



Translating Felix's *Vita sancti Guthlaci* into Old English: The lexical domains of beauty and aesthetic pleasure and their figurative dimensions in the Old English prose *Life of Saint Guthlac*

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ABSTRACT

Based on some of the most recent studies on aesthetic emotions, the purpose of this paper is to examine how aesthetic concepts and aesthetic experience are translated and adapted from Felix's *Vita sancti Guthlaci* into Old English prose. Looking into the Old English terms from the lexical domains of beauty and aesthetic pleasure, this paper highlights very specific translation practices on the part of, especially, an Old English author, who implements an additional aesthetic dimension that is not generally found in the Latin source. This paper highlights an apparent hybridity between the cognitive and the sensory in these literary texts, and it also stresses how one of these authors in particular frequently uses sensory evaluations to describe the complex and abstract ideas that are typical of the hagiographical genre.

KEYWORDS

Old English; Latin; Beauty; Aesthetic Pleasure; Aesthetic Emotions; Metaphor.

1. INTRODUCTION

The recent developments in the study of emotions have provided scholars with new theoretical and methodological tools with which to tackle the study of aesthetic concepts and aesthetic emotions in texts of a literary nature. The works by Harbus (2012) or Lockett (2011)

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illustrate the insights that can be gained from adopting a cognitive perspective in the study of Old English literature. Nevertheless, while the cognitive approach seems to be gaining ground in the study of Old English verse texts, very few publications address how Old English authors translate and adapt emotion concepts from Latin sources into Old English prose. More specifically, the composition processes through which Old English translators and prose writers adapt their source materials to best reflect the aesthetic paradigms and rules of emotion expression of the target culture are largely unexplored.

Following recent research on aesthetic experience and conceptualisation and expression of aesthetic emotions, the purpose of this paper is to examine, chiefly, two early Medieval English texts that narrate the life of the Mercian saint, Guthlac. One of this is the Latin *Vita sancti Guthlaci* by Felix, which is the source text for the other Old English text that will be analysed in this paper, the anonymous *Life of Saint Guthlac*. This paper will also pay attention to Guthlac's entry in the *Old English Martyrology*. Using a variety of Old English and Latin lexical resources, like the *Dictionary of Old English* (DOE), *Bosworth-Toller Anglo-Saxon Dictionary* (BWT) or *Lewis and Short Latin Dictionary* (1986), and based on the latest studies on the lexical domain of beauty and its metaphors in Old English verse and on aesthetic emotions in Old English hagiography (see Author 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022) the purpose of this paper is to examine the usage of the lexical domains of BEAUTY and AESTHETIC PLEASURE on the part of the Old English translator. This will make it possible to analyse how they interpret, translate, and adapt Felix's Latin text. This paper will then pay close attention, not only to translational practices, but to the figurative recourses that are employed by the Old English author of the anonymous *life* and their usage of eminently sensory elements to describe conceptual and abstract ideas.

2. BEAUTY AND AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE: SOME THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

In recent years, the number of publications exploring the different constituents of the aesthetic emotion episode and the number of scholars who have put forth their aesthetic emotion theories has grown exponentially. These research items are, generally, produced by scholars in the discipline of Cognitive Science. In the context of this and similar studies, these publications provide solid theoretical and methodological frameworks with which to carry out the analysis of the emotion dynamics that are present in literary texts. Nevertheless, while the cognitive approach to Old English literature is becoming more and more common, aesthetic experiences and their figurative and spiritual symbolisms have not been analysed in-depth from a cognitive perspective, taking into consideration the most recent developments on the study of human emotion and embodied experience.

In his paper, Scherer (2005: 706) describes an emotion family that shows “an absence of utilitarian functions.” With this, he establishes a difference between utilitarian emotions,

which play a central role in the life and survival of the individual, like FEAR, and aesthetic emotions, which are triggered by a non-pragmatic appraisal of the object, person or circumstance that elicits them. An example of this is the emotion AESTHETIC PLEASURE, which might be felt at beholding a beautiful landscape. For Scherer (2005), all aesthetic emotion is subject to an appraisal of intrinsic pleasantness, and, in fact, his definition of aesthetic emotion is self-explanatory: “aesthetic emotions are produced by the appreciation of the intrinsic qualities of the beauty of nature, or the qualities of a work of art or an artistic performance. Examples of such aesthetic emotions are being moved or awed, being full of wonder, admiration, bliss, ecstasy, fascination, harmony, rapture, solemnity” (Scherer, 2005: 706). Nevertheless, recently, other scholars have disputed this claim, like Menninghaus et al. (2019: 179), who claim that aesthetic emotions cannot be exclusively defined based on this appraisal; they also put forth a longer list of appraisals like novelty, familiarity, goal relevance and goal conduciveness.

Other researchers like Juslin (2013) do not focus on what aesthetic emotions are or on how to define them but on the different process that each subject undergoes from the moment in which they behold a beautiful object until the moment when they express the aesthetic emotion that it triggers in them. Particularly interesting to this study is Juslin's (2013) categorisation of the different types of stimulus input that can be observed in aesthetic emotion processes. Juslin (2013: 248) identifies three types of stimuli: perceptual, cognitive, and emotional. Perceptual input refers to the sensory dimension of aesthetic experience, and it describes a type of aesthetic experience that is triggered, fundamentally, by sensory evaluations, that is, by what something looks, smells, tastes, feels or sounds like. Cognitive stimulus inputs are more complex in the sense that they entail a more rational and analytical type of evaluation, like appraisals of excellence, meaning or complexity. Finally, his reference to emotional stimulus input concerns the emotions that are triggered by another emotion episode: for example, AESTHETIC PLEASURE might trigger HAPPINESS.

The phenomenology of aesthetic emotions has certainly been explored in depth by this and other authors, but there does not seem to be a consensus as to how many aesthetic emotions there are. For example, Fingerhut and Prinz (2020), who carry out a survey of the existing aesthetic emotions and their characteristics, only focus on positive emotions, while other scholars explain that other emotions like the experience of DISGUST are, indeed, aesthetic emotions of a negative valence. The emotional responses analysed here fall within the subfamily of EMOTIONS OF PLEASURE; Fingerhut and Prinz (2020: 229) describe this family as being comprised of “various forms of aesthetic pleasure.” In their survey of aesthetic emotions, they identify three emotions in this family AESTHETIC PLEASURE, ATTRACTION, and FLUENCY, but they do not describe THE EXPERIENCE OF BEAUTY as an aesthetic emotion, contrary to the perspective of other scholars. Regarding AESTHETIC

PLEASURE, they come up with a list of somatic profiles, which may occur in textual contexts in causative metonymies through which authors might refer to an emotional response drawing on the effects that it causes. These somatic profiles include “the usual correlates of joy, including smiling, increased blood flow, and muscle relaxation,” the action tendency of “looking for the source of aesthetic pleasure,” and the main appraisal of “this satisfies my senses” (Fingerhut & Prinz, 2020: 229).

Armstrong and Detweiler-Bedell (2008: 305) take on a different approach to this matter, and they establish a distinction between aesthetic pleasure, which “explains the mild pleasure associated with simple or familiar objects” and more intense instances of emotional experiences that are “associated with complex or novel objects.” This last emotion can be widely categorised as the THE EXPERIENCE OF BEAUTY, a distinction that, for instance, is favoured in Carruthers’ (2013) volume, *The Experience of Beauty in the Middle Ages*, where she claims that she has “set [her] subject as the *experience* of beauty (not the *idea* of beauty)” (Carruthers, 2013: 15), a phrasing that allows for a more exhaustive examination of beauty as connected with aesthetic pleasure and embodied experience. Based on Armstrong and Detweiler-Bedell (2008) and Fingerhut and Prinz (2020), and some of the more general ideas mentioned in the preceding paragraphs regarding the nature of aesthetic experience, this paper will assume a key difference between THE EXPERIENCE OF BEAUTY as an emotion that is more frequently triggered by cognitive and sensory stimuli and AESTHETIC PLEASURE as an emotion that is less intense and more commonly triggered by appraisals of familiarity and intrinsic pleasantness.

Furthermore, the methodology from this study does not rely exclusively on aesthetic emotion theories but also, as mentioned in the introduction, on some of the most recent studies on the lexical domain of beauty (Author, 2020 and 2021), which are based on a series of Old English lexical tools like the Thesaurus of Old English, the Dictionary of Old English, or Bosworth-Toller Anglo-Saxon Dictionary, among others. These research items stress how, in Old English, OE *fæger* is, generally, used to describe beauty, while OE *wynsum* is found in contexts where it denotes personal pleasant experience. Nevertheless, these corpus-based studies also point out instances where OE *fæger* does refer to personal pleasant experience, and where OE *wynsum* alludes to physical beauty. As a result, this paper aims at looking at the attestations of these terms in context, rather than assuming that these terms are always used literally in this textual context.

3. SAINT GUTHLAC IN OLD ENGLISH PROSE TEXTS AND ITS LATIN SOURCE

Before moving on to the discussion of the usage of the terms from the lexical domains of BEAUTY and AESTHETIC PLEASURE in texts under analysis, a brief description of these texts is required. Jane Roberts (1970) carries out a comprehensive overview of the available early

materials on Saint Guthlac, and she points out the existence of the two separate Old English poems, typically known as *Guthlac A* and *Guthlac B*, Saint Guthlac's entry in the *Old English Martyrology*, an Old English prose translation of Felix's *Vita sancti Guthlaci*, and a related homily. For space reasons, this comparative analysis will focus on the Old English *Life of Saint Guthlac*, as well as on a parallel episode that can be found in the OEM, both of which are widely regarded as being a relatively close translation of Felix's *vita*.

It is certain that the source text was written by a monk named Felix, of whom little is known, "at the request of King Ælfrwald of the East Angles" (Colgrave, 1956: 15). Roberts (1970: 12) points out that "there are thirteen mediaeval manuscripts which contain either full or fragmentary versions of Felix's *vita*." Colgrave (1956: 18) dates the writing of this text "very soon after the saint's death [715 CE] and even before the translation [of his remains]," pointing out to "a date somewhere between 730 and 740" (Colgrave, 1956: 19). Generally speaking, this text narrates Guthlac's life from birth until his death, making an emphasis on his days as a warrior, his entrance in the monastery at Repton when he was twenty-four, his retreat to Crowland, and the many instances in which he is visited by both demons who torture and try to deceive him and the angels that try to comfort him. As Colgrave (1956: 1) explains, this *vita* is a vivid reflection of the cult of Saint Guthlac in East Anglia one generation after his passing.

With regards to the anonymous *life*, Colgrave (1956: 19) points out that it is "to some extent a simplification of Felix's elaborate style, and many of his difficult phrases and words are avoided by judicious omissions," while acknowledging that "the main thread of the story is followed faithfully enough." Colgrave (1956: 19) also discusses how "Old English scholars have neglected this piece and have hardly done any justice to the unusual skill of the translator, or the importance of the piece in the development of translation technique during the Anglo-Saxon period." Since then, more critical attention has been paid to the Old English anonymous *life*, as the translation by Kramer et al. (2020) emphasises, or the works by Anlezark (2019), Brooks (2019), Waugh (2009), which focus on different aspects of these texts but that do not necessarily discuss the role of aesthetic experience in them. Part of these concerns are addressed in this paper, which seeks to examine how the translator adapts aesthetic experience by looking into their usage of the previously discussed lexical domains. Comparatively speaking, Guthlac's entry in the OEM is a much shorter text, and it only describes Guthlac life on a more general note, stressing the miracle that takes place when he is born. Rauer (2013: 252) discusses the sources for this entry, and she claims that it is "ultimately based on Felix, *Vita S. Guthlaci*," while acknowledging that "there is disagreement among commentators on the direct or indirect nature of this borrowing. The martyrologist is unusual among authors in omitting any reference to Guthlac's demonic

encounters.” Colgrave (1956: 25) also discusses the source for this entry, claiming that “it is taken from Felix.”

Because of the close textual relation between these texts, it is possible to identify a clear parallel passage and to identify translation and adaptation practices that would evidence a particular style and intention as far as the lexical domains mentioned before are concerned. What follows is the discussion and analysis of these translation and adaptation choices. The following paper is divided in two sections, based on the nature of the evaluation that takes place in the episodes under scrutiny.

4. SENSORY AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE: BEAUTY AND AESTHETIC PLEASURE

As has been discussed before, aesthetic emotions like THE EXPERIENCE OF BEAUTY and AESTHETIC PLEASURE might be triggered by three types of stimuli: sensory, cognitive, and emotional. Even though sometimes sensory and cognitive evaluations occur simultaneously, and they cannot be told apart easily, this section aims at looking into the attestations of these two lexical domains when they describe an aesthetic appraisal that is carried out in more sensory than cognitive terms. Previous research on the lexical domain of BEAUTY and AESTHETIC PLEASURE in Old English (Author 2021) evidenced a preference on the part of Old English writers to describe the natural world as miraculous in its beauty, and as an ultimate symbol of God’s power. A series of publications discuss this conceptual connection under the metaphor GOD IS AN ARCHITECT (see Wehlau, 1997), and, more specifically, GOD IS AN ARTIST (see Ramey, 2017). Ramey (2017: 480) points out how poets “rarely [distinguish] beauty from creativity. [They conceive] beauty as something made—as the product of skill and design, even in the case of the beauty of nature, which, drawing from biblical images, is celebrated as an intricately fashioned artwork.” This idea is further supported by Wehlau (1997: 23), who points out the same metaphorical conception in the scop’s song from *Beowulf*. While these remarks apply to texts of a poetic nature, the prose *life* of Saint Guthlac showcases a similar understanding of the process of creation:

Swa on six dagum ærest god ealles middaneardes fægernysse gehiwode and gefræt wode, and on þam seofþan he hine reste, swa þonne gedafenað þam þe gelice þurh six daga fæsten þone gast gefræt wian (LS 10.1 (Guth 5.59))

“Just as God first shaped and adorned the beauty of all the earth in six days and on the seventh day he rested, so it is fitting for a person to adorn the spirit in like manner through a fast of six days” (Kramer et al., 2020: 165).

In this passage, two of the devils that torment Guthlac in his house in the wasteland are trying to teach him how to fast with the intent of deceiving him. In his speech, one of the devils employs the verb OE *gefrætewian* ‘to adorn’ to give a physical and eminently visual

dimension to the spiritual effects of fasting. This is done through the usage of a verb that prototypically describes the action of adorning or making something beautiful at a physical level but that, in this instance, is used metaphorically, as the DOE explains: “*gæst/sawle gefrætwan* ‘to adorn, add lustre to one’s spirit/soul’” (DOE, s.v. *gefrætwan*, vb., 1.b.). Fasting is, therefore, conceptualised an action that adorns the spirit: FASTING IS ADORNING THE SPIRIT. The result of proper fasting is then the beauty of the spirit, a moral sort of beauty.

However, in this excerpt the term OE *fægernys* refers to a beauty of the created world, the beauty of nature. This occurrence illustrates the metaphor discussed above, GOD IS AN ARTIST, which is not exclusive to Old English verse, and that, furthermore, is an original inclusion on the part of the Old English translator. While this instance of aesthetic evaluation could be taken to be more prototypical in the sense that it seems to be triggered exclusively by a visual appraisal, the fact that, here, it is presented as a result of God’s creative ability (OE *gehiwan* ‘to form’) implies that this beauty holds a larger symbolism¹. In this case, a comparison with Felix’s vita also shows an initiative on the part of the Old English author to implement an additional aesthetic dimension to his text that is not present in its source:

Sicut enim sex diebus Deus mundis plasma formavit et septimo die requievit ita etiam hominem decet sex diebus per ieiunii plasma spiritu reformari et septimo die comendo carni requiem dare

“For as in six days the Lord moulded the world and rested on the seventh day, even so man ought to be remoulded in spirit by fasting for six days and on the seventh day give rest to the flesh in taking nourishment” (Colgrave, 1956: 100-101).

Comparing these two parallel passages highlights the fact that the Old English author gives an aesthetic sense to his adaptation by including, first of all, a very culture-specific reference to earthly beauty, and, second, the metaphor FASTING IS ADORNING THE SPIRIT. This suggests that, through these idiosyncratic figurative recourses, this Old English translator is aiming at providing relatively simple imagery with which to conceptualise the transcendent benefits of fasting.

Nevertheless, the usage of the lexical domain of BEAUTY in these texts are not limited to the natural world. There is a series of attestations of these terms in contexts where they describe people’s physical beauty. In this sense, there are two ways in which the Old English author uses the lexical domain of BEAUTY in the anonymous *life*: on the one hand, they employ terms for beauty in exclusively visual appraisals of a person’s beauty, where it is unlinked from moral connotations; on the other hand, and particularly in the case of the saint, this beauty is indicative of morality and spirituality. The anonymous *life* begins with a description of Guthlac’s parentage, and how Guthlac’s father, Penwald, chose Tette, Guthlac’s mother, as a wife:

He him þa ana geceas on þære mædena heape, þe þær fægorost wæs and æþelestan kynnes; seo wæs gehaten Tette (LS 10.1 (Guth) 1.7)

“He chose for himself from a great number of young women the one who was the most beautiful and of the noblest family there. She was called Tette” (Kramer et al., 2020: 147).

Penwald chooses Tette for two main reasons: because she comes from a noble family, and because she is beautiful in appearance. This occurrence of OE *fæger* describes a beauty that exclusively appeals to the sense of sight without additional cognitive considerations, contrary to the Latin text, where the author does not mention physical beauty, but makes unambiguous references to *puellari verecundia* “maidenly modesty” and nobility (*nobelium*) (Colgrave, 1956: 74-75).

More often, the Old English text contains attestations of these terms in contexts where they evaluate the saint’s morality (and that of the angels that appear to comfort him) through an appraisal of beauty, where the external is conceptually linked to the internal. The anonymous *life* contains a physical description of Guthlac, which includes attributes that can be deemed cognitive as well:

Wæs he on ansine mycel and on lichaman clæne, wynsum on his mode and wlitig on ansyne; he wæs liðe and gemetfæst on his worde, and he wæs geþyldig and eadmod; and a seo godcunde lufu on hys heortan hat and byrnende (LS 10.1 (Guth) 2.87)

“He was impressive in appearance and clean in body, pleasant in his disposition and beautiful of face. He was gentle and modest in speech, and he was patient and humble, and divine love was ever hot and burning in his heart” (Kramer et al., 2020: 153).

This passage features an uncommonly long list of aesthetic emotion markers, among which OE *ansyn*, *wynsum* and *wlitig* stand out. OE *ansyn* occurs twice in this passage. According to the DOE, this is a fairly polysemic term, as it can simply refer to ‘appearance’, ‘face, countenance’, but also, more specifically to “attractive appearance” (DOE, s.v. *ansȳn*, n., 4.a.i). OE *wynsum* and *wlitig* then evaluate two separate qualities. OE *wynsum* describes Guthlac’s *mod*. This is a notably polysemic term, and it might refer to either ‘the inner man’ or to more specific qualities of the soul like “courage, high spirit” (BWT, s.v. *mōd*, n., I). Kramer et al. (2020: 153) translate it here as ‘disposition’, but the reality of the Old English text is more complex. Even though OE *wynsum* generally operates as a marker of aesthetic pleasure (see Author, 2020), it is also used to describe “the conduct of living creatures” (BWT, s.v. *wynsym*, adj., 2.). In fact, in the Old English corpus, this term is used to describe the conduct of tamed birds². This occurrence of OE *wynsum* seems to stress Guthlac’s calm behaviour and disposition, compared to his early youth as a soldier. This passage portrays a gentler and happier man, now that he has flourished spiritually. Moreover, this passage presents an important deviation from the Latin source. The Old English author translates

mente devotus as *wynsum on his mode*, and, in doing so, they shift the focus from spirituality and devotion, qualities that are generally more abstract, to a more physically observable physical disposition that is indicative of his spirituality.

Erat enim forma praecipuus, corpore castus, facie decorus, mente devotus, aspect dilectus

“He was distinguished in appearance, chaste of body, handsome of face, devout in mind, and attractive to look at” (Colgrave, 1956: 84-85).

In the case of this passage, the author seems to be drawing on the metaphor BEAUTY IS PERSONAL PLEASANT EXPERIENCE, which is further supported by the next clause, where OE *wlitig* is applied to an exclusively sensory aesthetic appraisal. The association between beauty and morality is not unusual in Old English literature, and it is well-defined in a metaphor that Antonina Harbus (2012: 61) develops in her work: THE EXTERNAL IS AN INDEX OF THE INTERNAL. According to this metaphor, Old English authors use the notion of beauty as an index of morality, and, indeed, this metaphor operates in a great percentage of the Old English literary production, where most descriptions of beautiful figures are linked to appraisals of morality. This is also the case of Saint Guthlac here, who is presented as beautiful and pleasant even before his love of God, and the qualities of gentleness, modesty, patience, humbleness are even mentioned. While in this passage the Old English author is literally translating the Latin text as far as the lexical domain of beauty is concerned, the metaphor discussed above can be found in other passages from the Old English *life*.

The anonymous *life* features yet another instance of physical beauty that has a larger symbolism or spiritual transcendence. Guthlac is remembering “the earlier sins and crimes that he had committed and performed” (Kramer et al., 2020: 163), and this triggers great distress and anxiety. After three days of this emotional torture, Guthlac calls upon God to comfort him. Help comes in the shape of a spiritual vision. The next passage describes this scene in more detail, and what emotions it elicits:

ða wæs sona æfter þon, þæt his se getreowa fultum him to com, sanctus Bartholomeus; and nalæs þæt he him on slæpe ætywde, ac he wæccende þone apostol on engellicre fægernysse geseah and sceawode. And he þa sona se eadiga wer Guðlac swiþe bliþe wæs þæs heofonlican cuman; and him sona his heorte and his geþanc eall wæs onlihtod (LS 10.1 (Guth) 4.88)

“Immediately after this his trusted help came to him, Saint Bartholomew. He revealed himself to him by no means in sleep, but Guthlac saw and beheld the apostle in angelic beauty while awake. The blessed man Guthlac was immediately very glad for the heavenly guest, and his heart and his thoughts were at once fully enlightened” (Kramer et al., 2020: 163).

This passage features what Díaz-Vera (2016: 36) denominates “particular modes of vision (such as, for example, imagination, dreams and religious visions).” The saint here is witness to a vision, but the text is certainly ambiguous. It seems to suggest that, despite the fact that Saint Bartholomew appears to Guthlac in his sleep, Guthlac seems to see and experience this vision as if he had been awake. The spirituality of this saint is further reinforced by its sensory beauty, which is described here through OE *fægernys* and complemented by the adjective *engellic* ‘angelic’, alluding to a very specific type of beauty that is reserved for angels and other divine entities. This passage is also rare in that it contains a description of how this vision affects Guthlac, a description that is rich in figurative expressions. This vision causes Guthlac to feel happier (OE *blīþe*), which is a literal denomination, and it indicates that this instance of AESTHETIC PLEASURE or THE EXPERIENCE OF BEAUTY acts as an emotional input in another emotion episode that triggers HAPPINESS. Nevertheless, the last clause in this excerpt evidences a conceptualisation of this positive emotional state in terms of light, originating the metaphor HAPPINESS IS LIGHT. Interestingly enough, the reference to physical beauty is not present in Felix’s *vita*, where Bartholomew is described as *sed palam splendentis caelicolae cognovit vultum* “but he openly recognized the countenance of the splendid citizen of heaven” (Colgrave, 1956: 96-97). Here the Old English author translates Lat *splendentis*, which refers to brightness, as ‘beautiful’, and in doing so they add an explicit aesthetic evaluation that is not present in the source text, and that, furthermore, highlights the close relation between the lexical domains of BEAUTY and LIGHT in Old English literary contexts.

In other passages from these texts, the symbolic dimension of beauty is not directly linked to the physical beauty of a person but is manifested in the symbolic beauty of an object, a type of beauty that evidences the existence of narrative motifs that are associated with the notion of ‘theophany’. Previous research on the lexical domains of WONDER (Author, 2022) highlights the central role of the term OE *tācn* as an indicator of experiences of AMAZEMENT in Old English hagiographical texts. This research suggests that OE *tācn* frequently describes situations where the abstract promises and ideas of Christianity are miraculously materialised in physical objects that are further proof of either God’s existence, the saint’s divinity, or both. There is a fairly representative example of this idea in two different texts on Saint Guthlac. Beginning with the shortest, Guthlac’s entry in the OEM, it describes the episode in which the hand descends from the sky to bless the door of the house where Guthlac is being born. In the text, this is described as a heavenly token (OE *heofonlicum tacnum*):

Men gesegon cumin fæger hand of heofonum ond gesegnian þæs huses duru ðe he wæs on acenned, ond eft to hefonum gewat (63, Guthlac)

“Men saw a beautiful hand come down from heaven and bless the door of the house in which he was born, and then disappeared back to heaven” (Rauer, 2013: 81).

The same episode is narrated in more detail in the anonymous *life*:

ða se tima com, þæt heo þæt bearn cennan scolde, þa sæmninga com tacn of heofenum, and þæt tacn swytelice mid inseglum beclysde. Efnæ, men gesawon ane hand on þam fægerestan readan hiwe of heofonum cumende; and seo hæfde ane gyldene rode, and wæs æteowod manegum mannum, and helde toward toforan þæs huses duru, þær þæt cild inne acenned wæs (LS 10.1 (Guth) 1.11)

“When the time came that she was to give birth to the child, a sign came suddenly from the heavens, and that sign was clearly marked out as authentic. People truly saw a hand of the most beautiful red color coming from heaven, and it held a golden cross and was shown to many people, and it inclined toward the front of the door of the house where the child was born” (Kramer et al., 2020: 147).

Both of these passages have the same source, Felix's *vita*, but at first glance several differences in their translation and composition become evident. To begin with, the OEM entry is, in the nature of the text, succinct and factual. This miracle is described as one of the many that took place at the beginning of Guthlac's life, and it explains the spiritual transcendence of this symbol as an indicator of the divinity of the child that has just been born. The anonymous *life* takes on a different approach, and it is far more descriptive of the hand that comes down from the sky, explaining that it is of a red hue, that it holds a cross and that it is directed towards the door of the house, information that is not present in the OEM entry. Furthermore, and in terms of vocabulary, both these texts use OE *fæger*, but while in the OEM it is applied to the hand itself, in the anonymous *life* it is applied to its red hue. The fact that both texts have the same lexical aesthetic emotion marker would suggest that Felix's *vita* features a similar equivalent, but that is not necessarily the case:

Igitur cum nascendi tempus advenisset, mirabile dictu ! ecce humana manus croceo rubric nitoris splendore fulgescens ab aethereis Olympi nubibus ad patibulum cuiusdam crucis ante ostium domus, qua sancta puerpera futurae indolis infantulum enixa est, porrecta videbatur

“For when the time of his birth had arrived, marvellous to relate, a human hand was seen shining with gold-red splendour, and reaching from the clouds of the heavenly Olympus as far as the arms of a certain cross, which stood in front of the door of the house in which the holy woman, now in labour, was bearing an infant son destined to greatness” (Colgrave, 1956: 74-75).

There is no direct equivalent in Felix's *vita* that refers to this hand as something that is appraised as intrinsically pleasant (Scherer, 2005), only a reference to brightness (*nitoris splendore fulgescens*) that these two separate authors construe as beautiful, which suggests that, outside a poetic context, Old English prose authors also draw on the metaphor BEAUTY IS

LIGHT frequently. Furthermore, and with regards to Felix's *vita*, the idea of theophany is clearly seen in this passage: "Embedded in this allusion to a biblical antecedent entailing the coming of both terror and hope is the language of Virgilian theophany—*ab aethereis Olympi nubibus*." (Anlezark, 2019: 258). What these three passages have in common is that the hand, regardless of whether it is beautiful or not, and regardless of whether it holds a cross or not, is relevant because it is a symbol of something larger than the self, and the emotions that this sight causes are not exclusively triggered by its intrinsic pleasantness, but partly because of the supernatural causality implicit in the event and the symbolic meaning that can be derived from it. Ultimately, this highlights something that has been suggested throughout this section: that, despite the fact that these examples feature instances of aesthetic experience triggered by a sensory appraisal, it is not always possible to separate the sensory from the cognitive in these Old English and Latin texts.

5. THE COGNITIVE SIDE OF AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE: SENSORY APPRAISALS AS SOURCE DOMAINS FOR COGNITIVE EVALUATIONS

The preceding section has examined the translated passages where the lexis for beauty marks an exclusively sensory aesthetic evaluation or instances that feature a hybridity between the sensory and the cognitive. Nevertheless, there is another group of attestations of the terms in the lexical domains analysed in this paper that showcase a much more complex relation between the stimuli that trigger these emotional instances and these lexical domains. In these cases, pleasant personal experience or experiences of beauty or aesthetic pleasure, and the vocabularies through which they are described, become used as a source domain that is mapped onto an eminently cognitive evaluation.

One instance of this is the usage of the term OE *fæger*, one of the main denominators of physical (and moral) beauty in Old English, to describe knowledge and intelligence:

*ic menige wat on Angelcynne mid þam fægerum stafum gegylde, fæger and glæwlice gesette,
þæt hig þas boc sylf settan mihton* (LS 10.1 (Guth) 0.17)

"I know many among the English gilded with fair learning, well and wisely grounded, who could compose this book themselves" (Kramer et al., 2020: 143)

The translator here omits a metaphor in the Latin source that refers to the craft of writing as a stream that flows amid "the green meadow of literature," (Colgrave, 1956: 63). Moreover, further on in the text, they claim that there are many people among the English who might be able to compose this narrative better than him. The Latin author employs the term Lat *luculentiusve* "full of light, bright, splendid" (Lewis and Short, 1986, s.v. *luculentus*, adj.), a term that points out to a conceptualisation of intelligence as a light source (INTELLIGENCE IS A LIGHT SOURCE, Lakoff et al., 1991). Nevertheless, the Old English author translates this

adjective using OE *fæger*, which is also found in the Old English corpus in evaluations of language: “of words, promises, commentary, eloquence: beautiful, pleasing, agreeable (to perception)” (DOE, s.v. *fæger*, adj., 1.c). Furthermore, in the Old English text there is a metaphor that is not present in the original, INTELLIGENCE IS AN ADORNMENT. This figurative recourse draws on ornamentation, a recurrent image in the Old English aesthetic paradigm, to describe a cognitive reality.

The anonymous *life* of Saint Guthlac also contains instances where the vocabulary that is typically associated with pleasant personal experience is employed in cognitive evaluations that use sensory language in figurative terms. Consider the following example, which describes Saint Guthlac's conversation with bishop Saint Headda:

Mid þy þa þe foresprecena bisceop to þære spræce becom þæs godes mannes Guðlaces, hi þa sylfe betweonum indrencton mid þam cerenum þære godspellican swetnysse (LS 10.1 (Guth) 17.28)

“When the bishop arrived for conversation with the man of God, Guthlac, they refreshed each other with the wines of evangelical sweetness” (Kramer et al., 2020: 197).

This passage is highly figurative. The words of the gospel are conceptualised here as a drink, more specifically, as sweet type of wine, as the term OE *ceren* indicates: “new wine that is boiled down one third or one half, sweet wine” (BWT, s.v. *ceren*, n., I). What is more, the author draws on the physiological effects of alcohol to describe the effect that the gospel has at a spiritual and intellectual level. The verb OE *indrencan* is ambiguous in the sense that it can mean ‘to soak’, but it can also refer to the intoxication that follows alcohol consumption. Therefore, the gospel, conceptualised as wine, is presented here as something that causes a state of (presumably pleasant) intoxication, and it is also described through a term that is commonly found in gustatory evaluations, OE *swētness*. Unsurprisingly, the Latin original features a related but different synaesthetic experience:

Ergo praedictus episcopus, postquam colloquiis illius potitus est et melle dulciora praecepta sapientiae ipsius gustavit

“So said the bishop, after he had had converse with him and had tasted of the teachings of his wisdom more sweet than honey” (Colgrave, 19565: 144-145).

In Felix's rendition of this episode, there is a more general denomination of the discussions between Guthlac and Headda, and the narrator does not specify if they speak about the gospel or not. The metaphor here is simpler, LEARNING IS CONSUMING FOOD, and it establish a parallelism between learning or receiving this wisdom and tasting this honey. While both of these passages have in common a conceptualisation of a cognitive evaluation by means of

sensory imagery, the Old English author opts for a more complex metaphor, and its different senses and implications are developed in a more verbose rendition of this episode.

A similar pattern of conceptualisation can be found as regards the usage of pleasant personal experience as an indicator of divinity. These instances have an important cognitive dimension, even though they clearly describe an aesthetic experience that is triggered by sensory stimuli. These examples can be found towards the end of the Old English text, where Guthlac falls ill and lies in bed. He is engaging in conversation with his servant, telling him what he expects him to do after he dies. The narrator describes how Guthlac lies against the wall and starts to breathe with long sighs:

Mid þy he eft gewyrpte and þam orð onfeng, þa com seo swetnys of þam muðe swa þæra wynsumesta blostman stenc (LS 10.1 (Guth) 20.94)

“When he recovered again and caught his breath, a fragrance came from his mouth like the smell of the most pleasant flowers” (Kramer et al., 2020: 209).

The categorisation of this passage as an instance of cognitive evaluation is certainly debatable.

Here, at a more literal level, there is an aesthetic evaluation that involves the sense of smell. The pleasant and floral smell that Guthlac emits triggers the emotion of AESTHETIC PLEASURE, as it is evidenced by the usage of the adjective OE *wynsum*. Nevertheless, at a more symbolic level, this pleasant smell is an indicator of Guthlac’s divinity and saintly status. In this case, the Old English text is a fairly close rendition of the Latin source, which also describes “the odour of sweet-smelling flowers” through the frase *velut meliflui floris odoratus* (Colgrave, 1956: 156-157). Guthlac’s divinity is further reinforced several lines after this passage, where the whole island is “filled with the great fragrance of a wondrous smell” (Kramer et al., 2020: 211), *mycelre swetnysse wunderlices stences ormædum was gefylled* (LS 10.1 (Guth) 20.116). In this passage, the Old English categorises this smell through an adjective that can either be used to describe smells or instances or gustatory evaluation (OE *swētness*), and this smell is further described through OE *wundorlic*. In this context, this adjective can either mean ‘miraculous’, describing the supernatural quality of the situation from a more cognitive perspective, or ‘wonderful’ resulting from a sensory appraisal of the excellence of this smell that ultimately triggers AESTHETIC PLEASURE.

In the Latin text, the approach is different. The Latin author makes reference to a more specific smell: to *insulam etiam illa diversorum aromatum odoriferis spiraminibus inflari cereres* “one would have thought the island to be filled with the sweet scents of many kinds of spices” (Colgrave, 1956: 159). It is not several lines after this that the Old English text points out what this smell is: *mid ambrosie þære wyrte swetnysse gefylde* (LS 10.1 (Guth) 20.128) “filled with the fragrance of the plant ambrosia” (Kramer et al., 2020: 211).

Moreover, in this particular passage, the Old English is a relatively close translation of the Latin, which alludes to an odour similar to that of the same plant. The Old English, nevertheless, includes an additional adjective that is not present in the Latin, the adjective OE *swētness*, translated in Kramer et al. (2020: 211) as ‘fragrance’, but which prototypically refers to the sweetness of a particular smell.

A similar sign takes place shortly after this, when Guthlac sends his spirit forth. In this case, there is a visual assessment of a pillar of light that is deemed beautiful:

Betwux þa þingc se foresprecena broðor geseah eall þæt hus mid heofonlicre bryhto geondgoten, and he þær geseah fyrene topp up of þære eorþan to heofones heannysse, þæs beorhtnys was eallum oþrum ungelic, and for his fægernysse þæt seo sunne sylf æt middum dæge, eall hire scima was on blæco gecyrrad (LS 10.1 (Guth) 20.111)

“During these events, the brother saw the whole house suffused with heavenly light, and he saw there a fiery column stretching from the earth to the height of heaven, whose brightness was unlike all others, and because of its beauty the sun itself at midday, all its brightness, was turned to paleness” (Kramer et al., 2020: 209).

Guthlac’s passing is symbolised by this pillar of light that fills up the house, and which contributes to the multifactory aesthetic experience that is witnessed by Guthlac’s servant. This pillar is compared to the light of the sun, which pales in comparison in terms of brightness and beauty. OE *fægernys* describes once more an aesthetic evaluation that is carried out through the sense of sight, as OE *geseōn* emphasises. However, in this instance, the supernatural causality that is implicit in the apparition of this pillar of light contributes to a more intense emotional episode. What is more, the servant’s interpretation of this pillar as a token that symbolises Guthlac’s passing is also responsible for the cognitive dimension and intensity of this emotional experience, considering that, the more appraisals that are involved in an emotion episode, the more intense the resulting emotion will be. The trend observed in previously analysed passages, where the Old English author includes explicit aesthetic evaluations, is also observed in this passage. Felix’s rendition of this episode alludes to “the splendour of heavenly light and a tower as of fire stretching from earth to heaven, in comparison with whose splendour the sun, though it was in mid heaven, seemed to grow pale like a lamp in daylight” (Colgrave, 1956: 159). The Latin passage refers to this brightness through the term Lat *splendore*, but there is no explicit aesthetic judgment. In the Old English text, the beauty of this pillar of light is related to its symbolic dimension, and this further demonstrates a preference on the part of this Old English author to draw on the metaphor THE EXTERNAL IS AN INDEX OF THE INTERNAL (Harbus, 2012: 61).

6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The preceding two sections have examined selected instances in which the Old English author of the anonymous *Life of Saint Guthlac* deviates from its Latin source, Felix's *Vita sancti Guthlaci*, while also paying attention to the short entry from the *Old English Martyrology* where relevant. This analysis highlights, first and foremost, a remarkable faithfulness on the part of, especially, the Old English translator of Felix's *vita* to the narrative contents of Felix's *vita*, which, at times, is abbreviated for the sake of conciseness. Nevertheless, this paper has stressed how, with regards to the lexical domains of BEAUTY and AESTHETIC PLEASURE, and concerning the textual treatment of both pleasant personal experience and the usage of figurative recourses, there are marked differences between the Old English anonymous *life* and Felix's *vita*. Ultimately, this analysis highlights different approaches on the part of these two authors as regards the connection between beauty and morality.

The theoretical framework for this paper discussed the work by Juslin (2013), which points out the three types of stimulus input in the emotion episode. This analysis suggests that, while it is possible to find exclusively sensory evaluations, that is to say, instances where beauty is not symbolic for morality or spirituality, these are rare in the context of the data analysed in this paper. These texts, furthermore, showcase instances where THE EXPERIENCE OF BEAUTY triggers yet another emotion, HAPPINESS. This paper has also emphasised how, on the one hand, there seems to be a hybridity between the sensory and the cognitive in these three texts, which is particularly evident in the Old English rendition. The author seems to be drawing on a metaphor that is present almost everywhere else in the Old English literary corpus, THE EXTERNAL IS AN INDEX OF THE INTERNAL (Harbus, 2012: 61). Beauty is, therefore, symbolic and indicative of goodness, divinity and spirituality, and this connection does not only operate in the evaluation of the people in this text but also in the symbolic dimension of the objects in it, which are tokens that materialise the saint's divinity. Therefore, through a deliberate inclusion of these experiences of beauty, the Old English author portrays a different standard of sainthood than the one which can be reconstructed from the Latin source: in the Old English, *life* Saint Guthlac's physical beautiful is emphasised as a very simple and potentially effective manifestation of his sainthood.

On the other hand, this paper has also provided a series of examples where the Old English translator deviates from the Latin text by Felix as far as figurative language is concerned. This author showcases a preference for figurative expressions that take as a source domain visual cues. These figurative expressions are particularly well-developed in the Old English *life*. These metaphors can be outlined following Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) Conceptual Metaphor Theory as follows:

- FASTING IS ADORNING THE SPIRIT
- BEAUTY IS PERSONAL PLEASANT EXPERIENCE
- HAPPINESS IS LIGHT
- BEAUTY IS LIGHT
- INTELLIGENCE IS ORNAMENTATION

Similarly, there is a specific metaphor, LEARNING IS CONSUMING FOOD, which is present in the Latin text, and which is translated into a much more complex set of metaphors in the Old English text, with different implications:

- READING IS DRINKING
- THE GOSPEL IS WINE
- SCRIPTURAL KNOWLEDGE IS DRUNKENNESS

While the second, third and fourth metaphors outlined above are found across other Old English texts (see Author, 2021) and are idiosyncratic of the Old English literary production, particularly of hagiography, the first, fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth metaphors are original expressions that this particular Old English author creates for rhetoric purposes and to help their readership to conceptualise abstract ideas in more concrete terms. In doing so, this author lends a more physical dimension to their text, which facilitates the experience and conceptualisation of more abstract notions like Guthlac's sanctity, religious experience or learning processes. In short, these metaphors are particular to this Old English text and do not necessarily reflect patterns of conceptualisation in the Old English language. These expressions vary in degrees of complexity, and alongside the conclusions that have been outlined in the preceding paragraphs, they highlight the literary capabilities of this Old English author in his translation of Felix's text, an adaptation that stresses how, in the Old English literary style, the lexical domains of BEAUTY and AESTHETIC PLEASURE are essential in turning divine beauty into a more accessible human experience.

Furthermore, in the Old English text, BEAUTY and AESTHETIC PLEASURE are rarely presented as experiences that are triggered exclusively by sensory appraisals. Moreover, it is only in one passage that the Latin author makes explicit reference to the notion of beauty through terms that denote excellence, beauty and loveliness. Instead, the Latin text refers to the idea of luminosity much more frequently, and the Old English author construes this luminosity as a physical and moral sort of beauty. This suggests a stylistic preference on the part of the Old English translator to implement an additional aesthetic dimension that is not explicit in the original, and it goes in line with some figurative recourses that have been identified in previous research on Old English literature, more specifically, Antonina Harbus'

(2012: 61) appreciation that, in this textual context, Old English authors associate morality with physical beauty. Nevertheless, while the Old English author does not draw on the somatic profiles that are typically ascribed to positive aesthetic experience, they do employ causative metonymies frequently, describing the saint and all that surrounds him drawing on the effect that this causes on those who experience it, that is, AESTHETIC PLEASURE. All in all, the departure of the Old English text from its Latin source seems to be something that is deliberately done on the part of the Old English translator, who paints Saint Guthlac under a different light, re-contextualising this saint following a literary tradition where the saints and other divine figures radiate a sort of luminous beauty through which Old English authors emphasise their moral excellence and spirituality.

NOTES

¹ It is certainly challenging to distinguish between cognitive and sensory appraisals in this textual context. In order to establish this distinction, for the purposes of this paper, an appraisal will be categorised as either sensory or cognitive based on the type of surrounding lexis and other contextual information.

² *sum sceal wildne fugel wloncne atemian, heafoc on honda, oppæt seo heoroswealwe wynsum weorpeð* (Fort 85) “One must train the wild, proud bird, the hawk, to his hand, until the falcon becomes pleasant” (Bjork, 2014: 64). In this passage, OE *wynsum* describes a conduct opposite to that of wild birds, and it does not necessarily mark positive aesthetic experience. I would like to thank one of the anonymous reviewers for pointing out this connection.

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