“mænige calfru, þæt synt lytle and niwe fynd”:
A study of additions and changes in the translation of the prose psalms in the Paris Psalter

Joel Nordahl
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Abstract

The prose translation of the fifty first psalms in the Paris Psalter is quite unique as an early medieval scriptural translation (O’Neill 2016 p. x). There have been several studies made on the Paris Psalter recently, most notably by Patrick O’Neill. One focus of several of these studies has been whether or not the Prose translation is connected to Alfred the Great. However, there is still much left in this translation that has not yet been studied. Something that can be noticed when studying the prose psalms is that throughout the translation the translator made several additions and changes to the psalms. There are several different kinds of additions in the prose psalms, the most common of these is the þæt ys/þæt synt (‘that is’/‘those are’) type. This study focuses on these additions, and it will be suggested that the translator has made additions and changes to the psalms to describe metaphors and concepts that an Anglo-Saxon reader might not have been able to understand without these additions.

Keywords

Old English, Paris Psalter, translation, þæt ys, þæt synt, prose psalms, Psalms.
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Introduction

The Anglo-Saxon translation of the psalms named *Bibliothèque nationale de France, fonds latin MS 8824*, most commonly referred to as the *Paris Psalter*, is quite well known for consisting of two parts, one written in prose and one written in verse. The manuscript consists of the 150 psalms in Latin and translations of them into Old English. The first fifty psalms are translated into prose while the last one hundred psalms are translated into metric verse. An interesting feature is that the fifty first psalms, usually called the prose psalms, also have introductions written in Old English. The manuscript can be found in the national library in Paris but facsimile editions of the manuscript are more convenient to work with (Colgrave, 1958). This essay will look at this manuscript’s translation and study the changes that have occurred in the translation between Latin and Old English.

The text in itself has been studied for several reasons. The most common discussion on the text seems to be a discussion on its origins and if it can be traced to come from Alfred the Great or one of his translators (O’Neill 2014 p. 256). However, as pointed out by Butler “we have more to learn from this distinctive work, which offers an unusual glimpse of the formation of Anglo-Saxon attitudes towards scriptural history, national identity, and community building” (2016, p. 617). Several other studies have been done on the *Paris Psalter* through the years, from English Philology articles discussing the editions of the *Paris Psalter* (Grattan, 1909) to recent historical linguistic articles focusing on the compiler of the manuscript (Butler 2017).

Looking at these studies it can be seen that the manuscript has been studied quite extensively before. However, it can also be seen that despite this there are several aspects of the *Paris Psalter* that have not been studied or researched.

The *Paris Psalter*

A new edition of the *Paris Psalter* has recently been published by Patrick O’Neill (2016). O’Neill’s edition consists of the Old English psalms from the Paris Psalter together with his translations of them into modern English. The manuscript known as the *Paris Psalter* seems to be a compilation of at least two earlier translations of Latin texts. The three parts of the *Paris Psalter*, the Latin text, the prose psalms and the metric psalms seem to have different origins. However, all three parts of the manuscript are written by one hand, which has been dated by Ker to about the eleventh century (Butler 2017, p. 26).

So it can be assumed that all of the Paris Psalter was written and compiled by one person, but that the compiler is not the original translator of the texts. Much can be said about the compiler and the work done to complete the manuscript. It has been argued that the compiler was working close to “important sources, neither improvising, nor working by memory of the vague outlines of a source” (Butler 2017, p. 33). It has also been shown that the proportions and outline of the manuscript are very unusual, if not unique. Toswell (1996) has noted that the two columns in the manuscript have a width and height proportion of 1:10, a proportion that according to Toswell has been followed with precision through the entire manuscript. This, together with the fact that there have been lines drawn in parts of the manuscript to guide the compiler in his writing, has
made Toswell conclude that the manuscript has “been completed with care and checked several times in the early stages” (Toswell 1996, p. 130).

At the end of the manuscript there is a short colophon signed by a Wulfwinus cognomen Cada. Some studies to find out who Wulfwinus was have been carried out, but so far none of them have been successful (Toswell 1996 p. 130). However, a newer study by Richard Emms (1999) might come closer to identifying Wulfwinus, or at least identify where Wulfwinus worked. In his article *The scribe of the Paris Psalter* he has studied the handwriting, sketches and the odd proportions of the *Paris Psalter* and compared them to other manuscripts from the time. He concludes that because the sketches in the *Paris Psalter* are related to the sketches in the Utrecht Psalter, and because of the use of an open topped a similar to the one in the Harley Psalter (London, British Library, Harley 5431), the *Paris Psalter* most probably was produced in Canterbury (Emms 1999). If we assume that Canterbury is where the *Paris Psalter* was produced, it might be easy to assume that the writer Wulfwinus scriptor that we know wrote for St Augustine’s Abbey, Canterbury (Emms 1999 p. 181) However, as pointed out by both Emms (1999) and O’Neill (2001), Wulfwinus was not an uncommon name at the time. O’Neill mentions a Wulfwinus in Oxford as well, so it is far from certain that these two are the same writer. O’Neill (2001) also mentions that there are some doubts as to Emms’ theory of Canterbury as the source of the Paris Psalter, due to the lack of Kentish features in the Old English parts for example, but O’Neill does say that “of the numerous proposals for the place of origin of the Paris Psalter so far made, his [Emms’] is undoubtedly the most plausible” (O’Neill 2001).

With these things in mind it can be argued that the compiler might have been a skilled writer with relatively good access to resources, although several textual mistakes were made by the scribe (O’Neill 2001). The manuscript is also notable for its obvious waste of material, only using about 420 x 95mm of the available 526 x 186mm large pieces of hide used to create the manuscript itself (Emms 1999 p. 179). This is an unusual waste in comparison to many other manuscripts, for example the *Ormulum*, where almost all of the available space is used, which shows that whoever created or ordered the creation of the manuscript was prepared to pay a considerable sum for it. Since it is not known who ordered the manuscript and who Wulfwinus cognomento Cada was, the reasons behind this expensive and detailed manuscript are sadly not known.

**The Prose Psalms**

The first fifty psalms in the Paris Psalter are translated into prose while the remaining one hundred psalms are translated into metric verse. Because of this difference and because it seems like the two different parts of the Paris Psalter were actually translated by two different translators they should not be studied together as one text.

The Paris Psalter is the only psalter from Anglo-Saxon England which is not a gloss but “contains the complete text of the Old English Prose Psalms” (Butler 2010 p.10). These prose psalms are a very interesting translation and “there is nothing quite like them among the other early medieval vernaculars of the West” (O’Neill 2016 p. x). A large reason for this is according to O’Neill that it is a translation of a scriptural text; such translations were far from encouraged by the Roman Church, especially a translation that is more of a paraphrase that focuses on the meaning of the psalms (2016 p. x-xi).
Several studies have been conducted on the Prose Psalms; many of these have been conducted by Patrick O’Neill who “has done much to bring the Prose Psalms into broader conversations about the literary corpus of Anglo-Saxon England, especially through his recent study of the strategies of translation and interpretation employed in the Prose Psalms” (Butler 2016 p. 617).

According to O’Neill the original text that the *Paris Psalters Prose Psalms* are translated from is the *Roman Psalter*, which was the standard psalter in England up till around the Norman Conquest. However, O’Neill also points to some evidence that the translator also used the *Gallican* as well as the *Hebrew* versions of the Latin psalter. The reason for this seems to be “to convey the literal meaning as accurately and intelligibly as possible” (O’Neill 2016, p. xi), which would indicate that the translator put considerable effort and time into the translation. It also seems as if the introduction to these fifty psalms was written by the translator; when writing the introduction the translator used a fourfold interpretation of the original texts (O’Neill 1981, p. 38). O’Neill discusses how this fourfold interpretation of the introductions works both in an article written in 1981 as well as in his edition *Old English Psalms*. The four ways in which the translator interpreted the introductions to the fifty prose psalms are divided into two historical interpretations, one referring to David and his time and one referring to post-Davidic times, a moral interpretation and finally a Christological interpretation (O’Neill 2016, p. xii-xiii).

Emily Butler has conducted several studies on the prose psalms from a more literary perspective with a focus on what the introductions to the psalms can tell us about the attitudes of the author and Anglo-Saxons, especially towards Jewish people. Butler assumes in her studies that Alfred is the author behind the prose psalms and the introductions, which as we will see below might not be the case; however, her interpretation of the introductions should still be considered valid in what it can tell us about Anglo-Saxons at the time when the prose psalms were written. In one of her articles Butler notes that contrary to many other medieval manuscripts, the *Paris Psalter* and the prose psalms “seem to liken the Old Testament Jews to the Anglo-Saxons, not to Viking ravagers or to any other enemies of either the Anglo-Saxons or the church of God” (Butler 2016, p. 634). Butler shows in her study that this shows a sympathetic attitude towards Jews and the people of Israel and that the author through these comparisons highlights “the need for empathy and emulation of the people of God in the pre-Christian era” (Butler 2016, p. 635). In an earlier study of the attitudes in the introductions of the prose psalms Butler (2010) has also shown that there seems to be a will to identify with the kings in the Old Testament that restored sovereignty and law to Israel. There is also a “focus on the pastoral role of not only priests and bishops, but Christian kings” (Butler 2010 p. 17).

**The Translator**

There have been several studies on the Prose Psalms regarding the translator and if that translator might be Alfred the Great. The article that most commonly comes up in this debate is Janet Bately’s *Lexical evidence for the authorship of the prose psalms in the Paris Psalter* (1982). In her article Bately has studied and compared lexical items in the prose psalms with the other works attributed to King Alfred, the *Pastoral Care, Boethius* and the *St Augustine’s Soliloquies*. Bately presents a relatively long list of lexical items that the four works have in common and concludes that there was one
mind behind all four of them and that “it is reasonable to conclude that that mind was
King Alfred’s” (Bately 1982, pp. 94-95). Bately’s article and her findings together with
a statement from William of Malmesbury who, in the 12th century, mentions that close
to his death king Alfred had translated the first fifty psalms into English, have created a
“general, if not unanimous, consensus that the work is a product of Alfred’s circle of
scholars and that the king played an active role in the process” (O’Neill 2016 p. x).

However, there has been some criticism of this general consensus. A fairly recent
collection of criticism is the article A Stylometric Analysis of King Alfred’s
Literary Works written by Gill, Swarts and Treschow (2007). In the article the three
authors do a stylometric analysis which “allows for a more extensive analysis, not only
of contextual words, but also, and more importantly, of non-contextual words” (Gill,
Swarts & Treschow 2007 p. 1252). In the article the three authors, through looking at
key words and their distribution in the prose psalms, come to the conclusion that the
prose psalms in the Paris Psalter were not translated by Alfred the Great (Gill, Swarts
& Treschow 2007 p. 1258). With these articles in mind it can be seen that the identity of
the translator behind the first fifty psalms in the Paris Psalter has not been properly
established.

Translation theory

Translation of texts between different languages might be almost as old as writing itself.
With that we can assume that translations of the Bible and the Old Testament have been
done for as long as those scriptures have existed. Although translations have occurred
for a long time the field of Translation Theory is very young. Translation Theory is
usually considered to have emerged as its own field of study sometime in the 1970s or
80s (Naude 2002 p. 45-47). This does not mean that how to correctly write a translation
had not been discussed earlier, and in a way it could be argued that “translation theory
in the Western European tradition were first formulated in the environment of rhetorical
practice in Republican and Imperial Rome” (Copeland 1989 p. 15).

It is difficult, if not impossible, to know what the translator of the prose psalms thought
about translations and how they should be done. It is even difficult to know what the
leading thoughts about translations were in general at the time when the prose psalms
were translated. There are some writings from the time that can give us some ideas,
however. One of the more famous quotes regarding translations can be tracked back to
the Roman Republic and Cicero. The quote non verbum pro verbo, which comes from
Cicero’s treatise De Optimo Genere Oratorum, has been celebrated as an early claim
against literal (word for word) translation, suggesting a sense for sense translation
instead; however, Copeland mentions that Cicero might “not allow any differentiation
between the claims of verba and sentia” (Copeland 1989 pp. 18-19). No matter what
Cicero’s thoughts about translation were, there is no doubt that he was very influential
upon later translators. One translator who was influenced by Cicero’s work was Jerome,
at least in his non-scriptural translations (Copeland 1989 p. 23) While seemingly
following Cicero’s train of thought with his non-scriptural translations, Jerome wrote
that when translating Scriptures literal, word for word, translation is to be preferred,
because in scripture “the order of the words is itself a mystery” (quoted in Copeland
1989 p. 31). Jerome’s work on translation of scriptural texts is undoubtedly very
influential, being the translator behind both the Vulgate bible as well as the Gallican
psalter (Livingstone 2013), one of the sources used by the prose psalms translator.
(O’Neill 2016, p. xi). A final idea about translation that is often brought up in regards to the translation of the Prose Psalms is taken from Alfred the Great’s prefatory letter to the Old English *Pastoral Care*, where Alfred states his intention to translate texts into Old English to restore wisdom and learning to his kingdom (Bately 1982 p. 69). This statement is usually brought up as part of the evidence that Alfred might be the translator of the Prose Psalms, but even if Alfred is not the translator his view on translations might very well have influenced the creation of the Old English prose psalms.

In comparison to Roman and medieval times, modern translation theory is considerably more detailed in its studies about translations and how translations should be made. One of the focuses of modern translation theory is the functionalist models that have emerged, which “seek to liberate translators from an excessively servile adherence to the source text, looking at translation as a new communicative act that must be purposeful with respect to the translator’s client and readership” (Naudé 2002 p. 50). In other words, a translation could be seen as successful if it fills the intended purpose, even if it might partly sway from both word for word as well as sense for sense style of translation. Modern Translation Theory also puts considerable focus on the problems a translator, and translation critic, might face through “the political, social, cultural, literary and textual norms and conventions” between the source and target languages (Naudé 2002 p. 63-64). Of course it should not be assumed that the translator of the prose psalms had modern translation theory in mind when writing the translation, rather we should assume the exact opposite. However, when studying the prose psalms we should keep modern translation theory in mind, so that we can evaluate the translation. We should also keep in mind what the leading thoughts about translation were at the time.

As can be seen, there have been several studies done on the Paris Psalter manuscript; however, there is still much more that can be done. When looking at the prose psalms and comparing the Old English and the Latin version it can be noticed that the length of the verses is distinctly different between the two languages. The reason for these differences is not completely clear; some difference in length would be expected but in several cases the Old English verses are twice the length of the Latin equivalent. These differences seem to come down to additions and explanations that the translator has inserted. These additions have been mentioned by O’Neill in his *King Alfred’s Old English Prose Translation of the First Fifty Psalms* (2001). In his book O’Neill has commented on many of these additions and has pointed out several Psalter commentaries where some of these additions might come from. O’Neill has also shown that some of these additions seem to be original to the prose psalms (2001).

Despite some significant work done on the additions and explanations in the prose psalms O’Neill never seems to go into any detail as to what is being explained and possible reasons why the translator has chosen to explain some things but ignore other things. Therefore it would be interesting to study these differences to see if there is a pattern behind them. The differences might come down to how the syntactic and semantic features of the two different languages work, but the differences might also be due to the translator having to explain things that an Anglo-Saxon reader might not understand.
Methodology

In this research the prose psalms of the Paris Psalter have been studied. The purpose has been to study the translation of the psalms and the explanations added by the translator. There are many instances where the translator of the prose psalms has added clarifications and explanations to the verses of the Latin psalms. These instances are of several different variants. All additions and explanations cannot be studied due to the time limits of this project. So the focus will be on a few chosen types of additions. The possible reasons why the translator has inserted these additions and explanations will be studied, and at the end of the essay there will be a short discussion on what the translator might have had in mind, in regards to intended audience and use of the text, when writing the translation.

To find which addition this essay would start looking at was relatively easy. First of O’Neill’s (2016) edition of the Paris Psalter is quite a good source to find some of the additions. O’Neill has marked many of the additions by adding parentheses around them. He does not, however, explain why he has added these parentheses or what his method of finding these additions looked like. However, with knowledge of both Latin and Old English together with good knowledge on the psalters, these additions should be possible to find. Finding all of these additions and marking them out must be very time consuming and a thank you to O’Neill is definitely in place here. When looking through the additions marked by O’Neill it can easily be spotted that one of the most common types of addition is marked with the phrase þæt synt (‘that is’). This is a relatively obvious way to highlight that what comes after it is an explanation, and most of the time in the prose psalms the clause following it is an addition inserted by the translator. Because of this rather obvious way of explaining things in the psalms, this type of addition was the first to be chosen to be studied in more detail.

After the þæt synt type of addition had been chosen, similar types of additions were searched for and through this process the tacnian (‘signify’) type of addition was found. The tacnian type of addition is very similar to the þæt synt addition but forms a sentence instead of a subordinate clause. These additions are also marked by parentheses in Old English Psalms (O’Neill 2016). Something that was also noted when going through the marked additions in Old English Psalms (O’Neill 2016) was that ban (‘bone’) is explained a couple of times as a metaphor, but there are also unmarked instances where ban is used. So it was decided that some focus will be put on the use of ban in the psalms and why it sometimes is marked as a metaphor and sometimes it is not.

When reading the psalms several additions were also found around certain key concepts. For example certain animals and geographical points have been explained in the prose psalms. Some of these have been marked by O’Neill, but several of them have not been marked nor mentioned by him. Therefore animals, geographical points, food and other similar things in the psalms were searched for and put into a list for future comparison.

The instances of þæt synt, tacnian, and ban were added together with the list of animals, geographical points and food. The psalms and verses where these could be found were noted in the list. With the help of the list and the colour photographs of the Paris Psalter, which can be found on the Paris national library webpage, a comparison was made.
between the Old English verse and the Latin equivalent and the differences, additions, were written down. When all of the additions surrounding these particular words and phrases had been written down into tables they were studied to see what was added and what was explained with these additions.

Finally, when making the comparisons between the Old English and Latin verses it was noted that there were several pronouns that had been changed. Because of this a quick study of all the pronouns in the prose psalms was made to see how common it is that pronouns have been changed. These changes were studied with a focus on the translator’s reasoning behind these changes.
Result

That the Old English prose psalms have explanations and clarifications in them that do not exist in the Latin psalms can be spotted quite easily in the prose part of the Paris Psalter. Where the verses of the psalms are written in both Old English and Latin next to each other it can be seen that the Old English verses are often longer than their Latin equivalents. Of course it would be expected that the Old English text would be slightly longer than the Latin text or at least a higher number of words would be expected. However looking at the different psalm verses in the Paris Psalter it can be easily noticed that the Old English translation is often much longer than would be expected. The same thing can be seen in a relatively high number of other verses throughout the psalms.

\textit{þæt synt}

One of the most common variants of explanation in the psalms, or at least one of the most easily noticeable ones, is the use of \textit{þæt synt} (‘that is’) type of additions. \textit{þæt synt} additions are cases where the translator has added the phrase \textit{þæt synt} into the translation, usually followed by an explanation for the preceding phrase of the psalms. In this category of additions made by the translator several alternative spellings are also included, for example \textit{þæt synd}, \textit{þæt ys} and \textit{þæt is}. Even though there are several different spellings and versions of \textit{þæt synt} in this essay they will be considered the same because they all have the same function. For simplicity’s sake all of these versions will be referred to as \textit{þæt synt} additions in this text.

This type of addition is most clearly seen in Psalm 44 that, as pointed out by O’Neill, has “more than half of the verses pair a literal with a corresponding allegorical interpretation, the latter introduced by the formula \textit{þæt is/þæt synt} (2016 p. xii). Since the \textit{þæt synt} addition is very common in psalm 44 those occurrences will be looked at separately from the rest later in the text. Outside of Psalm 44 there are twenty-seven occurrences of the \textit{þæt synt} type of addition. All twenty-seven of these occurrences are missing in the Latin psalms. Seven of them only consist of the two word phrase (\textit{þæt synt}) and then followed by clauses that also occur in the corresponding Latin texts. These seven occurrences, which occur in 4:8, 8:4, 38:7, 47:7, 48:5, 48:19 and 49:3, seem to be placed as a way to highlight that the clause that follows it explains the preceding one, something that is not always clear in the Latin psalms.

In the rest of the occurrences the \textit{þæt synt} is followed by a word or clause that does not exist in the Latin texts. For example in psalm 24 verse 6 the \textit{þæt synt} addition is used to explain the phrase, \textit{pa þe ic ungewisses geworhte} (‘those that I committed unwittingly’), with adding \textit{þæt synt pa þe ic wende þæt nan scyld nære} (‘that is, things which I thought did not constitute sin’) which does not occur in the Latin text. In table 1:1 these additions are shown with the explanations that have been added by the translator. These explanations are usually added to explain different metaphors, for example in psalm 34 verse 11 where it is clarified that \textit{ban} (‘bone’) in the psalms can mean \textit{mægen} (‘strength’). To explain metaphors in this way would help if the metaphors in question might exist in Latin but do not exist in Old English and the translator still wants to use a more word for word translation. However, it can be considered to interrupt the reading of the text with the explanation placed in the running texts of the psalms.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psalm:Verse</th>
<th>Explaining</th>
<th>Æ̂t synt</th>
<th>Phrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5:3</td>
<td>seo þe ('(I) see you')</td>
<td>Æ̂t is</td>
<td>Æ̂t ic ongite þinne willan butan tweon and eac þone wyerce ('that I will understand your will with certainty, and also do it')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:13</td>
<td>Æ̂t deaðes Æ̂t ('the vessel of death')</td>
<td>Æ̂t sint</td>
<td>Æ̂t unrihtwisan ('the unjust')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:5</td>
<td>his bræwæs ('his eyelids')</td>
<td>Æ̂t ys</td>
<td>his riht dom ('his just judgement')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17:7</td>
<td>se grundweall para munta ('the mountains’ foundation')</td>
<td>Æ̂t is</td>
<td>Æ̂t mægen minra ofermodena feonda ('the power of my arrogant enemies')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21:10</td>
<td>menige calfru ('calves in great numbers')</td>
<td>Æ̂t sint</td>
<td>lytle and niwe fynd ('insignificant and recent enemies')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21:10</td>
<td>faettan fearas ('fat bulls')</td>
<td>Æ̂t synd</td>
<td>strengan fynd ('more powerful enemies')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21:15</td>
<td>eall min ban ('all my bones')</td>
<td>Æ̂t ys</td>
<td>min mægn ('my strength')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22:5</td>
<td>þin gyrd and þin stæf me afrefredon ('your rod and your staff consoled me')</td>
<td>Æ̂t is</td>
<td>þin þreaung, and eft þin frefrung ('your reproofs and afterward your comforting')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24:6</td>
<td>þa þe ic ungewisses geworhte ('those that I committed unwittingly')</td>
<td>Æ̂t sint</td>
<td>þa þe ic wende Æ̂t nan scyld nære ('things which I thought did not constitute sin')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25:6</td>
<td>ic wilnode symle þe ic aðwoge mine handa betwuþ þam unscaððigum ('I constantly wished to purify my hands among the innocent')</td>
<td>Æ̂t is</td>
<td>þe ic were unsclydig betwuþ him ('to be guiltless among them')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31:7</td>
<td>ne genealæcð him na þæt flod þæra myclena wæterena ('the flood of mighty waters will surely not reach them')</td>
<td>Æ̂t sint</td>
<td>þas andweardan earfoþa and eac þa toweardan ('these present tribulations and future ones also')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33:20</td>
<td>eall heora ban ('all their bones')</td>
<td>Æ̂t ys</td>
<td>eall heora mægen ('all their strength')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34:11</td>
<td>Eall min ban ('all my bones')</td>
<td>Æ̂t is</td>
<td>min mægen ('my strength')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37:2</td>
<td>þine flana synt afæstnad on me ('your arrows are stuck fast in me')</td>
<td>Æ̂t sint</td>
<td>þa earfoðu þe ic nu þolie ('the tribulations which I now endure')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39:2</td>
<td>on swiðe heanne stan ('on a very high stone')</td>
<td>Æ̂t ys</td>
<td>on swyðe heah setl and on swyðe fæstne anweald ('on a very high seat and with very secure control')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39:2</td>
<td>sende on minne mud niwne sang ('put in my mouth a new song')</td>
<td>Æ̂t is</td>
<td>lofsang urum Gode ('a song of praise to our God')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39:7</td>
<td>sylle þæt þu ær bebude ('give what you previously demanded')</td>
<td>Æ̂t ys</td>
<td>hyrsunness ('obedience')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41:4</td>
<td>þam wundorlican temple</td>
<td>Æ̂t ys</td>
<td>Godes hus ('God’s house')</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Psalm 44

Psalm 44 has already been pointed out by O’Neill as standing out amongst the other psalms because of the high amounts of þæt synt type additions. All of the occurrences of these additions can be seen below in table 1:2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psalm:Verse</th>
<th>Explaining</th>
<th>þæt synt</th>
<th>Phrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>44:1</td>
<td>Min heorte bealcet good word ('my heart will utter a noble word')</td>
<td>þæt ys</td>
<td>good Godes bearn ('the most virtuous Son of God')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44:2</td>
<td>Min tunge ys gelicost þæs wriþeres feþere þe hraðost writ ('my tongue is very like the scribe’s pen that writes with greatest speed')</td>
<td>þæt ys</td>
<td>Crist se ys word and tunge Godfæder; þurh hine synt ealle þincg geworht ('Christ, who is the word and tongue of God the Father, all things are created by him')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44:4</td>
<td>Gyrd nu þin sweord ofer þin þeoh, þu mihtiga ('gird now your sword on your thigh, you mighty one')</td>
<td>þæt ys</td>
<td>gastlicu lar seo ys on þam godspelle; seo ys scearpre þonne æni sweord ('the spiritual teaching present in the gospel, which is keener than any sword')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44:7</td>
<td>folc gefeallað under ðe ('people will fall under you')</td>
<td>þæt ys</td>
<td>þæt hy oper twega ðeþe an andetnesse gefeallað ðeþe on helle ('that they will either apply themselves to acknowledging you, or fall into hell')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44:11</td>
<td>And þær stent cwen þe on þa swyðran hand, mid golde getuncode and mid ælcere mislicre faegernesse gegyred ('and the queen stands there on your right hand, arrayed in a brocaded dress and decked with every possible kind of ornament')</td>
<td>þæt ys</td>
<td>eall Cristnu gesamnung ('the whole christian congregation')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44:12</td>
<td>min dohtor ('my daughter')</td>
<td>þæt ys</td>
<td>seo gesamnung Cristnes folces ('the assembly of Christian people')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44:12</td>
<td>and forgit and alæt þin folc ('and forget and renounce your people')</td>
<td>þæt synd</td>
<td>yfelwillende menn and unðeawas ('evilly disposed people and the vices')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44:12</td>
<td>þines leasan fæder ('your false father')</td>
<td>þæt ys</td>
<td>deofol ('the devil')</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
44:13

þa dohtor þære welegan byrig Tyrig: hi hine weorðiað mid gyfum

("the daughters of the wealthy city of Tyre …: they will honour him with gifts")

44:15

utan beslepte and gegyrede mid eallum misticum hrægla wlitum and mid gyldnum fnasum

(‘clothed and covered on the outside with every kind of elaborate clothing and with golden fringes’)

44:16

þe beoð broht manega mædenu, and æfter þam þære seo nyhste, þe we ær ymbespræcon. Mid blisse and mid fægnuncge hy bioð geleædde into þinum temple

(‘many virgins will be brought to you, and following them the female companion of her whom we previously spoke about; they will be led into your temple with joy and with rejoicing’)

44:17

þe bioð acennedu bearn ('children will be born to you')

Table 1:2 þæt synt additions in Psalm 44 (in the second column is the word or phrase that is explained, in the fourth column is the added explanation that does not occur in the Latin psalms)

As can be seen there is a much higher amount of the þæt synt type of additions in Psalm 44 than in any other psalm. In total there are twelve þæt synt additions in Psalm 44 which if added together with the additions in table 1:1 would be around a third of the total number of þæt synt additions in all of the prose psalms in the Paris Psalter. That there are so many of this type of additions in this particular psalm is the main reason why Psalm 44 is treated separately from the rest of the prose psalms when looking at these types of additions. Another reason why Psalm 44 is treated separately is the length of the additions. For example, Psalm 39 has four occurrences of þæt synt additions; however, they are all followed by only a word or short phrase, where several of the occurrences in Psalm 44 are considerably longer descriptions. For example, the explanations following the þæt synt in several verses are relatively long and detailed compared to most of the additions in table 1:1.
As can be seen in tables 1:1 and 1:2, all of this type of additions use the singular subject *þæt* but the verb changes between the singular *ys* and the plural *synt*. This change in the verb does not seem to be caused by what is being explained. *þæt synt* seems to only be used to explain things in the plural, however *þæt ys* is used to explain things in both the singular and the plural. On the other hand the verbs seem to change with the phrase complement so when the explanation is in the plural the verb is in the plural. The reasons why the verb changes because of the complement while the surface subject remains in the singular are not clear.

One reason for this might be that in these types of additions the explanation should be considered the underlying subject of the phrase. This could be explained by using Johannesson’s syntax model from *Stæfcraft* (2015). Johannesson discusses how the presentational construction works and that it has an inserted pronominal subject (2015 p. 148-152). In this type of construction it is argued that “BĒON, as used in the presentational construction must be an intransitive, copular, impersonal verb” (Johannesson 2015 p. 150). If we in the same way consider *þæt* to be an inserted pronominal subject and that the explanations work in a similar way to the presentational construction it would explain the change of the verb while the surface subject remains the same. If we use the same type of syntax trees used by Johannesson to explain this phenomenon we can arrange this type of addition like in tree 2:1.
**Tacnian**

In psalm 44 there are also a few other additions and explanations added by the translator to the prose psalms. The clearest examples of these would be the lengthy description at the end of verse 10 (as can be seen in table 1:3). The explanations used in this case are marked by the use of the word *tacnian* (translated as ‘signify’ by O’Neill). The explanations are all bunched together at the end of the verse, first explaining the spices, then explaining the clothing, then explaining what the ivory houses signify and finally explaining the king’s daughters. The translator has here chosen to bunch together the many explanations of this verse instead of writing the explanation next to the words that are explained. Psalm 44 verse 10 is very dense with metaphors which could explain this choice as a way of making the text flow better.

The *tacnian* type of additions are very similar to the *þæt synt* type of additions and seem to work in very similar ways. In this paper, however, the two different additions will be treated separately. In the prose psalms there are five instances where the translator has used the *tacnian* type of addition. Four of these can be found in the description of psalm 44 verse 10 as mentioned above. The fifth instance can be found in psalm 28 verse 5. All of these can be found in table 1:3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psalm:Verse</th>
<th>Explanandum</th>
<th>tacnian</th>
<th>Explanans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28:5</td>
<td>þa treowa (‘those trees’ [i.e. cedar trees])</td>
<td>tacniað</td>
<td>ofermodra manna anweald (‘the rule of arrogant men’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44:10</td>
<td>þa wyrt-gemang (‘those spices’ [i.e.myrrh, stacte and cassia])</td>
<td>tacniað</td>
<td>mistlicu mægen Cristes (‘the diverse powers of Christ’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44:10</td>
<td>þæt hrægl (‘the garment’ [i.e. your clothes])</td>
<td>tacnað</td>
<td>Cristes lichaman (‘Christ’s body’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44:10</td>
<td>þa elpanbænenan hus (‘the ivory houses’)</td>
<td>tacniað</td>
<td>rihtwisra manna heortan (‘the hearts of just men’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44:10</td>
<td>þara kynincga dohtor (‘the daughters of the kings’)</td>
<td>tacniað</td>
<td>rihtwisra manna sawla (‘the souls of just men’)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1:3 *Tacnian* additions in the prose psalms (in the second column is the word or phrase that is explained, in the fourth column is the added explanation that does not occur in the Latin psalms)

When comparing the *tacnian* type addition that can be seen in the table above to the additions shown in tables 1:1 and 1:2 a difference between the types of additions can clearly be seen. The difference is that when *tacnian* is used it is always preceded with a word or phrase as a subject. This subject is a repetition of something that was mentioned earlier in the verse and its role is to clarify what the *tacnian* addition is explaining. This difference is due to *tacnian* being a transitive, non-copular, personal verb taking the explanandum as its subject and the explanans as its object, while the verb in *þæt synt* is an intransitive, copular, impersonal verb which uses the *þæt* as an inserted pronominal subject. Even though the two different additions are used to explain metaphors, they are quite different syntactically.

It is also clear that the *tacnian* type of addition is used very rarely. In the prose psalms it is only used twice. The word *tacnian* shows up five times but only in two verses. This can be compared to the use of *þæt synt* additions as seen in table 1:1 and 1:2 which is
much more common. Even when *peet synt* types of additions show up twice or more in a verse they appear in different places in the verse and not bunched together at the end, as is the case in psalm 44 verse 10.

**Explaining geography, creatures and laws**

At several places in the prose psalms there are explanations added to explain concepts and names rather than metaphors. There are several concepts explained in this way: one of the first that can be noticed is the concepts of different creatures. Most creatures such as cows and lambs are not explained by the translator. However two of the creatures mentioned in the prose psalms have short explanations added to them, explanations that do not exist in the Latin psalms. These two are the Unicorn and the Asp. The unicorn’s children are mentioned in Psalm 28 verse 5, in comparison to the Latin text (“sicut filias unicornuorum” ‘like the daughters of unicorns’) the translator has changed the phrase into *þæs deores bearn be unicornus hatte* (‘the offspring of the animal called unicornus’) (O’Neill 2016 pp. 92-93)). This is a very small addition that helps highlight and explain to the reader that the unicorn is an animal. As in the case of the unicorn the asp is only mentioned by name in the Latin text without any explanation of what an asp is. In comparison the Old English text (Psalm 13:5) reads: *þære wyrrestan naedran attor þa mon aspis hæt* (‘the venom of that most deadly serpent called asp (O’Neill 2016 pp. 38-39)) adding that the asp is a venomous snake. The added explanation of the asp could be argued to depend on the fact that the asp is a serpent that is not indigenous to England.

There are also cases where geography is explained in the translation into Old English, an example can be found in Psalm 47 verse 6. Not only has the translator highlighted that *Tarsit* is a city with that name, in a similar way to how *Cades* was described (see p. 20 below), but also followed it up with the explanation that the city is located in the country called *Cilicia* (*seo is on þam lande þe Cilicia hætte*) (O’Neill 2016 pp. 174-175). So in this case the translator has not only added a short description of what *Tarsit* is but also added an explanation to where in the world it is located.

Another concept that is explained by the translator is Jewish law. This happens twice in the prose psalms, once in psalm 16 verse 14 and once in psalm 17 verse 43. In Psalm 16 the translator has added the phrase *þæt Iudeum unalyfedlic ys to etanne* (‘which is unlawful for Jews to consume’ (O’Neill 2016 pp. 48-49)) to explain the curse where David wishes his enemies will be so hungry that they have to eat pork. This curse would sound very strange if someone did not know that it is a sin for Jewish people to eat that type of meat. In Psalm 17 the translator has clarified that the reason why the children wavered from their paths is because *hi hyra willum ne heoldon iudea æ* (‘they did not voluntarily observe Jewish law’ (O’ Niell 2016 pp. 58-59)). In comparison to the first mention of Jewish law this is not so much of an explanation as it is a clarification. It does not explain anything about Jewish law, it just clarifies that in context wavering from the path means not observing Jewish law.

**Ban or Mægn**

Looking at table 1:1 it can be seen that in three of the *peet synt* additions the translator describes that *ban* (‘bone’) can be a metaphor for *mægn* (‘strength’). Throughout the prose psalms the translator has dealt with this possible metaphor in several different
ways. As can be seen above, the translator uses *æt synt* to explain the metaphor three times, another solution used is translating the Latin (*ossa*) into *min ban and min mægen* (‘my bone and my strength’), turning it into a phrase containing both the literal as well as the metaphorical translation. This type of double translation occurs twice in the text, once in 6:2 and once in 31:3. The third option used by the translator is to just use the metaphorical translation of *Ossa*; this occurs only once in the prose psalms (psalm 21 verse 11). This shows that the translator has used a varied way of translating the psalms and the metaphors in them. However, due to the small number of instances in the prose psalms, it is difficult to see if the choices made by the translator are due to any aspect of the language or due to context or if the choices are just random.

**Other additions and changes**

There are several other additions and changes in the prose psalms. Some of these will be shown below. Due to time and space limits, however, not all of the additions and changes can be included in this essay. Therefore the focus here will be on the more noticeable changes and additions with a hope of covering them all at a later time.

**Pronoun changes**

One thing that can be noticed in the translation of the psalms into Old English is the changes of the pronouns that are used. There are several cases where the pronouns have changed person, for example from third to second person. It would be expected that the Old English text would have more pronouns than the Latin equivalent; however, the changes from, for example, third to second person would of course not be expected in a literal translation. There seem to be a total of twenty six times where the pronouns have changed; these also include most cases where the Latin text has no pronoun but the verbs have a suffix to show whether there is a first, second or third person subject. The most common pronoun change is from third to second person with reference to God. This happens seven times while the change in the opposite direction, from second to third person, occurs four times. So almost half of the occurrences of the shift in pronouns are when the pronouns refer to God.

There is also one case where several pronouns in a verse change from first person singular to first person plural. This happens in psalm 7 verse 11 and changes the subject of the verse so that it matches the introduction of the psalm. There it is claimed that the psalm is sung not only by David but also that “everyone who sings this psalm does likewise complain of their difficulties to the Lord” (O’Neill 2016 p.17). This seems to highlight that there is a plurality of singers. The introduction might be the reason for this change. However as above it is difficult to know if the introduction was written before or after the translation of the psalm was made. Therefore it is difficult to know if the introduction inspired the change or the change inspired the translation. Similar cases of changes made by the translator can be found in psalm 19 verse 9 and psalm 20 verse 1 where the words *regem/rex* (‘king’) are changed into *urne kyning/ure kyning* (‘our king’). This change seems to match the introductions to the two psalms where it is stated that the Christians who sing it do so not only to God but also sing it “on behalf of their king” (O’Neill 2016 pp. 63 and 65). This possessive pronoun might be added as a clarification that the singer sings about their king, rather than about any god or king.
As can be seen in the results above there are many instances in the Paris Psalter’s prose psalms where the translator, whoever he was, has spent time and energy clarifying and explaining things to the reader. The translator has done so in several different ways throughout the psalms, from adding *pæt synt* type of additions to clarify different metaphors to explaining animals that the reader might not be aware of. These additions will be discussed below; the discussion will also consider the reasons behind all these additions and what they might tell us about the translator and Anglo-Saxons in general.
Discussion

As can be seen in the Results section, there are many cases where the translator of the Paris Psalter prose psalms has added explanations and clarifications to the psalms. These additions are of several different kinds. Many of them are used to explain metaphors that, presumably, an English speaker at that time would not understand. However, as has also been shown, the translator has not only spent time explaining the metaphors, but has also explained different concepts. In this part of the text a discussion on the findings will be conducted with focusing on the how and the why. First the results shown above will be briefly discussed, followed by a conclusion and suggestions for further studies.

þæt synt

þæt synt might be the most obvious of the additions added to the prose psalms by the translator. It is used throughout the translation to explain and clarify things for the reader, most commonly metaphors. A clear example of this would be in psalm 21:10 where the þæt synt addition is used twice, once to explain calves (calfru) and ones to explain oxen (fearas) and clarify that they are different kinds of enemies of the singer. The placement of these explanations, right after the phrase in which the words explained can be found rather than right after the word, seems kind of logical. The placement could have been chosen to make the text flow as smoothly as possible. It does interrupt the text slightly but not as much as if it was placed directly after the word, while if it had been placed at the end of the verse it might be difficult to know what is being referred to.

The þæt synt additions are interesting from a translation theory point of view, because it shows that the translator has made an interesting choice of how to deal with some of the metaphors that probably were not used in Old English. Instead of choosing between the literal or the allegorical translation the translator has gone for both: translating the psalms in a literal fashion and then adding allegorical information into the running text. This is interesting because it might be the translator’s way of putting in the allegorical meanings of the psalms while still keeping the translation close to a word for word translation; however, it is difficult to know if this is the reason why the translator chose the þæt synt additions or not, and the data set is too small to guarantee anything.

The þæt synt additions show us that the translator was proficient in Latin and arguably very proficient. Not only does the translator know what the words would translate into but also seems to know what they mean in their allegorical use. Since some of the metaphors also could come from the Hebrew original it also shows us that the translator might have had knowledge about Hebrew as well as Latin. The additions also show us that the translator was quite proficient in Old English, as can be seen in both the explanations as well as the psalms themselves which show a fluent and relatively flowing language. So at least we can say quite certainly that whoever the translator was, it was someone with good knowledge of both Old English as well as Latin.

Finally the þæt synt additions show us that the translator did not only want a word for word translation nor a sense for sense type of translation. Rather it shows us that the translator seems to have wanted to do both. This might be because the translator wanted to make the reader learn both the literal translation of the Latin psalms as well as the
allegorical meaning of the verses in them. There are also more things in the prose psalms that point towards this possibly having been the intention of the translator. These will be discussed later in this essay.

Psalm 44

Psalm 44 is a very interesting part of the prose psalms. It contains about a third of all of the _pæt synt_ additions in all of the prose psalms, and even has a few other additions besides these. Focusing on the high number of _pæt synt_ additions to start with we can see, as pointed out in the result, that the additions are not only much more frequent in Psalm 44 than anywhere else in the prose psalms, but they are also on average longer than other additions.

There might be several reasons for the uniqueness of Psalm 44 in regards to the _pæt synt_ additions. The first, and most probable, reason might be that Psalm 44 is a Psalm that seems to be considerably heavier with metaphors than any of the other Psalms. For example in verse 12 the translator has added three _pæt synt_ additions to explain things. First explaining the daughter (_myn dohtor_), then the people (_pin folc_) and finally the false father (_deofol_). Verse 12 could be considered to be even denser with metaphors than the other verses in psalm 44, but it helps in highlighting the relatively high number of metaphors in the Psalm. Reading the psalm ignoring the additions added to it by the translator also helps to illustrate why there are so many explanations, because it is difficult to follow the psalm and what everything in the verses actually means.

The reason why the translator has made many more additions in Psalm 44 than in the other psalms might be that Psalm 44 is denser with metaphor than any of the other Psalms. However there are several metaphors and allegorical parts of the Psalms outside of Psalm 44 which are not explained with additions. The reason why there are metaphors that have not been explained might of course be that those metaphors existed in Anglo-Saxon England so the translator felt no need to explain them, while the metaphors in Psalm 44 needed explanations, or at least that the metaphors in Psalm 44 were so obscure that they needed the more lengthy type of allegorical explanation that the _pæt synt_ type of addition can add. However, that the explanations of metaphors show up so frequently in Psalm 44, especially in the _pæt synt_ type, might show us that the translator briefly, for some reason, changed the translation tactic when writing Psalm 44.

So we can see that there are several things that make Psalm 44 interesting. It can be argued that Psalm 44, because of the high number of metaphors, is a very good example of what was discussed regarding the _pæt synt_ additions in general. For example, it seems as if the translator has spent a lot of time and energy on adding relatively lengthy descriptions of the metaphors, seemingly wanting to have both a literal translation as well as allegorical explanations in the running text. As pointed out earlier, this might be because the translator had the intention for the translation to teach the reader both the Latin words as well as possible allegorical meanings of them.
**Tacnian**

The *tacnian* type of addition is very uncommon in the prose psalms. The word does show up five times in the prose psalms; however, four times it is in the same verse, psalm 44 verse 10. So making any broad statements on them might be difficult. However, there are a few things that can be said about them, even though they are somewhat scarce. Firstly there are some similarities between the *þæt synt* additions and the *tacnian* additions. Both are used to explain metaphors. However, unlike the *þæt synt* additions the *tacnian* additions always have a subject put in front of them to clarify what is being explained. Since there are so few, it is difficult to say with only help from the prose psalms, if this type of additions always comes after the end of the sentence where whatever is explained can be found. Since the *tacnian* type of addition is formed like a sentence instead of a subordinate clause it would seem that that would be the more logical placement of them.

The *tacnian* additions in psalm 44 verse 10 are very interesting because there are four of them stacked together at the end of the verse. Since these explanations are put together in the end of the verse they seem a bit odd. At least it feels a bit clumsy when reading it to get four explanations for four different things stacked after each other. This verse is also a good example of where the tactic of the translator to use both literal and allegorical translation backfires. When there are several allegorical meanings in the same sentence the translator needs so many explanations that it becomes somewhat unwieldy. This might also be the reason why the translator in this particular verse has chosen to use *tacnian* instead of the more common choice of *þæt synt* which would arguably be even more unwieldy.

Looking at the fifth *tacnian* addition made in the prose psalms we can see that it is used to explain what the cedar trees (*cedertreowu*) that are mentioned twice in the sentence before it symbolise. It is interesting to note that in the *tacnian* addition *þa treowa* (‘the trees’) is used instead of *cedertreowu* (‘cedar trees’) (O’Neill 2016 pp. 92-93). The translator’s reason for this might just be to avoid repetition since cedar trees have already been mentioned twice recently in the verse. But it might also be a choice made to highlight that cedar trees are a kind of tree; however, since *cedertreowu* contains *treowu* (trees) that would seem to be redundant. Both of these could be reasons why the translator chose to use *treowa*; it is difficult to know, and the choice might not have been a conscious one.

The *tacnian* additions are few but they are important to note when we look at the explanations which the translator has added to the psalms. Because of the low number of *tacnian* additions it is difficult to know why the translator has chosen to use these instead of the more common *þæt synt* additions. Looking at how the additions are used in psalm 44 verse 10, the choice of using *tacnian* rather than *þæt synt* might be because the latter would be too unwieldy and clumsy. This does not explain why *tacnian* was used in psalm 28 verse 5, however. Comparing the *tacnian* addition in psalm 28 with the *þæt synt* additions in the other psalms does not tell us much either, since neither the length of the explanation nor the placement of it is noticeably different. With this it seems as if the addition in psalm 28 might be an anomaly: if we had a prose translation of all of the psalms maybe there would be enough *tacnian* additions to get a pattern.
Explaining geography, creatures and laws

In the corresponding section of the Results we could see that there are some things that the translator seems to have felt needed an explanation of what it is. There are not many cases of this. In fact there seem to be only five instances of this in the prose psalms. Even so, these are important if we want to understand the intention of the translator and the tactic that was used to translate the psalms into Old English.

If we firstly look at the animals, the unicorn and the asp, that have been explained in the prose psalms, we can see that both of them are a type of animal that a person in Anglo-Saxon England might not now about. The unicorn is a mythical and fictitious animal while the asp (aspers) most probably refers to the Egyptian cobra, a snake whose natural habitat is found in Africa and Arabia (Encyclopædia Britannica, 2017). With this in mind the reasoning behind why the translator has chosen to add clarification to unicornus and aspis seems quite clear. To clarify that the unicorn is an animal (deores) might arguably not be much of a detailed addition and might just be a choice of preference by the translator rather than an explanation, but it is an addition that the translator has made and there should be a reason for this addition. The information added to aspis is clearer in regards to what the translator wanted to achieve. Not only has the translator added that the asp is a snake but has added that the snake is venomous. Here it is quite clear that the translator have felt that these additions were needed so that an Anglo-Saxon reader would understand what is meant when something is likened to the asp and its venom.

If we look at the geographical explanation in psalm 47 verse 6 where the translator has added an entire clause to explain Tarsit. We can see that, the formula with hatte has been used in this verse too (þære byrig þe Tarsit hatte), but it has been followed up with the addition seo is on þam lande þe Cilicia hatte (‘it is located in the country which is called Cilicia’) (O’Neill 2016 pp. 174-175). In this case we can see that the translator has not only had to explain that Tarsit is a city, but has also had to add that the city is located in Cilicia. It would be assumed here that the reason for this extra addition is that the intended reader would not know about Tarsit nor have any idea where it would be located, or at least that that has been the translator’s assumption. Even though this type of explanation of a geographical place only occurs once it shows us that the translator has had an intended group of readers and has changed the text so that the intended audience would understand and learn from the psalms.

We can see this because, unlike the case with the unicorn, we have several more geographical locations to compare with, for example if we look at the more common and probably more well-known Jerusalem (hierusalem). Jerusalem is mentioned three times in the prose psalms, and it is never explained with the same formula as Tarsit. Once (psalm 9 verse 13) it is referred to as ‘the city Jerusalem’ (þære burge Hierusalem), but it is never used together with hatte (‘is called’). The same can be seen if we look at how the translator has dealt with Sion: a few times it is added that Sion is a mountain, but the name is never used with the hatte formula. On the basis of this we might be able to argue that the translator adds the hatte when the place or animal is not well-known to clarify.
As we also could see in the Results section, the translator has also explained Jewish law and custom. Most clearly this is seen in psalm 16 verse 14, where the translator has added *þæt Iudeum unalyfedlic ys to etanne*. This addition is used by the translator to clarify why someone would curse somebody else to eat pork. This addition seems to be added by the translator to clarify the curse for readers who do not know Jewish law or custom. That the intended reader of the psalm might not know Jewish law and custom is not surprising if we consider that it is a translation of a part of the bible and therefore probably intended to be used in a Christian setting.

As we can see with the explanations that the translator has added in regards to biology, geography and so on, the translator has adapted the psalms to the intended target, at least to some extent. The translator has described animals that are not indigenous to the British Isles, explained geographical places and their names and also explained customs that the intended reader might not know. It seems as if the translator has made a good adaptation of the psalms into an Anglo-Saxon Christian setting while still keeping it geographically set in the Middle East. This adaptation also goes together with the *þæt synt* and *tacnian* additions and the conclusion that the translator seems to have wanted the text to be used for the reader to learn more about the psalms.

**Ban or Mægn**

That *ossa* can mean ‘strength’ besides its literal meaning of ‘bone’ is a quite interesting metaphor in the prose psalms, because it shows us that the translator has used different ways of translating the word throughout the psalms. As we can see, the translator has used the *þæt synt* type of addition to translate *ossa* three times but has also used only the allegorical translation as well as the phrase *min ban and min mægen*. This shows us that the translator has varied his way to translate metaphors. This difference means that the translator has not had a fixed translation for *ossa*, but has translated the Latin word differently from time to time depending on different factors.

Why the translator has chosen to translate *ossa* differently from time to time is a difficult question to answer. Looking at the verses where *ossa* occurs does not tell us much either, so it seems as if the context does not influence the translator’s choice. The only exception to this would be where *ossa* has been translated into *ban*. So we can see that the translator has used different ways of translating *ossa*, but in most cases has translated it with both literal and allegorical translations even though it has been made in different ways.

**Pronoun changes**

The changes of pronouns are of course not additions to the psalms but some of these changes of pronouns seem to be intended to clarify the psalms for an intended target audience. It can quickly be seen that the most common change of pronouns is the change of third to second person in regard to God, which would make the Old English psalms more personal. It should, however, be pointed out that a change in the opposite direction also occurs several times. From third to second person is twice as common as the second to third person change, but both of them are not common enough so that we can make any worthwhile statistical analysis of them. It can be said that as mentioned by O’Neill in his comments to psalm 22 that these changes do follow the introductions to the psalms (2016 p. 643). This might be the reason why these changes occur, that the
translator has tried to have the psalms correspond to the introductions, if we assume that
the introductions were written before the translation. On the other hand there are many
places in the psalms where these changes could be made and fall in line with the
introductions but have not been made. So these changes might be due to the translator
wanting to keep the translations in line with the introductions, but it seems as if there is
no consistency to this. More research looking into the psalms and comparing them to
the introductions might find the reasons for these and other changes the translator has
made.

The changes in pronouns in psalm 7 verse 11 seem to be another case where the
translator has tried to fit the psalms to the introductions. The change from first person
singular to the plural form works well with the introduction, but as in the pronoun
changes above there are too few cases for us to make any closer type of analysis, on the
other side the changes in psalm 19 verse 9 and psalm 20 verse 1, where the translator
has added a possessive pronoun to the verses. These cases clearly follow the
introductions to the psalms which state that the psalms are to be sung by Christians for
their kings. These two introductions are also the only two where this is mentioned. So
we can see that in these two cases it seems as if the translator has had the introductions
in mind when writing the translation of the psalms.

There seems to be some kind of relation between the translations of the prose psalms
and the introductions that can be seen just before them in the Paris Psalter. In the
discussion above it has been assumed that the translator has written the translations after
the introductions and therefore done certain changes to the psalm, more specifically
changed some of the pronouns that have been used. It must be noted, however, that the
introductions might have been written after the translations, meaning that the changes of
pronouns have influenced the introductions rather than that the introductions have
influenced the pronoun changes. It is difficult to know whether the introductions were
written before the translations or the translation came first. O'Neill has shown that it
probably was the translator of the prose psalms who wrote the introductions; if this is
ture, then it might be impossible for us to ever find out which one was written first,
especially since we do not have the original manuscripts that later were transferred into
the Paris Psalter.
Conclusion

The translator of the *Paris Psalter*’s prose psalms has provided many explanations and additions to the translations from the Latin psalters. There might be many reasons why these additions have been made to the psalms. Firstly we have seen that many additions have been made to the psalms to explain some of the metaphors that can be found in the Latin psalms. We have also seen that additions have been made to explain animals and other concepts that might not be well known for an Anglo-Saxon reader. The translator’s reasoning why these additions were needed is not known, but the additions might tell us some things about the translator and the reasoning behind them on their own.

O’Neill has shown that the translator has used at least three psalter commentaries in the work to bring the psalms over to Old English (2016, p. xi). So it could be argued that the translator only added these passages because they were already there in the sources, and that he therefore had the intention to only translate the psalms and the commentaries on hand into one manuscript. However, it seems as if the translator has not used all of the comments from all of the Latin psalter commentaries; there is also evidence of comments and additions that have been made by the translator. So it is much more likely that the translator used many sources to create as good as a translation as possible, and changed and added what was deemed necessary. This is arguably further shown to be the translator’s reasoning behind the translation by the fact that it seems as if the translator has used at least three different Latin psalters as sources. So it seems that the additions in the prose psalms would not only have been added because they existed in the sources, but that the translator instead has actively chosen what additions to use in the psalms.

So if the translator has actively chosen the additions in the psalms, maybe the additions can tell us what the intention behind the translation of the psalms was, and maybe they can even tell us something about the intended audience. As we have seen above, the translator seems to have wanted to keep a somewhat literal translation while still explaining metaphors in a more allegorical way. This could arguably be because the translator wanted to work close to Jerome’s style of translating scripture word for word while still being able to explain the allegorical meanings of the psalms to the intended audience. This desire to explain things for the audience could mean that the intended readers were not necessarily highly educated with a lot of experience with the scriptures in Latin. That someone with good knowledge in Latin would not be the intended audience for a translation into Old English might be obvious but should be mentioned anyway.

Because of the mix of both literal and allegorical translations it could be argued that the prose psalms were meant to be used for some form of educational purpose. This might also be the case since the translator has taken time to explain animals and geographical locations that is located relatively far from England, as well as explaining laws and cultures. O’Neill argues that the prose psalms were not meant to be used in an educational setting because of “the total absence of glosses and commentary” (O’Neill, 2001). This might be true; however, his arguments seem to build on what the prose psalms look like in the *Paris Psalter*. Because of the odd format of the *Paris Psalter* manuscript, and since it is a compilation from several sources, we should not assume that the prose psalms would have looked the same in their original form. If the prose
psalms did look similar in set up in the original manuscript O’Neill’s argument still stands. However, even if the original manuscript had a similar format to the Paris Psalter it could be argued that the translator’s intention was for an educational purpose and that the layout of the manuscript could mean that it was meant to be used for educational purposes, just not necessarily for education in Latin.

That the original manuscript used for the prose psalms has disappeared causes some problems when we are discussing the prose psalms. For example it would not be too far of a stretch to say that there is a chance that the some of the additions mentioned in this article originally were written as commentaries in the margins of the original manuscript, and that it was the scribe behind the Paris Psalter who put it all together into the psalm verses to make it more neat and structured. At the same time there is the chance that the prose psalms looked very similar in the original manuscript. With that in mind we cannot make any really strong claims about the translator’s intention behind the writing of the prose psalms from what we can see in the Paris Psalter, in regards to layout and form at least. Therefore if we want to try and find out the translator’s intentions we should look at the text itself.

If we look at the text itself we can see that the translator has used many sources for the translation of the fifty psalms to be as clear and understandable as possible. Effort seems to have been put into explaining metaphors and concepts that might not be known by the intended reader. Since the effort seems to be put on explaining these things it could be argued that the intended reader of the prose psalms would be someone who did not have a high knowledge of Latin. It would also seem as if the intended audience was expected to have some knowledge about the geography of the scriptures, but were not expected to know it well. So if the prose psalms were not meant to be used in an educational setting, it seems as if it was intended to be used and read by an audience that was not highly educated.

From the additions and changes that have been studied in this essay it has been seen that the translator of the prose psalms in the Paris Psalter seems to have had the intention to teach the readers about the psalms. However, the exact intentions of the translator are difficult to know, especially since we do not know who the translator was, nor do we know what the original manuscript looked like. However, it should not be considered impossible to study and find out these intentions. A more detailed study and comparison between the prose psalms and the Latin psalters and psalter commentaries with focus on what parts have been used from the different sources and the reasons behind those choices, might be able to tell us more. O’Neill has started with that kind of research in his psalm commentaries (2001 & 2016). He has as of yet not done any detailed analysis of why the translator might have chosen a specific source over another in different places; this would be a very interesting analysis that could be done.
References


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