king Aldfrith; Hæmgisl is absent from the scene and in his stead we are informed that Dryhthelm also told his visions to *many worthy men*:

> He sæde his gesyhðe þære leode cyninge ælfride and gehwylcum eawfæstum mannum þus reccende. (CH II.21.21-2)
> ['He told his vision to the king of that people, Aldfrith, and to some pious men, thus narrating'.]

As regards the OEB, the translation of this section presents the usual features already encountered, such as more emphasis in some passages and expansions or explanatory additions in others.[214] The noun *gaudiorum* (HE V.12.163) is translated with a synonymic word pair as *gefeana 7 eadignesse* (OEB 434.7, 'joy and happiness'), which emphasizes the idea of joy by repeating it twice, but without adding any new piece of information to the narrative. In the same sentence, by juxtaposing the Latin and the Old English one can also observe that the main verb is translated in the OEB in such a way as to describe the action from the opposite point of view: the HE has *haurire uolebant* (HE V.12.164), and the grammatical subject is the people who wanted to learn from Dryhthelm's experience; the OEB describes the opposite perspective, because the grammatical subject is Dryhthelm, who is willing to share his experience only with certain people and not others: "þæm he [Dryhthelm] wolde […] cyðan 7 secgan" (OEB 434.8, 'to whom he wished to make it known and relate it'). In other words, the OEB more explicitly declares Dryhthelm's selective attitude towards the people who wish to know about his otherworldly experiences. The translator of the OEB also rearranges the syntactic structure of the subsequent sentence introducing Hæmgisl: the Latin "[…]

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[214] "Ða ðing 7 eac oðero, ðe se Dryhtnes wer geseah, nales eallum monnum æhwer suongrum 7 heora liifes ungemendum sæcgan wolde; ah ðæm anum, ða ðe oðþe for ege tinterigo afyrhte wæron, oðþe mid hyhte þara ecra gefeana 7 eadignesse lustfulledon, þæm he wolde mid árfæstnesse lufan ða þing cyðan 7 sæcgan. Wæs sum munuc 7 mæssepreost in nehnesse his cetan eardigende, þæs noma wæs Hamgels, 7 þone hæd mid godum dædum efenlice heold; se eft in Ibernia þæm ealonde þære ytmestan eldo his lifes in ancorsetle mid medmicle halfe 7 cealdan wætre awreðede. Þa gelomlice wæs inngongende to ðam ilcan were 7 þurh his geornfulle frygenisse fram him geherde hwilice ðing ðe he geseah ða he wæs lichoman ongerwed. Þurh þæs onwriginesse 7 gesegene eac swylce ða feoo ðe we her writon to use cyðþe becuoman. Sægde he eac swylce his gesihðe Aldfriðe ðæm cyninge, se wæs in halgum gebedum se gelæredesta; 7 he swa lustlice 7 swa geornfullice wæs fram him gehered, þæt he in ðæt gemyndgade mynster mid his bene inngedon wæs 7 inn munuchade bescoren. Ond þonne he se cyning ín ða dælas ðæs londes becom, þæt he gelomlice wæs to him gongende þæt he wolde his word 7 his sægene geheran" (OEB 434.4-22).

quidam *monachus* nomine Hæmgisl, *presbyteratus* etiam" (HE V.12.165) is rearranged as "Wæs sum *munuc 7 mæssepreost* […]" (OEB 434.8-9, 'there was a certain monk and priest'). By juxtaposing the two attributes pertaining to Hæmgisl, the translator creates a redistributive word pair. Further on in the text, Bede also underlines that this pious monk is still living at the time of his writing: ("qui adhuc superest", HE V.12.166-7); this relative clause is omitted by the translator of the OEB, and he also consistently proceeds to modify the verbal tense of the second part of the sentence from the present into the past ("et in Hibernia insula solitarius ultimam uitae aetatem pane cibario et frigida aqua *sustentat*", HE V.12.167-8):

> se eft in Ibernia þæm ealonde þære ytmestan eldo his life in ancorsetle mid medlice hlafe 7 cealdan wætre *awreðede*. (OEB 434.10-2)
> ['afterwards in Ireland the island he sustained the last years of his life in hermitage with a little bread and cold water'.]

The Old English translator also adjusts the tenses from present to past when referring to Æthelwold's abbacy: the present tense of the Latin verb *seruat* (HE V.12.180) is thus changed into *sæt 7 heold* (OEB 434.25-6, 'occupied and held'), a synonymic word pair in the past tense. The adjective *repetita* (HE V.12.169), referring to the numerous questions that Hæmgisl asked Dryhthelm, is rendered in the OEB as *geornfulle* (OEB 434.13, 'zealous'); the Latin qualifies Hæmgisl's *interrogationes* only in terms of their quantity, whereas the translator of the OEB chooses an adjective that is not quantitative in his attribution, but rather evaluative. When Bede underlines that Hæmgisl is his primary source (HE V.12.170-1), the OEB presents another synonymic word pair in the translation of the noun *relationem* (HE V.12.170-1), which is rendered as *onwriginesse 7 gesegene* (OEB 434.15, 'exposition and relation'). With regard to the passage mentioning King Aldfrith (HE V.12.172-3), it is interesting to observe that Bede describes him as a "uiro *undecumque* doctissimo" (HE V.12.173), whereas the OEB is more specific in determining the field in which the king is *doctissimus*: "se wæs *in halgum gebedum* se gelæredesta" (OEB 434.17-8, 'who was the best trained in holy prayers'). Rather than portraying a learned man, the translator of the OEB chooses the image of a pious king. Furthermore, the implicit construction "ad eum audiendum" (HE V.12.176) is given an expanded translation: "þæt he wolde his word 7 his sægene geheran" (OEB 434.22, 'because he wanted to hear his words and his story'), probably for reasons of clarity since the Latin sentence is syntactically complex.

**Dryhthelm's life as a tonsured monk (HE V.12.181-203; OEB 434.27-436.19; CH II.21.101-11)**


The concluding lines of Bede's chapter on Dryhthelm focus on the man's secluded life and on his devotional practices.[215] It is in this context that the name of the man is mentioned for the first and only time (HE V.12.194); as Colgrave/Mynors (1969: 498) point out, this shows Bede's rhetorical skills at work: "The whole chapter is a good example of Bede's power of relating a vivid story"; at the same time, however, it also makes the point that his name does not really matter, as if he was a sort of pious Everyman (Rowley 2011: 152), or an archetypal sinner (Foot 2009: 88).

The OEB presents a synonymic word pair to translate the verb *uacaret* (HE V.12.183) as *heran 7 ðeowigan* (OEB 434.29, 'obey and serve'), in which the Latin verb is expanded into two near-synonymous Old English verbs;[216] it should also be noted that the translator of the OEB changes the meaning of the Latin: Bede's "ut…in orationibus…uacaret" carries the sense 'so that he would have leisure for prayers'; the

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[215] "Accepit autem in eodem monasterio locum mansionis secretiorem, ubi liberius continuis in orationibus famulatui sui conditoris uacaret. Et quia locus ipse super ripam fluminis erat situs, solebat hoc creber ob magnum castigandi corporis adfectum ingredi, ac saepius in eo supermeantibus undis immerge; sicque ibidem quamdiu sustinere posse uidebatur, psalmis uel precibus insistere, fixusque manere ascendente aqua fluminis usque ad lumbos, aliquando et usque ad collum; atque inde egrediens ad terram, numquam ipsa uestimenta uda atque algida deponere curabat, donec ex suo corpore calefierent et siccarentur. Cumque tempore hiemali defluentibus circa eum semifractarum crustis glacierum, quas et ipse aliquando contriuerat, quo haberet locum standi siue immergendi in fluuio, dicerent qui uidebant: «Mirum, frater Drycthelme» – hoc enim erat uiro nomen –, «quod tantam frigoris asperitatem ulla ratione tolerare praeuales», respondebat ille simpliciter (erat namque homo simplicis ingenii ac moderatae naturae): «Frigidiora ego uidi». Et cum dicerent: «Mirum quod tam austeram tenere continentiam uelis», respondebat: «Austeriora ego uidi». Sicque usque ad diem suae uocationis infatigabili caelestium bonorum desiderio corpus senile inter cotidiana ieiunia domabat, multisque et uerbo et conuersatione saluti fuit" (HE V.12.181-203).

[216] "Onfeng he se Godes mon ín ðæm ilcan mynstre dehle stowe wunenesse, þæt he ðær meahte freoslice in singalum gebedum his sceppende heran 7 ðeowigan. Ond forðon seo seolfe stow on ofer ðæs streames wæs geseted, wæs his gewuna for ðære miclan lufan his lichoman clænsunge, þæt he gelomlice inn ðone stream eode 7 ðær ín sealmsonge 7 in gebedum stod 7 fæste áwunode hwilum oð midden siðan, hwilum oð ðone sweoran; 7 hiene in ðæm streame sæncte 7 defde, swa longe swæ he gesegen wæs þæt he áræfnan meahte. 7 þonne he ðonan gongende wæs to londe, næfre he ða his wætan hræl 7 þa cealdan forlætan wolde, oðþæt hio eft of his seolfes lichoman gewermedon 7 adrugedon. Mid ðy þe in midwintres tide, ymbhiene flowendum þæm sticcum halfbrocenra iisa, ða he seolfa oft bebræc 7 gescȩnde, þæt he stowe hæfde in ðæm streame to standenne oðþe hiene to bisæncenne, cwædon him men to, þa ðæt gesawon: Hwæt þæt is wundor, broðor Dryhthelm – wæs ðæt þæs weres nama – þæt ðu swa micle reðnesse celes ængre rehte áræfnan meaht: ondswarode he bilwtlice, forðon þe he wæs bilwitre gleawnisse 7 gemetfæstre gecynde mon, 7 cwæð: Cladran ic geseah. ond mid þy heo cwædon: Þæt is wundor, þæt ðu swa ræðe forhæfdnisse 7 swa hearde habban wilt: ondswarode he him: Heardran 7 hræðþran ic geseah. 7 he swa oð þone dæg his gecænenisse of middangearde mid ungeswencedlice luste heofonlicra goda þone ealdanlichoman his betwihn dæghwæmlice fæsteno swæncte 7 temede; 7 he monegum mannum ge in wordumge on his lifes bisene on hælo wæs" (OEB 434.27-436-19).

OEB drops the sense of leisure and makes the prayers into the vaguer 'to obey and serve'. The Old English translator retains the reference to the fact that Dryhthelm was given a separate dwelling in which to pursue his devotional practices: "Onfæng he se Godes mon ín ðæm ilcan mynstre dehle stowe wunenesse" (OEB 434.27-8, 'in the same monastery the man of God received a retired dwelling place', corresponding to HE V.12.181-3). The same cannot be said for Ælfric, whose rephrasing is more vague than the Latin with respect to Dryhthelm being assigned a separate dwelling: "Drihtelm wunode ða on ðæs mynstres digelnysse oð his lifes ende stiðlice drohtnigende" (CH II.21.101-2, 'then Dryhthelm lived in a secluded place of the monastery until the end of his life, living an austere life'), and thus seems to follow the tendency already noted at the beginning of the homily in trying to remove those aspects of Dryhthelm's episode that do not fall into the pattern of obedience to the rule of the monastery.[217] The description of his strict devotional practices is translated in detail in the OEB, where the verb *immergi* (HE V.12.185-6) is expanded with a synonymic word pair into *sæncte 7 defde* (OEB 436.2, 'plunged and dived'), thus lingering for a moment on the image of the now tonsured monk enduring physical suffering for the salvation of his soul. The same effect is also achieved further on in the text, where Bede writes that Dryhthelm would maintain his devotional practice even in winter, when he often had to break the ice covering the river to be able to enter it (HE V.12.191-3); the Latin verb describing the action of breaking the ice into pieces, *contriuerat* (HE V.12.193), is emphatically expanded with another synonymic word pair, *gebræc 7 gescende* (OEB 436.7, 'broke and crushed'). Ælfric does not completely omit this passage from his homily, and yet his account is more condensed than the Latin or the OEB. In particular, Ælfric's narrative does not contain the reference to Dryhthelm breaking the ice into pieces; the homily simply relates that Dryhthelm often used to pray in the river in winter: "Hé eode gelome on winterlicum cyle to ðære éá and stod on his gebedum on ðam wætere […]" (CH II.21.102-3, 'He went frequently in the wintry cold to the river and stood praying in the water'). This way of rephrasing the Latin, however, results in a slightly different

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[217] "Drihtelm wunode ða on ðæs mynstres digelnysse. oð his lifes ende stiðlice drohtnigende; Hé eode gelome on winterlicum cyle to ðære éá. and stód on his gebedum on ðam wætere. hwilon to his girdle. hwilon to his swuran; Eode him siððan mid ðam ylcum claðum. oð þæt hí on his lichaman wearmodon and adruwodon; Ða ða hine man axode hu he mihte ðone micclan cyle forberan. hé andwyrde; Maran cyle ic geseah. and wyrsan; Eft ða ða hí axodon hú hé mihte swa stearce forhæfednysse healdan. hé andwyrde; Stiðran and wyrsan ic geseah; Swa hé hit macode on his life. and manega oðre gerihtlæhte. mid worde and gebysnunge" (CH II.21.101-11).

image from the HE: if Bede underlines the steadfastness of Dryhthelm's devotional practice throughout the year, regardless of the weather conditions, Ælfric rather seems to suggest that Dryhthelm's devotional practice consisted in going to the river only when the season is coldest. Ælfric, however, places greater emphasis than the HE and the OEB when reporting Dryhthelm's answers concerning the austerity of his devotional practices by adding another comparative form. The OEB, on the other hand, does not depart from the Latin in the translation of the first answer, but also places greater emphasis in the second answer thanks to a synonymic word pair:

> frigidiora ego uidi (HE V.12.198)
>
> caldran ic geseah (OEB 436.12)
> ['I saw colder'.]
> maran cyle ic geseah *and wyrsan* (CH II.21.107-8)
> ['I saw colder, and worse']
>
> austeriora ego uidi (HE V.12.199-200)
>
> *heardran 7 hræðþran* ic geseah (OEB 436.14-5)
> ['I saw harder and more severe'.]
> stiðran *and wyrsan* ic geseah (CH II.21.109)
> ['I saw harder and worse'.]

As regards this last synonymic word pair, it should also be noted that the adjective *austerus* is used twice by Bede (HE V.12.199;200) and that the OEB reduplicates it in both occurrences (OEB 436.13;15). Further on, the Old English translator opts for a more explicative rendering of the noun *uocationis* (HE V.12.200), which is translated as "oð þone dæg his gecænenisse of middangearde" (OEB 436.15-6, 'until the day of his summons from earth'). Finally, the transformation of the verb *domabat* (HE V.12.202) into a synonymic word pair, *swæncte 7 temede* (OEB 436.17-8, 'made to labour and tamed'), provides an expansion of the meaning conveyed by the Latin, and thus not only implies that Dryhthelm was taming his body, but also that this was no easy task and it was rather a means of labouring and suffering. This final aspect is omitted in Ælfric, where only the reference to the positive influence of Dryhthelm's *exemplum* is retained: "Swa hé hit macode on his life and manega oðre gerihtlæhte mid worde and gebysnunge" (CH II.21.110-1, 'Thus he did in his life and corrected many others with his words and his example').

**The continuation of Ælfric's homily (CH II.21.112-37)**


Ælfric does not conclude his homily for Tuesday in Rogationtide with Dryhthelm's episode: he also inserts a passage from Gregory the Great's *Dialogues* (IV.37)[218] that quite fittingly describes a further otherworldly vision. The chapter of the *Dialogues* from which it is taken is entirely devoted to visions of the interim space between heaven and hell. Gregory relates the visions experienced by the monk Peter, the honourable man Stephen, a soldier, and another man. Each of them contributes to the creation of a diverse picture of the space situated between the kingdom of heaven and eternal damnation. Quite interestingly, Bede's chapter on Dryhthelm is also in itself reminiscent of some of the images evoked by Gregory in this chapter,[219] therefore it seems even more appropriate for Ælfric to have quoted from the chapter of the *Dialogues* that might have been taken as a model by Bede himself (Wallace-Hadrill 1988: 162).

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[218] Pricoco/Simonetti (ed. and transl.) (2006 vol. 2: 276-86).

[219] Bede's account of Dryhthelm presents some interesting similarities with the following passage from Book IV, 37 of the *Dialogues* relating the visions of the monk Peter (see also Carozzi 1994: 237): "[…] sicut ipso narrante dedicerat […], molestia corporis interveniente defunctus est; sed protinus corpore restitutus, inferni se supplicia adque innumera loca flammarum uidisse testabatur. Qui etiam quosdam huius saeculi potentes in eisdem flammis suspensos se uidisse narrauit; qui, cum iam deductus essit, ut in illo et ipse mergeretur, subito angelum corusci habitus apparuisse fatebatur, qui eum in ignem mergi prohiberet. Cui etiam dixit: "egredere, et qualiter tibi post haec uiuendum sit, cautissime, adtende". Post quam vocem, paulatim recaliscentibus membris, ab aeternae mortis somno evigilans, cuncta, quae circa illum fuerant gesta, narrauit, tantisque se postmodum uigiliis ieiuniisque constrinxit, ut inferni eum uidisse et pertimuisse tormenta, etiam si tacerit lingua, conversatio quippe loqueretur, cui omnipotentis Dei mira largitate in morte actum est, ne mori debuisset. Sed quia humanum cor gravis ualde duritiae est, ipsa quoque paenarum ostensio aeque omnibus utilis non est" (*Dial*. IV.37.19-35).

One could say that Bede's chapter on Dryhthelm parallels this narrative. It contains all the main stages of the Bedan narrative: illness, death, vision of hell, the soul being threatened and then saved by an angel, subsequent return to the body, new life of prayer and strict devotional practices. The only aspect in the HE that differs from the *Dial.* is the sudden reawakening of the soul in the body, which in Gregory is a gradual process, whereas Dryhthelm's experience is very abrupt.

Another section of Dryhthelm's episode reminiscent of this chapter in the *Dial.* is the description of the bright meadow (HE V.12.97-104). Gregory writes that the same soldier who saw the house being built of gold was also blessed with a heavenly vision: "[…] transacto autem ponte, amoena errant prata, adque uirentia odoriferis herbarum floribus exornata, in quibua albatorum hominum conuenticula esse uidebantur; tantusque in loco eodem odor suauitatis inerat, ut ipsa suauitatis flagrantia illic deambulantes habitantesque satiaret" (*Dial* IV.37.58-63).

In Gregory, as well as in Bede, the attributes characterizing heaven (or, more precisely for Bede, its ante-chamber) are the same, namely the scent of flowers and plants, and people dressed in white. The two narratives, on the other hand, differ in their descriptions of hell (or its ante-chambers): whereas Dryhthelm walks through a dark valley (HE V.12.27-46), the soldier described by Gregory sees a black, smoky river; in order to reach the bright meadow every soul must cross the black river over a bridge, and that is the moment where the soul is judged according to its merits or wrongdoings. Only those who lived a pious life are granted passage over the bridge, the others are dragged into the river (*Dial*. IV.37.70-3).

As Godden (2000: 542) rightly points out, Ælfric seems to have merged together two of the episodes mentioned by Gregory in chapter IV.37, namely the one in which a soldier saw a house being built of gold,

> ibi quaedam mirae potentiae aedificabatur domus, quae aureis uidebatur laterculis construi, sed cuius essit non potuit agnosci. (*Dial.* IV.37.65-7)

and the one about the shoemaker Deusdedit, for whom another house was also being built in the otherworld (*Dial.* IV.38), and whom Ælfric does not name.[220] After a short passage introducing Gregory as his source for the episode he is about to relate,[221] Ælfric offers a summarized version of the vision concerning Deusdedit: a man experiences a vision in which, amongst other things, he sees that a house is being built of gold and that the work is only carried out on Saturdays. The man is informed that the house is being built for a shoemaker in Rome. Once back in his body, he enquires about the shoemaker and finds out that it is his custom to offer to the poor all that he has earned during the week and that he usually does this on a Saturday; therefore the building is only built on the days when Deusdedit usually gives alms to the poor (CH II.21.117-30; see below). The homily then concludes with a general reflection on how men can help those already departed who are in torment – so long as they are not utterly condemned – as well as those who are still living.[222]

Ælfric's account is quite independent from its source; the details of the story are rearranged and summarized to suit the purposes of the new context:

> Sic etiam quidam iuxta nos, Deusdedit nomine, religiosus habitabat, qui calciamenta solebat operari. De quo alter per revelationem uidit quod eius domus aedificabatur, sed in ea constructores sui solo die sabbati uidebantur operari. Qui eiusdem viri postmodum subtiliter uitam requirens, inuenit quia ex his, quae diebus singulis laborabat, quicquid ex uictu atque uestitu superesse potuisset, die sabbato ad beati Petri ecclesiam deferre

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[220] According to Godden (2000: 542), Deusdedit is a monk "who saw a house being built for a shoemaker" (Godden 2000: 542). As can be seen from the Latin text, though, Deusdedit is not a monk, but a religious man and a shoemaker, and another man (*alter* in the Latin) experiences a vision concerning Deusdedit: "Sic etiam quidam iuxta nos, *Deusdedit* nomine, religiosus habitabat, qui calciamenta solebat operari. *De quo alter* per reuelationem *uidit* quod eius domus aedificabatur […]" (*Dial.* IV.38.1-3).

[221] "We rǽdað gehwǽr on bocum. þæt oft and gelome men wurdon of ðisum life gelǽdde. and eft to life arǽrde. and hí fela wítnungstowa. and eac halgena wununga gesawon. swa swa gregorius se halga papa awrát on ðǽre bec þe is gehaten dialegorum. be ánum men þæt his sawul wearð gelǽdd of ðisum life. and fela ðing geseah" (CH II.21.112-17).

[222] "Micel is godes mildheortnys ofer mancynne. þam ðe wel willað; We on ðisum life magon helpan þam forðfarenum ðe on witnunge beoð. and we magon us sylfe betwux ús on life ælc oðrum fultumian to ðam upplican life. gif we ðæs cepað. and ða ðe fulfremede wǽron and to godes rice becomon. magon fultumian ægðer ge ús. ge ðam forðfarenum þe on wítnunge sind. gif hí mid ealle forscyldgode ne beoð; Sy wuldor and lof. ðam welwillendum gode. A. on ecnysse. amen" (CH II.21.130-7).

consueuerat atque indigentibus erogare. Qua ex re perpende quia non inmerito domus ipsius fabrica sabbato crescebat. (*Dial.* IV.38.1-11)

Þa betwux ðam oðrum geseah hé hwær man bytlode ane gebytlu eal mid smætum golde and ða wyrhtan worhton ða gebytlu on ðam sæternesdæge and wæs ða fornean geendod; He befrán ða hwam ða gebytlu gemynte wæron swa mærlice getimbrode; Him wæs gesæd þæt hi wæron gemynte anum sutere on romana byrig and hine eac namode; Æfter ðisum arás se deada and axode geornlice ymbe ðone suhtere hu hé geworht wære on woruldlicere drohtnunge and man afunde ða þæt his gewuna wæs þæt he worhte his weorc to seofon nihtum and sealde on ðone sæternesdæg. Nam ða of his cræfte him bigleofan and dælde ðone ofereacan þearfum mid estfullum mode and wæron for ði þa gebytlu on ðam dæge swiðost geworhte ðe hé ða ælmessan gewunelice dælde; (CH II.21.117-30)
['Then amongst others he saw where they were building a building, all of refined gold, and the workers made the building on a Saturday and then it was nearly ended. He asked for whom the building so gloriously built was designed. He was told that it was designed for a shoemaker in the city of Rome and they also named him. Afterwards the dead arose and eagerly enquired about the shoemaker, how he had done in worldly life, and it was found that it was his custom that he performed his work for seven days and sold on the Saturday. Then he took his sustenance from his craft and distributed the remainder to the poor with devout mind, and for that reason the building was mostly made on the day in which he usually distributed alms'.]

As can be seen, Ælfric certainly relies on Gregory for the outline of the episode, but this practice cannot by any means be ascribed to the realm of translation; on the contrary, the different stages of the narrative are rearranged and condensed in such a way as to suggest that Ælfric might have composed this passage from memory rather than quoting directly from the *Dialogues* (Godden 2000: 542). This is also suggested by the conflation of the two passages concerning the building of houses as previously mentioned. Ælfric's reference to the story of Deusdedit is only a concluding remark that enables him to rely not only on Bede, but also on Gregory in order to make a stronger case for his argument. Thus names, places, and a detailed account of the vision are not necessary here. It is sufficient to mention the episode briefly to create further authoritative evidence and provide another very powerful image for his case.

### *Hortatorius sermo de efficacia sanctae missae* (CH II.21.140-80)

The last section of this composite homily is also taken from Bede's HE; it offers an *exemplum* of the power of the intercession of mass and shows that the prayers of

those who are still alive can provide help for the souls that do not enter the kingdom of heaven at the moment of death on because of their sins. In Chapter 20 of Book IV, Bede tells the story of Imma:

> In the battle by the river Trent between Ecgfrith, king of Northumbria, and Æthelred, king of the Mercians, one of Ecgfrith's retainers named Imma is wounded, captured by the enemy army, and taken to a gesith of King Æthelred. When he is asked about his identity, Imma conceals from his captors that he is a thane and replies that he is a married servant. The gesith orders Imma to be bound at night to prevent his escape, but his fetters loosen as soon as his captors go away.
> In the meantime, Imma's brother Tunna, a priest and abbot, believes Imma to have died in the battle and finds a body resembling that of his brother. He buries the body and offers masses for his brother's soul. It is on account of the masses offered for his soul that Imma's fetters always loosen.
> Having discovered that his prisoner is not a servant, the gesith sells Imma to a Frisian and once again the prisoner cannot be bound in any way; for this reason he is given permission to ransom himself. Imma reunites with his brother and realizes that bonds could not be put on him thanks to the masses his brother offered for the absolution of his soul.

This passage begins with the same opening phrase used by Ælfric to introduce the previous additional section: "We rǣdað gehwær on halgum gewritum" (CH II.21.140, 'we read everywhere in holy writings'; "We rǣdað gehwær on bocum", CH II.21.112, 'we read everywhere in books'). As pointed out by Godden (2000: 538), the first additional passage underlines "the frequency of visions of this kind", whereas the second explores the function of the mass as a form of intercession for both the living and the dead,[223] thus expanding the point already made before:

> Eac hi sume þurh freonda fultum and ælmysdæda. and swyðost þurh halige mæssan. beoð alysede. of ðam witum ær þam mycclum dome; (CH II.21.77-9)
> ['Some of them are released from the punishment before the great judgement through the aid of friends and almsgiving and above all through the holy mass'.]

For this purpose, Ælfric draws on another miraculous event narrated by Bede, the story of Imma (HE IV.20). As usual, Ælfric gives a summarized account of his source and in this case he explains the circumstances that led to Imma's imprisonment by briefly referring back to the battle between King Ecgfrith of Northumbria and Æthelred, King of the Mercians, described by Bede in chapter IV.19 (CH II.21.143-5). In the HE, Imma is described as a retainer of Ælfwine, brother of Ecgfrith, and therefore belonging to the

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[223] "We rǣdað gehwær on halgum gewritum þæt seo halige mæsse micclum fremige. ægðer ge ðam lybbendum. ge ðam forðfarenum. swa swa Beda se snotera lareow awrat on historia anglorum be sumum ðegene. þisum andgite reccende" (CH II.21.140-3).

Northumbrians;[224] the OEB follows this, but also simplifies the narrative by stating that Imma was a thane of Ecgfrith.[225] Conversely, Ælfric presents Imma as a retainer of King Æthelred of Mercia:

> On ðære tide þe ehfrid norðhymera cyning. and æðelred myrcena cyning wunnon him betwynan. ða æt sumon gefeohte wearð án ðegen æþelredes cyninges. mid oðrum cempum afylled. se wæs Ymma geháten; (CH II.21.143-7)
> ['When Ecgfrith, king of the Northumbrians, and Æthelred, king of the Mercians, fought against each other, in a certain battle a thane of King Æthelred anmed Imma was struck down with other soldiers'.]

Bede's diction is hardly prone to misunderstandings, therefore one might be led to conclude that Ælfric erroneously attributed Imma to the Mercian army because he was relying on his memory of the story rather than on its written version (Godden 2000: 543). This reversed interpretation is consistently carried forward also later in the narrative, where Ælfric relates that Imma is captured by the Northumbrian enemies: "Hine gelæhton ða sume þæs norðernan folces and to heora ealdormen brohton" (CH II.21.149-50, 'Then some of the Northumbrian people seized him and took him to their ealdorman'). In the HE, on the other hand, it is very clear that Imma is taken hostage by the Mercians: "inuentus est et captus a uiris hostilis exercitus et ad dominum ipsorum, comitem uidelicet Aedilredi Regis, adductus" (HE IV.20.10-11). The OEB follows the Latin,[226] but the passage also presents an expansion: the relative clause "et coepit abire, sicubi amicos, qui sui curam agerent, posset inuenire" (HE IV.20.9-10) is thus translated as "7 ongan aweg gan, gif he hwær ænigne freond metan meahte, *þe his gymenne dyde 7 his wunda læcnian wolde*" (OEB 326.10-11, 'and he began to move away, to see if he could find a friend, to take care of him and attend to his wounds').

Bede then proceeds to explain that Imma is questioned about his identity, and the man conceals his rank for fear of losing his life.[227] The Old English translator

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[224] "In praefato autem proelio, quo occiso est rex Aelfuini, memorabile quiddam factum esse constat, quod nequaquam silentio praetereundum arbitror, sed multorum saluti, si referatur, fore proficuum. Occisus est ibi inter alios de militia eius iuuenis uocabulo Imma" (HE IV.20.1-5).

[225] "In þem foresprecenan gefeohte, þa Ælfwine þæs cyninges broðor ofslegen wæs, wæs sum gemyndelic wise geworden, seo nis to forswigienne, ac heo brycað monigra hælo, gif heo asægd bið. Wæs þær ofslegen in þæm gefeohte betweoh oðere sum geong cyninges þegn Ecgfriðes, þæs noma wæs Imma" (OEB 326.1-5).

[226] "Þa he ða þæt dyde, þa wæs he gemeted 7 genumen from þæm monnum þæs feondlecan weorodes; 7 þa læddon hine to heora hlaforde, þæt wæs Æðelredes gesiið þæs cyninges." (OEB 326.11-14).

[227] "A quo interrogatus qui esset, timuit se militem fuisse confiteri; rusticum se potius et pauperem atque uxoreo uinculo colligatum fuisse respondit, et propter uitcum militibus adferendum in expeditionem se cum sui similibus uenisse testatus est" (HE IV.20.12-15).

translates this passage quite closely,[228] whereas Ælfric completely omits it, probably because this detail is by no means indispensable for the delivery of the story, and it also makes him seem less admirable. We are then informed that Imma's wounds are attended to and that, when he starts to feel better, he is put in fetters at night to prevent his escape, but that the chains loosen the moment those who bound him go away.[229] Ælfric, on the other hand, writes that the bonds break the moment he is bound:

> Hé ða het hine lácnian. and ða ða he hál wæs het hine gebindan. ðy læs ðe hé fleames cepte; Ac his bendas toburston. swa hráðe swa he gebunden wæs; (CH II.21.150-3)
> ['He ordered him to be attended to, and when he was well he ordered to have him bound, lest he should escape, but his bonds burst asunder as quickly as he was bound'.]

The OEB presents three expansions in this passage: the Latin "eum curam uulneribus egit" (HE IV.20.16) is translated as "7 his gýman dyde 7 his wunde het læcnian" (OEB 326.19-20); secondly, the verb *sanescere* (HE IV.20.16) is rendered with a synonymic word pair, *trumian 7 haligan* (OEB 326.20, 'recover and get well'), whereas the verb *aufugeret* (HE IV.20.17) is translated as *fluge 7 bestæle* (OEB 326.21, 'flee and steal off'). Ælfric retains this stage of the Latin narrative but without mentioning that Imma is only put in fetters at night. Further on, he also omits the reference to the city named after Tunna, Imma's brother, a detail that the Old English translator, on the other hand, has retained.[230]

Tunna finds a body that resembles his brother's, buries it, and offers masses for Imma's soul. Whenever Tunna has a mass sung for his brother's absolution, Imma's chains immediately burst open (HE IV.20.20-8):

> Qui cum eum in pugna peremtum audiret, uenit quaerere, si forte corpus eius inuenire posset; inuentumque alium illi per omnia simillimum, putauit ipsum esse, quem ad monasterium suum deferens honorifice sepeluit, et pro absolutione animae eius saepius

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[228] "Þa frægn hine se, hwæt he wære, þa ondred he ondettan, þæt he cyninges þegn wære, ac sæde, þæt he folclic mon wære 7 þearfende 7 gewiifad hæfde; 7 þætte he forðon in þa fyrd cwome, þæt he sceolde cyninges þegnum heora ondlifen 7 mete lædan mid heora heafodgemæccum" (OEB 326.14-18).

[229] "At ille suscipiens eum curam uulneribus egit, et ubi sanescere coepit, noctu eum ne aufugeret uinciri praecepit. Nec tamen uinciri potuit; nam mox, ut abiere qui uincierant, eadem eius sunt uincula soluta" (HE IV.20.15-19).
"Þa onfeng se gesiið hine 7 his gýman dyde 7 his wunde het læcnian. Þa he ða ongon trumian 7 haligan, þa bebead he þæt hine mon gebunde, þy læs he on onweg fluge 7 bestæle. Þa ne meahte hine mon gebindan; forðon sona þæs þe heo onweg eodon, þa ðe hine bundon, þonne toslupon ða bendas 7 tolesde wæron" (OEB 326.19-24).

[230] "Habebat enim germanum fratrem, cui nomen erat Tunna, presbyterum et abbatem monasterii in cicuitate quae hactenus ab eius nomine Tunnacaestir cognominatur" (HE IV.20.20-2).
Hæfde he agenne broðor mæssepreost, þæs noma wæs Tuna, se wæs abbud in þæm mynstre 7 in þære ceastre, seo nu oð þis is nemned from his noman Tunnanceaster" (OEB 326.25-7).
"He hæfde ænne broðor Tuna geháten mæssepreost and abbud" (CH II.21.153-4).

missas facere curauit. Quarum celebration factum est quod dixi, ut nullus eum posset uincire, quin continuo solueretur. (HE IV.20.22-8)

Mid þy he hine hyrde in þæm gefeohte ofslegenne, þa cwom he 7 sohte in þæm wæle his líc, hwæðer he hit findan meahte. Þa funde he oðerne þurh eal þing him þone gelicestan, þa tealde he þæt he hit wære. Bær hine þa to his mynstre, 7 arlice bebyrgde: ond fore alysnesse his sawle gelomlice mæssesong dyde. Þære mærsunge wæs geworden, þæt ic ær cwæð, þæt hine nænig mon meahte gebindan, ac sona instæpe þa bendas toslupon, 7 he onlysed wæs. (OEB 326.27-328.3)
['When he heard that he had been slain in the battle, he came and searched for his body among the carnage, whether he could find it. Then he found another one exactly like him in all things, and he supposed that it was him. He took him to his monastery and reverently buried him, and he frequently sang masses for the release of his soul. Through this celebration it so happened, as I said before, that nobody could bind him, but at once the bonds loosed, and he was released'.]

In this case Bede's interpolated clause "quod dixi" (HE IV.20.27) is translated in the OEB as "þæt ic ær cwæð" (OEB 328.1-2, 'as I said before'), thus maintaining the first-person reference rather than transforming it into a more distant third-person narrative. In addition, the verb *solueretur* (HE IV.20.28) is expanded with the added clause "þa bendas toslupon, 7 he onlysed wæs" (OEB 328.2-3, 'the bonds loosed, and he was released'), most probably for reasons of clarity. Ælfric maintains this passage without any omissions:

And ða ða he his broðor slege ofáxode, þa ferde he to ðam wæle his líc secende. And gemette ænne oðerne him swiðe gelicne. Ferode ðone to his mynstre mid arwurðnysse. And gelomlice for his sawle alysednysse mæssan sang. And þurh ða halgan mæssan toburston þæs broðor bendas; (CH II.21.154-9)
['when he eard of his brother's death, he went to the battlefield looking for his body, and he found another one very much like him. He took it to the monastery with honour, and frequently sang masses for the redemption of his soul. And through the holy mass the bonds of his brother loosed'.]

The fact that even the logical sequence of the single phrases is reproduced in the Old English could suggest that at this stage Ælfric was, in fact, relying on a written version of the episode rather than exclusively on his memory as he was for the beginning of the homily.

Puzzled by the inexplicable loosening of Imma's chains, the gesith asks him if he knows the reason for this prodigy:

Interea comes qui eum tenebat mirari et interrogare coepit, quare ligari non posset, an forte *litteras solutorias*, de qualibus fabulae ferunt, apud se haberet, propter quas ligari non posset. (HE IV.20.28-31)

These *litteras solutorias* have been variously translated in the two Old English texts, though in both cases they seem to have been interpreted as runes:

Ond hine ascode hwæðer he *ða alysendlecan rúne* cuðe, 7 þa *stafas* mid him awritene hæfde, be swylcum men leas spel secgað 7 sprecað, þæt hine mon forþon gebindan ne meahte. (OEB 328.6-9)

['And he asked whether he knew the releasing runes, and had the letters written out with him, about which men tell and relate false tales, as he could not be bound'.]

Þa áxode se ealdorman þone hæftling hwæðer he ðurh *drycræft* oððe þurh *rúnstafum* his bendas tobræce; (CH II.21.159-60)

['Then the ealdorman asked the prisoner whether he had loosed his bonds through magic or through runic characters'.]

This is one of very few pieces of literary evidence concerning the use of runes in Anglo-Saxon England (Page 1964: 21). As can be seen, the translator of the OEB underlines the written dimension of this magic practice and explains it to some extent, even while condemning it (*leas*, 'false'). Ælfric, on the other hand, seems to equate runes with magic (Elliott 1959: 68). As Godden points out, it seems certain that

Ælfric's *runstafum* seems definitely to mean 'runic letters' […], and it does appear that Bede's reference to 'releasing letters' naturally suggested to Ælfric (with or without the help of the *Old English Bede*) an inscription in the runic script, with magical powers presumably associated with that script. (Godden 2000: 544)[231]

Imma proclaims himself unaware of such magic practices, and he attributes these strange events to the masses that his brother is undoubtedly offering for the absolution of his soul.[232] Imma's reply is maintained in both Old English texts with very little variation from the source text[233]: the OEB expands the noun *poenis* (HE IV.20.35) with an additional word pair, *from þæm écum bendum 7 witum* (OEB 328.13, 'from the eternal bonds and torments'), thus explaining the analogy between the physical and the spiritual bonds, but adding that the spiritual ones also have torments attached, whereas his earthly captors are not torturing him. Ælfric also makes use of a synonymic word pair, and translates the verb *respondit* (HE IV.20.31-2) as *andwyrde and cwæð* (CH II.21.160-61, 'answered and said').

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[231] Further discussion on this passage is provided by Seth Lerer (1991: 30-60).

[232] "At ille respondit nil se talium atrium nosse: «Sed habeo fratrem» inquit «presbyterum in mea prouincia, et scio quia ille me interfectum putans pro me missas crebras facit; et si nunc in alia uita essem, ibi anima mea per intercessione eius solueretur a poenis»" (HE IV.20.31-5).

[233] "Þa ondswarede he þæt he noht swylcra cræfta ne cuðe. Ac ic hæbbe, cwæð he, in minre mægðe mine broðor mæssepreost; ond ic wat, þæt he mec ofslegene talað 7 for mec gelomlice mæssan deð. 7 gif ic nu in oðrum life wære, þonne wære min sawl þær þurh his þingunge from þæm écum bendum 7 witum onlysed" (OEB 328.8-13).
"Hé andwyrde and cwæð þæt he ðæs cræftes nán ðing ne cuðe; Ac ic hæbbe ænne mæssepreost to breðer on minum eðele. And ic wát þæt hé wenð þæt ic ofslagen sy. And gelóme for mine sawle mæssan singð; Witodlice gif ic nu on oðre worulde wære. þær wurde min sawul fram wítum alysed. Þurh ða halgan mæssan" (CH II.21.160-66).

The gesith realizes that Imma is of noble rank and promises he shall not be killed if he tells the truth, and so Imma reveals his identity (HE IV.20.36-46).[234] This passage is absent from Ælfric's account, but is maintained in the OEB,[235] where the translator has inserted quite a few expansions and word pairs:

- the present participle *manifestans* (HE IV.20.42) is translated with the synonymic pair *ondette him 7 sægde* (OEB 328.21, 'he confessed to him and said');

- the verb *respondit* (HE IV.20.42) is also translated with a synonymic word pair, *ondswarede he him 7 cwæð* (OEB 328.22, 'he answered him and said');

- the verb *cognoueram* (HE IV.20.43) is translated with another synonymic word pair, *ic onget 7 oncneow* (OEB 328.22, 'I perceived and understood');

- two explanatory additions are attached to the gesith's rebuke: "et ego per singula tua responsa cognoueram, quia rusticus non eras; "et nunc quidem dignus es morte […]" (HE IV.20.43-4) becomes "Þurh syndrige þine ondsware ic onget 7 oncneow, þæt þu ne wære swa folclic mon *swa ðu sægdest. Ond ic þe nu secge*, þæt þu eart wið mec deaþe scyldig […]" (OEB 328.22-4, 'from one single answer of yours I perceived and understood that you are not a common man, as you said. And now I say to you, that you are worthy of death for me');

- finally, the noun *fidem* (HE IV.20.46) is expanded into a synonymic word pair: *min gehat 7 mine treowe* (OEB 328.27, 'my promise and my faith').

The gesith sells Imma to a Frisian in London. When the latter realizes that Imma could not be put in fetters in any way, he offers Imma the opportunity to ransom himself; Bede also specifies that the bonds were most often impossible to apply at the

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[234] "Dumque aliquanto tempore apud comitem teneretur, animaduerterunt, qui eum diligentius considerabant, ex uultu et habitu et sermonibus eius, quia non erat de paupere uulgo, ut dixerat, sed de nobilibus. Tunc secreto aduocans eum comes, interrogauit eum intentius unde esset, promittens se nihil ei mali futurum pro eo, si simpliciter sibi quis fuisset proderet. Quod du mille faceret, ministrum se regis fuisse manifestans, respondit: «Et ego per singular tua response cognoueram, quia rusticus non eras: et nunc dignus quidem es morte, quia omnes fraters et cognate mei in illa sunt pugna interemti. Nec te tamen occidam, ne fidem mei promissi praeuaricer»" (HE IV.20.36-46).

[235] "Mid þy he ða hwylce hugu tid mid þone gesiið hæfd wæs, þa ongeton hy, þa hine geornlecor sceawodon, of his ondwlitan 7 on gebærum 7 eac swylce on his wordum, þæt he ne wæs of þearfendum folce, swa swa he sægde, ac þæt he wæs æðele strynde. Þa gecegde se gesið hine deagollice to him; frægn hine þa geornlice, hwonon he wære; ond him wæs gehatende, þæt he him noht laðes ne yfeles gedon wolde, gif he him þæt hluttorlice gecyþan wolde, hwæt he wære. Þa dyde he swa: ondette him 7 sægde, þæt he wære cyninges þegn. Þa ondswarede he him 7 cwæð: Þurh syndrige þine ondsware ic onget 7 oncneow, þæt þu ne wære swa folclic mon swa ðu sægdest. Ond ic þe nu secge, þæt þu eart wið mec deaþe scyldig, forþon ealle mine broðor 7 mine magas in þæm gefeohte wæron ofslegene. Ond hwæðre ic þec ne wille ofslean, þy læs ic min gehat 7 mine treowe forleose" (OEB 328.13-27).

hour of mass. Imma then goes to King Hlothhere of Kent, who provides him with the money for the ransom, and subsequently visits his brother (HE IV.20.47-71). The OEB closely follows the HE (OEB 328.28-330.7), whereas Ælfric (CH II.21.167-73) omits the details of the financial transaction. Especially worthy of mention is his concluding remark on the offering of masses, which is particularly emphatic and exhortatory:

> Cognouitque referente eo illis maxime temporibus sua fuisse uincula soluta, *quibus pro se missarum fuerant celebrata solleoni*. (HE IV.20.62-3)

> Ond he gecneow þurh his geseagone, þætte þæm tidum swiðust þa bende onlesde wæron, þæm þe *for hine þa symbelnesse mæssena mærsode wæron*. (OEB 330.11-13)
> ['And he perceived by his narrative, that the bonds were most loosed when the solemnity of the mass was celebrated for him'.]

> Þa tocneowon hí þæt his bendas toburston on ðære tide þe se broðor *mid estfullum mode for his sawle alysednysse þam ælmihtigum gode þa liflican lác geoffrode*; (CH II.21.174-6)
> ['Then they discovered that his bonds loosed at the time when his brother, with pious spirit, offered the living offering to Almighty God for the redemption of his soul'.]

Bede concludes his chapter with a general reflection on the efficacy of Imma's *exemplum* for the redemption of other souls, and with a reference to the trustworthiness of the people from whom he heard this story (HE IV.20.72-5).[236] The translator of the OEB reproduces his source text without any notable variation, besides two synonymic word pairs placed at the very end of the chapter: the adverb *indubitanter* (HE IV.20.74) is emphatically translated as *hluttorlice 7 untweondlice* (OEB 330.24, 'certainly and unhesitatingly'), and the gerundive *inserendam* (HE IV.20.74-5) as *to geþeodenne 7 in to gesettenne* (OEB 330.25, 'add and insert'). Ælfric's concluding remarks depart from Bede and are directed towards drawing a parallel between Imma's *exemplum* from the HE and those that can be read in Gregory's *Dialogues* (CH II.21.176-80).[237] In this way the link between this final *exemplum* and the previous passage in the homily inspired by the *Dialogues* is made even more visible. Finally, the closing exhortatory comment of the homily is devoted by Ælfric the teacher to reminding his audience that they can also

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[236] "Hanc mihi historiam etiam quidam eorum, qui ab ipso uiro in quo facta est audiere, narrarunt; unde eam quia liquid comperi, indubitanter historiae nostrae ecclesiasticae inserendam credidi" (HE IV.20.72-5).
"Ðis spel me sume þara sægdon, þa ðe hit from þæm seolfan were gehyrdon, in þæm hit geworden wæs. Ond ic hit forþon hluttorlice 7 untweondlice gelyfde þæm cyriclecan stære to geþeodenne 7 in to gesettenne" (OEB 330.22-5).
[237] Godden (2000: 544) argues that Ælfric is here referring especially to Book IV.12 of the *Dialogues*.

profit from the reading of the *Dialogues* by themselves because this work has conveniently been translated into English:

> Seo boc is on englisc awend on ðære mæg gehwá be ðison genihtsumlice gehyran se ðe hí oferrædan wile. (CH II.21.178-80)

As Helen Foxhall Forbes underlines,

> That the offering of mass for someone could produce an actual, physical release from chains indicates just how real and potent the chains of sin were held to be, and how valuable was the mass in forgiveness of that sin. (Foxhall Forbes 2007: 57)

Seen in this light, the episode of Imma provides Ælfric's audience with very clear instructions on how to avoid the torments of the afterlife described in the previous visions; moreover, it shows that mass can actually produce a real, palpable effect for those for whom it is offered, whether they are still on earth, as in the case of Imma, or not.

## Concluding remarks

As regards the account of Dryhthelm's otherworldly vision, in general it can be said that the visual images described by Bede are replaced by Ælfric with a much more linear, less emphatic account. Ælfric provides his readers with a more simplified narrative than his source; in particular, he tends to omit or to rephrase more explicitly the learned references that characterise Bede's style. Ælfric makes the concepts more clear, to make sure that the message is understood. This might suggest that the intended audience for the second section of the sermon for Tuesday in Rogationtide was not a highly educated one. Here are a few examples of this tendency.

Ælfric's tendency to offer a more simplified version of the narrative can be seen in the way he defines the evil spirits that inhabit the vision:

| *HE V.12* | *OEB* | *CH II.21* |
|---|---|---|
| ll. 70-1: Vt autem sonitus idem clarior redditus ad me usque peruenit, considero *turbam malignorum spiritum.* | 426.31-32: Þa he ða se sweg me near wæs 7 to me becom, þa geseah ic *mænigo þara wergra gasta.*<br>['When the noise was close to me and came to me, I saw a crowd of accursed spirits'.] | ll. 44-5: Þa ða ic þær lange stod. ormod and ungewiss mines færeldes. þa gehyrde ic þæt *þa deoflu*;<br>['When I had long stood there, despairing and uncertain of my course, I heard that the devils'.] |
| ll. 76-7: Trahentes autem eos | 428.3-4: Tugon heo *ða wergan* | ll. 48-9: and *þa / deoflu* scegdon |

| HE V.12 | OEB | CH II.21 |
|---|---|---|
| *maligni spiritus* descenderunt in medium baratri illius ardentis. | *gastas* 7 niðer mid geweotan in midde ða niolnesse ðæs byrnendan leges.<br>['The accursed spirits dragged them and went down with them into the middle of the abyss of burning flame'.] | hlude hlihende. þæt hi ða sawla for heora synnum habban moston;<br>['and the devils said, loudly laughing, that they must have those souls on account of their sins.'.] |
| ll. 80-3: Interea ascenderunt quidam *spirituum obscurorum* de abysso illa flammiuoma, et adcurrentes circumdederunt me, atque oculis flammantibus et de ore ac naribus ignem putidum efflantes angebant; | 428.6-10: Betwioh ðas þing ða upp comon *sume ðara þiostra gasta* of ðere niolnesse, 7 of ðære witestowe, 7mec utan ymbsaldon. Hæfdon heo fyrene eagan 7 full fyr of heora muðe 7 of heora nasum wæron ut blawende;<br>['In the meantime there rose up some of the dark spirits out of the abyss and place of torment, and surrounded me. They had fiery eyes and blew foul fire out of their mouth and nostrils'.] | ll. 49-52: Betwux ðam ascuton *þa awyrigedan gastas* sume of þære nywelnysse wið min. mid byrnendum eagum. and of heora muðe and nosþyrlum stod stincende steam.<br>['In the meantime some of the accursed spirits shot up towards me from the abyss, with burning eyes, and from their mouth and nostrils came forth a stinking steam'.] |
| ll.90-2: dispersi sunt et aufugerunt omnes qui me forcipibus rapere quaerebant *spiritus infesti*. | 428.21-2: ða wæron tostencte 7 onwæg flugon ealle ða *awergdan gastas*, ða ðe me ær mid heora tangan tobeotodan.<br>['all the accursed spirits, which had previously threatened me with their tongs, dispersed and fled away'.] | ll. 56-7: Þa toscuton *ða deoflu* sona. þe me mid heora tangum gelæccan woldon;<br>['Then the devils who wanted to seize me with their tongs were immediately scattered'.] |

As can be seen, Bede refers to them as *maligni spiritus* and as *obscuri spiritus* and the OEB does the same, whereas Ælfric makes explicit reference to the fact that these accursed spirits are devils. The third example in the table shows that Ælfric only uses a periphrastic reference when this is followed by a clear description of the accursed spirits; the description makes it clear that these spirits are devils. They have burning eyes, and steam comes out of their mouths and nostrils.

The references to the blessed spirits are also equally clarified by Ælfric:

| HE V.12 | OEB | CH II.21 |
|---|---|---|
| ll. 28-9: «Lucidus» inquiens «aspectu et clarus erat indumento, qui me ducebat». | 424.18-9: Leohte gesihðe 7 onsione 7 berhte gegerelan wes, se ðe me lædde.<br>['Radiant in face and look, and in bright robes, was he who guided me'.] | ll. 22-4: Me com to *an scinende engel* on ðam æfene þe ic gewat.[…];<br>['On the evening when I departed, a shining angel came to me'.] |
| ll. 108-9: Erantque in hoc campo *innumera hominum albatorum* | 430.8-10: Wæron on ðissum felda *unrime gesomnunge hwitra* | ll. 61-3: Binnan þam weallum wæron *ungerime meniu hwittra* |

| HE V.12 | OEB | CH II.21 |
|---|---|---|
| conuenticula sedesque plurimae agminum laetantium. | *manna 7 fægra* 7 monig seðel gefeondra wæroda 7 blissigendra.<br>['In this field were countless gatherings of men, white and fair, and many hosts rejoicing and exulting'.] | *manna* on mycelre blisse;<br>['Within the walls was a great multitude of white men, in great joy'.] |

In the HE Dryhthelm describes his guide as having a shining countenance and wearing bright robes. This is reminiscent, for example, of the angels in the gospel of Matthew (28.2-3). Bede makes use of biblical symbols and his learned audience probably had no problem in understanding them. Ælfric chooses a more clear-cut rendering, in which the guide is explicitly defined as an angel. We have another example of this in the passage describing the ante-chamber to heaven, where in Bede Dryhthelm sees groups of men in white robes, and many companies of happy people sitting around. As Ananya Kabir (2001: 80) notes, "the image of rejoicing people clad in white remained a convenient iconographic description of the blessed". The OEB follows the Latin, but the quality of whiteness is attributed to the men rather than to their clothing; it has positive connotations and therefore it is associated with beauty. Also in Ælfric whiteness pertains to the men rather than to their robes; he writes that within the walls was a great multitude of white men, in great joy; Ælfric makes the association between whiteness and grace more direct: he clarifies the connection between whiteness and the joy of the blessed souls who dwell in heaven. He explains a biblical symbol that Bede considers perfectly suitable for his audience without the need for further explanation.

To conclude, the two otherworldly journeys examined here present some points of contact, but also some interesting differences: first of all, Dryhthelm is a layman at the time of his vision, and in this sense the narrative differs from the one about Fursey, because it is the vision itself which brings Dryhthelm to lead a monastic life, whereas Fursey was already a monk when he experienced his journeys to the otherworld.

Secondly, Dryhthelm's vision is characterized by a very rich otherworldly landscape. The otherworld is experienced through very vivid sensory perceptions and is composed of four distinct locations. And yet, Dryhthelm is only granted access to the

temporary *loci* of the otherworld, those that will only exist until judgement day, those that human understanding can approach. Fursey, who is already a monk, experiences a symbolic journey of fire, penance and theological debates, whereas Dryhthelm, who is only a pious layman, experiences a more descriptive journey permeated by sensory perceptions of the environment surrounding him and during which even spatial directions are given. Visions are also physical experiences (Gardiner 1989: xxi), and the two accounts considered here engage with the physical in different ways, Fursey by means of his scar, Dryhthelm with the numerous sensory perceptions that characterise his journey.

Taken together, the two visions seem to balance each other, the latter supplying the descriptive elements which the former, being focused on a more symbolic dimension, is lacking. They offer a diverse picture of the interim space situated between the kingdom of heaven and eternal damnation, the existence of which is confirmed by the experiences of two local visionaries, a monk and a layman. As Holdsworth (1963: 143) notes, detailed accounts of visions would appeal more to untrained laymen rather than to the clergy. Thus Ælfric combines two different levels of visions in his composite sermon for Tuesday in Rogationtide; both visions focus on otherworldly journeys, but the nuances of Fursey's visionary experience seem to be intended for a monastic, learned audience, whereas the vision of Dryhthelm is more straightforward and might have appealed to a wider, less learned, audience.

# CONCLUSION

It has been the aim of the present study to explore the modes of resignification of Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica* in the *Old English Bede* and in Ælfric's homilies, two very different forms of rewriting in terms of scope as well as genre. In order to do this, the comparative analysis of the two target texts has been focused on an investigation into how the representation of five saintly figures evolved throughout the Anglo-Saxon period, beginning in the era's Anglo-Latin and deeply monastic infancy with Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica*, moving through one of the first attempts to rebuild a cultural identity after the first wave of Viking devastations with the *Old English Bede*, and drawing to a close with the homilies of Ælfric and the Benedictine reformist efforts of late Anglo-Saxon England.

In this study I have applied the theoretical framework of *Translation Studies* to the field of Medieval Studies. The latter discipline offers plenty of material for the study of translational phenomena, but its paths of signification, until very recently, have rarely been explored with the methodologies of contemporary translation theories. Itamar Even-Zohar argues that translation acquires a fundamental role in marginal, or weak, cultural systems, and it is particularly significant that contemporary translational studies have been developed in recent years at the margin of the European literary polysystem, rather than at its centre. In this sense, what Even-Zohar describes on the practical level of literary production (anything from children's books to novels), is also reflected at the theoretical level, that of meta-literature, or literary studies, or philology, in this particular case. Peripheral literary systems rely on translated literature to nourish the system itself from the outside in a way that is not even comparable with the hegemonic centre of the system, which is, by definition, less in need of external inputs in order to live and thrive. For this reason the periphery is more sensitive to the subtleties of translation, and to the role it plays in constructing identity. In this sense, it is no accident, I believe, that the bulk of the theoretical framework of this thesis is based on the work of non Anglo-American scholars.

Chapter 1 argues that Alban's *Passio* has a legitimizing role in Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica*. By including the narrative on Alban, which is built on the conventional diametrical oppositions of the martyr legend (as opposed to the gradational oppositions of saints' lives), Bede provides his audience with a local parallel for the numerous accounts of the suffering of those people who sacrificed their lives in the name of the Church at the beginning of Christianity. I demonstrate that in this case Bede partly departs from the basic narrative principle of hagiography: the construction of universal stories. Hagiographic narratives customarily present a weak characterization of space and time, because their aim is to offer universal stories. They also typically contain detailed descriptions of the gruesome tortures endured by holy men and women as testimony to their faith and to God's protection. Traditionally, martyrs can be killed only by beheading, and any other enterprising attempt on the part of the pagan (i.e. evil) Roman authorities to kill their victims just exhausts the persecutor's patience, because the martyr usually happily endures all sorts of ordeals. This phase is just a conventional prolegomena to the martyr's death by beheading. It has been shown that Bede deviates from these two basic narrative principles, partly because of his source (the *Passio Sancti Albani*), which is already uncharacteristically sober, and also because Bede blends several historiographical cues in the story. The *Passio* contained in the *Old English Bede*, on the other hand, obliterates most of the geographical and historical details integrated by Bede into the story. Instead, the translator emphasizes the torture scene by using a large number of synonymic binomial expressions that slow down the narrative pace and force the reader to pause on the images, without actually adding anything new to the scene. To sum up, we might say that the Old English translator renders Alban's story as more hagiographical than the source text, thus suggesting a moralistic or pedagogical aim behind its translation and supporting George Molyneaux's interpretation of the *Old English Bede* as a "store of examples to inculcate Christian behaviour" (Molyneaux 2009: 1316). A similar conclusion can also be drawn with regard to Ælfric's rendering of Alban's *Passio*. In this case, though, the hagiographical core of the account stands out because Ælfric rhetorically emphasizes the diametrical oppositions within the narrative. Moreover, by exalting the figure of the *clericus*, which in Bede plays only a minor role, Ælfric provides the narrative with another model of

sanctity besides that of the martyr: martyrs might be a thing of the past, but teachers and monks are very much present in Ælfric's own day.

With regard to the *Old English Bede*, the widespread use of word pairs emerges as one of the main stylistic features used by the Old English translator throughout the entire work. In Chapter 2, for instance, it can be seen that word pairs are employed in particular to emphasize Æthelthryth's own account of her illness, as well as the elevation scene. Among other examples of this tendency found in Chapters 3 and 4, one of the most striking can be found in the account of Fursey's otherworldly visions, where the beginning and the end of the chapter are linked together by the same word pair.[238] In order to achieve this effect, which is reminiscent of the envelope patterns used in poetry, the Old English translator departs quite vigorously from the source text. To sum up, the cases discussed in the study demonstrate that the Old English translator often employed word pairs as a stylistic device and that they are carefully devised. Consequently, they cannot simply be interpreted as a sign of an over-literal attitude towards the act of translation. In Old English poetry, parts of speech are often described from more than one perspective thanks to the use of variation, which offers a composite, rather than a univocal, presentation of the most significant elements in the narrative. As Fred C. Robinson comments about the style of Beowulf:

> Apposition, by its very nature, conditions readers to read the poem in a certain way. It is a retarding device and thus forces us to read reflectively, pausing to consider an object or action from more than one perspective as the poet supplies alternate phrasings for the same general referent. It is paratactic and so implies relationships without expressing them, […]. Beyond these effects, however, apposition functions in various ways to remind the poem's audience of the multiple levels of meaning present in the words that make up the traditional Old English diction as it was adapted by the poet of *Beowulf*. (Robinson 1985: 60-1)

I would like to argue that it is possible to draw a parallel between the use of apposition in poetry and that of binomials in prose, as both devices, paraphrasing Fred C. Robinson, force readers to pause and consider an action from more than one

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[238] "Mid ðy ðe Sigeberht þa gytá rice hæfde, cwom of Hibernia Scotta ealonde halig wer sum, þæs noma wæs Furseus. Se wæs in wordum 7 dædum *beorht 7 scinende*, swelce he wæs in æðelum mægenum mære geworden" (OEB 210.3-6; beginning of the chapter).
"Þa wæs æfter feower wintrum eft, þæt mon oðre cirican getimbrede: 7 him eallum þuhte þæt hit gerisenre wære, þæt his lichoman mon gesette to eastdæle þæs wigbedes. Þa gena he buton womme gebrosnunge wæs gemeted, 7 heo hine þa ðær mid wyrðre áre gesetton. Ond þær his geearnunge oft þurh godcunde wyrcnesse mid miclum mægenum *scinað 7 beorhtað*" (OEB 218.26-32; end of the chapter).

perspective. In other words, there is more to the use of word pairs in Old English prose than simply to unfold translational cruxes.

Chapter 2 looks at the modes of re-signification in the accounts of the life of Æthelthryth. Bede and the Old English translator appear to be at ease with the model of sanctity provided by this virgin wife, who rejects the matrimonial life that has been imposed on her in order to devote herself to God in a monastery. Ælfric's treatment of this narrative, on the other hand, shows that this female saintly figure contrasts with his orthodox views concerning marriage and the order of society (Jackson 2000). I argue that Ælfric downplays Æthelthryth's agency precisely to make this model of sanctity less awkward, and for the same reason he appends a coda depicting a much more orthodox picture of matrimonial life. This is not the only occasion on which Ælfric makes use of a coda to reassert the main points of his narrative. The same rhetorical strategy is adopted, for example, in his account of the life of King Oswald, discussed in Chapter 3, and also in the homily concerning the otherworldly vision of Dryhthelm analysed in Chapter 4.2. In the case of the sermon on Oswald, though, the coda referring to St Cuthbert, serves the purpose of reinforcing the model of sanctity represented by the saintly King Oswald; rather than counterbalancing the narrative depiction of modes and methods of sanctity as in the case of Æthelthryth, instead it completely swings the balance in favour of St Oswald. The same can be said for the coda in the homily on Dryhthelm, where the appended episodes concerning additional visions of the otherworld serve to reinforce the message of the homily. Rather than functioning to moderate or alter the tone of the message as in Æthelthryth's case, instead they simply contribute a diverse catalogue of otherworldly experiences and provide the lay audience with another example of a non-monastic person who finally dwells in Heaven because he lived according to the precepts of the Church.

The life of Oswald discussed in Chapter 3 proves to be a very good example of Ælfric's succinctness, as well as of the Old English translator's ability to reassess the balance between orality and literacy with his target audience in mind. As already noted by Victoria Gunn (1993) and Clare Stancliffe (1995) amongst others, the three accounts of the life of Oswald examined here do not portray an image of a martyr-king, although he did indeed become to be perceived as such. On the contrary, the accounts all emphasize Oswald's achievements in his missionary work as well as his pious way of

life, and this is particularly evident in Ælfric's sermon. For this reason I suggest at the outset, following André Vauchez (1989 [1981]), that Oswald may rather be described as a model of *rex iustus*.

Chapter 4 brings together two examples of a different form of sanctity contained in the *Historia ecclesiastica*, that of the visionary. It should be underlined, though, that the vivid accounts of the otherworld of Fursey and Dryhthelm are not homogeneous in their depictions; in fact, the visionaries give two entirely different pictures of the interim space between heaven and hell. The monk from Ireland and the layman from Northumbria each experience a different otherworld, and Bede does not appear to be worried by this diversity as he includes both stories in the *Historia ecclesiastica*, albeit not in the same Book. The vividness of the accounts is closely reproduced in the *Old English Bede* and is also emphasized, as previously discussed, with the careful use of word pairs. The popularity of these visions, and especially of the vision experienced by Dryhthelm, is also confirmed by later signs of use and reuse in the manuscripts of the *Old English Bede*, as discussed in detail by Sharon Rowley (2011: 156-94). She notes, for instance, that the account of Dryhthelm's journey in ms. B contains neumes, the early medieval form of musical notation: the neumes "appear directly over the vowels of the words, indicating that these words were sung when the text was read aloud" (Rowley 2011: 169). This strongly suggests that the Dryhthelm episode may have been used for oral performances, most probably for preaching to the laity. Another later medieval sign of use of the Dryhthelm episode further confirms this hypothesis. As Molyneaux (2009: 1315) and Rowley (2001: 185) observe, ms. Ca contains annotations in a hand that has been identified as that of Coleman (d. 1113), chancellor to Archbishop Wulfstan and prior of Westbury-on-Trym (Ker 1949: 31). Coleman's interest in vernacular preaching can be seen in his annotation to the margin of the account of the vision of Dryhthelm in ms. Ca, where he writes:

> sumes goodes mannes gesihðe be heofene rice 7 be helle wite ræd hit 7 well understond 7 þu bist þe betere. (Rowley 2011: 185)
> ['some good man's vision of the kingdom of heaven and of the punishment of hell; read it and understand well and you will be better'.]

The laity also seems to be the most likely intended audience for the homiletic piece about Dryhthelm included by Ælfric in his composite homily for the Tuesday in Rogationtide. In this case, evidence is apparent in the way Ælfric rephrases or omits

altogether the most difficult passages from Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica*, something he does not do with the Fursey episode, for which a monastic audience is argued.

The comparative analysis undertaken highlights different types of results in the two target texts examined. This is not surprising, considering how different from each other they are. In the case of the *Old English Bede*, particular attention is paid to the use of doublings and their function, both at a semantic and at a stylistic level. With regard to Ælfric's homiletic production, a most fruitful line of investigation has been paying attention to the presence or absence of certain themes in the target texts in comparison to their sources. One of the recurrent themes shared by all the hagiographic narratives of the *Historia ecclesiastica* considered here is that of fasting as a form of asceticism. Fasting is practiced by the main character of the narrative, as in the Æthelthryth episode, or by somebody else in the story, for instance by those who followed the teachings of Bishop Aidan. Rather than the theme itself, what struck me as especially significant is Ælfric's attitude towards it. As previously discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, Ælfric is particularly concerned with providing his lay audience with *exempla* of moderate asceticism. Mary Clayton (2008; 2009) observes that temperance is the chief virtue for Ælfric, and this is duly reflected in his attitude towards fasting. The narratives of the *Historia ecclesiastica* examined in this study mention fasting practices on three occasions: firstly, Dryhthelm's guide lists the forms of devotion that can help the souls trapped in the interim space between heaven and hell:

> Multos autem preces uiuentium et elimosynae et ieiunia et maxime celebratio missarum, ut etiam ante diem iudicii liberentur, adiuuant. (HE V.12.133-35)

Bede also relates that the people who followed Bishop Aidan's teaching regularly practiced fasting:

> Cuius exempli informati, tempore illo religiosi quique uiri ac feminae consuetudinem fecerunt per totum annum, excepta remissione quinquagesimae paschalis, quarta et sexta sabbati ieiunium ad nonam usque horam protelare. (HE III.5.26-9)

Finally, he notes that Æthelthryth usually only ate once a day:

> Raro praeter maiora sollemnia uel artiorem necessitatem plus quam semel per diem manducauerit. (HE IV.17.35-7)

If we now turn to Ælfric's rendering of these passages, we see that the picture changes considerably. Only three remedies are listed by Dryhthelm's guide, and fasting is simply omitted:

> Eac hi sume þurh freonda fultum and ælmysdæda. and swyðost þurh halige mæssan. beoð alysede. of ðam witum ær þam micclum dome; (CH II.21.77-9)
> ['Some of them are released from the punishment before the great judgement through the aid of friends and almsgiving and above all through the holy mass'.]

In the case of Bishop Aidan, the passage is omitted altogether. As for Æthelthryth, Ælfric stresses that she used to fast habitually, allowing herself only one meal a day, thus changing the emphasis: "to anum mæle *fæstende* . butan hit freols-dæg wære ." (LoS 20.42, 'fasting but for one meal a day, unless it were a feast-day'). To these passages a fourth should be added, because in the account of St Alban's life Ælfric adds the detail that the *clericus* used to practice fasting very frequently, something that does not appear in the *Historia ecclesiastica*:

> Þa be-gan se preost swa swa he god lufode / his gebedu singan and *swyðe fæstan*. / and dæges and nihtes his drihten herian. / and betwux ðam secgan ðone soðan geleafan / þam arwurþan albane . oþþæt he gelyfde / on ðone soðan god . and wiðsoc þam hæðen-scype . / and wearð soþlice cristen . and swyðe geleaffull. (LoS 19.23-9)
> ['Then the priest began, just as he loved God, to sing his prayers and fast exceedingly, and praise the Lord day and night, and meanwhile to teach the honourable Alban the true faith, until he believed in the true God and renounced heathenism and truly became a Christian and exceedingly devout'.]

There is a progression in these references to fasting: those that concern the devotional practices of the laity, as in the first two examples involving Dryhthelm's guide and Bishop Aidan, are omitted altogether and the audience of the Old English homilies would have no awareness that the source texts make references to fasting, because such references completely disappear. Æthelthryth, as discussed in Chapter 2, appears to offer another model, one for moderate, and hence appropriate, asceticism within the walls of the monastery, and for this reason the reference is maintained. The supplementary reference to fasting in Alban's *Passio*, on the other hand, may have been added to complete the picture of idealised, complete, unrestrained devotion of the first Christians, a model that according to Ælfric is no longer attainable, but that should nonetheless be accounted for, as explained in LoS 13 (See Chapter 1).

To conclude, the cases discussed in the present study challenge contemporary ideas on translation and rewriting in several ways. It is true that Ælfric's attitude

towards his source texts generally inclines towards the idea of rewriting more than towards that of translation proper, but, as previously discussed in many examples, this does not always seem to be the case; it is a tendency, but not an infallible rule. He can omit entire episodes that he has no interest in reporting and that correspond to whole chapters of the *Historia ecclesiastica*, as previously mentioned in Chapter 3, and then immediately afterwards reproduce every detail of a particular scene. His approach to his sources is mostly content related, and target-oriented, but within this broad framework there are often exceptions. Ælfric is an author, more than a translator. The texts examined here could be labelled as "authorial translations", because he relies on his source for content, macro-structure, and sometimes even for the actual wording, and he sometimes even explicitly acknowledges his debt to Bede, but the texts become something else in his hands. This attitude is still very much in existence – take, for instance, Ezra Pound translating the *Seafarer*, or Seamus Heaney translating *Beowulf*, or Umberto Eco translating Raymond Queneau.

The *Old English Bede* offers a completely different picture. The Old English translator considerably reduces the amount of source material he actually translates, and he is very consistent in doing so. The Old English text preserves a Latinate syntax, but at the same time is highly productive in terms of Old English vocabulary, as examined in detail by Gregory Waite (1984). The *Old English Bede*, then, challenges Lawrence Venuti's opposition between foreignizing and domesticating translations, because it is both the one and the other at the same time. In fact, the cases discussed in this study show that binary oppositions of any kind do not fully account for the complexity of translation acts. Every translation is a unique rendering of its source text, and in this sense different translation strategies may coexist without necessarily creating an irreconcilable contrast: different translational strategies are applied to different levels, or sections, of the source text. As King Alfred commented on his translation of Gregory the Great's *Pastoral Care*, he sometimes translated word for word, sometimes sense for sense.

The *Old English Bede* is a domesticating translation at the level of content, because it omits all that might not be of interest for the target-audience, or material that the translator is simply not interested in reproducing, though it is not simply a domesticating translation. It is also a foreignizing translation at the same time, because

266

the translator makes the audience aware of the text's status as a translation every time he underlines the difference between the two concurrent voices in the *Old English Bede*: that of Bede, an *auctoritas*, and that of the translator himself. In this sense, translations resemble a palimpsest (Genette 1982). Like a writing surface on which the original text has been erased, and then overwritten by another, translations recreate their source texts, sometimes by completely overwriting it, sometimes by still retaining traces of it. Paraphrasing Lawrence Venuti, the translator of the *Old English Bede* is far from being "invisible": by making Bede's presence felt, he also implicitly uncovers his own role as a translator.

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