

John Frankis, England.

SUMMARY

The Guðbrandsdal episode, which appears in several versions of Óláfs saga helga from the Legendary Saga onwards, contains details that have led scholars to question its historicity. The nucleus of the episode is a story about mice coming out of a destroyed idol, which was available in Latin (Cassiodorus) and Old English (Aelfric). One detail in the saga, the offering of bread to the idol, derives not at all from Cassiodorus and only indirectly from Aelfric: the only possible source is the Old Norse translation of part of Aelfric's homily which is preserved in Hauksbók. This translation omits the story of the destruction of the idol, but since the saga-author derives the detail of offerings of bread from the extant portion of the Old Norse translation of Aelfric, it is likely that the story of the destruction of the idol also came from the same source: i.e. that the text now partly preserved in Hauksbók was originally a translation of the whole of Aelfric's homily. This homily in fact provides several details in the saga. This source-material by no means accounts for the whole episode: it only shows how the saga-author embroidered a Norwegian story with homiletic details. Two episodes in Óláfs saga Tryggvasenar (Flateyjarbók version) may also make use of material from the same homily.

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The story of St Olaf's subjection of the inhabitants of Guðbrandsdal and of their conversion to Christianity first appears in the Legendary Saga of St Olaf¹ and is repeated with some variations in later versions of the saint's life.² Commentators have pointed to several features of the story that raise doubts as to its historical authenticity: the account of the cult of Thor is said to differ significantly from other descriptions of Norse paganism, biblical sources have been suggested for certain details in the story, the reference to the bishop's mitre is said to be anachronistic, and it is alleged that the author may have been influenced by the story of Þangbrandr's escape when the ground opened under his horse.³ The nucleus of the Guðbrandsdal episode is the account of the destruction of the idol of Thor, which is a story of a type common in the early records of Christian evangelization.⁴ The fact that the destruction of idols was an established motif of early medieval hagiography does not mean of course that all stories of this kind were untrue (no doubt in this, as in other matters, nature often followed art), but the historical accuracy of any such story must be gauged in terms of the relative conventionality of its components and the use of identifiable sources. The story of the idol of Thor in Guðbrandsdal contains in fact one peculiar element that points to the use of a particular literary source, thus confirming the suspicions voiced by earlier scholars concerning the historicity of this episode. The climax of the story is as follows in the Legendary Saga:-

En i þui bili laust Kolbeinn guð þeirra sva at þat brast allt
i sundr oc liopo or mys or gulli þeira sva storar sem kattir
vare, oc ayðlur oc paddur oc ormmar.

(34.5-9)⁵

The detail that distinguishes this from similar stories (like, for example, the destruction of the idol of Thor by Olaf Tryggvason)⁶ is that when the idol was broken mice and other creatures ran out. There is a source for this detail in patristic accounts of the overthrow of the idol of Serapis in Alexandria. The story is first recorded in Greek in the Historia Ecclesiastica of Theodoretus;⁷ this version can safely be ignored for our purpose because of the relative inaccessibility of Greek texts in early medieval Scandinavia and because it contains no details that are not to be found in more accessible versions. The Latin version of the story of Serapis in the Historia Ecclesiastica of Rufinus (XI.23-4) can also be ignored because it omits the detail of the mice running out of the idol; this detail appears, however, in the story as related by Cassiodorus in his Historia Ecclesiastica Tripartita: Cum vero ejus abstulissent caput, greges soricum exinde cucurrerunt (LX.28)⁸. There are further parallels, however, in a later version of the story that is known to have been available in Scandinavia, and the particular versions that lie behind the Legendary Saga can be pinpointed with some confidence on the basis of these parallels.

The crucial version for transmitting this story from the patristic sources to Olaf's Saga is not in Latin but in Old English, the homily De Falsis Diis, written by Aelfric, the Anglo-Saxon Abbot of Eynsham, about the year 1000. In Aelfric's homily the story of the idol of Serapis has the

following climax:-

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þar wearð þa micel gamen þæt feala musa scutan of þære
anlicnysse, þa hire of wæs þæt heafod, floccmælum yrnende
geond þa widgillan flor, þæt men mihton tocnawan þæt þar
wæs musa wunung, and nan godcundnyss, ne godes geleafa. ⁹

Aelfric's version combines details from both Rufinus and Cassiodorus, but the reference to mice can only derive from Cassiodorus.¹⁰ Aelfric's De Falsis Diis is, of course, of outstanding interest to students of Old Norse for it was translated (and is the only extant example of sustained translation) from Old English into Old Norse.¹¹ The story of the idol of Serapis, however, immediately poses a problem since it occupies lines 521-571 of Aelfric's homily, whereas the Old Norse translation, which follows the first three-quarters of the homily fairly closely, ends at line 499 of the Old English text, omitting the last quarter of the homily, in which the story of Serapis appears. Now, as is shown below, there are enough similarities of detail for us to be fairly confident that the Guðbrandsdal episode includes material derived either directly or indirectly from Aelfric and not from Cassiodorus, but the problem is whether the author of the Legendary Saga read the story in Old English or Old Norse. To rephrase the problem, did the original Old Norse translation of De Falsis Diis stop short at line 499 (like the extant version in Hauksbók), or did it give the whole homily, including the story of Serapis? One cannot be completely certain, but at least one detail in the Legendary Saga can be shown to derive from the Old Norse translation and not from the Old English original. To explain this more fully we have to turn to a point made long ago by Bang, and later repeated and developed by Sigurður Nordal and Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson. One reason given by these scholars for doubting the historicity of the Guðbrandsdal episode is that it contains a motif not known elsewhere in records of Scandinavian paganism, namely, offerings of food to be eaten by idols; and it was pointed out that this motif is biblical, appearing especially in the story of Daniel and the Babylonian idol of Bel:-

Erat quoque idolum apud Babylonios nomine Bel, et
impendebantur in eo per dies singulos similia artabae
duodecim, et oves quadraginta, vinique amphorae sex.

(Dan. 14.2)

There is indeed a general resemblance to the list of foods given to Thor in Guðbrandsdal -- Fim læivar brauz ero hanum færðer hværn dag oc þar slatr við (32.13-15) -- but an important discrepancy is that for the biblical twelve measures of meal (similiae artabae duodecim) the Legendary Saga apparently substitutes five loaves of bread, and for this there is a clear, though complicated, explanation. The story of Daniel and Bel is related by Aelfric in De Falsis Diis, following the Bible very closely, and the verse quoted

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above (Dan. 14.2) is rendered accurately in Old English; this passage is in the portion of the homily for which there is an Old Norse translation in Hauksbók and, with some minor confusion over the quantities (probably due to the use of Roman numerals), it is there too rendered accurately. The three versions of Dan. 14.2 (Latin, Old English and Old Norse) thus agree as to the food offered to the idol (meal, sheep and wine), and none of them explains the puzzling feature of the loaves of bread in the Legendary Saga.

The idol of Bel, however, is not the only recipient of food in De Falsis Diis, for Aelfric also tells the story of Daniel's sojourn in the lions' den, including an account of the lions' normal daily diet. The food given to the lions is listed in the Bible, and here again Aelfric gives an accurate translation, but he introduces a complication by rendering the Latin corpora with the Old English word leapas. Old English leap normally means 'basket', and the further sense of '(human) body' is otherwise unrecorded; it is semantically plausible, however (cf. Modern English trunk, and see Pope's glossary s.v. leap), and there can be no doubt that Aelfric preserves here an authentic usage (the reading leapas is confirmed in all extant manuscripts of this portion of the work). The Old Norse translator is thus not to be blamed for failing to understand leapas—that he is to be blamed for failing to check such details with the Vulgate is another matter, but his translation would have been less interesting if he had been more learned or thorough. Naturally enough, as happens often elsewhere in the text, the translator uses the cognate Old Norse word and builds a translation round it: Aelfric's twegen leapas thus suggests tva laupar, 'two baskets', but in a list of foodstuffs this is felt to be incomplete, so the translator speculates as to the possible contents of the baskets and comes up with the answer 'bread', so the twegen leapas becomes expanded to tva laupar brauðs—a phrase that not surprisingly disconcerted the editors of Hauksbók, who, not knowing how it was arrived at, remarked with more truth than relevance 'løver æder jo ikke brød' (p.CXX). The ancestry of the passage in the Legendary Saga now becomes clear when the two lists of food are set beside each other:-

similæ artabæ duodecim, et oves
quadraginta, viniq̄ue amphoræ sex

(Dan. 14.2)

mid feowertigum scepum, and him
man win sealde six sestras
and twelf sestras melues

(De Falsis Diis 356-8)

tolf sesteri vins oc sald miols
oc .xl. sauða

(Hauksbók 162. 17-18)

duo corpora quotidie et duæ
oves

(Dan. 14.31)

tva scep to bigleofan and
twegen leapas

(De Falsis Diis 462)

tva laupa brauðs oc tiu sauði
til fæslu

(Hauksbók 163. 25-6)

Fim læivar brauz oc þar
slatr við (Legendary Saga 32.14)

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One can now see that the saga-author draws on both sources: from Dan.14.2 (or its Old Norse derivative) he obtains the idea of offerings of food for idols, while from the Old Norse derivative of Dan.14.31 he takes the items of his list, namely, bread and meat; beyond doubt he worked from an earlier version of the translation preserved in Hauksbók, for nowhere else could he have found the reference to bread: the change of laupa brauðs to laeivar brauz need present no problem if we think of the author of the Legendary Saga as working from memory rather than from a text beside him, which also offers the most likely explanation for his confusing the two lists of foodstuffs, taking the function of the first and the contents of the second.

Since the author of the Legendary Saga used a version of the Old Norse translation of De Falsis Diis for one detail of his work, it is likely that he used the same source for other details rather than that he should also have used the Old English text: that is to say, he may be assumed to have worked from an Old Norse translation that contained the story of the idol of Serapis, although this story is missing from the unique text of the translation in Hauksbók. His use of material from this source becomes clear when we draw up a list of parallels as follows:-

<u>Aelfric, De Falsis Diis</u>	<u>Legendary Saga</u>
and þæs anlicnyss wæs ænlíce geworht ... mid golde beworht and mid hwitum seelfre (527-30)	... oc mannlican, oc var þat allt gulli glæst oc silfri (33.8-9) cf. gull ... ne silfr (32.13-14)
Seo anlicnyss wæs swiðe heah on lenge ... and heo wæs swa brad ... and þæt hus wæs swapeah swiðe heah and wid (531-5)	Oc er bæðe har oc digr (32.10)
Heo wæs swiðe egeslic on to beseonne for hire micelaysse (536-7) þa wearð eac tobrytt se arwyrða Seraphis (545) feala musa scutan of þære anlicnysse (551-2)	Oc man yðr ogorlect þikcia hve mikill hann er firir ser (31.35) at guð þeirra var fallet oc brotet allt i suandr (34.7) oc liopo or mys (34.7-8)
þæt men mihton tocnawan þæt þar wæs musa wunung and man godcundayss (554-5)	Nu mege þer sia hvat guð yðar matte ... nu sa þer hveriar vetter er þess hava næytt, mys oc ormar (34.19-20)

An even more exact source for the last passage from the Legendary Saga (34.19-20) occurs earlier in De Falsis Diis, deriving from Dan.14.26, Ecce quem colebatis: Aelfric has Nu ge magon geseon hwaene ge swa wurðodon (450), and for this the translation in Hauksbók has Nu megut þer sea a hvern þer

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truðut (163.18-9); indeed, the lines in the Legendary Saga may be seen as a conflation (probably made in the author's memory without conscious intention) of passages from the Norse translation corresponding to De Falsis Diis 450 and 554-5 (as above), and perhaps also 286-7 (Aelfric: Her we magon tocnawan be ðan hæðenum godum hwilce mihte hi hæfdon ongean þone aelmihtigan God; Hauksbok 161.8-9: Af sliku me gum ver vita huert megin þau hini heiðnu guð hofðu við varn drotten er alsz er valldande).

One final parallel may be added, even though it involves considering a version of Óláfs saga later than the Legendary Saga and also questioning the assertion that one of the revisers of Óláfs saga was influenced by the story of Þangbradr's escape when the earth opened under his horse. The relevant passage does not appear in the Legendary Saga which merely expresses Guðbrandr's surprise that the pagan gods allow Christians to mock them:-

Oc er þat furða at hanum skal lyða at lasta sva miok var guð
oc hui þorer sliet at mæla; oc undarlect pikci mer er guð var
hæmna hanum xigi.

(29. 22-5)

At this point the version in Flateyjarbok has:-

ok er þat furða er iordin brestr xigi j suadr undir homum er
ham þorir sliet at mæla eðr god uor lata ham lengr ganga.

(p.188)

The two versions by Snorri are substantially the same as that in Flateyjarbok,¹² and it was this reference to the earth's bursting asunder that was seen as deriving from the story of Þangbrandr. The possibility that the author had this story in mind cannot of course be ruled out, but in view of the correspondences already mentioned there can be no doubt that the main impulse for this passage must have come from the lost Old Norse translation of the latter part of Aelfric's De Falsis Diis, since the Old English text has:-

and his biggengan sædon, gif him [sc.Serapis] hwa abulge, þæt
se heofon sora sceolde afeallan and seo eorðe nyðan mid ealle
toberstan.

(539-41)

That the reference to the earth's bursting open appears only in the later versions of Óláfs saga and not in the Legendary Saga is a minor complication: presumably some such reference must have appeared in the original version of the Legendary Saga and have been omitted from the Uppsala MS for reasons beyond conjecture, but later versions of the saga must have been based on a text of the Legendary Saga that contained the reference. The alternative — that the later author expanded a version like that extant in the Uppsala MS by drawing again on one of the sources used by the author of the Legendary

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Saga (the translation of De Falsis Diis)—is possible, but to my mind less likely.

Another complication concerning sources appears in the statement in the Legendary Saga that the idol of Thor was hollow: Þetta guð er holt innan (32.11). This detail is not in Aelfric, but surprisingly it appears in his main source, Cassiodorus: Erant enim simulacra aerea ligneaque intus vacua. The author of the Legendary Saga may have taken the detail direct from Cassiodorus, but there is a considerable difference between the context of the phrase in the two works: in the Legendary Saga this detail is part of an account of the structure of the pedestal (32.10-13) that has no parallel in any of the sources, Latin or Old English, mentioned above, and it is likely to derive from some hitherto unidentified source. The author presumably inherited a story, perhaps basically historical, about Olaf's victory in Guðbrandsdal and embroidered it with homiletic material, including somewhat confused memories of the Old Norse translation of De Falsis Diis. Conceivably also of homiletic origin is the expansion of feala musa to mys ... oc aeyðlur oc paddur oc ormmar (Flateyjarbók and Snorri omit the paddur): the reptilian additions suggest the creatures of infernal punishment in early Christian writings, perhaps to make clear the diabolical nature of the forces worshipped by idolaters.¹³ Perhaps there was also a reminiscence of the snake-pits of Old Norse heroic legend, aimed at making the effect more horrific,¹⁴ though the final impression is one of the ludicrous and contemptible nature of idolatry, a lesson that could have been learned from De Falsis Diis as well as from the Bible.

This use of homiletic source-material in a king's saga might on the face of it seem to support the views of those who look for the origins of saga-writing in the Latin literature of the Christian Church, but in fact the material of identifiable homiletic origin in this episode is such a small part of the whole piece that it does not permit any conclusions of this kind. On the contrary, the homiletic material is transformed by its transference to a quasi-historical setting, and this transformation could not have taken place if there had not been an established tradition of local historical writing to accommodate it: any discussion of the ultimate origins of saga-composition must therefore rely on other evidence than that offered here. What we find in the Guðbrandsdal episode, in fact, is a selection of homiletic motifs with which the Norse author embroiders a quasi-historical narrative in order to give the work an appropriately Christian colouring.

It remains finally to consider the possible influence of De Falsis Diis elsewhere in the kings' sagas. It has already been suggested that the account of Olaf Trygvason's destruction of the idol of Thor in Þrónheim may have been partly modelled on the Guðbrandsdal episode in the Legendary Saga (see note 6 above), and it is possible that De Falsis Diis may have left its mark at two other points in the version of Óláfs saga Trygvasonar in Flateyjarbók.¹⁵

The first case concerns a problematic detail in the Þáttur Sveins

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ok Finns: when Finn Sveinsson has overthrown an image of Thor (using, like Kolbeinn in Óláfs saga helga, a kylfa), he burns it and mixes the ashes into a porridge, which he feeds to some dogs with the remark, "þat er makligt at bikkiur eti þor en hann at sealfr sonu sina" (I.392). No story about Thor eating his own sons seems to be recorded elsewhere, but one is forcibly reminded of the classical myth of Saturn, and it is possible that the saga-author is here drawing on De Falsis Diis, which not only records the myth of Saturn, but also names several Norse gods as counterparts of the Olympian gods in such a way that the name of Thor follows close after the story of Saturn. The relevant portion of the text in Hauksbók is as follows:-

En hann Saturnus var illr maðr. hann drap sönu sína alla huerrn sem borenna var oc gerði at mat ser oc at síðan en sa Iupiter var þeira alra ríkistr hinna heiðnu manna. er sumir menn kalla þor. (158.11-22)

Until a better explanation is forthcoming, the reference in Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar to Thor's eating his sons is best regarded as a confused reminiscence of the Old Norse De Falsis Diis, with the attributes of Saturn erroneously ascribed to the god who is identified with Thor.

Secondly, the account of the idol of Freyr in Þrændheim contains several motifs, each of which might separately have been found in a number of places, but which all appear together in De Falsis Diis. The claim of the pagans that their god spoke to them (hann talade oft við ess) and Olaf's reply that this was the devil speaking through the idol (þess get ek sagde konungr at Freyr hafui ekki talat við ydr helldr diefullinn sealfr; Flateyjarbók I.402) may have been prompted by the following passage in De Falsis Diis:-

þar sao þeir dioflar, er þa hefðu aðr suicna, hin fogru manlikan oc flugu^{þar} i þeim oc meltu þaðan við þa hina^k ermu menn. (Hauksbók 159. 20-22)¹⁶

The rigid silence of Freyr in the face of the king's attacks (Freyr pagde Freyr pagde þa enn en Freyr bra ekki við; Flateyjarbók I.402) recalls the silence of Serapis in Aelfric's homily: ac he hit ne gefredde

.... ne he nan word ne cwað (De Falsis Diis 547-8: not in the extant Old Norse translation). The destruction of Freyr is also made the occasion for a euhemeristic explanation of the origins of paganism; euhemerism was of course familiar in medieval Scandinavia and it leaves its mark on the prologue to Snorri's Edda, on the Ynglinga saga and on Saxo Grammaticus,¹⁷ but its appearance here in the context of the motifs just mentioned suggests that the immediate source is the discourse on euhemerism in De Falsis Diis; the following parallel may in particular be noted:-

pat skulu þer ok vita at madr sa er Freyr het hefir uerit mikils hattar kenungr j Suiariki en er Suiar vissa at Freyr var daudr þeir kölludu hann veralldar gud ok blötudu hann langa æfui. (Flateyjarbók I.403)

Madr var sa einn mioc rikr oc bio i œy nokorre. er het Saturnus En þeir hinir heiðnu menn aller blotaðu hann dauðan (Hauksbók 158. 10-11 and 25-6)

None of the correspondences in this episode is strikingly close, but the cluster of motifs common to both texts suggests that the saga-author had the homily in mind.

Aelfric's De Falsis Diis was an influential work, and it is one of the curiosities of literary history that about the same time as the Norse authors were working portions of it into the kings' sagas the English poet Lawman was similarly introducing material from it into the Brut, his verse-history of the kings of Britain;¹⁸ this perhaps indicates an attitude to kingship common to both countries, and may even suggest to us the improbable, but not unrewarding, comparison of St Olaf and King Arthur.

1) This is the version preserved in the Uppsala MS Delagardie 8.II.4^o, edited by O.A.Johnsen, Óláfs saga hins Helga (Kristiania, 1922); the Guðbrandsdal episode appears on pp.29-35; all subsequent references to the Legendary Saga are to pages and line-numbers in this edition.

2) The later versions considered here are: (i) the version in Flateyjarbók, edited by G. Vigfússon and C.R. Unger (Christiania, 1860) II.188-92; (ii) the version by Snorri Sturluson preserved in the Royal Library, Stockholm, MS 2.4^o, edited by O.A.Johnsen and Jon Helgason, Den Store Saga om Olav Den Hellige (Oslo, 1941) I.271-82; and (iii) the substantially identical version in Snorri's Heimskringla edited by Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson, Íslensk Fornrit 27 (1945) II.183-90. All references henceforth are to these editions. I have not taken any later versions into account.

3) See A.C. Bang, Om Dale-Gudbrand, Videnskabsselskabets Skrifter II Hist. - Fil. Kl. 1897 no.2 (Christiania, 1897); Sigurður Nordal, Om Olaf den Helliges Saga (København, 1914); Hallvard Lie, Studier i Heimskringlas Stil, Skrifter utgitt av det norske Videnskaps-Akademi i Oslo, II Hist. - Fil. Kl. 1936, no.5 (1937); and the introduction to Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson's edition of Heimskringla, ÍF 27 (1945) LVI-LIX. The story of Þangbrandr is in Flateyjarbók, ed.cit. I.424, Kristni Saga ch.7 and Njáls Saga ch.101

4) See for example Augustine, De Civ.Dei V.26; Bede records (Hist. Eccl. 1.30) Gregory's instructions on the destruction of idols, and (Hist. Eccl. 11.13) the story of the pagan priest Coifi. Stories of a similar kind among the continental Germanic peoples are recorded by Alcuin, Vita Willibrordi, ch.14; ed. Levison, MGH Script.Rer.Merov. 7 (1909) 127-9; and by Willibald, Vita Bonifatii, MGH Script.Rer.Ger. 57 (1905) 31; see C.H. Talbot, Anglo-Saxon Missionaries in Germany (1954) pp.12-13. Adam of Bremen records an example in the Low Countries (Gesta I.xi) and several in Scandinavia: King Olaf of Sweden and the temple at Uppsala (II.lviii), the English missionary Wolred who smashed an idol of Thor with a battle-axe (bipennis) in Sweden (II.lxxi), Egino's destruction of an image of Frikko (IV.ix), and Adalward (presumably another Englishman) who with his followers destroyed various idols (IV.xxx): see ed. Schmiedler, MGH Script. Rer.Ger. 2 (1917). See also Heilagra Manna Sögur, ed. C.R. Unger (Christiania, 1877) pp.367 and 370.

5) See also Flateyjarbók II.191, Den store Saga I.281 and ÍF 27.189.

6) See Flateyjarbók I.319-22 and Heimskringla, ÍF 26.317-8; this story has much in common with the Guðbrandsdal episode, and may have borrowed from the Legendary Saga. The weapons of destruction—bipennis in Adam of Bremen (see note 4 above), the reför used by Olafr Tryggvason and Kolbeinn's rudda, kylfa or klumba/klubba (see references in note 5 above)—may have been selected to correspond to Thor's hammer (mentioned in the Legendary Saga 32.10 and the other versions) so as to give the incident something of the nature of a duel between equally armed opponents.

7) Migne, Patrologia Graeca 82, cols.1247-8.

8. Cited from Migne, Patrologia Latina 69, cols.1143-4.

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9) Quoted from The Homilies of Aelfric, edited by J.C. Pope, Vol.II, EETS 260 (1968) 706, lines 551-5; subsequent references are to the line numbers in this edition. I should express my debt to Pope's scholarly edition in numerous details, and particularly for the reference to Rufinus and Cassiodorus.

10) Aelfric tells the story of the idol of Serapis after relating several Old Testament stories of the overthrow of idols; these are introduced by a general condemnation of paganism that draws heavily on Martin of Braga, De Correctione Rusticorum, ch.4-8. It is possible that Aelfric was reminded of the story of Serapis by a reference later in Martin's homily (ch.11) to superstitions concerning mice, for the devotees of Serapis were unwittingly guilty of the foolish veneration of mice denounced by Martin: see C.P. Caspari, Martin von Bracarac Schrift 'De Correctione Rusticorum' (Christiania, 1883), pp.14-15, who compares PL 40.1172 and PL 87.528; for a later edition see Andoeni Vita Eligii, MGH Script.Rer.Merov. IV.706.

11) The unique copy of the Old Norse translation is preserved in Hauksbók: see Hauksbók, udgiven ... af det Kongelige Nordiske Oldskrift-selskab (København, 1892-6), pp.156-64: all subsequent references are to page and line-numbers in this edition. A connection between Aelfric's homily and the text in Hauksbók has long been recognized, but the precise relationship was only shown beyond doubt by Pope in his edition of Aelfric (see note 9 above) pp.669-70. Further information (not all accurate) is in A.Taylor, 'Hauksbók and Aelfric's De Falsis Diis', Leeds Studies in English, New Series, 3 (1969) 101-9. The present writer has prepared an edition of the two texts with commentary. For further connection between Aelfric and Hauksbók see Reichborn-Kjennerud, 'Et Kapitel av Hauksbók', Maal og Minne (1934) 114-8.

12) See Den store Saga 272. 7-8 and Heimskringla, ÍF 27.184.

13) References to serpents and snakes in descriptions of hell are too common to need exemplifying, and doubtless go back to biblical references to Satan as a serpent (Gen.3.1 and Apoc. 12.9 etc.) and to serpent imagery with reference to pain (Vulgate Ps.57.5, Prov.23.32 etc.); toads may have been included because they were traditionally supposed to be poisonous, and perhaps also through confusion with frogs, which are associated with evil or misfortune in the Bible (Ex. 8.2-7, Ps.77.45, Ps. 104.30, Apoc. 16.13).

14) The collocation of ormar and paddur is common (see Fritzner, Ordbog, s.v. padda). The literary references to snake-pits in the Poetic Edda (Dráp Niflunga, Oddrúnargrátr 28, Atlakviða 31, Atlamál 59 and Guðrúnarhvot 17), the Prose Edda (Skáldskaparmál ch.50), Volsunga Saga 39 and Ragnars Saga Loðbrókar refer only to snakes; most artistic representations show only snakes, but a panel on the Oseberg cart shows both snakes and toad-like creatures.

15) I have not attempted to take into account other versions of Óláfs saga Tryggvasenar, except to note that neither of the two episodes discussed here is included in Heimskringla.

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16) MS: þeir dæfla er þar hafðe aðr suicna oc hini fogru; I have emended the text to bring it into line with the OE original: see Aelfric, De Falsis Diis 197-8.

Another story about a devil inhabiting an image of Freyr is recorded in Flateyjarbók I.337-8.

17) See Saxonis Gesta Danorum I.vii.1 and VI.v.3; ed.Olrik and Ræder (Hafnæ, 1931) I.25 and 152.

On euhemersim in general see J.Seznec, The Survival of the Pagan Gods (English translation, 1953), pp.11-18, and the works there cited; on euhemerism in Snorri see Anne Heltmark, Studier i Snorres Mytologi (Oslo, 1964), pp.9-16.

18) Details are given in my article, 'Lawman's English Sources', to appear shortly.

It should be noted that in some cases in the foregoing paper I have added punctuation to clarify certain quotations.

John Frankis

England