"Wordriht": The Right of Translation in *Genesis B* and *Exodus*

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Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies,

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Master of Arts

By

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"Wordriht": The Right of Translation in *Genesis B* and *Exodus*

BY

Diana Patzer

A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the degree

Of

Master of Arts

Diana Patzer © 2005

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Abstract

My thesis argues that the poetic (re-)interpretation and (re-)creation of the Bible and patristic literature in the Old English vernacular by poets is not only a *right*, but a *duty*. By examining the translation theories and practices of Jerome, Augustine, Alfred and his helpers, and Ælfric, I establish their right(s) of translation. I then address several potentially heterodox changes the poets of *Genesis B* and *Exodus* make to the word and sense of their biblical and patristic source-texts, and argue that they make these changes not only to guide the reader with their respective pens to an appropriate interpretation, but to teach the reader how to forge his own interpretive path and steer his way through the *machina* of the text. I would argue that *Genesis B* and *Exodus*, and texts like them, are an interpretive challenge to the reader himself from God, one that allows him to turn, paradoxically, to God even as he bows his head to a page fraught with a seeming heterodoxy.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank...

se þe me lærde—my advisor, Dr. Robert Emmett Finnegan, who his "wordhord onleac" and poured forth "þa boclican lare". From you "ic geseah and gehyrde mycel wisdom", and with your help I, too, read "bec, ða þe nidbeðyrfesta sien eallum monnum to witanne". Thank you for the Old English, and for providing me with "seo cæg ðe ðæra boca andgit unlicð".

Dr. David Watt, who did "gladly teche", and Dr. Egil Grislis, a "servus verbi Dei".

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And, of course, my parents.

earc sceal þy mare. (*Genesis A* 1313b)

þæt is syndrig cynn.
Symle bið þy heardra þe hit hreoh wæter,
swearte sæstreamas, swiðor beatað. (*Genesis A* 1324b-1326)

Him on hoh beleac heofonrices weard
merehuses muð mundum sinum,
sigora waldend and segnade
earce innan agenum spedum
nergend user. (*Genesis A* 1363-1367b)

þam æt niehstan wæs nan to gedale
nymþe heo wæs ahafen on þa hean lyft. (*Genesis A* 1400-1401)

heofon þider becom (*Exodus* 46b)

Hu þearf mannes sunu maran treowe? (*Exodus* 426)

Hwa is þæt ðe cunne
orðonc clene nymðe ece god? (*Christ and Satan* 17b-18)

Ge sind wilcuman! (*Christ and Satan* 616a)

In the darkness something was happening at last. A voice had begun to sing. It was very far away and Digory found it hard to decide from what direction it was coming. Sometimes it seemed to come from all directions at once. Sometimes he almost thought it was coming out of the earth beneath them. Its lower notes were deep enough to be the voice of the earth herself. There were no words. There was hardly even a tune. But it was, beyond comparison, the most beautiful noise he had ever heard. It was so beautiful he could hardly bear it....Then two wonders happened at the same moment. One was that the voice was suddenly joined by other voices; more voices than you could possibly count. They were in harmony with it, but far higher up the scale: cold, tingling, silvery voices. The second wonder was that the blackness overhead, all at once, was blazing with stars. They didn't come out gently one by one, as they do on a summer evening. One moment there had been nothing but darkness; next moment a thousand, thousand points of light leaped out—single stars, constellations, and planets, brighter and bigger than any in our world. There were no clouds. The new stars and the new voices began at exactly the same time. If you had seen and heard it, as Digory did, you would have felt quite certain that it was the stars themselves which were singing, and that it was the First Voice, the deep one, which had made them appear and made them sing.
--C.S. Lewis, *The Magician's Nephew*

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Introduction

In his introduction to *The Guest-Hall of Eden: Four Essays on the Design of Old English Poetry*, Alvin A. Lee writes that "the extant Old English poetic corpus has as its major function in Anglo-Saxon England the re-creation, in poetic terms, of the biblical vision of human life" (6). The poems of the Junius Manuscript—*Genesis A, Genesis B, Exodus, Daniel,* and *Christ and Satan*—are a "poetic Bible," highlighting the continual pattern of the fall(s) and regeneration(s) of mankind, and re-creating for their Anglo-Saxon audience select scriptural events from the Creation to the Ascension. Far from being unoriginal, word-for-word translations of their respective biblical books, however, the poems of Junius 11 contain many "re-arrangements, interpolations, expansions, and omissions" (Hieatt 243). The Anglo-Saxon poets render into poetry from prose choice passages from the Bible, and do so in their native Old English tongue, thus asserting that their vernacular language can give expression to the words and themes of sacred Christian literature. What licence do they have to translate the sacred Book from the sacred languages into vulgar Old English, to presume to put into poetry that which was once prose, to reshape and edit their sacred source? I intend to examine the right and authority of translation in Anglo-Saxon England generally, and in relation to two of the poems in the Junius Manuscript, *Genesis B* and *Exodus*, specifically. Through an investigation of the Anglo-Saxon theoretical justification for translation, and the function of the changes the Anglo-Saxon poets make to their biblical source-texts, I suggest that not only are the poetic (re-)interpretation and (re-)creation of the Bible and patristic literature in the vernacular by poets a right, they are a *duty*.

The Junius poems, both singly and together, "form an imaginative unity that parallels the literary shape of the Bible" and create "an Anglo-Saxon concept of the Bible as the living Word of God, still working through the compositions of poets like Caedmon and Cynewulf" (Lee 81-82). The Junius poets create a "poetic Bible" of sorts, but also push their pens beyond the margins of their biblical and patristic source-texts. The poets of *Genesis B* and *Exodus* have no control over the outcome of the biblical stories they re-create for their audience: Adam and Eve must fall, and Pharaoh and his army must drown in the Red Sea. The poets can, however, control *how* their stories unfold. In *Genesis B*, the poet has made changes to the "bare-bones" biblical source-text(s) that are overt, unparalleled, and heterodox: it is not Satan but another devil that tempts *both* Adam and Eve; Adam is tempted before Eve is; the poet changes the nature of Eve's temptation. The changes to the narrative of *Exodus* are not as pronounced as those in *Genesis B*; the poet instead "recasts" the diction and syntax of the poem, creating an Exodus that is more overtly typological and Christological than that in the Bible: the Israelites "sail" across the desert in the ship of the church; they are "baptized" in the Red Sea; Pharaoh and his kin and kind perish in a type of the Last Judgment. In *Genesis B* and *Exodus*, the poets have employed two essentially different ways of "translating" or "re-writing" their biblical source-text, making these two poems, more than any of the others in the Junius manuscript, excellent companion pieces. In *Genesis B* the poet alters the *word*, the narrative of the poem; in *Exodus* the layers of typological meaning that the poet adds change the *sense* of the poem. By creating, recreating, and transforming their material, the poets, in effect, "rewrite" the Bible.

The first chapter of this thesis will outline the translation theories and practices of Jerome, Augustine, Alfred, and Ælfric. I intend to draw from Jerome's prefaces to his translations and revisions of various biblical books, as well as some of his epistles. I will then turn to Augustine's *On Christian Doctrine*, Alfred's prefaces to his translations of Gregory's *Pastoral Care* and *Dialogues*, Augustine's *Soliloquies*, and Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*, and Ælfric's prefaces to his *Homilies*, *On the Old and New Testament*, *Lives of the Saints*, *Grammar*, and *Genesis*. I thus posit the fundamental question: by whose authority do these poets translate? The second and third chapters will focus on *Genesis B* and *Exodus*, respectively: I will address the significance of and reasons for the changes the poets make to their source-texts and the importance these alterations have in relation to the discussion of translation theories and practices. I intend to show that a poetic (re-)interpretation and (re-)creation, even a potentially heterodox one, is the right *and* duty of the poets—and all Christian readers.

Chapter One

Many and various are the languages of man and God; this is why translation exists. The Bible—the authoritative, inspired, and sacred book of Christianity—contains "faith statements about God: his acts in history, his will for people, and his purpose for all of creation" (Arichea 54). Through fallen eyes man must read in fallen languages the Bible, a book of "salvation instructions" for man (cf. II Tim. 3: 15-17). The Scriptures must be translated and interpreted properly in order to be understood, and thus, proper translation and interpretation are matters of spiritual life and death; we must read the right words in order to write the right things on the "fleshy tables of [our] heart[s]" (II Cor. 3:3). But reading is not enough; we as readers must *understand* the plain and difficult passages, the metaphors, the *deus ex* Scriptural *machina*. In this chapter I will briefly examine the Biblical origins of translation and interpretation and their importance to the early church. I will analyze Jerome and Augustine's theoretical justification(s) for translation and interpretation, respectively, as well as the right and authority of translation according to the Anglo-Saxon translators Ælfric and Alfred, and determine by what or whose authority they translate.

Creation itself begins with a W/word, the "act of immediate calling into being whereby God had literally 'spoken the world'" (Steiner 58). God speaks (Gen. 1:3), and light appears: the void is translated in a verbal creation textually recorded. Man, too, is spoken into being; he, like God, has the ability to speak, to translate thought into word, but his words are "made, not begotten" (Dawson 129). Brian Stock notes that Augustine "believed that reading and writing were among the labours imposed on the first couple as a result of their disobedience in the garden...Before the fall, there was no need of such

cumbersome instruments of communication...[After the fall, humans needed] the linguistic and grammatical skills that enabled them to understand the Bible" (15-16)[1]. The Fall "had been, among many other things, a fall from direct knowledge into indirect knowledge through signs" (P.Brown 261). Pre-fallen man names the birds and the beasts (Gen. 2:19-20)[2], but post-fallen man attempts to "make us a name" (Gen. 11:4), and the tower of Babel is built. Babel was a "second Fall...an assault on heaven" (Steiner 59, 67); man stretches his hand to the fruit and his brick to the heavens and in return must figure out "how far language [must] be stretched" (Macquarie 29) in order to re-establish a dialogue with the Divine[3]. Confusion ensues, and scattered tongues and pens must (re)write for themselves a common and shared past. The Bible is the product of this endeavor; it is, in Jeffrey's words, the "foundation text which gives rise to a whole world of books" (preface xiii). Man must build with this book a hermeneutic tower that leads to a shared salvation.

While Christianity is more than just the sum of its texts, it is also very much a textual and written religion. Christianity

> placed an extraordinary premium on verbal formulation; speech constituted one of its basic metaphors, and it framed itself around written texts...Jesus taught in words, especially in parable...[and the Gospels are] rewritings, or recreations, of the text of the life of Jesus [...]. Early Christianity was...always a matter of

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[1]Stock cites Augustine's *De Diu. Quaes.*, q.52; *De Gen. Ad Litt.* 8.17, 8.18, 8.27, 9.2, 11.33; *De Gen. C. Man.* 2.4.5 as examples. Brian Stock's *Augustine the Reader* presents Augustine as a "convert to reading," who linked "his spiritual progress to his ability to read and interpret biblical texts" (53).

[2] Steiner writes: "The vulgate of Eden contained...a divine syntax—powers of statement and designation analogous to God's own diction, in which the mere naming of a thing was the necessary and sufficient cause of its leap into reality" (58).

[3] "[T]he very need for translation" writes Steiner, "was like the mark of Cain...all languages share in a common myopia; none can articulate the whole truth of God or give its speakers a key to the meaning of existence...[T]he Tower is...an assault on Heaven...but it is also a vast Jacob's ladder of stone...on which man would ascend towards his Creator" (62, 67).

> teaching, of interpretation, of definition. (A. Cameron 19, 31-32)[4]

Christ's spoken Aramaic is turned into a Greek text by the apostles, and he himself translates and interprets the Old Testament Hebrew for them (Matt. 13:36; Luke 24:26-7, 44-7). His repeated "But I say unto you" (Mark 9:13 and elsewhere) demonstrates that he is here to fulfill and correct the interpretations and translations of yore. "Christians," notes L. Sanneh, "are unique in abandoning the original language of Jesus and instead adopting Greek in its *Koine* and Latin in its *vulgar* as the central media of the church [...]. [T]ranslation...[is] built into the very fabric of Christianity" (Sanneh 1)[5]. The translation of the Bible into many other languages also necessitates a textual and interpretive Christian community. Christianity

> appropriat[ed] the Hebrew scriptures and present[ed itself] as the legitimised heir to Judaism [...]. In many cases...[Old Testament] narratives and even ethical teachings actually seemed to contradict those of the New Testament. The need to interpret texts was thus not an incidental phenomenon of the new religion, but a response to a problem that was essential to its foundation and subsequent development. In this sense...critical theory was what Christianity was all about. (Prickett 4-5)

Prickett goes on to note that Christianity has "always been at least dimly conscious of, and correspondingly uneasy about, its own distance from its sacred writings...it has *always* needed a theory of reading" (79). Distance from one's sacred writings suggests

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[4] Cameron also writes that "[a]t no point that we can now recapture was there a "first Christianity" distinct from its verbal expression...As Christ "was" the Word, so Christianity *was* its discourse or discourses" (32).

[5] Sanneh also notes the paradoxical "contention by Christians that God's eternal counsels are compatible with ordinary, everyday speech", that "religious language...belong[s] to the ordinary commonplace world of men and women...The Christian attitude to religious language places right at the heart of things the idea that people, especially ordinary people, should understand" (1-2).

distance from God, and in order to bridge this distance God must be translated and interpreted; God must speak, among other languages, Latin and Old English.

The "translatability of Christianity" (Sanneh 3) does not, however, allow translation a free rein as she gallops through the Scriptures. Translation is a potentially dangerous activity; many potential theological "mistranslations" lie just around the corner—with serious theological consequences. The divine message may be changed; the will of God may be altered with the swish of a pen: one wrong word is a matter of life or death. There is always a fear that translation leads one away from the original text, to "one further remove from the immediate moment of the *logos*" (Steiner 239)[6], or that, as Dante discovers in Paradise, some things cannot be translated, put into words[7]. H.F.D. Sparks notes in Volume One of the *Cambridge History of the Bible* that Jerome "[o]ccasionally...points out the doctrinal implications of a textual variant: the two words *neque filius*, for example, read by some texts at Matt. 24:36, are (says Jerome) a godsend to Arians because they attribute ignorance to the Son" (528). Many early texts also stress the evils of translating: the "*Megillath Taanith (Roll of Fasting)*...records the belief that three days of utter darkness fell on the world when the Law was translated into Greek" (qtd. in Steiner 239), and the "*Masseketh Sopherim* (Tractate of the Scribes)...[states that] 'Five elders wrote the Law in Greek for King Tolmai (Ptolemy); and that day was a hard day for Israel, like the day on which Israel made the golden calf'" (qtd. in Nida *Science* 2). James Barr forwards the fascinating thought that

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[6] Translation is especially problematic when religion and salvation are involved: "So far as speech is divine and numinous, so far as it encloses revelation, active transmission either into the vulgate or across the barrier of languages is dubious or frankly evil" (Steiner 239).

[7] "How weak are words, and how unfit to frame / My concept—which lags after what was shown / So far, 'twould flatter it to call it lame!" (XXXIII 121-23). (*The Divine Comedy*. Trans. Dorothy L. Sayers and B. Reynolds. London: Penguin Books, 1962).

> the existence of scripture...brought Jesus to his clash with the Jewish leaders of his time and thus to his death. The conflict between scripture and the existing Jewish interpretations of it, and the dialectic between it and Jesus' own religious ideas and ideas of himself, brought about the deep and tragic conflicts between Jesus and the leaders of his people, which in turn brought him to rejection and death, and brought mankind to salvation. (11)

Translation and interpretation are therefore a paradox: murderous instruments and salvific vehicles at the same time. They are problematic acts, but necessary ones: God must reach people and people must understand, in the vernacular, how to reach God. "No man," writes Steiner of the *translatio* of Christ's message, "must be kept from salvation by mere barriers of language" (245).[8] To ensure that all people can reach God, man must "stretch language", translate—and try to avoid creating another Babel. Translation and interpretation are always "reinterpretation, both of the original and of the intervening body of commentary" (Steiner 249).

Saint Jerome, *doctor maximus in interpretandis scripturis*, devotes much time and space in both his prefaces to his works and his letters articulating how and why he translates a variety of biblical books. The necessity and dangers of translation chart for him a dangerous course throughout the fourth century, and he raises his pen in defense again and again against those who thunder forth criticisms of him, his translations, and his bold revisions of the sacred word. "Questions of translation technique and details connected with the 'mechanics' of translation," notes Sparks, "obviously occupied Jerome's mind continuously" (522). Jerome does not take his "right to translate" for

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[8] God's scattering of tongues at Babel is not "an irreparable finality...As the Fall may be understood to contain the coming of the Redeemer, so the scattering of tongues at Babel has in it...the return to linguistic unity, the movement towards and beyond Pentecost" (Steiner 244).

granted, however, and strewn about his prefaces and letters are his justifications for translating *sanctae scripturae*. His statements about the principles of translation "almost always occur in polemical situations, when defending his translations and the method of which he has made use in them, against his enemies, who often accused him of falsifying the original" (D.Brown 104).

Jerome himself was particularly qualified to be a translator. He had "innate flair for languages", and was a *vir trilinguis*, competent in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and had a passing acquaintance with Aramaic/Chaldaic and Syriac (Sparks 517). He was an avid collector of books, and a "great scholar, who knew that the Hebrew text was the original one" (D.Brown 22, 60). His persistent "belief in the correctness and authenticity of...the *Hebraica veritas*...in the face of considerable criticism[] is a memorial to his scholarly integrity and resolute convictions" (55). Perhaps most importantly, Jerome issued many "translations, commentaries, scholarly studies and compilations" (Kelly 141, 143), and would thus be able to translate and interpret a variety of biblical and patrological works correctly, having been well schooled in Christian texts.

In 383, Jerome was commissioned to revise the four gospels by Pope Damasus; in the first sentence of his *Praefatio in Quatuor Evangelia*, he explains why he must do so: "Novum opus facere me cogis ex veteri, ut post exemplaria Scripturarum toto orbe dispersa, quasi quidam arbiter sedeam; et quia inter se variant, quae sint illa quae cum Graeca consentiant veritate, decernam" (*PL* 29.557). He realizes the seriousness and dangers of his task ("Pius labor, sed periculosa praesumptio" [*PL* 29.557]), and knows that he may be reviled for having the audacity to "addere, mutare, corrigere" the sacred books (*PL* 29.557). He "bears the unpopularity" of this charge for two reasons:

> quod et tu, qui summus Sacerdos es, fieri jubes: et verum non esse quod variat, etiam maledicorum testimonio comprobatur. Si enim Latinis exemplaribus fides est adhibenda, respondeant, quibus: tot enim sunt exemplaria pene quot codices. Sin autem veritas est quaerenda de pluribus: cur non ad Graecam originem revertentes, ea quae vel a vitiosis interpretibus male edica, vel a praesumptoribus imperitis emendata perversius, vel a librariis dormitantibus addita sunt, aut mutata, corrigimus? (*PL* 29. 558-59)

The true translation is the one that has apostolic approval; because our language is marked by discrepancies, we must go back to the "fountainhead" text (*PL* 29.559)[9]. Jerome does, however, mention that "ita calamo temperavimus, ut his tantum quae sensum videbantur nutare, correctis, reliqua manere pateremur ut fuerant" (*PL* 29.559). Jerome realizes that the Gospel manuscripts as they stand are steeped in error, and that he will have to go back to the Greek, the "fountainhead", in order to make a clean translation. Scribal errors and incompetent translators; omissions, additions, and discrepancies: these have increased the distance between God's Word and God's people, the Truth and the text. A corrupt text is *why* Jerome translates, but the sanction of Damasus and the fact that we must pin our faith to the Latin texts (*PL* 29.558-59) give Jerome the *right* to translate. Heretical interpretations may snake their way around the translation of one word (*neque filius*, for example)[10], and it is Jerome's duty as a scholarly soldier of Christ to ensure the texts people "put their faith" in are correct and orthodox ones.

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[9] "Hoc certe cum in nostro sermone discordat, et diversos rivulorum tramites ducit: uno de fonte quaerendum est" (*PL* 29.559).

[10] Avril Cameron notes that the "history of Christianity could literally depend on one word, as happened at the first ecumenical council at Nicaea in A.D. 325" (21). She footnotes "homoousios" (consubstantial) as the problematic word.

Jerome's Gospels, however, were "greeted with the howl of indignation he had predicted" (Kelly 89); he defends himself in *Epistola XXVII (ad eamdem Marcellam)*:

> Non adeo me hebetis fuisse cordis, et tam crassae rusticitatis... ut aliquid de Dominicis verbis, aut corrigendum putaverim, aut non divinitus inspiratum; sed Latinorum codicum vitiositatem, quae ex diversitate librorum omnium comprobatur, ad Graecam originem, unde et ipsi translata non denegant, voluisse revocare. Quibus si displicet fontis unda purissimi, coenosos rivulos bibant. (*PL* 22.431)

A corrupt text is a dangerously dirty text: "the most ancient books lose their authority in transmission" (D. Brown 36). A book as important as the Bible needs to be copied cleanly, for a single word can be a "godsend to Arians." H.F.D. Sparks mentions that only Jerome's "revision of the gospels was at all widely accepted during his lifetime. It had been commissioned by the pope, and this conferred on it a certain official status" (520)[11]. If the Bible is to serve as an inspired guide for Christians, it must, like an "[a]dministrative and legal document[]...convey to the reader the exact meaning of the original" (Brock 73).

Jerome's other translations do not have the blessing of a pope to protect them, and Jerome frequently uses the prefaces to his translations to defend them, and his right to translate. He has a right to translate, he insists, because the sacred texts are corrupt. Once he creates a clean translation, "ne Judaei de falsitate Scripturarum Ecclesiis ejus diutius insultarent" (*Praefatio in Librum Isaiae* [*PL* 28.827]). In his *Praefatio in Pentateuchum*, Jerome notes that "maximeque quae evangelistarum et apostolorum

[11] Sparks also notes that this acceptance may have been due to the fact that Jerome's gospels were a revised edition of the Old Latin texts, and not a fresh translation (520).

auctoritas promulgavit: in quibus multa de Veteri Testamento legimus, quae in nostris codicibus non habentur" (*PL* 28.179-80). Jerome has rescued Job: "beatum Job qui adhuc apud Latinos jacebat in stercore, et vermibus scatebat errorum integrum immaculatumque gaudete" (29.64). His version is "magis...intelligi", for it has "statim de prelo purissimae commendata testae" (*Praefatio in Libros Salomonis* [*PL* 28.1308]). Asterisks are sprinkled throughout Origen's translation of Job, and Jerome's detractors

> [n]eque...fieri potest, ut quos plura intermisisse perspexerint, non eosdem etiam in quibusdam errasse fateantur, praecipue in Job: cui si ea quae subasteriscis addita sunt, subtraxeris, pars maxima voluminis detruncabitur... ut decurtatus et laceratus corrosusque liber, foeditatem sui publice legentibus praebeat. (*Praefatio in Librum Job* [*PL* 28.1139])

In his *Praefatio in Danielem Prophetam*, Jerome writes that "multum a veritate discordet, et recto judicio repudiatus sit" (*PL* 28.1357). Again and again Jerome writes of the corruptness of the biblical texts in use throughout Christendom: the omissions, incompleteness, alterations, discrepancies, disorder. It is his prerogative to translate, to alter, to complete: man cannot stretch his language, his hand, to God, with a corrupt text. His comments suggest that those who do not want a "clean" text, who are content with the corrupt versions floating about Christendom, are in the wrong—*they* are the unorthodox ones, not he. A corrupt text is a falsification of the sacred word, and the sacred page must regain its truth-value; this can be done through an accurate translation.

Despite the perceived novelty of his undertaking, Jerome reminds his audience that others have translated before him. He writes in his *Praefatio in Pentateuchum* that "Origenis me studium provocavit, qui editioni antiquae translationem Theodotionis

miscuit" and "maximeque quae evangelistarum et apostolorum auctoritas promulgavit" (*PL* 28.179). He often mentions the biblical translations of Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion (*Pref.Lib.Job* [*PL* 28.1138]; *Pref.Lib. Isaiae* [*PL* 28.827]; *Pref.Comm.Ecc.* [23.1062]), and notes that Origin marks the Old Testament books with obeli and asterisks (*Pref.Lib.Job* [*PL* 28.1139]). Hilary the Confessor, "qui Homilias in Job, et in Psalmos tractatus plurimos in Latinum vertit e Graeco, nec assedit litterae dormitanti, et putida rusticorum interpretatione se torsit: sed quasi captivos sensus in suam linguam, victoris jure transposuit" (*Epistola LVII* [*PL* 22.572]). He writes that "Ecclesiae viris, cum Septuaginta interpretes, et Evangelistae atque Apostoli idem in sacris voluminibus fecerint" (*Ep. LVII* [*PL* 22.572]). Pope Damasus himself had requested of Jerome a translation of the Gospels (*Pref.Quat.Evan.* [*PL* 29.558]). Lesser men than Jerome have picked up their pens, have translated for many reasons in many different ways: why should he not have the authority to do so also?

Translation may also reveal mysteries of the faith once hidden, illuminate the obscure. Jerome notes that the translators of the Septuagint "cum illi Ptolemaeo regi Alexandriae mystica quaeque in Scripturis sanctis prodere noluerint, et maxime ea quae Christi adventum pollicebantur: ne viderentur Judaei et alterum Deum colere: quos ille Platonis sectator magni idcirco faciebat, quia unum Deum colere dicerentur" (*Pref.Heb.Quaest.Gen* [*PL* 23.985]). He also mentions this story in his *Praefatio in Pentateuchum*, writing that "Denique ubicunque sacratum aliquid Scriptura testatur de Patre et Filio et Spiritu sancto, aut aliter interpretati sunt, aut omnino tacuerunt; ut et regi satisfacerent et arcanum fidei non vulgarent" (*PL* 28.181). But apart from those who rightfully conceal the mysteries of the faith from the ignorant, there are "haeretici...qui

multa mysteria Salvatoris subdola interpretatione celarunt" (*Pref.Lib.Job* [*PL* 28.1142]). Does not Jerome, who "vexillum crucis in mea fronte portans", have a right to "omissa repetere, depravata corrigere et sacramenta Ecclesiae puro ac fideli aperire sermone" (*Pref.Lib.Job* [*PL* 28.1142])?

Jerome's "right to translate", however, does not make his job any easier. In his "helmeted" ("galeatum") *Praefatio in Libros Samuel et Malachim*, he begs Paula and Eustochium to "contra latrantes canes, qui adversus me rabido ore desaeviunt" (*PL* 28.604). In the same preface he states that he has "[p]osui ori meo custodiam" (*PL* 28.604), but later growls that "excetre sibilet...nunquam meum, juvante Christo, silebit eloquium: etiam praecisa lingua balbutiet" (*Pref.Ezram* [*PL* 28.1474]). Translation is an arduous task: it is difficult to preserve the flavor of the text, to find the right words to convey the meaning (*PL* 27.223). There are tensions between a literal and a free translation: "Si ad verbum interpretor, absurde resonat: si ob necessitatem aliquid in ordine vel in sermone mutavero, ab interpretis videbor officio recessisse" (*Pref.Chron.Euse.* [*PL* 27.223]). Translating is sometimes like trying to hold an eel in your hands, and "quanto fortius presseris, tanto citius elabitur" (*Praef.Lib.Job* [*PL* 28.1140]). Men even may prefer dangerous ancient error to new truth (*Praef.Lib.Job* [*PL* 29.63]; *Praef.Lib.Psalm* [*PL* 29.123]), as a letter Jerome received from Augustine demonstrates:

> Nam quidem frater noster Episcopus, cum lectitari instituisset in Ecclesia cui praeest, interpretationem tuam, movit quiddam longe aliter abs te positum apud Jonam Prophetam, quam erat omnium sensibus memoriaeque inveteratum, et tot aetatum successionibus decantatum. Factus est tantus tumultus in plebe, maxime

> Graecis arguentibus, et inflammantibus calumniam falsitatis, ut cogeretur Episcopus [ea quippe civitas erat] Judaeorum testimonium flagitare. Utrum autem illi imperitia, an malitia hoc esse in Hebraeis codicibus responderunt, quod et Graeci et Latini habebant. Quid plura? coactus est homo velut mendositatem corrigere, volens, post magnum periculum, non remanere sine plebe. (*PL* 22.833-34)

A change in one word is enough to cause a riot, and old error conquers once more as the poor bishop must revert to the original—erroneous—translation. In his prefaces, Jerome attempts to anticipate objections like those in Eoa before they happen, to explain to his readers that ancient error may be comfortable, but that it is not correct and should not be tolerated. J. Kelly notes that Jerome continually reminds his audience that he is "correcting...not the Lord's sayings, but the manifest faultiness of the Latin codices" (Kelly 89)[12].

I would argue, then, that Jerome translates *because* he wishes to correct the corrupt biblical translations floating about Christendom, and that he believes it is his *right* to do so because we cannot pin our faith to a corrupt text; because others, including the apostles and evangelists, translated before he did; because hidden mysteries of salvation need to be revealed; because he is particularly qualified to do so. Augustine's interpretive strategies, however, would suggest that a painstakingly translated text may not be necessary; that a corrupt translation can still be used by the church, that allegory can "emancipat[e] the exegete from bondage to the text" (Hanson "Exegesis" 450).

Augustine's *Epistola LXXI*, quoted above, also contains some of his thoughts on Jerome's translations. He is impressed with Jerome's translation of the Gospels, but asks

[12] Of course, he reminds the "bipedes asellos" of this rather bluntly (*Epistola 27* [*PL* 22.432]).

Jerome why there are discrepancies between the Hebrew codices and the Septuagint, and notes that the Septuagint, which circulates widely, was the translation the apostles used (*PL* 22.834)[13]. He then suggests Jerome give a Latin translation of the Septuagint as "in diversis codicibus ita varia est, ut tolerari vix possit, et ita suspecta, ne in Graeco aliud inveniatur, ut inde aliquid proferri aut probari dubitetur" (*PL* 22.834). Augustine is aware of the differences between the Hebrew and Greek texts, but seems quite content to place his faith in the Septuagint, not the "fountainhead" Hebrew text. His preference for the Septuagint is consistent with his thoughts on the *sitz* of words in the Christian *Leben*, that "minor inconsistencies can be overcome through faith" (Stock 195). Augustine notes in his *Confessionum* that if Moses "latine [voce loqueretur], scirem quid diceret" (3.5 [*PL* 32.811]). But knowing what Moses is saying is not enough to "overcome the deficiencies of signs" (Williams 65): "Sed unde scirem an verum diceret? Quod si et hoc scirem, num ab illo scirem? Intus utique mihi, intus in domicilio cogitationis, nec hebraea, nec graeca, nec latina, nec barbara veritas, sine oris et linguae organis, sine strepitu syllabarum diceret, Verum dicit" (*Conf.* 3.5 [*PL* 32.811]). The deficiencies of signs, even deficient signs, can, however, be overcome by *caritas*, of which Augustine writes in *De Doctrina Christiana*. Augustine suggests that translating is not enough; that Scripture would seem to contain "shameful" things; that intent, a charitable intent, is also important when interpreting; that, perhaps, it is possible to stretch one's linguistic hand to God with a corrupt text—and reach Him.

"Essentially," writes D.W.Robertson, Jr. in his translator's introduction, "*On Christian Doctrine* is an introduction to the interpretation and explanation of the Bible" (ix). According to Augustine, the first three books of *De Doctrina Christiana* elucidate

[13] "Neque enim parvum pondus habet illa, quae sic meruit diffamari, et qua usos Apostolos" (*PL* 22.834).

"modus inveniendi quae intelligenda sunt"; book four a "modus proferendi quae intellecta sunt" (*DDC* 1.1 [*PL* 34.19]). In his prologue to his work, Augustine states that "Sunt praecepta quaedam tractandarum Scripturarum" (*DDC Pro.*1 [*PL* 34.15]); while some men may receive "divino munere" and can thus "sine talibus praeceptis...se sanctos Libros intelligere atque tractare", the rest of us should not expect to be "rapi usque in tertium coelum" (*DDC Pro.* 4-5 [*PL* 34.17]). Interpretation is *work*, mental manual labor, and Brian Stock notes that in *DDC*, the "entire Christian community is envisaged...as a body of readers...[T]he purpose of reading is to permit one to ascend to a type of truth that lies beyond the reading process" (190-91). Jerome "gave the medieval scholar his text and his learned apparatus; [...] Augustine told him what his aim should be" (Smalley 23). Readers must, according to Augustine, transcend the twenty-six letters of their disobedience and build a hermeneutical, interpretative, stairway to heaven.

Book One of *De Doctrina Christiana* treats "the basic principles of linguistic signification...Augustine's explicit concern is...with language as means, as a vehicle for teaching (doctrine)" (Jeffrey 81). Things are learned by signs, and though the "form of signs may appear arbitrary, the *use* of signification is not. Signs are a vehicle, capable of variable direction, and also of being themselves mistaken for the destination toward which they are designed to move the mind" (Jeffrey 81). We are "Neoplatonic wanderers...from our homeland" (Cavadini 165), from God, and we must try not to become "perversa suavitate implicati" (*DDC* 1.4 [*PL* 34.21]). At the end of his first book, Augustine writes that interpretations of Scripture must "aedificit istam geminam charitatem [sic] Dei et proximi": charity (*DDC* 1.36 [*PL* 34.34]). Even if this interpreted

caritas is not what the author intended, the interpretation is not a "deceptive" one. The person who finds in Scripture a charitable interpretation not intended by the author is

> ita fallitur, ac si quisquam errore deserens viam, eo tamen per agrum pergat, quo etiam via illa perducit. Corrigendus est tamen, et quam sit utilius viam non deserere demonstrandum est, ne consuetudine deviandietiam in transversum aut perversum ire cogatur. (*DDC* 1.36 [*PL* 34.34])

The proper *intent* of Scripture is essential to a proper interpretation; dangerous interpretations may travel the charitable but 'un-*intended*' Scriptural road. It is possible, however, that one may find truth in Moses', or others', writings that they did not intend (*Conf.* 12.32.43 [*PL* 32.844]). This truth is to be accepted as proof of the generosity of God's gushing interpretative fountain.

In Book Two, Augustine, in regard to signs, again reminds his readers that "ne quis in eis attendat quod sunt, sed potius quod signa sunt, id est, quod significant" (*DDC* 2.1 [*PL* 34.35]). Words are signs (*DDC* 2.4 [*PL* 34.37]), but are rife with "obscuritatibus, et ambiguitatibus" that are "totum provisum divinitus...ad edomandam labore superbiam" (*DDC* 2.6 [*PL* 34.37-38]). "Per similitudines," writes Augustine, "libentius quaeque cognosci, et cum aliqua difficultate quaesita multo gravius inveniri" (*DDC* 2.6 [*PL* 34.39]). Augustine's scholastic salvation entails much reading: things are obscured either by literal or figurative signs[14], and in order to clarify these obscurities, the interpreter must read extensively (*DDC* 2.9 [*PL* 34.42]). Knowledge of a variety of languages (*DDC* 2.11 [*PL* 34.42]) will help those who need to inspect various translations (*DDC* 2.12 [*PL* 34.43]); the knowledge of animals, stones, and plants, not to mention numbers and music and other select liberal arts, is also important (*DDC* 2.16 [*PL*

[14] The word "ox", for example, can signify an animal or an evangelist (*DDC* 2.10 [*PL* 34.42]).

34.47-49]). Secular and classical methods may be appropriated because "imo vero quisquis bonus verusque christianus est, Domini sui esse intelligat" (*DDC* 2.18 [*PL* 34.49]); the Egyptians had "vasa atque ornamenta de auro et argento, et vestem, quae ille populus exiens de Aegypto, sibi potius tanquam ad usum melioren clanculo vindicavit" (*DDC* 2.40 [*PL* 34.63]). Augustine advocates

> a discriminating borrowing...[T]he incentive for so much learning is not...mere mastery of knowledge for its own sake...[but] a desire for conformity of the will of the scholar with the will of God. The true reader wants to know principally what is to be done...Distraction or misdirection on the intellectual pilgrimage is...a form of derailment and bondage. (Jeffrey 87-88)

One should not take signs for the things that they signify[15]; it is also an error to interpret signs in a useless way (*DDC* 3.9 [*PL* 34.71]). Augustine's *DDC* stacks a surplus of books in front of the knowledge-hungry Christian, but also emphasizes the "instrumentality of human beings" in the interpretation of God's word; this is *doctrina* both "human and divine" (Vessey 59). Man is enabled and expected to respond to this "exegetical call"; the "obscurities and ambiguities" need to be clarified, explained, translated, interpreted. These difficulties are "the central problem in the discovery of Christian fact" (Scott-Craig 139), and knowledge of secular discourses can help explain the obscurities and ambiguities of Scripture. How can a reader "appreciate the scriptural symbolism of the serpent if he does not know what snakes really are like?" (Markus 103).

There are ambiguities in Scripture that result from words used literally or figuratively, and if, after consulting the "rule of faith", the text remains ambiguous, it is

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[15] "Ut autem litteram sequi, et signa pro rebus quae iis significantur accipere, servilis infirmitatis est" (*DDC* 3.9 [*PL* 34.71]).

necessary to examine the content of the passage (*DDC* 3.2 [*PL* 34.65-66]). If the passage is still ambiguous after the faith and the context have been consulted, the reader can interpret the passage in "various possible ways"—assuming the interpretation subscribes to *caritas*, of course (*DDC* 3.2 [*PL* 34.67]). Augustine notes that rarely are ambiguities in the literal sense *not* solved after examining the context of the passage or by comparing translations (*DDC* 3.4 [*PL* 34.68]), but also goes on to write that the "verborum translatorum ambiguitates...non mediocrem curam industriamque desiderant" (*DDC* 3.5 [*PL* 34.68]). Figurative expressions should not be taken literally: to understand the Sabbath as "unum diem de septem, qui continuo volumine repetuntur" is to be a slave to the carnal meaning, to take "signa pro rebus" (*DDC* 3.5 [*PL* 34.69]). Augustine also warns against taking literal expressions figuratively (*DDC* 3.10 [*PL* 34.71]), and knows that a method of determining whether a word or phrase is literal or figurative must be established (*DDC* 3.10 [*PL* 34.71]).

This method, of course, is the crux of *De Doctrina Christiana*. According to Augustine, "ut quidquid insermone divino neque ad morum hostatem, neque ad fidei veritatem proprie referri potest, figuratum esse cognoscas" (*DDC* 3.10 [*PL* 34.71]). Scripture teaches nothing but charity (*DDC* 3.10 [*PL* 34.71])[16]. Things that seem "shameful" when spoken or performed by God or men "figurata sunt", and their secrets are to be removed as kernels from the husk (*DDC* 3.12 [*PL* 34.73]). Obscure and unknown signs, the excessive literality of the Old Testament writers could be explained, allegorized, "neutralized." The reader must scrutinize what is read "donec ad regnum charitatis [sic] interpretatio perducatur", but "Si autem hoc jam proprie sonat, nulla

[16] Charity, writes Augustine, is "motum animi ad fruendum Deo propter ipsum, et se atque proximo propter Deum" (*DDC* 3.10 [*PL* 34.72]).

putetur figurata locutio" (*DDC* 3.15 [*PL* 34.74]). One word can have different meanings in different passages, and "ubi autem apertius ponuntur, ibi discendam est quomodo in locis intelligantur obscuris" (*DDC* 3.25-26 [*PL* 34.79]). It is entirely possible to elicit two or more meanings from a single passage, as long as they are orthodox meanings steeped in *caritas* (*DDC* 3.27 [*PL* 34.80]). Augustine ends his treatise with a discussion of the teacher and preacher of Scripture, who are justified in using rhetoric to get their point(s) across (*DDC* 4.2 [*PL* 34.89-90]). The divine authors were both wise and eloquent (*DDC* 4.5 [*PL* 34.92]), and obscurity itself is a kind of eloquence (*DDC* 4.6 [*PL* 34.92]). At times Paul is so eloquent that "qui stertit advertit" (*DDC* 4.7 [*PL* 34.94]). Obscurity exercises and sharpens the minds of readers, stimulates the desire to learn, and converts the minds of the impious to piety or excludes them from the mysteries of the faith, but things that are not understood or hardly understood should not be set before a popular audience (*DDC* 4.8 [*PL* 34.98-99]). "Quae praecepti finis et plenitudo Legis est charitas [sic]" (*DDC* 4.29 [*PL* 34.119]): this is both the means and the end of Augustine's theory of interpretation.

Augustine's Christian community is "envisaged, potentially at least, as a body of readers...[T]he moral, intellectual, and spiritual improvement of the individual thus takes place within an aural or visual encounter with scripture" (Stock 190). The "stairway to heaven" is indeed a hermeneutical and scholastic one: the play of human language, with all of its parables and figures, requires—nay, demands—an interpreter, an exegete, a translator (M. Cameron 78). The "text and reader of scripture emerge as the chief parameters of communication. Reading is no longer one method among others; it lies at the root of our ability to acquire salvific knowledge" (Stock 197). The obscurities of

language, of figure, force the reader to work, to interpret, to translate; this exercise is good for the reader(s), is provided by God to conquer pride[17].

For Augustine, the overall doctrine is more important than the individual words; *caritas*, however, is a rather broad criterion for interpretation. Despite Augustine's claims to the contrary, intentionality "seems to be irrelevant...[A]ny interpretation which is suitable and which conforms to the standards of orthodox Christian truth is an acceptable interpretation" (Rollingson 45)[18]. Augustine would seem to "accept[] Aesop but reject[] Homer [and] Virgil" (62), and "every tree or every mast of a ship...[is] a cross, regardless of its literal context" (83). F.W.Farrar goes further, huffing in the *History of Interpretation* that Augustine's exegesis was marked by "arbitrary perversion" (236): *caritas*-based interpretations allow Augustine to open the door to "arbitrary fancy" (237). For Farrar, once the "principle of allegory is admitted...the reader is delivered bound hand and foot to the caprice of the interpreter" (238-9). His rant about the *in potentia* abuses of Augustinian exegesis expresses valid concerns about Augustine's methods. For Augustine, however, *caritas*-based interpretations are not arbitrary; if many *caritas*-based interpretations are born from one textual passage, this just proves that God's biblical fountainhead is generous, pouring forth many interpretations. One's own opinion "is not really one's own at all if it is true" (Williams 67): it is God's. Truth can

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[17] Cf. *DDC* 2.6, 4.6, 4.7, 4.31; *De Cat. Rud.* 9.13. David Dawson points out the "vicious circle: human beings have separated themselves from God and neighbor by self-seeking pride and consequently are forced to rely on signs, and yet, Augustine tells us, "in the knowledge of signs," it is "very difficult not to be proud" (*DDC* 2.13.20)" (131).

[18] For example, the saints as the teeth of the church (*DDC* 2.6): "Et tamen nescio quomodo suavius intueor sanctos, cum eos quasi dentes Ecclesiæ video præcidere ab erroribus homines, atque in ejus corpus, emollita duritia, quasi demorsos mansosque transferre. Oves etiam jucundissime agnosco detonsas, oneribus sæcularibus tanquam velleribus positis, et ascendentes de lavacro, id est de Baptismate, creare omnes geminos, id est duo præcepta dilectionis, et nullam esse ab isto sancto fructu sterilem video" (*PL* 34.38-39).

be expressed in many different ways, and the many different interpretations possible with Augustine's theory are not superfluous, but legitimate, even authorized.

Augustine knows that "plerum[] a sensu auctoris...aberrat interpres" (*DDC* 2.13 [*PL* 34.44]), and suggests the reader consult many translations to clarify what is obscure to him (*DDC* 2.12 [*PL* 34.43]). But he also insists that anyone who "insists on correct diction (*integritas locutionis*) shows nothing but vanity, for he is unmasked as one to whom the form (*signa*) matters more than the content (*res*)" (Schäublin 57). Does it matter if "ignoscere" is spoken with a long or short third syllable (*DDC* 2.13[*PL* 34.44])? If one uses "inter homines" instead of "inter hominibus" for "among men" (*DDC* 2.13 [*PL* 34.44])? "Sed tamen eo magis inde offenduntur homines quo infirmiores sunt...Ista ergo facile etiam contemni possunt, si quis ea cavere noluerit, quae sano intellectui nihil detrahunt" (*DDC* 2.13 [*PL* 34.44-45]). This idea, however, calls into question the "pains Jerome takes in his translations to preserve the *euphonia* of...traditional[] Latin" (Schäublin 57). Augustine's theory of interpretation would seem to suggest that a correctly translated text is not necessary; that a corrupt text, if you will, can also be used to elucidate the mysteries of the faith. The harshness of the Old Law and its literal precepts can be allegorized and thus "redeemed" for the children of the New Testament, the obscurities and ambiguities made plain, but Augustine's interpretive theory also potentially discards grammatical "jots and tittles" and the labors of the translator.

This, perhaps, is why Augustine seems to be permissive of the "ancient error" conquering the "new truth" in his *Epistola LXXI* to Jerome: not only are the people of Eoa comfortable with their "ancient error", it is of no consequence: gourds, ivy; they can be allegorized, (re)interpreted in an orthodox manner, if one has an eye to *caritas*. The

Septuagint, and Augustine's preference for it, can also be seen as less dangerous in this light: he writes that the translators "singuli cellis etiam singulis separati cum interpretati essent", but also that "contulerunt ut una omnium communi tractatu judicioque vox fieret, nec sic quidem quemquam unum hominem qualibet peritia, ad emendandum tot seniornem doctorumque consensum aspirare oportet aut decet" (*DDC* 2.15 [*PL* 34.46]). Augustine himself seems to allow for the possibility that the rumors of the origins of the Septuagint may not be entirely true, but throws his weight behind the "seniornem doctorumque" men. The Septuagint, though it may differ from the Hebrew codices, is still inspired, and the sharp interpreter will be able to find a *caritas*-based interpretation that will account for the "shameful" and difficult passages. Augustine suggests that interpretation and allegory are a right, a necessity: the reader must use these tools in order to reach the goal of his textual pilgrimage. Almost "every line of [the Bible] serves to remind us that it is about the people of another time and place who belonged to other kinds of societies from our own and who spoke different languages from ourselves...[The Bible is] *not about us*" (Prickett 52, 62). Allegory and interpretation allow readers to reclaim an ancient and alien textual past. Figure and shadow allow *all* people to be "the new Israelites," wherever they may live: their past is now our past; their God our God. The reader can create a text specifically his: Abraham and Isaac are *his* obedient patriarchs, and a type of *his* God and His Son. The "taboos of primitive tribes" can be "spiritualized" (Smalley 11). Only by interpreting the text properly can we become "apprentices[] in the...story of redemption" (Jeffrey 161)[19]. It is the *interpreter* that must

[19] Jeffrey is referring to "the liturgical reminders provided by the use of texts from Jeremiah" in Dante's *Vita Nuova*, ones "which in their liturgical context invite participants through an identification in Christ's sorrow (as penitents) to a fuller appreciation of his Love, and so to an apprenticeship in the whole story of redemption" (161).

grasp the pages of his salvation; the onus is on him. "The possibility of meaning on two levels," writes R.A. Markus, "gives rise to a language constituting linguistic communities on two levels" (103-4)[20]: the "literal" city of man, populated with those who cannot pierce the looking glass, and the "allegorical" city of God, composed of those who can. But what of a nation with two "levels" of language—Latin *and* Old English? What right have Alfred and Ælfric to translate scriptural, philosophical, and historical texts from Latin, the discourse of privilege, into the vernacular Old English?

In Book One of his *Ecclesiastical History*, Bede writes of the many languages of Britain and the one language that unites them:

> Haec in praesenti iuxta numerum librorum quibus lex diuina scripta est, quinque gentium linguis unam eandemque summae ueritatis et uerae sublimitatis scientiam scrutatur et confitetur, Anglorum uidelicet Brettonum Scorrotum Pictorum et Latinorum, quae meditatione scripturarum ceteris omnibus est facta communis. (I.i.)[21]

Under the unifying umbrella of Latin are gathered the "lesser" languages, those that endure throughout the kingdom, to be sure, but those also that are not quite capable of expressing profound truths. Latin is to be the language that harbors scriptural truth; the other languages must yield to it. Bede himself writes his *EH* in Latin, eschewing his native tongue in favor of the sophistication of Latin. That King Alfred should, a mere century and a half later, lament the loss of learning and Latin in his kingdom in his

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[20] Markus cites Augustine's example of "ox": "We might say that someone who understands the word *ox* belongs to a primary linguistic community...someone who understands what its signified (the ox) can mean in a further (e.g., scriptural) context belongs...to a secondary linguistic community" (104).

[21] Quote is from Colgrave and Mynors' edition, p.16. In IV, 24, Bede tells the story of Cædmon, the illiterate cowherd, and his divine gift of poetry. After quoting Cædmon's Hymn, Bede cautions his reader that he has given only the sense, not the actual words, of the Hymn, for words, he writes, lose much of their beauty in translation.

preface to his translation of Gregory's *Pastoral Care*, is startling, as Kathleen Davis notes in her PhD dissertation (4). Alfred writes that knowledge and learning have drastically declined[22], and few people "hiora ðeninga cuðen understondan on Englisc, oððe furðum an ærendgewrit of Lædene on Englisc areccean" ("could understand their service in English, or even translate a written message/letter from Latin into English") [3:14-16])[23]. The churches stand full of treasures and books, but because they are not written in English, nary a person can use or read them. Alfred vows to translate "sumæ bec, ða ðe niedbeðearfosta sien eallum monnum to wiotonne...on ðæt geðiode...ðe we ealle gecnawan mægen" ("some books, which are most necessary for all men to know...into that language...which we can all understand" [7: 6-8]). In doing so, Alfred would both restore Latin to its privileged position, allowing men to read the books they previously could not understand, *and* vault the vernacular English into a position of privilege as well, asserting by the mere act of translating that English is worthy of expressing historical, scriptural, and philosophical truths. Davis writes that

> Latin, according to Alfred, had become a language of discontinuity in England, while English had the power to unify and restore to wisdom *ealle* men "throughout England" (*giond Angelcynn*)...This project would clearly disrupt Bede's harmonious scheme of four peoples and four vernaculars united under a fifth language of privilege. The language of the English (*Anglorum*) gains by moving into the space of privilege. (K. Davis 5)

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[22] This decline in learning may have been due, in part, to Viking assaults (Frantzen 5, 7).
[23] All citations to Alfred's *Pastoral Care* are from Sweet's edition of the Hatton manuscript; to Alfred's version of Augustine's *Soliloquies* from T. Carnicelli's *King Alfred's Version of St. Augustine's Soliloquies*; to Alfred's version of Gregory's *Dialogues* from Giles' *The Whole Works of King Alfred the Great Volume 2*; to Alfred's version of *Boethius* from M.R. Godden in D.Scragg and P.Szarmach, *The Editing of Old English*. All citations are by page and line number; all translations are my own.

Alfred's translation scheme was far-reaching and effective, spawning many other translators in generations to come, who dared sully their fingers with the vulgar vernacular in the pursuit of knowledge. Old English, previously consigned to interpreting and glossing Latin texts, would be pushed from the margins of the page, from above and below the Latin letters it glossed, into the center of the manuscript page. It would not be interpreting or glossing Latin, but would stand alone to be itself interpreted. The Alfredian translation program gave birth to Old English versions of Pope Gregory's *Pastoral Care*, Gregory's *Dialogues*, Augustine's *Soliloquies*, and Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*, among other texts. Alfred, like Jerome before him and Ælfric after him, confers prefaces on his translations and those of his helpers, and by turning our eye to these prefaces, we may discover his theoretical justification for translating.

In many of his prefaces, Alfred stresses the fact that he has not only translated but *understood* what he has translated. He assures the reader in his preface to Gregory's *Dialogues* that he has "cuðlice ongiten...þæt us an God swa micele healicnesse woruld geðingða forgifen hæfð" ("truly/clearly understood...that to us one God so much greatness of worldly things has given" [141:3, 5-7]). In his preface to the *Pastoral Care*, as Huppé notes, the "fact of his long careful preparation is suggested by [his] thoughtful carefulness to name all those through whose training he was enabled to proceed on his own translation" (Huppé "Two Prefaces" 130). After he names Phlegmund, Asser, Grimbold, and John, Alfred writes that "[s]iððan ic hie ða geliornod hæfde, swæ swæ ic hic forstod, & swæ ic hie andgitfullicost areccean meahte, ic hie on Englisc awende" ("[a]fter I had then learned them [the books], so that I understood them, and so that I might translate/read them most clearly/intelligibly, I turned/translated them into English"

[7:23-25]). Alfred also stresses his translation and interpretative abilities in his preface to Augustine's *Soliloquies*, describing his search for "weorca þe ic wyrcan cuðe...be þam dele ðe ic aberan meihte" ("works that I could work/produce...the deal that I might bear" [47:2-4]) in order that he might build himself a "lænan stoclife" ("temporary dwelling-place" [47:13]) with the spiritual wood of the fathers and earn "bocland" ("bookland" [48:9]). Alfred suggests that reading and translating are not enough; in order to translate properly, the text must be *understood*. Alfred assures his readers that not only has he understood the texts, but that he understands also which texts are important to read. Unlike those who cannot read, follow the textual tracks of their ancestors, Alfred can: as he reproves ignorant judges (Asser 64) for their lack of understanding in rendering legal verdicts and scares them into the study of justice and letters, he in his prefaces presents himself as a discerning king and translator, one who is justified in doing what he does[24].

Closely related to Alfred's understanding is the possibility that his translations are inspired. He writes in his preface to Gregory's *Dialogues* that he has truly understood "gyfendum Criste" ("by the grace of Christ" [141:1]), and in his preface to the *Pastoral Care* that his bishops should bestow "ðone wisdom þe ðe God sealde" ("the wisdom that God has given" [4:3-4]), and that they translate "mid Godes fultume" ("with God's help" [7:9]). In his preface to Augustine's *Soliloquies* he prays that "se þe me lærde" ("he who taught me") will enlighten "mines modes eagan" ("the eyes of my mind" [48:1]). It is in his metrical epilogue to the *Pastoral Care* that he suggests he is part of a "textual "flow"" of wisdom, one that "can only be conveyed through the faithful" (K. Davis 100):

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[24]Cf. Martin Irvine: "Plato presented a myth of a king who would banish writing from his kingdom because texts entail the proliferation of unsupervised readings and the loss of the authority of the king's present word (*Phaedrus* 274c-275b). In King Alfred, we witness the antithesis of Plato's myth: Alfred represented himself as a king who writes" (415).

> Ðis is nu se wæterscipe, ðe us wereda God to frofre gehet foldbuendum. He cwæð ðæt he wolde ðæt on worulde forð of ðæm innoðum a libbendu wætru fleowen, ðe wel on hine gelifden under lyfte. Is hit lytel tweo ðæt ðæs wæterscipes welsprynge is on heofonrice; ðæt is Halig Gæst. Ðonan hine hlodan halge & gecorene, siððan hine gierdon ða ðe Gode herdon ðurh halga(n) bec hider on eorðan geond manna mod missenlice. (467, 469: 28-32, 1-2)
>
> ("This is now the water-ship/waters, which the God of Hosts promised as a consolation to us earth-dwellers. He said that he wished that in the world living waters would flow forth from the hearts of those who well believed in him under the sky. There is little doubt that the water-ship's well-spring/source is in heaven; that is, the Holy Ghost. Whence the holy and the elect draw from him/it, after those who obeyed God had directed him/it through holy books on this earth through the minds of men variously")

Gregory's *Pastoral Care* is the "wæterscipe", and Alfred, the translator of the "wæterscipe," also participates in the flow; he, too, draws from the kingdom of heaven, the Holy Ghost. Alfred, like Moses does the Red Sea, is redirecting these waters, so that the English nation will be sprinkled with truth and knowledge, and by way of the "flow of wisdom from...the New Testament, through the Apostles and then through generations of teachers who gained wisdom through study", Alfred will become a "legitimate source[] of wisdom for others" (K. Davis 101-102)[25]. In his metrical preface to the *Pastoral Care*, Alfred, after connecting the transmission of the work with Augustine and Gregory, inserts himself into the textual tradition and transmission of the book, *becomes*

[25] Davis continues: "Although this tradition assumes that the flow of wisdom has its ultimate source in Scripture, it makes quite clear that the transmission of this wisdom can occur only through individual interpretation and teaching" (102).

the book, writing that "Siððan min on Englisc Ælfred kyning awende worda gehwelc, & me his writerum sende suð and norð" ("Afterwards King Alfred turned/changed all of my words into English, and then sent me, his writings, south and north" [9:12-14])[26]. Alfred both metaphorically and literally participates in the transmission and translation of the *Pastoral Care*; his inspired version will also touch foreign ports and shores.

Like Jerome, Alfred also cites authorities to justify his translation program and his translations. In his preface to the *Pastoral Care*, he wonders why the wise English men of old have not translated books into their own language. He then answers his own question: they "ne wendon ðætt[e] æfre menn sceolden swæ re[c]celease weorðan & sio lar swæ oðfeallan; for ðære wilnunga hie hit forleton, & woldon ðæt her ðy mara wisdom on londe wære ðy we ma geðeoda cuðon" ("did not think that men would ever become so careless, and that learning would decline; for that desire/reason they neglected it, and believed that more wisdom would be in the land the more languages we knew" [5:22-25]). Alfred does not question their right to translate, or consider that the vernacular might be "inappropriate or inferior" (K. Davis 6), stating only that there was no need at this point in time to do so, that an abundance of languages increases the amount of wisdom in the land. Times, however, have changed, and Latin has "fallen off": there is now an acute need for translation. He mentions Hebrew, Greek, and Latin translations of the Law, noting that "ealla oðræ Cristnæ ðioda summe dæl hiora on hiora agen geðiode wendon" ("all other Christian nations have translated some part into their own language" [7:4-5]). Alfred seeks a "precedent in Scripture for his program of translation" (Frantzen

[26] E.G. Stanley notes that in the metrical preface to Alfred's *Pastoral Care*, "the book speaks...its vernacular language speaks...This preface, like that in prose, shows consciousness of the Christian tradition enshrined in *Cura Pastoralis*, written by St Gregory himself to whom the English owe Christianity, and brought here, Alfred tells us, by St Augustine of Canterbury" ("Prefaces" 355).

29), but as Huppé notes, his response to "an unstated but profound problem...the question of propriety", is "basically pragmatic" (Huppé "Two Prefaces" 128). By listing examples of translations, he implies that "translation is justified by authority" (129). Latin is never privileged as the "universal language of scripture...the Latin Bible is itself [only] a translation" (K. Davis 6). In his preface to Augustine's *Soliloquies*, Alfred also drops some authoritative patristic names (Augustine, Gregory, and Jerome), a reminder to the reader that his translation carries with it an authority, a precedent—and a promise[27]. Wisdom has flowed not only through the New Testament and the apostles, but through the various biblical translations and the church fathers as well, and Alfred partakes in this wisdom by translating, negotiating with, their words. If others can translate scripture, the Word of God, surely Alfred may incline his pen to more secular texts without fear.

Unlike Jerome, however, Alfred is not worried about differing and corrupt texts; he himself may be said to "corrupt" the texts by translating. Alfred states that people could not understand the books in the churches because they could not read Latin; the books had become, in effect, "museum pieces" (Orton 141). It is not only the language that is the problem, however: there are "foreign or scholarly references" (B. Davis 65) that the readers may not understand[28]. Accordingly, Alfred and his helpers take great liberties with the texts they translate; so many, that Janet Batley calls their work a "transformation" rather than a translation (Bately 13). In his prefaces to the *Pastoral Care* and the *Consolation of Philosophy*, Alfred writes that he translates "hwilum word

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[27]Alfred mentions "þam ecan hame ðe he us gehaten hefð þurh sanctus Augustinus and sanctus Gregorius and sanctus Ieronimus, and þurh manege oððe halige fædras" ("the eternal home which He has promised us through Saint Augustine and Saint Gregory and Saint Jerome, and through many other holy fathers" [47:14-16]).

[28] "Alfred," writes Bruce Davis, "wanted to reach as many of the people in his kingdom as he could. To this end he made additions and omissions...in order to hold the reader's attention and to place a minimal requirement on the reader...Alfred wrote for the common man" (65).

be worde, hwilum andgit of andgi[e]te" ("at times word-for-word, at times sense-for-sense" [7:19-20; 164:2-3]). More specifically, he explicates "names and places of Boethius's world for readers who would have been unfamiliar with them" (Frantzen 48); in the *Pastoral Care* he "does not shrink from repetition, or from adding explanations and parallels to make the meaning clearer" (Whitelock 79); he "tries to clarify what he apparently thought vague, indefinite, or simply too abstract" (W. Brown 669). In doing so, he is "making the scholarship of the Latin tradition available to readers who knew no Latin" (Godden 106). Arguably, Alfred is not translating Scripture but historical, philosophical, and patristic works, and thus has some "translational latitude" in ensuring that his readers, like he, *understand* the texts they are reading. The need for people to reclaim the lost Latin wisdom, to understand the texts, allows Alfred to create a new text. Unlike Jerome, Alfred would see a corrupt text as not a falsification, but necessary for understanding. If readers cannot understand the texts they read, the texts are of no use to them. If the texts are necessary for the readers' education, possibly salvation, the text must be *made* understandable: in some cases, man can *only* stretch his hand to God with a "corrupt" text. Perhaps the most ancient books do *not* lose their authority in transmission (D. Brown 36): they gain their authority by translation, textual transmission. Jerome's slavishly literal translations create a "fountainhead" biblical text that readers can rely on, but Alfred's liberal renderings of slightly more secular works provide texts that readers can understand, can apply to their own lives.

Being a king who both understands the texts he translates and is possibly inspired to do so, in translating "bec, ða ðe niedbeðearfosta sien eallum monnum to wiotonne" ("the books which are most necessary for all men to know" [7:6-7]), Alfred is asserting

that "a king may become an instrument in the salvation of his people...[H]e demonstrates his consciousness of the spiritual needs of his people" (Stanley "Prefaces" 355). Alfred, like Gregory, translates and writes "to lare and to byrne eallum þam þe Godes willan wyrceað" ("for instruction and example to all who work the will of God" [141:27-29]). In translating the *Pastoral Care*, Alfred translates a "rule containing the guidelines for the daily life of a religious community" (B. Davis 42), one that was widely copied and circulated. The *Pastoral Care* is a

> treatise[] about ruling, about the obligations of the ruled and the ruler. Many commentators have noted Gregory's...insistence upon the heavy responsibilities that weigh on those entrusted with the care of souls and the concerns of government. The authority carried by the ruler...stems from his moral worthiness [...]. Gregory...stress[es] the importance of learning as a necessary ingredient in the make up of the ruler. (B. Davis 43)

It is Alfred's responsibility to ensure that the souls of the people in his country are on the right track, and it is therefore right and necessary for Alfred to translate the *Pastoral Care*, and other books, for his people. It is necessary that they learn scriptural, historical, philosophical truths, and that they contemplate them so that they may "bocland...geearnige" ("earn...bookland" [48:9]). Alfred sees the abandoned path of wisdom in his preface to the *Pastoral Care*, and knows that though others may not, he *is* able to follow it, and in doing so, he allows and equips others to follow him on the path of wisdom. In his preface to Augustine's *Soliloquies*, he specifically asks others to follow him on this path: "Forþam ic lære ælcne ðara þe maga si and manigne wæn hæbbe, þæt he menige to þam ilcan wuda þar ic ðas stuðansceaftas cearf, fetige hym þar ma...þat he

mage windan manigne smicerne wah, and manig ænlic hus settan" ("Therefore I advise every one who is able and has many wains, that he disturb the same wood where I cut down the stud-shafts, there fetch more for himself...so that he may wind many a beautiful wall, and establish many a noble house" [47:6-10]). This is why "we" must translate books most necessary for all men to understand; "bocland" is a communal project and goal, initiated by he who possesses the understanding and the responsibility to use it.

Bookland, wisdom, literacy: these are the key(s) to God (Wormald 107)[29], to salvation, and this is why Alfred's translation project is so important. People are unable to follow the tracks of their forebears,[30] the written tracks of writing across the page, and must regain their "tracking skills" in order to gain access to the wealth they are unable to use (Orton 147). The tracks, tracts, lead to God, are the tracks *of* God, and translation therefore

> does not deviate from, but participates in...exegetical flow. Such transmission is not only legitimate, but is a required activity, since access to God or wisdom is not direct, but must be gained through...books, which in turn require wise teachers and mediators...This constant need for teaching and informed mediation is the logic that authorizes Alfred's educative and translation program, and makes sense of his claim that renewed learning is required for the sake of individual, as well as national, salvation. (K. Davis 103)

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[29] Wormald writes that "what Alfred sought to inspire in his judges was what he had fought so painfully to acquire for himself, namely the wisdom of Solomon, the wisdom that came simply from the ability to read, and thus to familiarize oneself with the Word of God" (107).

[30] In the preface to his *Pastoral Care*, Alfred writes: "Her mon mæg giet gesion hiora swæð, ac we him ne cunnon æfterspyrigean, & forðæm we habbað nu ægðer forlæten ge ðone welan ge ðone wisdom, forðæmðe we noldon to ðæm spore mid ure mode onlutan" ("Here men may yet see their track, but we cannot follow it, and have now therefore forsaken both the wealth and the wisdom, because we would not bend our mind to the track/trail" [5:15-18]).

Alfred translates into English texts previously only available in Latin and Greek, asserting that English can express these truths as well as Latin and Greek can. Dorothy Whitelock points out that by the end of Alfred's reign, a man had access to works of ancient history and the history of the church, the history of his own people, ethics and religious morality, theology, stories of saints and much more (98); the authority and truths of these works are now associated with the English vernacular (K. Davis 69). Alfred's goal may have been to "place[] the vernacular in the service of Latin Christianity" (Stanley 355), but in effect, his translations and the changes he makes to the source texts place the Latin Christian, philosophical, and historical tradition in the service of the vernacular.

In his prefaces, Alfred connects his translation task with the fallen state of learning in his kingdom, as Jerome had connected his with the corruption in biblical texts. Alfred implies that he is qualified to translate, has a right to do so, because he has *understood* the texts, and suggests that he may be inspired, a source of exegetical flow, both metaphorically and literally. Like Jerome, he also justifies his translations with authorities, the translations of others. The fact that people cannot read or understand the Latin texts in his kingdom causes him to create texts that they can read and understand, even ones that are altered substantially from the originals. Because bookland, wisdom, is the key to God and required for salvation, Alfred becomes an instrument of salvation for his people. For Alfred, it is the "function of the finished product" rather than the procedure that is important (Bassnett-McGuire 51). His secularly sacred translation program, aimed at promoting the revival of Latin and learning, would end up vaulting the vernacular into the privileged position, and would pave the way for Ælfric, who would

begin to translate not only patristic and other works, but the sacred word of God into the English vernacular.

Although Alfred's translation program had helped revive learning, there was still much to be done in Ælfric's time. Ælfric also deplores the loss of learning in Anglo-Saxon England, and embarks on a program to combat this loss as well. James Hurt calls Ælfric's program "a survey of universal history," as he "compos[es], adapt[s], and translat[es]" basic teachings of the church, saints' lives, homilies, select portions of the Bible, and educational books such as his *Grammar* and *Colloquy* (33). As Alfred's program was secularly sacred, Ælfric's is sacredly secular, designed mainly for men of the church—and laymen. There are those "qui hanc norunt tantummodo locutionem" (*Pref.HomI* 107:5-6)[31], who know not any Latin. Ælfric regrets that these unlearned men "ne cuþon ne næfdon þa godspellican lare on heora gewritum, buton þam mannum anum ðe Leden cuðon, and buton þam bocum ðe Ælfred cyning snoterlice awende of Ledene on Englisc" ("knew not nor had not the evangelical teachings among their writings, except those men only who knew Latin, and those books excepted which king Ælfred wisely turned from Latin into English" [*Pref.HomI* 2:11-15]). He also notes in the Old English preface to his *Grammar* that

> Godes þeowum and mynstermannum georne to warnigenne, þæt seo halige lar on urum dagum ne acolige oððe ateorige, swa swa hit wæs gedon on Angelcynne nu for anum feawum gearum, swa þæt nan Englisc preost ne cuðe dihtan oððe

[31] Citations to Ælfric's Old English preface to *Lives of the Saints* are from Skeat's edition; to Ælfric's Old English prefaces to his first and second series of homilies from Thorpe's *The Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church*; to *On the Old and New Testament* from Crawford's *The Old English version of the Heptateuch, Ælfric's Treatise on the Old and New Testament, and his Preface to Genesis*; to his Latin prefaces to his first and second series of homilies, his *Grammar*, his *Lives of the Saints*, his *Life of St. Thomas*, and his Old English prefaces to his *Grammar* and *Genesis* from Wilcox's *Ælfric's Prefaces*. Citations are by page and line number. All translations are my own.

> asmeagean anne pistol on Leden, oð þæt Dunstan arcebisceop and Aðelwold bisceop eft þa lare on munuclifum arærdon. (115-116: 18-23)
>
> ("God's servants and monastery-men must zealously take care, that holy lore in our day does not grow cold or fail, as happened among the English a few years since, so that no English priest could write or understand a letter in Latin, until Archbishop Dunstan and Bishop Æthelwold again established/raised learning in monastic life.")

Ælfric is well aware of the dangers of another lapse in learning, and he, like Alfred, Æthelwold and Dunstan, will attempt to fasten learning and Latin to the minds of the Anglo-Saxon monk and layman. Like Jerome and Alfred, Ælfric does not take his right to translate for granted, especially his right to translate the scriptures. In his Old English *and* Latin prefaces, Ælfric at times expresses the theoretical justifications for translation of Jerome and Alfred, but, more than his two predecessors, he demonstrates an uneasiness in regards to translation into a vernacular language. Ælfric also connects more intimately his acts and right of translation with interpretation, and the relationship between learning and salvation—and the lack of learning with the fire and brimstone of the alternative.

Ælfric, like Alfred, stresses the agency of God in the translation task. In his Latin preface to his first book of homilies, he writes that he hopes he translates "Dei gratia" (108:34); in the Latin preface to his second book of homilies, he records that "festinavimus hunc sequentem librum, sicuti Omnipotentis Dei gratia nobis dictavit" (111:7-8).[32] He trusts that the idea to translate occurred to his mind through God's grace,

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[32] According to Gregory, those who wrote scripture are only pens in the hand of the Holy Ghost (*Pref. Mor.Lib.* [*PL* 75:517]).

and that he undertakes the task "on Gode truwiende" ("trusting in God" [*Pref.HomI* 2:15-16]). Ælfric knows that others may be more learned than he, but "God geswutelað his wundra þurh ðone þe he wile...paulus se apostol cwæð, "We sind Godes gefylstan," and swa ðeah ne do we nan þing to Gode, buton Godes fultume" ("God reveals His wonders through whom he will...Paul the apostle said, "We are God's assistants," and yet we do nothing for God without the help of God" [*Pref.HomI* 8:3-4, 7-9]). Moses himself wrote as God directed (*On OT/NT* 21:128-130), and the Holy Ghost "ealle þing geliffæst...he mid his gife ealle þa englas onliht, þe eardiað on heofenum, & ealra manna heortan, þe on middanearde libbað, þa þe rihtlice gelifað on þone lifiendan God" ("brings to life all things...he with his grace enlightens all the angels, who dwell in heaven, and the hearts of all men, who live on middle-earth, who rightly live/believe in the living God" [*On OT/NT* 17:41-44]). Ælfric, like Alfred, participates in the flow of wisdom, the inspiration drawn from the kingdom of heaven. His assertions that his texts are inspired speak to their orthodoxy and their relevance to the life of the monk and layman. There are books that only Christ can open (Rev. 5:1-5), and the book of Ælfric's heart, the ink of his pen, have clearly been opened and flow by and through the grace of Christ. *Ergo*, Ælfric's entreaties that his texts not be perverted, and transcribed correctly[33] connect with the demand of John in Revelation that nothing be added to or taken away from his book (Rev. 22:18-19). Ælfric's inspiration, and the fact that his texts, and proper interpretation in general, are necessary for salvation give him the right to demand what John had

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[33] See *Pref.HomI Latin* (107-8:33-4); *Pref.Liv.Saints OE* (121:32-34); *Pref.HomI OE* (110:86-91); *Pref.HomII OE* (112:15-20); *On OT/NT* (75:1272-74).

demanded, and he bestows upon his Anglo-Saxon texts, biblical translations and others, the status of the Bible, a sacred document not to be tampered with.[34]

Ælfric also appeals to various authorities to justify his translation program, and names certain other authorities that requested translations from him. In his Latin preface to his first book of homilies, he writes that he has followed "Augustinum [Y]pponiensem, Hieronimum, Bedam, Gregorium, Smaragdum, et aliquando [Hæg]monem, horum denique auctoritas ab omnibus catholicis libentissime suscipitur" (107:13-15). He notes in his Old English prefaces to his homilies that Alfred translated before he did (*Pref.HomI* 2:13-14), and that he has taken his homilies "of halgum godspellum, and æfter geðungenra lareowa trahtnungum hi asmeade, þæra lareowa naman ic awrat on ðære ærran bec, on ðære Ledenan forespræce" ("from the holy gospels, and I treated [them] after the expositions of distinguished teachers, the names of which teachers I wrote down in the earlier book, in the Latin preface" [2:3-6]). Ælfric observes that Jerome had translated the Bible out of Greek and Hebrew into Latin (*On OT/NT* 61:1017-19), and even mentions his own translations of biblical books and homilies (*On OT/NT* 33:442; 47:743-5). He is, like Jerome and Alfred before him, attempting to "establish[] his credibility by citing his sources" (Menzer "Preface" 18), and the authorities he names pack a heavy theological and orthodox punch. Even in his Latin preface to his *Grammar* Ælfric mentions the names of Priscian, Donatus, and Æthelwold, and the *Ars Grammatica*, in order to confer upon his little treatise the authority and "blessing" of these great men and their great works. The authority of Augustine's denial of the

[34] Benjamin Withers points out that "[t]hroughout his preface [to Genesis] Ælfric presents himself as the unwilling and "unworthy" author who professes not to be up to the task assigned by his "lord." By the end, he authoritatively establishes the originality of his own translation and substitutes it for that written by Moses" (66).

canonicity and propriety of the punishments in the *Life of St Thomas* is enough to prevent Ælfric from translating the offending passage ("Et ideo volo hoc pretermittere et cetera interpretari que in eius passione habentur" [*Pref.Thom.*122:9-10]). Augustine is here presented as a discerning and orthodox reader; Ælfric takes care to translate works sanctioned by Augustine *et al*, and he also refuses to translate works that are not, and he, too, becomes a pinnacle of orthodoxy in his refusal. Ælfric also mentions "ecclesiastical or secular superior[s]" (Wilcox 67) who request works from him, and the fact that their requests clear him of possible wrongdoing in translating:

> Non mihi inputetur quod divinam scripturam nostræ lingue infero, quia arguet me praecatus multorum fidelium, et maxime Æþelwerdi ducis et Æðelmeri nostri, qui ardentissime nostras interpretationes amplectuntur lectitando. (*Pref.Lives of the Saints* [120:28-31])

If faithful and orthodox individuals request a translation, surely their request must not be inappropriate; of course, if the request *is* inappropriate, Æthelweard and Æthelmer must share in Ælfric's wrongdoing. Not a few of his writings stem from the requests of friends, however (*St.Thom Latin* [122:9-11]; *Liv. Saints OE* [120:1-6]; *Pref. Gen.OE* [116:1-5]; *On OT/NT* [16:11-16]). By aligning himself with orthodox authorities and those venerable people who requested works of him, Ælfric justifies and validates his right to translate, and presents himself as in line with orthodox doctrine.

One of Ælfric's main reasons for translating is the error he has seen in Old English books, the heresies that may be snaking their way through the letters of the texts now circulating: "ic geseah and gehyrde mycel gedwyld on manegum Engliscum bocum, þe ungelærede menn þurh heora bilewitnysse to micclum wisdom tealdon" ("I have seen

and heard much error in many English books, which unlearned men, through their simplicity, have thought great wisdom" [*Pref.HomI* 2:8-11]). In his Latin preface to his first book of homilies, he writes that he has translated sense for sense and not word for word, "cavendo tamen diligentissime deceptivos errores, ne inveniremur aliqua heresi seducti seu fallacia fuscati" (*Pref.HomI* 107:10-12). While he does mention the historical errors of scribes and translators ("duos imperatores sive cesares...sicut in Latinitate legimus" [120:17-18]), implore scribes to transcribe his book correctly, and threaten that the "soul of the erring scribe will be held accountable at the Day of Judgment for any who are led astray through scribal error" (Wilcox 70)[35], his main concern is not with errors of *translation,* but errors regarding the *interpretation* of texts. "[M]ulta subtilia," Ælfric writes in his Latin preface to *Lives of the Saints*, "habentur, que non conveniunt aperiri laicis" (119:12-13). It is in his *Preface to Genesis* that he most overtly relates the possible profound dangers of misinterpretation:

> ...ic ondræde, gif sum dysig man ðas boc ræt oððe rædan g[e]hyrþ, þæt he wille wenan þæt he mote lybban nu on þære niw[an] æ, swa swa þa ealdan fæderas leofodon þa on þære tide ær þan þe seo ealde æ gesett wære, oþþe swa swa men leofodon under Moyses æ. Hwilon ic wiste þæt sum mæssepreost, se þe min magister wæs on þam timan, hæfde þa boc Genesis, and he cuðe be dæle Lyden understandan; þa cwæþ he be þam heahfædere Iacobe, þæt he hæfde feower wif,

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[35] In his preface to *HomI*, Ælfric writes: "Nu bidde ic and halsige, on Godes naman, gif hwa ðas boc awritan wylle, þæt he hi geornlice gerihte be ðære bysne, þe-læs ðe we, þurh gymeleasum writerum, geleahtrode beon. Micel yfel deð se ðe leas writ, buton he hit gerihte, swilce he gebringe ða soðan lare to leasum gedwylde: forði sceal gehwa gerihtlæcan þæt þæt he ær to woge gebigde, gif he on Godes dome unscyldig beon wile" (2:15-22) ("I now ask and implore, in the name of God, that if anyone will transcribe this book, he zealously correct it by the copy/example, lest we, through negligent writers, be blamed. He does much evil who writes false, unless he correct it, as though he bring the true teaching to false heresy: therefore every one should put right that which he before bent to error, if he will be guiltless at God's doom").

> twa geswustra and heora twa þinena. Ful soð he sæde, ac he nyste, ne ic þa git, hu micel todal ys betweohx þære ealdan æ and þære niwan...We secgað eac foran to þæt seo boc is swiþe deop gastlice to understandenne, and we ne writaþ na mare buton þa nacedan gerecednisse. (116-117: 7-16, 41-43)
>
> ("I dread that, if some foolish man reads or hears read this book, that he would think that he could live now under the New Law, just as the ancient fathers lived in that time before the Old Law was established/set down, or as men lived under the law of Moses. At one time I knew that a certain priest, who was my teacher at that time, had the book of Genesis, and he could understand some Latin; he said concerning the patriarch Jacob, that he had four wives, two sisters and their two handmaids. He said the full truth, but he did not know, nor I then yet, how great a distinction there is between the Old Law and the New...We say beforehand also that this book is very deep in spiritual understanding, and we write no more than the naked narrative")

Error, a misinterpretation, can lead men astray, especially ignorant laymen. Readers, hearers, *must* understand the difference between the Old and New Dispensations, the Old and New Testaments: their very salvation relies upon this distinction. Timothy Gustafson correctly points out that Ælfric fears both excessive literalism and allegory in his *Preface to Genesis* (154), and he therefore

> preface[s] Genesis with...theological explanation[s]...that demonstrate[] the profound spiritual level of the text and a brief introduction to typological reading...[T]hey make such an audience aware that allegorical explanations exist for any unusual or difficult passages encountered at the same time that they

remind them that they are not qualified to attempt such readings. (155)[36]

Ælfric's *On the Old and New Testament* also is, among other things, an exercise in typology[37], a treatise that shortly but capably explains many basic tenets of the Christian faith and the bare bones of the biblical narratives. Ælfric deftly and straightforwardly guides his Anglo-Saxon readers through a variety of typological interpretations and literal, historical facts, even relating Judith's situation to the current Anglo-Saxon one ("ge eower eard mid wæpnum beweriæn wið onwinnende here" "you may also protect your homeland with weapons against an attacking army" [48:778-780]). Ælfric must ensure that readers are easily and properly able to interpret the texts they read; he must make it easier for them to understand.[38] Ælfric's "translation" of a text, even of Genesis, must therefore be less a *translation* and more an *interpretation*, or interpretative translation. Because of this, Ælfric, like Alfred, will insist that a "corrupt" text is not necessarily a falsification, but necessary for understanding. It is his duty to edify the simple (*Pref.HomI Latin* 107:5), to enlighten and inform in the faith through reading (*Pref.Lives Saints Latin* 119:2-3)—and hearing—the unlettered, the unlearned.

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[36] Ælfric writes: "Be þisum litlum man mæg understandan hu deop seo boc ys on gastlicum andgite, þeah þe heo mid leohtlicum wordum awriten sig" ("By these little things a man may understand how deep this book is in spiritual meaning, although it is written with easy-like words" [118: 70-72]). He writes of Joseph: "Iosep...hæfde Cristes getacnunge" ("Joseph...had Christ's type/signification" [118: 73-75]).

[37] For example, "Adam tacnode, þe on ðam sixtan dæge isceapen wæs þurh Gode, ure Hælend Crist, ðe com to ðissere weorulde [&] us edniwode to his licnysse. Eua tacnode, þe of Adames sidan God sylf wrohte, Godes gelaðunge, ðe of Cristes siden syððan wearð acenned his sylfes agen bryd mid his blode aðwogen" ("Adam, who was created on the sixth day by God, betokened our Saviour Christ, who came to this world and restored us to his likeness. Eve, who God Himself made of Adam's side, betokened God's church, who was afterwards brought forth, His own self's bride, baptized with his blood" [22-23:16676]).

[38] Benjamin Withers notes that "in his specific examples of misinterpretation, Ælfric...significantly alters the nature of the problem...priests run into difficulty not because of English translation but because they understand the Latin imperfectly....the partial understanding of Latin books replaces a concern for English translation as the present and principal danger" (61).

Because of the nature of his task, therefore, Ælfric is not concerned with textual accuracy and integrity[39], but theological reliability (J.Hill 180). Timothy Gustafson notes that Ælfric "explicitly privileges avoidance of error over the integrity of the text" (159), even asking Archbishop Sigeric to "corrigere" any "maligne heresis aut nebulose fallacie," should Sigeric find any in Ælfric's first book of homilies (108:37-38). Ælfric takes many liberties with the texts he translates: he, "concerned with the needs of his audience...strives to simplify and clarify narrative and exposition...[and] tries to make the moral content of the material as clear and unambiguous as possible" (Hurt 94)[40]; he paraphrases (Nichols 223); in his books of homilies he makes "additions and, when translating a narrative represented in multiple Gospels, collat[es]" accounts (Bedingfield 14); in his translation of Genesis he omits and compresses material, and even directs his readers to seek what he omits in the Latin version (Hurt 102). These are justified changes to the texts: in making these changes, Ælfric makes his homilies, saints' lives, and even biblical translations more accessible and understandable to the layman and churchman alike, while ensuring that certain unsuitable passages are not shown to the laity. "Mycel yfel deð seðe leas writ" ("He does great evil who writes false" [*Pref.HomI* 8:12-13]), but Ælfric is not writing false, but translating true, guiding with his pen his readers to the true doctrine, one that they are able to understand. The devil may look and act like God Almighty (*Pref.HomI OE* 6:6-9), and out of the Good Book may come bad readings, but

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[39] While Ælfric takes many liberties with the texts of others, he is *very* concerned with the textual accuracy and integrity of his own texts: "Ic bidde nu on godes naman gif hwa þas boc awritan wille / þæt he hi wel gerihte be þære bysne and þær namare betwux / ne sette þonne we awendon" ("I ask now in God's name if anyone will translate this book, that he will well correct it by the example and set no more therein than we translated" [*Pref. Lives Saints* 6:74-76]).

[40] Hurt continues, noting that in *Catholic Homilies* I.XXII, in "translating Acts 2:14-35, he omits parts of verses 17, 19, 33, and 34, and all of verses 18 and 20 through 31; and the result, a speech of Peter's, is pointed and effective, gaining power through its relative brevity" (94).

Ælfric will attempt to ensure that his translations will guide readers to the correct, orthodox interpretation of the text at hand.

Ælfric has a right to tamper with the texts because learning, reading, and interpreting are the keys to salvation, to our own security. Melinda Menzer writes that as "dangerous as it may be to allow people to read the Old Testament themselves, it is worse if they do not read the Old Testament at all...Ælfric has a Christian obligation to bring the texts to others" ("Preface" 38). Ælfric himself knows that "Ure Drihten bebead his discipulum þæt hi sceoldon læran and tæcan eallum þeodum ða ðing þe he sylf him tæhte" ("Our Lord commanded his disciples that they should teach and instruct all people the things which he himself taught to them" [*Pref.HomI OE* 6:20-22]), and that he sent them abroad into all towns (*On OT/NT* 55:908), and Ælfric must also instruct and teach people as he is able. "Ælcum men gebyrað" ("It behoves all men"), writes Ælfric in his Old English preface to his *Grammar*, "þe ænigne godne cræft hæfð, þæt he ðone do nytne aðrum mannum and befæste þæt pund, þe him God befæste, sumum oðrum men" ("who have any good craft, to make it useful to all men, and to entrust to other men that pound which God entrusted unto him" [115:6-8]). The texts Ælfric translates have the ability to arouse a languishing faith (*Pref.Lives Saints Latin* 119:14) and "trymmincge þam towerdum mannum" ("to confirm the faith of future men" [*Pref.Lives Saints OE* 6:52]); he writes his *Lives of the Saints* "mannum to getrymminge and to munde us sylfum / þæt hi us þingion to þam ælmihtigan gode / swa swa we on worulde heora wundra cyðað" ("to encourage men and so that we be mindful of ourselves, that they [the saints] intercede for us with Almighty God, even as we make known their miracles in the world" [*Lives Saints OE* 6:71-73]). Both reader and writer benefit from the translated texts,

which can also show how "ure Hælend Crist ure yfel gebette, swa swa ðeos racu hæræfter sæð us" ("our Saviour Christ bettered our estate, as this treatise hereafter tells us" [*On OT/NT* 21:124-126]).

Ælfric's translations and interpretations are more closely connected with salvation in his Old English preface to his first book of homilies, where he writes that "men behofiað godre lare swiðost on þisum timan þe is geendung þyssere worulde" ("men have need of good teaching, especially at this time, which is the ending of this world" [2:17-18]). Those who cannot read or interpret properly will perish, but "[g]ehwa mæg þe eaðelicor ða toweardan costnunge acuman, ðurh Godes fultum, gif he bið þurh boclice lare getrymmed; forðon ðe þa beoð gehealdene þe oð ende on geleafan þurhwuniað" ("[e]veryone may the more easily withstand the future temptation, through God's help, if he is strengthened through book learning, for they shall be preserved who remain in faith to the end" [4:7-10]). Ælfric later repeats some of the Lord's commandments to warn the unrighteous, writing that "[f]or swylcum bebodum wearð me geðuht þæt ic nære unscyldig wið God, gif ic nolde oðrum mannum cyðan, oððe þurh tungan oððe þurh gewritu, þa godspellican soþfæstnysse þe he sylf gecwæð, and eft halgum lareowum onwreah" ("[f]rom such commands it seemed to me that I would not be guiltless before God, if I would not reveal to other men, either through tongue or writings, the gospel truth, which he himself spoke, and afterwards revealed to holy teachers" [6,8:33-5, 1-2]). "[We] geearnion þæt ece lif þurh his weorces fremminge" ("We may earn that eternal life through the performance of his work" [8:6-7]): this refers to both the translator-teacher and the reader, who must perform their interpretive duties in order to be of the elect. With a nod to Augustine, Ælfric writes that grammar, reading, interpretation are the "cæg

ðe ðæra boca andgit unlicð" ("key that unlocks the meaning of the books" [*Grammar OE* 115:3-4]), for

> ðurh lare byð se geleafa gehealden and ælc man, ðe wisdom lufað, byð gesælig. And se ðe naðor nele ne leornian ne tæcan, gif he mæg, þonne acolað his andgyt fram ðære halgan lare and he gewit swa lytlum and lytlum fram Gode…hu mæg se geleafa beon forðgenge, gif seo lar and ða lareowas ateoriað? (115:12-17)
>
> ("through learning is faith held, and every man who loves wisdom is happy; and he who will neither learn nor teach, if he can, then his meaning grows cold toward holy lore and he departs little by little from God…how may faith be forth-going, if learning and teachers fail?")

Or, to put it more bluntly, if "þu nelt witan & beon gewissod her, þu scealt leornian ðær þe laþre bið on egeslicum witum" ("if you will not know and be guided here, you will learn where there is more hateful things, in horrible torments" [*On OT/NT* 71:1202-03]): in hell. Ælfric's book-learning, Alfred's bookland: these are protection, salvation. Menzer writes that

> [g]rammar unlocks the *andgit* of a particular text, but grammar is *andgit* itself, knowledge that must be passed on from one teacher to the next in order to maintain Christian belief. Finally, grammar serves to increase the *andgit* of a person's soul, the ability to understand texts and become a better Christian…By providing his readers with the ability to read English-language texts safely, Ælfric makes English a legitimate language for religious discourse[.]
>
> (Menzer "Ælfric's *Grammar*" 645)

Ælfric, in effect, writes his readers into the kingdom of heaven. While the readers must perform their interpretative task properly, Ælfric makes it easier for them to do so by modifying the texts, ensuring that the proper interpretation is easy to grasp. Because the salvation of his readers depends upon a clear text, he has a right and duty to do this.

Ælfric's vast corpus of translations, the fact that he "produced the largest, most impressive body of Bible translation in Old English" (Hurt 103), suggests that he was confident that Old English could express profound theological and scriptural truths. He is able to find equivalent Old English words for Latin ones, and he sometimes translates Old English and Latin passages side by side[41]. His blatant changes to biblical and patristic texts and his belief that he must translate so that people can understand, in simple language, the many and various words of God, would suggest that he, while not being entirely comfortable with, is at least reconciled to, translation into the Old English vernacular. Bruce Davis notes that Ælfric has an "almost obsessive fear of mistranslating scripture"(51)—and not only scripture, but any religious text. Davis quotes some of Minkoff's findings that Ælfric, when translating from the *Heptateuch*, "translated as literally as possible even retaining Latin word order in the Old English if [it] was at all possible" (51)[42]. Ælfric's promise in his Latin preface to the *Lives of the Saints* that he not "plura...scripturum hac lingua, quia nec convenit huic sermocinationi plura inseri, ne forte despectui habeantur margarite Christi" (119:9-11) is related to his thought, in the same preface, that there are some things not suitable to be shown to the laity. What

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[41] For example, in his *Preface to Genesis*, he writes: "Seo boc ys gehaten *Genesis*, þæt ys "Gecyndboc'...He onginð þus: *In principio creavit Deus celum et terram*; þæt ys on Englisc, 'On annginne gesceop God heofenan and eorþan.'" ("This book is called Genesis, that is "Origin-book"...It begins thus: [...]; that is in English, 'In the beginning God created the heaven and earth'" [117:44-49]). Cf. *On OT/NT* 69:1159-60; 71:1199-1202; *Pref.Gen* 117:55-57).

[42] For the Vulgate "Nec ultra vocabitur nomen tua Abram, sed appelaberis Abraham," the *Heptateuch* has "ne ðin nama byð geciged heononforð Abram, ac ðu byst gehaten Abraham" ("henceforth thy name is not called Abram, but you are called Abraham" [qtd. in B.Davis 51]).

Ælfric fears, of course, is not that English is not capable of carrying theological thoughts, but that his readers will misinterpret his texts, and possibly fall into heterodox, or even heretical, errors. Latin may the language of Christianity in Anglo-Saxon England, but it cannot lead men to salvation if they cannot read or understand it, or if they misunderstand and misinterpret it.[43]

Like Alfred, Ælfric insists he has a right to translate because there are men who do not understand Latin, and are therefore unable to read the words of God in their own tongue. He also associates his right of translation with the errors he has seen and heard in books, the potential for error in interpretation; consequently his right of translation also becomes a right of interpretation. Like Augustine's, Ælfric's salvation is a scholastic one. Because book learning and bookland lead men to salvation and allow them to distinguish between the real and false Christs, Ælfric is justified in correcting, translating, rewriting patristic works and the Bible. Ælfric also connects his right of translation and interpretation with his inspiration and the authority of other church doctors who have, like him, "tampered" with the words of God. His translation program is sacredly secular, making available to churchmen and laymen alike religious and theological works in a "coherent body of reliable doctrine" (Wilcox 43)[44], as Alfred's program had made available historical, philosophical, and religious works.

In Ælfric are integrated the right of translation and the right of interpretation. Jerome translates the sacred word; Augustine interprets the sacred word; Alfred both

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[43] However, the fact that many of Ælfric's works contain not one but *two* prefaces—in Latin and Old English—would suggest that Anglo-Saxon England may still be a nation with two "levels" of language, of understanding.

[44] As noted before, Ælfric mentions his own translations in *On OT/NT*, in which he "provides a complete condensed synopsis of Christian history in English, interweaved with notices about his previous writings...By incorporating an account of his own previous works in the Letter, Ælfric intends to demonstrate to Sigeweard how much biblical writing is available in English. Such listing also marks off his own reliable, orthodox body of vernacular writing from any other erroneous versions" (Wilcox 41).

translates and "interprets" historical, philosophical, and patristic texts for his Anglo-Saxon audience: in Ælfric the translation and interpretive functions are united in his recreations of biblical and patristic texts. The right and duty of Ælfric and his predecessors to interpretively translate texts provide the Anglo-Saxon poets of *Genesis B* and *Exodus* with a justification for reshaping and transforming their biblical sources. The overt, unparalleled, and sometimes heterodox changes made by the Anglo-Saxon poets to their biblical source texts are justified by the function of the changes; the ends will justify the means. The changes to the *word* of *Genesis B*, to the *sense* of *Exodus*, will poetically "rewrite" the Bible, but, in accordance with the theoretical justifications of translation of Jerome, Augustine, Alfred, and Ælfric, the poetic (re-)interpretation and (re-)creation of the Bible and patristic literature in the vernacular by poets is a *right* and a *duty*.

Chapter Two

Having investigated the rights of translation and interpretation in select works of Jerome and Augustine, respectively, and in the interpretive translations of Alfred and Ælfric, we must now determine by what right and/or by whose authority the poet-translator of *Genesis B* translates and creates. If, indeed, one can reshape and transform a biblical or secular text in order to guide the reader with one's pen to an appropriate interpretation, how far can the letter of the text be stretched? If the goal of a "recreated" text is clarity, understanding, what of *Genesis B* and its supposedly heterodox quirks: is not the poem made more veiled, more opaque for its struggling readers? Surely this unorthodox translation of *sanctae scripturae* must have a purpose; there must be a reason for its existence. Or is man simply attempting to reach God, as he did at Babel with muddy hands and a schismatic tower, with ink-stained fingers and unorthodox doctrine? Will he again "challenge...God himself...turn, paradoxically, from God even as [he] aspire[s], by [his] own devices, toward heaven" (Lee 37)? In this chapter I will address several key changes the poet of *Genesis B* makes to the biblical Genesis: the fact that Satan is enchained and cannot effect the temptation himself; that Adam is tempted first and rejects the proffered apple; and that the nature of Eve's temptation is changed. I will briefly investigate the textual history of the changes the poet makes to his source-text(s), and the significance of and reasons for the changes, and will argue that the poet "extends or transfers...control to readers by locating the real power of ethical inquiry in the act of interpretation or reading and by offering his own exegetical performance as a kind of program for his readers" (Copeland 183).[45] I will then ruminate upon what kind of "biblical" text the poet has here established, and why. The potential didactic function

[45] Rita Copeland is writing about Dante and his *Convivio*.

(Britton 66) of *Genesis B*, the apparatus of interpretation existing within and without the poem, allow the readers to interpret a potentially heterodox poem in an orthodox manner, and thus allow the poet of *Genesis B* to take many licenses with his poem. Perhaps *Genesis B* and texts like it are a challenge to man himself from God, an interpretive challenge, one that allows man to turn, paradoxically, to God even as he bows his head to a poetic page fraught with a seeming heterodoxy. If, indeed, the "Devil was the author of his own destruction" (Evans *Paradise Lost* 159), man must pen a new text—author, with the help of God, his own salvation.

The biblical Genesis narrative of Adam, Eve, and the temptation is sparse, and needs, as Brian Murdoch puts it, "augmentative exegesis" (*Fall of Man* vii), especially a poetic version. *Genesis B* begins with God's command to Adam and Eve not to eat of the fruit, and then expounds poetically the Fall of the Angels and the temptation and Fall of Adam and Eve, and ends with the first couple awaiting God's Judgment. The Old English *Genesis B* roughly covers Genesis 2:15-3:8; the poet turns these few lines of text into a poetic *tour-de-force* of over six hundred lines. A.N. Doane nicely sums up some of the major changes the poet has made to the biblical text:

> In *Genesis B* the Prohibition against eating of the Tree of Knowledge is given to both Adam and Eve[;]...the unbiblical Fall of Satan...is placed between the Creation of Man and the Fall of Man; Adam and Eve are tempted not by Satan or a snake, but by Satan's messenger who enters a snake's body; the tempter approaches Adam first, and failing, tempts Eve; Eve is tempted by being told that the command not to eat has been rescinded; Eve's tempter appears to her as an "angel of light"; [and] when she eats, Eve has an "angelic" vision.

(Doane *Saxon* 94)

As Doane also points out, many of the changes have "identifiable parallels in earlier works"; however, "identifying them is not a necessary or sufficient explanation of the origin or meaning of the poem we have" (94). There is, however, a "fine line between...stylistic license and...heretical interpretation" (Bassnett-McGuire 46), and the changes the *Genesis B* poet makes to his source-text hover precariously between the two. Martin Irvine notes that the "biblical text is polysemous and therefore necessitates multiple interpretations in many supplementary texts," but also that in "this continual proliferation of supplementary discourse, what guarantee is there for true, orthodox, interpretations?" (265). The more words one uses to attempt to flesh out the bare bones of a biblical text, or any text, the greater the chance those words will lead one into Augustine's potentially perverse field of interpretation (*DDC* 1.36 [*PL* 34.34]). The poetic biblical siren song may attract and educate the faithful, but may also lure the prowling Grendels to the harped Heorotic Eden of *Genesis B*, those intent on destroying the beautiful, hopeful noise of a newly born land. Fitting it is, then, that the interpolated *Genesis B* opens with the voice of God and His command to both Adam and Eve, and the reader outside the artistic frame, not to eat of the tree, and that Satan, "whose rebellion was a vocal gesture only" (Doane 133), will also make his voice heard in order to wend the first couple from their way. Like Grendel stalking his wastelands and slaughtering the warrior-folk, Satan roams the pages of this poetic fall, and will tempt, and cause to fall,

the first couple in an attempt to silence the voices and words inside and outside the poetic frame.[46]

But in *Genesis B* Satan does *not* tempt Adam and Eve; he is chained in hell ("fet synt gebundene, / handa gehæfte" "[my] feet are bound; [my] hands are fastened" [379b-380a]).[47] For wanting to "ahebban" ("upraise" [294a]) war, to set himself against the Lord, Satan is cast down, "under eorðan neoðan" ("deep under the earth" [311a]).[48] Satan cannot use his hands (368b), for "helleclommas" ("hell-fetters" [373b]) hold him fast.[49] The door of Hell is closed to him (380b-382a), and he cannot escape. God Himself has His foot pressed against Satan's neck, as a man would a snake he wishes to prevent from stinging him (384b-385a). A.N. Doane notes that Satan's "elaborate lament for his chains (371-388)...is practically an index of words for fetters and fettering" (*Saxon* 133), but also that "[a]ll this is in Satan's own words. It is not the narrator who fashions the means of bondage but Satan himself. The elaborate restraints are self-made" (134). Yowling in bondage, Satan cannot verbally unlock his chains. Indeed, it is Satan's proud words that get him into trouble in the first place: he "sohte hetespræce" ("sought hate-speech" [263b]) with the Lord; he uttered "gylpword" ("boastwords" [264a]); and again and again he "cwæð" and "gespæc" and "spræc" ("said/spoke" [265a, 271b, 294b]). But both before and after the Fall, words are all Satan has; "the only activity available to

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[46] As Susan Burchmore notes, "the stress on hell torment is linked to the poet's addition of Satan's fall to the story of original sin...[M]an's fall is a direct result of Satan's...the poet's emphasis on hell unites the poem's two fall stories and keeps Satan himself ever lurking through Paradise" (139).

[47] All quotes from *Genesis B* are from A.N. Doane's edition.

[48] "Ahof" and "ahofan" are used in the *Dream of the Rood* to refer to the raising of Christ by the cross and the lifting of Christ's heavy torment (44b, 61a), and contrast with Satan's desire to raise himself above others because he thinks he "mægyn and cræft maran hæfde" ("has greater strength and craft" [269]). Satan wants to raise himself above God and others via a "strenglicran stol" ("stronger throne" [273]) and a "godlecran stol, / hearran on heofne" ("goodlier throne, higher in the heavens" [281b-282a]).

[49] Satan had earlier boasted that he could "mid handum swa fela / wundra gewyrcean" ("work as many wonders [as God] with [my] hands" [279b-280a]). It is only fitting that for his presumption he cannot use his hands (368b-370; 380a; 388b).

Satan is talk" (Doane *Saxon* 120). Consequently, as he himself is in a prison of his own making, Satan must verbally persuade another devil to attack mankind and thwart God's plans for them.

Satan convinces a subordinate devil to undertake the temptation task, ironically invoking the Germanic bonds of loyalty and comitatus to do so:

> gif ic ænegum þegne þeodenmadmas
> geara forgeafe þenden we on þan godan rice
> gesælige sæton and hæfdon ure setla geweald
> þonne he me na on leofran tid leanum ne meahte
> mine gife gyldan gif his gien wolde
> minra þegna hwilc geþafa wurðan
> þæt he up heonon ute mihte
> cuman þurh þas clustro and hæfde cræft mid him
> þæt he mid feðerhoman fleogan meahte,
> windan on wolcne þær geworht stondað
> adam and eue on eorðrice (409-419)
> ("If I ever gave princely treasures to any thanes while we sat blessed in that good kingdom and had the power of our thrones, then he could not make requital for my gifts at a better time than now. If any of my thanes would yet be my helper, and has craft with him, he with a feather-coat might fly, go out hence through the gates, to wing his way in the sky to where Adam and Eve, newly-wrought, stand on the earth-kingdom.")

Satan's design for the first couple is clear: "þæt hie word godes / lare forlæten" ("that they forsake God's word and teaching" [428b-429a]). The subordinate devil, if he successfully completes his task, will win a seat beside Satan ("Sittan læte ic hine wið me sylfne" "I will let him sit next to me" [438a]). Eventually the tempter, who "wiste...spræca fela / wora worda" ("knew many a crafty speech, crooked words" [445b-446a]), departs in all of his heterodox glory.

According to J.M. Evans, there are a few possible source-texts for the heterodox idea that Satan was not the tempter of Adam and Eve. This idea could have been drawn from some anti-Ophite or anti-Manichaean tract. Evans notes that if, according to the Ophites and Manichaeans, Adam and Eve were created by the devil or Demiurge, and the serpent, a Wisdom or Christ figure, was responsible for leading the first couple to this knowledge, and that of the true God, "the natural line of argument against this view would be that although the tempter may have pretended to be a divine emissary he was in fact a messenger of the devil, and that although he gave Eve a vision of heaven when she had eaten the fruit that vision was a false and diabolic illusion" (5). Thus, a "strict refutation of the Manichaean concept of the Fall...would produce a version of the story very similar to that in *Genesis B*" (5). Evans does, however, find this explanation the "least likely" (5).

Evans also mentions an argument by C. Abbetmeyer and A.D. McKillop that there was some confusion between the 'descensus' literature and the 'plaint' literature, which "may have produced the notion that Satan was bound in Hell immediately after his fall, and that he was therefore obliged to use a subordinate devil to tempt Adam" (6).[50] A

[50] In the *Gospel of Nicodemus*, after the gates and locks of Hell are forcibly opened, we find: "And Satan remained in the midst and stood put to confusion and cast down, and bound with a fetter about his feet.

few New Testament verses also provide possible sources for the idea of the subordinate devil as tempter. Jude 6 ("angelos vero qui non servaverunt suum principatum, sed dereliquerunt suum domicilium, in judicium magni diei, vinculis aeternis sub caligine reservavit")[51] and 2 Peter 2:4 ("Si enim Deus angelis peccantibus non pepercit, sed rudentibus inferni detractos in tartarum tradidit cruciandos, in judicium reservari") could provide a biblical backing for a Satan chained immediately after his fall.[52] In John 8:44, Evans finds the most likely explanation ("Vos ex patre diabolo estis...quia mendax est, et pater ejus"), noting that "eius" could be either masculine or neuter, and that the phrase could be read in two different ways: "because he is a liar and his father is also" and "because he is a liar and the father of it" (Evans 6). Evans then cites Augustine and Cyril of Alexandria in order to prove that the first interpretation was current and could give "rise to the belief that the devil employed some subordinate to carry out his designs on Man" (6).[53] He completes his discussion of the possible history of the subordinate devil as tempter of Adam and Eve with the thought that there was "some patristic precedent, albeit dubious, for the conception of the devil's messenger as it appears in *Genesis B*" (7).

Patristic precedent aside, why would a poet—Old English, Old Saxon, or any other—alter the letter of the Bible in this way? What are the significance and function of

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And behold, the Lord Jesus Christ...bearing a chain in his hands bound therewith the neck of Satan, and also, binding his hands behind his back, cast him backward into Tartarus, and set his holy foot upon his throat" (p.134-135 in *The Apocryphal New Testament*). In the 'plaint' literature, Satan "bewails his fate after his fall" (Evans 6), which, of course, he does in *Genesis B* as well (ll.356-441).

[51] All Latin biblical quotes are from *Biblia Sacra* (Paris: A.C. Fillion, 1887).

[52] Cf. Revelation 20:2.

[53] Evans cites Augustine's *Hom. In Joh.*, xlii.12 ("In these words, some have imagined that the devil hath a father and have asked, who the devil's father might be") and Cyril of Alexandria's *Comm. In Joh.*, vi ("For some of the elder expositors, citing what is now before us, say that the ancient Satan who is conceived of as being the chief of all the other devils was bound by the Might of God and cast into Tartarus itself there to pay the penalty...and that some other appeared after him, coming nothing short of the abominations of his father, and they affirmed...that *he was a murderer*") (Evans 6).

the changes the *Genesis B* poet makes to the biblical text(s)? If, indeed, control is extended to readers through acts of interpretation, and the poet "offer[s] his own exegetical performance as a kind of program for his readers" (Copeland 183), what kind of hermeneutical performance has the *Genesis B* poet here constructed?

A "translation of a translation" (Overing 39), *Genesis B* is naturally attentive to the concerns of its Germanic audience. The poem itself paints a picture of heroic society, the conventions of which are applicable to heaven, earth, and hell. As Michael Cherniss points out, loyalty is one of the major themes of the poem, and "recurring motifs that center about the heroic attitude toward loyalty and the related attitudes toward vengeance, treasure, and exile serve to link the episodes in the poem securely to one another" (483). Heaven is A.A. Lee's "guest-hall", a place of thrones and castles, singing and feasting, where one should "lof...drihtnes wyrcean" ("work/perform [his] Maker's praise" [256b]) and "drihtne þancian" ("thank the Lord" [257b]) for "þæs leanes þe he him on þam leohte gescerede" ("the reward He appointed him in the light" [258a]). Lucifer/Satan, a thane who refuses to obey and worship his L/lord ("hwy sceal ic æfter his hyldo ðeowian, / bugan him swilces geongordomes?" "Why should I be subject to His favor, or submit to Him such service?" [282b-283a]), is exiled with his "strange geneatas" and "hæleþas heardmode" ("strong comrades" and "stout/hard-minded heroes" [284a; 285a]) for his disobedience. In their "dryht of hell" (Lee 14), a perversion of the heavenly dryht, Satan and his minions create for themselves a "grotesque parody of the society faithful to God" (21). The tempter of Adam and Eve, obeying his lord's request, embarks on a Germanic military expedition to fell the first couple, complete with "frætwum" and a "hæleðhelm" ("armor" and a "helm of darkness/invisibility" [443a, 444a]). All of the heroic and

hierarchal elements would be familiar to an audience fairly steeped in them, and would make an alien text, alien biblical ancestors, and an alien biblical origin more relevant and understandable to them.

So also the fact that the tempter is not Satan, and the Germanic consequences and significance of this supposedly heterodox change to the biblical text of Genesis: Satan refused to praise and obey his Lord in heaven, to render Him "þegnscipe", but ironically expects from those who fell with him exactly that. The *Genesis B* poet here "use[s] traditional Germanic social bonds and customs to help explain Christian teaching through biblical subject-matter"; "whole episodes...are interpreted in terms of the Germanic *comitatus*" (Lucas "Loyalty" 121).[54] Satan's pride "becomes the violation of the social hierarchy" (Cherniss 485).[55] This violation, the seriousness of which would be easily recognized by an Anglo-Saxon audience, makes Satan's sin(s) all the more heinous, as does Satan's request that some subordinate devil obey his behest despite the fact that Satan himself did not obey God's. Michael Cherniss observes that the "moral and ethical climate of *Genesis B* is controlled...by heroic ideals, and principally by the ideal of loyalty" (495). The subordinate devil-tempter exists to highlight for the readers the inverted and hellish logic of Satan, the essential error of his position that necessitates his proposition in the first place. The poet needs no complicated theological argument to effect this, but instead relies upon his audience's knowledge of *themselves* and their position in the grand scheme of things. In doing so, of course, the poet turns the argument from a social one into a theological one, and therein lies the beauty: the reader

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[54] Cf. Cherniss: "Just as in Germanic heroic poetry, the ideal of loyalty, of the duty of a retainer to serve his lord, is at the core...of this Christian story...God and his angels, Satan and his devils, and God and Adam are all related as Germanic lords and their retainers" (483).

[55] Cherniss is here summarizing R.E. Woolf's argument in "The Devil in Old English Poetry" (*RES* n.s. 4 (1953): 1-12).

here uses the text of his life in society as a guide, a text "inscribed within" (Irvine 269), one that can "bring home the moral consequences [of Satan's, and the tempter's] action[s] to even the most naïve or inattentive audiences" (Doane *Saxon* 151). Out of the reader's social mythology the *Genesis B* poet has created a biblical and theological one, one that reveals to the readers the fundamental mysteries of the faith and basic Christian doctrines.[56] In doing so, the poet has highlighted the act(s) of interpretation that must take place within and without the poem in order for the readers to render proper "þegnscipe" so that they reach the heavenly realm.

A.N. Doane also comments on an interpretive consequence of an enchained Satan, and the necessity for another tempter: if a bound Satan is "a theme of the *descensus*", a sign that we are now, historically, at a point *after* the Harrowing of Hell, "the notion of Satan that governs this poem is not the Satan who fell, not an Old Testament adversary of Adam and Eve, but the Satan of the sixth age, the Satan who exists now, lurking around in the present" (Doane *Saxon* 135). History and time "collapse", and there are now four actions "simultaneously unfolding" (Doane *Saxon* 135):

> the historical action, the casting down and controlling of Satan within a cosmic scheme that took place at the beginning, an action which provides the historical motivation of his feud with God and man; the typological action, the proleptic announcement of Satan's other historical defeat when he is bound by Christ at the

[56] "[D]octrinal information," notes Doane, "has been bracketed and presented as part of Satan's bad thought, perceived as he conceives and speaks it" (132). Satan fears that Adam and his kin will be granted the position he and his thanes once held in heaven ("the Augustinian doctrine of replacement" [Doane 132]), and the poet presents this as "Satan's faulty perceptions...not as *doctrine* but as an imperfectly grasped set of circumstances...the doctrine is expressed as an act of divine vengeance, carried out not to save man but to injure Satan" (132). Doane goes on to write that the "replacement doctrine is exhibited in the poem not for its direct value, but in order to illustrate the defective mentality of the devil, the sinner, the heretic" (133). This would "impl[y]...an audience sophisticated enough to recognize the gap between true doctrine and what Satan says it is" (133). As we shall see, the audience *must* see through Satan's hellish logic, his misinterpretation of doctrine and God's motives.

> Harrowing and the feud between Satan and man and between God and man is resolved; the eschatological action, announcing the final days when the Great Dragon will be enchained once and for all; and the tropological action, Satan enchained after his exposure as the symbol of the allowance of God that governs any temptation. (Doane *Saxon* 136)

This combination of past, present, and future, of "historical time and liturgical time" (136), ensures that *Genesis B* will be read as a many-valenced text, one forged textually in the fires of history, typology, eschatology, tropology and hammered so hard that the layers are inseparable.[57] The poet takes pages from the Old and New Testaments, the apocrypha, and the patristic commentaries and writings, among other things, and places them one on top of the other, creating a poem that is many-layered; read one page and read all pages, pages that reach back to the past and forward to the future, but contain all in a continuous present. As Doane points out, this also happens in the liturgy of the church: the "binding of Satan takes place again and again in the cycle of the Church year and in the sacraments, each time sin is conquered or covered" (*Saxon* 136). The poet thus does textually what the liturgical participants do verbally, and in doing so shows "Satan as he is now...already defeated by the victorious cross" (*Saxon* 137). Even Adam's response to the tempter foregrounds Satan's accomplished defeat: "Ic wat hwæt he me self bebead, / *nergend user*, þa ic hine nehst geseah" ("I know what things *our Saviour*

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[57] *Genesis B* functions much like the hilt of the sword Beowulf brings to Hrothgar after his fight with Grendel's mother [1677-1698]: engraved with the past, used in the present, indicative of the future. These layers are read "simultaneously" by the reader.

Himself commanded when I saw Him last" [535b-536b] [italics mine]).[58] *Ergo*, Satan's power, "whatever his successes...[is] temporary and passing" (*Saxon* 137).

Satan's power may be temporary, but it is still there. In positing for his audience a Satan who is already defeated, and therefore a remote relic of the biblical past, the *Genesis B* poet also posits a Satan whose "binding in Hell...really is a binding into the present", and therefore "Adam and Eve are not historically remote either, but in the same position as the audience" (Doane *Saxon* 135). The layers of *Genesis B* reach into the past, present, and future for the protagonists of the poem, but also include the reader of the poem. The reader's own fate, as a descendant of Adam and Eve, is also at stake here, and the decision of Adam and Eve regarding whether or not to eat the proffered apple is also therefore one to be made in the present (Burchmore 140). The fact that Satan is enchained at the beginning of *Genesis B*, and the implications of this, "forc[e] the reader to participate in the dilemma of the protagonists and to make significant decisions about the action" (Doane *Saxon* 141). The "moral life of the audience" (Doane *Saxon* 112) is what is at stake here; paradoxically, a chained Satan may possibly be more dangerous than an unchained Satan. Satan as tempter of the first couple would possibly (although not necessarily) keep the poem in the historical past, which would make for an interesting and orthodox biblical recapitulation, but one that would end when the last word of the poem does. Satan as enchained beast of the past, present, and future, who must send

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[58] Historically speaking, for Adam Christ has not yet come, and his use of the word "nergend" (Saviour) might seem an odd choice. However, this relates to the *Christ and Satan* poet's reference to naked men striving with worms in Hell ("hwilum nacode men / winnað ymb wyrmas" "at times naked men strive with worms" [134—135a]), which is in "defiance of narrative chronology...[I]n the linear sequence of the informing mythology man has not yet been created but, so far as the readers or listeners who are being instructed in the horrors of the satanic condition are concerned, this...poem is, so to speak, set in a timeless present" (Lee 22). The Satan of *Genesis B* may be the Satan of the sixth age, but Adam subtly reminds the tempter that the Christ of the sixth age is also therefore not far behind. All quotes from *Christ and Satan* are taken from R.E. Finnegan's edition.

another to do his will, is the Satan who can reach out of the pages of the poem and grasp the readers with his textual and verbal claws before, during, and after the reading of the poem. As a result, the audience

> is expected to make judgments, side with one set of characters and actions against a clear set of opposites...[The poet] direct[s] the audience's attention to its present moral obligations and spiritual condition...[and] forc[es] the audience to exercise correct perception and correct choice, to participate in the action of the poem...[T]he audience is a main player in the meaning of the biblically based action and is expected to complete and fulfill it in its own life[.]
>
> (Doane *Saxon* 113)

Genesis B, then, is both a warning and a remedy for its reader[59], a poem that does not allow the reader to sit idly by while the origins of sin—his sin—and its implications are discussed and commented upon. It is, in part, a call to action, a call to interpretative action: Satan, his minions, and their sin(s) must be recognized for what they are, and the reader must know what to do and how to do it when the tempter comes a-tempting.

Genesis B—in part, as a whole—stresses the act of interpretation, the proper interpretation that must take place if the reader is to escape the textual and verbal wiles of Satan and the tempter, and exit the poem alive. It is a poem that demands that its Germanic elements, its tropological layering, its necessity of involving the reader in the action at hand, be properly understood. God's words, His voice, open the poem in a verbal command textually recorded; the words of Satan and the tempter snake through the letters on the page and the ears of the protagonist and reader. The poet also speaks;

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[59] Cf. ll. 1-7 of *Exodus*, in which the poet states that the law of Moses, and by extension the words of the poem, are "bote lifes" ("life's remedy" [5]). Text of *Exodus* is taken from P.J. Lucas' edition. All translations are my own.

quietly, perhaps, but his words are a call to interpretive arms nonetheless. The poet functions at times as a "chorus to remind the audience of the motives, tensions, and implications lying beneath the surface" (Evans 120). For example, after Satan makes his presumptuous speech ("ic mæg wesan god swa he" "I may be God as well as He" [283b]) and is about to be cast into Hell, the poet notes that the punishment fits the sin ("swa deð monna gehwilc / þe wið his waldend winnan ongynneð" "And so does/makes every man who begins to struggle against his Ruler" [297b-298b]).[60] The meaning of the lines before this passage is clear: Satan strove with God, and will go to Hell for it, but this event is "commented upon despite...[its] self-evident meaning" (Doane *Saxon* 113).[61] The poet also uses words that "have traditional exegetical meaning, but one need not know patristic exegesis to understand them"; for example, "[l]ight is associated...with good, darkness with evil" (Gardner 30, 33). Before his fall, Lucifer is "hwitne" ("radiant" [254b]) and "gelic...þam leohtum steorrum" ("like...the bright stars" [256a]); God hurls Satan and his thanes into a "wyrse leoht / under eorðan neoðan" ("a worse light deep under the earth" [311b-312a]), a "sweartan helle" ("dark hell" [312b]). Satan's former brightness is hereafter spoken of in the past tense ("þe ær wæs engla scynost, / hwitost on heofne" "[he] who was before the most beautiful of angels, the brightest in heaven" [338b]). This simple contrast weaves itself throughout *Genesis B*, making the moral valence of a person or thing (potentially) clear.[62]

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[60] Mere lines into *Genesis B*, after God has ordered Adam and Eve to "forlætað þone ænne beam" ("refrain from that one tree" [235b]), the poet reminds the reader that "heo wæron leof gode / ðenden heo his halige word healdan woldon" "they were dear to God as long as they would keep his holy word" [244b-245]). The poet also notes, before Satan's fall, that Satan "lof sceolde he drihtnes wyrcean" "should have sung/worked his Maker's praise" [256b]).

[61] Doane goes on to note that "[t]his does not at all preclude a narrative subtlety that allows the audience to make its own judgments and see the processes and results of good and evil" (113).

[62] In his edition of *Genesis B*, B.J. Timmer also flags other contrasts the poet highlights, such as the contrast between devils and angels (ll. 310ff., 320ff), and heat and cold (ll.313ff) (59).

As a poem concerned with interpretation, *Genesis B* is also concerned with words: "words and The Word, divine, satanic, masculine and feminine words" (Overing 39). Satan's verbal acts are again and again highlighted, as noted before: he "maðelode" and "spræc" and "cwæð" ("spoke/said" [347a; 347b; 355b]). Satan speaks many words (355b), but "he ne wolde wereda drihtnes / word wurðian" ("he would not obey the word of the Lord of hosts" [352-353b]). Fitting it is, then, that God "acwæð hine þa fram his hyldo" ("spoke him [Satan] then from his grace/favor" [304a])—a verbal gesture by God in response to Satan's vocal rebellion, and a reminder that whilst Satan's multiplication of words will not get him anywhere, God's w/Word(s) carry with them the power to create and to destroy. Satan's error is in forgetting that he was created as an object in the grammatical sentence of creation, in "forgetting the "grammar" of his position in the heavenly syntax" (Doane *Saxon* 118): "hæfde he hine...geworhtne" ("he [God] had created him [Satan]" [254b]). A multiplicity of pronouns in the grammar of creation is *not* an excuse for a confused interpretation. The poet "does not...leave [the reader] without a guide" (Britton 68), and uses a potentially heterodox episode to ensure that his audience learns a lesson in interpretation, one that they can apply to their own lives. The reader also will be "leof gode" ("dear to God" [244b]) if he will God's "halige word healdan" ("holy word hold" [245]). We also must "lof...drihtnes wyrcean" ("work the Maker's praise" [256b]) and "drihtne þancian" ("thank the Lord" [257b]).[63]

In choosing to pen a poetic recreation of the book of Genesis in which Satan cannot effect the temptation because he is in chains, the poet of *Genesis B* forces his readers to participate in and to exercise their choice regarding their moral obligations as

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[63] Cf. the first few lines of *Genesis A*: "US IS RIHT MICEL ÐÆT we rodera weard, / wereda wuldorcining, wordum herigen, / modum lufien" ("Right is it that we praise in words the Guardian of heaven, the Glory-King of hosts, and love Him with all of our hearts/minds" [1-3a]).

revealed to them by the poem. In expressing Satan's disobedience and his need for an alternate tempter in terms of a violation of the Germanic social order, a misinterpretation of the Anglo-Saxon social mythology that becomes the backbone of the Fall in this version of the Anglo-Saxon biblical mythology; by presenting an enchained Satan who is an adversary of the past, present, and future simultaneously, and is thus as much the reader's adversary now, today, as he was Adam's then, yesterday; by insisting that the reader attend to his moral obligations and participate in the action of the poem through proper interpretation; and by creating a poem that hints at and teaches the reader how to interpret the action at hand, the poet of *Genesis B* has used a potentially heterodox episode to highlight the necessity of interpretation in the life of the Christian. Out of a seeming heterodoxy emerges doctrine and mysteries of the faith, scriptural truths and the dangers of not reading properly.

The unorthodox tempter, after escaping "þurh þa helldora" ("through the hell-door" [447a]) to "men beswican / forlædan and forlæran" ("deceive men, mislead and misteach [them]" [451b-452a]), addresses not Eve but Adam with "forman worde" ("first words" [495b]), ironically "mimick[ing] God's acts of creation and commandment" (Mintz 613). The tempter gets right to the point ("langað þe awuht, / adam, up to gode?" "long you at all, Adam, unto God?" [496b-497a]), telling Adam that he is on God's "ærende" ("errand" [497b]) and had of late "wið hine sylfne sæt" ("with Him sat" [499a]). God, apparently, wants Adam to eat "þisses ofætes" ("this fruit" [500a]), and when Adam does so, many good things will happen ("...þin abal and cræft / and þin modsefa mara wurde / and þin lichoma leohtra micle, / þin gesceapu scenran..." "thy strength and craft, and thy mind, would become greater, and thy body much brighter, thy

shape more beautiful..." [500b-503a]). "[W]aldengod," says the tempter, "sende...þas helpe of heofonrice" ("God sent...this help from heaven" [520b-521]).

As Evans points out, if the tempter "really were the emissary of God it would be natural for him to deliver his message to the man in the first instance" ("Background" 120). He finds the temptation of Adam "completely without precedent" (9), but finds a possible explanation in I Timothy 2:13-14 ("Adam enim primus formatus est, deinde Heva; et Adam non est seductus, mulier autem seducta in prævaricatione fuit"), noting that a "reader unlearned in theological commentary might have taken these verses to mean that the devil failed to deceive Adam but succeeded in deceiving Eve" (10). This unprecedented attack on Adam creates a story "both familiar and strange", in which a "new action has been laid over the familiar plot" (Doane *Saxon* 140); familiar, because the reader knows the biblical Fall story includes a temptation, but strange because it is Eve who should be tempted first, not Adam.

In rejecting the tempter and what he has to say, Adam provides for Eve and the readers outside the artistic frame an example of correct interpretation, a "paradigm of behavior" (Finnegan "Vincible" 331). Adam's temptation, a "brief mirroring of the self-temptation of Lucifer" (Finnegan "Handmaegen" 7)[64], consists of a short "verbal theological battle" (Stanley *Continuations* 43), one in which Adam prevails. Adam responds to the tempter's wily words with his own simple ones, thinking his way through what the tempter has said and responding accordingly. The tempter noted that he "gehyrde hine...ymb þin lif sprecan" ("heard Him [God]...speak about your [Adam's]

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[64] "The initial question, *Langað þe awuht, / Adam, up to gode?* (496b-97a)...contains the suggestion that he [Adam] may want to become like God, which was exactly the desire of Lucifer...If Adam eats the fruit, the Tempter promises...[...thy power and skill and mind would become greater, and thy body much more bright, thy shape more beautiful...] [500b-503a]. These are similar to those qualities upon which Lucifer ruminated, concluding that he ought to rebel" (Finnegan "Handmaegen" 7-8).

life" [507-508])[65], and Adam's first words to the tempter are also in regards to God's words: Adam also "mihtigne god mæðlan gehyrde" ("heard mighty God speak" [524]), and God told him to "his bebodu healdan" ("hold his commandments" [526a]), *not* to "þisses ofætes æte" ("eat this fruit" [500a]). For all the tempter's promises of gifts—God's gifts—that would be granted to Adam when he eats, Adam simply reminds the tempter of one of the many gifts God has already granted him: "me þas bryd forgeaf, / wlitesciene wif" ("[He] gave me this woman, this beautiful wife" [526b-527a]). The tempter reminds Adam of his obligations to God, and God's messengers ("swa þu læstan scealt þæt on þis land hider / his bodan bringað" "you must carry out what [i.e., the orders] his messengers bring hither to this land" [509-510a]), but Adam remembers that God specifically warned him "þæt ic on þone deaðes beam bedroren ne wurde, / beswicen to swiðe" ("that I be not tempted to death's beam and be utterly deceived" [528-529a]), or he would dwell in "þa sweartan helle" ("dark hell" [529b]). In about seven simple lines Adam has recalled both to himself and the tempter God's w/Word, his commandment, his gifts, and the results of disobedience. Immediately before the temptation, the poet had also taken the liberty of reminding the reader of exactly those things as well: Adam and Eve, "godes handgesceaft" ("God's handcreation[s]" [455a]), stand upon the "eorðrice" ("earth-kingdom" [454b]) that God has granted them. They stand between two trees, two choices, and "næs se wæstm gelic" ("unlike was their fruit" [466b]): one tree "wæs lifes beam" ("was life's tree" [468b]), and he who eats of the fruit of that tree "moste on ecnisse æfter lybban / wesan on worulde" ("might live after in eternity, be in the world" [469-470a]); the other was "deaðes beam" ("death's beam"

[65] Janet Ericksen notes that in "the twenty-four lines of the devil's speech to Adam, seven times the devil claims to be reporting God's words: "his ærende," "þa het he me," "het þæt þu," "cwæð þæt þin," "cwæð þæt þe," "Ic gehyrde hine, " "he þe mid spellum het" (12).

[478b]), which "bær bitres fela" ("bore bitter fruit" [479a]). The implications and consequences of the choice that will face both Adam and Eve are unveiled for the reader by the poet; he provides the information for the reader that God had provided to Adam in person.[66]

Adam goes on to say that he does not know if the tempter comes "mid legenum" ("with lies" [531]) or if he is indeed "drihtnes...boda of heofnum" ("the Lord's...messenger from heaven" [532b-533a]), even though the tempter states that he has been sent on "his ærende" ("His [God's] errand" [497b]). Adam declares that he the messenger's "bysna ne mæg / worda ne wisna, wuht oncnawan, / siðes ne sagona" ("commands cannot recognize, [his] words or ways, journey or statements" [533b]). What Adam *does* know, however, is "hwæt he me self bebead, nergend user" ("what He Himself commanded me, our Saviour" [535b-536a]): "his word weorðian and wel healdan, /læstan his lare" ("obey His word, hold it well, and carry out His teaching" [537-538b]). In fact, the messenger is "gelic ne...ænegum his engla þe ic ær geseah" ("unlike any of His angels that I have ever seen" [538b-539]), nor has he shown Adam "ænig tacen" ("any token" [540b]) by which Adam might know him as an angel of God's. Therefore, Adam "hyran ne cann" ("cannot listen to/hear" [542b]) any more of the tempter's speech, and orders him to leave (543a]).[67] Adam ends his rebuttal of the tempter by stating that

> ic hæbbe me fæstne geleafan
> up to þam ælmihtegan gode þe me mid his earmum worhte,
> her mid handum sinum. He mæg me of his hean rice

[66] J.M. Evans remarks that the narrator "relieve[s] Adam and Eve of any moral blame" but also that "although the Fall itself is softened its results are constantly highlighted" (*Paradise Lost* 165).
[67] Adam is "speaking" the tempter from his presence, much like God "acwæð" Lucifer from Heaven.

> geofian mid goda gehwilcum þeah he his gingran ne sende. (543b-546)
>
> ("I have my faith fixed fast upon Almighty God, who made me with His arms, here on earth with His hands. He may give me of every good from his high kingdom, even if he sends not his servants ["he need not send his servants"])

Unlike Satan, Adam in his final words to the tempter "acknowledges the debt which he owes his lord for the "gift" of his being—"þe me mid his earmum worhte" ["he [who] wrought me with his arms"] (543)" (Cherniss 491). God, who takes a personal, hands-on interest in His creation, need not send a subordinate to do his work, unlike the immobile Satan, who lies bound in Hell.

The tempter attempts to convince Adam that "God so loves [him] that he has taken back his easy command, but...is too busy to come down to announce this tedious business himself—therefore eat the fruit" (Doane *Saxon* 142). Adam rejects the tempter's argument because it

> defies his rational belief in God's nature and his experience of the divine operation...Adam's reply to the devil is framed with a logical and moral consistency not available to Satan's messenger...Adam recognizes...certain absolutes or axioms of reality: God's preeminence and stability, a duty to be obedient absolutely, God's love and gifts, among which was the command not to eat of the one tree...Adam, as an interpreter of God's plain word, is able to make distinctions about what lies behind commands, their inner meaning and purpose. Adam sees the command not as a mere form of words, that may be changed at will (even God's), or a mere prohibition of external actions that may be negated

> (as the devil suggests), but as a necessary moral condition, the condition of obedience, that has been granted to him as a gift. (Doane *Saxon* 142)

In pointing out the impossibility of understanding the tempter's syllogistic logic and request, the fact that the tempter's appearance is "unlike" the appearance of an angel, and the tempter's lack of a token, Adam demonstrates that he finds the tempter's words lacking, and responds correctly.[68] There are many things that Adam simply does not know (if this is an angel of the Lord; what its words mean, or its ways are; why it is unlike any of God's other angels, and what it could possibly be if it is not God's angel; why it does not have a token; why God might change His command), but he has enough information to make an informed decision about the messenger's demand that he eat the apple. What Adam does know trumps what he does not: that he is the hand-work of God's; that God commanded him not to eat of the one tree; that God has bestowed many gifts upon him; what the consequences of disobedience are; that God loves him dearly, that he is "the object of God's loving concern" (Finnegan "Handmaegen" 9)—this is all

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[68] Both A. Renoir and S. Mintz find Adam's answer to the tempter overly simplistic. Renoir writes that Adam's "refusal to listen ought not to be construed as a sign of superior intelligence. In fact, he sounds rather stupid when, after nineteen lines devoted essentially to repeating the circumstances under which he received God's original command (e.g., 523b-31a), voicing his own puzzlement at the present situation (e.g., 533b-35a), and stating his own but not exactly original conviction that snakes do not look like angels (538b-42a), he caps his argument with the simplistic conclusion, *ic þe hyran ne cann* 'I can't listen to you' (542b) and brings his discourse to an end with a mindless but very smug assertion of his faith in God...(543b-44b)" ("I.Q." 265). Renoir points out that the Old English verb "cunnan" normally means "to know" or "to know how", and writes that "it [is] tempting to imagine Adam as so puzzled by a situation which taxes the limits of his comprehension that his refusal to listen to the Tempter's argument may also be construed as an admission that he would not know how to listen to it if he wanted to" ("I.Q." 265). S. Mintz writes that "Adam cannot understand the tempter not only because he has never before seen anything like this "angel," nor because he can only operate on "signs," but because he cannot think outside of divine dictum, cannot process the rhetoric of artful logic" (613). It is only "riht micel", however, that Adam recall and repeat—for himself, the tempter, Eve, the reader—God's command, and that he also, like God, verbally banish Satan from his presence. It is especially important for Adam to assert his faith in God, for the love of God trumps all logic, and that one simple but beautiful sentence, especially coming as it does at the end of Adam's speech, single-handedly checks all of the sentences the tempter has spoken.

he need know.[69] In having Adam tempted first, the poet reveals to Eve and the reader not only what has to be done, but that it *can* be done.

The temptation of Adam, like the enchained Satan who must send another to execute his evil plan, serves tropological functions in *Genesis B*. A fettered Satan is the enemy of not only of Adam and Eve in the historical past, but of the reader in the historical and tropological present; the reader is not only in the same position as Adam and Eve, but participating in the poem as well. The "narrative confusion" that arises in the poem when Adam is tempted first, and Adam's appropriate response to the tempter, "forc[e] the reader to participate in the dilemma of the protagonists and to make significant decisions about the action" (Doane *Saxon* 141). By prefacing Adam's temptation with the discussion and description of the two trees, the poet demonstrates that the two trees "are not merely Adam's to choose between, but everybody's" (Doane *Saxon* 151). In noting that "sceolde bu witan / ylda æghwilc yfles and godes" ("every man must know both good and evil" [479b-480]), the poet "puts everybody in Adam and Eve's position of choice" (Doane *Saxon* 151): if indeed man does eat of "deaðes beam" ("death's beam" [478b]), he *will* know both good and evil; as man *will* and *has* failed the interpretive test, he needs *must* know both already. Adam is "representative of man in general" (Doane *Saxon* 279), and his response to the tempter is also potentially ours. Adam's response is tropological: "its literal meaning is veiled—whoever eats of the evil thing, the apple, thus bringing it near his heart, will hold Hell within him" (Doane *Saxon* 143). Satan enchained, Adam's temptation: these episodes present a reading of the Old Testament that has the New blazing through the narrative "cracks" the poet has here

[69] Adam's assertion that God "me mid his earmum worhte" ("with His own arms wrought me" [544]) demonstrates that he, unlike Satan, *does* know his "position in the heavenly syntax" (Doane 118)—God is the subject, and he is the object.

created. Embedded in the Genesis story are Christ's story ("nergend user" [536a]), the New Testament story, the reader's story—and the implications, consequences, and potential of all of these stories.[70] Both the potentially heterodox Satan and Adam episodes "point[] forward to the moment of history when Christ appeared, and by a kind of "historical inertia" [they] suggest[] a tropological continuation to the present" (Doane *Saxon* 111).[71] We as readers must continue the story started for us by our first parents, but to do this properly we must interpret correctly—and that is exactly what *Genesis B* is teaching us to do.

The temptation of Adam may also serve another function: it may be a vehicle for illustrating church doctrine. While the first couple was "Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall"[72], Adam's rejection of the tempter and the apple stresses Adam's correct use of his faculties and his free will—and Eve's mistakes. A.N. Doane argues that a reading of the temptation of Adam "focused on the strict sequence of events forces the audience to concentrate on the process of sinning and the issue of free will" (*Saxon* 141).[73] Adam is approached by a snake ("wearp hine þa on wyrmes lic" "he [the tempter] cast himself into the body of a serpent" [491a]), an innocent creature and neutral object; while "[t]he audience is keenly aware of both the historical significance of the snake in the Fall story and of its allegorical significance in the Christian tradition", Adam is not (141).[74] The tempter-snake then attempts to convince Adam that God has changed His command, but

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[70] J.R. Hall observes that the "use of deception to bring mankind into hell brings Christ there too" ("Geongordom" 306). The tempter does not know this, but the reader of the poem does.
[71] Doane is here writing about the *Heliand*, but his comments naturally relate to what is also happening in *Genesis B*.
[72] *Paradise Lost* 3.99.
[73] Cf. Doane in *Genesis A: A New Edition*: "[In] *Genesis B*...the story of the Fall provid[es] the occasion for an intensive examination of the nature of the will and the process of sinning" (49).
[74] Thus, John Vickrey's assertion that "to have Adam resist cajoleries from a serpent would not have reflected much credit on his reason" ("Selfsceaft" 165) is overly simplistic indeed. For Adam, a snake is a snake is a snake; for the reader, a snake is a snake and Satan.

Adam still sees only a snake, "so that the temptation may take place, and may succeed if he fails in reason or will, hearing the devil's words and forgetting God's words" (142).[75] In an episode *not* in the Bible, the tempter fails to seduce Adam, who exercises his freedom *not* to eat the proffered apple, and highlights the reader's freedom of choice and "participation in the process of good and bad willing" (Doane *Saxon* 153) as well.

John Vickrey also maintains that Adam's temptation and successful rebuttal of the tempter illustrate the consequence of Adam's free will and choice. He argues that the word "selfceaft" ("Adam maðelode þær he on eorðan stod, / selfsceafte guma" "Adam spoke where he stood on earth, the self-created man" [522-523a]) translates as "self-fate" or "dispensation by oneself" ("Selfsceaft" 158), and that Adam's transgression was "ordained by himself: Adam could be said to have been **self-gesceapen* in that if he had free will, then what befell him was of his own determining" (158).[76] Vickrey goes on to note that "selfsceaft" as "self-fate" does not jeopardize the poem's orthodoxy, writing "God assigns man's fate in such matters as the times of his birth and death, but in the context of moral choice man determines his own spiritual fate" (159). Adam had the choice to choose between the two trees, between life and death, and while he chooses rightly in this section of the poem, he will choose wrongly later on.[77] Adam "determined his own fate in matters in which posterity had no choice at all" (160)—but, in a sense,

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[75] Doane notes that in "the traditional allegorical reading of Genesis 3, the serpent was supposed to represent *suggestio*, the circumstances which put the possibility of sin before the mind's eye...In itself, *suggestio* neither constitutes the cause of evil will, nor is it a mitigating factor; it is merely one of the circumstances or conditions that precedes the operation of will" (*Saxon* 148-149).

[76] Vickrey quotes a relevant passage in Ælfric: "Næs him [Adam] gesceapen fram Gode, ne he næs genedd, þæt he sceolde Godes bebod tobrecan, ac God hine let frigne, and sealde him agenne cyre, swa he wære gehyrsum, swa he wære ungehyrsum" ("It was not ordered him from God, nor was it compelled, that he should break God's commandment, but God left him free, and gave him his own choice, whether he would be obedient, or whether he would be disobedient") (*Homilies* I, 18, 19).

[77] Vickrey also writes that "selfsceaft" "could have referred also to the unique capacity of Adam to choose. For in the opinion of the times Adam was uniquely endowed with sufficient reason and will to determine his own fate ("Selfsceaft" 162).

posterity, the reader, *does* have a choice. This is the point the poet of *Genesis B* is trying to emphasize—that despite the fact that we are fallen readers, we still must navigate our textual boat and choose between the two trees. We, like Adam, "self-create" our moral life, choose our actions and in doing so choose also the consequences that result from those actions. In *Genesis B* the consequences of eating the apple are bared for the reader to see, so that we know exactly what we are choosing between, for this sin and every other.

In creating an extra-biblical episode in which Adam is tempted before Eve, the poet provides for the reader and for Eve a model of proper interpretation. Adam's ability to "read" correctly the tempter's words and send him on his way ("þu meaht...forð faran" "go away" [543a]) and his choice of words in the mere twenty or so lines he uses to respond to the tempter are telling. Simply but beautifully, Adam puts his faith in God, and this is all the rebuke the tempter needs. Again, the poet stresses the fact that the reader must participate in the poem, keep in mind his moral obligations, and make, like Adam, decisions about the action, the interpretation. Adam's temptation also allows the poet to disclose to the reader basic truths—exegetical, patristic, human, biblical, Christian, doctrinal, interpretive, tropological. Adam can and does "interpret" his way through his temptation—it does not exceed his ability. Adam's—and, by extension, the reader's and Eve's—free will and choice are highlighted. Out of a seeming heterodoxy the poet has demonstrated his orthodoxy.

Having been rejected by Adam, the tempter then turns to Eve, "wraðmod" ("wrathful minded" [547a]). His first words to her are angry as well, as he threatens that God "abolgen wyrð" ("will be angry" [552a]) when He finds out that Adam and Eve "ne

læstan wel / hwilc ærende" ("will not faithfully carry out this errand" [554b-555a]). God might even come down to earth Himself to speak to Adam and Eve about this potential mess: "nu sceal he sylf faran / to incre andsware" ("now shall He Himself go to you for/as an answer" [556b-557a]). However, if Eve will "minum wilt...wordum hyran" ("will hear/obey my words" [559b-560a]) and "æt þisses ofetes" ("eat this fruit" [564a]), she might "wite bewarigan" ("ward off punishment" [563a]) and "swa wide ofer woruld ealle / geseon" ("see widely over all the world" [565-566a]). Why, if she "gebod godes / lare læstes" ("God's command, the teaching perform" [571b-572a]), she might even "adame...gestyran" ("rule/steer...Adam" [568]), and

> gif þu þæt angin fremest, idesa seo betste,
> forhele ic incrum herran þæt me hearmes swa fela
> adam gespræc, eargra worda,
> tyhð me untryowða, cwyð þæt ic seo teonum georn,
> gramum ambyhtsecg, nales godes engel. (578-582)
> ("if you will perform this undertaking, thou best of women, I will hide from our Lord that Adam spoke many harms to me, evil words, accuses me of bad faith, says that I am eager in wrongs, a hostile servant, and not God's angel.")

The tempter insists that he "cann...engla gebyrdo, / heah heofona gehlidu" ("knows...the origins of angels, the high vaults of heaven" [583-584a]) and that he is "ne...deofle gelic" ("not like a devil" [587b]). Eve, "ofer drihtnes word" ("over God's word" [593a]), eats, and "ne wearð wyrse dæd / monnum gemearcod" ("never was a worse deed wrought for men" [594b-595a]). After Eve has eaten, and is granted a vision, the tempter again promises Eve that if Adam will "læst mina lara" ("perform my advice" [614a]), he will

not "wite...him þa womcwidas þeah he his wyrðe ne sie, / to alætanne þæs: fela he me laðes spræc" ("blame...him [Adam] for his evil-speech, although he is not worthy to be pardoned: he said many harmful things to me" [621-622]).

Far is this temptation from the one of Genesis 3:1-6; there is no mention of a "lignum[] scientiæ boni et mali" (Gen. 2:9), but only of the "rume ræd" ("good counsel/plan" [561]) Eve might devise with the tempter's help for Adam's "sped" ("advantage/good" [575a]) so that Adam's "yfel andwyrde" ("evil answers" [573a]) and "eargra worda" ("evil words" [580b]) will not reach God's anthropomorphic ears. Adam's temptation is potentially "Of Mans First Disobedience"[78]; Eve's is "Of Mans Obedience", "founded partially upon the truth of her duty to Adam" (Cherniss 491). Where Adam has supposedly failed, she must succeed; an apple today might keep God—in all of his wrathful glory—away. The tempter "appeals to her emotional attachment to Adam, with its potential for fear and to her subordination to Adam, with its potential for resentment" (Doane *Saxon* 143). Adam's "disobedience" will be hidden from God if Eve obeys and eats the fruit; in doing so, Eve "accepts not only the preposterous idea, rejected by Adam, that God could change but the even more preposterous idea that God is not omniscient" (Doane *Saxon* 145). The temptation of Eve not only is composed of more lines of text than that of Adam, but of a "sophisticated[,]...logical and moral argument" (Renoir "Eve's I.Q." 266).

Whence comes this change in the nature of Eve's temptation? While this Anglo-Saxon rendition of Eve's temptation may be original, the deception used by the tempter is not. J.M. Evans notes that Cyprianus Gallus, a Christian Latin poet, frames Adam and Eve's temptation around their naïvety of the workings of light and darkness:

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[78] *Paradise Lost* I.1.

> According to his [Cyprian's] version of the story night fell as soon as God had forbidden Adam and Eve to eat of the tree of knowledge. Taking advantage of this situation the serpent promises Eve that if she eats the forbidden fruit the light will return...Man falls, then, as a result of a diabolic trick whereby the devil used Eve's ignorance of the cycle of day and night to persuade her that the forbidden fruit would bring back the light. ("*Genesis B*" 11-12)

Adam eats the fruit with her, and daylight is restored (12); the first couple is deceived rather than tempted from the path of righteousness. Rosemary Woolf also mentions the *Vita Adæ et Evæ*, in which, "after the Fall, Adam and Eve resolve to do penance by immersing themselves for thirty days, he in the Jordan and she in the Euphrates. After eighteen days, the devil disguised as an angel of light approaches Eve, claiming to be a messenger from God, bringing the divine instruction that she may leave the water" ("Fall of Man" 191).[79] Again, slight textual precedent aside, what of the consequences, the function(s) of the nature of Eve's temptation in *Genesis B*?

Much like Satan's ironic expectation that his comitatus will render him "þegnscipe" despite his refusal to render the same to God, and where this refusal, with all of its attendant pride, has placed him and his troop, the change in the nature of Eve's temptation highlights her "Promethean overreaching and [her] subversion of hierarchical order" (Hill "Fall of Angels" 288). In suggesting that Eve can save Adam from the wrath

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[79] J.H. Charlesworth's *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, II reads: "Then Satan was angry and transformed himself into the brightness of angels and went away to the Tigris River to Eve and found her weeping. And the devil himself, as if to grieve with her, began to weep and said to her, "Step out of the river and cry no more...God has heard your sighs and accepted your repentance; and all we angels have entreated for you and interceded with the LORD, and he sent me to bring you up from the water...Now when Eve heard this she believed and came out of the water of the river...when Adam saw her and the devil with her, he cried out with tears and said, "O Eve, Eve, where is the work of your penitence? How have you again been seduced by our enemy by whom we have been deprived of our dwelling in Paradise and of spiritual joy?"" (*Vitae A&E* Ch. 9-10, p. 260).

of God, the tempter presents a temptation composed of "not only naked and direct disobedience of God's command but...[of] Eve's traditional sin, the usurpation of Adam's responsibility" (Doane *Saxon* 143-44). The tempter states that Eve has the power to ward off God's punishment and vengeance (562-63), to rule the heart of Adam (568)—and to guide Adam from his angry and erroneous path "swa wit him butu / an sped sprecað" ("as we two [will] tell him for his good" [574b-575a]). He appeals to "her desire to protect her husband from the consequences of his supposed disobedience" (Evans "*Genesis B*" 121), but when Eve does attempt to protect Adam, she violates the social hierarchy, putting herself in the subject-position, with Adam as the object of her actions. "Only pride," writes Doane, "not simple deception, can make her obey this new command, since she not only has God's word against it, but Adam's explicit rejection of it, for the snake has told her this. To follow the snake's orders implies that she knows better and does better than Adam" (Doane *Saxon* 144). In reaching for the apple because she thinks she can save, rule, and know better than Adam, Eve reaches too far.[80] In presenting Eve's temptation in terms of pride and inversion of hierarchy, the poet explains her consequent fall in terms an Anglo-Saxon audience would understand. Again a biblical mythology is created out of a social one; in the temptation, the poet uses not Eve's ignorance, but the reader's *knowledge* of her place in the grand scheme of things, and her actions despite this knowledge, to demonstrate her errors.[81]

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[80] J.M. Evans' assertion that Eve's "motives are pure" and that "there is no suggestion of any 'love of her own power' or 'proud presumption'" in her actions is erroneous indeed ("*Genesis B*" 4). There is in her temptation *both* "a moral *temptation* and an intellectual *deception*", and thus the poet has *not* "abandoned the patristic view that Adam's sin [and by extension, Eve's] consisted in pride" (120).

[81] Eve's actions, however, also demonstrate the paradoxical propriety of her actions, regardless of the result. Cherniss remarks that "the temptation of Eve is founded partially upon the truth of her duty to Adam" (491). In eating the apple, Eve has disobeyed God's command—a command given to *both* Adam and Eve at the beginning of *Genesis B*. Gillian Overing, however, paraphrasing an argument by Jane Chance, writes that the tempter "has represented eating the apple to Eve as part of an attempt to make peace

In the tempter's words to Eve, as in the previous episodes of an enchained Satan and the necessity for another tempter and Adam's earlier temptation, are clues to the interpretation the poet would like to guide the reader to. The nature of the temptation may be changed, and new threats, promises, and explanations added to the version in Genesis, and to Adam's previous temptation in *Genesis B*, but the poet artfully guides the reader through the strange and heterodox field he has led him into. God's command ("forlætað þone ænne beam" "refrain from that one tree" [235b]) and Adam's rejection of the tempter and his logic should guide Eve to reject the apple and all it stands for. So also, for the reader, should the tempter's twisting of Adam's words. The tempter claims that Adam's heart is full of "laðan strið" and "yfel andwyrde" ("harmful strife" and "evil answers" [572b-573a]), that Adam spoke to him "hearmes...fela" ("many harms" [579b]) and "eargra worda" ("evil words" [580b]),

> tyhð me untryowða, cwyð þæt ic seo teonum georn,
> gramum ambyhtsecg, nales godes engel.
> Ac ic cann ealle swa geare engla gebyrdo,
> heah heofona gehlidu. Wæs seo hwil þæs lang
> þæt ic geornlice gode þegnode
> þurh holdne hyge, herran minum,
> drihtne selfum. Ne eom ic deofle gelic. (581-587)
> ("he accuses me of bad faith/falsehood, says that I am eager in wrongs, a
> hostile servant, not God's angel. But I know all of it, even the origins of angels,

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between God and Adam, and when Eve agrees to intercede she is accepting her role as peaceweaver...Eve does—in fact, in word, in action—*succeed.* If ever a peaceweaver accomplished the task she set out to do, it was surely the Saxon-poet's Eve" (49-50). Eve, given the chance by the tempter to ward off God's punishment, does so, and functions as both a disloyal wife and usurping retainer and a good, loyal, Germanic "wif" and peaceweaver.

the high vaults of heaven. The time was long that I loyally served God with a faithful mind, my Lord, God Himself. Nor am I like a devil.")

As Alain Renoir points out, "Adam has made no such accusations; he has merely expressed his doubts as to the validity of the message and remarked that the bearer does not look like other angels" ("Self-Deception" 60). Adam does not call the tempter a fiend, remarking only that the messenger is not an angel of the Lord from heaven (531b-533a). Indeed, the reader knows very well that the tempter is *not* "deofle gelic"—he *is* a devil. The reader, of course, has observed Adam's temptation mere lines ago, and can see that the discrepancy between what the tempter *says* was said and what *was* said is great indeed. Eve has no such retrospective reading luxury, however, and in taking the tempter's text as truth blinds herself to his lies.

However, apart from the tempter's invented fictions about Adam's answers are the "internal contradictions and implausibilities" (Finnegan "Vincible" 333) and suspicious grammatical slips in his overture to Eve—slips that she should be able to identify for what they are, as should we as readers. The tempter "mentions his time in the service of God in the past tense (*wæs*)" (Renoir "Self-Deception" 59-60)—a true statement, of course, but one that should set off warning bells for Eve.[82] Indeed, the tempter *was* in God's service once, but is not any longer. His offer to conceal Adam's discourteous words from God (578-582) should also serve to unmask his intentions, for while the "philosophical impossibility of hiding anything from an omniscient deity is lost

[82] Renoir prefaces this comment by noting that the tempter's argument to Eve is syllogistic: "The first premise is that Adam denies the Tempter's angelic nature (581-82); the second premise, forcefully introduced by the denial 'but on the contrary' (*Ac*), is that the Tempter is thoroughly acquainted with celestial geography and has served God a long time (583-87a); and the conclusion is that he has therefore nothing in common with the infernal powers (587b). The premises are factually correct, but the argument is logically invalid: the fact that one has a knowledge of celestial geography and has faithfully served God for a long time does not necessarily imply that one thereby comes straight from heaven and is still a faithful servant" (59).

on Eve...the moral impropriety of becoming a party to such a subterfuge, whether the design is possible or not, is obvious" (Finnegan "Vincible" 332). The tempter even has the audacity to threaten Eve with God's presence (556b-557a), depicting God "as a threatening and vindictive avenger" (Finnegan "Vincible" 331) who needs must become violently angry when his hand-work refuses to listen to any voice but His. Also noteworthy are the "articled slips" of the tempter:

> we have the verbal legerdemain of lines 575b-576a: "Span þu hine georne / þæt he *þine* lare læste..." (do you urge him earnestly / that he obey your teaching). A slip, this, but a significant one. The "lare" Adam is to obey is not God's, but Eve's, that is, the tempter's. Of the same order are the two occasions when the tempter refers to God as the Lord of Adam and Eve exclusively...in 577a *incrum waldende* (to your ruler), and 579a *incrum herran* (from your lord), and the single instance when he suggests that God is the Lord exclusively of Eve, 567a *herran þines* (of thy lord). In these cases, the pronoun effectively excludes the messenger from the company of those of whom God is Lord.
>
> (Finnegan "Vincible" 332-333)

These slips function as a grammatical guide to the reader and Eve, although Eve seemingly misses the semantic hints. The tempter, after Eve has eaten the apple, also peppers his second speech with first-person personal pronouns, much like the lamenting Satan at the beginning of the poem. Eve has trusted "minum wordum" and "mine lare" ("my words" and "my teaching" [613b; 614a]), is radiant with the light "ic from gode brohte" ("I brought from God" [615b]), experiencing a vision "þurh minne cime cræfta" ("through my coming's/power's craft" [618a]). Why, if Adam will "læst mina lara þonne

gife ic him þæs leohtes genog / þæs ic þe swa godes gegired hæbbe" ("carry out my teaching, then I will give him enough of this light, of the good I prepared for you" [619-620]). The tempter's second speech, like Satan's after the angelic fall, is all about *him* and what he can do, and is thus linked to Satan's arrogant lament. After arrogating to himself God's power of creation, the power of giving light, the tempter claims God's power of judgment also: "ne wite ic him þa womcwidas þeah he his wyrðe ne sie, / to alætanne þæs: fela he me laðes spræc" ("I will not blame him for his evil-speech, although he be not worthy of pardon: he spoke many harmful things to me" [621-22]). Words only and words all, but words that signal to the reader how the tempter's argument should be interpreted, and that it can be seen through, read through.

Eve, however, has no words for the tempter, no answer, no reply. Hwæt? Satan's verbal rebellion lands him in Hell, chained; he subsequently replies to God's actions, soliciting a subordinate devil to steer the first couple from their way, lamenting his fortune. He responds—vindictively, verbally, in such a way that the reader can understand and interpret his errors. The reader is able to render this heterodox revision into something comprehendible. So also with Adam's temptation: Adam responds, simply, beautifully, and in doing so highlights the correct response and reading for the reader. Not so Eve. Although her consumption of the apple is, in a sense, all the response required of the narrative, her nonexistent verbal reply to the tempter, her lack of interpretation of the tempter's semantics, contradictions, inconsistencies, are disturbing.[83] The poet, however, has been quietly building to this moment of non-response: Satan pontificates for many lines regarding how he sees his new situation, but Adam's response to Satan's subordinate is shorter. The poet *needs* no response from Eve—it is the reader

[83] Cf. Doane: "her [Eve's] eating *is* the answer" (149).

of the poem whom he is trying to reach, to teach. This interpretive test is not for Eve but *us*. It is we who must come up with the correct response to the tempter's verbal and textual wiles, who must *answer*. The content and grammar of the tempter's speech are the reader's to reply to; where Eve is silent we must speak. Again tropology rears its theological head as readers *must* participate in the poem—this time, there is no one answering for us.

The tropological comments made by the poet and the tempter also serve to point out to the reader his interpretive duties and to ensure that the reader knows he, too, is participating in the poem. The change in the nature of Eve's temptation invites room for such comments. Immediately before the tempter's first speech to Eve, the narrator notes that the tempter "cwæð þæt sceaðena mæst / eallum heora eaforum æfter siððan / wurde on worulde" ("said the greatest of all harms would thereafter fall on their descendants in the world" [549b-551a]). The tempter, of course, will inform her that if she does *not* eat the fruit, this indeed will happen; the reader knows that it is if she *does* eat the fruit, she will injure her descendants. What the tempter is here doing is "us[ing] the language of sin in his own favor, working to instill in Eve a fear of committing the very transgressions toward which he steadily coaxes her" (Mintz 614).[84] So also the poet's comments after the tempter's second speech to Eve: "swa hire eaforan sculon æfter lybban / þonne hie lað gedoð: hie sculon lufe wyrcean, / betan heora hearran hearmcwide ond habban his hyldo forð" ("So must her descendants live hereafter! When they do evil,

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[84] Mintz writes: "Satan's messenger manipulates the chaos of interpretation and translation in an interweaving of truth and falsehood so opaque, they become nearly inseparable—especially to the human couple who do not...have the advantage of critical distance from their own situation...What then makes the tempter's speech to Eve even more tangled is its slippery inversion of "truth": Eve's children *will* suffer (*sceaþena mæst / eallum heora eaforum* [549-550]), and God *is* going to be angry (*inc waldend god / abolgen wyrþ* [551-552; 558])—all because Eve is about to do precisely what *she* believes will prevent God's wrath" (613-614).

they must work for [God's] love, amend/improve their L/lord's injurious-speech, and have his grace/favor henceforth" [623-625]). Again we have a statement that speaks to a future that, in the narrative chronology of the poem, has not yet come, although typologically speaking, that future is here, now, in this poem alongside the past. Not only to Eve are these foreshadowing comments addressed, but to the reader also—knowing now the consequences of the first misinterpretation, we must interpretively succeed where Eve has failed.

Another of the poet's comments also demands a response from mankind in general and (possibly) insists on Christ's presence in the poem:

> þæt is micel wundor
> þæt hit ece god æfre wolde,
> þeoden, þolian þæt wurde þegn swa monig
> forlædd be þam lygenum þe for þam larum com. (595b-598)
> ("That is a great wonder, that Eternal God, the Lord, would ever suffer/endure that so many of His thanes would be misled by the lies of one who came with such teaching.")

John Vickrey translates "wolde þolian" as "was willing to endure", explaining that the "implication of the *micel wundor* passage may be that though His thanes are punished for their transgression, God endures their perversion in the first place in order to turn this evil to a greater good and so to show forth the fullness of His mercy as well as His justice" ("Micel Wundor" 250).[85] While Doane takes issue with Vickrey's translation and its

[85] Vickrey writes: "the meaning heretofore assigned to þolian…is especially unwarranted and misleading. The predominant sense of Old English *(ge-)þolian* / Old Saxon *(gi-)tholon* is not "to allow, permit" but rather "to undergo, endure." Yet even critics who find the passage orthodox have accepted the former

resulting interpretation, that God endures "injury to himself" (*Saxon* 288), it is entirely possible that the poet was slyly calling attention to the one who did endure injury to himself—Christ.[86] Again a pointed comment by the poet insists on the reader's attention—the reader outside yet inside the artistic frame, reading from a point both before and after the first sin, but before the Last Judgment. The deception of the tempter, his appeal to Eve's love of her husband and her supposed power to save him, allow the poet to play with words like this, to more pertinently remind the audience of the serious consequences of misinterpretation and the Fall, so that we, too, do not allow ourselves to be "forlædd be þam lygenum" ("misled by lies" [598a]).

Again through the pen of the *Genesis B* poet a potentially heterodox change to the word of the book of Genesis points the way to interpretation—an (orthodox) interpretation, and how to interpret correctly. Eve, like Satan, violates the Germanic social order. Her crime, while it would not be lessened if the Germanic-heroic mythology were removed from the poem, is heightened by the poet's sketch. The change in the nature of Eve's temptation also invites a tropological and typological interpretation of the episode, and thus the whole poem. The temper of Eve's temptation and her non-response demand that the reader respond, participate, for the poet's changes are designed not only with an eye towards the instruction of the reader, but the action of the reader, inside and outside the artistic frame, as well (Copeland 15).

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definition, so that the *micel wundor* is seen to be that God allowed man to fall. But in my view... the *micel wundor* is now seen to be that God was willing to endure that His thanes be suborned" (251).

[86] After eating the fruit, Eve, with the help of the tempter, tempts Adam, and describes for him the vision she has been granted, supposedly by God. She says she can see where "se ðas woruld gesceop" ("he who created the world" [668b]) sits. John Vickrey argues that she is seeing a vision of Judgment, and notes that "it is Christ who will come to judge but God the Father who was the Creator...Eve refers to God in terms which the audience knows are also applied to Christ, of whom Eve does not know" (94-95).

Like Jerome, the poet of *Genesis B* is establishing a biblical text—a poetic one, one that privileges the act of interpretation. Any translation is by its very nature also an interpretation, and the *Genesis B* poet's work lends itself nicely to the interpretive methods of Augustine, functioning much like the creative transformations of Alfred and his helpers, and the salvific interpretive translations of Ælfric. The *Genesis B* poet, however, goes further in not only interpretively translating, but in foregrounding and privileging the act of interpretation in his poetic recreation. He makes bold changes to the *word* of the biblical Genesis, but woven into the text is not only "explanatory material...required to make the...meaning of the text clear" (Doane *Genesis A* 50), but an interpretive apparatus that highlights the meaning of the text—and itself, the *ex machina*, the act of interpretation. In *Genesis B* are "the activities of the scribe, reader, and interpreter...united in a sacred calling" (Irvine 14). The poet, also the hand-work of God, works with his hands, scratching the way to salvation, but demands that the readers and hearers work with him also, be "responsive to the Creator's revelation" (Lee 116), be responsible for their spiritual health. Indeed, "Satan's conquest of mankind...is dramatically answered by Christ's conquest of Satan" (Hall "Epic of Redemption" 208), but it is also answered by the reader, on the page, even—and especially—a page fraught with a seeming heterodoxy. Indeed, we as readers are led deep into Augustine's potentially perverse field, but are taught to separate the wheat from the chaff, to find our way out again.

Chapter Three

As we have seen, the poet of *Genesis B* pushes his pen far beyond the margins of his biblical and patristic source-texts, and creates a poetic text that requires intra- and extra-textual interpretation from its reader, a text that highlights the act of interpretation. The reader must be able to transcend the borders and the page of the poetic text in order to interpret properly, but must also be able to negotiate the text in the center of the page as well. As Steven Kruger notes, the events of *Exodus* also "occur[] in a borderland, in a region between clearly defined entities" (168), a "mearclandum" ("borderland" [67b]). The Israelites scurry out of Egypt, treading "uncuð gelad" ("unfamiliar paths" [58b]) and "norðwegas" ("northern ways/tracks" [68b]), eventually making their stand by the Red Sea before forty years of wandering in the desert prior to reaching the Promised Land. The *Exodus* poet's pen also treads the borderlands and margins of the literal interpretations of the Old Testament Exodus: the typological and New Testament interpretations, the allegorical traditions, the exegesis. In *Exodus*, however, as in the works of Ælfric, the borders and margins merge with the main page of the text, the New Testament with the Old, the gloss with the biblical text. The New Testament is not only shining through the narrative "cracks" of the Old but fused with it, the ink of the Old and New Testaments bleeding together with an "urgent theological purpose" (Stanley 31). As Moses raises his "grene tacne" ("green rod/token" [281b]) and strikes the Red Sea, the *Exodus* poet raises his pen and strikes his page, and the Babel-like "weallfæsten" ("ramparts" [484a]) and "meretorras" ("sea-towers" [485a]) between the Old and New Testaments crumble. In their place is raised a "wrætlicu wægfaru, oð wolcna hrof" ("splendid wave-passage up to the sky's roof/heaven" [298]), one established with ink,

one that lays bare the typological "ealde staðolas" ("ancient foundations" [285a]), "fage feldas" ("shining fields" [287a]), and "grenne grund" ("green ground" [312a]) of the text. In this chapter I will peruse three main passages in *Exodus*: the Israelite trek across the desert; the battle in the Red Sea; and the so-called Noah-Abraham "digression" in the midst of the Red Sea crossing, and the poet's related comments regarding interpretation. In making the changes he does to his source-texts, the poet of *Exodus* creates a text much like those of Ælfric, one that guides the reader through typological interpretations and historical fact to the correct interpretation. Alfred, Ælfric, and the poet of *Genesis B* "gearwian us togenes grene stræte / up to englum" ("prepare us/make us ready for the green roads up to the angels" [*Christ and Satan* 285-286b]), guide us to the true meanings of their texts, much like God guides his people through the desert borderlands and Red Sea of *Exodus*. The *Exodus* poet does this as well, creating a textual path that his reader can not only follow, but one that he can learn to forge himself.

The Old English *Exodus* roughly encompasses Exodus 12:29-15:22, and tells the story of the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, their journey through the desert pursued by Pharaoh and his army, the Red Sea crossing, and the destruction of the Egyptians in the Red Sea by the battle-God of the Israelites. Peter Lucas observes that

> [s]elected events preceding the exodus are dealt with succinctly (8-29), and of the ten plagues only the last, the death of the Egyptian first-born, is specifically mentioned (34-5)...the poem draws on the rest of Exodus as appropriate, notably Ex. 15.1-21, the Song of Moses, and the later chapters which describe the Tabernacle of the Tent of the Presence of the Lord (*feldhusa mæst* 85). The stories of Noah (362-79), Abraham and Isaac (380-446), and Joseph (140-1 and

> lacuna, 142-7, 588) are based on the relevant parts of Genesis, and the allusion to the building of the Temple at Jerusalem (389-96) implies familiarity with the relevant parts of Kings and Chronicles. (*Exodus* 52)

A.N. Doane comments that the *Genesis A* poet "seamlessly weav[es] into the translation [of *Genesis A*] itself such explanatory material as was required to make the literal meaning of the text clear, sound and complete" (*Genesis A* 50); the *Exodus* poet, however, weaves into his translation a "teacher's running explanation of [his material]...a blend of typological analysis, doctrinal commentary, and exhortation" (Hall "Epic of Redemption" 192). The *Exodus* poet wants to ensure that the reader understands the *sense* of the text, and so the weight of patristic commentary and the New Testament are brought to bear on a few choice chapters from Exodus. The poet "makes us focus not only on the poem's end, but also on its process—the process of human beings making moral choices" (Kruger 168)—and the process of readers making interpretive choices. If, indeed, one were to create an Exodus based not only on literal narrative but the New Testament interpretations of it and the patristic commentaries about it, the resulting text would read much like *Exodus*, a poem in which "the poet can rely on his readers doing much of his work for him" (Lucas "Cross" 205)[87], because he has done much of their work for them—has *created* them as typological and tropological readers, in fact, with his hands, his pen. As the Lord speaks to Moses, telling him "soðwundra fela" ("many true-wonders" [24b]) and "His sylfes naman" ("His own name" [27b]), the poet speaks to the reader of a "wræclico wordriht" ("wondrous word-right/code" [3a])—and interprets it for us.

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[87] Lucas is quoting Dame Helen Gardner's *Religion and Literature* (London 1971), p. 137.

The *Exodus* poet opens his poem with a speaking text, "Moyses domas" ("the laws of Moses" [2b]), which, we have heard, declare to men a "wræclico wordriht, wera cneorissum / in uprodor eadigra gehwam / æfter bealusiðe bote lifes, / lifigendra gehwam langsumne ræd" ("wonderful law/code, life's reward for generations of men, for all the blessed in heaven after the terrible journey, long-enduring counsel for all the living" [3-6]). No mystery is there in regards to what will happen in this poem: Moses is "gewyrðode" ("exalted" [10a]) by the Lord in the "westenne" ("wilderness" [8a]); Pharaoh and his kin are "gyrdwite band" ("bound with a rod" [15b]); the sons of Abraham are given "onwist eðles" ("habitation of a homeland" [18a]). Before all this comes to pass, however, the first-born are slain, and the Israelite "folc ferende" ("folk wandered" [45a]) out of Egypt, marching on "enge anpaðas" ("narrow tracks" [58a]), on "norðwegas" ("northways" [68b]). The poet, like God, has all of sacred history present in his head simultaneously, for the reader "is meant to be aware of past, present, and future all converging in one moment of apprehension" (Lee 10)—this textual moment, this text.

Curious but fitting it is, then, that in these borderlands God shields His people from the heat with a "halgan nette" ("holy net" [74a]), one that covers the "bælce" ("ceiling/central beam" [73a]) of the heavens. This "[d]ægscedles hleo" ("dayshield's protection" [79b]) moves across the heavens, God having covered the course of the sun with a "segle" ("sail" [81b]). Men, however, knew not and saw not the "mæstrapas" ("mastropes" [82a]) and "seglrode" ("sailyards" [83a]), were unable to understand how "feldhusa mæst" ("the greatest of fieldhouses" [85b]) was fastened. The sail, "lifes latþeow lifweg metan" ("life's guide, marked out the life-way" [104]); the "sæmen" ("seamen" [105b]) trod their path through the "flodwege" ("floodway" [106a]). Two

columns, of cloud and fire, guide the Israelites by day and night, necessary lest the "westengryre, / har hæðbroga, holmegum wederum, / on ferclamme ferhð getwæfde" ("desert-terror, grey heath-stalker, should put an end to their lives with a sudden terrifying clutch in stormy weather" [117b-119]). The "sailors" ("flotan" [133a]) encamp, safe in their "feldhusum" ("fieldhouses" [133a]), "[w]ræcmon" ("exiles" 137b]), "eðelleasum" ("homelandless" [139a]). Eventually, Pharaoh and his kin and kind, the "landmanna" ("landmen" [179b]), will the "mearc tredan" ("borderlands tread" [160b]) in search of their lost treasure.

With words and phrases such as these, it is obvious that this is no mere march across the desert, but something allegorically and typologically *more*. Historical though the exodus may be, the poet's mind is also "crowded with allegorical equations [of the exodus] which for him are as much fact as the information given in the...statements of the Bible" (Cross and Tucker 123). The poet is "conditioned by [the allegorical tradition], and re-acts to events or parts of an event, as would any well-read Christian" (124). Any Christian, however, need not be well-read to understand the significance of these events, having been conditioned by the previous poems (*Genesis A, Genesis B*). The Israelites are indeed exiles treading "enge anpaðas" ("narrow paths" [58a]), having left Egypt and bondage for the unknown. Man is also an exile from "neorxnawanges" ("paradise" [*Genesis A* 929b]), evicted by God ("þu scealt oðeren eðel secean, / wynleasran wic, and on wræc hweorfan" ("thou shall seek another homeland, a joy-deprived place, and shall wander in exile" [927-8]), ordered out to a "nearore lif" ("narrower life" [944b]). The fruit led Adam and Eve, and through them all Christians, to "helle and hinnsið" ("hell and the journey hence/death" [*Genesis B* 718a; 721a]).

The Israelites, like Adam and Eve from Eden, and to a certain extent Satan and his minions from Heaven ("sohton oþer land" "they sought another land" [*Genesis B* 332b]), are exiles from their native land. As Peter Lucas notes,

> the journey of the Israelites to the Promised Land is seen as the journey taken by Christians (we 529, us 530-31) through this life (lifweg 104) to the heavenly home. Just as the Israelites are eðellease (139, also 383b) because they have not yet reached the Promised Land, so Christians (eorðbuende 84) are homeless exiles (eðellease 534, wreccum 533) because they have not yet reached heaven. For the Israelite nation stands allegorically for another nation, the Christians, who, just as the Israelites struggled with Pharaoh, were locked in confrontation with the devil, Pharaoh's allegorical equivalent (45, 503). (*Exodus* 67)

Dee Dyas also points out that the *Exodus* poet uses the word "ingefolca" ("native folk/race" [142b]) in reference to the Egyptians, but the words "wræcmon" ("exiles" [137b]) and "eðelleasum" ("homeland-less" [139a]) to describe the Israelites: "[t]he Egyptians remain in their native land; the Israelites become wanderers" (Dyas 2). The image of the Christian exile was a common one; it was "taken up by New Testament writers, [and] became a commonplace in patristic and homiletic material, and was one of the dominant images of the Christian life used within the Anglo-Saxon church" (Dyas 3).[88] But if the Israelites and all Christians are exiles, they are also "God's obedient people on the move" (Dyas 3)—on the move home, to heaven.

Adam and Eve's exile from Eden was a forced one, an angel with a "fyrene sweorde" ("fiery sword" [*Genesis A* 947a]) having "beleac" ("locked up" [945a]) the

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[88] Dyas footnotes I Peter 2:11; Hebrews 11:8-16; Cyprian's *De Mortalitate* Ch. 26 (*PL* 4.601); Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* 5.21 (Dyas 8). Cross and Tucker also footnote Augustine's *Enarr. in Psalm* 34, Sermo I § 6 (*PL* 36.326); and Sermo CXI, cap. II (*PL* 38.642-3) (127).

gates of Paradise. For the Israelites and all Christians, "pilgrimage, that is voluntary exile, [is] the response...required...if a new relationship with God [is] to be established" (Dyas 2). This exile, this journey, is one the Israelites have yearned for ("on langne lust leofes siðes" "in long-lasting desire of the beloved journey" [*Exodus* 53]), kept from it by the Egyptians, "gif hie Metod lete" ("if/while the Measurer let them" [52b]). The Israelites' journey out of Egypt and their subsequent years of wandering the desert is "an allegory of man's journey from this world to the next, from the earthly "land of bondage" to the Promised Land...a type for the transitory life which must be led in the meantime" (Earl 544, 552).[89] The literal and spiritual pilgrimage of the Israelites, and by extension all Christians, lends itself nicely to Augustine's idea of two cities, which was restated by Caesarius of Arles:

> Duae sunt civitates, fratres carissini [sic]: una est civitas mundi, alia est civitas paradisi. In civitate mundi bonus christianus sempter peregrinatur...Peregrini esse debemus in hoc saeculo, ut cives esse mereamur in caelo. Qui amat mundum, et civis esse vult in mundo, partem non habet in caelo; in hoc enim probamus, quod peregrini sumus, si patriam desideramus. (qtd. in Dyas 6)[90]

This idea of pilgrimage and exile is repeated by the *Exodus* poet, after the Israelites have crossed the Red Sea: "þis is læne dream / wommum awyrged, wreccum alyfed, / earmra anbid. Eðellease / þysne gystsele gihðum healdeð" ("this is a transitory joy, suffocated with sins, granted to exiles, a wretched expectation. Homeland-less we occupy this

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[89] Satan et al. also wander, but throughout Hell ("Blace hworfon / scinnan forscepene; sceaðan hwearfedon, earme æglecan, geond þæt atole scref" "Black/Pale, the disfigured demons, wretched fiends, wandered throughout that horrible pit" [*Christ and Satan* 71b-73]). Satan, having been "aseald" ("expelled" 89b]) from Heaven, knows he has led his thanes home "to hæftum" ("to bonds" [91a]) out "of earde" ("of [your] native home" [92a]), and he himself must needs "hweorfan" ("wander/turn" [119b]), "wadan wræclastas" ("wade/travel the exile-paths" [120a]).

[90] Dyas also cites Augustine's *De Civitate Dei* 15, 2 (*PL* 41.437-38) and Gregory the Great's *Moralia in Job* 18.48 (*PL* 76.577) (Dyas 6-8).

guest-hall in sorrow" [532b-535]). The Israelites, like good Christians, are on a pilgrimage in search of their promised land, promised heaven. But, as Peter Lucas observes, this journey can also be depicted as that of the Christian on board the Ship of the Church, and in *Exodus*, "the conception of the allegorical journey as a sea-voyage has been superimposed on the description of the land-journey...at this level are the journeys equivalent" ("Cross" 210). The "lifweg" ("lifeway" [104b]) must needs be the "flodwege" ("floodway" [106a]). The fallen Adam, at the end of *Genesis B*, seems to have a poetic inkling of what awaits him and his progeny, stating that

> gif ic waldendes willan cuðe
> hwæt ic his to hearmsceare habban sceolde
> ne gesawe þu no sniomor --þeah me on sæ wadan
> hete heofones god heonone nu þa,
> on flod faran nære he finum þæs deop,
> merestream þæs micel-- þæt his o min mod getweode
> ac ic to þam grunde genge gif ic godes meahte
> willan gewyrcean. Nis me on worulde niod
> æniges þegnscipes. (828-836a)
>
> ("If I knew the Ruler's will, what I of His punishment must have, you would not see one more quick to do it—even though the Lord of Heaven commanded me to wade/go in the sea, fare on the flood, it could not be so very deep, the sea so great, that my mind would not doubt [his command], but I would go to the bottom of the sea, if I was able to work God's will. There is for me no need of any loyal service in this world.")

This, of course, is exactly what the Israelites end up doing: walking and floating upon the desert sea in their ship, traversing the "ealde staðolas" ("ancient foundations" [285a]) and "grenne grund" ("green ground" [312a]) of the sea-bottom. A.A. Lee points out that Adam "imagines himself as an exiled thane" (30), which he is—as are his descendants with him. It is important, however, that they become exiled *seafaring* thanes, ones who "wadan" their way to heaven, and who do not become "coarctati...in terra" (Exodus 14:3), as Pharaoh hopes they will.[91] Adam's "þegnscipe" or service must be on board Alfred's "wæterscipe".

"A Christian then must be a sailor" (Lucas *Exodus* 67), and the nautical imagery the poet uses to describe the flight from Egypt is appropriate indeed. While the image of the Church as a ship is a common one,[92] this ship is no wooden monstrosity lurching across the desert but a graceful allegorical vehicle piloted by God through the Holy Ghost (" heahþegnunga Haliges Gastes" "at the high service of the Holy Ghost" [96]). Like Noah's ark, this ship is a type of *ecclesia*,[93] "by means of which the faithful are saved, while those outside perish" (Earl 562), for in the words of Tertullian, "[q]ui in arca non fuit, in Ecclesia not sit" (*De idol.* [*PL* 1.696]). However, just as the flight of the Israelites from Egypt merges with the journey of the exiled Christian to Heaven, the image of the ship melts into that of a tent:

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[91] In *The Whale*, seafarers are warned not to "gehydað heahstefn scipu / to þam unlonde" ("fasten the high-prowed ships to the false land" [13b-14a]): the whale. Seafarers may think they have found an "ealond" ("island" 16a]), but, "þonne gefeleð facnes cræftig / þæt him þa ferend on fæste wuniaþ, / ... / ðonne semninga on sealtne wæg / mid þa noþe niþer gewiteþ / garsecges gæst, grund geseceð, ond þonne in deaðsele drence bifæsteð / scipus mid scealcum" ("when he, crafty in treachery, feels that the sailors firmly dwell on him...then suddenly into the salty wave with the plunder he departs below, the ocean's spirit seeks the ground, and then delivers/fastens the ships with the men to drown in the death-hall" [24-31a]). (Old English text taken from Muir's *Exeter Anthology*). Cf. also *Genesis B*, in which Adam and Eve literally cover themselves with the trappings of the land, leaves, and lament "on þone grenan weald" ("in this green grove" (840b).

[92] Cf. Tertullian's *De Baptismo* 12, 7 (*PL* 1.1317), *De Idololatria* 24, 4 (*PL* 1.773); Cyprian's *De Unitate Ecclesiae* Liber I (*PL* 4.519); Augustine's *In Psalmum XXVIII Enarratio* (*PL* 36.214).

[93] For the ark as a type of church, see Augustine's *Ennar. in Psalm. VIII* (*PL* 36.115), *CIII* (*PL* 37.1358).

> [t]hrough mention of the sail (81), sailyard (83) and rigging (82) the way is prepared for the introduction of the concept of the Ship of the Church but instead the poem passes on to *feldhusa mæst* (85), a term which by association suggests an allegorical meaning (the Tent of the Church) while at the same time relating at the literal level to the nomadic existence of the Israelites on the exodus (cf. 133, 223). (Lucas *Exodus* 68)

Peter Lucas argues that this tent is the Tabernacle, which is also a type of Church, and that "where the poem might have had a term ('ship') which in the context would have denoted an allegorical meaning ('Church') exclusively, what we find is a term ('Tabernacle') which by association suggests this allegorical meaning while at the same time relating to the exodus itself" ("Cross" 202). Lucas also mentions that the word "segle" ("sail" [81b]) can also mean "veil" or "curtain",[94] and that the Tabernacle had "a central beam [*bælc* 73] hung with a curtain" (*Exodus* 47).[95] The potential "veil", which is also a "sail", is also and was originally a "wederwolcen" ("cloud" [75a]), God's "halgan nette" ("holy net" [74a]), with which He shielded the Israelites from the burning sun. Lucas connects this cloud with "God's manifestation of His glory in the form of a cloud over (and also mysteriously within) the Tabernacle" ("Cloud" 303) in Exodus 40:34, and reasons that "[i]f *this* cloud is...meant by *segl* (81), there is some ground for the association of the sail (or veil) with a tent: God is present in both...The presence of the cloud implies the presence of the Tabernacle" ("Cloud" 303). The sense(s) of the text multiply yet fuse, and a single passage shimmers and flashes with a variety of colors much like Joseph's famous coat. The ship and tabernacle-tent, the sail-cloud and the veil:

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[94] The Bosworth-Toller defines "segl" as "1. A sail; 2. A veil, curtain; 3. A flag, banner" (856).
[95] Cf. Exodus 36: 33-35.

these words are smelted together by the poet to create multiple shades of meaning. Like a prism, however, the poet's pen refracts yet another color in the cross.

In the description of the ship, with its sail, mast-ropes, and sail-rood, are "the essential features of a cross held upright", and the image of the Mast of the Cross is a "patristic commonplace" (Lucas "Cross" 197).[96] The word "beam" is used many times in *Exodus* to describe the pillars of fire and cloud,[97] and James Earl points out that the phrase "wuldres beam" ("hæfde wuldres beam werud gelæded" "glory's beam led the host" [568]) has described the cross elsewhere.[98] Other words and phrases also bring to mind the cross: the poet's description of the sails as "lyftwundor leoht" ("bright miracles of the air" [90a]) that "hlifedon" ("towered" [89a]) over the people are also "more appropriate to the pillar...as the Cross" (Lucas *Exodus* 46). It is the cloud, the "[d]ægsceldes hleo" ("dayshield's protection" [79b]), and therefore the cross, "lifes latþeow" ("life's guide" [104a]) that leads the Israelites (77a). Of course, the cloud, which is also a pillar (94), is also a sail, and so these "Christians aboard the Ship of the Church [are] propelled by the Sail of the Holy Spirit (81, 105) which [is] attached to the Sailyard of the Cross" (Lucas *Exodus* 67-68). Even the Tabernacle has a central cross-beam (Exodus 36:33), a type of cross within the Holy of Holies. By creating a multifaceted description of the Israelites' strange desert sea-journey, the *Exodus* poet has created a poem in which

> we have to deal with terms applicable to one concept being transferred to another: the Tent (*feldhusa mæst*) is referred to after concentrated nautical

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[96] Cf. Ambrose's *De Spir. Sanc.* 1.9.110 (*PL* 16.760); Augustine's *Tract. In Ioh.* 2.2-4 (*PL* 35.1391).
[97] For example, at lines 94b, 111a, 121a, 249a. The Bosworth-Toller has the following definitions for "beam", among others: 1. a tree; 2. the tree, cross; 3. a column, pillar; 4. wood, a ship (71-2).
[98] Earl mentions *Dream of the Rood* l.97; *Elene* l.217 (563).

> imagery; the division perhaps appropriate to the veil of the Tabernacle is accorded to the cloud (*wederwolcen*); terms applicable to the Cross (*leoht, hlifedon*) are used where the pillar is apparently being viewed as a sail; mention of the Holy Spirit, appropriate as a signification for the sail, follows the use of the word *beam*, which confirms the identification of the pillar with the Cross (evidently its transverse bar). (Lucas "Cross" 205)

The *Exodus* poet has here established his own "fage gesceaft" ("shining creation"), a Joseph-like garment gleaming with multiple levels and interpretations, much like the Cross in *The Dream of the Rood*, which is decorated with "golde" ("gold" [16a]) and "gimmas" ("gems" [16b]), but also "ongan / swætan on þa swiðran healfe" ("began to bleed on the stronger/right side" [19b-20a]), "wendan wædum ond bleom; hwilum hit wæs mid wætan bestemed, / beswyled mid swates gange, Hwilum mid since gegyrwed" ("to change in garments and colors; at times it was made wet with moisture, drenched with the flowing of blood, at times adorned with treasure" [22-23]). The cross is both a murderous instrument and a salvific vehicle, and *Exodus* also requires such dual perception by the reader, a literal eye to the desert beneath your feet and an allegorical eye to the Heaven ahead. Water, too, is both "chaotic" and "creative or redemptive" (Lee 35), and so also will be the descent of the Israelites and Egyptians into the Red Sea.

The Egyptians, who "wære fræton" ("devoured/broke the covenant" [147b]), are also on their own unholy pilgrimage of sorts—to slaughter their traveling treasure. The Israelites, compassed around by "mægen" ("troops" [210a]) and "merestream" ("sea" [210a]), perceive their danger, and ready themselves for war. Moses, "rices hyrde" ("the shepherd of the kingdom" [256b]), makes a speech on the shore of the Red Sea,

promising victory, telling the Israelites not to "andrædan deade feðan, / fæge ferhðlocan" ("dread dead troops, doomed-to-death bodies" [266-267a]), advising them to "gewurðien" ("honor" [270a]) the Lord. Moses strikes the sea, the "haswe herestræta" ("grey army-roads" [284a]) are laid bare[99], and the tribes of Israel "wod on wægstream" ("waded on the wave-stream" [311a]), one after another. A battle ensues, and pronouns and weapons and blood are confused, snarled in the sea and smeared across the pages of *Exodus*; the "holm heolfre spaw, hream wæs on yðum, / wæter wæpna ful" ("sea spewed gore, the waves were in tumult, the water full of weapons" [450a]); "Flod blod gewod" ("the flood was dyed with blood" [463b]). At the end of all things, the Egyptians "swæfon" ("slept" [496b]), "on cwealme / fæste gefeterod" ("fettered fast in death" [469b-470a]). As for the Israelites, "Folc wæs on lande" ("the folk was on/reached the land" [567b]), dividing "gold ond godweb, Iosepes gestreon" ("gold and god-webs/woven cloth, the treasure of Joseph" [588]), having been led there by "wuldres beam" ("glory's beam/tree" [568a]).

While Moses does warn his people to make haste "þæt ge of feonda fæðme weorðen" ("so that you escape the fiends' grasp/embrace" [294]), it does seem odd that the first tribe to tread the green sea-bottom engages in "heard handplega" ("hard hand-play" [327a]) and "grimhelma gegrind" ("the helmet's clash" [330a]) and has its share of "bilswaðu blodige" ("bloody bill-swaths" [329a]). Even the third company of warriors, the sons of Simeon, advance "ofer garfare" ("over the spear-fare" [343a]) with "deawig sceaftum" ("wet spears" [344]). If Pharaoh and his kin and kind are *behind* the Israelites, who or what are the Israelites doing battle with in the Red Sea? Why have the Israelites

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[99] Cf. Isaiah 43:19.

shifted "from the defensive to the offensive", and the Egyptians been "put on the defensive and...overwhelmed" (Vickrey "Battle" 139)?

That the crossing of the Red Sea is a type of baptism is right out of the New Testament: "patres nostri omnes sub nube fuerunt, et omnes mare transierunt; et omnes in Moyse baptizati sunt, in nube et in mari" (I Cor. 10:1-2).[100] "The relationship between the crossing of the Red Sea and Baptism," writes Danielou, "could not be emphasized more clearly. The Exodus from Egypt was...a Baptism: the two realities have the same significance: they mark the end of slavery to sin and the entrance into a new existence" (*Bible* 88). In baptism

> the candidate, who up to this time has belonged to the demon, strives to escape his power...[T]he waters of Baptism are the tomb in which man the sinner is buried, [and] they are also the vivifying element in which the new creature is generated...As sinful humanity in the time of Noe was destroyed by a judgment of God in the midst of the water, and one just man was saved to be the first-born of a new human race, so in Baptism the old man is annihilated by means of the sacrament of water, and the man who comes out of the baptismal pool belongs to the new creation. (Danielou *Bible* 21, 47, 77)

Indeed, baptism is a martial act; "[i]n the Christian view the catechumen comes to his baptism as a soldier to the colours" (Cross and Tucker 125).[101] John Vickrey argues that the drowning of the Egyptians does *not* "describe conflict between the Israelites and the Egyptians; we are only to infer that the drowning of the Egyptians must be understood as

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[100] Cf. Tertullian's *De Bapt.* 9 (*PL* 1.1209-1210); Augustine's *Enarratio in Psalmum LXXII* (*PL* 36.917).
[101] Cross and Tucker footnote Cyril of Jerusalem's *Catechetical Lectures* I., 3 and Gregory Nazianzen's *Oration on Holy Baptism* X (125-127).

such a conflict" ("Battle" 123)[102]. The enemies the Israelites battle are not behind them but ahead of them, surrounding them, inside them; the real battle is the one "within the soul of the individual Christian (Hermann 1), the one in the baptismal font. United with the "thin, frequently broken line of literal narrative" (Lee 43) of the battle in *Exodus* is an allegorical and typological battle for the Christian soul. The Israelites do walk the typological "fage feldas" and "grenne grund", but so also do they thrash about "under wætera hrofas" ("under the waters' roofs" [572a]) and wade "þurh" ("through" [573b]) the bloody sea, in order that they, too, may become a new creation. The poet "compromises between the literal Biblical text, in which no battle occurs, and the typology of baptism" (Vickrey "Battle" 123), which insists upon a struggle with the devil.

Important it is, then, that as the Israelites rush to the font, led by the "wederwolcen" ("cloud" [75a]) and the "segl" ("sail" [105a]) and the "lyftwundor leoht" ("bright wonders of the air" [90a]), it is the best and bravest of warriors that lead the host through the bloody baptismal waters: "Wace ne gretton / in þæt rincgetæl...Gamele ne moston" ("The young were not sought after in that company of warriors...the old were not able" [233b-234a, 240b]). They hold their spears (246a) and shields (251a)—and their "freoðowære" ("covenant" [306b]) with God. Moses and company, already exiles wandering their way through this earthly life to heaven, must first battle the fiend in the font, for

> as the catechumen approaches the refreshing waters, the devil pursues him,

[102] There are those who shrink from or do not consider this possibility. Cross and Tucker mention Irving's argument that the poet's battle-scenes "anticipate[] the future battles to be fought before the Israelites reach the Promised Land" (125). They themselves, however, only see "the battle-imagery of the crossing as allegorical description of the life of the Christian after baptism", as Vickrey notes ("Battle" 119). Earl, although he mentions the typology of baptism (567), insists that "the Israelites never go into battle" (565).

> hoping to retrieve the soul (the "treasure," in the language of *Exodus*) now escaping from his bondage. But the initiate goes down into the waters, is healed and saved, and emerges a new creature, ready to sing the song of salvation. When the devil and the rulers of the world arrive at the waters, they are conquered and destroyed. (Lee 46)

The Israelites overcome their enemies in the sea-font, and "[l]indwigan life gefegon þa hie oðlæded hæfdon / feorh of feonda dome, þeah ðe hie hit frecne geneðdon, / weras under wætera hrofas" ("the shield-warriors rejoiced that they had brought away their lives from the fiends' doom, although they daringly risked them [their lives], men under the waters' roofs" [570-572a]). However, "the deliverance of men's souls, in baptism, from sin and the devil *is* the Egyptians' death by water" (Vickrey "Battle" 123). A "mihtig engel" ("mighty angel" [205a]) had before severed the journeys of the Israelites and Egyptians ("leng ne mihton / geseon tosomne: sið wæs gedæled" "they might no longer see together: the journey was divided" [206b-207]). Their journey, however, is brought together once again in the Red Sea: many of the lines describing the tumult and battle in the waves could potentially refer to *either* or *both* the Egyptians and the Israelites ("Folc wæs afæred; flodegsa becwom / gastas geomre, geofon deaðe hweop" "The folk was afraid, the flood-terror came to the sorrowful spirits, the sea threatened death" [447-48]).[103] The Israelites' salvation will be the Egyptians' destruction; "physical destruction

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[103] Steven Kruger observes that at several points throughout *Exodus*, the Egyptians and Israelites "resemble each other; the line dividing them begins to become unclear" (167). One such occasion is "where the poet describes the slaying of the Egyptian first-born and, at the same time, the Israelite departure from Egypt...at several points, it is essentially impossible to decide whether statements refer to the Israelite fugitives or the Egyptian dead or both" (167). Vickrey explains that the Egyptian first-born "are devils and our sins" and that "the journeys are to be seen as the same...the death of sin *is* the delivery of the soul" ("Battle" 123).

and spiritual judgment", writes Green, "are one action" ("Mode" 76)—the action of the Last Judgment.

That Pharaoh and his kin and kind are types of devils is not a far stretch of the imagination. When describing the death of the Egyptian first-born and the exit of the Israelites, the poet comments that the "feond wæs bereafod" ("the fiend was robbed" [45b]) and that the "Hergas on helle...druron deofolgyld" ("the shrines in hell...the idols, fell" [46a, 47a]).[104] The Egyptians are "since berofene" ("deprived of treasure" [36b])—their first-born children, and their Israelite treasure.[105] Both the death of the first-born and of the Egyptians in the Red Sea occasion the phrase "hordwearda hryre" ("hoard-guardian's death" [35a, 512a]), a phrase that links Pharaoh and his people with a dragon, the Dragon—Satan.[106] The Egyptians, like Satan in *Genesis B*, "wið God wunnon" ("strove with God" [515b]), and for it are "fæste gefeterod, forðganges nep, / searwum asæled" ("firmly fettered, without power of escape, bound/held down in armor" [470-471a]). They also "break their oaths with God's people (147)" and "worship devils", and for all their sins have their "archetype in the dryht of hell" (Lee 43).

The *Exodus* poet's description of the chaos in the Red Sea is magnificent indeed: the hillsides are "blode bestemed" ("splattered with blood" [449b]); the "[s]torm up gewat / heah to heofonum" ("tumult mounted up, on high to heaven" [460b-461a]); "fægum stæfnum" ("doomed-to-death voices" [463a]) cry out; the "[s]and basnodon / witodre wyrde" ("sand awaited the ordained course of events" [471b-472a]); the blue sky

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[104] The poet also writes that "heofon þider becom" ("heaven came there" [46b]), and Lucas explains that "*Heofon* probably denotes the divine power which descended into Egypt to free the Israelites, thus typifying Christ's descent to liberate the patriarchs from hell" (*Exodus* 82).

[105] Noah himself sails the Deluge with "maðmhorda mæst" ("the greatest of treasure-hoards" [*Genesis A* 368a])—the obedient saved.

[106] For Pharaoh as *diabolim*, see Zeno's *Tractatus LIV: De Exodo I* (*PL* 11.510); Isidore's *Allegoriae Quaedam Scripturae Sacrae* (*PL* 83.108); Bernard's *Sermo XXXIX, 4* (*PL* 183.978).

was "heolfre geblanden" ("mingled with blood/gore" [477b]); the "famigbosma" ("foamy-breasted" [494a]) sea is "modwæga mæst" ("the greatest of mind-waves" [500a]). Echoes of the Last Judgment abound in the drowning of the Egyptians:

> The sea turns to blood...The tumult reaches to the heavens...Structures (the metaphor of shield-walls or sea-walls) collapse...Screaming and terror are universal...The ocean floods the dry land...Wounds are manifest...God's handiwork (here the sea) falls...Sinful men perish by the sword of God in vast numbers, princes fall in the pride of their pomp...blood reaches to the sky...the doomed ones are wan...God's enemies are overcome. (Trask 295-296)

The blood splattered across the pages of *Exodus* spells "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin" (Daniel 5:25) for the Egyptians, who are "fæste gefeterod" ("firmly fettered" [470a]); Pharaoh, "Godes andsaca" ("God's adversary" [503b]), discovers when he reaches the sea-ground that the "mereflodes Weard" ("mere-flood's Guardian" [504b]) is "mihtigra" ("mightier" [504a])—as did Satan when he reached the grounds of Hell. The sea itself "geswealh" ("devoured" [513b]) the Egyptians, much like they had devoured God's covenant. Indeed, the sea is God's judging instrument, a "fah feðegast" ("hostile war-like spirit" [476a]) that "ðe feondum gehneop" ("dragged down the fiends" [476b]), much like the "mansceaðan" ("man-scather" [37a]) slaughtered the first-born. The Lord slays "mid halige hand" ("with [His] holy hand" [486a]); "Flodweard gesloh / unhleowan wæg alde mece" ("the Flood-guardian struck the unprotecting wave with an ancient sword" [494b-495]); the Egyptians "onbugon brimyppinge" ("bowed down to the flood-manifestation" [499]), sank to the patient sand that waits for the "waðema stream" ("wave's stream" [472b]) to return to its "ece staðulas" ("eternal beds" [474b])—to the

Egyptians' new hell-beds, on which they will "swæfon" ("sleep" [496b]) in torments for all eternity.

The poet specifically mentions Hell and the Last Judgment after the Red Sea crossing, when the Israelites have reached the shore, reminding the reader that "fæst under foldan" ("deep under the earth" [537a]) lies a "manhus" ("pain/false-house" [536b]), where "fyr ond wyrm" ("fire and the worm" [537b]) dwell:

> Eftwyrd cymeð
> mægenþrymma mæst, ofer middangeard,
> dæg dædum fah. Drihten sylfa
> on þam meðelstede manegum demeð,
> þonne He soðfæstra sawla lædeð,
> eadige gastas, on uprodor,
> þær bið leoht ond life, eac þon lissa blæd. (540b-546)
> ("The Last Judgment [Again-Fate] will come, the greatest of glories, over middle-earth, a day of hostile deeds. The Lord Himself at that meeting-place will judge many, then will He lead the truth-fast souls, the blessed spirits, to heaven, where there is light and life, and also an abundance of grace.")

The trumpets that before summoned the Israelites and Egyptians to judgment (90a, 216b) now sing a "fægerne sweg" ("a delightful sound/song" [567a]) of salvation.[107] The Lord is a fisher of men, and the net (74a) that He stretches across the heavens to protect His people from the heat becomes a "wælnet" ("death-net" [202a]) that captures the Egyptians floundering about in the sea. Coming as it does almost immediately after the

[107] In *Christ and Satan*, the archangels "beman blawan" ("blow the trumpets" [601a]) on "domdæge" ("doomsday" [599a]). Cf. Rev. 1:10-11: John writes "audivi post me vocem magnam tanquam tubæ, dicentis: Quod vides, scribe in libro".

Red Sea crossing, the above passage hammers home the eschatological bent of the crossing, as it does the necessity of the Christian life of exile and pilgrimage—and *Exodus* as a whole.

Curiously enough, however, as the Israelites are marching tribe by tribe into the Red Sea in the literary and typological tracks of baptism and the Judgment Day to come, the *Exodus* poet reminds his reader that they all had "an fæder" ("one father" [353b]) and then "digresses". "Noe" (362b), he reminds us, sailed over "[n]iwe flodas" ("new floods" [362a]), the "deopestan drencefloda" ("deepest of drenchfloods" [364]), with a "halige treowa" ("holy tree/covenant" [366b]) in his heart and "maðmhorda mæst" ("the greatest of treasure-hoards" [368a]) in his ship. Abraham also, for whom God created a "naman niwan" ("new name" [381]), lived "on wræce" ("in exile" [383b]), and at the Lord's command led his son to "Seone beorh" ("Zion's hill" [386b]) where he found a "halige heahtreowe" ("holy high-tree/covenant" [388a]). This hill is the very one on which the "snottra sunu Dauides" ("wise son of David" [389]) built a "tempel Gode" ("a temple unto God" [391b]), the "heahst ond haligost" ("highest and holiest" [394a]) of temples. Abraham led Isaac there and would have offered him as a "sigetibre" ("victory-sacrifice" [402b]) via his "ealde" ("old" [408a]) sword had not God "mid handa befeng" ("with hands seized" [416b]) him. A "stefn of heofonum" ("voice from heaven" [417b]) congratulates him for keeping the "fæste treowe" ("firm/fixed covenant/tree" [423a]), and promises increase to his progeny, and then the poet goes back to his original matter, the bloody slaughter in the Red Sea.[108]

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[108] There is a lacuna here: "Line 446 ends Section XLVII and line 447 begins Section XLVIIII" (Lucas *Exodus* 131).

Noah's story, of course, reaches back to Genesis 6-8 and *Genesis A* ll.1270-1550, and is intimately related to that of the exodus. Among other things, the Deluge is a type of baptism[109] and a type of judgment[110], and the Deluge

> experienced by Noah, in *Genesis A*, like the primeval waters in Creation, is chaotic and antithetical to the created order, a symbol of the absence of divine love; it is also creative or redemptive, a figure of that new life which comes to the individual Christian through baptismal immersion and emersion. It is also a foreshadowing, in its destruction of evil and its preservation of the good elements in the world, of the Last Judgment. From the Christian perspective of the poet, the Deluge is at once past and future event, symbolically identifiable with Creation, Baptism, and Judgment (this last traditionally being the baptism by fire). (Lee 35)

Past, present, and future converge as the ink of the Exodus bleeds into that of the Deluge, the Judgment, and the life of the reader. The parallels between the stories of the Deluge and the Exodus are compelling as words from one event bleed into the other and the "digression[] gloss[es] the narrative from within" (Martin 9). Noah and his family float in their "wudufæsten" ("wooden fortress" [*GenA* 1312a]) much as the waters of the Red Sea form a "sæfæsten" ("sea-fortress" [*Ex* 127b]) or "wealfæsten" ("wall-rampart" [283a]) which protects the Israelites and crashes down on the Egyptians (484a). The ark, like the sail-pillar as Cross in *Exodus* (89a), "hlifigean" ("towered" [*GenA* 1321b]) above the waves, was "ahafen on þa hean lyft" ("lifted up into the sky" [1401]) by the flood ("flod up ahof" "the flood lifted [it] up" [1419b]). God shielded ("nerede" [*GenA*

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[109] Cf. 1 Peter 3:18-21. In *The Bible and the Liturgy*, Danielou cites Justin (*Dialogue*, CXXXVIII, 2-3); Tertullian's *De Baptismo* 8 (*PL* 1.1209); and St. Cyril of Jerusalem (*PG* 33.982), among others (77-82).
[110] Cf. Daniel 9:26; Amos 9:5; Matthew 24:38; 2 Peter 2:5.

1397a]) Noah and his family from the "wætres brogan" ("water's terror" [1395b]) much as he did the Israelites from the heat with the sail-net, and His "wægþreat[]" ("wave-army" [1352b]) "wræcon arleasra feorh / of flæschoman" ("exiled/drove out honor-lacking life from the flesh-coverings" [1385-1386b]) of the sinful in Noah's time as they did the Egyptians in Moses'.[111] Noah too has a "wære" ("covenant" [*GenA* 329a]) with God, and must go on a "weg" ("journey" [1329b]) in order to "of enge ut æhta lædan" ("lead [his] possessions out of narrowness/their narrow home" [1435]) and regain his "eðelstol" ("native seat" [1485; 1514b]). From the "wolcnum" ("clouds" [1538b]) will come an "andgiettacen" ("intelligible sign" [1539b]): the "scurbogan" ("rainbow" [1540b]), a sign of the new "wære" ("covenant" [1542a]).

Noah and his family "under bord gestah" ("descended under the boards" [*GenA* 1369b]) of their "merecieste" ("sea-casket" [1317a]) much like the Israelites waded under the watery roofs of the Red Sea (*Ex* 572a): exiled, baptized, judged.[112] In the midst of the marching tribes of Moses and the bloody battle in the sea are we reminded of the relationship of one journey to another and the "historicity of the covenant between God and the Israelites (and Christians in general)" (Lucas *Exodus* 31). The *Exodus* poet "departs from his story to explicate it" (Martin 9) in a "skillfully introduced and poetically effective subplot reinforcing through its parallels much of the significance of the material in the main story" (Hauer 89). The senses and meanings that fused in *Exodus* also melt rainbow-like into Noah's story in *Genesis A*, the Israelites floating

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[111] The Lord tells Noah he will kill all those "þa beutan beoð earce bordum" ("who are outside the ark's boards" [1354]). Dark water (1300b) will swallow people (1301b); it "wreah and þeahte / manfæhðu bearn" ("covered and hid the sons of evil-strife" [1377b-1378a]) and "grap /...fæge folc" ("grabbed doomed men" [1381b-1382a]). As the poet notes, "strang wæs and reðe / se ðe wætrum weold" ("He was strong and angry who ruled the waters" [1376b-1377a]). Cf. the battle in the Red Sea (*Exodus* 447-515).
[112] Noah is a type of Christ (Cyprian [*PL* 4.386-7]; Augustine *De Civ. Dei* 15, 24 [*PL* 41.472]), and the above words and phrases bring to mind the Harrowing of Hell.

across their desert sea as Noah piloted and flew his wooden *ecclesia* through the waters and into the heavens. But if Noah's story is "of the help of God, the virtue of faith, and the precursor[] of both the Old and New Covenants" (Hauer 89), so also is Abraham's.

Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac is the business of Genesis 22, but his history and story are granted many lines in *Genesis A* (1703-2936). God promises to "wreo and scylde" ("protect and shield" [2171b]) Abraham from evil, and gives him His "wære" ("promise/covenant" [2204b]). The Lord pledges to be a "hyrde" ("shepherd" [2317a]) to His folk, and Abraham "worhte to / ... / his waldendes willan fremman" ("strove to work the will of his Lord" [2379b, 2381])[113]. Abraham, already accustomed to wandering, must again "feran, / lastas lecgan" ("go, depart on the exile-paths" [2850b-2851]) with his son—and sacrifice him. The sacrifice of Isaac is a type of the crucifixion[114] and Isaac, like Noah, is a type of Christ[115], and Christ delivers Christians through the cross and baptism:

> Noe per aquam et lignum liberat suos, Christus per crucem et baptismum liberat Christianos. Arca construitur de lignis non putrescentibus, Ecclesia instruitur hominibus in sempiternum victuris. Arca enim ista Ecclesiam significat, quæ natat in fluctibus mundi huius. (Bede *Comm.Pent. 5* [*PL* 91.222])

However, as Peter Lucas perceives, the *Exodus* poet's discussion of the sacrifice of Isaac is necessarily selective and "not primarily typological": "there is no mention of the wood which Isaac carried for the fire nor the ram which was substituted for Isaac in the actual sacrifice" (*Exodus* 124). The poet's main concern is with the "halige heahtreowe" ("holy

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[113] Compare with Satan, who "wann wið heofnes waldend" ("strove with heaven's Lord" [*GenB* 303b]), and the Egyptians, who also "wið God wunnon" ("strove with God" [515b]).
[114] Cf. Isidore (*PL* 83.250-51); Bede (*PL* 91.245-6). For these references I am endebted to Hauer (87-89).
[115] Cf. Augustine's *Ennar. in Ps. XXX* (*PL* 36.244-45); *De Trin. II, 4* (*PL* 42.852); Galatians 3:16, 4: 22-28.

covenant/high-tree" [387a]), the "wære" ("covenant" [422b]) that Abraham kept with God: "Soð is gecyðed" ("the truth is revealed" [420b]). Almost half of the Abraham-Isaac part of the "digression" is God's speech, his "stefn of heofonum" ("voice from heaven" [417b]), the words he "spræc" ("spoke" [418b]). Like the poet's digressionary halt of the Red Sea struggle, God's voice, his very *hand*, stops Abraham's action, and the action of the digression as a whole. The poet stops his textual march across the *Exodus* page to sail an ark and a church across a sea of ink, and to remind the reader of God's "not primarily typological" Covenant-Son ("Hu þearf mannes sunu maran treowe?" "How needs the son of man a greater covenant?" [426]) and the blood that flows from His "sidan" ("side" [*XSt* 543a]), the New Testament and patristic borderland of the *Exodus* text, in a "fulwihtes bæðe" ("baptism's bath" [544b]) of blood that sails the "nægledbord" ("nail-studded" [*GenA* 1418, 1433]) ark, that *is* the *ecclesia*.

The ark of Noah, that "holmærna mæst" ("greatest of sea-houses" [*GenA* 1422b]), came to rest "on dunum" ("on a hill" [1421a]);[116] Abraham climbs "heahlond" ("highland" [*Ex* 385b]), "Seone beorh" ("Zion's hill/mountain" [386b]) with Isaac. Again words and senses melt into each other as the *Exodus* poet informs us that "the hill on which Abraham sacrificed Isaac [is] the same as that on which Solomon later built the temple" (Moore 19):

> þær eft se snottra sunu Dauides,
> wuldorfæst cyning, witgan larum
> getimbrede tempel Gode,
> alh haligne, eorðcyninga
> se wisesta on woruldrice,

[116] Cf. Genesis 8: 4-5.

heahst ond haligost, hæleðum gefrægost,
mæst ond mærost þara þe manna bearn
fira æfter foldan folmum geworhte. (389-396)
("There later the wise son of David, the glory-fast king, the wisest of all earth-kings in the world, wise in teachings, built a temple unto God, a holy temple, the highest and holiest, among men the most famous, the greatest and most renowned of those which men's sons ever built with their hands upon the earth.")

The wandering pen of the poet seems always to come to rest upon a hill: the ark, that wooden *ecclesia*, is lifted here, carrying God's people, the greatest of treasures (368a); Abraham leads "beorna selost" ("the best of sons" [401b]) here, who carries upon his back the typological twigs of the cross; Solomon, the son of David, builds the highest and holiest (394a) of temples upon this very same place, a type of "meðelstede" ("meeting-place" [397a]), church,[117] founded upon this Calvary hill. Even the Israelites, fleeing from the Egyptian army, set up camp upon hills until they reach the Red Sea (132a, 212a, 222a). The hill is a place of covenant, a God-made earth-tower most unlike Babel on which people are a little closer to God. "On feorhgebeorh" ("On the life-hill/refuge" [369a])[118] does Noah number out the saved—that is, in the life-hill, the ark, the church. In this digression which "has its own digression in the reference to David" (Isaacs 158) lies the significance of the Israelites' wandering story, one in which the "maðmhorda mæst" ("greatest of treasure-hoards" [368a]) is the "mæst ond mærost" ("greatest and

[117] For Mt. Zion as church, see Augustine's *Ennar. in Psalm. II* (*PL* 36.70); *Ennar. in Ps. IX* (*PL* 36.122).
[118] The Bosworth-Toller defines "feorhgebeorh" as "life's security, refuge" (279). However, "feorh" is defined: "1. Life, soul, spirit; 2. a living being, person" (278) and "gebeorh" as "a mountain" or "a defense, protection, refuge" (372). Indeed, Noah's ark is a refuge, but so is it a "life-mountain" for its inhabitants.

most renowned" [395a]) of meeting-places (397a) to which Abraham led his "magan mid mece" ("son with a sword" [414a]), guided by the "Metod" ("Measurer" [414b]); indeed, "mannes sunu" ("men's sons" [426a]) need not a "maran treowe" ("greater covenant" [426b]).

The so-called "digression" in *Exodus*, then, might "be better called [an] 'ingression[]'" (Marsden 158)[119], one that leads us into the heart of the history and typology of God's covenant with man. The "digression" is not only "relevant to the main theme of the poem" (Lucas *Exodus* 31) but an interpretive tool, one that allows the reader to place side by side the events of Genesis and Exodus. Indeed, my explanatory quotes and footnotes from the *Patrologia Latina*, while interesting, are unnecessary: *Exodus* explicates and interprets itself for the reader, glosses itself, creates for its reader a multi-colored typological tapestry on which an ark forever floats across the flood waters of Genesis, the sailing wood of the church carried by the wave-children of God as the wood by Isaac, lifted as a Cross to the sky. This, too, is the story of the Exodus, the ship sailing the sandy sea, the mad pursuit by the Egyptians, and the struggle to escape. The patterned path to wisdom and salvation is not a linear one: "qui Deum sequitur, errare dicitur, quia, ut diximus, sapientiae iter tortuosum est, multos habens flexus, multas difficultates, plurimos anfractus...sed tu fixus esto, nec dubites de hujus modi fide, sciens quia Deus tibi ostendit hanc fidei viam" (Origen *In Exodum Homilia* 5 [*PG* 12.328-29]) (qtd. in Martin 9).

For most of *Genesis A* and *Exodus*, the Lord locks things and people up: an angel "beleac" ("locked up" [*GenA* 945a, 1576a]) Paradise after the fall; the Lord Himself "beleac" (*GenA*1363a, 1391b, 1409b) Noah's ark after all had boarded; at the slaughter of

[119] Marsden is referring to the digressions in *Beowulf*.

the Egyptian first-born, the hands of the laughter-smiths are "belocene" (*Ex* 43b); Pharaoh and his kin and kind are "beleac" (*Ex* 457b) in the roiling waves of the Red Sea.[120] The *Exodus* poet, however, suggests that the "Dægweorc" ("Day's work" [519b]) of Moses does not, cannot, remain concealed, locked up, "swa gyt werðeode on gewritum findað" ("just as still people find in writings/scriptures" [520]):

> Gif onlucan wile lifes wealhstod,
> beorht in breostum, banhuses weard,
> ginfæsten god Gastes cægon,
> run bið gerecenod, ræd forð gæð;
> hafað wislicu word on fæðme,
> wile meagollice modum tæcan,
> þæt we gesne ne syn Godes þeodscipes,
> Metodes miltsa. He us ma onlyhð,
> nu us boceras beteran secgað,
> lengran lyftwynna. (523-532a)[121]
>
> ("If life's interpreter, the guardian of the bone-house, bright in the breast, will unlock with the Spirit's keys this ample good, the mystery will be explained, wisdom will go forth; it has wise words in its embrace, will earnestly teach minds/hearts, so that we will not be lacking God's fellowship, the Measurer's

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[120] For severing the bond between Abraham and Sarah, Abimelech is punished by God: his people could not bear children. Abraham, however, beseeches God for mercy on behalf of Abimelech, and God "tuddorsped onleac" ("an abundance of offspring unlocked" [2753b]) for Abimelech and his people. Cf. Satan's fetters and bonds in *Genesis B* (370ff.).

[121] Cf. *Christ and Satan* ll.298-302 ("Deman we on eorðan, ærror lifigend, / onlucan mid listum locen waldendes, / ongeotan gastlice! Us ongean cumað / þusend engla, gif þider moton, / and þæt on eorðan ær gewyrcað" "Let us proclaim on earth, while we are living, unlock with skill the mysteries of God, and perceive/understand spiritually. A thousand angels shall come out to meet us, if thither we take our way, and earn that on earth").

favor. He grants us more now that writers declare better things to us, the longer-lasting joys of heaven.")

God has locked more than the gates of Paradise and the ark of Noah: he has also locked letters and language from the silly and ignorant, has "reorde gesette / eorðbuendum ungelice / þæt hie þære spæce sped ne ahton" ("built unlike/diverse the voices/languages of earth-dwellers, so that they had no strength in their speech" [*GenA* 1684b-1686]).

But if there is one thing both poems have made quite clear, it is the need to unlock what is locked. The multiplicity of pronouns in *Genesis B* confuses Satan, as does the tempter's argument Eve; who is where and doing what in the Red Sea at any given point in time during the crossing is also confusing as the Israelites and Egyptians are practically indistinguishable according to the syntax of *Exodus*. These mistakes, misreadings, and potential errors are unacceptable and dangerous. Great is the difference between heaven and hell, and to become a resident of the latter because of textual confusion and an inability to understand the matter at hand is not a comfort. If one does not wish to be fettered like the Egyptians in the tortured sleep of hell or sink into the pit of fire and the worm, one must unlock the bonds of the letter. In order to be "ahefeð holdlice in heofones leoht" ("lifted graciously to heaven's light" [*XSt* 310]), to our "eðelland", we must bow our heads to, traverse "bocland" with all of its meandering borders.

In order to board the locked Ship of the Church, we must be able to unlock it—with spiritual keys and interpretation, the "typological and allegorical exegesis as expounded by the Fathers of the church" (Lucas *Exodus* 66). As Earl points out, the *Exodus* poet does just that immediately following his comments regarding interpretation: he gives "an interpretation of the whole exodus narrative according to its most common

exegetical traditions" (Earl 555). Life is "læne" ("transitory" [532b]), and we are "wreccum" ("exiles" [533b]) and "[e]ðellease" ("homeland-less" [534b]), occupying a "gystsele" ("guesthall" [535a]) below which is a "manhus" ("sin-house" [536b]) full of pain and punishments. But after the "Eftwyrd" ("Last Judgment" [540b]) comes, the Lord will lead the "soðfæstra" ("trustworthy" [544a]) souls to heaven, to light and life (546a). This, of course, is *Exodus* in miniature, the allegorical story of the Israelites and the Egyptians and all Christians. Moreover, in order to board the ship we must be able to see it, even where there is no water. We must, like the Israelites, go from not seeing ("men ne cuðon / ne...geseon meahton" "men did not know, nor...could see" [82b]) to seeing ("Fyrd eall geseah" "the army all saw" [88b]) and understanding ("...leode ongeton, / dugoð Israhela, þæt þær Drihten cwom" "the people perceived, the Israelite troop, that the Lord came there" [90b-91]), even in a limited fashion, how the ship and the poem works, how to construct the ship.

The poet, as God does the Israelites', lights our textual way, guides us so that we follow his textual tracks across the *Exodus* page. This is a poem that takes into account the allegorical and typological interpretations of its matter, that merges its matter with those interpretations, and in doing so relieves itself of the need for a gloss, a key. *Exodus* is its own key, even while it teaches you how to use the key to unlock the text. The patristic echoes of Christian exile, the Ship of the Church, Baptism, and the Last Judgment abound, but are explained by another text, a poetic in/digression which reaches backwards and forwards in time and places all of sacred history on the same page. The in/digression bellows to the reader and offers him instructions, much like the voice of God stays Abraham's hand on the holy hill and renews their covenant. It is a trumpet-

voice that demands a textual reckoning. It provides the reader with "a plethora of figures" (Martin 9) and types that shed light on how to interpret the Israelite action at hand. The poet's pillar-pen ensures that the words of God are not covered or buried (cf. 427ff.), that "nihtscuwan" ("nightshadows" [114a]) cannot "ahydan" ("hide" [115a]) them.

The *Exodus* poet calls attention to the need for interpretation (ll. 523-32), but his changes to the *sense* of the text, his allegorical and typological rendition of the escape from Egypt and the Red Sea crossing, have already interpreted the text for the reader. Like Ælfric, the poet ensures that the proper interpretation is easy to grasp, and in doing so, he, like the *Genesis B* poet, highlights the *machina* of the text, albeit a graceful one. If the *Genesis B* poet leads his readers into a potentially perverse field, the *Exodus* poet leads his to "bote lifes" ("life's reward" [5b]), a reward through "muðhæl" ("mouth-heal" [553a]), words and texts which, if interpreted properly, lead man to God, "lifes leohtfruma" ("life's light-author" [*GenA* 1410a]). The *Exodus* poet, like Ælfric, knows that proper reading and interpretation are the "cæg" ("key") that "unlicð" ("unlocks") the meanings of books, and the changes he makes to his text ensures that we will be able to see through the sail-veil of the poem to the mystery that lies behind it. This burning page, through which God peeks out at us (cf. Exodus 14:24), is also one that "ends in the middle of a word" (Tolkien 36)[122], allowing us once again to answer, to complete the poem ourselves, to decide if we will unlock the naked letter or become locked, like Pharaoh, in death.

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[122] The last line and a half of *Exodus* reads "Werigend lagon / on deaðstede, drihtfolca mæ" (589b-590). Lucas emends the "mæ" to "mæst", allowing the line to read "The protectors/foes lay on their death-places, the greatest of armies." In the MS, the "mæ" is "followed by erasure; [the] original reading [is] irrecoverable under ultra-violet light" (Lucas 148).

Conclusion

"Sume þa wuniað on westennum" ("Some dwell in the deserts" [*Guthlac A*]),[1] but protecting them from the shrieking fiends are angels "mid gæsta wæpnum" ("with weapons of the spirit" [89a]). Such a man is Guthlac, who with his own spiritual weapons (177-178) climbs his new mountain home, guided by God; "Stod seo dygle stow dryhtne in gemyndum / idel on æmen, eþelriehte feor, / bad bisæce betran hyrdes" ("The secret place, empty and desert, uninhabited, stood in God's mind; it awaited the coming of a better guardian" [215-217]). The fiends who before rested there, weary from their wanderings, are enraged, and torment Guthlac at all hours of the day and night in the hopes of wending him from the Lord's way. Guthlac, however, guided by the Holy Ghost, "[n]e wond...for worde" ("changed/turned not for [their] words" [294a]), and fends off the attacks of his foes. When the fiends bring him to the gate of Hell itself, Bartholomew intercedes for Guthlac, and orders the fiends not only to return Guthlac to his mountain abode, but to heal the wounds they have inflicted upon him (704-705). "Hwæt" ("Lo" [752a]), writes the *Guthlac A* poet, "we þissa wundra gewitan sindon. / Eall þas geeodon in ussera / tida timan" ("We are aware of these wonders; all these things happened within our times" [752-754a]). The Lord wants us to acquire wisdom so that His truth may work upon us (763-68), and so that we may build a house for our souls (802a) and "mid gleawnesse / feond oferfeohtað" ("with wisdom conquer the fiend" [802-3]). The wise and

> soðfæstra sawla motun
>
> in ecne geard up gestigan

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[1] All citations to *Guthlac A* and *B*, *The Whale*, and *The Panther* are from *The Exeter Anthology of Old English Poetry* (Ed. B. Muir); to Bede's *EH* from B. Mitchell and F.C. Robinson's *A Guide to Old English*; and to *Beowulf* from Klaeber's edition. All translations are my own.

rodera rice, þa þe ræfnað her
wordum ond weorcum wuldorcyninges
lare longsome, on hyra lifes tid
earniað on eorðan ecan lifes,
hames in heahþu. (790-796a)
("truth-fast souls may ascend to the eternal abode, the kingdom of the heavens,
those who will perform here in words and works the Glory-King's lasting
teaching, earn in their lifetime on earth eternal life, a home in heaven.")

It is books that proclaim and reveal examples of his "wundra geweorc" ("wondrous works" [529a]) and wisdom, and Guthlac says to the fiends that "næfre ge mec of þissum wordum onwendað" ("you will never turn me from these words" [376a]).

The poets of *Genesis B* and *Exodus*—and even Jerome, Augustine, Alfred, and Ælfric—also perform in words the Lord's teachings. Their hearts, like Guthlac's, are also kindled with the "bliðe gæste" ("glad spirit" [335]) from heaven. That the composition of poetry is "typologically linked to creation" (Doane *GenA* 46) is illustrated by the angel's demand of the cowherd Cædmon, that he "sing me frumsceaft" ("sing me creation/sing to me of the creation" [33]). Cædmon creates a poem, recreates the first few lines of Genesis, and thus "imitates and shares in God's creation" (Raw 64)—as do all Christian poets. He comes bearing sweet songs and poetry "on morgenne" ("in the morning" [59]), creating that which "him beboden wæs" ("was commanded/commended to him" [60]), that which he "mid hine gemyndgade" ("remembered within himself" [67]) after having ruminated upon it in the darkness of the night. "The spirit which informed everything "in the beginning"", writes Doane, "informs song. The creation the Christian poet so often

sings of is his pattern for poetry" (*GenA* 45). Through biblical poetry is the world created and recreated, and authored is a Voice that invites its creatures to sing too.

Creativity, however, also "involves being *responsive* to the Creator's revelation of himself and his works and then going on to "shape" things—damascened swords, gold circlets, timbered halls, illuminated manuscripts, jewelled crosses, poems—that commemorate the mighty acts of God" (Lee 116, emphasis mine). Like Cædmon, the poets of *Genesis B* and *Exodus* (re)create biblical texts; like Christ, they (re)interpret the old law in light of the new. They make bold changes to both the word and sense of their poems, but their changes ensure that their readers will be able to follow their inked tracks across the pages—and forge their own interpretive paths through other texts. When the reader's very salvation depends upon wisdom and books, it is essential that he know how to read and interpret texts lest he be ignorant of the distinction between the Old and New Dispensations, like Ælfric's priest. Guthlac, on the verge of death in *Guthlac B*, opens his mouth, and out comes a "swecca swetast" ("the sweetest of smells" [1273a]), one akin to the sweet smell that emanates from the Christ-Panther's mouth in *The Panther* (44-48). This same "wynsum stenc" ("delightful scent" [54b]), however, also escapes from the whale's mouth in *The Whale*, and lures unsuspecting fish into his jaws so that he might devour them in his hell-mouth:

> Swa biþ gumena gehwam,
> se þe oftost his unwærlice
> on þas lænan tid lif bisceawað,
> læteð hine beswican þurh swetne stenc,
> leasne willan, þæt he biþ leahtrum fah,

wið wuldorcyning. (62b-67a)

("Thus it is for every man who in this transitory time most often looks heedlessly upon his life; he lets himself be ensnared/deceived by a sweet smell, a false desire, so that he is guilty with sins against the Glory-King.")

We as readers must be able to differentiate between the Whale and the Panther, though their mouths send forth, seemingly, the same sweet smell. Thus, if the changes the poets of *Genesis B* and *Exodus* make teach the reader to negotiate his way between the un/pleasant-smelling words of the text, they are justified ones. Perhaps we, too, must be tested, much like the pitch of the ark, the very ark *itself*, in *Genesis A*, which "symle bið þy heardra þe hit hreoh wæter, / swearte sæstreamas, swiðor beatað" ("keeps getting harder/stronger, the more the rough waters, the dark sea-streams, beat against it" [*GenA* 1325-26]). The seemingly astonishing liberties the poets take with their subject matter both demand and ensure a response from the reader, and perhaps this, apart even from teaching the reader that he must interpret, and how to do so, is the purpose of the altered text(s). As God "gefrætwade foldan sceatas / leomum ond leafum" ("adorned/decorated the earth's surface with limbs and leaves" [*Beowulf* 96-97]), so must the poet—and the reader—decorate and brood upon the "idel ond æmen" ("empty and desert" [*GuthA* 216]) page in his manuscript and mind.

Appendix: Latin Translations[1]

9—You urge me to revise the old Latin version, and, as it were, to sit in judgment on the copies of the Scriptures which are now scattered throughout the whole world; and, inasmuch as they differ from one another, you would have me decide which of them agree with the Greek original.

10—The labour is one of love, but at the same time both perilous and presumptuous.

--* to add, to change, to correct

-- the command is given by you who are the supreme bishop; and secondly, even on the showing of those who revile us, readings at variance with the early copies cannot be right. For if we are to pin our faith to the Latin texts, it is for our opponents to tell us *which*; for there are almost as many forms of texts as there are copies. If, on the other hand, we are to glean the truth from a comparison of *many*, why not go back to the original Greek and correct the mistakes introduced by inaccurate translators, and the blundering alterations of confident but ignorant critics, and, further, all that has been inserted or changed by copyists more asleep than awake?

--I have used my pen with some restraint, and while I have corrected only such passages as seemed to convey a different meaning, I have allowed the rest to remain as they are.

11—I am not, I repeat, so ignorant as to suppose that any of the Lord's words is either in need of correction or is not divinely inspired; but the Latin manuscripts of the Scriptures are proved to be faulty by the variations which all of them exhibit, and my object has

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[1] All translations of Jerome's prefaces and letters are from the *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*; of Augustine's *On Christian Doctrine* from D.W. Robertson Jr.'s translation and of his *Confessions* from J.G. Pilkington's translation; of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* from L. Sherley-Price's translation; of Ælfric's Latin prefaces from Jonathan Wilcox's translations in *Ælfric's Prefaces.* Translation of Caesarius of Arles on page 96 is from Dyas' article. Translation of Origen on page 116 is from Martin's article. Bible quotes are from the King James Version. All translations marked with a * are my own. Translations are listed by thesis page number except those of the footnotes, which appear at the end of this appendix.

been to restore them to the form of the Greek original, from which my detractors do not deny that they have been translated. If they dislike water drawn from the clear spring, let them drink of the muddy streamlet.

12—The Jews can no longer scoff at our Churches because of the falsity of our Scriptures.

--I was encouraged by the authority of the apostles and evangelists, who read much from the Old Testament which we do not have in our manuscripts.

--blessed Job, who, as far as the Latins are concerned, was till now lying amidst filth and swarming with the worms of error, is now whole and free from stain.

--the most intelligible…been drawn straight from the press

--must allow that those translators, who it is clear have left out numerous details, have erred in some points; especially in the book of Job, where, if you withdraw such passages as have been added and marked with asterisks, the greater part of the book will be cut away…the book, mutilated, torn, and disintegrated, exhibits its deformity to those who publicly read it.

--it differs widely from the original, and is rightly rejected.

13—I was stimulated to undertake the task by Origen, who blended with the old edition Theodotion's translation…encouraged by the publications of the apostles and evangelists.

--who has turned some homilies on Job and several treatises on the Psalms from Greek into Latin…has not bound himself to the drowsiness of the letter or fettered himself by the stale literalism of inadequate culture. Like a conqueror he has led away captive into his own tongue the meaning of his originals.

--the translators of the Septuagint, the evangelists, and the apostles, have done the same in dealing with the sacred writings.

--since their work was undertaken for King Ptolemy of Alexandria, did not choose to bring to light all the mysteries which the sacred writings contain, and especially those which give the promise of the advent of Christ, for fear that he who held the Jews in esteem because they were believed to worship one God, would come to think that they worshipped a second

14—wherever Scripture had some sacred truth of the Father and Son and Holy Ghost, they translated the passage differently, or passed it in silence, so that they could satisfy the king and not divulge the secrets of the faith.

--heretics, who, by their deceitful translation, have concealed many mysteries of salvation

--carry the standard of the cross on my brow…to recover what is lost, to correct what is corrupt, and to disclose in pure and faithful language the mysteries of the Church

--confront with the shield of your prayers the mad dogs who bark and rage against me

--set a guard upon my mouth…the serpent may hiss…but never shall my mouth be closed. Cut off my tongue; it will still stammer out something.

--A literal translation sounds absurd; if, on the other hand, I am obliged to change either the order or the words themselves, I shall appear to have forsaken the duty of a translator.

--the more you squeeze it, the sooner it escapes

15—A certain bishop, one of our brethren, having introduced in the church over which he presides the reading of your version, came upon a word in the book of the prophet Jonah, of which you have given a very different rendering from that which had been of old familiar to the senses and memory of all the worshippers, and had been chanted for so

many generations in the church. Thereupon arose such a tumult in the congregation, especially among the Greeks, correcting what had been read, and denouncing the translation as false, that the bishop was compelled to ask the testimony of the Jewish residents (it was in the town of Oea). These, whether from ignorance or from spite, answered that the words in the Hebrew MSS. were correctly rendered in the Greek version, and in the Latin one taken from it. What further need I say? The man was compelled to correct your version in that passage as if it had been falsely translated, as he desired not to be left without a congregation.

16—the variations found in the different codices of the Latin text are intolerably numerous; and it is so justly open to suspicion as possibly different from what is to be found in the Greek, that one has no confidence in either quoting it or proving anything by its help.

--spoke in Latin, I should know what he said

--But whence should I know whether he said what was true? But if I knew this even, should I know it from him? Verily within me, within in the chamber of my thought, Truth, neither Hebrew, nor Greek, nor Latin, nor barbarian, without the organs of voice and tongue, without the sound of syllables, would say, "He speaks the truth".

17—a way of discovering things that are to be understood…a way of teaching what we have learned

--there are certain precepts for teaching the Scriptures

--divine assistance…treat the sacred books without precepts of any kind…caught up to the third heaven

18—entangled in a perverse sweetness

--build the double love of God and of our neighbor

--deceived in the same way as a man who leaves a road by mistake but passes through a field to the same place toward which the road itself leads. But he is to be corrected and shown that it is more useful not to leave the road, lest the habit of deviating force him to take a crossroad or a perverse way.

--no one should consider [signs] for what they are but rather for their value as signs which signify something else

--obscurities and ambiguities...provided by God to conquer pride by work

--Things are perceived more readily through similitudes...[W]hat is sought with difficulty is discovered with more pleasure.

19—every good and true Christian should understand that wherever he may find truth, it is his Lord's

--vases and ornaments of gold and silver and clothing which the Israelites took with them secretly when the fled, as it to put them to a better use

20—ambiguities of figurative words...require no little care and industry

--one day out of seven that are repeated in a continuous cycle...signs for things

--whatever appears in the divine Word that does not literally pertain to virtuous behavior or to the truth of faith you must take to be figurative

21—are figurative

--until an interpretation contributing to the reign of charity is produced...if this result appears literally in the text, the expression being considered is not figurative

--where things are used openly we may learn how to interpret them in obscure places

--even he who snores must notice

--charity…is the end and fulfillment of the Law

23—many translators err from the sense of the original authors

--The more men are offended by these things, the weaker they are…These things may easily be disregarded if one does not wish to pay attention to that which does not detract from a sound understanding.

24—were separated in various cells while they worked…even if they conferred and arrived at a single opinion on the basis of common judgment and consent, it is not right or proper for any man, no matter how learned, to seek to emend the consensus of so many older and more learned men

25—At the present time there are in Britain, in harmony with the five books of the divine law, five languages and four nations—English, British, Irish, and Picts. Each of these have their own language; but all are united in their study of God's truth by the fifth—Latin—which has become a common medium through the study of the scriptures.

37—who know only this [Old English] language

38—by God's grace…we have hastened to translate the following book just as the grace of Almighty God dictated it to us

39—Augustine of Hippo, Jerome, Bede, Gregory, Smaragdus, and sometimes Haymo, for the authority of these is most willingly acknowledged by all the orthodox

40—And so I want to leave that aside and translate the other things contained in his passion

--Let it not be charged against me alone that I turn divine scripture into our language because the entreaty of many of the faithful clears me and especially that of ealdorman

Æthelweard and of our friend Æthelmer, who most ardently favor our translations by often reading them.

41—guarding, nevertheless, most diligently against deceptive errors so that we might not be found to have been led astray by any heresy or darkened by fallacy.

--two emperors or caesars…as we have read in the Latin

42—Many subtleties are found which are not suitable to be shown to the laity

44—correct…malign heresy or dark fallacy

49—write more in this language because it is not fitting to introduce more in this language, lest, perhaps, the pearls of Christ be held in disrespect

57—[Jude 6] And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day

58—[2 Peter 2:4] For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment

--[John 8:44] You are of your father the devil…for he is a liar, and the father of it

68—[1 Timothy 2:13-14] For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression

96—There are two cities, dearest brothers: one is the city of the world, the other is the city of paradise. In the city of the world the good Christian is always on pilgrimage…We ought to be pilgrims in this world, in order that we may deserve to be citizens in heaven. He who loves the world and wishes to be a citizen in the world has no place in heaven; for by this we prove that we are pilgrims, if we long for our homeland.

98—entangled…in the land

99—he who was not in the ark will not be in/of the church [*outside the ark there is no salvation]

103—[1 Corinthians 10: 1-2] all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea

112—*Noah through water and wood frees/releases his own; Christ through the cross and baptism frees Christians. The ark is constructed of un-rotten wood; the church instructs/constructs men who will be victorious in eternity/everlastingly. Therefore the ark signifies the church, which navigates through the waves of this world.

116—whoever follows God, is said to wander, since, as we said, the journey to wisdom is tortuous, having many windings, many difficulties, and several digressions…but be you fixed, and doubt not of faith of this kind, knowing that God is showing you this path to faith.

Fn.9 We must confess that as we have it in our language it is marked by discrepancies, and now that the stream is distributed into different channels we must go back to the fountainhead.

Fn.12 two-legged asses

Fn.13 For the latter has no mean authority, seeing that it has obtained so wide circulation, and was the one which the apostles used.

Fn.15 It is a servile infirmity to follow the letter and to take signs for the things that they signify.

Fn.16 the motion of the soul toward the enjoyment of God for His own sake, and the enjoyment of one's self and of one's neighbor for the sake of God.

Fn.18 Nevertheless, in a strange way, I contemplate the saints more pleasantly when I envisage them as the teeth of the Church cutting off men from their errors and transferring them to her body after their hardness has been softened as if by being bitten and chewed. I recognize them most pleasantly as shorn sheep having put aside the burdens of the world like so much fleece, and as ascending from the washing, which is baptism, all to create twins, which are the two precepts of love, and I see no one of them sterile of this holy fruit.

Fn.107—[Rev. 1: 10-11] I heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying…what thou seest, write in a book.

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