A STUDY OF CHRIST AND HIS SAINTS AS REPRESENTATIVES OF THE VALUES OF CHRISTIAN HEROISM IN OLD ENGLISH POETRY

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This dissertation investigates the concept of Christian heroism as it appears in a number of Old English poems, through a study of the figure of the miles Christi. These poems present a specific Christian heroism which, though couched in terms culled from Germanic heroism, nevertheless exists in its own right and is quite different from it. Christ and his saints are seen as heroes in themselves (Christian servants obedient to the will of God) rather than as heroic warriors as they are usually regarded (Germanic heroes fighting for a Christian cause). They are leaders and heroes in the sense of servants, and not only like kings and warriors of the Germanic code. A study of some poems from the Cynewulf canon shows that the poets understood Christian heroism to mean more than brave battling for the cause of good; in essence, it is complete submission to the will of God.

Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

- 2 Timothy 2:3

A.M.D.G.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION

Quin Hinieldus cum Christo? - What has Ingeld to do with Christ? It is the thought behind Alcuin's famous remonstrance to the monks of Lindisfarne that has prompted this investigation into the relation between Germanic and Christian heroism. Alcuin scolded the monks thus for their preference for listening to the old heroic lays rather than biblical truths in the refectory. Was this because the epics were so much more exciting than the scriptures? Were the secular values of Anglo-Saxon society more inveterate than the religious ideals the monasteries served to inculcate? There is an element of truth in both, which goes some way to account for the fact that early Christian poetry relied heavily on Germanic diction and metaphor for its effectiveness. In most Christian poems there is a residual heroic quality in the vocabulary and treatment of certain themes. Genesis B, for example, one of the earliest poems, presents God and his angels, Satan and his devils, and God and Adam as Germanic lords and their retainers. The metaphor is extremely appropriate, for as the concept of loyalty - that of the thane to his lord - is integral to Germanic heroic poetry, so here the same concept is at the core of the new ethical system by which the behaviour of Satan and Adam is judged. But beyond the metaphor, it was the heroic diction, the formulas and formulaic units, on which the Christian poets leaned heavily. The analogies were poetically effective and aesthetically satisfying; the vocabulary was their inheritance, which Christian poets intent on writing Christian poems were compelled to use. Yet it has been contended that the value system and terminology of heroic poetry were not suitable vehicles for the emergent religious poetry, that the Germanic garb hung on the poems "like a giant's robe/Upon a dwarfish thief" (Macbeth V:II:21-22). At best the new poetry was

ludicrous; at worst, seriously flawed. Many critics have seized upon the so-called incompatibility:

> The Christian epic hero has been viewed as garbed in the borrowed robes, or rather armour, of his Germanic counterpart, as a warrior venturing into battle against spiritual evil and the forces of Satan even as the secular lord and his comitatus engaged the armed forces of predatory enemies. There is, of course, much truth in this picture ... Christ and his saints come marching in with many of the qualities of a Beowulf or a Byrhtnoth. And the phraseology and tone in which these qualities and actions are depicted in the poetry are similar to those arraying the heroes of the Anglo-Saxon secular world.[1]

In the earlier poetry at least, the Christian subject matter usually comprised exciting adventures and martial exploits since formulas already existed for them. Germanic words and compounds used to express the idea of "ruler" were adapted to serve as synonyms for God, like "waldend" and "drihten". Woolf, however, has declared that the heroic convention was never satisfactorily adapted to Christian themes. "The heroic formulae were usually merely decorative, for any more integral use of the old style would have resulted in a deep-rooted incongruity; but nevertheless, even this superficial usage is unsatisfactory; the apostles, for instance ... are ill at ease in their disguise of Germanic retainers, 'Christes þegnas'."[2] It is the aim of this investigation to show

how incomplete a reading of Old English religious poetry this is and, for the most part, quite unfounded, although there are notable exceptions. Of course there is a problem; Shippey mentions the incongruity between the "highly developed military vocabulary and resolutely abrupt syntax" of the heroic tradition, and the "alien subjects - notably the virtues of humility and passivity [which] sought expression in a native style."[3] Yet neither view takes cognizance of the fact that there exists a Christian heroism in its own right. Though based on values different from those of Germanic heroism, it nevertheless holds its own beside its earlier counterpart.

Apart from a few flaws in certain poems, the subject matter of Old English Christian poetry - in so far as it exhibits heroism of a kind - is by and large consonant with the heroic diction and metaphor in which it is couched. The concept of Christian heroism must therefore be examined. What makes Christ, and his saints, champions of God in a way, say, that Beowulf never can be; and why can heroic diction, by and large, be so suitably applied to them? It is that quality peculiar to the Christian hero, that "better fortitude/Of patience and heroic martyrdom" (Paradise Lost IX:31-32), by which the saint trusts solely in God for his strength. It is to what extent his own will is brought in line with that of God, that his worth as a Christian hero is measured. And it is only through patience and endurance that this alignment occurs. "Patience is the virtue which shows itself when we peacefully accept God's promises, supported by confidence in the divine providence, power and goodness: also when we bear any evils that we have to bear calmly, as things which our supreme Father has sent for our good."[4] And, of course,

it is temptation which is the main battlefield for the saint:

> A good temptation is that whereby God tempts even the righteous for the purpose of proving them, not as though he were ignorant of the disposition of their hearts, but for the purpose of exercising or manifesting their faith or patience, as in the case of Abraham and Job; or of lessening their self-confidence ... that both they themselves may become wiser by experience, and others may profit by their example.[5]

That Germanic heroic terms are therefore applicable to the heroism of Christian saints does not, of course, erase the problem inherent in this question of fortitude. If the saint is essentially a passive hero, relying on God for his strength rather than trusting in his own, surely those terms which depict an active Germanic hero, in full armour and in search of his own "dom" and "lof", must be incongruous in a Christian context? We are familiar with the figure of the Germanic warrior cut by Beowulf, a brave man who is committed to society: to the people of Hrothgar when, as hero, he accomplishes the death of Grendel, and to his own people as their king, by the slaying of the dragon. Yet this commitment only serves to further his own gaining distinction; in essence, the pursuit of his own lasting reputation drives him on to deeds of valour. In contrast, it is service to God which sustains the Christian hero in his battle of suffering; God's glory is the paramount issue and this is achieved through the saint's "þeowdom" and "martyrhad". The warrior's motivation

is essentially selfish, though it benefits society; that of the saint is selfless if, paradoxically, directed to God alone. The Germanic warrior is a man of great physical prowess and courage, and uses his strength to serve the interests of his lord and kinsmen. (Three times Beowulf trusts in his own strength at a critical juncture in the accomplishment of his three heroic deeds - 1270, 1533, 2540). He performs difficult and dangerous feats which he undertakes to accomplish, or die in the attempt. Because his valour is his own, any reputation he gains accrues to him. (The twelve warriors encircling Beowulf's barrow extol his courageous deeds - 3169-82). Yet it is only within the context of society, and for society, that his feats are achieved. In contrast, the trial of the Christian hero is one of protecting his personal religious integrity. He is not necessarily a man of physical strength; his holiness comes from God and so his life is a witness to the greater glory of God. In Christian poetry at least, his temptations occur outside of society, and do not benefit it in any way. The warrior seeks his own glory; the saint, that of God. Surely the borrowed robes of the mighty man of valour must sit awkwardly upon the ordinary man whose strength is of God? This can be answered by looking at the figure of the miles Christi in a number of poems, loosely called the Cynewulf group.

Because the signed poems of Cynewulf, and those which have been linked with his name, date from roughly the ninth century - allowing, of course, for the very speculative nature of the subject - they are representative of the crisis taking place in Old English poetry at that time: the development from purely heroic verse before the advent of Christianity in the early sixth century right through to those Christian poems which exhibit little, if any, vestiges of the heroic

convention, in diction and values. Schaar has, in fact, from an extensive structural analysis, divided the Cynewulf group into two. The first comprises the four poems of the canon itself and Andreas - a group characterized by the influence exerted by Beowulf and the earlier Caedmonian poems; the second, poems such as The Dream of the Rood, Christ I and III and Guthlac A and B - a group composed almost independent of the epics:

> It is important for us to realise that this [independence] is in no way due to the fact that the authors of The Dream, Christ III, the Guthlac poems ... are occupied with religious subjects different from the old tales of valour and brave deeds. The themes of Cynewulf and the Andreas-poet are also religious, and nothing, a priori, need have prevented the authors of Guthlac A and B from describing the saint's struggle with the devils and the disease in the same way as similar situations are described by the Andreas-poet in terms culled from Beowulf ... the reason may be that these 'independent' poems form part of a special movement in Anglo-Saxon poetry, a movement trying to create new poetical ideas, free from the influence of the heroic age.[6]

Close investigation of some of these poems will reveal that, though the adaptation of Germanic to Christian certainly was more successful in some poems than in others, there was always a fundamental common

ground between the two conventions, and any critical appraisal of the suitability of heroic vocabulary and metaphor to the Christian poems must take this into account. It is heroism which, though different in the Germanic and Christian ethical systems, is nevertheless the stuff of epic. And we are dealing with two different kinds of epic. One we might term the ethical, the protagonist of which is Job, or the Suffering Servant in Isaiah; the other could be called the poetic, whose heroes are those of classical and Germanic tradition. The two are diametrically opposed; yet the diction of one serves the purpose of the other because of their common ground. This will be shown through examination of the most remarkable religious poem in Old English, The Dream of the Rood. In so far as it portrays Christ as the active Germanic hero, and the Cross as the suffering servant - or retainer - so combining the two modes of heroism, it will serve as a useful stepping stone to those poems which deal with Christian heroism exclusively. It should be noted at this point, though, that although the epitome of the Christian hero is the patient servant dependant on God, there is, nevertheless another, lesser kind of heroism: that of the active fighter for God, also dependant on him. Where the Christian hero differs from his Germanic counterpart is in his reliance on divine strength instead of on his own. So he seeks the glory of God, rather than his own "tir" and "blæd". Examples of this higher Christian heroism include Christ's overcoming Satan in the Temptation in the wilderness, and his victory on the cross in the Crucifixion. But Christ is also the active warrior in his harrowing of hell, and victory over the hosts of Satan in heaven. The Christian heroic spectrum is thus comprehensive. It embrances both the active and passive modes of fortitude; the active valour, say, of Judas Maccabeus, and the patient suffering of Job. It includes the perfect fortitude tempered by reason and holiness, and also the incomplete fortitude demeaned by greed and

pride. "The Anglo-Saxons were, of course, familiar with the Augustine doctrine that the devil had fallen through pride, the "engles oferhygd", and yet pride was a prominent characteristic of Germanic heroism: not the pride of Guthlac, over which the fiends taunt him, but the pride of Beowulf, who 'strenge getruwode/mundgripe mægenes' and who, despite a pious acknowledgement of God's assistance, would scarcely have been content to ascribe to him the glory of his victories."[7] Christian heroic tradition, therefore, offered the Old English poets a very varied palette for portraying the Christian hero.

It will be seen that the concept of heroism in Christian poetry is extremely complicated. We are not dealing with a simple dichotomy of Germanic and Christian; the Christian itself is many-coloured and, to a greater or lesser degree, consonant with the Germanic. But at the deepest level it is flatly contradictory. The Christian hero's work is holiness or sanctity; the Germanic hero's is courage, and valour. The one encourages patience; the other pride. It is holiness, the principal characteristic of the image of God, which makes the saint godlike, and thus truly heroic. Whether it is Andrew, actively engaged on a mission to Mermedonia, or Guthlac, enduring temptation in a fen; whether it is Christ hurling down Satan from heaven, or willingly going to his death on the cross, what characterizes the Christian hero is sanctity, that quality which comes of aligning the human will with the divine. It must, of course, entail courage as well, but a valour dependant on God. In his dependance - his weakness - the Christian saint is strong:

> The resolution of the paradox of strength in weakness lies in the distinction between acquired and infused virtues, and the decisive role of divine grace. The martyr's frailty is buttressed by divine power; his weakness is sustained by a strength infused from God. All that is demanded of him is the acknowledgement of his frailty, and a complete trust in providence. Like the fortitude of active valour, the better fortitude of patience hinges upon an exemplary faith. A heroism of trust underlies action and suffering alike, and both formulae are in reality the dual modes of a heroic piety.[8]

In two of his signed poems Cynewulf opposes these alternative ideals. Christ II presents Christ as the active warrior, whether ascending from his comitatus of apostles, or descending to harrow hell and release his captive thanes. The Fates of the Apostles, on the other hand, deals with the patient endurance of the apostles, who undergo the martyrdom of both suffering and death. In the former we have the active fortitude, whose quality is holiness, and the latter exhibits the passive and better heroism of patience. Yet the apostles are depicted too much as Germanic heroes for the amount of active fighting they do. The literal portrayal is therefore not appropriate for the actions described. Likewise, in Andreas heroic convention is sometimes too literally applied, so that the hero Andrew is not always the active Christian warrior, but often exhibits vestiges of his Germanic counterpart. The inconsistency of portrayal causes some incongruities, which we shall see. In Guthlac A, however, there is

a fine synthesis between heroic phraseology and Christian theme, precisely because there is no ambiguity in the depiction of the anchorite. His is a passive heroism; heroic terms which evoke no expectations of active fighting are applied to him. And so, when in Christ and Satan, that poem in the Junius MS which has so many affinities with the Cynewulf group, Christ is depicted as an active lord freeing the righteous souls from hell, the heroic terms used are consonant with his activity. The kind of temptation he undergoes is certainly not that of the Gospels, but rather similar to his hurling down of Satan from heaven. Once again, then, he is the active Christian hero, and his feat is appropriately described in the phraseology of heroic tradition.

In this thesis, then, the presentation of the miles Christi will be examined, as it appears in these poems. Because it is so complex, it will be well to bear in mind the various distinctions we have noted. Both active and passive heroism in Christian poetry is dependant on God alone; its mark is sanctity. The former may include the concept of the iustum bellum which presents the warrior literally fighting for God against the heathen; and that of the eremite, who actively contends with incarnate demons. In the poems under scrutiny, the iustum bellum does not occur on the human level as it does so often in prose; rather, examples include the harrowing of hell and the expulsion of Satan from heaven. The anchorite Guthlac, furthermore, is compelled to tackle hordes of demons. The better fortitude, that of passive endurance, also has two manifestations: the suffering servant or martyr, who strives to align his will with the divine, and the monastic, who lives in obedience to his Rule and, ultimately, to God. Guthlac, of course, may be considered an example of the former if his contest is a

psychomachia, rather than an actual engagement with fiends; but certainly the finest exemplar is Christ, willingly suffering death on the cross. With the monastic life we shall have little to do; most instances occur in prose. Perhaps the word "martyrdom" sums up the essence of Christian heroism, for it encompasses all of the above. The use of that term was not restricted to those who died for the faith, but included all saints who resisted passively and endured suffering; in fact, it was more the willing acceptance of death which earned them their victory, rather than the act of death itself. The figure of the martyr, therefore, must now be investigated in order to come to some understanding of the relation of Ingeld to Christ within the corpus of Old English Christian poetry.

CHAPTER 2 : THE DREAM OF THE ROOD

One of the finest religious poems in English, The Dream of the Rood, reveals an almost perfect coalescence of the heroic and Christian traditions. By utilizing the formulaic techniques of Germanic heroic poetry to present Christ as the active warrior, as well as the Christian ideal of the suffering servant in the portrayal of the Cross, the poet has composed a poem which reveals the true significance of the Crucifixion. It is the very suffering and defeat in the Crucifixion which is the occasion for Christ's victory over death. Most critics tend to see Christ as the Germanic lord and the Cross as his retainer who, in an ironic reversal of his role, is compelled to acquiesce in the death of his lord, and even be his bane.[1] Certainly this depiction contributes to the richness of the poet's creation; but the poet draws on another tradition as well. By identifying the Cross with Christ's human and vulnerable nature, he fuses Germanic and Christian elements in the figure of the Cross. Likewise, although Christ is the Germanic hero, this idea is not strictly the poet's own, as Ravennate iconography and Latin hymns of the period present him as the conquering hero. So again, in the person of Christ, heroic and religious coalesce; and the marriage of the two throughout the poem is a success. In fact, the strand of heroism is ubiquitous in the fabric of the whole. The dreamer is called "hæleð" in lines 78 and 95.[2] The only other time it is used is to describe Christ in line 39; clearly a connection is meant to be drawn. "The dreamer has become 'hæleð' through his vision, a conversion, perhaps, but an awareness of the salutary power of the rood. And, by extension, he is giving his audience the opportunity to become 'hæleð' , by believing in the rood also, for the vision of the rood is what truly makes a man 'hæleð'."[3]

Such an observation is actually an endorsement of the pattern of Christian heroism depicted in The Dream, and in poems such as Guthlac A. Ordinary men may become heroes, in contrast to Germanic tradition, where only those who have proved themselves worthy through heroic deeds may be given the appellation. It is Christ who has made ordinary men worthy, so that by no power of themselves may they claim worthiness. Those who believe in the significance of the Crucifixion are Christian heroes primarily because of Christ. Of course, this observation does not end here. The dreamer is only called "hæled" in certain contexts, when he is invoked and set apart from others. The poet has thus indicated that he is not like other men - as Guthlac is not - but singular because ennobled by his vision. Even in Christian heroic tradition, therefore, some men are more saintly and holy than others, because they trust God more. The degree of sanctity is in direct proportion to the extent to which men rely on God; and in inverse proportion to dependence on their own strength. But all men who believe in the power of the Cross, says the Rood-poet, are heroes; and they are so because of the victory of Christ.

That Christ hastens to his death with all the resolution and boldness of a Germanic hero is a commonplace of criticism on the poem. In contrast to the later depiction of him as suffering the ignominy of being nailed to an instrument of torture, of undergoing all the pain and humiliation of mortality, he hastens with great zeal ("efstan elne micle", 34a) and is determined to climb up on the Cross ("he me wolde on gestigan", 34b). He is an active, even eager, agent in the tradition of heroic valour:

Ongyrede hine þa geong hæleð, (þæt wæs God ælmihtig),
strang ond stiðmod; gestah he on gealgan heanne,
modig on manigra gesyhðe, þa he wolde mancyn lysan.
Bifode ic þa me se beorn ymbclypte. 39-42

We might note a few points here. First, Christ strips himself, and does not undergo the humiliation of being stripped by mocking soldiers. Woolf (147) has pointed out an interesting parallel in the Aeneid (V.241ff) where Entellus strips himself for an heroic encounter, an example of a voluntary and heroic act. But within Christian tradition as well, it was a patristic observation that, just as Adam in his defeat assumed clothing, so Christ in his victory laid them down. Second, Christ advances to do battle as a warrior might, mounting his horse and gripping his sword. It is no accident that words such as "gestah" and "ymbclypte" are used. Cherniss[4] has devoted a whole article to the depiction of the cross as the sword of the warrior, showing how closely both inanimate objects which face the enemies of their lord are united in the poet's mind. It would have seemed natural to the poet, he argues, given the formulation of Christ as a heroic warrior, to envisage the close relationship between Christ and the Cross as the same as the bond between a hero and his weapon, especially since the Cross assists in the ultimate defeat of his enemies. The word "gestah" is also used by Cynewulf in Christ II to describe Christ's Ascension; noteworthy are its connotations of glory and triumph. The word is appropriate here because of the victorious nature of Christ's sacrifice. Within Christian tradition, Christ's voluntary action overcomes his opponent, Satan. This is the rationale for Christ's depiction as conquering hero in the mosaics at Ravenna, and as king in Latin hymns about the Crucifixion. Woolf (144) mentions his depiction as a Roman soldier

with the cross swung over his shoulder as weapon; and the idea of Christ's reigning from the tree found its finest expression in Fortunatus' hymn Vexilla Regis Prodeunt. The skill of the Rood-poet, then, consists in his weaving both heroic and Christian elements in his portrayal of Christ the victor on the cross. But his creation is all the richer for his depiction of the Cross as victim. It is the Cross in The Dream who is the exemplar of the higher Christian heroism as we have defined it. The Cross takes on the aspects of Christ's suffering as a mortal, leaving him free to be represented as the divine conqueror. That Christ's may have been the victory of sinless, glorious humanity, seems not to have occurred to the poet's mind - or, if it did, he chose not to treat Christ's victory in this way. Christian heroism, then, as conceived of in the poem, is that of fallen man, made worthy through Christ's triumph, and determined to strive for perfection. It is markedly different from Germanic heroism, represented by Beowulf, who is seen as the almost godlike hero, intent on maintaining his own reputation and, as king, on protecting his people. So then, the Cross represents the suffering of Christ as human:

> þurhdrifan hi me mid deorcan næglum; on me sindon þa dǽg gesiene,
> opene inwid-hlemmas. Ne dorste ic hira nænigum sceaðan.
> Bysmeredon hie unc butu ætgædere. Eall ic wæs mid blode bestemed,
> begoten of þæs guman sidan, siððan he hæfde his gast onsended.
> Feala ic on þam beorge gebidan hæbbe
> wraðra wyrda. 46-51

The Cross by its passive endurance becomes a surrogate for Christ. It undergoes the humiliation and suffering which are the marks of a Christian hero - and more, in obedience to divine decree, it does not dare to bend or break ("bugan oððe berstan", 36) or even fall to the ground ("feallan to foldan sceatum", 43). It wants to protect Christ from his enemies; but it stands firm at his command. Patience and obedience under such duress make the Cross exemplary within Christian tradition. By identifying the Cross with Christ, the poet has linked the idea of sacrificial offering and divine victory. The Cross is inanimate weapon, heroic retainer - and representative of Christ's humanity. Christ is Germanic warrior lord - and victorious Christian king. In the unification of the two figures by the death on the Cross, we observe the highest example of Christian valour: victory brought about by obedience and suffering. In his depiction of the "gewinne" (65) the poet has evoked an heroic aura as well as a religious one, for the word - as will be seen in other poems - frequently means "battle" or "strife", as well as "agony". The poet has called the opponents of Christ "feondas' (30,33) and the nails are metaphorically termed "strælum" (62). This imagery, however, goes further than that of the literal battle; it suggests the struggle against the powers of darkness, or spiritual warfare, so important in hagiographical poems. And, of course, the concept of the agon is a peculiarly Christian one: a battle of suffering which, after patience and endurance, must result in victory. So the apparent defeat of the Crucifixion is, in reality, a divine triumph.

This is clearly conveyed through the skilful use made of heroic convention. Not only is the chief figure Christ a warrior valiantly engaging in a conflict, but the apostles and other followers are depicted - like one aspect of the Cross - as his retainers. Christ is not a warrior lord in name only; his comitatus surrounds him. The apostles are described by the heavily Germanic word "hilderincas" (61b), and the friends who discover the Cross are called thanes of the lord (75b). Furthermore, the actions of these retainers are integral to heroic tradition. The Cross's bowing down to deliver its holy burden to the apostles ("hnag ic hwæðre þam secgum to handa /eaðmod elne mycle", 59-60) and the apostles' singing a dirge as they prepare the sepulchre for their lord ("Ongunnon him þa sorhleoð galan/earme on þa æfentide", 67-68) are examples of the duty of a retainer in service to his lord. The latter action in particular, echoes the ritual lamentation at the grave of the hero in Beowulf (3148ff). This heroic imagery is successful because the metaphors are lightly drawn to suggest the aura of Germanic tradition, which enriches the Gospel account, without detracting from its truth. The apostles are not required to perform martial exploits to earn their appellation of thanes - as they are in The Fates of the Apostles - and the poet has skilfully depicted them as retainers in occasions suitable to both traditions: service to their lord, and attendance at his burial. It must be pointed out, furthermore, that the Rood-poet was not a slave to the diction and thought of heroic tradition; that his depiction of the Crucifixion thus was not obligatory for him. He astutely perceived how much the imagery of the earlier tradition would enhance and enrich the latter, and composed his poem accordingly. One has only to look at the Crucifixion in

Christ III (1081-1127) to see the truth of this. There it is portrayed as a sacrifice rather than a martial encounter: to Christ are ascribed pain and affliction. He appears as the victim, not the conquering hero; in fact, more in keeping with the Gospel account.[5] This suffering passive lord is the antithesis of the victorious lord in The Dream. The one is insulted, suffers and endures; the other hastens, strips and mounts. Christian heroism, then, is more obvious in the figure of Christ the victim and sacrificial offering; but its treatment at the hands of the Rood-poet is more subtle. He ascribes it to the Cross, in order that the strengths of the two conventions enrich the significance of the Crucifixion. This act is both active and passive, symbolised by the identification of Christ and the Cross, when they are mocked together ("Bysmeredon hie unc butu ætgædere", 48) and the Cross is covered with the blood shed from Christ's side ("Eall ic wæs mid blode bestemed,/begoten of þæs guman sidan," 48-49). Christ is the conqueror in defeat; he suffers death but overcomes Satan; he vanquishes death but is slain. This one act combines heroic and Christian valour. By this act Christ is both the doer of great deeds like Beowulf, and the lowly sufferer - through his surrogate the Cross - prevailing through affliction, like Job. It is in the alignment of the human will with the divine that victory occurs: the Cross remaining steadfast at the command, and Christ hastening to do the task set before him. Heroic and Christian meet in the depiction of this crucially significant action.

In this poem, then, the two motifs which are discernible in all Old English Christian poetry are evident: the epic heroic theme

and the religious one. It was natural that the Rood-poet should use what heroic tradition offered him; it is a mark of his genius that he wove it into the fabric of the whole so well. What is remarkable in this poem is the religious fervour: the zeal of the two protagonists, but more - the determination of the dreamer who, we have noted, is called "hæleð", to be true to the vision he has received. It is this Christian aura which lends credence to the framework of Germanic convention. At the very heart of the poem, the act of the Crucifixion, the two traditions are woven so tightly that the final impression is wholly convincing. The image of the Crucifixion as a conflict, and Christ as the warrior lord is very appropriate, for the whole point of the Redemption is that an opponent, the antagonist Satan, is overcome, and the hero Christ is triumphant in rescuing souls from his clutches. In Christ III Christ merely buys the souls with his own life ("þær he leoflice lifes ceapode", 1095 and "deore gebohte/þæt longe lif", 1462-63), a heroic action indeed, but not as rich as the portrayal of the redemptive act in The Dream. Here Christ vanquishes death with his own death ("Deað he þær byrigde; hwæðere eft Dryhten aras/mid his miclan mihte", 101-102). The one is led like a lamb to the slaughter; the other hastens bold, strong and resolute. Both are heroes, both align their will to the divine; but the depiction in The Dream is enhanced by the inclusion of both, in the persons of Christ and the Cross. This distinction between divinity and humanity, triumph and suffering, is united in the stylistic device of communicatio idiomatum. Examples include "Geseah ic weruda God þearle þenian" (51b-52a), "Genamon hie þær almihtigne God" (60b), "Aledon hie ðær limwerigne,

gestodon him æt his lices heafdum;/beheoldon hie ðær heofones Dryhten" (63-64a), and "gesetton hie þæron sigora Wealdend" (67a). This device, a very close connection of apparent opposites, serves to stress the many-stranded texture of the poem: the Cross as victory seat and bane, as retainer and Christian hero; Christ as king and victim, as Almighty God and mortal. In short, the diction and style of the poem perfectly enhance the two-fold action at the heart of the poem, the Crucifixion. The portrayal of the Cross and Christ is a fusion of the two traditions which were the poet's legacy as a Christian and Anglo-Saxon. In the idea of the Crucifixion he drew on both, and the resultant synthesis is a near perfect, remarkable poem. "In The Dream of the Rood the mystery of the resurrection, the victory of Christ over his enemies through his death at their hands, finds its Germanic heroic correlative in the paradox of a weapon-retainer which, by becoming the instrument of its lord's death, becomes the instrument of his victory."[6] And so the compatibility of Ingeld and Christ is secured.

CHAPTER 3 : CHRIST II AND CHRIST AND SATAN

We move on now from the active Germanic heroism of Christ in The Dream of the Rood to his active Christian heroism in Cynewulf's Christ II, and Christ and Satan. It should be stressed that the difference between the two is in the heroic act itself. In The Dream, Christ's feat of redemption on the cross is essentially passive: in death he conquers. Hence the description of him as a warrior in the Germanic mould is metaphorical. But in the other two poems his actions are indeed active: he literally fights for his Father in the Expulsion of Satan from heaven, and in the Harrowing of Hell. He is not like a warrior; he is one, in the Christian sense. Christ the warrior manifests Christian heroism in his overcoming Satan in the iustum bellum of the spiritual realm. In The Dream, the poet's ingenuity lay in his portrayal of the passive act as an active achievement, and the resultant blending was very successful. The poets of Christ II and Christ and Satan had the easier task of describing Christ's warlike feats in the appropriate diction of Germanic heroic deeds. The synthesis was no less effective. When heroic elements appear, they have been adapted to the expression of Christian ideas. The poets are not, by and large, concerned with confronting Germanic heroism with the Christian ideal - as are the poets of Andreas and Juliana, for example - but they employ the Germanic ideal of pride to account for the disloyalty of Satan to his leader, God. In Christian terms, the Devil is the rebel and outcast; in the Germanic view he is the faithless retainer and eternal exile. His heroic fortitude, though laudable for its courage in Germanic terms, is nevertheless a specious heroism in the Christian view because it is in direct conflict with the will

of God. But the protagonist Christ in both poems brings his will in line with that of his Father, both in his active deeds as deity in the Expulsion of Satan and Harrowing of Hell, and in his passive endurance as man in the Temptation and Crucifixion. Significant actions in both poems will be compared for an important reason: the descent-ascent motif, or humiliation-ex altation theme,[1] is common and integral to both. In Christ II Cynewulf focuses on the Ascension, the glorification of Christ after his self-abasement in the Incarnation: Christ ascends because he voluntarily descended. Likewise, the Harrowing of Hell could only occur after his Passion on the cross: he descended to victory after being raised up in death. It is only suffering and humiliation willingly undergone which brings triumph; this is Christian heroism. The structure of Christ and Satan is tripartite: the first presents Satan who, exalting himself in heaven, is humbled and thrust down to hell; the second, Christ who, because he suffered on the cross, gained the victory in harrowing hell; and the third focuses on the showdown between the two antagonists, in which patient endurance vanquishes presumption. In active and passive deeds, Christ is hero.

The primarily passive acts of Christ in lines 720-755 of Christ II[2] are, interestingly, called "leaps", essentially active endeavours. Cynewulf must have been aware of the victory inherent in the humiliation and endurance of Christ, as were his probable prose sources.[3] The first four "leaps" are passive: Christ is conceived, taking on human flesh and emptying himself of glory (cf. Philippians 2:6-11). Then he is born as a humble babe, is put to death on the cross, and is laid in the tomb. In willingly undergoing our human lot, he gains the triumph of vanquishing his foes. He releases the righteous souls from the clutches of hell, and ascends in glory to his Father.

These last two "leaps" are obviously active. It is interesting that, in this poem, Christians are exhorted to believe in the truth of the Ascension for their salvation, whereas in The Dream it was incumbent on them to have faith in the significance of the Crucifixion. But both are crucial, in that they exemplify Christ exalted; yet one is active and the other passive. Interestingly enough, the Epistle to the Hebrews mentions the Crucifixion only once; it emphasises the condescension of the Son in the Incarnation and, after his death, his exaltation in the Ascension. This descent-ascent motif is clearly brought out in the passage under discussion. Cynewulf uses the parallel construction "it was the x leap when ..." to play one "leap" off against another. So "þa he on fæmnan astag" (720) is countered by "þa he on rode astag" (727); "þa he þone beam ofgeaf" (729) finds its opposite in "þa he to heofonum astag" (737). The two other "leaps", those of the Incarnation and Harrowing of hell, though both descents, are similarly contrasted: the babe "þa he in binne wæs" (724) with the conqueror "þa he hellwarena heap forbygde" (731). It is Satan who then becomes the one who lies in the dungeon "clommum gefæstnad" (735), just as the babe was once "claþum bewunden" (725) This alternation in the status of Christ and his adversary Satan will be examined more fully in the treatment of Christ and Satan. Cynewulf closes the passage with an exhortation to Christ's comitatus on earth, the "geþungen þegnweorud" (751), to follow Christ's footsteps as it were, in ascending to heaven. Christian heroism, then, is not the exclusive preserve of doughty and exalted warriors, but the call of all believers, through the merits of Christ. Yet the most patient and humble of these "thanes" deserve the appellation more than others, for they reflect most clearly the virtues of their leader, who conquered when he suffered most.

This paradox is the pivot on which the poet of Christ and Satan has centred his poem. The tripartite structure of the poem has been mentioned; the abasement-exaltation motif is treated in a different way in each part. But the figures of Christ and Satan are integral to its working. They are indirectly played off against each other in the first two parts, but the contrast is exceptionally clear in the opening lines of the poem, 1-33.[4] The picture of Christ the creator, exalted but humbling his Godhead in the act of creation has a foil in the subsequent portrayal of Satan, debased in perdition for striving to raise himself above the Godhead. Clearly, the descent-ascent theme of Christ II is manifested in this poem, too. Creation is a descending movement; Christ by descending and creating, is glorified. The paradox that Satan, by seeking to rise and destroy, is brought low, complicates this motif, which makes Christ and Satan a far richer poem. Christ's heroism in the former poem is clear enough, but Christ's heroism set against the specious heroism of his antagonist in Christ and Satan is thrown into relief. Close scrutiny of the parallelism of two passages in this poem[5] will bear out the contrast in the poet's mind, of self-exaltation, which abases, and self-denigration, which glorifies.

Hwearf þa to helle þa he gehened wæs,
Godes andsaca; dydon his gingran swa
gifre and grædige, þa he God bedraf
in þæt hate hof þam is hel nama.

190-193

Hwearf þa to helle hæleða bearnum
Meotud þurh mihte; wolde manna rim
fela þusenda forð gelædan
up to eðle.

400-403a

Both the humbled Satan and powerful Christ descend to hell; Satan because he is the adversary of God, and Christ because of his compassion for the race of men. So Satan is shown as going to hell involuntarily in the abasement which follows his aspiration, Christ as descending by his own decision, in the last and lowest of his "leaps" that leads to his supreme exaltation. Satan's followers, as well, are involuntarily humbled because of their cupidity. Christ as active hero drives them down to hell. The thanes of Christ, on the other hand, are raised up to heaven. It should be noted that the comitatus of Satan is the subject of an active verb "dydon", but that of Christ the object of "gelædan": its role is entirely passive. This is in keeping with Christian heroism, waiting upon God; and also suggests that they are exalted as heroes not on their own merits alone, but on the victory-sacrifice of Christ. This, the Crucifixion, is recognised by the poet as a glorious deed ("fæger wæs þæt ongin") in lines 547-557, heroic in itself because Christ voluntarily mounted the cross, and also in its consequences, since in his passion and death he overcame Satan. Christ denigrated himself in order that his followers be exalted in heaven. Satan tried to raise himself up, with the result that his thanes were abased in hell. The abasement-exaltation theme is reinforced in both poems by the description of the last and lowest descent, the Harrowing of Hell.

The treatment of this victorious descent will be investigated in each poem. Both Cynewulf in Christ II and the poet of Christ and Satan present Christ as the active Christian warrior fighting and vanquishing his adversary in order to lead the righteous souls to his Father. But Cynewulf includes many more heroic details, so that

the triumph becomes like that of a Germanic warrior returning from a successful military exploit. The song of welcome by the angels in lines 558-585 is couched in true heroic diction. Christ has plundered hell ("bireafod", 558) of its tribute ("gafoles", 559) with the result that the Devil's warriors ("deofla cempan", 563) are deprived of prosperity ("dugudum bidæled", 563):

> Ne meahtan wiþerbreocan wige spowan
> wæpna wyrpum, siþþan wuldres Cyning,
> heofonrices Helm, hilde gefremede
> wiþ his ealdfeondum Anes meahtum,
> þær he of hæfte ahlod huþe mæste
> of feonda byrig folces unrim 564-569

After the battle play ("gudplegan", 573) he returns to his city ("ceastre", 578) to resume his throne ("giefstol", 572). Such diction is obviously metaphorical. Cynewulf does not conceive of Christ as the Germanic warrior, but uses heroic terminology to describe his active harrowing and subsequent glory. Yet it is quite apposite, for Christ is the Christian warrior, and his victory is a literal one in a way that, say, spiritual warfare for a saint is not. Furthermore, Cynewulf has precedent in treating Christ's return thus: the questions and answers of Psalm 24:7-10 were connected in patristic convention with the Ascension of the victorious Christ.[6] Brown (9) mentions that Gregory of Nyssa in his sermon on the Ascension combined Christ's descent to hell and his Ascension because of the repetition of the question in the Psalm "Who is the King of Glory?". He made the angels first challenge Christ as he descends to do battle, and then again on

his return as he ascends to heaven. Cynewulf does the same, recalling the Harrowing of Hell with "wuldres Cyning" (565) and Christ's Ascension in "geatu ontynaƀ" (576). The poet of Christ and Satan, however, handles the Harrowing of hell more imaginatively. He describes the victory itself, ingeniously using the reactions of captors and captives alike. Christ is the soldier with his legions ("þegen mid þreate", 388) and the prince of angels ("þeoden engla", 388) but the portrayal of him as conqueror depends for its effectiveness on the lamentations of the devils:

> Nu ƀes egsa com,
> dyne for Drihtne, sceal þes dreorga heap
> ungeara nu atol þrowian.
> Hit is se seolfa Sunu Waldendes,
> engla Drihten. Wile uppe heonan
> sawla læden, and we seoƀƀan a
> þæs hereweorces henƀo geþoliaƀ. 393-399.

It is the terror of the fiends which makes Christ's action all the more striking. He has vanquished them ("oferfohten", 405), in their age-old hostility ("fæhƀe", 405). Yet this victory is obliquely portrayed by their fear and abasement, rather than by emphasising Christ as soldier in the Germanic mould. Cynewulf used heroic diction and thought to portray the triumph; the poet of Christ and Satan, in keeping with his abasement-exaltation theme, stresses the one, say, denigration of the devils, which necessarily evokes the idea of the other, the glorification of Christ in his victory. It is a more subtle method, but quite as effective. Cynewulf emphasises his motif through the literal

descent and ascent of Christ the King of Glory; the other poet evokes his in his depiction of the respective states of abasement and victory.[7] Yet in both poems, Christ is the active warrior, winning the iustum bellum, like a Germanic warrior in his might, but indeed a Christian hero in his doing the will of his Father.

The final episode of Christ and Satan, the Temptation, bears this out. Interestingly enough, however, the poet has not treated this incident - the supreme example of man's ability to overcome Satan - in the traditional way. Guthlac A, it will be noted, is far more conventionally handled: the saint is tried through adversity, but by patience and suffering wins through. Christ, on the contrary, wins by the might he has gained through constantly doing the will of his Father. Nevertheless, his perseverance against Satan in the Temptation is vital. It was in his human nature that Christ was tempted, and so he has given us an example of overcoming temptation, not by divine might, but by means available to man, humility and trust. This is not made explicit in the poem, however, as it is in the Gospels; it is far more important to the poet to show Christ's power, ending the poem by a juxtaposition of the supreme exaltation of Christ with the lowest disgrace of Satan. This is argued by Sleeth (65), who uses as his reasoning the placing of the Temptation out of chronological order within the poem. It is interesting that the poet gives only two of the three temptations described in Matthew 4:1-11. This seems to corroborate our interpretation of the poet's intention to depict Christ as the active hero, and not passive victim. He does not use the Temptation in its orthodox role as a forging of virtue through a trial of adversity.

In the Gospels Christ strengthens his spiritual muscles by undergoing a struggle of three increasingly difficult temptations. This may be called a psychomachia, like the trial which Guthlac undergoes and which, as has been noted, is a manifestation of the heroism of the passive Christian saint. In the poem, however, the first temptation, that of turning the stones into bread, is a mere formality, and the second is omitted as, possibly, irrelevant to the poet's purpose.[8] The third is handled in detailed and ingenious fashion: Satan tempts Christ to seek possession and power, his very own sin which caused his abasement. It is the poet's own addition to make Satan offer heaven as well; this serves to underline his emphasis of the motif. He would not have found the confrontation fully representative of his purpose without this inclusion: as Satan fell in the beginning by grasping covetously for the highest possession, so he tempts Christ to fall to hell by the same. This fails. Christ, the epitome of compassion, is mighty and prevails; Satan, characterized by cupidity, is weak and succumbs. Christ's stature is reminiscent of his position in the Last Judgement of the Gospel of Matthew, and his "Cer þe on bæcling!" (698) recalls Christ's rebuke to Peter made, it should be noted, in his capacity as man, as it is here in the Temptation. Christ here is mortal, but his denunciation of Satan is done with the full power of his Godhead. This exaltation he has achieved through his self-abasement in the Incarnation, and endurance of his human lot. "Though God's might was surely revealed in the Creation, and in the Fall of the rebellious angels, and in his Harrowing of hell, Christ's example of temptation withstood is the closest parallel to man's own flesh-bound experience in imitating God - and, in the humility of his humanity, Christ-God paradoxically achieved his most profound

triumph."[9] Satan, on the other hand, is compelled to execute the miserable task imposed on him. In his measuring of the torment and pain of hell, he undergoes the most extreme humiliation, ironically suffering pain as Christ did. But this is involuntary; even his own followers mock him, "La! þus beo nu on yfele, noldæs ær teala" (732). Satan is divested of all his power, and his disgrace and shame are the consequences of his grasping for glory, and presumption in tempting God in the person of Christ. In this poem, Christ's victory as a Christian hero, though couched in heroic diction, is most clearly presented through the playing off of humility against presumption, a self-abasement which is exalted, and a pride which is disgraced.

Before we go on to examine the temptation of Guthlac in the poem of that name, it is necessary to acquaint ourselves with the diction of spiritual warfare in one passage in Christ II, as it will illuminate our understanding of Guthlac's trials. The exhortation to Christians in lines 756-782 to let God fight for them against the attacks of devils is couched in heroic diction which should not be taken literally:

> He his aras þonan,
> halig of heahðu, hider onsended
> þa us gescildaþ wið sceþþendra
> eglum earhfarum, þi-læs unholdan
> wunde gewyrcen, þonne wrohtbora
> in folc Godes ford onsended
> of his brægdbogan biterne stræl. 759-765.

Although Cynewulf presents the warfare as an onslaught ("færscyte", 766),

in which the poisoned dart ("se attres ord", 768) and bitter shaft ("biter bordgelac", 769) may penetrate the saint, the poet relies less on heroic literary precedent, than on St Paul's exhortations to believers that they arm themselves against the attacks of the Devil (Ephesians 6:11-17). Still, it is not surprising that the metaphor of spiritual warfare takes on Germanic colouring from the heroic diction which, being inherent in poetic tradition, carries martial connotations. Yet it cannot be stressed enough that the Christian hero is not _like_ a Germanic warrior; he _is_ a warrior in his own right. The diction which describes him as an active hero is clearly metaphorical only in so far as it presents his battle as a spiritual one, and not in so far as it likens him to his Germanic counterpart. In this it differs from the use in _The Dream_, and is very important for the analysis of subsequent poems. The incompatibility which some critics have found when a saint is described in martial terms is _not_ the result of his being a pastiche of the Germanic hero. It is rather the consequence of a misapplied metaphor for spiritual warfare; in other words, the saint is described as a soldier even when he is not engaged in the battle against Satan. In both _Christ II_ and _Christ and Satan_, Christ is not dressed in the borrowed robes of Ingeld. The robes may resemble those of his counterpart, but they fit snugly because he is a warrior in his own right. The abasement-exaltation theme presents him as the active Christian hero in suitably heroic diction. "Cynewulf's repetition of this inherited descent-ascent motif of the theology of glory seems also uniquely apt for the Old English poetic mode, with its heroic vocabulary, contrasting and interlaced themes and typological allusions, so that his poem represents both contemporary Christological verse, and splendid Old English poetry."[10] One might say the same of _Christ and Satan_, too.

CHAPTER 4 : GUTHLAC A AND GUTHLAC B

One of the main issues dogging an approach to Guthlac A is the question of how far the poet was dependant on Felix of Croyland's Vita Sancti Guthlaci. Another is the extent to which the poet was influenced by heroic poetry or, on the other hand, took his imagery from the miles Christi tradition. Certainly the language of both Guthlac A and B recalls the diction of heroic poetry; but, in the case of Guthlac A, there is a very strong suggestion of the poet's acquaintance with certain prose writings of the period which stress the idea of the soldier of Christ. It has already been noted that the higher Christian heroism of passive endurance manifests itself in two forms: that of the monastic, who "fights" for God by being obedient to his Rule; and that of the anchorite, whose province is suffering because of the will of God. In so far as he fights against demons, the anchorite is an active hero as well (as are, of course, the warriors in the iustum bellum of the spiritual or earthly realms). In much ecclesiastical prose the imagery of warfare was used for monks and hermits: the monastic was conceived of as fighting within the community, but the anchorite, once he had learnt how to resist the devil while a monk, could leave the battle line, so to speak, and face single combat. The weapons were obedience to and faith in the Rule, and especially trust in God. Hill[1] mentions how militia had become a technical term for monasticism, and that militare was equivalent to servire by a semantic shift in martial terminology. She goes on to observe how militare is glossed in the Rule of St Benedict as "þeowian" and "campian"; so words like militatur and servitutis militiam are interpreted as "geþeowad ond gehyrsumod" and "þeowdom" respectively. But it is "cempa" and "campian" which regularly translate miles and militare, and, by a further semantic shift, come to gloss

words which denote endurance, like agonizans. Thus both fighting and suffering are suggested by the word "campian". Hence the monastic - whether cenobite or anchorite - was regarded in Christian prose writings as a warrior whose essential function was to be obedient in suffering. This is how Guthlac is depicted: the heroic diction in Guthlac A is more the result of the poet's familiarity with the miles Christi tradition than the vestige of Germanic heroic poetry. Examination of Guthlac's temptations in the Vita Sancti Guthlaci will give some estimation of the poet's use of Felix's work. We must bear in mind, though, that prose writers such as Felix presented the martyr in martial terms, which denote service and obedience in the monastic context, and suffering in the eremitic. Yet the terms are quite apposite in so far as the expectations raised are not for martial action in the Germanic sense, but for valour shown in enduring adversity.

The Vita externalizes Guthlac's struggles with tempting thoughts as a battle with diabolic manifestations; the temptations in Guthlac A, however, are regarded by some as attacks by real demons. Woolf, for example, claims that the attacks in Felix's work are psychological, incitements either to despair or to excessive chastisement. But those in Guthlac A, on the other hand "are actually physical or are threats of physical pain"; the author "was not interested in the psychological struggles of the ascetic life, and therefore presented the Devil as an external persecutor, not as an internal tempter."[2] But her comparison is incomplete as she does not mention the one temptation common to both works, Guthlac's transportation to hell. More important, however, this distinction makes no difference to the portrayal of the Christian warrior: if the temptations are external, heroic epithets are quite in order as

the saint is the hero engaged in a literal, if spiritual, battle. His weapons may not be Germanic, but they are those of the Spirit ("gyrede hine georne mid gæstlicum /wæpnum 7 wædum", 177-178).[3] However, if the foe is really his self as he strives to perfect himself in ascesis, heroic diction is still apposite - at least, that which is the heritage of the miles Christi tradition - as his battle is a figurative one. For the struggle with the self is at the heart of the Christian conflict; which is why martyrs so often withdrew into solitude, that they might all the more effectively come to terms with their natural selves:

> In place of the heroic martyrdom of the age of persecution, [solitude] offered the metaphorical martyrdom of an abandonment to the world by means of a vigorously disciplined (ascetic) life. The first exemplars of the movement were known as the Desert Fathers because of the fact that they abandoned urban society for the loneliness and difficulty of life in the waste places. (They never, of course, forgot the fact that Christ had fasted and suffered temptation in the desert.)[4]

That Guthlac's temptations "have a certain symbolic and psychological force" in the Vita in no way prevents Felix from continually describing the saint as a soldier of Christ; and if, in Guthlac A, the saint's enemies "come from outside, not from the mind, but from the Devil"[5] he is nevertheless always called "Cristes cempa". His is essentially a battle of suffering.

In the poem many diabolic threats occur, these being misinterpreted by Woolf as physical when, in fact, the devils only menace corporal discomfort. They threaten death ("geheton/þæt he deaþa gedal dreogan sceolde", 234-235) and attacks by horsemen and hosts ("þec breodwiað,/tredað þec 7 tergað 7 hire torn wrecað," 287-288). Yet Guthlac vows to stand firm even if they were to accost him physically - a hypothetical situation:

> ðeah ge minne flæshoman fyres wylme
> forgripen gromhydge, gifran lege,
> næfre ge mec of þissum wordum onwendað þendan mec min gewit gelæsteð
> þeah þe ge hine sarum forsæcen: ne motan ge mine sawle gretan
> ac ge on betran gebringað. 374-378

The poet's comment, furthermore, is very revealing:

> No God wolde
> þæt seo sawl þæs sar þrowade
> in lichoman; lyfde se þeana
> þæt hy him mid hondum hrinan mosten
> 7 þæt frið wið hy gefreoþad wære. 407-411

That the demons here are physical beings is certain; but their temptations are not. In fact, the poet told us earlier that they hoped for an inward yearning to seize Guthlac ("Woldun þæt him to mode fore monlufan/sorg gesohte þæt he siþ tuge/eft to eþle", 353-355). The distinction which Woolf draws is therefore irrelevant to our purposes. In both prose and poetry Guthlac has to fight inward urges in his struggle to remain in the will of God. Moreover, she neglects

discussion of the third temptation in the Vita, that of Guthlac's visit to hell. This is certainly a physical transportation,[6] as it is in Guthlac A. Both this visit (557-589) and the earlier one to the monasteries, in which the fiends show Guthlac the corruption (412-434), entail his being caught up in the air. The saint resists the first by pointing out that, even in monasteries, youth will have its day, and that time is a great healer. He counters the second by placing his trust in God, in contrast to the permanent damnation of his foes because of their rebellion. In neither case does he fall into despair. It matters little whether the attacks of the fiends are literal or psychological: Guthlac wins through by passive resistance based on faith in God.

By the poet's frequent comments on the Christian hero's resistance, and by the words he attributes to Guthlac himself, he underlines his struggle as being that of the miles Christi:[7]

No ic eow sweord ongean
und gebolgne hond oðberan þence,
worulde wæpen ne sceal þes wong Gode
þurh blodgyte gebuen weorðan
ac ic minum Criste cweman þence
leofran lace nu ic þis lond gestag. 302-307

"He wæs on elne 7 on eaðmedum" (328). Time and time again the poet shows Guthlac's fortitude in the face of suffering in the will of God: "se þe in þrowingum/þeodnes willan dæghwam dreogeð" (385-386) and "his mod geþah/in Godes willan" (537-538). The Christian hero himself talks about his own patience, and the absence of this virtue in the fiends: "Eom ic eaðmod, his ombiehthera,/þeow geðyldig" (599-600)

and "ne ge þæt geþyldum þicgan woldan" (483). It is his courageous endurance which counts:

> A long temptation is a gruelling affair. Even brainwashing apparently takes a long time, a lot of concentrated effort....The process here must be long and concentrated, most susceptible to an excruciating narrowness and dullness - especially when the protagonist has one main line of defence (he has others, but they must be secondary) a singleness of faith in the will of God, a perfect "passivity".[8]

Such "passivity" is Guthlac's line of defence; his weapons are obedience and patience. His courage comes from God alone, as does the victory ("him God sealde/ellen wiþ þam egsan", 202-203 and "hine God fremede/on andsware 7 on elne strong", 292-293). But the victory can only come through suffering, through service and obedience to God, which is the province of the martyr. It will be recalled that not only was it the shedding of blood which constituted martyrdom, but also a holy life entirely devoted to God. That Guthlac's temptations seem to be overcome without any strain, and his "arguments" merely an assertion of power, detract very little from the heroism of the protagonist, though some have found fault with this seeming ease of resistance.

Taking her cue from a long temptation being a gruelling affair, Woolf remarks of the poem, "This lack of variety in content is reflected in monotony of tone, which is didactic and narrowly

heroic, unvaried and unsubtle" (56). There is indeed much truth in her observation, though what she means by "narrowly heroic" is unclear. Shippey's comments, however, are certainly unfounded if one bears in mind the poet's use of the *miles Christi* metaphor. "The poet seems to be projecting effort and triumph where none is clearly visible. The style is designed for action, and so does not fit a 'life' of this type; at the same time the poet cannot break entirely from his own poetic tradition and move to the internalized conflicts of his source" (130). Shippey seems to have mistaken *Guthlac* for *Andreas*! The poet is not forcing a Germanic heroic framework on the passive Christian content; if it seems thus, it is due to inconsistencies in the *miles Christi* metaphor itself. The paradox of Christian heroism is that a man becomes a saint only when it is God who fights. In the eyes of the world this is ludicrous. That courage and victory should come from God alone seems to make a laughing-stock of such heroism. But as we have noted, within the Christian context a believer's very weakness is his strength: the more he learns to depend on God, the more of a hero he is. Guthlac receives no human aid; he fights alone ('ana" 245, 450) which, of course, enhances his heroic stature. He does, granted, receive divine aid essential for his victory, but this is solely through his personal faith. God is said to grant Guthlac strength to resist ("Guðlace God leanode/ellen mid arum", 449-450) while, in fact, Guthlac has merely allowed himself to be defended by God. And this when the attacks themselves were permitted by God! Such logical inconsistencies are only such from a secular point of view, however, for the issue is not valour but holiness, not strength but faith. And it is all the faithful who are called to spiritual warfare, not only ascetics and

martyrs. This is the general condition of the Christian life, clearly expressed in the prologue of Guthlac A:

> Monge sindon geond middangeard
> hadas onder heofonum þa þe in haligra
> rim arisaþ; we þæs ryht magun
> æt æghwylcum anra gehyran
> gif we halig bebodu healdan willaþ. 30-34

Later (81-92) we are told that it is only some who, like Guthlac, seek out the wastes in order to perfect themselves. Ascesis is not presented as an ideal to which everyone should aspire, for these eremites are set apart among the faithful as those who have chosen an unusually difficult way of life. In the prologue and closing lines (780-818) the poet concentrates on the virtues of the ordinary Christian hero who, as we have noted, is one by the merits of Christ, and so Guthlac becomes less the exalted and exclusive hero than the type of all Christians. "The figure of the saint as hero and as exemplar of Christian virtues becomes less important than the significance of his experiences."[9] If this is a somewhat radical view, it is nevertheless valuable in that it shows how Christian heroism differs from its Germanic counterpart, in that its heroes are ordinary believers. Within the ranks of the miles Christi tradition, it is a difference of degree, not kind. Whereas the Germanic warrior, by virtue of his own valour and strength, is of a different breed from the rest.

This dichotomy is, interestingly enough, apparent on one level in Guthlac B. The relationship between Guthlac and his servant Beccel (we know his name from the Vita) resembles that of a

warrior lord and his retainer, even though both are Christians. The poem concentrates on the death of the saint, and for this reason it is not as relevant to the present study as is his temptation. Nevertheless, comment on some heroic elements can prove valuable. Guthlac is also given the appellation "cempa" (889, 901) which, it will be recalled, is a heroic word widely used in ecclesiastical prose, and "þeow" (922, 951) - but these only in the first two fitts which mention his battle with the demons. Three times Beccel is called "ombehtþegn", and the word "þegn" is used in compounds to refer to angels, the retainers of God (1126, 1216, 1243). Beccel uses characteristic heroic epithets for "lord" or "master" when addresing Guthlac ("mondryhten", 1007 and "winedryhten", 1011 etc) and when reporting the saint's death to his sister ("sincgiefan", 1352 and "hlaford", 1357 etc). The fact that the poet includes the person of Beccel at all, and in the role of retainer ("gesiþe", 1295) reveals his intention to draw a distinction between the degrees of Christian heroism. "Beccel serves the saint, but Guthlac serves God. This hierarchy expressly points out the abyss that lies between the ordinary man and sanctity, for Beccel does not, nor will he ever, grasp the meaning of the mystical transformation that will occur in his presence."[10] He is not the saint that Guthlac is - hence the lord/retainer distinction - but he trusts and loves his lord as a warrior does, both Germanic and Christian. By Guthlac's death on Easter Sunday, the poet suggests, the saint becomes a type of Christ who stripped power from Satan in his Harrowing of hell (1098-1104). And, in so doing, he foreshadows the Christian hero's own ascension into heaven. Yet this is set very firmly in an elegiac background, not least conveyed through Beccel's laments. But the final elegiac effect derives from the fact that the poem ends not

with Guthlac's soul being carried to heaven, but with the heartfelt message delivered by his servant in the role of bereaved retainer. This lament (1348-1379) deals on the one hand with the loss of the lord, and on the other, the dreary prospects for the thane as a survivor.[11] In Guthlac B, then, the diction is more heroic than Christian, but just as apposite because of the Germanic and elegiac elements involved.

If the lord/thane relationship and the concept of exile are integral to this poem, obedience and patience, characteristic of the miles Christi tradition, form the content of Guthlac A. In his climactic rejection of the temptation of hell (592-620) he emphasises as his defence service, humility, obedience and patience. These essentially passive qualities are the province of the Christian hero, in direct contrast to the heroic warrior. They are only evoked and sharpened through the peculiarly Christian temptation motif. Calder makes the point that "Guthlac cannot take care of the devils in one fell swoop; as spiritual doubts, fear and terrors, the devils present him with a constant battle that cannot be won until his trials prove him worthy and he vanquishes his own demons."[12] It will be noted that he regards Guthlac's struggles as purely psychological. Reichardt holds the same view: "Thus Guthlac's fight, like that of every ascetic, is 'in his heart' and may justly be described as an inner psychological struggle."[13] This interpretation does make sense, as it is to solitude and to communion with his self and God that the ascetic retires. Obedience and patience are best wielded when the self is at one with God, yet at war against its arch adversary:

oft his word Gode
þurh eaðmedu up onsende
let his ben cuman in þa beorhtan gesceaft,
þoncade þeodne þæs þe he in þrowingum
bidan moste hwonne him betre lif
þurh Godes willan agyfen worde. 775-780

The poet of Guthlac A has avoided obviously heroic vocabulary in his attempt to follow the miles Christi tradition that was fundamentally different from the heroic. He has focussed on Christian ideals of the hero, which are essentially passive. At no time does Guthlac's behaviour suggest that he is literally a warrior engaged in warfare for his Germanic lord. So when a critic like Derek Pearsall points to the incompatibility of Ingeld and Christ in Guthlac A, he misses the point of the miles Christi tradition: "[The poem] shows some of the limitations of the adapted heroic style in constantly substituting physical for spiritual confrontation. Inward analysis of the allegorically heroic temper of martyrdom seems imposed within the inflexibilities of the inherited style."[14] He has simply confused Guthlac with one of Ingeld's thanes.

CHAPTER 5 : ANDREAS AND THE FATES OF THE APOSTLES

It may be pointed out, however, with due reason, that the same error has been made by the author of Andreas and Cynewulf, creator of The Fates of the Apostles. Each seems to be unaware that his poem falls between two stools. In the former work, Andrew, in his passivity and reliance on God for protection and victory, conforms to the miles Christi tradition. The heroic diction, therefore, used to describe his character and exploits is quite in keeping with his being a soldier of Christ and exhibiting the higher form of passive heroism. And yet, when he finds himself in literal martial encounters, without ever coming to blows with his adversaries, he is given wholly incongruous heroic epithets. Here the poet seems to be more the slave of his inherited heroic tradition than its master. The poem's middle position is further compounded by its author's unmistakeable reliance on Beowulf in language and set-piece descriptions, and his conscious attempt to subordinate Christian subject matter to heroic framework. His use of the miles Christi metaphor is relatively unsuccessful, compared with its employment in Christ and Satan (the active soldier aspect) and Guthlac A (that of the passive martyr). It is more legitimate in Cynewulf's poem The Fates of the Apostles, but only because the apostles are never forced to prove themselves in martial encounters. Their deaths are seen as their moment of greatest victory and triumph, since they have shown heroic martyrdom. Yet the poem fails because the language arouses connotations of more active warfare than that applicable to the soldier of Christ. Furthermore, it implies a courage originating with the hero, as in the case of Beowulf, rather than the courage which, for a saint, comes from God. Both poets do not seem to have been aware of the contradiction of heroic

and Christian elements in their poems, the style of which may be the result of an insensitivity to the miles Christi metaphor, or a dearth of competent technique in yoking together the two traditions. Whatever the reason, one can agree with Shippey that the poet of Andreas "in any tug of war between native and alien traditions ... was the man who moved least."[1] This conservatism, however, was bought at the price of incongruity.

This discrepancy between framework and subject matter is attested to by the opening lines of Andreas.[2] It is worthwhile to compare them with those of The Fates of the Apostles as this will elucidate the respective failure of the handling of the miles Christi metaphor. Both openings are typical of the beginning of a secular heroic poem, and reminiscent of Beowulf. The apostles appear as retainers in a Germanic comitatus and, if we had no more than the first eleven lines of both poems, we could legitimately assume they were so:

Hwæt, we gefrunan on fyrndagum
twelfe under tunglum tireadige hæleđ,
þeodnes þegnas. No hira þrym alæg
camprædenne, þonne cumbol hneotan,
syđđan hie gedældon swa him dryhten sylf,
heofona heahcyning, hlyt getæhte.
þæt wæron mære men ofer eorđan,
frome folctogan ond fyrdhwate,
rofe rincas, þonne rond ond hand
on herefelda helm ealgodon,
on meotudwange.

Andreas 1-11

Hwæt, ic þysne sang siđgeomor fand,
on seocum sefan, samnode wide
hu þa æđelingas ellen cyđdon
torhte ond tireadige. Twelfe wæron
dædum domfæste, dryhtne gecorene,
leofe on life; lof wide sprang,
miht and mærđo, ofer middangeard,
þeodnes þegna þrym unlytel.
Halgan heape hlyt wisode
þær hie dryhtnes æ deman sceoldon,
reccan fore rincum.

Fates 1-11

So when the miles Christi concept is introduced later in the two poems it conflicts with the different heroism propounded in the opening lines. Such phrases as "þonne cumbol hneotan" (4) and "rof rincas, þonne rond ond hand/on herefelda helm ealgodon" (8-9) force us to conclude that the poet of Andreas considered the conventional heroic opening, with its martial connotations, the most effective one for his purposes. That his decision was injudicious for the unfulfilled expectations it sets up is undeniable. The opening of The Fates of the Apostles, however, is more elegiac, and the emphasis is on heroism in abstract terms rather than as the concomitant of martial encounters. The epithets Cynewulf gives the apostles could be attributed to Christ or Guthlac; they "ellen cyðdon/ torh te ond tireadige" (3-4) and their "lof wide sprang/miht ond mærðo ofer middangeard" (6-7). Interestingly enough, the formulaic unit "þeodnes þegna" (8) is used of the apostles in the opening lines of Andreas as well; its ambivalence in no way detracts from the subsequent heroic mood. It is quite in order to read the opening lines of The Fates of the Apostles as a celebration of Christian heroes: the style is not so dependant on heroic diction that it arouses the wrong set of expectations. Yet the war in which the apostles are engaged is not the iustum bellum; suggestions of physical warfare are therefore quite injudicious. From time to time Cynewulf does lapse into confusion; speaking of the fate of Andrew he remarks "syþþan hildeheard heriges byrht me/æfter guðplegan gealgan þehte" (21-22). Even if Andrew was killed by violence, this can in no way be taken as his involvement in active fighting for God. But because the formulaic units of heroic diction were at hand for Cynewulf to use, he did so, sometimes indiscriminately as

in "Næron þa twegen tohtan sæne/lindgelaces" (75-76). It is quite acceptable for Simon and Thaddeus to die by violent means; the context, however, is incongruous. Their epithet is "beadurofe" (78) with connotations as Germanic as the "beaducræftig" (44) attributed to Bartholomew. Doubtless they are heroes, but not in the way in which they are presented. Moreover, Thomas is killed like a warrior of heroic tradition, in a "sweordræs" (59); Philip as a Christian martyr, being "ahangen" (41). The difficulty with the latter death is that its agents are described as "hildecorðre". Here the context is most incongruous, given the heroic act as Christian. If some apostles are killed by weapons, and others by crucifixion, this is legitimate, even though their fight is a spiritual one. But if the context is one of active strife, the distinction between the two types of heroism is blurred. It is when the expectations of Germanic warfare are undercut by passive Christian heroism that disjunction results. Certain epithets, it is true, may be ambivalent, but formulas which designate Germanic warfare in a Christian context are most incongruous. Neither poet in these works came to grips with the tension between the two traditions. They had to serve up the new wine of the Spirit in the old wine-skins bequeathed them by their Germanic forebears. Yet neither took cognizance of the poetic heritage and subject matter being fundamentally at odds. Beowulf's armour is only cumbersome luggage for the soldier of Christ. To bear out the validity of this, we must examine a few passages from Andreas, keeping in mind, of course, that Andrew's warfare is spiritual, not actual; but that his mission is an active one, his quest in keeping with that of heroic tradition. To combine these two strands is the difficulty of the poet's task; the author of Guthlac A happily evaded his problem.

The difficulty resides primarily in the twofold structure of the poem. Ostensibly Andrew is sent by God to rescue Matthew from the Mermedonians. This entails his passage over the sea, his release of his fellow saint, and his destruction of Satan's sway over the race. On this level his quest is much like that of Beowulf who sails overseas to salvage Heorot for Hrothgar - in fact, like any secular hero of Germanic tradition. It certainly is not the province of the Christian, be he anchorite or active warrior. Underlying this quest, however, is the temptation or testing of Andrew, in order that he may progress from being a somewhat reluctant disciple into a worker of miracles. He undergoes various trials before he is deemed worthy for the victory. He must suffer God's rebuke for his reluctance to set out (203-224) and prove his determination in the interchange with the seacaptain (254-339). The lengthy discussion with the disguised Christ on the journey serves to prove his gratitude, humility and compassion, his competence in leadership and knowledge of his lord. It is the firmness of his faith which Andrew must prove before he undergoes the physical trials in Mermedonia. There he suffers a form of passion (1238-78) without quite dying as a martyr; his trials for three days include the most gruelling physical abuse and mental anguish. When God heals and releases him, he is proven a saint, and so performs the miracle of calling forth water from a pillar (1498-1521). In all these struggles God has aided him, and Andrew has proved himself a Christian hero in his growing dependance on and trust in God. Yet his holiness lies in his being obedient to God's call for him, not in his martial valour for which, according to the epithets he is given, he is lauded. The notions of military service suggested by the diction are not modified by the concept of Christian service as

we saw in Guthlac A: "þeow" and "þeowian" are not used in the poem. In poems like Guthlac A, for example, which establishes a clearly Christian context, military language is used in situations where no action occurs; yet this is paradoxically acceptable and fulfils our expectations. In Andreas, however, the disjunction of the storyline and the underlying narrative pattern makes for an injudicious use of language. The wrong expectations are aroused; when inaction follows words denoting martial prowess and active battle, a sense of incongruity results. The poet constructed his plot around the ordeal of moral testing: spiritual temptation takes the place of physical combat in secular heroic poems. But the context is not a Christian one, as in Guthlac A: the military diction is therefore liable to be taken literally, whereas it is intended as metaphorical. And the consequence is somewhat ludicrous because Andrew never engages in acts which enable a literal interpretation to be made. His inaction is the stuff of Christian heroism, but it creates an anticlimax since our expectations of seeing him fulfil his martial epithets are dashed. The poet seems unable to adapt his Germanic heritage to the demands of his Christian subject.

Two passages bear this out. The first is God's rebuke to Andrew and Andrew's subsequent preparation for his mission:

> Ne meaht ðu þæs siðfætes sæne weorðan,
> ne on gewitte to wac, gif ðu wel þencest
> wiþ þinne waldend wære gehealdan,
> treowe tacen. Beo ðu on tid gearu;
> ne mæg þæs ærendes ylding wyrðan.
> Ðu scealt þa fore geferan ond þin feorh beran

in gramra gripe, ðær þe guðgewinn
þurh hæðenra hildewoman,
beorna beaducræft, geboden wyrðeð. 211-219

Andrew shrinks from his mission to Mermedonia, just as any Germanic warrior would at the thought of exile. And the task that awaits him suggests that he is portrayed more as a faltering warrior than as a timorous saint. Because the quest is active and like a secular one, words which designate battle ought to be taken literally. So whereas the idea of Andrew bearing his life "in gramra gripe" (217), and even the connotations of "guðgewinn" are perfectly consonant with the suffering of the soldier of Christ, whose supreme victory is always death, the variations on these battle words are not. The context for "hildewoman" (218) and "beaducræft" (219) can only be Germanic, hence the confusion of physical and spiritual warfare. A few lines on, Andrew is depicted as a brave and valiant warrior, leading his thanes to the shore:

þa wæs ærende æðelum cempan
aboden in burgum, ne wæs him bleað hyge,
ah he wæs anræd ellenweorces,
heard ond higerof nalas hildlata,
gearo, guðe fram, to Godes campe. 230-234.

Only, he little needs to be resolute, for a swift ship lies ready for his passage and the fair weather augurs well. God's hand is evident, yet since the context is reminiscent of heroic tradition, the depiction of Andrew on a mission for God is incongruous. And what are we to make of "Godes campe" (234), surely a term denoting spiritual warfare, when the phrase is used here as a variation on

those suggesting Germanic combat? The effect of such vocabulary in descriptions which are obviously inspired by the poet's Germanic heritage is to actually contradict the underlying narrative pattern of the poem.

A second passage, when Andrew is about to free Matthew, is illustrative of the fine line separating heroic warfare from Christian in this poem:

> Ða wæs gemyndig modge þyldig,
> beorn beaduwe heard; eode in burh hraðe
> anræd oretta, elne gefyrðred,
> maga mode rof, meotude getreowe. 981-984

Whereas epithets like "modgeþyldig" (981) and "meotude getreowe" (984), characteristic as they are of the miles Christi, can exist side by side with more ambiguous titles as "anræd oretta" (983) and "maga mode rof" (984), a phrase like "beorn beaduwe heard" (982) makes one a little uneasy. The saint is "elne gefyrðred" (983) and "elnes gemyndig" (1001), but his actions - or rather, his inactivity - belie the description of him advancing to battle.

> Hæfde þa se æðeling in geþrungen,
> Cristes cempa, carcerne neh;
> geseh he hæðenra hloð ætgædere
> fore hlindura, hyrdas standan
> seofon ætsomne. Ealle swylt fornam,
> druron domlease; deaðræs forfeng
> hæleð heorodreorige. Ða se halga gebæd
> bilwytne fæder, breostgehygdum

herede on hehðo heofoncyninges god,
dryhten demde. 990-999

There is no battle and God grants the victory. Andrew, invisible as he is, meets with no opposition; his bold front as a determined warrior is quite inappropriate. And yet the passive reception of victory, and God's protection, are quite in keeping with the soldier of Christ - integrally so - but the poet's choice of language and insensitivity to the miles Christi image arouse expectations which are incompatible with the image itself.

Yet Andrew is not conceived of as the ideal Germanic warrior; he follows Christ's instructions during his time in Mermedonia, and willingly endures the tortures and sufferings for three days. His patience in adversity and single-minded trust in the will and providence of God show him to be in essence a soldier of Christ, as is Matthew before him. When we meet Matthew, he has obviously reached the point to which Andrew's trials take him: complete faith in God. He counters the physical attack of his captors with spiritual warfare; though they advance against him no fight ensues:

Eodon him þa togenes garum gehyrsted,
lungre under linde, nalas late wæron
eorre æscberend to þam orlege. 45-47

Matthew receives their aggression passively, thus revealing himself as a soldier of Christ:

hwæðre he in breostum þa git
herede in heortan heofonrices weard
þeah ðe he atres dryncc atulne onfenge. 51-53

The Mermedonians do battle for their lord Satan with armed hostility; Matthew fights for Christ in his patience and faith in him. The potential is there for the poet to develop heroic ideas: he could have portrayed Matthew in prison as an exile within Germanic tradition, or even as the secular warrior Andrew is sometimes depicted - so incongruously. But showing an understanding of the concept of Christian heroism, the poet makes Matthew's prayer (63-87) an expression of complete submission to the will of God. It is not an exile's lament, nor an heroic affirmation of courage, but a desire to endure suffering rather than actively oppose his captors:

gif þin willa sie, wuldres aldor,
þæt me wærlogan wæpna ecgum
sweordum aswebban, ic beo sona gearu
to adreoganne þæt þu, drihten min,
engla eadgifa, eðelleasum,
dugeða dædfruma, deman wille. 70-75

It is evident, therefore, that the virtue of the saint is faith in God, not valour: or rather, that his valour manifests itself as holiness, not prowess in battle. Because it is the evil Mermedonians who reveal the latter quality, the poet undercuts this heroic system of values to advocate the higher fortitude of patience. This Andrew manifests when he suffers the cold of his first night in prison. The detailed description of winter

results from the poet's intention to emphasize the severity of the hardships which Andrew, like an exile, must endure. Just as the afflictions of winter are the concomitant of exile in heroic poetry, so here the poet exploits this tradition - choosing to ignore, of course, that an eastern Mediterranean country never faces the rigours of such a winter! However, the description of a hostile setting calculated either to break a man or to underline his heroic powers of endurance is necessary to the poet's purpose. Such hardships can only bring out the mettle of a saint, by their very challenge. An exile in heroic poetry would be depressed in the extreme; not so Andrew:

> Blidheort wunode
> eorl unforcuð, elnes gemyndig,
> þrist ond þrohtheard, in þreanedum,
> wintercealdan niht. No on gewitte blon,
> acol for þy egesan, þæs þe he ær ongann,
> þæt he a domlicost dryhten herede,
> weorðade wordum. 1262-1268

His three days of torment do afflict him, however; he weeps copiously as he reaffirms his trust in God (1278-1295) and he is heavy of heart as he cries out to God to take away his life (1398-1428). But all the time his will is God's will: his plea is no more than Christ's "If thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will but thine be done" (Luke 22:42). The mark of the saint is alignment of his own will with the divine.

As Christ is the exemplum for the suffering saint, so it is

towards this ideal that Andrew progresses. It is his development which forms the hagiographic or narrative pattern of the poem. Early on Andrew was rebuked for striving against God's will:

> No ðu swa swiðe synne gefremedest
> swa ðu in Achaia ondsæc dydest,
> ðæt ðu on feorwegas feran ne cuðe. 926-928

To emphasize his remonstrance, Christ in lines 964-972 relates to Andrew how he endured the cross and its humiliation because it was God's will. It says much for Andrew's progression that during the tortures which would break a lesser man he maintains his faith:

> Næfre ic geferde mid frean willan
> under heofonhwealfe heardran drohtnod,
> þær ic dryhtnes æ deman sceolde. 1401-1403

By an ironic reversal of Christ's rebuke Andrew in lines 1406-1415 remonstrates with God for suffering one day only while he undergoes three days of torment. But in both rebukes the poet makes his point that what characterizes the Christian hero is patient endurance; as Christ gained the victory by suffering, so do his soldiers. Yet, as we have seen, this point is not consistently maintained; the unambiguously Christian designations of Andrew are, in fact, relatively few. He is called "halig" and a "þegn" of Christ, but far less often than he is given those epithets which are drawn from secular heroic tradition. Andrew is, of course, a spiritual soldier, but because of the lack of such designations, it seems as if the poet did not intend to consistently present his hero as a miles Christi as, say,

did the author of Guthlac A. The same is true of the appellations of the apostles in Cynewulf's poem. Being as evocative of Germanic tradition as they are, they sustain the expectations set up by the heroic opening lines that the poet is describing the warlike deeds of active heroes, which is belied by the deaths of the apostles - not that their deaths should not be represented as passive victories, nor that they should not be described in military terms since they do fight a spiritual battle and win in death, for Cynewulf is at least aware of the implications of the miles Christi metaphor. So a statement like Schaar's "the final death and martyrdom of God's servants is looked upon as the tragic but glorious overthrow of faithful retainers"[3] does not take cognizance of the essentially Christian ideas propagated in the poem. The deaths of the apostles are not tragic - as they would be if viewed from a secular heroic perspective - but rather triumphant, their moment of greatest victory. And yet it must be pointed out that this is conveyed not only through the idea of Christian heroism, but also within a Germanic framework. So the wrong expectations set up undercut the strong thesis contained in the poem, namely that Christian heroism consists in patient endurance, and the paradox of victory through death. Likewise, the confusion of heroic quest and Christian temptation in Andreas contributes to the less than satisfactory treatment of Christian subject matter within a basically heroic poem. In both poems, then, because of the poets' inconsistent treatment of the miles Christi metaphor, or perhaps their lack of skill in harnessing the two traditions, the boundaries of physical and spiritual combat are blurred. Expectations are set up which are not fulfilled; this seriously retards the originality of the poems and does violence to the idea of the soldier of Christ. Sisam's quaint appraisal of the poets' shortcomings deserves inclusion: "I doubt whether [the Andreas-poet] had

in mind the Church militant, or that he thought solely of the martial tastes of his audience: rather, he felt that in alliterative verse he could not make the apostles live and move except to the clank of arms".[4] But in these poems the armour of Ingeld only chafes the Christian saint.

CHAPTER 6 : CONCLUSION

This investigation has dealt with a number of Old English poems, chosen for their heroic and hagiographical nature. Purposely excluded were those religious poems dealing with Biblical narratives and eschatological events, since they do not treat the concept of Christian heroism in any depth. The archetype is Christ, his life of suffering and victorious death the pattern for his saints, such as Guthlac and Andrew. The poems were selected for their individual treatment of this concept and not for their place in the chronological development of Old English poetry. That the marriage between Germanic framework and Christian material in Andreas is not very satisfactory may argue for the poem's relatively early date; and the discerning use made of Germanic diction in Guthlac A may be evidence of its later date. And yet we know that The Dream of the Rood precedes Guthlac A and the Cynewulf canon,[1] but a better synthesis is hard to find. So the chronology, highly speculative as it is, has little bearing on the idea of Christian heroism; what is important is the figure of the miles Christi as he is conveyed in certain representative poems. A chronological survey would show the displacement of heroic values by Christian ones, the religious conversion of the Old English poetic tradition. We, however, have been concerned not so much with heroic values as with heroic diction and metaphor. Vestiges of these survived independently from the value system from which they came, because they were an effective means of figurative expression. Though heroic concepts were rejected by the poets of the works we have examined because they no longer provided a valid code of values, the figure of the hero could be, and was, employed as a metaphor for the Christian saint. The

miles Christi is like a heroic retainer only in so far as the diction describes him thus; his Christian heroism, however, makes him a leader and a saint, rather than a king and thane. He is a Christian servant obedient to the will of God, and not a Germanic warrior fighting for a Christian cause. To say such heroes are like those of heroic tradition does not go far enough; they are warriors, but in their own system of values. Christ is portrayed as the leader of a comitatus of Christian thanes, not because he is a courageous fighter for good - though of course he is - but because true leadership is perfect accordance with the will of God. And Guthlac - Andrew, too, towards the end of his development - is a great warrior, not because he is adept with his spiritual weapons, which he is of course, but because inevitable victory results from complete obedience to God. The greatness of the Christian hero is of a different sort from that of his Germanic counterpart.

This greatness is epitomized in the idea of the suffering servant, as manifested in Christ's ministry of redemption. The saint conforms to the example set by Christ in his humiliation and exaltation, the victory of the cross presaging the triumphant death of the martyr. In the suffering servant, then, we understand how the miles Christi is a hero in his own right. Should we recall, however, that this heroism also includes the concept of the iustum bellum, active fighting against the foe, we see how the saint is like the Germanic hero. Christ despoiling hell of its captive souls and Guthlac overcoming demonic attacks are effectively described in heroic terms which, because of the context, have lost their connotations of Germanic warfare. (Of course, this is not so in Andreas, which causes the incompatibility.

Expectations of warfare in the Germanic tradition are aroused, yet Andrew never actually fights his foes.) Yet Christ and Guthlac are heroes, too, in their own right. Milton acknowledges the existence of the two types of Christian heroism, "the victorious agonies of martyrs and saints, the deeds and triumphs of just and pious nations doing valiantly through faith against the enemies of Christ".[2] Victorious suffering, and the iustum bellum; both are aspects of this concept, and are contingent on each other. Christ could only cast out the rebellious angels, because of his descending motion in creating the universe, and could harrow hell only after his self-abasement on the cross. Since victory is dependent on God, it must be given back to him. The paradox of strength in weakness, of triumph in humiliation is inseparably interwoven with the quality of patience. This virtue, cognizant of its own frailty, relies on the power and providence of God, and is therefore strong. Hence the importance of the temptation motif in the hagiographical poems under scrutiny. Where physical combat brought out the fortitude of the hero in Germanic tradition, it is the moral struggle which accentuates the worth of the Christian warrior. Andrew and Guthlac are tested and exalted; their pattern was the temptation of Christ. Where personal and earthly glory was the motivating force in the life of the Germanic warrior, the glory of God is the desire of the saint. Of course, in so aiming for this, glory in heaven is promised to the victorious miles Christi, but the means to this ultimate exaltation is humiliation. The path to heavenly honour leads through earthly shame. The glory of the Germanic hero is his reputation for greatness, his fame on earth during and after his own lifetime. That of a saint is his disgrace on earth, but his subsequent honour in heaven. The paradox of glory in shame, and the abasement-exaltation motif, are evident

in varying degrees in all the selected poems. This is the essence of Christian heroism.

Because this heroism exists in its own right, the description of the miles Christi in terms culled from Germanic tradition is usually most effective; unless, of course, the expectations aroused are not fulfilled. Problems which certain critics find with the marriage of the two conventions generally arise because co gnizance has not been taken of the force of Christian heroism.

> If, however, awareness of the strength of the heroic battle tradition in Old English were matched by an equal awareness of the strength of the image of the saint as miles Christi, the critic might recognize more easily that we do not always have in poetic hagiography a simple redeployment of traditional poetic diction, with its traditional heroic connotations, but an informed response to the Christian warrior metaphor in which the poet may be both explicit about his aims and selective in his use of battle vocabulary. [3]

Two points here require comment. In the poems dealing with Christ, and Guthlac A it is clear that the poets do not wish that their heroic terminology be taken literally. Of course, the highly conventional diction of Old English poetry will transform the saint into a warrior somewhat like his Germanic counterpart, but the context ensures that he is taken on his own recognizances. Thus, the aim of the poets has been to employ heroic vocabulary so that

not only will the Christian saint become a figurative warrior; but more, he will be seen literally as a warrior in his own right. Yet the context must be unambivalent. Christian ideals must pervade the poem so that the poet may use heroic diction without fear that his audience will misinterpret his intention. Secondly, certain poets make more use of their inherited stock of poetic words than others. In the Cynewulf canon and Guthlac A there is more question of real warfare - literal or figurative - than in Andreas, yet words denoting this are more frequent in the latter, which goes a long way to account for the heroic flavour of this poem. Schaar points out that Cynewulf's tendency is to restrict the use of heroic diction as much as he can, and that "the extension, in Andreas, of the 'inimical' words fits in with the poet's general tendency, demonstrated in his use of words for 'battle' and 'warrior' to make his descriptions as martial as possible - in the old heroic style".[4] As we have discovered, Cynewulf's practice is far more felicitous than that of the Andreas-poet, although The Fates of the Apostles is a lapse from his usually sensitive approach. Terms which imply Andrew's responsibility for certain achievements are out of harmony with descriptions in which the poet makes clear that God himself effected the victories. And Cynewulf's depiction of the apostles in The Fates as doughty warriors in a Germanic context is less satisfactory than his portrayal of Christ's return to heaven as a conquering hero in Christ II, where the context is clearly Christian. Quite obviously, when the saint is celebrated in the wrong context - in the wrong terms - the result is incongruity.

What, then, has Ingeld to do with Christ? That heroic ideals gave way to Christian subjects in Old English poetry is beyond question. If heroic vocabulary remained, it was due to more than the conser-

vative force of such diction. Poets recognized the existence of a Christian heroism distinct from that of the older Germanic warriors and used the heroic diction in a new context. The poets were constrained, it is true; but within the confines of heroic terminology they had enough leeway to be selective as to the words and images they used. If some poems are more successfully integrated than others it is because of that poet's sensitivity to the concepts of Germanic and Christian heroism, and sometimes his skill in combining the vocabulary of one with the subject matter of the other. Those critics who find fault with the use of heroic diction to describe the heroic acts of the miles Christi fall foul of the same error as Satan's in Juliana; each one "myopically translates and reduces the nature of his Christian opponent into something he himself can understand, failing to acknowledge the spiritual and physically passive nature of the opposition"![5] As Satan counters the passive saint with physical warfare, some critics insist on remaining blind to the new type of heroism. Different poets make different use of heroic tradition, while working within the confines of the convention. The Rood poet mingled heroic and Christian imagery in his representation of Christ and the Cross: Christ as Germanic warrior engaged in an essentially passive battle, and the Cross enduring his passion as a loyal retainer. The mingling is also evident in Christ II, where Christ is portrayed as a victorious lord returning to his royal hall, yet only because he has plumbed the abasement which will lead to his exaltation. The poet of Christ and Satan took words expressive of heroic concepts, like a lord's generosity to his retainers - already adapted in poetic diction to express the Christian concept of God's grace - and used them to convey the essentially giving nature of the Godhead: Christ's act of creation,

and his charity as opposed to Satan's covetousness. Going even further, the poet of Guthlac A freely used those heroic words which Christian tradition had appropriated to serve its purposes, and the Christian context of the anchorite involved in spiritual warfare enables these terms to be unambiguously acceptable. Yet in Andreas, some imagery retains its heroic colouration, like the suggestion of Andrew's going into exile and the description of the gloom of winter. The ambivalent context, therefore, causes a sense of confusion. Cynewulf, in The Fates of the Apostles, repudiates certain heroic concepts and debases Germanic heroism by portraying the enemies of the apostles as warriors in heroic tradition. Of course, this is not as effective as it could be, given the passive nature of the disciples' warfare. In the light of these examples, therefore, a whole repertoire of uses of heroic terminology is revealed, different for each poet and poem.

This varied palette gives us a clue as to the relation between Ingeld and Christ. This relationship varies according to individual poets, as it is dependent not so much on heroic concepts as on the deployment of heroic imagery and vocabulary. There is a chronological development of the ideals of Germanic heroism being replaced by Christian ones, but this has negligible effect on the use of metaphor and diction - at least, in the selection of poems under scrutiny. These heroic elements are employed to varying effects, the most successful poems presenting a Christian context for material described in heroic terminology. This prevents ambiguity and incongruity; and enriches the impact of the subject matter, the concept of Christian heroism. This has been recognised of late, and Greenfield's recent comment on the problem of compatibility

reflects favourably compared with his earlier view:

> Because religious writers adopted Old English poetic diction, their Christian heroes and heroines seemed ill-fitted in the borrowed robes (or armour) of their secular counterparts, especially since their spiritual battles against evil and the forces of Satan demand, for the most part, a passive resistance. On the Old English saint's lives, therefore, even sensitive critics pronounced adverse judgements, finding them poetically inferior and doctrinally naive. But the Anglo-Saxon writers may have had patristic as well as scriptural precedent for their use of martial imagery in the figure of the miles Christi. To a great extent they self-consciously adopted this imagery to their purposes and subordinated that associated with the secular hero. Even more important, the Old English poetic saints' lives are not just Christian themes decked out in the trappings of secular heroic poetry, but typological or figurative constructs in the best tradition of mediaeval hagiography. The individual saint's life is a pattern of Christ's.[6]

This investigation has stressed that these poems be taken on their own recognizances. The miles Christi is not the dwarf upon whom the

warrior's robe sits awkwardly, but a giant himself, who suits the borrowed robes usually very well. Both Ingeld and Christ are heroic warriors; only their heroism is fundamentally different. Christ and his saints are only like Ingeld in that they are superior representatives of their code of values; they are heroes in their own right, their greatness residing in their qualities of patience and obedience. The pattern of Christ's life is the highest example of Christian heroism, and this pattern is followed by his saints in the hagiographical works of Old English poetry.

NOTES

CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION

1. S.B. Greenfield, A Critical History of Old English Literature (London, 1965): 102.

2. R. Woolf, "The Devil in Old English Poetry", Essential Articles for the Study of Old English Poetry, Eds. J.B. Bessinger and S.J. Kahrl (Connecticut: Archon Books, 1968): 164.

3. T.A. Shippey, Old English Verse (London: Hutchison, 1972): 114.

4. Milton, De Doctrina, Vol. VI of The Collected Prose Works of John Milton, Ed. M. Kelley (New Haven: Yale Press, 1973): 662.

5. Milton, De Doctrina in A. Low, The Blaze of Noon (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974): 171.

6. C. Schaar, Critical Studies in the Cynewulf Group (Lund: Gleerup, 1949): 309.

7. R. Woolf: 169.

8. J. Steadman, Milton and the Renaissance Hero (Oxford: Clarendon, 1969): 37.

CHAPTER 2 : THE DREAM OF THE ROOD

1. See, for instance, Rosemary Woolf, "Doctrinal Influences on The Dream of the Rood", Medium Aevum, 27 (1958): 150 "... by a tremendous and ironic reversal of the values of the heroic code, it has to acquiesce in and even assist in the death of its lord, forbidden either to protect him or avenge him." Also Stanley Greenfield, A Critical History of Old English Literature, (London, 1965): 138 "... the Cross's presentation of itself as a loyal retainer in the epic mould, with the ironic reversal that it must acquiesce and even assist in the death of its lord, and cannot aid or avenge him."

2. All references are to the text of the poem edited by Michael Swanton, The Dream of the Rood (Manchester: University Press, 1970).

3. Kathleen Dubs, "'Hæled' in The Dream of the Rood", Neophilologus, 59 (1975): 615.

4. See Michael Cherniss, "The Cross as Christ's Weapon", Anglo Saxon England, 1 (1972): 240-252.

Notes to Chapter 2 (cont)

5. It is interesting to note that it is Christ who speaks of his own sufferings in Christ III. Likewise in The Dream it is also the afflicted servant - the Cross - who narrates the crucifixion. Perhaps both poets hoped to evoke sympathy, and the religious zeal it encourages.

6. Cherniss: 252.

CHAPTER 3 : CHRIST II AND CHRIST AND SATAN

1. I am indebted for the former term to G.H. Brown, "The Descent-Ascent Motif in Christ II", Journal of English and Germanic Philology, 73 (1974) and, for the latter, to C.R. Sleeth, Studies in Christ and Satan (Toronto: University Press, 1982).

2. All line references are to the text of the poem edited by A. Cook, The Christ of Cynewulf (Connecticut: Archon Books, 1964).

3. These include Ambrose and Alcuin, who comments on Cant. 2:8 ("Saliens super montes, et transiliens super colles") thus: "Tales enim saltus fecit dilectus meus: de caelo venit in uterum, de utero in praesepe, de praesepi in crucem, de cruce in sepulchrum, de sepulchro rediit in caelum". (Compendium in Canticum Canticorum; note in Cook: 144).

4. All line references are to the text of the poem edited by M.D. Clubb, Christ and Satan (New Haven: Yale, 1925).

5. I am indebted to Sleeth (18) for alerting me to this parallelism.

6. For example, Origen links the psalm with the Ascension: "When he comes, conquering and triumphant, with his body which has risen from the dead, then certain of the Powers say 'Who is this that comes from Edom, with reddened garments from Bozrah, in such splendour?' Then those who escort him say to those who are set in charge of the heavenly gates, 'Open your gates, you rulers, open your everlasting portals, and the King of Glory shall come in.' But they inquire yet again, if one may so describe it, seeing his right hand red with blood, and his whole body covered with the marks of his valour." (Comm. in Johann; quoted in Brown: 9)

7. It should be pointed out that, though the devils suffer and feel pain, theirs is a far cry from Christian patience in that it is involuntary. A Christian hero willingly endures; his will is aligned with the divine. The question of will is absolutely crucial to the issue of heroism: Christ and his saints are heroes in so far as their will is that of God himself. They may also be mighty and courageous (in fact, they usually are), but their heroism depends not on those qualities, but on trust in and reliance on God.

Notes to Chapter 3 (cont)

8. It is noteworthy that the second temptation, that of Christ's trying God's providence by casting himself off the pinnacle is used by Milton in Paradise Regained as the climax of the three. In standing firm, Christ showed himself to be the Son of God more than in the other temptations. Here, however, Christ's identity is not in doubt; more important is his might, integral as it is to the abasement-exaltation motif.

9. S.B. Greenfield, A Critical History of Old English Literature (London, 1965) : 142.

10. Brown: 5.

CHAPTER 4 : GUTHLAC A AND GUTHLAC B

1. J. Hill, "The Soldier of Christ in Old English Prose and Poetry", Leeds Studies in English, 12 (1981): 59.

2. R. Woolf, "Saints' Lives", Continuations and Beginnings, Ed. E.G. Stanley (London: Nelson, 1966): 55. But she omits to mention that in chapter 31 of the Vita Guthlac is actually subjected to physical punishment at the hands of the devils. And in chapter 34 his tormentors take the form of British soldiers in an attempt to convince him that his dwelling is being attacked.

3. All references are to the text edited by J. Roberts, Guthlac A and B (Oxford: Clarendon, 1979).

4. M. McC. Gatch, Loyalties and Traditions (New York: Pegasus, 1971): 67.

5. T.A. Shippey, Old English Verse (London: Hutchison, 1972): 130.

6. The chapter in which the transportation occurs is entitled "Quomodo corporaliter maligni spiritus ad portas inferni illum asportaverunt". From Felix's Life of St. Guthlac, Ed. B. Colgrave (Cambridge: University Press, 1956).

7. An interesting parallel is the story of St. Martin who refused to fight for the Emperor Julian with the bold words "Christi miles sum; pugnare mihi non licet". He paradoxically assumes the role of soldier and withdraws from combat. From J.E. Cross, "The Ethic of War in Old English", England Before the Conquest: Studies in Primary Sources, Ed. P. Clemoes and K. Hughes (Cambridge: University Press, 1971): 280. It should be remarked upon that Guthlac gave up a very successful martial life at the age of 24 to achieve martial prowess in a context quite opposed to that of secular warfare!

8. A. Stein, Heroic Knowledge (Hamden: Archon Books, 1965): 10.

9. F.R. Lipp, "Guthlac A: An Interpretation", Mediaeval Studies, 33 (1971): 59-60.

10. D.G. Calder, "Theme and Strategy in Guthlac B", Papers on Language and Literature, 8 (1972): 237.

11. The sentiments of this dirge, it should be noted, are very close to those expressed in the second half of Beowulf, especially lines 2444-2459 (the Father's Lament for his Son) and 2247-2267 (the Lay of the Last Survivor), as well as in the Elegies, especially The Wanderer.

12. D.G. Calder "Guthlac A and B: Some Discriminations", Anglo Saxon Poetry, Ed. Nicholson and Frese (Notre Dame: University Press, 1975): 72.

13. P.F. Reichardt, "Guthlac A and the Landscape of Spiritual Perfection", Neophilologus, 58 (1974): 334.

14. Quoted in Hill: 69.

CHAPTER 5 : ANDREAS AND THE FATES OF THE APOSTLES

1. T.A. Shippey, Old English **Verse**, (London: Hutchison, 1972): 117.

2. References to the text of both poems from the edition of K.R. Brooks, Andreas and The Fates of the Apostles (Oxford: Clarendon, 1961)

3. C. Schaar, Critical Studies in the Cynewulf Group (Lund: Gleerup, 1949): 34.

4. K. Sisam, Studies in the History of Old English Literature (Oxford: Clarendon, 1953): 16.

CHAPTER 6 : CONCLUSION

1. For a discussion of the date of this poem see The Dream of the Rood, Ed. M. Swanton (New York: Manchester University Press, 1970): 59-60.

2. Milton, The Reason of Church Government, Vol II of The Prose Works of John Milton, Ed. J.A. St John (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1878): 479.

3. J. Hill, "The Soldier of Christ in Old English Prose and Poetry", Leeds Studies in English, 12 (1981): 51.

Notes to Chapter 6 (cont)

4. C. Schaar, Critical Studies in the Cynewulf Group (Lund: Gleerup, 1949): 314.

5. Adapted from C. Schneider, "Cynewulf's Devaluation of Heroic Tradition in Juliana", Anglo-Saxon England,7 (1978): 117.

6. S.B. Greenfield and D.G. Calder, A New Critical History of Old English Literature (New York, 1986): 158.

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