

The Later Lives of Mary of Egypt  
in NLW MS Llanstephan 34  
and Cardiff, Central Library MS 2.633

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The story of Mary of Egypt occupies an unusual place in Welsh tradition. It is one of the earliest Welsh-language saints' Lives that has been preserved, yet it appears to have first arrived in Wales as no more than an episode in a collection of the miracles of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Only later did it acquire a more independent status, being presented alongside Lives of Katherine of Alexandria, Margaret of Antioch, Mary Magdalene and Martha. These Lives of female saints have been compared with a similar grouping from England, in the context of a suggested new interest in 'the virgin life' and the education of devout women.<sup>1</sup> In the case of the Welsh Lives, however, there is no evidence to connect them with nuns or anchorites specifically, and it is likely that they were read and listened to in the homes of lay women and men as well as in churches and religious houses.<sup>2</sup>

The Welsh Life of Mary of Egypt is essentially a quite simple account of the conversion, extended penitence and redemption of a female sinner. The need to atone for sexual transgressions, specifically, might have added to the story's appeal; it is noteworthy that Mary Magdalene's Life, too, was very popular in Wales, as elsewhere, and the two saints seem often to have been associated or indeed confused with one another.<sup>3</sup> It is possible, too, that Mary of Egypt's extreme fasting in the desert – or 'desolate mountain land' in one later Welsh recension – struck a chord with a Welsh audience familiar with the asceticism of St David and his mother St Non.<sup>4</sup> It is likely,

<sup>1</sup> J. E. C. Williams, 'Buchedd Catrin Sant', *BBGC* 25 (1973–4), 247–68, at 249; G. Williams, *The Welsh Church from Conquest to Reformation*, rev. edn (Cardiff, 1976), 103.

<sup>2</sup> J. Cartwright, *Feminine Sanctity and Spirituality in Medieval Wales* (Cardiff, 2008), 123–4.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 129–30.

<sup>4</sup> In late versions of both Mary of Egypt's Life and David's there are instances of particular attention being paid to the saints' relationship with food. See below and J. Day, 'The later Lives of St David in NLW MSS Peniarth 27ii, Llanstephan 34 and Peniarth 225', Chapter 6 above, 138.

however, that the prominent role played by the Blessed Virgin Mary, through whom Mary of Egypt finds her path to redemption, was the most important facet of the story for its medieval audience in Wales.<sup>5</sup>

Three medieval and four later manuscripts contain copies or versions of the Welsh Life of Mary of Egypt. Even amongst the three earliest copies there are a few significant variant readings, most notably in the version preserved in a fragment of NLW Llanstephan 27 (now part of Cardiff, Central Library 3.242, or Hafod 16). Two early modern texts, written down by Roger Morris of Coedytalwrn, Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd, Denbighshire (fl. 1582–c. 1600) in NLW Llanstephan 34, and John Jones of Gellilyfdy, Ysgeifiog, Flintshire (c. 1580–1657/8) in Cardiff, Central Library 2.633, contain more significant paraphrases. The likely Latin source of the Welsh Life has been identified, and the relationship between the three earliest surviving representatives of the Welsh Life has also received attention from a number of scholars.<sup>6</sup> This chapter considers the later textual history of the Life, focusing on the alterations in the versions in Llanstephan 34 and Cardiff 2.633 and on what these may reveal about the intentions of their scribes and adapters.

#### *The origin and development of the story*

It seems that Mary of Egypt's story originated in an episode from the sixth-century Life of Kyriakos, attributed to Cyril of Scythopolis; this Life's Mary was a harpist (*psaltria*) in the church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, but she became instead a prostitute from Alexandria when the story was adapted to create the Greek ('Sophronian') Life of Mary of Egypt, probably in the late sixth or early seventh century.<sup>7</sup> This Life is much more detailed than the original brief episode and gives great prominence to Zosimus, who replaces the earlier text's 'abba John' (a disciple of Kyriakos) as the monk who encounters Mary in the desert and to whom she relates her story.<sup>8</sup> The Greek Life of Mary of Egypt proved popular and a number of Latin translations were made; amongst these, the ninth-century *Vita Sanctae Mariae Egyptiacae* of Paul, a deacon of Naples,

<sup>5</sup> On devotion to the Virgin in medieval Wales, see Cartwright, *Feminine Sanctity and Spirituality*, chapter 1.

<sup>6</sup> See the sections on the Welsh Life in Peniarth 14 and the later medieval versions, below.

<sup>7</sup> For an edition and translation of the Greek Life, see J.-P. Migne, ed., *Patrologia Graeca* (Paris, 1857–67), 87.3, col. 3697–726; M. Kouli, 'Life of St Mary of Egypt' in *Holy Women of Byzantium: Ten Saints' Lives in English Translation*, ed. A.-M. Talbot (Washington DC, 1996), 65–93. On its origin and antecedents, see *ibid.*, 65–6; J. Stevenson, 'The holy sinner: the Life of Mary of Egypt', in *The Legend of Mary of Egypt in Medieval Insular Hagiography*, ed. E. Poppe and B. Ross (Dublin, 1996), 19–50; H. Magennis, *The Old English Life of Saint Mary of Egypt* (Exeter, 2002), 3–5.

<sup>8</sup> Stevenson, 'Holy sinner', 22–40.

was particularly influential.<sup>9</sup> Paul's translation gave rise to further Latin redactions, and was the direct or indirect source of many of the vernacular versions of the Life.<sup>10</sup> In the first half of the twelfth century Dominic of Evesham included a brief account of Mary of Egypt's life, deriving from Paul's *vita*, as part of a book of miracles concerning the Virgin Mary, and it seems it was a version of this Latin miracle-collection, perhaps specifically that found in manuscript Oxford, Balliol College 240, that provided the source for the Welsh Life of Mary of Egypt.<sup>11</sup>

#### *The Welsh Life in Peniarth 14*

The earliest surviving version of the Welsh Life of Mary of Egypt is to be found amongst the collection of miracles of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 'Gwyrthyeu e Wynvydedic Veir', in the first part of manuscript NLW Peniarth 14 (hereafter Pen 14i) which was written, perhaps at Aberconwy abbey, in the second half of the thirteenth century.<sup>12</sup> Mary of Egypt's story, which takes up less than two pages of the manuscript, may readily be summarized. Having been raised in her father's house until she was twelve, she went to Alexandria where she lived a dissolute life for seventeen years (§1). When she saw crowds on their way to Jerusalem she went with them, but was prevented from entering the church there (i.e. the church of the

<sup>9</sup> Magennis, *Old English Life*, 3, 10–12. For an edited text and translation of Paul of Naples's *vita*, see *ibid.*, 139–209 (hereafter *VSM*); also J. Stevenson, 'Vita Sanctae Mariae Egyptiacae', in *Legend of Mary of Egypt*, ed. Poppe and Ross, 51–98.

<sup>10</sup> Magennis, *Old English Life*, 11–12.

<sup>11</sup> Stevenson, 'Holy Sinner', 46–7, and on the origin of the Welsh Life see the discussion and citations below.

<sup>12</sup> D. Huws, *A Repertory of Welsh Manuscripts and Scribes c. 800–c. 1800* (forthcoming); I. Mittendorf, 'The Middle Welsh Mary of Egypt and the Latin source of the *Miracles of the Virgin Mary*', in *Legend of Mary of Egypt*, ed. Poppe and Ross, 205–36, at 206–8. The manuscript may be viewed on the National Library of Wales website at <hdl.handle.net/10107/4575050>. For editions of 'Gwyrthyeu e Wynvydedic Veir', see L. H. Angell, 'Gwyrthyeu e Wynvydedic Veir: astudiaeth gymharol ohonynt fel y'u ceir hwynt yn llawysgrifau Peniarth 14, Peniarth 5 a Llanstephan 27' (unpublished M.A. thesis, Cardiff, 1938), 52–83, and G. Jones, 'Gwyrthyeu y Wynvydedic Veir', *BBGC* 9 (1937–9), 144–8, 334–41, and 10 (1939–41), 21–33; and for a recent transcription of the Pen 14i version, see *Rhyddiaith Gymraeg o Lawysgrifau'r 13eg Ganrif: Fersiwn 2.0*, transcribed by G. R. Isaac and S. Rodway, reformatted by S. Nurmio, K. Kappahn and P. Sims-Williams, and emended by S. Rodway and P. Sims-Williams (Aberystwyth, 2010, 2013). Edited texts and translations of the Pen 14i Life of Mary of Egypt have been published by M. Richards, 'Buchedd Mair o'r Aiff', *Études Celtiques* 2 (1937), 45–9, and Mittendorf, 'Middle Welsh Mary of Egypt', both including variant readings from Pen 5, with the latter also showing variant readings from the Hafod text. My transcription, edited text and translation of the Pen 14i Life are also available at <welshsaints.ac.uk/theedition/> (2021). Quotes from Pen 14i, below, are taken from this edited text and translation. Quotations from the other manuscripts are from transcriptions, available at *ibid.*, with added punctuation, standardization of word-division and capitalization, and expansion of abbreviations and underdotted letters (*u = w, l = ll, d = dd*).

Holy Sepulchre, but not named as such) by a sign or ‘gesture’ (*amneit*) from God (§2). After realizing the reason for this she repented in front of an image of the Virgin Mary, and was advised by the Virgin to travel beyond the river Jordan; on leaving the church she was given three coins which she used to buy three loaves (§3). She received Holy Communion in a church on the bank of the Jordan before crossing the river and entering the desert, where she survived, apparently for 64 years, with no food save for her loaves, and succeeded in overcoming carnal temptation with the aid of the Virgin Mary (§4). When Mary of Egypt was nearing the end of her life God sent to her a monk named Zosimus, to whom she told her story (§5). Zosimus returned to the desert the following year and Mary walked miraculously over the river Jordan before receiving Communion from him and taking a little of the food he had also brought with him (§6). When Zosimus returned again to the desert after another year, as she had requested, he came upon her dead body with a message written in the earth nearby asking him to bury her; as he was wondering how he could manage this, God sent a lion to him which buried her remains according to his command (§7).

Regarding the source of the story, Lewis Haydn Angell observed in his M.A. thesis (1938) that the Welsh versions of ‘Gwyrthyeu e Wynvydedic Veir’ resemble the Latin miracle-collections in manuscripts London, British Library, Cotton Cleopatra C. x, and Oxford, Balliol College 240, and he included the latter’s version of the story of Mary of Egypt for comparison with his edition of the Welsh text.<sup>13</sup> Ingo Mittendorf, in his more recent discussion of the Welsh Life of Mary of Egypt, also drew attention to these two manuscripts (each dating from the second half of the twelfth century), suggesting that Oxford, Balliol College 240 is the more likely source since the arrangement of the miracles most closely resembles that in Pen 14i.<sup>14</sup> The Welsh version of Mary of Egypt’s story in Pen 14i follows its proposed exemplar quite closely, though it is more concise and contains a number of mistranslations.<sup>15</sup> Three in particular had repercussions in the later manuscript tradition.

Firstly, the rather awkward phrase *pan weles e niveroed mwyhaf en menet Gaerusalem a chroes* ‘when she saw the greatest multitudes going to Jerusalem with a cross’ appears to be a mistranslation of a longer passage in the Latin exemplar: *cum vidisset maximam multitudinem Jerosolimam*

<sup>13</sup> Angell, ‘Gwyrthyeu’, 49, 117–20, quoting from H. Kjellman, ed., *La deuxième collection anglo-normande des miracles de la Sainte Vierge et son original latin* (Paris, 1922), 47–9.

<sup>14</sup> Mittendorf, ‘Middle Welsh Mary of Egypt’, 208, 211–12; on the Latin miracle-collection and its author, Dominic of Evesham, see Stevenson, ‘Holy sinner’, 46–7.

<sup>15</sup> Mittendorf, ‘Middle Welsh Mary of Egypt’, 231–3, and see *ibid.*, 226–31, for the text of Dominic of Evesham’s Latin version, from his *miracula sancte et perpetue virginis Marie* as preserved in Balliol 240 (hereafter *MSPVM*).

*properare ad vivificum sancte crucis signum adorandum* ‘after she had seen a huge crowd hurrying to Jerusalem to adore the life-giving sign of the Holy Cross’.<sup>16</sup> Possibly *cum* at the end of *ad vivificum* was taken by itself to mean ‘with’ as the passage was translated and abridged, or may have been interpreted in this way due to an error in the source (if this was not the specific text in Balliol 240, but rather a closely similar one).

Secondly, there is confusion over the length of time Mary spends in the desert. In Paul of Naples’s much longer *vita* she spends a total of 47 years in the desert prior to her meeting with Zosimus, subsisting on her three loaves for the first 17 years and thenceforth on grass or herbs (*herbis*).<sup>17</sup> The situation is essentially the same in Dominic of Evesham’s shorter version as represented in Balliol 240; however, it is not made clear that the 17-year period fell within the 47-year period.<sup>18</sup> It is easy to see how this could have led the translator to suppose that the 17 years, mentioned after the 47 years in his source, followed on after them in the story as well.<sup>19</sup> As a result, the reader is left to assume not only that Mary’s sojourn in the desert, prior to Zosimus finding her, lasted 64 years rather than 47, but also that she ate nothing at all for the first 47 years and *then* began to eat her three loaves. This is unfortunate as regards the significance of her story, since it suggests she became weaker or more desperate later in her life, whereas in Paul of Naples’s *vita* she has, by the time of Zosimus’s second visit, so completely conquered the demands of the flesh that she accepts only three lentils from the food he offers her.<sup>20</sup> (The Welsh Life itself, following Dominic’s text, has her accepting *ychydic o’r bwyt* ‘a little of the food’ at that point.<sup>21</sup>)

Thirdly, this food brought by Zosimus seems itself to have caused some confusion for the translator. In the *vita* it seems Zosimus’s intention (though not actually stated) was to offer it to her, but the Welsh Life refers to him bringing ‘some food for himself’ (*[p]eth bwyllvr idav e hun*) as he set out to visit her.<sup>22</sup> This makes him seem rather selfish and heartless, but Ingo Mittendorf suggests that the Welsh translator misunderstood the pronoun *illius* in a similar phrase in his Latin source, and that it had

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 221, n. 47.

<sup>17</sup> *VSME* §§18–19.

<sup>18</sup> Mittendorf, ‘Middle Welsh Mary of Egypt’, 232–3; *MSPVM* §23.

<sup>19</sup> Pen 14i, §4 *Ac ena e bu hep vwynt en dieissyau, wedy e chymunav, seith mlyned a deugeint. Ac a vu o’ e buched en ol, nyt amgen dwy vlyned ar bymthec, e buchedocaws ar e their torth* ‘And there, having received Communion, she was forty-seven years without food, [but] without want. And for what remained of her life, namely seventeen years, she lived on her three loaves.’

<sup>20</sup> *VSME* §22.

<sup>21</sup> Pen 14i, §6; *MSPVM* §35a *paululum cibi*.

<sup>22</sup> *VSME* §§21–2; Pen 14i, §6.

originally been meant to refer to Mary rather than Zosimus.<sup>23</sup> It seems that this, and other instances of awkwardness in the original translation (as represented by the Pen 14i text and its early ‘relatives’ or derivatives), were noticed by later scribes and adapters and inspired some of the changes in the later versions of the Welsh Life, as discussed below.

*The later medieval versions in Peniarth 5 and Cardiff 3.242/Hafod 16*

Two other medieval manuscripts contain versions of Mary of Egypt’s story closely resembling that in Pen 14i. The earlier of the two is NLW Peniarth 5 (hereafter Pen 5). This manuscript constitutes the first part of the White Book of Rhydderch, thought to have been written around 1350 for Rhydderch ab Ieuan Llwyd of Parcrhydderch, near Llangeitho, Ceredigion.<sup>24</sup> In this case, rather than being included in the miracle-collection (which is to be found further on in the manuscript), the Life of Mary of Egypt is located after the Lives of Katherine, Margaret, Mary Magdalene and Martha (the latter two Lives are incomplete), and before ‘Ystoria Addaf ac Efa’.<sup>25</sup> Unfortunately the first part of the text is in poor condition, the ink having faded, and there are some dark stains resulting from treatment with gallic acid, a reagent used by antiquarians to revive old ink; it is likely that John Jones, Gellilyfdy (c.1580–1657/8), was the culprit in this case.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, Robert Vaughan of Hengwrt (c.1592–1667) wrote over some of the text in dark ink using a thick nib.<sup>27</sup>

The Life of Mary of Egypt is again associated with the miracles of the Virgin Mary in a stray quire from the late-fourteenth or early fifteenth-century manuscript NLW Llanstephan 27 (hereafter Llst 27), written by Hywel Fychan; the quire is now part of a different manuscript, Cardiff, Central Library 3.242, also known as Hafod 16 (hereafter Hafod).<sup>28</sup> Before the quire was separated, Mary’s story would have been located at the end

<sup>23</sup> Mittendorf, ‘Middle Welsh Mary of Egypt’, 232 (*MSPVM* §33b–c) *secum corpus dominicum in apto vase deportans, et quedam cibaria ad opus illius* ‘carrying with him the Body of the Lord in an apt vessel and some food for her use’.

<sup>24</sup> D. Huws, *Medieval Welsh Manuscripts* (Cardiff and Aberystwyth, 2000), 22, 247–52. The manuscript may be viewed at <hdl.handle.net/10107/4682879> and a transcription of its version of Mary’s Life is available at <welshsaints.ac.uk/theedition/>.

<sup>25</sup> J. G. Evans, ed., *Report on Manuscripts in the Welsh Language* (London, 1898–1910), I, 310; Mittendorf, ‘Middle Welsh Mary of Egypt’, 206–10; J. Cartwright, *Mary Magdalene and her Sister Martha* (Washington DC, 2013), 33–4.

<sup>26</sup> Huws, *Medieval Welsh Manuscripts*, 240; *id.*, *Repertory*. Damage to an upper corner of the folio has also resulted in some loss of text.

<sup>27</sup> Huws, *Medieval Welsh Manuscripts*, 241; *id.*, *Repertory*.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* This text was edited by M. Richards, ‘Hafod 16, tt. 101–9’, *BBGC* 14 (1950–2), 186–90 (two corrections are noted by Mittendorf, ‘Middle Welsh Mary of Egypt’, 218, n. 43). Transcriptions are available on the ‘Welsh Prose 1300–1425’ website <rhyddiaithganoloesol.caerdydd.ac.uk/> and on <welshsaints.ac.uk/theedition/>. Cardiff, Central Library 3.242, is now the preferred name of this manuscript but I refer to it as ‘Hafod’ to distinguish it from the other Cardiff manuscript discussed below.

of the miracle-collection, rather than tenth among them as in Pen 14i.<sup>29</sup> This version of the Life shares some readings with the Pen 5 text against those in Pen 14i. For example, the Hafod text begins with the name *Meir o'r Eifft*, and the reading in Pen 5 is similar, whilst in Pen 14i the saint's name is *Meir Egiptiaca* (§1).<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, of these three texts, only Pen 14i notes where Mary's last message was written before quoting her words (as in Dominic's Latin text), the other two quoting them first and describing their location afterwards.<sup>31</sup>

Though differing conclusions have been reached over the relationship between the three oldest texts, it seems clear, firstly, that they are quite closely related to one another, and, secondly, that the Pen 14i text is our best surviving representative of the original Welsh Life.<sup>32</sup> There is some modernizing in both the Pen 5 and Hafod texts, especially the latter (most obviously in its substitution of the third person singular preterite endings *-ws*, *-wys* with *-awd* or *-abd*).<sup>33</sup> The Hafod text also includes some more creative paraphrases of its own. Its unique readings include *yd ymrodes hi y buteinrbyd o'e chorff* 'she gave herself up to prostitution of her body' as opposed to *yd emrodes e chorff e buteindra* 'she gave up her body to prostitution' in Pen 14i, and three instances in which an auxiliary verb, *goruc*, is added.<sup>34</sup> These changes were probably made to make the text easier to follow and understand, but others suggest different motives.

<sup>29</sup> Huws, *Repertory*; Mittendorf, 'Middle Welsh Mary of Egypt', 208–9.

<sup>30</sup> Hafod, 104.12; Pen 5, 28<sup>r</sup>.30 {*M*}*Meir o'i Eifft* (with *o'i* probably being what remains of an earlier *o'r* with a dot added later). The scribe of Pen 5 left a gap for a decorated initial letter which was never supplied; a simple *M* was added by a later hand.

<sup>31</sup> See Appendix 2, and compare *MSPVM* §§36e–37 & *juxta illud in terra scriptum: «Sepeli, abba Zosima, misere Marie corpusculum!»*.

<sup>32</sup> Richards, 'Bucedd Mair o'r Aifft', 45, described the Pen 5 Life as a 'transcript' of that in Pen 14i. Mittendorf, 'Middle Welsh Mary of Egypt', 223–5, likewise regarded the Pen 5 Life as a copy of that in Pen 14i (referring to the latter as the original Life), and, further, regarded the Hafod text as a copy from Pen 5. By contrast, Angell, 'Gwyrthyeu', 23, 30–3, 43–4, discussing the miracle-collection as a whole, argued that the versions in Pen 14i and Pen 5 share a common (lost) source, and, further, that the portion of the miracle-collection in Llst 27 derives mainly from Pen 5 but with influences from Pen 14i or its source. See also J. Fife, 'The syntax of the Middle Welsh *Mair o'r Aifft*', in *Legend of Mary of Egypt*, ed. Poppe and Ross, 237–54, at 242, where it is argued that '[t]he two later texts either contain conscious updating, or are based on related exemplars of more recent vintage than Peniarth 14'.

<sup>33</sup> Fife, 'Syntax', 242; see also Cartwright, *Mary Magdalene*, 39–41, and Angell, 'Gwyrthyeu', 18, 37, on similar modernizing in the Lives of Mary Magdalene and Martha, and 'Gwyrthyeu e Wynvydedic Veir' as preserved in Llst 27. The significance of the substitution of *-awdd* for *-ws*, *-wys*, in terms of date and dialect is discussed in S. Rodway, *Dating Medieval Welsh Literature: Evidence from the Verbal System* (Aberystwyth, 2013), 163–5. It is noted, *ibid.*, 157, that similar replacement does not generally occur with the *-is* ending, but this too may be found in the Hafod Life (105.18 [*m*]anaga**bd**, 19 managa**bd**; contrast Pen 14i, §5 [*m*]ynegis, menegis; Pen 5, 28<sup>v</sup>.5 [*m*]enegis, menegys).

<sup>34</sup> Hafod, 104.14–15; Pen 14i, §1 (cf. Pen 5, 28<sup>r</sup>.31–2 (in Vaughan's overwriting, except for the final word, of which only the latter part is legible)). The Hafod text has added *a*

One particularly interesting alteration in Hafod is that Mary is said to receive from Zosimus ‘the body of her Lord’ (*corf y Harglŷyd*), rather than of ‘the Lord’ (*corff er Argluyd*), emphasizing her personal relationship with the Almighty.<sup>35</sup> A further, possibly related change is that before the miracle which allows her to cross the Jordan dry-footed to meet him, the Hafod text describes her making the sign of the cross ‘upon her’ (*dodi arŷyd y groc arnei*) as opposed to making it upon or over the water (*dodi arwyd e groc ar e dwuyr*) as in Pen 14i (and Pen 5).<sup>36</sup> If this means Mary of Egypt made the sign of the cross upon *herself*, then perhaps the adapter wished to make the miracle more of God’s instigation than her own, with her gesture invoking divine aid or protection only in a general way. Another possibility, however, is that the pronoun refers to the (feminine) river Jordan, mentioned later in the sentence, in which case the essential meaning of the passage is unaffected.

A further creative change is seen in the addition of the descriptive phrase *y diffeithŷch ac y nnyalŷch* ‘into desert land and wilderness’, which appears to have been intended to enliven what is in Pen 14i (and Pen 5) a rather bland description of Mary’s highly significant first crossing of the Jordan, *A thrannoeth, wedy kemryt eno corff er Argluyd, e kerdws e diffeith e tu draw y Eurdonen* ‘And the next day, having partaken there of the body of the Lord, she walked into a desert beyond the Jordan.’<sup>37</sup> This alteration may reflect the fondness of medieval Welsh prose writers and storytellers

*oruc* in 104.25–6 (*llefein ar delŷ Veir a oruc* ‘she lamented upon the image of Mary’) and twice in 105.25–7 (*a chymryt y ganthaŷ corf y Harglŷyd a oruc [...] ac yn vn agŷed ac y dathoed ymchoelut trŷy y dŷfyr a oruc a gŷediaŷ Zozimas* ‘and she received from him the body of her Lord [...] and in the same manner as she had come, she returned across the water and devoutly petitioned Zosimus’). Earlier scribal errors are perhaps being corrected in one or two of these instances; see Fife, ‘Syntax’, 246–8, and note especially the apparently faulty reading in Pen 5 (28<sup>v</sup>.39 *lleuein ar delŷ Veir*; contrast Pen 14i, §3 *hi a dechre[w]s llevein ar delw Veir*). Though the equivalent verb-form *gwnaeth* rather than *goruc* was favoured by prose writers after c. 1350 (see P. W. Thomas, ‘(GWNAETH): Newidyn arddulliol yn y Cyfnod Canol’, in *Cyfoeth y Testun: Ysgrifau ar Lenyddiaeth Gymraeg yr Oesoedd Canol*, ed. I. Daniel, M. Haycock, D. Johnston and J. Rowland (Caerdydd, 2003), 252–80 (at 267–8)), the scribe of the Hafod text, Hywel Fychan, may have elected to use *goruc* in order to be consistent with some other instances that occur in earlier versions of the Life and which he retained (Hafod, 104.18 *bryssyaŷ a oruc hitheu*, 105.2 *dyuot drachefyn a oruc*, 5 *kerdet a oruc*; cf. Pen 14i, §§2, 3; Pen 5, 28<sup>v</sup>.33–4, 42, 44). Compare Thomas’s observation (‘(GWNAETH): Newidyn arddulliol’, 266–7) that the Red Book of Hergest versions of the prose tales ‘Owain’ and ‘Geraint’, likewise copied by Hywel Fychan, preserve many instances of *goruc* as an auxiliary verb (on the scribes of the Red Book, see D. Huws, ‘Llyfr Coch Hergest’, in *Cyfoeth y Testun*, ed. Daniel *et al.*, 1–30).

<sup>35</sup> Hafod, 105.25 (see the previous note); contrast Pen 14i, §4 (cf. Pen 5, 28<sup>v</sup>.9–10). Fife, ‘Syntax’, 247, notes the ‘emphasis on the personal’ suggested by this change.

<sup>36</sup> Hafod, 105.23; Pen 14i, §6 (cf. Pen 5, 28<sup>v</sup>.8).

<sup>37</sup> Pen 14i, §4 (cf. Pen 5, 28<sup>v</sup>.47–8 (partly illegible)); Hafod, 105.9–10 *wedy kymryt yno corf yr arglŷyd y tu draŷ y Eurdonen y diffeithŷch ac y nnyalŷch* ‘having partaken there of the body of the Lord beyond the Jordan into desert land and wilderness’.



for juxtaposing pairs of nouns with similar meaning, in this case with the added attraction of rhyme; the same pairing is found twice in the Arthurian tale 'Peredur' (*ynialwch a diffeithwch*).<sup>38</sup> Furthermore, in her discussion of the Life of Mary Magdalene in Llst 27 Jane Cartwright draws attention to similar instances where it seems the scribe Hywel Fychan added an adjective or adverb to 'increase the dramatic effect'.<sup>39</sup> However, it seems the rearrangement of the sentence in Hafod, referring to the desert *after* the phrase 'beyond the Jordan' rather than beforehand as in Pen 14i, had an unfortunate side-effect, apparently resulting in the omission of the important verbal phrase *e kerdws* 'she walked'.<sup>40</sup> The Hafod version also omits the reference to Mary's being able to enter the church once she has repented tearfully before the image of the Virgin Mary, jumping straight to her veneration of the Cross (see Appendix 1). This, again, looks like an error: had an adapter wished to suggest she venerated the Cross from the doorway, then he would surely also have removed the description of her 'returning again' to the image of the Virgin.

*The later Lives in Llanstephan 34 and Cardiff 2.633 and their origin*

The earliest of four post-medieval manuscript versions of the Life of Mary of Egypt forms part of the important collection of saints' Lives in NLW Llanstephan 34 (hereafter Llst 34), written by the scholar and recusant Roger Morris of Coedytalwrn between 1580 and 1600.<sup>41</sup> Here, as in Pen 5, the Life is presented along with the Lives of other female saints. It is located towards the end of the manuscript (pp. 382–5), preceded by the Lives of Mary Magdalene and Martha and followed by 'Ystori Susanna' and the Life of Margaret (this latter Life was added by Thomas Evans in 1628). The Life of Katherine is located much earlier in the manuscript (pp. 24–35).

Though it contains a number of paraphrases of its own, the version of Mary of Egypt's Life in Llst 34 does not contain any of those paraphrases or errors of the Hafod text that are discussed above, being more similar to the two earlier texts in Pen 14i and Pen 5. There are also instances where Llst 34 agrees with Pen 5 against Pen 14i. Only in Pen 5 and Llst 34 does the brief phrase *llefain ar ddelw Vair*, describing Mary of Egypt's lamenting before the image of the Virgin, occur with neither an auxiliary

<sup>38</sup> G. W. Goetinck, ed., *Historia Peredur vab Efracw* (Caerdydd, 1976), 7.12–13, 10.6, and see the discussion of the role of such 'doublets' (*dwbledau*) in adorning the narrative of medieval prose tales, in S. Davies, *Crefft y Cyfarwydd* (Caerdydd, 1995), 182–5. Compare also R. L. Thomson, ed., *Owein or Chwedyl Iarllles y Ffynnawn* (Dublin, 1968), l. 35 *eithauoed byt a diffeithwch* 'the farthest regions of the world and desert lands' (cf. ll. 659–60).

<sup>39</sup> *Mary Magdalene*, 43.

<sup>40</sup> This was noted by Mittendorf, 'Middle Welsh Mary of Egypt', 223.

<sup>41</sup> Huws, *Repertory*. A transcription is available at <[welshsaints.ac.uk/theedition/](http://welshsaints.ac.uk/theedition/)>.

verb nor a preceding *hi a dechreu[w]s* ‘she began’ (see Appendix 1); and Llst 34, Pen 5 and Hafod all agree in having the preposition *trwy* ‘through(out)’ preceding a reference to the seventeen dissolute years Mary of Egypt spent in Alexandria.<sup>42</sup> By contrast, in the last section of the Life the Llst 34 text agrees with Pen 14i (and Dominic of Evesham’s Latin text) in noting that Mary’s last words were written beside her dead body before quoting those words, rather than adding the explanation afterwards as in Pen 5 and Hafod.<sup>43</sup> It is possible, however, that the reading in the Llst 34 text derived from one similar to that in Pen 5 and was rearranged by an adapter who was trying to make the narrative easier to follow. Llst 34 and Pen 5 (and Hafod) agree against Pen 14i, indeed, in using a pronoun, *hynn* or *hynny*, to refer to the writing.

It is likely, then, that the text in Llst 34 derives either from the version of the Life in Pen 5, as suggested by Ingo Mittendorf, or from a closely related text.<sup>44</sup> Significantly, it does seem that the White Book of Rhydderch, of which Pen 5 was originally a part, was the source Morris used for his copies of ‘Peredur’, ‘Bown o Hamtwn’ and the Four Branches of the Mabinogi in manuscript NLW 3043B.<sup>45</sup> Furthermore, the Lives of Katherine and Martha in Llst 34 itself resemble versions in the White Book and may have been drawn from it (or from an intervening or closely related source).<sup>46</sup> Not all the Lives in Llst 34 came from the same source, however. The manuscript’s Life of Sylvester is attributed by Morris to Sir Huw Pennant (*fl.* c. 1465–1514), whilst its Life of Mary Magdalene appears to derive from the one in Llst 27 (or a derivative or relative of that text), with additional material perhaps drawn from a source shared with the version in NLW Peniarth 27ii (dating from the latter half of the fifteenth century).<sup>47</sup> Again, Llst 34’s Life of David is similar to that in Llst 27, but more especially to the version in BL Cotton Titus D. xxii (written in 1429 or soon after).<sup>48</sup> Moreover, the Llst 34 Life of David contains amendments made by Morris after he initially wrote the text, which appear to have been drawn from a second source. This was probably either Thomas Wiliems’s version in NLW Peniarth 225 (written in 1598) or a closely related text.<sup>49</sup>

Many of Morris’s amendments to the Life of David involved underlining words in the main text and providing a variant or corrected reading in superscript or in the margin, whilst others use square brackets to make

<sup>42</sup> Llst 34, 383.2–3 *trwy ddwy flynedd ar bymthec*; cf. Pen 5, 28<sup>r</sup>.32 (overwritten); Hafod, 104.16; contrast Pen 14i, §1 *dwyllyned ar bymthec*.

<sup>43</sup> Llst 34, 385.8–10, and see n. 31 above and Appendix 2.

<sup>44</sup> Mittendorf, ‘Middle Welsh Mary of Egypt’, 225, n. 62.

<sup>45</sup> Huws, *Medieval Welsh Manuscripts*, 260, 261–2.

<sup>46</sup> Williams, ‘Buchedd Catrin Sant’, 256; Cartwright, *Mary Magdalene*, 49, 53.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.* 49, 50, 56–7.

<sup>48</sup> Day, ‘Later Lives of St David’, 123, 134–42.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 147–8.

corrections or show alternate readings, and it is noteworthy that there are two apparently similar instances in his Life of Mary of Egypt. Firstly, square brackets were added to the passage describing Mary's decision to follow the crowd of pilgrims to Jerusalem. Morris's text reads *hi a ddechreüwys [ewyllyssio myned gyd ac hwynt a] bryssio a orüc hithaü gyd ac hwynt* 'she began [to have a mind to go with them and] she hastened along with them', whereas the three earlier texts state only that 'she hastened along with them'.<sup>50</sup> There is nothing wrong with the text as Morris originally wrote it, either in terms of syntax or meaning, and it is hard to see why he should have felt the need to add the brackets unless he had seen some other version which had the shorter reading. (Skipping over the text within the brackets does result in faulty syntax, but perhaps Morris considered that the reference to Mary's decision-making was the more significant deviation, or perhaps he simply made a mistake.)

The second instance of Morris amending his text after he wrote it is in the episode describing Mary's first meeting with Zosimus, and here too the alteration brings a paraphrased reading into line with the earlier texts: *hithaü a fanegis iddaw ef i chyphes dros<sup>gyphes</sup> i holl fuchedd*.<sup>51</sup> The text as originally written means 'she related to him her confession for her whole life' and, again, appears to contain nothing objectionable either in its sense or its syntax, but Morris still took the trouble to alter it, his underlining and marginal addition of *gyphes* suggesting a reading essentially the same as that in Pen 14i, Pen 5 and Hafod ('she related to him the confession of her whole life').<sup>52</sup>

It appears that Morris initially copied a source that contained some paraphrasing but was otherwise similar to Pen 5; perhaps a derivative of it or some other close relative. He might have made some changes of his own as well, incorporating them into his main text as he wrote. Then, at some stage, he collated his text with that in a second source and was prompted to make the two changes noted above. That second source is likely to have been Pen 5 itself, given that this manuscript does seem to have passed through his hands, though since the relevant readings are not significantly different in Pen 14i and Hafod no firm conclusion can be drawn on this point.

The Life of Mary of Egypt in Llst 34 is itself considered to have been the source for the version copied by John Jones, Gellilyfdy, into NLW Peniarth 217 in 1611, and of the later text in NLW Llanstephan 104 (c.

<sup>50</sup> Llst 34, 383.4–6; Pen 14i, §2 *bryssyaw a oruc hitheu gyt ac wyntwy*; Pen 5, 28<sup>r</sup>.33–4 *brussyaw a oruc hitheu y gyt ac wynt* (the first word is in Vaughan's overwriting); cf. Hafod, 104.18.

<sup>51</sup> Llst 34, 384.16–17.

<sup>52</sup> Pen 14i, §5 *hitheu a vynegis idaw ef kyffes e holl vuched*; cf. Pen 5, 28<sup>v</sup>.4–5; Hafod, 105.17–18 (in Hafod the verb-ending *-ad* replaces *-is*).

1710×15).<sup>53</sup> John Jones, however, had earlier (in 1604) written a different version of Mary of Egypt's Life in Cardiff, Central Library 2.633 (hereafter C 2.633), and this text is of particular interest because of the extensive paraphrasing it contains.<sup>54</sup> Like Roger Morris, John Jones lived in north-east Wales and was an antiquary and prolific copyist; he also had Catholic sympathies, and he had access to many sources, including manuscripts from Morris's collection. Significantly, his transcripts are generally 'notable for their faithfulness to their exemplars'.<sup>55</sup>

John Jones's version of the Life of Mary of Egypt in C 2.633 is located after the Lives of Mary Magdalene and Martha, and before those of Katherine and Margaret.<sup>56</sup> A colophon at the end of the Life gives the date as 21 August 1604, but notes that the text was 'written' in 1531.<sup>57</sup> If this latter date is correct (and its precision suggests it derives from a colophon or some other record in the source), this would indicate that John Jones's source text has since been lost, because none of the surviving manuscript versions of the Life date from the first half of the sixteenth century. It appears, in fact, that the same lost manuscript, written or completed in 1531, was also Jones's source for several of the other texts he copied into C 2.633, namely the 'Elucidarium', 'Y Gyssegyrlan vvhedd', 'Purdan Padrig', and the Lives of the Virgin Mary, Mary Magdalene, Katherine and Margaret.<sup>58</sup>

Positioning C 2.633's version of the Life of Mary of Egypt within the stemma of the other versions of the Life discussed above is challenging, since many of its passages have been paraphrased too extensively to allow meaningful comparisons to be made. It is noteworthy, however, that the C 2.633 Life agrees with all the other texts (including Llst 34) against Hafod in stating that Mary makes the sign of the cross 'over the water' (*ar y dwfr*) rather than 'over herself' (*arnei*), and in using the third person singular preterite ending *-is* rather than *-abd* for the verb *mynegi*, in describing Mary relating her story to Zosimus and his subsequent telling of it to the brethren at his monastery.<sup>59</sup> On the other hand, in C 2.633 the saint's poignant last message to Zosimus resembles the Hafod version

<sup>53</sup> Mittendorf, 'Middle Welsh Mary of Egypt', 225, n. 62; Huws, *Repertory*. The texts in Peniarth 217 and Llanstephan 104 were not consulted in preparing this chapter.

<sup>54</sup> Huws, *Repertory*. A transcription is available at <welshsaints.ac.uk/theedition/>.

<sup>55</sup> Huws, *Repertory*, s.n. Jones, John, of Gellilyfdy; see also Cartwright, *Mary Magdalene*, 61.

<sup>56</sup> Evans, *Report*, II, 332.

<sup>57</sup> C 2.633, 357.15–19 *Ac velly y terfyna bvchedd Mair o'r Aiffi yr 21 o vis Awst yn y vlwyddyn o oydran Krist 1604, yr hwnn a ysgrifenesid yn y vlwyddyn o odran [sic] Krist 1531* 'And thus ends the Life of Mary of Egypt, the 21st of August in the year of the Lord 1604, which was written in the year of the Lord 1531.'

<sup>58</sup> Evans, *Report*, II, 332; Cartwright, *Mary Magdalene*, 61; Williams, 'Buchedd Catrin Sant', 257; J. E. C. Williams, 'Welsh versions of *Purgatorium S. Patricii*', *Studia Celtica* 8/9 (1973–4), 121–94, at 146.

<sup>59</sup> C 2.633, 356.13–14, and see the discussion of Hafod, above; C 2.633, 356.6–8 (compare Pen 14i, §5; Pen 5, 28<sup>v</sup>.4–6; Llst 34, 384.16–19 (the readings vary but the verb-forms agree); contrast Hafod, 105.17–19).

alone in its references to *y drvanaf Vair* ‘the most wretched Mary’ rather than *e [d]ruan Veir* ‘the wretched Mary’ or ‘poor Mary’, and to her ‘body’ (*[c]orff*) rather than her ‘little body’ (*corfyn* or *corffyn*) (see Appendix 2).<sup>60</sup>

There are also a few instances where the C 2.633 Life agrees with that in Llst 34 against the three earlier texts. Both have *[g]wlad* ‘land’ rather than *[g]wal* ‘lair’ when referring to Alexandria,<sup>61</sup> and when describing Mary’s sojourn in the desert they use a similar phrase with the same verb, *yr ymborthes* and *y by yn ymborth*, each meaning ‘she sustained herself’, to replace the perhaps rather obscure *e buchedocaws* or *y buchedockaa6d* ‘she lived’.<sup>62</sup> Furthermore, in describing Mary of Egypt’s encounter with the image of the Blessed Virgin Mary both the later texts state that Mary of Egypt trusted ‘in the Virgin Mary’ as opposed to just speaking ‘trustingly’, both have unnecessary reiteration of a form of the verb *dywedud/dywedyd* ‘to say’ when introducing her words, and both refer to the Virgin as ‘the Lady Mary’ (*yr Arglwyddes Vair*) rather than ‘the Lady’ (*er Arghuydes*) as she gives her reply (Appendix 1). Again, the C 2.633 text describes the location of the message written near Mary’s body before quoting it, as in Llst 34 (and Pen 14i), though the reading is different each time (Appendix 2).

It does not appear that either of these two later texts (nor their immediate sources) was copied from the other, since each contains errors and paraphrases of its own, discussed below. One possible scenario is that each derived from a common source that was similar to, or derived from, Pen 5. If so, then perhaps the similarities of the C 2.633 Life to the Hafod version, noted above, might have resulted from cross-fertilization during transmission.<sup>63</sup> It is worth noting that a similarly complex pattern of affinities is suggested for other Lives preserved in C 2.633; Jane Cartwright has observed that this manuscript’s Life of Martha shares similarities with versions in Pen 5 and Llst 27, whilst its Life of Mary Magdalene shares features with those in Llst 27, Pen 5, Peniarth 27ii and Llst 34, and in versions written by Ieuan ap Wiliam ap Dafydd of Ruabon in manuscripts Cardiff, Central Library 2.629 (1535–6) and NLW Llanstephan 117 (1542–54).<sup>64</sup>

<sup>60</sup> With the latter form, compare the diminutive *corpusculum* of Dominic of Evesham’s text (Angell, ‘*Gwyrthyeu*’, 248; Mittendorf, ‘Middle Welsh Mary of Egypt’, 225; *MSPVM* §37).

<sup>61</sup> Llst 34, 382.28; Card 2.633, 353.8; contrast Pen 14i, §1; Pen 5, 28<sup>r</sup>.31 (cf. Hafod, 104.14 *[g]val*).

<sup>62</sup> Llst 34, 384.8; Card 2.633, 355.20; contrast Pen 14i, §4 (cf. Pen 5, 28<sup>v</sup>.1–2 *y buchedoc[ ]s*); Hafod, 105.13.

<sup>63</sup> Mittendorf, ‘Middle Welsh Mary of Egypt’, 225, n. 62, likewise concluded that the Card 2.633 text was based upon more than one manuscript; he noted that it is similar to the versions in Pen 5 and Hafod, and might also show influences from Pen 14i.

<sup>64</sup> Cartwright, *Mary Magdalene*, 61–4, and on the manuscripts see also Huws, *Repertory*.

*The nature of the paraphrasing in the Llanstephan 34 and Cardiff 2.633 Lives*

Both these later Lives contain instances where a word or phrase has been modernized or replaced with one that might have been more familiar or more readily understood. Each, as noted above, replaces *e buchedocaws* or *y buchedockaa6d* with phrases containing the verb *ymborthi*, and each replaces the earlier texts' colourful reference to Alexandria as a *gwal* 'lair' with the more prosaic *gwlad* 'land'. Neither of the two later Lives has retained the uncommon word *bwyllwr(w)*, used in the earlier texts (Pen 14i *bwyllwr*; Pen 5 *bwyll6r6*) to refer to the food brought by Zosimus; it is replaced by *bwyd* in Llst 34 and the relevant passage is omitted entirely from C 2.633.<sup>65</sup> Likewise *emachludws* or *ymachluydvys* 'set', in a description of the setting sun, is absent from both versions, being replaced by *gostyngwys* 'descended' in Llst 34 whilst the C 2.633 version, again, omits the entire phrase.<sup>66</sup>

The Llst 34 version is alone in replacing *parth a* 'towards' with the perhaps more familiar *tü a* in the phrase describing Mary's approach to the ship.<sup>67</sup> It is also alone in changing plural *tei* 'houses' to singular *[t]y* when referring to her early life in her father's household, and in having her spend her first forty years (*deügain mlynedd*) rather than twelve years (*deudeng blynedd*) in that household.<sup>68</sup> The former change is easy to account for as singular *ty* may have been preferred as being more straightforward or down-to-earth.<sup>69</sup> The latter is probably a copying error since, whilst it may well be supposed that an adapter would have been uncomfortable with so young an age, increasing it to forty is somewhat extreme. Perhaps the word, or the entire phrase, was hard to read in a source text; it may be significant that this opening section of the Life is the part of the text that shows the worst deterioration in Pen 5, much of it having been overwritten by Robert Vaughan. Another possibility is that a related or intermediate source used the Roman numeral *xii* and that this was mistaken for *xl*.

The C 2.633 Life alone has retained none of the three instances of *goruc* as an auxiliary verb that are common to the three earliest versions of the

<sup>65</sup> Pen 14i, §6; Pen 5, 28<sup>v</sup>.7; Llst 34, 384.22. The form *b6yill6ru* in Hafod, 105.22, may be corrupt.

<sup>66</sup> Pen 14i, §4; Pen 5, 28<sup>r</sup>.46 (cf. Hafod, 105.7–8 *ymachludya6d*); Llst 34, 384.1.

<sup>67</sup> Llst 34, 383.6–7; contrast Pen 14i, §2; Pen 5, 28<sup>r</sup>.34; Hafod, 104.18; C 2.633, 354.3.

<sup>68</sup> Llst 34, 382.25–6; contrast Pen 14i, §1 (cf. Pen 5, 28<sup>r</sup>.30 (overwritten by Vaughan); Hafod, 104.12; C 2.633, 353.4–5).

<sup>69</sup> The usage of *tei* in the other versions of the Life may be compared to instances in Welsh poetry where this plural form is used 'to describe a single residence, presumably because a high-status home contained several buildings' (B. J. Lewis, ed., 'Moliant i Ddafydd Mathau o Landaf', 17.24n, at <gutorglyn.net>, consulted 11 November 2020). In the Welsh Life, however, the plural form may have been chosen primarily because the corresponding phrase *paternis laribus* in the Latin source is plural in number (Angell, 'Gwyrthyeu', 244; Mittendorf, 'Middle Welsh Mary of Egypt', 221, n. 45).

Life: one instance has been modernized by replacing it with *gwnaeth* (an equivalent form of the same verb, *gwneuthur*) and in the other two the periphrastic phrase has been replaced with a short-form conjugated verb.<sup>70</sup> C 2.633 is also alone in using the verb *[k]vro* rather than *maedu* when describing Mary of Egypt beating her breast in distress, and *meddyllo* ‘contemplating’ rather than *emovalu* ‘concerning himself’ in the passage where Zosimus is in a quandary over how to bury her body (Appendices 1 and 2). The C 2.633 Life, furthermore, has *hi a vv dda* ‘she was virtuous [or ‘comfortable’]’ rather than *ny pheryglws* ‘she was not in danger’, in referring to her overcoming carnal temptation,<sup>71</sup> and *[d]iwedd i hoydyl* rather than *tervyn e buched* in referring to her nearing the end of her life.<sup>72</sup> In the latter instance, the adapter may have felt that the two meanings of *buchedd*, namely ‘life’ in the sense of a person’s span on the earth, and ‘Life’ in its narrative, biographical sense, might cause confusion. The word *hoydyl*, however, refers unambiguously to the former. So, too, does *[b]ywyd*, which replaces *[b]uched*, probably for the same reason, in the episode concerning St Patrick in the late-medieval version of the Life of St David in Peniarth 27ii.<sup>73</sup> Another parallel with that version of the Life of David is that both texts have omitted the verb *adoli*, used in David’s Life with the saint himself as its object and in Mary’s with the Cross as its object. In each case there may have been an uneasiness that the verb could be interpreted as referring to an act of worship properly owed only to the Godhead (though it was probably intended in the sense of ‘make reverence’ in David’s Life and ‘venerate’ in Mary’s). It is important to note, however, that whilst the passage has been paraphrased successfully in David’s Life,<sup>74</sup>

<sup>70</sup> C 2.633, 354.3 *hithev a aeth*, 355.1 *dywod a wnaeth drachefyn*, 9–10 *y kerddodd hi*. Compare also the addition of *a wnaeth*, perhaps correcting an earlier scribal error, in 354.16–17 *llefain a wnaeth ar ddelw Vair*; see n. 34 above for readings in the earlier texts, and on the issue of dating. These changes, consistent with a post-1350 date, also reflect the adapter’s willingness to paraphrase.

<sup>71</sup> C 2.633, 356.3; contrast Pen 14i, §4 *ny pheryglws*; Pen 5, 28<sup>v</sup>.3 *ny pheriglws* (cf. Llst 34, 384.13); Hafod, 105.16 *ny pherigla6d hi*.

<sup>72</sup> C 2.633, 356.3–4; contrast Pen 14i, §5 (cf. Pen 5, 28<sup>v</sup>.4; Hafod, 105.16; Llst 34, 384.14).

<sup>73</sup> J. Day, ed. and trans., *Buchedd Dewi* (Pen 27ii) <welshsaints.ac.uk/theedition/> (2021), §2 *i myddyliodd ddwyn yno i vwyd hyd i ddiwedd* ‘he thought he would lead his life there until his death’; contrast D. S. Evans, *The Welsh Life of St David* (Cardiff, 1988) [WLSL], 1.15–16 *y medylawd dwyn yno y uched*.

<sup>74</sup> Day, *Buchedd Dewi* (Pen 27ii), §23 *holl saint yr ynys honn a’r brenhinedd a’r tywysogion a ostyngasant iddaw* ‘all the saints of this island and the kings and the princes bowed down before him’; contrast WLSL 11.17–18 *holl seint yr ynys honn a’r brenhinedd oll a ostyngasant ar eu glinnyeu y adoli y Dewi* ‘all the saints of this island and the kings went down on their knees to make reverence to David’. Another late version of David’s Life, written down by Thomas Wiliems in 1598 in NLW Peniarth 225, retains most of the passage but adds a reference to God as the primary object of the verb *adholi*, before David (Pen 225, 238.36–239.1 *holl Saint yr ynys honn a’r brenhinedd a ostyngasant ar eu glinieü, y adholi Düw a Dewi*). On these texts, see further Day, ‘The later Lives of St David’, Chapter 6 above.

in Mary of Egypt's it appears there was simply an omission of several words, resulting in faulty syntax.<sup>75</sup> It might, therefore, have been an accidental omission, or if deliberate, it was done carelessly. It is similarly unclear whether *yn droydnoyth* 'bare-footed' was added deliberately to the description of Mary's crossing of the Jordan, perhaps to emphasize her humility and asceticism, or whether it was an error for *yn droytsych* 'dry-footed', unobtrusively corrected by supplying that phrase at the end of the sentence.<sup>76</sup>

Whilst the later versions of the Life are not without errors of their own, it is noteworthy that they improve upon some of the problematic readings of the earlier texts. In Llst 34 the awkwardness of the phrase 'going to Jerusalem with a cross' has been removed by the simple expedient of omitting the words *a chroes*, whilst in C 2.633 the phrase is made to sound more natural by moving these words so that they follow the verb directly (*yn myned a chroes i Gaerselem*).<sup>77</sup> The earlier texts' error regarding the length of Mary's time in the desert, adding at the end of her 47-year sojourn the initial seventeen years that were intended to be included within it (thereby implying a total of 64 years), may also have inspired some changes. The C 2.633 Life explains that it was through the grace of the Communion bread (*Korff Krist*) that Mary of Egypt received before crossing the Jordan that she was able to survive for 47 years without hunger or want, thereby making clear to the reader why she only turned to her three loaves for the subsequent seventeen years.<sup>78</sup> It might also have been a realisation that there was something amiss with the placement of these seventeen years that made the adapter refer to her being troubled or tormented 'by her flesh' during 'the early years' (*[y] blynyddedd kyntaf*) rather than 'the first seventeen years' (*e dwy vlyned ar bemthec kentaf*).<sup>79</sup>

<sup>75</sup> C 2.633, 354.22 *hi a aeth i'r demyl y grog*. This might be intended to mean 'she went into the church of the Cross', but the definite article *y(r)* should not be used twice in genitive construction of this kind. Contrast Pen 14i, §3 *hi a aeth e'r demyl ac en vuyd dihewydus adoli prenn e groc* 'she went into the church and dutifully and devoutly venerated the Cross' (other manuscript readings are shown in Appendix 1).

<sup>76</sup> C 2.633, 356.14–15 *yn kerdded yn droydnoyth ar draws Vrddonnen yn droytsych*; contrast Pen 14i, §6 *kerdet en droetsych dros Eurdonen* (cf. Pen 5, 28<sup>v</sup>.8–9 (with faulty *kedet* for *kerdet*); Hafod, 105.23–4; Llst 34, 384.24–5 (with faulty *Ioddanen*)).

<sup>77</sup> C 2.633, 354.2; Llst 34, 383.4 *yn myned y Gaerüsalem*; contrast Pen 14i, §2 *en menet Gaerusalem a chroes*; Pen 5, 28<sup>r</sup>.33 *yn mynet y Gaerüssalem a chroes* (entirely in Vaughan's overwriting) (cf. Hafod, 104.17). Only Pen 14i uses the old construction whereby the name of the destination (with lenition, *Gaerusalem*) directly follows the verbal-noun denoting movement (see T. J. Morgan, *Y Treigladau a'u Cystrawen* (Caerdydd, 1952), 227–8); in all the later texts the preposition *y* or *i* 'to' has been supplied.

<sup>78</sup> C 2.633, 355.17–20 *ag yno y bv hi heb vwyd a heb na newyn nag eissie wedi i chymmvno saith mlynedd a devgain o rad korff Krist* 'And there, having received Communion, she was forty-seven years without food and without either hunger or want, through the grace of the body of Christ'; contrast Pen 14i, §4 *Ac ena e bu hep vwyt en dieissyeu, wedy e chymunav, seith mlynedd a deugeint* (cf. Pen 5, 28<sup>r</sup>.48–28<sup>v</sup>.1; Hafod, 105.10–12; Llst 34, 384.5–6).

<sup>79</sup> C 2.633, 356.1; contrast Pen 14i, §5 (cf. Pen 5, 28<sup>v</sup>.2; Hafod, 105.13–14; Llst 34, 384.9).



The awkwardness arising from the apparent mistranslation concerning the food that Zosimus brings ‘for himself’ when coming to visit Mary of Egypt in the desert, discussed above, seems to have had repercussions in both the Ll1st 34 and C 2.633 versions. The three earlier texts go on to say that Mary receives ‘the body of the Lord’ from Zosimus, and then ‘after the monk had offered it to her, she took a little of the food’ (Pen 14i *gvedy e gennic idi o’r manach, hi a gemyrth ychydic o’r bwyd*).<sup>80</sup> It is unclear whether it is the Communion bread or the ordinary food that is envisaged as being ‘offered’, but the Ll1st 34 text removes the ambiguity: *wedy i gymeryd, kynic o’r manach iddi beth o’r bwyd, a hi a gymerth ychydic o’r bwyd* ‘and after she had received it, the monk offered her some of the food, and she took a little of the food’.<sup>81</sup> A writer of the C 2.633 text took a more heavy-handed approach, omitting any mention of the ordinary food brought by Zosimus, in the earlier passage, and referring only to the Communion bread.<sup>82</sup> A desire to omit the obscure word *bwyllwr(w)* (discussed above), or uncertainty over what it meant, may have been a further motivation for this change, encouraging the removal of the food from the entire episode.

Mary’s acquisition of her original three loaves is also simplified greatly in the version of her Life in C 2.633: as she leaves the church of the Holy Sepulchre someone gives them to her directly, rather than providing her with three pennies which she uses to buy them.<sup>83</sup> Perhaps it was felt that the complication with the coins did not add anything to the story, or it may be that the adapter did not want to describe Mary taking the active step of buying the bread, preferring to portray her as trusting entirely in the guidance of the Blessed Virgin Mary or in divine providence. It may be, however, that all these food-related changes were made simply in order to make the text more straightforward and easier to understand. This motive is very apparent, indeed, in the text’s later, helpful reminder that the loaves that sustained her were those ‘she had brought with her’.<sup>84</sup>

It seems adapters of both of the two later Lives were interested in the feelings and motivation of their heroine. Indeed, even in the earlier Hafod text, as noted above, there may be an attempt to emphasize Mary of Egypt’s personal relationship with God, in the reference to her receiving the body

<sup>80</sup> Pen 14i, §6; cf. Pen 5, 28<sup>v</sup>.10; Hafod, 105.25–6.

<sup>81</sup> Ll1st 34, 384.27–9.

<sup>82</sup> C 2.633, 356.11–12 *a chorff Krist gidag ef*.

<sup>83</sup> C 2.633, 355.10–11 *ag ar ddrws y demyl y rroyd iddi tair torth o vara* ‘and at the church entrance she was given three loaves of bread’; contrast Pen 14i, §3 *Ac e rodes vn idi teir keinnyauc ac er e rei henne e prynws hitheu teir torth* ‘And someone gave her three pennies and in exchange for those she bought three loaves’ (cf. Pen 5, 28<sup>f</sup>.45–6 (partly illegible); Hafod, 105.6–7 (with *prynabd* replacing *prynws*); the wording is slightly changed in Ll1st 34, 383.30–2 (*[...] ac a’r rhai hynny y prynws [...]*), but the sense is the same).

<sup>84</sup> C 2.633, 355.22–3 *y tair torth vara a ddygasai gida hi* ‘the three loaves of bread that she had brought with her’; contrast Pen 14i, §4 *e their torth* ‘her three loaves’; cf. Pen 5, 28<sup>v</sup>.2.

of *her* Lord rather than *the* Lord. The Llst 34 text's added reference to Mary actively *deciding* to follow the pilgrims has, again, been discussed above, and this version also expands upon the description of what she endures in the desert. Rather than stating merely that 'she was troubled by her flesh' (*e cauas avlonnydwch gan e chnavt*) as in the three earlier texts, Llst 34 refers specifically to temptation, and emphasizes her suffering: *ydd oedd tentassiwn y cnawd yn i phoeni ac y kafas boenaü gan y chnawd* 'the temptation of the flesh tormented her and she suffered torments from her flesh'.<sup>85</sup>

Overcoming temptation, with the help of the Blessed Virgin Mary, is a crucial part of Mary of Egypt's story, and it is unsurprising that the C 2.633 Life also pays particular attention to this aspect. In this version it is not only 'unchastity', *aniweirdeb*, but also the more active 'fleshly lust', *chwant cnawdol*, that compel her to leave her father's home. The addition of *y byd* 'the world' in the phrase *hi a gerddodd y byd hyd Alexandria* is also interesting in terms of the saint's character, perhaps emphasizing her willingness to travel and hence her independent nature, though the similarity in form between *hyd* 'as far as' and *byd* 'world' raises the question of whether a textual error may have been involved in the genesis of this reading.<sup>86</sup> Another change in this opening section of Life is that rather than giving up her body to *puteindra* as in Pen 14i (and, probably, Pen 5), in C2.633 Mary of Egypt is said to 'give her body to everyone' (*rroddi i chorff i bawb*).<sup>87</sup> The paraphrasing in this section of the C 2.633 Life is quite extensive but might have been prompted in part by the adapter's unease that the primary sense of *puteindra*, namely 'prostitution', was contradicted by the subsequent mention that Mary received no *gwerth* 'payment'.<sup>88</sup> A little later in the story she does in fact obtain passage on the

<sup>85</sup> Llst 34, 384.9–11; contrast Pen 14i, §4 (cf. Pen 5, 28<sup>v</sup>.2–3 (lacking the end of *avlonny[dwch]*); Hafod, 105.14–15); compare also C 2.633, 356.1–2 *y kafas hi vlinder gann i chnawd*.

<sup>86</sup> C 2.633, 353.5–8 *y kymheloedd aniweirdeb a chwant knowdol iddi vnyed o ddyno, a hi a gerddodd y byd hyd Alexandria* 'unchastity and fleshly lust drove her to depart from there, and she travelled the world as far as Alexandria'; contrast Pen 14i, §1 *wedy e chymell o aniweirdeb, e kerdws hyt en Alexandria* (cf. Pen 5, 28<sup>f</sup>.30–1, partly overwritten, and with the verb-ending *-avd* replacing *-ws* (as also in Hafod, 104.13–14 (with *-a6d*), and Llst 34, 382.26–8 (with *-awdd*)). With C 2.633's *byd hyd* compare also *bed* 'as far as' (*GPC* s.v. *bed*<sup>1</sup>; the forms *behet*, *bihit*, etc. are interesting, but *GPC*, *ibid.*, notes no attestations of these after the tenth century).

<sup>87</sup> C 2.633, 353.9–10; contrast Pen 14i, §1 *yd emrodes e chorff e buteindra* (cf. Pen 5, 28<sup>f</sup>.31–2 (largely overwritten save for the last word, the beginning of which is illegible); Llst 34, 382.28–383.1); Hafod, 104.14–15 *yd ymrodes hi y buteinrbyd o'e chorff*.

<sup>88</sup> Pen 14i, §1 *hep dim gwerth idi hitheu* (cf. Hafod, 104.15–16; Llst 34, 383.1–2; in Pen 5, 28<sup>f</sup>.32, the phrase has been almost entirely overwritten by Robert Vaughan and it is likely that his *guarth* 'shame' is an error for *guerth*); contrast C 2.633, 353.11 *heb ddim gwerth gan neb* 'without any payment from anyone'. *GPC* s.v. *puteindra* notes a range of senses including 'licentiousness' and 'fornication' as well as 'prostitution'; the former are apt in the context of the Welsh Life, but the use of the verb *prostituo* in the likely Latin source

ship by ‘giving her own body’, *rodi e phriaut gorff* – or in C 2.633, rather repetitively, *hi a roddes i chorff yn gyffredin i bawb* ‘she gave her body indiscriminately to everyone’ – but there is no suggestion that this was her usual means of making a living.<sup>89</sup> The much longer account of her youthful promiscuity in the *vita*, indeed, explains that she lived by begging and spinning flax.<sup>90</sup> A further alteration in the C 2.633 Life, namely the omission of the earlier texts’ description of Mary’s disembarking from the ship, ‘still without having obtained her sufficiency from her wantonness’ (Pen 14i *etwa hep gafael e dogyn o’e godinap*), might, again, have been prompted by the adapter’s uneasiness with a particular word, in this case *godinap*.<sup>91</sup> He may have supposed it meant strictly ‘adultery’, that is, the breaking of marriage vows, and was therefore inappropriate since Mary was unmarried, though it is possible that this detail was simply viewed as unnecessary.<sup>92</sup>

Mary’s feelings of repentance, too, are emphasized in the C 2.633 version, beginning with her initial rebuttal at the door of the church. The earlier texts’ *o amneit Duw e gurthledit* ‘she was expelled by a gesture from God’ has been extended in C 2.633 to *o amnaid Dvw y gwrthnebid iddi val na allai hi vyned i’r demyl* ‘by a gesture from God she was refused so that she could not go into the church’, perhaps because this is an important turning point in the story and it was felt that the meaning had to be made absolutely clear.<sup>93</sup> Mary of Egypt’s distress as she realizes why she has been turned away is heightened in this text, her tears being specifically ‘salty’ or ‘bitter’ (*hallt*) as she repents before the image of the Virgin Mary (see Appendix 1), and this version has her state specifically that she would change her life ‘if she were to receive forgiveness’ (*pe kae vaddevaint*).<sup>94</sup> This active request for forgiveness is not in the three earliest texts (nor Llst 34). C 2.633 is also the only version in which Mary of Egypt asks the Virgin not simply to direct her to where she wishes her to go, but specifically to ‘wherever you wish me to pray to you’ (*lle y mynnych ym dy weddio*), thereby emphasizing both her own desire for redemption and the Virgin’s role as her intercessor. The personal relationship between the two is also emphasized, in both the later Lives, by stating that when Mary of Egypt first addresses the image of the Virgin she speaks not just ‘trustingly’ but ‘trusting in the Lady Mary’ (C 2.633 adding *yn gadarn* ‘firmly; see

may suggest that the latter was intended (*MSPVM* §5 *corpus suum nil mercedis accipiens insaciabiliter prostituit*).

<sup>89</sup> Pen 14i, §2 (cf. Pen 5, 28<sup>r</sup>.34 (barely legible, and with the first word overwritten); Hafod, 104.18–19; Llst 34, 383.7); C 2.633, 354.4–5.

<sup>90</sup> *VSME* §13.

<sup>91</sup> Pen 14i, §2 (cf. Pen 5, 28<sup>r</sup>.35 (partly illegible); Hafod, 104.19–20; Llst 34, 383.8–10).

<sup>92</sup> See *GPC* s.v. *godineb* ‘adultery, incontinence, fornication’; and compare *MSPVM* §8b *necdum libidine saciata*.

<sup>93</sup> C 2.633, 354.13–15; contrast Pen 14i, §2 (cf. Pen 5 28<sup>r</sup>.38–9 (only partly legible); Hafod, 104.24–5; Llst 34, 383.15–16).

<sup>94</sup> See *GPC* s.v. *hallt* (a) ‘salt, salty ...’, (b) ‘bitter, sharp ...’.

Appendix 1). C 2.633's extended closing sentence further emphasizes the Virgin's role in Mary of Egypt's story and salvation: *ag velly y terfyna ag y bv ddiwedd Mair santes o'r Aifft drwy nerth Mair Wýrny Vorwyn, Amen* 'and thus concludes and was the end of St Mary of Egypt through the power of the Virgin Mary, Amen.'<sup>95</sup> The C 2.633 text does, however, in a sense distance the Virgin from earthly affairs in emphasizing that Mary of Egypt holds her conversation with her image (*delw*) rather than with the Virgin herself. The word *delw* is used four times rather than twice, and most significantly it is the 'image of the Lady Mary' who gives advice to Mary of Egypt at the end of the episode (*Ag yna y dywod delw yr Arglwyddes Vair wrthi, 'O cherddi di ...'*) rather than 'the Lady' herself ('*O cherdy, hep er Argluydes ...*') as in Pen 14i and the other early texts (see Appendix 1). Rather than having any theological significance, however, this emphasis might reflect the writer's familiarity with one or more of the carved images of the Virgin which abounded in medieval Wales, such as the statue at Penrhys in the Rhondda Valley which was claimed to have been sent from heaven, or the reputedly 'living' images at Rhiw, Gresford and Mold.<sup>96</sup>

The role of God and Christ is also emphasized in the C 2.633 Life. As well as explaining, as noted above, that it was the grace of the Communion bread that allowed Mary of Egypt to survive her first 47 years without food in the desert, this version also states that she was able to resist the temptations of the flesh not through the aid of the Blessed Virgin alone as in other versions of the Welsh Life (Pen 14i [*c]anhorthwy e Wynvydedic Wýry*) but rather 'through the grace of God and (through?) the Virgin Mary' (*[t]rwy radev Dvw a Mair Wýrny*).<sup>97</sup> (The wording in C 2.633 is ambiguous as to whether it is the grace of the Virgin or, as in the earlier texts, the Virgin herself that provides the added assistance.) A further reference to God's *grace*, specifically, is included in the description of Zosimus's first meeting with Mary, as he encounters her through the grace of God rather than being 'led' to her by God as in the three earliest texts (and Llst 34).<sup>98</sup> Lastly, God's role in the saint's burial is strengthened by making it clear that the lion, having been sent to Zosimus by God, buried her not 'by his command' as in the three earliest texts (Pen 14i *urth e orchemen enteu*) but rather 'according to God's instruction' (*wrth gyngor Dvw*; see Appendix 2). The former reading is a little ambiguous but the pronoun probably refers to

<sup>95</sup> C 2.633, 357.12–14.

<sup>96</sup> On these, see Cartwright, *Feminine Sanctity and Spirituality*, 54–5, 65.

<sup>97</sup> C 2.633 356.2–3; contrast Pen 14i, §4 (cf. Pen 5, 28<sup>v</sup>.3 (with *ganthorthwy* for *ganhorthwy*); Hafod, 105.15; Llst 34, 384.11–12; the latter two texts refer to the Virgin as *y Wynvydedic Veir* and *Wynfydedic Vair Wýry*).

<sup>98</sup> C 2.633, 356.4–5 *y damwennodd drwy radev Dvw ddywod manach att[e]i* 'through the grace of God it came about that a monk came to her'; contrast Pen 14i, §5 *e kyuarwydhaws Duw atei menach* 'God led a monk to her' (cf. Pen 5, 28<sup>v</sup>.4 (with verb-ending *-vys*); Hafod, 105.17 (with *-a6d*); Llst 34, 384.14–15 (*y cyfarwyddodd Düw atti vanach santeiddiol*)).

Zosimus, his role being clearly stated in Dominic of Evesham's Latin version.<sup>99</sup>

The corresponding passage in the Llst 34 text has been paraphrased differently, stating that 'God sent a large lion to assist him and it broke the earth according to his command and he buried her' (Appendix 2). Here it appears Zosimus himself buries the saint once the lion has dug her grave. Perhaps this change was made because the writer wished to give Zosimus a more active role in the story, or because he considered it unseemly for an animal to bury the saint, even if it had been sent by God.<sup>100</sup> The detail of the lion being large might have been added to enhance the drama of the story, or to mark it out as a special animal. It is noteworthy, however, that the division of labour involved in the burial, with the lion opening the grave and Zosimus burying the saint's body, is the same in Paul of Naples's *vita*, and likewise in the versions of Mary of Egypt's story in the *Gilte Legende* of 1438 and William Caxton's *Golden Legend* of 1483 (both deriving indirectly from Jacobus de Voragine's thirteenth-century *Legenda Aurea*), and in Caxton's *Vitas Patrum* of 1491.<sup>101</sup> Furthermore, Llst 34's 'large lion' (*[l]lew mawr*) may be compared to the *vita*'s 'lion of enormous size' (*ingentis forme leonem*) or the *merueyllouse grete Lyon* of the *Vitas Patrum*.<sup>102</sup> It is also worth noting that the Llst 34 Life's specific mention of Mary's 'temptation of the flesh' (*tentassiwn y cnawd*) and 'torments from her flesh' (*[p]oenau gan y chnawd*) are reminiscent of her *gret turmentinge with temptacions of the flessch* in the *Gilte Legende*, and her account, in the *Vitas Patrum*, of *flesshely thoughtes and deuyllyssh songes ... By the whyche I was gretely tormented and flesshely temptacyons*, though the similarities are not distinctive enough to prove borrowing.<sup>103</sup>

Some of the C 2.633 Life's paraphrased readings, too, may be compared with Latin or English versions of Mary of Egypt's Life. Its mention of tears

<sup>99</sup> *MSPVM*, §39c *qui ad preceptum Zosime humum effodiens corporis illius capacem effecit*.

<sup>100</sup> Compare the alterations made by Roger Morris to his Life of David in Llst 34, which substitute an angel for the beast which carries the messenger Scuthyn over the Irish Sea and even moderate the role of David's famous dove, having it 'descending upon him' rather than 'teaching him' (Llst 34, 270.18 *yn dysgu*<sup>disgin ar</sup> *Ddewi*, 276.30 *anghenfil*<sup>angel o'r mor</sup>; see the discussion in Day, 'Later Lives of David', Chapter 6 above, 140).

<sup>101</sup> *VSME* §§26–7; S. Lavery, ed., 'Gilte Legende Version of the Legend of Mary of Egypt', in *Legend of Mary of Egypt*, ed. Poppe and Ross, 149–60, lines 142–7; *Legenda aurea sanctorum, sive, lombardica historia*, printed by William Caxton (London, 1483), retrieved from <search.proquest.com/docview/2240950786?accountid=12799>, p. cliii; *Vitas patrum*, printed by Wynkyn de Worde (London, 1495), retrieved from <search.proquest.com/docview/2264204025?accountid=12799>, f. lxxi<sup>b</sup>. On these English texts and their origins, see S. Lavery, 'The story of Mary the Egyptian in Medieval England', in *Legend of Mary of Egypt*, ed. Poppe and Ross, 113–48, at 117–20.

<sup>102</sup> *VSME* §26 (line 862); *Vitas patrum*, fol. lxxi<sup>b</sup>; compare also the *immanem leonem* 'enormous lion' in R. M. Thomson and M. Winterbottom, *William of Malmesbury: The Miracles of the Blessed Virgin Mary* (Woodbridge, 2015), 112 (§17).

<sup>103</sup> Lavery, ed., 'Gilte Legende', lines 88–9; *Vitas patrum*, fol. lxxi<sup>b</sup>.

that are salty or bitter (*hallt*) is reminiscent of the *Gilte Legende* and the *Vitas Patrum*, and indeed of the earlier *Legenda Aurea* version.<sup>104</sup> Interestingly, too, both the *Legenda Aurea* and the *Gilte Legende* attribute Mary of Egypt's success in overcoming carnal temptation solely to the grace of God, and William of Malmesbury's account of Mary of Egypt's story in his *Miracles of the Blessed Virgin Mary* likewise gives prominence to God's grace (*Dei gratia*) in describing her first seventeen years in the desert, whilst noting the Blessed Virgin Mary's role as her guarantor.<sup>105</sup> In most versions of the Welsh Life, by contrast, it is the Virgin alone who is said to lend her aid to Mary of Egypt, but in the C 2.633 text, as noted above, temptation is overcome 'through the grace of God and (through?) the Virgin Mary'. Again, both the *Legenda Aurea* version and the *Gilte Legende* omit all mention of the ordinary food brought by Zosimus, as does the C 2.633 Life; this, however, may reflect no more than a shared tendency to leave out the less crucial aspects of the story when summarizing. This food is also omitted from Caxton's *Golden Legend* and from the account of Mary's life in William of Malmesbury's miracle-collection, but retained in the much longer *Vitas Patrum*.

That versions of the Welsh Life of Mary of Egypt should have been influenced during their later development by Latin or English texts is likely enough. Jane Cartwright has, similarly, noted parallels between C 2.633's Life of Mary Magdalene and the *Gilte Legende*, and between its Life of Martha and the *Legenda Aurea*.<sup>106</sup> Moreover, comparison and collation of saints' Lives in more than one language may be seen as part of wider trends. There was a flourishing of textual criticism in sixteenth-century Wales, most prominently demonstrated by the production and revision of Welsh versions of the Scriptures by William Salesbury, William Morgan and others.<sup>107</sup> The Renaissance humanist ideals that took hold from around the second quarter of the century inspired Protestant and Catholic scholars alike, and indeed, even in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century there had been a flourishing literary and learned culture in Wales. There was also an enduring scholarly interest in saints' Lives, as demonstrated by the careful translation into Welsh, by 1488–9, of the Latin Life of St Martin of

<sup>104</sup> Lavery, ed., 'Gilte Legende', lines 66–7 *to shede bittir teeris; Vitas patrum*, f. lxxviii<sup>b</sup> *to wayle and wepe bytterly*; Th. Graesse, ed., *Jacobi a Voragine Legenda Aurea Vulgo Historia Lombardica Dicta*, 2nd edn (Leipzig, 1850), 248 *lacrymas amarissimas fundere*.

<sup>105</sup> Graesse, ed., *Legenda Aurea*, 249 *per Dei gratiam omnes vici*; Lavery, ed., 'Gilte Legende', lines 89–90 *bi þe g[ra]ce and goodnesse of god*; Thomson and Winterbottom, *William of Malmesbury: Miracles*, 110 (§12).

<sup>106</sup> Cartwright, *Mary Magdalene*, 62–3 (nn. 136, 137).

<sup>107</sup> See R. G. Gruffydd, 'The Renaissance in Welsh literature', in *The Celts and the Renaissance: Tradition and Innovation*, ed. G. Williams and R. O. Jones (Cardiff, 1990), 17–39; compare also G. H. Jones, 'John Davies and Welsh translations of the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer', in *Dr John Davies of Mallwyd: Welsh Renaissance Scholar*, ed. C. Davies (Cardiff, 2004), 208–25.

Tours by Siôn Trefor of Pentrecynfrig (near Chirk), and likewise by Huw Pennant's production, by the early sixteenth century, of a Welsh version of the Life of St Ursula and the 11,000 Virgins, as well as a Life of Sylvester and a version of the Miracles of the Archangel Michael (the latter apparently deriving from the *Legenda Aurea*).<sup>108</sup> Interestingly, Jane Cartwright has demonstrated that Pennant drew on several sources when writing his Life of Ursula: perhaps primarily the *Nova Legenda Anglie* (printed by Wynkyn de Worde in 1516) or its source, but also drawing upon the Welsh texts 'Bonedd y Saint' and 'Y Pedwar Brenin ar Hugain a Farnwyd yn Gadarnaf', and Cartwright notes that he may also have been familiar with the Middle English *Lyf of Saynt Vrsula* (printed, again by Wynkyn de Worde, probably in 1509).<sup>109</sup> This hints at the range of materials that were in circulation by the time John Jones's lost source of 1531 was being written. It is noteworthy, too, that Huw Pennant seems to have had connections with the literary and learned circles of north-east Wales, as did Siôn Trefor before him, and that both John Jones and Roger Morris were later contributors to the continuing scholarly culture of that region.<sup>110</sup>

The case for these later Welsh Lives of Mary of Egypt having being influenced by English or Latin versions is therefore plausible, but the extent of any such influence remains uncertain since some or all of the observed similarities, whether they be omissions, additions or paraphrases, might have resulted from the independent creative efforts of different adapters with similar motives. One interesting instance where it seems the minds of writers from Wales and elsewhere were working in similar ways, but with different results, is in the description of the desert or wilderness in which Mary of Egypt gains her redemption. As discussed above, the earlier Welsh texts have her crossing the Jordan 'into a desert' (*e diffeith*) or 'into desert land and wilderness' (*y diffeith6ch ac y ynyal6ch*) but in the C 2.633 Life she goes *i ganol mynydd anial* 'into the middle of desolate mountain land'.<sup>111</sup> Perhaps the adapter was familiar with the Life of St Antony of Egypt, attributed to Athanasius, which describes that saint retreating twice into the desert, first to the 'Outer Mountain' at Pispir and then to the 'Inner Mountain' near the Red Sea; if so, there may have been a deliberate decision to provide Mary of Egypt with a similar location for

<sup>108</sup> See the Introduction to *Buchedd Martin*, ed. J. Day, at <welshsaints.ac.uk/theedition/> (2020); J. Cartwright, *Hystoria Gweryddon yr Almaen: the Middle Welsh Life of St Ursula and the 11,000 Virgins* (Cambridge, 2020), 31–4.

<sup>109</sup> Cartwright, *Hystoria Gweryddon yr Almaen*, 39–40, 45.

<sup>110</sup> On Pennant, see *ibid.*, 37–8, and on Trefor see M. E. Owen, 'Prolegomena i astudiaeth lawn o Lsgr. NLW 3026, Mostyn 88 a'i harwyddocâd', in *Cyfoeth y Testun*, ed. Daniel *et al.*, 349–84, at 351–2, and A. Parry Owen's note on Edward ap Dafydd and his family at <gutorglyn.net>.

<sup>111</sup> Pen 14i, §4 (cf. Pen 5, 28<sup>r</sup>.47–8 (partly illegible); Llst 34, 384.4–5); Hafod, 105.10; C 2.633, 355.16–17.

her own retreat, thereby subtly associating her with the Desert Father.<sup>112</sup> It is also possible that the adapter wished to make the setting more familiar to his audience and had in mind the uninhabited upland terrain of his local area – perhaps north-east Wales, if John Jones’s source did not travel too far before reaching him. Jane Cartwright has drawn attention to the reference in C 2.633’s Life of Mary Magdalene to that saint retiring to remote woodland (rather than a wilderness without trees or streams as in the *Legenda Aurea*, or ‘the most uninhabited wilderness’, [*y*]r *diffeithaf didref*, as in Llst 27) and being fed by angels ‘on that mountain’ (*yn y mynnydd hwnnw*), and suggests that ‘to a Welsh audience remote woodland and mountains seemed a more natural setting for a repentant ascetic’s abode than the desert’, noting that influence from the wider Welsh literary tradition may also have played a part.<sup>113</sup> Similar changes, moreover, may be seen in versions of the Life of Mary of Egypt from outside Wales. In William of Malmesbury’s Latin version Mary’s desert has been changed to woodland, and likewise in the Old Norse *Mariu saga egipzku II*, whilst an anonymous Anglo-Norman *Vie* refers to both desert and deep forest.<sup>114</sup> All these writers may have wished to make the story more relevant to their audiences’ lived experience, whilst also drawing upon popular and literary traditions that associate woodland or mountain land with saints, outcasts, adventure or otherworld encounters.<sup>115</sup> It appears, then, that adapters of saints’ Lives might change not only the events but also the setting of their stories in order to make them more edifying, appealing and relevant to their audiences.

### Conclusions

In the later Welsh versions of Mary of Egypt’s Life recorded by John Jones and Roger Morris, and to a lesser degree in the version in Hafod 16 (C 3.242), may be seen the earnest efforts of adapters to make the texts more accessible and edifying. In Jones’s text the adaptations were very likely present in his source, a lost manuscript of 1531, and might have been of even earlier origin. It seems at least some (perhaps all) of the paraphrases in Morris’s text derived from another lost source, which was apparently closely related to the version in Pen 5 (the White Book of Rhydderch) and

<sup>112</sup> I thank Professor Jane Cartwright for this suggestion (pers. comm., 9 December 2020).

<sup>113</sup> Cartwright, *Mary Magdalene*, 59–60, 96, 108.

<sup>114</sup> Thomson and Winterbottom, *William of Malmesbury: Miracles*, 110 (§9); A. Orchard, ‘Hot lust in a cold climate: comparison and contrast in the Old Norse versions of the Life of Mary of Egypt’, in *Legend of Mary of Egypt*, ed. Poppe and Ross, 175–204, at 197; J. Weiss, ‘The metaphor of madness in the Anglo-Norman Lives of St Mary the Egyptian’, in *ibid.*, 161–73, at 168.

<sup>115</sup> Cartwright, *Mary Magdalene*, 60; Weiss, ‘The metaphor of madness’, 168; Orchard, ‘Hot lust in a cold climate’, 197; see also Thomson, *Owein*, xc, and *ibid.*, ll. 234–5 *eithafoed byt a diffeith vynyded* (cf. l. 575).



may have been derived from it. Two subsequent alterations made to paraphrased readings in Morris's text, bringing them into agreement with the three earliest texts, suggest he was making comparison with a second source, perhaps Pen 5 itself.

Morris's and Jones's texts in Llst 34 and C 2.633 share some similarities, and might each have derived ultimately from a common source related to Pen 5, with the C 2.633 Life perhaps being influenced by the Hafod text (C 3.242) during its subsequent development. If so, then it seems the development of *both* these early modern texts involved a degree of cross-fertilization between different versions of the Welsh Life. It is possible too that one or other, or both, of the C 2.633 and Llst 34 texts were influenced by Latin or English versions of the Life. Though the evidence for this is not conclusive, it is likely enough that various versions of Mary of Egypt's Life were circulating in the late medieval and early modern period and were known to writers and adapters of the Welsh Life.

Whilst a few changes in the later versions of the Welsh Life of Mary of Egypt are the result of errors, or attempts to correct earlier errors, most appear to reflect an active creative process. There seems to have been a desire to make the story more straightforward and easier to understand, in terms of both vocabulary and narrative structure. Jane Cartwright has drawn attention to similar instances of simplification and modernization, and of substitution of words by more familiar ones, in the version of the Life of Mary Magdalene in Llst 34, and discusses instances of attempting to better explain the events or significance of the story both in that text and in the version of the Life of Martha in Llst 34, as well as in the Lives of Martha and Mary Magdalene in C 2.633.<sup>116</sup> Similar motives seem to have been at work in the version of St David's Life recorded by Roger Morris in Llst 34, and in those recorded by his contemporary Thomas Wiliems in NLW Peniarth 225 and by an anonymous fifteenth-century scribe in Peniarth 27ii. It is interesting, too, that in later Lives of both David and Mary of Egypt we find instances where it seems adapters have used phrases or techniques from the wider prose tradition to enliven or adorn their narrative.<sup>117</sup>

The Lives of Mary of Egypt in both Llst 34 and especially C 2.633 pay particular attention to the character and motivation of their heroine. In C 2.633 she is driven in her youth by lust rather than the more passive-sounding 'unchastity', and 'travels the world' before reaching Alexandria;

<sup>116</sup> Cartwright, *Mary Magdalene*, 52–7, 61–4.

<sup>117</sup> With the phrase *y diffeithŏch ac y ynyalŏch*, discussed above, compare the discussion of *[t]ori yn ddav gelwrn* in Day, 'Later Lives of St David', 127–8 above; compare also Cartwright, *Mary Magdalene*, 42–3, on Hywel Fychan's addition of adjectives and adverbs to the Life of Mary Magdalene in Llst 27. For other possible instances of influence from the wider prose tradition, see the discussion of mountain and woodland settings at the end of the previous section, above.

again, Llst 34's reference to her actively deciding to go with the pilgrims to Jerusalem implies she was a person in command of her own destiny, and this version also emphasizes the carnal temptation she endured in the desert and the torment it caused. Similarly, Jane Cartwright has noted that the version of Mary Magdalene's Life in Llst 34 emphasized that saint's sexual sins, referring to her devoting herself 'to sins and especially to wantonness' (*i bechodai ac yn fwya i odineb*) rather than 'to the seven deadly sins' (*i'r saith pechod marwol*) as in the earlier version in Peniarth 27ii.<sup>118</sup>

The Blessed Virgin Mary is given increased prominence in Mary of Egypt's story in Llst 34 and especially in C 2.633, the latter text also giving increased prominence to God (as, possibly, does the Hafod text).<sup>119</sup> The C 2.633 Life also makes Mary of Egypt's role in her own salvation more active and her asceticism more extreme: in this version she makes receiving forgiveness an explicit condition of her repentance, offers the Virgin her future prayers when seeking her guidance, receives the three loaves only incidentally rather than buying them with coins, and takes only Communion bread from Zosimus when he visits her (no other food being offered in this version). Nonetheless, it is only 'through the grace of God and (through?) the Virgin Mary' (as opposed to through the Virgin's aid, in the three earliest texts and Llst 34) that she is able to overcome carnal temptation, and furthermore this version adds the explanation that it was through the grace of the Communion bread, *Korff Krist*, that she was able to survive without food in the desert for 47 years (before finally broaching her loaves). The C 2.633 Life, then, emphasizes both Mary of Egypt's particular determination to gain redemption, and the divine grace which allows her to do so.

The attention paid to the inner life of Mary of Egypt in the later versions of her Welsh Life may have served not only to better explain the workings of her penitence and redemption, but also to make her a more sympathetic, engaging character, thereby making the story itself more appealing and accessible and further increasing its impact in an instructive, spiritual sense. In the textual history of St David's Life, too, may be seen an increased emphasis on character and emotion, not only in later versions of the Welsh Life as compared with the earliest representatives of the original translation, but also in those earliest Welsh texts as compared with Rhygyfarch's Latin Life. Mary of Egypt, of course, lacked David's special status as patron saint of Wales, but the interest shown in her Life by more

<sup>118</sup> *Mary Magdalene*, 57, 91.

<sup>119</sup> See the discussion above of the reading in Hafod which might suggest that Mary of Egypt made the sign of the cross not over the river Jordan but over herself, perhaps implying that her role in the ensuing miracle was lessened in this version, and compare Jane Cartwright's discussion (*Mary Magdalene*, 55) of added references to God in the Life of Mary Magdalene in Llst 34, perhaps intended 'to slightly temper Mary Magdalene's independent powers'.

than one adapter suggests she remained an important, inspirational figure, whose story demonstrated that even the greatest sinner might hope to earn redemption and be received among the saints.<sup>120</sup>

*Appendix 1. Mary of Egypt's encounter with the Blessed Virgin Mary.*

Pen 14i, §3 <sup>121</sup>	Llst 34, 383.17–28 (Roger Morris)	C 2.633, 354.16–355.9 (John Jones)
hi a dechre[w]s <sup>122</sup> llevein ar delw Veir <sup>123</sup> a oed yn drws e demyl, ac edrech arnei a maedu e dwyvronn gan dagreuoed	llefain ar ddelw Vair a oedd yn drws y Demyll ac edrych arni a maeddü y dwyfronn gan illwng i dagreoedd	llefain a wnayth ar ddelw Vair a oydd yn drws y demyl ag edrych arni a chvro i dwyvron ag wylo dagrevoydd hallt
ac adav en gadarn na halogei e chorff byth <sup>124</sup> o henne allan.	ac addaw yn gadarn na halogai i chorff o hynny allan.	a doyd yd pe kae vaddevaint nad a logai [sic] i chorff mwy byth o hynny allan.
Ac odena hi a aeth e'r demyll <sup>125</sup> ac en vuyd dihewydus adoli prenn e groc.	Ac oddyna hi aeth i'r Demyll ac vfydd addoli prenn y Groc	Ag oddyna hi a aeth i'r demyll y grog
A dyuot drachevyn a oruc ar delw e Wynfydedic Veir a dywedut urthi gan emdiryret,	a dyfod drachefen a orüc at ddelw y Wynfydedic Vair a dywedüd wrth [sic] gan ymddired yr Arglwyddes Vair a dywedüd	a dywod a wnaeth drachefyn at ddelw y Wynfydedig Vair a doydyd wrthi gann ymddiriaid yn gadarn i'r Arglwyddes Vair, ag yna y dywod hi wrth ddelw Vair

<sup>120</sup> This chapter is based in part on my paper given at the International Medieval Congress, University of Leeds, 1–4 July 2019, and includes research originally undertaken as part of the *Cult of Saints in Wales* project (2013–17), funded by a research grant from the Arts and Humanities Research Council and carried out at the University of Wales Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies in Aberystwyth. I thank the conference delegates and colleagues on the Welsh and Latin saints projects for valuable comments and discussions and I particularly thank Professor Ann Parry Owen for corrections and comments on the online edition of the Life of Mary of Egypt and Professors Jane Cartwright and Paul Russell for corrections and comments on this chapter.

<sup>121</sup> With variants from Pen 5, 28<sup>r</sup>.39–44 (where legible), and Hafod, 104.25–105.5.

<sup>122</sup> *hi a dechre[w]s* omitted from Pen 5 and Hafod.

<sup>123</sup> Hafod adds *a oruc*.

<sup>124</sup> *byth* omitted from Hafod (?and Pen 5).

<sup>125</sup> *Ac ... deml* omitted from Hafod.

Pen 14i	Llst 34	C 2.633
'Arglwydes,' hep hi, <sup>126</sup> 'kyvarwydhaa <sup>127</sup> vi en e lle e mynnych.'	'Cyfarwydda fi i'r lle mynnych.'	'Kyfarwydda vi i'r <sup>128</sup> lle y mynnych ym dy weddio.'
'O cherdy <sup>129</sup> ,' hep er Arglwydes, 'e tu draw y Eurdonen, ti a geffŷ orfwys da.'	'O cherddy di,' heb yr Arglwyddes Vair, 'i'r tŷ draw i Iorddanen ti a gephi orphowys da.'	Ag yna y dywod delw yr Arglwyddes Vair wrthi, 'O cherddi di o'r tv draw i Vrddonnen ti a geffŷ orffwysfa dda.'

*Appendix 2. Mary of Egypt's last message and burial.*

Pen 14i, §7 <sup>130</sup>	Llst 34, 385.8–16 (Roger Morris)	C 2.633, 357.4–12 (John Jones)
Ac en yscrivenedic en e daear ger llaw e corff, 'E Tat Zosimas, clad corfyn e druan Veir. [Hafod <i>gorfy druanaf</i> <i>Ueir</i> '] <sup>131</sup>	A hynn oedd yn yscrifenedic yn y ddayar gar llaw y corph. 'Y Tad Zozimws, cladd gorphyn y druan Vair.	Ag yno y ddoydd yn emyl y korff a[r] y llawr yn ysgrivenedig val hynn, 'Sosinias, kladd di gorff y druanaf Vair.'
A phan weles <sup>132</sup> henne llawen vu, cany wydyat e henw kynno henne.	A phan welas ef hynny llawen a fŷ can ni wyddiad i henw cyn no hynny.	ag yno da vv gantho gael i henw.
A phan ytoed en emovalu pa furw e cladei, yd anvones Duw llew idav a hwnnw a'e cladws <sup>133</sup> urth e orchemen enteu.	A phan ydoedd yn ymofalŷ pa phŷryf y claddai, y danfones Dŷw lew mawr yddy helpŷ a hwnnw a dorres y ddayar wrth y orchymyn ac ynteŷ a'i claddwys.	Ag val yddoydd ef velly yn meddylio pa ddelw y kladdai y hi, ag ar hynny y doyth llew atto a anvones Dvw, a'i chladdv hi wrth gyngor Dvw a wnayth.

<sup>126</sup> *hep hi* omitted from Hafod (?and Pen 5).

<sup>127</sup> Hafod adds *di*.

<sup>128</sup> MS *r ir*, perhaps with deletion of the first *r*.

<sup>129</sup> Hafod adds *di*.

<sup>130</sup> With variants from Pen 5, 28<sup>v</sup>.14–17 and Hafod, 106.5–9.

<sup>131</sup> Pen 5 '*E Tat Zosimas, clad gorffyn y druan Veir.*' *A hynny yn yscrivenedic yn y daear ger llaw y corff*; Hafod '*Y Tat Zosimas, clad gorfy druanaf Ueir.*' *A hynny a oed yn ysgrivenedic yn y daear geyr llaŷ y corf*.

<sup>132</sup> Pen 5 and Hafod add *ef*.

<sup>133</sup> Pen 5 *cladvys*; Hafod *cladaŷd*.