Symeon's *Libellus* and the identity of the *Haliwerfolc*

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Abstract

This paper will examine the role played by Symeon of Durham in helping to create, in his *Libellus de exordio*, a number of the conditions, ideological and locational, of considerable significance in the formation of the later identity of the *Haliwerfolc*, the people of St Cuthbert. Anthony Smith defines an ethnic community as 'a named human population occupying a historic territory and sharing common myths and memories, a public culture, and common customs and laws for all members' (Smith, 2003). Ethnic identities often form under times of stress (Eriksen, 2010) and the recently reformed Community of St Cuthbert found itself under attack from the rapacious Ranulf Flambard (Bishop of Durham 1099-1128). Bede's portrait of Cuthbert as the ideal monk and his expressed belief in strong monastic communities created a template Symeon used to fill the Community's political needs. Symeon updated Bede's historical writings with recent examples of Cuthbert's miracles derived from oral histories and information from the few extant written tracts (Rollason, 2000) to demonstrate the continuity of the current Community with the past. This paper will cite the *Libellus* as an example of establishing an "ideological descent" (Smith, 1999) for the *Haliwerfolc* based around St Cuthbert's role as the defender of the Church. Other facets of the *Libellus*, such as the establishment of a territorial link to St Cuthbert by naming the sites of miracles and documenting the unique laws of the Community, will be shown to be factors in identifying the *Haliwerfolc* as a distinct ethnic group. History writing is usually a product of the author's environment (Eriksen, 2010) and demonstrating the impact of the *Libellus* in the development of the *Haliwerfolc*'s identity will lead to a greater understanding of the role historical literature played in ethnic identification during the twelfth century.

Keywords: landscape, Cuthbert, Symeon, Haliwerfolc

One of the dominant political and ecclesiastical forces in northern England during the eleventh and twelfth centuries was the Community of St Cuthbert housed at Durham. As part of King William I's (1066-1087) efforts to solidify Norman rule in the turbulent region, significant reforms were introduced in 1083 designed to reduce the Community's political clout while updating its monastic practices to bring the Community in line with current

Benedictine doctrine. Yet, these changes came under threat a mere twenty years later, when King William II (1087-1100) appointed one of his chief political advisors, Ranulf Flambard (1099-1128), as Bishop of Durham. The Community responded to this challenge by creating literature explaining that the reforms were not a radical change at all, but necessary to return the Community to its role as heir to the ancient Northumbrian tradition of monasticism as defined by Bede's portrayal of St Cuthbert. This paper will highlight how one of the histories written in the twelfth-century, Symeon of Durham's *Libellus de exordio*, enables 'the people of the saint' to fit Anthony Smith's definition of an ethnic identity. By creating an identity for the Community of St Cuthbert, Symeon helped to lay the foundations for what eventually became the identity of the *Haliwerfolc*.

The term '*haliwerfolc*' is a compound word derived from the Old English words for 'holy', 'man', and 'folk' according to the Bosworth-Toller Anglo-Saxon Dictionary (1954). Symeon, who compiled the *Libellus* between 1104 and 1115 according to Rollason's translation, appeared to be focused on identifying who the men of St Cuthbert were (*Libellus* 2000, pp. xlii-xliv). Rollason suggests that the Latin word '*populus*' translates into the vernacular as '*haliwerfolc*' (*Libellus* 2000, p. 114, n 6) but although '*populus*' appears fifteen times throughout the *Libellus*, on only three occasions is '*populus*' modified by '*sancti*'. Symeon uses the combination of '*populus*' and '*sancti*', a more direct reference to the 'people of the saint', to demonstrate a sense of collective action. The rest of the usages of '*populus*' are in the context of the saint interacting with his followers.

Lapsley (1900, p. 24-25) suggests that over time, *haliwerfolc* came to refer to both the people and the region, as did the terms 'Norfolk' and 'Suffolk'. Holford (2010, pp. 39-40) cites the incident in the *Libellus* where William I sent Ranulf the tax collector into areas traditionally exempt from royal levies, because they were inhabited by 'the people of the saint', thus tying the people with the territory. The process of identifying the people with defined territories was underway in Symeon's time; Liddy (2008, pp. 188-192) identified charters issued by Bishop Flambard in the early twelfth-century that granted land to one of his retinue, referring to 'all his barons and faithful men of Haliwerfolc,' as well as the 'barons of Yorkshire, and the chapter of St Cuthbert, and all the barons of […] Northumbria' while the resolution of a dispute about fishing rights in the river Tyne caused Henry I's justices to seek information from the '*antiquiores totius Haliswerisfolk et Northumbria*' when determining where the boundary between the two regions fell. Later in the twelfth-century, Bishop Geoffrey Rufus (1133-1141), informed 'men of the Haliwerfolc and Yorkshire' when he was granting land to the priory of Durham (Liddy 2008, p. 193). Clearly, the lands and

people associated with St Cuthbert were distinctive enough during the twelfth-century to have their own name.

The works of Anthony Smith on ethnicity and nationalism help illuminate the process of identity formation in the medieval era. Rather than using the term 'nation', with its modern legal and political connotations, Smith (2005, p.34) uses the term '*ethnie*' to describe 'pre-modern collective cultural identities' defining an *ethnie* as a

> named human community, with myths of common descent, shared memories and one or more elements of common culture such as language, religion and customs, and a sense of solidarity, at least among the elites. (2005, pp. 38-39)

Smith further refines his definition by emphasising cultural elements as critical to an *ethnie*'s formation. These cultural traits are often found in a

> distinctive ethnic myth which, like all myth, brings together in a single potent vision elements of historical fact and legendary elaboration to create an overriding commitment and bond for the community. (1999, p. 57)

The *Libellus* was written during the era of dramatic change in the aftermath of the Norman Conquest. In addition to political change, the Conquest brought religious change as Norman practices differed from those of England. As a major secular power in northern England, any religious reforms introduced into the Community of St Cuthbert were bound to have a political impact as well, and hopefully would increase Norman control over the turbulent region (Aird 1998a, p. 90). William I appointed the Lotharingian cleric Walcher (1071-1080) as Bishop of Durham, and the new bishop offered his encouragement to a Benedictine cell at Bede's abandoned monastery at Jarrow established in 1073 (*Libellus* 2000, p. 203). Walcher's politically motivated murder at Gateshead in 1080 by disaffected members of the Northumbrian nobility, led to William I appointing William St. Calais (1080-1096) as bishop. St Calais used Bede's vision in the *Historia Ecclesiastica* of a monastic Church, and of Cuthbert as the perfect monk who was above reproach, for the model the reformed Community would follow. In 1083, St Calais initiated his changes by moving the re-established Benedictine cell from Bede's former monastery at Jarrow to Durham to form the heart of the monastic convent. St Calais, who was a monk as well as the bishop, became the abbot of the Community thus bringing the two major ecclesiastical bodies within the bishopric under his personal control (Aird 1998a, pp. 143-144). St Calais reassigned some of the Community's lands and revenue to the bishopric, therefore reducing its ability to act independently of the bishop (Aird 1998a, p. 90). As the abbot of the priory, St Calais ordered

the married members of the Community to renounce their wives and become celibate or face expulsion, bringing the Community into line with current Benedictine practices. Aird (1998a, p. 126) believes St Calais also removed women from the Community to disrupt the transmission of hereditary lands through the female line, thus clearing the way for title to be transferred to the bishopric. St Calais needed to minimise the traditionally strong political influence of the Community, but his desire to legitimise the reformation of the Community by using history ensured that the cultural focus of the *Haliwerfolc* remain firmly centred on St Cuthbert.

The reformed Community feared more change when Ranulf Flambard, one of William II's' chief political and financial advisors, assumed the episcopal throne at Durham in 1099. Flambard had a reputation for financial irregularities and building his family's wealth at the expense of the Church—William of Malmesbury suggests Flambard bought the bishopric from William II for £1,000 (Aird 1998a, p. 169, n. 6). The inherent tension between a powerful bishop and the monastic Community had been masked while St Calais held the offices of bishop and abbot. Flambard, who was not a monk, perhaps would be tempted to use his political standing to improve his position at the expense of the Community. The desire to document the historic pedigree and rights of the Community as a way of defending the reforms introduced by St Calais may have been a motivating factor in the creation of the *Libellus* under Symeon's guidance (Aird 1998b, p. 32-45). As the cantor (the man responsible for the care of the books in Durham's library) Symeon was the logical candidate to perform this task because he had ready access to source material (*Libellus* 2000, pp. xlii-xlviii). In addition, Symeon's consultation by ecclesiastical authorities during disputes involving Durham, York, and Carlisle suggests he was considered somewhat of an expert on local history (Sharpe 1998, pp. 218-219).

When compiling the *Libellus*, Symeon followed Bede's pattern for writing history by using factual, verifiable events to convey a specific message (Southern 1973, pp. 243-263). Symeon based his work on Bede's authoritative *Historia Ecclesiastica*, while drawing heavily on the late eleventh-century *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*, administrative documents, and oral traditions to tell the story of the Community from its founding up to the death of St Calais in 1096 (*Libellus* 2000, pp. lxvii-lxxvi). But, as did Bede in the *Historia*, Symeon added or exaggerated details in order to reinforce his themes—including emphasising the power of St Cuthbert to defend his people as the tale of the Community fleeing Durham for Lindisfarne in 1070 demonstrates, when the sea surrounding the island parted, allowing the beleaguered procession carrying Cuthbert's body to cross safely (*Libellus* 2000, p. 187). The

prominent role given Bede in the opening chapters of the *Libellus* provided Symeon's work with an air of great authority when debating rights and privileges with Flambard while allowing claims gathered from less recognized source materials to be woven into the history of the Community. The title used by Rollason in his translation, *Libellus de exordio atque procursu istius, hoc est Dunhelmensis ecclesie* (Tract on the Origins and Progress of this, the Church in Durham) suggests that Symeon was not attempting to write a broad history of the region but a narrowly focused treatise telling of the historical development of the Community of St Cuthbert (Rozier 2014, p. 233). Prior to the Conquest, the Community of St Cuthbert exercised immense secular power in the bishopric as a legacy of ancient Northumbrian greatness (Kapelle 1979, p. 31). The political struggle between bishop and convent provided an opportunity for the head of the convent, Prior Turgot (1087-1107), to remind the Community of its distinguished place in the region which, because St Calais had framed his changes in the context of the past, thus reinforcing the reforms within the fabric of the Community.

The *Libellus* is an example of what Smith identifies as an 'ethnohistory', where the aim is 'to explain the nature and goals of the community to its members' (2003, pp. 169-170). In the introduction to the *Libellus*, Symeon reports he was told 'by my elders to describe the origins of this the church of Durham' and to 'set out in order those things which I have been able to find scattered throughout the documents' to create his work (*Libellus* 2000, p. 3). Educating the monks at Durham about their illustrious past was part of Prior Turgot's efforts to develop a collective identity as a component of the Community's defence against the perceived threat from Bishop Flambard (Piper 1989, p. 438). Certainly the stress of the Conquest, the reforms St Calais introduced, and the conflict with Flambard introduced significant change within a relatively short period of time for the *Haliwerfolc*. Eriksen notes that 'identity becomes most important the moment it seems threatened. Several factors may constitute such a perceived threat, but they are always related to some kind of change' (2010, p. 81). Such turmoil presented an opportunity for the identification of an 'other', providing an oppositional image and helping the group further refine its identity as something they are not (Davies 2004, p.572). For the *Haliwerfolc*, the 'other' were those who tried to weaken the influence of the saint in his lands.

The *Libellus* can be seen as part of the European-wide trend of converting oral memories into written words during the twelfth-century as the primary way of proving claim and title (Clanchy 2013, p. 3). Symeon's source materials, in addition to Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*, included the 'little works' at his disposal plus 'a number of facts which have

not been written down because of a lack of writers to record them' and 'the truthful accounts of our elders […] or which we have witnessed ourselves' (*Libellus* 2000, p. 21). Having how the Community acquired properties it possessed written down in a single document describing its historical development would help defend against any conflict with Flambard over lands he might try to claim for the bishopric.

The ostensible purpose of the *Libellus* is to record the development of the Community from its founding in 635 until the death of St Calais in 1096 as a way of justifying the reforms St Calais introduced (*Libellus* 2000, p. lxxxi). Symeon explicitly linked the reformed Community with its glorious Northumbrian past in the opening statement:

> This venerable church derived its status and its divine religion from the fervent faith in Christ of the former glorious king of the Northumbrians and estimable martyr Oswald. (*Libellus* 2000, p. 17)

Bede's description in the *Historia Ecclesiastica* of the birth of the Church in Northumbria and the role St Cuthbert played in its growth was the building block for Symeon's work. The reputation Bede carried, not only has a historian, but as an exegete and scholar meant his works were widely circulated throughout England and carried immense weight throughout society (Rowley, 2010, p. 228). Demonstrating that the reforms St Calais introduced constituted a return to Bedan principles would add legitimacy to the Community in its struggle with Flambard. In the *Libellus*, Symeon provides more biographical data about Bede than any other figure, indicating his importance while adding details about Bede's life that emphasised his sagacity and holiness, referring to Bede as 'that lamp of the catholic church' (*Libellus* 2000, p. 65). Bede's *Historia* is mentioned as an inspiration for Aldwin to re-establish a monastery at Jarrow in the eleventh-century (*Libellus* 2000, p. 201). The first book of the *Libellus* not only relied heavily upon Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* for its narrative, but emphasised Bede's virtues as a scholar and holy man, concluding with a recitation of Bede's works and the scene at his death bed (*Libellus* 2000, pp. 65-77). Symeon tells how Bede's bones were secretly removed from his tomb at Jarrow and placed 'in a linen bag' next to Cuthbert's incorrupt corpse in his shrine, an indication of the high regard Bede was held in by the Community (*Libellus* 2000, pp. 165-167). Finally, the reform of the Community began, according to Symeon, when Bishop Walcher invited the monks from southern England who, inspired by Bede's *Historia* decided to reintroduce monasticism to the North, to settle at Bede's ruined monastery at Jarrow (*Libellus* 2000, p. 201). After Walcher's murder in 1080, Bishop St Calais consulted Bede's lives of St Cuthbert, the *Historia* as well

as the 'older and wiser men of the bishopric', and decided to move the monks from Jarrow to Durham (*Libellus* 2000, pp. 227-229). If the heart of the identity of the *Haliwerfolc* was its devotion to St Cuthbert, the soul was provided by Bede and Symeon's *Libellus* made clear that the lineage between the Venerable Bede and the twelfth-century monastery was direct and intact.

The saga of the Community's journey across northern England during the ninth and tenth centuries is the foundation myth of the *Haliwerfolc*, something Smith says is necessary for the formation of an *ethnie* because 'the roots of its unique identity *must* (author's italics) reside in its origins and genealogy' (1999, pp. 60-61). While the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* does mention the seven years it took for the Community to find a new home after it left Lindisfarne, it neither supplies the date of departure nor the reason for the move (Johnson South 2002, pp. 96-97). Symeon added many of the details of the trek found in the *Libellus*, indicating he intended to draw a Biblical parallel between the wanderings of the Israelites in the Old Testament and the Community (Rollason 1987, p. 47). The initial decision to leave the Community's spiritual home of Lindisfarne was taken in 875 as a Viking army was bearing down on the monastery; thereafter the Community 'wandered from place to place, moving hither and thither, backwards and forwards, fleeing in the face of the cruel barbarians' (*Libellus* 2000, pp. 101-105). After seven years of wandering, conditions became so arduous that the people 'dispersed to uninhabited places to sustain themselves by whatever means they could' leaving only those who had been trained by monks to guard Cuthbert's body. To end the suffering, Cuthbert appeared in a vision, telling Abbot Eadred to bring a young boy to the heathen army where he would be accepted as their king by Cuthbert's command, allowing the Community to rest at Chester-le-Street (*Libellus* 2000, pp. 123-125). The Community remained at Chester-le-Street until 995 when Bishop Ealdhun (940-1018) was warned by a 'heavenly premonition' to flee and 'escape the fury of the Vikings', by heading south to Ripon (*Libellus* 2000, p. 145). Three or four months later, after the danger passed, the Community was returning to Chester-le-Street when Cuthbert's corpse became too heavy to move and a holy man named Eadmer said Durham was where the saint wanted to rest (*Libellus* 2000, pp. 145-147). Ealdhun 'began to build a church of noble workmanship and by no means small in scale, and to the completion of this he devoted all his efforts' (*Libellus* 2000, p. 151).

The tale of the Community's wandering is most likely a device meant to highlight the similarities between the people of Israel and the men of St Cuthbert. Although Symeon describes the travellers as destitute, Rollason (1987, pp. 47-50) points out that the

Community could not have been without resources because it carried Cuthbert's precious corpse, relics of other Northumbrian saints, and assorted treasures such as the Lindisfarne Gospels with it on the journey. In addition, the Community still owned a substantial amount of property including most of the resting places listed by Symeon, suggesting it was not as powerless as portrayed in the *Libellus* and that the final decision to rest at Durham came from a political alliance between Uhtred, a scion of the ruling Bamburgh family who eventually became Earl of Northumbria, and Bishop Ealdhun, whose daughter was married to Uhtred (1987, p. 52). The peninsula at Durham, where Cuthbert's shrine was established, is an exceptionally desirable and defensible position and the political interests of Community and earldom might have merged on top of the peninsula. Symeon's intended audience within the cloister certainly would have been familiar with the Old Testament wanderings of the people of Israel. Adding too many specific details about the actual travails of the Community might have blurred Symeon's intended message, that those who served St Cuthbert suffered a long and arduous journey as did the Israelites before being led to their home. The methodology Symeon used in describing the trek demonstrates his technique of mixing Biblical examples placed in a Northumbrian setting, illustrating his theme that the Community of St Cuthbert was a body chosen to serve the saint and therefore God.

The hereditary aspect of the pre-Conquest Community came from the seven men who guarded Cuthbert's corpse as it travelled in search of safety and their descendants. That the Community was a hereditary body is highlighted by Symeon, who specifies that 'all their descendants who succeeded them down to the time of Bishop Walcher followed the tradition of their fathers'. When the saint's body left Lindisfarne, the men who were responsible for its care 'had been brought up and educated amongst the monks since childhood', stayed with the body wherever it went, and 'preserved the custom of […] singing the day and night offices'. Symeon points out that 'we ourselves have often heard them singing in this manner, and even today we are accustomed to hear several of their descendants describe it so' (*Libellus* 2000, pp. 103-105). When the people dispersed near the end of the seven-year trek, 'those seven who had been supported and educated by the monks […] vowing never to part company with it as long as they lived' remained to care for the incorrupt corpse. Symeon gives the names of the four most important guardians and writes

> Many of their descendants in the kingdom of the Northumbrians—clergy and laity—take pride that their ancestors are said to have served St Cuthbert so faithfully. (*Libellus* 2000, p. 117)

When the Community settled at Durham, Symeon identifies Riggulf, who was 210 years old and had spent the past forty years as a monk, as a grandson of Franco, one of the seven 'who followed the father's venerable body in inseparable companionship'. Another grandson of Hunred, one of the original seven, Eadred, was mute until he was inside the church so he 'should not be defiled by pointless or harmful speech'. Eadred's daughter, Collan, was named as the mother of 'Eilaf and of two priests who are still alive today, Hemming and Wulfkill' (*Libellus* 2000, p. 149). Symeon emphasises the ancient and hereditary nature of the Community by using apocryphal figures and a miracle story to show their holiness, in the process creating a genealogical as well as a cultural myth of ethnic descent.

The mission of the Community was to provide good service to St Cuthbert, as Bede demonstrated in the *Historia*. According to Symeon, the monastic character of the Community changed during their journey from Lindisfarne to Durham, thus the need for reform. As a point of emphasis, Symeon described how the community caring for Cuthbert's corpse was always led by bishops who were monks. Symeon's need to justify the Community of St Cuthbert as a traditionally monastic community led him to state that those charged with caring for the corpse were actually monks 'albeit in the habit of clerks'—a very unlikely possibility (*Libellus* 2000, p. 103). When St Calais became bishop of Durham in 1080, he found Cuthbert 'was provided a degree of service inappropriate to his sanctity. For he found neither monks of his own order, nor regular canons'. St Calais learned from the 'older and wiser men of the whole bishopric' about the tradition of monastic service to Cuthbert and began to examine how to re-establish a convent to properly serve Cuthbert at Durham (*Libellus* 2000, p. 227). In May, 1083, St Calais ordered the men who 'previously dwelt in the church' to either live their lives as monks by repudiating their wives or to leave the church. According to Symeon, only one of these men chose to stay and he 'was persuaded with difficulty by his son who was a monk that he also should become a monk' (*Libellus* 2000, p. 231). The methodology Symeon employed in reporting the departure of the canons is consistent with other historical episodes he describes in the *Libellus*. There is no mention of what happened to the clerks after their expulsion or of any resistance to St Calais' reforms and discussing their fate would have drawn attention away from Symeon's theme about the need for change.

One of the central tenets of the *Haliwerfolc* was their belief in Cuthbert's ability to protect his people from outside threats. In addition to miracles of healing attributed to Cuthbert's holiness, Symeon listed examples of Cuthbert using his power to defend his people and punish those who infringed the rights the Community enjoyed. Throughout the

Libellus, Symeon links these miracles with specific geographical locations providing another tie between the land and the *Haliwerfolc*. Two Northumbrian kings, Osbert and Ælle, were defeated by Viking forces in 867 because they had seized vills from the Community. (*Libellus* 2000, pp. 97-99). The Viking chieftains, Scula and Onlafball, occupied the lands of St Cuthbert with Scula controlling numerous vills. Although Scula levied heavier than usual taxes, the saint's wrath was reserved for Onlafball who 'molested the bishop, community, and people of St Cuthbert.' After the bishop appealed to God and St Cuthbert for aid, Onlafball was transfixed in a threshold 'fixed as if by a nail in each foot' where he remained until he 'acknowledged publicly the sanctity of the confessor (Cuthbert)' (*Libellus* 2000, pp. 131-133).

Symeon provided many more examples of Cuthbert's ability to defend the *Haliwerfolc* from threats that were more apocryphal. The enemies of St Cuthbert, whether they were Viking, Scots, or Normans, all were punished for the damages they inflicted on the saint's people. A Viking army that had 'inflicted injuries on St Cuthbert' and sacked Jarrow as well as 'the monastery at the mouth of the Don' was subjected to violent storms at sea with those that survived the tempest 'were somehow thrown up on the land alive, were soon killed by the swords of the inhabitants' (*Libellus* 2000, pp. 89-91). King Guthred 'strengthened by St Cuthbert' confronted a Scots army that had looted Lindisfarne but as he faced the 'innumerable army', the 'earth suddenly opened and swallowed the enemy alive'. Symeon points out this battle 'repeated there a former miracle' from the Old Testament story of the congregation of Abiron where the earth swallowed up Dathan and his army (*Libellus* 2000, p. 127). In 1069, the Northumbrians rebelled against the Norman Robert Cumin (1068-1069), whom William I had made Earl of Northumbria. Cumin occupied Durham but was trapped by local forces inside a house. The Northumbrians burned down the house but the flames threatened the church until 'the people knelt down and beseeched St Cuthbert that he should preserve his church unharmed from the flames'. The wind shifted direction not only sparing the church but intensifying the fire to completely destroy the house where Cumin was hiding. In response, William I sent forces to 'avenge the earl's death' but when the army reached Allerton, a territory claimed by the Community, a dense fog forced the army to halt. The Normans, who evidently were unfamiliar with St Cuthbert, were told how he was 'always their (the men of Durham) protector in adversity, and that with him as their avenger no one was able to harm them with impunity' (*Libellus* 2000, p. 185). Upon learning of the saint's power, the advancing army turned back. Symeon, who probably was from northern France, was more concerned with representing the might of St Cuthbert than with putting the ruling

Normans in a favorable light (*Libellus* 2000, p. xc). The ability of St Cuthbert to defend his lands was a central part of the identity Symeon was developing. By demonstrating the supernatural powers of the saint as he defended his people, the *Libellus* carried warnings to Flambard not to take on Cuthbert or his servants in the Community—if the mighty William I could not overcome Cuthbert's power then what chance would Flambard have?

Another aspect of Cuthbert's mythical personality was his misogyny. Symeon reported that Cuthbert, upon becoming bishop, 'severed all his monks from female company' and 'completely removed from women the right of entry into his church'. According to Symeon

> This custom [banning women from the Community's churches] is still meticulously observed today, to such an extent that women are not even given permission to enter the cemeteries of those churches where his body rested for a time, unless they are forced to see refuge there, either from fear of enemy attack, or because the place where they are living has been burned down. (*Libellus* 2000, p. 105)

Symeon then cites two examples of women who tried to circumvent the ban but received the saint's wrath as a result (*Libellus* 2000, pp. 109-111). Even Judith, the wife of the last earl of Northumbria before the Conquest, was not immune from Cuthbert's prohibition against women entering his church. Judith sent her servant girl to try and enter the church at Durham. As soon as the girl set foot in the cemetery outside the church, a 'violent force as of the wind' knocked her down, leading Judith to try and appease the saint by offering him fine gifts (*Libellus* 2000, pp. 175-177). None of the earlier extant histories that Symeon used as source material refer to Cuthbert's misogyny. Piper (1989, p. 443) speculates that the appearance of misogyny in the Libellus stems from the Gregorian reforms and a desire to demonstrate that Cuthbert's incorrupt corpse was so pure because the saint was chaste. Aird points out that St Calais' desire to requisition the lands of the recently disavowed wives of the Community might have led Symeon to develop examples of the saint's misogyny (1998a, pp.125-126). Symeon's description of a misogynistic streak within Cuthbert's character should be seen as part of the justification for St Calais' reforms where the monastic nature of the Community had been corrupted and needed to be restored.

The *Libellus* also outlined legal rights claimed by the Community. The Community believed the saint's body was a place of sanctuary where fugitives had 'thirty seven days peace which may not on any pretext ever be broken'; Rollason points out this is a passage directly drawn from the *Historia Sancto Cuthberti*, a tenth-century history of the Community (*Libellus* 2000, p.125, n.81). Symeon specifies that the fine for violating the 'saint's peace'

would be as 'much as they would owe to the king of England for breach of the royal peace […] that is ninety six pounds' (*Libellus* 2000, p. 127). This section concludes with King Guthred gifting to the Community 'in perpetuity […] the sanctuary rights of those fleeing to the saint's tomb which should never be violated by anyone' upon his death in 894. Symeon points out that these rights 'are still preserved today' (*Libellus* 2000, pp. 127-129). Another right the Community claimed was exemption from royal taxation. According to Symeon, the Community did not traditionally pay 'tribute' to kings as evidenced by the illness that befell 'Ranulf', a tax collector sent by William I to 'compel the people of St Cuthbert' to pay into the royal coffers. Ranulf's illness did not abate until he begged forgiveness from Cuthbert and left the bishopric. Upon hearing of this, the king gave lands 'for the sustenance of those serving St Cuthbert […] quit and free of all customs and to be held in perpetuity.' William I also confirmed 'the laws and customs of the saint, as they had been established by the authority of former kings' (*Libellus* 2000, pp. 199-201). Symeon used an example from the not too distant past to demonstrate the limits of royal power in dealing with the historic rights of the Community within its lands.

In addition to historical and cultural factors, the role of territory in the formation of an ethnic identity is crucial. In Smith's view, an *ethnie* is identified

> not only by historical memories, codes, and ancestry myths, but also by its possession, or loss, of an historic territory or 'homeland'. Over the generations, the community has become identified with a particular, historic space, and the territory with a particular cultural community (1999, p.127).

Part of Symeon's political agenda in the *Libellus* was defining the territories his superiors felt belonged to the Community in order to protect its income stream. Symeon knew some of the Community's holdings were 'found in writing elsewhere' but adding details of how the Community came into its properties could help defend against anticipated attempts from Flambard to take more lands for the bishopric. Symeon's augmentation of the existing writings with 'the truthful accounts of our elders who had […] often heard them related by their own elders' bolstered the impression that the Community's claims were rooted in long held traditions (*Libellus* 2000, p. 137).

According to Storey (2012, pp. 111-112), two types of connections are important when examining the role of territory in the formation of an *ethnie*; First, a 'generic' link to a region identified as a 'zone of origin' serving as the 'heartland' for the community and secondly, ties to 'specific' places of importance to the *ethnie*. Both generic and specific places can be found in the *Libellus*, as Symeon identified the areas traditionally held by the Community in its

battle with Flambard. The heartland of the *Haliwerfolc* is the region between the Tyne and the Tees. Symeon describes how Cuthbert appeared in a vision to an abbot who told King Guthred that the saint asked for 'the rights of perpetual possession to me and those who minister in my church all the lands between the Wear and the Tyne' (*Libellus* 2000, p. 125), while King Ceowulf granted Cuthbert 'also the church and vill which he had built in a place called Gainford and whatever pertained to it between the river Tees and the river Wear' (*Libellus* 2000, p. 93). Cuthbert recently demonstrated what the boundaries of his lands were by striking William I with a fever, after he questioned the saint's holiness, one which did not abate until after the crossed the Tees (*Libellus* 2000, p. 197). When the Community attempted to take the incorrupt corpse to Ireland during the seven year period it wandered northern England, a storm arose as the vessel left the mouth of the Derwent, nearly swamping the vessel with 'three waves of marvellous size'. The boat carrying the saint's body turned back and the bishop begged Cuthbert's forgiveness for trying to take him out of his lands (*Libellus* 2000, p. 115). The bond between the people and the region is further emphasized when 'a multitude of people from the whole area between the river Coquet and the river Tees' came to help clear the peninsula at Durham and build a church to house Cuthbert's body, once the saint indicated that Durham was where the Community should end its wandering (*Libellus* 2000, p. 149).

Symeon also identified specific locations of importance throughout the *Libellus*; one of the goals of Symeon's work was to provide historical justification for the places the Community believed it had rights to and received revenue from. Gifts came from royalty; King Æthelstan granted lands to the saint for his aid as his army moved north to confront the Scots including 'twelve vills, the names of which it is not necessary to insert here because they are to be found in writing elsewhere' (*Libellus* 2000, p. 137) while King Cnut 'gave freely and in perpetual possession to the saint and all who served him the vill of Staindrop' (*Libellus* 2000, p. 167). The nobility in the region often sought the saint's (and the Community's) favour by gifting lands for the saint's maintenance as various factions jostled for supremacy (Rollason 2003, pp.243-249). Symeon cited gifts by nobles during the Viking era as well as a gift by Copsig who 'presided over the affairs of the whole earldom under Tostig' just before the Conquest is identified as donating the church of St Germanus in Marske plus a long list of vills with the amount of land held per vill to the saint. Those who would try to separate the lands from the church would be excommunicated and sent to 'damnation with the devil' (*Libellus* 2000, p. 181). Emphasising that the ruling class gave

lands to the Community bolstered Symeon's assertion that the Community had strong historical ties to the region and that the gifts were not to be questioned.

The *Libellus* is the 'ethnic myth' necessary to fit Smith's definition of an *ethnie* because it identifies the distinct historical and cultural characteristics of the *Haliwerfolc*. The miracles Cuthbert performed defending the Community demonstrated that the Community's devotion to the saint would be rewarded by his protection from its enemies. Symeon's listing of territories the Community had claims to, and how those properties were acquired, helped define the boundaries of where the *Haliwerfolc* lived. The story of the Community's struggles as it wandered throughout northern England provided an epic tale, allowing the Community to draw a parallel between itself and the Israelites, further strengthening the belief that the *Haliwerfolc* were a special people. Symeon's restating of Bede's portrait of Cuthbert as the perfect monk came as the convent at Durham was preparing for a battle to protect its monastic nature and provided an ideological core for the Community. Although it was a politically motivated work, the *Libellus* educated the *Haliwerfolc* about its identity by highlighting the central roles of Cuthbert, Bede, and its Northumbrian roots as the building blocks necessary for its future.

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