Vernacular Liturgy in England and Armenia from the Fifth to the Eleventh Centuries

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From its beginning in 597 with the arrival in Kent of the missionary Augustine (died c. 604), sent by Pope Gregory I (reigned 590-604), to its end in 1066 with the Norman Conquest, the Anglo-Saxon Church celebrated Mass in Latin.[1] The early Church's language had been Greek. Latin was the vernacular of the Western Roman Empire, including Roman Britain. But the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries saw the establishment of so-called "barbarian" "Germanic" kingdoms throughout the western empire's extent; the end of antiquity and of *Romanitas*; the beginning of the Middle Ages. By 597 the Anglo-Saxon vernacular was a Germanic language, Old English. In its early centuries Anglo-Saxon Christian texts were almost entirely Latin. Vernacular literature blossomed with the late-ninth-century King Alfred of Wessex (reigned 871-899). He decried a decline of churchmen's understanding of Latin, which he dated to before the Viking threat with which he had to deal. Alfred ordered a programme of translation of books that he thought "the most necessary for all men to know,"[2] translating some himself. Also, he and others composed original works in Old English. A hundred years later came a second flowering of the vernacular, its most prolific and influential writer being Aelfric (c. 955-c. 1010, monk of Winchester and later of Cerne Abbas, subsequently abbot of Eynsham), a pupil of Aethelwold (c. 908-984), bishop of Winchester (963-984). Aelfric belonged to the second generation of the group responsible for the so-called tenth-century reformation of the English Church, anxious about local clergy's poor understanding and standards (Jolly 1996: 62-64). There was also, most clearly expressed by Wulfstan (bishop of London 996-1002, bishop of Worcester 1002-1016 and archbishop of York 1002-1023), fear that poor religious standards would attract the wrath of God. Like Alfred, Wulfstan regarded Viking attacks – which resumed late in the century after several decades of English conquest and peace – as punishment from God. Aelfric produced a body of homilies, his first series being composed in about 989 (Wilcox 1994: 11), incorporating translation, or adaptation, of various Latin texts.[3]

No translation of the liturgy was ever produced. This is surprising in at least three respects. First, because a comparative perspective, considering the case of the Armenians both in general and with regard to the importance of liturgy in building a sense of national community, suggests that a translation would have been useful for both Church and State. Second, because the Church was concerned both to engage the laity,

including the common people, using the liturgy in this process, and that the laity should understand what they were doing. Third, because kings and clerics were aware of a wider Christian world in which languages other than Latin and Greek were used. After the exploration of these issues possible explanations will be considered, including ideas about a hierarchy of languages, translation theory and concerns about heresy and, finally, the emphasis in the building of an English identity of royal and state control.

Armenian enjoyment of a vernacular liturgy almost as soon as one was possible, with Mesrop's invention of the Armenian alphabet early in the fifth century, makes Anglo-Saxon retention of the Latin seem surprising. For the two societies had much in common.[4] Well before 1000 both, unlike other, west European groups, had a strong national identity[5] and a well-developed vernacular literature. Such literature can, even in a society without widespread literacy, through the mediation of priests, reach a wide audience. It expresses and promotes national identity, by creating and reinforcing senses of being a community with shared interests, concerns, and prospects (Anderson: 1983). Especially important are histories. They provide a vision of the past for their audience to regard as a shared past. Armenian histories of parts, or all, of Armenian history were produced throughout the period of the fifth to the eleventh centuries.[6] In England, Bede's (672/3-735, monk of Jarrow in the kingdom of Northumbria) Latin *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*,[7] finished in 731, gave the disparate groups of "Anglo-Saxons" a vision of a shared identity. Its translation into Old English is associated with Alfred's circle (Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 33, 215 n39), as is the composition of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 39-41, 217-218 n62, 277-279), one of whose themes is the rise of the house of Wessex to rule all the English and all England.

Christianity was basic to both identities. In Eghishe's *History of Vardan and the Armenian War*, about Armenian resistance, in 451, to Persian attempts to impose Zoroastrianism, traditionally dated to the fifth century, Christianity is integral to "Armenianness".[8] Not all fifth-century Armenians agreed,[9] but it came to be true later. For Bede, the English were the people used by God to punish the British for sin in the fifth century, converted to Roman Christianity, members of one church ruled from the archbishopric of Canterbury. For Alfred, Christianity set the English apart from the Vikings, and understanding Christianity and Christian history would help the English to prevail. From his own and his circle's works we see that Alfred was one of the makers of English identity and of what, by the late tenth century, was a united kingdom of England, with borders very similar to its current ones.

It is also clear that for Alfred, Aethelwold and Aelfric, language and text were unifiers. A work well known to Anglo-Saxon scholars was the *Etymologies* of the seventh-century Isidore of Seville (in Spain). In the book *Languages, Peoples, Kingdoms, Armies, Cities and Relationships*, Isidore's view is that peoples arise from languages, not languages from peoples (Stanton 2002: 66-67). Alfred, in his recall of unity and happy times, which is historically inaccurate, in his prose preface to his translation of Pope Gregory's *Pastoral Care* (c. 890), presupposes England as a continuously existing, single linguistic and political community, presents English as having the power to unify and to restore all men to wisdom, and integrates land,

language and "people" (Davis 1998). Later there was an attempt to propagate a "standard" language. By 1066 Old English, a form of West Saxon, with astonishing uniformity of phonology and morphology and conformity regarding vocabulary, was "a highly developed written standard language" used throughout England. There is nothing comparable at this time or earlier in other Germanic languages. This deliberate development began in Aethelwold's school in Winchester, capital of the West Saxon kings, and was promoted by its pupils. Various texts connected with Winchester exemplify the standard language (Gneuss 1972).

These include Aelfric's homilies, whose circulation was massive, throughout England. This circulation has been called the beginning of a form of mass communication that must have played a significant part in defining a sense of English identity around the year 1000 (Wilcox 2005: 61-62). There was a visual element to this too, a new, distinctive script, English square minuscule, used for both vernacular and Latin texts (Davis 1998: 627). For Alfred's successors encouraging both Christianity and a sense of "Englishness" were part of the effort to conquer Viking settlers and make England secure, especially after Viking attacks resumed. They feared lest the English go the way of the British, from sin to defeat (Howe 1989: 180). Wulfstan was behind a body of law codes whose purpose was to make the Anglo-Saxons a properly Christian people (Wormald 1999: 330-366, 389-397, 449-465), and author of warning sermons. Besides his and Aelfric's we also have a number of anonymous homilies. All these were in English. In total it is not dissimilar to the efforts of Mesrop, his circle and disciples, translating and preaching, to strengthen Armenian Christianity, as resistance to Persian absorption, especially after the abolition of the Armenian kingship in 428.[10]

Christianity and the Church were very important in creating and maintaining national identity in both societies – as they have been in others. Their role had various dimensions, but this article is concerned only with the liturgy, as something that generates an "imagined community" – imagined in the sense that members do not all know each other personally. Christians worship in a group, at set dates and times in a set service, conscious that other groups are doing the same elsewhere. Prayer for the welfare of others, both living and dead, promotes a sense of community with the beneficiaries, including a sense of responsibility for their welfare (Hen 2001: 89-95 and 152). Commemoration of particular saints or occasions promotes a sense of a shared past. In the Armenian liturgy there are prayers for pious kings and their armies, commemoration of Vardan and his fellow-soldiers, intercessions referring to a series of Armenian Church leaders.[11] The wording repeatedly conjures up an "us" who are "Armenians".

In England, the Latin *Regularis Concordia*, (written probably in about 970)[12] in which Aethelwold stated the rule for reformed English monasteries, is based in a number of respects on Continental works (Symons 1953: xlv-li; Lapidge and Winterbottom 1991: lvii-lx; Deshman 1995: 210-211). But it has a very original feature - great emphasis on repeated prayer for the king, Edgar (died 975), the first to be crowned king of all England, in 973, and queen (Symons 1953: xxxii, 5, 12, 13, 14, 16). We do not know how uniform the liturgy was in England. But uniformity was an aim, and monastic practices were disseminated beyond the monastic context.[13] In the pastoral letter that

Aelfric wrote (993 x c. 995) for Wulfsige III, bishop of Sherborne 993-1002, to circulate to his clergy,[14] he stipulates that mass-priests and all God's servants are to pray for the king (Whitelock, Brett and Brooke 1981: 206).

These parallels between English and Armenian history, England's increasing use of the written vernacular, and the contribution in both of liturgy to identity, raise the question of why England did not develop a vernacular liturgy. The Church did, after all, make great efforts to engage the people, targeting the whole population, as did the Frankish Church in the ninth century, under the influence of its Carolingian rulers,[15] whose influence on English rulers and churchmen, in various respects, is well established. In his letter for Wulfsige, Aelfric states that every Sunday must be observed as a festival, Christian men are to attend church frequently, and the mass-priest is to explain the Gospel to the people on Sundays and festivals, and the paternoster and the creed as often as he could (Whitelock, Brett and Brooke 1981: 208, 217, 225). In his instructions for Good Friday, Aethelwold recommends "a practice worthy to be imitated for the strengthening of the faith of unlearned common persons" (Symons 1953: 44). Reference to laity holding candles assumes lay presence at mass. In one homily Aelfric assumes that some of the participants might not be monks, trained to chant, in another he refers to the distribution of palms, on Palm Sunday, to "the folk" (Bedingfield 2002: 55-57, 99). Bishops were supposed to travel to conduct confirmations and say Mass afterwards, with their lay flock (Lynch 1998: 104-105).

Nor was lay exposure to liturgy simply a matter of aspiration. I have argued elsewhere that in early medieval Armenia the peasantry was indeed exposed to the liturgy regularly and frequently, as it was supposed to be (Redgate 2006). There are many signs in England that the common people were far from untouched by the Church. First, medical texts show that Christian ritual was applied to illness. Frequent stipulations that Mass be said over this or that potion or herb, for this or that number of times, suggests that altars had various items underneath them, to be ready when needed. Indeed, Aelfric recommends that people should seek health at the Church (Jolly 1996: 93, 115, 122). Second, there was taxation. Tenth-century royal law shows that two types of dues were owed to the church, and by the early 960s a sense of obedience owed to a specific church was well established. Priests were to remind the laity to pay their dues, three times a year. Some sources express a relationship between dues and pastoral care. (Tinti 2005). Third, pastoral care was indeed given, as we see from the Old English rubrics in some liturgical manuscripts and in the very existence of material designed for parish use. A mid-eleventh-century manuscript, probably from Worcester, has Latin *ordines* for the sick and dying with long, detailed English rubrics, and English confession texts, and often refers to the priest-parishioner relationship (Thompson 2005). The manuscript known now as The Red Book of Darley, dated about 1061, from Sherborne or Winchester, which likewise includes vernacular material, may have been designed for parish use, containing as it does almost everything that the putative parish priest required (Gittos 2005).

Fourth, practical provision of and in churches was not lacking. Monastic churches could serve the local lay community. A cathedral, as at Sherborne, might serve

townspeople and secular clergy (Wilcox 1994: 12). William the Conqueror's survey of England, Domesday Book, conducted in 1086, shows that by then, in some counties, there was a church and priest in every village (Stafford 1989: 194; Loyn 2000: 94). The liturgy was dramatic, not in a representational sense, but in the sense that it re-enacted Christian history, encouraging sympathetic identification with biblical figures, making the congregation participants, not spectators. Some proceedings went out to the people. There were frequent processions in Lent (Symons 1953: 32-46). In Canterbury, on Palm Sunday, the monastic-based ceremony processed through the heart of the city and out of the gates. The liturgy gives the laity a central place. Rogationtide observance had always been a practice for the common people and would have involved everybody (Bedingfield 2002: 4-12, 98-99, 106, 191, 196).

The English homilists, particularly Aelfric, tried in their homilies to reach the people through their priests, to overcome the problem of unlearned priests, far from the centres, poorly resourced and perhaps not owning the books that Aelfric thought were an essential priestly requirement (Jolly 1996: 73, 76; Wilcox 1994: 20-21; Wilcox 2005: 54-60). Aelfric wanted, and, as far as we can judge, managed, to grip his audience and to provide for the whole church. He said that he tried to be brief, to avoid boredom. Rather than depend on colourful stories, as the anonymous homilists did, he developed a heightened rhythmical prose, including sound effects of words to emphasise their meaning and a range of auditory effects. His eighty sermons circulated widely and cover most Sundays and almost all the major saints' festivals. He stated that his first series was sufficient for a year if recited in entirety, and that he was providing the second so that the two could be alternated, to avoid boredom (Wilcox 1994: 17, 19, 22, 57-62, 127).

Throughout the English reformers' work is concern for people's understanding. Aethelwold stipulated that the prayers for the king and benefactors "be chanted distinctly so that mind and voice agree" (Symons 1953: 5). Aelfric repeatedly stresses his simplicity of style (Wilcox 1994: 60) and was especially concerned to explain to the laity the meaning of the liturgy, for example emphasising the biblical models, telling the audience to emulate them, increasing their sympathetic identification (Bedingfield 2002: 11, 18). In liturgical manuscripts the Old English elements occur where the layman's understanding is critical, most frequently in penitential discipline. In the Red Book of Darley the priest sometimes uses the vernacular in the visitation of the sick (Dumville 1992: 131; Gittos 2005: 78-79).

Could the reason why no English liturgy was produced have been a belief that, apart from the Latin, there was no precedent? Certainly the neighbours of the Anglo-Saxons who, historically, greatly influenced English Christianity, namely the Irish, and the Carolingian and post-Carolingian domains, offered none. But King Alfred's circle certainly and Aelfric's probably felt themselves to be part of a wider Christendom in which vernacular liturgies did indeed exist. It is the contention of this article that their existence was known.

Alfred's awareness of such a wider world was explicit. In his prose preface to his *Pastoral Care* translation, finished about 890, he states that "the Law" (meaning the scriptures), originally in Hebrew, has been successively translated by the Greeks and the

Romans and "similarly all the other Christian peoples turned some part of them into their own language." In considering what translations he meant, scholars have not gone beyond the fourth-century Gothic Bible and the few ninth-century German translations (Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 35, 124-126, 295-296 n12; Davis 1998: 632 n12). Yet from a comparative perspective there are two other obvious possibilities to explore, the Armenian and the Slavonic.

The case that Alfred knew of the latter is very strong. It was in the 860s that a Slavonic alphabet was invented, by the Byzantine Constantine (also known as Cyril), for Moravia, an area of Byzantine-Frankish rivalry in which the production of Christian texts in Slavonic became an issue. The Byzantine mission group's leaders (Constantine and his brother Methodius) visited Rome (where Constantine died in 869) and papal approval was given to the Slavonic script. In 880 Methodius gained papal permission to celebrate the liturgy in Slavonic. But finally the Franks, after years of trying, engineered the end of papal support and the expulsion of Methodius's disciples, in 885, whereupon they moved to Bulgaria, taking the Slavonic tradition with them. Bulgaria itself had been an area of rivalry between Rome and Constantinople, capital of the Byzantine Empire.[16] There was always a variety of people in Rome. Whenever there were factions within the church at Constantinople, as there were in the 860s over the legitimacy of Photius being patriarch, individuals went to lobby for support or to escape persecution (Sansterre 1983). There were also frequent embassies between the two cities.[17]

Slavonic Christianity was thus a *cause celèbre* for the Papacy. Alfred surely knew of the Slavonic liturgy, given his contacts not only with the Franks but also with Rome. Emphasis on connection with Rome recurs in his reign and he had many real contacts with Rome and the Papacy. For example, almost all the texts of his literary programme have a connection with Rome (Howe 2004: 149-150, 157-158); his respect for Gregory I's teaching was profound and he applied it to his kingship (Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 29-30; Pratt 2001: 81-82); elements in design of a series of new coin types were copied from Roman coin prototypes (Blackburn 2003: 207); and the mid-ninth-century fortification of Vatican City may have been a model for Alfred's urban policies (that is, the fortification of burhs and the laying out of regular street plans within them) (Hill 2003: 220-228).

As for real contacts, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and the biography of Alfred by his contemporary, Asser (died 908 or 909), claim that as a child, aged four, Alfred himself visited Rome and was anointed, as future king, by the Pope, though some scholars doubt the nature of the ceremony and also Asser's claim that the visit was repeated (Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 14, 69, 70, 211, 232, 234). The *Chronicle* mentions the English School at Rome, burnt down in 816 but rebuilt (Howe 2004: 147-148), pilgrims and couriers. The fact that it reports of 889 that "no journey was made to Rome, except by two couriers whom king Alfred sent with letters", suggests that journeys to Rome were commonplace.[18]

Finally, besides supposition, there is concrete evidence that Alfred was aware, before his allusion in 890 to other peoples' translations, of Moravia and some of its history. In the Old English translation of the Latin *History Against the Pagans* by

Orosius (c. 385-420), where the geography of continental Europe is rewritten and updated, Moravia is not only named, but treated as a "pivotal" area. The wilderness between Carendra and Bulgaria, which the updated section refers to, was probably the result of ravages of Svatopluk of Moravia in 883 and 884. The fact that there is no reference to Hungarians, who settled in the region in 889, dates the English Orosius to the late 880s.[19]

That Alfred knew of an Armenian vernacular tradition is less certain than that he knew of the Slavonic one. But it is very likely. He could have learnt this from one or more of three sources. One was Rome, for an Armenian monastic house had been established in the area in the seventh century though it subsequently declined and had no community by 807 (Sansterre 1983 vol. I: 9-10, 12-13, 17-21, 48, 152, 208). Another was Jerusalem, which had a well-established Armenian community, as well as westerners' (Pratt 2001: 68), and which probably still, as it had earlier, drew Armenian as well as western pilgrims (Redgate 1998: 233-236). Alfred had contact with Jerusalem well before 890. Asser claims to have "seen and read letters sent to him [Alfred] with gifts" from Elias, patriarch of Jerusalem (c. 879-907) (Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 101, 270 n220). In Bald's *Leechbook*, a collection of medical texts composed during Alfred's reign, there is a group of remedies that, according to the compiler, "Elias, patriarch at Jerusalem, ordered to be told to King Alfred." These two claims are probably true, for the remedies fit symptoms that Asser says Alfred had, and need substances that were only readily available in the eastern Mediterranean. Elias had probably sent them, with his advice (Pratt 2001: 67, 72-73, 81). Elias's interest was probably initiated by an Alfredian embassy that departed from Rome in 883, to take alms to Judaea.[20] It would not have taken an embassy more than seven years to get there and then back to England.

The existence of an Armenian vernacular tradition could also have been learnt from Constantinople. Not only were there Armenians there, but some of the most highly placed had, or claimed to have, Armenian origins, including patriarch Photius, and emperor Basil I (867-886), and Armenia and Armenians were of great political importance. Thus Photius wrote to Armenia's future king, Ashot Bagratuni, about the possibility of church union (Maksoudian 1988-1989). In 875, according to a thirteenth-century Armenian source, Ashot sent Basil a crown, at Basil's request. After Ashot's revival of the Armenian kingship in 884 (the Caliph, apparently petitioned by the heads of the leading Armenian aristocratic families to do so, granting him a royal title) Basil recognised his kingship.[21] Such matters must often have been a topic of court conversation. It has been pointed out that the route of Alfred's emissaries to Jerusalem might have run through Byzantium and that they might have visited the emperor's palace in Constantinople (Shepard 2003: 358). Certainly, if they did indeed pass through the capital they are very likely to have gone to court, given the well-documented Byzantine penchant for impressing "barbarian" visitors with displays of imperial luxury and ceremonial.

The case for English knowledge of an Armenian vernacular tradition is stronger for Aelfric's period than it is for Alfred's. In the later tenth century there is evidence for direct Byzantine-English contact and Armenia was even more important than in the ninth century for Byzantium. A bishop of "Greek" origin (*natione Grecus*) is recorded as one

of King Edgar's magnates (Blake 1962: 73, 396); an abbot of a Greek monastery in Rome, Leo, probably acted as a papal legate to England in 991; there are snatches of Byzantine liturgy in English monastic chant books; and Byzantine titles are used by kings (Harris 1999: 33). The lavish manuscript *The Benedictional of St Aethelwold* shows signs of direct Byzantine influence of comparatively recent date, perhaps from a tenth-century Byzantine liturgical book (Deshman 1995: 89, 90, 229-231). As for Byzantium, the number of Armenians there increased (Toumanoff 1971: 131; Jenkins 1981: 66), Byzantium first helped Armenians to resist Arab pressure and then waged war against Arab emirates that were located in historic Armenian territory. Her most successful emperor was Edgar's contemporary, John I, who was Armenian. John's successor Basil II (976-1025) planned and largely accomplished the annexation of the Armenian kingdoms and principalities.[22]

At the same time English contact with Rome continued, as did an Armenian element in Rome. The only English itinerary for a pilgrimage site that survives is for Rome. In 990 Bishop Sigeric went to Rome, as bishops traditionally did, to obtain his *pallium* (his mark of office) from the Pope (Howe 2004: 158-159). In 983 a Papal synod had been interrupted by bystanders denouncing an Armenian pilgrim, called Symeon, as a heretic. They suspected him in part because of his unusual language. Yet he was not the only Armenian-speaker present. He was saved by a bishop who had come from the regions of Armenia, and could translate when Symeon recited the Nicene Creed.[23]

English sources provide no information about whether any consideration was ever given to translating the liturgy, which does not necessarily mean that it was not considered. Nor has this question been addressed by scholars.[24]

The reason does not lie in any lack of ability to translate the liturgy or of self-confidence to be, in a western context, innovative. Scholarly literature is awash with testimony that there was no lack of either. Alfred's own and his circle's work incorporated sophisticated scholarship, for example, patterns of allusions to earlier texts and traditions (Lerer 1991: 66-78; Howlett 2003). The famous and enigmatic "Alfred jewel" is without precedent (Webster 2003: 81-83). The English pioneered the creation of sponsorship at the catechumenate and at confirmation (Lynch 1998: 134). Aethelwold's translation of the sixth-century Latin monastic *Rule* of Benedict of Nursia[25] is impeccably accurate (Lapidge and Winterbottom 1991: xci). Aelfric's *Grammar* was a remarkable and original achievement (Bullough 1972: 488-491. Aelfric and Wulfstan of York compare favourably with the best theologians of the age (Gatch 1977: 6), Aethelwold's pupil Wulfstan of Winchester with the best ninth- and tenth-century Continental authors (Lapidge and Winterbottom 1991: cxi). The recognition of a dynamic of establishing sympathetic association with biblical models was a major innovation in the late Anglo-Saxon liturgy, the Continental having merely included the potential for such identification (Bedingfield 2002: 10-11, 222-226). In the artwork in Aethelwold's *Benedictional*, Byzantine and Carolingian influence were transformed more than in any other Anglo-Saxon work into an indigenous idiom and the book itself is an intellectual and artistic achievement of the highest order (Deshman 1995: 232, 252). Many other examples could be cited. Anglo-Saxon cultural achievement has a character that is original and

distinctively English whilst being firmly based in a wider context.

To explain why the liturgy was not translated, it is necessary to speculate. First, although it is not the case, as was once thought, that there was a western tri-linguist heresy, that regarded only Hebrew, Greek and Latin as permissible (Thomson F. J. 1992: 67-75, 98-99, 106), Latin may have been felt more prestigious, as some scholars believe,[26] or more suitable than the vernacular. Its use by Church Fathers and the Roman Empire and in an inscription on Christ's Cross had given it a sacred character (Thomson 1992: 80-90; Resnick 1990: 60-67). It probably symbolised continuity, with the broader church and with earlier English Christians, and also respect for the Papacy whence it came. Multi- or bi-lingual individuals' and groups' use of different languages in different contexts is common in history.

Certainly, English translators present their work as necessary and by implication regrettable, expedients. Alfred did (Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 125-126). In what is thought to be his prologue to his translation of Benedict's *Rule* Aethelwold stated that it was "necessary for unlearned laymen" (Whitelock, Brett and Brooke 1981: 142, 151). Aelfric's first series of homilies was to edify "the simple who know" only English. He addressed his archbishop in Latin, his secular patron Aethelweard, despite his knowing Latin, in English (Wilcox 1994: 127, 66). Old English glosses - words and phrases near Latin ones – in manuscripts have been interpreted as teaching aids and as evidence that Latinity was poor.[27]

But some scholars disagree. Gregory I's, Isidore of Seville's and Bede's ideas about language unequivocally justified vernacular translation and education. There is ambition as well as circumspection in Alfred's and Aelfric's prefaces (Davis 2000: 149-151, 155; Stanton 2002: 3, 57, 63-73). In Alfred's account of the history of biblical translation, English has for the English the same status as Latin had for the Romans (Davis 1998: 616). In the glossed Psalters, the expression of hierarchy of Latin and English, through size of script and choice of script, varied (Stanton 2002: 44).

Second, because liturgy was participation in the angels' incessant worship of God,[28] it is conceivable, though unlikely, that it was felt that angels would be discomposed by English. Some Jewish traditions held that Hebrew was the only tongue angels knew (Resnick 1990: 57). But this was not widely accepted. Gregory and Isidore taught that the Creation was wordless and God and the angels did not speak as such, Bede that God was pure intellect (Stanton 2002: 67, 68, 70). The development of polyphonic chant in England, in the 970s (Bedingfield 2002: 2), suggests English confidence in angelic adaptability, for the early Church had shunned it because angels all sang with one voice (Petersen 1964: 28). Third, human understanding in this context may have been thought unnecessary. As is clear from the unintelligibility of some incantations in medical remedies, words were thought to be powerful in themselves, whether understood or not (Jolly 1996: 117). Fourth, and much more certainly, whereas the English translations that were produced were addressed to an audience who could not understand the Latin original, the liturgy was addressed to God, whose understanding was in no doubt at all.

Equally certain is that there was fear of heresy, coupled with fear that translation might itself lead to heresy. Aelfric thought that there was, besides erroneous books

written in Latin, "much error in many English books", probably meaning anonymous homily collections, two of which survive. To fight it, he provided an authoritatively orthodox body of doctrine, connecting his work with orthodox patristic and Carolingian tradition, identifying himself, establishing his credentials in various ways, such as naming his position, asking that his work be corrected should heresy be found in it. He worried lest translation cause misunderstanding (Wilcox 1994: 28, 69-70, 145; iii, 1; 19, 65, 68, 69, 128, 129; 37-38: Jolly 1996: 77-78: Stanton 2002: 131-137, 145-146). St Jerome (c. 340-420), responsible for the Latin translation of the Bible known as the Vulgate, had views about whether translation should be word for word or sense for sense, and these were known (Davis 2000: 161; Pratt 2007: 195). Alfred stated that his translations of Pope Gregory's *Pastoral Care* and of the Latin *Consolation of Philosophy* by Boethius (c. 480-524) (later than that of the *Pastoral Care,* Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 35), both of which Aelfric approved (Wilcox 1994: 3, 70, 146), were sometimes one, sometimes the other (Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 126, 131). His translation of the first fifty psalms is his closest to the original, yet alters them subtly, to present an image of himself as a wise educator, based on King David (Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 153; Stanton 2002: 121-123). Those of Boethius and of the *Soliloquies* by Augustine of Hippo (354-430) (later than that of the *Consolation,* Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 35), are very free, to the extent that they constitute significant evidence for Alfred's own thoughts on a variety of subjects (Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 131, 138).

Aelfric too usually did what we would call adapt, or interpret, rather than translate. He was very uneasy about biblical translation, several times expressing reluctance to continue lest "the pearls of Christ" be disrespected, though he did in fact continue, providing, in total, versions of eight Old Testament books, and, in his homilies, of some New Testament and Old Testament passages. His first preference had been for the word for word style, not imposing interpretation, which might be erroneous, on it. But lack of commentary, he felt, was itself dangerous; unlearned people might think that they could live as people did in the Old Testament, for example, practising incest, or that the whole meaning was locked in the simple narrative; also a literal translation could leave the meaning obscure. His later translations were freer, more interpretative, imposing his own view, for example toning down in his version of *Esther* the moral of vengeance implicit in the original, and in his version of *Maccabees* condemning the use of violence (Wilcox 1994: 1, 23, 37-41, 44, 63, 64, 131-132; Davis 2000: 157-162; Stanton 2002: 104, 131-137, 140, 146, 158).

In his prologue to his translation of the Benedictine *Rule* Aethelwold referred to "the two-fold wisdom - that is, the wisdom of things actual and spiritual - and each of those again admittedly consists of three divisions" which "keen-witted scholars" understand, so that they do not need the translation (Whitelock, Brett and Brooke 1981: 151). Given the theory of multiple meanings, it is not surprising that Aelfric thought that book-learning was essential for understanding and that unlearned priests might mislead their flocks (Whitelock, Brett and Brooke 1981: 209). The weight of responsibility attached to translating the Bible might explain the lateness and lack of use of the West Saxon Gospels. This late-tenth or early-eleventh-century translation was not widely

known. Its function is a matter of speculation, though the manuscript evidence suggests its production was part of an organised programme and of some interest and use in at least some places where it was kept (Stanton 2002: 129-131).

The theory of multiple meanings of course applied to the liturgy as well, perhaps even more so. On the European mainland its most original applications were to the liturgy, to which all the theological disciplines and the arts became handmaidens (Gatch 1977: 11). A safe translation that was usable, not unwieldy, probably seemed an impossible dream. Explaining it in sermons was a more practical option.

As the text to which most people were exposed most often, liturgy could be a means of encouraging truly national sentiment. But in England it was not the only one and its use in this respect was perhaps incompatible with the top-down approach for which England is notable. Strict control by an increasingly demanding and sophisticated state is compatible with the self-identification of the English as a new Israel, something that has been established by scholars and is manifest in several respects,[29] since the Bible presents Israel as a nation-state ruled, ideally, by a strong king (Hastings 1997: 4, 16-18, 42, 186, 195-196, 204). Alfred's translations reveal that "an extraordinarily coherent philosophy of theocratic royal rule" was a fundamental organ of his government. Alfred taught his subjects that they owed him respect and obedience and he legislated against disloyalty with what has been termed almost Stalinist zeal.[30] In Edgar's reign kingship was given a Christ-like element, in which it was Christ as mediator with the Father and Christ in Majesty rather than Christ the crucified that was stressed. In his *Benedictional*, Aethelwold regalised Christ, and St Benedict, to present them as exemplars for Edgar, so that like a Christ-like abbot Edgar could legitimately exercise his authority over the monasticised church. Edgar was crowned not when he became king of all England in 959 but in 973, when he was the same age as Christ at the beginning of his ministry, and at Pentecost (Garmondsway 1954: 118; John 1991: 185, 188-189; Deshman 1995: 211-214).

Edgar's Benedictine Reform was imposed as a unifying element from above (Symons 1953: li, 1-9). The *Regularis Concordia* and standard Old English are only the most obvious examples. Aelfric lived in seclusion but corresponded with leading political figures and his prefaces suggest that he produced his works at their request (Wilcox 1994: 9, 13-14, 41, 50, 54, 56, 66, 128, 131). Local priests were to propagate what came to them from the upper echelons of the Church. Canterbury played a directive role (Dumville 1992: 37-39, 65, 82), including being at the heart of the operation behind the circulation of Aelfric's homilies (Wilcox 2005: 61). Regulation of behaviour was a recurrent concern. Aethelwold did not want laymen who had chosen to follow the Benedictine rule to claim, if they broke it, that they had erred through ignorance (translation (Whitelock, Brett and Brooke 1981: 151). The thrust of the numerous legal texts in whose authorship Wulfstan of York was involved, and of his sermons,[31] was to establish a properly Christian society in which people lived strictly in accordance with God's law and teaching.

From the time of Alfred West Saxon royal government was intrusive, demanding, and impressive. Alfred made huge demands on his people to defend the burhs; kings and their representatives intruded in the workings of the regularly held local and regional

lawcourts; Edgar instituted recall and reminting of the coinage at regular intervals; the West Saxon administrative unit of the shire was extended to the Midlands; Aethelred II frequently levied vast sums of tax in coined money. Eleventh-century England has been regarded as the most advanced and sophisticated state in western Christendom. Its reach was deep, its grip tight, its ambition elevated. This, and the shared experience that it gave to the population, was a crucial factor in the making of English identity as well as of the English State.

Late Anglo-Saxon England has evidence for laxity in obedience, and in religious observance, and for succession disputes. But other than this we have almost no evidence to suggest any religious dissent,[32] whereas at the same time the Armenian Church was troubled by the Tondrakian heretics, whose heresy has sometimes been seen as social and economic protest and which certainly expressed dissent from the values, institutions and practices of the official Church (Redgate 1998: 222). By comparison, Aelfric's attestation of English heresy is more apparent than real. He seems to have taken an approach that was significantly more strict than that of other reformers and meant such things as apocryphal legends about the Assumption of the Virgin, at least one story from which was accepted by his teacher Aethelwold (Wilcox 1994: 28-29, 30-31, 55-56), rather than the concerns of Armenian authorities, like deviant Christology and rejection of the sacraments. We do not know what lies behind this apparent lack of dissent. The possibilities include both lack of dissent and significant dissent going unreported.

Anglo-Saxon and Armenian history have many similarities and two major differences. The first difference is that Armenia had a vernacular liturgy and England did not. The second is that by the mid-eleventh century England was a nation-state (Campbell 1995: 31), whose boundaries were very similar to modern ones, this having been the deliberate policy of the West Saxon kings beginning with Alfred, control of thought and behaviour one of its hallmarks and methods. In Armenia, Alfred's contemporary, Ashot Bagratuni (died 890), re-established kingship, in 884, but the elite did not think in terms of a nation-state. Kingdoms proliferated, starting with Artsruni Vaspurakan early in the tenth century. By 1000 there were five (Redgate 1998: 199- 205, 224-226).

In the case of England these two contrasts are probably connected.

Notes:
1. The text of this article is essentially the same that was read at the Second International Conference of the Armenian Association for the Study of English, Yerevan, 16-19 October 2007. Notes and references are selective and kept to a minimum.
2. Alfred made these remarks in his *Prose Preface* to his translation of Pope Gregory I's *Regula Pastoralis*. This   preface is translated into modern English, as are other contemporary sources, in Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 124-126.
3. For a general account of Anglo-Saxon history in all its aspects see Campbell 1991.
4. For some similarities see Redgate 1998: 244-248 and Redgate 2005.
5. The case for Anglo-Saxon England is summarised in Hastings 1997: 35-43. Hastings 1997: 66-123 considers western Europe. The prime exponents of the case

for Anglo-Saxon England have been Patrick Wormald and James Campbell, whose arguments I find wholly convincing. They have not however gone unchallenged, either by Anglo-Saxonists or by scholars of nationalism whose specialisation is more recent history and who adhere to the so-called modernist school of thought about national identity. For recent questioning see Pratt 2007: 5-7.

6. These are identified and briefly discussed in Redgate 1998.

7. For translation and notes see McClure and Collins 1994.

8. The text is translated into English in Thomson R. W. 1982. See Thomson R. W. 1982: 9-24 for discussion of its date and of the author's views.

9. The conclusion that the fourth and early fifth centuries were "a time of uneasy change in the self-consciousness of the Armenian people" (Terian 2005) is applicable to the entirety of the fifth century.

10. For details see Redgate 1998: 140-149.

11. For text and translation see Nersoyan 1984: 50-51, 84-85, 106-107 (prayer for kings and armies); 169-170, 178-180 (commemorations); and 82-85, 169, 178 (intercessions).

12. For text, translation and commentary see Symons 1953. The text is anonymous. For its date and authorship see Symons 1953: xxiv, li-lii.

13. For a study of the liturgy including these aspects see Bedingfield 2002.

14. For its Old English text, modern English translation and notes see Whitelock, Brett and Brooke 1981: 191-226.

15. For the Carolingian Church see McKitterick 1977 and Wallace-Hadrill 1983: 258-303.

16. For these events see Shepard 1995: 238-245; Whittow 1996: 282-285.

17. For travel including ambassadorial travel between eastern and western Christendom see McCormick 2001: 143-147, 152, 175-181, 211-213, 921-963.

18. The Old English *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* is translated in Garmondsway 1954. For visits, pilgrims and couriers to Rome during Alfred's lifetime see Garmondsway 1954: 64, 66, 67, 72, 73, 80-83.

19. The Old English version of Orosius is published and discussed in Bately 1980. For the rewriting of the original account of continental Europe, the dating of the translation; its authorship and association with Alfred's circle; and its references to Moravia (Maroara meaning the Moravians) see Bately 1980: lxvii, lxviii, lxxxix, xc; lxxiv, xc-xciii, 13.

20. The reference to India (Garmondsway 1954: 79) is probably a mistake for Judaea (Harris 1999: 39; Pratt 2001: 69).

21. For Ashot's career and Armenians in ninth-century Byzantine society see Redgate 1998: 173-175, 236-241.

22. For these years, from an Armenian perspective see Redgate 1998: 224-229.

23. The episode is recorded in the Latin *Life* of Symeon published by Golinelli 1979: 757-759. It is briefly discussed in Hamilton 1961: 13.

24. The first book-length study of translation in the Anglo-Saxon period is Stanton 2002. This does not consider the liturgy. Anglo-Saxon liturgy is a subject that in 2002 was "just coming into its own" (Bedingfield 2002: 1). Liturgical manuscripts

ʼand pastoral care at local level have been the object of a number of recent studies. Vernacular annotation and the phenomenon of vernacular documents in liturgical books have been discussed by David Dumville, who concluded that by the middle of the eleventh century the vernacular was poised to assume a more substantial role in liturgical books, that is, all rubrics and direction being in the vernacular (Dumville 1992: 127-133). The most recent studies considering pastoral care and vernacular material in liturgical books are Gittos 2005 and Thompson 2005. Karen Jolly and Suzanne Keefer are reported (in 2007) to have begun work on a study of the vernacular in the liturgy of Anglo-Saxon England. Helen Gittos is planning a ʼstudy of the vernacular in the liturgy in England, going beyond the Anglo-Saxon period and in an international context (private communication, 2007). With regard to the Frankish Church, to my knowledge, the only scholar to have attempted to explain, rather than simply note, a failure to translate the Latin liturgy into the vernacular is Rosamond McKitterick (McKitterick 1977: 143-148).

25. The translation is anonymous but Aethelwold's authorship is established (Whitelock, Brett and Brooke 1981: 142, 151 n1).
26. McKitterick 1977: 146 sees the prestige of Latin as one explanation for the Carolingian retention of the Latin liturgy. Stanton 2002: 3 notes a pessimistic strain in some Anglo-Saxon scholarship that regards English texts as regrettable expedients in the face of inadequate Latin literacy.
27. Noted by Gittos 2005: 75 with regard to the vernacular in liturgical books.
28. See Rios 1940; Petersen 1954: 13, 14, 30-40; Mayr-Harting 1998: 14.
29. See for example Howe 1989.
30. Burghart 2007 reviewing Pratt 2007, which offers close analysis of the emphases of Alfred's translations.
31. Most notably his Old English Sermon *of the Wolf to the English,* preached late in the reign of Aethelred II (979-1016) (Wormald 1999: 462-463) translated into modern English in Whitelock 1955: 855-858.
32. Although the preaching of loyalty and legislation against disloyalty (notably by King Alfred) suggests a perception of dissent and a lack of security. Gatch 1977: 121 suspects that the monastic reform party and the crown of Wessex were so strong that dissent could be ignored by the 990s, notes that the absence of theological controversy has seemed characteristic of the Saxon period but that stories from a slightly earlier period may mask a greater degree of disagreement than has heretofore been imagined.

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Պատարագի առանձնահատկությունները
Անգլիայում և Հայաստանում 5-11-րդ դարերում

Հոդվածում քննության է առնվում 5-11-րդ դարերում Անգլիայի և Հայաստանի եկեղեցիներում տրվող պատարագների լեզվի հարցը։ Զուգահեռներ անցկացնելով Անգլիայի և Հայաստանի պատմությունների միջև, հեղինակը ցշում է, որ ի տարբերություն հայերի, որոնք պատարագը հայերեն էին կատարում, անգլիացիների համար պատարագի լեզուն լատիներենն էր։ Հեղինակը փորձում է քննել արտալեզվական այն գործոնները, որոնցով պայմանավորվում էր ժամանակի իրավիճակը։