Textual Reception and Cultural Debate in Medieval English Studies

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Edited by

María José Esteve Ramos
and José Ramón Prado-Pérez

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INTRODUCTION

(RE)SEARCHING THE MEDIEVAL: A VISION OF RECENT PERSPECTIVES

MARÍA JOSÉ ESTEVE RAMOS
UNIVERSITAT JAUME I

> El hombre medieval vivía efectivamente en un mundo poblado de significados, remisiones, sobresentidos, manifestaciones de Dios en las cosas, en una naturaleza que hablaba sin cesar un lenguaje heráldico, en la que un león no era solo un león, una nuez no era solo una nuez, un hipogrifo era tan real como un león porque al igual que este era signo, existencialmente prescindible, de una verdad superior. (Eco, Umberto)

After many years of being a scholar in the field, it is still sometimes difficult to express the impact that the study of the Medieval times has on us. It becomes so appealing and interesting, so thrilling that hundreds of years passed by, we still feel a real fascination for all things connected to that period. Different disciplines in academia contribute to the knowledge and fascination of the Medieval era, and philologists and linguists play a fundamental role in this achievement. In the case of the current publication, this collection of essays are the work of well-known scholars in the field. By using different approaches and encompassing many and varied topics, the book will provide the readers with a well-selected sample of current research in the field of Medieval English studies.

The Medieval linguistic and cultural commonplaces offer many insights into the multiple perspectives of this period of time, its language or languages, and of course, the relationships of culture with its multilingual context and text production. In recent decades, new approaches have emerged, but the necessity to go back to the manuscript sources has been a recurrent issue. In the iconic article by Nichols, published in the Journal *Speculum* in 1990, the idea of the discipline as connected with archaic notions of methodological enterprises was challenged, and Nichols coined the term “New Philology” to stand for the necessity of embracing a discipline which had been fundamental in the history of the humanities:

> What is “new” in our enterprise might better be called “renewal”, *renovatio* in the twelfth-century sense. On the other hand, it is a desire to return to the medieval origins of philology, to its roots in a manuscript culture where, as Bernard Cerquiligni remarks “medieval writing does not produce variants; it is a variance” (Nichols, 1990: 1).

In his article, he continued emphasizing the fact that there should be a more narrow connection between the philological approach in medieval studies and other contemporary movements such as linguistics or cultural studies. In this sense, this introduction aims at gathering a few of the different approaches regarding this term. In 1996, Jeremy Smith, in his introduction to *An Historical Study on English*, highlights the value of a more philological approach to texts:

> It is therefore important not to draw linguistic conclusions from textual data without first subjecting the texts to careful examination. “Every text has its own history” could be taken as the key axiom which underlies –or should underlie- philological practice. To refer simply to diatopic (“through-space”, i.e. geographical) and diachronic (“through-time”, i.e. historical) variation of texts is not enough; texts need to be contextualised, so that the true status of the information they contain may be ascertained. (1996:15).

In line with this tendency, the term *pragmaphilology* also emerged in the past decades. We can find a definition of this approach by Jucker (1995:11) claiming that “Pragmaphilology goes one step further and describes the contextual aspects of historical texts, including the addressers and the addressees, their social and personal relationship, the physical and social setting of text production, and the goal(s) of the text.” Whether it is, or it’s not, a useful framework in our present times, is a question that arises in the article “The Future of Philology” by Bajohr, Dorvel, Hessling and Weitz, who write that “The question, then, is whether it still makes sense to speak institutionally and epistemologically of “philology”. In the same article, published in 2014, they refer to the idea that there may not be one philology, but a multitude of schools and approaches that differ from each other by period, textual type, editorial tradition and their current theoretical trends. Current use of technology has also provided a new value for the discipline, and we may now find the label *e-philology* or the more global term *digital humanities*. In the end, the presence of the discipline seems to be still prominent, and the authors conclude that “philology seems to have converted its continuing crises into an ongoing success, and has thus earned the honorific *philologia perennis* or “everlasting philology” –an expression coined by the classical Rudolf Pfeiffer.” (2014:18).

All considered, it seems quite clear that a text, its context and its reception are all important when we are dealing with the understanding of the language, literature and culture of the time, and this is what the following works attempt to do in the subsequent chapters. The present book comprises eight chapters covering topics such as translation, manuscript studies, language contact, vocabulary and Anglo-Saxon and Early Medieval Literature.

In chapter One, Fran Álvarez investigates the use of the vernacular and Latin in the religious context of the Benedictine Reform. The idea of a multilingual England is widely accepted and attested. This chapter deals with the different status of two of the most important: English and Latin, and specially with the idea that English may have a subordinate role in reference to Latin –specially in religious contexts, in which Latin would still stand as lingua franca. Old English had won a prominent role thanks to the politics of King Alfred, whose actions in favour of translating important works from Latin to English positioned the vernacular in a more equalitarian position with Latin. However, the Benedictine Reform, despite using English “[…] became more distinctly that ever before an instrument, a pedagogical tool for the sake of effectiveness, in sharp contrast with the simulatenous movement of a hermeneutic form of Latin, decidedly intended as a prestige dialect of the monastic movement.” In this context, then, the author considers the Old English version of the *Regula Sancti Benedicti*, translated by Ethelwold. The didactic purpose of this work may have been connected with the lack of competence in Latin, specially by the novices, and would have been oriented to “deprive uneducated monolingual speakers of English (þa ungelæredan inlendisce) of their excuses for not obeying the precepts of the RSB on account of their deficient knowledge of Latin.” Seven copies, full or partial, have arrived to our days, mostly produced in the eleventh century. The majority presented a bilingual format -Latin first- followed by the Old English translation. This layout is considered to be the choice of the scribe, which would come to reflect a well-known tradition of bilingual texts produced and transmitted following that arrangement. Álvarez considers the paleographical analysis fundamental as “it is crucial to examine the ways in which the scribes responded to the challenges presented by a context which required each language to be written in a separate set of letterforms." Apart from letterform, text size also reveals differences, showing that Latin letters were bigger that the vernacular ones. As Álvarez concludes, Latin was the language of the church and the language of God, and these visual differences in the manuscripts made it clear that, in the observance of the rules and the precepts of the community, Latin would be considered as the best option.

In the next chapter, Bueno deals with the interesting and difficult question of literary translation in Old English. As an expert in the field, Bueno analyses the Old English poem the *Battle of Brunanburgh*, and focuses on different elements commonly used by the heroic poetry with the aim of discussing how renderings have tried to face and solve the challenge of being translated to contemporary English. In the chapter, Bueno considers the analysed translations to be classified in three groups. First, translations that would consider the poem in isolation. Second, those who would consider it within the context of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. And third, those who would use the poem for poetic inspiration. The author of the chapter focuses on the first group, and more specifically, on the beast-of-battle topos present in lines 57-56a. He continues by comparing the translation into Spanish and Asturian and a very interesting question arises; what makes the difference, once the lexical meanings have been successfully rendered? Bueno answers that those who "have been able to incorporate that meaning into a given rhythmic structure, those which have taken into account the overall poetic layout of the verse" may have the answer, and continues: "that is to say: they saw the trees of the units to be translated but also seeing he woods of their syntactic organisation." The chapter continues by analysing more examples of the renderings, and insists on the idea that the degree of adequacy of each translation will depend on the philosophy and conception of the work, including elements such as the layout or the structural organisation of the poem. Finally, Bueno concludes by emphasising the importance of these type of translations, as they stand as the only source form many contemporary readers and alludes to the function of poetic translators, whose fundamental function would be: "trying to see the present moment in yester texts, to bring the past into sympathy with the present"

De la Cruz studies the language and the linguistic provenance in MS Ferguson 147, a collection of medical recipes housed at the Glasgow University Library (GUL). The Ferguson collection, acquired by the University, in 1921, contains a big part of the personal library of John Ferguson, a chemistry professor at Glasgow University in the 19th century. The manuscript under consideration is dated around the beginning of the fifteenth century. This miscellany contains recipes for different illnesses, as well as prognostic texts and also charms. The text contains, according to the author, 13.000 words approximately. Out of these, once Latin and other material excluded, the final number of words considered for analysis will result in approximately 11.300. The methodology used relied on the author's transcription and the use of a concordance programme (AntConc). With this software, frequency of words was obtained. The author continues the chapter by describing the editorial practice of the scribe and again, by discussing the use of concordance programmes for linguistic analysis in historical texts such as the material under consideration. She makes very interesting reflections on this issue and introduces the use of LALME (*Linguistic Atlas of Late Mediaeval English*), which is used for the localisation of the results at stake. Results of the medieval recipes are compared to previous studies on the *Antidotarium*, also contained in MS Ferguson 147, as indicated above. Linguistic features and dot maps provided by LALME offer the results to be considered, and again the author offers a very interesting discussion on the advantadges and limitations when using LALME. She concluded, thus, despite some limitations, that LALME continues to be a valid and useful source when mapping the language in a manuscript. Results on this particular case have shown that language in MS Ferguson 147 does not coincide fully with the Linguistic Profile of LALME. However, some features may reveal compatibility with some of them, and although some forms are highly standardised, the author's main conclusion would be that Profiles that show a higher correspondence belong to the county of Hereforshire, with influences from Shropshire, Monmouth and Warwickshire. Other questions that should be considered, including the fact that the scribe may have used different sources for the text, or even the interference of his own dialect, would also need to be taken into account.

Next chapter deals with astrological medicine. This work, written by Isabel de la Cruz and Irene Diego explores the language of these texts. This type of medicine deals with the effect of planets on the health of the people, and it constitutes an unexplored and fascinating topic of research. The article starts referring to the well-known article by Robbins (1970) in order to establish three groups according to the type of text, based on three types. The first would be prognosis, the second, diagnosis, and the third would be "treatment or medications by means of herbs, bloodletting ad empirical remedies". However, this classification was not considered to be sufficiently accurate and Voigts (1984) proposes medical writings to be classified into academic treatises, surgical treatises and remedybooks or *materia medica*, of which astrological treatises would be part of. Astrological treatises could be further classified into lapidaries, electionaries, lunaries, destinaries and questionaries. In this case, the treatise under consideration in the chapter is a lunary, more specifically a zodiacal lunary. As the authors indicate, most of these lunaries seem to have been translated into English during the first half of the fifteenth century period, and the audience to which they were addressed would be varied, from the high classes to the clergy. This would explain the large number of surviving copies. The texts analysed in the chapter are considered to be translations of a Hippocratical Treatise. In the Middle Ages, however, many of the treatises attributed to the Hippocratic Corpus were not in fact treatises by Hippocrates, but as the authors point out, they would be " "fabrications of the Middle Ages" and have been usually referred to as the "medieval Hippocratic collection"". After explaining several issues concerning the so called "Hippocratic question", the sections that follow focus on the transmission of the Latin texts and its transmission through the renderings in English. The identification of parallel copies follows, by including a list of the identified copies of the treatise under consideration and the location of the material. Finally, the authors present their findings and conclusions, emphasizing the importance of Astrology, and more specifically of Zodiacal Lunaries, as a fundamental part of medieval medicine.

Chapter Five discusses the Viking legacy in Medieval English vocabulary, a task that proves to be –in some cases- almost impossible to achieve, defeating the linguist in the battle for uncovering the origin of the word. In this chapter, Dance presents us with a fascinating insight into the origin of English words. This subject has been the object of concern for many scholars, and still today, stands as one of the most problematic questions that concerns English etymology. To identify a word as having Old Norse origin or a different one is one of the central issues dealt with in this chapter.

This work considers the etymological evidence from a particular group of words, and focuses on examples present in the Middle English text *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, as these examples are claimed to be Norse loans. The author reminds us that measuring the impact of Old Norse words would range from the 1500 items presented in the Oxford English Dictionary, to "the 600-900 given by Nielsen in Contemporary English". Dance makes an exhaustive revision of the methods used to establish methodological grounds, especially focusing on the comparative phonological evidence. He then focuses on the case of Norse-related words in *Sir Gawain*, explaining that a total of 140 words in this work would unarguably present Norse origin. However, other examples could be included in the same category, according to different considerations. If we add these words, the total of Old Norse lexical stock in *Sir Gawain* would turn nearly 400. The question, then, according to Dance, would be what should be done with the “difficult” words. In order to attempt to answer this question, he proposes four types of prototypical categories which show the structural evidence under which Norse-derived words could be filed. The Chapter continues deepening into each of the four categories, bringing up difficult and fascinating examples of the etymological possibility or non-possibility of the origins of words present in *Sir Gawain* such as ME *grome* or ME *rass*. The author concludes, after detailed analysis and discussion, that each case need individual focus and study. As he states, in many of the examples the etymological evidence resists a single interpretation, nor a simple one. Thus, interpretation and the process of surfing into the complexities of the problem are as important as the conclusions themselves, and deserve to be at the center of the debate as much as results do.

In the following chapter, Gomes uses the idea of labyrinth as a symbolic landscape to explain the structure of the poem Beowulf. The poem presents, as it is the case in Old English poetry, an intricate design in which elements such as alliterative patterns, repetitions, variations, recurrent themes and other additions form a maze resembling the journey that the hero himself will have to go through. To a certain extent, this structure would resemble the contemporary decorative art of the Lindisfarne Gospels or the Book of Kells, containing curvilinear and rectilinear patterns. Gomes continues by stating that may be the labyrinth, conceived as a metaphor, a physical and a mental representation, would well be a more comprehensive alternative to previous proposals for the analysis of the poem. The chapter continues by analysing different passages that connect with this idea of labyrinth, creating a clear tension between linearity and circularity that contributes to the greatness of the poem. Gomes concludes the chapter reminding us that may be the final purpose of a labyrinth is precisely not having a purpose. The joy, mistery and greatness of the journey itself –as for Beowulf- should be the main attraction.

Chapter seven is written by Professor Nils-Lennart Johannesson. This interesting work exposes and relates the correspondences of two passages in two texts: the first found in the *Orrmulum* and the second in the *Testaments of the Twelve Partriarchs*. This comparison is grounded in the claim that a previous Greek source would have been available to Orrm before the latter translation of the same into Latin by Grosseteste in 1242. The evidence found for this claim would be sustained by some passages in Middle English present in the well-known Middle English homily collection *Orrmulum,* which would reflect the content of the Greek text, *the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*. The chapter is divided into six different sections. In the Introduction, the author explains the state of the art and exposes the necessity to consider the revision of the transmission routes of the text under consideration. Following this introduction, he continues with the description and contextualisation of the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* and of the *Orrmulum* in sections two and three. After this revision, Johanesson presents the correspondences between the list of Orrms' vices and virtues and their parallel version in the *Testaments.* As the author indicates, the entries are presented with the same layout. After presenting these correspondences, Johannes arises the question of whether Orrm would have been able to ascribe these vices and virtues to the patriarchs without having access to one version of the *Testaments*. How this could have happened is the object of the next section. In this section, he discusses a possible route of transmission, where he established links between Orm and the palace *school of Laon* in Picardy, where a translated copy of the Testaments may have been available. The precise route in which the Testaments reached Orrm is not yet to be known, but according to the evidence when comparing the list of the vices and virtues of the Patriarchs, it seems clear that the Latin copy of the *Testaments* entered Western Europe prior to twelfth century, and left no other print than Orrm's list.

Last chapter of the volume is written by Haruko Momma. This work purports to demonstrate how the Early Middle English literary tradition used previous material to construct the emerging literary tradition of the emerging period. Momma uses very interesting concepts, such as "bricolage" -coined by Lévi-Strauss- and relates it to the way materials have been re-used in order to give way to this new tradition stemming from the previous one. She focuses on the use of "the trope of ravenous worms" as connected to the theme of soul and body. In her chapter, the image of the ravenous worms is the base to conduct a survey in the Anglo-Saxon tradition that help to link these previous sources with the new literary tradition in the Early Medieval tradition in England. In order to do so, she focuses on a vernacular homily found in composite manuscript named Hatton 115, which is related to the ninth homily in the Vercelli Book. The theme of the homily is related to the topic of the body and soul. Post-Conquest vernacular writers "make do with" whatever is at hand" and "renew or enrich the stock […] to maintain it with the remains of previous constructions or destruction." The idea of worms associated to the dead flesh goes back to a Pre-Christian era. The expression "food for worms" and its different variations are found in Old English texts, such as the Soul and Body poems of the Vercelli Book and the Exeter Book. This tradition, according to Momma, may have reached the Post-Conquest period; early Middle English poems such as *The Grave and the Soul's Address to the Body* from the Worcester Fragments.

Next section in the chapter is about the so called "Hatton Worm Homily". This homily, found together with other texts, is part of the manuscript known as Hatton 115, and shows the image of the trope of ravenous worms very effectively. The text in Hatton shares a common origin with the ninth homily in the Vercelli Book, but its version in the Hatton adds material (not found in the Vercelli) as Momma shows thoroughly. The author finds this material in another homily, a version of which is found in Vercelli II. Thus, she concludes that Old English Homilies will still be used after the Conquest, and that Post-Conquest tradition would assemble materials to produce texts that could accommodate the audience of the time. In this particular case, it is proven that Hatton mss would be a composite homiletic text, composed by assembling existing materials of Anglo-Saxon origin that endured and remained part of a renewal and innovative tradition.

In conclusion, the contents of the volume above described remain particularly interesting for those interested in the different perspectives of current research in the field. The chapters included in this volume cover a wide range of topics, exhorting the potential reader to consider the relationship of the medieval textual heritage and language with both, its contemporary medieval audience and the readers of the 21st century. We hope that this book will inspire further research and interest. I would like to conclude this introduction by emphasizing, once more, the importance of this field of research. We must search and (re)search to continue the quest for the poetic verses and their metaphors, the origin of words, the impossible spellings and translations, the lost manuscripts, and the endless labyrinths so that we can continue studying and writing about the fascination we feel for the Medieval English Studies.

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CHAPTER ONE

BILINGUAL MANUSCRIPTS IN LATE ANGLO-SAXON ENGLAND: THE BILINGUAL COPIES OF THE *REGULA SANCTI BENDICTI*

FRANCISCO JOSÉ ÁLVAREZ LÓPEZ
UNIVERSITY OF EXETER

In his well-known *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, Bede describes the linguistic landscape of Britain in the following terms:

> At the present time, there are five languages in Britain, just as the divine law is written in five books, all devoted to seeking out and setting forth one and the same kind of wisdom, … These are the English (*Anglorum*), British (*Brettonum*), Irish (*Scottorum*), Pictish (*Pictorum*), as well as the Latin languages; through the study of the scriptures, Latin is in general use among them all. (1994, 10)

This is the description of a multilingual society, that is to say, one in which the different communities and their languages coexisted in apparent harmony, as here exemplified by the simile with the five books of the Pentateuch. However, the final sentence leaves little doubt that the vernacular languages held a subordinate status to Latin in accordance to its position as religious *lingua franca*. As was the case throughout Western Europe at the time, Latin was the main instrument for the production of written records in Anglo-Saxon England. However, unlike other contemporary European societies, the Anglo-Saxons resorted to their written vernacular from a very early date. Even though Old English began to be written in the seventh century in the form of glosses and native personal and place-names, it is not uncommon to find Old English bounder descriptions in charters from the early eighth century and even from the seventh. One such example is to be found in S23 (Whitelock 1955).[1]

By the third quarter of the ninth century the situation had been turned on its head by the Viking raids, as dramatically described by King Alfred of Wessex:

> There were very few (individuals) this side of the Humber who were able to understand their services in English, or translate even a single document from Latin into English, and I reckon that there were not many the other side of the Humber; there were so few that I cannot think of a single one south of the Thames when I first came to the throne. (Keynes and Lapidge 1983, 126)[2]

The apocalyptic landscape that Alfred outlines is subsequently seized upon to justify the need for his very own educational programme in which an innovative approach is laid out: learning to read Old English would be the priority, although "Latin would (also) be taught to those that seemed most apt or were intended for holy orders" (Orchard 2003, 214). However, it is Alfred's reference to the translation of texts from Latin to English that is relevant here. One of Alfred's cultural achievements was the setting up of a translation programme that would bring into the vernacular those texts which he considered "most necessary for all men to know".[3] The impact of this endeavour on Anglo-Saxon prose was outstanding in part due to the fact that the presentation of the texts translated in Alfred's circle was mainly in Old English. As pointed out by Nicole Discenza, even though Alfred's court was multilingual (as it included Frankish and Welsh assistants and often hosted Irish and Scandinavian guests) "the works of Alfred and his contemporaries carry little trace of these tongues. They wrote *monolingual* texts" (2011, 55).

In the history of interaction between Latin and Old English, Alfred's translations probably stand as the second most significant step towards the more fluid interplay which we find in the tenth and eleventh centuries. The presence of glosses in some of the most outstanding manuscripts from the early Anglo-Saxon era has been described as "the

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[1] London, British Library, Cotton MSS, Augustus II 91. A grant of land to Dunn, priest and abbot, and the church of Lyminge by Æthelberht II, King of Kent, date AD 732 (Whitelock 1955, no. 65). See also Crick (2012, 177); and Tite, (2003, 102-3).

[2] Orchard (2003, 213).

[3] In recent times the role of Alfred in the translation programme has been questioned. See Godden (2007); and the reply by Bately (2009). The latest views on this can be found in Discenza and Szarmach (2014).

foundations of English translation" (Stanton 2002, 1). In the tension between the two languages the need was felt for the vernacular to become an essential instrument in the interaction with Latin texts. And "it was precisely in its need to regard, contemplate and process Latin texts that Old English acquired its own status as a written vernacular" (1). In Stanton's words,

> [g]losses are our earliest evidence of interpretative activity among the Anglo-Saxons, and they graphically dramatize the externalization of understanding, where the interpretation of a text becomes visibly separable from the words of the text and, paradoxically, by being marginalized becomes a more central object of investigation and further manipulation. (6)

Alfred's output shows more likeness with the use of glosses than it may seem initially apparent. As with the glosses, the vernacular renditions that came out of Alfred's circle have an intended didactic character, and therefore they betray a strong determination to elucidate and educate. It is tempting to agree with Stanton's view whereby "[t]he king is playing the role of the schoolmaster (as he seems to play with) the idea of the eloquent ruler, a figure with roots both in the Old Testament and in classical antiquity", and later revisited in the Carolingian court (6-7). His translations set the foundations for a culture of vernacular translation and perhaps institutionalised the concept of bilingual culture. His work and that of his circle seem to counterbalance the implicit lack of "authoritative weight" of English in the shadow of Latin.

However, Alfred's "unwavering belief in the ability of English to express the same content as Latin texts" was seemingly not shared by the generations of Benedictine reformers that came to dominate the Anglo-Saxon religious landscape from the mid-tenth century (Stephenson 2011, 130). Two of its most prolific voices seem to have had a rather different view on the value of the vernacular. Both Byrhtferth of Ramsey and Ælfric of Eynsham produced a remarkable corpus of vernacular texts, and yet it is only too apparent that for them English was but "a shabby substitute for those who have not mastered Latin" (130).[4] Byrhtferth is particularly adamant of this as he fervently "protests that he is forced to resort to English due to the laziness of his clerical audience whose Latinity is deplorable" (131). On the other hand, Ælfric seems resigned to accepting much more willingly his role as mere translator given that he writes for a lay audience (his patrons Æthelweard and Æthelwær). In the context of the

[4] On Alfred´s contrasting view see Discenza (2005, 5).

language politics of the Benedictine Reform, English became more distinctly than ever before an instrument, a pedagogical tool for the sake of effectiveness, in sharp contrast with the simultaneous development of a hermeneutic form of Latin decidedly intended as a prestige dialect of the monastic movement.[5]

1. The Translation of *RSB*

It is within this context of vernacular translations and compositions which aimed to achieve a didactic goal that the production of the Old English *Regula Sancti Benedicti* must be considered. Æthelwold's translation became the core workbook among the newly founded or reformed Benedictine communities. An entry in the *Liber Eliensis* claims that King Edgar and his queen assigned the Bishop of Winchester to produce an Old English rendering (Blake 1962).[6] The ascription of authorship provided by this twelfth-century entry has been widely accepted among scholars although the translator's ultimate purpose is a recurrent topic of debate.[7] However, a historical record surviving on an early twelfth-century manuscript (Cotton MSS, Faustina A X) but commonly accepted as contemporary with the Benedictine Reform and known as *King Edgar's Establishment of the Monasteries (EEM)* claims that "hæbben forþi þa ungelæreden inlendisce þæs halgan regules cyþþe þurh agenes gereordes anwrigenesse, þæt hy þe geornlicor Gode þeowien and nane tale næbben þæt hy þurh nytennesse misfon þurfen" (Whitelock et al. 1981, 142-54).[8] Therefore, according to this historical source which is arguably a product of Æthelwold himself, the translation was intended to "deprive uneducated monolingual speakers of English ("þa ungelæredan inlendisce") of their excuses for not obeying the precepts of the *RSB* on account of their deficient knowledge of Latin" so that they might "the more zealously serve God and have no excuse that they were driven by ignorance to err"

[5] On hermeneutic Latin see Lapidge (1975).
[6] Recently translated in *Liber Eliensis: A History of the Isle of Ely from the Seventh Century to the Twelfth*, trans. Janet Fairweather (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005), 134-5.
[7] For differing views on this, see Grestch (1974, 125; 1992, 131; 1999, 226-33); Jayatilaka, (2003, 147); Schröer (1885-88, xiii-xiv); Whitelock (1970, 125); Wulfstan of Winchester (1991, liv-lv).
[8] Also printed in Thomas O. Cockayne, *Leechdoms, Wortcunning and Starcraft of Early England,* 3 vols., *Rerum Britannicarum medii aevi scriptores*, no. 35 (London: Longman, 1864-66, repr. 1965), iii, 432-44.

(Gretsch 1999, 237, no 32).[9] Hence, the available evidence presents us with a purposeful translation, created (and presumably circulated) under royal sponsorship, that was intended to bridge the existing gap between the accession of new recruits to monastic orders and their lack of appropriate Latin comprehension skills. In an instance not too dissimilar from the aforementioned translation programme set out by King Alfred, the aim was an utterly practical one. Novices needed to understand and abide by the monastic principles from the moment they entered the community, but this was not possible given their defective knowledge of Latin. Hence, it was most necessary that these regulations were made available in their native language.

2. Format

Seven full or partial copies of Æthelwold's text have survived to the present day.[10] Even though they range in date from the late tenth century to the early thirteenth, most of them were produced in the eleventh century. Moreover, the majority of these items share a common, bilingual format whereby the Old English text follows the Latin chapter by chapter.[11] On the other hand, the remaining two manuscripts offer monolingual renderings of the vernacular *RSB* as evidence that the vernacular text may have circulated to some extent on its own, perhaps as a late, eleventh-century development.[12] The most problematic of these is the Durham manuscript, because it contains a copy physically independent from the Latin text and there is only tentative evidence to suggest that both versions were originally intended to go together. Moreover, it seems that the vernacular was produced at a different *scriptorium* and was later

[9] See also Pratt (2012).
[10] Oxford, Corpus Christi College, MS 197 (s. x^2); Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 178, Part B (s. xi^1); London, British Library, Cotton MSS, Titus A IV (s. xi med.); Wells, Cathedral Library, MS 7 [chs. 49-65] (s. xi med.); Durham, Cathedral Library, MS B. IV. 24 (s. xi^2); London, British Library, Cotton MSS, Faustina A X, Part B (s. xii^1); London, British Library, Cotton MSS, Claudius D III (s. xiii^1). Two further manuscripts are often included in this group (London, British Library, Cotton MSS, Tiberius A III and Gloucester, Cathedral Library, MS 35). However, they contain only chapter 4 of the *RSB*, which seems to have had its own independent circulation. See Hallinger (1969, 211-32); and Jayatilaka (1996, 245-9).
[11] This is the case in OCCC197, CCCC178, Cotton MSS, Titus A IV, Wells 7 and Cotton MSS, Claudius D III.
[12] They are B.IV, 24 and Cotton MSS, Faustina A X, Part B.

attached to the composite manuscript in order to supplement the Latin version (Álvarez López 2007a; Dumville 1993, 12-13). Similarly, the Faustina manuscript presents us with a very interesting instance in which a twelfth-century copy of the vernacular *RSB* is followed by a contemporary copy of the aforementioned *EEM*, in a manuscript with plenty of evidence of mid-twelfth century use in the form of numerous marginal annotations (Álvarez López 2012; Gameson 1999, no. 384; Gretsch 1974, 126-37; Ker 1957, no. 154B; Treharne 1999, 232-4).[13]

When considered as a group, the surviving copies suggest that the bilingual format may have been the original layout chosen by the translator himself or a copyist very shortly afterwards, even though none of the extant copies is contemporary with the translation. Far from being innovative, such choice would come to reflect a tradition, well-known at the time, of bilingual texts produced and transmitted in that arrangement (Dumville 1993, 12). The production of bilingual texts in which the two languages are presented side by side or immediately following each other was particularly common during the eleventh century and even a quick exploration allows us to find a number of examples in which a variety of slightly different formats were used in order to accommodate multilingual works on a manuscript page.

One such instance is found in the so-called Paris Psalter (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS lat. 8824). This is a codex of uncertain origin (although St. Augustine's, Canterbury has been plausibly argued for) from the middle of the eleventh century which contains both a prose translation of Psalms I-L associated with King Alfred's circle and a vernacular verse rendering from the mid-tenth century of Psalms LI-CL parallel with the Latin original (Bately 1982; Gneuss 2001, no. 891; Gretsch 1999, 21; Ker 1957, no. 367; O'Neill 2001).[14] Here the narrow pages show two columns of text with the Latin original on the left-hand side and the Old English translation on the right column. This format, which is seldom found amongst other bilingual texts of the time, allows for a close relationship between the two languages and, as it happens, reveals the need for extra space when copying the vernacular. To compensate, ink drawings were entered in most of the gaps left at the end of the Latin chapters.

A fragmentary copy of the *Homiliarium* of Angers survives in Taunton, Somerset Heritage Centre, DD/DAD C/1193/77 (Gneuss 2003,

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[13] For a detailed palaeographical study of Part B, see Álvarez López (2010, ch. 6).

[14] For an edition of the prose translation, see Bright and Ramsay (1907). For the "Metrical Psalter" see Krapp (1932). A facsimile of the entire manuscript can be found in Colgrave (1958).

303).[15] This item, commonly known as the ‘Taunton fragment’ since Helmut Gneuss brought it to the attention of the academic world following Simon Keynes’ discovery in 2002, consists of two original bifolia (now four separate leaves) containing part of an exposition of biblical texts (pericopes) for the fifth to eighth Sundays after Pentecost. Here, the Latin original alternates with the vernacular translation at brief intervals. Although its place of origin remains unknown, evidence ranging from the quality of the hand to peculiar linguistic features points to a minor Anglo-Saxon centre. The leaves were written in the middle of the eleventh century or shortly after and provide an instance of a bilingual text aimed at catering for the pastoral needs “outside of the intellectual traditions of the Benedictine reform and its practitioners”, as Aidan Conti puts it (2009, 33). Thus, this small window into the production of manuscripts in rural England during the Anglo-Saxon period shows, not only that bilingual texts were known, produced and circulated outside the intellectual circles of the time, but that a practical layout had been selected to ease the duties of the preachers using them. In this particular case, the rapid alternation of languages allows the speaker to engage their monolingual audience in very fluid manner.

Durham, Cathedral Library, B.iii.32 is a composite book containing a hymnal from the second quarter of the eleventh century (fos 1-55) and an early or mid-eleventh-century copy of Ælfric’s *Grammar* (fos 56-127) (Gameson 2010, nos. 8-9; Gneuss 1968, 85-90; Hartzel 2006, no. 91; Ker 1957, no.107A; Scragg 2012, nos. 318-24). Overall, the manuscript has a distinctive bilingual feel given that the hymns and canticles in part A were almost fully glossed in Old English and the *Grammar* in part B is also partly bilingual. However, it is fos 43v-45v that draw our attention. Within those five pages, which had originally been left blank, we find a collection of proverbs in a hand from the middle of the eleventh century.[16] In this instance, each Latin sentence is followed by its Old English translation, with the hand alternating between Caroline and insular minuscule accordingly. Even though both languages were copied in the same ink, the separation is highlighted by the use of initials in the Latin only.

A final, albeit more relevant instance is provided by the Exeter bilingual copy of the *Rule of Chrodegang*, now in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 191 (Gneuss 2001. no. 60; Ker 1957, no. 46). This manuscript from the third quarter of the eleventh century presents both renderings of the regulations for canonical life in a single column of text

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[15] See also Conti (2009); Gneuss (2005); Gretsch (2004); Rudolf (2010).

[16] For an edition of the proverbs see Arngart (1981).

with the Latin followed by the vernacular chapter by chapter. This arrangement, which is favoured in the surviving copies of the *RSB*, was also used for texts as diverse as the *Marvels of the East*, extant in London, British Library, Cotton MSS, Tiberius B V, fos 78v-86v (s. xi $^{2/4}$). Nevertheless, this format seems to have been particularly convenient for customaries that were used in daily chapter meetings (Ker 1957, no. 193).[17]

This selection of items offers evidence of a tradition of bilingual texts being copied and circulated by the middle of the eleventh century (and probably from as early as the middle of the tenth century) whose layout may range from the parallel columns of the Psalter to the chapter-by-chapter presentation of the *Rule of Chrodegang* and even the line by line variation seen in the *Durham Proverbs*.[18] The primacy of the Latin language is not only maintained but even reinforced by its foregoing position. However, the role of the vernacular should not be underestimated given that the format chosen for copying these bilingual texts seems to respond to the practical aim of gaining a better and easier access to the Latin text through the vernacular (Wieland 2009, 139). This is something that can be seen, for instance, in the Taunton fragment whose Old English text "would have well served priests with limited abilities in Latin" (Conti 2009, 32). However, the common format used for the *RSB* and the *Rule of Chrodegang* was probably more fitting for texts intended to be read out and explained at the daily chapter meetings, precisely chapter by chapter.

3. Script

The use of this layout during the late tenth and eleventh centuries in England had significant implications for the nature and appearance of the scripts in which these manuscripts were written and for the scribes who wrote them. Although for most of the Anglo-Saxon period scribes used their own insular script when writing both Latin and Old English, the introduction of the continental Caroline minuscule in the middle of the tenth century destabilised the status quo of the native, vernacular script and brought about a definite separation between the two languages (Stokes 2014, 11). The foreign script was soon adopted, if not imposed, as a set of

[17] An earlier copy of the *Rule of Chrodegang* with same layout from Canterbury can be found in Canterbury, Cathedral Library, Add. MS 20 (s. xi^{2}). See Ker (1957, no. 97). A further instance of the same layout is found in the F-text of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. However, in this case the Latin follows the vernacular, which takes pre-eminence. See Ker (1957, no. 367).

[18] Other bilingual texts from this period are discussed in Stokes (2014, 19-21).

letterforms whose marked clarity and roundness symbolised the religious perfection that the Benedictine élite strived to implement across the Anglo-Saxon monastic landscape, even if this varied between the *scriptoria* connected with Æthelwold and those connected with the other two leading reformers, Dunstan and Oswald (Crick 2012, 63).[19] Moreover, as the visual separation became increasingly blurred towards the middle of the eleventh century, the native Anglo-Saxon script was somehow relegated in a kind of ideological script hierarchy.[20] Thus, in bilingual manuscripts from the second half of the tenth century and from the eleventh century the Latin text tends to be visually less cluttered (a sense only enhanced by the absence of certain ascenders and descenders) and present a more elaborate punctuation system. On the other hand, the insular text tends to appear untidy, using a rather simple punctuation system (*punctus simplex* is normally the only mark found) and at times even smaller in size.[21]

From a palaeographical point of view, it is crucial to examine the ways in which the scribes responded to the challenge presented by a context which required each language to be written in a separate set of letterforms. A detailed study of each hand both in the vernacular and the Latin reveals informative details about the dynamics under which individual scribes performed, as well as regarding the evolution of script in the broader context of the English *scriptoria*. However, one must begin by establishing a fine chronological line at about the year 1100 when the separation between Caroline minuscule (or, rather, its English developments) and the insular Anglo-Saxon minuscule effectively becomes so blurred that it is no longer possible to establish clear differences between them, except for those letterforms which remain unique to Old English (*æ*, *ᵹ*, *ƿ*, *þ*, *ð*).[22] As a result, in the two latest copies of the Old English *RSB* (Cotton

[19] On the arrival of Caroline minuscule in England and the English Benedictine Reform, see Bishop (1971, xvii); Dumville (1993, 143); Rushforth (2012, 198).

[20] This form of minuscule is also described as English Vernacular minuscule. See Crick (2012a) and Stokes (2014). On the ideological undertone behind the introduction of Caroline minuscule, see Bishop (1971, xi-xii and xvii-xxiii); Crick (2011, 6); and Dumville (1993, 7-78).

[21] The difference in size is particularly obvious in some bilingual charters, where property boundaries are given in Old English. See, for example, S801, a charter from Edgar to Æthelwold from 975: London, British Library, Harley Charter 43 C. 6. On the visual separation between Anglo-Saxon minuscule and Caroline minuscule see Crick (2012a, 179); Stokes, (2011, 23-47); Treharne (2012, 265-87).

[22] This is effectively the beginning of a transitional period characterised by a transitional script: Protogothic minuscule. See Brown (1990, 72-3), and Roberts (2005, 104-7).

MSS, Faustina A X, s. xii[1], and Cotton MSS, Claudius D III, s. xiii[1]) the scribes do not show significant differences between Latin and Old English beyond the aforementioned special letterforms.[23] On the other hand, the earliest surviving manuscripts do confirm the existence of a strict binary system of scripts. None of these codices is contemporary with the reforming process which allegedly established this new state of affairs, but, as pointed out by Bishop (1971, xxi-xxiii) and Dumville (1993, 35-48), the earliest surviving copy (OCCC197) shows the work of a scribe with an excellent skill in both scripts at a time when maintaining that difference seemed to be a matter of great ideological importance.[24]

After the first generation of reformers, the degree of purity of the continental script seems to have deteriorated progressively and a certain degree of insularity reveals itself throughout the Latin letterforms. Arguably, this "purity" was never properly achieved in the *scriptoria* under the direct influence of both Dunstan of Canterbury and Oswald of Worcester, the two leading reformers working alongside Æthelwold. CCCC178 has often been highlighted as an example of the unique development that the Anglo-Caroline script, the generic variety of Caroline minuscule developed in England, underwent at Worcester in the last quarter of the tenth century. Dumville (1993, 69-75) labelled this variety of insular Caroline as "Style III" and it argued that it was characterised by the abundance of mannerisms and its vernacular proportions.[25] Most copies from the eleventh century reveal a parallel tendency whereby the vernacular script becomes more angular and the continental more anglicised. Overall, the scribes of these earlier bilingual texts were able to maintain this separation of scripts with a high degree of success, even though the exercise must have required a good deal of concentration. As noted elsewhere, it is not uncommon to find a script occasionally used in the wrong language (Álvarez López 2007b). Slips of concentration were fairly regular when copying short chapters and therefore alternating from script to script in quick succession. The two earliest manuscripts show a few interesting instances. Thus, whereas the scribe of OCCC197 writes whole sections of the Latin text in a neat form

[23] In the case of the former manuscript, which contains a monolingual copy of the vernacular text, Latin words and quotations are still occasionally found. See, for example, fos 106r or 118v, where musical notation was also entered.
[24] On OCCC197; see also Dumville (1993, 19-35); Jayatilaka (2003, 151-4, 182-6); Ker (1957, no. 353); Scragg (2012, nos. 950-8).
[25] See Bishop (1971, 20, no. 22). Dumville actually argued that Worcester initially produced a style of Caroline minuscule much closer to Æthelwold's Winchester (Style I) before the development of Style III at the turn of the century.

of Anglo-Saxon Square minuscule,[26] CCCC178 exposes how individual letterforms influence each other in both scripts.[27] Nevertheless, most scribes coped fairly well with the frequent appearance of Latin words or phrases within the vernacular text. The abundant influences found are mostly related to either visible features of letters common to both alphabets[28] or forms with slightly different shapes but significantly close to each other as to allow common features to be visible.[29] Finally, it seems that this impact is more frequently present in Latin, where letterforms are occasionally evocative of insular shapes. It consequently follows that these scribes had probably been trained first in the insular script before moving on to the continental alphabet,[30] once considered "the most difficult of scripts" (Bishop 1971, xxiii).[31]

The difference between the two languages is not simply reduced to individual letterforms. In some instances, a detailed examination of the text size exposes the fact that the Latin letters may be noticeably bigger than their vernacular counterparts. Whereas this difference is not so markedly noticeable in other early copies, Wells 7 shows a consistent dissimilarity in appearance whereby the Latin text is visually clearer and more solemn.[32] Besides, the difference in minim height is of 2 mm.[33] Similarly, it has already been discussed how the birth of translation in Anglo-Saxon England is often deemed to lie with glosses (Stanton 2002, 1-7). The best examples of glossed manuscripts are provided by some of the most remarkable early medieval psalters. In several of them the

[26] See fos 74v17-23, 82r10-14, 83r17-83v1, 86v18-87r15 (full Chapter 59).

[27] Namely, the descender of Caroline *g* and high *s*.

[28] For instance, *c*, *e*, *i*, *l*, *m*, *n*, *o*, *p*, *q*, *t*, or *u* look substantially similar in both scripts as well as the descender of *g* and *ᵹ*.

[29] For example, *a*, the second component of *æ*, round-shaped *d* as well as ascenders and descenders.

[30] For further commentary on the initial training of scribes see Bishop (1971, xxiii) and Dumville (1993, 26).

[31] See also Crick (2012a, 179-83) and Stokes (2014, 192-8).

[32] Similar instances are found in the late copy in Claudius D III as well as in the bilingual copy of Chapter 4 preserved in Tiberius A III, fos 103r24-105r10. This mid-eleventh century text is sometimes studied alongside the full copies of the Old English *RSB*. However, the vernacular, interlinear gloss found in the copy of the Latin *RSB* in the same manuscript has been shown not to relate to Æthelwold's translation and is therefore not studied alongside it. See D'Aronco (1983, 121-8); Gretsch (1999, 226-8); Jayatilaka (1996, ch. 5).

[33] Minims are consistently 5 mm high in the Latin, whereas they reach only 3mm in the Old English. With regard to ascenders, they are 8 mm and 7 mm respectively.

glossing process was planned from their very conception and the lines were ruled and written by the main scribe of the Latin text. In most of these cases, the vernacular gloss is significantly smaller than the Latin original. However, one exception stands out. The pages of the mid-eleventh-century Cambridge Psalter, also known as the Winchcombe Psalter (Cambridge, University Library, MS Ff. 1. 23), were ruled in a single column for 32 long lines in which the continuous Old English gloss (in red ink) was entered immediately above the Latin original (in black ink). Despite the chromatic variation, the mise-en-page and the overall appearance prompted N. R. Ker to argue that this "is not properly an interlinear gloss" (1957, no. 13).[34] Indeed, the ruling of the page shows great consistency in terms of space between the lines regardless of whether they are intended for the main text or the gloss. Moreover, minim height is only slightly higher in the Latin, which is about 1mm higher than its translation. Nevertheless, a number of features are present as a reminder of the status of the Latin. These include the choice of ink colours (where the gloss is given the same ink colour as the opening initials and which is very uncommon for the copying of main texts), the thinner nib used for the vernacular and the lack of initials in the Old English text. In the words of Jane Roberts, "the greater importance of the Latin is signalled by the setting of the initial capital for each verse out into the marginal space" (2011, 63).

4. Conclusions

The manuscripts containing the bilingual copies of the Old English *RSB* provide us with a remarkable set of items which, beyond their unquestionable individualism and the unique features each of them contains, allows for a wider exploration of the solid Anglo-Saxon tradition of negotiating multilingual works. They reflect and are a direct result of a long tradition which emerges from the need felt by individuals such as King Alfred to bring the most significant Latin texts closer to potential readers whose abilities on the foreign language were limited. The need to bridge that gap by enhancing the didactic character of the texts and their physical representations seems to be commonplace during key moments across the Anglo-Saxon period. However, the starting viewpoint was not always the same. Thus, whereas Alfred played the role of schoolmaster of his realm and conceived English as a valid vehicle for teaching and learning, the generations of Benedictine reformers that came from the mid-

[34] See also Robinson (1988, I, no. 29).

tenth to the eleventh centuries, were much less enthusiastic about the didactic value of the vernacular. In their eyes, resorting to Old English was a minor irritation that was only accepted as a medium to access Latin and thus reaching the true means for divine teaching and learning. The frequent references to recipients of vernacular texts as "those who have not mastered Latin" or the "uneducated monolingual speakers of English" only serve to emphasise the authoritative weight of Latin which may also be reflected in the parchment.

As a consequence of the proliferation of bilingual texts, scribes were faced with the dilemma of how best to present them on the page. It has been shown that a variety of options were adopted mostly according to the nature of the work in question. Thus, a mise-en-page made of two columns was adopted for the Paris Psalter as both languages were kept physically separate, whereas the periscopes in the Taunton fragment alternate languages at short intervals within a single column of long lines in a much more fluid setting. Finally, the Durham proverbs show a format much closer to that used for customaries such as the *Rule of Chrodegang* or the *RSB* where the prominent Latin text is followed by the Old English after each section (be this a proverb or a chapter).

The introduction of Caroline minuscule in Anglo-Saxon *scriptoria* from the middle of the tenth century turned the copying of bilingual texts into a challenge for scribes who were now required to use two scripts. What is more, they often had to switch between languages within very short intervals. As expected, this alteration had a real impact on the performance by English scribes and, even more importantly, it deeply marked the history of both scripts in England. Thus, whereas the vernacular script was from this point effectively limited to the copying of Old English and saw the rounding of the Square minuscule, the Caroline minuscule underwent a similar process of hybridisation at different points in different centres of production.[35] Overall, evidence from the manuscripts discussed above shows how in the eleventh century both scripts evolved in an ever-closer fashion to the point when differentiation became problematic and ultimately non-existent. The epitome of this process is provided by the early twelfth-century copy of the Old English *RSB* in Faustina A X, where the Protogothic script is used both for the vernacular text and for the occasional Latin sections found within it.

Beyond the upheaval caused by the adoption of a new script, and despite the availability of different formats for the production of bilingual texts, there seems to be little doubt that the scribes, or those that

[35] For a recent study on this, see Curran (2017).

commissioned their works (in this case the bilingual *RSB*), aimed at sharing the translation of the Benedictine text while carefully maintaining the status of Latin on the page. It is arguable whether one could blame the new continental script with its round and occasionally large dimensions, but instances such as Wells 7, where the Latin text is significantly bigger than the vernacular, show a determined effort to focus the reader's attention on the former while at the same time somehow belittling the Old English text. Thus, the latter becomes a mere tool required simply to overcome the lack of sufficient linguistic skills among the younger members of the community.

To conclude, Latin was in the medieval period the language of the Church and, by implication, the language of God. It may to an extent seem striking that, within the context of the Latinising Benedictine Reform, English ecclesiastics produced such a large body of vernacular writings (reluctant as they may sometimes have been), and even more so that sacred texts such as the Psalter and *RSB* were translated and repeatedly copied in Old English. However, one should not lose sight of the fact that this resulted often out of the necessity to communicate to those with little or no Latin at all (Liuzza 1998, 7). In addition, the underlying linguistic hierarchy seems to be strictly maintained with regards to the visual appearance which the texts had on the page, especially after the Benedictine Reform and the establishment of the Caroline minuscule. There is little doubt that scribes were fully aware of the visual difference between the two scripts they were working with (Crick 2012a, 19-20). Thus, besides the fact that the version in the divine language takes precedence by leading the vernacular translation, its occasionally bigger size provided a symbolic reminder of what language a member of the monastic community (or, for that matter, any reader) should strive to dominate if they were to observe fully the precepts of a saintly life.

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