

131c. Exeter Cathedral Library FMS/3
“Vita Sancti Basili” (fragmentary leaf)
[Ker:--; Gneuss 260]

HISTORY: Eight binding fragments from a single leaf containing parts of sections II, III, and IV of the Latin translation of the Greek Pseudo-Amphilochius’ “Vita Sancti Basili” (BHL 1023), the translation often attributed to Euphemius *interpres* (Corona 2006: 14–25, Whatley 2001: 105). The “Vita” circulated in the late 9c in Carolingian centers, and later became the source for Ælfric’s OE “Life of Saint Basil” (Whatley 1996: 19; Corona 2006: 74–94). The eight fragments, all cut from a single leaf, are of various shapes and dimensions, darkly stained, and only sporadically legible. The text is in an early A-S square minuscule script dated by Ker (1977: 2. 845) to the beginning of the 10c; Dumville dates the script to the 920s and possibly the 910s (Dumville 1987: 171). Conner (1993: 128) and Corona (2002 and 2006, who discovered OE glossing in the fragments), suggest that the text — and its subsequent copying — may have originated in donations of books and relics by King Æthelstan (893/4–939). Indeed, two relics of St. Basil are listed in the record of Æthelstan’s donation to Exeter found in Oxford, Bodleian Library Auct. D.2.16 [340], a gospel book later given to Exeter by Leofric (donation ed. Conner 1993: 171–209). Conner (1993: 20) and Gameson (1996: 152–53) note that the book from which these fragments survive may have been in Exeter in the 10c, or may have come with Leofric to Exeter. The illegibility of the OE gloss (on f. 4v) does not allow dating. Perhaps some later medieval writing is on ff. 2v, 3v, 5v. The item, “legenda sanctorum” from the 1327 inventory allows that the book may have been in Exeter in the 14c (Oliver 1861: 305). Pen-trials, scribbles, etc. on several of the fragments suggest that these leaves were accessible in the later medieval period; however, the only definitive fact is that the fragments were in Exeter in the late 16c, when they were used in the binding of Exeter, Cathedral Library 3779, a cathedral capitular account book spanning the years 1499–1561 (Ker 1977: 2.845, Conner 1993: 28). Notes on the envelopes holding the fragments state that they were “cleaned and pressed” on

4 June 1958 and that an eighth fragment was discovered in 1973. Now kept wrapped in tissue and in a set of envelopes in the cathedral library.

CODICOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION: Eight variously shaped and sized fragments on brittle thin parchment, many thickly stained with remnants of glue and paper from binding. The fragments are marked in modern pencil with numbers '1-8'. Fragments 5 + 8 and 7 + 6 were contiguous and the text continuous. The order in accordance with the known text of the "Vita" is 2, 5 + 8, 3, 1, 7 + 6, 4. The fragments are all from one leaf, as the data below show. By calculation, it is clear that the leaf concerned had 35 lines of original writing on each side. The page width was ca. 190 mm. The distance between the top of one line of writing to the next is ca. 8 mm., yielding a height of 280 mm., plus margins, making the page rather tall in relation to width. The original quire arrangement is now impossible to ascertain, but from what remains, it is clear that the manuscript was amply spaced and carefully written. The script is an early square minuscule in dark brown ink (where it has not faded or been obscured) with a red heading in the same script (f. 1r). Approximate dimensions of the fragments: f. 1: 155 × 40 mm.; f. 2: 145 × 50 mm.; f. 3: 70 × 23 mm.; f. 4: 110 × 20 mm.; f. 5: 40 × 23 mm.; f. 6: 45 × 36 mm.; f. 7: 45 × 41 mm.; f. 8: 40 × 23 mm. The width of the outer margin from text area to trimmed edge of the original leaf is 50/52 mm. on ff. 1 and 3.

[Note: Corona reconstructs the fragments, suggesting that altogether the group "forms no more than two folios" (2002: 318). The ensemble is kept in a large envelope. There is a stapled set of photocopies of the fragments; on the back of each photocopy is a note numbering the images (as 'frags 1-4 recto', etc.), while a later hand has renumbered the images on the front of each photocopy supplying the numbers used by Corona (2002) and circled pencil numerations on each fragment. The fragments themselves are unmounted, kept wrapped in tissue in a smaller envelope inside the larger envelope also holding the photocopies. Fragments 1 and 2 are "foliated" with a circled '1' and '2' on the first (in textual order) sides. Fragments 4 and 5 are similarly labeled, but 5 is also numbered with a circled '3'.]

CONTENTS:

"Vita Sancti Basili" (fragments ed. Corona 2002: 318-20; full ed. Corona 2006: 223-47)

[Note: In the case of ff. 8 + 5 and ff. 7 + 6, the sign || has been used to mark fragment breaks; often exact line breaks cannot be determined; text in brackets are from the print edition. See Corona 2002; at times readings here are slightly different. As the fragments are somewhat illegible and confusingly arranged, a full reconstruction of the pertinent part of the text is given below.]

- f. 2r from 2.3–8: ‘[c]iuitatis . . . tremore’ (Corona 2006: 227/4–9);
 [Note: There appear to be vestiges of interlinear writing above f. 2r/2 ‘regenerationem’.]
- ff. 8r + 5r side by side, top line of f. 8r is contiguous with top line of f. 5r; from 2.8–10: ‘suis. et cum ips||is uere . . . fulgore uenit’ (Corona 2006: 227: 227/9–12);
- f. 3r from 2.16–20: ‘tue uoce . . . antiochyam’ (Corona 2006: 227/19–23);
 [Note: There is a later scribble, perhaps the word ‘ego’ at f. 3r/4 in the blank space above and following ‘antiochyam’.]
- f. 1r from 3.2–6: **cesaream** | [**diuina reuel**]atione innotuit | [‘et basilium sub mileti]o tunc . . . uisionem noc|[tis]’ (Corona 2006: 227–28/1–6);
- ff. 7r + 6r side by side with top line of f. 7r contiguous with top line of f. 6r; from 3.6–9: ‘ep[iscop]o ipsius [ciuitatis] || eusebio . . . ergo || ad porta[m] ciuitatis’ (Corona 2006: 228/7–11);
 [Note: In the space following ‘fieri’ at f. 6r/2, a later ink scribble, perhaps writing.]
- f. 4r from 3.10–11: ‘[agn]oscentes . . . in similitu|[dine]’ (Corona 2006: 228/12–13);
- f. 2v from 3.13–16: ‘[mi]nistris que . . . tibi post’ (Corona 2006: 228/15–19);
 [Note: At f. 2v/4–5 in the outer left margin, later (13c? 14c?) writing, just a few letters.]
- ff. 5v + 8v side by side, top lines match up; from 3.18–20: ‘aduocans basilium . . . n(on) mul[to]’ (Corona 2006: 228/21–23);
 [Note: At f. 8v/2, above ‘pelagus’ is a scribble, perhaps writing. At f. 5v/2, in the blank space, a scribble in a later hand, above ‘scriptura’ and across the fragment, perhaps ‘es p . . . s . . . aaaaaaa’.]
- f. 3v; from 4.7–9 (bottom left corner of the leaf): ‘uero sex . . . aduenien[s]’ (Corona 2006: 228/8–11);
 [Note: More script may be visible at the base of the fragment but it is illegible. At f. 3v between lines 1 and 2, ‘abc’ in a later hand.]
- f. 1v; from 4.11–16: ‘postulationem . . . Sine intermissi[one]’ (Corona 2006: 228/13–19);
- ff. 6v + 7v; from 4.18–20: ‘ie[su] chr[ist]e d[eus] n[on]o[s]te[r] . . . quidem commu[n]icauit’ (Corona 2006: 228–29/20–25);
- f. 4v; from 4.21–22: ‘autem reseruauit . . . sup[er] al[tare]’ (Corona 2006: 229/25–).
- [Note: Corona (2002: 318) reports the OE gloss ‘golde culfre’ on ‘[col]umbę aureę’ and a “smudged” ‘up’ on ‘pendit’ but these are difficult to see either on film, in high resolution digital photographs, or in person.]

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M.T.H.

Reconstruction of Text

[Note: The remnants of the text are presented in their full context, taken from Corona 2006: 227–29, part of ch. 2, all of ch. 3, part of ch. 4. Extant text is in roman type, supplied text in italic; the supplied text is exactly as Corona, except ‘ae’ is replaced by ‘e’; in supplied text, in order to account for line-length, elements subject to suspension as used in this text are underlined, while in the extant text suspensions are expanded within angle brackets, as usual in this series. Immediate continuations of text between editorial separations are indicated by ‘~’; contiguous lines shared between fragments (i.e., ff. 5rv + 8rv, ff. 7rv + 6rv) are indicated by ‘||’. Added writing, glosses, and scribbles are generally not noted, for which see above.]

Recto (35 lines): page ca. 190 mm. across, including extant margins

[beg. in ch. 2]

f. 2r; Corona 2006: 227/2.4–9

manifestauit episcopo ciuitatis nomine maximino. Et se ei p(ro)sternentes. postulabant consequi diuinam regeneratione(m) in iordane fluui[o]. Quos uidens idem uir sanctus plenus cum esset benignitate adimpleuit postulationem eorum et simul cum fidelib(us) uiris uenit ad iordanem Basilius aut(em) iuxta ripam factus p(ro)iecit se in humum et cum lacrimis ac clamore forti postulat signum reuelari eius fidei. Resurgensq(ue) cum tremore ~ f. 8r + f. 5r; 227/2.9–12 [side by side, top line of f. 8r is contiguous with top line of f. 5r]

dispoliat se uestimentis suis. et cum ips||is uere uetusto homine et descendens in aquam orabat. Descendens || orabat sacerdos babtizauit eum et ecce fulgor ignis uenit sup(er) eos et c||olumba ex eodem fulgore uenit ~ Section cut away = Corona 227/2.12–19, line breaks approximate:

in iordanem et turbans aquam reuolauit in celum. Adstantes autem in tremore facti glorificauerunt deum. baptizatus uero basilius exiit de aqua. Admirans quoque maximinus basili in deum dilectionem orans uestiuit eum christi resurrectionis indumentis. Baptizauit autem et eubolum atque unguens eos sancto crismate tradidit illis uiuificam communionem postulauitque basilium dei sacerdos post orationem sumere cibum. Quod et fecit dicens.~

f. 3r; from 227/2.19–23

iesu christe, deus noster credo euangelicę tue uoce et spero in tua benignitate comedens et bibens contra congregientem nos diabolum cooperationem nobis tui sancti spiritus fieri. Stupens uero ‘d(e)i’ sacerdos in fide eius reuersus est cum ipsis in ciuitate(m). Annuali aute(m) tempore in ibi commorantes communi sententia uenerunt antiochyam. ~

[beg. ch. 3] f. 1r; 227–228/3.2–6

**Quomodo diaconi gradum antiochiaie suscepit et apud¹ cesaream
diuina reuelatione innouit**

Et basilius sub miletio tunc ibidem ep(iscop)o in diaconi ordine consecratus parabólicos sermones interpretans ab omnib(us) admiratus est. Non multo post aute(m) uenit simul cum eubolo in cappadociensiu(m) regionem et debentes introire cesariensium ciuitate(m) per uisionem noc- ~ f. 7r + f. 6r; 228/3.8–11 [line breaks approximate]
tis reuelata est tunc ep(iscop)o ipsius [ciuitatis]² || eusebio nomine istorum presentia et quia debet basilius ei successor || fieri. Is autem excitatus aduocat principem ec|clesiastice ministracionis et quosdam reuerentium cleri. et misit eos || ad orientalem portam ciuitatis dicens eis uisionem. Abeuntes ergo || ad porta(m) ciuitatis obuiauerunt ~ f. 4r; 228/3.12–13
eis introeuntibus quos uidentes et agnoscentes. Postulauerunt adire episcopum. Et uidens eos intrantes sanctus ep(iscop)us. Stupefactus in similitudine uisionis deo gratias egit. Interrogauit etiam eos unde uenirent et quo irent et que essent eorum appellaciones. Et edoctus dixit ~³

Verso (35 lines)

f. 2v; Corona 2006: 228/3.15–20:
 ministris que ad refectionem sunt eis tribuere. Qui ducentes eos in [insignem]⁴ zetam que ad curam obtulerunt eis in ipsa autem hora uocans sanctissimus electos cleri ac ciuitatis narrauit eis que a deo illi reuelata sunt. Qui una uoce dixerunt. Uere et istud dignum est munde uite tuę diuino decreto reuelari tibi post te debentem ierarchicam [sedem ornare unde nihil dubitans fac quod tibi]⁵ uidetur. Qui ~ f. 5v + f. 8v, 228/3.21–23:
 aduocans basilium simul cu||m eubolo. Cepit cum eis considerare scripturas Admirans autem || pelagus adiacentis in eis sapientię et habens eos dextra leuaq(ue) su||stentatores n(on) multo post transiit \ de uita episcopus. ~⁶
 [beg. ch. 4.] Corona 2006: 4.1–8, section cut away, line breaks approximate:

¹ Top line mostly trimmed.

² 'ciuitatis' can be seen split between lower edge of f. 1r and upper edge of f. 7r, line 2, some scribble after 'fieri'.

³ Two lines cut away; text proceeds to verso.

⁴ First word illegible.

⁵ Line present but illegible.

⁶ The end of the line before the title must have had an "up" run-on.

Quomodo episcopus factus missam composuit et saluatorem nostrum cum apostolis uident. Conueniens ergo coetus episcoporum sancti spiritus cooperatione elegerunt basilium ad episcopatus sedem et consecratus gubernabat ecclesiam dei prouidentia. Post quoddam autem tempus postulauit deum ut daret illi gratiam et sapientiam atque intellectum propriis sermonibus offerre insanguineum sacrificium illi et uenit super eum sancti spiritus aduentus. Post dies ~

f. 3v 228/4.8–11 bottom left corner of leaf

uero sex sicut in extasi factus in aduentu sancti spiritus septima die apprehendente cepit ministrare deo pro singulos dies. Et post aliquot tempus fide et oratione cepit propria manu scribere ministracionis mysteria atque in una nocte adueniens ei dominus in uisione cum apostolis propositionem panis [faciens in sancto altari ex]⁷ citauit basilium dicens ei. Secundum tuam ~

f. 1v; 228/4.13–19

postulationem [repleatur os tuum laude]⁸ ut per proprios sermones offeras insanguinem sacrificium. [Qui non ferens] oculis uisionem surrexit cum tremore. Et accedens ad sanctum altare [cepit dicere] scribens in carta sic. Repleatur os meum laude ut hymnum dicat glorie tue domine deus qui creasti nos et adduxisti in uitam hanc et ceteras orationes sancti ministerii. Et post finem orationum exaltauit panem. Sine intermissione orans et dicens. Respice ~

f. 6v + f. 7v; 228–229/4.20–25

domine ie(s)u chr(ist)e d(eu)s n(oste)r || [ex sancto habitac]⁹ uolo tuo & ueni ad sancti-

ficandum nos qui sursum patri consedes et || h(ic) nob(is) inuisibiliter coes dignare potenti manu tradere nobis et p(er) || nos omni populo sancta sanctis. Populus respondit .

Unus sanctus unus d(omi)n(us) ie(su)s chr(istu)s || Cum s(anct)o sp(iritu) in gl(ori)a dei patris

amen. Et diuidens panem in tres partes || una(m) quid(em) communicauit timore ~ f. 4v; from 229/4.25–26

[multo alteram]¹⁰ autem reseruauit consepilire sibi tertiam uero

[inponens col]umbę aureę quę pependit sup(er) altare.

Eubolus siquidem et cleri princeps stantes ante portas templi

uiderunt lucem intelligibilem in templo et uiros gloriosos candidas . . .

A.N.D.

⁷ Line present but illegible.

⁸ Top line mostly trimmed, and show-through of title from recto. The right edge of the text, lines 1–3, is generally illegible.

⁹ The trimmed top of 7v is partly visible at bottom of f. 1v.

¹⁰ Left side present but illegible; two lines cut partly away at bottom, ascenders of line 3 visible.