

THE ROLE OF THE DEVIL
IN OLD ENGLISH NARRATIVE LITERATURE

by

Peter J. Dendle

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Abstract

The thesis presents a holistic overview of the dramatic, didactic, and allegorical possibilities presented by the figure of the Christian devil to Anglo-Saxon authors, poets, homilists, and translators. Certain narrative inconsistencies characteristically accompany the nebulous devil of early medieval narrative literature—he is simultaneously bound in hell and yet roaming the earth; he is at one point identified as the chief of demons, while at another point taken as a collective term for the totality of demons; he is a physical enemy to be encountered in the natural world, and yet a metaphoric emblem invoked as the principle of sin or evil. Such critical moments reveal the devil's protean vitality as a literary symbol, which authors were free to manipulate in a variety of ways to create literary effect or even to encode cultural anxieties. The study covers Old English charm literature and Solomon and Saturn I, the translations of the reign of Alfred (especially Wærferth's Dialogues and the Old English Bede), select vernacular prose homilies and saints' lives (especially Ælfric and the Life of Margaret), and the major poetic corpus (Juliana, Elene, Andreas, and Guthlac A). Ultimately the thesis constructs an ontology of hagiographic demonology, that is, a means of reading saints' lives that unpacks certain anxieties inscribed in narrative about the foundations of reality. These texts are permeated by signals that the demonic is far less remote and weak than is openly asserted in these works or in the orthodox theology of the time; it is interesting to observe precisely how diverse authors attempt to confront or circumvent the implications of these signals.

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"on ælcum treowo ic geseah hwæthwugu þæs þe ic æt ham
beþorfte."
—Preface to Alfred's Soliloquies

It is also my pleasure to thank my father Brian, my mother Catherine, and my brother Mark for continued support and encouragement throughout my studies, at Toronto and elsewhere.

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Table of Contents

Abbreviations.....	vi
List of Figures.....	vii
 Introduction.....	 1
 Part I. Background	
1. The concept of the devil.....	10
2. The devil and human sin.....	17
3. The location of the devil.....	24
4. The multiplicity of demons.....	36
5. The liturgical devil.....	39
6. The devil and demons.....	45
7. Exterior evil and Old English literature.....	55
 Part II. Prolegomena: Charms and <u>Solomon and Saturn I</u>.....	 61
 Part III. Old English Prose Literature	
A. 9th-c. prose of the reign of Alfred.....	74
B. 10th-c. vernacular homilies.....	91
C. Ælfric.....	106
D. Vernacular saints' lives	120

Part IV. Old English Poetry

Introduction.....	144
A. <u>Juliana</u>	154
B. <u>Elene</u>	166
C. <u>Andreas</u>	181
D. The <u>Guthlac</u> cycle.....	200

Part V. Conclusions.....227

Appendix: The devil as idiom.....242

Figures.....244

Works Consulted.....249

Abbreviations

ASE: Anglo-Saxon England

ASPR: Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records

CCSL: Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina

CSEL: Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum

EETS: Early English Text Society

JEGP: Journal of English and Germanic Philology

MGH: Monumenta Germaniae Historica

NM: Neuphilologische Mitteilungen

PL: Patrologia Latina

PMLA: Publications of the Modern Language Association of America

RES: Review of English Studies

List of Figures

Figure 1: Cotton Caligula A.XIV, fol. 29 ^r	254
Figure 2: Bodley 579, fol. 50 ^r	255
Figure 3-5: Junius 11, pp. 9ff.	256-8

Introduction

This study is an attempt to define and articulate the precise significance of the devil as a recurring character in Old English narrative literature. The devil is among the most frequently appearing characters in the corpus, reflecting a pervasive interest on the part of Old English authors, poets, and translators to sustain reified representations of evil as an integral component of mythological narrative, especially hagiography. Understanding the responses of Anglo-Saxons to the devil of the Latin source texts, as well as recognizing the innovative uses of the devil in original insular literature, allows us more fully to understand these enigmatic, and often quite alien, literary forms.

It is a commonplace of Old English criticism that the devil instigates sin. It is curious, therefore, that no one has asked in any systematic or comprehensive manner exactly how the devil does this. I will offer a wide-ranging look at the various manifestations of the devil in an attempt to characterize the disparate attitudes toward his precise role in the initiation and progression of human sin. But it becomes immediately apparent that the devil does more than instigate sin: he performs a range of narrative and thematic functions that I will also attempt to illuminate.

Certain ambiguities and tensions in the conceptualization of the devil were left unresolved in the orthodox traditions of the early Middle Ages, representing crucial loci of conflicting demonological paradigms, loci which allowed poets, homilists, and authors certain latitude in which to construct a variety of acceptable portraits of demonic participation in the human realm, and with which to articulate the precise significance of the devil in history as well as in human

psychology. Perhaps these tensions were never satisfactorily resolved in early orthodox tradition specifically because they allowed a flexible range of explorations of the interaction between the human and the demonic. The Old English writers, in any event, worked largely with the same range of demonological conceptual frameworks as the writers of the first centuries C.E., and along with these frameworks, the same range of conceptual lacunae and the artistic freedom resulting from those lacunae. I hope to show that the Old English composers--especially poets--in many cases exploited these opportunities for creative demonology, psychology, and even ontology above and beyond the precedents found in the source works. To illustrate this thesis, I will work systematically through a cross-section of the corpus of Old English narrative literature, moving from the demonologically conservative translations of Alfred's reign to the bold and distinct demonology of Old English poetry, culminating in the verse narrative most independent of its Latin source--Guthlac A.

Any conceptualization of 'the demonic,' of course, continually overlaps with other aspects of Anglo-Saxon representations of evil (such as the demonization of non-Christian cultures, and of non-human or partly-human monsters such as whales or Grendel). A more complete study of representations of evil would have to take into account both the evils that arise spontaneously without ostensible demonic instigation (by far the greater proportion of authorially censured actions do not mention demonic instigation), as well as the purely natural evils of wolf and storm, to whose harsh reality the speaker of The Seafarer, for instance, is only all-too-ready to attest.¹ Here I will be content to elucidate only those textual processes informing the literary

¹ Examples of authorially censured characters without explicit demonic instigation include Holofernes in Judith and Diocletian in Bede's Historia 1.6. Andreas, though told by the Lord that he has sinned (927ff.), is nevertheless not said to be influenced by the devil. The Seafarer

representation of the strictly 'demonic'--that is, those evils explicitly attributed to demons, the conscious and malicious spiritual agencies well-known in Christian mythology, and more particularly, where it is possible to distinguish them sufficiently, the devil himself.² With this, working from the foundations laid by such Old English demonologists as C. Abbetmeyer, Thomas Hill, David F. Johnson, and Benjamin Kurtz, I hope to make a further small step toward an Anglo-Saxon demonology.

My decision to approach demonology by primarily investigating narrative scenes rather than straightforward expository discussions (theology, homiletics, commentary literature, etc.) may call for a word of defense. Paul Ricoeur has demonstrated that it is not sufficient to explicate mythic narratives by reducing them to a series of meanings expressed as propositions--there is always a surplus of significance built into the very images and their relationships that defies exhaustive analysis.³ Thus the dramatization of events is not mere adornment, but is

describes natural evils especially in lines 1-6a, 8b-17b, 31a-33a (see also Wanderer 45-48; see Robinson Beowulf 70-71 on the harshness of the natural world and the comfort of human artifice).

² Demons are readily distinguishable from other demonized monsters who are also enemies of God, such as the eotons, ylfe, orcneas, and gigantas mentioned in Beowulf (112-13), in that these latter creatures are not generated until after the time of Cain (107, 1261). They are historical, while demons have existed since the archetypal epochs predating the creation of the world, and (unlike these other monsters) are depicted in Judgment Day narratives as present at the end of time.

³ See esp. 164-65, 168-71, 312-13, 347-53. He asserts, "...the myth is autonomous and immediate; it means what it says" (164). What is being represented in myth is not a set of facts but the on-going experience of life itself, viz. a drama: "it is, in fact, because that which is ultimately signified by every myth is itself in the form of a drama that the narrations in which the mythical consciousness is fragmented are themselves woven of happenings and personages; because its paradigm is dramatic, the myth itself is a tissue of events and is found nowhere except in the plastic form of narration" (169). It is not that the lived experience of the author is immediately represented in the events surrounding the saint, of course; but the stylized medium of mythic narrative provides a set structure in which any of a number of isolated beliefs

itself the "meaning" of the text. Secondary analysis (by modern or medieval explicators alike) can approach this meaning more or less carefully, but can never pretend to have "uncovered" or "revealed" it in any decisive manner. It is often illuminating to consider contemporary articulations of demonological beliefs such as those found in the Interrogations of Sigewulf or commentaries of Genesis, Job, and the Gospels, but there is no intrinsic reason these texts should be granted priority over narrative representations when grappling with the meanings of the myths. On the contrary--Neil Forsyth has shown that it was in the composition of narrative as much as exposition that the more influential thinkers of the patristic age encoded their beliefs (5-6, 10-12). To represent a particular conceptualization of the human condition and its relationship with evil, the church fathers would tell different stories about the fall of angels and the crisis in Eden (13-14).⁴ It is not from simplicity, but from sensitivity, that the most fundamental truths and anxieties are cast in a society's myths, in a series of stories rather than a catalogue of assertions. Thus it is imperative to focus on the role of the devil specifically in narrative contexts, especially where the findings conflict with those of contemporary explanatory analyses. The Anglo-Saxons were not necessarily keen interpreters of their own devil.

or anxieties may be introduced at certain junctures. We must also be prepared to recognize, however, the tendency of such a conservative genre as hagiography to perpetuate motifs, themes, and narrative sequences without any contemporary mythic significance for Anglo-Saxon England.

⁴ "Even when the fathers of the church go to work to interpret the biblical texts, they often do so by retelling the story in such a way as to refute a rival version. In practice, then, theology is often a kind of narrative, even when disguised as hermeneutics. Conversely, the art of traditional narrative itself is always the interpretation and adaptation of previous stories. Theology merely extends the inherent potential of narration by incorporating deliberate exegesis into its structure" (Forsyth 13).

I will approach the texts in terms of internal narrative logic, attempting to reconstruct the scenes and actions as far as they are explicitly described.⁵ Although the cues for spatial staging in Old English narrative are rarely abundant (except in such cases as the careful description of Grendel's approach to the building and then the main room of Heorot), they are nearly always functional and serve to orient the reader. Andreas experiences an abrupt transportation to Mermedonia in Andreas, for instance, waking up outside the walls of the very city—but here the poet draws ample attention to Andreas' accompanying feelings of surprise (839-49), and carefully accounts for the spatial disruption. Although Andreas' spatial movement is fractured, the author assures that reader or listener comprehension is not impeded by anticipating and endeavoring to prevent possible confusion through explanation (822-28). This practice is abandoned, though, during the on-stage appearances of the Christian devil. His entrances and exits are only stated (if even that), never described; yet it is surely at such junctures that the audience most requires the details to visualize the scene. New characters obviously alter the inter-personal dynamics--glances are exchanged, those already present shift their stance to face the new-comers, etc.--and in the present instance the new characters are no less than the spectacular fallen angels themselves: is the author so uncharitable as to deny the reader or listener insight into their means of locomotion, or to eschew describing the awe of characters at their appearance? In most of the cases here explored, the answer to both questions is yes.

⁵ It may be objected that any such literal reconstruction of events in hagiography reflects a deep-rooted misunderstanding of the genre: Doble offers the clearest and most straightforward arguments against literal reconstruction (esp. 332-33). The visualization of events in autonomous narrative space is different from historical reconstruction, however, and remains integral to a reading of the text from any perspective. All readers, regardless of their precise relationship with the text, must form some mental picture of what is happening; they must organize the images and motifs in some chronologic or geographic relation to each other.

Only a few words would be required to turn the various laconic accounts into clear and rational narratives: "the devil then left the room and returned to hell through a nearby aperture in the earth," or "an invisible demon whispered so and so into his ear, though no one else there could see it." Such rationalizations occasionally appear, for instance, in St Martin's discovery of a demon whispering into Avitianus' ear in the Life of Martin, or in the explicit mention of the devil rowing toward and then away from a ship in the Life of Nicholas.⁶ But far more often the staging and orientation are left unstated; the texts offer gaps and silence rather than clear stage directions, even at the most crucial moments. These moments will become critical focal points of analytic attention, as I have indicated, because their very open-endedness often denies the possibility of a single visualization of the scene, and because at such moments the demonic can be seen at its most slippery and elusive--and thus, potentially at its most suggestive and conceptually fertile. I will make every attempt to fill in the narrative gaps where this can be done easily and intuitively, but my ultimate purpose is not to impose coherence where the author sees fit not to--in this I am sympathetic with the critical principles of Jean Starobinski in his reading of Mark's "Gerasene demoniac" episode:

But there is nothing to compel this analytical method to extract only harmonies and agreements from the text; if it can pay enough attention, it will also be able to point out the imbalances, the contradictions, the clash of conflicting actions, if it meets them in the text. (379)

In this spirit, I propose to investigate the logical lacunae of the narratives diagnostically; many

⁶ Ælfric's Life of Martin: Skeat 2.292, ll. 1184-91 (see below, Part II, section C); Life of Nicholas: Ahern ll.390 and 407 (see below, Part II, section D).

of them manifest genuine tensions that result from ambiguities in early medieval conceptions of the devil, and, I believe, opaquely reflect deep-rooted anxieties in the early medieval understanding of the territorial distribution of the moral cosmos--the contested spiritual provinces of the demonic and the divine. Of course, it is also possible that many such logical inconsistencies are simply errors, authorial or scribal.⁷ It is nonetheless significant that certain types of errors can be easily introduced and perpetuated, and that the shifts in sense they invoke apparently cause medieval scribes and redactors little cause for concern. Even these variants and errors are comfortably camouflaged in the range of narrative possibilities, and thus are themselves revealing of fundamental conceptual tensions.

For this study I have attempted to survey every narrative appearance of the devil occurring in the sixth age of humankind (the present age) extant in Old English literature.⁸ I

⁷ One such example is in the Blickling homily on the Assumption of Mary (13 in Morris' edition). In the Latin *Adsumptio Sanctae Mariae*, as the apostles are preparing to remove Mary's body to heaven on its bier, the devil enters into the Jewish chiefs to provoke them to mischief: "Et statim Satanias introiuit in illos principes sacerdotum et coeperunt ad alterutrum dicere..." (Wilmart *Analecta* 349) In the Old English, however, the entering of the devil into the Jews is not clear: "& þa raþe eode Satanias þæt deofol & þara Iudea ealdormen & heora ongan þa ælc cweþan to oþrum..." (Morris 149) Dawson (250) suggests that at some point in the manuscript transmission *ond* (represented in the MS with 7) has become confused with *on* and has replaced it, such that the devil is no longer presented as entering into them ("*on* þara Iudea"). The reader of the Blickling homily as it stands is encouraged to envision the devil as physically present as an independent character ("& þa raþe eode Satanias"), though the phrase "& þara Iudea ealdormen" is thereby left syntactically isolated. Thus, a narrative appearance of the devil can be introduced as easily as a scribal confusion between *on* and *ond*.

⁸ Förster conveniently collects Latin and Old English enumerations of the ages of the world in "Die Weltzeitalter." The basis for most Anglo-Saxon chronologies is Bede's enumeration in *De temporum ratione* 66 (excerpted in Förster 189), derived from Augustine. Some chronologies deviate from that of Bede, especially regarding the third and fourth ages (e.g., the Pseudo-Wulfstan *De ætatibus mundi*, Förster 187-88), but most agree on the present age as being the sixth, beginning with the birth of Christ and ending with the Second Coming. The seventh and last will commence with the Last Judgment. Cf. Hunter Blair 265-70. Rosemary Woolf, and

am primarily interested in the devil not as a player in the cosmic drama of salvation history, but in human time, because this has been less studied, and because it is during the sixth age that the tensions I wish to explore are most acute, since the devil is supposed to be bound in hell during this period. The devil's function and precise activities at the major turning points of cosmic history (as depicted in Genesis B or Christ and Satan) are well-known and are only matters of debate concerning fine details. His fall from heaven and arrival in hell are rehearsed in countless passages, and the Harrowing is likewise familiar, but thereafter the records are largely silent concerning his activities until Judgment Day.⁹ His precise role as an on-going participant in the sins of the fallen human world **between** the Harrowing and Second Coming has not been studied as a whole, however. He is a frequent character in Old English and Anglo-Latin narratives set in various places, and through various times from the scriptural period right up to Anglo-Saxon England: thus Ælfric does not hesitate to assert, "Nu on urum dagum on ende byssere worulde, swicað se deofol digollice embe us" ("Now, in our days, at the end of this world, the devil secretly deceives us," Skeat I.352, ll.219-20).

First, however, a background chapter on the demonology of the early Christian tradition

David Johnson (in a study of the devil similar in orientation to this one), discuss the same period (minus the period of Christ's life of earth) as the second of Gregory's three stages of Satan's dominion, beginning with his binding at the Harrowing of Hell and ending with the events of the apocalypse (Johnson Studies 7-8, Woolf "Devil" 6; cf. Abbetmeyer 29).

⁹ Lee provides a structural overview of the highlights of the cosmic drama presupposed in Old English poetry, and Ælfric's De initio creaturæ offers perhaps the most outstanding contemporary version in the vernacular (see also Wulfstan homily VI, Bethurum 142-56). For the genre of the catechetical narratio (overviews of Christian cosmology and history for the instruction of the newly converted) see Virginia Day "The influence of the catechetical narratio" and Johnson Studies 30-46.

will serve to orient the discussion in terms of several operative thematic focal points. Considerations from a wide range of genres (theology, hagiography, law, epistles) will be adduced to delineate the precise points of tension in the Christian mythology of the devil—especially his location, externality to the human heart, and even his distinction from other demons. It is these points of tension, left unresolved in the conflicting sources, that allow the native author the greatest narrative freedom, and thus the most room for creative mythology. In terms of texts to be treated, I have selected for close examination those appearances which most exhibit spatial or numerical incongruities; and as it turns out, this sample represents most of the longer and more important narrative texts in the corpus. This fact alone already suggests that the presence of the narrative distortion is not accidental, but is somehow integral to the conceptualization and function of the devil.

Background

1. The Concept of the Devil in Early Christian through Anglo-Saxon Times

The constellation of diverse traits and functions that gradually coalesced into the unified concept of the 'devil' in the Middle Ages had crystallized well before the period of Anglo-Saxon literature. Yet the modern and Anglo-Saxon conceptions of the devil are both quite alien to that found in the Bible; the productive period of the devil's formation in literature and theology was the first four centuries C.E. Prior to the period of Anglo-Saxon England, the concept of the devil had evolved roughly along the following lines:

a.) The idea of Satan as opponent of the Lord is essentially foreign to the Old Testament. The word satan appears frequently with the sense of "adversary," without implying a proper name or distinct personality.¹ The cosmic foes of a primordial battle (Leviathan, Rahab), often portrayed as the sea, are mentioned only in vague, undeveloped references.² The few OT appearances of Satan as a distinct character present him as a member of heaven's court, a prosecuting attorney enjoined to bring accusations against humankind.³ Only in these post-exilic writings do we find the first glimpses of an independent cosmic antagonist (whose will is opposed to that of the Lord), which concept has clearly been influenced during the exile by the

¹ Numbers 22.22, 1 Samuel 29.4, 2 Samuel 19.22, 1 Kings 5.4, 11.14, and 11.23 (see Langton Satan 9-10).

² **Leviathan:** Job 41ff., Psalms 74.13-14, Isaiah 27.1. **Rahab:** Psalms 89.10, Isaiah 51.9. **Primordial sea** as cosmic enemy: Job 26.12, Isaiah 51.10, Ezekiel 29.3ff. For further references and general bibliography see Russell Devil 216, note 93.

³ 1 Chronicles 21.1, Job 1.6-12 and 2.1-7, Zechariah 3.1-2.

Persian/Zoroastrian principle of evil, Angra Mainyu or Ahriman.⁴

b.) By the time of the New Testament, especially in inter-testamental and apocryphal works, a personal, cosmic antagonist to the creator deity is already loosely in place. Several names appear in the apocryphal works for this ill-defined and little-developed character or these characters (Azazel, Beelzebul, Beliar or Belial, Mastema, Sammael, Satan, Semjaza, etc.), a few of which are found in the New Testament.⁵ A 'fall of angels' is frequently mentioned, and the fallen angels are increasingly identified with the demons long believed to inhabit the earth.⁶ The demonology of this period is largely marked by attention to the 'watcher angels' story of Genesis 6 (the 'sons of god' coupling with the 'daughters of humans').⁷ The story would later

⁴ Brandon "Devil" 472-73, 476; Conybeare (1897) 451-54; Langton Essentials 52-80, Satan 21-24; Pagels 39-44; Russell Devil 67, 98-121.

⁵ **Azazel**: Ethiopic Enoch 8.1-2, 9.6, 10.8, 13.1, 54.5, 55.4, 69.2, cf. Leviticus 16.8, 10.26; **Beelzebul** (Vulgate 'Beelzebub'): 2 Kings 1.2-6, Mark 3.22, Luke 11.15; **Beliar**: Book of Jubilees 1.20, Testament of Reuben 2.1, 6.3, Simeon 5.3, Levi 19.1, Issachar 6.1, 7.1, Ascension of Isaiah 1.8-9, 2.4, 3.11, Qumran Testament of Amram (4Q543, MS B frag. 2, line 3), and cf. Deuteronomy 13.13, Judges 19.22, et al.; **Mastema**: Jubilees 10.5, 18.9ff., 48.2, Qumran 4Q525 (col. 5, line 4); **Sammael**: Ascension of Isaiah 2.1ff. 11.41, 3 Baruch 4.8; **Satan**: Jubilees 10.8, 23.29, Testament of Dan 3.6, 6.1, Slavonic Enoch 29.4, 31.4, Eth. Enoch 53.3, 54.6, Matthew 12.26, Mark 1.13, 3.23, 4.15, Luke 22.3, 22.31, John 13.27, Acts 5.3; **Semjaza**: Eth. Enoch 6.3, 7.1-2, 9.7, 29.2. For more references see Barton "Origin," Langton Satan 13-21, Russell Devil 188 (note 17). Barton lists over fifty proper names and variants for the devil figure in early apocryphal writings (162-66). References to Qumran passages are from Robert Eisenman and Michael Wise, The Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered (Penguin, 1992): 156, 177.

⁶ Fall of angels: Ethiopic Enoch 6.7, Slavonic Enoch 29.4, 31.4, Revelation 12.7-9, Luke 10.18.

⁷ The term 'watcher' is used in Ethiopic Enoch 10.7 and appears in the Bible in Daniel 4.13 (for the use of the term 'watcher' in King James and subsequently, see Nash 4). Accounts of watcher angels appear in Ethiopic Enoch (books 9-15), Jubilees (books 4-5), Testament of Dan (5.5-6), Testament of Reuben (5.6-7), Slavonic Enoch 29.3-4. For general accounts of the watcher angel myth, see Bamberger 74-81, Nash 1-43, Russell Devil 188, 191-97.

drop out of the orthodox tradition altogether, and the Enochian books would never become included in the canon.⁸

c.) Irenaeus, the first to accept the four present gospels as authentic and reject all others as spurious, elaborated the fundamental relationship of the devil to the creator as one of apostasy.⁹ Thus certain gnostic claims were expelled from mainstream Christian theology, especially the co-primacy of the principle of evil with that of good. Though the ‘ransom theory’ of salvation championed by Irenaeus (and later popularized by Gregory the Great) would not be a lasting church tradition, Irenaeus permanently altered the course of Christian demonology in other ways.¹⁰ From this point on, the devil was generally recognized not only as having been created, but as having been created good: he only turns away from God on his own impetus.¹¹ Thus God is ontologically prior to the devil, but is in no way responsible for the devil’s falling away.¹² Tertullian also fought the heresies presented by gnostic dualists, pioneering the writing of theology in Latin rather than Greek. Everything created by God is good, so only perverse actions of independent wills—those of humans as well as of fallen angels—account for the evident

⁸ Bamberger 15-72, Langton Essentials 107ff., Ling 9-10, Pagels 47-55 (see also 191, note 20).

⁹ Langton Satan 48-49.

¹⁰ Ransom theory: although the devil justly acquires power over the human race through Adam’s sin, he loses it again by attempting to extend his power to a sinless human (Christ). The Church would later object to the idea inherent in ransom theory that Christ had to trick the devil to regain rights over him. Ælfric subscribes to the ransom model in In dominica palmarum (Thorpe 1.216, ll.4-17). See Adversus haereses 2.20, 3.18, 5.21 (Russell Satan 84).

¹¹ Adversus haereses 3.8, 4.37, 4.41, 5.21, 5.24 (Russell Satan 80-81).

¹² Bamberger 55-56, 73-86; Forsyth 334-48; Russell Satan 80-88.

evil and suffering in the world.¹³

d.) Origen of Alexandria established the picture of Satan as proud rebel angel (such as that in Genesis B) in contrast to the devil's more popular representation as lustful 'watcher' angel.¹⁴ Whereas before, the temptation scene of Eden had been frequently portrayed as the site of both angelic as well as human transgression, with Origen the fall of angels is distinguished absolutely from the fall of humankind.¹⁵ Satan's rebellion is pushed back to a pre-mundane time, and thus becomes a prototype for the human fall in Eden.¹⁶

e.) Augustine's importance in the formation of Christian demonology is sometimes exaggerated.¹⁷ By the time of Augustine, Christian doctrine regarding Satan had largely weathered its major transformations. Augustine's contribution was not a revolution but a fine tuning of several points requiring precision and balance. For instance, he definitively established pride (instead of envy) as the devil's chief sin, though that had become the more common tendency anyway; he likewise put to rest the increasingly unpopular stories of 'watcher angels'

¹³ Apologeticum 22; De spectaculis 2, 15; Adversus Marcionem 2.10. See Langton Satan 49-50, Russell Satan 88-103, Stanford 81.

¹⁴ Bamberger 35.

¹⁵ The notion that the devil's sin was envy of Adam and Eve (thus making his fall temporally subsequent to their creation) was widespread throughout the early Fathers (e.g. Tatian, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus; see Evans "Genesis B" 8-9, Johnson Studies 37ff.); to this day it remains the explanation of the devil's sin in the Quran (Sura 15.30-31, et al.; see Russell Lucifer 55).

¹⁶ Bernstein 305-13, Forsyth 358-83, Kelly (1968) 29-33, Russell Satan 123-48.

¹⁷ As in Langton Satan 61.

mating with human women.¹⁸ Augustine's penchant for allegorization and his focus on spiritual needs (both personal and pastoral) encouraged the formation of the Neo-Platonic privation theory, wherein sin and evil are in reality non-being.¹⁹ Yet such a sophistic argument can hold little sway in practice, and theologians and writers alike required more concrete images than 'non-being' in their representations of spiritual struggle.²⁰

By Anglo-Saxon times it was common to identify Lucifer (the morning-star from Isaiah 14.12ff.) with Satan, and those with the devil, and all three with the serpent of Genesis and the dragon of Revelation. Here Anglo-Saxon demonology parts from established traditions in maintaining a fairly consistent distinction between Satan, the fallen angel Lucifer who is bound in hell, from the devil, a more mobile instigator of evil whose precise relationship with Satan is variously imagined.²¹ The devil/Lucifer/Satan figure is usually distinguished from the

¹⁸ Pride: De civitate Dei 11.15, Ennarationes in Psalmos, 58.2-5, De Genesi ad litteram 11.16 (see Russell Satan 214). Before Augustine the idea appears in Origen (The Beginnings 1.5.5, 1.8.3, Homilies on Numbers 12), Ambrose (Explanatio super Psalmos 3.34, 16.15, 35.11), and Jerome (Letters 12, 22, 108), for instance. Chrysostom rejected the watcher myth decisively from the Eastern tradition (Homilia in Johannem 16.4, Homilia in Genesin 22.2), while Western writers such as Ambrose and Jerome were still undecided (Russell Satan 187, note 3). Augustine attacks the myth in De civ 15.22-23, 18.38, In Gen. Quaestionum 3 (see Bamberger 80).

¹⁹ De civ 11.9, 11.22. The privation theory first appears in its Christian context in Clement of Alexandria (see Russell Satan 109 for refs.).

²⁰ Forsyth 387ff., Pagels 182.

²¹ Thus Genesis B (409-21, 760-2); Juliana (522-25); Prose Solomon and Saturn Pater Noster Dialogue (Cilluffo 135, ll.41-46); Ælfric Annunciatio Mariæ (Thorpe 1.194, ll.30-31). See Champneys 184; Dustoor 229-32; Russell Lucifer 239, 247-48 (cf. Rudwin 77 for Lucifer/Satan distinction in Middle Ages in general). Johnson notes that the Anglo-Saxons firmly distinguished the two (Studies 8-10, 79-81), arguing that the tension arose from an awkward blending of the native poetic motif of the freely-roaming exile with the Christian motif of

Antichrist, although their association is always considered to be close (the Antichrist is his son, assistant, etc.). For Ælfric, followed by Wulfstan, the Antichrist often seems to be an incarnation of Satan.²² Death is also a closely associated figure, sometimes identified with the devil but more often kept distinct.

The primary role of this composite figure is that of tempter. The vast majority of references to the devil in Old English give the impression of psychological metaphor, evil impulses and tendencies toward sin being readily imputed to him. These references appear most often in fixed phrases such as burh deofles larum ("through the devil's teachings"), which in many cases seem to represent a frozen idiom or rhetorical trope largely divorced of signification.²³ Hence the portrayals of the devil in Anglo-Saxon literature, as opposed to its visual arts, know little of the dramatic flourishes that would characterize the later devil of medieval drama or Renaissance witch trials--the horns and spines, multiple faces, bestial proportions and features, etc.²⁴ In our

confinement in hell (91-107). In many cases the issue is more problematic, however--the narratives go out of their way, I will argue, to sustain the very tension between the roaming devil and confined Satan, without allowing a simple or literal resolution.

²² Russell Lucifer 154. For Gregory on the Antichrist as incarnation of devil, see Moralia 32.33, 34.7 (Dudden 2.366-67). For Ælfric, Catholic Homilies Preface (Thorpe 1.4), and for Wulfstan, homilies Ia-c, III, IV (especially), V, and IX. Cf. Gatch Preaching 80 (for Ælfric) and 105-16 (for Wulfstan), Johnson Studies 194.

²³ That is, the same few phrases recur frequently in diverse texts, usually without ostensible reference to the events or topics of the surrounding context. See the appendix for further discussion.

²⁴ One exception is the description of the demon inhabiting a pagan idol in the The Old English Martyrology (August 25, St Bartholomew; Herzfeld 152), as well as in Ælfric's account of Bartholomew (Thorpe 1.466, ll.22-28). Neither of these preserves all the features of the description in the Apostolicae historiae (Fabricius 2.683, ll.17-25), though the Martyrology preserves all but one. Another exception is the description in the anonymous homily Be heofonwarum 7 be helwarum (Callison 246, ll.56-60; see Wright Irish Tradition 159). See also Gregory's Dialogues 2.8 (Hecht 122, ll.2-9), and of course the Antonian demons assaulting

sources he is given little physical attention; his most frequently mentioned characteristics reveal two main concerns: mythology (his role in the larger cosmic battle), and psychology (his causal agency in the inducement of human sin). Thus he is at once a character in set mythological narratives and a moral metaphor, but in both cases the emphasis is on his function rather than his personal character or activities.²⁵ By the end of the Middle Ages, the opposite is true: the character of the devil—greatly elaborated through treatises, dramatic portrayals, and folkloric assimilation of native tales within the Christian framework—becomes personal and vivid, even

Guthlac in Felix 31 (ch. 31, Colgrave 102, ll.6-14; see also ch. 36).

In light of the later developments of cloven hooves in iconography, it is interesting that Bede characterizes the trait as saintly rather than demonic (*De templo*, book 2): "fissam... unguam discretæ actionis ac loquellæ" (D. Hurst, *CCSL* 119A [*Beda Venerabilis Opera* part 2; Turnholt 1969]: 216, ll.969-70; "the cloven hoof of prudent action and word," Connolly 95-96).

²⁵ For a brief though provocative meditation on the Proppian function of the devil in hagiography, see Helg "La fonction." Helg concludes that the devil is assimilable with any sort of narrative obstacle or opponent, such that the devil serves the function of investing the texts with motion, dynamism, and action: "la fonction du diable est d'investir la vie sous toutes ses formes possibles, d'être mouvement en contraste avec l'immobilité divine, qui, déjà, capture le saint par la puissance de son immutabilité" (14; "the function of the devil is to lay siege to life in all its possible forms, to be movement in contrast with divine immobility, which already captures the saint with the force of its immutability"). This idea is explored more generally in the conclusion of Carus' *History of the Devil* (482-88; cf. Vatter 21-22), and is reminiscent of Origen's account of the falling away from God as ontological diversification (Russell *Satan* 126).

Augustine, more surprisingly, approves of God's decision to allow evil to exist, simply on aesthetic grounds: "For God would never have created a man, let alone an angel, in the foreknowledge of his future evil state, if he had not known at the same time how he would put such creatures to good use, and thus enrich the course of the world history by the kind of antithesis which gives beauty to a poem...there is beauty in the composition of the world's history arising from the antithesis of contraries—a kind of eloquence in events, instead of in words" (*De civ* 11.18, Bettenson 449; "Neque enim Deus ullum, non dico angelorum, sed uel hominum crearet, quem malum futurum esse praescisset, nisi pariter nosset quibus eos bonorum usibus commodaret adque ita ordinem saeculorum tamquam pulcherrimum carmen etiam ex quibusdam quasi antithesis honestaret...ita quadam non uerborum, sed rerum eloquentia contrariorum obpositione saeculi pulchritudo componitur," Hoffmann 1.537-38).

in circumstances in which his function is obscured or altogether absent.²⁶

2. The Involvement of the Devil in Human Sin and Worldly Evil

Church writers have always exhibited a wide range of attitudes toward the scope of the devil's involvement in human sin. All are agreed, of course, that the devil is the originator of all sins in being their first cause, historically—he opened the possibility of sin by leading humans astray in Eden. But, now that he lies shackled in hell, to what extent is he implicated in the ongoing sins of fallen humankind? Theologians such as Gregory the Great, though including the devil as an integral component of sin, are nonetheless anxious to preserve individual responsibility.²⁷ Orthodox theology has always required a balance between external stimuli and internal free will--the temptations of the world and the demons on the one hand, and on the

²⁶ The fact that the devil had accumulated such personal traits in art and literature explains, in part, how he survived the two great theological innovations that rendered his function in Christian thinking otherwise obsolete--Augustine's formulation of original sin, which eliminates the need for an external cause of evil, and Anselm's reformulation of redemption theology, which denies that the devil holds rights over God and thus eliminates him altogether from the atonement equation: the death of Christ is a satisfaction paid from one person of the trinity to another (and not from the Father to the devil; see Russell Lucifer 161-72). (For a study of the effects of Anselm's redemption theory on the devil in Middle English literature see C.W. Marx, Devil's Rights.) However, popular belief in the devil increased with the Albigensian persecutions and especially with the Protestant Reformation--even while numerous other medieval beliefs were being scornfully labeled superstitions--and the devil acquired a new function largely unknown to the early Middle Ages, the god of witches and master of ceremonies at their sabbat. Only the violent and hysterical excesses of the witch hunts would arouse serious questions concerning the devil's existence.

²⁷ "And because impure temptation springs up to him from no other source than from himself, like a moth, temptation consumes the flesh, as a garment from which it issues. For man contains in himself the occasion whence he is tempted" (Moralia 11.64, Morals 2.40; cf. 11.48, 31.45). See Coulange 135, McCready Signs 232-37. Cf. James 1.14.

other, the complicity of the will implied in succumbing to those temptations. The literary context often determines which of the factors, personal will or external temptation, receives the greatest emphasis. Narrative literature generally reifies sin agents as external characters, while homiletic literature tends to internalize or allegorize demons and the devil as human passions and sinful impulses. The two genres thus exert pulls in contrary directions, and as a result, the hortatory value of narrative literature is necessarily compromised. Hagiographers, as we will see, show themselves far more concerned with displaying the contours of the demonic through a highly codified series of iconographic conventions, than in addressing questions of free will, or in confronting the struggle between sin and virtue in the human soul.

Some commentators see the devil more metaphorically as the principle of evil itself. Thus de Tonquédec observes, "on reading certain texts of the New Testament or of the Desert Fathers, one gets the impression of a general superintendence exercised by the prince of this world over all the evil which is committed in it" (43; cf. 44).²⁸ The devil has set the ball rolling but also runs alongside it, guiding its downhill course very carefully.²⁹ Certain New

²⁸ Kelly likewise refers to the "common tendency in Christian discussions of the devil, which can in fact be seen in the New Testament itself, namely, to speak of Satan as if his power were virtually unlimited in carrying out his evil designs in various parts of the world at the same time. Sometimes, no doubt, the devil is simply taken as a collective term for all evil spirits" (Devil at Baptism 165; cf. Yates 54, note 45). This latter position seems to be Augustine's in De civ 10.11, where he says that demons are either figments of the imagination, or they are identical with he who is called the deceitful one (fallax, Hoffmann 1.467, 1.25).

²⁹ Daniel Defoe espouses such a position in no uncertain terms in his History of the Devil (1726): "From this time forward you are to allow the Devil a mystical empire in this world; not an action of moment done without him, not a treason but he has a hand in it, not a tyrant but he prompts him, not a government but he has a ----- in it; not a fool but he tickles him, not a knave but he guides him; he has a finger in every fraud, a key to every cabinet" (2.2).

Testament passages readily lend themselves to such an interpretation,³⁰ but the strongest Scriptural authority is from the Book of Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach 21.27 (Vulgate 21.30): "dum maledicit impius diabolum, maledicit ipse animam suam" ("when the impious curses the devil, he curses his own soul").³¹

The medieval moralist might be tempted to find the influence of Satan wherever evil and sin rear their heads, just as it is tempting to see the mysterious grace of God in felicitous coincidences and touching acts of human kindness. Technically, however, such impulses are exercised upon the devil only at the risk of theological heterodoxy. If the concept of an evil cosmic antagonist is broadened to encompass too much of the fallen natural or moral world, it comes to resemble the evil demiurge of gnosticism so distasteful to Augustine and to the Church after him. That is, the tendency to portray Satan as omnipresent is dangerously suggestive of various species of dualistic heresy, and by turning the devil into the personification of evil

³⁰ E.g., 1 John 3.8: "Everyone who commits sin is a child of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning." Here the relationship of devil to sinner is father-child; other common ones in Old English literature are master-slave (*Ælfric Agatha*, Skeat 1.196, l.6), king-subject (*Margaret* CCCC 303.16), and whole-part (*Blickling* 3, the devil is the head and the unrighteous his limbs; cf. *Ælfric Dominica prima in Quadragesima*, Thorpe 1.168, ll.7-8). See also Abbetmeyer 32, 36. One homiletic fragment of the soul addressing the body (Junius 85) expands the familial metaphor of souls as children in this curiously malleable fashion: "Ic wæs Godes dohter and ængla swistor gescapen, and þu me hafæst forworht, þæt ic eam deofles bearn and deoflum gelic..." ("I was created a daughter of God and a sister of angels, and you have undone me, such that I am a child of the devil and like to devils," Healey *Vision* 326, ll.294-96).

³¹ For an affirmation of the canonicity of the Book of *Iesu filii Sirach* (or *Ecclesiasticus*) see Augustine *De civ* 17.20, though Augustine denies it was written, as tradition asserted, by Solomon (Hoffmann 2.258, ll.6-10).

writers would be inadvertently granting that figure an undue measure of power and dignity.³² In practice, medieval moralists freely admitted the influence of the devil in both minor peccadilloes as well as in the crimes of kings and popes, and the theological undertones of the early church heresy were not often a problem—especially by Anglo-Saxon times. Thus in a discussion of the devil in Blickling homily 3, for instance, we find that "Cup is þæt se awyrgda gast is heafod ealra unrihtwisra dæda" ("it is known that the wicked spirit is the head of all our unrighteous deeds," Morris 33, ll.7-8), but Wulfstan, characteristically, says it most succinctly: "Ælc yfel cymð of deofle" ("every evil comes from the devil," VI, Bethurum 147, l.82; cf. 241, ll.30-31).

Overall, however, a consistently-developed, fully allegorical reduction of the devil is more characteristic of Oriental-Hellenistic philosophy and religion (such as gnosticism), and of Reformation theology, than it is of the writings of the Middle Ages. There are occasional

³² "Plus tard, en général, on ne trouve plus guère l'idée que le diable est l'adversaire et le rival de Dieu, formulée dans un sens quasi dualiste; aemulus, inimicus et adversarius Dei font place à aemulus, inimicus et adversarius humani generis. C'est surtout à partir du IV^e siècle que les auteurs chrétiens insistent beaucoup sur l'idée que le diable et les démons sont entièrement soumis à la puissance divine et n'opèrent d'aucune façon par eux-mêmes" (Bartelink "Dénominations" 427; "Later, in general, we hardly encounter the idea that the devil is the adversary and rival of God, an idea formulated in a quasi-dualistic sense: aemulus, inimicus, and adversarius Dei give way to aemulus, inimicus, and adversarius humani generis. Especially beginning with the fourth century Christian authors insist greatly that the devil and demons are entirely submitted to divine power and do not act in any way on their own"). Nonetheless, in Old English the devil is still called godes andsaca (Christ and Satan 339, Guthlac 233; see Malmberg 241 and Frank "Poetic Words" 93 for a curious instance of the phrase in prose).

If the demons and Satan embody rather than oppose the will of God, even despite themselves—a thoroughly common homiletic and theological trope—the obvious conclusion is that they are to be aided rather than opposed (see Lohr 73). Augustine combats this inference in De divinatione daemonum 1-6. In practice, despite theology, the demonic forces are standardly treated as directly opposed to the will of God, and God is commonly represented as being continuously frustrated and disappointed with them.

leanings in that direction, such as Athanasius' claim that, "when they [demons] come they approach us in a form corresponding to the state in which they discover us, and adapt their delusions to the condition of mind in which they find us" (Ellershaw 207b). Augustine is likewise motivated by a similar allegorizing impulse when he locates the devil within the multitudes of sinners in an exegesis of the Book of Revelation:

Et misit illum [diabolum], inquit, in abyssum, quo nomine significata est multitudo innumerabilis impiorum, quorum in malignitate aduersus ecclesiam Dei multum profunda sunt corda. (De civ 20.7; Hoffmann 2.442, ll.3-6)

["And he threw him," says John, "into the abyss," meaning, clearly, that he cast the Devil into the abyss; and "the abyss" symbolizes the innumerable multitude of the impious, in whose hearts there is a great depth of malignity against the Church of God. (Bettenson 908; cf. Coulange 62-64)]

Gregory the Great in the Dialogues indicates that the devil scrutinizes all our thoughts, words, and deeds at all times [semper].³³ And Ambrose even insists, as Thomas Hill puts it, that "we are our own demons,"³⁴ and argues:

non igitur ab extraneis est nobis quam a nobis ipsis maius periculum. intus est aduersarius, intus auctor erroris, intus inquam clausus in nobismet ipsis. (Exameron 1.8.31; Schenkl 31, ll.11-13)

³³ "Malignus quippe spiritus cogitationi, locutioni atque operi nostro semper insistit, si fortasse quid inueniat, unde apud examen aeterni iudicis accusator existat" (Dialogi 3.19, de Vogüé 2.348-50; "this malicious spirit constantly besets our thoughts, words and actions, looking at all times for evidence to bring against us on the day of judgment," Zimmerman 151).

³⁴ "Imago Dei" 46 (for more references see 50, note 28); cf. Hill "Middle Way" 182-83.

[The greater danger lies not in attacks from outside but from within ourselves. Inside us is the adversary, inside us the author of error, inside us, I say, closed up within our very selves. (Russell Satan 189)³⁵]

Despite such claims as these, the gradual establishment of original sin as church doctrine gradually rendered the need for Satan (or an external sin-principle) within each individual sin and sinner theologically obsolete, since it provided a ready-made explanation for the tendency to sin.³⁶

Suggestions of such an allegorical interpretation are latent in any case where Satan is implicated in a sin or evil without more evidence than the very existence of that sin or evil. Such cases, in the Middle Ages, are abundant. There are numerous traditional and even scriptural passages that indicate Satan was behind the obstinacy and hostility of the Jews as they turned against Christ, to cite a famous example;³⁷ but on what basis, other than the ubiquity of Satan in all acts of treachery and malignancy, does an Anglo-Saxon author attribute to Satan the blame for occurrences closer to home and unsupportable by authorities? To cite but one instance,

³⁵ Blickling 4 states, "Se þe Godes bebod oferhogap, he biþ on hæpenra onlicnesse, & manig deofol on him eardap" ("he who forsakes God's bidding, he is similar to heathens, and many devils dwell in him," Morris 49). In Blickling 6, those who live without Christ "gearwiap deoflum eardunga" ("prepare dwellings for devils," Morris 77). In Blickling 15, Peter submits that Simon Magus "is mid deofle gefylled" ("is filled with the devil," Morris 183). In the homiletic fragment in the middle of which the OE Vision of Paul has been inserted (Junius 85), the soul tells the body: "Þu eart deofles hus, forðan ðu deofles willen worhtest" ("you are the house of the devil, for you work the devil's will," Healey Vision 324, l.284; cf. Frank "Poetic Words" 93).

³⁶ Gregory Moralia 4 (preface): 4.6, 8.8, 9.32, 15.57, 17.21, 18.84. For an account of Original Sin in the early Church see G.M. Lukken, Original Sin in the Roman Liturgy (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1973), esp. 157-265 for the role of Satan. Cf. De civ 22.22, 22.24.

³⁷ See, for instance, Ælfric De fide catholica (Thorpe 1.292, ll.5-6).

Eddius Stephanus in his Vita Wilfridi 14, tells us that,

Quodam igitur tempore, adhuc sancto Wilfritho episcopo trans mare non veniente, Oswi rex, male suadente invidia, hostis antiqui instinctu alium praearripere inordinate sedem suam edoctus consensit ab his... (Colgrave 30, ll.1-4)

[After a lapse of time, when Saint Wilfrid the bishop did not arrive from across the sea, King Oswiu, moved by envy and at the instigation of the devil, consented to allow another to forestall him in his see in an irregular manner... (Colgrave 31)]

Is this a purely literary trope, understood by author and intended audience alike to constitute embellishment rather than informative, empirical assertion? Or is the devil indeed understood to underlie all such acts, and only diverse contexts make it more or less relevant to mention the obvious fact? Or, perhaps, does an author occasionally feel confident in asserting diabolical influence merely from the superlatively heinous scope or nature of an evil act, without insinuating that such influences exist in all evil acts? No one answer to these questions will satisfy the range of early medieval attitudes toward the devil; only detailed investigations of individual works and authors will begin to provide the contours of the medieval understanding of diabolical temptation.

The actual treatments of Satan in the literary as well as theological sources almost invariably place him somewhere between the two extremes of ubiquitous involvement in present sins and none at all. The ambiguity inherent in the diverse scriptural and patristic passages was sustained throughout the course of Christian art, literature, and theology—Satan is portrayed on the one hand as personal, subject to spatio-temporal laws and thus confined to a single place at a given

time; while on the other, he is an angelic entity of such inconceivable scope and power that he may be said to inhere in all sinners throughout the world (and thus conform to an allegorical notion of the principle of sin itself). The mainstream of tradition followed a middle ground, in which Satan is envisioned as causing some sins and evils in the present world, but not all. The internal impulses of the fallen human soul, combined with the external, sensual temptations of the fallen natural world, provide sufficient occasion for the possibility of sin without requiring absolutely the assistance of demonic beings.³⁸

3. The Location of Devil

When this ambiguity in Satan's psychological function is cast in mythological terms, corresponding tensions in Satan's representation as personified character naturally arise. One is his precise location during the present age, between the Harrowing of Hell and the Second Coming. Church tradition insists paradoxically that he is simultaneously chained in hell and roaming about the earth.³⁹ The most dramatic scriptural account of the cosmic battle between Satan and the angelic powers is the Book of Revelation, where indications of both tendencies may be found. Revelation 12.9 reads, "The great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him..." Here the present earth of human

³⁸ Thus Origen (Langton Satan 53), Gregory Moralia 6.52, 19.12; cf. Romans 7.23.

³⁹ As will become clear, the case is much more complicated than Dando presents it, when he asserts that Gregory in the Moralia (4.9.16, et al.) innovatively departs from patristic tradition in claiming Satan now lies in hell (426).

habitation has been Satan's location since the rebellion in heaven, an interpretation, as we will see, popular with most commentators of the early Middle Ages. Revelation also asserts in no uncertain terms, however, that Satan is bound in a pit (20.2-3): "He seized the dragon. that ancient serpent, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, / and threw him into the pit [abyssum], and locked it and sealed it over him, so that he would deceive the nations no more, until the thousand years were ended." Revelation 20.7-8 allows that following the thousand year period, Satan will be let loose to deceive the nations of the earth--thus, depending upon whether one takes the thousand year period to be already completed, the text can be cited to prove either that Satan is bound in hell or that he is already at large.⁴⁰

But there are other, less ambiguous scriptural passages that imply Satan is confined in hell:

...enim Deus angelis peccantibus non pepercit, sed rudentibus
infernī detractos in tartarum tradidit in iudicium cruciatos
reservari...

[...God did not spare the angels when they sinned, but cast them
into hell and committed them to chains of deepest darkness to be
kept until the judgment... (2 Peter 2.4)]

Angelos vero qui non servaverunt suum principatum sed
derelinquerunt suum domicilium in iudicium magni diei vinculis

⁴⁰ Though Jerome, Cassian, and other early writers hold that the events of the Book of Revelation describe the original fall of the angels, Gregory the Great (Moralia 32.22, Homiliae in Evangelia 34.9), Bede (Explanatio Apocalypsis 12.4), Alcuin, Strabo, and others believe they describe rather the final combat, and this view generally held until Peter Lombard and Aquinas returned to Jerome's interpretation (Coulange 40, Forsyth 255, Russell Satan 194).

aeternis sub caligine reservavit.

[And the angels who did not keep their own position, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains in deepest darkness for the judgment of the great Day. (Jude 6)]⁴¹

Although these passages may be enigmatic, because of the interpretation of 'hell' and 'deepest darkness' by certain patristic authorities as the air of this world (to be discussed shortly), the emergence of an independent literary tradition--that of the vision of hell and the Descensus ad inferos--eventually made the binding of Satan in a subterranean prison absolutely unequivocal.

Since at least the time of Dante's Inferno Satan has been commonly visualized as bound in hell, and it is difficult for the modern reader to adjust to the fact that this was not the predominant image of Satan in the early Middle Ages.⁴² Two of the earliest visions of hell, the Apocalypse of Peter (ca. mid second century) and the Apocalypse of Paul (ca. late fourth century), each mention Satan in moral contexts,⁴³ yet, though the visionaries tour hell and view the occupants and torments, there is no sign of the devil there. There are references to punishing angels (Ezrael, Tatirokos, Tartaruchus), and both mention the worm that does not sleep as a resident, but there is no explicit mention of Satan or any attempt to equate him with these figures. Likewise, Gregory the Great presents three brief visions of hell in the Dialogi (4.37),

⁴¹ The devil and the demons are most concretely associated with an underworld abode when cited in connection with their role as tormentors of the wicked.

⁴² This paragraph is based largely on the works collected and translated in Gardiner Visions (1989), along with Himmelfarb and Patch 80-133; quotations are from Gardiner.

⁴³ Peter: "Satan makes war against you and has veiled your understanding"; Paul: "you transgress and add sin upon sin...doing the work of the devil" (Gardiner 11 and 14).

Bede offers three more in the Historia,⁴⁴ and Boniface in his correspondence gives us two,⁴⁵ but only one of these eight--Bede's anonymous monk--offers a glimpse of the bound Prince of Darkness in hell. Even that is but a passing, static glance:

coepit narrare, quia uideret inferos apertos et Satanan demersum
in profundis Tartari... (Colgrave and Mynors 504, ll.3-4)

[he began to describe how he had seen hell opened and Satan
sunken in its infernal depths...]

Of the other early (pre-1100) medieval visions of hell catalogued in Gardiner's sourcebook (Medieval Visions), most do not include the devil.⁴⁶ Only with a tenth-century redaction of the Voyage of Brendan, the eleventh-century Vision of Adamnan, and finally the widely-popular twelfth-century Vision of Tundale does Satan become an essential feature of hell tours. The result is that Satan was increasingly seen as bound in a physical location, limited by a certain description, and his allegorical status as ubiquitous principle of evil or temptation was cast

⁴⁴ Fursey 3.19 (Colgrave and Mynors 268-76), Drythelm 5.12 (Colgrave and Mynors 488-98), and an unnamable monk 5.14 (Colgrave and Mynors 502-04).

⁴⁵ Following Emerton, these occur in letter 2 (a monk of Wenlock) and 92 (an anonymous visionary).

⁴⁶ Along with those in Gardiner's Visions, I have also consulted the visions catalogued in her Sourcebook (1993): Valerius of Bierzo's visions of Maximus and Baldarius (mid 7th-c.), the vision of Barontus (late 8th-c., which repeatedly alludes to the devil as dragging people to hell, but in fact presents the demons rather than the devil as the active agents when the visionary is in hell), the vision of Rotcharius (early 9th-c.), that of Raduin (9th-c.), Heito's Vision of Wetti (9th-c.), Prudentius of Troyes' vision of an English priest (9th-c.), Rimbert's vision of Ansgar (9th-c.), Hincmar of Reims' vision of Bernoldus (late 9th-c.), the vision of Laisrén (late 9th- or early 10th-c.), and that of Leofric (late 11th-c.). Of these only Valerius of Bierzo's vision of Bonello (mid 7th-c.) indicates the devil is in hell: "perduxerunt me ante conspectum impiissimi diaboli," PL 87.434, ch.22, l.5).

increasingly into obscurity.⁴⁷

Overlapping with the 'vision of hell' genre or type-scene is the widely influential Descensus ad inferos, which, together with the Acta Pilati, comprises the more familiar Gospel of Nicodemus.⁴⁸ In the early Descensus tradition, though Christ conquers an enemy in the underworld, this enemy is not identified as Satan; in fact, there is great diversity in the identification of the enemy.⁴⁹ Yet the binding of Satan grew to be an indispensable feature of the narrative. By the time of the prose Old English redaction, Satan and Hell are each significant figures, and conduct a lengthy dialogue in nervous anticipation of the coming victor (Hulme 498-503). Blickling Homily 7 (Easter Day) contains an account of the Harrowing which mentions the binding of Satan twice, and the Junius 11 poem Christ and Satan dwells at length upon the humiliation suffered by Satan in the Harrowing.⁵⁰ Cynewulf isolates the binding of Satan as the principal salient point of the Harrowing, in his descriptions of the six 'leaps' of Christ in

⁴⁷ Significantly, perhaps, The Vision of Tundale appears not long after the single greatest blow against the importance of the devil for Christian theology: Anselm's redemption theory (see above, note 26).

⁴⁸ On the Gospel see MacCulloch 152-73. The precise influence of the Gospel of Nicodemus in Anglo-Saxon England is a matter of some debate. Antonette di Paolo Healey, reflecting the general scholarly consensus, argues for the thorough influence of the Gospel on Old English homiletic prose and poetry (Old English Vision 41-57, "Anglo-Saxon Use" 95-102). Jackson Campbell, on the other hand, claims that the material dramatized so famously in the Gospel was widely known in the early Middle Ages from a number of other sources as well, and that in many cases it is difficult to demonstrate that the source text for an Old English work is the Gospel itself rather than these other liturgical and homiletic materials.

⁴⁹ Teachings of Silvanus 110.24--"haughty tyrant"; Origen Commentary on Matthew 16.8--"Satan"; Aphraates of Syria Homily 14--"evil" (Peel 1979). Most commonly, death, or the underworld itself (Hades or Inferus/Infernus), are personified and viewed as the primary antagonist, the 'strong man' whom Christ is binding.

⁵⁰ Morris 85, ll.4-6 and 87, ll.19-20; Christ and Satan 398-467, esp. 441-54.

Christ II may be taken as emphasizing essential points:

Wæs se fifta hlyp
 þa he hellwarena heap forbygde
 in cwicsusle, cyning inne gebond,
 feonda foresprecan, fyrum teagum,
 gromhydigne, þær he gen ligeð
 in carcerne clommum gefæstnad,
 synnum gesæled. (Krapp and Dobbie III, 730-36)

[The fifth leap was when he humiliated the crowd of hell-dwellers
 in (their) living torment, bound the king therein, the advocate of
 demons, the malignant one, with fiery fetters, (and) there he yet
 lies in prison, secured with bonds, confined for his sins.]

This entire fifth ‘leap’ of Cynewulf’s six—the Harrowing—is itself an addition to the five leaps of Gregory’s homily which is the source for the leaps of Christ passage. These texts as a whole established the chaining of Satan in hell more firmly by rendering the scene explicit in narrative detail. Audiences could now picture the devil in hell in a way they could not by merely relying on the isolated passages of Revelation, 2 Peter, and Jude.

Thus the banishment of the rebellious angels to hell apparently occurs at two times: once at the war in heaven, and again at the Harrowing. In some contexts these facts are reconciled by allowing that the devil fell to earth at first and then was confined to hell at the Harrowing; others posit a difference in degree of depth and torment, which was merely augmented at the Harrowing; most contexts, however, simply do not address the issue and blithely refer to the

'fall' and 'binding' of Satan whatever the context at hand.⁵¹ These are, after all, archetypal images whose importance lies more in their reiteration than in their coherence as a unified narrative (Bernstein 278ff). Whether or not the devil was strictly confined to hell before the Harrowing, he has undeniably been there since that time, and the description of the devils bound in hell is a familiar trope in Old English.⁵²

Yet for some early Christians, the confinement of the devil appeared incompatible with numerous other traits supposed to characterize him. Hippolytus of Rome asks, "Were the Devil already bound, how could he then still mislead the faithful and persecute and plunder mankind?"⁵³ For in Christian discourse the devil is not merely a mythological character in narratives concerning the beginning- and end-times, entirely divorced from the present state of

⁵¹ A reconciliation found in the Prose Solomon and Saturn does not appear widely in vernacular texts: "[God] hyg todældon on þri dælas; anne dæl he asette on þæs lyftes gedrif; Oðerne dæl on ðæs wateres gedrif; þriðdan dæl on helle neowelnysse" ("God divided them [the fallen angels] into three parts; one part he set in the tract of the sky; the second part in the tract of the sea; the third part in the depth of hell," Cross and Hill 30, passage 32). Cf. Christ and Satan 262-63, 269-75.

⁵² For instance, Vercelli Homily 19: "ealle þa ðe æt ðam ræde mid him wæron ⁊ him æfter besawon, ealle hie wurdon of englum to deoflum forscapeþene ⁊ on helle bescofene, þær hie on ecnesse witu þoliað..." (Scragg 316, ll.19-22; "and all those who were in his conspiracy and followed him, all of them were transformed from angels into devils, and shoved into hell, where they suffer torments for eternity"). Cf. Andreas 1190-94, 1376-85; Elene 751-71, 934-52; see Abbetmeyer 31 for other instances. For the figural significance of Satan's binding in Old English poetry, see Rendall "Bondage."

⁵³ Cited in Brandon "Devil" 477; cf. Doane 134-36 and Dustoor 260-66 for discussion with regard to early English.

affairs, but he is also invoked in relation to recent and contemporary events.⁵⁴ Thus attention is brought to certain scriptural passages that assert the freedom of the devil to move amongst humankind, sowing his seeds of evil. In the first two chapters of Job, when asked by the Lord where he has been, Satan responds: "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it..." (Job 1.7 and 2.2)⁵⁵ The most explicit New Testament passage—and one specifically referring to the period subsequent to the Harrowing of Hell—is 1 Peter 5.8: "Discipline yourselves, keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour."⁵⁶ Thus Gregory the Great refers to the devil in several letters as lupus circumiens.⁵⁷

There is also a tendency in the New Testament to treat evil spirits as beings of the air, a motif common in classical and early Christian philosophy.⁵⁸ Thus the devil is associated with

⁵⁴ This is the very reason that Defoe proposes to do away with the concept of hell (while keeping that of the devil): "The notions we receive of the Devil, as a person being in hell as a place, are infinitely absurd and ridiculous; the first we are certain is not true in fact, because he has a certain liberty, (however limited that is not to the purpose) is daily visible, and to be traced in his several attacks upon mankind..." (2.2).

⁵⁵ The article that appears with 'satan' in the Hebrew text, thus making it more of a title than a proper name, is lost in the Vulgate (Forsyth 110).

⁵⁶ Cf. Psalm 10.9, Matthew 13.39, Mark 4.15, Luke 8.12. In Hebrew the very name of the satan suggests his mobility, as the writer of Job puns on the sound of satan and the verb "to roam," shût (Pagels 41).

⁵⁷ O'Donnell 142. The identification of the devil as a wolf is common (Abbetmeyer 36). Wulfstan, who identifies himself as lupus in certain contexts, refers to the devil as a wodfræca werewolf ("madly ravenous wolf-man") in Homily 16b (Bethurum 241, l.35).

⁵⁸ Diogenes Laertius Lives of the Philosophers 8.32 (Pythagoras); Cicero De republica 6.22; Philo Somn 1.22.135; Apuleius De deo Socratis; Eusebius Preparatio evangelica 4.5, 141c-d; Epinomis 984d. For earlier sources, see Plato Symposium 202e. Discussing Apuleius' contention that the demons reside mid-way between the gods and humankind, Augustine notes that that much is certain beyond dispute (De civ 9.13; Hoffmann 1.425, l.10). See Finnegan Christ and

the air in Ephesians 2.1-2: "You were dead through the trespasses and sins / in which you once lived, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air [*principem potestatis aeris huius*], the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient."⁵⁹ Indeed, throughout the patristic period the devil was often conceived as inhabiting the lower heavens--the atmosphere of this world. The Latin rendering of *zophos* ('darkness') in Jude 6 (cited above) in the Vulgate is *caligo*, which aside from 'darkness' can also mean 'fog' or 'thick air'--thus the passage could be used to support Satan's entrapment in the air of this world, instead of his confinement in a void or pit (Kelly 1968, 33).

It may seem unintuitive that the 'hell' into which the fallen angels were plunged following their expulsion from heaven was the air of this world, but the matter was elaborated upon at length in the church fathers.⁶⁰ If not always identified as the place of torments, the air is frequently characterized as a prison.⁶¹ Augustine is not vague:

Satan 42-7, Flint 101-26.

⁵⁹ For discussion of early textual variants and the wider context of the passage, see Christopher Lash "Where Do Devils Live? A Problem in the Textual Criticism of Ephesians 6,12," *Vigiliae Christianae* 30 (1976): 161-74. Cf. Daniélou *Théologie* 148-49.

⁶⁰ It is a common theme in Jewish apocalyptic writings. In *2 Enoch* (or the Slavonic *Secrets of Enoch*) the visionary is carried up through the heavens, beginning with the clouds, by winged creatures. The fallen angels are found brooding in the second of the seven heavens (7.1-2), and the northern part of the third heaven contains Hell with all the familiar punishments (10). An account of the expulsion of the angels occurs in 29.4: "And I threw him out from the height with his angels, and he was flying in the air continuously above the bottomless" (Rutherford Platt, ed. *The Forgotten Books of Eden* [Alpha House, 1927]). For the author of *The Ascension of Isaiah*, the fallen angels occupy the firmament, beneath the lowest of the seven heavens, and the demons occupy the air below that (Daniélou *Théologie* 132-34, 146-49, 258-59).

⁶¹ Justin Martyr *1 Apology* 26, 54, 76ff, 62; Tatian *Discourse* 16; Tertullian *Apologeticum* 22.5, 22.10; Origen *De principiis* 2.2.6, *Homilies on Judges* 9.2, *Against Celsus* 1.31; Lactantius *Institutes* 2.14.5; Athanasius *Vita Antonii* 21, *De incarnatione* 25; Ambrose *Explanatio Psalmorum* 118.8.58, *Expositio Evangelii secundum Lucan* 4.9, *De bono mortis*

Propterea ad ista caliginosa, id est, ad hunc aërem, tanquam ad carcerem, damnatus est diabolus, de apparatu superiorum Angelorum lapsus cum angelis suis: nam Apostolus hoc de illo dicit: 'Secundum principem potestatis aëris hujus, qui nunc operatur in filiis diffidentiae.' Et alius Apostolus dicit: 'Si enim Deus angelis peccantibus non pepercit, sed carceribus caliginis inferni retrudens, tradidit in iudicio puniendos servari,' infernum hoc appellans, quod inferior pars mundi sit. (Homily upon Psalm 148.9, Caillau and Guillon 53)

[On that account, the devil was condemned into this darkness, that is, into this air, as though into a prison; he fell from the splendor of the angels with his angels. For the Apostle says this about it: "...following the prince of the power of this air, who now works in the sons of diffidence" (Eph 2.2). And elsewhere the Apostle

6.22, Exameron 2.2.5; Augustine De civ 7.6, 8.14-16, 8.22, 10.9-10, 10.21-22, 14.3, Ord 2.9.27, Epistulae 9.3, Contra academicos 1.7.20; Isidore Etymologiae 8.17 (Campbell 119-20, 130, 133; Daniélou "Les démons" 139; Dustoor 261-65; Ferguson 111; McHugh "Demonology" 211-13; Pépin passim; Russell Satan 77 and 171; Sleeth 50-51). McHugh discusses the motif in Ambrose (213). See Augustine De Genesi ad litteram 11.33: "Let us not doubt but that the guilty angels were hurled into the dungeon of our shadowy atmosphere, while waiting to be punished on the Day of Judgment" (Coulange 67-68), and De civ 8.22: "They do indeed dwell in the air, because they have been cast down from the upper heights of heaven as a reward for their irremediable transgression and condemned to inhabit this region as a kind of prison appropriate to their nature" (Bettenson 329-30; "qui in hoc quidam aere habitant, quia de superioris sublimitate deiecti merito in regressibilis transgressionis in hoc sibi congruo uelut carcere praedammati sunt," Hoffmann 1.391, II.4-6).

For demons in the air as physically obstructing souls attempting to ascend to heaven, see Daniélou "Les démons," esp. 138-39. He contrasts the two principal traditions for situating the battle between Christ and Satan, that of the air (the New Testament and patristic tradition) and that of the underworld (which in the Middle Ages eventually prevailed over the first, due in part to the Descensus tradition in art and liturgy, as well as to undue attention to Psalm 104.4). Athanasius in De incarnatione verbi Dei 25, "argues that Jesus was crucified rather than decapitated or sawn asunder, because the Ruler of the Power of Evil dwells in the air, and he only that is crucified dies in the air" (Conybeare 1897: 63; cf. Lohr 75).

says: "truly, if God did not spare the sinning angels, but thrusting them into the prisons of gloomy hell, delivered those to be punished to be kept until judgment..." (2 Peter 2.4), calling that "hell," which is the lower part of the world.^{62]}

In such a schema, the traditional view of hell as a cave is compromised, in favor of a cosmological finesse capable of sustaining both the letter of Scripture and the omnipresence of the demonic.⁶³ The demon in a Passio Margaretae copied in Anglo-Saxon England reveals to Margaret, "Our lives are not on the earth, but we travel with the winds."⁶⁴ Ælfric in De auguriis notes that the invisible devil "flyhð geond þas woruld and fela ðincg gesihð" ("flies throughout the world and sees many things"), and Byrhtferth closes his Enchiridion with the admonition that "eall þis lyft is full hellicra deofla" ("all this air is full of hellish devils").⁶⁵ Only with Peter Lombard and Thomas Aquinas would the idea that Satan is already chained in

⁶² Coulange 62-64. Cf. De Genesi ad literam 3.10: "nec aëris saltem spatia superiora atque puriora, sed ista caliginosa tenere permissi sunt, qui eis pro suo genere quidam quasi carcer est, usque ad tempus iudicii" (Caillau and Guillon 232). "...[the transgressing angels] have not even been allowed to stay in the region of higher and purer air, but must instead remain until judgment day in this dense atmosphere, which is like a dungeon for them according to their kind" (Kelly 1968, 32). Also De civ 11.33: "We know that some angels sinned and were thrust into the lowest parts of this world, which is a kind of prison for them, where they are confined until the condemnation which is to come in the day of judgement" (Bettenson 468). For further distinctions in Augustine's division of the air into upper and lower regions, see De Natura Boni 33; cf. Finnegan Christ and Satan 42-43.

⁶³ See also Gregory Moralia 2.47-48 (Dustoor 262). Though Sleeth (51) distinguishes the rival traditions of the aerial hell of this world (found in the exegetical tradition up through Ambrose) from the subterranean hell (found in Augustine, Gregory, and Bede), in fact all of these writers can be seen in different passages to adhere to both views.

⁶⁴ BN Lat. 5574 (tenth century): "Nam uite nostre non sunt super terram sed cum uentis ambulemus [sic]," Clayton and Magennis 208-11. Cf. Juliana 281 (lyftlacende).

⁶⁵ Skeat 1.372, ll.110, 111; Baker and Lapidge 247-48, ll.84-5.

hell become the prevalent opinion in orthodox circles (Coulange 64-65).

Although the tradition that the demons were properly beings of the air was widespread, it proved difficult to envision how they could be suffering the fires of hell (a belief occasioned from Revelation). Matthew 25.41 refers to a fire "prepared for the devil and his angels," to be their fate at the final judgment, and thus (by implication) not afflicting them at present (Russell Satan 69). The presence and nature of these fires consuming the rebel angels was thus a matter of dispute, and for early writers, once again, the allegorical interpretation predominated: they are not the material flames of hell (though those exist and await the demons), but represent rather their present state of suffering.⁶⁶ Many early writers insist that it is merely the anticipation of the hellfires which they know await them that causes the demons to suffer. Bede falls within this tradition in his Commentary on the Epistle of St James (3.6):

A gehenna dicit a diabolo et angelis ejus, propter quos gehenna facta est, et qui ubicunque vel in aere volitant, vel in terris aut sub terris vagantur, sive detinentur, suarum secum ferunt semper tormenta flammaram, instar febricitantis, qui et si in lectis eburneis, et si in locis ponatur apricis, fervorem tamen vel frigus insiti sibi languoris evitare non potest. Sic ergo dæmones et si in templis colantur auratis, et si per aerea discurrant, igne semper ardent gehennali... (PL 93, col. 27; cf. Coulange 68-69).⁶⁷

[By hell, he says, 'by the devil and his angels', for whom hell was

⁶⁶ Ambrose, following Origen, espouses this view in Expositio evangelii secundum Lucan 7.205. For Ambrose see McHugh "Demonology" 212-13.

⁶⁷ Dustoor 265 mistakenly attributes this passage to the Historia 5.15. Russell (Lucifer 99) and Finnegan (Christ and Satan 43) also cite In 2 Epistolam Sancti Petri (PL 93, col. 75).

made and who always everywhere take with them the torments of flames, whether they fly in the air or wander on the earth or beneath the earth or are (kept there. They are) like a person with a fever who, even if he is placed on ivory beds or in sunny places, still cannot avoid the heat and the chill of the illness within him. So therefore the demons, even if they are worshipped in golden temples or move around through the air, always burn with hellish fire... (Hurst 39)]

Here we are on familiar ground--this is not far removed from Marlowe's "where we are is hell; and where hell is, must we forever be" or Milton's "Which way I fly is hell; myself am Hell."⁶⁸ Though provocative in the context of Reformation and Renaissance theology, these tropes were in fact commonplaces of the early patristic tradition, in which the moral and allegorical aspects of the devil were at least as prominent as his individuality, traits, or personal history.

4. The Multiplicity of Demons

Associated with the mobility of the devil and the other fallen angels is the tradition that the

⁶⁸ Faustus 5.119-20; Paradise Lost 4.75; cf. Jacob Boehme "The Supersensual Life," "On Heaven and Hell," et al. For the motif in Gregory the Great see Russell Lucifer 98-99, and for a "point of contact" between this idea and Christ and Satan (263-64), see Finnegan Christ and Satan 43 (note 32). Could some such notion inform the surprising epithet used of errant Grendel, "feond on helle?" (l. 101; see Malmberg 243) The reference is certainly troublesome: Feldman suggests the emendation "feond on healle" (171), while Ball concludes that the poet's Song of Creation actually ends with line 101, not line 98--thus the "feond on helle" refers to Satan instead of Grendel (163).

world is filled with the bustling of innumerable demons.⁶⁹ Tertullian claims that this world has been filled with Satan and his angels: "totum saeculum satanas et angeli eius repleuerunt" (De spectaculis 8.9, Quinti Septimi Tertulliani Opera 235). Eusebius also shares the belief, following Porphyry, that "every house is full of them, and even "our bodies are likewise full of them" (Langton Satan 57). Cassian in Conlationes 8.12 observes that "the atmosphere which extends between heaven and earth is ever filled with a thick crowd of spirits, which do not fly about in it quietly or idly" (Gibson 379).⁷⁰ And St. Augustine's disciple Salvianus simply states, "Ubique daemon"--the demon is everywhere.⁷¹

Origen's account presents the world as initially filled with demons, but as each individual casts off demons of sin, those demons are sent to the abyss and permanently subtracted from the total sum. Thus the world is becoming increasingly free of the antagonists: "Hence there are far fewer demons now than before; hence, also, a large number of demons having been overthrown, the heathen are now free to believe, as they would not did whole legions of demons exist as formerly" (Homily on Joshua 15.5; quoted in Ferguson Demonology 128). Such notions as these presumably inform the geographical distributions of demons as found most notably in the Vita Antonii, and also in Felix's Vita Guthlaci, in which the overcrowded throngs of demons are present, but driven to unpopulated wildernesses. Also in those works, the associations of the

⁶⁹ A discussion concerning precisely how many demons there are can be found in chapter 2 of Rudwin Devil. While innumerability topoi were more common than exact figures in the Middle Ages, the largest specific number I have encountered comes to us from Reformation Switzerland: Martinus Borrihaus calculates them as 2,665,866,746,664 (Carus 346; cf. Rudwin 25).

⁷⁰ "Tanta uero spirituum densitate constipatur aër iste qui inter caelum terramque diffunditur" (Petschenig 227).

⁷¹ Cited in Papini 33.

demons with the air are conspicuous: the demons lift the saints into the air, and in Guthlac, even show him the gate of hell which is apparently situated not in the earth but high in the atmosphere. Thus the Anglo-Saxons were more moderate than early Christians in their insistence on the population of demons on earth; the filling of this world with innumerable demons would have to await Judgment Day.⁷²

The extraordinary mobility of the devil and of the demons gives them a sort of effective omnipresence. Tertullian writes, "Every spirit is winged...Consequently in a moment they are everywhere, to them the world is one place" (Apologeticum 22).⁷³ Gregory the Great, attempting to explain how Satan could appear in the celestial court in Job, argues that "though he had lost his blessed estate...Satan did not part with a nature like to theirs. His deserts sink him; but he is yet lifted up by the properties of his subtle nature" (Langton Satan 63). Throughout the early Middle Ages, perhaps influenced by the Descensus tradition, church writers gradually abandoned the association of the devil with the air and formed a (tenuous) consensus concerning his imprisonment in hell. The devil for the Anglo-Saxons was thus more or less firmly incarcerated beneath the earth; the demons, however, continued to teem throughout creation.⁷⁴ But vestigial features of the earlier notions were numerous and survived

⁷² Thus Blickling Homily 7, on the sixth day of apocalypse: "þonne biþ from feower endum þære eorþan eall middangeard mid awergdum gastum gefylled..." ("when all middle-earth will be filled with wicked spirits from the four corners of the earth," Morris 93-95).

⁷³ "Omnis spiritus ales est...Igitur momento ubique sunt; totus orbis illis locus unus est" (Mayor and Souter, 76 and 77). See Langton Satan 49. Ferguson (116-17) mistakenly attributes the passage to Justin Martyr's Apology.

⁷⁴ In letter 92, Boniface tells of a visionary who sees "three troops of enormous demons--one in the air, one on land, and a third on the sea" (Emerton 190) and in 2, the monk of Wenlock observes, "the demons with triumphant rejoicings gathered together from every part of the universe, in numbers greater than the narrator had supposed there were human beings

in all manner of Christian artistic and cultural expression—especially those of Mediterranean origin—not only folklore, hagiography, homiletics, and theology, but even liturgy.

5. The Liturgical devil

A far more powerful influence on the minds of practicing Christians than theological works—which were both abstruse and difficult to obtain—was the liturgy itself, which vividly suggests the presence and ubiquity of the devil. Coulange writes,

Let us note that the traditional belief [that the devil is not in hell, but free to wander], expelled from theology, found refuge with the people and in the Liturgy. Without thought of the doctors and their revolutionary speculations, the faithful continued to believe that the Devil ranged about them. And the Church, which chased the Devil from the bodies of the possessed, which interdicted, under the gravest penalties, pacts with the Devil, changed nothing in its practices. The theologians, with their innovations, succeeded only in putting themselves in a state of rebellion against the Ritual. (65-66)

While Russell observes that on the whole the devil plays a small role in the liturgy (Lucifer 124), it may be worth pausing to consider a significant exception, baptism—the definitive

living in the world..." (Emerton 30, "daemones gaudentes et exultantes de universis mundi partibus congregati maiori multitudine, quam omnium animantium in saeculo fieri aestimaret," Rau 40).

sacrament in the construction of the Christian self.⁷⁵

No standard baptismal rites were established during the time of the composition of the New Testament.⁷⁶ Already in the earliest extant baptism liturgies in the West, however--the Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus (Rome) and the writings of Tertullian (Carthage), both around the beginning of the third century--the ceremony is presented as freeing the catechumen from evil spirits (Kelly 1985: 81). The renunciation of Satan is one of the few features both the Roman and Carthaginian practices share, in fact. In Hippolytus' rite, Satan is directly addressed and rebuked as part of the initiatory practices, but references to him are abandoned throughout the remainder of the ceremony.⁷⁷ In Tertullian's rite, the devil is not addressed in direct discourse or treated as though present; the renunciation is addressed to God and the congregation. By Augustine's time, however, the practice of prebaptismal exorcism had become a standard part of the ceremony, and would soon dominate the initiation procedures in the rites of baptism throughout Christendom (except Syria, Kelly 1985: 150). For Augustine the expulsion of Satan from the uninitiated was metaphoric--that is, in the exorcism of the devil, the

⁷⁵ See, for instance the prayer "For the making of a Christian" in the late seventh century Missale Gothicum (ed. L.C. Mohlberg, Missale Gothicum, *Rerum Ecclesiasticarum Documenta*, Series Major, Fontes V [1961]: 65; cited in Fisher Christian Initiation 48), and the sources offered by Sarah Foot 172-73, 191.

⁷⁶ The following discussion is indebted to Kelly The Devil at Baptism (hereafter Kelly 1985), supplemented with material from Fisher Christian Initiation, Foot, T. Hill "When God Blew Satan," and Regan. Wulfstan grants the devil an especially prominent role in the significance of baptism (VIIIa-c, *Bethurum* 166-84).

⁷⁷ "It is perfectly credible that Hippolytus and his associates believed themselves done with the devil and his servants once the renunciation and the anointing with exorcized oil had occurred and that they took no further thought of this darker side of reality during the rest of the ceremony. If so, the great adversary in this ritual tableau of salvation received the ultimate insult of being ignored once his power over the candidates was severed" (Kelly 1985: 92).

catechumens were merely severing the bondage of their souls to sin.⁷⁸ In Contra Julianum (3.199) he writes,

Tu autem, qui eam negas a diabolo possideri, procul dubio negas
a potestate erui tenebrarum...immo vero exsufflatur, sed diabolus,
qui contagione peccati tenet parvulum reum... (Zelzer 498, ll.8-17)

[You, however, who deny (that an unbaptized infant) is possessed
by the devil, without doubt you deny (him) to be possessed from
the power of darkness...But by no means is He (the Deity, in
whose image the infant is created) blown upon, rather the devil
(is), who holds the little one condemned by the contagion of sin...
(Hill "When God Blew Satan" 134)]

Yet the dramatic nature of the rite surely left a great impression on the congregation, and even more so on the participants (in the case of adult baptism). The local variations of the rite exhibit a marked tendency to embellish and dramatize those very demonological references that Augustine and other church authorities would have preferred to de-emphasize.

Two letters of Alcuin, which would later become influential in the Carolingian reformations

⁷⁸ "The notion that all sinners were literally possessed by the demons did not find much favor with the Fathers, and when they were confronted with baptismal ceremonies that presupposed it, they were forced to interpret them allegorically..." (Kelly 1985: 273-74) But also: "...the creative liturgists took their cue not from the liturgotropic rationalizations of the Fathers but from the literal sense of the exorcisms themselves, which had continued to be performed with more attention than the Fathers' homilies had been reread. As a result, this aspect of the confrontation with the adversary, theologically questionable unless symbolically understood, underwent great elaboration, unhindered by the circumstance that these fearsome adjurations came more and more to be pronounced over the heads not of sinful and world-tainted adults but of imperceptive infants" (151).

of liturgy, describe contemporary baptism procedures.⁷⁹ The catechumen undergoes initial rites "to renounce the malign spirit and all of his damnable poms."⁸⁰ The devil is then mocked and driven away through 'exsufflation,' and the candidate receives the Apostles' Creed so that the empty soul may be adorned for the entry of God, "now that it has been abandoned by the original inhabitant" (Kelly 204). In fact, the rites are interpreted in terms of anti-demonological significance throughout the prebaptismal ceremony: the breast is anointed "so that by the sign of the holy cross the devil will be denied entry" (204). The presence of the devil in the candidate is stressed repeatedly, and several rites which in earlier treatments are not given explicit demonological significance are freely associated here with the expulsion of and fortification against the devil. The demonological emphasis is dropped during the remaining ceremonies (following the baptism itself); the prebaptismal exorcism is apparently taken to be absolutely effective (Kelly 1985: 205).

It is difficult to judge how reflective Alcuin's descriptions were of current practices. The Roman liturgy, however, as reflected first in the Ordo romanus XI and eventually in the Ordo L (compiled and disseminated in the tenth century), quickly supplanted most local variants and soon became the standard Catholic baptism ritual (Kelly 1985: 254). In the Ordo XI the devil is treated as present and even as though he were inhabiting all the candidates simultaneously (177). He is ordered to depart in direct discourse ("Exorcizo te immunde..."), and the priest interprets several of the subsequent rites for the catechumens in terms of demonological combat.

⁷⁹ Epistolae 134, 137 (ed. E. Dümmler, MGH, Epistolae Karolini Aevi 2 [1895]): 202-03, 214-15.

⁸⁰ Kelly 1985: 204. For Alcuin's letters, see also Fisher 59-61.

Kelly submits that "these references do bring home the 'real presence' of Satan in their lives," and that "taken together, the rituals of expulsion, repudiation, and prophylaxis or apotropaism formed a series of ceremonies that dramatized in a striking way the very real struggle that every Christian waged with the devil" (210, 273). While it must be stressed that the treatment of the unbaptized as possessed was not considered analogous to the corporeal possession by demons or Satan—which appear in the gospel possession narratives, and which are abundantly attested by Gregory of Tours, Bede, and numerous others—nevertheless "the picture of their [the demons'] existence in and around the candidates and the oil and the water was so strongly and lengthily depicted by the prayers that it would have been natural for the ministers and congregation to imagine the evil spirits as actually present, cowering before the exorcists' threats and humiliated by the renunciation that followed" (151).

The very nature of the sacrament, in fact, requires the suspension of the historical attitude toward mythological narrative, and the adoption of a more symbolic frame of mind to allow for the participation of the congregation in the holy mysteries. That is, regardless of what theologians and historians may assert concerning the devil's history and present location, the liturgist necessarily ignores these, and instead employs the archetypal facet of the ancient enemy in crafting a rhetoric of personal participation in the cosmic battle.

The devil is simply envisaged as possessing each of the candidates and as not yet suffering the pains of hell. But this logical (or chronological) contradiction did not disturb the overall movement of the ritual plot, as it had developed by the ninth or tenth century: in the historical present of the sacred triduum, the Savior who died yesterday and will rise tomorrow will defeat the forces of evil in hell this very night. In this morning's ceremony [the seventh

scrutiny], Satan, who has virtual omnipresence, is warned of this defeat. (Kelly 1985: 221)

Thus the archetypal significance of the mythological element is stressed over the historical in order to allow direct participation of the individual in the supernatural combat for the cosmos itself.⁸¹ In the process, however, the historical interpretation cannot help but undergo lasting permutation in the minds of the practitioners.

In ritual functions the ordinary significance of space and time are suspended and invested with a new religious significance (in this case, personal rather than social), as Eliade argues in The Sacred and the Profane.⁸² Yet are we to imagine that the congregation, after witnessing or even experiencing such a ceremony and leaving the church, would immediately abandon the rhetorical conventions and conceptual presuppositions of the liturgical practice? Surely the presence of the devil in the ritual drama of the sacrament contributes toward a broader understanding of his activities in the world, in addition to those activities familiar from more conventional narrative sources (the Bible, hagiography, etc.).⁸³ In the texts to be studied, the

⁸¹ Such a reprioritization of meaning can be smoothly effected when the two levels of interpretation are thought to be not only fully compatible, but are actually taken to be mutually informative, as they were for the Christian Middle Ages. That is, by studying the history of the cosmos as found in scripture and patristic exegesis, the individual may gain insight into the human soul; and reciprocally, by internal reflection upon the human condition and the personal experiences of sin and humility, the nature of the primordial conflict between the good and bad angels is better understood.

⁸² Chapters 1 (space) and 2 (time). For baptism, see 130-36.

⁸³ Hill in "When God Blew Satan" shows how an isolated liturgical expression from the baptismal liturgy (the *exsufflatio*) appears in hortatory/literary sources of ostensibly unrelated context (see also Knox 201). I propose that not only phrases and visual images may be thus transferred, but also broader conceptual schemata, such as the characteristics and activities of the major players in the drama of the cosmic battle. Galpern is of this opinion also ("the liturgy shaped the most basic, unarticulated assumptions of the monks"), and regrets the lack of

devil enjoys certain freedoms with the natural world: he appears and disappears at will, he enjoys an almost omniscient awareness of remote matters, and his role as external vs. internal tempter is blurred beyond hope of distinction. Perhaps the "virtual omnipresence" assumed of the devil in the liturgical rites, and the ease with which he is treated as an entity clearly in defiance of normal spatio-temporal constraints, informs some of the anomalous tendencies of the devil in these texts.

6. The Devil and the Demons: Number Distinction and Identity

These ambiguities of function and location generate an even more perplexing tension that recurs throughout the narrative representations of the devil, the very distinction between the devil and the subordinate demons. As quoted above, Kelly observes that "sometimes, no doubt, the devil is simply taken as a collective term for all evil spirits" (Devil at Baptism 165)—yet this is not the explicit claim of a medieval commentator, but the despairing attempt at analysis on the part of a modern reader.⁸⁴ Bastiaensen warns, "la distinction entre le démon et ses

scholarly investigation on the influence of liturgy upon art and literature (23).

⁸⁴ And not of one reader alone: Russell Satan, speaking of Tertullian, notes, "here and elsewhere the term diabolus may be a general term for all hostile spiritual powers" (96); Bastiaensen, puzzling over the demonological significance of the word hostis in the Veronese Sacramentary, offers the related observation, "En effet, tout le long de l'histoire de la langue latine le singulier hostis paraît fréquemment au sens collectif, comme d'ailleurs aussi dans les langues modernes" (132). Cotton Mather, for one, unambiguously takes the devil as a collective concept: "When we speak of, The Devil, 'tis a name of Multitude; it means not One Individual Devil, so Potent and Scient, as perhaps a Manichee would imagine; but it means a Kind, which a Multitude belongs unto," and again, "But because those Apostate Angels, are all United, under one Infernal Monarch, in the Designs of Mischief, 'tis in the Singular Number, that they are spoken of" (44, 173).

assistants ne doit pas être trop absolue" (133). Though not often explicitly addressed in theological or expository writings, there is confusion between the singular devil and his multitude of minions in the earliest patristic writings and throughout the early Middle Ages, both within sentences at the level of syntax, as well as at larger narrative levels.⁸⁵

The base text for all medieval constructions of spiritual warfare, Ephesians 6.12-18 (built around Isaiah 59.17), contains the seed of this tension. The singular devil and the plural hostile spiritual powers are presented in apposition:

Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. / For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places...With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

The singular 'devil' at the beginning of the series and 'the evil one' at the end frame a number of terms designated in the plural, as though amplifying in greater detail the signification or

For scholarly trends taking daimōn as a more primitive, animistic conceptual manifestation of belief than theos in classical religion, and therefore appearing as more of a collective entity than clearly distinguished beings (and thus appearing with the definite article less frequently), see Smith "Towards Interpreting" 432. For an interpretive discussion of this tendency in Manichaeism, see Puech 139-46.

⁸⁵ See Bartelink 1982 for discussion of Jerome's tendency in the Vulgate to render fortitudines in the singular where Scripture calls for the plural, and the significance of that term for Jerome (467-69). It is not uncommon to find the devil attributed certain actions in one text, and to find a host of demons attributed the same action in an alternate version. Hence Satan enters into Jewish princes in one version of the Latin Adsumptio Sanctae Mariae (MS Reginensis Latin 119, Wilmart Analecta 349: "Et statim Satanias introiuit in illos principes..."), while in another, the offenders are a group of lesser demons (MS Silos fonds reconstitué 2, Wilmart 349: "in eis ingressis demonibus").

constitution of the singular term 'devil' (Ling 76-77). Whatever Paul's original intention, the habit of placing the devil in syntactic apposition with demons without comment or explanation is commonplace in the Middle Ages.⁸⁶

At the narrative level there are authoritative precedents for the confusion of the single devil with his subordinate demons in the gospel possession accounts. The Gerasene demoniac episode (Mark 5.1-20 and Luke 8.26-39, in which Jesus exorcizes a possessed gentile in his only foray outside of Judea) offers a convenient starting point: a single man possessed by a 'legion' of demons experiences some confusion in referring to himself, alternating between the first person singular and plural. The demon in him exclaims, "My name is Legion; for we are many."⁸⁷ The image of the two thousand demons fleeing before Christ and driving themselves into a river after occupying nearby swine is dramatic and apparently stuck in the imagination of many medieval writers--legio becomes a common, species-specific phrase referring to a group of demons (as with a 'pride' of lions), and the number two thousand becomes a figure frequently

⁸⁶ See, for instance, Rufinus of Aquileia Historia monachorum 1 (John of Lycopolis, sing. tentator = pl. multitudo daemonum, PL 21, col. 399, ll.11, 46-47); Gregory of Tours Liber Vitae Patrum 1.1 (Lupicinus and Romanus, pl. daemones = sing. hostis, inimici; Krusch 214) and 15.3 (Senoch, daemonibus = daemonis; Krusch 273).

⁸⁷ Matthew (8.28-34) offers only an abbreviated account, without the quotation cited, and speaks of two demoniacs rather than one. Cragan postulates that the change could be influenced by the awkwardness of the first-person plural discourse employed, which Matthew preserves ("Gerasene" 531). All three synoptics attest multiple possession, and even Matthew infests his two Gerasene demoniacs with a "whole herd" of unclean spirits. Mark 1.24 (the Capernaum demoniac) offers another demonic vacillation between the singular and the plural: "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." For discussion of singular-plural confusion in the gospel possession narratives, see Cragan 526ff, Ferguson 6, Pesch passim, Starobinski 386-90. For the increasingly symbolic interpretation of the Gerasene episode in Latin patristics, see Feliers 1970.

associated with possession by multiple indwelling spirits.⁸⁸ Here as elsewhere, the synoptic gospels themselves do not explicitly associate the demons with Satan, but medieval interpreters, not content with two thousand antagonists, also discern in that possession the activity and even the presence of Satan. For instance, the devil is specifically equated with the demons of the Gerasene episode in an exorcism from the Liber ordinum (northern-Spanish/southern-French service, eleventh-century MS): "We admonish you by his power to whom you yourself revealed your name, that you were Legion" (Lib ord 26, cited in Kelly 1985: 251).⁸⁹ In a non-baptismal exorcism formula of that text, the devil is interestingly called a "multiform spirit" in an impressive list of explicatives,⁹⁰ a word also used of the devil in the Passio Marinae (Clayton and Magennis 231, l.17). Gregory the Great equates the single devil with the legion of spirits in Book 3 of the Dialogi,⁹¹ and Ælfric likewise equates the devil with the Gerasene troop in

⁸⁸ The exact number itself sometimes varies, just as the actual number of troops in a Roman legion declined through the closing centuries of the Empire. Ælfric reckons the Gerasene demoniac to contain 6000 demons (Dominica iii post Pentecosten, Thorpe 2.378, ll.29-30). On 'legions' of demons see Eitrem 56-57, esp. note 1 (57).

⁸⁹ In the East we find a similar identification in the eighth-century Byzantine Barberini euchologium ("you, devil,...all-wicked and unclean and filthy and abominable and alien spirit...Remember him who at your request commanded you to go into the herd of swine," Conybeare Rituale Armenorum 392-93, cited in Kelly 1985: 165-66).

⁹⁰ "Agimus aduersus te, zabile, auctor criminum, celi refuga, animarum infelicitum parricida, temptator seculi, iustorum inuide, castitatis et continentium inimice, demon immunde, spiritus multiformis, subdole hostis, serpens horrende damnabilis," Férotin 76, ll.42-46; "We act against you, devil, author of crimes, fugitive from heaven, slayer of unhappy souls, tempter of the world, envious of the just, enemy of chastity and of the continent, unclean demon, multiform spirit, crafty foe, horrendous damnable serpent," Kelly 251).

⁹¹ "And Christ, after casting them out, allowed them [eos] to enter the swine and drive them over the precipice. From this we know, too, that without God's permission the evil spirit has [habeat] no power against mankind, for he could [potuit] not even have entered into the swine if God had not allowed it" (Zimmerman 153; "Qui hanc et ab homine expulit, et in porcos ire eosque in abyssum mittere concessit. Ex qua re hoc etiam collegitur, quod absque concessione

De auguriis.⁹²

Isolated features of the Gerasene possession account recur in subsequent medieval writings. In his Vita Hilarionis (ch. 18), Jerome has Hilarion cure a man occupied by a 'legion' of demons and say to Jesus in his supplication, "Ut unum, ita et plures vincere tuum est" (PL 23, col. 36; "Thine it is to conquer many no less than one," Fremantle 306b-307a). So fascinated is Jerome by the multiple aspect of the possession that he includes the detail that several distinct voices are heard to come from the man ("as it were the confused shouts of a multitude"). A further instance is Boniface's spirited letter to King Æthelbald (746-47):

Nam Ceolredum, precessorem venerande celsitudinis tuae, ut testati sunt qui presentes fuerant, apud comites suos splendide epulantem malignus spiritus, qui eum ad fiduciam dampnandae legis Dei suadendo pellexit, peccantem subito in insaniam mentis convertit, ut sine paenitentia et confessione furibundus et amens et cum diabolis sermocinans et Dei sacerdotes abhorminians de hac luce sine dubio ad tormenta inferni migravit. (Rau 224)

[For while Ceolred, Your Highness's predecessor, as those who were present testify, sat feasting amidst his nobles, an evil spirit (malignus spiritus) which had seduced him into defying the law of God suddenly struck him with madness, so that still in his sins,

omnipotentis Dei nullam malignus spiritus contra hominem potestatem habeat, qui in porcos intrare non potuit nisi permissus," de Vogüé 2.354, ll.34-39).

⁹² "drihten geðafode þa ðam deoflum þæt / Hi ða into þam swynum...Ne mæg se deofol mannum derian butan godes ðafunge...þonne he ne moste faran / furðon on þa swin butan him geðafode þæs se hælend" ("the Lord then permitted the demons that they then [went] into the swine...the devil cannot harm people without God's permission...since he could not even go into the swine unless the Savior allowed it," Skeat 1.378, ll.193-98).

without repentance or confession, raving mad, gibbering with demons (diabolis sermocinans) and cursing the priests of God, he departed from this life and went certainly to the torments of hell. (Talbot 125)]

No anxiety is expressed concerning the conceptual difficulty of any of these identifications of the devil with multiple demons or indwelling spirits, but the texts reflect a complete integration of the two basic models for the expression of evil in the world, i.e. its embodiment as the devil vs. its manifestation as a horde of demons (Aronstam 273-74). Furthermore, I have purposefully cited scattered and sundry instances of this conceptual tendency to show that it is not limited to a certain context or genre, but appears in epistolary and liturgical as well as more obviously literary (hagiographical, theological, poetic) environments.

This tendency toward syntactic and conceptual confusion survives the transition from Latin to Old English. The opening of Vercelli Homily 12 apposes helle gæstas and dioflum sylfum ("evil spirits," "the devils themselves") with the singular dioful in a discussion of the occupation of pagan idols by demons/the devil.⁹³ Blickling Homily 5 offers a further example:

se gifra helle bið a open deoflum & þæm mannum þe nu be his
larum lifiaþ... (Morris 61, ll.12-13)

[the greedy hell is always open to devils and to those people who
now live according to his (i.e., the devil's) lore...]

The poetic Solomon and Saturn I features a list of demonic shapes and attributes clearly referring to plural fiends (calra feonda gehwane 147, manfulra heap 148), whose culminating sentence

⁹³ Scragg Vercelli Homilies 228, ll.4-10. Scragg notes further number confusion among devils in Vercelli 4 (107, citing lines 317-19, 328-32, 336-41).

employs the singular (feond 169) rather than plural (1.151ff., Menner 89). Thus there is a gradual and unannounced shift from plural to singular but non-specific 'enemy' within the passage (146-69). The devil and/or the demons in Christ and Satan make a speech which vacillates between the first person singular and plural.⁹⁴ With regard to native texts and popular demonology, we may tentatively cite the (problematic) charm "Wið dweorh" (Harley 585; #3 in ASPR, #7 in Storms), in which an anomalous shift from singular to plural has driven editors to various emendations, even to the point of reordering the lines of the charm (see Storms 169). Even in art Satan and his emissary exhibit a certain convergence: the manuscript illustrator for Junius 11 blurs the conceptual distinction between Satan and his mobile emissary. Figures 3 and 4 show Satan bound in heaven as a result of the rebellion in heaven, and here he has no wings. In figure 5, however, when Satan sends forth his emissary, he now has a pair of wings himself. Not only is he anatomically assimilated with the departing devil, but his up-ward bodily posture also forms the first segment of the arc which the exiting devil follows.

The tension is sufficiently consistent in recognizable contexts across time and place that one can safely discount the possibility of recurring, coincidental oversights. But what, then, does it mean? David Johnson is perhaps the first person to confront the problem directly, and to offer an interpretive solution. Primarily dealing with Christ and Satan, Johnson resolves the problems of narrative logic by drawing attention to an important text, the Liber regularum of Tyconius

⁹⁴ Plural 228-244, singular 245-253, plural 254-264, singular 265-278. The speech is attributed to the plural demons by the narrator, both before and after (227, 279).

("Old English" 172-75).⁹⁵ The work would have been readily available to the Anglo-Saxons, since Augustine incorporated significant sections of it in De doctrina Christiana, including a certain section on the 'bodies' of Christ and the devil.⁹⁶ Just as Christ is the head of the Church and the believers are its limbs or 'body,' and references to Christ can sometimes be taken also to refer to any member of that body, so also, according to Tyconius, is there an equal and opposite 'body' of the devil:

uigilandum est, ut intellegatur, cum de una eademque persona scriptura loquitur, quid conueniat capiti, quid corpori: ita et in ista nouissima, aliquando in diabolum dicitur, quod non in ipso, sed potius in eius corpore possit agnosci... (Johnson "Old English" 174)

[...it is necessary to be alert in order to understand what pertains to the head and what pertains to the body when Scripture speaks of one and the same person, so in this last one, sometimes things are said concerning the Devil which may be understood not with reference to himself, but rather to his body. (trans. Robertson, cited Johnson "Old English" 174)]

⁹⁵ The text and translation of the Liber regularum can be found in William Babcock, Tyconius: The Book of Rules (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989). Tyconius was active in fourth-century North Africa. Though ostensibly a Donatist, he was responsible for several severe breaks from provincial Donatism. Ironically, Augustine largely founded his own theological responses against Donatism on the basis of Tyconius' works (xii).

⁹⁶ The Trial Version of the SASLC project (eds. Biggs, Hill, and Szarmach) has no entries yet for Augustine except for the Confessiones (71), but Gneuss lists at least one eleventh-century MS of De doctrina Christiana in Anglo-Saxon England (item 717, Salisbury Cathedral Library MS 106), and Ogilvy notes its influence in Bede, Alcuin, and possibly Ælfric (84). For confirmation of Bede's reliance on Augustine for his knowledge of Tyconius (at least for his Expositio Apocalypsis), see Mackay (213-14, and for the passage on the devil's body in Bede see esp. 218).

There can be no doubt that this interpretational framework informs the attitudes of early Christian writers and poets, and that many disrupted narratives can be re-imagined in more satisfying and coherent ways through its application. And yet, however relevant to the problem at hand, the Tyconian account of the interchangeability of the devil's head with his body is itself but an attempt to impose order and rationale on unsatisfying contradictions in the material. Tyconius' theoretical formulation of the devil's body offers a description rather than an explanation of the narrative tensions. It does not go far toward deciding why such unintuitive principles inform early Christian narratives so consistently.

The psychological and philosophical repercussions of the inherent unity or division in the kingdom of evil have been interpreted variously by modern commentators. Speaking of the division that is the concern of the Beelzebul accusation episodes (Matt 12.22-37, Mark 3.19-35, Luke 11.14-28), Fridrichsen writes,

Behind this idea lies the pluralism of popular demonology. The demons, it is true, form together a kingdom, a body of affiliated beings, divided into groups and classes with varying power and faculties; but there is no unity of will in this kingdom, nothing but planlessness, capriciousness, independent activity. It is the grotesque manifold of popular phantasy. 126-27)⁹⁷

⁹⁷ For an extreme and vivid expression of this position, see Puech's description of the kingdom of evil in Manichaeism, as gleaned from the Kephalaia and from Severus of Antioch. A fragment will illustrate: "The Kingdom of Evil is one perpetual rending, constant struggle of self against self, unremitting intestine warfare, permanent anarchy, auto-destruction. All its members lift their hands against each other, subject against subject, Archon against Archon, vassal against Monarch. Hostility, fury, implacable jealousy compel them to throw themselves against each other, to fight and rend and devour" (152). See also the assault of Mara on the Bodhisattva in the Lalitavistara: "This fantastic accumulation of ever-changing monstrosities never manages to be more than a sum of so many parts, a mass of fragments that can never be resolved into a unity" (Bazin 352).

In fact, the word daimōn itself is thought to derive from daiomai, "to divide, apportion," though it is not certain why.⁹⁸ Chaos has long been associated with evil as order is with good, an association recorded at least as far back as the monstrous goddess Tiamat in the Babylonian Enuma Elish (second millennium BCE).⁹⁹ As the sea is often employed as a symbol of chaos (raw potentiality or directionless activity), the sea creatures Rahab and Leviathan (Biblical analogues of Tiamat) were defeated by Jahweh as part of his imposition of order on the world.¹⁰⁰ The intrinsic chaos of the kingdom of evil, described by Cassian in terms of the infighting of demons amongst themselves, is also the demonology implicit in Juliana, for instance, in which the subordinate demon sets out on Satan's request only grudgingly, and trembles at the scourging he will receive upon returning to his cruel master.

Cassian holds that though no lasting accord can exist among the wicked (human or spiritual), demons, when their interests overlap, "necesse est eos temporalem commodare consensum" ("must arrange for some agreement for the time being," Conlationes 7.19, cf. 8.13; Petschenig 196, Gibson 368). For other analogues (Acts of Thomas, Voyage of Brendan), see Lohr 55-56; and cf. Dante Inferno 22.133ff.

⁹⁸ See H. Bietenhard, entry for δαίμωνιον ("daimonion") in the New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology (450). The standard medieval etymology was rather that of Plato (Cratylus 398b), who derives the word from daēmôn ("knowing" or "wise"), a knowledge which Augustine grants them but which, because of their perverse spirit, he calls "a kind of windy emptiness" ("inanissimae quasi ventositatis," Hoffmann 1.438, ll.3-4). Etymology: Augustine De civ 9.20 (Hoffmann 1.437, ll.26-28); Isidore Etymologia 8.11.15 (Oroz Reta 720).

⁹⁹ See Stephanie Dalley, trans. Myths from Mesopotamia (Oxford University Press, 1991): 233-55 (tablets 1-5).

¹⁰⁰ Russell Devil 216 cites other conflicts of Jahweh with the ocean (see also 66-68 on evil and chaos, esp. 68 for the serpent as a common symbol of chaos). Vatter reads chaos (and the devil) in Jungian terms as the unconscious (13). Throughout world mythology the creator deity or force is represented as imposing order on the world (often portrayed as primordial sea with no land), while an antagonist tries to subvert the project. Cf. Eliade 29-32, 49; Ricoeur 199-200, 204. On internal (psychological) chaos, see also Ricoeur 343: "evil is the consecration of multiplicity within ourselves."

Contrast with this the sober and dignified integrity of the demonic front facing humankind, according to Ferguson:

The larger consideration represented by Jesus' perspective is the essential unity of the kingdom of evil. The demons function under a prince or ruler and are his subordinates. Evil may have varied manifestations, but ultimately there is only one principle of evil. Instead of a world dominated by many warring demons (a pagan and polytheistic conception), Jesus saw one kingdom of Satan. (20)

Interpreters such as Trevor Ling maintain that this emphasis on the singular evil of Satan--as opposed to the multiple autonomous demons of popular imagination and folklore--is among the most important spiritual innovations of the New Testament (see esp. 9-10, 17ff., 54-55).¹⁰¹ This is the demonology implicit in Genesis B, for instance, in which Satan, a good king rather than a cruel tyrant, asks graciously for a volunteer; he reminds his thanes of past gifts and favors, and offers the successful volunteer a seat closest to his own. Likewise in the Guthlac complex of texts the picture is one of cooperation and single-mindedness among the demons.

7. Exterior Evil and the Landscape of Old English Literature

The conceptual tensions I have been at pains to illustrate are, to my mind, symptomatic manifestations of what I take to be the core issue: the question of the nature of demonic temptation itself, which is the question of the nature of external instigation. The essential

¹⁰¹ Cf. Eitrem 6, 56, 58; Fridrichsen 126-30; Yates *passim*. Even Milton subscribes to the essential concord of the fallen angels: "Devil with devil damn'd / Firm concord holds, men only disagree / Of Creatures rational..." (Paradise Lost 2.496-98).

premise of 'the demonic' as metaphor for the instigation of sin or moral evil is that 'sin' is at some root level external to the self.¹⁰² The demon is wholly other, the impulse toward sin introduced from without. C.W. Marx identifies 'otherness' in the abstract as the essence of the medieval devil:

And, in exploring medieval constructions of the Devil, one is exploring at a fundamental level conceptions of the Other. With the Devil, however, we are concerned not with an identifiable Other--what medieval culture defined itself against such as pagans, Muslims, or Jews--but with more abstract notions about what constitutes the Other. (5)

Narrative and liturgical conventions consistently maintain the distinction in identity between the individual and the associated evil spirit. As in the continental source texts, the sin and sinner walk beside each other in Old English narrative, occupying different focal points on the horizon of narrative space; the allegorical and the historical interact with one another as characters. Sometimes, of course, a narrative account can gracefully succeed in adequately portraying the internalized interaction between the self and the demonic. In De divinatione daemonum, Augustine writes,

suadent autem miris et inuisibilibus modis per illam subtilitatem
corporum suorum corpora hominum non sentientium penetrando et

¹⁰² The serpent as temptation, according to Ricoeur, is "a part of ourselves which we do not recognize...[it hovers] on the border between the outer and the inner...Our own desire projects itself into the desirable object, reveals itself through the object" (256-57). Thus, "bad faith, then, seizes upon the quasi-externality of desire in order to make it an alibi for freedom" (256). For Ricoeur, evil necessarily includes both subjective and objective components (experience of guilt and inclination toward repentance on the one hand, sin and defilement on the other). Thus he claims an honest and complete anthropology of evil must include an objective devil-figure, but must not use that symbol as an excuse for the repenting individual (259-60; cf. 313-14, 327-28).

se cogitationibus eorum per quaedam imaginaria uisa miscendo,
siue uigilantium siue dormientium. (Zycha 607)

[They (demons) persuade them (sinners), however, in marvelous and unseen ways, entering by means of that subtlety of their own bodies into the bodies of men who are unaware, and through certain imaginary visions mingling themselves with men's thoughts, whether they are awake or asleep. (Brown 430)]

This passage presents an especially artful juggling of the various facets of representations of the instigation of sin: the actual physical bodies commingle, suggesting demon possession, which is made possible through lack of vigilance (cf. Beowulf 1741-42); there is, simultaneously, a commingling of minds or thoughts between the intrusive spirit and the sinner, such that visions become confused with reality; and thus populated by phantasms, waking reality becomes indistinguishable from dreams. This imagistic picture thus sustains a careful ambivalence between a materialist or literal account of the demon entering the sinner on the one hand, and an allegorical account of the demon representing the wandering thoughts of the undisciplined individual on the other. Only in rare and isolated instances such as this one, however, is the theological insistence that there is no distinction between internal and external temptation captured so delicately. In hortatory prose it is natural to encounter phrases such as, "ðæt dioful bið on eowrum heortum" ("that devil is in your hearts," Vercelli 22.110), but this metaphysics is largely foreign to the landscape of narrative. There, the devil is external to the sinner, and in those contexts we must evaluate his role as character and sin-principle afresh.

I will have cause to analyze at least two distinct demonological processes in the narrative situations to be studied. The first is the demonic instigation of heathen antagonists, and the

second is the demonic interaction with the saintly protagonist. In the former case, the processes of the successful instigation of sin are recounted rather summarily—we are usually granted little insight into the heathen's internal psychological processes (the pull of sensual or emotional impulses, etc.). The great villains of Old English poetry and prose—Holofernes, Heliseus, Olibrius—only have a passing and sporadic acquaintance with the devil, not the profound affiliation we might expect if we take their actions to manifest impulses of an internal sin principle.

In the second of the two processes, the encounter between the devil and the saint, a far more elaborate ritual of spiritual conflict is encoded in the elaborate interchanges of word and gesture. These scenes occupy significant portions of the narrative,¹⁰³ and thus they clearly reflect no small preoccupation on the part of the authors and audience. It is these processes that will primarily occupy the attention of the studies that follow.

Thus we must be prepared to admit that many of these texts, most of them hagiographic, are not attempts (even sophisticated ones) to articulate the personal, everyday experiences of sin and temptation for an ordinary person. These are not works of psychology, even for an anchorite or cenobite accustomed to visualizing spiritual conflict in concrete terms. The scenes in which the devil explicitly instigates the pagans to sin would provide the best opportunity for an exploration of the demonic vs. the human, but as has been mentioned, authors rarely pause at these moments for more than a brief descriptive clause or two. Instead, the scenes most emphasized are generally those in which the devil encounters complete defiance from the saint

¹⁰³ In *Juliana*, for instance, 314 out of the 731 lines are devoted to the saint's conflict with the demon.

and has no hope of success from the outset, i.e., the combats in which the weak human element is all but absent. Thus what is most often being explored is rather the demonic vs. the divine as ideals, through the pawns of demons and saints, and the experience of the saint in these scenes is far removed from that of frail mortals.¹⁰⁴

Thus, what are encoded are not the internal processes of mind, emotion, and sense, but more cosmological processes, in which the ontological status of the demonic and the divine (their respective dominions, powers, rights, and abuses) are contested and defined in a stylized literary debate.¹⁰⁵ The potential pain of the saint and that of the demon are counterbalanced for a certain time through a ritual dialogue of rhetorical dueling, until the combat is resolved, usually by a direct divine intervention. These scenes often constitute the larger part of what, in modern terms, we might call the narrative tension, though the fact that the texts cover more material than just this (e.g., miracles, translation details, etc.) reminds us that the original audience was not exclusively interested in tension per se.

At the outset I would emphasize that the devil is largely a literary motif, encountered primarily in ecclesiastical productions. There are few secular laws forbidding interaction with

¹⁰⁴ The devil himself admits the irrelevance of these scenes to normal human psychology when, upon his defeat at the hands of a saintly protagonist, he laments that such a result is unprecedented, and that he has been overcome by no ordinary person (*Juliana* 547-51, *Tiberius A.iii Margaret* 15). Such statements argue against the common contention that saints' lives are edifying in that the reader or hearer is somehow meant to emulate the saint; in fact, the saint is beyond all bounds of common human identification (Hill "*Imago Dei*" 47).

¹⁰⁵ Bringing artistic as well as literary evidence to bear, Galpern concludes, "eleventh-century Anglo-Saxons saw themselves as helpless, insignificant figures in the great battle between heaven and hell" (55).

him;¹⁰⁶ chronicles and personal letters seldom mention his presence other than in phrases such as þurh deofles larum, the literal meaning of which may well be doubted. Thus we need surely not go so far as G.G. Coulton, when he suggests that "to the ordinary man, it may almost be said that the devil was a more insistent reality than God" (Five Centuries 1.95). If the devil does loom large in many of our sources, it is because the extant writings were largely produced or preserved in monastic and ecclesiastical environments, and because they are moral rather than scientific in nature.

¹⁰⁶ The first law code of Cnut ends with the statement that a bishop's duty is to protect the flock from any ðeodsceaða ("criminal"), adding that "Nis nan swa yfel sceaða swa is deofol sylf" ("no one is so evil a criminal as is the devil himself," A.J. Robertson, The Laws of the Kings of England from Edmund to Henry I; Cambridge University Press, 1925): 172. For the ecclesiastical nature of this code, see Galpern 14-16; cf. Judicia Dei 4.2, Liebermann 409-11. For the devil in charters (e.g. Sawyer 354 and 1045) see Johnson Studies 53-58.

Part II: Prolegomena

Charms and Solomon and Saturn I

The devil in the charms

The devil of the charm literature provides a valuable contrast with the devil of hagiography. As the devil's temptations are mentioned in the medical texts among a variety of natural intrusive forces (poisons, worms, insect bites, etc.), they are almost entirely bereft of their usual psychological implications. The devil appears almost exclusively as a malicious natural force, who has assailed the unlucky rather than morally guilty, and who may be repelled through a precise application of herbal and liturgical remedies. The patient suffers from misfortune--be it physical or spiritual, medical or psychological--and without further regard to the patient's role in creating or succumbing to that misfortune, the unfavorable condition can be corrected by universally valid formulas. Questions of free will, responsibility, absolution, and merit never enter the equation.¹

A variety of charms throughout the Anglo-Saxon medical compilations are directed against very general ailments, sometimes even against all ailments (e.g., Lacnunga CLV: "wið ælcum yfele," Grattan and Singer 180). In such contexts the devil can be mentioned as easily

¹ Charms reflect an implicit faith in the moral entitlement of the patient to recover, which is characteristic of the attitude of the medical community in most documented societies. In this the charms parallel certain aspects of penitential literature, which is founded on the principle that anyone can be forgiven, if the proper attitude is adopted and the correct procedures applied. Whereas penitential literature concerns itself only with personal behavior and attitude, however, charms concern themselves more generally with states of affairs (diseases, bad crops, theft of cattle). The major charm studies with particular reference to Anglo-Saxon medicine are those by Bonser, Cameron, Cockayne, Grattan and Singer, Grendon, and Storms.

as lice, elf-shot, or discharging foot disease, and the charm-user possibly did not distinguish between these categories very carefully when employing remedies wið feondum. Nonetheless, certain charms sufficiently specify characteristics associated with the mythological character of the Old Enemy, that it is clearly the Christian Devil (and not merely the general term 'a devil' meaning 'an antagonist') which has been incorporated into the charm-lore. For instance, the devil is considered responsible for 'strange swellings' in Bodley Junius 85, p.17--doubtlessly reminiscent of his infliction of Job with boils (Job 2.7)--and the practitioner is directed to recite the Pater noster and fuge diabolus² several times in succession (Grendon A.23, 186). Furthermore, a charm in the Leechbook (Regius 12-D.xvii, p.122b) against the devil appears with the title "Wið feondes costunge"--a clear reference to the devil's role as tempter.³ The charm offers the following remedy against the devil's temptation:

Rud molin⁴ hatte wyrt weaxeþ be yrnendum wætre. Gif þu þa on þe hafast, and under þinum heafodbolstre and ofer þines huses durum, ne mæg ðe deofol sceþþan, inne ne ute. (Grendon D.3, 200; Cockayne 342)

[Red mullein is the name of an herb that grows near running

² "Fuge diabolus, Christus te sequitur. Quando natus est Christus, fugit dolor" (Grendon 186; "flee, devil, Christ follows you. When Christ was born, suffering fled").

³ There is no indication that, prior to Christianization, elves or other pre-Christian disease-agents constituted a psychological or tempting threat (but see Thun 388-89). It is probably a matter of syncretism that one charm, at least, seems to associate temptation with elves and night-walkers: "Gif men hwilc yfel costung weorþe opþe ælf opþe niht gengan..." (lxi, "If any evil temptation come to a person, or an elf or a night-walker"). The series, after all, is presented in disjunction rather than apposition, and suggests only a broad affinity between the three elements.

⁴ Cockayne 342 emends to rudniolin ("red stalk," or "water pepper"), an emendation defended by Cameron (132).

water. If you keep it on you, and under your pillow and over the doors of your house, the devil cannot harm you, inside or out.}]

Nothing could be more antithetical to Christian exegetical norms than the idea that the devil's temptations can be combatted by common herbs, sprinkled about the premises like a pesticide. Here there are no exhortations to clean living or to confession, no reference to the sacraments, the will, or to the grace of God—a physical prop is considered effective against all injuries from the devil, "inside or out." But many remedies against devil-sickness do address the religious dimension of the illness, although the substitution of ecclesiastical props for secular ones does not by itself alter the material nature of the remedy. An herbal remedy appears shortly after the one just cited, also claiming efficacy against feondes costunge ("temptation by the enemy"), through a variety of liturgical and folkloric procedures (Cockayne lxii). Here, however, the herbs are placed under an altar, and lichen must be scraped from a cross, and the recipe specifies use of prayer throughout. Thus the assimilation of physical and spiritual, of botanical and psychological, is complete: where patristic psychology draws a rigid distinction between soul and matter, the charms reify all injurious impulses and situate them external to the subject.

Saints' lives often imply that only the saints can restore health to possessed persons, but the existence of devil-sickness recipes in general medical compilations argues against this.⁵ If the herbal and liturgical remedies did have a calming effect, the demon (that is, the unsocialized behavior) was effectively banished already, without the need for relics or formal sacramental exorcism. Thus, we may speculate, if indwelling spirits were actually perceived as genuine

⁵ See, for instance, Leech Book III, recipes xli ("wiþ eallum feondes costungum," Cockayne 334), lxii ("wiþ ælcra feondes costunge," 350), lxiii ("wiþ deofle" and "wiþ deofles costunga," 352), lxvii ("wiþ deofolseoce" and "wiþ deofle," 354 and 356).

phenomena of occasional occurrence, and were not merely literary motifs, then there is reason to think they may not have been as frightening or as uncontrollable as hagiography might have us believe. No more so, anyway, than discharging foot disease.

Although the devil does appear as a pathological agent, from what is told of the devil in the charms, one cannot form even a skeletal or laconic conception of the Old Enemy's history or personality. He is absent, silent, distant, and when he is briefly glimpsed in the ravings of a convulsive or in the internal pangs of temptation, he can be readily dispelled again through an application of soothing herbs and orderly, ritualized prayer. It will be well to keep in mind this popular conceptualization of the devil--as revealed in the medical recipes--for it forms a radical contrast to the presentation of spiritual conflict in the more literary sources, the saints' lives.⁶ Though the saints' lives were presumably produced in comforting monastic settings, spiritual conflict is often presented in them as violently as possible, and the devil is painted with as much presence as conventions allow. While it is commonly theorized that a prominent and vivid devil is the cultural symptom of desperate or turbulent periods in history, perhaps there is another sense in which a prominent devil is rather the product of leisure.

Solomon and Saturn I

Solomon and Saturn I, a devotional exercise in vernacular verse expounding the anti-demonic and apotropaic properties of the Lord's Prayer, offers a particularly vivid portrayal of the demonic. In the imagined dialogue between the two titular figures, the Pater noster is the

⁶ Spiritual assailants are sometimes represented more graphically and sensationally in the verse charms than in prose ones, casting medicine as epic battle (thus the Nine Herbs Charm and Wið Færstice), but none of these are directed against the devil.

"shield of sinners" (scyldigra scyld, 79), much as lorica poems are presented in martial terms as effective defense against spiritual assailment.⁷ Sharing a stylistic as well as functional affinity with loricas, Solomon and Saturn I enumerates the precise protective powers of the Lord's Prayer in a litany.⁸ This poem sensationalizes spiritual aggression in a highly stylized and literary manner, not unlike certain charms (e.g., Nine Herbs Charm).

In response to Saturn's question concerning who can most easily open heaven's doors, Solomon cryptically answers that the Lord's Prayer "extinguishes the devil's fire" ("adwæscēð deofles fyr," 42).⁹ He asserts the inherent power of the words of God: they break bonds, plunder hell, and dissipate fire. Even hunger is not 'alleviated' but rather 'plundered' or 'destroyed' (ahieðeð, 73)--thus there is a tendency to cast even themes of healing or soothing in terms of ritual aggression.¹⁰ He explains that each of the letters spelling out the words of the Lord's Prayer has individual power against the devil (though only sixteen of the nineteen

⁷ References to Solomon and Saturn I are to Menner. Solomon and Saturn I is extant primarily in the mid- to late-tenth century CCCC 422, though an alternate version of the first ninety lines or so may be found in the eleventh-century marginalia of CCCC 41. This variant is especially helpful in providing the first thirty lines of the poem, because the first page of CCCC 422 is unreadable (but see O'Keeffe 60-67, esp. 66, on the dangers of treating the two variants as a single text).

⁸ Loricas amount to charms in many ways, and the Lorica of Gildas even appears in the magico-medical Lacnunga compilation (Grattan and Singer 69-71, 130ff.; Menner 42). The Lorica of St Patrick is another famous example, and indeed, the Solomon and Saturn texts reflect a number of traits associated with Irish literary traditions (see Menner 42-43; Wright Irish Tradition 233-48, 266-67).

⁹ The devil is apparently conquered through an extraordinary torment, viz. being scalded by burning drops of blood--a graphically literalized understanding of the efficacy of 'fervent' prayer. For this interpretation of these corrupt lines, and for further discussion of the motif of boiling, bloody drops, see Hill "Tormenting the Devil."

¹⁰ The earlier manuscript, CCCC 422, reads he ahieðeð. CCCC 41 offers he gehideð ("he hides"), a somewhat less violent, if also less intelligible, metaphor (O'Keeffe Visible Song 64).

letters actually appear in the poem). Solomon thus begins a remarkable sequence in which the individual letters of the Pater noster each combat the devil in a specific way.¹¹ In the spirit of Prudentius, the allegory dwells on the gory physical details of the battle: thus "F" and "M" assail the devil with arrows, "T" stabs him through the tongue, "R" somewhat less heroically pulls his hair, and "S" is particularly brutal:

Ðonne-ȝ S cymeð, engla geræswa,
 wuldores stæf, wraðne gegripeð
 feond be ðam fotum, læteð foreweard hleor
 on strangne stan, stregdað toðas
 geond helle heap. (111-15)¹²

[Then S comes, the chief of angels, a letter of splendor, (and)
 seizes the hostile fiend by the feet, drops his cheek forward on the
 hard stone, and strews his teeth around the crowd of hell.]

What is ostensibly a meditation on the protective spiritual powers of a Christian prayer is actually the narration of a massacre. While the warrior-letters are silent and effective, given no personality or individuality, the devil by contrast is presented as suffering emotionally as well as physically from these assaults: "him bið æt heartan wa" ("there is woe in his heart," 104).

¹¹ Zolla offers an engaging reading of the battle in which the word conventionally associated with each rune (e.g., feoh for ƿ, "F") is brought to bear on the significance of each round of melee, taking into account the information provided for each rune in the Rune Poem.

¹² Hermann, who traces the specific influence of Prudentius' Psychomachia on the poem, notes that the image of the scattering teeth is more graphic in the Old English version than in the Prudentian counterpart (Luxuria spits out her teeth, but there is no reference to their 'scattering'; see "Pater Noster" 209). "In constructing his allegory of spiritual battle, the Old English poet recalled images from the first great Christian allegory of spiritual battle, and employed them freely, not slavishly, although his debt to Prudentius for certain of his descriptions is unmistakable" (210).

After an unsatisfactory encounter with the letter "R," the devil apparently wishes he were back in hell ("helle wisceð," 105), which invites the reader or listener to wonder where exactly this contest is taking place. The poem addresses itself increasingly to that very issue.

First, we learn shortly after the Battle of "R" that there is not a single devil but rather a crowd of them, since the opponent of "S" loses its teeth, which scatter "around the crowd of hell" ("geond helle heap," 115). Until this point, the implicit assumption has been that the letters were all attacking the singular devil, an assumption suddenly problematized. The precise demonological relationships active in the poem slowly become manifest: Solomon identifies the now-toothless demon as "Satanes ðegn" (117). The battle of the letters is followed by further discussion of the demons' traits and habits:

Mæg simle se Godes cwide gumena gehwylcum
 ealra feonda gehwane fleondne gebrengan
 þurh mannes muð, manfulra heap
 sweartne geswencan, næfre hie ðæs syllice
 bleoum bregdað, æfter bancofan
 feðerhoman onfoð. Hwilum flotan gripað;
 hwilum hie gewendað in wyrmes lic
 str[o]nges and sticoles, stingeð nieten,
 feldgongende feoh gestrudeð. (146-54)

[The word of God, through a person's mouth, can always put to flight each and every fiend for every person, torment the black throng of wicked ones, so that they may never strangely change their appearances, assume plumage on their body. Sometimes they attack a sailor; other times they turn into the shape of a strong and prickly serpent (or dragon), sting the field-roaming beast, ravage

the cattle.]

It becomes increasingly difficult to read the poem as an allegory of genuine spiritual combat in any specific sense. These demons are not those hypostatized human vices sometimes pitted one-on-one against the verses or letters of a protective canticle in medieval Irish literature;¹³ they are natural creatures terrorizing cattle and horses as well as the populace. This poetic rendering of spiritual conflict shows no interest in internalizing the evil impulses with which the devil is often associated.

Some of the descriptions of the battles between warrior-letters and the devil are clearly related to the shape of the letter.¹⁴ Thus, while it is possible to speak of symbolized spiritual conflict occurring in allegorical space (the human soul or breost) or mythological space (the nebulously defined cosmological regions of heaven and hell), it is also possible to situate the battle in what may be conceived as abstract orthographic space. The visual form of the letters take on intrinsic significance in the Pater noster battle, and thus the dialogue becomes a highly literate exercise. The tricks of charms and riddles--the visual aspects of the text (such as the use of runes and disintegration of the prayer into individual letters) are brought to bear on an abstract Prudentian conflict, drawing attention away from possible metaphorical or didactic

¹³ E.g., the Middle Irish Geinemain Molling ocus a Bethae ("Birth and Life of St. Moling," Wright Irish Tradition 237-38).

¹⁴ O'Keeffe denies this (58, n.34), but the runic T (↑), which stabs a tongue, is well-shaped for that purpose; and the runic F (ſ), which sets fire to the devil's hair, makes a very passable torch. Furthermore, C (runic h), with its rounded, encompassing hook shape, is equally capable of performing its function, "surround him with war" ("guðe begyrdað," 124) in either alphabet. As a whole, the runic alphabet especially presents a formidable arsenal of torture instruments. The runes accompany the Latin letters in CCCC 422, but not in the CCCC 41 fragment.

interpretations of the Pater noster battle. The psychic conflict between the sacred and the demonic falls somewhat into the background in the midst of this literary game.¹⁵

Saturn never mentions the devil; Solomon never makes a speech without mentioning him. But it is interesting to observe what happens to Solomon's references: as the Pater noster battle draws to a close, and the activities of demons become increasingly the focal point of Solomon's monologue, the grammatical indicators of number concerning the demons become increasingly erratic. Specifically, the more the Lord's Prayer resolves the demonic into its manifold embodiments and scatters them, the more the grammatical accident betrays this fragmentation by introducing a series of abrupt shifts between the singular and plural verb forms that Menner calls "curious" (114).¹⁶ Solomon begins speaking of the powers of the deofol and se feond (25, 69), but by the end of his oration, references to the demonic have splintered into a host of minor demons instead. He is particularly concerned with the demonic ability to assume a variety of forms--its outward manifestations.

Solomon and Saturn I combines a highly literary presentation of allegorically encoded spiritual conflict on the one hand, and on the other, an unashamedly literal and folkloric affirmation of the devil as a natural menace, driving cattle insane and wandering through the

¹⁵ O'Keeffe (Visible Song 47-59) offers an engaging reading in which competing oral and literate ideologies--already encoded in the text at several stylistic and hermeneutic levels--are played out both in the dialogue between the two interlocutors, as well as in the Pater noster battle. Thus, for instance, the power of the Pater noster prayer is capable of silencing the devil (S scatters his teeth), just as Solomon's greater wisdom appropriates the dialogue from Saturn, turning it into a monologue.

¹⁶ Kemble denies this morphological tension by silently emending them for grammatical consistency (153-56, 158, 161-62). Other shifts from singular to plural in the passage include 127, 128, 130 (see Menner 114). Menner observes that they may reflect a Northumbrian original, since the confusion of -eð and -að is more common in that dialect (20).

deserts. The devil of theology and that of charm-lore are not considered incompatible; indeed, they exist as a single, unbroken entity, whose fluid boundaries can fill the cosmos with a plethora of formidable shapes at one instant, and whose miserable body can be found skulking in a dark corner or tree at the next; and whose activities in the dialogues only make sense by simultaneously allowing the devil to be a highly metaphorical and abstract concept to be pitted against hypostatized letters of the Pater noster, as well as a physical condition akin to anthrax or distemper.

Solomon and Saturn I and the charms have much in common, in terms of reifying abstract agents of temptation and cure, and in exploiting repetition, increment, and sequential balance to create a litanic effect. There is no indication that the demons instigate sinful thoughts, tempt, or attack on the spiritual plane at all; although spiritual menaces, they are purely natural and can be combatted with the outward form of the Pater noster or with herbs, without reference to the supplicant's state of mind.

But the presupposed attitudes toward the devil are different. Of these two poles of demonic presentation--the lavish and literate on the one hand, and the undramatic, sober, and cautious on the other--it is the former which most informs the hagiographic and devotional literature that constitutes the bulk of extant Old English narrative literature. It must be stressed from the outset, then, that in proceeding to the literature of the monasteries and chapter houses, we are in all likelihood departing from the everyday conceptions of the demonic of the average uneducated Anglo-Saxon, only the slightest and most tantalizing glimpse of which can be discerned in the opaque charm record. The literature to which we now turn our attention is a mannered literature, like Solomon and Saturn I, rather than a body of sociological artifacts. But

through their continuous attention to spiritual conflict, monasteries and ecclesiastical institutions can sometimes inadvertently foster as well as bridle ritual aggression (cf. Rosenwein 153-57), and if the literature seems artistically deliberate and affected, this does not mean that it did not serve simultaneously as a venue for the expression and exploration of sincere preoccupations and anxieties.

Structures of Discourse

As the sophisticated craftsmanship of Solomon and Saturn I serves as the model for the remainder of the literature to be studied, so there is a certain textual process informing the dialogue which also informs much of the narrative literature. Most spiritual aggression is inscribed as dialogic conflict in the narrative literature--that is, there is a flyting or debate, rather than a physical combat, between the saint and the devil.¹⁷ The ways in which dialogue encodes power and authority thus becomes the key hermeneutic principle in unravelling the discourses of power in these scenes.

More specifically, authors strategically exploit the use of direct and indirect discourse to delimit the relative power, authority, and sympathetic scope granted to various characters. Lars Lönnroth has astutely articulated some of the operative principles of 'rhetorical persuasion' (the authorial guiding of audience sympathies) in the Old Norse family sagas, for instance. Focusing particularly on Njáls saga, he writes,

¹⁷ For a monograph-length study of ritualized verbal aggression in epic and romance, see Parks Verbal Dueling. Because his enquiry studies the motif in explicitly 'heroic' or martial contexts (7), Parks dismisses the rhetorical contests of Elene and Juliana as "doctrinal in their subject matter" (188), while that of Solomon and Saturn is "less a flyting than a catechism" (187).

Things that the narrator wants stressed and especially remembered by his audience are for example often expressed in direct rather than indirect speech, are placed as the 'last words' at the end of a chapter, paragraph, or section, and they are usually presented with a greater number of details and retarding elements than other, less important information. (168-69)

When employed with human characters, such principles may signal registers such as social status (when a slave does not talk back to his master), prophetic wisdom or intellectual superiority (when the truly cognizant character is allowed the final say in a given debate), or moral standing (when a pagan overlord is left speechless by the powerful oration delivered by an accused Christian). Hugh Magennis, for instance, has shown how the CCCC 303 Life of Margaret--the version that focuses on the saint's devotional experiences more acutely than the Latin models--enhances the textual presence of Margaret and renders her more of an individual by increasing her proportion of direct speech from the Latin passio ("Listen" 34-35). While such textual considerations are clearly important in understanding the relations between human characters, they are even more significant when analyzing discourse among abstract or allegorical entities.

It is commonly accepted that in the Solomon and Saturn texts, Solomon represents the mouthpiece of Judeo-Christian wisdom, while Saturn stands for pagan learning.¹⁸ It becomes evident that in Solomon and Saturn I, at least, the privilege of direct discourse is not granted equally to both participants. Some initial exchanges rapidly give way to Solomon's monopolizing the debate. Furthermore, the tone of their respective exchanges reflects their different levels of wisdom: while Saturn asks the questions, Solomon gives answers. John Hermann is right to

¹⁸ See, for instance, Menner 56-57, Parks 187-88 (n.8).

examine this "common catechetical form" of dialogue in terms of discourses of power (Allegories 168-69): it is not so much the content of the addresses that interests us in this light, but the external structures of dialogue and interrogation.¹⁹

I will pay close attention, then, to who asks the questions and who answers, who is granted speaking time and how much, and finally, to what extent and under what circumstances the various cosmological levels of sentient beings (divine, demonic, and human) interact with each other at all.²⁰ It should become clear, I think, that these considerations were also of concern for the authors and poets. However unconcerned the narrative signals sometimes are with regard to physical motion, activities, entrances, and exits, they are consistently clear in indicating the precise relationships of discourse (who is talking, and to whom). In such processes, Old English authors--and especially poets--record the ongoing conflict of the demonic and the divine in the human sphere.

¹⁹ Specifically, building on the work of Foucault, Hermann links Juliana's subjugation and interrogation of the demon with the rhetorical strategies of the expanding early medieval church: "Such a narrative tactic also serves to support the validity of the discursive practices of the penitentials" (169). Even more obvious than the political overtones of such rhetorical strategies are the ontological assumptions about the relative authority (= power) of the adversaries in the dialogue, especially when the dialogue is overtly symbolic and features abstract concepts or relations (soul vs. body, saint vs. demon, etc.). Cf. Nelson "King Solomon's Magic" 25-26 on Solomon as "narrator" and Saturn as "audience."

²⁰ Robert Bjork offers a monograph-length study of the rhetorical structures of direct discourse in the verse saints' lives, and argues that the success of a character's mastery of such rhetoric often reflects that character's spiritual state. He finds, "Old English saints' lives use dialogue uniquely, investing more in direct discourse than do some other contemporary hagiographical works and giving it thematic and structural status that it usually does not have" (22).

Part III: Prose

A. Ninth-Century Prose of the Reign of Alfred

Alfredian Translations and Early Prose

In the final quarter of the ninth century King Alfred commissioned a systematic series of translations from carefully selected Latin texts into the vernacular, in an effort to strengthen native Anglo-Saxon literary culture. Though the products of this campaign are not the earliest vernacular prose writings in England, this period does offer the first substantial body of datable Old English texts on diverse topics, from which generalizations may be drawn concerning broad intellectual trends.¹ Thus situated, Alfred's translation campaign provides a fixed point of reference between the seminal Latin writings of Aldhelm, Bede, and Alcuin on the one hand, and the mixed Latin and English works of the monastic reform in the tenth and eleventh centuries on the other.

The works traditionally associated with Alfred's translation campaign primarily reflect concerns historical (Orosius and Bede), philosophical (Boethius' De consolazione and Augustine's Soliloquies), and pastoral (Gregory's Cura), though of course, all simultaneously serve broader

¹ Old English translation goes back at least to Bede, who completed a translation of the gospel of John on his death-bed, though it is no longer extant (mentioned in the Epistola Cuthberti de obitu Bedæ; Dobbie Manuscripts 122, ll.44-45 and 123, ll.39-40). On the prose datable to the period of the reign of Alfred, Bately concludes: "The corpus of vernacular prose literature that can be safely attributed to the period before 900, therefore, consists of two or three Mercian texts (the Dialogues and possibly the Martyrology and Bede) and seven West Saxon ones, comprising five by Alfred (the Pastoral Care, the Boethius, the Soliloquies, the prose psalms of the Paris Psalter and the introduction to the laws), the Orosius and the opening sections of the Chronicle to 896. Almost all of these texts seem to have been composed during the last thirty years of the ninth century" (118; cf. Whitelock 73-77). For a recent overview of the prose saints' lives available in pre-Ælfrician England, see Scragg "Corpus."

purposes such as assimilating Anglo-Saxon culture(s) with the more established traditions of the Christian Church. Fortunately for the student of narrative literature, a significant amount of story-telling features even in these early works--historical writing, then as now, relied on compositional units of narrative episodes, and Gregory's Dialogues are comprised entirely of a series of hagiographic accounts linked by the broader narrative device of a dialogue frame. Thus there is ample opportunity to examine the vernacular translators' responses to diverse narrative situations and problems. Since the devil as dramatis persona mostly appears in hagiographic contexts, it is likewise fortunate for our topic that many of the narratives included in Alfred's campaign are hagiographic in nature or have substantial hagiographic content (most notably, the Martyrology, Bede's History, and Gregory's Dialogues). Orosius' Historiarum adversum paganos libri septem, though a Christian history of secular paganism, is singularly unconcerned with the devil, both in the original and in its vernacular rendering. The narratives of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, though promulgated in monastic or ecclesiastical contexts, are likewise relatively free of devils.

It would seem natural to expect little mention of the devil in the philosophical translations, at least. Yet on the whole, greater attention is paid to the devil in the Old English translations than in the Latin originals. Whereas Boethius makes no mention of the Christian devil in his De consolacione, several references to him appear lightly sprinkled in the Old English rendition.² Even in the brief translation of Augustine's Soliloquies a single mention of

² See, for instance, Sedgefield 38, l.28 (diouful), 98, l.13 (wiðerweardan englas), and 129, l.6 (scuccena). The references are elliptical, and not integrated into the course of the argument.

the devil appears, though there is none in the original.³ Nonetheless, the overall impression is one of continuity, as the spirit of the translations adheres to that of the original closely in the range of attitudes toward and treatment of the demonic, even though particular episodes may differ incidentally. The two translations of Alfred's reign of greatest relevance here, Gregory's Dialogi and Bede's Historia, offer the fullest assortment of material with which to illustrate this thesis.

Gregory's Dialogues

Gregory the Great completed his Dialogues around or shortly after 593, just a few years before his commissioning of Augustine to convert the English (Zimmerman viii). The importance of this work for the Anglo-Saxons cannot be doubted—Ogilvy knows of at least ten manuscripts with English connections, and there are remains of at least four manuscripts of the Old English translation.⁴ While the actual focus of the text shifts from saint to saint, the devil appears in

³ Augustine obliquely mentions having served "foes" in his folly, which Alfred clarifies as the devil and expands rather dramatically: "ic wes geo þin, and þa fleah ic fram þe to deofle, and fuleode hys willan, and micel broc geðolede on hys þeowdome" ("I was once yours, and then I fled from you to the devil, and followed his will, and suffered great misery in his servitude," Carnicelli 54, ll.23-24).

⁴ Ogilvy 150, Yerkes "Translation" 335. There are two main versions of the Old English Dialogues. Wærferth's translation itself is preserved in two manuscripts (CCCC 322 and Cotton Otho C.i, both of the eleventh century); the former is standardly called 'C' and is the version quoted here. In a detailed article, Harting draws attention to the fact that the C edition in Hecht is not a definitive reconstruction of Wærferth's text, as some scholars have been led to believe, but that C and O are both but descendants of Wærferth's text. Probably they go back to the same original, whether or not that was Wærferth's (287). The second main version of the OE Dialogues comes from a century or so later than these two, when an Old English version was itself revised, providing an independent line of manuscript versions (this is the 'H' text, appearing in Hecht as the right-hand column). See Hecht vii-ix, Yerkes Two Versions xvi.

narrative episodes throughout the Dialogues, and is the only character in the work to do so.

For Gregory the devil is not only able to roam the earth and cause trouble, but he enjoys such free time that he can figure in even the most trivial folkloric anecdotes.⁵ For instance, in 3.20, Stephen of Valeria colloquially orders his servant: "veni, diable, discalcia me" ("come, devil, take off my shoes," de Vogüé 2.350, ll.6-7).⁶ But before the servant can answer, the bootstraps begin to untie themselves--an invisible devil who happens to have been nearby has promptly complied with Stephen's command. Stephen must now clarify that he was only talking to his servant, and (the boots being almost fully unlaced) he commands the devil to leave. On the other hand, in Book 2 of the Dialogues, the devil subjects Benedict to a series of assaults that reflect the stages of that saint's spiritual progression. Pivotal moments of Benedict's spiritual conflict are here encoded in his encounters with the devil, who takes on a more allegorical function. Thus the devil figures as the dignified and cosmic spiritual antagonist, as well as the buffoonish subject of minor pranks. A similar spectrum of narrative functions, which strikes the modern reader as self-defeating (at one moment the reader is asked to take the devil seriously and the next to laugh him off as a clown), is characteristic of many important early hagiographies that treat the devil substantially--e.g., Athanasius' Vita Antonii, Jerome's Vita Hilarionis and Sulpicius' Vita Martini.

⁵ Dudden claims that in the Dialogues, "we meet, for the first time, with the fully developed conception of the mediaeval devil. Here Satan is represented, no longer as the portentous power of darkness, but as a spirit of petty malice, more irritating than awful..." (2.367). His conception of the devil is not so different from that in many earlier saints' lives, though, such as Jerome's Vita Hilarionis (ch. 23; PL 23, col.40b, ll.24-25), or Ennodius' Vita Epifani (Cesa 60, ll.101-02).

⁶ Citations indicate volume, page and line number in de Vogüé.

For Gregory, Benedict is not just another saint—in the Dialogues he is singled out as the holy man par excellence, whose Regula was sufficiently worthy for all subsequent spiritual aspirants to emulate. Accordingly, Gregory devotes more space to him than to any other saint in the work, and singles out Benedict's relations with the devil to draw attention to the devil's role as an intrinsic component of spiritual progression. Possession accounts become more frequent as Book 1 comes to a close, as though the demonic were increasing in malice or force. It is at this point that St Benedict is introduced, and in Book 2 the combatting of evil finally crystallizes into a controlled and consistently arranged scheme. Here the pacing of the demonic attacks take on a certain rhythm, and a conscious design emerges.

The devil's power is presented as increasingly stronger in Book 2, after a community of disciples begins to grow around Benedict's cave. He appears to Benedict in the form of a blackbird while Benedict is alone, and though Benedict dispels the bird with the sign of the cross, he is nonetheless stricken with temptation. The devil instills him with images of a woman he had once seen, and the saint is almost overcome. Benedict leaps naked into a bush of 'spiny thorns and stinging nettles' as though to tear the sinful thoughts from his body. He rolls about for a long time, exchanging the heat of bodily pain for that of lustful thought, until he is (not surprisingly) freed of the temptation. As the devil is physicalized in the form of a bird, so is Benedict's struggle with his passions physicalized in a morbidly severe, self-inflicted ordeal. For Gregory, this ordeal represents a turning point--Benedict is free from temptation from this time forward:

Pa of þære tide...seo costung synlustes wæs atemed on him, swa
þæt he þyslices naht on him sylfum næfre ofer þæt ne ongæt.

(Hecht 101-2)⁷

[Then from that time...the temptation of lustful sin was tamed in him, so that he never felt anything like it in himself (again) because of that.]

Though the devil implants the temptation in Benedict's mind, for Gregory the victory is over the temptation of lust rather than over the devil. The devil is never mentioned in this account following the initial instigation (in accordance with Gregory's outline of sin in the Moralia).⁸ This is the extent of the saint's personal struggle with internal promptings and temptations.

Gregory presents Benedict's founding of the monastic community of Monte Cassino as a troubled and arduous struggle against the devil, a struggle explicitly introduced when Benedict removes himself to the old temple of Apollo on the mountain. Though Benedict is mobile, the presence of the fiend knows no geographic boundaries:

witodlice se halga wer, þa þa he wæs farende to oðrum stowum,
ne onwænde he noht þone ealdan feond, þeh þe he sylfa gecyrde
to oþre eardungstowe. ac swa myccle ma he aræfnede æfter þon

⁷ "Ex quo uidelicet tempore...ita in illo est temptatio uoluptatis edomita, ut tale in se aliquid minime sentiret" (2.2, de Vogüé 2.138, ll.22-24).

⁸ In Gregory's model, as expounded in the Moralia and several other places, the devil is responsible for the first of four stages in the process of sin (Moralia 4.27.29). This fourfold model is frequently cited in explicating Old English literature—see, for instance, Calder Cynewulf 92-93 and Doubleday "Allegory" 504 (for Juliana), Hermann "Recurring Motifs" 12-14, Hill "Fall of Angels" (for Genesis B) and "Two Notes" (Solomon and Saturn II). McCready indicates, however, that Gregory is not consistent in his own employment of the model—sometimes he refers to a threefold model (Bede's Historia 1.27, Cura pastoralis 29), and sometimes he implies the devil is a factor throughout the entire process of sin, not just the initial temptation (Moralia 4.27.29, Signs 236).

hefigran gewin, swa myccle swa he ma gemette ⁊ onfand þone
lareow selfne þæs bealwes openlice feohtendne ongæn hine. (Hecht
121, ll.8-13)⁹

[Truly the holy man, when he was travelling to other places, did
not avert the old enemy at all, though he himself proceeded to a
different habitation. But however much more he accomplished
after that harsher fight, even so he encountered and perceived the
teacher of evil himself fighting against him openly (even) more.]

In fact, the establishment of the monastery becomes in the Dialogues the prolonged story of Benedict's conquering the devil in a series of calculated struggles.¹⁰ Implicit here is the casting of spiritual states in geographic terms, mapping spirituality onto ideal space—a notion that will become increasingly important in this study. Following this personal encounter, the devil never again threatens Benedict directly. Benedict has overcome the fiend in single combat (a victory Gregory envisions purely as passive resistance), and now the devil's only recourse is to harm others. Benedict hereafter takes on the role of protector rather than victim.

The brothers cannot move a certain large rock when gathering stones for the construction of the monastery, and become convinced the devil must be on it.¹¹ Benedict drives the demon away with a prayer and the sign of the cross. Next, the kitchen appears to be on fire, but

⁹ "Sanctus uir, ad alia demigrans, locum, non hostem mutauit. Nam tanto post grauiora praelia pertulit, quanto contra se aperte pugnantem ipsum magistrum malitiae inuenit" (2.8, de Vogüé 2.166, ll.91-94).

¹⁰ Cusack has shown in detail how similar this portion of the narrative is to chapter 15 of the Vita S. Pachomii (see esp. 56).

¹¹ 2.9; Hecht 122, l.25-123, l.6.

Benedict sees through the illusion and again dispels the demonic mischief.¹² Finally, the devil drops in on Benedict to inform him that he is on the way to visit one of Benedict's brothers. Sure enough, a wall under construction falls and crushes a young monk, whom Benedict promptly restores to life to undermine the devil's endeavor.¹³ Though these assaults are trivial, they are not random: they manifest a new stage of sanctity that Benedict enjoys following his successful resistance of the devil.

Ʒa ongan se Godes wer betweoh Ʒysum wisum eac swylce Ʒeon 7
weaxan mid witedomes gaste, Ʒæt he bodode Ʒa toweardan Ʒing 7
sægde Ʒa æfweardan 7weardum mannum. (Hecht 126, ll.7-12)¹⁴

[Then amidst these events the man of God also began to progress and flourish with the spirit of prophecy, in such a manner that he foretold future things and spoke (about) absent things to those present.]

Two threads of the text thus converge in parallel: the perfection of Benedict's personal sainthood, and the establishment and construction of Monte Cassino, the monastic community that would eventually serve as the model for all others throughout the Middle Ages. Although the devil as Benedict's personal opponent has been summarily defeated, his spiritual function as general enemy of humankind (and his literary function as antagonist) does not suffer, despite all

¹² 2.10; Hecht 123, ll.26ff.

¹³ 2.11; Hecht 124, ll.23ff.

¹⁴ "Coepit uero inter ista uir Dei etiam prophetiae spiritu pollere, uentura praedicere, praesentibus absentia nuntiare" (2.11, de Vogüé 2.174, ll.26-28).

the healings, exorcisms, and church consecrations.

What stands out most about Wærferth's rendering of Gregory's text is its almost unnatural adherence to the original—"faithful to a fault," it has been said.¹⁵ Gregory's demonology is transmitted intact to the Old English readers of Wærferth's text; thus the translation allows Gregory's ideas to become even more firmly entrenched in the Anglo-Saxon cultural milieu. There they blend with a wealth of similar portrayals of the demonic in hagiography—many of them portrayals after which Gregory modeled his own pattern (Athanasius, Jerome, Sulpicius Severus). It remains to be seen how this wide range of motifs and conceptualizations manifested themselves in the literary productions of Anglo-Saxon England, and thus to what extent it may be possible to identify traits of a characteristically Anglo-Saxon demonology. In Wærferth we have an assurance that Old English prose translators were under no necessity of altering continental source texts, from linguistic, thematic, or cultural considerations. Conceivably, the entire conceptual corpus of continental demonology could have been transmitted into the vernacular without alteration; in this light we can better appreciate the fact that most translations did in fact choose to accommodate Latin models for the Anglo-Saxon audience through conscientious additions, expansions, and omissions.

In the Dialogues the devil exhibits a wide range of functions, but in Book 2 he serves

¹⁵ Frank "Poetic Words" 98. One exception is the instance in which Benedict cures a possessed monk from Aquino (2.16): he warns the man never to seek promotion, or he will find himself once again in Satan's power (iuri diaboli, "mid deofles anwealde" Hecht 135, ll.15-16). Behind this possessing demon (daemonio), as Benedict reveals only gradually, is the power of the devil—Wærferth somewhat obscures this pacing by using the term deofol and ealda feond throughout the account, such that there is no apposition between 'devil' and 'demon.'

especially as a gauge for the spiritual progression of the saint. Saints are often loners, and in many hagiographic texts the devil winds up being their oldest and most consistent acquaintance. He is ideally suited to trace the saint's evolution--as an ahistorical and effectively omnipresent entity, he can be introduced at any time or place. Furthermore, since the devil is also omniscient in many respects (he always seems to know what is going on, anywhere in the world), he functions perfectly as an external observer to the saint's trials and triumphs. He appears at critical moments, issuing a running commentary on the state of the saint's circumstances, internal or external. Thus he often serves a role not unlike that of the chorus in Greek tragedy, always on the periphery, occasionally rejoicing but more often lamenting. But this 'chorus' of one does not represent the general good or the response of society, but a twisted and inverted chorus whose laments and tragedies are rather a source of enjoyment for the reader.

Bede's Ecclesiastical History

Wærfeth's translation of Gregory illustrates the response of an Anglo-Saxon to a foreign source text. The vernacular translation of Bede's Historia, on the other hand, represents the response of an Anglo-Saxon to an indigenous Anglo-Saxon source text. Bede includes a healthy number of possession stories in the history; furthermore, all paganism or idolatry is assimilated with devil-worship and thus presumes the presence and activity of at least some demons. Though there are numerous demons flitting about, being exorcized from supplicants or driven from sites of future monasteries, Satan himself is most often invoked in certain rhetorical contexts such as references to unconverted peoples being 'bound' and to his implanting suggestions in people's

hearts.¹⁶ Missionary efforts and church consecrations are thus acts of snatching the devil's prey from his very mouth. Such expressions come across as highly metaphorical, of course, as there is never a personal description of the devil's response to these events, or further indications of his role as participant.

There are only three passages in Bede's history that directly introduce the devil or a demon as a character. The changes in the Old English translation of these scenes are overall slight, and can best be characterized by an increased tendency to render the anonymous demons in the original more personal and individual. The first narrative appearance of the devil in the *Historia* is a minor prank, in which the devil causes Germanus of Auxerre to trip and break his leg.¹⁷ Next, in 3.11, Bede tells of an anonymous demoniac against whom regular exorcism is powerless--not until he comes into contact with the relics of King Oswald is he healed, as the purpose of the scene is to exemplify the sanctity of that saint-king. The scene unfolds curiously, however. It is interesting to watch the fluctuation of singular and plural in the brief account: at first we are told he is possessed by an "evil spirit" and then, "the devil."¹⁸ When the sacred dust effects the miracle cure, the man himself, now restored to his right mind, gives a first person account of his deliverance:

"Mox ut uirgo haec cum capsella quam portabat adpropinquauit

¹⁶ Instigates sin: 1.27 (Colgrave and Mynors 100, ll.18-21), 2.10 (170, ll.31-32), 3.22 (284, ll.7-9); associated with idolatry and paganism: 1.30 (108, l.5), 2.1 (130, ll.11-12 and 132, ll.34-36), 3.19 (272, ll.8-10), 3.29 (320, ll.17-20), 5.9 (476, ll.9-12); the 'bondage' or 'tyranny' of Satan: 2.1 (122, ll.5-7), 2.10 (168, l.30), 2.11 (172, l.8), 2.20 (206, ll.2-4), 4.13 (376, ll.1-3), 4.14 (376, ll.5-6).

¹⁷ 1.19; Colgrave and Minors 60, ll.7-8.

¹⁸ *inmundo spiritu*: Colgrave and Mynors 248, l.9; *diabolo* (though still not necessarily Satan himself): 248, l.11.

atrio domus huius, discessere omnes qui me premebant spiritus maligni, et me relicto nusquam conparuerunt." (Colgrave and Mynors 248, ll.31-34)

["As soon as this maid reached the porch of the house with the casket she was carrying, all the evil spirits which were oppressing me left me and departed to be seen no more." (Colgrave and Mynors 249)]

Thus he bears personal witness to there being a number of spirits assailing him--perhaps the fragmentation of self inherent in the phenomenon of possession impresses itself upon the victim as a multiplicity of invaders. Or, perhaps the man is providing greater detail, offering a more precise account than the more generalized assertion that he was possessed by an "evil spirit" or "devil." The conclusion of the chapter at last offers a final interpretation of the events, again in the narrative mode (rather than in the man's account). For the final words of the chapter specify that the man "suffered no more night alarms nor afflictions from the ancient foe" (ab antiquo hoste, 250, l.2). Only here is it certain that the demonic assailant is in fact the Old Enemy--in retrospect. The offending spirit has not been a common demon, such as those that besprinkle the exorcisms listed among the miracles of holy persons, but in the present instance, the man has been host to no less than Satan.¹⁹

¹⁹ I take epithets such as insidiator inimicus and antiquus hostis as referring particularly to the devil rather than to lesser demons, but in fact, this intuition is not consistently supported by other sources from the period. As the following chapters will show, there is an obstinate practice of confounding one demon with another throughout the early Middle Ages, and if we insist on making much of the difference between Satan and a demon, we depart from our sources in doing so. Perhaps it is safest to speak rather of a complex of traits that may or may not be attributed to a given demon (fallen angel, enemy of humankind, tempter/instigator of sin, deceiver, etc.). Many epithets (even antiquus hostis) can be applied to other demons besides Satan. The more of these that are positively attributed to the demon, the more that demon resembles Satan (or,

Though there are other appearances of demons and other possession narratives in the Historia, Bede varies the rhythm of the demonic interventions in the work as a whole by introducing the devil in a narrative slot that would normally require a simple demon. Thus a more acute tension is built by the introduction of Satan rather than a general demon—he is more personally known and understood by the audience, and, no doubt, his presence elevates the conflict to a higher level of ontological significance.

With these considerations in mind we may observe that the three actual narrative appearances of the devil in the Historia appear at the beginning, middle, and end (books 1, 3 and 5).²⁰ The final appearance is in Book 5, where there is only a brief glimpse of him in hell (5.14). An anonymous sinning monk, whom Bede identifies as an acquaintance of his, is granted a vision of the hell to which he will soon depart, and Satan, chained in hell, appears in the man's description:

what amounts to the same thing, the greater the possibility the demon at hand is Satan).

Thus, whether or not the sources adequately distinguish Satan from his demons in actual narrative circumstances, they do employ a range of rhetorical characterizations that align the given demon with certain demonic traits as opposed to others, thus drawing attention to his different roles such as cosmic enemy, instigator of human sin, or petty vandal. It is often significant, in each individual context, whether the devil is characterized as, say, auctor peccati or adversarius Dei. Furthermore, a more detailed list of epithets augments the significance of the scene in a wider cosmic context. Whereas early hagiographic sources might only invoke a demon from the wilderness in much the same spirit as they might invoke a centaur, giant, or lion, other sources, by heaping epithets appropriate to the fallen angels upon the original demon, associate him with an increasing number of moral and historical trespasses.

²⁰ 1.19, 3.11, and 5.14. Bede employs such structural techniques in his exegetical works as well. Connolly draws attention to the fact that Bede uses two scriptural passages (John 14.2 and Psalm 113.21) as a similar refrain in De templo: "in terms of symphonic composition, these texts in juxtaposition for a theme one hears at key points in the opus, viz. here in the Prologue, again at chapter 18.14, a little over half way, and then significantly, in the very last two sentences by way of finale" (2, note 18).

...coepit narrare quia uideret inferos apertos et Satanan demersum
in profundis Tartari Caiaphanque cum ceteris qui occiderunt
Dominum iuxta eum flammis ultricibus contraditum. (Colgrave and
Mynors 504, ll.3-5)

[...he began to describe how he had seen hell opened and Satan in
its infernal depths, with Caiaphas and the others who slew the
Lord, close by him in the avenging flames. (Colgrave and Mynors
505)]

This brief and sterile glimpse--this frozen picture of the devil immured in his torments, as that in Dante--is all that the final narrative appearance of the devil offers.²¹ He no longer does anything, but is only alluded to passively, the mere object of description by a doomed and abject sinner. If the three periodic narrative appearances of Satan in books 1, 3, and 5 form a refrain punctuating the demonic themes running through the work, then this third and final refrain is no crescendo. Satan has receded, reduced to a subordinate position both in narrative prominence (he no longer acts) and in location (he is in hell rather than in the world).

On the whole there are far fewer references to the devil and to demons in the Old English translation than there are in the original.²² This is due mostly to the abridged nature of the translation, of course--those episodes and passages that are preserved in the vernacular

²¹ Inferno canto 34, ll.28-60.

²² The Old English translation, though probably written contemporaneously with the other translations of the reign of Alfred, was probably not written by Alfred himself as Ælfric and William of Malmesbury indicate (Bately 118, Greenfield and Calder 57-58). The text used is that of Thomas Miller, whose preferred text is the Tanner MS (Bodleian Tanner 10, end of 10th-century). Passages cited here referring to base texts other than the Tanner MS are specially noted. Miller argues that all versions derive from a single original (xxiii ff.).

translation tend to keep the demonic references intact.²³ The entire Germanus of Auxerre episode (1.19), for instance, is absent from the Old English translation, and thus our neat schematization of the three-part Satanic 'refrain' is disrupted from the outset.

The central episode concerning the healing dust of King Oswald that delivers a man from demonic possession is also simplified. Though there is the initial shift from the single indwelling spirit to the plural spirits of the man's own description, the narrative does not follow Bede in culminating the passage with a description of the possessing demonic force as the devil.²⁴ Instead the narrative voice continues to refer to the plural spirits (awyrgedan gastas, Miller 186, 1.19) as the man has done in direct discourse. This shift effects a two-fold change in the demonology: first and most obviously, Bede's elaborate build-up to the single Old Enemy is passed over--in fact, there is no direct indication that the unclean spirit possessing the man is Satan at all. The Old English translator seems content to bring the story in line with the more conventional possession narratives, in which lesser demons are acknowledged far more often than Satan.

The second effect of the change is more subtle. We have seen that the multiple possession of Bede's narrative readily lends itself to a psychopathological reading, since it is not the narrative voice but only the man's personal testimony that points to a multiplicity of spirits. The narrative itself indicates only that there is a single spirit, at last identified as the Old Enemy. The

²³ A few exceptions are such references as "potestae Satanae" (2.1), "dentibus antiqui hostis" (2.1), and "multitudine daemonum" (2.4; Colgrave and Mynors 122, 1.6; 130, ll.11-12; 148, 1.13), all of which are absent from the Old English, though the sections in which they appear faithfully reflect the material in Bede's original otherwise.

²⁴ Single spirit: "unclænum gaste," "deofle"; Miller 184, ll. 22, 24. Plural demons of man's description: "ealle þa wergan gastas," Miller 186, ll.14-15.

man's insistence that there are many spirits, then, can possibly be taken as a purely perceptual or even illusory claim--conceivably, even a symptom of the very possession itself. Such a reading is no longer possible for the Old English version, however. Once the healed energumen asserts that there were multiple indwelling spirits, the narrative voice follows his example and continues to refer to plural spirits. Thus the Old English abandons fluid shifts of mental processes, and substitutes for them fluid shifts of ontological (in this case, demonic) ones. The vernacular translator feels no discomfort in apposing unclænum gaste with awyrgedan gastas in the direct narrative, presumably because there is an easy conceptual fluidity in the very understanding of demons that allows for such inconsistency to pass without comment. Perhaps the translator wishes to preserve Bede's crescendo, but feels that this is better accomplished by terminating with references to a number of demons rather than with a reference to the old enemy. Or, perhaps, the translator may be bothered by the fact that in this passage Bede implies that the devil is not in hell.

The only narrative appearance of the devil in the Old English translation at all, in fact, is the last one in Bede, the vision of the devil in hell. The translator still grants Satan the power of moral instigation, as when he follows Bede in ascribing the murder of King Oswy by his kinsmen to the devil's promptings ("inbryrdendum þæm feonde ealra goda," Miller 226, ll.31-32), yet he never presents the devil as corporeally outside of the underworld. This means that the only view of the devil himself, in Book 5, represents a more intense demonic finale, appearing as the last of three visions of hell.²⁵ Readers of the Old English version are never

²⁵ The text of the Tanner Bede ends in the middle of this chapter. The text that follows, describing the actual vision of hell, is taken from Corpus Christi College, Oxford 279 (Miller's manuscript O).

granted a direct glimpse of Satan (unlike the Latin), therefore, but hear of him only indirectly through the testimony of the sinning monk. Furthermore, the Old English translator has been reticent with regard to using the name Satan itself, even translating Bede's use of the proper name with "the devil" (e.g., 5.9; Miller 410, l.27). Here at last, though, the proper name and title are invoked: the monk sees,

helle opene ⁊ Satanan þone ealdan feond moncynnes besencedne on
þam grundum helle tintriges. (Miller 442, ll.27-29)

[hell open and Satan the old enemy of humankind immersed in the
abyss of hell torment.]

This is the only use of the word "Satan" in the Old English translation, and the phrase "Satanan þone ealdan feond moncynnes" expands somewhat on Bede's "Satanan." The picture of Satan in his torments has thus caught the translator's attention, if the embellishments on this theme are any indication. Satan for the translator is an object of visual fascination, but only in his incarcerated helplessness. Though Bede mentions that Satan is in hell in Historia 5.14, in other writings Bede indicates more generally that for him, as for Augustine, the devil is more generally in the 'hell' of the lower atmosphere (see background chapter) rather than in any particular spot. In vain will a reader of the Old English find Bede's mobile, folkloric devil that occasionally interferes in human affairs through direct contact; instead there is only this silent and helpless figure exiled to darkness and flames, approachable only in a second-hand report by a pitiful sinner toward the close of the work.

B. Tenth-Century Anonymous Homilies

If monastic reformers such as Ælfric did attempt to rid England of theologically suspect religious texts, we are fortunate that they were not entirely successful, for many of the homilies of the tenth-century Blickling and Vercelli collections, for example, may well have received their censure.¹ It would be pointless to search these homily collections for coherent demonological systems, since they generally reflect a wide diversity of sources and backgrounds; nonetheless, the collections are sufficiently substantial that they can be used to form a general conception of portrayals of the demonic in tenth-century England. Furthermore, unlike the translations of Alfred's cultural campaign, these texts are even more revealing in their casual and sometimes unsophisticated presentation of material. Reflecting a haphazard collection of sources in contrast to the conscientiously selected and edited texts of Alfred's campaign, they permit occasional insights into the popular Christianity of the period.²

Having said that we should not expect a consistent demonology from the texts in these collections, it is surprising to find, in certain particulars, how much consistency there actually is. While these texts frequently mention the devil, they generally exhibit a greater reluctance to

¹ Gatch *Preaching* 8, Godden "Aelfric" 100; but see also Hill "Devil's Forms" 175. Vercelli Book--Codex Vercellensis CXVII; Blickling homilies--Princeton, New Jersey, Scheide Library 71.

² See Aronstam 272, 277; Clayton 225-29, 242; Gatch *Preaching* (esp. 1-11, 25-59); and K. Greenfield 283-84. But also see Gatch "Unknowable Audience" for important reservations concerning the generalizations frequently drawn about the tenth-century vernacular homilies as mirrors on contemporary Anglo-Saxon society: "it is not necessarily the case that authors will tailor their materials to the special needs and conditions of those who will read their writings or hear them read" (114).

picture the devil outside of hell than their sources. Furthermore, certain texts in the Vercelli Book offer what amounts to a rationalization, if not a fully developed systematization, of a certain demonological motif that only appears sporadically in other sources, the motif of the devil shooting invisible arrows of temptation. The precise role of the devil as an instigator of human sin is not eschewed--indeed, it is frequently affirmed--but the homilies of the Vercelli collection offer unusually bold details concerning how exactly this instigation is conceptualized.

The homilies in the Vercelli compilation were almost certainly originally composed by a number of authors over a range of time.³ There is thus a need for caution in looking for common themes and consistent viewpoints across the collection. It is evident, however, that the compilation reflects an interest in certain themes and images that connect many of the disparate homilies. The eschatological emphases are mentioned most frequently in this context;⁴ many of the homilies offer graphic visualizations of the Day of Judgment and present dialogues between the soul and body.⁵ For the present purposes, however, there is an even more precise conceptual trend that unites several of the pieces--the insistence that the devil is located in hell rather than here on earth pervasively informs the various narrative episodes that treat the devil,

³ Scragg identifies this range as the late-ninth to the late-tenth century (Vercelli Homilies xxxix; cf. Clayton 226-29). Only some of the brief devotional prose pieces in the Vercelli Book are technically 'homilies' (didactic meditations expounding upon a given scriptural passage or pericope)--the pieces also touch on a number of other related devotional genres such as sermons and saints' lives (Scragg xix, Smetana 78-79, Szarmach "Vercelli Homilies" 241). For sake of convenience, however, I will use the term 'homily' in the looser sense.

⁴ Clayton 227, Gatch "Eschatology" 143-44. Scragg, however, counters that the homilies share little in common not also shared by tenth-century vernacular homilies in general (Vercelli Homilies xx).

⁵ Eschatology: homilies 2, 4, 9, 15, 21; soul and body motif: homily 4 and cf. 22. One of the two vernacular "soul and body" poetic pieces is also found in the Vercelli Book (fol. 101b-103b).

and furthermore, in one homily a specific visualization of how this happens is provided more clearly than anywhere else in our sources.

The devil appears as a claimant over the soul in the second homily, at the Day of Judgment. This is in keeping with the orthodox belief that the devil is only bound between the first and second coming, of course.⁶ The devil in this homily (as elsewhere in the collection) is associated with death, as he imputes sins to the soul, aids in the sorting of the saved from the damned, and along with (or as) the Antichrist, cleans the earth with fires of purification. In the fourth and tenth homilies, two more meditations on the Last Judgment, the devil speaks directly in a lengthy monologue, claiming the sinner as his own property. In homily 10, for instance, he entreats of the Lord in judgment,

"Dem, la dryhten, rihte domas, / 7 forlæt me mines rihtes wyrðe,
þæs ðe ic me sylf begiten hæbbe..." (Scragg 200, ll. 76-77)

["Lo, Lord, decree right judgments, and leave me my precious
right, since I have earned it myself."]

In these two homilies, then, the devil takes on a central narrative role in the events of the Last Judgment, forming a counter-balance for his significant role at the beginning of time with the fall of angels. This is a significantly different presentation of the Day of Judgment than that recorded in Scripture or in standard Judgment Day narratives, where it is Christ, not the devil,

⁶ In another homily, Be heofonwarum and be helwarum (MSS CCCC 302 and Cotton Faustina A.ix), the devil is already bound in hell at the Day of Judgment and it is the lesser demons who accuse the sinning soul: "þonne cwyð sum deofol, 'mare þe is toweard þonne þu gesyxt þone ealdordeofol þe lið onbæc gebunden in þære neowelnesse helle grundes'" ("then a certain devil says, 'more awaits you when you see the Devil Lord who lies bound back in the abyss of the depth of hell,'" Callison 244-45, ll.29-32).

who doles out punishments and rewards.⁷ Before proceeding, however, it must be noted that a very different picture of the Day of Judgment is presented in Homily 15. That work also indicates that there is to be a battle between angels and devils (just as in the original war in heaven), but the devil is not--nor Satan, nor Antichrist--ever singled out as a prominent spokesperson or leader of these demons. The demons remain a nameless and homogenous group, never allowed to the forefront of the narrative. Instead, the intercessors granted direct discourse are Mary, Michael, and Peter, who plead for mercy and thus each carry off a portion of the souls from the reach of the demons.⁸ The Lord himself pronounces judgment on the damned, and they are taken to their torments and locked in hell along with their guardian demons. Characteristically, the torments of hell are described at greater length and with more spirit than the joys of heaven, but never in that description is there a hint of the devil.

Despite the anomalous inattention to the devil in Homily 15 and to a lesser extent 21 as well,⁹ most of the Vercelli homilies grant him an important role in the definition of a sinner (as devil's slave or thegn) and in the psychological portrayal of sin. Szarmach finds that the rendering of Matthew 16.26 in Homily 10 "carries no threat" ("Vercelli Homilies" 247):

Hwæt hylpeð þam men aht, þeah þe he ealne middangeard on his
anes æht eal gestryne, gif eft þæt dioful genimeð þa sawle?
(Scragg 212, ll. 258-59)

⁷ See Matthew 25.34 and 25.41. Szarmach notes that the unusual daemon accusator passage in which the devil, rather than the Lord, accuses the sinning soul at the Day of Judgment is from Paulinus of Aquileia's Liber exhortationis ch. 62 ("Vercelli Homilies" 265).

⁸ Ælfric objected to this notion (Thorpe 2.572, 16-18 and 22-25; see Gatch Preaching 83).

⁹ Except for one brief reference to "the devil Antichrist" ("þone deofol Antecrist," Scragg 359, l. 184), Homily 21 invokes only a homogenous group of demons as the antagonists of the Final Judgment.

[What does it help a man at all, though he amass all middle-earth
as his own property, if the devil then takes his soul?]

The translation not only preserves the latent threat of the Vulgate, however (which only refers obliquely to 'suffering loss of' one's soul), but moreover, renders it more intimate and readily visualized by specifying that it is the personal devil who carries the soul away.¹⁰ Thus there is a very real sense in which the devil is present and active.

Homily 19 presents an overview of the devil's history (the rebellion in heaven and fall of angels, followed by the temptation in Eden), and provides a detailed list of the devil's present activities. Quite simply, he attacks us both day and night: "Se deofol dæges ⁊ nihtes winnð ongean us mid his geleafleste" ("the devil fights against us with his unbelief day and night," Scragg 318, ll. 69-70). The arsenal of demonic assaults—actually a catalogue of proscribed psychological states—is then listed, each with the appropriate countermeasure:

He winnð mid ofermოდnesse; uton we ongean mid eaðmოდnesse.
He us gegearwað galnesse; uton we ongean clænnesse. He gegripð
manfulnesse; uton we ongean rihtwisnesse. He us onbebringeð
yrsunge; uton we fylgean gepylde. He us onasent gytsunge; uton
we began mildheortnesse. He us myngað to gifernesse; uton þær
ongean gehealdan forhæfednesse. (Scragg 318-19, ll.71-76)¹¹

¹⁰ There is no mention of the devil in either the Latin or the Old English versions of the Biblical passage. Vulgate: "Quid enim prodest homini si mundum universum lucretur / animae vero suae detrimentum patiat." OE Gospels: "Hwæt fremað ænegum menn þeah he ealne middangeard gestryne gyf he hys sawle forwyrd þolað" (Liuzza 34-35).

¹¹ The homilist is here translating from the homiliary of St Père de Chartres (Scragg 310; text from Cambridge, Pembroke College 25 printed 318-19), or rather the homiliary "formerly known" as that of St Père de Chartres (Godden "Experiments" 263). The Old English homilist changes the original tu (second person singular) of the original to uton (first person plural) to negotiate a more diplomatic exhortation, the preacher or authorial voice accepting equal

[He fights with pride; we should (stand) against him with humility.
 He girds us with lust; we should (stand) against him with purity.
 He seizes us with wickedness; we should (stand) against him with
 righteousness. He incites anger in us; we should observe patience.
 He sends avarice against us; we should practice mercy. He incites
 us to greed; we should there practice temperance against him.]

Thus the homily externalizes and renders concrete broad psychological states that are socially discouraged by characterizing them as personal attacks. The homilist paints the active acts of aggression vividly through the rich variety of verbs describing them, while stylistically suggesting passive resistance through the frequent absence of a verb in the countermeasures. The externalization of the source of evil does not exonerate the individual, but rather draws the individual more deeply into what can be characterized as spiritual paranoia: "Se deoful us symle ymbeþridað" ("the devil surrounds us always," Scragg 321, l.105). Whereas the evils enumerated in this homily are only vaguely-defined influences that the devil exerts upon humans, the following homily, the twentieth, presents the eight cardinal sins even more tangibly, in the tradition of Prudentius' *Psychomachia*, as the devil's warriors ("strange deofles cempen," Scragg 340, l.143). It is clear that the manifestations of the instigation of sin are concretely discernible in the day-to-day affairs of the individual, and it remains only to explore how the source of these influences is characterized in the collection.

responsibility with the listener or reader. For another homiletic series of the devil's methods (a list of 'teachings,' e.g. "diofol us læreð slæw and slæcnesse..."), listed in apposition with God's corresponding methods or teachings, see Wright *Irish Tradition* 244-45 (Junius 85-86, also in Healey *Vision* 332-34, ll.351-65). For a series of the devil's "evil gifts" (*yfelan ungifa*) to humankind, see Wulfstan homily IX (Bethurum 186-87, ll.56-67), and for a series of the devil's "works" (*opera diabolica*, = the eight deadly sins), see Wulfstan Homily Xb (Bethurum 195-96, ll.50-52).

By citing 1 Peter 5.8 (devil as roaring lion prowling about), Homily 14 reminds the hearer that the source of the evil influences, the devil, is himself out and around, actively looking for human souls. But this scriptural catch-phrase is scarcely descriptive of the picture the Vercelli homilies exhibit as a whole concerning the machinations of the devil. Perhaps more explicitly than any other text or group of texts in the vernacular (with the possible exception of Juliana), several of these homilies rationalize the means by which the devil, bound in hell, can still claim sinners as his slaves and instigate temptation in the world. The idea of the devil's invisible 'arrows,' a common homiletic trope as well as an analogue of the 'elf-shot' of Germanic folklore,¹² provides the necessary rationalization, so long as one accepts that these invisible arrows can travel from hell to a sinner's heart without obstacle or delay.

The motif of the devil shooting invisible arrows is familiar from a variety of sources, and appears in at least three Vercelli homilies.¹³ In Homily 9 a hypothetical individual is mentioned "hwæs heorte sie mid diofles stræle þurhwrecen" ("whose heart may be pierced with the devil's arrow," Scragg 170, l.118), for instance, and in 23 (Guthlac), there is a detailed description of the devil shooting an arrow of despair into the saint (Scragg 384-85, ll.13-33).¹⁴

¹² On the iconographic and conceptual convergence of demon arrows and elfshot, see Grattan and Singer 56-62, Jolly 134-38; cf. Cameron 141-42. Consider, for instance, "For a Sudden Stitch" ("Ut, lytel spere!" ASPR 6, 122, l.12).

¹³ Hrothgar's 'sermon' provides a familiar analogue in Beowulf ("bona swiðe neah, / se þe of flanbogan fyrenum sceoteð...biteran stræle," 1743-46; "the murderer [is] very near, he who wickedly shoots from his bow...a sharp arrow"), and Klaeber reviews some patristic sources for the 'arrows of sin' motif in "Christlichen Elemente" 129-30. See also Abbetmeyer 37-39, and especially Hermann "Recurrent Motifs" 11-16 for the role and occurrences of the motif in OE poetry.

¹⁴ Here the source is ultimately Felix's Vita Guthlaci ch. 29 (Colgrave Felix's Life 94, l.26).

In Homily 3 there is even a reversal of the topos: fasting is said to be an arrow fired against the devil.

Witodlice þa fæstenu sint strange gescotu angean þæs diofles
costungum. (Scragg 79, ll.98-99)¹⁵

[Truly, fasts are powerful missiles against the devil's temptations.]

Homily 4, however, develops the idea of the devil's arrows rather boldly, offering an imaginative visualization of the processes at work in psychological temptation. The account is straightforward, almost disarming in its simplicity:

Ponne hæfð þæt dioful geworht bogan 7 stræla. Se boga bið
geworht of ofermettum, 7 þa stræla bioð swa manigra cynna swa
swa mannes synna bioð. Sumu stræl byð geworht of niðe 7 of
æfste, sumu of gebelge 7 of hatheortnesse, sumu of stale 7 of
wrænnesse, sumu of druncennesse 7 of dyrnum geligre, sumu of
æwbryce 7 of gedweollcræftum, sumu of lyblace 7 of gytsunge,
sumu of gifernesse 7 of yrrre, sumu off reaflace 7 of scincræftum,
[sumu of drycræfte] 7 of morðorcwale, sumu of þeorfunga 7 of
feounga. Swa manige stræla syndon swa nis æniges mannes gemet
þæt hit asecgan mæge. 7 ælce dæge / þæs diofles willa bið, þæt
þissa stræla nan ne sie geunfæstnod, gif he findan mæg hwær he
hie afæstnian mæge. 7 on helle þa dioflu scotiaþ mid þissum
strælum, 7 eac swa some he hæfð ælce dæge his bogan to us
gebend, 7 wile us scotian mid þam strælum þe ic ær nemde.
(Scragg 102-03, ll.308-21)

¹⁵ Other arrows being employed against the devil include Solomon and Saturn I 128-31 and the Prose Pater Noster Solomon and Saturn Dialogue (the Pater noster's second form is "on stræles onlicnisse," Menner 168, l.7).

[Then that devil has fashioned a bow and arrows. The bow is fashioned from pride, and the arrows are of as many varieties as are a person's sins. One arrow is made from enmity and from envy, one from anger and from rage, one from theft and from wantonness, one from drunkenness and from illicit fornication, one from adultery and from sorceries, one from witchcraft and from avarice, one from greed and from ire, one from robbery and from sorcery, one from magic and from murder, one from theft and from hatred. So many arrows are there that it is within no one's ability to relate it. And every day it is the will of the devil that not one of these arrows remain unfastened, if he can find somewhere to fasten them. And the devils in hell shoot with these arrows, and also, similarly, he has his bow bent against us every day, and wishes to shoot us with the arrows I named before.]

Here the familiar topos of the devil's arrow is expanded into a scenic description that neatly reconciles the conflicting facts of Satan's active instigation and his imprisonment in hell.¹⁶ The motif of the devil's 'arrow' appears also in Blickling homily 19 (on Andreas), though there is no mention of arrows in the analogue texts (the Greek Praxeis or the Latin Casanatensis versions).¹⁷ While the demonology of the Vercelli homilies as a whole does not rigorously adhere to this model (if we may take the liberty, from its explicit schematization, of calling it

¹⁶ Scragg, who knows of no Latin source for the homily, puzzles over the peculiarities of this passage and the paragraphs following it (the final ones of the piece). They are late West-Saxon, while the rest of the homily contains many early- or non-West Saxon features, and they bear little thematic relation with the rest of the homily (Vercelli Homilies 88-89).

¹⁷ Andreas calls the devil the "heardeste stræl to æghwilcre unrihtnesse" ("hardest arrow for every wickedness," Morris 241, ll.3-4). In the Vercelli poem Andreas, Andreas also calls the devil, "ðu deofles stræl" ("you arrow of the devil," or perhaps, "you arrow of a devil," 1189b).

a 'model'), the Vercelli homilies--as the vernacular homilies in general--do exhibit a marked reluctance to present the devil as a character outside of hell. The detailed catalogue of vices in the passage, furthermore, exhibits an anxiety to compartmentalize them; this is perhaps related to the tendency in other texts to master the demonic by atomizing it or disintegrating it into its components.¹⁸

The devil of the Vercelli Book, to restate, mostly appears in narrative accounts occurring before the First Coming or after the Second. At least a quarter of the homilies mention that the devil is in hell, while only two actually depict him as being out of hell.¹⁹ Both of these are hagiographic episodes--of SS Martin and Guthlac--and both rely substantially on Latin predecessors. However, for the account of St Martin (Homily 18), at least, the redactor has eliminated most of the numerous appearances of the devil found in Sulpicius Severus' Vita Martini, preserving Martin's most notable encounter, that with the devil at his death-bed.²⁰

¹⁸ See sections on Solomon and Saturn I, Andreas, and Ælfric's Life of St. Maur (in conclusion).

¹⁹ Devil in hell: Homily 1 (Scragg 40, ll.289-91), 4 (104, l.341), 8 (147, ll.76-77), 19 (316, l.21), 20 (335, l.60), 21 (355, l.93); see also 9 (160, ll.21-22).

²⁰ The devil of the Vercelli homilies appears in accounts of struggles over a human soul, but it is not always clear in the context whether this is meant to be at the Day of Judgment or simply at the death of the individual. Thus the figure of the devil overlaps with that of death--he is the deapberende dioful (Homily 2, Scragg 56, l.29; cf. Thorpe 1.66, ll.28-29 for the equation of death and the devil in Ælfric's Assumptio Iohannis). Rush explains, "The ancient Christians, both of pagan and Jewish extraction, were impregnated with the popular belief in the powerful presence of the devil at all times, but especially at the moment of death" (372-73; for the connection between death and the devil in Old English literature see Joyce Hill 10-15). The earliest depiction of Satan in Anglo-Saxon art, in the Leofric Missal, represents him as Mors or death (see figure 1; Jordan 290-93). The Missal was produced in Glastonbury in the 970's, and is thus roughly contemporary with the Vercelli homilies. There was apparently a convention in Old English homiletic collections to close with the death scene of a saint (Healey Old English Vision 14-15). Healey also suggests that the presence of the devil in Martin's death scene recommended that passage as an appropriate companion piece for the Vision of St Paul and the

I have chosen to focus on the Vercelli collection because of its bold innovations in describing the devil's arrows, but the Blickling collection exhibits the same tendencies: though the devil is frequently mentioned, there is a studied reluctance to assert his presence outside of hell during the sixth age of humankind.²¹ In the homilies of Wulfstan, sparse in narrative content as they are, there is no instance of the devil appearing out of hell in any narrative episode.

The only other passage that may be taken as an earthly appearance of the devil during the sixth age of humankind in the Vercelli Book is, upon closer inspection, not really one. The story of the devil and the anchorite (also known as "the devil's account of the next world" and the "Theban legend") was widely popular and appears in a number of Old English versions.²² A more correct designation for the story might be "a devil's account of the next world," for all the versions are quite clear that it is a randomly encountered devil, and not Satan, who is seized and interrogated. In Vercelli 9 the account begins, "an deoful sæde anum ancran be helle wite mid hire tintregum" (Scragg 175, ll.134-35). Other versions also insist on an indefinite article: "an ancra gefing ænne deoful";²³ "sum deofelgast sæde sumen ancre";²⁴ "an deoful arehte

other homiletic materials in Junius 85-86 (15).

²¹ In fact, there are three such instances. The first, in Homily 13 (Assumptio Mariæ Virginis, Morris 149, l.32) probably results from a misreading of the source text or from a corrupt source text (Dawson 250; see above, Introduction, note 8). The other two are the appearances of the devil in Homily 18 (St. Martin; Morris 227, ll.23-24) and 19 (St. Andreas; Morris 239-43, several appearances). In the former, as with the Vercelli homily on Martin, the devil's single appearance at Martin's death-bed represents a role much diminished from that in the Latin source texts.

²² For the background of the legend and its Old English variants see Robinson "Devil's Account" 362-65, Wright "Devil's Account" and Irish Tradition 175-214.

²³ Tiberius A.iii, Robinson "Devil's Account" 365.

²⁴ CCCC 303, Scragg 174 (deck 3, Scragg's manuscript H), l.1.

anum ancran."²⁵ These episodes, which float freely through diverse manuscript contexts, sometimes retain little of their fuller narrative framework.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of the various versions of the "devil's account" episodes is the undue attention granted the demon in them. It is the demon rather than the anonymous holy man who divulges the facts and principles that form the backbone of the narrative. The saint is on the edges of the narrative, no less a passive observer than is the reader or hearer of the account, attentively granting the devil an almost unbroken monologue. By way of contrast, consider the Vita Antonii: the demons do speak some, but Anthony speaks much more. In fact, most of what the devil/demons say is reported indirectly, in a sermon Anthony delivers to his disciples.²⁶ The "devil's account" ultimately stems from the tradition of the Vitae Patrum (of which the Vita Antonii forms a part), and thus it is significant that the isolated strands of the tradition evidenced in the Anglo-Saxon versions reveal a notable shift of emphasis.²⁷ Now the anchorite learns truths (both factual and moral, without deception or perversion) from the devil, as Anthony's disciples learned from Anthony. The devil, as it turns out, makes quite a good homilist. Thus tutored, the anchorite lets the devil go at the end of the monologue:

Ða þæt deofal þis eal hæfde asegd þam haligan ancran þa forlet he

²⁵ Bodleian Hatton 113, Scragg 174 (deck 2, Scragg's manuscript O), ll.1-2.

²⁶ Anthony's sermon: Ellershaw 200a-208a (chs.16-43); Evagrius chs.15-20 (PL 73, cols.134D-146B).

²⁷ For some devil tales from the Vitae Patrum in Old English (MS Cotton Otho C.i, vol.2) see Assmann 195-207. In one tale, a sinner must go to the devil ("for ða to þam deofle," Assmann 197, ll.77-78) to receive demonic encouragement and advice, though we are never told where this devil is.

hine, and se deofal gewat þa to helle to his eardungstowe.
(Robinson "Devil's account" 367-68)

[When that devil had said all this to the holy anchorite, then he let
him go, and the devil departed to hell, to his habitation.]

Thus the narrative focus follows the devil from the scene, without further mention of the anchorite. It is a commonplace that the devil must speak the truth when interrogated by a holy person.²⁸ But in the "Devil's account" (as well as in Juliana and Margaret, for instance), this minor phenomenon which grants momentary prominence to the devil as personal character is promoted to a full-blown narrative structure, and the nameless saint confronting the devil is all but effaced from the scene.

While the Vercelli homilies, on the whole, thus present a rather unproblematic account of the devil's whereabouts, this in no way implies that his function in tempting humans is not complex. It is easy enough to say that the devil fires arrows, but the psychological implications of the interaction of arrow and heart remain problematic and open to diverse treatment. These arrows are quite insidious and often effective ones, and if they find their mark, they implicate the target in the devil's allegiance—that is, unintuitively, the victim, if hit, becomes an accessory

²⁸ This appears in patristic sources in the context of demon exorcism, when the lying demon must reveal its identity when questioned by a Christian. Tertullian (1 Apology 23) believes demons would not dare lie to a Christian ("Christiano mentiri non audentes," Mayor 80, ll.11-12), and bids those who heed demons when they lie—that is, prior to the interrogation by a Christian—heed them even more when they tell the truth ("Credite illis, cum uerum de se loquuntur, qui mentientibus creditis," Mayor 82, ll.28-29; cf. 80, ll.2-5). See also Minucius Felix Octavius 27, 5-7 (Pellegrino 42, ll.21-29), Lactantius Div Instit 2.16, 5.22 (PL 6, col. 334, ll. 9ff.; col. 623, ll.16ff). Furthermore, as Lohr indicates, isolated instances of the motif appear in important hagiographic source texts (such as the Vita Antonii: Ellershaw 197a-b, ch.6; 207a-b, ch.41). See Lohr 43-45. In fact, so reliable is this convention, that in Ælfric's Life of Martin, Martin even uses possessed persons as an informational resource, to learn about the rumored advances of an invading army! (Skeat 2.254, ll.554-59)

to the crime. The exteriorization of evil is thus imperfect, as in Homily 4, where the devil professes his nearness to the sinner: "þonne wæs ic symle ær æt him" ("at that time I was ever near him," Scragg 102, l.299). Indeed, the devil's very person is sometimes said to inhere in the heart of the sinner: Vercelli 22 states that "ðæt dioful bið on eowrum heortum" ("that devil is in your hearts," Scragg 373, l.110).²⁹ Interestingly, the reverse is also true in Vercelli 10—the devil avers that the sinner is also desirous of being in his (the devil's) own 'inner chamber,' which is often a term for 'mind' or 'heart': "woldon hie in minon hordcofan" ("they wished [to enter] into my inner chamber," Scragg 201, l.88). There is thus an indistinct boundary between devil and sinner on a spiritual plane, in contrast to their express separation in the physical world.

Thus, without systematizing more than is warranted for a compilation of such diverse homiletic pieces, we can say that certain consistent demonological ideas inform the various approaches to sin and to narrative presentations of the devil in the Vercelli collection. His absence from narrative situations set between the Harrowing of Hell and the Second Coming is conspicuous throughout the anonymous vernacular homilies as a whole, and attests to the strength that certain ideas had become entrenched in the popular imagination—most notably, the parallel images of the binding of Satan at the Harrowing of Hell and at the Day of Judgment.³⁰ The motif of the devil firing his arrows from hell is exploited at certain points, which, whether or not intended as a conscious rationalization, has the effect of logically reconciling the devil's incarceration with his active participation in psychological temptation. Where the demonological

²⁹ On the mutual in-dwelling between Satan and the sinner in the Gospel of John, see Ling 33-34.

³⁰ The two structurally similar episodes become readily assimilated in the homilies.

consensus of the homilies cease is in the free and creative presentation of this active participation.

The early vernacular homiletic collections betray, on the whole, a flat-footed approach to the devil and his activities. While the anonymous homilies exhibit no small fascination with scenes of dramatic grandeur and indulge freely in spectacular scenes and cosmological speculations, they tend not to expend this energy on the person of the devil himself. Perhaps a taboo figure (as in the charm literature) popularly immune to such idle poetic license, he remains a distant and ill-defined character, appearing as background trimming or absent altogether from scenes of the Last Judgment, and appearing only in the scenes in which he is essential (such as the Rebellion in Heaven and the temptation in Eden). Furthermore, the non-hagiographic homilies tend to concretize and rationalize the more potentially unstable features of the devil's location, mobility, and personal presence in the human sphere--the very elements that the hagiographic texts (especially poetic ones) exploit. The devil is 'present' only in the abstract consideration that individuals must beware of sin, but cosmologically, there is little support for the theological claim that the old enemy is imprisoned in the air or that he roams the earth, "prowling like a lion." The effects of the devil's works and machinations are real and frightful, perhaps far more so--certainly of more current interest--than the devil himself.

C. Ælfric

The most polished literary productions of the vernacular homiletic tradition are, of course, those of Ælfric of Eynsham. Ælfric left a sizable corpus—at least three separate homiletic cycles, providing readings for the entire liturgical year. Much of this material is expository or hortatory rather than narrative in nature, though of course, homilies continuously turn to scriptural and hagiographic episodes for exempla to illustrate certain points.¹ The most sustained portions of narrative are found in the Lives of Saints, a sanctorale (that is, a cycle of readings on the saints of the church following the fixed saints' days rather than the movable church feasts), though of course, narratives occur throughout his homiletic writings.² Though the devil himself is frequently mentioned throughout the Catholic Homilies in the same general contexts that we have seen in the Alfredian translations as well as the anonymous homilies (in connection with pagan idols, for instance, or in set phrases), there are a few occasions in Lives of Saints in which Ælfric introduces the devil as a character that problematizes the portrayal of the devil we have seen so far. These instances point toward the plastic, free-floating devil of Old English poetry.

¹ Sustained expository discussions of the devil or the demonic may be found in Dominica prima in Quadragesima (Thorpe 1.166-80) and De Dominica oratione (Thorpe 1.258-74), as well as in De falsis diis (Pope 2.676-712), and in De auguriis in Lives of Saints (Skeat 1.364-82).

² On the relationship between Ælfric's temporale and sanctorale, see Lapidge "Ælfric's Sanctorale." The gaps in Ælfric's sanctorale, Lapidge argues, correspond to the feasts in the temporale, such that a unified body of readings for the liturgical year is obtained by taking Ælfric's corpus as a whole (119). See also Lapidge "Saintly life" for certain caveats on making too sharp a distinction between Ælfric's two cycles of Catholic Homilies and his Lives of Saints (256).

It is difficult to reconstruct exactly what Ælfric's own Lives of Saints looked like, for other scribes saw fit to add to his collection shortly after its publication (Lapidge "Ælfric's Sanctorale" 118). Nonetheless, of the lives that have come down to us, many bear features of Ælfric's style and doctrinal temperament--such as his characteristic quasi-poetic prose, and his anxiety that the material may be apocryphal or unsuitable for a particular audience.³ Just as Ælfric introduced or reinforced distinctions concerning the orthodoxy or heterodoxy of pastoral texts, so he collapsed many of the distinctions between classical Old English poetry and prose--he adapts a rhythmical meter akin to that of prosody, though employing the vocabulary of prose. In fact many of his works have been printed in different modern critical editions as both verse and prose.⁴ Dorothy Bethurum conjectures that when selecting texts suitable for translation and inclusion in Lives of Saints, Ælfric tended to stay away from overly-sensational vitae ("Form" 523), but Ælfric's collection contains some very vivid and lively passages involving demons nonetheless (such as the story of the young man who makes a written contract with a demon in the Depositio S Basilii Episcopi, Skeat 1.72-78).⁵

In the passion of the Forty Soldiers (Quadragenta milites, March 9), the devil walks into

³ Consider his anxiety over the apocryphal Vision of St. Paul, for instance (In Letania Maiore, Feria Tertia; Thorpe 2.332, ll.15-17) and over other apocryphal materials in general (as in De assumptione Beatae Mariæ; Thorpe 1.440, ll.29-32), or his concern that Old Testament material, outside of context, may be misunderstood in translation (Preface to Genesis, Crawford 76, ll.8ff.). For discussion, see Malcolm Godden, "Ælfric and the Vernacular Prose Tradition," in Szarmach and Huppé, eds. The Old English Homily and its Backgrounds (1978): 99-117.

⁴ On Ælfric's style, see for instance Bethurum "Form," Clemoes "Ælfric" 193-206, Pope Homilies, vol. 1: 105-36; and for the issue of verse vs. prose see Kuhn "Was Ælfric."

⁵ All references to the Lives of Saints are to Skeat, by volume, page and line number. Skeat leaves the text unpunctuated, so for clarity I have added my own. For a consideration of Ælfric's intended audience for Lives of Saints, see Clayton 239-41.

court holding a serpent in one hand and a sword in the other. He tells the judge, "Pu eart min agen ongin nu" ("you are my own, now begin..." 1.246, 1.136). While it is clearly the physical devil who urges the judge to torture the soldiers further, the narrative indicates that the idea "came to the persecutors, into their thoughts" ("Ða gewearð þam ehterum on heora geþeahte" (1.246, 1.139). Here the instigating function of the devil has been cleverly integrated into the narrative, the spiritual and the physical complementing each other. The devil's speech is not physical, at least not in any conventional sense, for it only reaches the thoughts of the heathens. Although present, the devil remains a lifeless and depersonalized iconographic figure, bearing in his hands the symbols of his insidious power, but not using them.

Of the myriad torments the forty soldiers suffer, the most memorable is their forced immersion in an icy lake. A bright heavenly light appears to the soldiers, warming the icy pool and making their punishment pleasant. Observing these proceedings, the devil becomes infuriated that the martyrs are spared the pain of the tortures, and takes on human form:

Ða bræd se sceocca hine sylfne to menn,
gewrað his sceancan and wanode him sylfum (1.252, ll.222-23)

[Then the demon turned himself into a man, wrung his legs and
bewailed on behalf of himself.]

He delivers a brief plaint, and vows once again to incite the judge to further torments (ll.224-30). This promised instigation occurs off-stage, but is apparently successful because the judge does proceed to follow his bidding: "Ða gedyde se dema swa swa se deofol gebeotode" ("then the judge did just as the devil threatened him," 1.254, 1.259). What is most telling about this scene, however, is that the devil should bother to take on a human form just to deliver his plaint.

In many narrative contexts the early medieval hagiographer is often content simply to indicate that the devil laments, and record the lament itself, without indicating where the devil is, or offering orienting cues concerning how the scene is to be visualized. Ælfric's devil is a wide-roaming, protean entity, not necessarily bound by the stricter confinement imposed on him in the anonymous homilies, but still subject to the rules of coherent narrative logic. If he 'says' something, he must first be given recognizable form, and if he 'incites' someone, he must first be shown to have entered the room. Thus Ælfric insists on small details of blocking that would not otherwise be of principal concern for narrative visualizations of human-demon interactions.

The role of devil as saint's opponent

The most significant appearance of the devil in Ælfric is perhaps that in the Life of Martin. Here Ælfric abandons his "predilection for a single hagiographic source" (Zettel 24), and in a vita that combines material from Sulpicius' Vita Martini and Dialogi with accounts of Martin from other sources as well (e.g., Gregory of Tours), Ælfric offers a biography that resembles certain early medieval hagiographies, such as Athanasius' Vita Antonii and Gregory's Vita Benedicti, that exploit demonic motifs for the widest range of narrative functions. Indeed, Ælfric had already included an abridged life of Martin in his second series of Catholic Homilies,⁶ though that appearing in Lives of Saints is much more complete.⁷

⁶ Depositio Sancti Martini Episcopi, Thorpe 2.498-518.

⁷ Previous generations of scholars were impressed at Ælfric's wide reading, but more recently, Patrick Zettel has demonstrated that Ælfric found most of his materials in prearranged Latin compilations (see 24-27 for the Life of Martin). Specifically, the Cotton-Corpus Legendary, extant in numerous copies, represents just such a compilation. Unfortunately, the copy that bears the most demonstrable affinities with Ælfric's works (Hereford Cathedral

The closing chapters of Sulpicius' Vita concentrate increasingly on Martin's encounter with demons, and particularly with the devil. First the devil slays one of Martin's monastery workers, out of frustration at not being able to harm the saint (ch. 21), and then he appears to Martin in as many forms as possible to try to seduce him:

Frequenter autem diabolus, dum mille nocendi artibus sanctum uirum conabatur inludere, uisibilem se ei formis diuersissimis ingerebat...audiebantur plerumque conuicia, quibus illum turba daemonum proteruis uocibus increpabat. (Halm 131; Hereford P 7.vi, 19a, ll.3-13)

[Quite often, however, the devil, resorting to a thousand malicious tricks to score off the holy man, would thrust his visible presence upon him under forms of the utmost diversity...Very frequently, violent scolding could be heard, when a crowd of demons was abusing him in impudent language. (Hoare 23)]

The devil tries to convince Martin he is beyond redemption, but in response, Martin tells the devil that even he himself (the devil) is not beyond redemption, would he only show signs of genuine contrition.⁸ Sulpicius' emphasis in the Vita is on Martin's consistent ability to

Library, MS P 7.vi [H], written at Hereford, ca. 1150), and thus the one most suitably consulted as a source text, remains as a fragment--only the entries for November and December remain (Zettel 20, 32). Fortunately, Martin's feast-day falls in November. All references to the works of Sulpicius (Halm, CSEL 1) have been checked against microfilm copies of Hereford MS P 7.vi.

⁸ Though Sulpicius distances himself somewhat from this heretical view derived from Origen by presenting it as an instance of Martin's innocent generosity for others, Sulpicius is obviously much attracted to the thought of Origen (see Dialogi 1.6-7, Halm 157-59). Ælfric preserves the passage intact (2.267), despite the fact that its heterodoxy was much more firmly established in his day than in Sulpicius' (the fifth ecumenical of Constantinople in 536 anathematized Origen's doctrines). See Augustine De civ 21.17, 21.23. Ælfric elsewhere states

recognize the devil through his various disguises (chs. 21-24). The last appearance of the devil is his most ambitious ruse, assuming the form of Christ. Martin readily dismisses the impersonation on the basis that when Christ comes, he will appear not in purple raiments but in the humble rags which he wore on the cross (ch. 24).

In Ælfric's Life, the devil appears to Martin at the very beginning of his adventures, and again at the end, at Martin's death-bed. As soon as Martin leaves the military service so hateful to him, one of his first encounters is with the devil in the form of a man. Upon hearing Martin is a man of God, the devil announces,

"Swa hwider swa þu færst, oððe swa hwæt swa þu beginst,
þe bið wiper-ræde seo deofol." (Skeat 2.230, l.175-76; Sulpicius
ch. 6)

["Wherever you travel, or whatever you undertake, the devil will
be against you."]

Martin promptly dispels the figure, but from the outset Martin's entire pilgrimage in the human world has been established as perpetual warfare against the devil.

Though the devil besieges him frequently, Martin never succumbs even to a moment of doubt or weakness.⁹ The demonic episodes, then, are exclusively either of the rebuking (failed

flatly the orthodox opinion that the devil will not be saved, however (Annunciatio Mariæ; Thorpe 1.192, ll.15-19).

⁹ For a grudging admission of Martin's succumbing to the devil, one must go to Sulpicius' Letter to Eusebius (Letter I). Trapped in a burning building, Martin first tries to escape through the door, though it holds fast. Realizing his lack of faith, he prays rather than trying to flee, and is thus protected from the flames. According to Sulpicius, Martin himself admits that during this momentary error he was "diaboli arte deceptum" ("deceived by the arts of the devil"; Halm 141, Hereford P 7.vi, 23b, ll.15-16). This episode does not occur in any of the Old English materials on Martin, however. Even when saints err in vernacular writings, the devil is rarely inculpated

temptation) type, or concern themselves with the temptations of other characters, that do succeed to various extents. Ælfric groups together several episodes of the former, those demonic assaults launched against Martin himself, in the exact center of his Vita Martini (around lines 706-782 in Skeat's edition, which has 1495 lines). Ælfric faithfully renders the 'thousand malicious tricks' cited above ("mid þusend searo-cræftum," Skeat 2.264, l.710), recreating the Antonian temptation scene.¹⁰ Unlike the Antonian or Guthlacian temptations, however, no demon is ever able to lay a physical hand on Martin or harm him in any respect. As Ælfric also includes here the scene in which the devil appears in the form of Christ, that scene loses the climactic force it enjoys as the culmination of demonic manifestations in Sulpicius' Vita: here it is no longer Martin's last encounter with him. But the devil does pursue Martin even to his death-bed, where he patiently stands waiting for the saint to die. Martin's dying words, in fact, are addressed to the devil—he tells the devil sharply and confidently that he will have no claim over him (2.305, ll.1366-68).¹¹ The truth of these words is confirmed by Bishop Severinus, who observes the ascension of Martin's soul:

"...se hetela deofol
mid his unriht-wisum gastum hine wolde gelettan,
ac he gewat gescynd awæg fram þam halgan,

therein (see Introduction note 1 on Andreas).

¹⁰ In Sulpicius' Vita some of the forms assumed by the devil include the pagan gods Jupiter, Mercury, Venus, and Minerva (ch. 22), for which Ælfric provides Germanic counterparts: Jupiter = Thor, Mercury = Odin, Venus = Frigg (2.264). Thus in Ælfric there is an even richer diversity of demonic masks than in the Latin.

¹¹ This scene also occurs in Vercelli homily 18 as well as Blickling homily 18, both abridged lives of Martin. It is Martin's only direct encounter with the devil in the latter, and his only direct encounter save one in the former.

and nan þing his agenes on him ne gemette." (2.306, ll.1402-05)

["The hateful devil and his unrighteous spirits wished to impede him, but, put to shame, he went away from the saint, and met nothing of his own in him."]

Even after Martin's death the devil is intently interested in procuring his soul, attempting to inhibit its upward course to heaven.

Thus Martin's life as a saint is framed by his direct encounters, and verbal addresses to, the devil—roughly occurring at the beginning, middle, and end (as in Bede's Historia, see above pp.88-89).¹² Ælfric insists on sustaining the presence of the devil on the narrative horizon, always at Martin's back and always harrassing him whenever opportunity arises. The devil serves as a continuous reminder of the perils of the present world, perils which make Martin forever an outsider here, and which make him long for the next world after his eighty-one wearisome winters have expired (2.304, l.372). Though the devil is never allowed to penetrate Martin's spiritual armor, it is notable that Ælfric does not compromise the dignity of the Old Enemy in the process. Ælfric refrains from making the devil a buffoon, even though the occasional lesser demon does not get such consideration.¹³ His status as the ontological

¹² This structural framework is even tighter in Ælfric's Depositio in the Catholic Homilies (Thorpe 2.498-520). In the temptation episode there he does not conflate but carefully distinguishes the devil from the demons. The demons tempt him with the diversity of forms, while it is the devil who at last appears himself in the form of Christ. Thus, in the Depositio, the devil himself confronts Martin on exactly three distinct occasions—whereas in the Vita, as in Sulpicius, the referents are indistinct and seem to represent an indeterminate number of attacks by the devil during the period of temptation.

¹³ A demon expelled by Martin toward the beginning of the narrative, for instance, is forced out not through the mouth, but "fullice ferde þurh his forð-gang ut" (2.254, l.547).

benchmark of spiritual progress is preserved; his assaults, though resisted, are formidable; and his dominant role in the larger unfolding of human events around Martin is respected.

The devil on the periphery

Though Martin is able to resist demonic onslaughts successfully, several other beings in his environs are not so resilient. The scenes featuring these demonic attacks on secondary characters afford some intriguing glimpses into the machinations of demons and the devil that Ælfric has appropriated from the late antique world. Most memorably, Ælfric adopts from his sources the image of the demon riding the afflicted sinner like a steed. In an episode Ælfric adopts from Sulpicius' *Dialogi* (2.9), Martin encounters a mad cow (wod cu, 2.284) that violently assails everyone who comes near. Eminently percipient, Martin notices a demon (deofol or scucca, 2.284) riding atop the cow, whom he sharply rebukes:

"Gewit, þu wæl-hreowa, aweg of þam nytene,
and þis unscæððige hryper geswic to dreccenne!" (2.284, ll.1048-49)

["Depart, you blood-thirsty one, away from that creature and stop afflicting this innocent cow."]

The cow instantly regains self-possession, and pays obeisance to Martin out of gratitude. The innocence (unscæððige) of the afflicted beast (and, so far as we know, of the local people harrassed by the cow), presumes that this random demonic prank is divorced from any moral or allegorical consideration. The naturalistic presentation of the possession simply provides Martin with a miracle opportunity not unlike extinguishing the flames of an accidental fire.

When demons hold traffic with humans, on the other hand, one may expect an inherently

moral dimension, because humans are presumably moral beings. In fact this does not turn out to be the case.¹⁴ A certain monk decides to resume habitation with his wife, an irresponsible decision that can only have found its inspiration from one place: "þa besende se deofol swilc geþanc on þone munuc" ("then the devil sent such a thought into the monk..."; 2.286, l.1073). But besende is a relatively vague description--not long afterwards, in the episode of Avitianus, Ælfric provides much more detail. Sulpicius devotes several chapters of his third book of the Dialogi to the cruel tyrannies of Avitianus in the city of Tours, and to Martin's campaigns to mitigate his ferocity. At last, convinced of Martin's sanctity, Avitianus treats the people of Tours kindly though continuing his severe rule over his other lands. One day, Martin walks in and sees a very large black demon on Avitianus' back:

þa geseah he sittan ænne sweartne deofol
ormætne on his hrycge, and he him on ableow. (2.292, ll.1184-85)

[Then he saw a large black devil sitting on his back, and he blew
on him.]

Surprised, Avitianus asks why Martin is blowing at him, and Martin responds that it is not directed at him, but at the devil on his back:

Se bisceop him andwyrde, "Ne behealde ic na þe,
ac þone sweartan deofol þe sit on þinum hneccan;
ic þe of ableow." And se deofol swa aweg gewat,
and his hiwcuðe setl sona ða forlet. (2.292, ll.1188-91)

¹⁴ Hagiography, in direct contradiction to expository literature, encourages the presentation of animals as moral beings no less than humans. They are capable of obedience or wilfulness, and are accordingly praised or blamed by the saints who care for them (thus the wolf in Sulpicius' Dialogi 1.14, the raven in Jonas' Vita Columbani 25, and the jackdaw in Felix's Vita Guthlaci 40).

[Then the bishop answered him, "I wasn't looking at you, but at the black devil who sits on your neck; I blew him off you." And so the devil went away, and immediately abandoned his familiar seat.]

Just as in the case of the mad cow, the violent behavior is purely due to a parasitic demon physically envisioned as riding the sinner (see fig. 1). It is specified that Avitianus treats his subjects much more kindly after the 'exsufflation' of the demon.¹⁵ Avitianus apparently knows nothing of this demon at his shoulder, and hardly comes across as morally reproachable in this episode: he is, in a certain sense, the unwitting victim of demonic control, no less than the mad cow. However, Ælfric follows Sulpicius (Dialogues 3.8) in not committing himself definitely to the precise relationship between Avitianus' will and the demon's external control. He says that Avitianus amends his behavior,

oppe for-þan-þe he wiste þæt he his willan ær worhte,
 oppe for-þan-þe se unclæne gast him of-afliged wæs... (2.292,
 ll.1194-95)

[either because he knew that he had formerly worked his will, or
 because the unclean spirit had been expelled from him...]

Here is certainly one of the most transparent and tantalizing references to the relationship between internal will and external temptation to be found in Old English narrative literature--if only it came with a key. The two possible reasons listed, Avitianus' new awareness of the

¹⁵ On the exsufflatio motif as a literary importation from the baptismal liturgy, see T. Hill "When God Blew Satan," esp. 134-35 for St Martin. Note Augustine's concern in Contra Iulianum, similar to Martin's, that the exorcism of the indwelling spirit not be mistakenly taken as a reflection against the host (see Background sect. 5, and Hill 134).

demon vs. the simple removal of the demon, are clearly distinguished, and Ælfric places them in disjunction. Does Ælfric mean that both are possible explanations, and that it is simply not known in this case which was the actual one? Or is the disjunction intended rather as an elaborate apposition, such that the removal of the demon and Avitianus' greater awareness are meant to parallel one another, as two sides of the same process? There is ample room to read demonic instigation as a psychological process, if that is one's predisposition, but there is no fundamental difference in Sulpicius' narrative portrayal of the demonic instigation of a cow and that of a person, and Ælfric saw no reason to alter that fact.¹⁶

Thus, overall Ælfric paints a slightly more fluid portrait of the devil than the anonymous homilies; hell's grasp on the fiend is rather more tenuous. But in Lives of Saints Ælfric is still quite systematic in his portrayal of the way demonic instigation actually transpires: whether present physically or spiritually, the devil quite simply 'speaks' to his followers, while to them it simply appears that certain ideas have 'come into their thoughts.' More dramatically, this literal 'speaking' can take the form of physically riding the afflicted being, be it cow or count, and the consistent reduction of anti-social behavior to demonic instigation in these narrative episodes leaves little room for questions of the personal will and its complicity in sinful thoughts or behaviors. Those issues are for homiletic literature, not narrative.

¹⁶ On Ælfric's distinctions between humans and animals in terms of mind and soul, see Godden "Anglo-Saxons on the Mind" 278-81. For him the soul is roughly akin to the seat of intellect and rationality, and thus humans, but not animals, have souls. But Godden observes, "The soul is essentially both rational and immortal, and cannot therefore be ascribed to animals. Ælfric's repeated insistence on the point suggests that he was consciously taking issue with others, perhaps his contemporaries, perhaps his patristic authorities, perhaps Alfred" (281).

Ælfric is generally acknowledged an author of clarity and precision, and his restraintful inclusion of demons is careful and strategic.¹⁷ In fact, just as Ælfric straddles a delicate line between prose and poetry, so also his work incorporates features of the devil's portrayal characteristic of both prose and poetry. The devil of Ælfric's homiletic (expository) writings flies through the air ("se fleogenda sceocca"),¹⁸ while the devil of hagiography walks along the ground, if he appears at all. As in the homiletic prose narratives I examined, Ælfric respects a fairly clear distinction between the devil and his emissaries, and there is every reason to credit the occasional statement that the devil is presently bound in hell. In poetry, as we will see, such statements are more frequently problematized, since they manifestly accompany instances of the devil being out of hell. Thus, while prose tends to adhere to the literal level and sustains a consistent internal narrative logic, poetry invokes 'liturgical' time and place more freely and seamlessly blends them with the literal level of the narrative.

These trends may not be due so much to the nature of poetry, as to the fact that much of extant narrative poetry, unlike most of the extant prose, is hagiographical. But different kinds of hagiographic type-scenes require different kinds of devils. Ælfric invokes the multi-functional and omnipresent 'poetic' devil in his Life of Martin, because that lengthy narrative covers the widest possible range of issues, including the evolving spiritual life of the saint that runs parallel to his physical life. For this, Ælfric (like Sulpicius) cannot have recourse to just any demon, such as might be found in an idol or an energumen—he requires the Old Enemy, the devil

¹⁷ See, for instance, Gatch Preaching 14 and Healey "Search" 86 ("a model of lucidity").

¹⁸ Dominica in Sexagesima (Thorpe 2.90, l.27). Devils are birds: "deoflu sind fugelas gecigede, forðan ðe hi fleoð geond þas lyft ungesewenlice, swa swa fugelas doð gesewenlice," *ibid.* 2.90, ll.20-22). See also Skeat 1.372, ll.110.

directly addressed in the baptismal liturgy, the only mirror sufficiently broad to cast a full reflection of the saint.¹⁹ Only this omnipresent devil can follow Martin personally through his life, from conversion to death-bed, while along the way being repeatedly rebuked, exiled, and symbolically bound in hell.

¹⁹ This devil is most integrally incorporated as an intrinsic element of the narrative when invoked to portray the formation or spiritual advancement of the saint, as in Gregory's Vita Benedicti or Felix's Vita Guthlaci, as opposed to hagiographic narratives in which he simply trails along-side an already perfected saint (such as the Life of Martin). Thus Ælfric summons the fully omniscient and amorphous devil in his own Life of Benedict, closely following Gregory (Thorpe 1.154-88).

D. Anonymous Prose Saints' Lives

A substantial corpus of non-Ælfrician saints' lives remains from the Anglo-Saxon period that is not generally given critical attention; some are not even available in critical editions other than doctoral theses. Whatley provides an exhaustive list of forty-five hagiographic narratives not by Ælfric (including texts containing hagiographic material, such as feasts of the Assumption and the Nativity); not counting duplicate versions of the same vita, some thirty-two actual saints feature in independent texts, either complete or fragmentary (5-7).¹ Some of these are of no potential interest to a study of the devil (Chad, Mildred), others mention the devil in the familiar set phrases without offering much tangible material for a study of demonology (Euphrosyne, Pantaleon, Christopher) or only mention the devil in the context of exorcisms performed by the saint (Giles, James the Greater, Machutus). I will only examine two of these vernacular lives which seem most pertinent to the present study, focusing on the Life of St Nicholas and especially on the fascinating appearance of the devil in the Life of Margaret. These two roughly represent the extreme poles of the broad spectrum of views concerning the role of the demonic as intrinsic component of spiritual perfection.

Life of Nicholas

Eleven anonymous lives appear in MS CCCC 303, a large collection of lives of which

¹ Scragg lists and discusses the manuscripts of thirty-six anonymous saints' lives in "Corpus" 209-33, evaluating the context of Ælfric on 224-25: "However he may be shown to have transmuted it, the genre was already well established in England" (225).

the greater part are by Ælfric. Ahern estimates the codex, perhaps produced at Rochester, to be of "about the middle of the first half of the twelfth century" (3, cf. Scragg "Corpus" 213). The vernacular life of St Nicholas of Myra, included in the sanctorale section of the manuscript for the sixth of December (pp. 171-85), is a translation from a Latin vita by John the Deacon of Naples. John's vita, written ca. 880 from a Greek original, was the basis of all further Latin lives of the saint, and the Old English translation was probably composed in the eleventh century (Ahern 3, 36).²

The demonic appears only sparsely in the Life of Nicholas, and does not inform any crucial episode. Nonetheless, one episode in the Life affords several interesting insights into the workings of the devil in the world. After Nicholas is ordained bishop, the text relates a number of minor miracles attributed to him, many involving the calming of the sea and the assistance of sailors (Nicholas is the patron saint of sailors). His ministry includes the driving away of demons and false gods from the land, including the shameful goddess Diana; thus he incurs the wrath of the devil by diminishing the devil's domains on the earth. Plotting a variety of evil countermeasures, the devil finally resolves to have a treacherous oil brewed for him by certain sorcerers (dreomen, 380, or drymen, 386). He comes to them in the night and they perform his bidding without question. Now in possession of this evil oil, which will consume whatever it touches with flames, the devil must devise a means of having it delivered to Nicholas. Thus he

² Scragg and Treharne review the evidence of dating the composition of the lives of Giles, Nicholas, and the CCCC 303 Margaret in "Appendix: Three Anonymous Lives," concluding that Giles is probably post-Conquest. Because of linguistic affinities between the three texts, they likewise tentatively date the lives of Nicholas and Margaret to the same period, the second half of the eleventh century (233). All citations from the Life of Nicholas refer to line numbers in Ahern; the entire passage to be discussed appears in Ahern's paragraph or section 11.

assumes the form of an old woman, and entering a boat, rows to a ship of men on their way to receive Nicholas' blessing:

7 se deofol hine þa selfne gehiwode swylce he an eald wif wære,
 7 for into þære sæ 7 com rowende on anum bate to sumen scipfull
 mannum... (388-90)

[and the devil transformed himself such that he became an old woman, and went out on the sea and came rowing in a boat to a certain shipful of men.]

He asks the sailors to convey the oil to Nicholas and to coat the walls of his church with it, to which they agree, knowing nothing of his scheme or of the true nature of the oil. In John's original, the shadowy antagonist appears not as an old woman, but as a religious woman or a nun ("in cuiusdam religiosæ feminæ uultum," Mombritius 301.34).³ But in the Old English he appears to the sailors in a form standardly viewed with mistrust in later medieval folklore—an old woman (*eald wif*), or hag.⁴ In John's *Vita*, the devil-as-nun disappears from the scene in a rather indistinct manner:

Tunc monstrum informe umbra uelut tenuis uelociter euanuit.
 (301.41-42)

³ References to John's *Vita Nicholai* are from volume 2 of Mombritius' *Sanctuarium*, citing page and line number.

⁴ The early Christian literary tradition of presenting the devil as an angel, or allowing him to assume the form of a bishop or upright authority figure, was gradually de-emphasized during the Middle Ages, paralleling the deteriorating practice in pictorial art of presenting the devil as a graceful angel with a halo. For the earliest depiction of the Christian devil see Russell *Lucifer* 129-132 and Marrou 77-78 (but see Link 109-111); Russell prints a photograph of the sixth-century mosaic from San Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna (24). Cf. Woolf "Fall" 190-93.

[Then the formless monster vanished rapidly like a thin shadow.]

In the Old English, this ephemeral exit becomes more concrete and loses much of its mysterious grandeur:

Se scucce þærrihtes betæhte þæt manfulle ele 7 reow/ fram heom,
7 rædlice aḡwan of heora gesihþe. (404-06)

[Straight away the demon delivered that evil oil and rowed from them, and quickly vanished from their sight.]

In this version the devil ‘vanishes’ from their sight by the rowing, which is the second reference to the devil physically rowing his boat--neither of which is found in the Vita. The dream-like quality of the original is subdued in favor of more mundane staging.

Before the sailors reach Nicholas, they encounter a mysterious boat on which is a figure in the shape of Nicholas, who questions them about their encounter with the woman. He tells them that the woman was in reality the goddess Diana (that avatar of the devil with which the local population is most familiar), so recently expelled from the land by the activities of Nicholas. To prove the point, he has them throw the oil into the sea, and upon contact the ocean bursts into flames and burns ominously for a long time. When the sailors finally reach Nicholas and tell him of their adventure, he is surprised to learn of his divine doppelganger and joins them in a prayer of thankfulness.

The first thing to note about this miracle-story is that it has little to do with Nicholas. He is not present and knows nothing of the matter until told subsequently. He is but a symbol of righteousness, a recognizable and approachable form that the divine may assume when visiting humankind, but a pawn nonetheless. The miracle manifests and confirms his sanctity, but is in

no way a prodigy of Nicholas' own doing.

With regard to the demonic, it is equally clear in this account that the devil enjoys autonomous existence and activity, even when there are no human characters on the scene.⁵ In this text the devil is no allegorical embodiment of human psychological states, but operates independently as a physical player in the human sphere. On the whole, the phantasmal effect of the Latin original is toned down and the scene is re-envisioned in a more concrete manner. The devil's powers are implicitly circumscribed, however, since he is forced to work his machinations only through the most indirect of means. Though he can row a boat, he cannot himself produce the hyperflammable oil and relies on his sorcerer cohorts for their alchemical talents. Once in possession of the oil, he cannot go to the church himself to smear it on the walls, but enlists a ship of unwary sailors to perform the errand. Nicholas has driven him from the land so decisively that he can only conduct raids in neutral waters, like a pirate.

In both the Vita and the English Life, the devil is an active and interactive character in the world, though he remains only on the periphery of the Nicholas' domains: he is, as Rosemary Woolf says in a different context, "skulking wretchedly round the outskirts of the world" ("Devil" 8). He has no personal relationship or encounter with Nicholas, and his instigation of the other humans cannot possibly be related to psychological temptation--the sailors do not know what the oil really is, and the sorcerers have no idea to what ends the devil intends

⁵ We are invited to take this figure as the Old Enemy rather than a subordinate demon, because his anger stems directly from Nicholas' activity in diminishing 'his' empire. Fighting against "þæs deofles weorc" ("the devil's work," 368), Nicholas does not cease to rescue "þæt earme folc þe se awergode gast hæfde fæste begripan oðþæt he hi alesde of þæs deolfes anwealde" ("that wretched people whom the cursed spirit had firmly seized until he [Nicholas] released them from the devil's control," 376-78; cf. 378-80).

to use the potion he has them manufacture. Here the devil is little more than a functional (though colorful and vivid) villain in the anecdote, playing a role for which a thief, Jew, or disgruntled rival bishop could be substituted without difficulty. The entire anecdote itself appears amidst a series of miracle tales surrounding the person of Nicholas, and does not stand out as having any intrinsic spiritual significance over and above them.⁶ The case is quite different, however, with the passion of Margaret.

Lives of Margaret

The various texts recounting the passion of Saint Margaret of Antioch (sometimes appearing as the Greek form 'Marina') allow a far more significant role for the devil than the Life of Nicholas. As a passio, of course, the account of Margaret necessarily focuses on a different range of issues than a vita, though there is no a priori reason a vita cannot also integrate the devil as a pivotal force in the saint's testing and spiritual development (e.g., the Vita Antonii and Gregory's Vita Benedicti). Margaret's passio exists in two versions in the vernacular (one in Tiberius A.iii and another in CCCC 303, the same manuscript as the Life of Nicholas), and these differ in certain crucial aspects with regard to the prison scene in which she encounters

⁶ The connection between the devil and St. Nicholas would become more pronounced in certain ways through time, perhaps because of St. Nicholas' association with fertility cults. Thus the term "Old Nick" probably stems directly from St. Nicholas (Hole 8-16, Rudwin 33, Russell Lucifer 71). On the identification of St. Nicholas with Santa Claus ('St. Nick'), and the remarkable identification of both with the devil, see Russell Lucifer 71 and Rudwin 33.

the devil.⁷

The widely-popular legend of St. Margaret was disseminated in a number of recensions and versions through the Middle Ages, leaving a somewhat complicated textual genealogy with which to contend when dealing with the question of sources. The most standard form of the Latin passio, according to Clayton and Magennis, is no. 5303 in the Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina (hereafter BHL 5303), which represents an important manuscript tradition for our purposes: it is found in at least one Anglo-Saxon manuscript, and it contains elements also present in the Old English CCCC 303 variant. An alternate Latin tradition (BHL 5304, hereafter ‘Casinensis’) is attested only in a single copy (Monte Cassino 52), but seems to preserve material from a common older redaction. It bears certain features in common with the Old English Tiberius A.iii account.

The Cotton Tiberius A.iii Life of Margaret seems to represent a relatively conservative translation of its immediate exemplar, as Clayton and Magennis note (56). The Tiberius account follows those textual strands of the Margaret-complex that identify the author in the preface as a certain Theotimus (who, alternately, is Margaret’s foster parent in the CCCC 303 account). In the Latin passio (BHL 5303) this Theotimus indicates that the story of Margaret is, above all else, actually about her conflict with the devil. The narrator Theotimus describes his project at the outset thus:

Ego...posui me caute cognoscere quomodo pugnauit beatissima
Margareta contra demonem et uicit hunc mundum. (ch. 2,

⁷ Both texts have been recently edited by Clayton and Magennis Old English Lives of St Margaret (1994), the edition here employed (hereafter Margaret).

Margaret 194, ll.11-14)⁸

[I...set myself to investigate carefully how most blessed Margaret fought against the demon and conquered the world.]

The Tiberius version preserves this focus:

Ic þa, Ðeotimus, wilnode georne to witanne hu seo eadega Margareta wæs wiþ þone deofol gefæht and hine oferswiþde and þone ece wuldorbeh æt Gode onfengc. (Margaret 112, ch.2, ll.8-10)

[Then I, Theotimus, eagerly wished to know how blessed Margaret fought the devil and overcame him and received the crown of glory from God.]

The explicit of the now-lost Cotton Otho B.x vernacular Life of Margaret (which, along with the incipit, appears in Wanley and is thus the only portion to survive the destruction of the manuscript in the Cottonian fire), agrees in defining the core narrative tension as the conflict with the devil:

Nu ge gebroðra mine ge gehyrdon be þære eadigan Margaretan prowunge. hu heo ofer swiðe ealra deofla mægen. (Margaret 95)⁹

[Now you, my brothers, have heard about the martyrdom of Saint Margaret, how she overcame the power of all devils.]

⁸ References are to chapter and line numbers of the Latin passio printed as appendix 2 in Clayton and Magennis' edition. They print the text of Paris BN 5574, a passio of the BHL 5303 tradition copied in Anglo-Saxon England (191)—hereafter the 'Paris' version.

⁹ Preserved in Wanley, Librorum Veterum Septentrionalium; vol. II of G. Hickes' Linguarum Veterum Septentrionalium Thesaurus (Oxford, 1705): 192-93.

Though it does not constitute the bulk of the narrative, the devil episode does represent its center, and is singled out in these passages as the most salient feature of the story.¹⁰

Margaret's plight is the familiar predicament of the virgin martyr—she is arrested by the prefect Olibrius, who at first has nuptial designs for her, but subsequently engages in a brutal effort to convert her to worship of the pagan gods. He throws her into a prison, while contemplating the precise tortures to be administered. Though he has her publicly hung upside-down, stripped, and lashed, she still has the strength to address the crowd of witnesses with an elegant profession of her belief. Thus beaten and humiliated, she is again imprisoned ("on bystrum carcerne" 11, "in a dark prison"), but not before she first makes a special request of God: in her prayer in the Tiberius account, she asks to be able to confront her enemy directly, 'face to face':

"...þæt ic geseo minne wiperweardan, se þe wiþ me gefihtap,
ansyna to ansyna." (*Margaret* 118, ch.10, ll.8-9)¹¹

["...that I may see my adversary, he who fights against me, face
to face."]

¹⁰ Though quite removed from Anglo-Saxon England, a medieval reliquary for the hand of St. Marina in the Museo Correr in Venice also identifies Marina's primary significance in her conquering of the dragon, in a Greek inscription running along the sides: "This is [the hand] of the holy martyr Marina whose power crushed the head of the dragon" (Ross and Downey 42, Greek text on 41). The reverse of the inscription, addressing Marina directly, bids "save me from the storm of the evil spirits of my mind" (42). Clayton and Magennis observe that "relics of Margaret are attested in all three of the manuscripts containing lists of relics in Anglo-Saxon monastic houses" (80).

¹¹ The MS actually reads "synna to ansyne," which Clayton and Magennis emend to make sense of the passage and to bring it in line with the Latin *passio* ("facie ad faciem," 142, note 17; cf. Exodus 33.11, Deuteronomy 5.4, 34.10).

This passage is crucial, for its presence in some texts and not others amounts to a significant difference in the function of the demonological confrontation.

The prayer expressing her desire to see her enemy also occurs in the BHL 5303 tradition.

The Latin reads:

"Da mihi, Domine, fiduciam ut dimicem contra aduersarium meum, ut uideam eum facie ad faciem qui mecum pugnat, ut uincam eum et uideam eum proiectum ante faciem meam." (10; Margaret 202, ll.6-9)

["Lord, give me trust that I may struggle against my adversary, that I may see him face to face who fights against me, that I may conquer him and that I may see him cast out from before my face."]

It would seem, then, that the prefect torturing her is not truly her enemy. This is a significant element of this textual strand of the passio, in fact, for she repeats her request once she is locked in prison (immediately before the appearance of the dragon; ch. 11, Margaret 202, ll.29-30).¹² Though Olibrius is the one physically tormenting her, she obviously does not consider him the real enemy, the root of the problem. In this she is only heeding Paul's warning to the Ephesians: "For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but...against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places" (6.12; cf. Ling 73-74). The divinely intervening dove reinforces the Pauline interpretation, for after Margaret conquers the demon, but **before** she faces Olibrius again, the dove tells her she has already vanquished her enemy ("þu...þone feond oferswipdest,"

¹² This passage appears in the Latin Casinensis version also (ch. 11, Margaret 229, ll.2-3).

Margaret 126, ch.15, l.6; "you have conquered the enemy").¹³

Margaret prays again from prison, and laments (among other things) that "ic ane eom herinne" ("I am alone herein," 11). This is presently alleviated when a dragon emerges from the corner of the cell, a strange and terrible creature described at some length.¹⁴ He breathes fire, raises himself and hisses, and Margaret becomes afraid:

Seo halgæ fæmnæ wæs þa geworden swiþe fyrht and gebigde hire
cneowu on eorþan and aþenoda hire honda on gebede. (12,
Margaret 122, ll.10-12)

[The holy woman then became very afraid and bent her knees on
the ground and reached out her hands in prayer.]

Curiously, it is specified in both Latin versions that she forgets that she is the one to request the confrontation:

Oblita enim erat propter pauorem quod Deus exaudiuit orationem
eius et quod dixerat, "Demonstra mihi qui mecum pugnat." (Paris
12, Margaret 204, ll.13-15)¹⁵

[Truly, because of her fear, she forgot that God listened to her
bidding and to what she had said, "show me who fights against
me."]

¹³ Compare this hierarchization of spiritual and physical enemies with Ælfric's paratactic grammar of evil in his passion of the forty soldiers. There the soldier-martyrs avow that their enemy is three-fold: the prefect (heretoga), the judge (dema), and the devil ("and se deofol þridda," Skeat 1.242, l.79), none explicitly subordinated to the others.

¹⁴ For analogues see Price 338-39.

¹⁵ Cf. Casinensis 12, Margaret 229, ll.16-18).

It is interesting that her fear is specified--this is not a feature associated with Juliana, or with many other saints whose virtue lies in their fortitude and unfaltering faith (Margaret 35). We might not want to say that her faith is shaken, but whatever 'faith' we may wish to attribute to her takes on a more abstract or intellectual cast, as it must be distinguished from her wavering emotional state. It implies that (unlike Ælfric's Life of Martin) this is the story of the making of a saint, not the story of a saint already perfected. This process of perfection is intrinsically linked, as we have seen, with her personal encounter with the demonic.

She prays that the power of the dragon be extinguished (adwysc), but her prayer is apparently not heeded--at least not immediately--for the dragon swallows her directly:

mid þam þe heo þus gebæd hig to Crist, se draca sette his muþ
ofer þære halgan fæmnan heafod and hi forswearh. (Margaret 122,
ch.13, ll.1-2)

[While she prayed thus to Christ, the dragon set his mouth over
the holy woman's head and devoured her.]

She has thus descended into a prison within a prison, as it were, enclosed within the creature whose abode is a dark corner of a place of confinement. She has penetrated level after level of interiority.¹⁶ Although she has been verbose during her tortures as well as during the prison

¹⁶ If this scene is compared with the vision of hell in the anonymous homily Be heofonwarum and helwarum, the swallowing by a dragon itself may be seen as the descent into the underworld (entering hell). Twelve walls surround hell, and each has a dragon that swallows the soul, chews it, and spits it into the mouth of the next: "thus the soul passes from dragon to dragon, deeper and deeper into hell, until, in one version, it comes to the devil or last dragon" (Galpern 85; text in Callison 245-46, ll.45-55). See also the Pseudo-Wulfstan homily XXIX: "ða deoflu hi ða læddon and bescuton hi anum fyrenan dracan innan þone muð, and he hi þærrihte forswearh and eft aspaw on þa hatostan brynas hellewites" (quoted in Johnson 257; "Then the devils took him away and plunged him into the mouth of a fiery dragon, and the dragon swallowed him and spat him back out into the hottest fires of hell-torment," Johnson 257).

scene, here in the stomach her response is purely gestural (perhaps her cramped quarters preclude speech): she makes the sign of the cross. This has the effect of tearing the dragon in two and Margaret escapes unharmed. Thus her archetypal descent/destruction reaches its nadir, and the heroine (as students of mythology will already suspect) returns from this trauma newly perfected and empowered.¹⁷

So far, however, the episode lacks the dialogue normally associated with the saintly confrontation with the devil in prison. This is provided by a second encounter, that with a small black devil who is there when she crawls from the ruptured dragon's stomach.¹⁸ No sooner does Margaret offer a prayer of thanks for her deliverance from the serpent than the demon grabs her hands and asks her to depart. Again, we see her prayer perversely denied, at one level—but perhaps more profoundly answered at another. Only **through** such ordeals is deliverance possible.

The demon explains that the dragon was actually a demon, his own brother Rufus, sent

¹⁷ Eliade specifically mentions Margaret's non-martial defeat of the dragon as a textually encoded vestige of archaic initiation rites: "This is why snakes and dragons are nearly everywhere identified with the 'masters of the ground,' with the autochthons against whom the newcomers, the 'conquerors,' those who are to form (i.e., create) the occupied territories must fight" (*Myth* 40; cf. Olsen *Guthlac* 49).

¹⁸ Hrabanus Maurus in his *Martyrologium* asserts that these two demonic forms are simply diverse aspects of the single devil: "et diabolus in draconi specie similiter et in Aethiopis temptauit et subuertere uoluit" ("and the devil, in the form of a dragon and similarly in that of an Ethiopian, tempted and wished to overthrow [her]," 18 June, as Marina; McCulloh 59). The saint is reduplicated under 13 July, as Margaret, but again the single devil is discerned behind the dual forms: "diabuli seductiones, qui in species draconis et Aethiopis illi apparuit, superauit" ("she overcame the seductions of the devil, who appeared to her in the form of a dragon and an Ethiopian," McCulloh 67). On the duplication of saints in medieval martyrologies, see Delehaye 80-81.

in the form of a serpent.¹⁹ Margaret is unmoved by the demon's plaint, and without a word she seizes him and subjects him in turn to a highly graphic beating:

Seo halga Margareta gegrap þane deofol þa be þæm locce and hine
on eorþan awearp and his swyþran ege utastang and ealle his ban
heo tobrysde and sette hire swiþran fott ofer his swyran and him
to cwæþ: 'Gewit fram minum magphade!' (Margaret 124, ch.14,
ll.8-12)

[Holy Margaret then seized the devil by the hair and threw him to
the ground and plucked out his right eye and she shattered all his
bones and set her right foot on his neck and said to him: 'Get
away from my virginity!']

Thus the saint amply demonstrates her newly acquired power and confidence. Clayton and Magennis observe that "Margaret's physical assault on the demon is more violent in the Old English than in any of the Latin versions of this scene" (45). They go on to postulate that in this respect (especially in her deoculation of him), the Old English seems to be preserving a feature originally present in, but subsequently dropped from, the Latin versions. The BHL 5303 Latin version has the demon complaining at a later point that Margaret has put his eye out, which only makes sense with reference to the description retained in the OE but absent from the major Latin traditions (Margaret 45). The knowledge that the victim is an unclean spirit and a traitor against God does not serve to mitigate the ferocity of the scene, since there is ample evidence that other scribes found the violence too stark even for a medieval audience--the Latin redactors and the redactor of the CCCC 303 version tone down the brutal assault that was apparently a very early,

¹⁹ For the name Rufus and its demonic associations in early England, see Price 339 and 355 (note 13).

if not original, element.²⁰

Thus far Margaret has apparently initiated the assault without recourse to heavenly intervention, but at this point a light penetrates the dark prison and a vision of the cross appears.²¹ A dove accompanies the vision and tells Margaret to question the demon concerning his evil works, and so she stops beating him. In light of the treatment he has been receiving at her hands, the demon must no doubt consider a verbal interrogation a form of respite, and one may be justified in wondering whether the dove has come to Margaret's aid or to the demon's.

Consider Augustine's plea in De civ 20.1:

Nam et daemones ne torqueantur precantur, nec utique iniuste uel
parcitur eis uel pro sua quique inprobitate torquentur. (Hoffmann
2.425, ll.24-26)

[For the demons beg that they may not suffer torment; and it is
certainly not without justice that they are spared or tormented
according to their particular degree of wickedness. (Bettenson
896)]

The dove does not specifically censure her violence, however, and only expresses joy at her

²⁰ The corresponding section of the analogous Greek version of the life of Marina, printed and translated into French by Lafontaine-Dosogne, proves that Margaret's Eastern counterpart was at least as fierce: she pulls out the devil's beard, gouges out an eye, and repeatedly bludgeons him with a leather mallet until he falls to the ground. Then she places her foot on his neck and resumes striking him on the head and neck (Lafontaine-Dosogne 252-53). This moment of the narrative is that preserved in numerous Eastern iconographic depictions of Marina, such as the North African mural paintings shown in Lafontaine-Dosogne; thus the vanquishing of the demon is considered the essential moment of significance in the saint's career (253), and the theme "s'est concrétisée en un thème isolé, celui de la sainte assommant Belzébuth" (259).

²¹ For the apprehension of God as "a sudden flash of dazzling light in the depth of darkness," see Augustine De civ 9.16 (Hoffmann 1.432, ll.1-3, 9-11). A flash of light also comforts the forty saints in the OE Martyrology (March 9; Herzfeld 38, ll.6-7).

having overcome the enemy.

Thus ensues the requisite interrogation scene: the devil admits to inciting people to sin and to blinding them from their belief--thus, in putting his eye out, Margaret has only repayed him in kind. She asks for his lineage, but rather than responding to her, he asks her how she comes to be so strong and fortified in her faith. She answers that she is not permitted to speak to him:

"Nys me alifed þæt ic þe to secgæ forþon þu ne eart ne wyrþe
mine stefne to gehyrenne." (16, Margaret 128, ll.5-6)

["It is not permitted me that I speak to you because you are not
worthy to hear my voice."]

She does not press her original enquiry further, however, and in the Tiberius version we never do find out his lineage (though it is surely no great secret). In other words, she gets very little out of him. In all the Latin versions of the passio the devil answers her question at length (Margaret 144). Here in the vernacular translation, then, the structure of the dialogue is maintained, along with the framework of the exchanges of comments and the protocol of who has to answer whom, but the content of the actual speeches is abridged. The OE translator or compiler apparently values the outward facts of gesture and obeisance over the actual information contained within the discourses. Though she has obtained no information, she has sternly questioned him, and that is sufficient. At this stage Margaret orders silence rather than answers from her foe: "And þu, deofol, adumbe nu, forþon þe ic nelle nan word ma of þinum muþe gehyran" ("and you, devil, be quiet now, because I do not wish to hear one more word from your mouth," 16, Margaret 128, ll.7-8).

The demon is sent back to hell, not by Margaret, but by greater powers--for the very earth

swallows him: "hrædlice seo eorþe forswalg þone wælhreowan deofol grimlice" ("the earth quickly and horribly devoured the cruel devil," 16, Margaret 128, ll.8-9). The demon has been sent into his own prison or place of suffering and confinement, following his torture at Margaret's hands. Thus Margaret has appropriated the overworld activities of Olibrius, re-enacting them in a different context, without an audience. We might classify this other context as interior (that is to say, set in spiritual or allegorical space) as opposed to exterior, but these levels are seldom distinct in saints' lives. Most hagiographic narratives do seem to recognize different levels of interpretation, but never signal how they are to be reconciled in a single, coherent visualization of the action. The reappearance of the devil in the physical affairs of humankind outside of the prison in Andreas and Juliana preclude a purely archetypal reading that would encourage reading the prison as the heroine's soul in these texts, but the Life of Margaret offers no such resistance to a psychological reduction of demonic temptation. Here, spiritual conflict and the physical prison may be taken as one and the same. The 'true' conflict has been the interior one, which paves the way for her conquering of the exterior world (in the words of the Paris passio, "uicit hunc mundum"). Brought back before Olibrius, Margaret is now immune to the prefect's attempts to torture her and employs her newly-gained spiritual perfection in the conversion of preposterous numbers of on-lookers (fifteen thousand men, not counting women and children; Margaret 130, ll.12-13).

The other vernacular version of the life of Margaret, that found in CCCC 303, exhibits different demonological emphases, and is worth treating separately. It has been seen that in a curious passage in the Latin and in the Tiberius account, Margaret asks in a prayer to be able

to see her adversary (wiberweardan) face to face, even while she is in the presence of her ostensible adversary Olibrius (10, Margaret 118, ll.8-9). The Tiberius version thus presupposes that spiritual enemies are behind the physical ones, and that to deal with Olibrius or worldly tyrants is only to treat the problem symptomatically. Thus it becomes understandable why, in that version, she becomes afraid before the dragon but not before Olibrius.

The CCCC 303 version, on the other hand, does not preface the prison scene with Margaret's request that she be allowed to face her enemy.²² The appearance of the dragon and demon is thus less vested with allegorical significance. That is, the tortures in the human world are not subordinated to those of the spiritual world (the internal conflict with the demon and the dragon). The dragon is introduced as Rufus from his first appearance in CCCC 303, demystifying his identity from the outset. Her confrontation with Rufus transpires differently here than it does in the Paris and the Tiberius versions. Instead of being swallowed by him, here she makes the sign of the cross before he can touch her, and thus she remains uninjured: "And seo eadige fæmne hal and gesund fram him gewænte" ("And the holy woman went from him safe and sound," Margaret 162, ch.13, l.4). The dragon still bursts to pieces, though she is not inside of him:

And eall sticmælum toðwan se draca ut of þan carcerne, and hi
nan yfel on hire ne gefelde. (Margaret 162, ch. 13, ll.5-6)

[And the dragon disappeared from the prison all in pieces, and he

²² The text retains fossilized evidence of the passage, since a follow-up reference is intact: "georne ic þe bæd, þæt ic hine geseage" (ch. 12, Margaret 162, ll.7-8; "I prayed to you fervently that I might see him"). The omission of the earlier references could reflect an accident of transmission, or a conscious selection on the part of the scribe not consistently followed through in the later passage.

did not cause her any harm.]

The dramatic tearing of the dragon, perhaps originally introduced as a necessity to allow Margaret to escape from his digestive tract, is retained, while the more ignominious swallowing of Margaret is itself eliminated.²³

Just as in the Tiberius version, Margaret spots the black demon in the corner as soon as her confrontation with Rufus is finished. Whereas in the Tiberius account seeing him causes her to offer a prayer to heaven, here she addresses him directly instead, affirming her complete control of the situation by exhibiting knowledge of him (Magennis 40). She does not need to ask for directions:

"Ic wat hwæt þu þæncst, ac geswic þu þæs geþohtes, forþon ic wat
eall þin yfel geþanc." (Margaret 162, ch.14, ll.4-5)

["I know what you're thinking, but abandon that thought, because
I know all (about) your purpose."]

He answers that she has killed his brother, and expresses fear that she may do the same to him. She seizes him and throws him to the floor, planting her foot on his neck--but the CCCC 303 variant does not indicate that she puts out his eye or breaks all his bones. The physical violence is toned down, as in most of the Latin redactions.

²³ Gradually, the detail of the dragon swallowing Margaret would become regarded with doubt and (in some instances) is even excized altogether from the Margaret passio through the course of the Middle Ages: Jacobus a Voragine labels the episode of the dragon and the black demon "apocryphum et friuolum" (quoted in Margaret 34). Elizabeth Francis discusses this modification "introduced by critical hagiographers," suggesting that "caution in treatment of the supernatural grew as the centuries passed by" (96). Though Margaret was one of the most popular saints of Middle Ages (see Spencer, cols. 395-401), the Vatican suppressed her cult altogether in 1969 (Margaret 3).

Now the scene is interrupted with a divine incursion—only here it is not a cross and dove, but an angel of the Lord ("Drihtnes engel" 15), which is not the norm for the Margaret texts in particular, but is far more common form of divine assistance for martyrs in general if the OE Martyrology is any indication.²⁴ The interaction between Margaret and this divine messenger is only reported indirectly here, whereas an explicit dialogue between Margaret and the dove ensues in Tiberius. The focus here, then, leans more heavily on the actual verbal confrontation between Margaret and the demon, and her dependence on divine support is de-emphasized. Now in Tiberius, she only bids him depart, and it is stated that the earth swallows him up. Here the reference to the earth swallowing him up appears as part of her command:

"Gewit þe heonan on weig and sea eorðe þe forswelge and þu þær
wunige to Domesdæge!" (16, Margaret 166, ll.12-13)

["Depart from here on your way, and may the earth devour you
and you remain there until Judgment Day!"]

Thus, driving him away herself, she is consistently presented as wielding more power personally.²⁵

As in Tiberius, there is a brief struggle between Margaret and the black demon for the power to ask questions. Margaret asks his lineage, he asks for hers, and she refuses to answer him. But unlike Tiberius, the black demon finally offers a full account of his past deeds and

²⁴ Felix (Jan 14), Irene (April 5), Eleutherius and Anthia (April 18), Mark (April 25), Erasmus (June 2), Vitus (June 15), Christina (July 19), Theodota (Aug 2), Genesius (Aug 25).

²⁵ In fact, in the Paris version, it is not she who sends him into the earth, but he himself who requests it ("Adiuro ergo te...dirige me magis in manu terre" 16), as in the Gerasene demoniac exorcism of the two thousand swine (Matthew 8.31, Mark 5.12, Luke 8.32).

crimes in CCCC 303. One he deprived of sight, another of senses; one he led astray in this way, another in that; etc. The list even includes a reference to bestiality uncommonly explicit for non-penitential literature of the time, especially hagiography: "sume mid feowerfoted nytene for minum willen gefremedon" ("some by my will availed [themselves] of four-footed beasts," 15, Margaret 164, ll.24-25).²⁶ Thus the interrogation, so abbreviated in the Tiberius version, appears here unabridged. The CCCC 303 redactor thus shows a keener interest in the precise details of the demon's crime history, retaining the content as well as the external structure of the demon-saint dialogue.

In both versions, Tiberius and CCCC 303, the demonic conflict ceases with the end of the prison scene. The demons make no further narrative appearances. In the Latin versions, however, they appear at her body along with angels after she dies. They are tormented and exclaim the truth of the God of Margaret. In the Paris version there is also a reference to their torment at the relics of Margaret. But these loose appearances of demons that trail on even after Margaret's death in the Latin versions are absent in both OE versions: there the demonology is tightened, so that demons only appear in direct response to Margaret's mental state (in the middle of her torment and temptation) and physical state (in the prison). Thus both the Old English accounts open up the possibility of purely archetypal readings.²⁷ The demon-in-prison

²⁶ This anomalous reference is not found in the Latin Paris version.

²⁷ Unlike the Tiberius version, however, in CCCC 303 Margaret is not fully cut off from the world of humankind. Her foster-father Theotimus--the alleged writer of the passio--speaks to her and brings her bread and water through a hole in the wall, rupturing the purity of the internal, allegorical space. In the Tiberius prison scene, the actual events are exclusively between Margaret and spiritual beings.

confrontation type-scene in the Margaret texts is not used gratuitously, then, but forms an integral aspect of the poet's landscaping of spiritual conflict. In this it forms a radical contrast with the whimsical appearances of the demonic in the Life of Nicholas and most other early medieval hagiographies. Though quite different from one another, both vernacular Lives of Margaret exhibit among the most consistent and penetrating employments of the demonic encounter motif in Old English literature.

The divergent textual traditions of Margaret's passion in fact emphasize and downplay different aspects of the demonic conflict. The basic two-conflict paradigm, one against a dragon and one against an articulate demon, already lends itself to a range of interpretations. For instance, the struggle with the dragon can be seen as Margaret's struggle with her bestial nature (emotions, sexuality, etc.), while the dialectical struggle with the demon represents her confrontation with her own spiritual or mental nature (intellectually advanced, yet vulnerable to apostasy or misuse of mental faculties).²⁸ Though the dragon is split in both OE redactions, in Tiberius she does not conquer it until after initially succumbing to the dragon's power (i.e., after being swallowed). Likewise, her own treatment of the second demon is more severe and violent in Tiberius. Thus in Tiberius the physical actually embodies the spiritual: her struggle with darkness and chaos is not represented by merely having her meet the dragon, but by her being swallowed by it, completely immersed in it.

In exchange for this blunt physical allegory of Tiberius, the CCCC 303 version presents a

²⁸ Interestingly, the two adversaries Margaret encounters correspond to the two functions of the body in the Orphic mysteries, as summarized by Ricoeur: "The place of punishment [the *sôma*, 'body'] is also a place of temptation and contamination" (284; contamination = dragon, temptation = articulate demon). The Platonic passage Ricoeur discusses turns on a Greek pun associating the 'body' (*σῶμα*) with the 'prison' (*σῆμα*).

stronger Margaret, psychologically. She is perfected from the start, and the prison scene represents not so much the formation of her sanctity, but the testing or even simply the displaying of it. Her taking charge of the situation without asking guidance from heaven suggests a perfected heroine in action rather than a struggling soul in pursuit of perfection (Magennis 40). She does not show fear as the Margaret of the Tiberius version does, and her ability to exile the demon to hell at will places her in a position of executive authority. Just as her emotional relationship with God is stressed in the CCCC 303 account, so is her actual suffering at the hands of the demonic forces underground diminished--the dragon does not swallow her, and the black demon does not grab her. Even in her above-world experiences with Olibrius there is more talk of torture in direct speeches (threats, etc.), than there is actual narrative description of those tortures. The Tiberius Life, on the other hand, is not about protection from danger and pain, but direct confrontation with it, and above all, experience of it. The principle that wisdom cannot be achieved without suffering, characteristic both of Greek literature and of Bede's hagiography, forms the backbone of the Tiberius account and of the major Latin source texts. Thus Margaret specifically asks to be able to see her true enemy, and engages that enemy not only through rhetorical dueling but also through physical contact.

Clayton and Magennis have pointed out the distinctly emotional cast of Margaret's piety in the CCCC 303 version (65-71), and more recently Magennis has expounded the argument in greater detail:

In its insistent emphasis on the personal love of the saint for Christ, the CCCC version is exceptional both among Old English saints' lives and among early-medieval versions of the Margaret legend. This affective spirituality reflects impulses that were just

beginning to appear in religious writing in the very closing phase of Anglo-Saxon literature. (Magennis "Listen" 41)

This affective streak in Margaret's devotion does not conflict with her strengthened character, and Magennis notes, "her power in the scene of confrontation with the two demons is particularly emphasized" (40). It is probable that the CCCC 303 version was composed later than the Tiberius version, and that it even exhibits nascent signs of the coming twelfth-century trend in personal devotional literature associated with Anselmian spirituality.²⁹ The late Anglo-Saxon emotive piety notable in the CCCC 303 version apparently finds the brutal Greco-Bedan 'wisdom' of the earlier tradition incompatible with contemporary spiritual needs. This late Old English composition, above all, deviates quite boldly from its immediate source texts in eliminating the physical demonic confrontations (as in the Tiberius version) in favor of more direct and prolonged verbal confrontations. The competing world-views implied in Margaret and the devil's opposed moral alignments work themselves out in the structures of discourse rather than in representational violence.

²⁹ Margaret 70-71, Magennis 27-28, Scragg and Treharne 231-34.

Poetry: Introduction

Abbetmeyer proposes a two-part classification system for representations of the devil in Old English poetry, with 'epic' treatments such as Genesis A and B on the one hand, and semi-dramatic pieces which he calls "Plaints of Lucifer," including Christ and Satan, Phoenix, and the verse saints' lives, on the other.¹ Abbetmeyer's implicit premise that an original 'plaint of Lucifer' ur-text was subsequently cannibalized by diverse authors is dated, but his division does reflect a two-fold attitude toward the devil in the poetry that many continue to share. The 'epic' treatment of Satan, in which he is portrayed as strong and majestic although perverted, concerns itself almost exclusively with the rebellion in heaven and the fall of angels, and thus falls outside the scope of this study. These portrayals of Satan, especially that in Genesis B, have attracted the most critical attention.²

The 'plaints of Lucifer' scenes portray the devil as a participator in human contexts,

¹ For the Greek origins of the 'plaints of the devil' motif, see Shepherd 26-27. The devil makes eight unambiguous narrative appearances in Old English poetry, all in either the Junius Manuscript or the Vercelli Book: Genesis B 252-441; Christ and Satan 34-280, 315-347, 659-729; Andreas 1168-1200, 1296-1301, 1311-1387; Elene 898-961. If we count also the emissary demon and the hagiographic demon (who are conceptually assimilated with the devil in many respects), the number is raised to eleven: Genesis B 442-764, Juliana 242-558, 614-634. This count does not include generalized groups of plural demons, who make appearances in poems such as Christ and Satan (34-280, 315-347, et al.) and Guthlac A (181-327, 348-730).

² Though there are numerous studies of Genesis B, some of those most relevant to the present concerns include Burchmore "Traditional Exegesis," A.N. Doane The Saxon Genesis (esp. 116-38), J.M. Evans "Genesis B" and Paradise Lost and the Genesis Tradition (esp. 143-67), Eric Jager Tempter's Voice (esp. 145-89), John Vickrey "Micel Wundor" and "On Genesis," and Rosemary Woolf "Fall of Man." More particular treatments of isolated demonological motifs in Genesis B include Thomas Hill "Some Remarks," "Fall of Angels," and "Satan's Injured Innocence"; Alan McKillop "Illustrative Notes"; Paul Salmon "Site."

during the present age of the world. The devil of Christ and Satan, who has also been studied at length, comes just at the cusp between the fifth and sixth ages of humankind, and does not yet pose a problem concerning Satan's location.³ But the devil of hagiography, who should be unequivocally bound in hell, does. The "torments and utter hopelessness of hell" (Abbetmeyer 16) become the focal point of interest in these texts, stressing the devil's "malignity, his hideousness, and his sufferings" (42), while the pride and glory of the fallen angel are passed over quickly, if presented at all. He often appears just long enough to deliver the familiar plaint and then scurries off again. This grovelling adversary is cut from a very different cloth than the epic hero of Genesis B, and Abbetmeyer is correct in observing that the 'plaints' appear to have been far more popular than the 'epic' treatments, if the number of surviving texts of each is any indication (19).

On the whole, outside of the tradition of the Vitae Patrum, early Christian hagiography does not especially focus on the scene of conflict between the saint and devil as a pivotal turning point either structurally or thematically. A survey of early martyrologies, including that of Bede, Rabanus, and the OE Martyrology, confirms that the motif appears accidentally and is not an essential component of hagiographic narratives, even passions. Thus it is surely significant, despite the paucity of remaining poetic texts from which to generalize, that such a large proportion of Old English verse hagiography does in fact portray the combat between the saint and the devil as an integral component of the narrative structure and thematic development. The

³ For Christ and Satan consult Jackson Campbell 153-58; T. Hill "Fall of Satan"; Robert Finnegan "Christ and Satan," and Christ and Satan (a critical edition); Johnson ("Old English" 162-75); and Charles Sleeth Studies in Christ and Satan (esp. 50-70). More particular demonological points are discussed in Thomas Hill "Satan's Fiery Speech" and also "Measure of Hell," as well as Hugh Keenan "Satan Speaks."

testing and perfection of the saint—involving both incarceration and a direct encounter with the devil—represents pivotal narrative moments in Juliana, Andreas, Elene, and Guthlac A. As Guthlac B is presented in the manuscript as an extension of Guthlac A, only Judith does not display this fascination for the tempering of the saint through demonic conflict—and interestingly, Judith is the only one set in the fifth, not the sixth and present, age of humankind.

Thus it seems safe to say, at least, that when choosing source materials appropriate for translation and versification into Old English, Anglo-Saxons were particularly attracted to texts turning on scenes of direct spiritual or non-human conflict, and to a lesser extent, those including the underworld motif. The bipartite structure of passion narratives generally involves an external conflict with human foes, paralleled by a subsequent internal conflict (in a prison or cave) with non-human ones.⁴ Thus the Inventio crucis and the Passio Julianae are translated into verse saints' lives, while, so far as we know, no attempt was made to produce vernacular verse lives of Paul the Hermit, Augustine, Boniface, or the confessor saints of Anglo-Saxon England such as Cuthbert, Ceolfrid, or Benedict, though their Latin vitae were quite popular.

Space and sanctity

Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Beware, the devil is
about to throw some of you into prison so that you may be tested,
and for ten days you will have affliction. Be faithful unto death,
and I will give you the crown of life.

—Revelation 2.10

⁴ This is also the paradigm for Beowulf's fight with Grendel, preceded by the verbal duel with Unferð. Beowulf's two other fights are also preceded by verbal boasts or challenges, though these are less adversarial than that with Unferð.

Since three of the six major Old English poetic hagiographies reflect a tradition that situates spiritual conflict in prisons or prison-like environments (unlike the open-space conflicts of Anthony or Hilarion, for instance), I should begin by drawing some attention to the significance of the prison as privileged site of spiritual conflict.⁵ Poets carefully abstract the level of discussion beyond particular human concerns and historical settings, and only after establishing such a context is the poet free to explore the most fundamental principles of reality. Nor does this presuppose undue hermeneutic sophistication: such intuitions provide the framework for cosmological narratives throughout world mythology. By removing certain events to the beginning or the end of time, mythology signals them as ontologically prior to human historical events—they have greater significance than contingent human events, which become only shadowy reflections of them.⁶ Consider the following myth of the Krachi people of Togo:

In the beginning of days Wulbari [the deity] and man lived close together and Wulbari lay on top of Mother Earth, Asase Ya. Thus it happened that, as there was so little space to move about in, man annoyed the divinity, who in disgust went away and rose up to the present place where one can admire him but not reach him.⁷

⁵ Anglo-Saxon societies did not standardly resort to incarceration as a punitive measure. According to Margaret Deanesly, there were probably no real prisons, but only temporary holding cells to be used while the prisoner awaited sentencing or punishment. She explains, "Such brief imprisonment meant, generally, to remain with hands and feet tied in an outhouse" (330)—thus, in the precise posture in which Satan is often represented in manuscript illustrations (see figs. 3-5).

⁶ On the privileged ontological significance of beginning or end time narratives, see Eliade *Myth* 20, 51-92 and *Sacred* 68-113, Ricoeur 163.

⁷ From Paul Radin, ed. *African Folktales* (Princeton University Press, 1970): 28, quoted in Barbara Sproul, ed. *Primal Myths: Creation Myths Around the World* (HarperCollins, 1991): 75.

We instantly recognize the foundational significance of these events, though they are related only as particular and accidental occurrences, because they are related as temporally prior to the present age. This accounts for the significance of the Satan-figure in the cosmological narratives of salvation history (the fall, the harrowing, etc.). But these tropes are not available for the devil of on-going human interaction, the 'hagiographic demon,' since the beginning and end times are out of reach for the saints and sinners of the sixth age of humankind. Removing events to an underworld setting is an alternate method of investing them with ontological priority, and this is the one available to—and amply exploited by—Old English poets.

In its confinement, darkness, and solitude, the setting may be profitably likened to the 'underworld' familiar from both classical writers (Homer, Virgil, Ovid, etc.) and world mythology in general, although in the Latin Middle Ages the archetype is most familiar from the account of Christ's descent into Hell.⁸ Generally, in these narratives the protagonist, bereft of companions and protections (except perhaps for a single magical device or crucial piece of information), leaves behind the daylight world of reason, society, and order, to penetrate the

⁸ Odyssey 11 and 24; Aeneid 6; Ovid Metamorphoses 10 (Orpheus); MacCulloch offers other sources and suggests current anthropological analogues in The Harrowing of Hell (1-44). Though Augustine (De civ 1.14; Hoffmann 1.27, ll.9-11) cites Jonah and the whale as an instance of an incarcerated saint, Biblical analogues for this motif are admittedly few (Jeremiah 37.16 and 21, 38.6; Acts 16.23-30). There is no Hebrew or Christian analogue to the Babylonian Descent of Ishtar, in other words. The Harrowing of Hell actually reflects the conventional motif only aberrantly, since Christ goes to the underworld not for his testing but after it, simply as a triumphal demonstration of his perfection. For medieval treatments of the underworld in general, see Gardiner Visions and Medieval Visions, MacCulloch, and Patch Other World. In folk tales and romance the forest, or sometimes the open sea, often fulfils the structural function of the underworld.

hidden recesses of a darker world of fear, loneliness, and chaos.⁹

Among the various contexts in which the 'saint vs. the demon in prison' scene is found in early Christian narrative, the most common is the passions of the martyrs. What Marie Nelson has said of the prison in Juliana--that it is a "strange, inverted world"--is true of many of these hagiographical prison episodes (Judith 108). For ironically, though the binding of Satan and the confinement of the demons in hell are common homiletic tropes, in the hagiographic narratives of the saint vs. the demon it is rather the saint who is condemned to a place of confinement, in accordance with the archetypal standard outlined above. The essential idea informing the conventional mythological visit to the underworld is that the protagonist visits the most powerful antagonist on its own terms and in its own territory--but in our texts, this carefully established scene is then thematically undermined. Here in the cold prison the saints, praying and often conversing with the deity or an angel, are no less at home than they would be in the grandest

⁹ See, for instance, James Hillman The Dream and the Underworld (Harper and Row, 1975): 2-10, 85-90, and passim; C.G. Jung Symbols of Transformation (trans. R.F.C. Hull; Princeton University Press, 1956): 293-95, 369-75. We have already seen these conventions operative in the Life of Margaret (especially the Tiberius A.iii version). The visit to the underworld motif operates at numerous levels. Read psychologically, the underworld may be interpreted as the subconscious, in which case the shades and horrors encountered are none other than the visitor's own fears and anxieties. In the epilogue to the Vita Sancti Abrahae in the Vitae Patrum, which may have inspired Cynewulf's personal epilogues, the narrator prays to be led from the "prison" (carcere) of his iniquities (Allen and Calder 1976, 69). At an individual level, the conquering of the underworld often implies the conquering of death--thus the rhetorical assimilation between the prison and the grave (e.g. in Andreas, for which see Hieatt 53). Read archetypally, the descent into the underworld may address not simply the concerns of the individual, but broader cultural anxieties, subtly implanted and conditioned through centuries of telling and re-telling. Read anthropologically, the removal of an initiate from human society into the liminal realms often accompanies severe ascetic practices and physical suffering, either self-inflicted or inflicted by other members of the community; these cases bring about a profound change in the individual's conception of self, and represent a necessary and desirable initiation into a new societal function (adulthood, priesthood, etc.), for which see Glosecki (esp. chap. 4).

basilica.¹⁰ It is the saint who remains stationary, while the demons, who must themselves invade the prison, become the intruders. There is no discomfort or loneliness evident in the description of Juliana's incarceration, for instance:

Halig þær inne
wærfæst wunade. Symle heo wuldorcýning
herede æt heortan, heofonrices god,
in þam nydclafan, nergend fira,
heolstre bihelmad. Hyre wæs halig gæst
singal gesið. (237-42)

[The holy one remained faithful therein. She praised the king of glory, the god of the heaven-kingdom, the savior of people, in her heart continuously in the prison, covered in darkness. The holy ghost was a constant companion to her.]

Though we are given no direct description of her internal mental state, it is at least clear that she is not a conventional exiled retainer bereft of companions, for the Holy Ghost is with her constantly. In contrast with this steadfastness, the comings and goings of the demon make him appear flighty and directionless. Thus Cynewulf appropriates the underworld itself from stationary, controlling figures such as Hades, Pluto, Satan, or Hel, and reinscribes it as

¹⁰ Augustine *De civ* 1.14: "Sed multi, inquit, Christiani etiam captiui ducti sunt. Hoc sane miserrimum est, si aliquo duci potuerunt, ubi Deum suum non inuenerunt" (Hoffmann 1.27, ll.4-6; "But many Christians have been taken into captivity.' This was certainly most pitiable if they could be taken anywhere where they did not find their God," Bettenson 23). Also 7.30: "qui ipsis etiam inferis dominationem suam potestatemque non subtrahit" (Hoffmann 1.345-46; "He [God] does not withhold his lordship and power even from the underworld itself," Bettenson 292). In the OE *Martyrology*, about half of the dozen saints subjected to imprisonment receive divine encouragement there (Anastasia, Eugenia, Felix, Anasias, Erasmus, Christina), while none confront the demonic.

contested, if not quite sacred, space. The saint offers prayers, makes the sign of the cross, and drives away the trespassing demons.¹¹ For the Christian mythographer, there should be no region in the cosmos truly away from the reason and order of God's logos; in the following studies I would like to determine whether or not, in practice, this proves to be the case.

This motion from the world of nature and human society to the liminal realm of shadowy images and solitude represents a cross-over between the two fundamental paradigms of control over the demonic outlined by Jonathan Smith (438). In the 'locative' model, the demons occupy only the peripheral boundaries and are trespassers in the center of human activity. The role of exorcism and prayer in this case is to drive them back where they belong. The 'utopian' model, on the other hand, takes humans to be the trespassers in a setting that is fundamentally the natural abode of the demons--the demons are already in place, and have "their spheres, their realms, their 'houses'" (Smith 438). By this model, prayer serves to validate the occupation of an unholy region in need of cleansing and sanctifying, and expresses the confidence of the supplicant that the eviction of demons and reappropriation of setting is divinely sanctioned. In hagiography, the move from the palace of the prefect or the arena of public humiliation to the prison represents a conceptual shift from the locative to the utopian model. This is the observable pattern in many of the hagiographic prison sequences translated or adapted into Old English, especially Old English poetry.¹² Thus in the outside world in Andreas, for instance,

¹¹ Ælfric exploits the prison setting as a site of divine intervention, but consistently keeps his demonic intervention outside of the prison, in the world of daylight (see for instance the account of the Forty Soldiers in Lives of the Saints, Skeat 1.242-46, 252).

¹² In Margaret, the prison as demon's 'house' is even more evident--the demon does not enter from the outside, as in Juliana, but merely comes out of the corner he has been in all along.

the devil is only a visitor among the Mermedonians, whereas inside the prison, it is the devils who are at home and Andreas who is the outsider. Many of the most preoccupying textual anxieties evinced in Guthlac A (and even more so in the Vita Antonii) can be read in terms of the competing pulls of these two models. At root these are narratives of spiritual conflict encoded as primal struggles over territory, with some rudimentary attempts to establish priority of right above and beyond force of possession.

Thus, though there is no prison scene, in its own way Guthlac A, like the prison scenes of Juliana or Elene, encodes spiritual conflict not only as verbal debate but also as territorial dispute. In such a symbolic landscape, it understandably becomes crucial to pay close attention to the poet's use of relational and absolute space, and to the possible significance of adhering to or denying expected indications of position or motion. With this in mind, I launch the following discussions by noting that the devil is more ephemeral and mobile in the poetry than prose, less materially cumbersome.¹³ His connection with sin, idolatry, and spiritual weakness or blindness is sustained in both genres, but the more elevated or stylistically artificial the rhetorical style--in other words, the closer to poetry--the more freedom is employed with the conceptualization of the devil as character. The logical contradictions so carefully avoided in many of the prose texts appear in full force, unapologetically granting the devil not only

¹³ The poetic rendition of the Harrowing, the Exeter Book Descent into Hell, for instance, does not actually present the devil in hell, or even suggest he is there. The references to the devil are in connection with sin and bondage, in terms that imply a spiritual rather than physical presence for the Old Enemy. In fact, the devil is characterized as a roaming agent: "he bið wide fah" (63b). What a different image of the devil this poetic telling evokes than the ponderously present, impotent and immobile Satan of the prose Gospel of Nicodemus texts (Vespasian D.ix: Warner 83-84; Cambridge University Library Ii.ii.11 and Cotton Vitellius A.15: Hulme 498-503).

significant participation in the instigation of psychological temptation, but just as often simultaneously maintaining the image of the chained and fallen giant brooding in faraway pits. The psychology of homiletic prose ("ðæt dioful bið on eowrum heortum") gives way to a more iconographic representation of abstract concepts in three-dimensional poetic space.

A. Juliana

Of all the OE verse saints' lives Juliana offers the most detailed and intriguing instance of the devil vs. the saint type-scene, and poses certain curious interpretational difficulties.¹ The demonic portrayal of Juliana's worldly enemies (her father and Eliseus) has often been noted, as part of the general observation that human adversaries are demonized in Old English literature. However, though there is a rhetorical tendency to assimilate the earthly and spiritual foes throughout, there is also a strict practice of keeping them distinct in the narrative. The entire 'saint vs. the demon in prison' motif is built around an implicit principle that the conflict with the shadowy spiritual foes occurs in an underworld setting divorced from the usual social and spatial orientations. Particular human persecutions are forgotten and the names of the persecutors left behind, and in their place an abstract and stylized representation of the cosmic battle between Christ and Satan is re-enacted.

In Juliana, this distinction between the above-world human antagonists and the underworld spiritual foes is reinforced through several omissions from the Latin Passio S. Iulianæ that, for lack of more evidence, is often taken as Cynewulf's source (or close to it)—the first of the two lives of Juliana edited by John Bolland himself in the Acta Sanctorum.² In the Passio, Juliana addresses the prefect as the son of Satan twice, and in her first lengthy prayer,

¹ Juliana appears on fols. 65^b-76^a of the Exeter Book (Exeter Cathedral Library, 3501). All references are to ASPR vol.3.

² February vol.2, 873b-877b.

refers to him as a "companion of demons."³ The 130 witnesses whom Juliana converts also address the prefect as the son of the devil.⁴ All of these references are absent in Cynewulf, who retains the "son of Satan" connection exclusively with reference to the demon in prison (321-24, 522, 545).⁵ Thus whereas in the Latin the devil is generally considered the father of antagonists human and spiritual alike, Cynewulf reserves the designation only for the spiritual foes. He thus downplays the allegorical function of the devil as the 'father' of all evil and malice, in favor of a stricter taxonomy keeping spiritual and earthly evil distinct.

The most interesting feature of the demon in the Latin *Passio*, identified as 'Belial,'⁶ is that though he is only one among a host of demons, as he confesses his various crimes it comes out increasingly that he is responsible for a wide range of crimes normally attributed to Satan, and indeed, he at last appears singularly responsible for most major crimes of temptation recorded in Scripture (Wittig 46). To name the most important, he admits to tempting Adam and Eve, instigating Cain, testing Job, and possessing Judas to betray Christ. After the first-person monologue enumerating these crimes, however, he finishes, "I and my brothers have done all of these things" ("ego ista omnia & alia deteriora feci cum fratribus meis").⁷ The reference to 'my brothers' at the end comes as a surprise, and it is not clear in retrospect whether he means

³ "Patrem tuum Satanam": ¶4 (Bolland 874b, l.11), and ¶13 (876b, l.8). "Particem demoniorum": ¶5 (874b, l.39).

⁴ "Patre tuo diabolo": ¶16 (877a, l.9).

⁵ The phrase is not uncommon in similar hagiographic contexts. See, for example, *deofles bearn* (*fili diaboli*) in the OE *Life of Pantaleon* (Matthews 116, ll. 27-28).

⁶ ¶6, Bolland 875a, ll.2, 20, et al.

⁷ ¶7, Bolland 875a, ll.45-46.

"I" or "we" in the list of confessions. At some point along the way, "I" has become "we"—here a sort of rhetorical splintering of the demonic has occurred, as told from the demon's own point of view. Even if we read "we" instead of "I" throughout, and allow that those crimes were performed by the host of demons rather than by Belial alone, the confusion is not cleared: in patristic tradition, the crimes he names are specifically attributed to Satan himself (Belial's father, not Belial or his brothers).⁸ In another confession, he tells Juliana unequivocally,

"Omnia mala, quæ in isto mundo sunt, meo consilio peraguntur,
& ego ipse perficio." (§11, Bolland 875b. ll.70-71)

["All the evils which are in this world are executed by my
suggestion, and I myself perform them."]

This categorical assertion is not mere epic inflation or flippant boasting; he has spelled out a detailed list to support his claim. Thus the functional distinction between the demon and his father and brothers is hopelessly blurred. The result of this blurring is that when Juliana drags Belial out from the cell with her to humiliate him publicly, he whines,

"Patrem meum superasti, me vinxisti, quid adhuc vis?" (§12,
Bolland 876a, l.16)

["You have conquered my father; you have bound me. What more
do you want?" (Allen and Calder 128)]

In conquering the demon she has apparently conquered Satan also.

The author of the Latin *Passio* is unambiguous concerning spatial orientation: it is clear

⁸ There is even scriptural authority for attributing at least one of these activities to Satan—the possession of Judas (Luke 22.3, John 13.27).

when Belial enters and leaves in each of his two appearances, and there is no conflict between the appearance of the demon and the chaining of Satan in hell, since their persons (if not their precise functions) are kept distinct. However, this distinction between Satan and his emissary is sustained only at the expense of attributing no worldly evils to Satan whatsoever—he is distanced from the worldly scenario entirely, while his mobile son/emissary usurps all of the crimes normally associated with him. Satan remains distant, uninvolved, a liminal figure known only through second-hand reports. Like Dante's Lucifer, he is "an exhausted creature whose energy is spent, whose history is over" (Valensin 376). In his place, the sprightly demon Belial becomes, in effect, the 'devil' in the most commonly recognized senses of the word (except, of course, that he is not bound in hell and is not the leader of the rebel angels). It is this second devil—not the cosmic antagonist who broods below—that is the source of all worldly evils.

In evaluating Cynewulf's portrayal of the kingdom of evil we do not have the advantage of the personal names so carefully spelled out in the Latin *Passio*.⁹ When the demon first enters the cell he is not identified as either Satan or a lesser demon; he is only *hæleda gewinna* and *yfeles ondwis* ("people's enemy" and "skilful in evil," 243, 244). A missing leaf obscures the

⁹ Cynewulf does not identify the demon as 'Belial.' He also refuses to name the pagan gods specified in the original, Diana and Apollo (Heliseus only refers elliptically to 'our gods,' 169). In this respect *Juliana* resembles the OE prose translation of the *Life of Guthlac*, which consistently omits the references to pagan mythological names found in Felix's Latin original (Erebus, Styx, Acheron, Olympus). Ælfric, on the other hand, rather seems to enjoy naming pagan gods and demons. As a mild euhemerist, Ælfric's goal is to demythologize the gods and account for them in rational terms—thus their names are not taboo for him, as they seem to be for Cynewulf and the *Life of Felix* translator. For Ælfric's euhemerism, see Johnson "Euhemerisation" 47-62, esp. 53-54 and 62, and Robert Menner "Two Notes on Medieval Euhemerism," *Speculum* 3 (1928): 246-48, esp. 246-47.

first part of the demon's confession after Juliana seizes him, but fol. 70 resumes in the middle of his enumeration of past sins (ll. 289-315), which seems to adhere closely to that in the Latin *Passio*. We know, at least, that the demon is responsible for the trespass in Eden, since he refers to that event further on (500ff.). The list again ends with the problematic reference to his brothers and himself, and his next speech begins with reference to his having been sent by his father (hellwarena cyning, 322; "king of hell-dwellers"). Thus Cynewulf preserves the taxonomy of evil--the family relations among the demons--while (as we have seen) he abandons their connections to the worldly persecutors.

When Juliana addresses the demon shortly thereafter, the narrator refers to him as wrohtes wyrhtan and fyrnsynna fruman ("worker of evil" and "author of great (or former) sins," 346, 347)--thus, as in the Latin, the demon here appropriates epithets and features normally associated with Satan.¹⁰ The cosmic adversary may be bound in hell, but it is rather the creature in Juliana's presence who is the true source of all evils in the world. As in the Latin, his speech culminates in a pitch of ethopoeic frenzy that is dramatic if not entirely plausible:

"Hwæt sceal ic ma rīman
yfel endealas? Ic eall gebær,
wraþe wrohtas geond werpeode,
þa þe gewurdun wīdan feore
from fruman worulde fira cynne,
eorlum on eorþan." (505-10)

["How can I relate more of the endless evil? I brought it all forth,

¹⁰ Analogues include ealre synne fruma (*Elene* 771) and synna ordfruma (*Ælfric Octabas et circumcisio Domini nostri*, Thorpe 1.102, l.2).

the grievous crimes throughout the nation, those that occurred far and wide to the human race, to the people of the earth, since the beginning of the world."]

As in the Latin, no attempt is made to reconcile this admission of **all** evils with the statement that his fellow demons are out causing similar crimes, or with the tradition that these are, by other accounts, Satan's crimes. Up to this point, all we are told concerning Satan's involvement in evil is that "se is yfla gehwæs...geornfulra þonne ic" ("he is more eager than I for every evil," 323-24)—that he is more eager or zealous (geornfulra, etymologically related to 'yearn') than the emissary, but not that he actually performs more. He is merely the impetus that drives the legions. The demon implies that in defeating him, Juliana has defeated his father also (though the Latin is almost necessary at this point to make sense of the elliptic passage in Cynewulf):

"Ic þec halsige, hlæfdige min,
 Iuliana, fore godes sibbum,
 þæt þu furþur me fraceþu ne wyrce,
 edwit for eorlum, þonne þu ær dydest,
 þæt þu oferswiþdest þone snotrestan
 under hlinscuan helwarena cyning
 in feonda byrig; þæt is fæder user,
 morþres manfrea." (539-46)

["I entreat you, my lady Juliana, for God's peace, that you inflict no further injuries on me, abuse before people, than you already have, in that you conquered the wisest king of hell-dwellers in the darkness of prison, in the fortress of fiends; that is our father, the evil lord of murder."]

This conceptual conflation of the ostensibly fragmented devil serves to preserve a balance in the

text between the devil's culpability and his impotence. In the prison, Juliana has actually encountered the source of all evils in person, and can thus re-enact the cosmic binding of the strong man on-stage (and she does physically grab him and drag him out). For this the author need not take her all the way to Hell, as in the visionary tours of hell, but that scenario is represented in miniature through the confrontation in the cold, dark confinement of a worldly prison. Meanwhile, the enchainment of the devil, and his utter incapacity to intervene directly in human affairs, is not relinquished—the leader of the rebel angels is far away, alluded to through second-hand report, consigned eternally to a distant place of exile. In a way, by exiling the mobile demon back to confinement in hell, by silencing his loquacity and curtailing his busy machinations, Juliana is effectively causing the images of the two disparate devils (Satan and the demon) to converge. Thus she is physically, as well as rhetorically, collapsing the manifold kingdom of evil into a unified entity.

David Johnson faults many critics who claim that Juliana encounters Satan himself, for failing to notice that Cynewulf clearly distinguishes this lesser demon confronting Juliana from Satan, the demon's father, who is in hell (Studies 80-81). In fact, Johnson argues, the distinction of Satan from his lesser emissary is characteristic of Old English hagiography in general (with the notable exception of Elene; 8-10, 152ff.). This is an important observation, and serves well enough as a general model. However, the very on-going nature of the critical debate itself, and the interpretational gymnastics required in many instances to identify a given demon as Satan or a lesser demon (as I have been performing in this chapter), suggests that the case is not so easily resolved. This is due to the very nature of the devil-figure itself, which, as a literary character or image, not only exhibits a tendency toward protean plasticity of form, location, and

identity, but actually subsists on this plasticity as an essential trait. The devil fulfills certain narrative functions precisely because of his ability to appear suddenly, and to evaporate just as effortlessly; because his own fluid boundaries call into question the permanence and stability of the tangible world to which the materialistic and literal-minded pagans and sinners are so attached; and because his simultaneous existence in several ontological as well as hermeneutical domains (physical/literal/historical, spiritual/allegorical/liturgical), make him perfectly suited to challenge the adherence of a particular narrative scene or character to any one of those domains. He is most often, and most significantly, introduced as a character where a different functional villain (such as a thief or pagan) would not do.

As Johnson explains in his discussion of Elene, the devil is invoked in that poem to wrench the scope of the narrative out of its local particulars and to shift it instead to eternal, liturgical time, bending the rules of literal narrative logic in order to give greater cosmological resonance to the events. I suggest that this implicitly occurs in any narrative that introduces the devil, as opposed to a human villain, at a given narrative crux. Thus, while Cynewulf asserts the distinction between Satan and the lesser demon in Juliana, he simultaneously follows his source in undermining that distinction through the lesser devil's prolonged enumeration of his crimes as well as in statement that in defeating the demon, Juliana has also defeated the devil (543-46). There is a physical entity chained in hell called Satan, a silent and distant prop serving only as a mute memorial to a failed rebellion a long time ago, and there is a lively and industrious demon in Juliana's cell who is associated with sin and temptation in the human race through his constant contact with it. In the end, what the text calls into question is what it means, precisely, to be 'the devil.'

There is a second appearance of the demon in both the vernacular and the Latin, but before that point, Cynewulf adds a reference to the devil not found in the original. The prefect devises a cauldron of boiling lead as further torment for Juliana, and the text attributes this impulse directly to the instigation of the devil:

Næs se feond to læt,
se hine gelærde þæt he læmen fæt
biwyrcau het wundorcræfte,
wiges womum, ond wudubeamum,
holte bihlænan. (573-77)

[The fiend was not too slow, (when) he taught him (Eliseus) to
have wrought an earthen vessel with wondrous skill and (with) the
noises of battle, and to have trees and wood set around it.]

The scheme backfires horribly, as the cauldron explodes and thus kills seventy-five onlooking pagans, while Juliana herself is protected. Where the Passio is content to keep the interaction between demons and pagans mostly off-stage, so that its precise mechanisms are somewhat obscure despite Belial's lengthy descriptions, Cynewulf emphasizes the continuous interaction between human and spiritual antagonists (while keeping them categorically distinct). The exact nature of this demonic instigation—how we are to visualize it—is not described; the vague "se hine gelærde" remains elusive and open to various interpretations. What is certain is that the lesser demon is not fully impotent at this point in Cynewulf, as he is in the Latin. While in the Latin Juliana flings him in a dungheap until he returns for his second appearance,¹¹ in Cynewulf she apparently flings him all the way back to hell: "þystra neosan / in sweartne

¹¹ ¶12, Bolland 876a, l.20.

grund...on wita forwyrd" ("to seek the gloom in the black ground, in the ruin of torments," 554-56). Thus his dignity is less injured in the Old English than in the Latin—the darkness and torments of hell conjure a more noble range of cosmic and mythological associations than a dungheap; and furthermore, even while away he still exerts the influence on the actions of Eliseus that results in the fiery cataclysm. Though he cannot harm Juliana, Cynewulf's demon is granted greater presence in the manifestation of sin and evil than the *Passio*'s Belial.

This second confrontation comes across quite differently in Cynewulf than in the extant Latin versions. The demon returns for a final confrontation, and both sources are careful to specify that it is the same one Juliana has defeated earlier. This is an appropriate moment for him to appear, as Eliseus is at last about to triumph over Juliana, while the demon superfluously urges him not to spare her. In the Latin, as the demon addresses Eliseus, Juliana, presumably weary from her ordeals, can only barely raise her eyes to see who is talking:

Sancta autem Iuliana paullulum aperuit oculos, ut videret quis esset
qui talia loquebatur. (¶19, Bolland 877a, ll.47-48; cf. Brunöhler
33)

[Saint Juliana opened her eyes slightly to see who was saying such
things. (Allen and Calder 131)]

Meeting her gaze, the demon fears another defeat at her hands, and scurries away. The two Latin versions printed in Brunöhler (but not the one in the Bolland text) connect his escape more explicitly with her gaze: "Et statim evanuit ab oculis eorum fugiens" ("And suddenly he disappeared, fleeing before her eyes," 33a, ll.11-12). Thus in the Latin versions there is the suggestion that Juliana is in fact weakened from her torments, despite the various divine and angelic protections offered during them (cf. Palmer "Characterization" 20-21). Furthermore, the

demon appears cowardly in running from a haggard, broken woman who can barely raise her eyes. By contrast, Cynewulf, though preserving the eloquent power of Juliana's silent gaze, retains no suggestion that she is weary or debilitated:

Pa seo eadige biseah
 ongean gramum, Iuliana,
 gehyrde heo hearm galan helle deofol. (627-29)

[Then the blessed one, Juliana, beheld the evil one; she heard the
 hell-devil recite insult.]

She sees and hears him, fully accepting his presence without difficulty and without any suggestion that her stern demeanor is shaken. Thus the demon has every reason to think, as he says, that "Nu is wen micel / þæt heo mec eft wille earmne gehynan..." ("Now there is great expectation that she will humiliate wretched me again," 632-33). He runs because there is 'great likelihood' that he will receive another painful rebuking, while the demon in the Latin versions seems cowardly (*timidus*) and over-hasty in his decision to flee the wounded saint, since he only expresses that 'perhaps' (*forsitan*) she will vanquish him further. Thus, though the defeat of the demonic at the hands of the saintly is assured in all versions, again the demon is taken more seriously as an adversary in the Old English.

Thus the anonymous demon of Juliana is at once more mobile and fluid than Belial in the Passio (he goes all the way to hell and back in the course of the day), while simultaneously maintaining a more dignified narrative comportment. In the seclusion of the prison confrontation scene, his confession to Juliana serves only to obfuscate rather than elucidate his personal history and relationship with Satan. His particular relationship with sinners such as Eliseus is more securely established than it is in the Passio, as Cynewulf attributes Eliseus' final tortures to the

devil's instigations (573-77). Thus it would seem that Cynewulf is comfortable affirming the demon's participation in violent and blasphemous crimes simply on principle, and the demon thus comes across as a veritable embodiment of evil and malice, whether human or demonic. With such a strong view of the role of the devil, it is little surprise that his function and even identity remain more enigmatic and provocative in this brief and laconic poem than in the other verse saints' lives.

B. Elene / Invention of the Cross

Margaret and Juliana encounter the devil at a critical point of their physical ordeals, in an isolated underworld environment. The texts relating the finding of the true cross by Helen, the mother of Constantine, are generically distinct from the passions of the virgin martyrs, however. They are concerned with more than a single individual, and touch on the confrontations between two entire communities, Christianized Romans and Jews. Accordingly, the primary stage of conflict is resituated from the individual to the communal sphere, and the devil becomes more of a public spectacle than a private menace. His role as gauge for the saint's personal development is obscured, while in his new, more public guise, his character takes on an increasingly historical aspect.

The legend appears in a vernacular prose homily extant in two versions, CCCC 303 and Auct. F.4.32., given the title In inventione sanctae crucis in the former. Ælfric also provides a brief vernacular summary of the inventio for his Catholic Homilies, but he omits all mention of Judas and the devil.¹ The account of the finding of the holy rood is most familiar to many readers, of course, from its poetic redaction Elene, the last of six poems in the Vercelli Book.² Here Cynewulf explores different facets of demonic intervention in human affairs than in Juliana--here he becomes much more interested in space as an abstract metaphor for spiritual

¹ Inventio sanctae crucis (Thorpe 2.306, ll.3-17).

² The epilogue following the text on fols. 132b-133b containing Cynewulf's runic signature links the poem with his corpus, though the epilogue follows the word finit, and is written in a different style from that of the rest of the poem (Krapp Vercelli xl). If the poem is allowed to be the work of Cynewulf, as it is by most contemporary scholars, then it is his longest surviving work.

deprivation or advancement, and his concern is with exterior (cultural) rather than interior (personal) conflict.

The singling out of evil

In Cynewulf's Elene the devil is accorded a greater significance than in the Latin models.³ In the Acta Cyriaci there is but one brief mention of him before his personal appearance at the finding of the true cross. In Cynewulf's version, he is mentioned much earlier in the text (as in the prose homily, and in roughly the same context): as Constantine questions his wisest councillors, they tell him that the Savior freed humankind from the 'lock,' or prison, of the devils ("Alysd e leoda bearn of locan deofla" 181).⁴ The narrator reinforces this focus of attention shortly afterwards, blaming the devil for instigating the Jews to turn against Christ:

...swa se ealda feond
forlærde ligesearwum, leode fortyhte,
Iudea cyn, þæt hie god sylfne
ahengon, herga fruman. (207-10)

[thus the old enemy seduced the people with wiles, led astray the
Jewish race, such that they hanged God himself, the prince of
multitudes.]

Before Elene leaves the shores of Italy, then, the demonic dimension of the conflict has been

³ There are several likely sources for the poem, perhaps the closest being the Acta Cyriaci (under May 4 of the Acta sanctorum), and the Inventio sanctae crucis. On Cynewulf's Latin source for Elene, see Bodden 35, Carleton Brown 14-29, esp. 21. A legend in the Vitae sanctorum is often mentioned in this context also (see Gardner 65, Gradon 15-22).

⁴ All references to Elene are from G.P. Krapp The Vercelli Book, vol. 2 of the ASPR.

established. In her attempt to locate the cross, Elene interrogates successively smaller groups of Jews, narrowing her search methodically—from 3000 to 1000, then to 500 and at last to Judas alone.⁵ But the real root of the problem is not reached until the intermediate layers of sinners (the Jews, and then Judas alone) are penetrated, and the demon himself is defeated.

At first Elene's opponent, Judas blossoms into a humble Christian convert following week-long imprisonment in a well, when he at last agrees to co-operate and is led from the pit. Now Judas delivers a lengthy prayer, in which Cynewulf expands a reference to the rebellion of the angels—just a brief statement in the Latin Acta Cyriaci and altogether absent in the Old English prose homily. The Latin reads,

Tu autem dominaris omnium...qui incredibiles Angelos profundo
tartaro tradidisti; et ipsi sunt sub fundo abyssi a draconum foetore
cruciandi, et tuo praecepto contradicere non possunt. (Bodden 86)

[You, however, have authority over all...(you) who delivered the
unbelieving angels into deep Tartarus; and they are at the bottom
of the abyss suffering in the dragon's stench, and they cannot
contradict your order.]

In Cynewulf this passage becomes:

...þu womfulle
scyldwyrcende sceaðan of radorum
awurpe wonhydige. Ða sio werge sceolu
under heolstorhofu hreosan sceolde
in wita forwyrð, þær hie in wylme nu
dreogaþ deaðcwale in dracan fæðme,

⁵ ll.285, 326, and 379. See Doubleday 120, Nelson Structures 113-14.

þeostrum forþylmed. He þinum wiðsoc
 aldordome. Þæs he in ermðum sceal,
 ealra fula ful, fah þrowian,
 þeowned þolian. Þær he þin ne mæg
 word aweorpan, is in witum fæst,
 ealre synne fruma, susle gebunden. (760-71)

[You cast the sinful evil-doers, the foolish wretches, out of the heavens. Then the wretched band had to fall down to the house of hell, into an evil fate of punishments, where they now endure death-throes in surging fire, in the dragon's embrace, enveloped in darkness. He rejected your authority. For that he--guilty, full of foulness--must suffer in miseries, endure bondage. There he cannot reject your words, but is (held) fast in torments, the author of all sin, bound in torture.]

The Acta speaks only of the rebel angels as a group, and draws no special attention to the devil. Judas, on the other hand, phrases the account such that attention shifts gradually from the plural demons to the singular devil, the passage culminating with the punishments of the devil alone (ealre synne fruma).⁶ This singling out of the devil parallels Judas' own singling out from the multitude of Jews. In both cases, the opposing force must apparently be concentrated or crystallized into a unique entity before it may be confronted and controlled. Thus Elene's speeches are preoccupied with the issue of opponent identification; in fact, this defines her major

⁶ Nor is the increased focus on the devil merely an idiosyncrasy on Judas' part. As Judas digs for the cross, the narrator pauses to berate the Jews for having concealed it--but he adds that their guilt is to be traced directly to the instigation of the devil: "Hie wið godes bearne / nið ahofun, swa hie no sceoldon, / þær hie leahtra fruman larum ne hyrdon" ("they upheld hostility against the son of God, as they would not [have done], had they not heeded the author of sins on that point," 836-38).

role in the poem. Once the opponent has been found and overcome (converted), Elene recedes to the background. And there is particular anxiety, in both cases of opponent identification, over the physical presence of the isolated individual: Elene continually demands that the knowledgeable individual be brought to her (whoever that may be), while Judas commands that the individual confronting him be returned to hell. Accordingly, Cynewulf draws attention to the devil's physical presence over and above his sources.

Mise-en-scène

There has been some critical attention to the catechetical form of Judas' instruction at the hands of Elene, as well as to the analogies between Judas' fasting/conversion and the rites of early baptismal liturgies.⁷ On this account, the sudden appearance of the devil onto the narrative stage is easily accounted for: he is required to play his role in the liturgical drama being enacted (specifically, he must be present for Judas' renunciation of Satan, since it is delivered in the second person). At this point the narrative—which has only been marginally realistic in terms of historicity or visual detail—crosses over fully from literal to figural significance: "With the advent of the Devil immediately following the raising of the Cross, the narrative shifts as it were to spiritual, liturgical time."⁸ It would seem that this fact should invalidate any attempt to visualize the scene too precisely, or to hold the narrative to strict scrutiny of sequential progression, causality, or motive, and in fact, Thomas Hill warns against

⁷ T. Hill "Sapiential Structure" 171-75, Johnson Studies 164-77, Regan "Evangelicism."

⁸ Johnson Studies 180-81; see also Doane 136, Godden "Experiments" 277-80, Hill "Sapiential Structure" 175.

reading figural narratives literally.⁹

And yet, if the operative terms in the figural narrative (characters, motifs, etc.) are conscientiously chosen and carefully manipulated, as is increasingly recognized, it is still important to investigate them as they function not only in the abstract, but as concrete figures moving within clearly delineated regions of narrative space. Of course we would be wrong to think that a bishop or saint is actually twice the size of a fawning disciple, simply because they are iconographically depicted in those proportions in a manuscript illustration; this is only meant to represent relative sanctity, or to prioritize the spectator's attention.¹⁰ But in closely reading the literal level of a text, we are not departing from the figural or iconographic significance of the figures, but simply (to keep the analogy) measuring the relative proportions of the figures with great care. Even in the most symbolic of illustrations, it is still important to attend to close detail--perhaps even more so, since only in "realistic" (non-symbolic) descriptions do details have no ostensible external meaning, and make no claim to greater significance beyond themselves.

In the Latin Acta Cyriaci, once Judas has found the three crosses, and discovered the true one by a controlled experiment involving the resurrection of a deceased boy, the devil is moved to anger. Both the Latin and the Old English specify that the devil is in hell, yet his voice can

⁹ "Sapiential Structure" (166-67); cf. Calder Cynewulf (76, 86, and esp. 94), Wittig (37-38, 54). But see also Bzdyl 165-66 for a defense of realistic reading.

¹⁰ For two examples of such disproportionate figures, see the illustration of St. Dunstan at the feet of Christ in Bodleian Auct. F.4.32 (Plate 224 in David M. Wilson, Anglo-Saxon Art [Thames and Hudson, 1984]: 178), and that of Ælfwine at the feet of St. Peter on fol. 19^r of Cotton Titus D.xxvi (Plate 9 in C.R. Dodwell, Anglo-Saxon Art: A New Perspective [Manchester University Press, 1982]: facing 58).

be heard here in the world nonetheless: "sed omnium bonorum semper invidus diabolus cum furore vociferabatur in aere..." (Bodden 90-92; "but the devil, always envious of good things, cried out in the air...") Though the OE prose homily also states that the devil is in hell, the detail about the air is omitted:

þa wæs se niþfulla diofol on helle mid eorre and mid hatheortnesse
astyred. And he þa swiþe hlude rymde and þus cwæð... (Bodden
91-93)

[Then the envious devil in hell was stirred up with anger and with
rage. And he then cried very loudly and spoke thus...]

The Latin explicitly precludes a visualization of the devil on the scene by specifying that his voice is heard in the air. He is not actually present, but only audible from his confined location in Hell. The description of the devil in the Latin ('envious of all good things') is appropriate for the current circumstances; he speaks at the very climax of the 'good things' that happen in the account. This aspect is more or less preserved in the prose homily, where he is said to be niþfulla ("envious," 91). Cynewulf, however, eschews the particular motive of envy, and concentrates instead on the devil as more generally "mindful of evils" (901b, cf. 939b):

þa þær ligesynnig
on lyft astah lacende feond.
Ongan þa hleoðrian helledeofol,
eatol æclæca, yfela gemyndig... (898-901)

[Then the deceitful one rose up there in the air, the flying fiend.
Then the hell-devil began to cry out, the terrible demon, mindful
of evils...]

Unlike the prose homily or the Latin Acta, Cynewulf does not scruple to bring the old enemy in person into the actual scene. Not only is he present, but he is restless and even sprightly ("on lyft astah lacende feond"). In so doing, Cynewulf preserves the association of the devil with the air, unlike the prose homily. The other versions thus rely on a scene of less concretely visualized intervention from a more nebulous foe, though one with a specific motive, while Cynewulf insists on a tangible devil, more concretely visualized though less specifically motivated. This devil is thus less personal, and more iconographic in function—his presence is required as visual spectacle, while his own internal processes are not given attention.

In the Acta and in the prose homily, after the devil appears and bewails his loss of an ally, Judas' response to the devil's lament is brief and straightforward:

Qui mortuos suscitavit Christus, ipse te damnet in abyssum ignis
aeterni. (Bodden 92, Latin ll. 8-9)

[May Christ, who resurrected the dead, condemn you to the abyss
of eternal fire.]

Se Hælend þe lifað and rixað þe besænce on þone diopan helle
grund. (Bodden 93, ll. 249-51).

[May the Savior who lives and reigns sink you in the deep pit of
hell.]

Cynewulf greatly expands this passage, which already bears a formal resemblance to exorcism as found in the gospel possession accounts, as an exorcistic rebuke; Hill notes that the episode "seems patterned on the renunciation of the devil in the baptismal liturgy" ("Sapiential Structure" 175). In particular, Judas enumerates the identifying characteristics of the demon to be driven out:

Ne þearft ðu swa swiðe, synna gemyndig,
 sar niwigan ond sæce ræran,
 morðres manfrea, þæt þe se mihtiga cyning
 in neolnesse nyðer bescufeð,
 synwyrcente, in susla grund
 domes leasne, se ðe deadra feala
 worde awehte. Wite ðu þe gearwor
 þæt þu unsnyttrum anforlete
 leohta beorhtost ond lufan dryhtnes,
 þone fægran gefean, ond on fyrbæðe
 suslum beþrunge syððan wunodest,
 ade onæled, ond þær awa scealt,
 wiðerhycgende, wergðu dreogan,
 yrmðu butan ende. (939-52)

[You, mindful of sins, need not so greatly renew the pain and
 initiate the strife, wicked lord of murder, in that the mighty king
 will hurl you, sin-working, bereft of glory, down into the abyss--
 he who awoke many of the dead with his word. Know the more
 clearly that you foolishly relinquished the brightest of lights and
 the love of God, the fair joy, and have since dwelt in a bath of
 fire, encompassed with tortures, burned with fire, and will ever
 (dwell) there, hostile one, endure damnation, misery without end.]

The historical binding of Satan in hell ("þu anforlete gefean") is structurally assimilated with a
 future binding ("þe se cyning bescufeð"), presumably that at the time of the Second Coming.
 This cross-temporal referencing provokes a spatial distortion as well, as Judas claims explicitly
 that his interlocutor is in hell at present ("on fyrbæðe...syððan wunodest...ond þær awa

scealt...wergðu dreogan," 948-51).¹¹ Thus Judas' demonology here accords with that of Cynewulf's sources and with that of the Old English prose homily, but, curiously, seems to diverge from that of Cynewulf, or at least, that of the narrator of Elene. Judas insists on blurring the geographical distinction between the devil in the world and the devil in hell, while Cynewulf has digressed from the sources specifically in rendering that distinction explicit and consistent.

The devil laments impotently that through the finding of the cross, Christ enjoys yet another victory over him and his dominion.¹² At this point Cynewulf adds a detail not found in other accounts concerning the devil's periodic rather than continuous confinement in Hell:

"Hwæt, se hælend me
in þam engan ham oft getynde,
geomrum to sorge!" (919-21)

["Lo! The Savior has often enclosed me in that oppressive home,
to the sorrow of the mournful ones."]

As he specifically indicates the devil is physically present, Cynewulf appropriately goes out of his way to reconcile this mobility with his widely-known entrapment in hell. For Cynewulf, the

¹¹ Nor can it be argued that Judas distinguishes the demon before him from Satan--whomever he takes the demon before him to be, that is the one he claims is in hell.

¹² Robert Bjork, exploring the premise that the stylistic patterns of speeches in the verse hagiographies often reflect the spiritual state of the speaker, notes: "But the devil's role is simpler in Elene than in a poem such as Juliana or even Guthlac A; he exists primarily to validate Judas' new voice by offering a contrast to it..." (86) But the brevity of the devil's appearance should not be confused with simplicity of function--especially when he appears at such a crucial juncture, and when his own speech is granted the same epic expansion as Judas' hymn (725-801) and several other key passages in the poem.

devil is not continuously trapped in hell, but rather is shut up there "often" (oft).¹³ This explanation represents a departure from the standard patristic reconciliations of the devil's mobility vs. entrapment, outlined in the background chapter.¹⁴ He has placed himself under the necessity of providing such an explanation here, because, unlike in Juliana, in Elene he insists even more explicitly than his source that the devil confronting Judas is not a lesser demon but Satan, the Old Enemy (153-58).

In allowing the devil himself to sally forth from hell, Cynewulf implies hell is not so secure a place of confinement as humankind may desire. The narrative ends with an appeal that the porosity of hell—so graphically witnessed in Cynewulf's interpretation of the devil's direct appearance—be stopped up: "Sie þara manna gehwam / behliden helle duru..." ("may the doors of hell be closed for every person," 1228-29) In contrast the gate of heaven is hoped to be "ontynde, / ece geopenad" ("revealed, eternally opened," 1229-30). The wish is not that the good and the evil are each relegated to their own place, of joy on the one hand and punishment on the other, as is the common conception in poetry and homiletics, but that there may be an actual difference in the physical accessibility of the two places. The proverbial associations of hell with confinement in Old English are here so strong that the narrator paints heaven as open,

¹³ Anderson (139) identifies the periodic release of the devil as a characteristic Cynewulfian theme, citing Juliana 530b-58 and Christ II 730-36a (201). Johnson (Studies 161-62) rightly takes him to task on this point, since the Juliana passage concerns the 'hagiographic demon' and not Satan, and since the Christ II passage mentions only his binding at the Harrowing of Hell and does not indicate any subsequent parole. Though the passages from Juliana and Christ II are not incompatible with the more explicit reference to Satan's periodic release here in Elene, they cannot justly be cited in positive support of it. Cf. Christ and Satan 111-13 for another instance of Satan's periodic release from hell.

¹⁴ See above, chapter 1 (section 3).

at least to those who observe respect for the cross. The passage is not in Cynewulf's sources, and is of dubious theological solidity, but is revealing of the author's concern with the cosmic encoding of moral topography in terms of physical, geographic space.¹⁵ The loose poetic contrast suggests that hell, as it were, is the state of confinement, while heaven is openness and freedom. At least, so it will be after Judgment Day, if the narrator's plea is heard and answered; for at the present time--as witnessed so spectacularly by Judas, Elene, and the many witnesses in Jerusalem--the devil is not yet geographically bound in accordance with his moral deprivation.

Another king

It is not merely by appearing in person that the devil exerts his influence. The devil makes a parting threat against Judas, that he will yet be able to reverse the present state of affairs, even from hell (wearhtreafum, "dwellings of the accursed," 926). He is fully aware that he is about to be exiled to his confinement below once again, and yet that fact in itself does not curtail his evil instigation potential. As in the prose homily and the Latin versions, he does not actually need to appear in person (though in Cynewulf he apparently can), for even from below he can cause trouble through deception and calumny (purh wrohtstafas, 925). The specific threat he delivers is to raise 'another king' who will persecute and torture Judas so vehemently that Judas will be forced to renounce his present allegiance to Christ.

¹⁵ The New Testament occasionally hints at metaphors of space and salvation, such as Matthew 7.13-14, although there the spiritual topography is less optimistic than that in Cynewulf: "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road is easy that leads to destruction, and there are many who take it. For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it" (cf. Luke 13.24; Ælfric Dominica xxi post Pentecosten, Thorpe 1.536, ll.6-22).

The devil's threat to raise another king against Judas is uncanny. The threat in Elene appears much as it does in the Acta:

Inveniam et ego quid faciam adversum te: suscitabo alium Regem,
qui derelinquet Crucifixum, et mea exequetur consilia, et immittet
in te iniqua tormenta: et tunc cruciatus negabis Crucifixum.
(Bodden 92; Latin ll. 5-8)

[I will find one whom I will turn against you: I will raise another
king, who will forsake the cross, and will follow my councils, and
will incite excessive torments against you: and then you will
renounce the Cross as a result of such torture.]

Gen ic findan can
þurh wrohtstafas wiðercyr siððan
of ðam wearhtreafum, ic awecce wið ðe
oðerne cyning, se ehteð þin,
ond he forlæteð lare þine
ond manþeawum minum folgaþ,
ond þec þonne sendeð in þa sweartestan
ond þa wyrrestan witebrogan,
þæt ðu, sarum forsoht, wiðsæcest fæste
þone ahangnan cyning, þam ðu hyrdest ær. (924-33)

[Yet can I find, through deceit, a reversal at some point, (even)
from hell; I will awaken another king against you, who will
persecute you, and reject your teaching and follow my evil ways,
and then will send you in the blackest and the worst of terrible
punishments, so that you, afflicted with wounds, will promptly
renounce the crucified king, whom you previously obeyed.]

In mentioning 'another' king, Cynewulf is faithfully preserving the aliūm of the Latin Acta. But there has not been a first king, and no more detailed information about this king or persecution is given in the text. The most obvious solution, for those versed in history, is that the reference is to Julian the Apostate, under whom the actual Cyriacus, Bishop of Jerusalem, was thought to have suffered martyrdom (thus Gradon 60). If so, then there is no explicit detail in Cynewulf's version to indicate that he knew this--though he could well have from the Acta sanctorum.¹⁶ At a more general level, a king raised by the devil against the faithful also comfortably fits the standard medieval characterization of the Antichrist.¹⁷ Cynewulf shows no concern to elucidate the reference in the poem, however, and leaves the reference elliptical (Hermann "Theme" 120). The entire passage is absent from the Old English prose homily.

The devil's threat, in either event, is not empty--at least according to certain traditions. The two Middle English lives of St. Quiriac printed in Morris (Legends 58-61), for instance, detail the gruesome torments that Julian subsequently inflicts on the bishop.¹⁸ The devil in Elene is only mistaken in thinking that Judas will succumb to these promised persecutions, since we know from other sources (as if we needed them) that Judas will stand up steadfastly under the tortures and bear his martyrdom nobly. But this is quite far removed from the scope of the events in Elene. Here the devil only issues the enigmatic threat, which is charged with

¹⁶ Acta sanctorum, May 4. Eusebius in the Historia ecclesiastica 4.5 indicates that the fifteenth bishop of Jerusalem, a certain Cyriac, was martyred under Hadrian (Bodden 26-27). Anderson thinks there is "little doubt" that both Cynewulf the author of the Vita Cyriaci have Julian in mind (135).

¹⁷ In this context, Hermann cites bibliography on medieval commentators, beginning with patristic sources, who identify Julian the Apostate with the Antichrist ("Theme" 120).

¹⁸ A mention of the passion of Judas Quiriacus may be found in Hrabanus Maurus' Martyrology (McCulloh 42, May 1).

foreboding implications. The greatest moment of Judas' triumph, then--his conversion, discovery of the three crosses, and identification of the true cross--is somewhat undermined by a reference to coming trials and worldly humiliation and defeat. Thus the Latin source allows Cynewulf to weave into the narrative a feature that resonates with an ostensibly native practice, which Fred Robinson discusses with reference to Beowulf: "The poet's undercutting of the hero's moment of supreme triumph by pointing out that misfortune and disaster will occur no matter how successfully men struggle against evil forces is characteristic of his narrative method..." ("Beowulf" 145; cf. 152).¹⁹ In fact, the demonic is charged with potency in Elene, though the protagonists insist it is not. Judas seems entirely confident that the devil is bound and powerless, Cynewulf less so. The confinement of the demonic that was so complete in Juliana (in which Cynewulf has Juliana send the devil all the way to hell, rather than simply to a dunghill as in the Latin Acta) is less strict in Elene. Here the confrontation between the devil and Judas has moved from the devil's terrain--the prison--to the human sphere, and it would seem the author's confidence in the utter powerlessness of the devil has not survived the journey.

¹⁹ In this the poet's technique also accords with that of Aeschylus, especially in The Suppliants and in the first two dramas of the Oresteia (see Michael Ewans, Suppliants and Other Dramas [Everyman, 1996]: xlv).

C. Andreas

The apocryphal account of the conversion of the Mermedonians by the apostle Andrew appears in two major Old English texts, a homily extant in two manuscripts, and the well-known Vercelli manuscript poem Andreas. Source studies for these texts are hampered by the presence in each of features not readily traceable to specific Latin recensions, nor easily assimilable in a neat manuscript stemma. Many presuppose a now-lost Latin original for the homily (which the eleventh-century Latin Bonnet fragment could conceivably represent, Boenig Acts ii), and more tentatively, also for the poem; but Boenig confirms the scholarly consensus that the extant source closest to Andreas is in fact the original source of all translations, including the Latin--the Greek Acts of Andrew and Mathias in the City of the Cannibals.¹ He reminds us that Greek was not completely unknown in Anglo-Saxon England, although, for lack of more evidence, the matter can go no further than that.² A Latin version sharing many features with both Old English redactions can be found in the twelfth-century Codex Casanatensis. These two texts, though--the

¹ Praxeis Andreou kai Matheian eis ten Polin ton Anthropophagon, ix; cf. Hill "Figural Narrative" 270, Cassidy and Ringler 204.

² Boenig covers some basic evidence for knowledge of Greek in Anglo-Saxon England in Saint (23-25). He makes reference to the school of Archbishop Theodore and Hadrian at Canterbury, which, Bede mentions, included the study of Greek (Colgrave and Mynors 334, ll. 1-3 and 530, ll. 9-14). A prospective pupil of Aldhelm praises that writer's knowledge of the language (Letter 6, Lapidge and Herren 164). To add to Boenig's examples of cases in which Greek words or phrases are incorporated in Latin and Old English texts (24-25), I note that Greek is blended with both Latin and Old English in the uniquely hybridized poem Aldhelm (MS CCCC 326, ASPR 6: 97-98; see Dobbie's introduction, xci). The evidence is admittedly slim, however, and largely contained to the seventh century (see Mary Catherine Bodden, "The Preservation and Transmission of Greek in Early England," in Paul Szarmach, ed. Sources of Anglo-Saxon Culture [Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1986]: 53-63, esp. 57).

Latin and the Greek—cannot be considered sources in the way, say, that accounts from Latin Acta sanctorum are often treated as sources for other Old English verse saints' lives. At best they can provide a larger context and a fuller backdrop against which to set the demonology of the Old English accounts in relief.

The devil's shape

An Old English précis of Andrew's expedition appears as the nineteenth and final homily in the Blickling collection,³ and more completely in CCCC 198.⁴ It is much less detailed than Andreas or the Latin and Greek analogues, omitting especially much of the dialogue between Andreas and the divine navigator during the sea crossing.⁵ The narrative appearances of the devil and demons are preserved in some detail, however, even more so than the conflated scenes of the Latin Acta. In the Praxeis and the Latin Acta, the devil appears to the Mermedonians as an old man;⁶ but in the Blickling homily, he appears rather as a young man ("on cnihtes onlicnyse" Morris 239, l.32)—thus he parallels rather than contrasts Christ's earlier appearance

³ Rudolf Willard has determined, however, that the order of the homilies in the present MS is not the original arrangement (Willard Blickling Homilies 21-24, cf. 18-19; Jeffrey 2).

⁴ Boenig Acts ii-iii, ed. Cassidy and Ringler 205-19.

⁵ For one of the few interpretive readings of the homily, tracing images and spelling out the spiritual significance of certain themes, see Jeffrey 128-33, and for the theological significance and comparison with other versions, see the comments interspersed throughout Boenig's study of Andreas (Saint, e.g. 63-69, 86-89, 95-100).

⁶ Praxeis: "having become like an old man" (Boenig Acts 16, ll.26-27); Acta: "in similitudinem hominis canuti" (Blatt 79). References to the Praxeis are to the translation in Boenig Acts. The text is edited in Blatt 1930, with facing page edition of the Latin Casanatensis Acta.

as a 'fair youth' to Andreas outside the city gates.⁷ In the following scene, the devil is said to incite the crowd by going among them, ingangende (241, l.19). Thus his method is to integrate himself with the community, to appear as one of their number, and thus express himself unobtrusively. In Andreas, however, he appears not as an old man (Praxeis and Acta) nor as a young one (Blickling), but, quite openly and unashamedly, as the dark and hideous creature he is:

Pa for þære dugoðe deoful ætywde,
wann ond wliteleas, hæfde weriges hiw. (1168-69)⁸

[Then the devil appeared before the people; he had the aspect of
a criminal, dark and ugly.]

His tactic is thus radically different than in the other versions: he does not tempt by insidious deception, but appears before the Mermedonians in his natural, monstrous form.⁹ This might seem artless and unstrategic on the part of the poet, were it not for a peculiar circumstance regarding the devil's instigation in this story (in all four versions), which the poet has evidently

⁷ "Drihten him æteowde his onsyne on fægernes cildes heowe," ("God showed them his countenance in the form of a fair child," Morris 235, l.29).

⁸ All references to Andreas are from Krapp (ASPR 2).

⁹ Woolf attributes this narrative strategy to the subtle application of theological principles: only to the wicked does he show himself in his own horrifying shape ("Fall" 193). Pursuing this line of interpretation, one may speculate that in certain isolated occasions the devil appears to tempt individuals in a form reflecting the nature of the individual's soul (thus he appears as an angel of light to Juliana). Boenig offers an alternate interpretation of Satan's changing forms in Andreas, relating them to the issues of atonement theology that inform the poem, in Saint 87-88.

embraced: the devil tempts not with lies, but with the truth.¹⁰ He has no need to dissimulate. He identifies Andreas as the hidden stranger in the city who is responsible for setting free the prisoners and thus causing present famine. He only departs from the spirit of truth in urging the crowd to punish, rather than question and follow, the itinerant saint.

The Greek 'Praxeis' and the Latin 'Acta'

The devil makes his first narrative appearance (in all versions) after Andrew, rendered invisible, has melted the swords of the executioners with his prayers, and saved the youth(s) from being killed and eaten. Now the devil appears as an old man in the Praxeis, as I have indicated, and begins exhorting the crowd to discover the location of the stranger in their midst. Andrew tells the devil that Christ will condemn him to the abyss.¹¹ The two address each other several more times, and the devil continues to urge the crowd on, until they at last discover and apprehend Andrew.¹² Clearly there are open lines of communication between Andrew and the

¹⁰ Compare with the scene in Ælfric's Lives of the Saints (St. Maur), in which an angel admits to the saint that the devil can sometimes predict the future: "witodlice se deofol wat towerde ðing / hwilon (na symle), þurh sume gebicnunge / be þam þe he oft geseah, þeah þe he sylf leas sy" ("truly the devil knows future things sometimes (but not always), by means of some token which he has often seen, though he himself is a liar," Skeat 1.166, ll.327-29). The angel's anxiety (and perhaps Ælfric's as well) seems to result from the embarrassing fact that the devil has told the truth at the very moment Maur calls him a liar (leas-breda feond, Skeat 1.166, l.314). The angel proceeds to accuse the devil of telling only a half-truth ("soð be dæle," 1.166, l.330), referring to the fact that the monks will gain, along with the death promised by the devil, eternal life; but undeniably, the devil has threatened (and made good on his word) what must have been a bitter and terrifying worldly catastrophe--a hundred and sixteen monks out of the hundred and forty die from the ensuing plague, St. Maur among them.

¹¹ Boenig Acts 16, ll.26-27, 41-43.

¹² Boenig Acts 17, ll.12-14.

devil.

After the second day of Andrew's torture, when he is led back to the prison, he is visited by the devil and seven other demons. They threaten to kill him personally, but cannot approach him because of a cross that has divinely appeared on his forehead. The devil and his seven minions now engage in a dialogue among themselves, as he urges them to kill the apostle, while they respond repeatedly that they cannot. Here in the prison Andrew does not respond to them, or acknowledge their presence in any way, until he hears a voice he at first believes to be divine--"but it was the voice of the Devil changed" (18, ll.34-35). Andrew answers the voice, but after a brief exchange realizes who his interlocutor truly is. The devil flees, presumably because Andrew has not wavered from his prayers but has adhered to his divine commission.

Thus, in the Praxeis, dialogue between Andrew and the devil occurs freely outside of the prison setting, when the devil is in the form of an old man, but only occurs in the prison **after** the devil assumes a different voice. Andrew will not address or acknowledge the devil in his own form but only under altered guise. In fact the devil does not harm Andrew, though the citizens of the city, under the devil's influence, cause him so much suffering and harm that he at last prays to the Lord in a desperate, almost accusing, tone.¹³ It is as though the author envisions the devil as utterly powerless, insubstantial, or unworthy of attention in his natural state, and only capable of bringing about evil through the incitement of others.¹⁴ The prison

¹³ As well as the human citizens, it would seem that the lesser demons can also physically harm Andrew, since the devil sends them against him and is surprised by their failure, and since it requires special divine intervention (a cross on his forehead) to protect against their assault.

¹⁴ Assertions of devil's weakness are not uncommon in medieval writings. Vercelli Homily 1 indicates that Christ bereft the devil of all his powers at the Harrowing ("eallum his mihtum hine bereafode," Scragg 40, ll.292-93), Augustine claims that the fallen angels have only a

provides this setting in which conflict can be addressed at a more essential, extra-mundane level: after Andrew rebukes the devil in the prison, the devil makes no more appearances and is not so much as mentioned again in the text.

Certain aspects of the demonology I have been exploring, in which conflict must to come to a head in a battle against spiritual opponents in a prison setting, are more tightly controlled and consistently presented in the Latin Casanatensis Acta than in any of the other three Andrew-texts here discussed. Again the devil appears to the Mermedonians as an old man, urging them to consume the stranger who has set free their human larder. They try to kill Andrew, but are repulsed by the sign of the cross that appears on his forehead--thus the scene originally appearing between the devil and his seven demons in the prison scene of the Praxeis is here transposed to the outside world, and involves the Mermedonians rather than the seven demons. Upon finding they cannot approach the cross, they tell the devil to go himself, but he answers, "ego autem sine vos non prevaleo adversus eum" (Blatt 83, l.9; "but without you I cannot prevail against him"). Although they cannot kill him, they can seize him and throw him in prison.

The strict dichotomy maintained in the vernacular texts between daytime, the outer-world,

"poverty-stricken kind of power" ("ad quandam egenam potestatem redacti," De civ 11.1, Bettenson 429; Hoffmann 1.511, ll.18-19), and St. Anthony explains that demons "are weak (debiles) and can do nought but threaten" and "they have no power to effect anything" (Evagrius' Vita Antonii 16, PL 73, col. 139D, l.58 and 140C, ll.38-39; cf. col.132C, col. 167A). Their power is destroyed ("potestas eorum [sunt] ablata," col. 140B, ll.22-23), and the devil himself knocks on Anthony's door to explain he is vanquished and powerless (col. 145A, ll.9-33). There is evident uneasiness in these claims, however--the concern evinced is surely inordinate for such an allegedly impotent foe. After all, having said that the demons can only threaten but cannot fulfill those threats ("minationem tuam non sequitur effectus," Evagrius 16, PL 73, col. 140C, ll.38-39), Anthony goes on to explain that they often beat him ("sæpe quoque me a dæmonibus non denego verberatum," Evagrius 20, PL 73, col. 144D, ll.56-57).

and human antagonists on the one hand, and night-time, the underworld, and spiritual antagonists on the other, is not as solid in the Latin Acta. The devil and the Mermedonians begin to taunt Andrew as soon as they incarcerate him, though it is not specified to be night-time, and the hostility does not immediately shift to purely spiritual foes. Eventually, however, Andrew prays to the Lord, and the devil now assumes a transformed voice,¹⁵ and is thus able to engage Andrew in a dialogue concerning his suffering and steadfastness. While the devil's opening question is innocuous enough ("quid est quod ploras andreas," Blatt 83, ll.19-20; "why is it that you weep, Andrew?"), it is probably his second utterance that gives him away:

"audi me andrea, quid tibi utile videtur, hoc age tantum consula,
ne invanum recipias maiora tormenta." (Blatt 83, ll.22-24)

["Listen to me, Andrew, do as much as seems useful to you, and
take care lest you vainly endure greater torments."]

Now Andrew is cognizant he is addressing a demonic rather than divine voice, as he responds,

"non facio voluntates vestras, set voluntatem patris et domini mei
qui in celis est iesu christi." (Blatt 83, l.24-85, l.1)

["I will not obey your wishes, but the wish of my Father and Lord
Jesus Christ who is in heaven."]

Andrew asserts confidently that when the time comes, he himself will triumph over the devil, and at this the devil flees with his minions ("cum suis satellites," Blatt 85, ll.3-4). The minions must here refer to the Mermedonians, of course, since the seven lesser demons have not been

¹⁵ "Diabolus vero transmutatus est, quasi de celo advenisset vos," Blatt 83, ll.18-19; "Indeed the devil was transformed, as though a voice had come from heaven").

introduced in the Latin version at all.

The Latin Acta thus denies the strict spiritual/mundane division associated with the prison/surface world, then, in that it does not exclude human enemies from the prison conflict, but it does keep Andrew's interaction with the demonic exclusively within the confines of the prison. Unlike the Greek or either Old English version, there is no interaction whatsoever between the devil and Andrew outside of the prison. Not until Andrew has crossed into the underworld can the devil address him directly, either as the old man or as the heavenly voice. In this it displays quite the opposite trend of the Praxeis, in which the saint's dialogue with the demonic occurs primarily outside the prison. Furthermore, before he enters the prison, Andrew addresses neither the devil nor the Mermedonians--only when drawn into dialogue by the supernatural (ostensibly divine) voice does he break his silent aloofness. But it is significant that once he does finally engage the antagonists at all, and once he realizes whom it is he is addressing and rebukes him directly, the spiritual battle is immediately over.¹⁶ As with the Greek Praxeis, there is no further mention of the devil through the remainder of the narrative. Thus, initially Andrew will only address the spiritual, and more specifically, what he takes to be the divine; and while this might appear to reflect a reverent disregard for the demonic, one can alternatively posit an archetypal priority of engaging and defeating the hostile powers that supercedes such pious decorum. That is, there is a latent sense in these analogue texts that Andrew must confront and exorcize the devil rather than ignore him--and this is the theme that

¹⁶ In this respect, Andreas accords with a principle expounded by Saint Epiphanius in Ennodius' Vita Epifani (though in a different context): "to have sensed an enemy immediately is to have conquered him" (G.M. Cook 319; "etenim hostem protinus sensisse superasse est," Cesa 54, l.37).

the vernacular texts embrace and expand.

The prose vernacular version

In CCCC 198 and the Blickling homily on Andreas (hereafter, simply the OE homily or the Blickling version), the saint and the devil engage in a dialogue before the Mermedonians, the devil puzzling over the fact that he cannot see the saint, and the saint reminding the devil that Christ has thrust him into hell (Morris 241, ll.2-9). The devil next exhorts the crowd to apprehend Andreas, and then the Savior appears and tells Andreas to show himself to the crowd (241, ll.9-15). Now Andreas and the crowd exchange brief statements, and the devil at last convinces them to bind and torture Andreas (241, ll.15-23). Thus the scene runs through several possible combinations of commentor and respondent, with each of the parties (Andreas, Mermedonians, devil, Savior) addressing each of the other parties individually.¹⁷ The discourse does not go beyond a simple statement or brief comment in these exchanges, and thus the overall effect is one of fragmented chaos, a miniature Babel of unsustained conversations at cross-purposes with one another.

The prison sequence in the homily involving the entrance of the devil and seven demons carefully preserves much of the external dialogue form familiar from the other sources, while abbreviating the actual contents of the statements. The formal sequence of discourse in the scene proceeds thus (laid out in terms of who addresses whom):

Devil + 7 demons --> Andreas
 Devil --> 7 demons

¹⁷ The most important exception to this is that the Savior addresses only Andreas (not the worldly or the demonic).

7 demons —> Devil

Andreas —> Devil + 7 demons

It would perhaps be over-interpreting to point out the neat chiasmic pattern, but there is at least a controlled simplicity quite in contrast with the disordered and fragmented conversation of the earlier scene outside of the prison. This simplicity is possible because the passage in which the devil assumes a divine voice in order to question Andreas, if it existed in the homilist's immediate source, has been omitted. The series of dialogic exchanges culminates in Andreas directly addressing the demonic, at which point, the demonic is effectively defeated (243, l.23).

Andreas

After the devil exhorts the crowd to violence, Andreas launches a fulmination against the enemy, in which it is clear that Andreas envisions the adversary presently before him as also presently suffering in hell:

"Ðe se ælmihtiga

heanne gehnægde, ond on heolstor besceaf,
 þær þe cyninga cining clamme belegde,
 ond þe syððan a Satan nemdon,
 ða ðe dryhtnes a deman cuðon." (1190-94; cf. 1376-85)

["The Almighty conquered you, abject, and thrust you into the darkness, where the king of kings enchained you with a bond, and they who know how to heed the Lord's law have called you Satan ever since."]

In his conceptualization of the devil as existing simultaneously in hell and on earth (however this is meant to be envisioned), Andreas thus resembles Judas in Elene (948-52). There is no

confirmation or contradiction of Andreas' view from the narrator, but Boenig observes that the verb tenses at this point in both Old English versions mark a shift from that of the Greek Praxeis (Saint 88-89). In the Praxeis, Andreas tells the devil that Christ "will lower you" into the abyss, which the OE homily and poem render instead in the past (Christ has already done so). Thus the narrative logic is deliberately upset in the vernacular versions, and the devil's status as present participator explicitly problematized.

In Andreas, the saint's prayer ends with the wish that the devil not be allowed to harm him, without wishing the same protection from the Mermedonians--as though he is more afraid of spiritual than physical injury. There is no reference to the devil at this point in the analogues. But the reformulation of this speech produces a strange effect, since the very next event (beginning, in fact, with the very next line) is the appearance and successful assault of the devil:

Ða ðær ætywde se atola gast,
 wrað wærloga. Wigend lærde
 for þam heremægene helle dioful
 awerged in witum, ond þæt word gecwæð:
 "Sleað synnigne ofer seolfes muð,
 folces gewinnan! Nu to feala reordap."
 Ða wæs orlege eft onhrered... (1296-1302)

[Then the hateful spirit appeared there, the hostile traitor. The hell-devil, cursed with torments, instructed the warrior in front of the multitude, and spoke thus: "Strike the guilty one on his own mouth, the enemy of the people! He now speaks too much." Then was violence stirred up again...]

If perchance the devil specifically targets Andreas' mouth because he fears the saint may pray

(which is the justification he gives explicitly in the OE homily, Morris 243, ll.1-3), he need not be concerned: at present the Lord is not listening, or at least not answering. As with the Tiberius A.iii Life of Margaret, the saint's entreaty for protection from the devil is not only rudely ignored, but actually seems to precipitate the very encounter the saint is praying to avert. The brief appearance of the devil and his instruction to break the saint's mouth is also found in the Praxeis and the OE homily, directly after the saint's address to the Lord, but in Andreas it has a jarringly abrupt effect, following directly upon Andreas' specific request that the devil not be allowed to harm him. The encounter with the devil and his minions in the prison that very night likewise seems to run counter to Andreas' request. It would appear that the saint's preoccupation with the devil is, in a sense, a signal that the saint must still confront the demonic more directly.¹⁸

Throughout Andreas the poet dwells on the cyclical progression of day and night, and describes the nights as cold, dark, and lonely in vivid detail. In such a "dusky night" the devil and his demons enter the "dim building."¹⁹ Although the devil does not speak to Andreas directly in the outside world even when addressed by him, here in the prison he does directly confront the saint. The progression of dialogue runs thus: the fallen angels address Andreas together, threatening him.²⁰ The devil and the demons then converse among themselves, as

¹⁸ Consider also the appearance of the devil to Judas in Elene (898ff.), not long after Judas specifies in his hymn that the fallen angels are bound in hell (762ff., see above).

¹⁹ "niht helmade, / brunwann" 1305-06; "dimme ræced" 1308.

²⁰ It is not certain whether the Andreas poet has in mind six or seven lesser demons accompanying the devil into the prison. The phrase "seofona sum" should normally mean "one among seven," i.e., seven total, and this is the sense often read. Brooks retains the sense of the analogue texts--the devil in addition to seven others, to make eight total--based on other attested usages of sum (Bosworth-Toller I.b; Brooks 109). We should not, however, consider the

they unsuccessfully try to approach the saint. At last Satan alone addresses Andreas--the only time he speaks to the saint by himself in the work. The conflict with the demonic in prison reaches a culmination as it becomes further concentrated in the conflict between saint and Satan alone. Andreas has rebuked the devil once before, when the devil first appeared to the Mermedonians and betrayed Andreas' presence to the angry citizens, but that rebuking was lamentably ineffective (1185-94). Here at last in the pitched, sharpened conflict between the single devil and saint in the underworld, Andreas rebukes him one more time (1376-87), reminding him that he has been, still is, and will ever be exiled from God, suffering. This second rebuking of the devil by Andreas is at last determinative, for

Ða wearð on fleame se ðe ða fæhðo iu
wið god geara grimme gefremede. (1386-87)

[Then he took to flight, he who previously perpetrated fierce strife
against God, long ago.]

This rebuke is effective in all four Andreas texts, but it is interesting to note that in each,

testimony of the analogues as confirmation, as he does, for the question at hand is whether or not the poem deviates from the tradition. The image of a principal demon accompanying seven others is familiar from Matthew's parable of the strong man: if the 'house' (i.e., soul) from which the demon is driven is not secured, "then it [the demon] goes and brings along seven other spirits more evil than itself" (12.45; cf. Luke 11.26). Then again, the earliest pictorial representation of the devil from Anglo-Saxon England, the illustration of Satan as Death on fol. 50^r of the Leofric Missal (ca. 970s), shows the figure with six other winged demons issuing from his head (see fig. 2). Furthermore, Aldhelm's riddle "Lucifer," written from the devil's point of view, indicates that "Sex igitur comites mecum super aethera scandunt" ("hence, six companions ascend the sky with me," Ehwald 135, trans. Lapidge and Rosier 88; cf. Jordan 293, 315). Thus there are established traditions for the motif of both the devil + six and that of the devil + seven. The issue may be further complicated, if desired, by Augustine's suggestion in *City of God* that the number seven often merely stands for a large or even unlimited number (11.31; Hoffmann 1.559, 11.11, 19). The question concerning the precise number of demons entering the cell in *Andreas* is wisest left unresolved.

Andreas' final statement, which drives the demons away, is different from that in each of the others.²¹ The fact and efficacy of the verbal rebuke holds priority over the actual content, a generalization we have also seen true elsewhere (e.g., Margaret's formal dialogues with the demon).

Andreas does not become a conversion narrative until the final episode; Andreas never tries to talk to the Mermedonians. There is no attempt at missionary activity until the apostle's spiritual purification through ordeal is completed. The implication is perhaps that Andreas' suffering is meant to provide an example for the Mermedonians—but actually Andreas' suffering is not strictly required for this. Other conversion narratives (such as Margaret, Juliana, and many accounts in the OE Martyrology) concentrate on the outward appearances of torture, contrasted with the inner peace and protection from suffering the Lord grants, and the heathen peoples in those texts are impressed with the calmness of the saint during prolonged torture—that is, they are impressed not by the saint's endurance of suffering but the immunity from it. This is not the method of the Andreas texts. Here Andreas' suffering is real and bitter, and he is led to question the Father even as did Christ on the cross.²² Furthermore, the Mermedonians are

²¹ Praxeis: "Why then do you do these things to me? But let it not happen to me that I misunderstand the command of my Lord; for if the Lord should make me bishop in this city, I will teach you how you are to be holy" (Boenig 18-19). Casanatensis: "Even if you kill me now, I'll not do your will, but the will of my Father and Lord who is in heaven, Jesus Christ. However, at the time it pleases my Lord to visit this city, I will impose on you the sort of punishment He demands" (Allen and Calder 30). OE Homily: "Even if you kill me, I will not do your will, but I will do the will of my Lord Jesus Christ" (Boenig Acts 66, ll.5-7). Andreas: lines 1376-87, cited above.

²² In the Markan passion narrative, Jesus recites from Psalm 22.1 ("My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?") and utters a last cry of anguish (Mark 15.34). Luke (23.46), apparently finding this behavior inappropriate for the Savior, omits it and substitutes a more positive psalm (see Pagels 97).

never explicitly impressed by his strength or patience under adversity—they only turn to conversion subsequently, under direct forceful compulsion. The two primary themes of Andreas, spiritual purification and conversion, are kept distinct. The poet finds a harsh view of each of those in the sources, but is pleased to render them even harsher.

Spiritual comfort and brutality

The Old English poet shows no restraint in elaborating the severity of Andreas' physical trials. And despite the Lord's earlier statement that he will dwell with him (1218), the poet leaves us with the unmistakable sense of Andreas' loneliness and misery. Since the trials of the martyrs and saints are understood to temper and perfect the spiritual self, Andreas' plight requires little justification; nonetheless, the poet indulges in the hero's pain with no little relish. At this point the Lord fulfills only one of his promises to Andreas, a morbid and portentous one: "ðu drype þolige, / mirce manslaga" ("you will suffer violence, cruel and evil blows," 1217-18). At last, during the torments of the second day, Andreas supplicates the Lord that the devil not be allowed to harm him:

"Pu eart gescyldend wið sceaðan wæpnum,
 ece eadfruma, eallum þinum;
 ne læt nu bysmrian banan manncynnes,
 facnes frumbearn, þurh feondes craft
 leahtrum belecgan þa þin lof berað." (1291-95)

["You are the protector against the enemy's weapons, the eternal
 author of blessedness, for all your people; do not let the slayer of

humankind, the first-born of wickedness, through his devil's craft
now revile and maliciously afflict one who bears love for you."]

Through this speech we are allowed a glimpse into Andreas' mental state during his torments—he is not yet as desperate as he is in his subsequent speech on the third day of torments, but there are hints of weariness ("geseoh nu, dryhten god, drohtað minne," 1281; "see now, Lord God, my condition"). The speech is very different in tone from the brief statement Andrew makes in the corresponding scene in the Praxeis ("Do not forsake me, my Lord Jesus Christ; for I know that you are not far from your servant," Boenig Acts 17-18)—the saint here is clearly less comforted than in that work. After the confrontation with the demonic on the second night, Andreas undergoes a third day of torture, in fact his worst day. Though he has firmly rebuked the devil, his most desperate moments are yet to come (e.g., 1394-1403). This is true for all four versions, but especially in Andreas the saint casts quite a pathetic shadow next to the stoic steadfastness of Juliana or Margaret, as he laments his broken limbs (1404-07), reminds the Savior of His broken promise that not a hair on his head would be hurt (1418-24), and unsportingly reminds the Savior that even His own patience had run out after a single day of torments (1406-13).²³

Also striking in Andreas is the novel emphasis on protection specifically against the devil

²³ Boenig agrees that Andreas' prayer assumes a tone of "daring reproach" (Saint 100). In general, the emotional suffering of Christ is not stressed in the early Middle Ages so much as the external circumstances of his humiliation and crucifixion, nor did hagiographers tend to present their protagonists as despondent (they are generally protected from outward torments, as in the OE Martyrology). Andreas might be considered historically in advance of its time, then, except that the highly internalized, personal, and spiritual interpretation of the suffering of Christ evident in later medieval spiritual writings or in Cynewulf's epilogues is completely absent. Following Bede and numerous other theologians, the poet believes spiritual purification can only be achieved through suffering, and is thus content to let the protagonist suffer without further ado.

(1291-95). There is no mention of the devil at this point in any of the other texts. The focus of the present study has been on the demonological aspects of Andreas, and it would be unfair to downplay the numerous up-lifting speeches and images of the poem (including the hymn that constitutes the last six lines); but the spiritual landscape of Andreas (in all its versions but especially the OE poem) is undeniably a cold and severe one on the whole, in which suffering is near at hand and consolation is remote.

Conclusion

As the poem operates on the resolute literalization of the spiritual, Andreas is unconcerned with the wily deceiver familiar from Genesis B or the Blickling account of Andreas. He is a monster and he appears as one in his natural form. Furthermore the poet, along with the homilist, omits the scene in which the devil tries to deceive the saint by addressing him in a divine voice. The tactics of the devil preserved most faithfully from the analogues in Andreas are in fact the least subtle: the exhortations that his executives (human or demonic) physically harm the saint. This does not represent a lack of sophistication, but an unapologetically concrete attitude toward the narrative representation of spiritual struggle, in the purest spirit of Prudentius' Psychomachia.

Within the framework of Andreas' spiritual progression, the prison setting does not play the archetypal role it does in the Life of Margaret and classical epic. It does serve as a pivotal crux of the saint's conflict with the demonic, which runs parallel to, though distinct from, his conflict

with the human.²⁴ Though there is frequent and substantial divine intercession and personal guidance at various points in Andreas' venture, it is conspicuously absent in the prison scenes in all four versions. The prison in the Andreas complex is not merely a place of intensified spirituality, as in the Margaret texts, where the angelic and the demonic clash in an extra-mundane setting, but is specifically a place of demonic confrontation. The angelic visitations and spiritual comforts are Andreas' in the outside world, but he must leave them behind at the prison door.

Andreas is closer to the Latin Acta than to the Praxeis in its tendency to downplay the interaction between the saint and the devil outside of prison. The rebuking of the devil is not effective until Andreas succeeds in engaging the devil in single debate. The saint's rebuking of the devil is not a test—if anything, the physical ordeals inflicted by the Mermedonians are that. Instead, the scene should best be regarded more as a ceremony of initiation, a necessary formality in the ritual progression to sainthood or salvation. Just as Christian baptism requires a fixed and intricate series of ceremonies, involving both verbal affirmation and ascetic practice to ensure mental and physical purification, so the enigmatic narrative episodes of Andreas, as well as those of the other vernacular verse saints' lives, seem to represent movements in a larger symphony of violent spiritual initiation. The role of the devil in this ritual is formal and ceremonial, to a certain extent; yet in the encoding of spiritual terms into literal narrative, the

²⁴ Hieatt's assertion that "it is almost impossible to differentiate between the Mermedonians and the demonic cohorts who encourage and participate in the tormenting of Andrew" (53) is indefensible in this light: though the two types of adversaries are rhetorically assimilated, the poet follows the Greek Praxeis in rigorously distinguishing the settings and external appearances of the two types of conflict. The human antagonists engage the saint physically, in the surface world, while the demonic ones engage him verbally, in the prison.

devil comes across nonetheless as obstinately real and concrete. There is often a remainder left over, as it were, after the equation of the saint's ritual initiation is exhausted—in Andreas, this remainder is the final glimpse of the frustrated yet present devil at the end of the work (1689-94), lurking in the periphery like Grendel, anxious to prepare for his subsequent misdeeds (such as those that presumably guide the heathen peoples listed in Fates of the Apostles, which follows Andreas in the Vercelli Book). As in Elene, the demonic is kept on the narrative horizon even when defeated, and furthermore, in Andreas, the saint's experience of the divine as well as of the demonic is marked by pain, humiliation, and solitude. Though we appear to be painting an increasingly grim portrait of Old English poetic representations of spiritual initiation, Guthlac A succeeds in mitigating some of the harsher strains of such iconographic violence.

D. The Guthlac Cycle

With the numerous materials covering the eremitic temptations of Guthlac of Crowland—a full prose translation, a homiletic abstract, and at least one major poem—we are at last dealing with an entirely insular tradition: the ultimate source for all of the renditions and adaptations is Felix's Vita Guthlaci, written between 730 and 740 (Colgrave 19). Felix crafted his Vita from a number of sources, two of the most obvious being Bede's Vita Cuthberti and Athanasius' Vita Antonii.¹ The Guthlac cycle as a whole attests to the wide range of interests which an Anglo-Saxon author, translator, homilist, and poet can bring to a single base narrative. Felix's original itself exhibits the widest range of interests of all these—biographical completeness, incidental miracles, political undertones, demonic confrontation, and ascetic practices all receive attention in the Latin original.

A translator, working perhaps in the century following the composition of the Vita, decided to make the work available for those who did not read Latin, "perhaps at a time when Alfred was encouraging scholars to translate Latin writings into English" (Roberts "Inventory" 203). If Roberts is correct, this hypothetical work, though no longer extant, was the ancestor of both the tenth-century Vercelli homily and the late eleventh-century prose translation.² The full prose translation attests to the on-going interest in preserving the substance of Felix's text as closely as possible, occasionally omitting or altering details of only minor importance, in a form accessible to the general populace or to those in the beginning stages of a clerical

¹ The latter, demonstrably, in the Latin translation of Evagrius (Kurtz 103-06, et al.).

² The prose translation is found in MS Cotton Vespasian D xxi, ff. 18-40^v.

education. In contrast with this relatively conservative translation, the handling of the material in other Old English renditions presents sometimes revealing peculiarities.

Felix's Vita Guthlaci

Benjamin Kurtz, in an exemplary study comparing Felix's Vita with its most significant precursors, identifies various traditions of hagiographical demonology that all stem from Athanasius' Vita Antonii. He argues that Athanasius' work skillfully represents the spiritual struggles one would expect of an eremitic life, encoding psychological realism in the demonic encounters. The order, type, and narrative function of Anthony's conflicts with demons meaningfully reflect the internal struggles against sins and temptations (105-09). The majority of early medieval saints' lives, however, follow more in the tradition of Jerome's Vita Hilarionis (129) in missing Athanasius' subtlety, and fail to exploit the allegorical potential of the demon encounters:

Like most of his successors who superficially imitated the Antonian demonism, Jerome piles up his devil stories in indiscriminate confusion, merely as a romantic sign of his hero's spiritual éclat...there is more zoology than spirituality in many of his marvels. (130-31)

Kurtz offers an overview of the major hagiographic contributions from late antiquity through Anglo-Saxon England, finally concluding that Felix's Vita Guthlaci approaches the Antonian model of spiritual development through demonic conflict more faithfully than any of the other works he considers. Felix's work exhibits "a notable penetration into the ideals of discipline and

tranquility," and presents its demonic struggles with

some insight into the Athanasian concept that victory over the fiends of solitude marks the attainment of a spiritual majority. Felix does not scatter his demons and miracles indiscriminately over the hagiographical course. The conquest of self in the fight with the demons of solitude eventuates, as in the Antonius, in an access of miraculous power. (141)

Thus Kurtz traces the psychological thread of the conflict, in which the demons represent sinful thoughts or passions that a hermit is likely to face. I will instead trace a more archetypal or ontological facet of the work, for the text also encodes the delicately shifting balances of power between the saintly and the demonic. These formal structures of discourse parallel Kurtz' psychological ones. But, while the vernacular Guthlac texts show little awareness of the psychological mechanics behind the representational violence, they often preserve and sometimes expand the ontological processes.

Felix's Vita and the prose translation

Through the course of his demonic confrontations, Guthlac shifts from being timidly victimized by demonic harassment to displaying forceful mastery over the autochthonous demons. In an interesting passage Felix implies strongly that it is not so much the defeat of the demonic, as the very combat against it, that constitutes a major turning point in the saint's spiritual progression. Felix admires not that God delivered Guthlac **from** spiritual struggles, but that he led him away from worldly struggles **to** spiritual ones:

...sic et sanctae memoriae virum Guthlac de tumido aestuantis
saeculi gurgite, de obliquis mortalis aevi anfractibus, de atris

vergentis mundi faucibus ad perpetuae beatitudinis militiam, ad
directi itineris callem... (Colgrave 92, ll.9-13)

[...so he also led Guthlac a man of saintly memory from the
eddying whirlpool of these turbid times, from the tortuous paths of
this mortal age, from the black jaws of this declining world to the
struggle for eternal bliss, to the straight path... (Colgrave 93)]

The removal of the scene of conflict from mundane matters to the spiritual realm is already half the victory, and to address matters in terms of "the struggle for eternal bliss"--even though much of the battle lies ahead--is itself worthy of praise (recall Margaret wishing to see her 'true' enemy, the spiritual one).

The territorial struggle for Crowland can be traced through the verbal interaction of Guthlac with his assailants, and more specifically, through his recognition of them as single or plural. Guthlac refuses to address the demons of his first two encounters--the first with the devil, and the second with two lesser devils, whom the narrator subsequently refers as the single devil.³ Though there is narrative insistence that a unity underlies the surface multiplicity, Guthlac shows no awareness of this yet. In his trip to the jaws of hell, however, in which the multiform variety of the demonic is presented in full splendor, he does directly address the antagonists.⁴ Thus, as the two weeping demons in the following encounter seem to confess, he

³ Overcomes devil: ch. 29, Colgrave 94-96. Overcomes two devils: ch. 30, Colgrave 98-100. Narrator describes them as plural ("duo zabuli...se obtulerunt," ll.3-4) but at their departure refers to them as singular ("hostis strofusus...evanuit," ll.9-11): Colgrave 100.

⁴ Journey to gates of hell: ch. 31, Colgrave 100-06. Demons presented as plural ("inmundorum spirituum catervis," Colgrave 102, l.1; "innumerabiles...inmundorum spirituum," Colgrave 104, ll.10-11), while their speech still suggests an underlying unity ("velut ex uno ore turmae clamabant," Colgrave 104, ll.26-27). Guthlac addresses them as plural: "Vae vobis, filii

has crossed a threshold in his spiritual struggle.⁵ Next he at least recognizes the single foe behind the myriad forms in the assault of the British-speaking demons, though he does not yet address this antagonist.⁶ He also recognizes the unified kingdom of evil directly in the person of Satan, when Satan enters Beccel, though here again he addresses Beccel rather than the devil.⁷ Only in the final demonic assault on Guthlac, in which he is assaulted by a menagerie of hooting, howling beasts, does he at last both recognize and directly address the demonic.⁸ Having driven these desperate forms from before him by a direct rebuke, Guthlac has at last crossed the threshold from spiritual enthusiast to saint. No longer nervously reciting psalms or awaiting the intercession of Bartholomew, no longer taken in by appearances or by the misleading external multiplicity that conceals the unity of the demonic, in his one brief command to Satan (Colgrave 114, ll.25ff.) Guthlac concludes the temptation phase of his life. The conflicts and confrontations Guthlac experiences from this point on are of a notably subdued character, never against the demonic in any direct form, but involving comparatively innocuous annoyances with mischievous monks and jackdaws.

tenebrarum..." (Colgrave 106, l.11).

⁵ The two demons say they have been defeated and can no longer approach him ("non enim te tangere aut propinquare audemus," Colgrave 108, ll.16-17).

⁶ British-speaking demons: ch. 34, Colgrave 108-10. Guthlac perceives assault as tricks of the singular enemy ("vir Dei tandem hostis pellacis millenis artibus millenas formas persentiens," Colgrave 110, ll.12-14). Addresses God through Psalm 67: Colgrave 110, ll.15-16.

⁷ Beccel episode: ch. 35, Colgrave 110-12. Guthlac recognizes singular devil, but addresses Beccel: "O mi Beccel, ut quid hebido sub pectore antiquum hostem occultas?...Scio enim te a maligno spiritu deceptum" (Colgrave 112, ll.17-20).

⁸ Final assault: ch. 36, Colgrave 114-16. Demons appear as plural ("variorum monstrorum diversas figuras," Colgrave 114, ll.12-13), but Guthlac addresses them simply as Satan: "O miserrime Satana, manifestae sunt vires tuae..." (Colgrave 114, ll.25-26).

Though this overview has been much condensed, the general rhythm and progression of the demonic encounters are clear. They present recognition and direct confrontation as integral components of spiritual struggle, and the spiritual struggle sequence of the narrative as a whole (chs. 29-36) meaningfully distinguishes the early sections on Guthlac's ambitious novitiate from the later chapters on his prophecies and miracles. The Old English translators and poets who approach Felix's Vita thus take on a work of competently structured demonology, whether or not they notice or choose to preserve this structure.

The prose translation adheres closely to Felix's original. The homily in the Vercelli Book (10th-c.) and its poetic counterpart in the Exeter Book (late 10th- or early 11th-c.), however, each presuppose a great deal of freedom with the text by comparison. We cannot ascertain how many other stories about Guthlac independent of Felix's Vita might have been available to these authors--there were certainly some in circulation⁹--but there are thirteen extant manuscripts of Felix's Vita, six of which are from around or before 1000 C.E. (four of them in the tenth century),¹⁰ and thus the author's own Latin original must be considered the authoritative version or 'standard edition,' then as now. Deviations from Felix's version, deliberate or accidental, must have caught the attention of many contemporaries.

⁹ Some of the most common features later associated with Guthlac and demons--namely, Guthlac's whipping of the demons, and Guthlac's enclosing the devil in a boiling pot--are unknown to Felix and do not appear until the Middle English period (Roberts "Inventory" 221-28).

¹⁰ BM Royal 4 A.xiv (8th- or 9th-c.), CCC 307 (9th c.), CCC 389 (9th- or 10th-c.), BM Royal 13 A.xv (10th-c.), Arras MS 1029 (late 10th-c.), Boulogne Public Library MS 637 (ca. 1000). Roberts "Inventory" 194-200.

Vercelli Homily 23

The last item in the Vercelli Book is an independent and much earlier prose text—either an excerpt of an Old English translation, or an autonomously translated block of material—whose precise relationship to the Vespasian translation is not certain, though they are most likely derived from a common translation.¹¹ The opening sentence of the Vercelli excerpt infelicitously refers to "þam sprecenan iglande" ("the aforesaid island"), conservatively preserving Felix's praedicta insula (some MSS praefata) even at the sacrifice of the narrative coherence in its new context. The excerpt does however correspond to a section of the Vita that announces itself as an independent narrative unit, as Roberts has observed ("St. Bartholomew's Day" 17), though there is no closing rubric or scenic shift at the section of the Vespasian text corresponding to the excerpt's close.

Attempts to characterize the nature of the material extracted from the Guthlac legend for the homily have often contextualized the excerpt in the manuscript environment of the Vercelli Book (the nature of the compilation, the positioning of the homily, etc.). É. Ó Carragáin, for instance, presents the homily as mitigating some of the harsher theological and ascetical implications of Elene, which precedes it in the manuscript (68-70, 75-78).¹² However, there are also intrinsic reasons for the extraction of the particular passages as an individual homily.¹³ The Vercelli 23 homilist has chosen to extract the most intensely dramatic section from the story—the initial confrontations between Guthlac and the demonic forces of Crowland. All else

¹¹ Roberts "Inventory" 203, "Old English" 363.

¹² See also Roberts "Old English" 375.

¹³ Roberts also proposes internal reasons: "the Homily consists mainly of those episodes in the Vita in which Bartholomew, Guthlac's patron saint, appears" (367-68).

has been omitted: Guthlac's early life and cenobitism, the handful of comparatively trite miracles and tricks he performs following his conquering of the demons, and his death scene and revelations to Beccel.¹⁴

Some minor peculiarities of the homiletic excerpt call for attention. When the devil first approaches Guthlac to assault him with the arrow of despair, the devil is said to be roaming through a grassy plain (*græswang*, 384, 1.16).¹⁵ Felix specifies the devil is rather flying through the air ("per vasti aetheris spatia," ch. 29, Colgrave 94, 1.23), while the Vespasian translation omits any spatial reference. The homilist thus brings both the cosmic scope of the subject matter, as well as the physical devil, down to earth. The two devils of the second encounter slide down from the sky, however, as in Felix. Their suggestions for immoderate fasting are dispelled with a psalm, also, and as in Felix, they are equated with the single fiend. Each of the two Old English versions thus preserve Felix's equation of the two fiends with the devil, though employing differing diction.¹⁶ Thus the demonological concept of the single devil underlying or apposing the two demons, protean though it is, enjoys more stable preservation and transmission than the language that is its vehicle. The homily bears little trace of Felix's

¹⁴ In this the homily offers a striking contrast with the compiler of the *OE Martyrology* (April 11, Herzfeld 56). There the essentials related are the miraculous circumstances of Guthlac's birth and his daily conversations with an angel after his habitation of Crowland, without mention of demonic confrontation (on the Guthlac entry in the *Martyrology* see Roberts "Inventory" 203-04, 217).

¹⁵ The homily is edited in Gonser in parallel with the corresponding passages of the Vespasian translation; references here are to page and line numbers in the more recent edition of the homily in Scragg *Vercelli Homilies*.

¹⁶ Vespasian translation--*se awyrigeda gast* (Gonser 126), Vercelli homily--*se awyrigeda feond* (Scragg 126, 1.79).

careful rhetorical attention to the multiplicity of the fiends in the third encounter, the journey to hell, though the scene preserves the dramatic grandeur and sensational diversity of the original.

The Vercelli homilist has thus seen fit to focus only on the demonic confrontations, and more specifically, only the most traumatic and violent, those in which Guthlac himself seems most unsettled. In fact, the scenes excerpted to form an independent unit are themselves carefully selected. They build in scale: first Guthlac encounters the singular devil, then two demons, and then at last a multitude of demons. Guthlac having met the worse that the rebellious spirits have to offer, the homily ends. The homilist casually inserts a closing sentence that not only departs from Felix's *Vita* and other vernacular versions, but even contradicts them: the homily indicates that Guthlac goes to heaven directly following the third and most dramatic demonic encounter, suggesting that the two are causally linked. Bartholomew appears to comfort Guthlac while the demons are threatening to deposit him in hell. The text then reads:

⁊ þa æfter þam fleah se haliga Guðlac mid þam apostole, sancte Bartholomei, to heofona rices wuldre, ⁊ hine se hælend þær onfeng, ⁊ he þær leofað ⁊ rixað in heofona rices wuldre... (392)

[And then after that holy Guthlac flew with the apostle, Saint Bartholomew, to the glory of the heavens' kingdom and there the Savior received him, and there he lives and rules in the glory of the heavens' kingdom.]

It seems relatively clear that Guthlac flies off with Bartholomew immediately after the events in question, while the two are still together. But why "æfter þam"? Why does Guthlac go to heaven then, as opposed to some other time? The question invites speculation concerning the

role of the demonic assaults in Guthlac's worldly sojourn. Clearly the "struggle for eternal bliss" to which Felix draws attention informs this ad hoc 'assumption,' but the effect in the homily is to emphasize the spiritual interests to the exclusion of all earthly ones (Guthlac's subsequent miracles, etc.). The defeat of the demonic results in immediate salvation. The homilist's demonology comes out not in composition, then, but selection. The brief prose excerpt is not a homily in any conventional sense, as Scragg points out (381), but forms an isolated meditation on spiritual conflict devoid of all context or historicity. It presents us with an Anglo-Saxon homilist concerned almost exclusively with the 'demon vs. the saint' struggle we have been at such pains to extricate from other texts.

Guthlac A

Guthlac A shares a similar range of interests with the homily--particularly, both choose to focus on a cumulatively dramatic series of demonological conflicts to the exclusion of the rest of Guthlac's life and experiences. The scope is cosmic rather than human, as each downplays Guthlac's identity as an individual and exploits his struggles as paradigmatic of generalized spiritual advancement. Unlike the homily, however, which is still primarily an excerpted selection of a faithful translation of the original, Guthlac A offers radical interpretive departures from Felix's original. The outward appearances of the demonic assaults resemble those in Felix in a general way, but as well as rearranging Felix's material and even introducing new material, the poet takes advantage of the confrontational scenes to offer a series of monologues that constitute, over the course of several scenes, a formalized debate between the demonic and the

divine.¹⁷ Just as the poet abridges external narrative action and details, including the most essential details of time, place, and sequence, so also does the poet expand and develop the speeches into thematically linked allocutions. These speeches are not merely opportunities for exhortatory admonitions or vehicles for Christian creeds, but the formal structure and arrangement of the speeches, and the power relations they imply, embody a confrontational dialectic that is more fruitfully understood archetypally than doctrinally (or historically or psychologically). In this, Guthlac A preserves certain processes that are already present in Felix's Vita (if only nascently), and promotes them from appearances in discrete episodes to a thematic principle unifying the narrative.

First contact

Felix's clear and precise narrative staging of events becomes largely obscure in the more imagistic poetic account of Guthlac A.¹⁸ The first demonic encounter in Felix, Guthlac's

¹⁷ Opinions differ not only as to whether or not Felix's Vita was a source for Guthlac A, but even as to whether or not there is scholarly consensus on the subject. Greenfield says of the relationship of Guthlac A to Felix's Vita, "most scholars feel there is none" (New Critical History 177), while Roberts notes that "it is generally held that the poet must have known the Vita" (Guthlac Poems 19). As I have indicated, six of the thirteen MSS of Felix are from around or before the year 1000, the time of the Exeter Book's compilation. Perhaps the safest position is one recognizing that a literate audience or reader of the poem would be likely to know Felix's Vita, and would draw comparisons between it and the poem even where the author intended none. The issue centers largely around the dating of the poem, which depends on how literally one takes the poem's own claim to have been written within living memory of the saint ("Eall þas geeodon in ussera / tida timan," 753-54; "all this happened in the time of our life"). Delehaye notes that phrases such as "in our own time" represent a hagiographic topos, however, not to be taken as literal without further evidence (70-71).

¹⁸ Paul Reichardt examines the poem's use of figural rather than literal space, especially with regard to the beorg as mons of spiritual perfection, in "Guthlac A and the Landscape of Spiritual Perfection" (cf. Johnson 181-91). Karl Wentersdorf extends the significance of the

wounding with an arrow of despair, becomes in Guthlac A more of an abstract meditation on spiritual conflict, divorced from its historical context as Guthlac's first encounter on Crowland, and even largely divorced from its individuality as being specifically Guthlac's conflict. The confrontation appears following two indicators of chronological orientation: the statement that Guthlac arrived at Crowland (101-02), and then the statement that Guthlac's earlier days were devoted to sin (108-10). "Tid wæs toweard" begins the brief section on Guthlac's battle with the devil ("the time was near," 114), but which tid--the arrival at the island, or the abandoning of sin, which according to Felix should predate his decision to retreat to the fens by at least two years?¹⁹ In fact, the poet is unaware or uninterested in Guthlac's entire intermediate monastic career, and implicitly equates the retreat to solitude with the abandonment of youthful waywardness. Felix's careful presentation of increasing depths of sanctity are collapsed into an intensified, two-tiered model of worldly/fallen vs. spiritual/blessed. The battle with the devil is thus a crux or transitional point prefacing Guthlac's entire experience in Crowland in a way it is not in Felix, where it merely forms the first of Guthlac's several experiences on the island.

The historical nature of Felix's account, offering details such as the three-day duration of Guthlac's despair,²⁰ is lost in Guthlac A. Instead the confrontation becomes a meditation on the nature of spiritual struggle both in the world and in the individual.²¹ The protection of the

beorg to the socio-political sphere, especially the Christianization of England, in "Guthlac A: The Battle for the Beorg."

¹⁹ References are to ASPR 3.

²⁰ Ch. 29, Colgrave 96, ll.11-12.

²¹ In an insightful study on the different symbolic modes operative in Guthlac A and B, Calder concludes that the poem's "temporal confusions and ambiguities are resolved by a spatial symbol of the 'center'--the beorg" (73). In his reading Guthlac A purposefully obscures issues

steadfast is to be sought from without: it is the angels who protect the devout with spiritual weapons (88-89). The role of the individual will is obscured—in fact, not even mentioned—in this initial presentation of the clash between opposing spiritual entities, angelic and demonic, over the human soul. The blessedness of Guthlac is a gift, or grace, sent from God ("him giefte sealde / engelcunde," 100-01; "[He] gave him angelic grace"). Though there is mention of Guthlac's eaðmedu ("humility"), ellen ("courage") and other virtues, there is little exploration of the struggles of his youth and early monastic life that led to such sanctity, though the poet refers to them obliquely (104-05, 108-110), and no exploration of how the internal qualities are related to these external protections. Though Guthlac is established as a perfected saint early in the poem, in the poet's conception, the continual surveillance of a protecting spirit is still required despite Guthlac's exemplary qualities (105-07).

Guthlac A presents the confrontation of the good and the evil spirit ("engel dryhtnes ond se atela gæst," 116) as the mutual implanting of conflicting promptings (lare) into Guthlac's mind (modes gemynd, 118). The promptings of the angel are described in terms of verbal address—the angel 'told' (sægde) him to value eternal over ephemeral things. Those of the devil, on the other hand, are more hostile and irrational in their very mode of communication—the devil 'drove' (scyhte, 127) him to seek the company of the accursed. Thus, though the poor soul receives conflicting urges ("hy hine trymedon on twa healfa," 133; "they incited him on both sides"), the poet makes the angelic promptings appear self-evidently good in their civilized formulation through rational discourse, while the demonic promptings are easily recognizable

of chronology because it is about spatial orientation, whereas Guthlac B provides the temporal counterpart.

by their more instinctual and insidious manifestation. This is a crafty formulation of spiritual struggle, and though it might be thought that such a conceptualization of sin would place the onus of discernment upon the individual, again the poet removes the initiative for action and resolution away from human volition or individual discernment. It is God who decides one way or the other:

...þæs gewinnes weoroda dryhten
 on þæs engles dom ende gereahthe.
 Feond wæs geflymed... (134-36)

[...the Lord of hosts decreed the end of the struggle in favor of the
 angel. The enemy was driven away...]

The balance between grace and merit is of course an ancient and delicate tension, no less for Augustine than for Calvin; but this Anglo-Saxon poet clearly emphasizes the role of exterior intervention (whether that is conceived as 'grace' or otherwise) over interior discernment ('free will') in the struggle of Guthlac.²² Accordingly, Guthlac does not speak throughout this initial conflict, either to utter a psalm (as in Felix), or to drive the demons away otherwise (as in subsequent encounters). The poet concludes the scene by stating again that the good spirit remains with Guthlac to comfort him (136-37).

From the other Guthlac materials we immediately recognize this scene against the devil as Guthlac's initial struggle with despair, brought on by the devil's arrow (chapter 29 in Felix), but as we have seen, Guthlac A avoids pinning the scene down so precisely to any single time or place. The isolated scene presents a free-floating and imagistic portrayal of the most

²² For an attempt to struggle with a similar problem in Juliana, see Calder (Cynewulf 79).

crystallized and purified spiritual conflict, perhaps only intending to represent Guthlac's victory over sinful urgings in general. The effect, however, is to reinforce the sense of his spiritual perfection **prior to** the subsequent demonic assaults. The battle with the devil is portrayed as the requisite trial for tempering Guthlac, so he may be a fitting ward over the island:

...þæt lond gode
fægre gefreopode, sibþan feond oferwon
Cristes cempa. (151-53)

[...that he might protect the fair land of God, once the soldier of
Christ overcame the enemy.]

Now Guthlac is said to fortify himself with spiritual weapons (177-81); in Felix this takes place before the meeting with the devil, not after it. Whereas in Felix, the earlier worldly and monastic experiences made a saint of Guthlac before his encounter with the devil, here it is the encounter with the devil that itself creates the saint. Immediately the assaults of the demon armies ensue, and again the poet shifts praise from Guthlac's inherent goodness to the protection of God ("we þæs Guðlaces / deorwyrðne dæl dryhtne cennað," 182-83ff.; "we ascribe the lot of that [same] Guthlac to the worthy Lord") as well as of Bartholomew ("engel hine elne trymede," 190ff., "the angel strengthened him with courage"; cf. 172-74).

Satan's forms and assaults

The actual progression of the encounters with the demon hordes in Guthlac A is difficult to map onto any of the encounters in Felix's Vita. A host of many demons with their many weapons arrives at first (185-86), and they threaten that they will burn him there on the hill if

he does not leave the wasteland (191-99). The evil spirits' commination has been delivered, we are told at its conclusion, by a single spokesperson:

Swa him yrsade, se for ealle spræc
feonda mengu. (200-01)

[Thus he who spoke for all the host of fiends became enraged at
him.]

A single voice is allowed to speak for the demons, though they are repeatedly characterized as "many." Shifting attention quickly back from Guthlac to the spiritual foes, the text proceeds to a lengthy description of the demons' history on the island, an account which begins with the demons' lament that Guthlac has robbed them of their resting place (206-25). They continue their threats, however, urging that if Guthlac does not depart, they will return with a larger host ("mid mengu maran cwome," 237). Thus the multiplicity of demons hopes to confound the saint by expanding into an even larger multiplicity. Thus far the demons' harangue has been reported entirely in indirect discourse, and Guthlac has not explicitly made any response either directly or indirectly. Now at last he engages, though, and issues a lengthy rebuke in first-person, in which he informs them that the inequality in numbers is of no consequence:

"Mæg ic þis setl on eow
butan earfeðum ana geðringan." (244-45)

["I can gain this dwelling from you by force alone, without
hardship."]

He bids the evil spirits begone ("Gewitað nu, awyrgde," 255, quoting Christ's curse of Matthew 25.41), sending them into a flurry of disorder.

Now that Guthlac has finally brought the dialogue to the intensified level of direct discourse, the demons respond in kind—but, rather than relying upon a singular speaker, they now express themselves as a sort of chorus in the first-person plural. It is now the "many" (monige, 264) who speak: "Oft we ofersegon..." ("often we have observed..." 266); and the demons draw attention to their own collectivity: "þeos mengu eall" ("all this multitude," 278-79). Thus Guthlac's firm rebuke has splintered the opposing forces from one speaker into a multiplicity of speakers, even if they are still in agreement with each other. Again they threaten to increase their numbers (maran mægne, 282) if he will not comply with their eviction requests. They warn that their armies (monfarum, 286) will devastate the island by trampling it under their very feet, so numerous will they be, and again Guthlac patiently tries to explain to them that their numbers are of no import:

"Peah ge þa ealle ut abanne,
 ond eow eac gewyrce widor sæce,
 ge her ateoð in þa tornwræce
 sigeleasne sið." (296-302)

["Though you call all of them out, and you perpetrate (even)
 greater strife, you will make a journey without victory in that
 fierce vengeance."]

The narrator repeatedly draws attention to Guthlac's single resistance against many ("se wið mongum stod," 323; "he stood against many") and the effect of the saint's speech is at last to drive away the hordes ("Gewat eal þonan / feonda mengu," 325-26; "all the many enemies departed from there"). Throughout this brave defense, Guthlac does not find his strength exclusively from within. His 'readiness' is apposed with God's assistance:

Gearo wæs Guðlac--hine god fremede--
on ondsware ond on elne strong. (292-93)²³

[Guthlac was ready with an answer, and strong in courage; God
helped him.]

Furthermore, though he is repeatedly described as a single man against a host of spirits, this is problematized by the nebulous presence of an army of protective spirits behind Guthlac:

Swa modgade, se wið mongum stod,
awreðed weorðlice wuldres cempa
engla mægne. (323-25)

[He exulted thus, who stood against many, the soldier of glory,
worthily supported by the strength of angels.]

The strength he shows in resisting the army of demons is equated with the might of angels, to the point that it is not clear where one stops and the other begins.

With its characteristic lack of spatial or temporal orientation, other than that it is night-time (nihta genipu, 350), the narrative proceeds without break into the next demonic encounter. Demons swarm around the saint like so many locusts, but the text is silent regarding their precise mode of attack. Instead it is specified, once again, that Guthlac has a spiritual guardian with him at all times (355-60). Guthlac addresses the demons directly:

Oft worde bicwæð:
"Huru, þæs bihofað, se ðe him halig gæst
wisað on willan ond his weorc trymað,

²³ Punctuation here follows Roberts rather than Krapp and Dobbie, for reasons given in Roberts Guthlac Poems 139.

lapað hine liþum wordum, gehateð him lifes ræste,
 þæt he þæs latteowes larum hyre,
 ne lete him ealdfeond eft oncyrran
 mod from his meotude." (360-66)

[Often he made an exhortation: "Truly it behoves him whose will the holy ghost guides and whose works (it) fortifies--invites him with gentle words, promises him peace in life--that he follow the teachings of the guide, and not let the old enemy afterwards turn his mind from the Measurer."]

Why "oft"? Is the poet drawing attention away from the localized conflict at hand, rendering the impression that the demonic attacks are frequent and the speech cited is but a typical response on the part of the saint? Or rather, are we meant to assume that this particular attack was of lengthy duration, and the saint thus forced to issue such a rebuke periodically? Though the poet focuses attention away from the historical and chronological at every turn, note that here Guthlac addresses himself at last not to the host of flighty demons painted so vividly, but to the single ealdfeond.

Having returned him to solid ground, the demons again address Guthlac, pointing out that he has seen for himself the truth of their accusations. It is a singular spirit, "se werga gæst" (451), that addresses him, though the speech is again a collective sentiment in the first-person plural. Guthlac answers the direct address in kind, and the narrator repeats the litany of Guthlac's solitary front against the numerous foes: "he wið mongum stod" (474, "he stood against many"). The text pauses for a meditation on the role of suffering in the purification of the soul (535-36), and invokes the inexpressibility topos to characterize Guthlac's many ordeals,

before passing to the journey to hell.²⁴

Unperturbed by his physical removal to the very gate of hell (559), Guthlac delivers an extensive discourse (592-684), after which the protective spirit from heaven immediately appears and routs the demons. The divine protector pronounces himself as the arbiter of the present case (dema, 703), and orders the demons to return Guthlac to his accustomed barrow. He further specifies that he will not hide his own face from the many ("Ne sceal ic mine onsyn fore eowere / mengu miþan," 707-08; "I will not conceal my face from the multitude of you"), and identifies himself as one of the twelve apostles. Not identified as Bartholomew until after his speech is ended, the apostle promises to attach himself to his spiritual brother Guthlac:

"Is þæt min broþor, mec his bysgu gehreaw.
 Ic þæt gefremme, þær se freond wunað
 on þære socne, þe ic þa sibbe wið hine
 healdan wille, nu ic his helpan mot,
 þæt ge min onsynn oft sceawiað.
 Nu ic his geneahhe neosan wille." (714-19)

["That is my brother, his trouble grieved me. I will bring it about that, so long as the friend dwells in that sanctuary (he with whom I wish to hold peace, now I can help him), that you will often see my face. Now I wish to visit him frequently."]

This promise is not a little confusing, given the narrator's insistence early in the poem that

²⁴ There is a narrative digression concerning the complacency of the Lord in allowing the saintly man to suffer further (517-20). The text refers to the travesty as "wundra sum," reminiscent of Genesis B's famous "micel wundor" (referring to the Lord's complacency in allowing the Fall in Eden, for which see Vickrey "Micel Wundor"). The narrator shrugs off the mysterious motives of divine edict, however, stoically observing that "þæt hwæpre gelomp" (520, "that happened nevertheless").

Guthlac gained his spiritual guardian after first defeating the devil, and given the repeated assertions that the guardian was with him at all times (cf. 747-48). The distinction between even the free-floating confrontation with the devil early in the poem and these subsequent battles is thus blurred: are they meant to be diverse expressions of essentially the same struggle for spiritual purification? Was the first conflict described actually the same as the last, serving as a general, preliminary overview before recounting more specific details? Lipp sees in the loose organization of the various demonic conflicts a progression toward greater universality (55). However the various confrontations are meant to be related, structurally what is stressed in them is their periodic finality. After each stage of demonic confrontation, Guthlac advances and gains some apotropaic immunity against similar attacks. Thus the demons must escalate, either in number or in kind of attack, to present a challenge for the increasingly saintly man. After the battle at the gates of hell, however, there is no further conflict generated within the bounds of the poem; the demons are silenced; and even nature yields to Guthlac once he returns to his fen. The conflicts with the demons are apparently not at an end, for Bartholomew says the demons will see his face oft (718), but their function in the narrative is complete. A peaceful tone of resolution permeates the last ninety lines of the poem, stressing the success of the steadfast.

Overview: fragmentation of the demonic

In certain ways, the poem preserves certain broad demonological tendencies of the Vita that are downplayed or lost altogether in the prose translation and the homily. Most notably, the poem exhibits a keen awareness of the ambiguities in demonic identity and number that abound in Felix's text, and exploits their dramatic rhetorical potential. The defeat of the devil, initially

presented as a trial for subsequent spiritual struggles, turns out to be less of an individual, historical conflict, than an abstract, prefatory summary of an ideal spiritual struggle, that may yet be played out in particular instances again and again. It lays bare the psychology implicit in all spiritual conflict, and should not be too strictly distinguished from Guthlac's subsequent demonic confrontations. For the multiple demons are placed in direct apposition with the devil, both at the level of narrative (346-47) as well as in Guthlac's own discernment (365). Guthlac's personal recognition of his foe(s), in fact, proceeds along a course running parallel to the increasing intensity of the demonic confrontations. My reading of Guthlac's ordeals in Guthlac A has been necessarily intricate, and a brief overview will no doubt be welcome.

During the first encounter Guthlac does not speak, as the debate is conducted entirely by a demon and an angel, until resolved through the intervention of God. Though directly confronted with physical demons in the second confrontation, Guthlac still does not speak, though addressed (185-232). When he finally speaks, bringing the interaction to the level of direct discourse at last, he scatters the demons after engaging them in a brief debate (240-327). The demons are fragmented from a single speaker into their true multiplicity, and the dialogue itself, though consisting only of three speeches, still reflects the view-points of each side. In the subsequent assault, Guthlac addresses himself not to the demons at all, but abstractly to the ealdfeond (365), as though concentrating his discernment of spiritual opposition.

At this point the demonic attacks shift from merely verbal to physical expression, a categorical distinction explicitly drawn by the narrator (434-39; cf. 226-31). The last two assaults are thus physical, or at least contain physical components: the abduction into the air to

view the monasteries, and the abduction to the gates of hell.²⁵ The evil spirits now speak again through a single spokesperson (451-69), as though returning to the starting point in the confrontation paradigm, but at a heightened valence shell. Just as the demons have augmented the intensity of their assaults, so does Guthlac: his speech of rebuttal now contains a new element, an incipient offensive threat, rather than merely his previous humble and defensive stand. "þæs cymeð / steor of heofonum," he restraintfully hints in an isolated hypermetric line ("punishment for that will come from the heavens," 510). These patterns come to fruition in the climactic scene at the gaping mouth of hell. The demons are once again fractured from a single voice into a multiplicity (577), and Guthlac's response, though directed to the plural demons rather than to a more abstract entity, constitutes a devastating blow to the spiritual antagonists. Here he provides more than derisive epithets—he relates their history and by revealing their state of bondage, thereby effects it. The ealdfeond is granted no further presence, in speech or narrative, although the closing passages of the poem say that saintly persons in general conquer the enemy (feond, 803) and avoid sinful desires (firenlustas, 803), the two in apparent opposition. With the recognition, atomization, and dispersal of the demonic, Crowland is 'consecrated' as sacred ground, as the land was cleared of demons before the erection of a medieval cathedral (Rudwin 133-34).

²⁵ In "The Middle Way," T. Hill offers a reading of these two climactic struggles, each reflecting a separate mode of attack and each targetted for a separate psychological susceptibility: egesa ("terror") and idel wuldor ("vain glory"), both mentioned in line 86. In this respect, Hill draws attention to the vertical axis of the poem's motion: Guthlac is drawn up in the air to represent exaltation, and then drawn down ("niþer under næssas," 563) to represent despair (185). See also note 1 for further speculation on topography and spiritual progress. I agree that these conflict scenes are granted more prominence than the previous three, but not that these are the only ones exhibiting structure (183).

Guthlac and the angels

In Guthlac A the overlapping conceptual features that unite Satan and the lesser demons are likewise operative in the divine sphere, no less than the demonic. Attention has been frequently drawn to the poet's insistence on the solitary nature of Guthlac's fight against the demons, and the recurring use of adjectives such as ana certainly validate this reading; yet there is simultaneously a rhetorical pull toward the presentation of Guthlac as supported by angelic hosts. At times this pull refers only to a single guardian (identified late in the poem as Bartholomew) who keeps constant watch over the disciple, while at others, Guthlac refers to his support from a certain company of divine spiritual impulses ("mara dæl / in godcundum gæstgerynum," 247-48) such that he states outright that he does not face the assailants alone:

"Ne eam ic swa fealog, swa ic eow fore stonde,
monna weorudes, ac me mara dæl
in godcundum gæstgerynum
wunað ond weaxeð, se me wraþe healdeð.
Ic me anum her eaðe getimbre
hus ond hleonað..." (246-51)

["I am not so destitute of a band of men, as I stand before you,
but a greater portion, which supports me with comfort, remains
and thrives (by) me in divine spiritual mysteries. I will easily
construct a house and shelter for myself alone..."]

Thus what Guthlac in fact presupposes is a vacillation between himself as alone and himself as protected by spiritual guardians--in short, Guthlac's angelology betrays the same fluidity that Felix's demonology exhibits in the Vita. Since his promptings are from heaven, he enjoys a

hazy-bordered assimilation with the hosts of heaven.²⁶ Thus he has the 'strength of angels' (*engla mægne*, 325), and the increasing numbers of the demon army thus have no effect on the siege of the saint's soul. The poem emphasizes both rhetorical tendencies--presenting Guthlac as alone, and presenting him as continually supported by an angel or angels--with greater insistence than Felix or the other Guthlac sources.

The imprecise conceptual distinction between Guthlac and the angels stems from the poet's consistent practice of assimilating the interior and exterior sources of strength and fortitude. For the *Guthlac A* poet, the exterior and interior mesh harmoniously--Guthlac is unfailingly steadfast, but rather than obviating the need for an external protector, the poet rather presents this state of internal perfection through the image of a continuously vigilant external protector. Guthlac's virtues are not only the cause of the Lord's favor, but are simultaneously, and quite mysteriously, a manifestation of it. There may be some method behind the practice, furthermore: Guthlac's personal actions and individual merits are stressed in the localized central episodes, during his solitary fight with the demons, while in the less historical opening and closing passages, the virtues are presented more as gifts from God, and the saint presented more as passive. The opening and closing sections can thus be viewed as general accounts of the nature of Guthlac's spiritual conflict, in which the ultimate sources of good and evil impulses are most completely exposed, while the central episodes, more individualized and historicized as they are, may be taken as simply a more detailed focus on how those general forces actually

²⁶ On the "communion of the saints," in which the saints are thought to partake of a single essence, see Jones *Saints' Lives* 57-64. For one of the clearest applications of this principle, see the anonymous *Oldest Life of Gregory* ch. 30, Jones 118). Here, however, Guthlac is still regarded as human and therefore subordinate to the angels.

play themselves out in context.

Conclusion

Despite its evident fascination with demons, Guthlac A is not an adventure story. The text consistently defuses elements of suspense and danger, emphasizing Guthlac's protection from harm at the outset of each new demonic assault. It shares with the homily a particular interest in the increasingly intense and dramatic confrontational scenes of Felix's chapters 29-33, to the virtual exclusion of the rest of Guthlac's rich and amply recorded life. As with Beowulf, the interest of Guthlac A is not in the formation of the saint, but in the already perfected hero's struggle for territorial and societal recognition. Unlike Beowulf, however, Guthlac's twelve companions will not leave him in battle (709), and his beorg thus enjoys cheerier connotations than that of the literally cremated Geatish hero.

Guthlac A as a whole is not so much a series of narrative events at all, in fact, but a layering of imagistic portraits of various moments in the saint's formation of the self through spiritual conflict. The plot is primarily one of verbal dialectic rather than action.²⁷ The action is internal or ontological--that is, deeper layers of reality are explored through the monologues, and this abstract motion of revealing implicit structures of the cosmos (the devil behind the demons, the angels behind Guthlac) form the 'plot' of Guthlac A as much as any exterior

²⁷ Lipp emphasizes the didactic nature of Guthlac's speeches, "which serve at once as an indication of his spiritual strength and as a vehicle for moral instruction" (61). Lipp does not grant the controlled progression of Guthlac's apotropaic and exorcistic speeches, however: "The speeches are undramatic; Guthlac's replies to the demons, for example, regularly sound like exhortations to the audience...The poet merely expresses a few basic Christian ideas, using repetition and changing contexts for emphasis and variety" (59).

activity.

It is largely true, as T.A. Shippey insists, that "the poem's scheme is barren of any psychological depth or sense of temptation" (130).²⁸ These paradigms are better read as literary than psychological, for as Kurtz was the first to suggest, they often fail by the gauge of psychological realism (cf. Woolf "Saints' Lives" 55-56). As structurally encoded templates of cosmic and psychic confrontation, however, the poem's tensions are different from those of the other Guthlac sources, betraying the work's particular range of anxieties. Specifically, the other vernacular sources show little interest in the number differentiations I have traced and found pervasive in Guthlac A. And whereas Elene and Andreas expressed only imperfect confidence in the complete domination of the divine over the demonic, Guthlac A finds solace using the very conceptual tensions that give the demonic its strength in these texts. By embracing the imprecise distinction between the devil and his demons, and applying it rather to Guthlac and the angels, the Guthlac A-poet constructs a genuine metaphysical bulwark against the demonic threat that exhibits such strength and presence in the verse saints' lives as a whole.

²⁸ See Calder "Guthlac A" 71-72 for commentary on Shippey's analysis, and an attempt to read Guthlac A psychologically: "No situation, action, or reaction in A may seem to have profound psychological roots, but without exception the poet says they do...We must accept his statements, even if they are at odds with our preconceptions about psychological narratives. In Guthlac A the devils do not have a separate and external reality; the number of times the poet uses Old English words for Guthlac's heart, mind, soul, and spirit cancels even the possibility of a discrete existence for the demons" (72; cf. 77). The demons' lengthy account of their own history and their sojourn on the island prior to Guthlac's arrival, however, does argue for their independent existence. The high incidence of heart, mind, and soul words demonstrates only that the poet is interested in the precise relationship between the inner self and the demons, not that the two are to be equated.

Part V: Conclusion

From the depersonalized, naturalistic demons of the charms and Solomon and Saturn, inhering in the animate and inanimate world at every level, to the iconographic and highly stylized personalities of the ‘hagiographic demon’ who verbally articulates evil suggestions directly into the ear of all-too-acquiescent pagans, to the more distant and stately devil performing the static roles of the mythological scenes of salvation history, Old English literature presents a variegated spectrum of demonic forms and functions. Soldier, scop, farmer, and knot-maker, bird, whale, and wolf, the forms of the devil permeate every sector of the social and natural spheres.¹ It is interesting to note the ways in which this very ambiguity of forms proves to be one of the demon’s most fertile and organic traits, the conceptual elasticity allowing for imagistic narratives that prove challenging, if not altogether perplexing, to the modern reader.

Hugh Magennis has recently disparaged the role of setting in most Old English religious narrative poetry, excepting perhaps Andreas and Guthlac (Images 168-69). We have seen, however, that certain features of representational setting inform the construction of narrative topography throughout the range of vernacular verse saints’ lives. These spatio-temporal cues are for the most part not realistic but mythographic. These spatial cues (underworld, prison, sea) and temporal indicators (night, dawn) serve rather to delineate certain realms in which to situate

¹ **Soldier:** Juliana 382-409; **harpist:** Vercelli homily 10 (Scragg 200, ll.83-85); **farmer:** Ælfric Sermo de memoria sanctorum (Skeat 1.362, 1.376); **knot-maker:** Ælfric Sermo ad populum in octavis pentecosten dicendus (Pope 1.423, 1.164); **bird:** Wærferth Dialogi 2.2 (Hecht 100); **whale:** The Whale 31-82; **wolf:** Ælfric Dominica II post Pascha (Thorpe 1.240, ll.1ff.). Ælfric, however, departing from his source (Gregory’s Dialogi 2.30), declines to make the devil a doctor (S. Benedicti Abbatis, Thorpe 2.180, ll.3ff.).

or circumscribe distinct types of conflict. Thus the underworld in the passions (Margaret, Juliana) is a place in which the demonic is enclosed and contained, perhaps indicating a desire to keep the demonic distanced from mundane settings. While appearing also in Elene and Andreas, the underworld in those texts cannot effectively contain the demonic. Close attention to the devil's location and locomotion has helped us to chart his presence or absence in these contested spaces.

The role of the devil

I have considered two major demonological processes operative in these narratives: the instigation of sinners by the devil, and the conflict between the devil and the saint. These two processes reflect the demonic when its urgings are successful, on the one hand, and when they are not, on the other. Yet the two cases bear little resemblance to one another. We are at a complete loss to decide why Heliseus succumbs to the devil's promptings, while Juliana does not, or why Beccel falls prey to evil instigation while Guthlac remains firm. To observe that Juliana has faith in God and that Heliseus does not is not to explain the phenomenon, but only to describe it in different terms, for in Old English religious narrative, to say that a character is a heathen or has turned from God, is only another way of saying that the character has fallen prey to the devil.² It is not the case that the devil approaches saint and sinner alike; the form and extent of their interaction already presupposes from the start the relationship they will

² E.g., Ælfric: "ælc hæðen man bið deofles" ("every heathen person is of the devil," Sermo in ascensione Domini; Thorpe 1.304, l.34).

pursue.³ The orthodox platitude that the demon can tempt, but cannot force, the individual to sin only makes an awkward transition from theological treatise or pulpit to narrative.⁴ More often it is belied by the narrative presentations of heathens that are deceived as a matter of course, and Christians who overcome the temptation and rebuke the demon without internal struggle. It is not generally the purpose of these texts to examine the processes involved in the instigation of sin, then, but to portray its effects.

More profound and problematic than the relationship between the devil and the sinner in these works is that between the devil and the saint. The devil is granted significant attention and even a considerable amount of dignity in many of the texts, sometimes in unexpected places. While the mythological devil of Christ and Satan may be humiliated by being forced to measure hell with his hands, Old English authors often tend to avoid degrading the devil or hagiographic demon, sometimes departing substantially from their sources in order to do so.⁵ Thus it is clear that the devil figure was considered somewhat more than a dupe suitable only for sustained vilification and quick defeat at the hands of the protagonist. Though the demon is grovelling and disempowered, the intent is to preserve his greater cosmological significance. Since the devil assumes a certain narrative preeminence in Old English hagiography, he likewise takes on a privileged thematic function, and assumes a priori an important spiritual and cosmological role--

³ Consider, for instance, the different ways in which the good and bad angels divulge their promptings to Guthlac in Guthlac A.

⁴ E.g., Ælfric Dominica prima in Quadragesima: "hi moton ure afandian, ac hi ne moton us nydan to nanum yfle" ("they can test us, but they cannot force us to any evil," Thorpe 1.170, ll.12-13).

⁵ Thus Juliana sends him to hell rather than to a dungheap, for instance (see above, 162-63). Cf. Ælfric's Life of St Martin (above, 113-14), the Old English "Devil's Account of the Next World," and the Junius 11 illustration of Satan in his torments (fig.4).

either in the forging of the saint, or in the testing of an already perfected saint. In the most complete and expansive texts (Gregory's Benedict, Tiberius A.iii Margaret, Andreas, Felix's Guthlac), the devil serves both functions.

The devil as a character, or even as a frozen iconographic motif, is most significantly employed when reserved for the most intense and pivotal moment in the saint's development: often the saint's initial struggle with the devil is final, such that the saint is immune to all further direct attacks.⁶ Ideally we should like to see some fault or sign of weakness in the saint before or during the encounter with the demonic, that wholly disappears after it, to assure ourselves of the validity of such archetypal criticism (and we do find at least some such confirmation in the Tiberius A.iii Margaret, Andreas, Elene, and Guthlac); but as the affirmation of the saint's weakness rather conflicts with hagiographic convention, this cannot be a reliable benchmark. Instead we must content ourselves with other surrounding circumstances, such as the introduction of the devil character exclusively in extra-mundane 'otherworld' environments.

In the brief section on the vernacular homilies, we saw that Old English homilies could effectively rise to the task of integrating patristic as well as popular demonology with a sincere desire to solicit from the audience personal contemplation of delicate psychological states. Saints' lives, on the other hand, allow for—even encourage—exploration of a different range of interests. I submit that among these is the exploration of the ontological status of both the demonic and the divine in abstract conceptual space (though embodied in the various local conflicts between

⁶ Thus the Vita Benedicti, Margaret, Neot (Warner 129-34; overcomes devil 130, ll.18-21), and the Vita Guthlaci. Cf. Jonas' Vita Columbani ch.7.

saint and demon),⁷ divorced from any moral concern for the particular reader or hearer. An interesting narrative passage in Blickling homily 15 (Spel be Petrus and Paulus) confirms this hagiographic focus on extra-human rather than human affairs: Peter explains that Simon Magus contains two powers or faculties, human and demonic: "þonne syndon on þyssum Simone twa speda, mannes & deofles" ("therefore there are two powers [or faculties] in Simon, human and diabolic").⁸ From what theology leads us to believe about the devil, we should expect his influence to be the more dangerous of the two. It is, however, the human rather than the demonic component that Peter singles out as the corruptive one: "& he þonne men gæleþ ælces godes þurh his menniscan dæl" ("and he through his human part hinders people from anything good," Morris 179, ll.10-11). There is thus a sense in which the demonic and the divine are of another order than our local, human concerns, and are in that sense beyond our anthropocentric blame or praise.

Critical discussions of Old English hagiography frequently comment on the profound and implicit faith Anglo-Saxon hagiographers exhibit in their portrayal of the demonic as inherently weak and doomed to failure. It is supposed that the divine and the demonic are disproportionately opposed in the combat scenes of these works, so much so that the greatest assault of the demons cannot sustain its attack for a moment before the humblest Christian

⁷ Calder makes a convincing case for a similar point for Juliana specifically: "the narrative pattern in Juliana accordingly is ritualistic...a fixed ceremony and public ritual involving figures reenacting the cosmic struggle between Christ and Satan" (Cynewulf 80). See also St-Jacques for a fuller defense of this position ("Cosmic Dimensions").

⁸ Morris 179, ll.9-10; the source (Passio sanctorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli) has two "substances": "in isto autem Simone sunt duae substantiae, hominis et diaboli, qui per hominem conatur hominibus inpedire," Lipsius and Bonnet 139.

manifesting sincere faith and genuine sanctity. By taking a step back, however, it is not difficult to see a certain amount of anxiety in these exaggerated portrayals of the devil's weakness.⁹ Why should the impotence, the confinement, and the ultimate defeat of the demons be so tediously rehearsed in narrative as well as in liturgy, were it not a matter of genuine concern? In fact, despite the frequent and pious exclamations of saint and hagiographer, the conflict between the saint and the demon is not always so one-sided. The scenes of spiritual conflict in early medieval hagiography document a profound and heated engagement between the demonic and the divine (or occasionally between the demonic and the human), an engagement presented as permeating all levels of society and all regions of the earth. Only by recourse to mythological time (the beginning of time or the end of it) do the historical saints extricate themselves from the localized conflict: they tell the demon either, "you were thrown out of heaven and bound forever," or else, "you will, at the last, be cast down and bound forever." As for the present age, however, it is abundantly clear from the sources that the demonic is real, and the devil's present fetters can only be of the most slipshod quality.

Dialogue and demonology: defining the opponent

In almost all cases dialogic conflict, as opposed to physical violence, serves to define the abstract contours of the demonic and the divine. Socrates is clearly the winner in Plato's dialogues--that is, he understands, and therefore defines, the nature of reality more accurately and more deeply than his interlocutors--but nonetheless, Plato insists on maintaining the dialogue

⁹ See Andreas section (above, 185-86, note 14).

form.¹⁰ Thus the reader never loses sight of the multiplicity of voices and the inherent instability of numerous points of view.¹¹ Likewise, the devil in our Latin and Old English texts is allowed his own speaking time and even the power of self-description, and the dialogue thus transcends mere catechism. The single-sided presentation of truth is compromised through narrative dialogue—however much the speeches themselves attempt to deny such compromise.

What is at stake, after all, is not simply the soul of the individual saint, but the order and moral composition of the entire ‘spiritual cosmos’—that logical space inhabited by abstract values or concepts and their relations, projected from local concerns into ideal space, for which the saint is but an ambassador and advocate. The saint must struggle to impose order on the chaos that confronts him or her—to give it precise identity, location. And here I understand chaos in the broadest possible sense—the disorder of the body (torture), of the mind (falsehood), of the spirit (heathenism or heresy), of nature (demons as natural predators and parasites), and even of the cosmos itself, for the devil will always have at least some power until the ever-elusive Second Coming. It is thus no accident that a more precise and empirical metaphysics of demonic temptation never gained general acceptance in the early Middle Ages, or indeed, for as long as the devil was a living metaphor. The ontological processes being expressed are no less than rifts in the moral integrity of the cosmos, and by their very nature they cannot be expressed without a plastic and adaptable symbol, a symbol which stubbornly eludes all attempts at pinning down.

¹⁰ See, for instance, Charles Kahn Plato and the Socratic Dialogue (Cambridge University Press, 1996): 36-38, 296.

¹¹ Cf. Bernard Freyberg, The Play of the Platonic Dialogues (Peter Lang, 1997): 15-16, 36-38; Kenneth Sayre Plato's Literary Garden: How to Read a Platonic Dialogue (University of Notre Dame Press, 1995): 15.

The devil is admirably suited to fill this niche.

The tensions intrinsic to the conceptualization of the devil are thus intimately linked with the devil's narrative functions. Even the most orthodox and erudite author or poet, while adhering to patristic conceptions and sometimes rigid narrative conventions, recognizes certain open registers in the conceptualization of the devil. Among these are the internality/externality of the devil to the individual, the simultaneous presence of the devil in hell and on earth (reflecting his dual roles of cosmic enemy and personal antagonist), and the distinction between the devil and his lesser demons. Through these, authors react to and sustain the Christian paradox of the "simultaneous power and impotence of the sin and evil embodied in Satan" (Johnson "Old English" 175). Through the narrative progression of these shifting registers, the author may construct any of a number of possible models of spiritual or ideal conflict. This was true of the earliest hagiographers, and as Felix, the Guthlac A-poet, and the translator of the OE Bede demonstrate, at least some insular composers were able to build native demonologies from these premises, independently of their sources.

The devil's forms

One of the narrative registers that Old English translators perceived as most flexible was the form assumed by the devil.¹² If the source text indicates that the devil appears as a

¹² For instance, the translators of the Life of Nicholas and the composers of the vernacular Andreas texts exhibit an obvious freedom in manipulating the devil's forms from the Latin sources (above, 122 and 182-83). The source and function of the devil's ambiguous form in Genesis B (angel of light or serpent) is also an issue of long-standing debate. Simon Magus, when filled with "the wicked spirit" and inspired by the devil's spirit ("mid ðam awyrgedum gaste...afylled," "mid deofles cræfte," Thorpe 1.372, ll.1-8), assumes a number of spectacular transformations (De passione apostolorum Petri et Pauli, Thorpe 1.376, ll.11-14).

character, Old English composers never substitute another type of functional villain. But, having faithfully preserved the character of the devil, the translators apparently feel greater liberty in altering the devil's shape, and the means by which he enters and exits the scene. One may justly question, given this fact, whether this narrative freedom implies that these scenes were not strictly considered historical in the same way as the more conscientiously preserved surrounding narrative. But, as some of this compositional freedom is sometimes directed toward rationalizing and visualizing the activities of the devil more concretely, as we might expect of a historical narrative,¹³ the perplexed question of historicity and hagiography is best left aside altogether for the present.¹⁴

I have noted on the one hand that the presence of evil (in a general or collective sense) sometimes undergoes a shift in referents during the course of a given episode. A character may begin by perceiving the demonic intrusion as an attack by multiple demons or spirits, and only gradually recognize and acknowledge the unity underlying these manifestations of evil.¹⁵ Thus the character shifts from addressing the demonic as a plurality of demons, and addresses them in a more collective sense as the devil. The sense in these episodes is that the saint must overcome the manifold mask of evil, and learn to discern its true essence. Specifically, the saint

¹³ Thus the devil rows in the Life of Nicolas (above, 123), fires arrows in Vercelli 9 (above, 97-100), and wanders through a grassy plain in Vercelli 23 (above, 207).

¹⁴ On historical truth and hagiography see Colgrave "Earliest Saints' Lives" 35-37, 59; Delehaye 61-67; Doble 323-25, 332-33; Jones 57, 74-76; Olsen "De Historiis" 417-18; Woolf "Saints' Lives" 40.

¹⁵ In this respect, recall Judas' gradual recognition of the unified kingdom of evil in Elene (above, 176) and Guthlac's in Felix's Vita Guthlaci (the latter also preserved to some extent in the OE prose translation and Vercelli Homily; above, 203-04 and 207). Juliana seems to conflate the lesser demon with the devil conceptually and physically--not just rhetorically--and thus collapses them into a singly entity (above 159-60).

must associate the diverse lesser demons with the Old Enemy himself, by invoking the events of the Fall of Angels or the Day of Judgment (that is, the saint must project the local conflict into mythological time). The protean ambiguities of the early Christian representations of evil thus serve as organic conceptual registers at the disposal of ingenuitive composers.

On the other hand, the character or narrator may begin by addressing evil as a single demon or the devil, yet end by referring to it as a multitude of evil spirits or demons. A straightforward instance is in Ælfric's account of St. Maur, in which the devil (ðam fulan gaste, Skeat 1.158, 1.193) enters three workmen. When Maur prays for their release, it is a plurality of demons which disperses (þa deoflu, Skeat 1.160, 1.204).¹⁶ Here the number-identity of the demonic registers its relative coherence and solidity during its confrontation with the divine or saintly: as the demonic gradually loses ground, it fragments into a disparate multiplicity of entities, each one weak and scattering in a different direction. The distinction between the narrative voice and a character's directly quoted speech allows certain further finesses in terms of the character's **perception** of the demonic, as opposed to the narrator's presumed **knowledge** of it.¹⁷ The power of properly-employed discourse presupposed in popular charms as well as Christian prayer carries over into the narrative presentation of spiritual battle, for these scenes imply an ontological connection between the physical manifestations of evil in the world (demons) and the verbal manifestations of it in language.

¹⁶ Thus also the narrator in Solomon and Saturn I (above, 69), and consider the escalating number of demons in the demonic attacks against Guthlac in Vercelli Homily 23 (above, 207-08).

¹⁷ See the agreement of the narrator with the anonymous demoniac in the OE Bede (above, 84-85), or the disparity between Judas and the narrator in Elene (above, 175).

Significance

In its demonology a culture encodes basic moral and ontological registers in literary and liturgical formulations, expresses personal and social anxieties through concrete images. It is surely too simplistic to assert that a culture encodes its ideals in the divine and its taboos in the demonic; the divine often is a source of misery and fear, and the demonic can be comedic or even helpful as an ally. In fact the two provinces are rarely as sharply dichotomized as they are in the theologically developed Christian traditions bequeathed to the Anglo-Saxons, and are rarely as easy to distinguish even within the Christian tradition as might put a more exacting theologian at ease. But certain cultural anxieties sometimes shine through the chinks in the formidable wall of theological and literary Christian tradition.

In Totem and Taboo Freud speaks of the ambivalence of emotions that characterizes all human relations, but which pre-modern cultures especially express in their laws, mores, and arts (ch.2). For instance, Freud argues from the basis of his clinical studies that, mixed with our feelings of care and affection for loved ones, are always feelings of hostility and resentment as well, though these are prevented from being expressed in everyday social relations (81). The death of the person gives vent to these feelings, and it is then imagined that the loved one returns as a hostile spirit to antagonize the living—for a duration corresponding suspiciously with that of the mourning period (78-80). Thus the antagonistic feelings, which are too shameful to receive conscious acknowledgment or expression, rebound as a projected reification or personification of the lost person. This, Freud even hazards, accounts for the very origin of

demons (83; cf. 34-35).¹⁸ Similar processes occur in art:

The projection creations of primitive man resemble the personifications through which the poet projects his warring impulses out of himself, as separated individuals. (Freud 86, note 54)

One need not subscribe to Freud's ultimate conclusions in this early work of psychoanthropology to recognize that a similar ambivalence of emotions informs the texts I have been interrogating. We find repeated expressions of the devil's weakness, coupled with continuous evidence of his strength. The omnipotence an author enjoys over the constructed world of narrative space makes that setting an ideal one in which to project such conflicting impulses. But here we are no longer talking about ambivalent feelings toward deceased loved ones, but about feelings toward the fundamental emotional and conceptual loci of Christianity, those toward which symbols such as angels, saints, and demons all point. I would think it very surprising if medieval authors--especially those who daily endured the rigors of monastic behavioral constraints--did not come to assume ambivalent emotions toward God. Human nature would be something very different than what Freud believes it to be, if sufferers for Christ did not, on occasion, feel jealousy for the saints or resentment against the Savior--such as we see expressed most openly in Andreas, for instance.¹⁹ It is no matter of surprise that these resentments rarely surface at the conscious

¹⁸ "Now it is quite possible that the whole conception of demons was derived from the extremely important relation to the dead" (86; cf. Otto 14-17). I mention this only as an interesting aside, for Freud, relying heavily on the work of W. Wundt (32ff.), offers no convincing proof of this thesis.

¹⁹ On 'religious dread' (or 'numinous' awe before the holy) see Otto 14-15, 31. The wrath of Yahweh (and ira deorum in general) is capricious (18-19), and the way it is kindled and

level of explicit acknowledgment (in theology or exegesis), for it is only through more distanced and artificial channels—such as art, literature, and liturgy—that such proscribed impulses may be explored indirectly, through the manipulation of symbols.

Many homilists and hagiographers insist that God is all-powerful, that there is no corner of the cosmos truly beyond His domain, and that the devil is utterly disempowered in the presence of the saint or the cross. Thus, at the end of a particular conflict scene, the devil is invariably made to flee, while the saint emerges triumphant. But were the initial premise of the devil's powerlessness entirely true, there should not be any room for conflict at all. What is more significant than observing who emerges triumphant from these scenes is noticing how, exactly, the power hangs in the balance in the interim. For here it is that hagiographers betray their conceptions of where the contact points between the human and demonic occur—these are the possible seepage points of chaos into order, either into the order of the human psyche (if the conflict is read psychologically) or into the order of the cosmos (if it is read ontologically).

So what are some of these 'seepage points,' these recurring points of anxiety? What is it that the saint and the demon argue over most heatedly and frequently in the type-scenes describing their debates? A significant proportion of the contested grounds, quite simply, concerns the very narrative tensions I have examined at length—items of precise specification concerning the opponent's identity, location, and hierarchical status in the cosmos. Each of the opponents struggles to identify the other through the enumeration of personal characteristics, and

manifested remains baffling (18). Otto believes that fear of demons is itself the expression of fear of the divine (or an aspect of it), at a level he calls pre-religious (124-25).

it is not infrequent that each opponent will actually name the other.²⁰ The point is so innocuous at first glance, that its full significance may easily pass without notice. The saint is primarily interested in determining the precise qualities of the demonic as concretely as possible, and this not from scientific curiosity but from practical necessity. For when he or she has done so satisfactorily, the battle is won and the demonic, which only holds power so long as it retains its elusive non-specificity, is dissipated. A fundamental anxiety encoded in these scenes, then, is the desire to understand, and thus be able to define and articulate, the demonic--whatever that may have represented for any individual author. I think it is important to recognize, furthermore, that the symbolic attempts to dissipate the demonic are not always successful.

Thus we encounter a somewhat jarring feature of certain Old English hagiographies--the occasional scene in which the saint's prayer for deliverance **from** the devil is followed immediately by the saint's subjection **to** the devil.²¹ Though usually overlooked by medieval and modern critics alike, these fascinating and sometimes perverse scenes of inefficacious prayer and seemingly gratuitous neglect of the saint on the part of the Lord reveal certain thinly submerged textual processes that have less to do with theology than with the archetypal substratum of folklore and epic. The tale, it would seem, must progress through certain time-honored and deeply-ingrained narrative moments, during which the subsumption of the protagonist into the heart of chaos, darkness, and pain enrich the psychological and allegorical

²⁰ On the mutual identification of saint and demon see Eitrem 54ff., and for Old English hagiography (Andreas), see Olsen Speech 151. Cf. Margaret Tiberius A.iii (ch. 15, Margaret 126, l.10).

²¹ Thus the Tiberius A.iii Margaret and Andreas (above, 131-32 and 191-92). Consider also the motif of undercutting the saint's worldly triumphs with hints of future catastrophe, as in Elene (above, 180) and Life of Maur (above, 184, note 10).

resonance of the story. In the hagiographic texts selected for versification, this means that the saint must encounter the devil. Though the late antique hagiographers who initially forged the genre from classical forms such as panegyric and romance attempted to gloss over these narrative moments of weakness in favor of pastoral and didactic concerns, the Old English adaptations--especially the poetic ones--exhibit a re-kindled interest in the archetypal narrative impulse toward tempering the protagonist through ordeal.

The demonic--at the most foundational level, the principle of opposition or resistance to perceived ideals--permeates hagiographic narrative with inextricable fibres. Where there is genuine narrative tension, there the demonic is implicitly granted presence and fearful respect, however much the surface of the text attempts to deny it through professions of saintly power and divine omnipresence. Though hagiographers of the Middle Ages frequently turn their final attentions toward positive notes of encouragement through repeated claims that the devil was bound a long time ago, is bound now, and will be bound again in times to come (mutually conflicting claims that betray the anxiety fueling them), they do not cease to foster, even to expand, the very processes whereby his containment is denied. They never cease to grant him the dynamic and charged unspecificity that is the source of his strength, struggling to contain him by defining him, yet at the same time allowing him to resist absolute containment or definition.

Appendix: the devil as idiom

Encountering the devil repeatedly in recurring phrases such as deofles larum and deofles cræft, one may justly question to what extent the devil is an organic, evolving referent implying some mental visualization of the devil or belief in his agency, or to what extent these are simply frozen figures of speech. The genitive singular shows a particular propensity to such idiomatic patterning: of the 563 instances of deofles and its alternate spellings in the Microfiche Concordance,¹ over half (300, or 53.46%) are joined with a frequently recurring object (that is, an object appearing with deofles ten times or more).² These break down as follows:

72	12.79%	deofles lare (or lore), larum, unlarum
64	11.37	" costung (costnung), costunge/a, costungum ³
45	7.99	" anwealde, onwealde, anwealdum
24	4.26	" cræft, cræfte, cræftum
21	3.9	" þeowa, þeowte, þeowet, þeowdome
20	3.55	" bearn
18	3.2	" tyhting, tyhtting, tihtinge, ontihtingce, etc.

¹ Alternate spellings with genitive singular: defles, deoflæs, deofleos, deofoles, deules, diabes, diobles, diofles, diofules, dioules, diubles, diuoles.

² I only count instances in which the object is not separated from the genitive by more than two words, and in the few cases of double objects (e.g., "of deofles þeowdome & of his anwalde"), I count only the object closest to the word deofles (thus, in this example, þeowdome but not anwalde). These decisions are motivated by a desire to compile as conservative a list as possible, to avoid overstating the state for a given phrase's idiomatic nature. The choice of ten occurrences is completely arbitrary; the list provided here is only meant to serve as an illustrative guide. Different cut-off points would of course yield a longer or shorter list.

³ No variants of this frequent phrase occur in poetic contexts. In fact, the word costung almost never appears in poetry outside of the translations of the Psalms and the Lord's Prayer.

14	2.49	"	searo, searu, searwum, syrwm, etc. ⁴
11	1.95	"	bigencg, biggencg, biggengum
11	1.95	"	willan, willa, willen

300 53.46%

Thus one in eight occurrences (about 13%) of the word deofles in the surviving Old English corpus is an instance of the phrase deofles lare or its inflectional variants. It would be surprising if the most frequently-recurring phrases, at least, have not lost much of the force of their original signification. In contemporary English, "for God's sake" does not often imply what it literally states, while "for Pete's sake" almost never does. I would hesitate to divorce these OE phrases from their referents decisively, however, for although we do not necessarily think of heaven when we "thank heavens," sometimes in fact we do, and even when idly used the phrase has the potential to call certain images to mind. A wide variety of genitive constructions remain, furthermore, outside the scope of these set phrases.

These phrases are not evenly distributed throughout the corpus, however, and personal idiosyncracies can skew the evidence. Of the 11 occurrences of deofles bigencg and its variants, for instance, 10 are from Ælfric, as are 14 out of the 18 instances of deofles tyhting. Furthermore, Ælfric offers 8 out of the 9 occurrences of deofles templ, and 7 of the 8 cases of deofles beowa/beowdome. Wulfstan, on the other hand, prefers the phrase deofles lare--he provides 18 instances, while Ælfric, with a much more substantial corpus, offers only 14.

⁴ I have not counted the four instances of the combined form searocræftum, for either of its elements.



Figure 1. A scene from the life of Martin (Martin chases a demon from Avitianus' back, Sulpicius' *Dialogues* 3.8), taken from *The Hereford Troper* (Cotton Caligula A.XIV, fol. 29'). It is clear how this artist envisions the process of demonic temptation--the demon whispers evil thoughts directly into the ear. Yet the distinction between sinner and demon is compromised by the camouflage effect of the hunched demon, who blends in with the folds of the robes. At a quick glance or viewed from a short distance, one could imagine the sinner standing alone, with a hunched back and his own pair of demonic wings. The artist has thus skillfully sustained both the external and the internal nature of demonic instigation.

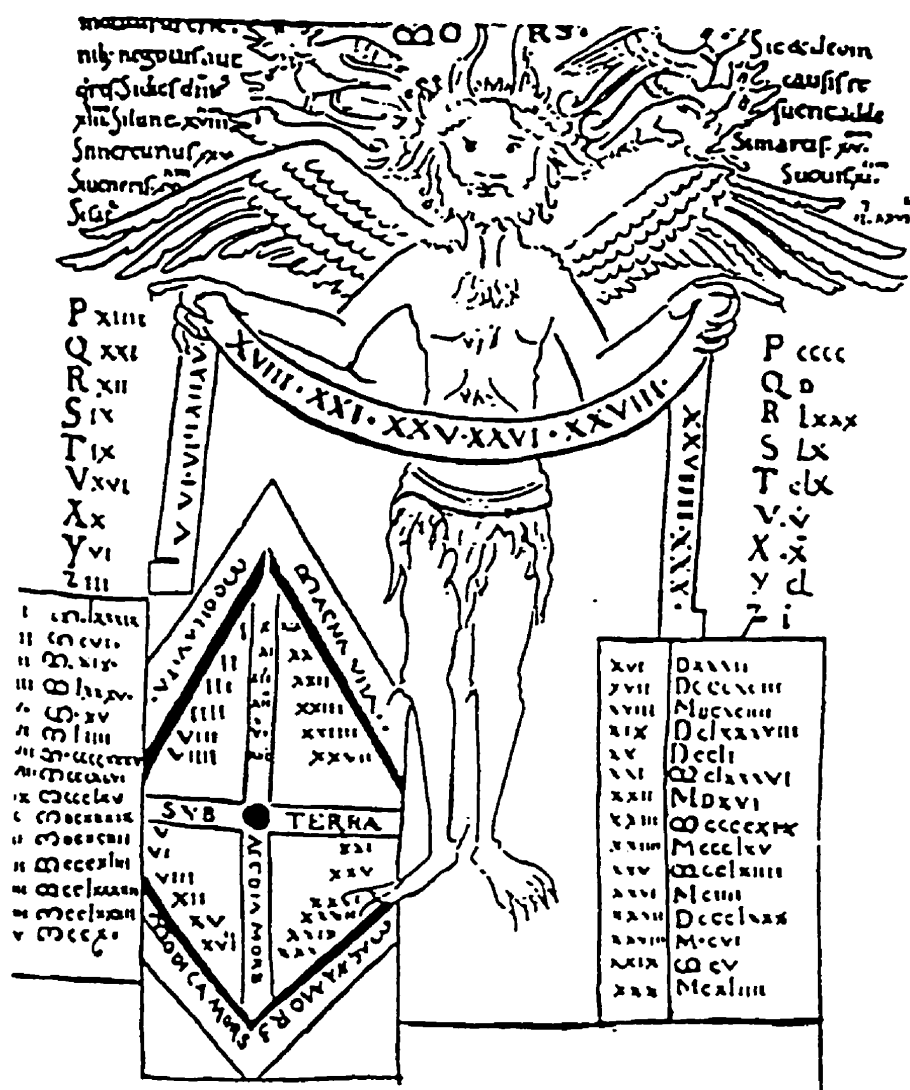


Figure 2. Tracing of Satan-Mors figure from the Leofric Missal (Bodley 579, fol. 50'), often taken to be the earliest depiction of the devil in Anglo-Saxon art (ca. 970s). While there are some bestial features, the figure is predominantly dignified and is in a posture indicating tranquility and freedom of motion. The figure of Christ-Vita facing the page (fol. 49^v) assumes an identical posture.

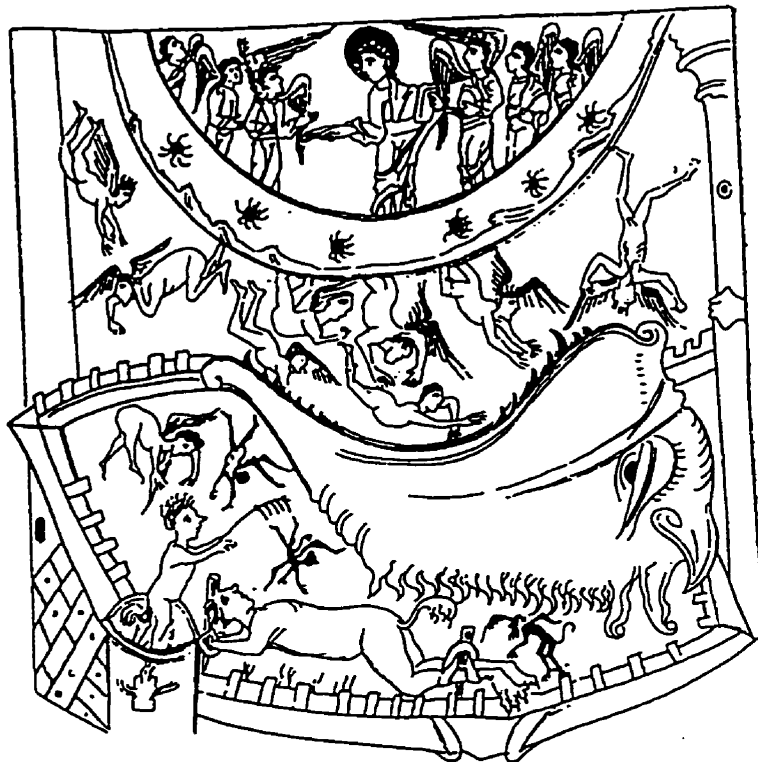


Figure 3. Satan is cast out of hell and bound in the drawings of Junius 11. Other than the tail and grotesque feet, he here appears basically human, though he looks longingly back to his lost heavenly abode.



Figure 4. The Junius 11 Satan is apparently resigned to his new-found fate--he looks to the side (in an attitude not unlike the 'two-eyed kings' in a modern deck of cards) with a subdued calmness that almost suggests dignity. Though his neck is bound as well as his hands and feet, his posture has changed from lying on his side to sitting upright. He remains tranquil and composed amidst the confusion of contorted, restless demons.



Figure 5. Satan sends an emissary in the Junius 11 account of Genesis B--or else, conceivably, the illustrator is adhering to the common iconographic convention of 'simultaneous representation,' drawing the same figure at two different moments on the same visual field (as with the dual Eves). Note how Satan's body and that of the emissary demon form a single, fluid arc, and how Satan here has wings (though in the previous drawings he had none). Thus, even bound in hell, Satan is iconographically assimilated with the mobile demon.

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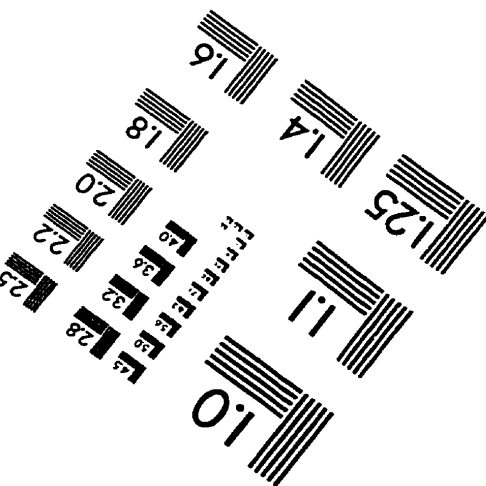
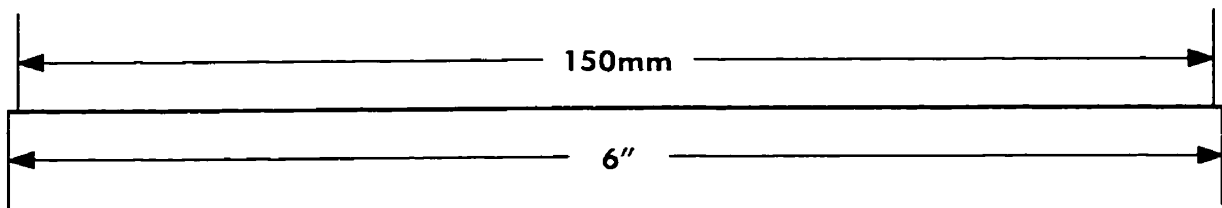
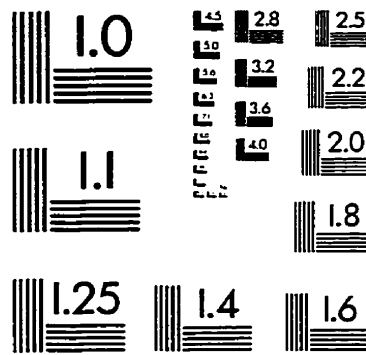
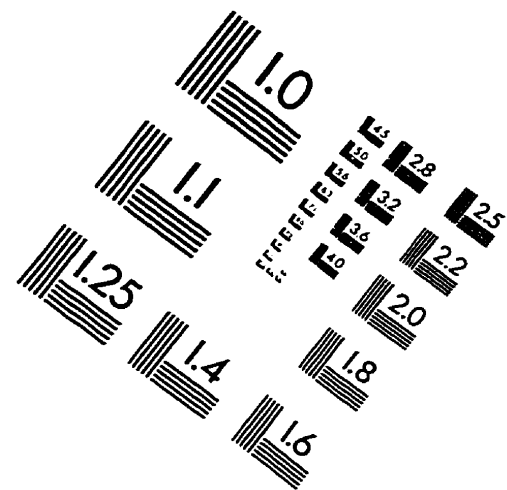
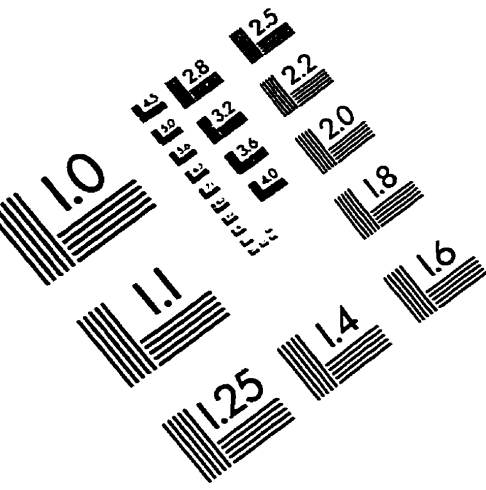
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