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*The Old English Translations of Bede's
Historia Ecclesiastica and Orosius' Historiarum
adversus Paganos: A Comparison*

Questo lavoro rappresenta il tentativo di confrontare il più precisamente possibile le versioni in antico inglese di due opere latine: le *Historiarum adversus Paganos* di Orosio e la *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* di Beda. L'interesse di questo confronto sta nel verificare l'ipotesi che nel tradurre questi due testi entrambi storici ed ecclesiastici, nonostante le differenti scelte, siano stati utilizzati anche dei principi guida comuni.

1. *Samples of the texts and technique of evaluation*

The Old English version of Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* and that of Orosius' *Historiarum adversus Paganos Libri septem* belong to the group of translations undertaken at king Alfred's behest. Since the king's wish was to improve the educational level of his people, which had so badly decreased after the invasions, he started a programme of educational reform which included the translation of a number of Latin texts into the language his subjects could understand. Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* and Orosius' *Historiarum* were probably chosen among the works to translate because they could provide learned men with all they needed to know about ancient and British history.

The venerable Bede (673-735), the author of the *Historia Ecclesiastica*, spent most of his life as a monk at Wermouth-Jarrow monastery, studying scriptures, teaching and writing. His studies embraced grammar, hagiography, natural science, history, biblical exegesis and poetry. His *Historia Ecclesiastica* has remained as a monument of eighth-century Northumbrian scholarship and it can be considered as both a history of the Church in England and a history of *gens Anglorum*. Bede's great purpose was to give the English a history, which was broader than they thought and make the English a part of a historical development in continuation with the Roman Empire (Stephens 1977: 6). Ælfric attrib-

uted the translation of the *Historia Ecclesiastica* in a homily on St. Gregory issued in 992 to Alfred himself, but in the 19th century the king's authorship started to be questioned: first Henry Sweet claimed that the Old English Bede was too over-literal to have been performed by the king and later Thomas Miller claimed that much of the vocabulary of the translation was not West Saxon but Mercian (Whitelock 1962: 57). Nowadays the Old English Bede is included in the works belonging to Alfred's scheme of reform even if it was probably carried out by one of the king's Mercian helpers and not directly by Alfred (Greenfield/Calder 1986: 58).

Paulus Orosius, on the other hand, was a Spanish monastic who, at the beginning of the fifth century, was induced by St. Augustine to write a history of the world from the creation to AD 416. Orosius' main aim was an attempt to demonstrate the improvement brought by Christianity to the Romans notwithstanding such fifth century's calamities as the sack of Rome carried out by the Goths. This theme could be relevant to ninth century England too (Bately 1991: 78).

Even if the Old English Orosius is included in William of Malmesbury's *Gesta Regum Anglorum* among the translations performed by King Alfred, a serious analysis of the syntax and of the vocabulary of the work has convinced many scholars that the king cannot be directly responsible for the Old English version of the *Historiarum* (See Bately 1970: 433-459 and Liggins 1970: 290-322).

The aim of my work was to compare as precisely as possible, beyond the well-known general characteristics, the different techniques employed in the translations of these two ecclesiastical and historical texts and to see if, behind the differences, it could still be possible to figure out a common design.

In order to carry out this comparison I tried to apply the objective method of analysis Nida expounded in his *Toward a Science of Translating* (1964) to a sample taken from the two works. Nida's method allows to evaluate very precisely the way in which a translation is carried out because it quantifies all the structural alterations, omissions, additions, changes in order of the words that a translator decides to perform turning a text from a language into another. Moreover, I chose this method because Nida used it in his analysis of different translations of the Bible, which can be considered in many parts both a historical and

religious text just as Orosius' *Historiarum* and Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*.

In the setting up of an evaluation of a translation Nida identifies three levels:

- firstly, a literal transfer, which is a morpheme-to-morpheme “transliteration” of the original text into the receptor language,
- secondly, a minimal transfer, in which all syntactical and lexical alterations which are obligatory for the text to conform to the language of the translation are carried out,
- thirdly, a literary transfer, in which not only obligatory alterations but also optional modifications can be found and calculated comparing this third level with the minimal transfer.

Nida divides the differences between the second and the third level into four groups: changes in order, omissions, additions and structural alterations.

Since it was not always possible for me to find an Old English equivalent for each morpheme of the Latin text to set up the literal transfer and, most of all, it was too difficult to establish the syntactical and lexical alterations which should have been obligatory to build the minimal transfer, I decided to simplify Nida's analysis and to confine myself to the third level. First, I numbered each word of the portion of the Latin text taken into consideration and found in the Old English version the equivalent word the Anglo-Saxon translator had chosen. Then, I calculated the amount of changes in order, omissions, additions and structural alterations. In addition to those categories I have also analysed the specific word order of each sentence and the order of genitive + noun groups.

My analysis¹ concerned the translation of the first eight chapters of the first book of Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*. In the following extracts we can see how Nida's analysis allows us to evaluate precisely the differences between the two versions of the text:

¹ This article is actually a summary of the results of the research I carried out in my graduation thesis; there I tried to keep the three levels of Nida's analysis, even if it was not always possible to build the literal and minimal transfers without employing some modern English words and even if the syntactical alterations of the minimal transfer were built following some fixed guiding principles. See: Simonetta Mengato, *The Old English Translations of Bede and Orosius. Techniques and Ideology*, Tesi di Laurea, Univ. di Padova 1997.

Extract 1

LATIN BEDE²

1) Capiuntur 2) autem 3) saepissime 4) et 5) vituli marini, 6) et 7) delphines, 8) necnon 9) et 10) ballenae: 11) exceptis 12) variorum 13) generibus 14) conchyliorum; 15) in 16) quibus 17) sunt 18) et 19) musculae, 20) quibus 21) inclusam 22) saepe 23) margaritam, 24) omnis 25) quidem 26) coloris 27) optimam 28) inveniunt, (...)

OLD ENGLISH BEDE³

7 **Her** 1) beoþ 3) oft 1) fangene 2) * 4) * 5) seolas 6) 7 8) * 10) hronas 9) and 7) mereswyn 7 **her** 11) beoþ **oft** 11) numene 12) missenlicra 13) cynna, 14) weolscylle 7 19) muscule 18) 7 17) * 15) on 16) þam 20) * 28) beoþ 22) oft, 28) gemette 21) * **þa** 27) betstan 23) meregrotan 24) ælces 26) hiwes.⁴

11 CHANGES IN ORDER: 3) oft, 7) mereswyn, 10) hronas, 18) 7, 19) muscule, 22) oft, 28) beoþ gemette, 27) betstan, 23) meregrotan, 24) ælces, 26) hiwes.

6 OMISSIONS: 2) autem, 4) et, 8) necnon, 17) sunt, 20) quibus, 21) inclusam.

7 STRUCTURAL ALTERATIONS:

3) oft - superlative *saepissime*

14) weolscylle - genitive *conchyliorum*

² The following extract is taken from: *Beda Opera Historica*, 1930, ed. by T.E. Page, London, Heinemann, p. 12.

³ The following extract is taken from: *The Old English Version of Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, 1978, ed. by Thomas Miller, London, New York, Toronto, Oxford University Press, p. 26.

⁴ Bold type has been used to identify additions, asterisks for omissions and structural alterations have been underlined.

11) beoþ numene weolscylle - dative absolute *ecceptis variorum generibus conchyliorum*

on þam beoþ gemette - two relative clauses: *in quibus sunt, quibus inveniunt*

28) beoþ gemette - *inveniunt*

27) betstan 28) meregrotan - singular *meregrotan... optimam*

18) 7 - *et 'also'*

8 ADDITIONS: 7, her, 7, her, oft, 7, 7, þa

WORD ORDER: AuxVS (co-ordinate to main clause) (= Lat. VS).

AuxVS (co-ordinate to main clause) (= Lat. VS).

XAuxVS (relative clause).

Missenlicra cynna weolscylle (genitive + noun) (≠ Lat.).

Betstan meregrotan ælces hiwes (noun + genitive) (= Lat.).

Extract 2

LATIN BEDE⁵

1) quorum 2) temporibus 3) cum 4) Eleutherus 5) vir 6) sanctus
7) pontificatui 8) Romanae 9) ecclesiae 10) praeset, 11) misit
12) ad 13) eum 14) Lucius 15) Britanniarum 16) rex 17) epistolam, 18) obsecrans 19) ut 20) per 21) eius 22) mandatum 23) Christianus 24) efficeretur.

OLD ENGLISH BEDE⁶

1) Ðara **cyninga** 2) tidum 3)* 10) wæs se 6) halga 5) wer 4) Eleuther **biscop** 7) papa **þære** 8) Romaniscan 9) cyrican. 11) Sende 12) to 13) him 14) Lucius 15) Breotone 16) cyning 17) ærendgewrit; **bæd hine** 7 18) halsade 19) **þæt he** 20) **þurh** 21) his 22) bebod 23) cristene 24) gefremed wære.

⁵ *Beda's Opera Historica*, op. cit., p. 28.

⁶ *The Old English Version of Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, op. cit., p. 32.

2 CHANGES IN ORDER: 10) wæs, 4) Eleuther.

1 OMISSION: 3) cum.

4 STRUCTURAL ALTERATIONS:

wæs se halga wer Eleuther (main clause) - *cum Eleutherus ...praeset*
(time clause)

7) papa - *pontificatui*

15) Breotone - *britanniarum*

18) halsade - *obsecrans*

9 ADDITIONS: cyninga, se, biscop, 7, bæd, hine, 7, he, þære

WORD ORDER: XVS (main clause) (≠ Lat. XSV)

VSO (main clause) (= Lat. VSO)

(S)V (main clause)

(S)V (co-ordinate clause)

SXVAux (purpose clause) (= Lat. (S)XV)

cyninga tidum (genitive + noun) (= Lat.)

Breotone cyning (genitive + noun) (= Lat.)

papa romaniscan cyrican (noun + genitive) (= Lat.)

Extract 3

LATIN BEDE⁷

1) Vidit 2) que 3) ibi 4) non 5) parvam 6) hominum 7) multitudinem 8) utriusque 9) sexus, 10) conditionis 11) diversae 12) et 13) aetatis, 14) quae 15) sine 16) dubio 17) Divinitatis 18) instinctu 19) ad 20) obsequium 21) beatissimi 22) confessoris 23) ac 24) martyris 25) vocabatur, 26) et 27) ita 28) fluminis 29) ipsius 30) occupabat 31) pontem 32) ut 33) intra 34) vesperam 35) transire 36) vix 37) posset.

⁷ *Bedae Opera Historica*, op. cit., p. 40.

OLD ENGLISH BEDE⁸

2) 7 **he** 1) geseah 3) ðær 4)5) micle 7) **menigo** 6) **monna** 8) æghwæðeres 9) **hades**; 7 **wæron** 11) **missenlicræ** 13) **yldo** 12) 7 10) **getincge men.** 14) **Seo menigo monna** 15) **butan** 16) **tweon** 18) **mid** 17) Godcundre 18) **onbryrdnysse** 25) **wæs geciged** 19) **to** 20) **þenunge ðæs** 21) edigan 22)* 23)* 24) **martyres** 26) 7 **hi** 27) **swa** 29) ðæs 28) **streames** 31) **brycge** 30) abysgade wæron 32) **þæt hi hwene ær** 33)* 34) **æfenne** 35) **oferfaran** 36)* 37) ne mihten;

7 CHANGES IN ORDER: 2) 7, 6) monna, 10) gestincge, 13) yldo, 25) wæs geciged, 29) ðæs, 30) abysgade wæron.

4 OMISSIONS: 22) confessoris, 23) et, 36) vix, 33) intra.

8 STRUCTURAL ALTERATIONS:

4)5) micle - *non parvam*

wæron missenlicræ yldo 7 gestincge men: new co-ordinate sentence
14) seo (adjective)... menigo monna wæs geciged - *quae* (pronoun) ... *vocabatur*.

17) mid Godcundre (adjective) onbryrdnysse - *Divinitatis* (noun) *instinctu*
21) ðæs eadigan martyres - *beatissimi* (superlative) *confessoris ac martyris*
29) ðæs - *ipsius*

30) ðæs streames brycge abysgade wæron - *fluminis ipsius occupabat pontem*

37) oferfaran ne mihten - *transire vix posset*

11 ADDITIONS: he, 7, wæron, men, menigo, monna, ðæs, hi, hi, hwene, ær.

WORD ORDER: SVO (co-ordinate to main clause) (= Lat. SVO)
VXS (co-ordinate to main clause)
SXAuxV (main clause)
SXVAux (co-ordinate to main clause) (≠ Lat. (S)VO)
SXVMod (result clause) (= Lat. (S)XInfMod)

⁸ *The Old English Version of Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, op. cit., p. 38.

menigo monna æghwæðeres hades (noun + genitive + genitive) - (≠ Lat. genitive + noun + genitive).

getincge men (genitive + noun)

menigo monna (noun + genitive) (≠ Lat.)

þenunge ðæs eadigan martyres (noun + genitive) (= Lat.)

streames brycge (genitive + noun) (= Lat.)

Nida's method is easily applicable to the Old English version of the *Historia Ecclesiastica*, but it could not be applied to the version of Orosius' *Historiarum adversus Paganos*⁹ because this one is too different from the original. Indeed, while Bede's translator adds information or omits even long bits of the original text without changing the structure of the Latin source, the high amount of additions in many passages of the Old English Orosius completely alters the original version in both content and form. In a few instances of the translation the additions proved to be many so that a quantitative evaluation of them would have made no sense.

The following extract about Hercules, with its incredibly high amount of additions, is a definite demonstration that Nida's analysis applied to this text would be completely useless:

Extract 1

LATIN OROSIUS¹⁰

1) Hac 2) fama 3) excitas 4) gentes 5) tanta 6) admiratio 7) et 8) formido 9) invaserat, 10) ut 11) Hercules 12) quoque 13) cum 14) iussus 15) fuisset 16) a 17) domino 18) suo 19) exhibere 20) arma 21) reginae 22) quasi 23) ad 24) inevitabile 25) periculum 26) destinatus, 27) universam 28) Greciae 29) lectam 30) ac 31) nobilem 32) iuventutem 33) contraxerit, 34) novem 35) longas 36) naves 37) praepararit, 38) nec 39) tamen 40) contentus 41) examine 42) virium 44) ex 45) inproviso 46) adgredi 47) et 48) insperatas 49) circumvenire maluerit.

⁹ The analysis takes into consideration the translation of chapters X-XXI from the first book and chapters I-II from the second book of Orosius' *Historiarum adversus Paganos*.

¹⁰ The following extract is taken from: Orosio, *Le storie contro i pagani*, Vol. I, 1976, a cura di Adolf Lippold, Milano, Mondadori, p. 76.

OLD ENGLISH OROSIUS¹¹

On þæm dagum 9) wæs 3)* 4)* 1)* 2)* 6)* 7)* 5) swa micel 8) ege **from ðæm wifmonnum þætte Europe ne Asiam ne ealle þa neahþeoda ne mehton aþencean ne acraeftan hu hi him wiðstondan mæhten, ær þon** 10)* hie gecuron 11) Ercol þone ent þæt he hie sceolde mid eallum **Creca cræftum** 48) beswican; 12)* 13)* 14)* 15)* 16)* 17)* 18)* 19)* 20)* 21)* 22)* 23)* 24)* 25)* 26)* 7 þeah ne dorste he **genedðan þæt he hie mid firde gefore, ær he** 45) **ongan** 29)* 30)* 31)* 32)* 33)* 34)* 35)* 37)* **mid** 28) **Creca** 36) scipun þe mon **dulmunus hætt**, þe mon sægð þæt on an scip mæge an þusend manna 7 þa nihtes 48) on ungearwe 38)* 40)* 41)* 42)* 43)44)* 46)* 47)* 48)* 49)* **hi on bestæl 7 hie swiðe forslog 7 fordyde 7 hwæðere ne mehte hie þæs londes benæman.**

Since Nida's method was not applicable, the analysis was carried out simply comparing the Old English passages to the correspondent Latin ones, adding a few remarks:

Extract 2

LATIN OROSIUS¹²

Anno ante Urbem conditam CCCCLXXX, Vesoges, rex Aegypti, meridiem et Septentrionem, divisas paene toto caelo ac pelago plagas, aut miscere bello, aut regno iungere studens, Scythis bellum primus indixit, missis prius legatis, qui hostibus parendi leges dicerent.

¹¹ The following extract is taken from: *The Old English Orosius*, 1980, ed. by Janet Bately, Oxford University Press, London, New York, Toronto, p. 30.

¹² The following extract is taken from: Orosio, *Le storie contro i pagani*, op. cit., p. 72.

OLD ENGLISH OROSIUS¹³

Ær þæm þe Romeburg getimbred wære IIII hunde wintrum 7 hun-
deahtatigum, Uesoges, Egypta cyning, wæs winnende of suððæle
Asiam, of oð him se mæsta dæl wearð underþieded 7 he, Uesoges,
Egypta cyning, wæs siþþan mid firde farende on Sciþþie on ða
norðdælas, 7 his ærendracan before asende to þære ðeode 7 him
untweogendlice secgan het þæt hie oðer sceolden, oþþe ðæt lond
æt him alesan, oþþe he hie wolde mid gefeohte fordon 7 forherigan.

Anno ante urbem conditam ... - *ær þæm Romeburg getimbred wære ...*
Scithis - *Sciþþie* (with the doubling of consonant in front of -j).

missis prius legatis - *his ærendracan before asende*: co-ordinate to main
clause (an ablative absolute is never rendered in the Old English Oro-
sius with the equivalent construction of dative absolute).

The translator divides into two different moments the war carried out by
Vesoges, who is said first, to have submitted the South and then, to have
fought in the North and sent the messengers to the Scythians.

Asiam: this kind of geographic additions are quite numerous, as the
translator has to clarify the text for the English audience.

The translator adds what precisely the laws of surrender are, therefore
he tries to instruct his audience.

Three coordinate sentences show the great use of coordination.

WORD ORDER: SVAuxX (time clause)
SAuxVX (main clause)
XSAuxV (time clause)
SAuxXV (co-ordinate to main clause)
O(S)VX (co-ordinate to main clause)
XInf.(S)V (co-ordinate to main clause)
SOV (noun clause)
OXV (disjunctive clause)
SOModXV (disjunctive clause)

¹³ The following extract is taken from: *The Old English Orosius*, op. cit., p. 28.

Egypta cyning (genitive + noun)

Egypta cyning (genitive + noun)

Extract 3

LATIN OROSIUS¹⁴

Inde continuo reversi perdomitam infinitis caedibus Asiam vectigalem facere; ubi per XV annos sine pace inmorati tandem uxorum flagitatione revocantur denuntiantibus, ni redeant subolem se a finitimis quaesituras.

OLD ENGLISH OROSIUS¹⁵

7 þa hie hamweard wendon be westan þære ie Eufrate, ealle Asiam hie genieddon þæt hie him gafol guldon7 þær wæron fiftene gear þæt lond herigende 7 westende, oð heora wif him sendon ærendracan æfter, 7 him sædon þæt hie oðer dyden, oððe ham comen oððe hie him woldon oðerra weras ceosan. Hi þa þæt lond forleton, 7 him hamweard ferdon.

reversi - 7 *þa hie hamweard wendon*: co-ordinate clause.

The translator adds the fact that women sent messengers.

There is one word pair: *wæron herigende 7 westende*

Be westan þære ie Eufrate: one more geographical addition which explains where the Scythians lived.

WORD ORDER: SXV (co-ordinate to main clause)

OSV (co-ordinate to main clause)

SXOV (result clause)

(S)AuxXOV (co-ordinate clause)

SXVO (time clause)

(S)XV (time clause)

¹⁴ The following extract is taken from: Orosio, *Le storie contro i Pagani*, op. cit., p. 72.

¹⁵ The following extract is taken from: *The Old English Orosius*, op. cit., p. 29.

SOV (noun clause)
(S)XV (disjunctive clause)
SModOV (disjunctive clause)
SOV (main clause)
X(S)V (co-ordinate clause)

2. *Analysis of the translations*

The main reason why King Alfred or his helpers felt free to rewrite Orosius' text but were more careful towards Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* can be found in what the two different writers together with their works represented for the Anglo-Saxons. Bede reached European fame and wrote a history of the Anglo-Saxons with the main concern of describing the growth of the Church in England (Greenfield / Lapidge 1986: 21). King Alfred did not need to change much of the original perspective and he treated the *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* with the respect his English author deserved in the mind of his own people. On the contrary, Paulus Orosius was a Spanish monastic, and even if his fame was greater throughout all the Middle Ages than that of Bede, for the fact that he was not English and that he wrote a history of Europe and not of England (which was the king's main concern), Alfred felt free to produce a translation of his work far from being literal.

In the Middle Ages translations could be easily adapted to the needs of the translator or of the public to which the new versions were destined, except for the biblical and liturgical texts, which were rendered more literally. For instance, in the translation of *De fide Catholica contra Iudaeos* into Old High German, the translator turns from literal translation (for biblical quotations) to free translation (for argumentative parts), and adds explanatory widenings with a persuasive function (Saibene 1994: 207-9). As for comparison, the translations made one century after the Alfredian programme of educational reforms by Notker from St. Gallen, who provided versions in Old High German of texts which could be useful for his pupils, contained many explanations and *excursus* (Santoro 1994: 244-5).

If we can say that Bede's translator never rerewrote sections of the text, not a few parts of Old English Orosius show a self-confident trans-

lator who produces essays of independent prose which just take the Latin text as a starting point. For instance, in the tirade against the Romans who complain about the coming of the Goths, only the general original theme is maintained. There, the translator starts reproaching the Romans (while in the correspondent Latin part this comes at the end of the paragraph) and addressing them with the Old English vocative *ge*: *Hu ungemetlice ge Romwara bemurciað 7 besprecað...* Then he transforms the Latin *totis viribus Romanas ingressi provincias* into three different clauses: *for þon þa Gotan eow hwon oferhergedon 7 iowre burg abraecon 7 iower feawe ofslogon*. Afterwards he adds that the lands the Goths ask for are empty and uncultivated (*hit ær þiosan genog æmettig læg 7 genog weste 7 his ane note ne hæfdon*) and that before Christian times people never asked for peace in exchange for money unless they had been submitted (... *hwær hit gewurde ær þæm cristendome... ænegu þeod æt oþerre mehte frið begietan oþþe mid golde, oððe mid seolfre, oþþe mid ænige feo, buton he him underþiedd wære.*)

The Old English Bede is closer to the original text than the Old English Orosius also in the way it often follows as much as possible Latin syntax and therefore Latin subordination:

- Latin Bede: *siquidem in ea passus est sanctus Albanus, de quo presbyter Fortunatus in Laude Virginum, cum beatorum martyrum qui de toto orbe ad Dominum venirent mentionem faceret...*
- OE Bede: *Swylce eac on þa tid on Breotone wæs þrowiende Scs Albanus be þam Fortunatus presbyter on Fæmnena lofe ða he gemyngode þara eadigra martyra ða þe of eallum middanearde to Drihtne coman...*
- Latin Bede: *Si vis perennis vitae felicitate perfrui, diis magnis sacrificare ne differas.* -
- OE Bede: *Gif ðu þysse lifes gesælignysses mid us brucan ne yld þu þæt þam myclan godum mid us onsecge.*

On the contrary the Old English translator of Orosius' *Historiarum adversus Paganos* prefers to employ parataxis and juxtaposition which are not typical Latin characteristics.

The translator of Old English Bede often employs Latin constructions which mimic the original Latin syntax such as dative absolutes (for a Latin ablative absolute) and accusative + infinitive forms:

- Latin Bede: *... devotione completa...*

- OE Bede: ...*gefylledre wilsumnesse*...
- Latin Bede: ... *Christianum iam me esse (cognosce)* ...
- OE Bede: *wite ðu me cristen beon*.

I could not find any such constructions in the part of the Old English Orosius which I have analysed.

The two translators also differ in their use of conjoined word pairs. Bede's translator employs them very frequently to render better and clarify his source and not only to embellish his work:

- Latin Bede: *At Sanctus Albanus qui se ultro persecutionibus fidei Christianum esse prodiderat...*
- OE Bede: ... *And Scs Albanus ða mid sylfes willan **cyðde** 7 **openade** ehterum Godes geleafan þæt he cristen wære ...* (*prodere* means both "tell" and "reveal").
- Latin Bede: ... *ecclesia est mirandi operis atque eius condigna extructa.*
- OE Bede: ... *þær cyrice **geweorht** 7 **getimbrad** wundorlices geweorces 7 his þowunge 7 martyrodome wyrþe.* (*Geweorcan* would be sufficient to translate *extruere*, but the translator chooses to add *getimbran*, "make of wood").

So, in the Old English Bede conjoined word pairs can be considered a means of translation (the meaning of a Latin word is rendered by both Old English words) but, since they are very frequently employed in the Old English linguistic and literary system (they can be found in poetry and in law texts too), they also represent the way in which the translator conforms to the already existing rules of the receptor language (De Vivo 1999 54-55, 68-71).

In the Old English Orosius conjoined word pairs cannot be found as often as in the Old English Bede but they are used even if they have no direct correspondent Latin term. For instance, *bemurciað* 7 *besprecað* and *sibb* 7 *frið* in the tirade against the Romans are more a stylistic device than a necessary translation technique.

As far as word order is concerned, the results of the samples taken into consideration (the translation of chapters I-VIII of the first book of Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* and that of chapters X-XXI of the first book and chapters I-II of the second book of Orosius' *Historiarum adversus Paganos*) again differ quite from each other. For instance, of the 38 genitive complements of the Old English Orosius, 29 follow a genitive + noun order, and only 6 of them follow a noun + genitive order.

Noun + genitive groups can be caused by a particularly heavy genitive which must be postponed on the right of the noun or by the fact that the noun is already determined by another qualifier:

- ... *þa miclan gefeoht Creca 7 Trojana* ... (a + n) + (g + g)
- ... *hwætestan men ealles þisses middangeardes* ... (a + n) + (a + g)
- ... *of þæm hwætestan monnum Germania* ... [(a + n) + g]

The tendency towards genitive + noun order is so strong in the Old English Orosius that even when the genitive is heavy the translator a few times follows the genitive + noun order:

- ... *Europe 7 Asia þone mæstan dæl* ... (g + g) + (a + n)
- ... *Babylonia 7 Asiria anwald* ... [(g + g) + n]

There are also three genitive + noun + genitive orders:

- ... *ægþer ge þara æþelinga wif ge þara oþerra monna* ...

So the change to complete pre-position of inflected genitive which is said to have begun during the Old English period (Mitchell 1985: 555) has already reached a very high degree in the Old English Orosius¹⁶.

On the other hand, if we take into consideration the 102 genitive complements of the Old English Bede, as there are 50 genitive + noun groups, 51 noun + genitive orders, and one genitive + noun + genitive order, the tendency towards genitive + noun order is not as strong as it was in the Old English Orosius, but the two tendencies seem to balance. In the Old English Bede the Latin influence must be taken into consideration, because 64 genitive groups have Latin equivalents. Of the 35 times in which the Old English translator decides to follow the Latin order 24 times it is a noun + genitive order which is kept and only 11 times it is a genitive + noun order, therefore it is the tendency towards noun + genitive which seems to be stronger.

As far as the order of subject, verb and object is concerned in the main clauses or co-ordinates to the main clause of both the Old English Orosius and of the Old English Bede, a tendency towards SOV can be detected¹⁷. In the Old English Orosius 45 times the object comes before the verb and only 14 times the object follows the verb:

¹⁶ I could not compare the genitive + noun groups of the Old English Orosius to the Latin because they had no equivalents in the original version.

¹⁷ Actually in Old English three basic orders are common: SV; S...V and VS. The SV order can occur both in principal and subordinate clauses, while the S...V order is most common in subordinate clauses (Mitchell/ Robinson 1992: 63-65).

- *Hi þa þæt lond forleton ...* (SOV).
- ... *7 ealle Babylonia aweste ...* (co-ordinate to the main clause: (S)OV).
- ... *he gegaderade þone fultum þe he þa mæhte* (main clause: SVO).

The tendency to leave the verb in last position is confirmed by the fact that when in a main clause the direct object comes before the verb, 9 times the other complement comes before the verb too, and only 3 times the other complement is postponed:

- ... *7 þær wæron fiftene gear þæt lond herigende 7 westende ...* (co-ordinate to the main clause: (S)AuxXOV).
- ... *7 mid ungemetlicre þinunge he wæs þæt folc cwielmende ...* (co-ordinate to the main clause: XSAuxOV).

In the main clauses of the Old English Bede, as there are 30 SOV orders and 26 SVO orders, the tendency towards SOV is still stronger than that towards SVO, but less strong than in the Old English Orosius¹⁸. As the Alfredian version of the *Historia Ecclesiastica* is quite literal, the Old English word order is often comparable to that of the Latin text. In main clauses 16 times the translator chooses to follow an SOV order which is already in the Latin text, therefore the Latin SOV influence is quite strong:

- Latin Bede: ...*Claudius imperator ...expeditionem in Britanniam movit.* (SOXV).
- OE Bede:...*Caludius se casere ... fyrde gelædde on Breotone.* (SOVX).

As far as subordinate clauses are concerned in both texts the preference for SOV order, as expected, is even stronger than in main clauses. In the Old English Orosius 53 times the direct object precedes the verb, and only 11 times it comes after.

- ...*for þon þa Gotan eow hwon oferhergedon ...* (causal clause: SOV)
- ... *þæt ure Dryhten us gesceop ...* (noun clause: SOV)

If there is another complement and not only the direct object, Orosius' translator chooses an SOXV or SXOV order (15 times), and never an SOVX order, unless there is more than one complement besides the direct object:

¹⁸ The SV order became more and more frequent during the Old English period. (Mitchell 1985: 713).

- ... *oð hie him þær eard genamon*. (time clause: SXOV)
- ... *on þære ilcan tide þe Babylonia ðiowdome onfeng from Ciruse ðæm cyninge* ... (relative clause: XSOVX, of the two complements besides the direct object, one is kept before the verb and the other is postponed).

In the Old English Bede 45 subordinate clauses have a SOV order and only 12 of them have a SVO order. Again Latin influence is quite evident, because 17 times the translator keeps a Latin SOV order, and only 3 times he changes a Latin SVO into SOV order.

- Latin Bede: ... *qui ... sanctum Dei confessorem ferire recusavit*. (OV)
- OE Bede: ... *þæt he wiðsoc þæt he ðone Godes andettere sloge*. (SOV)
- Latin Bede: ... *a quibus nomen accepit*, ((S)XOV)
- OE Bede: ... *fram þam hit naman onfeng* ... (XSOV).

Of the 12 subordinate clauses which have a SVO order, 2 keep a Latin order SVO, and four change a Latin SOV into SVO¹⁹:

- Latin Bede: ... *unde etiam plurimae longitudinis habet dies aestate, sicut et noctes in bruma*. (SVOX)
- OE Bede: *is on ðon sweotol ðæt þis ealond hafað mycele lengran dagas on sumera swa eac nihta on wintra* ... (SVOX)
- Latin Bede: ... *Deum verum ac vivum qui universa creavit adoro* ... (SOV)
- OE Bede: ... *7 ðone -lifingendan se gescop heofon 7 eorðan 7 ealle gesceafta ic simble bigange* ... (SVO, the new order is probably caused by the fact that the Old English direct object is much heavier).

3. *Ideology behind the translations*

The ideology lying behind the translations of these two Latin texts can be detected by a precise analysis of the additions and omissions performed by the two translators. As far as additions are concerned, even if

¹⁹ Oldoni analyses the word order in a text which is later than Old English Orosius and Old English Bede: the first cycle of Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies*. He claims that the most common word order in main clauses is of the type SVX and SVO, and that, even if the type #conj-S-...-V# is the most frequent word order in subordinate clauses, a tendency towards SVO can still be seen there, too (Oldoni 1995).

they are much more abundant in the Old English Orosius, both translators tend to follow the same guiding principles. Indeed, they both try to explain every detail which might be unknown to their audience and therefore they try to clarify the text. The difference is in the kind of text they translate. For instance, Bede's translator obviously does not need to add much information to clarify a geographic description of the British Isles to his Old English audience, but Orosius' translator tells his audience about people and events which take place in far countries and therefore he has much more geographic references to explain. In the Old English Bede only one geographic addition is performed and it is to clarify where *Gaul* is:

- Latin Bede: *Habet a meridie Galliam Belgicam ...*
- Old English Bede: *Hit hafað fram suððæle þa mægþe on gean þe mon hateð Gallia Bellica.*

But in the Old English Orosius many geographic additions can be found:

- Latin Orosius: *Inde continuo reversi perdomitam infinitis caedibus Asiam vectigalem facere.*
- Old English Orosius: *7 þa hie hamweard wendon, be westan þære ie Euftrate...* (The translator explains that to go back home the Scythians have to go west of Euphrates river, which was already known from the Bible).
- Latin Orosius: *... domo pulsi in Cappadociae Pontique ora consederunt...*
- Old English Orosius: *... gebudon Capadotiam 7 Pontum neah þære læssan Asian.*

(This is a clear explanation of where Cappadocia and Pontum are).

Both in the Old English Orosius and the Old English Bede, translators add historical details to instruct their audience and to help them to understand the texts. Indeed these texts could be used in schools instead of the Latin versions and therefore every detail which could be unknown had to be clarified, but again, Bede's translator, who most of all speaks about British events, has to specify to his audience only a few details such as:

- Latin Bede: *... Maximianumque cognomento Herculum socium creavit imperii.*
- Old English Bede: *Se geceas Maximianum him to fultume his rices*

ge sealde him westdæl middaneardes. (The translator adds that Maximianum was given the west part of the world).

On the other hand Orosius' translator has to clarify lots of historical events which are probably not known by an Old English audience, and that in the original text are only hinted at because they can be taken for granted by the certainly more learned audience Orosius had written his text for:

- Latin Orosius: ... *raptus Helenae, conjuratio Graecorum, et concursus mille navium, dehinc decennis obsidio, ac postremo famosum Trojae excidium praedicatur.*
- Old English Orosius: ... *gewearð þætte Alexander, Priamises sunu þæs cyninges, of Troiana þære byrig, genom þæs cyninges wif Monelaus, of Læcedemonia, Creca byrig, Elena. Ymb hie wearð þæt mære gewinn 7 micla gefeoht Creca 7 Troiana swa þætte Crecas hæfdon M scipa þara miclana dulmana 7 him betweonum gesworan þæt hie næfre noldon on cyþþe cuman ær hie hiora teonan gewræcen. 7 hi ða X gear ymbe þa burg sittende wæron 7 feohtende.* (Here the translator rewrites the equivalent Latin passage to give a brief summary of the war of Troja: he quotes some of the main characters and not only Helena, he explains which kind of ships was used, and that the Greek had sworn they would never go back home before taking their revenge).
- Latin Orosius: *Modo autem Gothi quos Alexander evitandos pronuntiavit, Pyrrhus exhorruit, Caesar etiam declinavit ...*
- Old English Orosius: *7 nu þa ða Gotan coman of þæm hwatestan monnum Germania, þe ægðer ge Pirrus se reða cyning, ge Alexander ge Iulius se cræftega casere, hie alle from him ondredon þæt hi hie mid gefeohte sohte.* (The translator explains to his audience that the Goths come from Germany, that Pirrus is wicked and that Julius Caesar is the mighty emperor- similarly Bede's translator defines Diocletianus as the *yfelan casere* and Constantinus as the *godan casere*).

Both translators seem concerned about clarifying foreign terms or names to make sure that their audience understood them:

- Latin Bede: ... *iuxta civitatem Verolamium, quae nunc a gente Anglorum Verlamacaestir sive Vaeclingacaestir appellatur...*
- Old English Bede: *neah þære ceastre ðe Romane heton Uerolami-*

um seo nu fram Angelðeode Werlameceaster oþþe Wæclingaceaster is nemned. (The translator explains that *Verolanium* was the Roman name of the town).

- Latin Orosius: ... *unde Amazones dictae*.
- Old English Orosius: *For þon hi mon hæst on **Crecisc** Amazanas þæt is on Englisc “fortende”*. (Orosius’ translator explains that *Amazones* is a Greek term which in English means “burnt”).

Both translators seem to take advantage of their translations, when they can, to remind the audience with principles of Christian faith:

- Latin Bede: ... *susceptam fidem Brittani...*
- Old English Bede: *and ða onfengan Bryttas **fulluhte** 7 Cristes geleafan* (The translator specifies that to get Christian faith one first has to be baptized).
- Latin Orosius: *Neminem jam esse hominum arbitror, quem latere possit, quod hominem in hoc mundo fecerit rectum ...*
- Old English Orosius: *Ic wene, cwæð Orosius, þæt nan wis mon ne sie, buton he genoh geara wite þætte God þone **ærestan** monn ryhtne 7 godne gesceop 7 **eal moncyn mid him***. (The audience is here reminded that when creating the first men, God created all mankind too).

As far as omissions in Old English Bede are concerned, one important kind regards contrasts between the Britons and the Romans, as for instance the battle between Cassivellaunus and Julius Caesar, or the betrayal of Roman allies in Britain. Bede’s translator also omits details about foreign countries such as the famine in Syria while *Claudius* was emperor, or the mentioning of Southern countries such as *Italia*, *Armenia*, *Macedonia*, or historical references which are not directly relevant to British history as *Severus* who was troubled by civil wars, or *Claudius* who sought war everywhere. The fact that Alfred first omits details about foreign countries in Bede’s translation and then makes one of his scholars translate Orosius’ *Historiarum adversus paganos*, which is basically a history of the world, might seem rather surprising, but, actually, if we think about the kind of omissions performed in Old English Orosius this will seem less contrasting.

Indeed, the translator keeps the original Christian view of world history: the empires of Babylon, Macedon and Carthage led to the empire of Rome which was Christ’s instrument for spreading true faith all over

the world (Whitelock 1966: 90). For this reason, he omits references to details which he does not consider as directly relevant to the transmission of the authority to rule given by God to these four empires.

For instance he only briefly sums up the long and detailed report of the battles between Lacedaemonians and Messians and the subsequent involvement of the Athenians:

- Old English Orosius: *7 þæt Creca folc fela geara him betweonum dreogende wæron, ægþer ge of Læcedemonia, ge of Mesiane, ge of Boetium, ge of Atheniensium; 7 monege oþera þeoda to ðæm ilcan gewinne getugon.*

or he does not even mention wicked Aremulus king of the Latins:

- Latin Orosius: *Fuerat etiam paulo superiore tempore apud Latinos rex Aremulus, qui per annos xviii flagitiis inpietatibusque crescens, ad postremum divino iudicio fulmine interceptus matura supplicia immatura aetate dissolvit.* (completely omitted).

Orosius' text ends in a moment in which the authority to rule given by God is still owned by the Romans, and the English, who came to Britain when the Romans had withdrawn, would represent the immediate next step of God-given authority (Kretzchmar 1987: 143). This interpretation would link the two translations and would explain the emphasis given in Old English Bede to the Roman possession of the island and the attempt to hide contrasts between Roman empire and Britain.

Therefore, no matters how different the subject of the two texts might seem, and how different the two translations are in the way they follow the original works, because they are performed respecting the same general guiding principles and they are linked in their being functional to a general aim, which should be that of inserting Alfred's kingdom in a providential design.

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