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A COMPARISON OF THE OLD ENGLISH *OROSIUS* WITH THE *HISTORIARUM ADVERSUM PAGANOS*

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Introduction

Scholars have long neglected the literary aspect of the OE Orosius, preferring instead to discuss its authorship, certain textual questions, or the new geographical information it provides about Europe in the time of the Anglo-Saxons. What is now needed is a close examination of the text of the OE Orosius, in comparison with the Latin Historiarum adversum Paganos, its primary source, as literature. This thesis provides such an examination, one that focusses on the artistic merits of the translator's work. What becomes clear is that the translator, in consciously altering the work of Orosius, has created a piece of Anglo-Saxon prose well suited to his audience and worthy of attention because of its many narrative strengths. In the course of his work the translator reveals his gift as a narrative craftsman, one who has the ability to transform what is primarily a work of polemic into a collection of engaging heroic tales.

The Orosius as a work of literature has in the past been received rather cooly by its critics. Stanley Greenfield says that it "is not exactly exciting, though there are curiosities of a literary-critical nature to be gleaned here and there,"[1] while Eleanor Duckett goes further, stating that "In spite, however,

of all the king's strenuous endeavour, many men of Wessex in this ninth century must have found their minds sinking and slipping as in a bog of clay when they strove to read this Anglo-Saxon version of Orosius."[2] Even those scholars who have not expressed such negative views have generally restricted their studies to other matters than the art of the work itself. The questions of its authorship and translation have been discussed at length by Bately and Elizabeth Liggins, among others,[3] and Bately, as well as Ann Kirkman and Simeon Potter, has focussed on questions that have arisen about the text itself or about it in comparison with other works.[4] By far the greatest attention has been given to the geographical section of the work (Book I, chapter i). Of the thirty-five articles in English devoted to the Orosius listed in Greenfield and Robinson's A Bibliography of Publications on Old English Literature, thirteen discuss some aspect of this section, and a further twenty-one articles in English dealing specifically with the voyages of Ohthere and Wulfstan are listed separately.[5] Even many of those scholars who do not think highly of the OE work see this section as its sole saving grace.[6]

This thesis will not deal with the much studied

geographical section of the OE text, since such an account, while it is written with its audience in mind, does not lend itself well to a study of narrative and of transformations for the sake of story. Further, it is not the intention of the present thesis to provide a close stylistic comparison of the Latin and the OE works; though this remains to be treated in future studies, it has given way here to an examination that focusses primarily on the larger aspects of narrative and on the translator's conscious shaping of his work for his readers. The translator's many omissions will only be referred to briefly. Because we do not have his Latin original, any study of his omissions would necessarily be highly conjectural, and this thesis has therefore concentrated largely on the manner in which he has added to and transformed the Historiarum, particularly in those books that are most closely translated.

These transformations are evident in the passages of commentary that appear throughout the work, the subject of Chapter I. The translator leaves out entire sections of commentary that appear in the work of Orosius, and he changes those that remain in such a way as to indicate that his thematic interests were

quite different from those found in the Latin work. He places increased emphasis on God's role as the shaper of human history and the controller of human destiny, and he demonstrates his perception of the birth of Christ as marking a dramatic change in the course of history, a moment before which there was no possibility of the universal goodness and mercy that followed it. In the course of these passages of personal intervention, the translator also exerts his own controlling influence, altering passages so that they become more relevant and immediate to his audience.

His treatment of the historical accounts given in the Latin work is further evidence of his concern with his readers. Historical information becomes, in the translator's hands, the basis for countless heroic tales, the kind of tales with which his audience was familiar and which they greatly enjoyed. He takes the Historiarum's accounts of events from history and relates them in such a way that they become more dramatic and entertaining (Chapter II, part 1); he heightens the portraits of historical figures in a manner that brings them vividly to life (part 2); and he pays careful attention to the selection and positioning of even the smallest details of a story (part 3). The result,

we will find, is a work that goes beyond mere translation and becomes very much the translator's own literary creation.

A Note on Quotations in the Text

The OE text used is Janet Bately's 1980 edition; the Latin is the CSEL edition by C. Zangemeister. I have chosen to use the system of notation employed in Bately's edition when referring to these texts; that is, the OE references are given by page and line numbers and the Latin, which is abbreviated OH, is referred to by book, chapter, and section. These references are in square brackets.

For the English translation of the Latin text I have relied on that of Roy Deferrari for the Fathers of the Church series, though I have also been aided by the earlier translation of Irving Woodworth Raymond. The literal English translation in Bosworth's 1859 edition has guided me in the OE translations; however, I have in most cases preferred Bately's punctuation, and in cases where Bately and Bosworth disagree on the meaning of specific words I have favoured that of the former. In the majority of instances I have supplied translations (in parentheses) for the OE and

for the Latin, unless the general meaning of the quotation is clear from its context in my chapter, since in such cases to provide a complete literal translation would be redundant.[7]

Notes

[1] Stanley B. Greenfield, A Critical History of Old English Literature (New York: New York Univ. Press, 1965), p. 33.

[2] Eleanor Duckett, Alfred the Great and His England (London: Collins, 1957), p. 143.

[3] Janet Bately's "The Old English Orosius: The Question of Dictation," Anglia, 84 (1966), 255-304, discusses a number of linguistic features of the OE MSS and concludes, "Whoever the translator of the Old English Orosius may have been, the evidence of the extant manuscripts appears to be that the text as we have it acquired its present form as a result of dictation not by a man of 'Romance culture' but by a Welshman of Latin education to a scribe with an Anglo-Saxon background" (p. 304). Her "King Alfred and the Old English Translation of Orosius," Anglia, 88 (1970), 433-460, argues convincingly, again on linguistic grounds, but this time in comparison with the other 'Alfredian texts,' that "King Alfred was not the translator of the Old English Orosius" (p. 459), as does a similar study by Elizabeth Liggins, "The Authorship of the Old English Orosius," Anglia, 88 (1970), 289-322, though Liggins

adds that "There is of course no reason to suggest that /the Orosius/ was not due to the instigation of Alfred. On the contrary, the evidence is strong that it belongs to the group of translations undertaken at his behest" (p. 321). These three articles are in response to the earlier accepted belief that Alfred was definitely the translator of the work. See, for example, R.H. Hodgkin, A History of the Anglo-Saxons, 3rd ed. (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1952), II, 29-30, and F.M. Stenton, Anglo-Saxon England, 2nd. ed. (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1947), pp. 270-71.

[4] Bately discusses the primary Latin source of the OE work in "King Alfred and the Latin MSS of Orosius' History," Classica et Mediaevalia, 22 (1961), 69-105, and she notes that, "as Zangemeister himself pointed out, /the translator's/ exemplar was inferior to the manuscripts on which this standard text /Zangemeister's edition/ is based and probably not earlier than the ninth century in date" (p. 70). She attempts to reconstruct some of the features of the translator's Latin original. Bately also examines other possible Latin sources for the OE work in "The Classical Additions in the Old English Orosius," in England Before the Conquest, ed. Peter Clemoes and Katherine Hughes

(Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1971), pp. 237-251, concluding that "at least some of the classical additions" in the OE work may have reached the translator "in the form of a gloss or commentary on OH" (p. 251). She discusses as well the influence of the OE Orosius on the thirteenth century French poem Les Empereors de Rome, in "Alfred's Orosius and Les Empereors de Rome," Studies in Philology, 57 (1960), 567-586, demonstrating convincingly that the OE work, in one form or another, and not the Historiarum of Orosius, was the source for the poem. In her "Proper Names in the Old English 'Orosius,'" Modern Language Review, 25 (1930), 1-22, 140-151, Ann Kirkman devotes a lengthy study to the proper names found in the OE Orosius, in which she argues that the errors found in names are of two sorts, "the one including unintentional changes due to the scribe, the other illustrating the more deliberate changes made by the composer of the OE text...caused either by the attempt to simplify the translation for the benefit of the reader or by mere lack of knowledge" (p. 2). Simeon Potter is alone among critics whose studies preceded Bately's edition, having attempted to present a systematic commentary on the OE work. While several of his comments have been disputed by

Bately and others, his work is to be praised for its diligence and for its close reading of the text. See his "Commentary on King Alfred's Orosius," Anglia, 71 (1953), 385-437.

[5] Stanley B. Greenfield and Fred Robinson, ed. A Bibliography of Publications on Old English Literature to the End of 1972 (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1980), pp. 322-328.

[6] Eleanor Duckett says of the Orosius's readers: "One hopes that their eyes lighted up when they fell on a few pages near the beginning of the book...For here the king, most happily for all his readers, medieval and modern, decided to insert a substantial addition of his own in regard to the Germany and the Scandinavia of this ninth century, those countries so well known by name in his England and among his own people" (p. 143). See also Stenton, pp. 270-71; Dorothy Whitelock, The Beginnings of English Society (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1952), p. 216; and Robert J. Kispert, Old English: An Introduction (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1971), pp. 96-97.

It should perhaps be mentioned here that it is certainly not the intention of this thesis to prove that the OE translator is stylistically a better writer

than Orosius, but rather to point out that the translator has demonstrable strengths of his own and that these are not limited only to his geographical additions.

[7] Janet M. Bately, ed., The Old English Orosius, EETS, SS, 5 (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1980); C. Zangemeister, ed., Pauli Orosii Historiarum adversum Paganos Libri VII, CSEL, v (Vienna, 1882); Roy Deferrari, trans., Seven Books of History Against the Pagans, by Paulus Orosius, Fathers of the Church, vol. 50 (Washington: Catholic Univ. of America Press, 1964); Irving Woodworth Raymond, trans., Seven Books of History Against the Pagans: The Apology of Paulus Orosius (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1936); Joseph Bosworth, ed. and trans., King Alfred's Anglo-Saxon Version of the Compendious History of the World by Orosius (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1859).

Chapter I

The Thematic Concerns of the Translator

Paulus Orosius's Historiarum adversum Paganos begins with a lengthy preface in which he tells his readers his reason for writing. At St. Augustine's request he is to refute the charge that his own time is unusually beset with evils because of the increased belief in and worship of Christ and the neglect of the idols of the past ("qui cum futura non quaerant, praeterita autem aut obliuiscantur aut nesciant, praesentia tamen tempora ueluti malis extra solitum infestatissima ob hoc solum quod creditur Christus et colitur Deus, idola autem minus coluntur, infamant" /OH.I.prol.9/). This he will do by setting forth all the instances of war, famine, plagues, floods, and other miseries he has found recorded in the histories and annals of the past. The Old English Orosius contains no such statement of purpose; in fact, the OE translator does not preface his work in any way, choosing instead to begin immediately with his discussion of the geography of the world. Moreover, throughout his work he omits several other lengthy passages that appear in the Latin, often at the beginnings and endings of books, in which Orosius returns to his main theme and restates it in terms of the events he has just discussed or is about to discuss.[1] The omission of these passages indicates that the OE translator's

interests were not the same as those of Orosius. However, since he nowhere gives a detailed statement of what his own particular themes are, the reader is left to deduce them from the text of his work itself, particularly from those passages of commentary throughout the work, in which the translator speaks in his own voice and not in that of Orosius.[2] An examination of these passages reveals two recurrent themes: that God shapes and controls history, and that Christ's birth marked a drastic shift in the course of that history. The way the translator transforms some of these passages of commentary found in the Latin text also shows that he had an interest in making Orosius's fifth century work more relevant to his own ninth century audience. "The result of these alterations," as Janet Bately writes, "is a transformation of /the Latin Historiarum/ from an exercise in polemic using historical material to a survey of world history from a Christian standpoint" (p. xciii).

That God is the shaper of history and the controller of mankind's destiny is stated by the translator at the beginning of Book II, where he explains that God has been working His will for man since the beginning:

Ic wene, cwaeð Orosius, þaet nan wis mon ne sie, buton he genoh geare wite þaette God þone aerestan monn ryhtne 7 godne gesceop, 7 eal monncynn mid him. Ond for þon þe he þaet god forlet þe him geseald waes 7 wyrse geceas, hit God siþþan longsumlice wrecende waes, aerest on him selfum 7 siþþan on his bearnum gind ealne þisne middangeard mid monigfealdum brocum 7 gewinnum, ge eac þas eorþan, þe ealle cwice wyht þi libbað, ealle hiere waestmbaero he gelytlade. Nu we witan þaet ure Dryhten us gesceop, we witon eac þaet he ure reccend is 7 us mid ryhtlicran lufan lufað þonne aenig mon. Nu we witon þaet ealle onwealdas from him sindon, we witon eac þaet ealle ricu sint from him, for þon ealle onwealdas of rice sindon. Nu he þara laessena rica reccend is, hu micle swiþor wene we þaet he ofer þa maran sie, þe on swa unmetlican onwealdun ricsedon! (35/28-36/11)

(I ween, said Orosius, that there is no wise man, who knows not well enough that God created the first man just and good, and all mankind with him. And because he forsook the good which was given to him and chose the worse, then God at

length avenged it, first on himself and afterwards on his children throughout all the world with manifold miseries and wars, yea he also lessened all the earth's fruitfulness by which all creatures live. Now we know that our Lord made us, we know also that he is our ruler and loves us with a more just love than any man. Now we know that all empires are from him, we know also that all kingdoms are from him, because all empires are from kingdoms. Now as he is ruler of the lesser kingdoms, how much more think we that he is over the greater, which had such unbounded powers.)

Though the presence of God's hand in man's destiny is seen in the corresponding Latin passage as well /OH.II. i.1-3/, Orosius does not emphasize His active participation in history to the extent the OE translator does: though Orosius says that all powers come from God ("quapropter omnem potestatem a Deo esse omnemque ordinationem, et qui non legerunt sentiunt et qui legerunt recognoscunt"), he does not mention that wars and other miseries are God's revenge for man's disobedience, nor does he refer to God as the ruler of man or to the fact that not only kingdoms but the great empires

themselves owe all their power to God.

The OE translator's greater interest in this theme is evident in two further passages from the same chapter, passages that in their departure from the Latin text emphasize God's role in the events of history. In the first the translator states, "Ðaet wille ic gecyþan, þaet þa ricu of nanes monnes mihtum swa gecraeftgade ne wurdon, ne for nanre wyrde buton from Godes gestihtunge" /37/2-4/ (This will I say, that the kingdoms were not strengthened by the powers of man, nor by any fate but by the providence of God). The corresponding Latin passage /OH.II.i.3-4/ remarks on the nearly simultaneous fall of Babylon and rise of Rome as resulting from God's judgement. Orosius does not say, as the OE does, that God strengthened ("gecraeftgade") the kingdoms, that is, was an active participant in their existence; he says only that His judgement was responsible for the coincidental date of the beginning of one and the end of the other ("ita Nini et Babylonis regnum eo anno in Medos deriuatum est, quo anno apud Latinos Procas, Amuli et Numitoris pater, auus autem Rheae Siluiae, quae mater Romuli fuit, regnare coepit. ut autem omnia haec ineffabilibus mysteriis et profundissimis Dei iudiciis disposita, non aut humanis uiribus aut

incertis casibus accidisse perdoceam").

The second passage shows a more marked transformation of Orosius's text. At the end of the chapter in which he discusses the mysteriously linked fates of Babylon and Rome (OH.II.ii), Orosius states, "Et ne diutius uerbis morer, committo me dentibus insanientium, sed ueritatis praesidio liberandum" (And not to delay longer with words, I commit myself to the teeth of the madmen, but to be freed by the support of truth.) The apologetic tone permeating the entire Historiarum is easily felt in this reference to his detractors as madmen and to his own work as the truth. The OE lines at this point have no such tone; rather, they are a restatement of the earlier passage, mentioned above, that attacks those who would deny the extent of God's participation in history: "Giet scael ic, cwaeð Orosius, monigfealdlecor sprecan wiþ þa þe secgað þaet þa anwaldas sien of wyrda maegenum gewordene, nales of Godes gestihtunge" /37/22-24/ (Now shall I, said Orosius, speak more fully against those who say that empires have arisen from the power of the fates, not from the providence of God). The clarity of the OE translator's statement concerning Providence's responsibility for the course of events in human history is obviously of more importance to him than the apologetic

tone of his source.

Throughout the work this increased emphasis on God's role is evident in the way certain events are described. When King Xerxes, in retreat from battle, finds his bridge destroyed and is forced to cross a river in a fishing skiff, the Latin text bemoans the great reversal of fortune ("maxime uarietate permetiens") that has seen this once mighty man concealed in a tiny boat without even a single slave to aid him /OH.II.x. 9-11/. The OE text, on the other hand, presents this episode as proof of the way in which God can easily bring down those whom men believe to be great:

> Hu God þa maestan ofermetto ? þaet maeste angin on swa heanlice ofermetto geniderade, þaet se, se þe him aer geþuhte þaet him nan sæe wiþhabban ne mehte þaet he hiene mid scipun ? mid his fultume afyllan ne mehte, þaet he eft waes biddende anes lytles troges aet anum earman men, þaet he mehte his feorh generian: /48/13-18/
>
> (How God so humbled the greatest pride and the greatest undertaking in so worthless a trust in self, that he, who formerly thought that no sea could keep him from covering it with his ships and his army, afterwards begged for

a poor man's little boat, that he might save his life!)

No man, the OE translator seems to say, is beyond God's reach, and no man, however great in the world of men, can escape the destiny God has chosen for him.

Even episodes that are translated quite faithfully show a subtle shift in emphasis that makes the theme of the translator apparent. At the end of Book II, for example, Orosius compares the captivity of Rome by the Gauls to that by the Goths, showing how much less devastation was wreaked on the Christian Romans by the Goths than on the pagan Romans of earlier days by the Gauls /OH.II.xix.12-15/. The same passage in the OE work makes clear that the increased mercy of the Goths was the result of God's control:

> Eft þa Gotan þaer laessan hwile hergedan þaet hie for þaes cristendomes are 7 þurh Godes ege þaet hie naþer ne þa burg ne baerndon ne þaes þone willan naefdon þaet hie heora noman hie benamon, ne þara nanne yflian noldan þe to ðaem Godes huse odflugon, þeh hie haeþene waere. /52/28-32/
>
> (Moreover the Goths plundered there for a less time for the honour of Christianity,

and through the fear of God neither burnt the
city nor had the wish to take from their name,
nor would they harm any of those who had fled
to the house of God, though they were heathens.)

Though the Latin text certainly implies that Rome's Christianity was the reason it was destroyed by the Goths, it does not state with the assurance of the OE text that it was God in whose honour the city was spared.

It can be observed as well that even in the final book, where the text is much abridged from the Latin and interventions by the translator appear far less frequently, his focus on God as the shaper of history is evident. The translator's opening words reflect this focus: "Nu ic wille, cwaeð Orosius, on forweardre þisse seofeþan /sic/ bec gereccean þaet hit þeh Godes bebod waes, þeh hit strong waere, hu emnlice þa feower onwealdas þara feower heafedrica þisses middangeardes gestodon" /132/ 24-27/ (Now I will, said Orosius, set forth in an introduction to this sixth book that it was God's command, though it was severe, how equally the four powers of the four chief empires of this world stood). Because the book is so greatly condensed, it is possible to deduce the translator's interests, to a certain extent, from what he chooses to retain, and he chooses to retain

incidences of God's involvement in history: two thirds of the chapters in the final book reveal that involvement in one way or another.[3] In some God is mentioned by name and events are referred to as either rewards or punishments from God. Thus, for example, the killing of twenty thousand Romans while they are attending plays /134/29-31/, the plague that tormented the Romans during the reign of Gallus /144/13-16/, and the great sickness of Galerius /148/23-25/ are punishments resulting from God's wrath ("wracu") against persecutors of Christians, and the succession of Valentinian to the government of the Romans is his reward for choosing Christianity over personal gain /151/16-19/. In other chapters God is not referred to by name, but the translator juxtaposes a historical figure's treatment of Christians and his subsequent fate in such a way as to indicate that one is the direct result of the other. For example, in discussing Aurelian, the translator writes, "Aefter þaem he bebead cristenra monna ehtnesse 7 rade þaes wearþ ofslagen" /146/1-2/ (After that he gave orders for a persecution of Christians and was slain shortly afterwards); in the discussion of Maximinus he says, "On þaem dagum Maximinus bebead cristenra monna ehtnesse 7 rade þaes gefor on Tharsa þaere byrig" /149/2-4/

(In those days Maximinus ordered Christians to be persecuted and soon afterwards died in the city of Tarsus); and of Gratian it is said, "On þaem ðriddan geare his rices, þa he þaet maeste woh dyde wið þa Godes þeowas, þa adrifon hine Gotan ut of hiora earde" /152/28-153/2/ (In the third year of his reign, when he did the greatest wrong to the servants of God, the Goths drove him out of their country). Though he has written a final book that is very much compressed from that of Orosius's work, the translator has made abundantly clear that his perception of God as an active participant in history, perhaps even more so after Christ's birth than He was before it, is a major shaping principle in his work.

Another theme that helps to give the OE Orosius its shape concerns Christ's birth, which he believes marked a drastic shift in the course of human history, "the dividing point, separating a past of unrelieved misery from a present characterized by universal manifestations of mercy and peace and an undeniable improvement in man's lot" (Bately, p. xciv). At the end of Book V, the point in the OE history when the birth of Christ is mentioned, the translator states this theme directly:

> Nu ic haebbe gesaed, cwaeð Orosius, from frymþe þisses middangeardes hu eall moncyn angeald þaes aerestan monnes synna mid miclum teonum 7 witum. Nu ic wille eac forþ gesecgan hwelc mildsung 7 hwelc geþwaernes siþþan waes siþþan se cristendom waes, gelicost þaem þe monna heortan awende wurden, for þon þe þa aerran þing agoldene waeron. /132/17-23/
>
> (Now I have told, said Orosius, how from the beginning of this world all mankind atoned for the first man's sins with great pains and punishments. I will also now further tell what mercy and gentleness there has been since Christianity came, just as if the hearts of men were changed, because the former things had been paid for.)

The Latin text, which reaches Christ's birth at the end of its sixth book, makes no such definite statement about an abrupt change that occurred in the history of mankind at the time Christ was born. Orosius says that this was the period in which Christ first enlightened the world by His coming ("Quamobrem quia ad id temporis peruentum est, quo et Dominus Christus hunc mundum primum aduentu suo inlustrauit" /OH.VI:xxii.9/), but

he does not say that it was at this moment that mercy and gentleness first began to really exist in the world of men.

Throughout the OE work the translator's commentary reflects the dividing line that he perceives in history, displaying a definite "before and after" pattern that is not present in the Latin text. Near the end of Book I, chapter i, for example, the translator says, "Þis ic sprece nu for ðaem þe ic wolde þaet þa ongeaten þe þa tida ures cristendomes leahtriað, hwelc mildsung siþþan waes, siþþan se cristendom waes, 7 hu monigfeald wolbaernes ðaere worulde aer þaem waes" (38/10-13) (This I say now, because I wish that they understood who blame the times of our Christianity, what mercy there has been since Christianity came, and how manifold was the misery of the world before that.) The Latin passage that appears at this point does not make any reference to the temporal division stressed in the OE text; instead, Orosius remarks on the ineffable judgements of God as revealed through the fates of Rome and Babylon:

> Itaque haec ob hoc praecipue commemoranda credidi, ut tanto arcano ineffabilium iudiciorum Dei ex parte patefacto intellegant hi, qui insipienter utique de temporibus Christianis

> murmurant, unum Deum disposuisse tempora et in principio Babyloniis et in fine Romanis, illius clementiae esse, quod uiuimus, quod autem misere uiuimus, intemperantiae nostrae. /OH.II.iii.5/

Orosius appears to be interested in demonstrating that his Christian times are no worse than the pagan ones of the past; the OE translator is intent on revealing that there was no universal goodness in any time before Christ was born.

Later in the work this difference in focus is again visible. At one point in his history Orosius tells how Hannibal was forced to withdraw from his intended battle with the Romans because a tremendous rainfall terrified his men and made fighting impossible. He then addresses his detractors:

> Respondeant nunc mihi obtrectatores ueri Dei hoc loco: Hannibalem a capessenda subruendaque Roma utrum Romana abstinuit fortitudo an diuina miseratio? aut forsitan conseruati isti dedignantur fateri, quod Hannibal et uictor extimuit et cedens probauit ac -- si istam diuinam tutelam per pluuiam de caelo uenisse manifestum est, ipsam autem pluuiam opportunis

et necessariis temporibus non nisi per Christum, qui est uerus Deus, ministrari -- etiam ab huiusmodi satis certo sciri nec negari posse existimo. /OH.IV.xvii.8-9/

(Let the detractors of the true God now tell me at this point, whether Roman bravery prevented Hannibal from seizing and overthrowing Rome or Divine compassion. Or perhaps those who were left unharmed refuse to confess that Hannibal, even as victor, became frightened and by withdrawing proved it and, if it is manifest that the Divine protection came from heaven through rain; moreover, that the rain itself was not provided at the opportune and necessary moments except through Christ, who is the true God, I think it can be learned sufficiently from evidence of this kind and cannot be denied.)

The shorter OE passage makes a much more dramatic statement, again pointing out the marked contrast between pre- and post-Christian times:

Gesecgaþ me nu, Romane, cwaeþ Orosius, hwonne þaet gewurde oþþe hwara, aer þaem cristendome, þaet oþþe ge oþþe oðere aet aenegum godum mehten ren abiddan, swa mon siþþan mehte siþþan se cristendom

waes, 7 nugiet magon monege gode aet urum - Haelendum Criste, þonne him þearf bið. /103/30-104/3/

(Tell me now, O Romans, said Orosius, when or where it came to pass before Christianity, that either you or others could have rain by praying to any gods, as they could afterwards, since Christianity came, and may now have much good from our Savior, Christ, when they have need.)

The structural contrast of the translator's comment reveals his theme: these times and those are very different, and it is these that are better.

Passages in which the translation is quite faithful to the Latin text also indicate the translator's emphasis on the difference between Christian and pagan times. In a comparison of the devastation by the Amazons with the far gentler invasion by the Goths, Orosius says,

et tamen caeca gentilitas cum haec Romana uirtute gesta non uideat, fide Romanorum inpetrata non credit nec adquiescit, cum intellegat, confiteri, beneficio Christianae religionis -- quae cognatam per omnes populos fidem iungit -- eos uiros sine proelio sibi esse subiectos, quorum feminae maiorem

terrarum partem inmensis caedibus deleuerunt. /OH.I.xvi.4/

(And yet, since the pagans in their blindness do not see that these things took place through Roman virtue, and were won by the Christian faith of the Romans, they do not believe and are unwilling to admit, although they realize it, that it was through the blessing of the Christian religion which unites all peoples through a common faith, that those men, whose wives destroyed the greater part of the earth with boundless slaughter, became subject to them without a battle.)

Again the OE passage makes the contrast between the pagan and Christian worlds much sharper:

Hu blindlice monege þeoda sprecaþ ymb þone cristendom þaet hit nu wyrse sie þonne hit aer waere, þaet hie nellaþ geþencean oþþe ne cunnon, hwaer hit gewurde aer þaem cristendome, þaet aenegu þeod oþre hiere willum friþes baede, buton hiere þearf waere, oþþe hwaer aenegu þeod aer oþerre mehte friþ begietan, oþþe mid golde, oþþe mid seolfre, oþþe mid aenige feo, buton he him underþiedd

waere. Ac siþþan Crist geboren waes, þe ealles middangeardes is sibb 7 frið, nales þaet an þaet men hie mehten aliesan mid feo of þeowdome, ac eac þeoda him betweonum buton þeowdome gesibbsume waeron. Hu wene ge hwelce sibbe þa weras haefden aer þaem cristendome, þonne heora wif swa monigfeald yfel donde waeron on þiosan middangearde? /31/10-21/

(How blindly many people speak about Christianity, that it is worse now than it was formerly. They will not think nor know that, before Christianity, no country of its own will asked peace of another, unless it were in need, nor where any country could obtain peace from another by gold, or by silver, or by any fee, without being enslaved. But since Christ was born, who is the peace and freedom of the whole world, men may not only free themselves from slavery by money, but countries are also peaceable without enslaving each other. How can you think that men had peace before Christianity, when even their women did such manifold evils in this world?)

The translator's belief in the birth of Christ as the time of a total change in mankind and in a human history that falls into two distinct periods is evident in the way he has changed the Latin passage while translating quite closely the actual facts it gives.

At some other points in the work the OE adds a passage of commentary where one does not exist in the Latin. That such passages do not rely directly on Orosius's text makes what they say even more important to any attempt to determine the major themes of the translator. In Book II, for example, Orosius discusses at length some of the history of the island of Sicily, including the frequent eruptions of Mt. Etna, which now only smokes innocently to give faith to reports of its activity in the past ("nunc tantum innoxia specie ad praeteritorum fidem fumat" /OH.II.xiv.3/). The OE text does not discuss Sicily's history at all; rather, the translator refers back to the wars of the Romans that he has just finished describing. He does, however, include Etna in his commentary:

> Ieþelice, cwaeð Orosius, 7 scortlice ic haebbe gesaed hiora ingewinn, þeh hi him waeron forneah þa maestan 7 þa pleolecestan. Þaet eac Edna þaet sweflene fyr tacnade, þa hit up of helle

geate asprong on Sicilia þaem londe, hwelc gewinn þa waeron be ðaem þe nu sindon, 7 Sicilia fela ofslog mid bryne 7 mid staence. Ac siþþan hit cristen weard, þaet helle fyr waes siþþan geswiðrad, swa ealle ungetina waeron, þaet hit nu is buton swelce tacnung þaes yfeles þe hit aer dyde. /50/23-30/

(Lightly and shortly, said Orosius, I have spoken of their wars at home, though to them they were almost the greatest and the most fearful. That also the sulphurous fire of Etna betokened, when it sprang up from the gate of hell in the land of Sicily, and slew many of the Sicilians with fire and with stench, what hardships were then, to what they are now. But, after it became Christian, the fire of hell was thenceforth so calmed, as all evils were, that it is now but a token of the evils it did before.)

Having turned Orosius's discussion of history into a personal intervention, the translator has once more restated his central theme. He also does this in another passage of added commentary earlier in the work. Here Orosius has described the tyrant Busiris, who drank the blood of his guests in toasts to the gods, and has

gone on to discuss the parricide involving Tereus, Procne, and Philomela (OH.I.xi.3). The OE text leaves out any mention of the parricide[4] and substitutes for it a comment that refers back to Busiris:

> Ic wolde nu, cwaeð Orosius, þaet me ða geandwyrdan þa þe secgað þaet þeos world sy nu wyrse on dysan cristendome þonne hio aer on þaem haeþenscype waeré, þonne hi swylc geblot 7 swylc mord donde waeron swylc her aer beforan saede. Hwaer is nu on aenigan cristendome betuh him sylfum þaet mon him þurfe swilc ondraedan, þaet hine mon aenigum godum blote? odde hwaer syndon ure godas þe swylcra mana gyrnen swilce hiora waeron? (27/11-17)
>
> (I wish now, said Orosius, that they would answer me who say that this world is worse at present under Christianity than it was before in heathenism, when they made such sacrifices and were guilty of such murder as I have just said. Where is it now in any Christian country that among themselves men need dread such a thing, as to be sacrificed to any gods? or where are our gods, that desire such crimes as these?)

By adding this comment the translator reveals, even more dramatically than in the many passages in which he transforms the Latin text more subtly, his controlling theme of the monumental significance of the birth of Christ to the history of mankind.

And even as the translator is using these themes to control the shape of the OE translation, there is evidence that he is also attempting to make his rendering of the Historiarum more relevant to his own ninth century audience. Orosius had written his work "against the background of the Gothic invasions of Italy and the disintegration of the Roman Empire" (Bately, p. xciii). The OE translator obviously has far less interest in such events than Orosius, yet he continually adresses the same audience of wranglers against Christianity that Orosius does. Though accusations against Christianity were undoubtedly more prevalent in the fifth century than in the ninth, the translator had some reason for choosing to address himself to Christianity's detractors. Perhaps the words of King Alfred's Pastoral Care can provide a hint here: "Remember what temporal punishments came upon us, when we neither loved wisdom ourselves nor allowed it to other men; we possessed

only the name of Christians, and very few possessed the virtues."[5] During the raids of the pagan Vikings much of England's learning had been lost, a fact which Alfred believed presented a threat to true Christianity. Therefore, while certainly the need to prove that Christianity was not responsible for the world's miseries was not a pressing one in the time of the translator, the need to restore both Christianity and Christian learning to their rightful places was. Throughout the commentary in the OE Orosius there are indications that the translator is striving to make the work relevant to his readers and to make those readers realize that its messages apply to them and reflect concerns that are very much their own.

In part the translator makes his work more immediate for his ninth century audience by subtly transforming the Latin commentary to refer to a situation that Anglo-Saxon readers would recognize as the one that exists for them.[6] For example, at the end of his discussion of the Macedonian War and the numerous atrocities associated with it, Orosius says:

> Haec sunt inter parentes filios fratres ac socios consanguinitatis societatisque commercia. tanti apud illos diuina atque humana religio

pendebatur. erubescant sane de recordatione praeteritorum, qui nunc interuentu solius fidei Christianae ac medio tantum iurationis sacramento uiuere se cum hostibus nec pati hostilia sciunt. /OH.III.xxiii.65-66/
(These are the relationships of blood and society between parents, children, and friends. Of such value were human and divine obligations weighed among them. Let those, indeed, blush on recalling past events who now know that by the intervention of the Christian faith alone, and only by means of the sworn oath do they live with enemies and do not suffer hostile acts.)

The OE lines that correspond to these are different in tone, speaking clearly to an audience that has known what it is to endure enemy raids:

Ðyllicne gebroðorscipe, cwaeð Orosius, hie heoldon him betweonum þe an anum hierede waeron afedde 7 getyde, þaette hit is us nu swiþor bismre gelic þaet we þaet besprecað, 7 þaet þaet we gewinn nu hatað, þonne us fremde 7 ellþeodge an becumaþ 7 lytles hwaet on us bereafiað 7 us eft hraedlice forlaetað, 7 nyllað geþencan

hwelc hit þa waes þa nan mon ne mehte æt
oþrum his feorh gebycggan, ne furþon þaette
þa wolden gefriend beon þe waeron gebroðor of
faeder 7 of meder. /82/32-83/6/

(Such brotherhood, said Orosius, they had among them, who were fed and educated in one family. It is very disgraceful to us, that we speak about what we now call war, when strangers and foreigners come upon us and rob us of a little and soon leave us again, and we will not think what it was when no man could redeem his life from another, nor would even those be friends who were brothers by father and by mother.)

The transformed lines present a picture of the type of invasion that would be all too familiar to a ninth century Anglo-Saxon, not of the massive wars of which Orosius so often speaks.[7] Similarly, after Orosius tells of the murder of Alexander, he writes a lengthy passage bemoaning the evil that has always existed in the world and comparing Alexander's kingdom to the Roman one in a manner that is unflattering to the Romans /OH.III.xx.5-13/. The much abridged OE passage has again been shaped by the translator to give it

the ring of truth for his audience:

> Eala, cwaeð Orosius, on hu micelre dysignesse men nu sindon on þeosan cristendome. Swa þeh þe him lytles hwaet unieðe sie, hu earfeðlice hi hit gemaenað. Oðer þara is, oððe hie hit nyton, oððe hi hit witan nyllað, an hwelcun brocum þa lifdon þe aer him waeron. Hu wenað hie hu ðam waere þe on Alexandres onwalde waeron, þa him ða swa swiðe hiene ondredan þe on westeweardum þisses middangéardes waeron þaet hie on swa micle neþinge 7 on swa micel ungewiss, aegðer ge on saes fyrhto, ge on westennum wildeora 7 wyrmcynna missenlicra, ge on þeoda gereordum, þaet hie hiene aefter friþe sohton on easte-weardum þeosan middangearde. Ac we witon georne þaet hie nu ma for iergðe naþer ne durran, ne swa feor frið gesecan, ne furþon hie selfe aet ham aet hèora cotum hie werian, þonne hie monn aet ham secð. Ac þaet hie magon þaet hie þas tida leahtrien. /74/13-26/

> (Oh, said Orosius, how great is the folly of men in these Christian days. Though they have but little uneasiness, how woefully they bemoan it. It is one of the two, either they do not

> know, or they will not know, in what wretchedness they were who lived before them. Let them think how it was with them who were in Alexander's power, when they who were in the west of this middle earth so much dreaded him that they, at great risk and in great uncertainty, both in dread of the sea, and of wild beasts in deserts, and of many kinds of serpents, and in the languages of nations, for the sake of peace sought him out in the east. But we very well know, that now for very cowardice they neither dare seek peace from far, nor even defend themselves at home in their own houses when they are attacked there. Yet they can slander these times.)

Here too the OE text has shades of meaning that contemporary Anglo-Saxons could detect and identify as having reference to their own time.[8]

Another way in which the commentary of the translator brings his work closer to his readers is through the inclusion of a gnomic saying of the kind that would be familiar to all. In Book I, after he tells the story of Joseph's saving of the Egyptians during their seven years of famine, Orosius states that Joseph was

so quickly forgotten by those whose salvation he could have assured that his sons and kindred were subjected to slavery, hardships, and massacres. He concludes this discussion with a comment on the relevance of this to the Romans:

> Quamobrem non est mirandum, si nunc quoque aliqui reperiuntur, qui cum a ceruicibus suis inpendentem gladium praetento Christiano nomine auerterint, ipsum nomen Christi, quo solo salui sunt, aut dissimulent aut infament grauarique se eorum temporibus adserant, quorum meritis liberantur. /OH.I.viii.14/
> (Therefore, it is not surprising if now also some are found who, when they would remove the sword hanging over their necks by pretending to be Christians, either conceal the very name of Christ by which alone they are saved, or make accusations against Him and assert that they are oppressed in the time of those through whose merits they are liberated.)

The OE commentary at this point has a very different moral, one that is in a form that the translator's audience would immediately recognize:

Swa eac is gyt on ealre þysse worulde:
þeah God langre tide wille hwam hys willan
to forlaetan, 7 he þonne þaes eft lytelre tide
þolige, þaet he sona forgyt þaet god þaet he
aer haefde 7 gedencð þaet yfel þaet he þonne
haefð. /24/24-28/
(So also it is still, in all the world:
if God, for a very long time, grant any
one his will, and he then takes it away for
a less time, he soon forgets the good which
he had before and thinks upon the evil which
he then hath.)

This kind of proverbial wisdom would be very familiar to an Anglo-Saxon reader: by changing Orosius's statement to a gnomic one, the translator helps to ensure that his ninth century readers perceive his work as one that reflects the values of their society in the way that their literature regularly did. Passages such as this one, coupled with those that are transformed to refer more directly to the circumstances of the translator's readers, make the OE Orosius more relevant in its own time. It is not only through passages of commentary, however, that the translator of Orosius's book makes his work one with which those who read it could identify:

his handling of narrative, for example, as will be seen in the next chapter, reveals that he consciously alters the shape of his work to appeal to his Anglo-Saxon readers.

Notes

[1] See, for example, OH.V.i. and ii., V.xxiv., and VII.xliii., all of which are omitted in the OE text.

[2] Passages of commentary are generally signalled in the OE text by the words "cwaed Orosius." This, however, has no bearing on the faithfulness of the passage to that in the Latin; the OE translator says this even at times when Orosius has not intervened personally in his work at all. See also Dorothy Whitelock, "The Prose of Alfred's Reign," in Continuations and Beginnings: Studies in Old English Literature, ed. E.G. Stanley (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1966), p. 93.

[3] Only the brief chapters vii, xii, xiv, xv, xvi, xvii, xx, xxv, xxvii, xxviii, xxix, xxxii, and xxxv do not clearly indicate the participation of God in history; two of these, however (xiv and xxix), do make reference to acts of God such as the sending of devastating lightning or thunder bolts.

[4] There is some indication that the translator has a tendency to avoid such matters, since in the course of his work he omits several references to atrocities and to "distasteful" occurences. Such omissions include the parricide and incest involving Tereus, Procne and

Philomela /OH.I.xi.3/; Tantalus's seizing of Ganymede for the purpose of homosexual relations /OH.I.xii.4-5/; Medea's slaughter of her children /OH.I.xii.10/; the detailed account of Harpalus's only son being killed by Astyages and served to Harpalus at a banquet /OH.I. xix.7/; the taunting of the fleeing Persians by their wives, who exhibited their private parts and asked if the ~~men~~ would take refuge in the wombs of their mothers and wives /OH.I.xix.9/; the burying alive of a defiled Vestal Virgin /OH.II.viii.13/; and the discovery and subsequent destruction of a hermaphrodite /OH.V.iv. 19/. However, Bately points out that "in the context of a reduction of OH's 236 chapters to 84 and the creation of a work which in spite of numerous additions is little more than one-fifth of the length of its primary source, this is not capable of proof" (p. xcvii).

[5] Dorothy Whitelock, ed., English Historical Documents, (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1968), I, p. 818. For the notion that a translation of the Historiarum was particularly suitable in the translator's time, since the ninth century barbarian invasions had much in common with those discussed by Orosius, see, for example, Fernand Mossé, Manuel de l'Anglais du moyen âge, (Paris: Aubier, 1950), I, 223.,

R.H Hodgkin, A History of the Anglo-Saxons, 3rd. ed. (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1952), II, 629, and Robert Kispert, Old English: An Introduction (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1971), p. 96.

[6] Simeon Potter also notes that the translator, whom he assumes to be King Alfred, changes his text to make it more "autobiographical" and relevant to the readers of his own time. See, for example, pp. 404, 414, 423, and 427.

[7] Certainly not all of Orosius's addresses are transformed in the OE work to make them more directly applicable to the translator's audience. For example, Orosius's comment that appears at OH.III.xv.7 is translated closely. The Latin passage reads:

> Quid de exaggeranda huius foedissimi foederis macula uerbis laborem, qui tacere maluissem? hodie enim Romani aut omnino non essent aut Samnio dominante seruirent, si fidem foederis, quam sibi seruari a subiectis uolunt, ipsi subiecti Samnitibus seruauissent.
> (Why should I, who would have preferred to remain silent, struggle to enlarge with words upon the blemish of this most disgraceful treaty? For the Romans today would not

exist at all, or would be slaves under Samnite domination, if they themselves, made subject to the Samnites, had preserved the observation of the treaty which they wished to be preserved by those subject to themselves.)

The translator renders this quite faithfully:

Geornor we woldon, cwaeð Orosius, iowra Romana bismra beon forsugiende þonne secgende, þaer we for eowerre agenre gnornunge moste, þe ge wið þaem cristendome habbað. Hwaet, ge witon þaet ge giet todaege waeron Somnitum þeowe, gif ge him ne alugen iowra wedd 7 eowre aþas þe ge him sealdon; 7 ge murciað nu, for þaem þe monega folc þe ge anwald ofer haefdon noldon eow gelaestan þaet hie eow beheton; 7 nellað geþencan hu lað eow selfum waes to gelaestanne eowre aþas þaem þe ofer eow anwald haefdon. /67/3-10/

(We would more willingly be silent about the shame of you Romans, than to speak of it, if we could for your own murmurings, which ye have against Christianity. Lo ye know that to this day ye would have been

slaves to the Samnites, if ye had not belied
your pledge and your oaths that ye gave them;
and ye now murmur, because many of the people
over whom ye had power would not fulfill what
they promised. Will ye not think how hateful
it was to yourselves to keep your oaths to
those who had the power over you.)

Obviously the OE lines at this point are referring to the Romans of Orosius's work. However, a comparison of this passage with the others I have discussed shows a definite difference in their handling of the Latin and reveals that at least at some points in the work, the translator's audience was very much on his mind.

[8] Also worthy of note here are two other passages in which the translator, though ostensibly addressing the Romans of Orosius, makes statements that are different from those in the Latin and that could be perceived to apply to the OE audience. In Book IV, chapter ix /OH.IV.xviii/ the translator says:

Ac þaet waes swiðe sweotol þaet hie þa
waeron beteran þegnas þonne hie nu sien,
þaet hie þeh þaes gewinnes geswican noldon,
ac hie oft gebidon on lytlum staþole 7 on

unwenlicum, þaet hie þa aet nihstan haefdon
ealra þara anwald þe aer neh heora haefdon. /103/3-7/
(But it was very evident that they were
then better warriors than they are now,
that they would never shrink from the war,
though they often stood on a small and
hopeless foundation, so that at last they
had the mastery over all those who before
had the mastery over them.)

And in Book III, chapter vii /OH.III.xiv/ he states:

...7 nu, þeh eow lytles hwaet swelcra gebroca
on becume, þonne gemaenað ge hit to þaem
wyrrestan tidum 7 magon hie swa hreowlice
wepan swa ge magon þara oþra bliþelice
hlihhan. Gif ge swelce þegnas sint swelce ge
wenað þaet ge sien, þonne sceoldon ge swa
lustlice eowre agnu brocu araefnan, þeh hie
laessan sien, swa ge heora sint to gehieranne. /65/27-66/1/
(Now, though only a little of such sorrows
comes upon you, yet you bemoan these as the
worst times, and can as bitterly weep over
them as you can joyfully laugh over the other.
If you be such heroes as you think you are,
then should you as willingly bear you own

sorrows, since they are less, than what you hear of theirs.)

Both passages are addressed directly to the "Romans," but each has an immediacy that would likely be sensed by an Anglo-Saxon reader.

Chapter II

In the Interest of Narrative

1. The formation of story
2. The enriching of character
3. The enhancement of narrative

Certain large thematic concerns, then, help to give the OE Orosius its overall shape, one that an Anglo-Saxon reader would appreciate. At the same time, however, the translator attends to the smaller details of his work and shapes them for his audience. The Anglo-Saxons, we know, were greatly interested in story, and in transforming Orosius's work for his audience, the translator was very conscious of this fact. He reveals a marked interest in narrative: countless times he alters or adds to the Latin text in such a way as to show a definite gift for and fascination with story-telling and an appreciation of history not solely as fact, to be reported from one's source with respect only for accuracy of detail, but as the basis for numerous interesting, sometimes inspiring, tales. A close examination of the OE text reveals that the translator at times creates stories from incidents which receive little attention in the Latin work, and at times relates in the form of a story an incident not given this shape in the Historiarum; that he is interested in character to a greater extent than Orosius, often embellishing a portrait to heighten one or another characteristic; and that he employs a number of different methods of enhancing narrative he finds in his Latin source.[1]

1

The translator's interest in narrative is evident in a number of passages in which he expands brief allusions by Orosius or adds detail to the discussion of an event that is quickly disposed of in the Latin. Often the details added by the translator are not essential to an understanding of any important historical occurence but serve rather to give a certain narrative life to Orosius's account of an incident that is a relatively minor one in terms of both history and the overall purpose of the Latin work. Thus, for example, Orosius tells of the plan to spare king Xerxes any dishonour in defeat by handing over control of the army to his general and then describes Xerxes' escape:

> probato consilio exercitus Mardonio traditur. rex Abydum, ubi pontem ueluti uictor maris conseruerat, cum paucis proficiscitur. sed cum pontem hibernis tempestatibus dissolutum offendisset, piscatoria scapha trepidus transiit. /OH.II.x.8-9/
>
> (The plan was approved and the army was handed over to Mardonius. The king set out for Abydos with a few men, where as victor on the sea he had kept a bridge. But when he

found the bridge destroyed by the winter storms, in fear he crossed in a fishing skiff.)

Though this incident sparks comment from Orosius on the reversals of fortune, it is of little importance to the account of the war during which it occurs, and consequently it is not described in detail. The OE text, however, presents quite a different version:

> Se cyning þa Xersis swiþe geliefedlice his þegne gehierde 7 mid sumum daele his fultume þonan afor. Þa he þa hamweard to þaere ie com þe he aer westweard het þa ofermaetan brycge mid stane ofer gewyrcan, his sige to tacne þe he on þaem siþe þurhteon þohte, þa waes seo ea to þon flede þaet he ne mehte to þaere brycge cuman. Þa was ðaem cyninge swiþe ange on his mode þaet naþaer ne he mid his fultume naes, ne ðaet he ofer þa ea cuman ne mehte; toeacan ðaem he him waes swiþe ondraedende þaet him his fiend waeren aefterfylgende. Him þa to com an fiscere 7 uneaþe hiene aenne ofer brohte. /48/4-13/
>
> (Xerxes, the king, in great faith listened to his general and went thence with some part of

his forces. On his way home, he came to the river over which, when going to the west, he had ordered a very large bridge to be built with stone, in token of his victory which he thought to gain in that warfare. The river was then so much flooded that he could not come to the bridge. The king was greatly troubled in his mind that he was not with his army, and that he could not go over the river; besides, he was very much afraid that his enemies were following him. Then a fisherman came to him and with much trouble brought him over alone.)

Here the OE translator turns a relatively unimportant incident into a story that both expresses and inspires emotion. The OE presentation of the event is more visual and vividly calls to mind the picture of the once great king standing alone and frightened on the edge of the swollen river.

In certain cases the OE text supplies the details of a story that Orosius expects his audience to know well and therefore describes briefly. Here again the OE portrayal is more graphic and becomes a complete narrative in itself. In Book II, for example, Orosius

refers to a certain Mucius who, he says, "moved the enemy by his heroic endurance in burning his hand" (hostem...constanti urendae manus patientia) [OH.II.v. 3], and thereby helped to save Rome from being defeated and enslaved. The OE translator, realizing that this is a story well worth telling, goes into greater detail:

> AEfter þaem Porsenna 7 Tarcuinius þa cyningas ymbsaeton Romeburg 7 hie eac begeaton, þaer Mutius naere, an monn of ðaere byrig: he hi mid his wordum geegsade. Ða hie hiene gefengon, ða pinedon hie hiene, mid þaem þaet hie his hand forbaerndon, anne finger 7 anne[2], 7 hiene secgan heton hu fela þaera manna waere þe wið þaem cyninge Tarcuinie swido[illegible] wiðsacen haefde. Þa he ðaet secgean nolde, [illegible]acsedon hie hine hu fela þaer swelcerra manna waere swelce he waes. Þa saegde he him ðaet ðaer fela þara monna waere, 7 eac gesworen haefdon ðaet hie oþer forleosan woldon, oþþe hira agen lif, oþþe Porsennes þaes cyninges. Þa þaet þa Porsenna gehierde, he ðaet setl 7 þaet gewin mid ealle forlet þe he aer þreo winter dreogende waes. [40/29-41/11]
>
> (After that king Porsenna and Tarquin surrounded

Rome and would have taken it, had it not been for Mucius, a man of the city: he frightened them with his words. When they had taken him prisoner, they tortured him in such a manner that they burnt off his hand, one finger after another, and commanded him to say how many men there were who had especially conspired against king Tarquin. When he would not tell them, then they asked him how many men there were such as he was. He told them that there were many of those men, and they had also sworn that they would either lose their own life or take king Porsenna's. When Porsenna heard that, he altogether gave up the siege and the war which he had already been carrying on for three years.)

The translator, seeing this as an example of the kind of heroism which would deeply interest his Anglo-Saxon audience, enlarges upon the brief allusion in the Latin work.

Perhaps one of the finest examples of how the OE translator expands Orosius's relating of an incident to make it a complete story is the discussion of the Carthaginians' sending of Regulus to ask peace of the

Romans. The Latin describes this episode quite quickly and without emotion:

> Post haec fessi tot malis Carthaginienses petendam esse pacem a Romanis decreuerunt. ad quam rem Atilium Regulum antea ducem Romanum, quem iam per quinque annos captiuum detinebant, inter ceteros legatos praecipue mittendum putanerunt: quem non impetrata pace ab Italia reuersum resectis palpebris inligatum in machina uigilando necauerunt. /OH.IV.x.1/
>
> (After these events, the Carthaginians, exhausted by so many evils, decided that peace should be sought from the Romans. For this purpose, they thought that Atilius Regulus, formerly a Roman general, whom they had held prisoner for five years, among others, especially should be sent, and when he returned from Italy without having obtained a peace, they killed him by cutting off his eyelids and by binding him to a machine to keep him awake.)

The OE text, however, is not content with such a matter-of-fact handling of an event that, though of little real importance in the course of history, has such irresistable narrative potential. Here the translator

is seen at one of his peaks as a storyteller, drawing on other sources and his own creative imagination in the formation of a captivating tale of heroism[3]:

> Þa waeron Cartainiense swa ofercumene 7 swa gedrefde betux him selfum, þaet hie hie to nanum anwalde ne bemaeton; ac hie geweard þaet hie wolden to Romanum friþes wilnian. Þa sendon hie Regulus þone consul, þone hie haefdon mid him fif winter on bendum, 7 he him geswor on his goda noman þaet he aegþer wolde, ge þaet aerende abeodan swa swa hi hiene heton, ge eac him þaet anwyrde eft gecyþan. 7 he hit swa gelaeste, 7 abead þaet aegþer þara folca oþrum ageafe ealle þa men þe hie gehergead haefden 7 siþþan him betweonum sibbe heolden. 7 aefter þaem þe he hit aboden haefde, he hie healsade þaet hie nanuht þara aerenda ne underfenge 7 cwaeð þaet him to micel aewisce waere þaet he swa emnlice wrixleden, 7 eac þaet hiora gerisna naere þaet hie swa heane hie geþohten þaet hi heora gelican wurden. Þa aefter þaem wordum hie budon him paet he on cyþþe mid him wunade 7 to his rice fenge. Þa ondwyrde he him 7 cwaeð þaet hit na geweorþan sceolde þaet se waere leoda

cyning se þe aer waes folce þeow. Þa he eft to Cartainum com, þa asaedon his geferan hu he heora aerenda abead. Þa forcurfon hie him þa twa aedran on twa healfa þara eagena, þaet he aefter þaem slapan ne mehte, oþ he swa searigende his lif forlet. /95/19-96/5/

(The Carthaginians were then so overcome and so troubled among themselves that they found they had no power; but they agreed that they would seek peace from the Romans. Then they sent Regulus, the consul whom they had with them in bondage for five years, and he swore to them in the name of his gods that he would both deliver the message they had given him and also again tell them the answer. He did so, and announced that each nation should give up to the other all the men whom they had taken in war, and afterwards keep peace between them. After he announced it, he besought them not to agree to aught of the message and said that it would be a great disgrace to them to exchange on such even terms, and also that it was not becoming that they should think of themselves so meanly, as if they were like them. Then

> after these words they prayed that he would stay at home with them and take the government. Then he answered them and said that he should not be a ruler of nations who had before been a slave to a people. When he came back to the Carthaginians his companions said how he delivered their message. Then they cut the two nerves on the two sides of his eyes, so that afterwards he could not sleep, till pining away, he died.)

In this instance the translator reveals his keen interest in story for its own sake and in history as a source of great stories. If he had wished to write only a history, the less detailed account of the Historiarum would have been sufficient; since he chose to embroider that account to such an extent we must assume that his interest lay in other areas than the simple recording of historical fact.

Even in many passages to which he does not add this amount of detail, the translator's concern with story is evident in his manner of describing certain incidents. Often the Latin covers an event in a single complex sentence, with the cause and effect relationships of various incidents established grammatically in several

subordinate clauses; the OE, however, relates the same event as a progressive narrative, a story with a definite beginning and ending and with incidents arranged chronologically in simpler syntactic units. This is not to say that the translator is incapable of constructing complex sentences; as Bately points out in her introduction, "The syntactical structures he uses are varied and frequently complex, with not only the sentence but often the paragraph conceived as a unit, and with plain prose alternating with passages of emotive rhetoric" (p. ci). Rather, it seems that in the passages in question the translator consciously chooses a simpler style than that of Orosius in order to transform a description of an event into a complete narrative. In Book IV, for example, the OE translator begins his discussion of Hanno's attempt to gain power as if he is about to tell a story and needs to introduce its unfamiliar characters:

> AEfter þaem waes sum welig mon binnan Cartaina, se waes haten Hanna 7 waes mid ungemete girnende þaes cynedomes; ac him geþuhte þaet he mid þara wietena willum him ne mehte to cuman 7 him to raede genom þaet he hie ealle to gereordum to him gehete, þaet he hie siþþan mehte mid attre acwellan. /90/1-5/

(There was afterwards a wealthy man in Carthage, called Hanno, who had an immoderate longing for the kingdom; but it appeared to him that he could not come to it by the will of the senators and he fixed upon the plan of asking them all to a feast at his house, that he might kill them by poison.)

Orosius, on the other hand, begins his discussion of the incident in this way:

Post haec Hanno, uir quidam Carthaginiensis priuatis opibus reipublicae uires superans, inuadendae dominationis hausit cupiditatem. cui rei consilium utile ratus est, ut simulatis unicae filiae nuptiis omnes senatores, quorum dignitatem obstaturam inceptis suis arbitrabatur, inter pocula ueneno necaret. /OH.IV.vi.16/

(After this Hanno, surpassing the resources of the state with his private fortune, took to himself a passion for seizing the government. For this scheme he thought it a useful plan to kill all the senators, whose rank he felt would stand in the way of his plans, by poisoning their cups at a pretended marriage of his daughter.)

The simpler style of the OE work makes the progression of events more apparent than they are in Orosius's account. Similarly, in Book II the Latin speaks of the anger of the Senonian Gauls in one long complex sentence:

> igitur Galli Senones duce Brenno exercitu copioso et robusto nimis cum urbem Clusini, quae nunc Tuscia dicitur, obsiderent, legatos Romanorum, qui tunc conponendae inter eos pacis gratia uenerant, in acie aduersum se uidere pugnantes: qua indignatione permoti, Clusini oppidi obsidione dimissa, totis uiribus Romam contendunt. /OH.II.xix.5/
>
> (Now when the Senonian Gauls under the leadership of Brennus with a very large and strong army were besieging the city of Clusium, which is now called Tuscia, they saw the Roman legates, who had come at that time to conclude a peace between them, fighting in the battle line against them. Roused by this affront they abandoned the siege of the city of Clusium and rushed with all their forces to Rome.)

The translator again uses a more suitably narrative style in describing the same historical event:

Sona aefter þaem weard Romana gewinn 7 þara Gallia þe waeron of Senno þaere byrig. Þaet waes aerest for þaem þa Gallia haefdon beseten Tusci þa burg. Þa sendon Romane aerendracan to Gallium 7 hie baedon þaet hie frid wid hie haefden. Þa on daem ilcan daege aefter þaem þe hie þiss gesprecen haefdon, fuhton Gallie on þa burg. Þa gesawan hie Romana aerendracan on hie feohtende mid þaem burgwarum. Hie for þaem hie gebulgon 7 þa burg forleton 7 mid eallum heora fultume Romane sohton. /51/26-33/

(Soon afterwards there was the war of the Romans and of the Gauls who were from the city Sena. That at first arose because the Gauls had besieged the city Tuscia. The Romans then sent ambassadors to the Gauls and asked them to make peace with them. On the same day after they had thus spoken, the Gauls attacked the city. Then they saw the Roman ambassadors fighting against them with the townspeople. They were so angry at it that they left the city and with all their forces marched against the Romans.)

Without adding any signiffcant details, the translator has rounded out the incident and has given it a narrative

shape that his audience would recognize and appreciate. The minor details he does add to such passages generally have little or no bearing on the outcome of an event or on its importance in history; rather, they serve to turn a description of a historical incident into a story with the potential to entertain the translator's readers. For example, of the Lacedaemonians' leader, Dercyllidas, and his battle against the Persians, Orosius writes:

> itaque toto Orienti bellum mouentes. Hircyliden ducem in hanc militiam legunt. qui cum sibi aduersus duos potentissimos Artaxerxis Persarum regis praefectos Farnabazum et Tissafernen pugnandum uideret, prouiso ad tempus consilio, ut pondus geminae congressionis eluderet, unum denuntiato bello adpetit, alterum pacta pace suspendit. /OH.III.i.6/
>
> (And so stirring up war in the entire East, they selected Dercyllidas as leader for this campaign. When he saw that he would have to fight against the two most powerful satraps of Artaxerxes, the king of the Persians, namely Pharnabazus and Tissaphernes, taking counsel for the moment on how to avoid the consequences of a double encounter, declared war and sought the one;

he postponed the other by making a treaty.)

Again the translator relates the incident in such a way as to reveal his interest in storytelling:

> AEfter þaem Laecedemonie gecuron him to ladteow Ircclidis waes haten, 7 hiene sendon on Perse mid fultume wiþ hie to gefeohtanne. Him þa Perse mid heora twaem ealdormonnum ongean coman. Oþer hatte Farnabuses, oþer Dissifarnon. Sona swa þara Laecedemonia ladteow wiste þaet he wiþ þa twegen heras sceolde, him þa raedlecre geþuhte þaet he wiþ oþerne friþ genaame, þaet he þone oðerne þe ieð ofercuman mehte; 7 he swa gedyde 7 his aerenddracan to oþrum onsende 7 him secgan het þaet he geornor wolde sibbe wiþ hiene þonne gewinn. He þa se ealdormon geliefedlice mid sibbe þara aerende anfeng, 7 Laecedemonie þa hwile gefliemdon þone oðerne ealdormon. /53/30-54/8/

> (After that the Lacedaemonians chose for their leader Dercyllidas, and sent him into Persia with forces to fight against them. The Persians then came against him with their two officers. One was called Pharnabazus, the other Tissaphernes. As soon as the leader of the Lacedaemonians

> knew that he must fight against two armies, it seemed to him more reasonable to make peace with one, that he might the more easily overcome the other; and he did so, and sent his messenger to the one, and told him to say that he wished more earnestly for peace than for war. The officer then in good faith received the messenger with peace, and the Lacedaemonians the while routed the other officer.)

That Dercyllidas sent his messenger to one of the Persians and that the messenger asked for peace are things we can deduce happened in Orosius's account of the incident just as we are told they did in the OE. However, the translator's decision to include each of these progressive details in his retelling of the story demonstrates his interest in more fully rounded accounts, explicitely relating those details he deems important to the development of the narrative. The Historiarum, then, becomes for the translator's audience an anthology of heroic tales that take their matter from history but their manner from the creative intelligence of the translator.

2

This creativity extends to other aspects of narrative besides the translator's fascination with story and with giving facts in the shape of a story. The translator demonstrates in his treatment of historical figures that they too represent to him facets of an entertaining tale. Perhaps more than any other, it is the element of character in narrative that the OE translator perceives as most interesting and most capable of capturing the attention of his audience. Both Dorothy Whitelock (The Prose of Alfred's Reign, p. 91) and Janet Bately interpret certain expansions made by the translator as reflecting a difference in tone between the Latin and OE works. Bately, following Whitelock, points out, "Orosius was reluctant to praise anything before the Christian era, but the translator writes in detail of the bravery of Mucius Scaevola and the honourable behavior of Regulus and stresses the renown of Papirius. Scipio is described as se betsta Romana þegna, while although the translator is not greatly concerned, as Orosius was, with Julius Caesar's generalship, he adds references to his clemency and generosity and to his bravery in the face of apparently overwhelming odds" (p. xcix). This would seem

to contradict the notion, expressed in Chapter I of this study, that for the OE translator Christ's birth marked a drastic shift in human history. However, both Whitelock and Bately fail to mention that the translator also expands Orosius's accounts of pre-Christian historical figures that are not so praiseworthy. In fact, a careful study of the OE work and its narrative format reveals that the translator is not as interested in a change of tone as he is in the historical figures themselves, the characters in his historical stories. He does not elaborate on and embellish only those portraits that reflect purely admirable traits; rather, he appears to dwell on any character that catches his fancy, good or evil. He expresses his interest in a given character primarily in two ways: by the addition or modification of certain details to emphasize and heighten a particular character trait, or by the attribution to the character of speech, either direct or reported, that makes him more vividly real to the reader.

Often the details added to a character's portrait might seem insignificant when viewed separately but when taken together serve to round out the total picture the reader receives and to demonstrate the translator's interest in that character. For example, Orosius says

of Philip of Macedonia, "ipsam uero urbem mox expugnauit et cepit" /OH.III.xii.9/ (But he soon stormed the city itself and captured it), a statement for which the translator substitutes the more brutal, "He hwaedre þa burg gewann 7 eall þaet moncynn acwealde þaet he daerinne mette" /62/7-8/ (He nevertheless took the city and killed everyone that he found therein). Later, the Latin describes the wounding of Philip in battle:

> Sed reuertenti Philippo Triballi bello obuiant: in quo ita Philippus in femore uulneratus est, ut per corpus eius equus interficeretur. cum omnes occisum putarent, in fugam uersi praedam amiserunt. aliquantula deinde mora dum conualescit a uulnere in pace conquieuit; statim uero ut conualuit Atheniensibus bellum intulit. /OH.III.xiii.8-9/
>
> (But Triballi blocked Philip in battle as he returned, in which he was so wounded in the thigh that his horse was killed by the weapon which passed through his body. Since all thought that he had been killed, they turned to flight and abandoned the booty. Then, after some delay, while Philip convalesced from his wound, he rested in peace; but as

soon as he regained his strength, he made war on the Athenians.)

The translator again embellishes this:

Eft þa Philippus waes þonan cirrende, þa offor hiene oðere Scippie mid lytelre firde, Tribaballe waeron hatene. Philippus him dyde heora wig unweord, oþ hiene an cwene sceat þurh þaet þeoh, þaet þaet hors waes dead þe he onufan saet. Þa his here geseah þaet he mid þy horse afeoll, hie þa ealle flugon 7 eal þaet herefeoh forleton þe hie aer gefangen haefdon. Waes þaet micel wundor þaet swa micel here for þaes cynges fielle fleah, þe na aer ðaem fleon nolde, þeh his mon fela þusenda ofsloge. Philippus mid his lotwrence, þa hwile he wund waes, aliefde eallum Crecum þaet heora anwaldas moston standan him betweonum, swa hie aer on ealddagum dydon. Ac sona swa he gelacnad waes, swa hergeade he on Athene. /64/27-65/3/

(After Philip turned from thence, other Scythians, called Triballi, went after him with a small force. Philip thought their warfare unworthy of him, until a Cwene shot him through the thigh, so that the horse on which he sat was

killed. When his army saw that he fell with his horse, they fled and left all the booty that they had formerly taken. It was a great wonder that on the fall of the king so great an army fled, which before would not flee, although many thousands were slain. Philip, with his cunning, while he was wounded, gave leave to all the Greeks that governments might stand among them, as they formerly did in olden times. But as soon as he was healed, he pillaged Athens.)

In just two passages Philip emerges as a more interesting and forceful character than he is in the Latin. He seems crueller, killing all the people in a city instead of merely overcoming it, and pillaging Athens instead of engaging its citizens in war. The translator demonstrates Philip's contempt for his enemy and his great power over his men, and points out as well that Philip's keeping the peace while he is wounded is an indication of his wiles. This suggests that the translator is intent on the nature of Philip's character and not strictly on his importance to history. The same can be said of Hannibal in the account of his siege of the Spanish city Saguntum. The Latin gives

the facts of the event:

> Anno ad Vrbe condita DXXXIIII Hannibal Poenorum imperator Saguntum florentissimam Hispaniae ciuitatem, amicam populi Romani, primum bello inpetitam, deinde obsidione cinctam et fame excruciatam omniaque fortiter contemplatione fidei, quam Romanis deuouerant, digna indignaque tolerantem octauo demum mense deleuit. legatos Romanorum ad se missos iniuriosissime etiam a conspectu suo abstinuit. /OH.IV.xiv.1-2/
>
> (In the five hundred and thirty-fourth year after the founding of the City, Hannibal, the commander of the Carthaginians, after he first attacked Saguntum, a very flourishing city of Spain and a friend of the Roman people, and surrounded it by a siege and tortured it with famine, all of which it endured bravely, whether deserved or not, by reason of the promise which the inhabitants had made to the Romans, finally, in the eighth month, destroyed it. The legates of the Romans who had been sent to him he unlawfully also kept from his presence.)

Here once again the translator adds seemingly unimportant details that enrich this piece of Hannibal's portrait:

AEfter þaem þe Romeburg getimbred waes v hunde wintrum 7 xxxiii, Hannibal, Pena cyning, besaet Saguntum, Ispania burg, for þon hie on symbel wiđ Romanum sibbe heoldon, 7 þaer waes sittende eahta monađ, oþ he hie ealle hungre acwealde 7 þa burg towearp, þeh þe Romane heora aerendracan him to sendon 7 hie firmetton þaet he þaet gewinn forleten; ac he hie swa unweorđlice forseah, þaet he heora self onseon nolde. /99/ 9-15/

(Five hundred and thirty-three years after the building of Rome, Hannibal, king of the Carthaginians, beset Saguntum, a city of Spain, because they had always kept at peace with the Romans, and settled there for eight months, till he had killed them all by hunger and overthrown the city, though the Romans sent their ambassadors to him and begged that he would leave off the siege; but he so contemptuously slighted them, that he would not bear the sight of them.)

That Hannibal kills all the inhabitants of the city with his siege, that he ignores the pleas of the Roman ambassadors, and that he has contempt for them, are small

things in themselves; together they subtly heighten the picture of Hannibal and emphasize his brutal power.

If such passages were the only evidence of the translator's interest in individual characters, it would be very difficult to determine the actual extent of that interest, or even whether it really existed at all. However, when they are thought of together with stories like those of Mucius and Regulus discussed above, stories that create dramatic portraits of individuals even as they describe a historical event worthy of particular attention, a pattern begins to appear. And if any doubt remains, there are also accounts in which the translator uses either direct or reported speech to make a historical figure come more fully to life, again indicating his special fascination with the concept of character. For example, Book II contains the story of the battle between the forces of Xerxes and those of Leonidas, a story that reaches its climax as the latter realizes the desperate nature of his situation. The Latin relates it in this way:

> quarto autem die cum uideret Leonida undique hostem circumfundi hortatur auxiliares socios, ut subtrahentes se pugnae in cacumen montis euadant ac se ad meliora tempora reseruent;

sibi uero cum Spartanis suis aliam sortem esse subeundam: plus se patriae debere quam uitae. dimissis sociis Spartanos admonet, de gloria plurimum, de uita nihil sperandum...mirum dictu sescenti uiri castra sescentorum milium inrumpunt. /OH.II.ix.6-8/

(On the fourth day, when Leonidas saw that the enemy had surrounded him on all sides[4], he urged his auxiliary allies to withdraw from the battle and escape to the top of the mountain, and to save themselves for more opportune times; but for himself, together with his Spartans, another fate must be undergone; for they owed more to the fatherland than to life itself. After dismissing his allies, he warned the Spartans that a great deal was to be hoped for from glory, nothing from life... Marvelous to relate, six hundred men broke into a camp of six hundred thousand.)

The OE version modifies this markedly, giving Leonidas' words to his men in direct, rather than in reported, speech:

Leoniþa þaet þa·geascade þaet hiene mon swa bepridian wolde. He þonan afor 7 his fierd

gelaedde on an oþer faestre land, 7 þaer gewunedon oþ niht, 7 him from afaran het ealla þa burgware þe he of oðerum londe him to fultome abeden haefde, þaet hie him gesunde burgen, for þaem he ne uþe þaet aenig ma folca for his þingum forwurde þonne he self mid his agenre þeode. Ac he þus waes sprecende 7 geormriende: 'Nu we untweogendlice witan þaet we ure agen lif forlaetan sceolan for þaem ungemetlican feondscipe þe ure ehtende on sindon. Uton þehhwaeþere acraeftan hu we heora an þisse niht maegan maest beswican 7 us selfum betst word 7 longsumast aet urum ende gewyrcan.' Hu micel þaet is to secganne þaette Leonida mid vi c monna vi c m swa gebismrade, sume ofslog, sume gefliemde: /46/34-47/11/

(Leonidas understood that they would thus surround him. He went away and led his army into another faster land, and waited till night, and gave orders that all the citizens whom he had asked to help him from other countries should go away, that they might be safe, for he could not bear that any more

> should die for his sake than himself and those of his own country. But he thus spoke and lamented: 'Now we undoubtedly know that we shall lose our own lives because of the very great hatred there is in those who are coming after us. Let us however plan how we can in this might most deceive them and earn by our deaths the best and most lasting praise.' How wonderful it is to say that Leonidas with six hundred men so brought to shame six hundred thousand, by slaying some and putting the others to flight!)

The change from reported to direct discourse immediately makes Leonidas more recognizable as a character and more alive than is his counterpart in Orosius's work. The translator also adds other details, such as the fact that Leonidas could not bear that others should die, that he lamented ("geomriende") to his men their certain fate, and that he and his men shamed Xerxes' forces, all of which serve to present Leonidas as a truly praise-worthy character and as a fit example for any Anglo-Saxon leader.

Indirect discourse is also used effectively in the OE work as a means of making a character more vivid. One

instance of such use is seen in Book IV's account of the despair of the Romans after their defeat by Hannibal. Orosius's story is quite straightforward:

> usque adeo autem ultima desperatio reipublicae apud residuos Romanos fuit, ut senatores de relinquenda Italia sedibusque quaerendis consilium ineundum putarint. quod auctore Caecilio Metello confirmatum fuisset, nisi Cornelius Scipio tribunus tunc militum, idem qui post Africanus, destricto gladio deterruisset ac potius pro patriae defensione in sua uerba iurare coegisset. /OH.IV.xvi.6/
>
> (To such a degree was the despair among the remaining Romans that the senators thought a plan should be entered upon for abandoning Italy and seeking another home. This would have been confirmed on the motion of Caecilius Metellus, if Cornelius Scipio, then military tribune and the same man who later was called Africanus, had not drawn his sword and prevented it, but rather had forced him to swear in his own words to defend his native land.)

The translator, obviously perceiving Scipio's action as one worthy of further attention, changes this passage

and enlarges Scipio's role in it:

> AEfter þaem gefeohte waeron Romane swa swiðe forþohte þaette Celius Metellus, þe þa heora consul waes, ge ealle heora senatus, haefdon geþoht þaet hie sceoldon Romeburg forlaetan, ge furþum ealle Italiam, 7 hie þaet swa gelaestan, gif him Scipia ne gestirde, se waes þara cempena ieldest, mid þaem þaet he his sweorde gebraed 7 swor ðaet him leofre waere þaet he hiene selfne acwealde þonne he forlete his faeder oeþel; 7 saede eac þaet he þara aelces ehtend wolde beon swa swa his feondes, þe þaes wordes waere þaet from Rome-byrg þohte. 7 he hie ealle mid þaem geniedde þaet hie aþas sworan þaet hie ealle aetgaedere wolden, oþþe on heora earde licggean, oþþe on heora earde libban. /101/21-31/
>
> (After that battle the Romans were so much cast down that Caecilius Metellus, who was then their consul, also all their senate, had thought that they should leave Rome, yea, even all Italy, and they would have done so, if Scipio, who was the eldest of the warriors, had not withheld them, for he drew his sword

and swore that he would rather kill himself than leave his fatherland; and said also that he would follow after every one of them as his enemy, who would speak a word that he thought of leaving Rome. With that he forced them all to take oaths that they would altogether either fall in their own land, or live in it.)

By expanding Scipio's speech and making it highly dramatic, the translator makes him an even more powerful figure, as well as a more prominent one, far more likely to capture the imaginations of his readers than the Scipio of the Historiarum.

A similar example occurs in Book V, in the story of the death of another Scipio[5]. Again Orosius's description of the incident is succinct:

C. Sempronio Tuditano et M. Acilio consulibus P. Scipionem Africanum pridie pro contione de periculo salutis suae contestatum, quod sibi pro patria laboranti ab improbis et ingratis denuntiari cognouisset, alio mane exanimem in cubiculo suo repertum. /OH.V.x:9/

(In the consulship of C. Sempronius Tuditanus and Marcus Acilius, that Scipio Africanus, who bore witness before the assembly about

the danger to his safety because he knew that accusations were being made against him by wicked and ungrateful men as he laboured for the fatherland, was found dead on the next morning in his own bedroom.)

In the much more detailed OE account Scipio comes to life more fully:

> On þaere tide Scipia, se betsta 7 se selesta Romana witena 7 þegna, maende his earfoða to Romana witum, þaer hie aet hiera gemote waeron, hwy hie hiene swa unweordne on his ylde dyden; 7 ascade hie for hwy hie nolden geþencan ealle þa brocu 7 þa geswinc þe he for hira willan 7 eac for hiera niedþearfe fela wintra dreogende waes unarimedlice oft; 7 hu he hie adyde of Hannibales þeowdome 7 of monegre oþerre þeode; 7 hu he him to þeowdome gewylde ealle Ispanie 7 ealle Africe. On þaere ilcan niht þe he on daeg þas word spraec, Romane h[illegible] geþancodon ealles his geswinces mid wrysan leane þonne he to him geearnod haefde, þa hie hiene on his bedde asmorodon 7 abrysemodan, þaet he his lif alet. /118/24-119/6/

(At that time Scipio, the best and most successful of the Roman senators and warriors, complained of his hardships to the Roman senators, when they were at their meeting, and asked them why they treated him so unworthily in his old age; and asked why they would not remember all the pains and toils he had borne for their sake and from necessity, at countless times for many years; and how he had kept them from the slavery of Hannibal and of many other people; and how he had brought all Spain and all Africa under their power. In the night of the same day on which he spoke these words, the Romans thanked him for all his labour with a worse reward than he deserved from them, when they smothered and stifled him in his bed, so that he lost his life.)

The reporting of Scipio's powerful and rather mournful speech before the senators ensures his realization as a real character in the OE version of the story, a character capable of inspiring pathos in Anglo-Saxon readers. The translator is clearly interested in giving Scipio his due as an active participant in this, one of history's great tales. Decidedly altered passages

like these and the ones discussed above, coupled with those that are more subtly changed, provide evidence that the translator's concern with narrative and with storytelling involves not only historical events but the active forces in those events as well. A fascination with character is a natural offshoot of the translator's interest in story: the historical figures, actors in the drama of history, are made real for the reader and engage his attention in a more compelling way than any other aspect of story possibly could.

3

It is not only the stories themselves and their major characters, the larger elements of narrative, that demonstrate the special care taken by the translator in the relaying of his material. Countless subtle modifications are made in the OE work that enhance its many stories, clarifying them for the translator's audience or making them, in one way or another, more effective. Such modifications include the addition of various kinds of details, the changing of the order in which a given story is related in the Latin, the selection of those details most necessary to a story, and the use of certain verbal constructions that make

the OE account of a historical event more dramatic. All of these changes, like the larger ones discussed above, demonstrate the extent of the translator's gift as a storyteller and of his attention to even the most minute aspects of story.

Often the OE text adds explanatory details to ensure that Anglo-Saxon readers can follow the entire story and understand the nature of the people, places, and things being discussed in the account of a given event. These can be brief explanations of mythical figures like the Centaurs "þaet sindon healf hors, healf men" /28/20/ or the Minotaur "þaet waes healf mon, healf leo"[6] /28/16/; or they can help to locate a certain people, stating, for example, that the Cheronese are "Creca folce" /64/12/ or that the Ethiopians are "Affrica leode" /25/8/. They also include those details that serve to further identify a particular character, details like the fact that Antiochus is "Sira cyninge" /108/29/, that Hasdrubal is "Hannibales oþerne brodor" /105/21/, that Eurydice "waes Philippuses steopmodor" /61/17/, or that "Xerxis þegn waes haten Mardonius" /47/33/. Occasionally such short interjections help to bring Orosius's story up to date for the translator's readers, telling them, for example, that the Illyrians

are "þe we Pulgare hatað" /61/23/, that New Carthage is that city "þe mon nu Cordofa haett" /104/29-30/, or that the Gauls are those people "þe mon nu Longbeardan haet" /102/15-16/. All such details are added with the Anglo-Saxon audience in mind and are further instances of the translator's concern with making his work more relevant and accessible to his readers. This concern is also shown in the inclusion of certain longer passages explaining particular Roman customs or institutions. For example, in Book II, chapter iv the translator adds a lengthy passage telling his audience the meaning of the Roman triumph and what the Roman senate is and does:

> Þaet hie triumphan heton, þaet waes þonne hie hwelc folc mid gefeohte ofercumen haefdon, þonne waes heora þeaw þaet sceoldon ealle hiera senatus cuman ongean heora consulas aefter þaem gefeohte, siex mila from ðaere byrig, mid craetwaene mid golde 7 mid gimstanum gefraetwedum, 7 hie sceoldon bringan feowerfetes twa hwit. Þonne hie hamweard foran, þonne sceoldon hiera senatus ridan on craetwaenum wiðaeftan þaem consulum 7 þa menn beforan him drifan gebundene þe þaer gefongene waeron, ðaet heora

maerþa sceoldon þy þrymlicran beon. Ac þonne hie hwelc folc buton gefeohte on heora geweald genieddon, þonne hie hamweard waeron, þonne sceolde him man bringan ongean of þaere byrig craetwaen, se waes mid siolfre gegiered, 7 aelces cynnes feowerfetes feos an, hiora consulum to maerþe. Þaet waes þonne triumpheum.

Romulus gesette aerest monna senatum, ðaet waes an hund monna, þeh heora aefter fyrste waere þreo hund. Þa waeron simbel binnan Romebyrg wuniende, to þon þaet hie heora raedþeahteras waeron 7 consulas setton, 7 þaet ealle Romane him hirsumeden, 7 þaet hie bewisten eal þaet licgende feoh under anum hrofe þaet hie begeaton oþþe on gafole oþþe on hergiunga, þaet hie hit siþþan mehten him eallum gemaenelice to nytte gedon, þaem þe þaer buton þeowdome waeron. /42/1-21/

(What they called a triumph was, when they had overcome any people in battle, it was their custom for all the senators to meet their consuls, after the battle, six miles from the city, with a chariot adorned with gold and precious stones, and to bring two white horses.

As they went homeward, the senators rode in chariots after the consuls, and the men they had taken they drove before them bound, that their great actions might be seen in a more lordly state. But if they brought any people under their power without a battle, when they came homeward they were to meet them, from the city, with a chariot mounted with silver, and one of each kind of four-footed beasts, in honour of their consuls. That was then a triumph.

Romulus was the first to form a senate, that was a hundred men, though after a time there were three hundred of them. These always dwelt within the city of Rome, that they might be their counsellors and appoint consuls, and that all the Romans should obey them, and that they should keep under one roof all the wealth they had gained either by tribute or by pillage, that they might afterwards apply it in common, to the use of all who were free from bondage.)

Such lengthy explanations serve the same purpose as the shorter ones: to bring Orosius's work closer to the

translator's ninth century audience by removing some of the difficulties caused by the passage of time and the difference in culture between the two works.[7]

Other details, while they do not explain unfamiliar terms to the translator's readers, ensure that those readers will have a clearer narrative to follow. These are additions that help the progression of a given narrative, either by clarifying the location or by specifying the particular time at which an event takes place. Thus, for example, Vesoges's force is said to have completed one battle "7 þa hie hamweard wendon be westan þaere ie Eufrate" /29/7-8/ and Himlico returns from Sicily to Carthage: "he for ðaem ege his unwillum þonan wende 7 ham for mid þaem þe þaer to lafe waeron" /89/15-16/; Hannibal marches to Rome "~~þaes~~ on mergen" /103/19/, and he slays the consuls Marcellus and Crispinus "On ðaem ilcan geare" /105/25/. These small details keep the narrative moving from place to place and from time to time. The OE translator is not willing to leave his readers to fill in gaps in the story, as Orosius often does, prefering instead to make the progression of his stories clear.

Still another kind of detail is added by the translator to make his stories more dramatic for his readers.

These are military details, descriptions of strategies used by certain characters in their battles against opposing forces that enrich the OE accounts of those battles.[8] In Book II, for instance, Orosius describes Queen Thamyris's revenge for her son's death:

> Thamyris exercitu ac filio amisso uel matris uel reginae dolorem sanguine hostium diluere potius quam suis lacrimis parat. simulat diffidentiam desperatione cladis inlatae, paulatimque cedendo superbum hostem in insidias uocat. ibi quippe conpositis inter montes insidiis ducenta milia Persarum cum ipso rege deleuit. /OH.II.vii.4-5/
>
> (Thamyris, after the loss of her army and her son, prepared to wash away the sorrow of a mother or of a queen with the blood of the enemy rather that with her tears. She pretended diffidence because of her despair over the calamity brought upon her, and withdrawing gradually she drew the proud enemy into ambush. Then, when she had arranged the ambush between the mountains, she destroyed two hundred thousand of the Persians.)

The OE work takes this same military encounter and adds further description of the queen's plan to avenge her son's death:

> Hio þa seo cwen Dameris mid micelre gnornunge ymb þaes cyninges slege hiere sunu þencende waes, hu heo hit gewrecan mehte, 7 þaet eac mid daedum gelaeste 7 hiere folc on tu todaelde, aegþer ge wifmen ge waepnedmen, for þon þe þaer wifmenn feohtaþ swa same swa waepnedmen. Hio mid þaem healfan daele beforan þaem cyninge farende waes swelce heo fleonde waere, oþ hio hiene gelaedde on an micel slaed, 7 se healfa dael waes Ciruse aefterfylgende. Þaer wearþ Cirus ofslagen, 7 twa þusend [sic] monna mid him. [44/34-45/6]
>
> (Then she, the queen Thamyris, in great grief was thinking about the slaughter of the king her son and how she might wreak her vengeance, and she carried out her wish by dividing her people into two parts, both women and men, for there the women fight the same as men. She with one half went before the king as if she were fleeing, till she led him into a great plain, and the other half followed after Cyrus.

There Cyrus was slain, and two thousand men with him.)

That the women fight alongside the men and that Thamyris divided her army into two parts in order to trap Cyrus are not facts that greatly alter the course of history, since in both the Latin and the OE accounts the outcome of the battle is the same. What such details do is add drama to the narrative description of the event. Similarly, in Book IV the Latin tells of the encounter between the forces of Regulus and those of Xanthippus:

> itaque Xanthippum Lacedaemoniorum regem cum auxiliis accitum, ducem bello praefecerunt. Xanthippus, inspectis Poenorum copiis atque in campum deductis, longe in melius mutato apparatu pugnam cum Romanis conseruit. ingens ibi ruina Romanorum uirium fuit: nam triginta milia militum Romanorum in illa tunc congressione prostrata sunt. /OH.IV.ix.2-3/
>
> (And so they summoned Xanthippus, the king of the Lacedaemonians, and placed him in charge of the war. Xanthippus, after inspecting the troops of the Carthaginians and leading them down into a plain, his forces being greatly changed for the better, he joined

battle with the Romans. There a great destruction of Roman forces took place, for thirty thousand of their soldiers were laid low in the meeting at that time.)

Again the translator provides a more detailed description of the battle:

Þa sendon hie aefter fultume aegþer ge on Gallie ge on Ispanie, ge on Laecedemonie aefter Exantipuse þaem cyninge. Eft, þa hie ealle gesomnad waeron, þa beþohtan hie ealle heora wigcraeftas to Exantipuse 7 he siþþan þa folc gelaedde þaer hie togaedere gecweden haefdon, 7 gesette twa folc diegellice on twa healfa his 7 þridde beaeftan him, 7 bebead þaem twam folcum, þonne he self mid þaem fyrmestan daele wiþ þaes aeftemestan fluge, þaet hie þonne on Reguluses fird on twa healfa þwyres on fore. Þa weard Romana xxx m ofslagen 7 Regulus gefangen mid v hunde monna. /94/9-18/

(They, therefore, sent for help both to Gaul and Spain, and also to Lacedaemon, to Xanthippus the king. After, when they were all gathered together, they put all their military

> forces under Xanthippus, and he then led the troops whither they had before agreed, and placed two troops secretly one on each side of him and the third behind him, and told the two troops, when he himself with the first part should flee towards the hindermost, that they on each side should then come across upon the army of Regulus. There thirty thousand of the Romans were slain and Regulus was taken with five hundred men.)

In this case as well there is no strictly historical import to the strategic details added by the translator. The addition has great value, however, in a scheme that perceives the translation as a collection of heroic stories; in such a scheme, details like these help to enrich the narrative and to engage the attention of the reader.

Another means of enhancing the narrative sometimes used by the translator is the repositioning of the details given in the Latin text, a device that can be employed with great effectiveness. For example, Orosius relates Book IV's story of some of Scipio's undertakings in this way:

Scipio...Pyrenaeum transgressus primo impetu

Carthaginem Nouam cepit, ubi stipendia maxima, praesidia ualida, copiae auri argentique magnae Poenorum habebantur; ibi etiam Magonem fratrem Hannibalis captum cum ceteris Romam misit. /OH.IV.xviii.1/

(Scipio...crossed the Pyrenees, and on the first attack captured New Carthage, where very extensive tribute and great supplies of gold and silver were kept by the Carthaginians. There he also captured Mago, the brother of Hannibal, and sent him with others to Rome.)

The OE translator reverses the order of Orosius's details, placing the capture of Hannibal's brother first:

Þa Scipia haefde gefaren to ðaere niwan byrig Cartaina, þe mon nu Cordofa haett, he besaett Magonem, Hannibales brodor, 7 for þon þe he on þa burgleode on ungearwe becom, he hie on lytlan firste mid hungre on his geweald geniedde, þaet him se cyning self on hand eode, 7 he ealle þa odre sume ofslog, sume geband, 7 þone cyning gebundenne to Rome sende 7 monege mid him þara ieldestena witena. Binnan ðaere byrig waes micel licggende feoh funden. Sum hit Scipia to Rome sende, sum he hit het ðaem

folce daelan. /104/29-105/5/

(When Scipio had marched to the new city Carthage, which is now called Cordova, he besieged Mago, Hannibal's brother, and because he came upon the townspeople unawares, he in a little time brought them under his power by hunger, so that the king himself fell into his hands, and of all the others, some he slew, some he bound, and sent the king bound to Rome, and many of the chief senators with him. Within the city much treasure was found. Some of it Scipio sent to Rome, some he ordered to be dealt out to the army.)

Besides adding some detail to the account, the translator makes the siege and capture of Mago, rather than the finding of Carthage's treasure, the focal point of the story. This makes the narrative more compelling by placing greater emphasis on its human element. By repositioning the two main parts of the story, the translator makes it one more likely to hold the attention of his audience.

In the course of the OE work the translator also reveals his talent for selecting from the Latin those

details that are most relevant to a given narrative, thereby creating from a lengthy passage in the Historiarum a much crisper story. This is evident in Book IV, chapter xi (OH.IV.xx), in which the story of the battles between Rome and Antiochus, king of Syria, is related. In the OE text this narrative is brief and to the point:

> Þa þa Lucius Ualerius 7 Flaccus Marcus waeron consulas, þa ongon Antiochus, Sira cyning, winnan wiþ Romanum 7 of Assia on Europe mid firde gefor. On þaere tide bebudan Romane þaet mon Hannibal, Cartaina cyning, gefenge 7 hiene siþþan to Rome brohte. Þa he þaet hierde, þa fleah he to Antiochuse, Sira cyninge, þaer he on tweogendlican onbide waes hwaeðer he wiþ Romanum winnan dorste swa he ongunnen haefde. Ac hiene Hannibal aspon þaet he þaet gewin leng ne[9] ongan. Þa séndon Romane Scipian Affricanus hiera aerendracan to Antiochuse. Þa het he Hannibal þaet hé wiþ þa aerendracan spraece 7 him geandwyrde. Þa hie nanre sibbe ne geweard, þa com aefter þaem Scipia se consul mid Clafrione, oþrum consule, 7 Antiochuses folces ofslog xl m.

Þaes on ðaem aefterran gere gefeaht Scipia wiþ Hannibal ute on sae 7 sige haefde. Þa Antiochus þaet gehierde, þa baed he Scipian friþes 7 him his sunu ham onsende, se waes on his gewealde... /108/25-109/8/

(When Lucius Valerius Flaccus and Marcus Porcius Cato were consuls, Antiochus, king of the Syrians, began to wage war against the Romans, and went with an army out of Asia into Europe. At that time the Romans ordered that they should take Hannibal, king of the Carthaginians, and afterwards bring him to Rome. When he heard of it, he fled to Antiochus, king of the Syrians, whilst he was abiding in doubt whether he should dare to wage war against the Romans as he had begun. But Hannibal led him to carry on the war longer. The Romans then sent Scipio Africanus their ambassador to Antiochus. Then he told Hannibal to speak with the ambassadors and answer them. When they did not agree to any peace, afterwards Scipio the consul came with Glabrio, the other consul, and slew forty thousand of the army of Antiochus.

In the year following this Scipio fought

against Hannibal out at sea and had the victory. When Antiochus heard of it, he asked Scipio for peace and sent home to him his son who was in his power...)

The Latin account of this is very different, inserting between Hannibal's urging Antiochus to carry on the war and the Romans' sending of Scipio Africanus as ambassador these other details:

> tunc etiam lex, quae ab Oppio tribuno plebi lata fuerat, ne qua mulier plus quam semunciam auri haberet neue uersicolori uestimento nec uehiculo per Vrbem uteretur, post uiginti annos abrogata est.
>
> P. Scipione Africano iterum T. Sempronio Longo consulibus, apud Mediolanium decum milia Gallorum caesa, sequenti autem proelio undecim milia Gallorum, Romanorum uero quinque milia occisa sunt. Publius Digitius praetor in Hispania citeriore paene omnem amisit exercitum. M. Fuluius praetor Celtiberos cum proximis gentibus uicit regemque eorum cepit. Minucius a Liguribus in extremum periculi adductus et insidiis hostium circumuentus uix Numidarum equitum industria liberatus est. /OH. IV.xx.14-17/

(At that time also, the law which had been proposed by Oppius, a tribune of the people, that no women should have more than a half ounce of gold and should not make use of a garment of diverse colours nor of a carriage within the City, was repealed after twenty years.

In the second consulship of P. Scipio Africanus and T. Sempronius Longus, ten thousand Gauls were slain in Milan, but in the following battle eleven thousand Gauls and five thousand Romans were killed. Publius Digitius, praetor in Hither Spain, lost almost his entire army. M. Fulvius, the praetor, conquered the Celtiberi, together with neighboring peoples, and captured their king. Minucius was drawn into extreme dang[redacted] by the Ligurians and, when entrapped by the ambuscades of the enemy, was with difficulty freed by the activity of the Numidian cavalry.)

While it is true that the OE translator omits the names of the consuls and therefore the change in time period, his account of the encounters with Antiochus is nonetheless much stronger than that of Orosius because he leaves out the extraneous information provided by the

Latin. The repealing of the twenty year-old Roman law could not have held much interest for the translator, and the list of the battles fought by the Romans quite possibly seemed too brief to be anything other than a distraction from the tale of the battles between the Romans and the forces of Hannibal and Antiochus. The translator also chooses to ignore later parenthetical remarks, translating as "þa com aefter þaem Scipia se consul mid Clafrione, oþrum consule, 7 Antiochuses folces ofslog xl m" /109/4-5/ the lengthy Latin passage that reads: "Antiochus quamuis Thermopylas occupasset, quarum munimine tutior propter dubios belli euentus fieret, tamen commisso bello a consule Glabrione superatus uix cum paucis fugit e proelio Ephesumque peruenit. is habuisse fertur armatorum LX milia, ex quibus XL milia caesa, capta plus quam V milia fuisse referuntur" /OH.IV.xx.20-21/ (Antiochus, although he had occupied Thermopylae, by whose defence on account of the uncertain outcomes of battle he was more secure, nevertheless, when battle was joined, was overcome by the consul Glabrio, and with difficulty escaped with a few men and arrived at Ephesus. He is said to have had sixty thousand armed men, of whom forty thousand are reported to have been killed, more than five thousand captured.) In

passages such as these the OE translator makes a conscious selection of information to ensure that the story in which he is chiefly interested is not interrupted unnecessarily, resulting in a story that is much sharper than its counterpart in the Historiarum.

Finally, the translator makes his narrative more dramatic than the Latin work by the use of certain verbal constructions that have a great deal of rhetorical force. He shows a marked preference for active rather than passive constructions, countless times substituting active sentences for the passive ones of Orosius's work. Given the translator's interest in character and in storytelling, such substitutions are perfectly predictable. Thus, for example, Orosius's "mox reuertente Cyro uniuersi cum adulescente obtruncantur" /OH.II.vii.3/ (when Cyrus returned, all of them together with the young man were slaughtered) becomes in the OE "He þa Cirus hie þaer besyrede 7 mid ealle ofslog" /44/31/ (Then Cyrus there ensnared and slew them all together); his "qui Aruba...per hoc deceptus amisit" /OH.III.xii.8/ (This Arubas...was defeated and failed in this) is in the OE "Ac he hiene on ðaere wenunge geband 7 him ðaet an genam þaet he self haefde" /62/3-4/ (But he deceived him in that hope, and took

all that he had); and the Latin "ubi mox exceptus classe Poenorum superatusque est" /OH.IV.x.3/ (presently he was intercepted by a Punic fleet and defeated) is changed to "Hannibal ut on sae ongean com 7 ealle ofslog buton xxx sciphlaesta" /96/11-12/ (Hannibal came out against them on the sea and slew all but those on board thirty ships). There are far too many instances of such changes to cite them all here, and all of these changes heighten the narrative's drama, focussing on the characters as active forces.

In other passages the translator employs repetition in order to make his account of an incident more dramatic. Rather than saying of Alexander, as Orosius does, "exim Ciliciam Rhodum atque Aegyptum pertinaci furore peruadit" /OH.III.xvi.12/ (Then he overran Cilicia, Rhodes, and Egypt with unyielding fury), the translator describes his actions in this way: "7 siþþan for on Cilicium 7 þaet folc to him geniedde; 7 siþþan on Rodum þaet iglond 7 þaet folc to him geniedde; 7 aefter þaem he for on Egypti 7 hi to him geniedde" /69/16-19/ (Afterwards he marched into Cilicia and pressed the people under him; then into the island of Rhodes, and pressed the people under him; and after that he went against the Egytians, and pressed them under him), a construction

that makes Alexander even more powerful and more brutal than in the Latin. Repetition combined with rhetorical balance is also used as a means of making the vows of certain characters more heroic, as in Book III, chapter x, where the Samnites cover their weapons with silver "to tacne þaet hie oþer woldon, oðde ealle libban oþþe ealle licgean" /75/27-28/ (in token that they would do one or the other, either all live, or all die), or in Book IV, chapter ix, when Scipio and the Romans vow "þaet hie ealle aetgaedere wolden, oþþe on heora earde licggean, oþþe on heora earde libban" /101/30-31/ (that they would altogether either fall in their own land, or live in it). All such constructions underline the statement being made by the translator and make his narrative more effective.

Any attempt to categorize all of the changes made by the OE translator must of necessity ignore the hundreds of modifications, small or large, that do not fit easily into one's categories. In innumerable instances the translator enriches his account of an incident in one or another subtle fashion, leaving his audience with a story that is somehow more readable than the one in the Historiarum. Although it is im-

possible to ennumerate all of these changes, they indicate the extent of the translator's concern with the presentation of his stories and their major characters. His gift as a storyteller makes his work one that ranges beyond the bounds of pure translation into the realm of individual artistic creation.

Notes

[1] Because of the number of changes made in the OE work, it is impossible to list each and every one of them in a study of this kind. The best one can hope to do is to determine certain relevant patterns in the changes and to discuss these changes, choosing supporting evidence from the text. In this way, though hundreds of examples will go unmentioned, it is hoped that the main concerns and features of the translation will become evident.

It must be reiterated here that we do not have the Latin original from which the translator worked and that we cannot, therefore, ascertain beyond any doubt which changes belong only to him. Since it does not seem likely that this original will be found, however, we must work with the text that experts have determined is the best and most representative of Orosius's Historiarum. It is not possible that one manuscript could account for all of the changes in the OE work; therefore, patterns of alteration that occur throughout the OE are presumed to be indicative of the translator's controlling influence. Also, though research has been done on the various extra sources used for the OE work

/see especially Bately's "The Classical Additions in the Old English Orosius," in England Before the Conquest, ed Peter Clemoes and Katherine Hughes (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1971), 237-251, and her introduction to the edition, pp. lv-lxxii/, what is important here is not where the translator found his materials but that he chose to incorporate them all in his translation of the Historiarum. Regardless of where else individual incidents appear, their combined presence here further indicates the translator's narrative control.

[2] Bately's commentary on this passages notes that the translator is apparently unaware that Mucius burned his own hand as a voluntary act of courage, and he therefore describes it as a horrible torture inflicted on Mucius by Porsenna. See her Commentary, p. 230.

[3] "The story of Regulus was a popular one and used as an exemplum by both classical and patristic writers" (Bately, p. 281). The translator obviously feels that Orosius's treatment of such a famous story is far too brief for his purposes.

[4] Deferrari's translation is faulty at this point, rendering the Latin as "On the fourth day, when Leonidas saw that the enemy was surrounded on all sides..."

Clearly this is a misreading of the Latin, since there would be no reason for Leonidas to expect himself and his men to be slaughtered if they were in the more advantageous military position. I have therefore amended this, supported by the translation of Raymond as well as by the OE text.

[5] It is not at all certain whether the translator is aware that this is another Scipio, Africanus Minor rather than Africanus Major. It was the latter who defeated Hannibal, not the former, but both had conquests in Spain and Africa, which may have added to the translator's confusion. See also Bately, p. 305.

[6] The Minotaur was, of course, half man and half bull. For Bately's discussion of the strangeness of this error in light of the number of Latin texts that correctly explain the name Minotaur, see p. 218. See also Potter, p. 392.

[7] The translator does not always deal with unfamiliar terms from Roman society in this way, at times apparently choosing to omit them altogether rather than explain them in detail. See, for example, Book II, chapter vi /OH.II.xiii.2-3/, in which he leaves out the references to the potestas, the decemvirate, and the imperium that are found in the Latin ("Ipso

autem trecentesimo anno, hoc est olympiade nonagensima quinta, potestas consulum decemuiris tradita constituendarum legum Atticarum gratia magnam perniciem reipublicae inuexit. nam primus ex decemuiris cedentibus ceteris solus Appius Claudius sibi continuauit imperium, statimque aliorum coniuratio subsecuta est, ut more contempto, quo insigne imperii penes unum potestas autem communis erat, omnes omnia propriis libidinibus agitarent"). It is tempting to see this as a suggestion of the translator's discrimination, his ability to distinguish those terms that are necessary to the understanding of the stories, either because of the frequency of their appearance or because of their importance to particular tales, from those with which his audience need not be concerned.

[8] Of such additions Bately says, "The strange thing about these additions is that they indicate a special interest in military strategems that is not borne out by either the manner of their narration or the translator's treatment of accounts of military matters provided by OH..." (p. xcix). The translator occasionally omits military details that are given in the Historiarum (see, for example, OH.II.ix.7-10, III.ix.3, and III.xiv.2-4), and it is therefore difficult

to determine the extent of his interest in things military. However, it is indisputable that these additions make the descriptions of the events in which they are included more dramatic.

[9] Bately's decision to include the "ne" here is questionable, despite her attempt to explain it. In her note to the line she says, "In view of OH.IV.xx. 13 'mox in bellum inpulit,' it is tempting to adopt the reading of the Cotton MS here and omit the negative. See BT under the entries lange and onginnan. However, it is possible that the translator or his source confused in bellum with imbellum, 'without war,' 'peaceful.'" In light of what follows in the text and of Hannibal's portrayal in other passages, however, it is difficult to accept a reading that presents him as a peacemaker. I have therefore omitted the negative in my English translation.

Conclusion

In the past the OE Orosius has been examined mainly in terms either of the Roman history it relates or of the Anglo-Saxon history it represents. Scholars have studied the accuracy of its accounts of historical events, the new facts it brings to light about the Anglo-Saxons' world, and the work itself as a historical artifact. To do only this, however, is to do the Orosius a great disservice, for it is worthy of attention in its own right. The OE translator, as has been demonstrated, alters his primary source to such an extent that his work becomes as much a demonstration of individual creativity as a rendering of the Historiarum into English.

These alterations are evident in all aspects of the OE work, but nowhere so clearly as in the passages of personal commentary that appear throughout. Here the translator moves furthest from his source, omitting entire sections of commentary and changing those that he retains, with the result that they reflect a difference in his thematic interests from those of Orosius. He emphasizes God's role as the controller of human destiny and the shaper of human history, and he demonstrates that Christ's birth was an event that marked a drastic change in the course of history. Throughout

his commentary the translator also begins to reveal a concern for the interests of his readers, altering passages so that they become more relevant.

This concern becomes even more apparent when the OE text is examined in terms of its treatment of the historical events in the Latin work as potential narratives. The translator consciously shapes his work for his audience, and in the process he exhibits a keen interest in the heroic stories of which the Anglo-Saxons were so fond. His controlling influence is evident in all aspects of his narrative: historical events are related in such a way as to make them more dramatic and compelling; the portraits of both good and evil historical figures are heightened and enlivened; and attention is given to the selection and positioning of even the most minute details of a story. In this way the translator creates a work of Anglo-Saxon prose that merits close examination and is deserving of praise for its own artistic strength.

While this thesis concentrates mainly on the additions and transformations made by the translator, future studies might profitably deal with his many omissions, particularly in the last books, that result in a work only one-fifth the size of the Latin. Both Whitelock

and Bately have referred briefly to some of these (Bately, pp. xcv-xcviii), but neither has made them the subject of a detailed examination.[1] As well, much still needs to be done with the language of the text itself, exploring it on its own terms and discovering its many stylistic merits. In her introduction Bately devotes only five pages (pp. c-cv) to the translator's style, and while these contain several excellent insights, they only begin the detailed work that should be done in this area. For example, she does not discuss the influence of Latin idiom on the translator or the extent to which he makes use of certain Latin constructions, tropes, and figures. The present thesis examines primarily the larger aspects of comparison between the two texts; it remains for scholars with a more intimate knowledge of the Latin Historiarum to make a detailed comparison of their rhetorical structures. In these and other areas, there is still much to be learned about the Orosius, for it is a work capable of providing fine insights into the writings of the Anglo-Saxons and their world.

Notes

[1] Bately notes that "What is incontrovertible... is that the translator omits a number of details that might have been supposed to be of interest to a military man, and at the same time lets slip a number of opportunities that should have appealed to a cleric" (p. xcvii). This indicates the difficulty in determining the identity of the translator and his approach to his work. Perhaps he found it heavy going. Twice he makes statements that seem to indicate a certain waning of interest: "7 monega gefeoht gewurdon on þaem dagum on monegum landum, þaet hit nu is to longsum eall to gesecgenne" /110/27-28/ (There were too many battles in those days in many lands, of all which it is now too tedious to speak), and "Ic sceal eac niede þara monegena gewinna geswigian þe on þaem eastlondum gewurdon: his me sceal abreotan for Romana gewinnum" /115/29-31/ (I must needs be silent also about the many wars which happened in the east lands: I shall be tired of the wars of the Romans); and once he alters the Latin in such a way as to suggest certain limitations in his own knowledge: "ic ne maeg eal þa monigfealdan yfel emdenes areccean, swa ic eac ealles þises middan-

geardes na maran daeles ne angite buton ðaette on twam onwealdum geweard, on þaem aerestan 7 on ðaem siþemestan" /49/11-15/ (I cannot take notice of all the manifold evils, as I know not the greater part of the world but what happened in two empires, the first and the last). Although these might possibly represent the rhetorical device of abbreviation, they are also conscious alterations by the translator. Such comments may be clues to some of his omissions, but many more remain to be explained.

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