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Crux Christi/Cristes Rod: Interpreting the Anglo-Saxon Cross

by

Christopher T. Vaccaro

**A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in English
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York**

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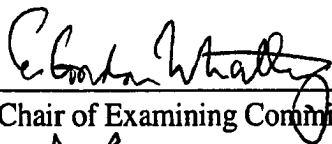
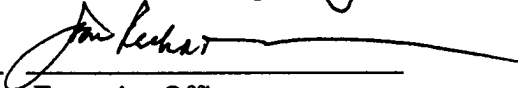


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Abstract:

Crux Christi/Cristes Rod: Interpreting the Anglo-Saxon Cross

by

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Few images garnered as much attention and occupied as much of the Anglo-Saxon imagination as that of Christ's cross. This project constructs a hermeneutic apparatus by which to better understand the cross through the assemblage of literary works dating from the late eighth to mid-eleventh century. In its methodology, it combines contemporary critical approaches alongside close comparisons of textual source material. Anglo-Latin and Old English texts, excepting the *Dream of the Rood*, are situated in the context of the Latin tradition beginning with Jerome's Vulgate Bible and continuing up to the literature that comprised the early English liturgical and devotional corpus. The analysis brings to the fore three core-properties associated with the cross: compunction, fecundity, and apotropaism. These categories, much as the chapters that examine them, are distinct but overlapping. Through an examination of various influential hymns and homilies, Chapter One establishes the place of these properties within the tradition of the early medieval Church. Chapter Two examines the influence of this tradition on the devotional anthologies of the ninth through eleventh centuries and provides, by means of an appendix, a working edition of Anglo-Latin, Old English, and macaronic prayers, some of which have not been edited or translated in a published edition. Chapter Three explores a nexus of inseparable themes utilizing Cynewulf's *Elene* to bring to relief the

cross's penitential attributes. Compunction, victory, and conversion come together in this powerful reflection on the cross's ability to save a penitent sinner. The complex interpretive possibilities available to the Anglo-Saxons become clear in Chapter Four which situates its analysis within the context of "popular" Christianity. Employing a field-remedy and a riddle, the chapter sees the fecundity of the cross as essential to the health of the Anglo-Saxon community. Finally, Chapter Five locates an apotropaic presence within the arrangement of the British Library Cotton Tiberius A. iii manuscript and highlights significant verbal echoes in a treatment of the Good Friday service, a set of cross-prayers and a vernacular life of Saint Margaret. Overall, the project's innovation lies in its synthesis and analysis of a broad range of material hitherto not considered together.

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Introduction

Christ's death on the cross transformed an image formerly associated with suffering into a symbol of eternal life and divine power. Introduced to the pagan Anglo-Saxons with the coming of St. Augustine in 597, the cross quickly became the most significant religious symbol in early English culture appearing in works of art, sculpture and literature in addition to remedies, rituals, and charters. By the time the monastic reform movement of the tenth century was underway, votive masses and services to the cross were held every Friday and an organized ritual was performed during the Friday of Holy Week. As the title of this study indicates, Anglo-Latin and Old English literature on the cross drew heavily from and responded to the substantial corpus of Latin material produced by the Church fathers and later writers including the prolific authors of Anglo-Saxon England.

In his comprehensive study of the Anglo-Saxon cross, William Stevens finds evidence of an almost unparalleled enthusiasm for the cross in pre-Conquest battle cries, oaths, and charters.¹ Since Stevens's project, scholarship has drawn from interdisciplinary research in such fields as History, English, Archaeology, Art History, and Religion.² Barbara Raw has assisted tremendously in her seminal investigation into crucifixion iconography.³ A great number of studies have focused on the Ruthwell Cross

¹ William Stevens, *The Cross in the Life and Literature of the Anglo-Saxons* (1904; NY: H. Holt and co., 1967).

² See William G. Collingwood, *Northumbrian Crosses of the Pre-Norman Age* (London: Faber and Gwyer, 1927); Richard N. Bailey, *Viking Age Sculpture in Northern England* (London: Collins, 1980); B. Cassidy, ed., *The Ruthwell Cross: Papers from the Colloquium Sponsored by the Index of Christian Art* (Princeton, The Department of Art and Archaeology, 1992); Mildred Budny, *Insular, Anglo-Saxon, and Early Anglo-Saxon Manuscript Art at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge* (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1997).

³ Barbara Raw, *Anglo-Saxon Crucifixion Iconography*. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1990).

and its connection to *The Dream of the Rood*.⁴ Outside of this poem, literary analysis had been limited. One notable exception is Thomas Hall's interpretation of Moses' Rod in the Old English *Exodus*.⁵ Recently, an interest in constructing an hermeneutic framework by which to interpret the Anglo-Saxon cross has been intensified through the work of Karen Jolly, Catherine E. Karkov, and Sarah Larratt Keefer and their efforts in the *Sancta Crux/Halig Rod* Project. From 2001-2003, seminars and conference sessions have been devoted to examining the cross's function in liturgies, psalter illuminations, medical books, riddles, and devotional anthologies of pre-Conquest England.

Very much influenced by the current fervor of activity, *Crux Christi/Cristes Rod* addresses the need for further interpretive strategies concerning the cross by bringing together a collection of materials from the canonical to the marginal. Given the attention that *The Dream of the Rood* and the Ruthwell Cross have enjoyed, this study reserves space for texts treated insufficiently or not at all. The meticulous examination of each attribute of the Anglo-Saxon cross is a titanic endeavor. The present study focuses attention on three of the core-properties associated with the cross: compunction, fecundity, and apotropaism leaving aside others such as royalty/rule, victory, cosmology, and brilliance for a more appropriate project; however, overlap does occur. Likewise, the study does not exhaust all possible Old English texts; poems such as *Andreas*, *Christ*,

⁴ There exist numerous essays. I list a select few below: John V. Fleming, "The Dream of the Rood and Anglo-Saxon Monasticism," *Traditio* 22 (1966): 43-72; Robert B. Burlin, "The Ruthwell Cross, The Dream of the Rood and the Vita Contemplativa," *Studies in Philology* 65 (1968): 23-43; Barbara Raw, "The Dream of the Rood and its Connection with Early Christian Art," *Medium Aevum* 39.3 (1970): 239-56; Annemarie E. Mahler, Lignum Domini and the Opening Vision of *The Dream of the Rood*," *Speculum* 53.3 (July, 1978): 441-63; Éamonn Ó Carragáin, "Crucifixion as Annunciation: The Relation of The Dream of the Rood to the Liturgy Reconsidered," *English Studies* 63.6 (Dec. 1982): 487-505; Jane Roberts, "Some Relationships between the Dream of the Rood and the Cross at Ruthwell," *Studies in Medieval Language and Literature* 15 (2000): 1-25.

⁵ "The Cross as Green Tree in the Vindicta Salvatoris and the Green Rod of Moses in *Exodus*," *English Studies* 72.4 (1971): 297-307.

Exodus, and *Guthlac* are not treated here, nor are some devotional anthologies or Tatwine's riddle *De cruce Christi*. However, the included texts offer strong evidence individually, while collectively providing what is hoped to be a useful and practical perspective on the subject.

The texts under consideration here are positioned within an interpretive framework of accessible source and analogue information. As one might expect, the Latin literary culture had a tremendous impact on Anglo-Saxon cross literature (much of which replicated earlier Latin texts with varying degrees of innovation). Biblical, patristic, and liturgical echoes and direct references provide insight into how the cross is to be read in Old English texts while lesser-known Anglo-Latin material provides new insights. Chapter One of the study attempts to establish the historical tradition to which the later vernacular material was so indebted. Presented chronologically, the chapter briefly surveys biblical passages and the influential cross hymns of Venantius Fortunatus concluding with perhaps the two most influential figures of the late tenth century: Æthelwold and Ælfric.⁶ Chapter Two explores compunctive, fecund, and apotropaic elements in private cross devotions. Cross prayers and illuminations are culled from devotional anthologies written around and following the time of the monastic reform movement with the ninth-century *Book of Cerne* providing an advantageous glimpse into earlier Hiberno-Latin material. Private prayers found in *Cerne* and Ælfwine's *Prayerbook* are edited and translated as are the lesser-known prayers attached to *The Vespasian Psalter*. The chapter concludes with a speculative look into the private devotional practice of Judith of Flanders, a patron of one of the manuscripts.

⁶ Here I define "tenth-century," in concordance with Michael Lapidge, "as extending from the death of King Alfred in 899 to the death of the scholar Ælfric in the early years of the eleventh century." *Anglo-Latin Literature 900-1066* (London: Hambledon Press, 1993) 1.

Each of the next three chapters investigates one of the core-properties associated with the cross, imposing artificial yet helpful distinctions in order to effectively examine its subject. However, it is not possible to separate the theme of compunction from those of conversion and victory in Cynewulf's epic poem, *Elene*, and so Chapter Three explores this thematic intersection and emphasizes the deep personal convictions stirred by the sight of the cross. Present discussions concerning the colonizing effect of conversion in England make analysis of the poem particularly relevant. Chapter Four employs the *arbor vitæ* image as an indication of the cross's fecundity in *Riddle 28* of the *Exeter Book* and the *Æcerbot* ritual. Both texts underscore through their ambiguity the over-determined nature of the Anglo-Saxon cross, layered as it was with residual pre-Christian and institutionalized Christian ideologies. The chapter examines the biblical references and images in each text and locates a corresponding pre-Christian interest in providing relief to the community. Lastly, Chapter Five locates in the miscellany of the BL Cotton Tiberius A. iii manuscript a pervasive apotropaic thread. An analysis of the Good Friday service, a set of cross prayers, and an Old English version of the Life of Saint Margaret illustrates the protective power of the cross with particular attention given to Christ's jurisdiction over monastic and martyred bodies. The study concludes with an appendix of edited and translated material.

Chapter One

Anglo-Saxon Cross Devotion: Establishing the Tradition

The cross was a significant symbol of the Christian faith as early as the third century. As image, gesture, or relic, it was thought endowed with properties emerging from its role in the central Christological drama: Christ's Passion and Resurrection. Three core-properties are compunction, fecundity and apotropaism. Christian belief posited that Christ's death on the cross gave Christians hope of salvation as the gates of Hell were broken, souls were retrieved, and the sins of the world, wiped clean. Allusions to the biblical mystery often appeared in cross devotions. Christ's cross was thought to have been prefigured in Genesis and Exodus of the Old Testament, while Revelations of the New Testament recalled the crucifixion scene of the gospels and described the symbol's return at the Last Judgment.

A biblical image later recognized by Christians as a prefiguration of Christ's cross was the *arbor vitæ* or Tree of Life. According to Genesis 2, God had created Paradise on earth in the Garden of Eden, and there he placed the first man and woman.¹ Among all the trees of this garden, two were forbidden: the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Having eaten of the Tree of Knowledge, the couple was expelled so that they might not eat from the Tree of Life, endowing them with health and eternal life: "nunc ergo ne forte mittat manum suam et sumat etiam de ligno vitæ et comedat et vivat

¹ "plantaverat autem Dominus Deus paradisum voluptatis a principio in quo posuit hominem quem formaverat" [The Lord God had planted a paradise of pleasure from the beginning, in which he placed man whom he had created.] All biblical citations are from Jerome's Vulgate version, *Biblia sacra : iuxta Vulgatam versionem* 2 vols. 2nd ed. B. Fischer et al. (Stuttgart : Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1975).

in æternum” (Gen. 2:22). Christ’s dying on the cross redeemed humanity of this act and made accessible eternal life after death.

The earliest example of the cross’s protective power is found in a Christian reinterpretation of an Old Testament passage in which the Jews made a sign in blood to protect their homes during the night of Passover.² In the words of Exodus 12:23, the Lord, “viderit sanguinem in superliminari et in utroque poste transcendet ostium et non sinet percussorem ingredi domos vestras et laedere” [“shall see the blood on the transom, and on both the posts, [and] he will pass over the door of the house, and not suffer the destroyer to come into your houses and to hurt you”]. Early Christians believed this mark to be that of the cross. They often made the sign throughout the day to keep back the devil and the temptations of the flesh.³

The protective sign of the cross, used as a spiritual mark called the *sphragis*, was placed upon the forehead of all Christians during baptism using blessed oil. Originally, the *sphragis* designated a mark of ownership such as that placed on sheep by a shepherd or, in a more martial context, on soldiers by a general.⁴ Church fathers likewise recognized those anointed with the sign of the cross as being under Christ’s jurisdiction.

From out of these passages grew various associations that over time were reified as core-properties; central to early English cross devotion were the properties: compunction, fecundity, and apotropaism. Manifest in the hymns of Fortunatus and homilies of Ælfric,

² Thomas W. A. Small. “The Iconography of the Merovingian Cross-Page: Apotropaic and cosmological Symbolism in Early Medieval Art” Master’s Thesis, (Northern Illinois University, 1986).

³ “Belief in the efficacy of this sign was supported by a great body of legends in which its powers as a talisman are most conspicuous. They point [to] the moral that safety demands that it should accompany every act of life, and show that devils, the forces of nature, and the ills of the flesh, are all subject to the wonder-working sign.” Stevens 30.

⁴ Jean Danielou, *The Bible and the Liturgy* (Notre Dame: U of Notre Dame P, 1956) 55.

these properties appear throughout early English cross poetry and prayers, and can be traced back to the earliest writings of the Church Fathers.

The influential patristic writers of the early Christian period (circa 3rd to 5th centuries) held the opinion that the sign of the cross possessed supernatural qualities. In his *De corona militis*, the writer Tertullian (b. 160) advises that the sign of the cross be made at every waking moment.⁵ Likewise, Cyprian (d. 258) articulates the protective aspect of the cross's power in his *De lapsis*,⁶ and in the second book of his *Testimonies Against the Jews*, interprets scripture and deciphers the meaning of the cross. Cyprian's commentary casts into relief the cross's protective function.⁷

⁵ "Ad omnem progressum atque promotum, ad omnem aditum et exitum, ad uestitum, ad calciatum, ad lauacra, ad mensas, ad lumina, ad cubilia, ad sedilia, quaecumque nos conuersatio exercet, frontem crucis signaculo terimus" (3.4). *Q. Septimi Florentis Tertulliani, De Corona*, ed. Jacques Fontaine (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1966). [At every forward step and movement, at every going in and out, when we put on our clothes and shoes, when we bathe, when we sit at the table, when we light the lamps, on couch, on seat, in all the ordinary actions of daily life, we trace upon the forehead the sign (of the cross)]. Translation provided by http://www.tertullian.org/works/de_corona.htm. According to Cyril Pocknee, *Cross and Crucifix In Christian Worship and Devotion* (London: A.R. Mowbray, 1962) 33-34, Hippolytus and Prudentius also give evidence of the sign's popularity.

⁶ "Ab impio sceleratque velamine, quo illic velabantur sacrificantium capita captiva, caput vestrum liberum mansit; fron cum signo Dei pura diaboli coronam ferre non potuit, coronae se Domini reservavit" (2.15). [your heads retain their freedom from the shameful heathen veil which enslaved the heads of the sacrificers in its folds; your brows, hallowed by God's seal, could not support the wreath of Satan, but reserved themselves for the crown which the Lord would give.] *De Lapsis and De Ecclesia Catholicae Unitate*, ed. Maurice Bevenot (Oxford: Clarendon, 1971) 4-5.

⁷ II "Testimonies" [That in this sign of the Cross is salvation for all people who are marked on their foreheads. In Ezekiel the Lord says: "Pass through the midst of Jerusalem, and thou shalt mark the sign upon the men's foreheads, who groan and grieve for the iniquities which are done in the midst of them." Also in the same place: "Go and smite, and do not spare your eyes. Have no pity on the old man, and the youth, and the virgin, and slay little children and women, that they may be utterly destroyed. But ye shall not touch any one upon whom the sign is written, and begin with my holy places themselves." Also in Exodus God says to Moses: "And there shall be blood for a sign to you upon the houses wherein ye shall be; and I will look on the blood, and will protect you. And there shall not be in you the plague of wasting when I shall smite the land of Egypt." Also in the Apocalypse: "And I saw a Lamb standing on Mount Sion, and with Him a hundred and forty and four thousand; and they had His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads." Also in the same place: "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have power over the tree of life."] *Fathers of the Third Century: Hippolytus, Cyprian, Caius, Navatian, Appendix*, ed. A. Cleveland Coxe (Boston: Rand, Avery, and co., 1886) 515.

The fourth-century writer, Cyril of Jerusalem (315-386) writes in his *Mystagogic Catecheses* of similar properties associated with the cross,⁸ while Gregory of Nazianzen (330-390) argues the *sphragis* can save a believer from further torment:

If you fortify yourself with the *sphragis*, marking your souls and your body with the oil (chrism) and with the Spirit, what can happen to you? This is, even in this life, the greatest security you can have. The sheep that has been branded (*ephragismenon*) is not easily taken by a trick, but the sheep that bears no mark is the prey of thieves. (XXXVI, 377 A).⁹

John Chrysostom (347-407), one of the most prolific Christian fathers, in his *Quod Christus Sit Deus* discourses on its fructifying and apotropaic powers.¹⁰ An interest in the cross's Invention (discovery) emerged at this time as attested to by the travel journal of the pilgrim Aetheria and several narratives of the actual Invention.¹¹ Finally, St. Augustine (354-430) supplies evidence of the cross's protective properties in his commentary on the Gospel of John.¹²

⁸ Cyril, *Catecheses* XXXIII, 373 A. [He imprints his wonderful and saving *sphragis* which is feared by the demons and recognized by the angels, so much so that the former flee and the latter accompany it as a friend.] Danielou 58. See also *Cyril of Jerusalem*, ed. Edward Yarnold, S.J. (London: Routledge, 2000) 176-78.

⁹ Cited by Danielou 56.

¹⁰ Latin: PG 48.827 "Orbem enim terrarum, qui quod virtutem sterilis erat, nec melius se habebat, quam desertum, cum non posset quidpiam boni parere, statim paradisum et matrem fecundissimam effecit" [for the entire earth, barren beforehand of all virtue, no better than a desert, powerless to bring forth anything good of itself, was changed all at once by the good [cross] into a paradise and a most fertile mother.] As cited in Whatley, "Bread and Stone" 560. See Chapter Three n. 19 for full citation.

¹¹ See *Egeria: The Diary of a Pilgrimage*, trans. George Gings (New York: Newman P, 1970).

¹² Augustine's Tractates on the Gospel of John 19:23-24, (Tractate 118, section 5) "Postremo quid est, quod omnes noverunt, signum Christi, nisi crux Christi? Quod signum nisi adhibeatur sive frontibus credentium, sive ipi aquae ex qua regenerantur, sive oleo quo chrismate unguntur, sive sacrificio quo aluntur, nihil eorum rite perficitur." *Patrologiae cursus completus series latina* 221 vols., ed. J.P. Migne (Paris: Garnier Frères, 1844-64), 34: 1950. Hereafter cited as *PL*. [Finally, what is as all know, the sign of Christ except the cross of Christ? And unless this sign should be applied either to the foreheads of those believing or to the very water by which they are regenerated, or to the oil with which they are anointed with the chrism, or to the sacrifice with which they are nourished, none of these things are done by proper rite.] *St. Augustine: Tractates on the Gospel of John 112-24*, trans. John W. Rettig (Washington DC: Catholic U of America P, 1995) 43-44.

Evidence of cross poetry appears around the middle of the sixth century with the work of the Italian poet Venantius Fortunatus (530-609) whose late antique style of hymns greatly influenced Anglo-Saxon liturgical and devotional practices.¹³ Fortunatus composed three hymns in 569 to commemorate the arrival of Holy Cross relics to the court of Queen Radegunde in Poitiers.¹⁴ These poems, according to Szoverffy, depict the earliest type of hymn to the cross: preoccupied with the relationship between the victorious cross and the *arbor vitæ* or Tree of Life.¹⁵

The beginning of *Crux benedicta nitet*, perhaps the first hymn to be written in elegiac form, employs biblical imagery of Christ's saving power.¹⁶ The second section foregrounds the cross's fecundity. The hymn's balanced and emotive verses, "fertilitate potens o dulce et nobile lignum/ quando tuis ramis tam nova poma geris" (9-10), achieve a poetic sophistication while drawing out the parallels between the triumphant cross and the Tree of Paradise.¹⁷

Fortunatus's *Vexilla regis prodeunt*, written in Ambrosian iambic dimeters, was possibly sung while the relics of the true cross entered the City of Poitiers.¹⁸ The poem focuses on Christ (stanzas 1-4) and then on the cross (stanzas 5-8). As the poem begins, Christ is described in physical terms; his sacrificial act is emphasized through affective phrasing: "confixa clavis viscera/ tendens manus, vestigial/ redemptionis gratia/ hic

¹³ J. Szoverffy, *Latin Hymns* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1989) 40.

¹⁴ For a detailed analysis of Fortunatus's life see Brian Brennan, "The Career of Venantius Fortunatus," *Traditio* 41 (1985): 49-78. See also R.W. Hunt, "Manuscript Evidence for Knowledge of the Poems of Venantius Fortunatus in Late Anglo-Saxon England," *Anglo-Saxon England* 8 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1979) 279-95 which includes useful material in an appendix by Michael Lapidge.

¹⁵ Szoverffy, "'Crux Fidelis...'" Prolegomena To a History of the Holy Cross Hymns," *Traditio* 22 (1966) 39. Cynewulf's *Elene* shares this preoccupation.

¹⁶ Szoverffy, "'Crux Fidelis...'" 7. See 1a in Appendix.

¹⁷ These lines echo Pseudo-Cyprian's poem 'Hymnus de pascha Domini.' See Cyprianus *Opera*, ed. W. Hartel, 3.3.305-308. As cited in Szoverffy, "'Crux Fidelis...'" 4.

¹⁸ See 1b in Appendix.

immolata hostia” (5-8). Shifting attention to the cross, the poem draws parallels to the *arbor vitae* and underscores a theme of kingship/rule in the phrase, “regnavit a ligno deus” (16) a reference to Psalm 95, “dicite in gentibus Dominus regnavit” (95:10). Additionally Christ’s victory over Hell bestows protection, “statera facta est corporis/ praedamque tulit Tartaro” (23-24). The poem conflates Christ and the cross in the first two lines of the last stanza: “salve ara, salve victima,/ de passionis gloria” (29-30).

The thematic framework of *Pange lingua* is centralized around the image of the fecund tree as Fortunatus illustrates the significant moments in the life and Passion of Christ, shifting from nativity to crucifixion.¹⁹ The last line in the second stanza remarks, “ipse lignum tunc notavit, damna ligni ut solveret” (6), a reference to the legend in which the wood of Christ’s cross is traced back to the Tree of Life. In stanza eight, the imagery becomes quite dominant as Fortunatus employs repetition and asyndeton (in which items are listed without the use of a conjunction) to an almost incantatory effect:

Crux fidelis, inter omnes arbor una nobilis
 (nulla talem silva profert flore fronde germine)
 dulce lignum, dulce clavo dulce pondus sustinens! (19-21)
 [Faithful cross, above all others, one and only noble tree,
 (No ordinary forest bears such a flower from leaf and seed.)
 It supports such sweet wood, sweet nails, sweet weight!]

A hymn composed around the first half of the eleventh century within an Anglo-Saxon diocese in Eichstätt founded by St. Boniface offers some evidence of a continued interest in Fortunatus’s hymns. Written by Bishop Heribert (1022-1042), *Salve, crux sancta* was

¹⁹ Szoverffy ““Crux Fidelis”” 10. See 1c in Appendix.

sung during Vespers and Matins of the Invention and the Exaltation of the cross.²⁰ Its first two stanzas associate the cross, *vitale lignum*, with the Tree of Life. The line “per lignum servi, per te, lignum, liberi” [“because of a piece of wood, we became slaves and became free through you, who are a piece of wood”](8), refers directly back to the *Pange lingua* phrase above. The next two stanzas act as direct invocation and petition to Christ:

Humanitatem miseratus fragilem

Per crucem sanctam lapsis dona veniam (11-12)

In the fourth stanza, Heribert, in *homage* to Fortunatus, also uses asyndeton and rhyme to intensify the requests for protection and blessing:

Protege, salva, benedic, sanctifica

populum cunctum crucis per signaculum.

Morbos averte corporis et anime.

Hoc contra signum nullum stet periculum. (13-16)

The last stanza closes the poem by glorifying the power of the Trinity and the exalted cross.

Early literary evidence of cross devotion in England appears in Insular texts of the eighth and ninth centuries. *The Dream of the Rood*, an anonymous text in the *Vercelli Book* was likely composed in the eighth century. Merging the prosopopoeia common to the riddle genre with a dream vision rife with liturgical and baptismal imagery, the poem presents a fairly unique example of the cross’s identification with Christ. The Venerable Bede (672-735), perhaps the most prolific and influential early English author, acknowledges properties of the cross similar to those found above in his letter to Bishop

²⁰ See 2 in Appendix. See also Inge Milfull, *The Hymns of the Anglo-Saxon Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996) 461-62.

Egbert. In the letter, Bede urges for the frequent use of the sign of the cross by parishioners, “suaque omnia adversum continuas immundorum spiritum insidias, necesse habeant munire” [“to fortify themselves and all they have against the continual snares of unclean spirits”].²¹ In his *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*, Bede recounts moments in which the cross plays a significant role in the history of the church. In narrating the arrival of Augustine in 597 to the court of Æthelberht, Bede describes the preacher’s procession to the city of Canterbury once he is received by the king:

Fertur autem, quia adpropinquantes ciuitati more suo cum cruce sancta et imagine magni regis Domini nostri Iesu Christi hanc laetaniam consona uoce modularentur: ‘Deprecamur te, Domine, in omni misericordia tua, ut auferatur furor tuus et ira tua a ciuitate ista et de domo sancta tua, quoniam peccauimus. Alleluia.’²²

Bede further recounts the heroic behavior of Oswald who, at Heavenfield, “set up the sign of the holy cross and, on bended knees, prayed for God to send heavenly aid to His worshippers in their dire need.”²³ According to Bede, Oswald and his army defeated the British ruler, Caedwalla, aided by the victorious cross, and splinters from that cross produced miraculous cures.²⁴ Bede’s interest in Oswald’s battle may have been influenced by the cross at his own church at Jarrow inscribed with a phrase from

²¹ Bede, *Venerabilis Bedae Opera Quae Supersunt Omnia*, ed. J. A. Giles, (London, 1843), 1.134-35.

²² “It is related that as they approached the city in accordance with their custom carrying the holy cross and the image of our great King and Lord Jesus Christ, they sang this litany in unison: ‘We beseech Thee, O Lord, in Thy great mercy, that Thy wrath and anger may be turned away from this city and from Thy holy house, for we have sinned. Alleluia.’” Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*, eds. Bertram Colgrave and R.A.B. Mynors (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969) 74-77. The prayer comes from the Gallican Liturgy.

²³ “Oswald signum sanctae crucis erexit, ac flexis genibus Deum deprecatus est, ut in tanta rerum necessitate suis cultoribus caelesti succurreret auxilio.” Ibid. 214-15.

²⁴ Ibid.

Eusebius's historical account of Emperor Constantine's similar victory over the barbarians.²⁵

Alcuin (735-804) traveled to the court of Charlemagne from York and had a tremendous influence on continental devotional practices. He expressed fascination over the cross's relationship to the four corners of the globe in his strange *Figurdichtung*, *Crux decus es mundi*, a complex hymn involving thirty-seven lines of thirty-seven letters arranged to form a square.²⁶ The line that forms its left side, "Crux pia vera salus partes in quattuor orbis," resonates with the cosmological imagery of earlier hymns.²⁷ Alcuin's pupil, Rabanus Maurus (776-856) was likewise inspired.²⁸ Additionally, stone sculptures such as the Ruthwell cross inscribed with verses from *The Dream of the Rood* poem supply further evidence of Insular cross devotion. This devotion was fueled by the arrival of fragments of the true cross, sent from Pope Marinus to King Alfred in 883 and again in 885.

Æthelwold (909-984), an influential reformer of the tenth century, was largely responsible for institutionalizing the cross's *adoratio* celebration. In fourth-century Jerusalem, a sequence of services commemorated the last few days of Christ's life. Through Rome, a similar sequence was brought to England.²⁹ Though a principal Mass was held in honor of the cross every Friday of the year, a complex dramatic ceremony involving chants and reenactments was developed specifically for Good Friday of the

²⁵ C. Tolley, "Oswald's Tree," *Pagans and Christians* (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1995) 152.

²⁶ Svöverffy *Hymns of the Holy Cross* 24-25.

²⁷ In his appendix to Hunt 295, Michael Lapidge convincingly argues for the availability of Fortunatus's poetic corpus at York in the eighth century though no manuscript of his eleven book collection dates before the tenth century. Evidence exists that certain poems circulated separately. Bede refers only to Fortunatus's *De virginitate* though his work echoes other poems.

²⁸ Maurus wrote a poem entitled *Carmen de laudibus S. crucis*.

²⁹ Raw 251.

Easter Week.³⁰ These devotional practices were regularized through the production of the *Regularis Concordia* (c. 973) composed, possibly by Æthelwold himself, under the Reform movement led by Archbishop Dunstan.³¹ The *Regularis Concordia* describes this day of veneration as busy with song, prayer, and ritual. Though I cover this service in some depth in Chapter Five, an analysis of the tradition of cross devotion requires a brief comment here.

The Good Friday service is comprised of two lessons, a series of responses and collects, a tract *Psalm 139 (Eripe me Domine)* and a passion narrative. Antiphons such as *Ecce lignum crucis* and *Crucem tuam adoramus Domine* are sung alongside verses of Fortunatus's *Pange lingua*. Several prostrations are followed by a recitation of seven penitential psalms: 6, 31, 37, 50, 101, 129, and 142. Another collect recounts the details of Christ's Passion. At the end of the service, a liturgical drama reenacts Christ's crucifixion and placement in a sepulchre. Functioning as a symbol of Christ's body, the cross is kissed and placed in a representative tomb where it stays until the morning of Easter Sunday.

Lastly, Ælfric (955-1022) offers insight into the properties attributed to the cross in the post-Reform climate of the late tenth century. In his redaction of the sixth-century *Passio sancti Bartholomei apostoli*, Ælfric describes an angel's victory over a devil. Responding to the apostle's petition, the angel arrives using the sign of the cross to bless and protect the multitudes:

³⁰ See Bedingfield, M. Bradford, *The Dramatic Liturgy of Anglo-Saxon England* Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2002. See Thomas Symons, ed., *Regularis Concordia* (New York, 1953) 20.

³¹ Symons (1953), xxiv; also Symons, "Regularis Concordia: History and Derivation" *Tenth-Century Studies: Essays in Commemoration of the Millenium of the Council of Winchester and the Regularis Concordia*, ed. David Parsons (London: Phillimore & Co., 1975) 42. See Tiberius A. iii version, 7a in Appendix.

And þær com þa fleogende godes engel scinende swa swa sunne, and fleah geond þa feower hwemmas þæs temples, and agrof mid his fingre rodetacn on þam fyþerscytum stanum, and cwæð, “Se god þe me sende cwæð, þæt swa swa þas untruman sind gehælede fram eallum cōpum, swa he geclænsode þis templ fram þæs deofles fulnyssum, ðone þe se apostol het to westene gewitan. And god bebæd me þæt ic ðone deofol eowerum gesihþum ær æteowie. Ne beo ge afyrhte þurh his gesihðe, ac mearciað rodetacen on eowerum foreheafdum, and ælc yfel gewit fram eow.”³²

Consecrating the four cornerstones of the temple through the sign of the cross dismisses the devil (“he geclænsode þis templ fram þæs deofles fulnyssum”) and establishes God’s dominion within that sacred space. The mark upon the forehead recalls the apotropaic outcome of Christ’s Passion and its Old Testament prefigurations.

In his *Inventio Sanctae Crucis* homily, Ælfric speaks of the advantage of praying to the cross’s likeness:

Cristene men sceolon soðlice abugan to gehalgodre rode on ðaes haelendes naman, for ðan ðe we nabbað ða ðe he on ðrowade, ac hire anlicnys bið halig swa ðeah, to ðaere we abugað on gebedum symle, to ðam mihtigan drihtne ðe for mannum ðrowade, and seo rod is gemynd his maeran þrowunge, halig ðurh hine,

³² Ælfric, *Ælfric’s Catholic Homilies The First Series*, ed. Peter Clemoes (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1997) 445 “and there came then flying God’s angel shining as the sun, and flew over the four corners of the temple, and graved with his finger the sign of the cross on the four-cornered stones, and said, “The God who sendeth me said, That so as these sick are healed from all diseases, so hath he cleansed this temple from the devil’s foulness, whom the apostle hath commanded to retire to the waste. And God hath bidden me that I first make manifest the devil to your sights. Be ye not afraid at the sight of him. but mark the sign of the rood on your foreheads, and every evil shall depart from you.” Benjamin Thorpe, *The Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church* 1 (1842; London: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1971) 467.

ðeah ðe heo on holte weoxe. We hi wurðiað a, for wurðmynte Cristes, se ðe us
 alysde mid lufe ðurh hi, þaes we him ðanciað, symle on life.³³

Ælfric's comments return us to the beginning of this chapter. The cross, *gemynd his* [Christ's] *maeran þrowunge*, derives its salvific qualities through the Christological drama of Christ's Passion.

Having discussed the properties associated with the cross within the Christian literary tradition permits us now to examine with some sense of perspective the development of Anglo-Latin private prayers to the cross.

³³ "Christian men should truly bow to the holy cross in the name of the Savior, because though we do not have that on which he suffered, nevertheless, its likeness is holy, so we bow to it in prayer, to the great Lord who suffered for men, and the cross is a record of his mighty Passion, holy through him, even though it grew in a wood. We always honour it, to honour Christ, who with love freed us through it, (and) we always thank him for that in this life." *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies The Second Series*, ed. Malcolm Godden (London: Oxford UP, 1979) 175-6. Brief sections of this homily also appear in an anonymous legend from an eleventh-century manuscript, Bodleian Library Auct. F 4. 32. See R.R. Morris, ed., *Legends of the Holy Rood* (EETS os 46, 1871) 3-17.

Chapter Two

Anglo-Saxon Private Cross Devotion: Insular Manuscript Evidence

In his examination of Anglo-Saxon devotional anthologies, Thomas Bestul distinguishes between a small group of manuscripts written through the eighth and early ninth centuries and a second, larger group written around and following the time of England's monastic Reform movement.¹ Of the forty or so surviving Anglo-Saxon anthologies only a few actually contain cross prayers. The earlier material reflects the continuation of continental and Insular traditions while that composed later displays an innovative approach to those traditions. In this chapter, representative prayer-books, psalters, and gospelbooks are examined in order to pinpoint three core-properties (compunction, fecundity, and protection) associated with the cross in Anglo-Saxon devotional anthologies. Given the distinctions between text and image, an examination of both prayers and illuminations provides a more comprehensive, inter-disciplinary analysis. The argument will first examine the prayers, then the illuminations and conclude with a speculative glance at an individual devotional practice.

Cross Prayers

The palm-sized ninth-century prayer-book, the *Book of Cerne* (Cambridge, University Library L1.1.10), contains seventy-four prayers intended for private devotional use, four

¹ For a list of the English devotional manuscripts see the appendix to Thomas H. Bestul, "Continental Sources of Anglo-Saxon Devotional Writing," *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Culture*, ed. Paul E. Szarmach (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1986) 124-26.

gospel accounts of the passion, illuminations, and a psalter.² A. B. Kuypers argues for its composition around 818-830 near Lichfield and notes the resemblance between the manuscript and similar compilations of Irish origin.³ Bestul, however, traces possible Latin influences from eighth-century Northumbria.⁴ The next two manuscripts of the study derive from Bestul's second category: i.e. they were composed in or contain a significant addition of material from the monastic culture of the eleventh century. The two volumes that make-up *Ælfwine's Prayerbook* (London, BL, Cotton Titus D. xxvi-xxvii) were composed by Ælsinus for the abbot Ælfwine around 1032 in Winchester.⁵ The material added to the eighth-century *Vespasian Psalter* (London, BL Cotton Vespasian A. i) was likely composed around 1035 also near Winchester.⁶

According to Kathleen Hughes, Irish traditions were influential in the composition of Anglo-Saxon devotionals.⁷ Contact between the two cultures flourished up to the early ninth century.⁸ The best known evidence of this is Laidcenn's seventh-century *lorica* (or breastplate) prayer found in the *Book of Cerne* and the *Book of Nunnaminster*.

The *lorica* genre was characterized by an "exhaustive enumeration" of protective possibilities.⁹ Invoking the hierarchy of angels, the *lorica* often contains a petition for protection and catalogues each body part from head to foot including internal organs.

² A. B. Kuypers, ed., *The Book of Ædelwald the Bishop, Commonly Called the Book of Cerne* (Cambridge UP, 1902).

³ Kuypers xiv.

⁴ Bestul, "Continental Sources" 111. Kuypers xxviii-xxix acknowledges the connections to the Gelasian sacramentary.

⁵ Beate Günzel, ed., *Ælfwine's Prayerbook* (London: Boydell, 1993) 1-3.

⁶ Sherman M. Kuhn, ed. *The Vespasian Psalter* (Ann Arbor, MI: U of Michigan P, 1965).

⁷ Kathleen Hughes, "Some Aspects of Irish Influence on Early English Private Prayer," *Studia Celtica* 5 (1970) 52.

⁸ Kathleen Hughes, "Evidence for Contact Between the Churches of the Irish and English from the Synod of Whitby to the Viking Age," *England Before the Conquest, Studies in Primary Sources Presented to Dorothy Whitelock* eds. P. Clemoes and K. Hughes (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1971) 50.

⁹ John Carey, *King of Mysteries, Early Irish Religious Writing* (Dublin: Four Court Press, 1998) 127.

Verbal echoes of the *lorica* appear in various prayers of *Cerne* and *Nunnaminster* (MS. Harl. 2965) and in a number of early English and continental manuscripts. Prayers such as those found in Cotton Tiberius A. iii and B.M. Royal 2 A. xx link this protective theme to an address to the cross.¹⁰ An early vernacular version of this type appears in a tenth-century Irish recension attributed to Mugron:

Christ's cross over this face and thus over my ear. Christ's cross over this eye.

Christ's cross over this nose, Christ's cross over this mouth, Christ's cross over this throat. Christ's cross over the back of this head. Christ's cross over this side...From the top of my head to the nail of my foot, O Christ, against every danger I trust in the protection of Thy cross.¹¹

First employed for physical protection, Laidcenn's *lorica* was adapted by the English to include a dimension of moral protection as will be seen in the following prayers.¹²

Bede and Alcuin, two prolific eighth-century writers, serve as possible influences on devotional material; evidence remains of their interest in the genre. Bede can be credited with the *Collectio Psalterii Bedæ* a collection of Psalm segments and a number of metrical prayers that make their way into devotional anthologies.¹³ Alcuin also composed at least two devotional manuals while still in England: the *Officia per Ferias* and the *De Psalmorum Usu*. In compiling Carolingian manuals for Charlemagne, he collected patristic and biblical texts in a manner similar to his method in England.¹⁴

¹⁰ For the Tiberius prayer see 7b in Appendix.

¹¹ "Cros Christ tarsin ngnuisse, tarsin gcluais fon coirse. Cros Christ tarsin suilse. Cros Christ tarsin sroinse. Cros Christ tarsin mbelsa. Cros Christ tarsin craessa. Cros Christ tarsin cula. Cros Christ tarsin taebse...O mullach mo baitse co ingin mo choise, a Christ, ar cach ngabad for snadad do chroise." Gerard Murphy, *Early Irish Lyrics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962) 32-34.

¹² Hughes 53.

¹³ One such prayer, *O deus aeternae mundi*, is found in Orleans, Bibliotheque Municipale MS. 184. As cited in Bestul, "Continental Sources" 106.

¹⁴ Ibid. 110-11.

A book preoccupied with penance and protection, the *Book of Cerne* contains two prayers that focus primarily on the cross.¹⁵ The prayer *Domine iesu christe adoro te quando dixisti*¹⁶ is remarkably similar to a prayer found in the Veneration of the Cross ceremony in the early Spanish liturgy, and is also an early example of the *Adoratio* prayer institutionalized a hundred and fifty years later through Æthelwold's *Regularis Concordia*.¹⁷ A similar version of this prayer appears in the Cotton Tiberius A. iii manuscript with an additional *lorica*-style prayer tacked on to the end, and so discussion of this prayer-type will be reserved for Chapter Five.

The prayer *Salve sancta crux quae in corpore christi dedicata*, like most prayers, is a collection of earlier verses.¹⁸ In the first half, the cross, a token of love and faith, is transformed from a feared implement of capital punishment, “antequam te ascenderet dominus timorem terrenum habuisti (3),” to the beloved object through which the supplicant may achieve salvation.¹⁹ Rephrasing Fortunatus's *Vexilla regis* (1b, l. 17-20), references are made to the adornment of Christ's limbs on the cross (2, 9). The prayer likewise asserts an emotional investment characteristic of early Insular, particularly Irish, private devotion as various qualifiers produce a compunctive tone similar to that in Cynewulf's *Elene* examined in Chapter Three.²⁰ For example, the supplicant does not simply, “come to the cross,” but “joyfully comes,” *gaudens uenio* (6)

¹⁵ Basing her argument on the Old English *Exhortation* (Kuypers 3-4), Michelle Brown *The Book of Cerne, Prayer, Patronage, and Power in Ninth-Century England* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1996) 147-51, emphasizes the presence of a *communio sanctorum* theme in the manuscript.

¹⁶ Kuypers 114-17.

¹⁷ Henry Mayr-Harting, *The Coming of Christianity to Anglo-Saxon England* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania UP, 1991) 187. See also A. Wilmart, “Prières Médiévales Pour L'Adoration de la Croix,” *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 4 (1932) 24. Wilmart examines the similarities between the prayer as it appears in *Cerne* and in the Pontifical of Poitiers.

¹⁸ See 3a in Appendix. The prayer is in fact the prayer recited by St. Andrew at the time of his crucifixion.

¹⁹ See Hans Ruedi-Weber, *The Cross*, trans. Elke Jessett (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1975) 5-16. Weber gives substantial evidence of the Jewish abhorrence of the cross.

²⁰ Mayr-Harting 186. Mayr-Harting identifies the use of qualifiers as a characteristic of Irish worship.

and hopes to be received in turn with exultation, *exultans suscipias* (7). In the line, “Diu desiderata sollicite quaesita (9-10),” the term *sollicite* adds a level of anxiety to the supplicant’s desire for the cross. What we do not see, however, is any reference to the cross as *arbor vitæ* or as protective device. *Lorica* echoes such as, “Defende me domine deus meus contra omnes inimicis meis uisibiles et inuisibiles,”²¹ exist in another *Cerne* prayer; however, this apotropaic phrasing is not used in an address to the cross, and the mention of salvation at the prayer’s end is brief and not pursued.

In various *Cerne* prayers not dedicated to the cross, a penitential tone is more to the fore. The prayer, *Deus deus meus omnipotens* catalogues the various possibilities of sinning:

peccauī per negligentiam mandatorum tuorum et factorum meorum. Peccauī per superbiam et per inuidiam. Peccauī per detractionem et per auaritiam. . . peccauī in corde et in cogitationibus.”²²

Another prayer, *Pro peccatis amare me*, addresses the supplicant’s tears and weeping eyes directly, “o lacrimæ rorate meum rigate uultum.”²³ The cross’s association with penance continues to develop in the later Anglo-Saxon period.

With the increase of intellectual and ecclesiastical projects in the tenth century, particularly in Canterbury and Winchester, the production of prayer collections finds new momentum.²⁴ Echoes of Fortunatus appear more frequently and in variations, and the properties of the cross are explored in greater depth as it redeems, revives, and protects those who request its aid.

²¹ Kuypers 99.

²² Ibid. 97.

²³ Ibid. 171.

²⁴ Lapidge’s *Anglo-Latin Literature* describes the late tenth century particularly through the momentum of Æthelwold as a period of literary enthusiasm 1-48.

The prayer-book (Cotton Titus D. xxvi-xxvii) compiled for Ælfwine, the Dean and Abbot of the New Minster at Winchester, contains twenty-one cross devotions and two private prayers to the cross. The placement of a cross miniature immediately before the devotions signals their importance in the manuscript over the private prayers placed separately and towards the back. Three of these devotions appear in Cotton Tiberius A. iii and are treated in more depth in Chapter Five. Three prayers representative of Titus's style and redemptive focus are analyzed below.

Ecce lignum crucis, in quo salus mundi pependit is arranged in four parts and is, in part, a variation on the *Salve sancta crux* prayer (3a) found in *Cerne*.²⁵ Three parts are addressed to the cross and one, the last, to Christ. Each part becomes increasingly penitential. The poem first associates the wood of the cross with the health of the world, i.e. Christ. By extension, the cross is responsible for this health and the redemption that Christ brings; references to redemption appear four times (4, 6, 11, and 16). As the prayer continues, the supplicant becomes increasingly preoccupied with his fate after death. As *miserum peccatorem* (10-11), the supplicant expresses an intense love for Christ in a line borrowed from *Cerne's* version: "quem toto corde adoro totis uisceribus concupisco," ["whom I adore with all of (my) heart and desire with all my inmost being"] (14). This desire for Christ grows to such a proportion that the last segment of the prayer shifts emphasis completely to him. Along with requests for grace and glory, four petitions conclude the prayer each punctuated with the same eschatological phrase: "Dum superuenerit mihi mortis hora horibilis," ["when the terrifying hour of death should overtake me"] (21).

²⁵ See 4b in Appendix.

Elaborating on the details of Christ's Passion, the prayer *Deus, qui uoluisti*, encourages a compunctive identification with Christ on the cross.²⁶ Details of the Passion are catalogued in a way that invites the supplicant to imagine Christ's suffering:

flagellis et obprobriis uexari et conspui spinis coronari, colaphis cedi, cruce eleuari, atque inter latrones deputari, clauorum quoque aculeis perforari, lancea uulnerari, felli et aceto potari. (3-5)

[to be tormented with whips and insults, and to be spit upon,
to be crowned with thorns, struck and raised on the cross,
and to be condemned among thieves, to be pierced with nail points,
to be wounded by a lance, to be made to drink vinegar]

The passive infinitives within the prayer direct us to witness Christ as object, tortured, and powerless, and the repetitive structure amplifies the trauma of the event.²⁷ The second half contains a much more personal and penitent tone as the supplicant, *miserum* (7) asks to be led (through the cross) to that place where Christ led the thief who hung beside Him. The effect of this identification with the thief is a *compunctio penitentiae* that complements the earlier phrases.

Additional prayers in *Ælfwine's Prayerbook* reflect this compunction explicitly. The supplicant of *O Iesu benigne* requests that Jesus, "de hac conualle plorationis eripe me," ["Rescue me, from that valley of weeping"].²⁸ Another prayer, *Gregum tuum quesumus*, supplies an affective description of Christ's blood, referring to it as that "pretioso

²⁶ See 4d in Appendix .

²⁷ Echoing and expanding Fortunatus, *Pange lingua* (1c, 16-17): "hic acetum fel arundo sputa clavi lancea, mite corpus perforatur."

²⁸ Günzel 123.

sanguine filii tui,” [“the precious blood of your son”].²⁹ The qualifying terms in these prayers heighten the affective tone and mark an early Spanish and Irish characteristic in the manuscript.³⁰

The brief prayer *O crux viride ligno*, contains little if any reference to penance or compunction.³¹ It does, however, associate the cross with the *arbor vitæ*, an image discussed more fully in Chapter Four. The cross’s creation out of wood is twice emphasized. The first occurs in an echo of Fortunatus where the poet utilizes repetitive phrasing and rhetorical exclamation to accentuate the image of sweetness (which may have connoted a restorative balm or healing salve): “quam dulce lignum, quam dulces clauī, quam dulcia ferens pondera (2-3),” [“O what sweet wood, what sweet nails, what sweet burdens you endure”]. Equally prominent in the prayer is a complementary reference to the cross as remedy. The terms *viride*, *redemptor*, and *salus mundi* recall Christ’s sacrifice by which the sins and ills of the world were removed.

*Tuam crucem adoramus*³² successfully conveys the cross’s salvific properties in a manner reminiscent of the *lorica*:

Sitque super me signum crucis tue, et defendas me a malis preteritis, presentibus et futuris et exterioribus et interioribus (3-4).

[Save me and pity me, and let the sign of your cross be above me, and defend me from evil in the past, present, and future, externally and internally].

Enemies and demons are a primary focus in lines similar to the apotropaic verse of the

²⁹ Ibid. 127.

³⁰ Mayr-Harting 187.

³¹ See 4a in Appendix.

³² See 4c in Appendix.

psalms:³³

per signum sancte crucis tue, et a persecutionibus omnibus liberermur, et per huius signaculum crucis prosternentur inimici et fugentur demonia (4-5).

[Through the holy sign of your cross, we were set free from all persecutions, and through the sign of the cross enemies were thrown to the ground and demons were driven away.]

The catalogue of possible methods of protection is followed by three succinct phrases:

“Crux mihi uita. Crux mihi salus. Crux mihi resurrectio, in uitam aeternam” (7-8). The sign of the cross not only promised Ælfwine health and hope for the future, the cross itself was health and life.

While *Ælfwine’s Prayerbook* offers evidence of the cross’s properties, it does not masterfully synthesize these properties to the degree found in the *Vespasian Psalter*. Composed around the third quarter of the eighth century, *Vespasian* contains one of the earliest copies of Jerome’s *Psalterium Romanum* and its interlinear translation in the Mercian dialect. The manuscript has enjoyed a great deal of critical attention in regards to its copy of the Psalter, its gloss, and illuminations.³⁴ Not much attention, however, has been given to its five elaborate and lengthy cross prayers likely written in eleventh-

³³ See Psalm 59.

³⁴ A complete list of the criticism cannot be offered here. For some examples see Johan Gerritsen, “A Note on the Vespasian Psalter Gloss,” *English Studies* 51 (1970): 228-30, and Sherman Kuhn’s later response, “On the Originality of the Vespasian Psalter Gloss,” *English Studies* 66.1 (1985) 1-6. See Phillip Pulsiano, “The Originality of the Old English gloss of the Vespasian Psalter and its relation to the gloss of the Junius Psalter,” *Anglo-Saxon England* 25 (1996): 37-62 for a detailed summary of the Vespasian Psalter gloss debate. For an investigation into the Vespasian illuminations, see Edwin N. Gorsuch, “Emotional Expression in an Early Medieval Manuscript: British Library, Cotton Vespasian A. I,” *Worldmaking* ed. William Pencak (New York: Peter Lang, 1996) 23-55. For a facsimile, see *The Early English Manuscripts in Facsimile* vol 14, *The Vespasian Psalter*, ed. David Wright (Copenhagen: Rosenkilde and Bagger, 1967).

century Winchester.³⁵ Three of these prayers exemplify the achievement of eleventh-century devotional composition by transforming traditional material into new forms. The cadence of the lines establishes a state of relaxed contemplation, and the cross properties appear often and magnified.

The prayer *Salve crux sancta et ueneranda* offers so little in the way of penitential material that there is no real indication that the supplicant has sinned at all.³⁶ The tone is more victorious and reverent. More central is the cross's fecund and protective quality. The prayer begins with a comparison between the cross and the *arbor vitæ* borrowing from Fortunatus's *Pange lingua* (1c,19-20):

Salve crux sancta et ueneranda. Gloriosa et laudanda. Que inter omnes arbores una es nobilis. Cui nec lignum paradisi sanctitate et dignitate potest coequari quia in corpore dedicata es Christi. (1-3)

[Hail holy and venerable cross, glorious and praiseworthy, you alone among all the trees are noble. Not even the wood of paradise is able to equal you in holiness and worthiness because you have been consecrated in the body of Christ]

In *Pange lingua*, an emphasis is placed on the cross's surpassing beauty (1c, 20); here it specifically surpasses the *lignum paradisi*. In an image found in Tertullian's *De oratione* and elsewhere, reference is made to the natural world and its devotion to the cross:

"Merito tibi totus orbis subicitur. omnisque creatura prosternitur," [By your merit the whole earth is subjected to you and every creature is prostrate] (12).³⁷ Evoking the

³⁵ Kuhn vi. In his comprehensive overview of sources to Anglo-Saxon devotionals, Thomas Bestul comments that the prayers, "are notable for their intensity of emotion and foreshadow the subjectivism that Anselm of Canterbury was to carry to new heights a generation later." "Continental Sources" 116.

³⁶ Line 25 offers the only reference, "non sinas me cum infidelibus dampnari non sinas me cum infidelibus dampnari." See 5a in Appendix.

³⁷ Tertullian describes the usefulness of prayer in martial terms: "Prayer is the wall of faith, our shield and weapons against our foe who studies us from all sides. Hence, let us never set forth unarmed. Let us be

remedy of Christ's Passion, "ammirabile signum in quo est salus uita. et resurrectio nostra (27)," [admirable sign in which there is life, health, and our resurrection], the cross is hailed as the source of personal salvation and redemption.

The prayer's petitions for protection are numerous. Quite unlike the catalogue of body parts found in *Cerne*, aid is requested in fighting off the devil and his associates (11, 17, 21, 29), in defending the supplicant from mental and physical impurity (17-8), and from the wrath of God (28-9). This is in addition to the general references for protection appearing throughout (14, 18, 30). Reference is made to the cross as incomprehensible sign (9), as banner (6, 28), and as *chrism* (20).³⁸

Aue sancta crux omnium arborum gloriosissima continues along the same lines as the previous prayer and, not surprisingly, retains many of the same images.³⁹ Recast in order to subordinate the *arbor* image to that of Christ's limbs, the first few lines continue to associate the cross to the Tree of Life through extended echoes of Fortunatus:

Tamen pretiosior cunctis eius arboribusque extitisti non decore frondium
 propriorum aut pulchritudine florum siue dignitate fructuum sed castissimis
 membris regis aeterni quem dum omne saeculum redimeret sustinuisti (3-6)

[you were, however, more precious than all its trees. Not through the fairness of
 your own leaves or the beauty of the flowers or the worth of the fruit,⁴⁰ but

mindful of our guard-duty by day and our vigil by night. Beneath the arms of prayer let us guard the standard of our general....All the angels pray too; every creature prays; the beasts, domestic and wild, bend their knees, and as they go forth from their stables and caves they look up to heaven with no idle gaze. Even the birds, upon rising in the morning, mount into the sky and stretch out their wings as a cross in place of hands and say something which might seem to be a prayer." *Tertullian, Disciplinary, Moral and Ascetical Works*, trans. Rudolph Arbesmann (New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc. 1959) 187-88.

³⁸ This last reference is significant in that the *sphragis* associated with the *chrism* maps the intersection where cross and body touch, where the cross protects the body, identifies it as Christian, and establishes Christ's perpetual jurisdiction over it. See Chapter Five.

³⁹ See 5b in Appendix.

⁴⁰ Echoing *Pange lingua* (1c, 20).

through the most chaste limbs of the eternal king,⁴¹ whom you held up while he
redeemed the entire world]

The prayer returns to this theme a few lines later, “dulce lignum ... pomum ... clauos ...
pondus ...onus (16-17),” and then a third time with garden imagery echoing *Pange*
lingua (1c, 19-21):⁴²

Non orbis quadriformes partes tam felicem ferunt arborem. in radice. fronde.
flore. fructu. sanctoque germine (21-2)

[The quadriform regions of the globe do not contain a tree so happy in its root,
branch, flower, fruit, and holy seed.]

Again the cross appears as incomprehensible (15) and as a protective device (27, 29, 32,
and 45); however, attention lingers on demonic forces mentioned five times (9, 12, 29,
41, and 46). The last example addresses the cross’s ability to ward off the devil’s
devouring mouth –an image relevant to the analysis of Saint Margaret in Chapter Five.
Here it serves to reinforce the connections between Christ’s salvific victory over the devil
and the redemption delivered through the cross: “salua me per te redemptum. et erue de
ore draconis. cuius saluator caput contriuit (46)” [save me, and redeem me through you
and deliver me from the mouth of the dragon, whose head was crushed by the savior].

Unlike the first prayer of this set, this devotion displays strong cosmological and
compunctive elements. The references to *orbis quadriformes partes* and the term *sæculi*
appearing twice (37, 38), compounded with the association of the cross with light (6-8)

⁴¹ Similar to l. 2 in *Cerne* (3a), “ex membris eius tamquam margaretis ornata.” Echoing *Vexilla regis* (1b, 20).

⁴² This imagery is reminiscent of that found in *The Dream of the Rood*: “Hwæt! Ic swefna cyst secgan
wylle/ h[w]æt me gemætte to midre nihte./ syðþan reordberend reste wundedon./ Ðuhte me þæt ic gesawe
syllicre treow/ on lyft lædan, leohte bewunden./ beama beorhtost. Eall þæt beacen wæs/ begoten mid
golde; gimmas stodon/ fægere æt foldan sceatum; swylce þær fife wæron/ uppe on þam eaxlegespanne.

recalls the cross's universal embrace. Finally, the prayer concludes with a penitential tone reminiscent of that found in *Cerne*. With humility and remorse, the supplicant recites a litany of Christ's afflictions:

propter que omnia corde contrito. corpore prostrato. imploro te alma crux Christi.
per amara uerbera. per dira uulnera. per atra pocula. per pretium sacri cruoris. et
per clauos eiusdem domini nostri Ihesu Christi sacris manibusque et pedibusque
infixos per pretiosam eius mortem./ per benedictam sepulturam...salue me.

(41-6)

[with a contrite heart, with body prostrate, I implore you dear cross of Christ,
through the bitter stripes, the dire wounds, the poisoned cup, the price of that holy
blood, and by the nails driven into the holy hands and feet of our Lord Jesus
Christ, and by his precious death, and blessed burial...save me]

The prayer continues a use of asyndeton and rhythmic phrases in its comprehensive treatment of the cross's properties and moves successfully from the expansive images of the universe to the minute details of Christ's Passion.

Te sancta dei crux, is a much shorter and quite different prayer.⁴³ Not nearly as comprehensive in its scope, it focuses primarily on the rehabilitation of the penitent supplicant, defined as *misero* (3). Every sentence is a request for some degree of assistance:

linguam a uaniloquio compescat. et precatis uerba in os meum conformet et

Beheoldon þær engel Dryhtnes ealle,/ fægere þurh forðgesceaft." (1-10a) *The Dream of the Rood*, ed. Michael Swanton Exeter: U of Exeter P, 2000.

⁴³ See 5c in appendix.

omnem pollutionem mentis purificet et me ad plenum in uitam honestam
componat (7-8)

[May he curb the tongue of useless talk, and conform the words of my mouth with
prayer, and purify every pollution of mind, and set me as much as possible in an
honest life.]

Two references to the cross's fecund property come as short addresses: *lignum uitale* (3)
and *hostia fructifera* (4-5). No metaphor is extended; no stylistic flourish exists.

The cross prayers composed in the eleventh century give further literary evidence of
the cross's core-properties (compunction, fecundity, and protection). Varying in degree
of accomplishment, the prayers for Ælfwine and those attached to the *Vespasian Psalter*
display an interest in the eschatological and cosmological cross not found in the cross
prayer of *Cerne*. All three manuscripts, however, indicate the cross's function as a
remedy through continued association with basic biblical, patristic, and liturgical
influences particularly Fortunatus.

Eleventh-Century Cross Illustrations

Thirteen late Anglo-Saxon manuscripts comprised of gospel-books, psalters,
pontificals, sacramentaries, private prayer-books, and homily collections possess
crucifixion images. Five eleventh-century manuscript illuminations form the corpus of
the following analysis and are representative of the crucifixion images of the period.

Crucifixion scenes appearing in four manuscripts: *Ælfwine's Prayerbook*, the
Winchcombe Psalter (Cambridge University Library, Ff. 1.23), the *Arundel Psalter* (BL
Arundel 60), and the *Red Book of Derby* (CCCC 422) offer sufficient evidence of
compunctive, fecund, and –to a lesser degree– apotropaic associations. A fifth

manuscript, the *Gospel Book of Judith of Flanders* (Pierpont Morgan 709 F. Iv), invites speculation concerning the personal strategies of identification initiated by the cross image.

Inserted between the Gospel of John and the devotions to the cross in *Ælfwine's Prayerbook* (f. 65v) is a crucifixion scene offering protection to its recipient.⁴⁴ The viewer's experience of the cross is mediated by the text written around both sides of God's gesturing hand, an indication of *Ælfwine's* grace:

Hec crux consignet Ælfwinum corpore mente

In qua suspendens traxit deus omnia secum

[May this cross bless *Ælfwine* in body and mind

on which, while hanging, God draws all things to himself]

The text inscribes upon the image a protective authority that directs readers to interpret the cross devotions within this apotropaic discourse. Recalling lines from the *Tuam crucem adoramus* prayer,⁴⁵ this crucifixion scene further personalizes the cross's employment offering *Ælfwine* personal protection. No explicit symbol of fecundity is attached to the pillar-like cross though Mary and John appear to be standing in a field of flowers. Christ's body appears in full health with no obvious signs of suffering, and his face conveys a sense of victory.

⁴⁴ See Plate 1.

⁴⁵ "Salua me et miserere mei. Sitque super me signum crucis tue, et defendas me a malis preteritis, presentibus et futuris et exterioribus et inferioribus" ["Save me and pity me, and let the sign of your cross be above me, and defend me from evil in the past, present, and future, externally and internally"] (4c, 3-5).



Plate 1: London, British Library, Cotton Titus D. XXVII (Ælfwine's Prayerbook), Crucifixion, f. 65v.



Plate 2: Cambridge, University Library, Ff. I. 23 (Winchcombe Psalter), Crucifixion, f. 88r.



Plate 3: London, British Library, Arundel 60 (Arundel Psalter), Crucifixion, f. 12v.



Plate 4: Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 422 (Sherborne Missal), Crucifixion, f. 53.

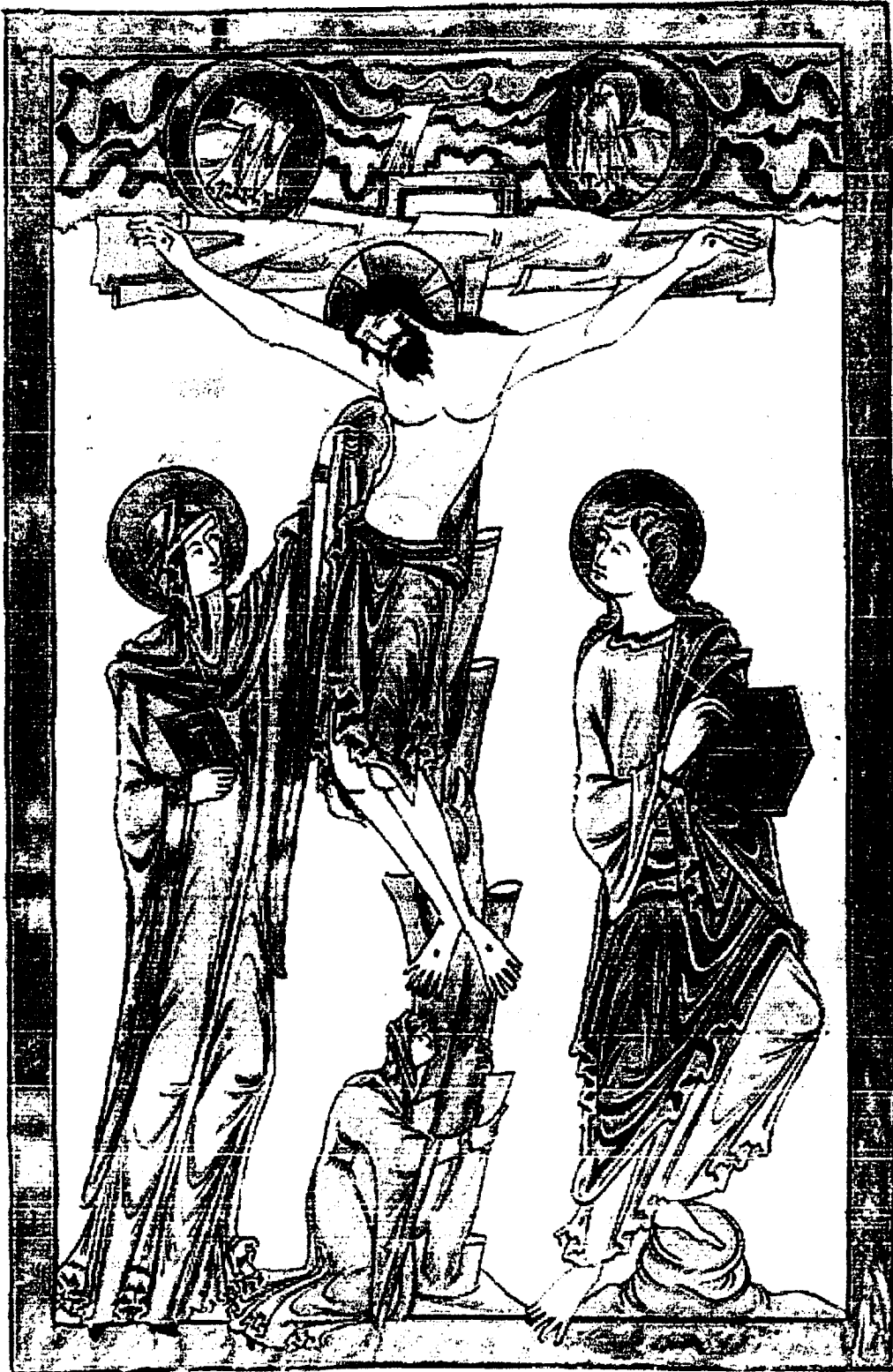


Plate 5: New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, 709 (Weingarten Gospels), Crucifixion, f.1v.

The mid eleventh-century *Winchcombe Psalter* contains a crucifixion scene (f.88r) before its text of Psalm 51.⁴⁶ While it does not display a color that identifies it as the *arbor vitæ*, it possesses rough ends on a horizontal beam inscribed with the words *lignum vit(a)e*. As with the previous image, this cross extends from the earth to the heavens and God's hand directs the viewer to behold his son. Not present in the previous drawing but seen here are the weeping images of *sol* and *luna* holding sheets before their faces. Additionally, blood pours out from an open wound in Christ's side and appears to trickle from the wounds on each hand and foot. Unlike the image in *Ælfwine's Prayerbook*, this crucifixion scene lacks any specific apotropaic imagery.

In the mid to late eleventh-century *Arundel Psalter*, a basic full-page crucifixion scene (f. 12v) facing Psalm 1 emphasizes the fecundity of the cross while avoiding any sense of mourning or protection.⁴⁷ The visual image of the roughly hewn cross painted green and stretching from the earth to the heavens conveyed, for the Anglo-Saxons, the idea of a "living" tree, and would clearly have evoked the fertile Tree of Paradise. This motif differed from earlier styles that tended to avoid ornament and is a characteristic of early eleventh-century cross miniatures from Winchester.⁴⁸ The chopped limbs along with the wood grain detail accentuate the natural property of the cross upon which stands a smiling victorious Christ. *Sol* and *luna* appear again; however, they do not display obvious signs of mourning. Mary and John also appear with similar effect.

⁴⁶ See Plate 2

⁴⁷ See Plate 3

⁴⁸ Jennifer O'Reilly, "The Rough-Hewn Cross in Anglo-Saxon Art," *Ireland and Insular Art A.D. 500-1200* ed. Michael Ryan (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1987) 153

In the *Red Book of Derby*, a missal from Sherborne Abbey (1061), a distinctive variation of the sprouting tree motif occurs in the crucifixion scene.⁴⁹ The drawing depicts a heavily green washed Tau shaped tree (Ezech. 9:4) standing as the T in the *Te igitur* in the introduction to the canon of the mass. Additionally, the Virgin stands nearby; her head looks down in grief. Her hands point to the blood sprinkling down from Christ's open wounds onto the tree.

A dove, signifying the Holy Spirit, hovers above carrying a wreath. God's hand emerges from the clouds and gestures towards his son's body draped in a perizoma. The crown-like wreath carried by the dove appears only this once in early English illuminations, and its only other parallel is a scene on the tenth-century Lothar Cross where the hand of God, Christ, and a dove encompassed by a wreath appear to symbolize the Trinity.⁵⁰

What is so distinctive about this cross is the fresh new foliage that emerges from its right side as Christ's blood sprinkles against the hewn tree trunk. The cross's vitality suggests the renewed life given to humanity through the blood of Christ. According to Barbara Raw, fecundity centered in this way on the foliated cross is quite an unusual variation and one that underscores the emergence of a greater interest in the cross as a tree.⁵¹ This corresponds interestingly with the appearance of the motif in the *Riddle 28* and the *Æcerbot* both found in eleventh-century manuscripts (discussed further in Chapter Four).

⁴⁹ See Plate 4

⁵⁰ Raw 152. This is possibly what occurs in this manuscript; however, Barbara Raw notes an interesting reference to an earlier Christian motif found on a reliquary lid dating from the late fifth to early sixth centuries. During that time, the symbol of the dove and wreath connoted the victory of life over death, and Raw speculates that this very well might have played a role in the appearance in the Missal.

⁵¹ Raw 153.

Cross Interaction: The Case of Judith of Flanders

Judith of Flanders (1030-1094) was the wife of Tostig Godwinson (1026-1066) who later became Earl of Northumbria. She lived in England from around 1052 to 1065 leaving for Flanders with her husband after the rebellion in Northumbria earlier that year. Four years after Tostig's death at the Battle of Stamford Bridge, she remarried Welf IV (1035-1101), bearing him two sons. In one of her customary gestures of generosity to the monastery established by her new husband's family, she gave four books, *tria plenaria et uno textu evangelii*.⁵² In one of these books, composed at New Minster, appears perhaps the most affective cross-image found in a manuscript of English origin prior to the conquest.⁵³

The illumination depicts a rough-hewn cross in a manner similar to that found in the *Arundel Psalter* and *Red Book of Derby*. Celestial witnesses, the sun and the moon, both weep as they do in the *Winchcombe Psalter*. On one side of the cross stands John recording the events in a book as seen in *Ælfwine's Prayerbook* also composed at New Minster. In an image present nowhere else this early in western art, Mary extends her robe in her left hand to the mournful face of Christ in a display of compassion towards her son's suffering and effectively directing the viewer's gaze.⁵⁴ Also unconventional for this period is the figure of a woman clutching the cross to her side. Though the motif of a donor figure does occasionally appear in other scenes, none possesses the intensity of this image.⁵⁵

⁵² *Witembergisches Urkundenbuch*, I (Stuttgart: F. H. Köhler, 1849-1913) 302-03.

⁵³ Meta Harrsen, "The Countess Judith of Flanders, and the Library of Weingarten Abbey," *The Papers of The Bibliographical Society of America* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1963) 3.

⁵⁴ Raw 159.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

The woman clinging to the cross is believed to be Judith herself or Mary Magdalen who, according to Temple, does not commonly appear this early in iconography of the Passion.⁵⁶ Being one of the larger of four books Judith gave to the minster, it is doubtful that it was used by her as a private prayer-book.⁵⁷ However, if the figure at the foot of the cross is meant to be Judith, then it is too inviting not to speculate that this book was placed somewhere the countess could view the illumination or where she might have spent time praying before the cross, imagining herself a part of the Passion scene.

Similar to post-Conquest practices, Anglo-Saxon devotion was marked by “participation, reenactment, and visibility.”⁵⁸ Through the aid of illuminations, individuals would have been able to participate emotionally in Christ’s suffering on the cross. Narrative art functioned in such a way as to allow for an individual to participate in its events. Viewers could approach the scene as spectators able to experience emotionally the event of the illustration:

For the Anglo-Saxons..., carvings and paintings, which were closely associated with liturgical celebrations, shared their function of making Christ present. Like the liturgy, art restored the memory by calling to mind the presence of Christ and his saints and by recreating the gospel events; it aided the understanding both intellectually and experientially by setting out the theological significance of

⁵⁶ Elzbieta Temple, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts 900-1066* (London: Harvey Miller, 1976) 109.

Interestingly, Mary Magdalen does appear at the foot of the Ruthwell Cross.

⁵⁷ Patrick McGurk and Jane Rosenthal, “The Anglo-Saxon Gospelbooks of Judith, Countess of Flanders: their text, make-up and function,” *Anglo-Saxon England* 24 (1995) 274. In the article it is noted that a different artist drew in each book. In the Pierpont Morgan manuscript designated *siglum A* a rather sloppy scribe rushed the copying most likely due to the immediate need to leave England. The crucifixion scene is the frontispiece illumination.

⁵⁸ Meyer Shapiro, “The Image of the Disappearing Christ,” *Late Antique, Early Christian and Medieval Art III* (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1979) 277.

historical events and by allowing man to live through them in imagination; it aided the will by encouraging a response of love, gratitude or repentance.⁵⁹

Mary Olsen posits that Anglo-Saxon texts required a degree of participation from the reader/viewer who was expected to insert herself into an already culturally established system of signs.⁶⁰ Similarly, O'Reilly agrees that the frontispiece illumination initiates a level of participation:

In Judith's gospel frontispiece, the small patron figure (and presumably the beholder) are invited to share St. John's insight into the event. She looks up at the means of her redemption, bowing the knee, acknowledging with the veiled sun and moon the Creator-Logos in the Crucified.⁶¹

Alongside the sun, moon, the Virgin Mary, and St John, the viewer's gaze is drawn to the object of the woman's embrace, captivated by Christ's body on the cross and invited to personally participate in the gospel story.

Conclusion

Experienced *totis visceribus*, the sight of the cross offers redemption to all those who stand or lie before it or to those who might imaginatively insert themselves, like Judith of Flanders, within the drama of Christ's Passion. The prayers and images in these psalters, prayer-books, and gospels provide some further insight into private Anglo-Saxon cross devotion. Not only do they contextualize the literary productions examined in the following chapters, they also define the form and scope of the cross's perceived attributes. Presented against the backdrop of liturgical hymns, antiphons, and homilies,

⁵⁹ Raw 187.

⁶⁰ Mary C. Olsen, "Words into Images: Textualizing the Visual and Visualizing the Textual in Medieval Illustrated Manuscripts" Ph.D Dissertation (Purdue University, 1997), 75.

⁶¹ O'Reilly, "Rough Hewn Cross" 172.

they display an amplification of traditional themes synthesized into meditative and personal compositions. Together, they tell of a cross brimming with vitality, emerging from the death of its own fruit, and protecting the souls and bodies of the faithful from evil. All of these attributes of the cross found within these prayers allow the supplicant, both in public mass and in private devotion, to briefly rise victoriously together with Christ in Paradise.

Chapter Three

Pierced to the Heart: Conversion, Compunction, and the *Sigebeam* in Cynewulf's *Elene*

The following chapter employs Cynewulf's *Elene* as a useful foil with which to define more precisely those attributes of the Anglo-Saxon cross appearing in the devotional material of Chapter Two with special emphasis given to compunction and its inseparable link, in the poem, to themes of victory and conversion. It contributes to current discussions through an investigation of Cynewulf's thematic and stylistic choices in his redactions. Additionally, it establishes the poem as a personal commentary on the rewards bestowed upon those willing to contemplate, with genuine compunction, the implications of the cross's discovery.

The late tenth-century manuscript, Vercelli Biblioteca Capitolare CXVII, otherwise known as the *Vercelli Book*, is a collection of prose and verse devotional texts compiled by a single scribe from a small monastery in or near Kent.¹ The one hundred and thirty-five leaves of the manuscript are divided into nineteen quires. Most of these pages contain homilies while the others hold six verse texts, *Andreas*, *Soul and Body*, a homiletic fragment, *Dream of the Rood*, and two poems signed by Cynewulf (*Fates of the Apostles* and *Elene* ff. 121-33v).²

¹ Donald Scragg in "The Compilation of the Vercelli Book," *Anglo-Saxon England* 2 (1973): 189-207 observed that the manuscript contained a few south-eastern spellings likely to have been introduced by its scribe and not from the exemplars, 206. Based on the scribe's lack of training in Latin, Celia Sisam concludes that he composed for a smaller monastery. *The Vercelli Book* (Copenhagen: Rosenkilde and Bagger, 1976) 44.

² *Elene* is the longest of Cynewulf's poems (consisting of some 1321 lines) and appears after *Homily XXII*.

Despite critics who claim to have linked the above texts to an actual historical author, there is, in fact, little evidence to support any such conclusions with certainty.³ What we do know from the existing material containing his now well-known runic signature is that he was very likely a Mercian who composed his poems around the first half of the ninth century.⁴ The presence of scriptural echoes, homiletic and patristic references, and liturgical subject matter strongly supports the argument that Cynewulf was involved closely with the Church.

Cynewulf's style is a fusion of formulaic phrases and rhetorical patterns.⁵ The four signed poems that make up the Cynewulfian corpus (*The Fates of the Apostles*, *Christ II*, *Juliana*, and *Elene*) reflect a writing that varies in intensity and mood and adjusts its use of stylistic devices to more adequately meet the needs of the material.⁶ His work explores the themes presented in the material and personally takes up the moral lessons embedded within the passages of the source. That Cynewulf's runic signature appears in the epilogue of his poems is a clear example of his tendency to relate himself closely to his material.

³ Early proposals concerning Cynewulf's dates were offered by Albert S. Cook ed., *The Christ of Cynewulf* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1909); Charles W. Kennedy, *The Earliest English Poetry* (London: Oxford UP, 1943); Kenneth Sisam, "Cynewulf and His Poetry," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 18 (1934, for 1932): 303-31; and P.O.E. Gradon, ed., *Cynewulf's Elene* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1966).

⁴ The rhymes found in *Elene* provide evidence of an Anglian pronunciation while the use of a medial *e* in the Cynewulf's name narrows the point of origin to Mercia after the variation *i>e* took place, sometime after 750. A well composed synthesis of this material is given in Daniel Calder's *Cynewulf* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1981). Gradon argues for the first half of the ninth century on account of the popularity of the acrostic and the use of runes at that time 23.

⁵ In *Cynewulf: Structure, Style, and Theme in His Poetry* (London: Associated UP, 1983), Earl R. Anderson depends on the work of Robert E. Diamond, "The Diction of the Signed Poems of Cynewulf," *PQ* 38 (1959): 228-41 who calculated that 62.7 percent of 459 verses composed by Cynewulf were "formula."

⁶ According to Dorothy Jehle, "Latin Rhetoric in the Signed Poems of Cynewulf," Ph.D Dissertation, Loyola University of Chicago, 1973, Cynewulf's use of zeugma, anaphora, parallelism, and chiasmus conform to the situations necessary to each text.

Elene takes its subject from an eastern version of the *Inventio Crucis* legend that merges the discovery of the cross with the conversion of a Jew who later becomes the bishop of Jerusalem. Stephen Borgehammar argues convincingly that a Syriac text was in fact twice removed from a fifth-century Greek original of the *Inventio* story. The Greek was first translated into Latin and this version translated into a Syriac text.⁷ Four legends made up the medieval narrative on the cross: the *Inventio Crucis*, *Origo Crucis*, *Flagellatio Crucis*, and *Exaltatio Crucis*.⁸ According to Pamela Gradon, the *Inventio* was the oldest of these legends.⁹

The Judas/Cyriacus version of the Invention legend entered into the western liturgy and was commonly read on the festival date commemorating the finding of the true cross, May 3rd.¹⁰ While the legend appeared in over ten languages and numerous manuscripts,¹¹ a study of the cross in Cynewulf's *Elene* need only be interested in those manuscripts containing Latin versions that could have possibly served as "source" texts. Of the numerous possibilities, the likely manuscripts include: the *Acta Cyriaci* found in the *Acta Sanctorum* Mai I, cols. 445-448, the *Inventio sanctæ crucis* (Paris, B.N. lat. 2769), *Sanctuarium seu Vitæ Sanctorum*, and the St. Gall manuscript (Codex Sangallensis

⁷ Stephan Borgehammar, *How the Holy Cross Was Found* (Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell International, 1991) 149. Borgehammar argues that Greek loan words and a recognizable word order appear in the Latin. He also points to a distortion found in the Latin texts and in the Syriac versions. Because traces of this distortion continue to appear in future Latin redactions, he concludes the Syriac must be a translation of a Latin original.

⁸ Gradon 15.

⁹ See also Thomas Foster Tipton, "Inventing the Cross: A Study of Medieval English *Inventio Crucis* Legends," Ph.D Dissertation (Northwestern U, 1997).

¹⁰ By the sixth century, the festival date of May 3rd and the legend of the Invention were established in Rome. *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture* 1 ed. Frederick M. Biggs, Thomas D. Hill, Paul E. Szarmach, and E. Gordon Whatley (Kalamazoo, MI: Western Michigan U, 2001) 265.

¹¹ Borgehammar 194.

225).¹² From her comparative research, Gradon concludes that the St. Gall manuscript is more closely aligned to that of *Elene*, so Holder's edition of the *Inventio* along with the St. Gall variants will be the primary Latin *Vorlage* for the study that follows.¹³

Much critical attention has been given to *Elene*'s structure and dominant themes as well as its coverage of a historical and religious moment.¹⁴ In most instances, readings emphasize the role of the prominent characters in the text, those being Constantine, Elene, Judas/Cyriacus, and Cynewulf himself. This procedure is most sound since an interpretation of the poem cannot exclude these characters around which the narrative revolves; however, there seems to be a dearth of attention given to the cross itself as a key figure and catalyst of the action.

In their analysis of movement from darkness to light, Stepsis and Rand find that the cross acts as a bridge between the two conditions, much as did Christ.¹⁵ However, they give no attention to the Latin "source texts" and so can not adequately judge to what degree Cynewulf amplified the prominence of the cross in the narrative, nor can they understand the texture of his translations.¹⁶ In his typological reading of the text, Hill cogently enumerates the similarities between the conversion of Judas and the finding of

¹² The St. Gall 225 version appears along with the Paris *Inventio* in Alfred Holder, *Inventio Sanctæ Crucis*, Lipsiae, 1889. Holder gives the St. Gall variants in his apparatus to his edition. Boninus Mombritius, *Sanctuarium seu vitæ Sanctorum*. 2nd ed. 2 vols. (Paris: Benedictines of Solesmes, 1910) 376-79.

¹³ Gradon's conclusions are based on similarities found in *Elene* and the eighth-century St. Gall manuscript that may have derived from an English original. 19, n 3. The composite source text found in Holthausen's 1936 edition is no longer considered adequate and reliable. Whatley, "Cynewulf and Troy" 203-05, gives further evidence of a connection between St. Gall 225 and Cynewulf's poem. Full citation below, n. 20.

¹⁴ See Theodor Wolpers, *Die Englische Heiligenlegende Des Mittelalters* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1964): 125-129 for a brief comparison of *Elene* to its Latin source and the Old English poems *Juliana* and Felix's *Guthlac*.

¹⁵ Robert Stepsis and Richard Rand, "Contrast and Conversion in Cynewulf's *Elene*," *Neophilologische Mitteilungen* 70 (1969): 273-82.

¹⁶ The following articles either make little mention of the role of the cross or fit a category already represented above: Donald Fry, "Themes and Type-Scenes in *Elene* 1-113," *Speculum* 44 (1969): 34-45; John Gardner, "Cynewulf's *Elene*: Sources and Structure," *Neophilologus* 54 (1970): 65-76; Earl

the cross.¹⁷ Though he provides little in the way of a direct analysis of the cross's semiotics, Hill's magisterial conclusions offer substantial proof that *Elene* maintains a tight and balanced narrative when read figuratively. In other thematic investigations, Calder briefly describes the cross as evidence of God's "wish to aid man in his struggle against sin," while Campbell somewhat tangentially argues for the insertion of "basic Christian paradoxes" into the text through the cross's revelation.¹⁸ Regan's attention to patristic and catechetical sources in the conversion scene of Judas directs her to visualize the cross as a bond joining the old law of the Synagogue with the new law of the Church. As such the cross stands as a symbol of the private conversion that must accompany Christian revelation.¹⁹ Whatley likewise interprets the conversion scene and the figures of Judas and Constantine.²⁰ His thorough examination of patristic and biblical allusions in *Elene* has contributed to a more informed understanding of the poem and its treatment of the cross. Whatley asserts that John Chrysostom's *Quod Christus Sit Deus* best exemplifies a tradition in which the legends of the victorious cross and the defeat of the

Anderson, "Cynewulf's *Elene*: Manuscript Divisions and Structural Symmetry," *Modern Philology* 72.2 (November, 1974): 111-22.

¹⁷ Thomas D. Hill, "Sapiential Structure and Figural Narrative in the Old English 'Elene'," *Traditio* 27 (1971): 159-77.

¹⁸ Daniel Calder, "Strife, Revelation, and Conversion: The Thematic Structure of *Elene*," *English Studies* 53 (1972) 202; Jackson J. Campbell, "Cynewulf's Multiple Revelations," *Medievalia et Humanistica* 3 (1972): 257-77. Campbell astutely points to the movement in the text from death to life, sin to salvation, hell to heaven, unbelief to belief, and old law to new law 260.

¹⁹ Catherine A. Regan, "Evangelicalism as the Informing Principle of Cynewulf's *Elene*," *Traditio* 29 (1973): 27-52. Regan provides useful Biblical references to Paul's discussion of Christ's Passion echoed in the text.

²⁰ Gordon Whatley, "Cynewulf and Troy: A Note on 'Elene' 642-61," *Notes and Queries* 218 (1973): 203-05; also Whatley, "Bread and Stone: Cynewulf's 'Elene' 611-618," *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 76 (1975): 550-60; "Old English Onomastics and Narrative Art: *Elene* 1062," *Modern Philology* 73.2 (November, 1975): 109-20; "The Figure of Constantine the Great in Cynewulf's 'Elene'," *Traditio* 37 (1981): 161-202; "Constantine the Great, the Empress Helena, and the Relics of the Holy Cross," *Medieval Hagiography: An Anthology* ed. Thomas Head (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 2000) 83-95.

Jewish nation are merged. Attributing a potent fecundity to the cross, Chrysostom provides commentary closely resembling that given by Cynewulf in *Elene*.²¹

Displaying substantial interest in the cross, Varda Fish argues that its development from a 'beacen' to a tree in the three 'panels' of *Elene* coincides with a spiritual development and a greater understanding of the Christian mysteries.²² Cynewulf's attempt, according to Fish, was to attach a more symbolic richness to the cross than was found in any of the Latin sources. Fish offers relevant patristic passages in order to outline a relationship between the foliation of the cross and the emergence of the New Law. Her attention to the deeper significance of the cross complements the argument of this study. Although she emphasizes the various levels of perception at the expense of the central *compunctio* theme, Fish provides a close reading of a few descriptive passages on the cross relating them to the emotional and intellectual development of the characters.

Martin Irvine's treatment of the cross in *Elene*, uncovers the cross commentary buried within the poem.²³ Irvine's assertion that Cynewulf intentionally wrote *Elene* to be part of the exegetical and interpretive tradition on the cross is fascinating if speculative. It cannot be denied that a certain emphasis on textual transmission not appearing in its source exists within *Elene*, and most certainly Cynewulf does provide a significant

²¹ See Chapter One, n. 5. Also see "The Figure of Constantine" 167, n. 18 where Whatley posits that the *Quod Christus* was unknown to the Anglo-Saxons but incorporated within the Syrian tradition from which the *Inventio Sanctæ Crucis* developed.

²² Varda Fish, "Theme and Pattern in Cynewulf's *Elene*," *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 76 (1975): 1-25. Fish's formulations are based on Tertullian's commentary on the cross. In his *Adversus Marcionem*, Tertullian explains that the true nature of the cross must be hidden from non-Christians until the time when they are ready to perceive its mystery, *Adversus Marcionem*, III. 18, *CSEL* 47, 406 as cited in Fish 7. Additionally, Fish locates within the cross the incarnate *Logos* of Christ and argues effectively for a correspondence between the progress of the cross through the narrative and the events of Christ's life.

²³ Martin Irvine, "Anglo-Saxon Literary Theory Exemplified in Old English Poems: Interpreting the Cross in *The Dream of the Rood*," *Style* 20 (1986): 157-81; rptd. *Old English Shorter Poems*, ed. Katherine O'Brien O'Keefe (New York: Garland Publishing, 1994) 31-63.

commentary on the cross. Irvine observes that *Elene* was intentionally written to be “a commentary or exegetical supplement, in Old English, on the Latin texts concerned with the cross,”²⁴ though he does not provide an interpretation of what Cynewulf’s commentary actually is.²⁵

Cynewulf wrote *Elene* within a cultural milieu in which a tradition of cross devotion was already established through texts of early Christian scholars and poets.²⁶ Evidence suggests that interest in the cross’s discovery began as early as the fourth century and continued to flourish with the arrival of its fragments.²⁷

Despite the controversies debated on the continent regarding the use of images for devotional purposes, Cynewulf seems to follow the example provided by *The Dream of the Rood* and developed in Bede’s *De Templo*.²⁸ Bede argues that images can be employed as a “*vivam...lectionem*” [living reading] instilling in the illiterate a knowledge of scripture.²⁹ Likewise, images can recall one’s memory of Christ’s Passion and inspire “*compunctio*” [a feeling of compunction] in the viewer. In his thorough analysis of *Elene*, Earl Anderson argues that the cross “and other holy objects and events” steered

²⁴ Irvine 43.

²⁵ Irvine offers a misreading of Cynewulf’s epilogue as evidence of the author’s intentions 43. In over-emphasizing how Cynewulf had *wordcraft wæf*, he gives little priority to his admission of *pragum preodude gepanc reodode* and so diminishes Cynewulf’s amplification of mental/emotional anguish in order to prioritize the intertextual relationship.

²⁶ See above, Chapter One, where I trace the attributes of the cross in the texts of Tertullian, Cyprian, Cyril, and Augustine and the pre-conquest English authors Bede, Alcuin, and Ælfric.

²⁷ See the *Journal of Aetheria*, which describes the earliest recorded pilgrimage to the site of the Invention, CSEL, Vol. 39 (Vienna, 1898) 37-101; for an English edition, see Gingras, *Egeria: The Diary of a Pilgrimage*.

²⁸ See Edwyn Robert Bevan, *Holy Images: an Inquiry into Idolatry and Image-Worship in Ancient Paganism and in Christianity* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1940).

²⁹ See *De Templo* 2: 829-32 as cited in Earl R. Anderson’s *Cynewulf* 172.

Cynewulf toward a compunctive mood.³⁰ These objects and events first triggered fear, sorrow, and penance followed by a desire for God and the attainment of wisdom.³¹

Though Anderson provides a sound reading of *Elene*, I hope to show, through an analysis of the cross's function within the poem, the importance of Christ's victory over Satan and the specific ways this victory allows for the dominion of grace to be established in the heart of a penitent convert. Helen remains a fixed icon of the Church Militant; however, the hearts of Constantine, Judas, and Cynewulf are pierced by the victorious cross and the eschatological implications of this victory. The cross's penitential power is most clearly played out in Judas, the converted Jew, who signifies the restoration of Israel and the ultimate defeat of Satan.

Interpretation

From the beginning of the narrative, the presence of Christ's cross initiates a series of victories against the devil. Though victory is central to the *Inventio Sanctæ Crucis*, Cynewulf amplifies the theme in order to underscore what he may have seen as the most significant aspect of the discovery.³² The root-word *sige/sigor* (victory) appears in *Elene* a hefty thirty-nine times; of these, four refer to the cross as *sigebeacen* (victory beacon) and seven, to the cross as *sigebeama* (victory tree). Almost nowhere else in the Old English poetic corpus are these terms used to refer to the cross.³³

³⁰ Anderson 174. Anderson, evoking a tradition outlined in Gregory's *Dialogues*, states that the theology of compunction linked the themes of penitence (a lower form of compunction) and wisdom (a higher form) in Cynewulf's work.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Alternatively, we may agree with Whatley when he suggests Cynewulf's task "was very much that of making explicit what is already implicit beneath the surface of the Latin *Inventio Sanctæ Crucis*." "Constantine" 192.

³³ See *The Concordance to the Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records*, ed. J.B. Bessinger, Jr. (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1978) 1058-60 where *Elene* is the only entry for the term *sigebeacen* and appears in seven out of the nine entries for *sigebeama*. *The Dream of the Rood* makes up the other two entries.

A likely influence may have been the sixth-century hymns of Fortunatus that made their way into so many antiphons. Perhaps the most influential of these would have been his *Pange lingua* and *Vexilla regis* hymns which, as seen in Chapter One, describe the cross within the context of Christ's victory.³⁴

The victory theme is established early on as Cynewulf elaborates on the scene of battle leading up to Constantine's vision.³⁵ This imagery of martial conflict will continue steadily as the story progresses and moves from an earthly to a spiritual struggle. Within the *hoptasia* sequence, Constantine, referred to as *sigerofum* (71), wakes to find a handsome messenger speaking to him concerning his anxious thoughts. During the encounter, he is promised protection and victory through the power of the cross:

Constantinus, heht þe cyning engla
wyrda wealdend, wære beodan
duguða dryhten; ne ondræd þu ðe
þeah þe elpeodige egesan hwopan
heardre hilde; ðu to heofenum beseoh
on wuldres weard; þær ðu wraðe findest
sigores tacen. (79a-85a)³⁶

[Constantine, the king of the angels, ruler of destinies, the lord of hosts, has commanded his safe-keeping to be offered you. Have no dread though strangers may threaten you with terror and with fierce fighting. Look to the heavens upon the glorious protector. There you will find help, a symbol of victory.]³⁷

By extending the angel's speech, Cynewulf makes his first of many commentaries on the nature of the cross. While bringing into bold relief implicit themes found in the Latin, he is in fact reconstituting the meaning of the cross. St. Gall 225 makes no mention of the

³⁴ Milfull 441. See also Chapter One.

³⁵ Fry comments on the importance of the "Approach to Battle" scene where stereotypical details forecast the author's artistic intentions, "Themes and Type-Scenes" 36.

³⁶ All quotes from the Old English are taken from Gradon, *Cynewulf's Elene*.

³⁷ Translations from the Old English are my own; however, I have found Bradley's translation an invaluable resource. S.A.J. Bradley, *Anglo-Saxon Poetry* (London: Everyman's Library, 1982) 164-97.

cross as a symbol of victory at this moment. The angel merely states, “Constantine noli timere sed respice sursum in caelo et uide” [“Constantine, do not be frightened, but look up to heaven and see”]. After which, a brief passage describes Constantine’s vision:

Et intendens in caelum uidit signum crucis Christi ex lumine claro constitutum et super litteris titulum scriptum In hoc signo uince.³⁸

[And looking into the heavens, he saw the sign of Christ’s cross made out of pure light and over it was written in letters the title: conquer through this sign.]

Cynewulf’s detailed elaboration of this vision outlines his own interpretation of the cross’s power while it demonstrates his artistic talent.³⁹ Because of its centrality to the present argument the passage is given in full:

He wæs sona gearu
 þurh þæs halgan hæs- hreðerlocan onspeon-
 up locade swa him se ar ahead,
 fæle friðowebba: geseah he frætwum beorht
 wlitu wuldres treo ofer wolcna hrof
 golde ge[g]lenged; gimmas lixtan;
 wæs se blaca beam bocstafum awriten
 beorhte 7 leohte, ‘Mid þys beacne ðu
 on þam frecnan fære feond oferswiðesð,
 geletest lað werod’; þa þæt leoht gewat,
 up siðode 7 se ar somed
 on clænra gemang; cyning wæs þy bliðra
 7 þe sorgleasra, secga aldor
 on fyrhðsefan þurh þa fægeran gesyhð (85b-98b)

[He was at once prepared through the holy one’s command; he laid open his heart and looked up as the messenger, the trusty peace-weaver, had asked him. He saw, bright with ornaments, the beautiful tree of glory over the vault of the heavens, decorated with gold, gleaming with gems. The shining tree was brilliantly and radiantly inscribed with letters: ‘With this emblem you will overpower the enemy in the terrible battle; you will halt hostile armies.’ Then the radiance disappeared; it and the messenger went up together, into the assembly of the pure. The king, the lord of men, was the happier, the less anxious at heart, on account of the fair vision.]

³⁸ Holder 1. St. Gall variants begin on page 15.

³⁹ The description is remarkably like that found in *The Dream of the Rood* and reminds one of actual descriptions of reliquary crosses. See Celia Sisam (1976) ff.104v-106r.

Using appositive phrases, Cynewulf extends the description of the cross to accentuate its beauty and worth. Additionally, the terms *wuldres treo* and *blaca beam* aside from their stylistic value make an explicit association between the cross and the *arbor vitae*, an image discussed further in Chapter Four.

Cynewulf brings to mind the apotropaic imagery found in the psalms by foreshadowing in the inscription the military success dealt to those who will follow the cross.⁴⁰ A verse within Psalm 50 seems close enough to draw some parallels:

Wið þe ænne ic gesyngode, and dyde yfel beforan ðe; wið þe ænne ic sceal þæt betan, for þæm þu ana eart rihtwis, and oferswiðest ealle þonne ðu demst.⁴¹

Within a broader context, the passage refers back to Christ's Harrowing and prefigures his second coming. Most immediately, one recalls Peter's address concerning the signs that will signal the coming of Christ: "et dabo prodigia in caelo sursum et signa in terra deorsum sanguinem et ignem et vaporem fumi" ["and I will show wonders in the heavens above, and signs on the earth beneath, blood and fire, and vapor and smoke"] (Acts 2:19).

Equally important is Cynewulf's commentary on the dominion of grace within the Christian heart. While magnifying Christ's victory in the final hemistich of the angel's message, Cynewulf gives emphasis to the spiritual condition of Constantine's heart in the expansion, *hreðerlocan onspeon* [laid open his heart]. As a Christian replacement of the Hebrew lineage begun by Abraham, Constantine's subsequent conversion and baptism must appear natural and without difficulty.⁴² As a sign of this receptivity, Constantine's

⁴⁰ See Psalms 17, 30, 53, 58, and 142 for examples.

⁴¹ Patrick P. O'Neill, ed., *King Alfred's Old English Prose translation of the First Fifty Psalms*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Medieval Academy of America, 2001) 163.

⁴² Whatley, "The Figure of Constantine" 164.

heart is said to be open. As the narrative continues, this will stand in opposition to the Jews who, as will be explicitly clear, possess hardened hearts. The biblical allusions to this characteristic of the Jews will be more appropriately discussed later in this analysis; however, it is fitting here to mention a Pauline conversion reference. Speaking of the immediacy of God's salvation, Paul pleads with the Corinthians, "ne in vacuum gratiam Dei recipiatis" ["do not receive God's grace in vain"] (2 Cor. 6:1). Paul concludes his definition of the Christian ministry with this request:

Os nostrum patet ad vos o Corinthii cor nostrum dilatatum est non angustiamini in nobis angustiamini autem in visceribus vestris eandem autem habentes remunerationem tamquam filiis dico dilatamini et vos.

[We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians, and opened wide our hearts to you. We are not withholding our affection from you, but you are withholding yours from us. As a fair exchange—speak as to my children—open wide your hearts also.] (2 Cor. 6: 11-13)

Paul claims the open heart as a central characteristic of the Christian; he asks, "aut quae pars fideli cum infidele" (6: 15) ["what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?"], and calls upon those possible converts to allow the spirit of grace within their hearts. With his heart laid open, Constantine, receptive to conversion, is prepared to receive the grace soon to accompany his approaching military victory.

The passage following the vision scene provides a detailed account of the rewards bestowed by the cross. Constantine commands his men to construct, as his battle standard, a symbol similar to the one appearing in the vision and, with it, he decimates his enemies in battle.⁴³ After an impressive description of the battle horrors in which he

⁴³ St. Gall reads, "et timentes (variant reads timuerunt) barbari et dederunt se in fugam per ripam Danobii. Et mortua est non minima multitudo. Et dedit Deus in illa die uictoriam regi Constantino per uirtutem sanctae crucis." ["The barbarians were terrified and fled along the banks of the Danube, and not a few of them died. And God gave on that day victory to King Constantine through the power of the holy cross"]. Holder 1, 23-27. Whatley argues that the placement of *Constantinus* and *Cristes rode* between a series of

utilizes the conventional phrasing of epic poetry (109b-22a), Cynewulf inserts an image amplifying the triumphant nature of the cross:

þa wæs þuf hafēn,
 segn for sweot[u]m, sigeleoð galen;
 gylden grima, garas lixtan
 on her[e]felda; hæðena grungon,
 feollon friðelease, flugon instæpes
 Huna leode swa þæt halige treo
 aræren heht Romwara cyning
 heaðofremmende. (123b-130a)

[Then the standard, the emblem, was raised up before the troops, a victory-song was sung. Gold helmets and spears gleamed on the battlefield. The heathens were dropping, falling, without refuge. Directly they took flight, the Hunnish people, the fighting ones, as the king of the Romans commanded that holy tree to be raised up.]

Illustrating the successful outcome of Constantine's cross devotion, the scene potentially reminded Cynewulf of Bede's account of Oswald's seventh-century victory at Heavenfield. As recounted in Bede, Oswald too had erected a cross before the battle and his faith in the symbol brought him victory on the field.⁴⁴ For Constantine, erecting the cross results in a similar scattering of his enemies.⁴⁵ The proximity and alliteration of *segn* and *sigeleoð* (124) reinforce this relationship further as the Romans chant a song of

epithets and the phrase *tireadig cyning* suggests how, "the time-honored values of Germanic kingship are blessed with victory through the agency of Christ's cross," "The Figure of Constantine" 175, n. 42.

⁴⁴ "Ostenditur autem usque hodie et in magna ueneratione habetur locus ille, ubi uenturus ad hanc pugnam Osuald signum sanctae crucis erexit, ac flexis genibus Deum deprecatus est, ut in tanta rerum necessitate suis cultoribus caelisti succurreret auxilio. Denique fertur quia facta citato opere cruce, ac fouea praeparata in qua statui deberet, ipse fide feruens hanc arripuerit ac foueae inposuerit atque utraque manu erectam tenuerit, donec adgesto a militibus puluere terrae figeretur." [The place is still shown today and is held in great veneration where Oswald, when he was about to engage in battle, set up the sign of the holy cross and, on bended knees, prayed God to send heavenly aid to His worshippers in their dire need. In fact it is related that when a cross had been hastily made and the hole dug in which it was to stand, he seized the cross himself in the ardour of his faith, placed it in the hole, and held it upright with both hands until the soldiers had heaped up the earth and fixed it in position.] As cited in Bede, *Ecclesiastical History* 214-15.

⁴⁵ Interestingly, Cynewulf describes the angel as *friðowebba* (88a) and the pagans who know nothing of the cross as *friðelease* (127a).

victory in the midst of battle. Concluding this scene, Cynewulf emphasizes what the previous passage demonstrated through its narrative:

þa wæs gesyne þæt sige forgeaf
Constantino cyning ælmihtig
æt þam dægweorce, domweorðunga,
rice under roderum þurh his rode treo. (144a-47b)

[It was clear then that the almighty King had granted Constantine victory in the day's work: glory, and power beneath the skies, through his rood-tree.]

Constantine's open heart and his faith are rewarded here on earth through victory (*sige*), glory (*domweorðunga*), and power (*rice*).

Constantine's triumph over the pagan Huns, Hrethgoths, Franks and Hugas is likewise a victory for Christ and his church as it leads to the conversion of the Roman people, the establishment of a Christian state, and the search for the cross. What appears on the surface to be a military victory is revealed to be a spiritual one as those few who were already baptized are requested to instruct Constantine on the nature of God's grace in relation to Christ's Harrowing. They explain to their Lord that the same *sigores tacen* (184b) he had used in battle belonged to Christ:

þæt hie for þam casere cyðan moston
godspelles gife, hu se gasta helm
in þrynesse þrymme geweorðad
acenned wearð, cyninga wuldor,
7 hu on galgan wearð Godes agen bearn
ahangen for hergum heardum witum.
Alysde leoda bearn of locan deofla,
geomre gastas 7 him gife sealde
þurh þa ilcan gesceaft þe him geywed wearð
sylfum on gesyhðe. (175a-84a)

[That they might reveal to the emperor the grace of the gospel, how the protector of souls, honored in the glory of the Trinity, was born, the paragon of kings; and how he, God's own son, was hung on the cross with cruel tortures, delivered the sons of men, their mournful souls, from the devil's prison, and granted them grace

through that same construct which was revealed to [Constantine] himself in his vision.]

The reference to Satan's defeat does not appear in the Latin source text nor does the reference to the grace bestowed through Christ's cross.⁴⁶ Cynewulf supplies these likely liturgical references on his own.

The insertion of these phrases reemphasizes the hope offered through Christ's triumphant crucifixion. Delivered from the devil's shackles (*of locan deofla*), all those who have open hearts are filled with the grace of the Holy Spirit. The terms *deofle* and *gife* in connection to the cross (*þa ilcan gesceaft*), recall the initial Harrowing of Hell while foreshadowing the central event to come in the narrative, Satan's defeat through the conversion of Judas. That conversion is the second in a tripartite structure in the narrative of which Constantine's is the first and Cynewulf's is the third.

Through a number of phrases not found in the *Inventio*, Cynewulf emphasizes the presence of grace bestowed upon the emperor. The heart that *onspeon* during the vision scene is now filled with a *niwe gefea* [new joy] (195) as Constantine *þurh Gastes gife* [through the grace of the spirit] (199) devotes his life to the word of God.⁴⁷ In the *City of God*, Augustine defines a similar facet of this grace:

But also some who till then shall be without, shall become firm in the faith they have hitherto rejected and mighty to conquer the devil even though unbound,

⁴⁶ The St. Gall *Inventio* reads, "Audientes autem pauci Xpiani qui [illic *om.*] erant eodem tempore uenerunt ad regem Constantinum et euangelizauerunt illi ei misterium Trinitatis et aduentum filii Di quemadmodum natus est et crucifixus est tertia die resurrexit [a mortuis *om.*]." ["When the few Christians who were present at the time heard this, they came to the king and preached the mystery of the Trinity and the Advent of God's Son – how he was born, crucified and rose again on the third day"]. Holder 2, 34-39.

⁴⁷ St. Gall 225 makes no mention of the devil or of God's grace stating only that, "erat beatus Constantinus perfectus in fide et seruienti spiritu sancto et exercebatur autem scis euangelii Christi." ["Blessed Constantine was perfect in his faith and fervent with the Holy Spirit, and studied Christ's Holy Gospels"]. (Holder 2, 47-50). A few lines later, the term *gratiam* does appear; however, it is reserved for Helena (54): "Gratia autem spiritus sancti requieuit in beatissima matrem Constantini imperatoris aelena" ["The grace of the holy spirit reposed in the Emperor Constantine's most blessed mother, Helena"] (Holder 2, 54-56). Cynewulf makes no mention of this and seems to have transferred this grace from Helen to her son for reasons discussed further on.

God's grace aiding them to understand the Scriptures, in which, among other things, there is foretold that very end which they themselves see to be arriving.⁴⁸

Grace enables Constantine to accept Christianity and understand the Scriptures. This grace keeps Constantine's heart and mind eternally fixed on Christ and his cross:

þa wæs Cristes lof þam casere
on firhðsefan forð gemyndig
ymb þæt mære treo (212a-14a)

[From then on, the praise of Christ kept the emperor mindful in spirit of that glorious tree.]

The line *on firhðsefan forð gemyndig* resonates with similar phrases appearing later in the narrative (894, 1252) and stresses the importance of grace in the development of inner reflection.

Once baptized, Constantine, the triumphant one, [*sigerofum*] (190), is instructed in scripture [*Godes bocum*] (204) to a degree not found in the Latin. He learns of Satan's role in the crucifixion and the seduction and fault of the Jews:

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

[that the ancient enemy with his deceitful wiles seduced the Jewish nation and led the people astray so that they hanged God himself, the creator of the armed bands.]

In an earlier passage, it was explained how Christ's crucifixion delivered souls from Satan's grasp; however, this passage redirects the responsibility for the Passion squarely on the devil and prepares for the conflicts to come. Despite the continuous emphasis on victory, the text asserts an animosity towards the fallen angel and those who follow him:

⁴⁸ Augustine, *Basic Writings of Saint Augustine*, vol. 2, ed. Whitney J. Oates (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1980) 523.

“þæs hie in hynðum sculon to widan feore werġðu dreogan, (210b-211b),” [“For this they should suffer humiliation and affliction forever”]. As the search for the cross continues, this animosity develops into a number of assaults against the devil of which Constantine’s conversion will be the first. According to Augustine, every conversion and baptism figures as a type of Harrowing and Judgment:

Because even now men are...converted to the faith from the unbelief in which he held them. And this strong man is bound in each instance in which he is spoiled of one of his goods.⁴⁹

Essentially, Constantine’s baptism frees him from the devil’s influence and limits Satan’s dominion on earth while commencing the discovery of the cross and the conversions that accompany it.

This assault on the devil is taken directly to Jerusalem as Helena, sailing over the seas in search of the cross, berates and interrogates the Jews.⁵⁰ In opposition to the establishment of grace within the ranks of the Romans, the Jews appear as a people from whom grace has been withdrawn. Within the first few lines of Helena’s speech, the Jews are scornfully reminded of their once privileged position.⁵¹ Initially, the Jews had been God’s chosen people:

þæt ge geardagum
wyrðe wæron wuldorcynige,
dryhtne dyre 7 dædhwæte. (290b-92b)

[that you in former days were esteemed by the King of Glory, dear to the Lord, and zealous.]

⁴⁹ Augustine 522. See James W. Earl, “The Typological Structure of *Andreas*,” in *Old English Literature in Context*, ed. John Niles (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1980): 66-89, part. 76. In his exploration of the typological structure of *Andreas*, Earl argues that, “the mission to the Mermedonians is explicitly patterned upon Christ’s (and the apostles’) mission to the Jews” (73). Earl cites important scriptural and patristic references to conversion and baptism that are equally relevant to *Elene*, 77.

⁵⁰ Cynewulf inserts an extensive and well-crafted passage on Helena’s *Meerfahrt* (225-271b) magnifying the martial tone through conventional phrases of heroic poetry. See also Wolpers 127 for a look into poetic similarities to the description of Helena appearing in earlier Germanic texts.

⁵¹ Inserting additional phrases only in apposition, Cynewulf remains fairly true to the *Inventio* here.

The passage continues to expound upon the faults of the Jews and the results of their denial (293a-312b). Within the broader scope of these accusations, the text underscores the stubborn malice and the lack of wisdom ascribed to the Jewish people.

Old English phrases closely characterize the rigid interior of the Jews and of Judas, clearly a figurative representation of the community of Jews.⁵² Where the *Inventio* explains, “*Illi autem cum uenissent ante eam interrogabantur ab ea et nihil uerum uoluerunt dicere*,”⁵³ Cynewulf extends the description to distinguish the heart of the Jew from that of the Christian:

Heo wæron stearce, stane heardran,
noldon þæt geryne rihte cyððan
ne hire andsware ænige secgan,
torngeniðlan þæs hio him to sohte
ac hio worda gehwæs wiðersæc fremedon,
fæste on fyrhðe þæt heo frignan ongan,
cwædon þæt hio on aldre owiht swylces
ne ær ne sið æfre hyrdon. (565a-72b)

[They were stubborn, harder than stone; they would not reveal that secret, nor would they, as her bitter enemies, give her any answer on that which she sought from them, but with heart closed tight, they thwarted every question that she asked of them, and said that never in their life, neither early nor late, had they heard of any such thing.]

In contrast to Constantine’s condition at the time of his vision, the Jews are clearly not spiritually prepared for Helena’s visitation, herself a representation of the Church Militant.⁵⁴ Whereas the emperor responds to the messenger’s explanation of the cross

⁵² Hill “Sapiential Structure” intelligently argues that the poem can only be understood through a figurative reading of Judas and his conversion. He states, “he [Judas] is presented as a typical figure representing the Jewish nation outside the Church rather than simply as an individual Jewish wise man who was forcibly converted and found the cross for Elene” 164.

⁵³ Holder 6, 183-84. [When they arrived, they were interrogated by her; but they did not wish to answer her questions truthfully.]

⁵⁴ Alexandra Hennessey Olsen, “Cynewulf’s Autonomous Women: A Reconsideration of Elene and Juliana,” *New Readings on Women in Old English Literature*, ed. Helen Damico and Alexandra Hennessey Olsen (Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 1990) 22-32. Olsen reads Helena as, “an assertive Germanic woman

with his heart that *onspeon* and inspired by God's grace, the Jews listen to the queen's questions *fæste on fyrhðe*, and find themselves *stane heardran* despite Helena's appeals.⁵⁵

Two scriptural passages evoke the image of the hardened heart of the Jews. Isaiah 63 offers a prayer in which the house of Israel petitions God to reinvest his love in the Jewish people despite their rebellion. The Jews recognize their plight, "*viscerum tuorum et miserationum tuarum super me continuerunt se*" ["your tenderness and your compassion are withheld from us"],⁵⁶ and address their own spiritual condition:

Quare errare nos fecisti Domine de viis tuis indurasti cor nostrum ne timeremus te convertere propter servos tuos tribus hereditatis tuae. (Isaiah 63: 17)

[Why, Lord, do you make us wander from your ways and harden our hearts so we do not fear you? Return for the sake of your servants, the tribes of your inheritance.]

A hardened heart, a result of their betrayal, precludes the return of God's grace and the possibility of compunction. For their crime against Jesus, Jews were seen as belonging to the devil; they were his body and his synagogue.⁵⁷ In the Gospel of John, Jesus accuses the Jews of being Satan's children: "*vos ex patre diabolo estis et desideria patris vestri vultis facere*" ["you belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire"] (*John* 8:44).

whose speech is action but who acts when she must" 230. Olsen's argument, though intelligent and thoughtful, does not withstand a close reading of the text where the character is more often than not reduced to a more figurative role.

⁵⁵ It is impossible to avoid the overt anti-Semitism of the poem; however, I find it likely that symbolic and figural interpretation was Cynewulf's central aim. This is not to dismiss the implications of the narrative's violent conversion or its representation of an historical reality. See, for example, John P. Hermann, *Allegories of War* (Ann Arbor, MI: U of Michigan P, 1989). "The subordination of real history and politics to theological symbolism should not go unchallenged. The historical effects of typology have been insufficiently thought through" 109.

⁵⁶ Isaiah 63:15. I read "us" where the text has "*me*."

⁵⁷ Revelations (2:9 and 3:9), cited in Joshua Trachtenberg, *The Devil and the Jews: The Medieval Conception of the Jew and its Relation to Modern Antisemitism* (Philadelphia, PA: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1983) 20.

However, through the image of the heart, grace and truth are compassionately offered again to the house of Israel for the sake of God's name as seen in Ezekiel 36 where a series of promises are made to the Jewish people:

Et effundam super vos aquam mundam et mundabimini ab omnibus inquinamentis vestris et ab universis idolis vestris mundabo vos, et dabo vobis cor novum et spiritum novum ponam in medio vestri et auferam cor lapideum de carne vestra et dabo vobis cor carneum, et spiritum meum ponam in medio vestri et faciam ut in praeceptis meis ambuletis et iudicia mea custodiatis et operemini. (Ezekiel 36: 25-27)

[And I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. And I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.]

Having sinned against their God according to Christians, the Jews lost their privileged position. At the time the Invention takes place, they are no longer capable of receiving the truth of Christ's divinity. However, the conversion of the Jews is an integral part of Christological history. The above scriptural passage allows Christians to believe that God would inspire many Jews through a new spirit to follow his doctrine and replace their hearts of stone with hearts of flesh, marking another assault on Satan's dominion.

As in the *Inventio*, Cynewulf's retelling of the cross's discovery is merged with the conversion narrative of the Jew, Judas. After a series of rebukes by the queen, Judas emerges from the company of Jews as the wisest of his nation, possessing knowledge long forgotten by all the others along with a resistance to its transmission. This unmistakably Christian knowledge was originally transmitted through Judas's paternal line: his grandfather, Zachaeus, told his son, Symon, who told his son, Judas.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Deah he sume hwile
on galgan his gast onsende,
Sigebeorn Godes; þa siððan wæs of rode ahæfen rodera wealdend,

Cynewulf here inserts additional verses continuing an extended commentary on the penitential power of the cross. Where the Latin briefly mentions the conversion of Paul and the martyrdom of Stephen,⁵⁹ *Elene* comments on the spiritual rewards of penitential action:

Nu ðu meaht gehyran, hæleð min se leofa,
 hu arfæst is ealles wealdend
 þeah we æbylgð wið hine oft gewyrcen,
 synna wunde gif we sona eft
 þara bealudæde bote gefremmaþ
 7 þæs unrihtes eft geswicap. (511a-16b)

[Now you can hear, my dear young man, how merciful is the ruler of all though we may often commit an offence against him through the wound of (our) sins, if we immediately afterwards do penance for harmful deeds and thereafter cease from wickedness.]

As an indication of the power of penance, the passage offers a didactic element, instructing readers that God's favor can be restored to both Jews and Gentiles alike regardless of sins committed in the past.

Despite his father's dying wish that Judas should proclaim Christ's divinity when at last inquiries are made (446-47), Judas displays the obstinate heart assumed characteristic of the Jews. Judas does not deny the knowledge of his fathers. In fact his discourse acknowledges its validity: 'Ic wat geare þæt hio wile secan be ðam sigbeame on ðam

eallra þrymma þrym; þreo niht siððan
 in byrgenne þeosterlocan 7 þa þy þridan dæg
 ealles leohtes leoht lifgende aras,
 þeoden engla 7 his þegnum,
 soð sigora frea seolfne geywde,
 beorht on blæde; (479b-89a)

[For a certain time on the cross he did send forth his spirit, *God's victorious son*, then afterwards he was taken down from the cross, ruler of the skies, the majesty of all majesties. For three days afterwards he was waiting in the burying-place down in the tomb: and then on the third day the Light of all light rose up alive, the prince of angels, and revealed himself, true *Lord of victories*, shining in splendor, to his disciples.] All references to victory are Cynewulf's own additions; they do not appear in the Latin. The emphasis is my own. See Holder 5.

⁵⁹ Holder 6, 156-171.

browade þeoda waldend eallra gnyrna leas, Godes agen bearn” [“I know very well that she wants to search for that tree of victory on which suffered the Ruler of nations, free from all evils, God’s own son”] (419b-22b). However, he does refuse to take part in its transmission on account of its impact on the Jewish nation. Because the cross’s discovery signals the end of the Old Law, Judas urges the others to remain firm of heart concerning its existence: “Nu is þearf mycel þæt we fæstlice ferhð staðelian” [“Now the need is great that we should firmly fix our hearts”] (426b-27b).

Once he is before the queen, Judas is given an ultimatum: essentially divulge the location of the cross and live or refuse and die. In a debated passage concerning the necessity of choosing bread over stone, Judas responds with a parable variation in a manner ironically fitting to his spiritual condition and that of the Jewish nation:⁶⁰

‘Hu mæg þæm geweorðan þe on westenne
meðe 7 meteleas morland trydeð
hungre gehæfted 7 him hlaf 7 stan
on gesihðe bu geweorðað
stea[r]c 7 hnesce, þæt he þone stan nime
wið hungres hleo, hlafes ne gime,
gewende to wædle 7 þa wiste wiðsæce,
beteran wiðhycge þonne he bega beneah’:- (611a-618b)

[How may it happen that a man who is trudging the wasteland in a desert, exhausted and starving,⁶¹ oppressed by hunger, and a loaf and a stone both appear, one hard, one soft, that he should pick up the stone, for the relief of his hunger, ignore the loaf, prefer starvation and reject the food, reject the better thing, when he had both available.]

⁶⁰ Hill “Sapiential Structure” interprets the scene through the scriptural passages (Matth. 4:1-11 and *Luke* 4:1-13) describing Christ’s temptation in the desert. Refuting Hill’s argument, Whatley “Bread and Stone” finds the passage a commentary on Matth. 7:9 and Luke 11:11. See also Rosemary Woolf, “Saint’s Lives,” *Continuations and Beginnings*, ed. E.G. Stanley, (London, 1966): 37-66. Hill redirects the argument again in his response, “Bread and Stone, Again: *Elene* 611-618,” *NM* 81 (1980): 252-57. Though Judas does situate his response in terms of the wilderness, clearly the immediate choice between bread or a stone is most central to and consistent with the amplified themes Cynewulf has developed.

⁶¹ A motif frequently associated with the Jews. For a more general example of those who do not follow the words of Christ see Cyprian’s *De lapsis* (34.19), “post diaboli cibum malle ieiunium” [“having supped with the devil, choose rather now to fast”] Bevenot 52.

Consistent with Cynewulf's amplifications are the verbal echoes that link this decisive moment to the extended commentary within the poem. The repetition of the term *stan* along with the juxtaposition of *stearc* and *hnesce* (within the context of Judas's free will to choose either) mirrors the spiritual plight of the Jewish nation he represents. That Judas, a Jew, might (and essentially does) choose a hard stone over nourishment symbolically reflects his decision to choose resistance over the mercy and truth of Christ.

As Whatley deduces, the "immediate situation" of this passage recalls the example of God's mercy in Matthew 7:9 ("aut quis est ex vobis homo quem si petierit filius suus panem numquid lapidem porriget ei") and Luke 11:11, verses interpreted by Augustine and Bede as pertaining to a *duritia cordis*. Ælfric supplies a later example; emphasizing the importance of faith, hope, and true love, he comments that, "stan is gesett ongean ðone hlaf, for ðan ðe heardmodnys is wiðerræde soðre lufe."⁶² Judas's choice of the stone, his refusal to transmit the Christian knowledge given by his forefathers, links his character to those *fæste on fyrhðe* while reifying the *topos* of the hostile Jew:⁶³

But the stone emerges as a complex symbol of his true intentions and his real point of view. It serves as a figure for the worldly, carnal kingdom he still believes in, even after what his father told him, and a figure for his stubborn refusal to believe in the kingdom of Christ and to help its representative, the empress.⁶⁴

Though Judas will follow his rhetoric with a series of three refusals indicative of his real choice; I do not agree that this decision reflects his actual belief. Rather, Cynewulf

⁶² Augustine, *Questionum Evang. Lib II*, cap. xxii. PL 35.1342; Bede, *Expositio* 134. Ælfric continues, "heardheort bið se man, þe nele þurh lufe oðrum fremigan, þær þær he mæg." In *Letania Maiore*, Clemoes, *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies* 1.322. See Whatley (Bread and Stone) 556, n. 2.

⁶³ See Gregory the Great's *Moralia* XXIX, xxix. PL 76.508-9 where Satan's heart is compared to a stone due to its imperviousness to compunction and penance.

⁶⁴ Whatley, "Bread and Stone" 556, n. 2.

seems to magnify within the archetypal figure an emotional distress, a conflict between his spirit that believes in the kingdom of Christ and some relentless pressure to resist it. During his interrogation, Judas's spirit is *geomer*; he feels *hat æt heortan* (627b-28a) at the thought of being denied entrance to heaven, and moments later he will speak with anguish (655b). With a flare of artistic irony, Cynewulf has Judas claim to Helena, "ic ne can þæt ic nat findan on fyrhðe" ["I can not find in my mind that which I do not know"] (640b-41a). Yet *on fyrhðe* is exactly where Judas will find a grace that will later enable him to do penance and receive Christ; it is primarily there that the spiritual struggles within the text take place.

From where then does this mysterious pressure derive which keeps Judas from accepting what he knows in his heart to be true? We may assume that it originates from his identity as a Jew and his association with the devil. As a figure of the Jewish nation, he must display the heart of stone assumed characteristic of his people. Judas chooses the carnal (*stan*) over the spiritual (*hlaf*) because this is the choice a Jew must make; carnality, blindness, physical resistance were perceived by Christians at the time as essential Jewish traits.⁶⁵ As Whatley asserts regarding Augustine's commentary on the failure of Jewish spirituality: "They clung to a carnal way of reading and thinking, looked for an earthly messiah, and rejected the Son of God when he came to them, both unable and unwilling to recognize him. Judas is fulfilling the same role."⁶⁶ However, the

⁶⁵ See Steven Kruger, "Conversion and Medieval Sexual, Religious, and Racial Categories," *Constructing Medieval Sexuality*, ed. Karma Lochrie, Peggy McCracken, and James Schultz (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1997) for an interesting analysis of the intersections between race, sexuality, ethnicity and gender within the medieval imaginary. See also by Kruger, "The Bodies of Jews in the Late Middle Ages," *The Idea of Medieval Literature New Essays on Chaucer and Medieval Culture in Honor of Donald R. Howard*, ed. James M. Dean and Christian K. Zacher (Newark: U of Delaware P, 1992) 301-23.

⁶⁶ Whatley, "Bread and Stone" 555 for an analysis of later representations of the Jews.

Invention is a story of victory, specifically for Christ and those who accept him, and so Judas, as a symbol of Israel, will be reclaimed as suggested in Ezekiel 36.⁶⁷ By necessity, this transformation from carnality to spirituality will be dependent upon Judas's physical suffering as the assault on Satan's dominion begun with Constantine continues.

Judas's *stiðhygcende* (683a) resistance is manifest in three vocalized denials of knowledge regarding Christ's cross (627-41, 656-61, 683-84). In order to crush this essential rigidity and enable him to accept what he knows to be true, Helena commands that he be thrust into a pit where he is afflicted by hunger for seven days.⁶⁸ This physical torture succeeds in shattering a visceral resistance that had earlier precluded an acceptance of Christ. Directly attacking his Jewish identity through hunger, Helena transforms Judas into a receptive vessel for Christ's merciful grace.⁶⁹ Establishing an association between Christ, Judas and the cross, the scene continues a steady movement towards revelation, and victory as all three figures are successfully freed from similar confines.⁷⁰

By the seventh day, Judas is *sargum besylced* (697) and *meðe 7 meteleas* (698) as he had himself forecast in his parable (612); he finally begs for mercy and offers to reveal the secret of the cross's concealment. Emphasizing Judas's symbolic transition from devil's pawn to a retainer and transmitter of the New Law, Cynewulf artfully extends the passage found in the *Inventio* to allow Judas to justify his "change of heart:"

⁶⁷ See Augustine's *City of God* chapter XLVI, where Augustine comments on the conversion of many of the Jews after Christ's resurrection.

⁶⁸ Hunger is often used to represent spiritual deprivation. Food appears in Scripture as a metaphor in passages of Genesis, Exodus, Proverbs 9, John 21, 1Corinthians 10, and 1Peter 2.

⁶⁹ Christopher Fee gives an interesting argument regarding a similar effect occurring in the *Andreas*, "Productive Destruction: Torture, Text and the Body in the Old English *Andreas*," *Figures of Speech: The Body in Medieval Art, History, and Literature*, ed. Allen Frantzen Essays in Medieval Studies 11 (1994): 5pp. 8 April 2002 <<http://www.luc.edu/publications/medieval/vol11/11ch4.html>>.

⁷⁰ Calder 206.

'Ic eow healsie þurh heofona God
 þæt ge me of ðyssum earfeðum up forlæten,
 heanne fram hungres geniðlan; ic þæt halige treo
 lustum cyðe nu ic hit leng ne mæg
 helan for hungre; is þes hæft to ðan strang,
 þreanyd þæs þearl 7 þes þroht to þæs heard
 dogorrimum; ic adreogan ne mæg
 ne leng helan be ðam lifes treo
 þeah ic ær mid dysige þurhdrifen wære
 7 þæt soð to late seolf gecneowe.' (699-709)

[I implore you by the God of the heavens to let me up from these tortures, prostrate from the affliction of hunger. I shall willingly reveal the holy tree; now that I may no longer hide it due to hunger; this captivity is so cruel, the misery so severe, and the suffering so harsh, in the passing of the days, I cannot endure it nor conceal the tree of life any longer, although I was earlier pierced with a foolishness and recognized the truth too late myself.]

The addition succeeds in demonstrating the degree of Judas's bodily suffering.⁷¹ The implication within the scene is that Judas is saved not by a choice of his own but because he has been given no choice.⁷² Deprived of God's grace, a Jew, according to Augustinian tradition, would be unable to make the correct choice himself and would depend on the intercession of God or his Church.⁷³ *Mid dysige þurhdrifen*, Judas was incapable of receiving Christ.⁷⁴ His call for mercy, suggests his awareness of his difficult position:

Since Judas' imprisonment in the pit metaphorically describes the situation of the
 Jews under the Old Law, his call for help, then, is a realization of his need of
 Grace to free him from the confinement of the Old Covenant.⁷⁵

⁷¹ The *Inventio* merely reads, "Obsecro uos educate me et ego ostendam uobis crucem Christi," Holder 8, 221-22.

⁷² See also Psalm 29:3-4

⁷³ God's will and that of the Church does intervene in the passage immediately before Judas is thrown into the pit. References to Christ are numerous at this point (672, 673, 686, 687) and emphasis is placed on the concord between the wills of Christ and Helena (678, 681). See Anderson, "Cynewulf" 162.

⁷⁴ Ironically, the term *ðurhdrifen* is used by Cynewulf again in *Andreas* to refer to how the saint was pierced with wounds (1397). The term is also used to describe Christ twice when he is pierced with nails (*DrR*, l. 46, and *Chr*, (1109). To employ *ðurhdrifen* is to invite a compunctive reading of Judas's own *imitatio*.

⁷⁵ Fish 15.

Meanwhile, Helena's assault on his body evinces another victory for Christ simultaneous with a defeat for the power that drove this *dysignes* within Judas's breast, and once again Satan is deprived of jurisdiction over one of his own. After this triumph, three sections bring this assault to its ultimate conclusion after which the narrative is more cohesively organized as a commentary on the penitential cross.

Judas ascends from the pit in closer relationship to Christ and his restoration is well underway.⁷⁶ With purpose, he walks *hungre gehyned* to where he believes Christ, "ðe dryhten, heofonrices weard, godbearn on galgan" was hanged (717-19). Once he locates the site of the crucifixion he delivers a reverent prayer to God.⁷⁷ Cynewulf is fairly faithful to the *Inventio* here; however, in a passage concerning Satan's defeat, he comments extensively through Judas on the outcome of opposing God's will:

7 þu womfulle,
 scyldwyrce, sceaðan of radorum
 awurpe, wonhydige; þa sio werge sceolu
 under heolstorhofu hreosan sceolde
 in wita forwyrd þær hie in wylme nu
 dreogaþ deaðcwale in dracan fæðme
 þeostrum forþylmed. He þinum wiðsoc
 aldordome; þæs he in ermðum sceal
 ealra fula ful fah þrowian
 þeowned þolian. Þær he þin ne mæg
 word aweorpan, is in witum fæst
 ealre synne fruma susle gebunden. (760-71)

[And you cast down from the skies the howling, rash, and evil-working fiends;
 then that wretched company was compelled to tumble down into dark places into

⁷⁶ "In his spiritual ascent from the sinful to the sanctified state, Judas follows the path which each man must take for spiritual awakening. The process involves acts imitative of Christ as man strives to become an *alter Christus*." Regan 34.

⁷⁷ Judas's speech is comprised of numerous scriptural references taken mainly from Isaiah 6:2, 37:16, and 40:12 as well as from Revelations and the Gospels. See Whatley, "Constantine the Great" 90. Additionally, Cynewulf extends a description of Paradise taken from Genesis 3:24 merging the fecund image of the *lifes treo* (756) with a well-crafted expansion of the heroic proportions in the narrative: "Heardecg cwacaþ, beofaþ brogdenmæl 7 bleom wrixleð grapum gryrefæst" (757-59). This stylistic addition and its use of chiasmus creates an appropriate link to the description of Satan's defeat that follows.

a ruin of misery where even now in that burning they are undergoing agony in the clutch of the dragon, smothered in darkness. He opposed your sovereignty; for that he, guilty, full of every foulness, must suffer miseries and endure slavery. There he is not able to reject your word: the origin of all sin is bound fast in punishments and torment.]

The first half of the passage reiterates the *Inventio* while accentuating the sufferings of those who fell from God's grace.⁷⁸ Cynewulf's extension (766-71) appropriately directs the reader's attention specifically towards Satan's fall and essentially links this initial defeat to the lamentation scene that follows. Through his prayer, Judas reveals his concealed knowledge of scriptural history beginning with the Old Testament with which he is of course familiar, continuing through the New (772-83) and on to the moment of the cross's discovery, an important event in Christian history in which he is about to play a part.

Moving from *hie* to *he*, the pronouns reflect Cynewulf's emphasis on this *fah* creature, the ruler of the Jews, in a manner similar to l. 207b-10a where the responsibility for Christ's suffering was again redirected towards Satan. Judas's conversion becomes more obvious as his speech takes on a Christian tone (772a-92a) and another assault on the devil's dominion succeeds as the heart of the Jew is now laid open, and the inscrutable resistance is at last explicitly traced to its source, "the author of all sin." Afterwards, the newly converted Judas combats Satan directly as the earthly warfare of the first half of the narrative develops into an internal and spiritual one. Having renounced Satan's authority over him, Judas entreats God, now Christ, that a smoke rise up and indicate where the cross lies. Cynewulf skillfully emphasizes this transition, defining God as *lifes*

⁷⁸ The St. Gall *Inventio* reads, "qui incredibilium angelorum profundo tartaro tradidisti et ibi sunt sub fundo abyssi a draconum fetoribus cruciantes et tuo precepto contra dicere non possunt." Holder 8, 243-47.

Fruma [author of life] (792) in direct opposition to Judas's previous relationship to *ealre synne fruma*.

Now as a participant in Christian history-making, Judas is given a miraculous sign by God, and his heart is infused with sufficient grace to confront Satan on his own first by his recovery of the cross and second through direct conflict. The *Inventio* has Judas entreat God for a sign; he then promises, "ego credam crucifixo quia ipse est rex israel nunc et in secula seculorum" ["I will believe that the crucified one is the king of Israel, both now and forever"].⁷⁹ Once he sees a rising smoke, Judas is overcome with compunction and digs in the location the miracle occurred:

Ut admiraretur Iudas et plauderet ambis manibus et dicerit. In ueritatem Christe tu es saluator mundi Gratias ago tibi domine quia cum sum indignus non me fraudasti tuae gratiae Deprecor ita domine ut inmemor sis meorum peccatorum.⁸⁰

[so that Judas clapped both hands in wonder and said: 'In truth, Christ, you are the world's savior. Thank you, Lord. Although I am unworthy, you have not deprived me of your grace. I implore you, Lord, that you not be mindful of my sins'.]

Though no mention is made of Judas's heart in the *Inventio* passage, Cynewulf once again employs the image with significant effect, building it to a triumphant climax.

When asking for a sign, Judas promises to believe in Christ and (in direct opposition to his earlier behavior) "þy fæstlicor ferhð staðelige" ["to fasten more firmly (his) heart"] (796) this time within a Christian context. Judas sees the miraculous smoke and, newly converted, he claps his hands, *beornes breostsefa* (804), *eadig 7 ægleaw* (805), and *gleaw in gebance* (806).

Most interesting is Cynewulf's decision to substitute a reference to Judas's heart for the phrase pertaining to the deprivation of grace: "Nu ic þurh soð hafu seolf gecnawen on

⁷⁹ Holder 9, 257-59.

heardum hige þæt ðu hælend eart middengeardes” [“Now I have truly acknowledged for myself in (my) ‘hard’ heart that you are the savior of the world”] (807a-09a).⁸¹ The presence of *heardum* as a modifier of *hige* complicates interpretation. The term either reflects a residual Jewish characteristic (i.e. Judas’s heart continues to display an essential resistance), or conveys a new meaning upon a thematically charged image (i.e. *heardum hige* within a Christian context ought to be read as ‘steadfast heart’). While the former is possible, it seems that the latter is also likely. The moment follows Judas’s physical torture in the pit, so one could assume his resistance has already been broken. He has undergone the suffering necessary for his forgiveness, and, as witnessed by his language, is fully receptive to the truth buried within his heart. He acknowledges this truth and fully participates in its present production. The new use of the phrase then intentionally recalls the old as a new law supplants the Mosaic one and a recalcitrant heart becomes steadfast. God’s grace, still very much present despite the omission of a translation of the line, “non me fraudasti tuae gratiae,” leads Judas to this salvific transformation.

Biblical evidence likewise supports this interpretation. As noted earlier, Psalm 50 describes a request for salvation following an ordeal of physical suffering. I give the most relevant verses below:

- 10. audito meo dabis gaudium et laetitiam
exultabunt ossa humilitata
- 11. averta faciem tuam a peccatis meis
et omnes iniquitates meas dele
- 12. cor mundum crea in me Deus
et spiritum rectum innova in visceribus meis
- 13. ne proicias me a facie tua
et spiritum sanctum tuum ne auferas a mea

⁸⁰ Holder 9, 261-66; “inmemores mea peccata” corrected by later hand.

⁸¹ Bradley translates the phrase as ‘obstinate mind’ 185.

14. redde mihi laetitiam salutaris tui
et spiritu principali confirma me.

[Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity. Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.]

Further on in Psalm 50, the penitent remarks, “sacrificium Deo spiritus contrabulatus cor contritum et humiliatum Deus non spernet” [“My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit, a crushed and contrite heart”].⁸² Having endured sufficient suffering, Judas’s salvation is later restored through his repentant behavior.

Looking within his own heart, Judas confesses what he finds: “þæs ðu me swa meðum 7 swa manweorcum þurh þin wuldor inwrigde wyrda geryno” [“because you through your glory have disclosed to one so troubled and so sinful the mystery of Providence”] (811-12) and asks God to forgive him for his numerous sins (*minre gylta*). He digs in the earth and uncovers the cross that was buried by the Jews. Once again Cynewulf re-directs the responsibility of the act upon Satan: “hie wið Godes bearne nið ahofun swa hie no sceoldon þær hie leahtra fruman larum ne hyrdon” [“They made war against God’s Son as they would not have done had they not listened to the cunning of the author of sins”] (836b-38b). The line sufficiently organizes the narrative around the ongoing assault and sets up the approaching scene of Satan’s lament.

With the image of the true cross in view, Judas’s heart is utterly opened as is promised in Ezekiel 36. The visual stimulus of “the tree of victory” manifests

⁸² Psalm 50: 19. See also 1 Peter 5:10, “Deus autem omnis gratiae qui vocavit nos in aeternam suam gloriam in Christo Iesu modicum passos ipse perficiet confirmabit solidabit” [“And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Jesus Christ after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm, and steadfast.”]

compunction for both Judas and the poet.⁸³ Following this climatic moment, *Elene* extends the Latin considerably:

Pa wæs modgemynd myclum geblissod,
 hige onhyrded þurh þæt halige treo,
 inbryrded breostsefa syððan beacen geseh
 halig under hrusan; he mid handum befeng
 wuldres wynbeam 7 mid weorode ahof
 of foldgræfe. (839a-44a)

[When he saw that holy emblem in the ground, then his mind was greatly gladdened, his heart strengthened, and his breast pierced by the holy tree. With his hands, he took hold of the joyous tree of glory and with a crowd hoisted it from its grave.]

Judas becomes *hige onhyrded* at the sight of the cross, underscoring his spiritual development. While continuing his attack on the *fruma* of his own resistance, Judas's heart is pierced by this experience. The absence of this image in the *Inventio* makes it difficult to ascertain Cynewulf's precise meaning in the phrase *inbryrded breostsefa*. In his often accurate treatment, Bradley offers the translation, "his heart inspired;"⁸⁴ yet the Modern English conception of "inspired" does not capture the moment's full intensity.⁸⁵ Fortunately, the context offers some hermeneutic assistance. Judas had possessed the hard heart of the Jew; he had refused to transmit knowledge regarding the cross and was forced to receive its truth through bodily suffering. Witnessing the first miracle, he recognized the gravity of his sins and petitioned God for forgiveness.

⁸³ Anderson *Cynewulf*, 168-70. Anderson argues, "there was for Cynewulf, a close relationship between the visual experience of images and relics, and the theology of compunction." For evidence, Anderson points to Cynewulf's *Ascension* and *Elene* both of which emphasize through significant details the importance and effect of visual stimuli. See *Christ II*, 461, 495a, 512-13, 562a, 568a.

⁸⁴ Bradley 186.

⁸⁵ Joseph Bosworth and Northcote Toller, *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary* (London: Oxford UP, 1972) 666, give textual evidence in support of defining the term 'strong feeling', Solil. H. 25, 17 and Hml. Th. i. 140, 17; ii. 42, 10; ii. 430, 5, ii. 504, 20; however, this definition is still not very satisfying.

Additionally, other sources help to glean a more satisfying definition of *onbryrded*.

Sandra McEntire gives compelling evidence suggesting that the term often denoted an intense spiritual/emotional experience or compunction.⁸⁶ Old English translations of the Benedictine Rule, Defensor's *Liber Scintillarum*, the Rule of Chrodegang, and the *Regularis Concordia*, "all consistently show 'onbryrdness' for 'compunctio.'"⁸⁷

Particularly relevant is a petition for inner strength found in the eleventh-century Cotton Tiberius A. iii manuscript. Though later than Cynewulf's *Elene*, it reflects a similar attitude:

Min drihten forgyf me rihtne geleafan and soðe lufe and eadmodnysse and arfæstnysse and clænnysse and onbryrdnysse and strenðo wið deofles costnunga...And min drihten genehxa þa heardheortnysse minre þære stænenran heortan and forgyf me teara genihtsumnysse þæt ic mæge þa misdæde bewepan. (H. Logeman, "Anglo-Saxonica Minora" 500)⁸⁸

[My Lord, give me true faith and genuine love and humility and mercy and purity and compunction and strength against the devil's temptations...And my Lord, draw near to the hard-heartedness of my stony heart and give me an abundance of tears so that I may weep for my sins.]

Likewise, Aelfric offers another late example in his homily *In Purificatione S. Mariæ* where he interprets the meaning of two turtledoves offered as a gift to Christ. He comments that these two young turtledoves represent, "twyfealdlic onbryrdnes eges and lufe; On twa wisan byð se mann onbryrd ærest he him ondræt hellewite, and bewepð his synna, syððan he nimð eft lufe to gode."⁸⁹ Aelfric describes the two types of *compunctio*

⁸⁶ Sandra McEntire, *The Doctrine of Compunction in Medieval England: Holy Tears*, Studies in Mediaeval Literature, vol. 8 (Lewston: Edwin Mellon Press, 1990) argues, "'onbryrde' has been variously translated 'stirred,' 'touched,' 'aroused,' 'instigated,' 'inspired,' and animated.' As a result, the full extent of the spiritual dynamism in those moments when the saints are said to be moved with compunction is missed. 'Onbryrdness, to be sure a stirring, inspired, gift of God, nevertheless conveys a much more specific and important grace than 'inspiration' can suggest" 88.

⁸⁷ McEntire 83.

⁸⁸ As cited in McEntire 91.

⁸⁹ *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies*, 1.252 (88). In his commentary on the passage, *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies, Introduction, Commentary, and Glossary* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000), Godden argues for this meaning; "by

a Christian might experience (*penitentiæ* and *cordis*) while also unpacking the deeper complex meaning of *onbryrdnes*. Infused by some divine energy (or breath in the poetic tradition), this feeling awakens the human heart to its fullest potential. One is ‘heart-struck’ by his fear or love of God. Judas experiences this awakening of *ege* and *lufu* in his heart. With the sight of the cross, he is gladdened and strengthened, and moved to a *compunctio cordis* that, though not complemented with tears, still reveals the degree of the character’s new faith and love.

Once the three trees are brought out of their confinement, Judas waits for a miracle from God to indicate which is Christ’s cross. When a young man’s corpse is carried nearby, each cross is placed over the body. Judas recognizes the true cross when the young body is reunited with its soul establishing a crowd of fresh converts.⁹⁰ At this point, Cynewulf appropriately amplifies the theme of victory to a powerful crescendo adding five references not appearing in the *Inventio* within forty lines: *sigebeamas prie* (846b), *ðam sigebeame* (860), *sigebearn Godes* (862a), *sigerofe* (867a), and *sigebeacen soð* (887a). A related image also appears twice: *wuldres wynbeam* (843a) and *ðam wuldres treo* (866b). As seen with Constantine, Judas has now been completely transformed; his heart is *miclum geblissod* (875b) and the crowd experiences a *neowne gefean* (869). The resurrection of the young man epitomizes the cross’s victory over Satan as once again a soul is sprung from Hell’s prison and reunited with its body.⁹¹ This

onbryrdnes (88) he seems to mean ‘grieving’ rather than ‘stimulation’” (3.72) and identifies the Latin source as Haymo of Auxerre (Hom. 14, PL 118): “id est duo compunctionis, timoris videlicet et amoris.” See also Thorpe, “a twofold affection of awe and love. In two ways is a man affected: first he dreads hell-torment, and bewails his sins; afterwards he again feels love to God” 1, 140-1. Thorpe’s choice of ‘affection’ diminishes the full intensity of the term ‘onbryrd.’ As Godden’s work suggests, the terms ‘compunction’ or, more poetically perhaps, ‘heart-struck’ would be appropriate here.

⁹⁰ This scene appears in Bede’s *De locis sanctis*. Full citation in Chapter Four, n. 13.

⁹¹ For an interesting analysis of the resurrection of pagan, Jewish, and Christian bodies see Paula Fredriksen, “Vile Bodies: Paul and Augustine on the Resurrection of the Flesh,” *Biblical Hermeneutics in*

victory brings to mind the New Testament scenarios of Christ's Resurrection, his Harrowing of Hell, and foreshadows the restoration of the faithful to occur at the Last Judgment as suggested in Psalm 50.

This victory serves as catalyst for a scene linking many of the redacted passages of the poem. Lamenting his defeat at the hands of both Christ and Judas, Satan arrives and cries out against the continuous assaults upon his dominion. The passage describes the painful defeat handed to those who oppose Christ's cross. Satan is given a moment to mourn his post-fallen state and make threats only to bring to relief Judas's newly awakened purpose:

Ne mot ænige nu
rihte spowan; is his rice brad
ofer middangeard, min is geswiðrod,
ræd under roderum; ic þa rode ne þearf
hleah tre herigean; hwæt, se hælend me
in þam engan ham oft getynde
geomrum to sorge. Ic þurh Iudas ær
hyhtful gewearð 7 nu gehyned eom
goda geasne þurh Iudas eft,
fah 7 freondleas; (915b-24a)

[Now I am not allowed to profit from any due of mine. His realm is spread abroad throughout the earth: my authority here beneath the skies has dwindled away. I have no reason to praise the cross with exultation: indeed, this savior has repeatedly shut me away in that constricting dwelling, to the grief of us wretches. Through a Judas, I was made hopeful and now am brought low, deprived of my goods, guilty and friendless, again through a Judas]

As the author of sin, Satan was primarily responsible for the fall of humanity (through a tree), the obstinacy of the Jews, and the death of Christ (through a tree). Through his own lack of insight, he condemned himself through the use of the cross against Christ.⁹²

Historical Perspective: Studies in Honor of Karlfried Froehlich on His Sixtieth Birthday eds. Mark S. Burrows and Paul Rorem (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1991) 75-87.

⁹² "and þu nu þurh þæt tryw and þurh þa rode hæfst ealle þyne blysse forspylled, and þurh þæt þe ðu þysne wuldres cyning ahegne, þu dydest wyðerwerdlice ongean þe and eac ongean me. And oncnaw nu hu fæle

Now the time arrives for Judas to combat the emblem of his own resistance.⁹³

Judas's insightful response to Satan illustrates his heart's reception to truth. Where the *Inventio* offers one line, Cynewulf expands the verse giving first and second halves of the poem thematic balance.⁹⁴ Most significant become the qualifiers used to describe the Christian Judas as the prophecies are fulfilled and the symbol of Israel is restored through God's grace:

Him ða gleawhydig Iudas oncwæð,
hæleð hildedeor- him wæs Halig Gast
befolen fæste, fyrhat lufu,
weallende gewitt, þurh wigan snyttro-
7 þæt word gecwæð wisdomes ful, (934a-38b)

[Then the wise Judas, the bold warrior, the Holy Spirit bestowed fast upon him— a love fervent as fire and an energetic wit— answered him through a fighter's cleverness and filled with wisdom, spoke these words]

As *miles christi*, Judas confronts the projection of his own denial with the aid of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is *befolen fæste* in his heart.⁹⁵ In his response to Satan (939a-52a), Judas speaks confidently of his new sovereign, *se mihtiga cyning*, (941b),

ece tyntrega and þa ungeendodan suslo þu byst þrowigende on mynre ecan gehealtsumnysse." ["And now through that tree and through that cross you have destroyed all your joy; and because you hung this King of Glory, you acted perversely against yourself and against me. And realize now how many eternal tortures and infinite torments you will be suffering in my [Hell's] everlasting custody"]. *Two Old English Apocrypha and their Manuscript Source*. ed. J.E. Cross. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996) 225.

⁹³ See Thomas Hill's "Imago dei : genre, symbolism, and Anglo-Saxon hagiography," *Holy Men Holy Women*, ed. Paul E. Szarmach (Albany: SUNY Press, 1996): 35-50 where Hill refers to Satan in the *Andreas* as emblematic of Andrew's psychological state.

⁹⁴ St. Gall reads, "Iudas autem feruens in spiritu domini Quique mortuos suscitauit Christus ipse te damnat in abysum ignis aeterni" Holder 10: 298-301; 26 ["But Judas, hot in the spirit of the Lord, said, "May Christ who raised the dead damn you to the abyss of everlasting fire."]

⁹⁵ This same fervor of spirit is witnessed in the Jew, Apollo, in Acts 18:24-25, "Iudaeus autem quidam Apollo nomine Alexandrinus natione vir eloquens devenit Ephesum potens in scripturis hic erat edoctus viam Domini et fervens spiritu loquebatur et docebat diligenter ea quae sunt Iesu sciens tantum baptisma Iohannis" ["Meanwhile a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the scriptures. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with a fervent spirit and taught accurately about Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John"].

employing direct speech and imperatives, and condemns the creature to the flames of Hell.⁹⁶

Up to this point, Cynewulf has artfully emphasized the continued assault on Satan and the spiritual receptivity of the open heart. The resurrection of the young man, along with Judas's response to the devil upon his conversion, fully illustrates the attributes of the true cross. This critical moment is accentuated through the figure of the militant Church, Helen:

Gode þancode,
wuldorcyninge þæs hire se willa gelamp
þurh bearn Godes bega gehwæðres,
ge æt þære gesyhðe þæs sigebeames,
ge ðæs geleafan þe hio swa leohte oncneow,
wuldorfæste gife in þæs weres breostum: (961b-66b)

[She thanked God, the glorious king, because her desire has been fulfilled through the son of God both, at the sight of the tree of victory, and in the faith which she so clearly recognized, the glory-rooted grace in the man's breast.]

Cynewulf's desire is also fulfilled when victory and grace are firmly associated with the cross as they are a few lines later, "þæt þæt sigorbeacen þurh meotodes est meted wære (984b-85b)," ["that the emblem of victory was found through the grace of the Lord"] and again in the poet's added commentary on the cross:

þær bið a gearu
wraðu wannhalum wita ghwylces,
sæce 7 sorge; hie sona þær
þurh þa halgan gesceaft helpe findað,
godcunde gife. (1028b-32a)

[There ever ready is a support for the weak in every injury, contest, and sorrow. There through that holy creation they shall find *aid* and *divine grace*.] Emphasis mine.

⁹⁶ Robert E. Bjork, "Judas with a New Voice: Revelatory Dialogue in Cynewulf's *Elene*," *The Old English Verse Saint's Lives: A Study in Direct Discourse and the Iconography of Style*, (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1985): 62-89.

The cross in *Elene* offers its divine protection and support to those able and/or willing to seek it. The proximity of *gesceaft* to *helpe findað*, and *godcunde gife* tightens this thematic association.

Following the thematic climax, an added passage on Constantine unites this segment to the emperor's earlier earthly victory. Constantine is *mod geblissod* and *ferhð gefeonde* (989b-90a) when he hears of the cross's recovery; a *hlihende hyge* [jubilant heart] (994a) is bestowed upon his people. In contrast, a reference to, "þara þe dryhtnes æ dyrnan woldon (970)," [those who would keep the Lord's law a secret] reminds the reader that most carnal Jews are not yet capable of opening their hearts to the truth of the cross. Just as Judas was sorrowful before his torture (655b), they continue to be, "gnornsorga mæst, werum wansæligum," ["the most sorrowful ones, those unhappy people"] (976b-77a).

Judas, on the other hand, appears utterly transformed. His heart, now moved by remorse, is able to repent its sins, and he is baptized. Extended from the Latin, *Elene* reads, "his geleafa wearð fæst on ferhðe siððan frofre gast wic gewunode in þæs weres breostum bylde to bote," ["His belief became steadfast when the comforting spirit occupied a lodging in the man's breast and moved him to penance"] (1035b-38a). The insertion of the term *bote* signifies the direction Cynewulf will take the remainder of his cross commentary. In a Christian interpretive mode, *fæst on ferhðe* (much like *heardum hige*) identifies Judas now as fortified in his faith rather than recalcitrant. Becoming bishop, Judas is given the name Cyriacus which Cynewulf glosses as "*æ hælandes*" ["the law of the Savior"] (1062a), a fitting nomination considering the character's involvement

in the transmission and production of Christian history, and his figural presence as the restored Israel.⁹⁷

As the narrative shifts its emphasis towards the recovery of the nails, Cynewulf maintains control of his amplified theme. Twice Judas's heart is struck in awe and love of God. Following his baptism, his, "inbryrdded breostsefa on þæt betere lif (1045)" ["conscience was "pricked" by the better life"]. Later, at Helena's request that he recover the nails, he sets out to Calvary:

þa se halga ongan hyge staðolian,
breostum onbryrdded bisceop þæs folces,
glædmod eode gumena þreate
God hergendra, 7 þa geornlice
Cyriacus on Caluarie
hleor onhylde, hygerune ne mað,
Gastes mihtum to Gode cleopode
eallum eaðmedum (1093a-1100a)

[Then the saint, the bishop of the people, focused his attention, stirred to compunction, gladly went with a crowd of people praising God, and when on Calvary, Cyriacus earnestly bowed down his face he did not conceal mysterious knowledge but by the powers of the spirit he called upon God with all humility.]

Judas's condition at this moment is difficult to capture with accuracy. Though the term *glædmod* certainly connotes joy, the phrases *hleor onhylde* and *eallum eaðmedum* create a repentant tone, and since Cynewulf's source emphasizes the penitent mood of this scene, it is reasonable to interpret *onbryrdded* with this mood in mind. The *Inventio* reads as follows:

Aeleuans in caelum oculos manibus simul percutiens pectus exclamauit ex toto corde ad Dominum confidens priorum ignorantium et beatificans omnes qui crediderunt in Christo et qui credituri sunt⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Whatley, "Old English Onomastics" 115-17 argues that the phrase *æ hælendes* epitomizes Judas's internal condition and his public position as bishop.

⁹⁸ Holder 11, 334-39.

[Raising his eyes to heaven and striking his breast with his hands, he cried to the Lord with his whole heart, and confessing his former ignorance, blessed all those who believed in Christ and who would believe in the future.]

Cynewulf's redaction does not recreate the degree of repentance manifest in the *Inventio*; he deliberately omits the image of Judas striking his breast perhaps in the effort to moderate the grief in an otherwise joyful moment. However, his use of *onbryrded* may convey Judas's contrite attitude towards God.

The *compunctio* harbored in Judas's heart is at last brought to the foreground once the nails of the cross have been discovered and the crowd of Jews, converted to the new faith. With the grace in his heart established, Judas is capable of responding appropriately to the discovery. In a significantly extended passage, Cynewulf elaborates upon the affective response found in the Latin:⁹⁹

Da wæs geblissod se ðe to bote gehwearf
 þurh bearn Godes, bisceop þara leoda
 niwan stefne; he þan næglan onfeng
 egesan geacloð 7 þære arwyrðan
 cwene brohte; hæfde Ciriacus
 eall gefylled swa him seo æðele bebed,
 wifes willan; þa wæs wopes hring,
 hat heafodwylm, ofer hleor goten;
 nalles for torne tearas feollon
 ofer wira gespon; wuldre [i]s¹⁰⁰ gefylled
 cwene willa; heo on cneow sette
 leohte geleafan, lac weorðode
 blissum hremig þe hire brungen wæs
 gnyrna to geoce. (1125a-38a)

[Then the bishop of those people, he who had turned to penance through the Son of God, was exhilarated anew. Trembling with fear, he took the nails and brought them to the reverent queen. Cyriacus had fulfilled the woman's entire desire as the noble woman had asked him. Then there was the sound of weeping, hot tears flowed upon the cheek, but the tears fell upon filigree clasp not because of grief:

⁹⁹ St. Gall reads, "Quos accipiens cum magno timore obtulit uenerabili Aelenae que figens genua capud inclinans adorauit eos" ["With great fear, Cyriacus received the nails and took them to blessed Helena, who knelt down, bowed her head and worshipped them."] Holder 12, 351-54.

¹⁰⁰ I defer to Graddon's suggestion that *wuldres* is possibly a corruption of *wuldre is*.

the queen's will was fulfilled gloriously. She knelt on her knees, radiant with faith, exultant with bliss, and worshipped the gift that was brought to her as a solace for sadness.]

While Cyriacus, *egesan geacloed* and *to bote gehwearf*, ostensibly displays a compunctive mood, the queen becomes the recipient of its outward, more sapiential form.¹⁰¹ The *compunctio amoris* of her *hat heafodwylm* [hot tears] (1132a) illustrates a spiritual fulfillment unattainable by the Jew despite his conversion. Cyriacus appears more sober and restrained in his reaction to the miracles, and the narrative leaves him in this condition.

As a symbol of the Church Militant, Helena is once again transformed into an extension of her son's earthly might. Originally introduced as a Christian, she possesses a devout faith in Christ and becomes overwhelmed with joy at the completion of her mission. Yet as image initiates spiritual development for Cynewulf, Helena's sight of the nails brings an immediate understanding of the divine: "*þæts þe hio soð gecneow andwearlice þæt wæs oft bodod feor ær beforan*," ["because she knew the actual truth which long before had often been proclaimed"] (1139b-41a). Consumed with her ongoing quest, the queen's desire unites victory and protection as the nails become an instrumental part of Constantine's military arsenal.

The nails, signifying the protective power of the cross and serving to distribute its apotropaic potency, are fitted into a bridle and given to Constantine as a guarantee of success in war.¹⁰² Skillfully constructing his narrative within the thematic framework of assault and victory, Cynewulf enhances the description of warfare, using the recovery of the nails to recall the poem's extended introduction:

¹⁰¹ Anderson 175.

¹⁰² See Zech 14:20.

þonne æt sæcce mid þy oferswiðan mæge
 feonda gehwylcne þonne fyrðhwate
 on twa healfe tohtan secap,
 sweordgeniðlan þær hie [sigor] willað,
 wrað wið wraðum. He ah æt wigge sped,
 sigor æt sæce 7 sybbe gehwær,
 æt gefeohte frið se ðe fo[r]an lædeð
 bridels on blancan þonne beadurofe
 æt garþræce, guman gecoste
 berað bord 7 ord; þis bið beorna gehwam
 wið æglæce unoferswiðed
 wæpen æt wigge (1177a-88a)

[In combat, he will be able to vanquish every enemy with this, when on two sides, brave soldiers, sword-wielding foes advance to battle, when they desire victory, support in hardship. He who bears this bridle upon a steed shall have victory in battle, security in the fighting and peace everywhere, when renowned warriors, proved men, carry shield and spear in battle. This shall be to every man an unvanquished weapon in battle against oppression.]

Earlier an angelic messenger had told Constantine, ‘Mid þys beacne ðu on ðam frecnan fære feond oferswiðesð geletest lað werod’ commencing the first assault on Satan’s body [his dominion] and establishing a grace within the emperor’s open heart. Eleven hundred lines later, with the recovery of the cross, the symbolic reenactment of Hell’s Harrowing, and the figurative restoration of grace among the Israelites,¹⁰³ Christians are again assured that they, “oferswiðan mæge feonda gehwylcne.”

A receptive heart and the fecund backdrop of Spring conclude Cynewulf’s commentary on the cross with liturgical echoes:

7 þa eallum bebead
 on þam gumrice God hergendum,
 werum 7 wifum, þæt hie weorðeden

¹⁰³ “Heht þa tosomne þa heo seleste mid Iudeum gumena wiste hæleða cynnes, to þære halgan byrig cuman in þa ceastre” [“Then she commanded those among the Jews whom she knew to be the best of men and of humankind to come together to the holy city, into the fortress”] (1201a-04a). Cynewulf greatly modifies the ending from the Latin in order to uphold the sense of victory. St Gall reads, “Beata autem Aelena quae in Christo ihesu est fidem confirmans hierusolimis ita omnia perficiens et perfectionem Iudaeis miset qui increduli facti sunt minauit eos a iudaeo” Holder 13: 373-77; 28. [“After blessed Helena had encouraged all those in Jerusalem who had faith the faith in Jesus Christ and had completed all, she persecuted the Jews, because they had not believed, and frightened them out of Judea.”]

mode 7 mægene þone mæran dæg,
 heortan gehigdum, in ðam sio halige rod
 gemeted wæs, mærost beama
 þara þe of eorðan up aweoxe,
 geloden under leafum (1219b-26a)

[And then she called upon all those worshipping God upon the earth, men and women, that they honor with mind and with body and with a reflective heart, the celebrated day on which the holy cross was found, the most glorious of trees, which have grown up from the earth, sprouting forth beneath the leaves.]

Bishop Cyriacus offers aid and support to the sick, and Helena entreats the community to venerate the day the cross was found with *heortan gehigdum*. Recalling the *wliti wuldres treo* (89) of the poem's beginning and the reference to Eden later on (757-59), Cynewulf here inserts imagery suggestive of both Paradise on earth (Gen 3) and the familiar relationship between the *mærost beama* and the *arbor vitae* in order to punctuate his thematic treatment.

In keeping with Helena's directive, Cynewulf's epilogue becomes a powerful reflection on the cross's power to save a penitent sinner. Placing himself alongside the narrative's converts, Cynewulf admits, in his leonine rhymes, to having once been in conflict with God's will, "ic wæs weorcum fah, synnum asæled, sorgum gewæled (1242b-43b)," [I was guilty of deeds, bound by sins, tormented by sorrows]. Much as Judas had been, he is burdened by his own anxieties, "bitrum gebunden, bisgum beprungen" (1244), until at last he receives God's grace through the cross. Cynewulf becomes its passive recipient; it *onband* (1249a) Cynewulf's body and *onwand* (1249b) his heart. His compunction of fear becomes one of love as he remembers the victorious cross, "ðam sigebeacne," (1256a) and counts himself as one of the faithful, those, "soðfæste," [steadfast in truth] (1289b), who will be parted from their sins and purged of their carnal desires.

As with Judas's suffering in the pit, Cynewulf will be freed from Satan's clutch in the final assault of the Last Judgment. His compunctive reflection on the cross rewards him, as it did Constantine, with a saving grace. As Robert Rice suggests:

The wisdom of the cross is the renunciation of the world and the acceptance of suffering and penance, which lead to forgiveness and absolution, granted through the power of the church to 'bind and loose.'¹⁰⁴

This detailed linear approach to *Elene* has enabled us to carefully examine Cynewulf's deeply rooted alterations and amplifications and formulate some possible conclusions as to the author's penitential attitude toward the victorious cross. Compunction and true conversion are, after all, deeply rooted emotional experiences as illustrated by Judas's (historical or typological) contact with the cross.

¹⁰⁴ Robert Rice, "The penitential motif in Cynewulf's *Fates of the Apostles* and in his epilogues," *Anglo-Saxon England* 6 (London: Cambridge UP, 1977) 117.

Chapter Four

Crossing into Paradise: The Remedy of the *arbor vitæ*

“Nothing in all nature was a more perfect symbol of the miracle of reproduction and man’s belief in immortality than the tree with its leaves and blossoms and fruit. It became again the symbol of ‘dying to live’ which is the framework of all ancient religions.”¹

In the same way that *Elene* supplies useful textual evidence of the cross’s penitential property, the Old English *Æcerbot* (field remedy) and *Riddle 28*, both found in eleventh-century manuscripts, articulate its fecundity.² As seen in the lopped trunks and green timber of the cross illuminations (Chapter Two), images of the cross’s wooden composition connoted its revivifying power. The foliating wood of the cross was still very much alive. In this chapter, the two texts mentioned above further assist in reconstructing the intellectual framework surrounding the Anglo-Saxon cross, and specific attention is given to its association with the *arbor vitæ*. The riddle tradition has firm roots in monastic culture whereas the *Æcerbot* emerges from the specific context of the Anglo-Saxon agrarian community.³ Both Old English texts belong to a worldview at the fulcrum between monastic and popular culture, formal theology and folklore, and Christian prayer and pagan charm.

¹ Elizabeth Goldsmith, *Life Symbols as Related to Sex Symbolism* (New York: Putnam’s Sons, 1924) 93.

² The *Æcerbot* is found in London, British Library, Cotton Caligula A. vii and *Riddle 28*, in the *Exeter Book* (Exeter Cath. 3501).

³ The Latin riddles of the classical riddler Symphosius influenced the English tradition originating in the work of Aldhelm, Tatwine, and Eusebius and continues with the Exeter riddle-poet.

Karen Jolly offers the *Æcerbot* as evidence of an English “popular Christianity” in which a residual pre-Christian worldview merged with Christianity. With a caveat that we not place anachronistic categories upon Anglo-Saxon culture, Jolly describes the context as an ideological synthesis:

The framework of meaning governing this perception was the result of the Germanic-Christian synthesis, creating a worldview in which microcosm and macrocosm were interconnected through God, and everything was alive with the presence of God and other spiritual beings.⁴

Jolly asserts that the natural and the supernatural were not divisive categories in late Saxon England as they become in the High Medieval period; they were, instead, unified in such a way that divine occurrences were recognized as part of the natural order.

The following chapter offers textual evidence of the cross’s fecundity after attempting to situate the two texts within their cultural context. Given *Riddle 28*’s intentional ambiguities and the *Æcerbot*’s synthesis of both Christian and pre-Christian sources, it is necessary to address the scriptural and liturgical echoes alongside those from a residual pagan tradition.⁵ The alignment of these two traditions highlights the interpretive possibilities available to the Christian Anglo-Saxons.

As discussed in Chapter One, the Christian image of the *arbor vitæ* emerges out of books of the Old and New Testament. The Garden of Eden was filled with beautiful and

⁴ See Karen Jolly, *Popular Religion in Late Saxon England: Elf Charms in Context*. (London: U of North Carolina P, 1996); “Father God and Mother Earth: Nature-Mysticism in the Anglo-Saxon World,” *The Medieval World of Nature, A Book of Essays*, ed. Joyce E. Salisbury (New York: Garland Publishing, 1993) 224. Jolly defines “worldview” as, “the way a culture, or an individual, perceives its relationship to the divine or supernatural, the physical realm, and other people.”

⁵ Frederick Tupper, *The Riddles of the Exeter Book* (Boston: Ginn and co., 1910), suggests the Exeter riddles date from the early eighth century. Craig Williamson, *The Old English Riddles of the Exeter Book* (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1977) 3-12 is pessimistic about pinpointing their precise date of composition.

nourishing plants and trees. In the middle of the garden stood the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge (Gen. 2:9), the only trees God had forbidden Adam and Eve to touch. The generative potential of this scene is, however, offset by the penalty assigned to the couple on account of their eating from the Tree of Knowledge. For her part in the disobedient act, Eve and all women must obediently bear children through painful childbirth, “multiplicabo aerumnas tuas et conceptus tuos in dolore paries filios et sub viri potestate eris et ipse dominabitur tui” (Gen. 3: 16).⁶ Condemned to a life of toil, Adam is told “maledicta terra in opere tuo in laboribus comedes eam cunctis diebus vitæ tuæ, spinas et tribulos germinabit tibi et comedes herbas terræ” (Gen 3:17-18).⁷

A second Old Testament image of the *arbor vitæ*, in Daniel (4: 8-9), tells of a tall nourishing tree that appears in Nebuchadnezzar's dream: “magna arbor et fortis et proceritas eius contingens caelum aspectus illius erat usque ad terminos universæ terræ, folia eius pulcherrima et fructus eius nimius et esca universorum in ea.”⁸ Daniel interprets the tree to be the king himself.⁹

In the context of Christ's Passion, the cross serves as the instrument through which the sins of the first man and woman are redeemed. As previously described, the idea of a tree initiating both humanity's transgression and redemption becomes increasingly popular, appearing in patristic and liturgical texts and the hymns of Fortunatus. As

⁶ “I will increase your pains and conceptions, in pain you will give birth to children and you will be under your husband's power and he will rule over you.”

⁷ “Cursed is the earth in your work, with labor will you eat from it all the days of your life, thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to you, and will you eat the herbs of the earth.”

⁸ “The tree was great and strong, and the height of it reached the heavens and it was visible even to the ends of the earth. Its leaves were most beautiful and its fruit exceeding much, and in it was food for all.”

⁹ The Old English translation poem *Daniel* is found in Junius 11 along with the poems *Genesis* and *Exodus* and *Christ and Satan*.

attested to by the *Gospel of Nicodemus*, Christians eventually understood that at Christ's death even Adam would be led by Christ to the tree of mercy:

Nu secge ic þe Seth, ne þearft þu swincan byddende ne þyne tearas ageotende þæt
 ðu þurfe biddan þone ele of þam treowe þære myldheortnyse, þæt ðu Adam
 þynne fæder myd smyrian mote for his lichaman sare, for þam ðe gyt ne syndon
 gefyllede þa fif þusend wyntra and þa fif hund wyntra þe sceolon beon agane ær
 he gehæled wurðe. Ac þonne cymð se myldheortesta Cryst, Godes sunu, and
 gelæt þynne fæder Adam on neorxnawang to þam treowe þære myldheortnyse.¹⁰

According to medieval legend, Adam's son Seth was sent to speak with the Archangel Michael who then gave him a twig (or three seeds) from the Tree of Knowledge.¹¹

Adam was buried with this twig at the center of the earth at the exact spot where Christ would later be crucified.¹² The tree that grew from this spot would be cut down by King Solomon and discarded, becoming later a bridge avoided by the Queen of Sheba, and recovered by the Jews who would make from it the upright portion of the cross. So it comes to pass that the tree that condemned humankind to death ultimately bears the fruit of everlasting life.

¹⁰ Cross 207. We know of two Latin and three Old English versions of the *Euangelium Nichodemi*. The earliest manuscript containing an Old English version, Cambridge University Library Ii. 2.11, dates from the third quarter of the eleventh century. ["Now I say to you, Seth, there is no need to toil in prayer or to shed tears, in beseeching the oil from the tree of mercy with which to anoint your father Adam for the pain of his body, because the five thousand and five hundred years which must pass away before he is healed are not yet complete. But then the most merciful Christ, the Son of God, will come and lead your father Adam into Paradise to the tree of mercy"].

¹¹ Evidence of this legend comes to us through the *Cursor mundi*. See Richard Morris, *Cursor mundi A Northumbrian Poem of the fourteenth century* 3 vols. (London: Kegan. Paul, Trench, Trübner, and co., 1893) 83-89.

¹² The legend, possibly originating in the east, has many variations. Some of these actually conflate the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil and the Tree of Life. One version credited to Ephrem the Syrian called *The Book of the Cave of Treasures*, may have been known to the Anglo-Saxons. For evidence of Ephrem's influence on *The Book of Cerne* and *The Book of Nunnaminster* see Patrick Sims-Williams, "Thoughts on Ephrem the Syrian in Anglo-Saxon England," *Learning and Literature in Anglo-Saxon England*, eds. Michael Lapidge and Helmut Gneuss (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1985) 205-26.

Through this connection, the cross offers hope of eternal life to humanity. This hope is rewarded to the faithful in the last chapter of the New Testament where the *arbor vitæ* appears on both sides of the river in the heavenly kingdom (Rev. 22: 2). Those who have “taken up” the cross of Christ have a right to eat from the Tree of Life (Rev. 22.14). From creation to apocalypse, the fecund Tree stood at the geographical and spiritual center of the religion that Augustine introduced to England.

Providing an Anglo-Saxon example of the *arbor vitæ* image, Bede mentions the cosmological cross in his *De Locis Sanctis*, a description of specific holy places and their importance borrowed significantly from Adomnan (627-704), the ninth abbot of Iona. Bede describes the scene in Jerusalem, narrated in Cynewulf’s *Elene*, where a man was brought back to life when the true cross was lifted over him:

In medio autem Heirusalem, ubi cruce Domini superposita mortuus revixit,
columna celsa stat, quae aestivo solstitio umbram non facit. Unde putant ibi
mediam esse terram et historice dictum: Deus autem rex noster, ante saecula
operatus est salutem in medio terrae¹³

[Yet in the center of Jerusalem, where a dead man was restored to life when the Lord’s cross was placed over him, there stands a tall column which casts no shadow on the summer solstice. From this they reckon that the centre of the earth is at that spot and that literally true is the saying, but God our king, before the ages, effected salvation at the centre of the earth.]¹⁴

¹³ Bede, “*De Locis Sanctis*,” *Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina* 175 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1965) 251-80.b.

¹⁴ Trent Foley and Arthur G. Holder, trans., *Bede: A Biblical Miscellany* (Liverpool, Eng.: Liverpool UP, 1999) 10.

The complementary images, *crux Domini* and *columna celsa* offer a more complete picture of the cross's nature. Central to the salvation of humanity, it stands at the cosmological center of Christianity.

Pre-Christian analogues to the *arbor vitæ* suggest multiple interpretive possibilities and are of a similar type to the Christian "tree/column image." The Northern European culture from which the pagan Anglo-Saxons and their Danish invaders derived had similar images. Icelandic compilers of the thirteenth century record earlier Scandinavian descriptions of the great ash tree, Yggdrasil, which stands as a pillar at the center of the cosmos.¹⁵ In the *Grímnismál* of the *Elder Edda* (c. 1270), the god Óðinn (a version of the Anglo-Saxon Woden) describes Yggdrasil's significance to the world, calling it, "the best of trees."¹⁶ According to the *Prose Edda* of Snorri Sturluson (1179-1241), Yggdrasil was thought to grow in a beautiful meadow or garden:

The ash is the best and greatest of all trees; its branches spread out over the whole world and reach up over heaven. The tree is held in position by three roots that spread far out; one is among the Æsir, the second among the frost ogres where once was Ginnungagap, and the third extends over Nifheim, and under the root is the well Hvergelmir; but Niðhöggr gnaws at the root from below.¹⁷

Far below the world, a serpent slid along the tree's roots while far above, a great eagle winged the high winds into motion. A squirrel named Ratatoskr raced up and down the tree carrying insults back and forth from the great eagle at the tree's top to the serpent,

¹⁵ H.R. Ellis Davidson, *Gods and Myths of Northern Europe* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1968) 190-96.

¹⁶ Richard North, *Heathen Gods in Old English Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997) 278. See also Patricia Terry's translation of the *Elder Edda* with a helpful Introduction by Charles W. Dunn in *Poems of the Vikings: The Elder Edda* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1969).

¹⁷ Jean I. Young, *The Prose Edda of Snorri Sturluson* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1964) 42-3.

Níðhgggr, at its roots. Yggdrasil was seen as the center of the world, the stage for the conflicts among the gods; it was their court.¹⁸ Legend speaks of the world tree as standing next to a nourishing spring. The Norns, maidens who decided the fates of men and women, sprinkled the great ash with waters from the spring in order to protect the tree from decay.

Óðinn endures the suffering of being hung upon Yggdrasil in a manner similar to Christ. In the *Hávamál*, Óðinn is eventually sacrificed on this tree, as is signified by the name *Ygg-drasill* meaning “Óðinn’s-steed” or “Óðinn’s-gallows.”¹⁹ It was at the moment of his greatest sacrifice that Óðinn, the father of the gods, brought enlightenment and the runic knowledge to humanity:

I know that I hung on the windswept tree for nine whole nights, pierced by the spear and given to Odin, myself given to myself, on that tree, whose roots no man can trace. They refresh me neither with bread nor with drink from the horn; I peered down; I took up runes, howling I took them up; and then fell back.²⁰

From a Norse perspective, the great tree not only bore the weight of a deity, but also brought a remedy to the world through these magical runes.²¹

One of these mysterious runes was associated with fecundity. The cross-shaped rune [+], sometimes drawn as [X], corresponding to the palatal semivowels “j” or “y” developed in early Modern English, symbolized the word *ger* (year), with the additional understanding that it conveyed a divine protection over the harvests and ensured

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ North 279.

²⁰ Terry 34.

²¹ This figure of an enlightened being who makes the world whole again through his contact with the Otherworld corresponds interestingly to Stephen Glosecki’s description of a shaman. *Shamanism and Old English Poetry* (New York: Garland, 1989) 9.

abundance.²² Runes were commonly used by Anglo-Saxon scribes as reference marks, for quire numbering, and for scribal signatures such as that by Cynewulf.²³ The complete alphabet, called the *Futhark* after the first six letters, appears on a fighting knife found in the river Thames.²⁴ Northumbrian caskets, manuscripts and crosses carried these magical symbols. As mentioned in Chapter One, the Ruthwell cross in Dumfriesshire has inscribed upon its side a portion of the Old English *Dream of the Rood* poem written in runes.²⁵

According to Maureen Halsall, Christian monasteries of this time actually kept the Futhark alive in their scholastic enterprises. Some Christian scribes would have been able to compare these runes to their Latin, Greek and Hebrew cognates and often copied these comparisons down in manuscripts. Halsall notes:

Instead of suppressing the runic characters or relegating them to fringe uses by the rural illiterate and by opponents of the Church, the English monasteries adopted the Futhorc, developed it, and expanded its uses.²⁶

One can safely assume that the *ger* rune [+] would have been familiar to the Anglo-Saxons and was likely recognized as a symbol of fertility and agricultural bounty.²⁷ Its resemblance to the sign of the cross may have mediated the Christian symbol's connotations.

Analogous to this symbol, the swastika or "the wheel of life," also had a place in pre-Christian mythology. This "hooked cross" along with the great hammer were symbols of

²² Gale Owen, *Rites and Religions of the Anglo-Saxons* (New York: Dorset Press, 1985) 56.

²³ Maureen Halsall, *The Old English Rune Poem: a critical edition* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1981) 18.

²⁴ Ibid. 3-6.

²⁵ Interestingly, the cruciform rune appears as X not as + on the Ruthwell Cross.

²⁶ Ibid. 18.

²⁷ See Kjel Meling, "The Cross as a Principle in the Formation of Certain Old English Runes," *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 80 (1979): 36-8.

Thor, the “High Thunderer,” – a term later reserved for the God of the Christians.²⁸ Both swastika and hammer appear on burial stones in Norway and Sweden. In fact, the two were occasionally found together as they were on a scabbard dating from the seventh century.²⁹ Davidson argues that the swastika was used in Saxon times as a funeral symbol. The swastika shared specific associations ascribed to Thor’s hammer and the Christian cross. Davidson acknowledges this:

It would seem indeed as though the power of the thunder god, symbolized by his hammer, extended over all that had to do with the well-being of the community. It covered birth, marriage, and death, burial, and cremation ceremonies, weapons and feasting, travelling, land-taking, and the making of oaths between men. The famous weapon of Thor was not only the symbol of the destructive power of the storm, and of fire from heaven, but also a protection against the forces of evil and violence.³⁰

Also analogous to the Christian *arbor vitæ* is the high pillar, *Irmisul*, thought to symbolize Thor’s power.³¹ These holy pillars, often made of oak, signified the power of the sky. One saga in the thirteenth-century Icelandic *Landnámabók* tells of a great tree that was washed ashore when a settler prayed to Thor for a “high-seat pillar” for his hall in Iceland. These pillars supplied luck and protection to the hall and bestowed on the community the power of the sacred grove.³²

²⁸ Davidson 83.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ *Irmisul* is likely named after the Saxon deity *Irmin* who may have been identified with the Old Saxon god Saxnot. North 113.

³² Davidson 88.

Having constructed an ideological framework by which we can understand the more “popular” Christianity of late Anglo-Saxon society, we may more confidently approach the Old English literary evidence of the cross’s fecund associations. The ninety-one riddles of the eleventh-century *Exeter Book* are West-Saxon and Anglian in dialect and were thought to have been composed during the first half of the eighth century by an author yet unknown. *Riddle 28* describes, through the conventional use of prosopopoeia, an object that is linked to nature (1-4) and to humanity (4-6), and God (7-9). Though there is a high degree of ambiguity,³³ the singular answer to the various associations appears to be: “a beam of wood.” From a tree branch at the mercy of natural forces to the vertical beam of Christ’s cross bestowing bounty, the text’s fecund imagery shifts ambiguously. Here is the riddle in full as it appears in Craig Williamson’s edition.

Ic eom legbysig, lace mid winde,
bewunden mid wuldre, wedre gesomnad,
fus forðweges, fyre gebysgad,
bearu blowende, byrnende gled.
5 Ful oft mec gesipas sendaþ æfter hondum
þæt mec weras ond wif wlonce cyssað.
Ðonne ic mec onhæbbe, ond hi onhnigaþ to me
monige mid miltse, þær ic monnum sceal
ycan upcyme eadignesse.³⁴
[I am troubled by fire, played with by the wind,

³³ A. J. Wyatt, *Old English Riddles of the Exeter Book* (Boston: D.C. Heath and co., 1912) “This is the first riddle, the answer to which I give up with regret.” 88.

³⁴ As it appears in Williamson 85.

wrapped with glory, united with the storm,
 ready for the journey, agitated by fire,
 the blooming grove, the burning ember.
 Very often friends pass me from hand to hand,
 exultant men and women, in order to kiss me,
 when I raise myself, and they bow to me,
 many (people) with joy, there I shall for the men
 increase the up-swelling of happiness.]

The critical guesswork as to the answer to this specific riddle has ranged from “rainwater” by F. Dietrich to a “snowflake” by Hans Pinsker; however, Frederick Tupper, W.S. Mackie, George Philip Krapp, and Elliott Dobbie stand behind F.A. Blackburn’s solution of “a beam.” According to Blackburn, the riddle first refers to a tree, then to a ship, again to a tree, then to a log, a harp, a cup, and finally, a cross. Moritz Trautman later agreed with Blackburn but argued that the riddle only suggests a tree (1-4) and then the cross (5-9).³⁵ Craig Williamson tends to agree that the answer to this riddle is “beam” or “wood” and finds the meaning fluctuates through the lines from a tree in the opening lines, then a wood or a log, a grove, an ember, then a cup and finally a cross. He sees in this a paradoxical progression:

There is a certain irony in the poem that links lines 1-4 with lines 5-9: the creature having been forced onto the death-road by man, is, as an art object crafted by man, loved (5-6) and worshiped (7-9) by all men.³⁶

³⁵ Ibid. 230.

³⁶ Ibid. 231.

Despite the riddle's intentional ambiguity, it is still possible to ascertain a reasonable answer.

As is typical with most riddles, many of the lines pose interpretive barriers that blur or unravel a cohesive interpretation; however, along with Trautman, I find it possible if not probable that the first four lines of the riddle refer to a tree and the last five, to the cross. The *fus forðweges* (3) seems a reference to the tree's movement through its seed; however, it also suggests a journey to the year's seasonal end or perhaps, more enigmatically, to the end of one's life. This eschatological emphasis appears more central as the riddle unfolds. The next half-line *fyre gebysgad* (3b) agrees with the first and seems to refer to the danger a tree encounters within nature.

The two half-lines, *bearu blowende, byrnende gled* (4), may offer an eschatological element paralleling the riddle's subject matter and movement from "tree" to "cross." Balanced through opposition, the full line juxtaposes terms that elsewhere connote procreation and destruction, life and death. According to the *Concordance*, the only other appearance of *blowende* in Anglo-Saxon poetry is in the *Exhortation to Christian Living* (ECL 2), in reference to the attainment of the emerging kingdom of heaven. *Gled* appears twice in *Beowulf* (2652 and 3114) as the "smouldering fire," ready to consume the dead heroes. The phrase *gleda gripe* is used to describe the "grip of hell-fire" in Cynewulf's *Elene* (1302) and *Juliana* (391).

The reference to *wlonce cyssað* (6) apparently describes the "kiss of peace" bestowed on the cross during the mass. The final image of the raised beam communally worshiped with joy [*monige mid miltse*] (8) brings the riddle to its ultimate signification, serving to invoke the power of the fecund earth and that of Christ's Passion. The ambiguity of the

riddle's final line, *ycan upcyme eadignesse* (9) allows for an eschatological reading and parallels, albeit loosely, its other appearance in Anglo-Saxon poetry also from the apocalyptic *ECL*, *on þa uplican eadignesse*, (15). It may also look forward to the celebration of May Day with its customary maypole dances.³⁷ In this final gesture towards community, the beam of Christ's cross operates in a manner similar to the pre-Christian *Irmingsul*, the cruciform *ger* rune, and the "hooked-cross," assuring the health of the community.

Reference to the fecund cross in monastic culture is not unusual. The eleventh-century manuscript Corpus Christi College 41, for example, contains a few charms that evoke the cross's powers of recovery and renewed health. One such charm, a palindrome, focuses on easy fertility and growth:

SATOR
AREPO
TENET
OPERA
ROTAS

George Henderson translates the text to mean, "the sower (or creator) holds with labour (or might) the wheels (rotation?) of the plough (?)."³⁸ Embedded within this charm for easy childbirth, the word *tenet* forms a cross thereby invoking the symbol's procreative powers. As with *Riddle 28*, the cross, as the tree that bore the weight of Christ, channels the generative powers of nature.

Extant in an eleventh-century manuscript (London, BL, Cotton Caligula A. vii), the *Æcerbot* also supplies useful information regarding how the cross was employed in a late

³⁷ I am again indebted to Gordon Whatley for this observation.

³⁸ George Henderson, *Early Medieval* (1972; Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1993) 220.

Anglo-Saxon agricultural context.³⁹ At the intersection of popular Christianity and formal theology, this prose and verse incantation brings to the discussion a breadth and depth not found in the other vernacular texts. The *Æcerbot* is a communal non-liturgical performance, involving a large percentage of the community.⁴⁰ Residual pagan elements provide a diachronic sample of earlier fertility myths along with a synchronic synthesis of motifs.⁴¹

The *Æcerbot*, composed of instructions and prayers, is designed to promote the growth of the fields and protect farmland from witchcraft and sorcery. Precise materials are called for with specific directions for their use. Oil, honey, yeast and milk together with holy water, twigs, and herbs are necessary for the remedy to be effective. Specific prayers are to be recited by the suppliant who must perform exactly as told. Despite a residual pagan element, the prayers are largely Christian in content containing biblical, liturgical and devotional references.

At its onset, the performance literally echoes God's instruction to grow and multiply: "Crescite, wexe, et multiplicamini, and gemaenigfealda, et replete, and gefylle, terra, þas

³⁹ See 6 in Appendix.

⁴⁰ John Niles, "The *Æcerbot* Ritual in Context," *Old English Literature in Context* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1980) 56

⁴¹ Bruce Rosenberg, "The Meaning of the *Æcerbot*," *Journal of American Folklore* 79 (1966): 428-35, sees many similarities between the *Æcerbot* ritual and Germanic "magical" practices paying special attention to the syncretism of religious beliefs: "The recipe we are discussing here appeals to sun gods and to mother earth, and possibly to a god of the furrow. Christ and Mary are invoked by name; Thor and others seem to be implied. The fertilizing power of trees, herbs, holy water, and prayer is invoked. All the magic one has ever heard of is used to bring the brown fields to life" 431. Insisting on a rather homogenous Christian framework, Niles argues that field-charms such as the *Æcerbot* were used by "sober Saxon farmers" in what he sees as a "solemn Christian ritual" 45. Though his argument is strong, Niles is perhaps too quick to see the social historical context for the charm as strictly Christian, quickly dismissing the lines invoking the earth mother, *Erce, erce, erce, eorðan modor* (41) as belonging to a residual invocation from the past. Niles 55. On the other hand, Richard North while presenting insufficient evidence of a connection to the *Skirnismal*, convincingly argues that the *Erce* phrase and the references to *ascira waestma* (45) point to a Christianization of a Scandinavian fertility theme. North 250-55.

eorðan” (8-9). The origin of the directive giving mankind dominion over the earth, its fields, and its creatures (Genesis 1: 28) is recited thirteen times: once at the beginning, nine times over crosses, and three times at the remedy’s end. Following this evocation, four sods of earth (symbolic of the four corners of the world) are taken to a church where four masses are sung. Four crosses are placed in the shoveled earth and covered by each of the four sods.

The type of wood from which the crosses are made seems to reflect a residual pre-Christian element. According to Rosenberg, *cwicbeam* (possibly rowan) was known for its ability to fertilize fields and even resurrect people from the dead:

The one element of the not completely forsaken religion is the rowan, which appeals to the power of Thor, deposed, but not yet completely powerless or forgotten and to whom the Saxons turned, as did other Germanic peoples, in times of crisis.⁴²

The rowan’s presence signifies the continuation of a thread of Thor’s worship or at the very least, the survival of a pagan reflex within a Christian context.

Baechtold-Staubli asserts that the rowan was connected to *quick* and John Evelyn also finds associations between rowan and quickbeam, quicken, and mountain ash.⁴³

One tale even tells of the rowan’s responsibility for returning Thor to life after drowning. As we have observed earlier, Thor was known even among the early Saxons as a god of agriculture and weather, and the rowan was often planted to honor the god and stimulate

⁴² Rosenberg 431.

⁴³ Ibid. 429.

growth. For ecclesiastics and laypersons alike, seeing crosses made of rowan ritualistically buried might have invoked the fertile powers of the wood itself.⁴⁴

A number of prayers are said once the wooden crosses are “planted” in the earth. Two of these appear to be original compositions tailored for the event. Following the standard formula of address and petition, the first invokes the Lord, his Son, the Holy Ghost, the earth, sky, and the Virgin Mary; but the second prayer addresses a possible pagan goddess, “Erce, erce, erce, orþan modor” (41), followed by an address to the Lord.

In the act of prayer, the supplicant establishes a relationship between his faith and the fertility of the earth:

aweccan þas wæstmas us to woruldnytte,
gefyllan þas foldan mid fæste geleafan,
wlitigigan þas wancgturf (28-30)
[Raise up these crops to our worldly benefit,
fill this earth by our firm faith,
make beautiful these grasslands]

The placement of crosses in the earth serves as a metaphor for this fertilization through faith. The previously mentioned reference to the earth-mother and two references to the Virgin Mary (24, 36) evoke instances of spiritual insemination and Immaculate Conception. Representing the Logos, the cross generates life in the womb of the earth-mother in the same way God’s word impregnated Mary, and made fertile the barren

⁴⁴ “As the protector and quickener of the dead, as the saver of Thor, and as forecaster of plant and human fertility, it would seem an obvious, even a necessary wood to use to start the saps flowing.” Ibid. 470.

Elisabeth (*Luke* 1: 31-41). The instruction to sing the *Magnificat* supports this association as the supplicant recalls how Mary received God's grace.⁴⁵

Also significant are the sixteen recitations of the *Pater noster*. The phrase petitioning for "our daily bread" speaks directly to the effectiveness of the ritual while the request, "deliver us from evil" recalls the cross's prophylactic powers. Much as the *sphragis* protected the baptized, the crosses would have countered any sorcery and witchcraft ["on dry oððe on lyblace"] (2) that may have kept the fields from producing. Niles argues cogently concerning the apotropaic nature of the cross in the ritual. Citing John Chrysostom's, "Everything is done by the cross," (*Homily on the Epistle to the Philippians* 13.1), Niles parallels the planting of the crosses to the *sphragis* placed on a neophyte during baptism:

In *Æcerbot* – a charm specifically directed against witchcraft, as we have seen– the burial of the four crosses serves the similar function of guarding the greater 'house' of the earth against the entry of malign influences...In this way he purifies the soil into which the seeds of the new crops are literally to be sown during the coming weeks.⁴⁶

In this instance, the earth and the divine make contact through the cross –the site of interaction– to make the soil fertile.

The act of planting the cross, an interestingly ideological performance, is thus interpreted through a ritual blessing in which all of nature takes part:

⁴⁵ Significant theories have been proposed concerning the connections between women, food and the body. Though not pursued here, an invocation to Mary within this field ritual, invites further theorization.

⁴⁶ Niles 51.

By burying the four crosses in the ground, the celebrant of *Æcerbot* is planting symbolic replicas of the Tree of Life, the archetypal source of earthly fruitfulness. Simultaneously, he is invoking the powers of the four arms of the cross not as the instrument of Christ's passion, but as symbols of the cosmic extent of His reign.⁴⁷

The cross's association with the *arbor vitæ* is reinforced through the recitation of the *Benedicite* canticle⁴⁸ and the clear cosmological reference (58-59). The Canticle of the Three Young Men, from Daniel 3, addresses the elements, the earth and sky, lightning and ice, creatures and cattle, and the cosmos, offering praise to God in return for protection.

Reminiscent of Fortunatus and the eleventh-century Vespasian *Aue sancta crux* prayer,⁴⁹ the placement of crosses at each corner of the field establishes them as paradisaal boundary markers.⁵⁰ Before they are planted, the four crosses are inscribed with the names of the four Evangelists which, according to Thomas Hill, further accentuates the cosmological association. Though Hill locates evidence in an eighth-century Irish-Latin text (PL 30. 531-4) and a fairly corrupt Latin redaction of the *Secrets of Enoch* (PL Supplementum 4. 937-8), he sufficiently supports his conclusion that the four gospels were closely aligned with the four elements, and the creation of Adam, with the four

⁴⁷ Ibid. 52.

⁴⁸ Along with the *Nunc dimittis*, the *Magnificat* and *Benedicite* were prayers belonging to the Daily Office recited at Compline, Vespers, and Lauds respectively. The sign of the cross is made at the first word of each prayer.

⁴⁹ "Non orbis quadriformes partes tam felicem ferunt arborem in radice fronde flore fructu. sanctoque germine" [The quadriform regions of the globe do not contain a tree so happy in its root, branch, flower, fruit and holy seed] (5b, l. 21-22).

⁵⁰ "It is the garden of Christendom, mystically pre existent from the beginning of time that the tree of the cross symbolizes." Eleanor Simmons Greenhill, "The Child in the Tree: A Study of the Cosmological Tree in Christian Tradition," *Traditio* 10 (1954) 371.

clods of earth brought by the four angels from the four quarters of the world.⁵¹

According to Howard Patch, the four Evangelists were also connected to the four rivers and the four cardinal virtues.⁵² Assuming Adam's cosmological creation was familiar to the celebrant, a symbolic association might have been made. As described in *Vexilla regis*,⁵³ the tree that led to Adam's transgression and subsequent banishment from paradise ultimately becomes a symbol of the world's redemption. Likewise, the collection and blessing of the four sods (symbolic of Adam's creation) may have evoked for the celebrant the edenic relationship between humanity and the land.

This reconstruction of the pre-transgressive garden-scene serves as a plea to set the world right again, to lift the curse and restore the land to its fecund state. Through the cross, Christ absolves humanity of this sin and its curse. The idea was not that the land was forever fruitful once Jesus was crucified, but that through faith in Christ's Resurrection and ritual this fertility could be restored.

Conclusion

Eleventh-century Anglo-Saxon communities were Christian in every sense of the term. Little evidence suggests that individuals needed to negotiate between the world-view of their forebears and the institutionalized ideological apparatus of the Church. However, the devotion bestowed on trees by their pre-Christian ancestors marks a suitable and informative point of correspondence between the two ideologies. This

⁵¹ Thomas Hill, "The 'Æcerbot' Charm and its Christian User," *Anglo-Saxon England* 6 (1977) 216-18. As Hill readily admits, his connection between the four evangelists and the four biblical liquids (honey, milk, oil, and wine) is not supported by the ritual.

⁵² See Howard Rollin Patch, *The Other World According to Descriptions in Medieval Literature* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard UP, 1950) 154-5.

⁵³ "De parentis protoplasti fraude facta condolens, quando pomi noxialis morte morsu corrui, ipse lignum tunc notavit, damna ligni iure, ut solveret" (1b, l. 4-6).

correspondence was recognized by opportunistic Roman bishops and Saxon converts in the sixth century and was reduced to a suggestive reading of the cross in the eleventh. The subtleties of meaning in the ambiguous lines of *Riddle 28* and the over-determined “planted” crosses in the *Æcerbot* bring attention to the complex interpretive possibilities available to the Anglo-Saxons.

The *arbor vitæ* image is an appropriate register of how the fecund cross was understood. Central to creation and eschatological narratives, the sacred tree standing at the center of the world brought relief and sustenance, harnessing all the generative power of Eden and the regenerative power of Christ’s Passion while impregnating the virgin land with hope.

Chapter Five

Pro Corpore/Pro Cruce: Praying for Protection in MS Cotton Tiberius A. iii

“Induite vos arma Dei ut possitis stare adversus insidias diaboli” (Eph. 6:11)

The struggle against the devil and his forces dominates much of scriptural and patristic literature. In Paul’s words to the Ephesians, Christians are asked to prepare themselves for battle.¹ Writers from Sulpicius Severus (360-425) to Ælfric wrote of the monk who stood on the front lines of the battle against the devil protecting his soul and his body from assault and serving as a soldier of Christ through his obedience.² Martyrs fought this battle with their personal suffering rather than obedience to a monastic rule. In her analysis of the medieval psalter, Kathleen Openshaw claims a prominent place for prayers in this ongoing conflict.

The monk was taught to arm himself with varied weapons against the onslaughts of the Devil, and to guard his heart against evil suggestions that might lead to sinful acts. In particular, he was urged to follow the example of Christ, who rebuffed the Devil with holy scripture: the word of God, embodied in scripture, was thus one of his most potent weapons in his constant struggle,³

This martial theme borrowed from numerous passages found in the psalms iterating God’s protection: “ego dormivi et soporatus sum exsurrexi quia Dominus suscipiet me”

¹ See Kathleen M. Openshaw, “Weapons in the Daily Battle: Images of the Conquest of Evil in the Early Medieval Psalter,” *The Art Bulletin* 75.1 (March, 1993) 24.

² J. Hill, “The Soldier of Christ in Old English Prose and Poetry,” *Leeds Studies in English* 12 (1981) 60.

³ Openshaw 24.

(Psalm 3.6),⁴ “in manibus tuis sortes meae eripe me de manu inimicorum meorum et a persequentibus me”(Psalm 30.16),⁵ “Eripe me de inimicis meis Deus et ab insurgentibus in me libera me”(Psalm 58.2),⁶ “si ambulavero in medio tribulationis vivificabis me super iram inimicorum meorum extendisti manum tuam et salvum me fecit detera tua” (Psalm 137.7).⁷

As discussed in the previous chapters, the cross as object, gesture, and image was a potent weapon in this spiritual battle.⁸ As early as the third century, Christian writers ascribed to the cross the ability to ward off evil. Whether as a blood-mark over a doorway, a gesture made by the human body, or verbally articulated through prayer, the cross evoked Christ’s Harrowing of Hell at the time of his Passion.

Christians used the cross to fortify buildings, and entranceways from the wiles of demons, and drew the symbol over thresholds and arches in order to create a sanctuary. Tombs, homes, churches, and books were protected through the cross’s warding. Stone crosses were used to protect landscapes, and those who feared attack from demons carried cruciform amulets and phylacteries.⁹ Manuscript compilers utilized the cross’s apotropaic power through drawings and prayers, while scribes placed cross miniatures at the beginnings of manuscripts in order to protect them.¹⁰

⁴ “I have slept and have taken my rest; and I have risen up because the Lord hath protected me.”

⁵ “My lots are in thy hands. Deliver me out of the hands of my enemies; and from them that persecute me.”

⁶ “Deliver me from my enemies, O my God; and defend me from them that rise up against me.”

⁷ “If I shall walk in the midst of tribulation, thou wilt quicken me; and thou hast stretched forth thy hand against the wrath of my enemies; and thy right hand hath saved me.”

⁸ See Stevens 30.

⁹ Small 26.

¹⁰ “As in the Bible of Leo the Patrician, the iconographic and formal repetition of the cross recalls the decoration of chancel screens and threshold mosaics. Crosses arranged in series may have helped to reinforce the barrier against demonic penetration, which stood at the threshold of the text” Small 22.

In his *Sermo de sacrificio in die Pascae*, Aelfric writes, “we sceolan mearcian ure forewearde heafod. And urne lichaman mid cristes rodetacne. þaet we beon ahredde fram forwyrd” [“We shall mark our forehead and our body with the sign of Christ’s cross so that we may be saved from destruction”].¹¹ Likewise, this attribute is, as we have seen, embedded within guidebooks, charters, remedies, riddles, prayers and saint’s lives. The early eleventh-century manuscript British Library, Cotton Tiberius A. iii written at Christ’s Church in Canterbury evinces this apotropaic theme in three major sections: the Good Friday service of the *Regularis Concordia*, a grouping of prayers to the cross, and a vernacular Life of Saint Margaret. Though these texts belong to separate fitts within the collection, they are united through their apotropaic emphasis.

Cotton Tiberius A. iii contains the complete Latin text of the *Regularis Concordia* with Old English glosses.¹² Compiled at Christ Church around the middle of the eleventh century, Tiberius A. iii serves as evidence of the continuing intellectual enthusiasm and stylistic flair found a century earlier in manuscripts from Canterbury.¹³ Helmut Gneuss’ investigation into the origins of Tiberius dates its composition around 1050.¹⁴ The manuscript is a puzzling composite of many different texts, and evidence suggests that it was a single volume before the year of the Norman Conquest.¹⁵

¹¹ Godden, *Ælfric’s Catholic Homilies* 2.151.

¹² The *Regularis Concordia* can be found also in the eleventh-century *Portiforium of Wulfstan* (CCCC 391). Tiberius and the *Portiforium* also share a prayer to the cross and a macaronic set of psalms, *preces*, and collects that appear in the form of a cross-charm. According to Dom Anselm Hughes, the *Portiforium of Wulfstan* was written around the year 1065 A.D. at Winchester. A. Hughes, ed., *The Portiforium of Wulfstan* 2 vols. (London: Henry Bradshaw Society, 1959-60) vi-vii.

¹³ See Michael Lapidge, “The Hermeneutic Style in Tenth-Century Anglo-Latin Literature,” *Anglo-Saxon England* 4 (1975) 83.

¹⁴ Helmut Gneuss. “Origin and Provenance of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts: the case of Cotton Tiberius A. iii,” *Of the Making of Books*, eds. P.R. Robinson and Rivkah Zim (Aldershot, Eng.: Scolar Press, 1997) 13. Clayton and Magennis also argue for the dating of the manuscript around the middle of the eleventh-century due to its connections to the saints having cults at Christ Church, Canterbury. *The Old English Lives of Saint Margaret* (Cambridge UP, 1994) 84.

¹⁵ Gneuss 17.

To my knowledge, there has been no edition or in-depth analysis of these prayers as they appear in Tiberius which, aside from two competent editions of its version of the *Regularis Concordia*, has only very recently received critical attention for its devotions to the cross.¹⁶ Roy Liuzza does a thorough job in “tracing the connections” between the devotional poems and locating many of the sources of their phrasing.¹⁷

The manuscript’s layout offers a clear sense of the compiler’s thematic interests.¹⁸

The contents of the manuscript are as follows:¹⁹

Ker no.:		Fol.:
1.	Illumination	117v
2.	<i>Regula S. Benedicti</i>	118
3.	<i>Memoriale qualiter</i> , chs 10-19	164v
4.	<i>De festivitibus anni</i>	168v
5.	<i>Collectio capitularis</i>	169-73
6.	<i>Regularis Concordia</i> with drawing	3
7 a.	<i>Somniale Danielis</i>	27v
7 b-g.	Prognostics	32v
7 h-r.	Prognostics	37v
8 a-c.	Miscellaneous	43
9 a-l.	Confessional Prayers	44
10 a.	Vespers and lauds of an All Saints Office	57
10 b.	Prayer	57v
10 c-g.	Devotions to the Cross	58
11.	Aelfric’s <i>Colloquy</i>	60v
12.	Prognostics	65
13.	Aelfric, <i>De temporibus anni</i>	65v
14.	Commonplaces	73
15.	Life of Saint Margaret	73v
16.	Aelfric, <i>Catholic Homily</i> II.xiv	77v
17.	Sunday Letter	83
18.	The Devil’s Account of the Next World	87

¹⁶ Lucia Kornexl, *Die Regularis Concordia und ihre altenglische Interlinearversion. Mit Einleitung und Kommentar*. (Munich: München Universitäts-Schriften, 1993) and Dom Thomas Symons, *Regularis Concordia Anglicae Nationis Monachorum Sanctimonialiumque* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd, 1953).

¹⁷ I am indebted to Roy Liuzza for permitting me a glimpse of his paper “Prayers and/or Charms Addressed to the Cross,” Cross and Culture in Anglo-Saxon England, Sancta Crux/Halig Rod Project, St. John’s College, Durham, 3 Aug. 2001.

¹⁸ See Fred Robinson’s advice to Anglo-Saxon scholars in *The Editing of Old English* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994) 3-35.

¹⁹ This table is modeled off of Helmut Gneuss’s “Origin and Provenance of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts” 14.

19.	Twelve homiletic pieces	88v
20.	<i>Examinatio</i> of the ordination of a bishop	93v
21 a-j.	Directions for a confessor	94v
22.	<i>Monasteriales indicia</i>	97
23.	Lapidary	101v
24.	Warning against pride (from Isodore's <i>Synonyma</i>)	102
25.	<i>Regula S. Benedicta</i> , ch 4	103
26-27.	Alcuin, <i>De virtutibus et vitiis</i> (OE version)	105
28.	A charm	106
29.	Aelfric, <i>Pastoral Letter</i> III	106
30.	Office of the Virgin	107v
31 a-c.	Prayers and verses, added xi/xii	116
31 d-g.	Prayers and verses, added xii	116

Though, admittedly, the manuscript contains a wide variety of items, the placement of these texts in one volume suggests that thematic choices were possibly made by a compiler who recognized a thematic connection between the Good Friday service, the cross prayers, and the Life of Saint Margaret.²⁰ Within this loosely unified arrangement, the Good Friday service sets the stage for this apotropaic reading through its petitions and its dramatic use of the cross.

Good Friday Service

In the *Regularis Concordia*, monks were told to make the sign of the cross – *per sanctæ Trinitatis inuocationem* [invoking the trinity] – immediately after waking, recite Psalm 69, a request for divine aid, and thank God for his protection during their morning prayers. Before sleeping, they thanked God for looking after them during the day, and while they slept, the dormitory was sprinkled *propter illusiones diabolicas*.²¹ There was a sense that God's protection was needed continuously in the ongoing battle against the

²⁰ See Charles Wright, *The Irish Tradition in Old English Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993) 176. Wright speculates that the compiler who placed The Life of St. Margaret close to "The Devil's Account" was possibly aware of "the generic affinity of the two stories."

²¹ Symons 11-12, 24.

devil.²² This use of the cross became more significant on Good Friday. While monks were to celebrate a mass in honor of the holy cross every Friday, Good Friday was the date in the liturgical year on which the holy cross was venerated for the entire day.

Though the Good Friday service would benefit from an exhaustive analysis of its sources, biblical citations, and patristic echoes, a glance at even a few of the prayers, collects, verses, and directions included is enough to convince readers of the powerful presence of the apotropaic cross in the text. A list of the readings, psalms, and collects arranged for the service can be found in the Appendix to this essay.²³

The second lesson read for the Good Friday service provides a suitable example:

Deinde legitur alia lectio, *Dixit Dominus ad Moysen*; sequitur tractus *Eripe me Domine*.²⁴

The lesson refers to the biblical scene in which God instructs Moses to spread the blood of the paschal lamb on the posts of the doorway. The Vulgate reads as follows:²⁵

et sument de sanguine ac ponent super utrumque postem et in superliminaribus domorum in quibus comedent illum

[Then they are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the lambs.]

The Exodus passage establishes a specific tone for the veneration ceremony. It reminds practitioners of the protective application of the sign placed above the doorway

²² The gesture of the sign of the cross made in the morning evokes the power of the Trinity, which emerges as yet another protective measure placed on the body.

²³ I rely on Symons edition of the manuscript for the information on the *RC*. Symons supplies a satisfactory list of references and sources though he is not interested in examining any thematic possibilities within these texts. For other essays, see Joyce Hill, "The 'Regularis Concordia' and its Latin and Old English Reflexes," *Revue Benedictine* 101. 3-4 (1991): 299-315 and Lucia Kornexl "The Regularis Concordia and its Old English Gloss," *Anglo-Saxon England* 24 (1995): 95-130.

²⁴ Symons, "Regularis" 41.

²⁵ Exodus 12:7.

(recognized by Christians as the cross) and situates the service within this context.²⁶

Psalm 139.3 (*Eripe me Domine*) supports the apotropaic construction further as the supplicant is instructed to ask for protection against those men, “qui cogitaverunt malitias in corde.” Aid is requested against the tongues and hands of those men who would do the speaker harm. Further along (139.8), martial imagery positions the speaker as *miles christi* in the ongoing battle against evil: “Domine Deus virtus salutis meae obumbrasti super caput meum in die belli” [Lord, God, strong deliverer, you shield my head in the day of battle]. The monks and nuns who would have followed this service were encouraged to perceive themselves within this martial context, as is evident through the verses of *Pange lingua* sung at the cross’s unveiling.

Seven penitential psalms follow the unveiling of the cross which are followed in turn by three prayers in honor of the cross. The first prayer *Domine Ihesu Christe, adoro te in cruce ascendentem* appears in the *The Book of Cerne*.²⁷ The second prayer, *Domine, Ihesu Christe gloriosissime conditor mundi*, derives from the Spanish *Liber Ordinum*, and the third *Deus omnipotens, Ihesu Christe*, according to Symons, does not appear again until after the Conquest.²⁸ With compunctive overtones, all three prayers assure the supplicants protection once they repent their sins and beg for aid.

Toward the end of the veneration service, the author includes a dramatic reenactment of Christ’s Passion. Emerging from a fourth-century ritual from the Church of

²⁶ Symons asserts that the *Ordo Romanus Primus* is the source for this section of the *RC*, “*Regularis*” 41.

²⁷ See 7a in Appendix and Chapter Two.

²⁸ Symons, “*Regularis*” 44 n. 2; also Symons, “History and Derivation” 45.

Jerusalem,²⁹ this drama staged the death and burial of Christ's body through the use of the cross:

Nam, quia ea die depositionem corporis Saluatoris nostri celebramus...sit autem in una parte altaris, qua uacuum fuerit, quaedam assimilatio sepulcri uelamenque quoddam in gyro tensum quo, dum sancta crux adorata fuerit, deponatur hoc ordine.³⁰

[Now since on that day we solemnize the burial of the Body of our Saviour...on that part of the altar where there is space for it there shall be a representation as it were of a sepulchre, hung about with a curtain, in which the holy Cross, when it has been venerated, shall be placed in the following manner]

Linked to the preceding readings through the image of the "sacrificial lamb," the Passion scene recalls Christ's Harrowing of Hell and his victory over evil and death. As the reenactment begins, the cross, as symbolic body of Christ, is placed within a representation of the sepulchre on the altar: "donec ueniant ad locum monumenti; depositaque cruce, ac si Domine Nostri Ihesu Christi corpore sepulto" ["until they come to the place of the sepulchre and deposit the cross, as if it were the burial of the body of our Lord Jesus Christ"].³¹ Thomas Hill rightly argues that the *Regularis Concordia* author deliberately assigns the cross the signification of "the body of Christ" because "it was necessary to find a symbol to represent the human body of the incarnate Christ."³² Because the Passion was a moment of physical suffering, it was necessary to emphasize

²⁹ See Gingras "Egeria." See Chapter One n. 11.

³⁰ Symons, "Regularis" 44.

³¹ Ibid. 45.

³² Thomas Hill, "The Cross as Symbolic Body: An Anglo-Latin Liturgical Analogue to *The Dream of the Rood*," *Neophilologus* 77.2 (April, 1993) 299.

Christ's humanity through this drama. The cross, in imitation of Christ's body was laid low and placed in a sepulchre. Within the context of this liturgical drama and the preceding readings of the Good Friday service, the cross simultaneously substitutes for the human body of Christ while protecting the bodies of his soldiers and is defined through sacrifice and penance. This topos seems to run consistently through the folios of Tiberius as an analysis of the set of cross prayers and the Life of Saint Margaret will reveal.³³

Cross-Prayers

The first cross-prayer appearing in the Tiberius manuscript, *Sing þas sealmas swa oft swa þu oftust mæge*, found with some variation in CCCC 391, establishes the apotropaic thematic arrangement of the set.³⁴ The poem begins with a rubric in Old English and continues in Latin. Beginning on a new line, the prayer establishes a thematic break from the Trinity worship of the previous prayer towards devotion to the cross.³⁵ Structurally, the prayer is a variation of the Good Friday service. It contains the *incipits* to the penitential psalms, all of the first prayer, a few key lines of the second and all of the third and follows it with a *lorica*-type prayer requesting protection for the entire body.

The very first line indicates the direction of the supplication: "Adhoramus te christe et benedicimus tibi quia per crucem tuam redemisti mundum" (2-3). Christ is the central figure throughout the prayer; however, the role of his cross is acknowledged as key to the

³³ Since there is no edition of the Tiberius version, I offer my own transcriptions in Appendix 7b-7f.

³⁴ See 7b in Appendix.

³⁵ Barbara Raw. "The Prayers and Devotions in the *Ancrene Wisse*," *Chaucer and Middle English Studies in Honour of Rossell Hope Robbins*, ed. Beryl Rowland (Kent, OH: Kent UP, 1974) 266. There is as yet no edition of the prayer, but Barbara Raw notes that the prayer set is almost the same as that found in the Wulfstan set, "with psalm 85 added to the second group of psalms, and the first prayer divided into two and the second omitted." Ker also makes a note that its CCCC 391 parallel appears in an 1892 article by Julius Zupitza. See Julius Zupitza, "Kreuzandacht," and "Kreuzzauber," *Archiv für das Studium der Neueren Sprachen und Literaturen*. 88 (Braunschweig: Druck und Verlag von George Westermann, 1892): 361-65.

supplicant's redemption and protection. Christ's power is channeled through the cross to the individual Christian. Later, the supplicant speaks to Christ of the degree of praise and adoration given to the symbol.

Requesting divine protection through a petition, the supplicant asks God "per signum crucis de inimicis nostris libera nos (4-5)." The term *signum*, appearing only twice in the prayer, suggests both the image and the gesture of the cross, and it is unclear whether the composer had one or both uses of the term in mind when he included this stock phrase. The prayer's phrasing and imagery emphasize the cross's ability to save and protect the speaker from the machinations of the devil. The prayer includes the phrasing, *descendentem ad inferos* (16) and *ascendentem ad celos* (18) confirming the cross's role in the Harrowing. Paradoxically, Christ's physical death on the cross is responsible for the spiritual safety of Christians.³⁶

Another supplication for aid likewise recalls the defeat of Hell: "Domine Iesu Christi adoro te in cruce ascendentem deprecor te ut ipsa crux liberet me diablo percutiente" ["Lord Jesus Christ, I worship you ascending on the cross, I entreat you that this same cross release me from the attack of the devil"] (8-9); however, in this instance the rhetoric speaks specifically of the originator of sin.³⁷ The cross is the sign of God's favor, and its

³⁶ Catherine E. Karkov recognizes this dual nature of the cross in her examination of the Junius Psalter. *Text and Picture in Anglo-Saxon England: narrative strategies in the Junius 11 manuscript* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2001): 142-75.

³⁷ Additionally, a psalm included as an *incipit* in the Tiberius version speaks of the cross as a sign of protection. Requesting god's grace, Psalm 85 shows appreciation of God's mercy and his aid. Due to its relevance, I give the psalm in full:

1. Inclina Domine aurem tuam et exaudi me quoniam inops et pauper sum ego,
2. custodi animam meam quia sanctus sum salvum fac servum tuum Deus meus sperantem in te,
3. miserere mei Domine quoniam ad te clamabo tota die,
4. laetifica animam servi tui quoniam ad te Domine animam meam levavi,
5. quoniam tu Domine suavis et mitis et multae misericordiae omnibus invocantibus te,
6. auribus percipe Domine orationem meam et intende voci orationis

use as such is the predominant theme in the group of petitions in the manuscript. This may have been the compiler's rationale for including the *incipit* in the prayer, or perhaps it was already in place at the time of compilation.

The composer completes the poem with a *lorica* prayer and in so doing foregrounds the compunctive and protective attributes of the cross:

Deus omnipotens Iesu Christi qui tuas mundas manus propter me in cruce posuisti
 et de tuo sancto sanguine precioso me redemisti mitte
 in me sensum et intellegentiam quomodo habeam ueram penitentiam
 et habeam bonam perseuerentiam omnibus diebus uitae meae. saluator mundi
 Ihesu Christi qui cum coeterno patre in unitate spiritus sancti. uiuis per omnia.
 Domine Iesu Christi qui per crucem passionis tue me redemiste et sanguinem
 tuum preciosum pro me fudisti. Salua me per lignum sancte cruces (25-31)
 [Omnipotent Lord, Jesus Christ, who placed your pure hands on the cross on my
 account, and with your holy precious blood, you redeem me, send to me insight
 and understanding, as to how I may have true penitence and I may have good
 perseverance all the days of my life. Savior of the world, Jesus Christ, you who,
 with the co-eternal father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, live forever and ever.

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7. In die tribulationis meae clamavi ad te quia exaudisti me,
 8. non est similis tui in diis Domine et non est secundum opera tua,
 9. omnes gentes quascumque fecisti venient et adorabunt coram te Domine et glorificabunt nomen tuum,
 10. quoniam magnus tu et faciens mirabilia tu Deus solus,
 11. deduc me Domine via tua et ingrediar in veritate tua laetetur cor meum ut timeat nomen
 12. confitebor tibi Domine Deus meus in toto corde meo et glorificabo nomen tuum in aeternum
 13. quia misericordia tua magna super me et eruisti animam meam de inferno inferiori
 14. Deus iniqui insurrexerunt super me et synagoga potentium quaesierunt animam meam et non proposuerunt te in conspectu suo
 15. et tu Domine Deus miserator et misericors patiens et multae misericordiae et verax,
 16. respice in me et miserere mei da imperium tuum puero tuo et saluum fac filium ancillae tuae,
 17. fac mecum signum in bono et videant qui oderunt me et confundantur quoniam tu Domine adiuuasti me consolatus es me.

Lord, Jesus Christ, you, who through the cross of your passion redeemed me and you poured forth your precious blood for me, save me through the wood of the holy cross.]

Pseudo-Chrysostom, in his *Paschal Homilies* articulates how Christ's blood protects Christians from the destroying angel. He defines the blood of God as "a saving sign" that marks the faithful.³⁸ Following the blood reference, the cross is then evoked to protect the head, hands, eyes, ears, mouth, knees, and feet of the speaker from diabolic forces (35-43). This protective power derives from the cross itself and from the body of Christ.

The prayer is followed by an Old English rubric, "Þonne þu hæbbe þis gefylled þonne gebletsa þu þe mid þissere," followed by a short prayer for God's protection through the holy cross. The construction *Þonne...þonne* links the two prayers and directs the reader to close the prayer with a short petition; for this reason, the prayers are combined as one. The use of *þu* suggests the prayers were directed to a sole reader. The final verses, "Sanctifica me domine signaculo sancte crucis ut fiat mihi obstaculum contra seva iacula inimicorum defende me domine per lignum sanctum et per pretium iusti sanguinis tui quo nos redemisti (45-46)," ["Sanctify me, Lord by the holy sign of the cross so it may be to me a shield against savage darts of enemies; defend me, Lord, through the holy wood and through the just price of your blood by which you redeemed us"] recall the hymns of adoration to the cross and thematically frame the text.

Immediately following these two cross-prayers, the compiler placed what Phillip Pulsiano defined as a "cross-charm."³⁹ Roy Liuzza has argued effectively for the term

³⁸ Pseudo-Chrysostom, *Paschal Homilies* (LIX, 726 D-727A) As cited in Danielou 166.

³⁹ Phillip Pulsiano, "British Library, Cotton Tiberius A. iii, fol. 59rv: An Unrecorded Charm in the Form of an Address to the Cross," *American Notes and Queries*, n.s., 4 (1991): 3-5.

“practice,” and I find this term to be more precise.⁴⁰ An examination into *Gif þe þince þæt ðine fynd þe hwirlice embe þridien* reveals it to be a macaronic collection of Latin psalms and collects and Old English instructions.⁴¹ Much as if the cross were a talisman in some mystical formula, the making of the sign of the cross, psalms, and petitions to the cross are combined so that the body and the soul of the speaker may not be harmed.⁴²

The prayer situates the supplicant within a personalized space in order to invoke Christ’s protection: “Þonne gang þu on gelimlicre stowe. 7 þæ þa halgan rode to gescildnesse gecy” (3-5). The phrase appearing in the *Regularis Concordia*, “per signum sancte crucis de inimicis meis libera nos deus meus,” appears in this text (23-25) and is a further example of the manuscript’s thematic cohesion. The line operates in a similar fashion in this prayer as it did in the preceding one, calling upon God through the sign of the cross to protect the speaker, and invoking the symbol’s authority over evil.⁴³ The macaronic text declares with clarity and emphasis that *per crucis*, Christ, “uim et fortitudinem Satane destruxisti” [“destroyed the might and bravery of Satan”] (35-36). Likewise, the supplicant asks that he, through the cross, “omnium mihi aduersantium machinas. disrumpere ualeam” [“be able to break asunder the plans of all my enemies”] (40-41).

⁴⁰ Liuzza 14. Liuzza argues that we should, “avoid the conceptual rigor of categories like “magic” and “religion” or “prayer” and “charm”, and concentrate instead on how and why an action, such as addressing the cross, might be performed at different points along this spectrum.” He states that giving the title of “charm” to the devotion would wrongly place it outside of the parameters of liturgical study and suggests we place the text in a “spectrum of practices.”

⁴¹ See 7c in Appendix.

⁴² See my transcription of Tiberius A. iii (art. 10d) along with my translation and help from Hughes edition of the CCCC 391 version in parentheses in the Appendix.

⁴³ The entire prayer is found in CCCC391 while two separate segments are combined in *Ælfwine’s Prayerbook* (Cotton Titus D. xxvi+xxvii). Other collects and *preces* in it are found in the Hartker Antiphonary and the *Regularis Concordia*. I am much indebted to Roy Liuzza who offered me his research on the sources and analogues of the Tiberius prayers to the Cross.

Referring to Revelations 5: “Ne fleveris: ecce vicit leo de tribu Juda, radix David, aperire librum, et septem signacula ejus” [“Weep not: behold the lion of the tribe of Juda, the root of David, hath won the right to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof”], the prayer’s apocalyptic verse, “Ecce crucem domini fugite partes adverse vicit leo de tribu iuda radix david alleluia” (73-76), suggests images of battle and victory in the same manner as the early prayer had. Just as the cross participated in the first defeat of Hell, it is destined to appear again in the second coming.⁴⁴

The Tiberius scribe’s attention to the cross’s protective nature is coupled with further reference to the physical body. As such, the body, blessed through the sign of the cross serves as an appropriate vessel for the cross’s apotropaic powers. Four times supplicants are entreated to say a prayer calling upon the protective powers of the cross. Three times (6, 44, 54) readers are asked to pray with arms outstretched, a gesture symbolic of their own physical control and spiritual freedom and suggestive of their body’s cruciform likeness. Three times (16, 23, 61) they are told to iterate the *per signum* refrain. Twice they are instructed to “make the sign” of the cross (72): once on their foreheads and once on their hearts.

These actions (both verbal and physical) harness the cross’s apotropaic energies. Furthermore, while these practices result in bodily control, they also apply a level of restraint or control on the penitent’s body. Readers are asked to stretch out their arms

⁴⁴ In prayer forty-four of *Ælfwine’s Prayerbook*, two segments of this Tiberius cross-prayer appear together to combine the early victory theme of Fortunatus, with verses pleading for protection from enemies seen and unseen. The prayer as it is in Günzel’s edition of the prayer-book follows the prayer. One important addition found in the Tiberius is the insertion of the *per* (16) which is the *per signum sancte crucis* refrain of the Good Friday service and the insertion of a *per te* (11) earlier on. Their presence might further suggest the Tiberius scribe’s dedication to and emphasis of the *uirtutem crucis* (27), the power of the cross. Furthermore, the use of the pronoun *me* (15) in Tiberius rather than the *nos* (3) found in the Titus version establishes a more personal tone and suggests a closer connection to the psalms. For that reason, we may see Tiberius as dating prior to the prayer found in *Ælfwine’s Prayerbook*.

and sing a psalm “swa þu swa oftust mæge” [“for as long as they can”](54). During this practice, penitent bodies are slowly reshaped to resemble that of Christ, and shoulders are pressed to their limits in imitation of His suffering.

Additionally, significance is given to the head and the heart, frequently considered those places where the human will resides: “7 wyrc swyþe gelome Cristes mael on þinum haefde. 7 on þinre heortan” (70-72), echoing Aelfric’s insistence that we mark our bodies “aegðer ge on foranheafode. ge on heortan mid blode þære drihtenlican ðrowunge” [“either on the forehead or in the heart with the blood of the Lord’s suffering”].⁴⁵ The head and the heart guide humans away from animal behaviors and physical limitations, and in this instance, the body becomes, through the cross, the contested site between physical renunciation and unleashed desire, between physical control and the inherently transgressive nature of human bodies.

Tiberius contains three more prayers to the cross, also found in *Aelfwine’s Prayerbook*, that likewise share a preoccupation with the cross’s power to defend Christians from attack. The third prayer of the set, *Hae sunt quattuor cause quibus Sancta Crux adorantur*, follows the charm (ff.59v-60) and gives reasons for adoring the cross.⁴⁶

Connecting adoration of the cross to Christ’s Passion and Harrowing of Hell, the prayer offers a guarantee against the persecution of *omnes demones* (4). As long as the cross is foremost in the minds of Christians, the gates of Hell will remain closed to them and they will suffer no torment. The mind is the governing faculty, and giving full attention to the cross will ensure the survival of the soul and the protection of the body. The fourth reason in the prayer evokes the protective energies located in the Psalms and

⁴⁵ Godden, *Ælfric’s Catholic Homilies* 1.151.

⁴⁶ See 7d in Appendix.

in the Sermon on the Mount. The reference to personal property recalls the words, “Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the earth.”⁴⁷ In his Sermon on the Beatitudes, Augustine comments that this inherited land is that place on which the soul finds rest. It is the same land that is referred to in Psalm 141, a prayer recited when one is in danger.⁴⁸

In the references to property and inheritance, the land is both a metaphor for divine protection and personal safety and literally a place of refuge, a Paradise presided over by the *arbor vitae*. The individual is assured security in the gardens of earth and of Heaven. The prayer readily associates the distance the worshipper traverses to the cross, *quantum terrae pergis ad crucem* (8) with an inheritance of personal safety.

Within the verses of this prayer, the supplicant’s body is again used to ensure its own protection. One approaches (2) the cross, bows (7) before it, and traverses (8) ground on

⁴⁷ Matt. 5.4

⁴⁸ Saint Augustine, *Commentary on the Lord’s Sermon on the Mount with Seventeen Related Sermons*, trans. Denis J. Kavanaugh (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1951) 22.

Because of its centrality to this argument, I give Psalm 141 in its entirety:

1. INTELLECTUS DAVID CUM ESSET IN SPELUNCA ORATIO,
- 2 voce mea ad Dominum clamavi, voce mea ad Dominum deprecatus sum,
- 3 effundo in conspectu eius deprecationem meam tribulationem meam ante ipsum pronuntio,
- 4 in deficiendo ex me spiritum meum et tu cognovisti semitas meas in via hac qua ambulabam absconderunt laqueum mihi,
- 5 considerabam ad dexteram et videbam et non erat qui cognosceret me perii fuga a me et non est qui requirit animam meam,
- 6 clamavi ad te Domine dixi tu spes mea parto mea in terra viventium,
- 7 intende ad deprecationem meam quia humiliatus sum nimis libera me a persequentibus me quia confortati sunt super me,
- 8 educ de custodia animam meam ad confitendum nomini tuo me expectant iusti cum retribuas mihi.

[With a loud voice, I cry to the Lord. I pour out my trouble before him and I lay my anguish before him. When my spirit is troubled within me, thou knowest my path. In the path wherein I walk, they have hidden a snare for me. I look to the right and see, and there is no one to take care of me. There is no place to which I may flee, no one who cares for my soul.

I cry to thee, O Lord; I say: *Thou art my refuge, my portion in the land of the living*. Give heed to my cry, for I have become very wretched. Deliver me from those who persecute me, for they are stronger than I. Bring me out of prison, that I may give thanks to thy name. The just will surround me, when thou dealest kindly with me]. Emphasis mine.

the way to it, displaying bodily discipline and control. The reader here is not asked to place him/herself in the cruciform position with arms outstretched or to make the sign of the cross; however, the aforementioned ways of harnessing the cross's protective powers are as integral to one's protection within the prayer.

Though the prayer *Domine Ihesu Christe* addresses Christ directly, emphasis remains steadily upon the powers of the cross.⁴⁹ Through repetition, the prayer begins with the principal request “apud me sis, ut me defendas” [“be near me so that you may protect me”] (1) as the petitioner stands before the cross, likely prostrate with arms outstretched, although there are no instructions to follow. Christ's power is reinforced through a belief in the cross. The phrase *pro...cruce* indicates that it is “on account of” the relationship between the cross and Christ and “on account of” the petitioner's complete faith in both, that the cross is capable of channeling God's grace. Thus, it is “because of” the cross's role in the crucifixion that evil can be defeated. The final result is that “because of the cross” Christ will act on the petitioner's behalf.

Also on account of the cross, Christ is in a direct physical relationship with the petitioner. The result of being physically enveloped by Christ varies from line to line, but each to the same end. The petitioner asks to be received by Christ in hopes that his soul will arrive unburdened in Heaven. Then he asks that no physical harm come to him. Christ is asked to lead the speaker along the road to heaven much as an escort might guide a traveler along a treacherous highway. The petitioner asks that he be lead without deviation on a straight course towards safety, and follows this with a blessing, a further guarantee of protection. Finally he asks that he might find his way to God.

⁴⁹ See 7e in Appendix.

Christ's body is called to surround the supplicant. Shifting emphasis from his humanity to his divinity, the scribe makes Christ more ethereal and spiritual through his ubiquitous presence. The body of the petitioner, on the other hand, is completely surrounded: "apud me sis, intra me sis, circa me sis, ante me sis, post me sis, supra me sis, and in me sis." The space becomes infused with Christ's power.

The prayer *Per gloriosam et uirtutem sancte crucis* catalogues those threats kept away by the cross: *arma atque uenena* (2), *concupiscentias carnales* (3), *languoribus diuersis* (5), *cladibus uariis* (5), *periculis cotidianis* (5), *infirmas* (6), *tribulatio* (6), *diabolo* (8), and *inimicis meis* (8).⁵⁰ The prayer urges Christ to protect the petitioner through the *gloriosam*⁵¹ (glory) and the *uirtutem* (power) of the cross. The sign is inscribed upon the reader's body – *mihi inpono corde et corpore* (2) – through which it saves the spirit. Once the *signaculum* is made, the petitioner requests that he be made safe through Christ, *in te et per te protectus*. At this time in the prayer, the two (Christ and his cross) are fully merged.

The five cross prayers in Cotton Tiberius A. iii illustrate the manuscript's preoccupation with the apotropaic theme. Verbal echoes of the psalms and Fortunatus evoke the implications of Christ's Passion while the body of the supplicant is employed as a vehicle for spiritual salvation. Whether Christ is described as divinely ubiquitous as in *Domine Iesu Christe*, or as divinely human as seen in *Sing þas sealmas swa oft swa þu oftust mæge*, his cross continues to place expectations, limitations, restrictions, and safeguards on the supplicant's body as it promises protection.

⁵⁰ See 7f in Appendix.

⁵¹ Read as a noun.

The Life of Saint Margaret

Eight folios after the last cross prayer, the compiler placed the Life of St. Margaret (ff. 73v-77v), a text that complements the cross prayers and the Good Friday service. To most accurately reconstruct a context for the Margaret life, I consult a Latin version that, although not its actual source text, appears to be its closest progenitor, so that comparisons may offer some specificity concerning eleventh-century Anglo-Saxon cross devotion.

When referring to the various versions of the legend, I use the designation C to refer to the eleventh-century Latin manuscript, *Bibliotheca Casinensis* (BHL 5304), a version that predates the more commonly read Mombritius version but is thought more closely in common with the transmission of the legend from the Greek to the *Tiberius* version.⁵² I use T to refer to our mid-eleventh-century MS Cotton Tiberius A.iii and C303 for the twelfth-century MS Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 303 from Rochester to which I sometimes refer.

It is not surprising to see a Margaret Life in a manuscript compiled in eleventh-century Canterbury.⁵³ The cult of Saint Margaret was well established by the time Tiberius was composed.⁵⁴ Though only two Old English versions of the legend are extant, the story's popularity is evidenced by its appearance in *The Old English Martyrology* (*Das altenglische Martyrologium* ed. Günter Kotzor 2 vols. Munich, 1981)

⁵² Clayton and Magennis 42.

⁵³ Ibid. 72. Also see Hugh Magennis's entry for Margareta in Biggs et al., "Sources" 1. 318-21. In her *Vergleich* of the Anglo-Saxon and Latin versions of the Margaret legend, Lenore Herbst identifies a Kentish influence also found throughout Tiberius linking the manuscript to Canterbury. *Die Altenglische Margaretenlegende in Der HS. Cotton Tiberius A. iii* (Georg-August Universität zu Göttingen, 1975) 46. See reference in Clayton and Magennis 97.

⁵⁴ Elaine M. Treharne argues for the twelfth century as the period in which the legend's popularity reaches its zenith. "They Should Not Worship Devils ... Which Neither Can See, Nor Hear, Nor Walk": The

2.141-44 and as a feastday in ninth and tenth-century calendars (the Oxford, Bodleian Library, Digby 63 and the Salisbury Cathedral Library, 150 are two examples), in the late tenth-century *Bosworth Psalter* (London, BL Add. 37517), and *the Sacramentary of Robert of Jumièges*.⁵⁵ Saint Margaret, or Marina as she was sometimes called, appears in litanies, masses, calendars, and hagiographic collections.⁵⁶ Her name in capitals appears tenth in a list of virgins in the litany of saints following the Marian Office (ff.112v-113v) of the Tiberius manuscript.⁵⁷

The other extant Old English version of Margaret's martyrdom is located in C303.⁵⁸ In comparison to that redaction, the Tiberius manuscript presents readers with a more faithful translation of its source.⁵⁹ It provides strongly apotropaic biblical imagery and retains the syntactic structure of the Latin, while C303 extends and alters its prose in order to create a more emotive and affective text in resonance with the later English tradition in which it was written.⁶⁰

Hagiographic texts are fairly formulaic in nature. *Passiones* follow a basic structure detailing a saint's fortitude and faith in the face of certain suffering. Sometimes composed by an individual familiar with the historical figure, these "sacred biographies"

Sensibility of the Virtuous and The Life of St. Margaret," *Proceedings of the PMR Conference* 15 (1990): 221-36.

⁵⁵ See F.A. Gasquet and E. Bishop, *The Bosworth Psalter* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1908).

⁵⁶ Old English versions derived from an early Greek version of the legend of Saint Marina. Later, in the West the name was changed to Margaret though the appearance of Marina still appears in the ninth-century *Old English Martyrology* and an eleventh-century manuscript. I am greatly indebted to Hugh Magennis for his detailed summary of this information. See Hugh Magennis, "'Listen Now All and Understand': Adaptation of Hagiographical Material for Vernacular Audiences in the Old English Lives of Saint Margaret," *Speculum* 71.1 (1986) 29, n.12.

⁵⁷ Helmut Gneuss, *Origin and Provenance* 33.

⁵⁸ A third version of the life, once found in MS British Library, Cotton Otho B. x, was lost in the 1731 fire at the Cotton library which burned the manuscript.

⁵⁹ Magennis observes that the Tiberius version strives for simplicity where the much longer CCCC 303 version attempts to imitate through alliteration, word pairing, and cumulative sequences the "elevated style of the Latin" 33.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

justify the beatification and the veneration of the saint while also serving as didactic expositions. Thomas Heffernan writes:

The lives of the saints were sacred stories designed to teach the faithful to imitate actions which the community had decided were paradigmatic.⁶¹

Saint Margaret's legend instructs its readers on the significance of protecting one's chastity despite the threat of mortal death. More precisely, it relates the difficulties female saints must endure in order to protect a commodity more precious to them than to male saints, their virginity.

Though there is an impulse within saints' lives to blur sexual differences, the narratives simultaneously reinforce these differences through the tropes of virginity and marriage. Female saints, often conceptualized as a *sponsa Christi* (bride of Christ), were more likely than male saints to face sexual threats in conjunction with attempts at their conversion.⁶² Through virginity, the female body was marked as a paradox.

According to early Patristic writing, a body can only be considered pure if all that makes it a physical body is renounced. The act of carnal renunciation is transformative, bestowing upon the saint a body fit for Christ.⁶³ Since medical and theological accounts of the early medieval period emphasize the close relationship between women and their bodies (complementing that between men and the rational mind), the efficacy of sexual

⁶¹ Thomas Heffernan, *Sacred Biography* (New York and Oxford: Oxford UP, 1988) 5.

⁶² Hugh Magennis, "Occurrences of Nuptial Imagery in Old English Hagiographical Texts," *English Language Notes* 33.4 (June, 1996): 1-7, cogently articulates the use of the motif in hagiographical narratives, though he finds the Tiberius version wanting in regards to the motif in comparison to CCC 303. See also John Bugge, *Virginitas: An Essay in the History of a Medieval Ideal* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1975).

⁶³ Clare A. Lees, *Tradition and Belief: Religious Writing in Late Anglo-Saxon England* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1999) 148.

renunciation becomes particularly complicated.⁶⁴ Within the discourse of the Church, the female body becomes disciplined through practices regulating chastity. The rhetoric defines it as that which is offered to Christ as a sacrifice. Within this hagiographic paradigm, the female's virginity is emphasized in order to establish the perception of sainthood.⁶⁵

Withdrawn from the normative heterosexual economy, the *sponsa Christi* is also intrinsically a "queer" subject, a bride resigned to remaining chaste, desiring not to be desired by anyone other than Christ.⁶⁶ The cross functions paradoxically in this situation, as seen in the case of Margaret. It assures the virgin martyr sexual protection, removing her from the earthly sexual arena, while guiding her along an *imitatio Christi* path that guarantees her union with Christ through the death of her body.

The Life of Saint Margaret tells the story of a virgin martyr whom the pagan ruler Olibrius desires as his mistress. As a Christian virgin, Margaret is already wedded to Jesus Christ and has promised to remain chaste. Because she is unwilling to accept the ruler's advances, she is thrown into a prison where she encounters two devils. During both encounters the cross is used to protect her from physical, spiritual, and by extension, sexual harm. Though she is never raped or brought to a brothel, Margaret is physically

⁶⁴ Because this subject has been thoroughly covered by many scholars, I need not address the argument here. See, for example, Francine Cardman, "Acts of the Women Martyrs," *Studies in Early Christianity*, ed. Everett Ferguson (New York: Garland, 1999) 98-104; Jo Ann McNamara, "Sexual Equality and the Cult of Virginity in Early Christian Thought," also *Studies in Early Christianity* 219-32; Karen A. Winstead, *Virgin Martyrs: Legends of Sainthood in Late Medieval England* (Ithaca and London: Cornell U.P., 1997); also Winstead, *Chaste Passions: Medieval English Virgin Martyr Legends* (Ithaca and London, Cornell U.P., 2000); Phillip Pulsiano, "Blessed Bodies: The Vitae of Anglo-Saxon Female Saints" *Parergon* 16.2 (1999): 1-42; and Chris Jones, "Women, Death, and the Law," *Martyrs and Martyrologies*, ed. Diana Wood (Blackwell, 1993) 23-34.

⁶⁵ "Sainthood is a spiritual drama played out on the physical body, and it addresses the problems of the flesh and the relationship between the body and desire with particular clarity." Lees 90

⁶⁶ Interested primarily in heroic narratives, Peggy McCracken supplies useful ways of thinking about the subject desiring not to be desired. "Chaste Subjects: Gender, Heroism, and Desire in the Grail Quest,"

tortured by Olibrius's men, and after being blessed by God, she willingly dies a virgin martyr's death through the stroke of a sword. Margaret's use of the cross as a protective sign or device is resonant with the texts examined earlier in this chapter. Verbal echoes within the narrative (particularly Margaret's prayers) invite readers to recall Tiberius's earlier texts and draw significant conclusions as to the cross's function.

The Life of Saint Margaret begins with an account of Christ's Passion upon the cross and connects this event to the martyrdom of many of those who wished to follow Christ's example:

Æfter þære ðrowunge and þære æriste and þære wuldorfæstan upastignesse ures Drihtnes, Hælendes Cristes, to Godfæder Ealmihtigum, þa wæron swiþe maniga martyres þrowiende and þurh þa þrowunge to ece reste becoman mid þære halgan Teclan and Susannan.⁶⁷

[After the Passion and the Resurrection and the glorious Ascension of Our Lord, the Savior Christ, to God the Father Almighty, there were very many martyrs suffering and through their suffering they came to eternal rest with the holy Thecla and Susanna.]

This opening serves to recall the veneration ritual within the liturgical drama of the Good Friday service in which the cross represented both Christ's body at the time of the Passion ("depositaque cruce, ac si Domini nostri Ihesu Christi corpore sepulto") and Christ's spiritual victory over evil. And much like the service, readers are invited to follow the *vita* as an *imitatio*, reenacting a martyr's sacrifice. Christ opened the door to

Queering the Middle Ages, eds. Glenn Burger and Steven F. Kruger, *Medieval Culture* 27 (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2001. 123-42.

⁶⁷ Clayton and Magennis 112.

Heaven through his suffering, and Margaret's legend offers an example of how this suffering is to be imitated within the drama of a Christian martyrdom.

Painfully nailed to the cross, Christ, "onfeng mennisc hiw and gebrowade deað for eall mankin" ["took on human form and suffered death for all mankind"].⁶⁸ Christ's suffering human body becomes a vehicle for salvation, and the power of the cross originates from this sacrificial and victorious event. Margaret emphasizes this connection when she addresses the importance of her personal bodily suffering, "Forþon ic sylle minne lichoman in tintrego, þæt min sawle mid soþfæstum sawlum gereste" ["I give my body to torments in order that my soul may rest with righteous souls"].⁶⁹ Though physical torment on Christ's behalf is not a necessity for salvation, it does assure the saint Christ's sympathy.⁷⁰

Margaret's prayers supply information on her character, act as catalyst for much of the life's limited action, and seem to closely and deliberately echo phrases from the psalms.⁷¹ Requesting more than deliverance from her enemies, Margaret's chastity is her primary concern; all of her thoughts are directed towards it. When asked by the prefect which god she worships, Margaret directly and willfully responds:

Ic gebidde me on Ealmihtigne God and his Sunu, Hælend Crist, se þe minne
magþad unbesmiten geheold oþ þysne andweardan dæg.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid. 116.

⁷⁰ In C, the composer speaks to this direct relationship between the sacrifice of Margaret's body and the sign of the cross: "Ego trado corpus meum in tormenta ut cum iustis uirginibus requiescam. Nam Christus pro nobis semetipsum tradidit in mortem, et ego pro ipsum non dubitabo mori, quia ipse suo signaculo sibimet consignauit" [I will commit my body to torture, so that I may rest with the just virgins. For Christ committed himself to death for us, and I will not hesitate to die for him, because he has sealed me to himself with his sign]. Ibid. 227.

⁷¹ See, for example, Psalms 17, 30, 53, 55, 58.

[I pray to Almighty God and to his Son, the Saviour Christ, who has preserved my virginity undefiled until this present day.]

Interestingly, the clause, “se þe minne magþað unbesmiten geheold,” serves to define Margaret’s divinity. She worships that god who keeps her virginity intact. Her prayers are uttered with this same end in mind. Requesting God’s deliverance from those who would cause her harm, Margaret prepares herself for further torment. Without a direct reference to her virginity, it seems clear this remains Margaret’s greatest concern:

On þe, Drihten, ic gelæfæ, þæt ic ne si gescend. Loce on me and gemiltsa me of arleasra honda and of honda þysses cwyllæræs, þy læs min heorte her on ege sy.

Send me hælo þæt syn onleohte mine witu and þæt min sar me cyme to gefean.⁷²

[In you I trust, Lord, that I may not be confounded. Look upon me and deliver me from the hands of the wicked and from the hands of this executioner, or else my heart should be in terror here. Send me salvation that my torments may be light and that my sorrow may turn to joy.]⁷³

The phrase, “loce on me and gemiltsa me of arleasra honda,” invites the reader to recall sentiments found throughout the personal prayers appearing earlier in folios 58r-60v of the manuscript. Unlike the goal of the cross-prayers, however, it is not Margaret’s aim to escape physical abuse (i.e. torture) but to remain undefiled and resolute and in so doing escape spiritual harm.

In a moment of affective style, T follows the prayer with a description of Margaret’s tortured body that parallels liturgical verses concerning Christ. Readers bear witness to Margaret’s martyrdom as they are told, “þa cwelleras swungon hire merwen lichaman

⁷² Clayton and Magennis 116.

⁷³ C contains these lines and more. Ibid. 227.

þæt hyre blod fleow on oerþan swa swa wæter deþ of þam clænestan wyllspringe” [the executioners beat her tender body so that her blood flowed on the ground as water does from the purest spring].⁷⁴ The addition of the phrase *merwen lichaman*, which has no equivalent in C, effectively draws the reader’s attention towards a mental image of Margaret’s “tender body” and initiates a sympathetic gaze.⁷⁵ Though the sign of the cross marks a Christian body as the property of Christ and so under his protection, the placement of the sign upon a martyr’s body assures the fulfillment of the *imitatio christi* role, in order that the soul can be saved at the expense of the body or, rather, (*pro corpore*) on account of the body’s sufferings.

After rebuking the prefect and those witnessing her suffering, Margaret petitions God for strength and sight against her enemies:

Gestrangie me, lifes Gast, þæt min gebed þurh heofonum gefare and þæt hit astige ætforan þinre gesihþe. And gesend me þinne þone Halgan Gast fram heofonum, se cyme me to fultume, þæt ic gehealde ungewæmedne minne mægþhad and þæt ic geseo minne wiþerweardan, se þe wiþ me gefihtap, ansyna to ansyna, and þæt sy bysen and blæd a eallum fæmnum þe on þe geleuat,⁷⁶ forþon þin nama is gebletsod on weorulde.⁷⁷

[Strengthen me, Spirit of Life, so that my prayer may travel through the heavens and may ascend before your sight. And send me your Holy Spirit from the heavens, which may come to my aid, so that I may preserve my virginity

⁷⁴ Ibid. 118.

⁷⁵ In C, “questionarii eam cedebant, et sanguis eius decurrebat tamquam aqua de fonte mundissima,” Ibid. 227.

⁷⁶ Ibid. 118, n. P. “þe on þe geleuat” added by B scribe.

⁷⁷ Ibid. C follows these lines though it omits the mention of women and adds more in the way of animal imagery 228.

undefiled and that I may see face to face my enemy, who fights against me, and so that I may ever be an example and an inspiration to all women who believe in you, for your name is blessed in eternity.]

Fifteen folios before, in the cross prayers *Sing þas sealmas swa oft swa þu oftust mæge* and *Gif þe þince þæt ðine fynd*, the composer of Tiberius inscribed phrases requesting that the cross give protection from all enemies *tam uisibiles quam inuisibiles*. Similarly, the biblical and liturgical phrasing of the Margaret life requests from the *lifes Gast* the aid to fight and the ability to see the invisible tormentor. Without conflating the two (*signaculo sancte crucis* and *lifes Gast*), it seems evident they closely address God's power over evil and serve as an immediate recourse when in danger. For Margaret, in spite of the torture that arrives with the very next line, "Þa cæmpan þa eodan and cwylmdon hire lichaman" ["Then the soldiers came and tormented her body"],⁷⁸ her concern is specific not to her body but to the virginity she wishes to keep intact.

Margaret's body is covered in blood to the point that the prefect must block his view with his cloak. He begs her to submit, but she rejects his coaxing. Reciting an earlier phrase, she informs him that her suffering is intentional for her soul's survival, "Eala, þu unsnotra, forþon ic sylle minne lichaman in tintrego, þæt min sawul sy gesygefæst on heofonum" ["O, you foolish one! For this reason I give my body over to torments, so that my soul may be victorious in heaven"].⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Ibid. 118-19.

⁷⁹ Ibid. 120.

Inside the dark prison, Margaret again prays to God, asking that she might see the enemy orchestrating her destruction. In T and C, the author extends the moment of her gesture, linking the sign of the cross to the saint's corporeal safety.⁸⁰ T states:

hio gebletsode ealle hyre lichaman mid Cristes rodetacne and ongan hi handan
blesian

[She blessed all her body with the sign of Christ's cross and began to bless herself
with her hands.] (120-121)

Typically, in a hagiographic narrative, a martyr cannot die a physical death before fully proving Christ's power to those who look on. Margaret's body is the site of the ideological battle occurring in the narrative, and T successfully acknowledges its centrality by retaining the focus found in the source material. Margaret follows this gesture with a prayer to Christ that replicates her earlier requests and reinforces her plea for security. The prayer is recorded by her witness, Theotimus:

Loce on me and gemildsa me, Drihten, forþon þe ic ane eom herinne, and min
fæder, he me forlet. Ne forlæt þu me, min Drihten, ac gemiltsa me, forþon þe ic
ongete þæt þu eart dema cwucra and deadra. Dem nu betwux me and þyssum
deoflum. Efne, ic sarige on minum witum. Ne yrsa þu wiþ me, min Drihten,
forþon þe þu wast þæt ic sylle mine sawle for þe. Þu eart gebletsod on weorlde.
[Look upon me and have mercy on me, Lord, for I am alone here and my father
abandoned me. Do not abandon me, Lord, but have mercy on me, for I recognize
that you are the judge of the living and the dead. Judge now between me and these
devils. See, I grieve in my torments. Do not be angry with me, my Lord, for you

⁸⁰ In C303, the author briefly states that Margaret blessed herself with the sign of Christ, 160-1. C gives, "consignauit totum corpus suum signaculo Christi," 228.

know that I will give my soul for you. You are blessed in eternity.]

The line, “Ne yrsa þu wiþ me, min Drihten,” translates faithfully the phrase, “Noli michi irasci, Domine meus,” found in C (229), and resonates with the penitential Psalms (6, 37) used in the Good Friday service and the opening verses of *Sing þas sealmas swa oft swa þu oftust mæge* (7b, 1), establishing a continuity within the prayers of Tiberius.

Through her prayers, Margaret’s enemies become visible. In her cell, a devil appears in the form of a dragon. In response, Margaret stretches out her arms in cruciform position and prays again to God in terms similar to the cross prayer (7b, 8) that petitions, “ipsa crux libera me diabolo percutiente:”

God, Ælmihti, adwysc þises miclan dracan mægon and gemildsa me þærfendra and earfopra and ne læt ðu me næfre forwyrðan, ac gescyld me wiþ þys wilddeor.⁸¹

[God Almighty, extinguish the power of this huge dragon and have mercy on me in my need and hardship and never let me perish, but defend me against this wild beast.]

Fully protected through the cross, Margaret is swallowed up by the dragon.⁸²

Empowered by her previous prayers, the saint evokes the cross and its domain over the flesh, to protect her body from harm. T explains that Margaret made the sign of the cross to protect herself and destroy the dragon. With its might, the demonic dragon attempted to imprison the virgin in its body, “Ac Cristes rodetacn, þe seo halga Margareta worhte

⁸¹ Clayton and Magennis 122. The prayer as it appears in the source text draws on the victorious event of the Harrowing and makes reference to the establishment of Paradise. Adding appositives to the address, it hails God as the one, “quem abyssi et thesauris abyssi contremescunt, qui paradisum radicasti et mari terminos posuisti, qui extinguiisti potestatem maligni draconis, qui infernum debastasti et diabolum religasti” [“at whom the depths and the strongholds of the deep tremble with fear, who planted paradise and laid down limits to the sea, who extinguished the power of the evil dragon, who conquered hell and bound the devil”]. In translating from the Greek, it appears the scribe mistakenly wrote thesauris for thesauri and supplied a weak translation with “paradisum radicasti.” 229.

⁸² In C303, the dragon is destroyed before it could place Margaret in its mouth.

innan þæs dracan innoþe, seo hine toslat on twaeigan daelas”⁸³ [“But the sign of Christ’s cross, which the holy Margaret made in the dragon’s belly, rent him into two parts”].⁸⁴

Cyril of Jerusalem declares, “the invocation of grace, marking your soul with its seal does not allow you to be swallowed up by the demon.”⁸⁵ Cyril’s statement speaks to this moment in the legend. By bravely marking herself with the sign of the cross, Margaret defines herself as one of his own, belonging to him and deserving of his protection.

Whether she inscribes herself with the sign or extends her hands to form a cruciform shape, divine protection is granted.

Following the first torment, a second devil appears, this time in the form of a dark skinned man. His hands are bound to his knees and Margaret gives thanks to God for her victory. The black devil explains to Margaret that it was he who sent his brother Rufus to destroy her beauty and chastity, “þinne mægþhad and þinne wlite forlure,”⁸⁶ and he goes on to threaten her virginity:

Þu hine þonne mid Cristes rodetacne acwealdest and nu þu wilt me acwyllan. Ac ic bidde þe for þinne mægþhad þæt þu me ne geswinge.⁸⁷

[You slew him then with the sign of Christ’s cross and now you wish to slay me.

But I ask you for the sake of your virginity that you do not beat me.]

⁸³ Ibid. 122.

⁸⁴ C303 always providing a bit more realism, offers details as to how Margaret kept herself from being swallowed by the devil that also involve the gesture of “making the sign” of the cross, “And seo eadiga faemna sona mid hira swiðre hand wið þonu sceocca wel gebletsode and on hire forhaefde rodetacna maercode and swa wið þone draca wel generode” [“And the blessed maiden immediately blessed herself against the demon with her right hand and made the sign of the cross on her forehead and so protected herself thoroughly from the dragon”]. Ibid. 162-63.

⁸⁵ Cyril of Jerusalem. *Mystagogic Catecheses*. As cited in Danielou 61.

⁸⁶ Clayton and Magennis 124.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

At this, Margaret grabs the devil, extracts an eye, steps on his neck, breaks his bones, and responds to his coaxing with, “Gewit fram minum magphade! Crist me is fultumiend, forþon his nama is scinende on weorulde”⁸⁸ [“Away from my virginity! Christ is helping me, for his name shines in eternity”].

The proximity of *Cristes rodetacne* to *þinne mægphad*, and the additional pairing of *minum magphade* and *Crist* in Margaret’s response make apparent the true relationship between the saint and Christ’s cross. Margaret’s virginity has dominated her struggles with Olibrius and the devils. It is under attack by her enemies, and she is in need of Christ’s protection. The possessive phrasing of “*Christ’s* cross” and “*your* virginity” clearly tightens this connection. Margaret’s virginity is dependent on Christ’s cross being present in some form. The devil’s preoccupation with Margaret’s body and her intensely defensive response remind readers, if forcefully, of what is truly at stake in this battle.

When ordered, the demon confesses his wrongdoings to Margaret. The demon’s earlier intimidation is returned as Margaret executes Christ’s justice. Concurrent with this action, the cross’s cosmological image, reminiscent of Alcuin, appears in the cell:

Þær scan swiþe micel leoht on þæm þystran quarterne and Cristes rode wæs
gesewen fram eorþan up oþ heofon, and an hwit culfre stod ofer þære rode.⁸⁹

[There shone a very great light in the dark prison and the cross of Christ was
seen stretching from earth up to heaven, and there was a white dove on the cross.]

The dove directs Margaret to extract information from the devil, and the beast is forced to

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid. 124.

comply.⁹⁰ The torture scene ends with this second devil being swallowed by the earth.⁹¹

Margaret's display of power over the devil is fairly formulaic. However the image acquires greater significance due to an earlier petition found in cross-prayer (7d), *Hae sunt quattuor cause*, in which readers are told, "si primum opus tuum ad crucem. Omnes demones, si fuissent circa te. Non potuissent nocere tibi" ["if your first concern be to the cross, all demons, if they should be around you, would not be able to harm you"] (4-5). Margaret's narrative proves this statement to be true, recalling that prayer and the power of the cross.

The sign of the cross protects Margaret's chastity even in the prison where she employs it to banish the devils who would destroy her resolve and taint her unsoiled body (again, *pinne maegphad and pinne wlite forlure*). The female body retains its purity precisely because it renounces its own existence. This renunciation is assured by the cross which fastens the terms of the marriage contract between Margaret and Christ.⁹² The body of the saintly bride must be pure, must be denied, in order to be given to Christ, and (*pro cruce*) on account of the cross, in the prison scene and afterwards, it will be so.⁹³

⁹⁰ In a Mombricitus version of the legend found in an Anglo-Saxon manuscript (Paris, BN, lat. 5574), the author firmly establishes to a greater degree than is found in either vernacular version the relationship between the cross and Christ's protective powers: "Quacumque arte uentilo quos sine signaculo cruce Christi inueni <et> contra eos pugnare atque eis nocere non cesso. Illos uero quos cum signaculo sancta cruce signatos inuenio et qui tibi sunt similes confuses et uacuis ab eis discedo quemadmodum a te hodie" ["By every possible device I fan the flames {of the passions} of those whom I find without the sign of the cross of Christ, and I do not cease from harming them. From those, however, whom I find sealed with the sign of the holy cross and who are like you, I depart confounded and unavailing, as from you today"] (208-09).

⁹¹ Ibid. 230. C explains that Margaret made another sign of the cross at the devil (*ligavit eum beatissima puella signo sancte crucis, et reliquit eum ligatum in angulo carceris*) and this sparked the earth's motion. One wonders whether this line was in the source text copied/used by the T scribe. Given the thematic emphasis it would have added, I can only suspect it was not included in the scribe's source.

⁹² This representation also appears in the Middle English version. See Elizabeth Robertson's "The Corporeality of Female Sanctity in The Life of Saint Margaret," *Image of Sainthood in Medieval Europe*, ed. Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski and Tímea Szell (Ithaca: Cornell U. P., 1991): 268-287.

⁹³ Though the soul is the true bride of Christ according to medieval interpretation of the Song of Songs, *sponsa christi* narratives seem to conflate the two.

Immediately after the prison encounter, Margaret is taken before the prefect to be tortured. In preparation, she makes the sign of the cross and boldly endures her suffering. In C, she gives a defiant speech to her captors in which her faith and chastity are both related:

Non adoro nec in molo uanis diis tuis, non/ enim expertus est diabolus uincere
quem sibi Christus consignauit, quia signum sancte crucis et castitatis consignauit
membra mea. Odorem suauitatis suae circumdedit me.⁹⁴

[Certainly I (whom) the devil tried to conquer, whom Christ himself sealed, will
never pray to nor sacrifice to your dumb gods, because the sign of the cross
and of chastity reverently sealed my members. He placed the incense of his
sweetness around me].

Once again, T follows the Latin fairly closely retaining Margaret's commanding tone though it falls short of the explicit connection made in the genitive forms, *crucis et castitatis*. Margaret states, "Ne magon ge oferswypan clæne fæmnan. Crist sylf gebletsode minne lichaman, and minre sawule he sylleþ wuldres beh" ["You cannot overcome a chaste virgin. Christ himself has blessed my body, and to my soul he will give a crown of glory"].⁹⁵ The body's chastity continues to rely on its being marked by Christ's cross. Though T omits any direct reference to the cross, the phrase "*Crist sylf gebletsode*," is an implicit reference to it. The structural phrasing of these lines gives equal stress to the predicates *clæne fæmne* and *minne lichaman*, linking the two under the protective powers of Christ's blessing. The subtle motif of the gift exchange is likewise implicit in the *wuldres beh*, which can stand for either a crown – in this case the victory

⁹⁴ Clayton and Magennis 231.

⁹⁵ Ibid. 128.

crown, or, less likely, a (marriage?) ring. In either case, the idea is similar. Margaret is given a treasure in exchange for her steadfastness.

Scorching Margaret's body with torches, the torturers then tie her up and place her in a vessel of boiling water. Before being immersed, Margaret cries out a prayer to God that the water might cleanse her of sin and be "to hælo and to lihtnesse and to fulwihtes bæpe" ["a healing and an enlightening and a bath of baptism"].⁹⁶ Closely mirroring the Latin, T follows this request with the appearance of a dove carrying the crown of life, and Margaret emerges safely from the hot cauldron/ baptismal font.⁹⁷ During this "second baptism," the suggestion of the *sphragis* once again emphasizes Christ's reinvestment in response to Margaret's choice of chastity.

Witness to the virgin's restored health, thousands of men convert to Christianity and are then immediately killed. The prefect then orders Margaret to be beheaded at which time she begs the executioner to stay his stroke so that she may have a moment to pray. Margaret earnestly prays to God asking the people to join her, and after a burst of thunder, the Lord appears as a dove bearing a cross.⁹⁸ In both manuscripts, the Lord, present through the dove and cross, assures Margaret that her body will serve as a holy relic, thus preparing the saint for her final corporeal test. Then the reluctant executioner, after much coaxing from Margaret herself, finally beheads the virgin martyr and falls dead by Margaret's side. As was promised, angels descend and lift Margaret's head up to paradise while exclaiming the glory of God, and her body becomes – like the cross, a

⁹⁶ Ibid. 131.

⁹⁷ An interesting variation occurs in C303 where an angel appears rather than a dove and the angel *þa gehalgode þæt wallende wæter to fonte* [then consecrated the boiling water as a font] Ibid. 166-67.

⁹⁸ In C303, the text explains merely that the Lord himself appears without supplying any further images. This may be an effect of the new spiritual overtones expressing affective piety between Margaret and her God. See Magennis, "Listen Now and Understand" 41.

holy relic – reaffirming the community’s faith in Christianity through its miraculous cures:

And ne beo þu sorhfull be þinum halgan lichaman, forþon þe he is forlætan on eorþan to þon þæt swa hwylc mann swa hrineþ þine reliquias opþe þine ban, on þære tide syn adilgade heora synna and hira naman awritane on lifes bocum.⁹⁹

[And do not be sorrowful concerning your holy body, for it is left on earth so that whoever touches your relics or your bones will have their sins wiped out at that moment and their name written in the book of life.]

The martyred virgin body and the cross function in the same miraculous way. Christ’s jurisdiction over Margaret is embossed upon her body through the sign of the cross early in the narrative. This authority is reinforced by the arrival of the cross and dove imagery in the final scene of her martyrdom. Having performed as a virgin martyr and *sponsa/miles christi* should, Margaret is given to her bridegroom after her bodily death while her physical remains continue to establish Christ’s jurisdiction over the newfound community of faithful. Like the cross, Margaret’s body will continue to protect the community and provide physical validation of Christian belief.

Within the thematic emphasis of the life, the apotropaic cross directs and defines Margaret’s body, marks it as blessed, and most importantly, keeps it chaste. In her analysis of charity and chastity in Aelfric, Clare A. Lees intelligently argues that, “as both gift given to and choice made by the chaste, chastity is regulated by a network of practices central to the church.”¹⁰⁰ Though it is outside the scope of this argument to explore the church’s methods of employing and regulating chastity, I would like to

⁹⁹ Clayton and Magennis 136.

¹⁰⁰ Lees 144.

suggest that the cross possibly played such a role (even metaphorically). As a virgin, identifying as both a *miles christi* and a *sponsa christi*, Margaret's chaste body becomes a precious gift intended for Christ alone. As such, the cross participates in the gift exchange between Christ and his virgin bride. Through the cross, Christ offered himself as a gift to humanity;¹⁰¹ it is only fitting then that the sign work reciprocally, making a gift out of Margaret. For a *sponsa Christi*, to make the sign of the cross is to keep this chastity and this marital bond intact.

The cross, at once a metaphor for bodily torment and divine authority over the Christian body, serves to protect Margaret from physical and spiritual harm even up to the point of her death. In the earlier devotions in the manuscript, the monastic reader looked to the cross for physical protection from the wiles of the Enemy, but a martyr could not avoid physical death. As a polyvalent sign of the crucifixion, Christ's interred body, and as a symbol of the *imitatio christi*, the cross ensures that a death determined by God *will* occur to all who follow the cross in such a fashion – in resistance to an irreverent hegemonic force. The hagiographical cross does not symbolize complete protection from torment so much as it signifies the nullification of Satan's power over the saint and her body. Saints give up control of their bodies in the attempt to imitate the life/death story of Christ, and they use the sign and gesture of the cross (the symbol of Christ's fleshliness) to reaffirm their own sanctity and solidify their positions as Christ's saints, soldiers, and (sometimes) brides.

Margaret's prayers evince the saint's desire to preserve her virginity. Her statement before Olibrius already cited, "Ic gebidde me on Ealmihtigne God and his Sunu, Hælend

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

Crist, se þe minne mægþhad unbesmiten geheold oþ þysne andweardan dæg,” makes clear the relationship between her prayers and her virgin body. Margaret’s petitions recast the apotropaic phrases found earlier in the cross-prayers within a hagiographic paradigm in which unseen enemies can actually be overcome and suffering mitigated through the power of the cross. However, as martyr, her prayers do not preclude suffering and death; they only strengthen her resolve.

Conclusions

The inclusion of the Life of Saint Margaret in Cotton Tiberius A. iii strengthens the apotropaic theme that is pervasive in the Good Friday service and the set of cross devotions. Each of the texts, the life, the prayers and the service, operates as a lens through which a reader can reexamine the others and recall images, prayers, directions, and gestures found elsewhere in the manuscript central to the veneration of the cross. The cross as image and gesture signifies Christ’s victory over evil. Margaret performs this gesture and evokes the image, acting as soldier and bride of Christ. Whether she makes the sign of the cross to confound her hellish enemies (visible and invisible) or adopts the cross’s might as her own in order to combat them physically, Margaret performs as *sponsa*, *miles* and martyr. As mentioned by Lees, the “performance of sanctity” involves using the sign of the cross at times of conflict, and in so doing, Margaret assures us that she is a proper saint.

The Good Friday service in the *Regularis Concordia*, part of which is reworked for private devotion in the first cross prayer of the set (*Sing þas sealmas swa oft swa þu oftust mæge*), establishes within the manuscript a specific thematic unity. It defines the cross as paschal sign, as object of veneration, and as a representation of Christ’s body.

The cross as *sphragis*, as *corpus*, and *vexilla regis* operates as the primary defense for the monastic body in its daily battle against the devil.

The five private devotions to the cross that are included in the manuscript clearly illustrate this defense. By praying to the cross, the devout could stand against the plots (*insidiis*) and assaults (*impugnationibus*) of the enemy and guard all the parts of the body (*costodi...omnia membra*) from attack with *Fugite partes aduerse* as a battle cry. Few manuscripts outline this idea more clearly than Cotton Tiberius A. iii.

Conclusion

This study has attempted to construct an interpretive apparatus by which three core-properties of the cross (compunction, fecundity, and apotropaism) may be more precisely understood. From a chronological survey (Chapter One), one acquires a keen sense of Venantius Fortunatus's role in Anglo-Saxon cross devotion. Echoes of his cross-hymns, *Vexilla regis* and *Pange lingua* appear centuries after their composition in liturgical and devotional texts (Chapter Two). Fortunatus's use of the *arbor vitæ* image popularized a biblical motif which corresponded to one found in the pre-Christian tradition of Northern Europe (Chapter Four).

The Book of Cerne, used as a register of ninth-century associations, supplies evidence that an early interest in the penitential power of the cross derived from an Irish tradition likely connected to the use of *lorica* prayers which also continue to appear in eleventh-century anthologies (Chapters Two and Five). Also appearing in later anthologies, *Cerne's Domine iesu christe adoro te* becomes a significant portion of the monastic reform's Veneration ceremony. The prayers in *Ælfwine's Prayerbook*, those attached to the *Vespasian Psalter*, and the cross miniatures appearing in the *Arundel Psalter*, *Winchcombe Psalter*, the *Red Book of Derby*, and the *Weingarten Gospels* of Judith of Flanders together illustrate the degree to which the cross's properties might have been recalled within devotional practices potentially allowing individuals to situate themselves within the scene of Christ's Passion (Chapter Two).

Cynewulf's *Elene* (Chapter Three) serves as an extended commentary on the compunctive effect of opening one's heart to the truth of the cross. Emphasis is placed

on the cross's power to convert both the ignorant and the resistant through its victory over Satan. The appearance of *Elene* in the eleventh-century Vercelli manuscript along with the composition of the *Vespasian* prayers (likewise depicting victory over Satan) and the apotropaic presence in the Tiberius A. iii manuscript (Chapter Five) indicate an interest in the cross's power over Satan's dominion.

Inserting a potential pre-Christian reading alongside a Christian interpretation of the *arbor vitæ* underscores the cross's hermeneutic possibilities. The synthesis of world-views in the *Æcerbot* and the ambiguities embedded within *Riddle 28* (Chapter Four) bring to the fore the ways in which the cross, much as *Yggdrasil* and the *Irminsul*, delivers a remedy to the world and establishes its cosmological center. Eschatological imagery in these two texts forecasts the revitalization of the Christian community and the restoration of Paradise on earth.

Representing the actual body of Christ in the liturgical drama of the Good Friday service, the cross retains its *lorica*-type power over the suppliant's body as seen in the Cotton Tiberius A. iii set of cross-prayers (Chapter Five). The body of the virgin martyr is a focus of the vernacular Margaret text as the cross becomes the symbol of the marital contract between God and Margaret. Additionally, it is used as a device to keep back and eventually defeat the devil in the form of a dragon, an image extended in *Vespasian*.

Hymns, prayers, antiphons, and rituals (edited and translated in the Appendix) supply rich literary evidence of the context of early eleventh-century cross devotion. A translation of the *Vespasian* prayers promises new material for further discoveries.

To unpack the meaning of the Anglo-Saxon cross is to be left with a field of interpretive possibilities. In its approach, this project has sought to expand not narrow this field as it strove to most accurately re-construct through Anglo-Latin and Old English texts how the cross was perceived in Anglo-Saxon England. *Halig treow*, *galgan*, *gled*, *Cristes mæl*, and *signum castitatis* – the Anglo-Saxon cross was this and much more.

Appendix

1. Cross Prayers of Venantius Fortunatus

1a. **crux benedicta nitet,** ¹ dominus qua carne pependit

atque cruore suo vulnera nostra lavat,

mitis amore pio pro nobis victima factus

traxit ab ore lupi qua sacer agnus oves,

5 transfixis palmis ubi mundum a clade redemit

atque suo clausit funere mortis iter;

hic manus illa fuit clavis confixa cruentis,

quae eripuit Paulum crimine, morte Petrum.

fertilitate potens, o dulce et nobile lignum,

10 quando tuis ramis tam nova poma geris!

cuius odore novo defuncta cadavera surgunt

et redeunt vitae qui caruere diem.

nullum uret aestus sub frondibus arboris huius,

luna nec in nocte sol neque meridie.

15 tu plantata micas, secus est ubi cursus aquarum,

spargis et ornatas flore recente comas.

appensa est vitis inter tua brachia, de qua

dulcia sanguineo vina rubore fluunt.

¹ Editions and translations of Fortunatus depend heavily on the work of F.J.E. Raby, *A History of Christian-Latin Poetry* (Oxford: Clarendon UP, 1927) and also A.S. Walpole, *Early Latin Hymns* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1922).

[The blessed cross shines, on which the Lord hung in the flesh
 and he bathes our wounds with his own blood,
 made a victim for our sake by tender love,
 he, sacred lamb, snatched from the wolf's mouth the sheep,
 5 when with pierced hands he redeemed the world from destruction
 and by his burial he closed the pathway to death.
 Here with bloody nails that hand was fastened,
 that pulled Paul away from crime, Peter from death.
 Potent in fertility, O sweet and noble wood,
 10 when your branches bear so many new apples
 at whose fresh odor dead bodies rise,
 and those who were deprived of daylight return to life.
 The summer burns none beneath the leaves of this tree,
 nor the moon at night, nor the noon sun.
 15 Planted near where waters flow, you shimmer,
 and you spread wide your foliage adorned with fresh flowers.
 Between your branches the vine hangs, from which
 come sweet wines, red as blood.]²

² For the translation of this last line, I am indebted to <http://arimathea.co.uk/crux.htm>

1b.	Vexilla regis prodeunt, fulgent crucis mysteria, qua carne carnis conditor suspensus est patibulo.	The standards of the King advance, the mysteries of the cross shine forth, on which the creator of the flesh in the flesh was suspended on the gibbet.
5	Confixa clavis viscera tendens manus, vestigia redemptionis gratia immolatus est hostia,	Pierced by nails in the flesh, stretching out the hands, the feet for the sake of redemption, a victim was sacrificed.
	qui vulneratur insuper	On this, He is wounded,
10	mucrone diro lanceae, ut nos lavaret crimine, manavit unda sanguine.	by the cruel point of a spear; so that he might wash us clean of faults, He dripped with blood and water.
	Impleta sunt que cecinit David fideli carmine	It has happened as he told, David, in faithful song,
15	dicendo nationibus: 'regnavit a ligno deus.'	saying to the nations: 'God ruled from a piece of wood.'
	arbor decora et fulgida ornata regis purpura,	Beautiful and shining tree, adorned with the purple of the king,

	electa digno stipite	chosen for your wood,
20	tam sancta membra tangere!	that was worthy to touch such holy limbs!
	beata, cuius brachiis	Blessed, on whose arms
	pretium pependit saeculi!	the ransom of the world hung!
	Statera facta corporis	It became weigh-scales for the body
	praedamque tulit tartaro.	and carried off its profit from hell.
25	Fundens aroma cortice,	Emitting an aroma from the bark,
	vincens saporem nectaris,	surpassing the savour of nectar,
	foecunda fructu fertili,	abundant with fertile fruit,
	portans triumphum nobilem,	bearing a noble triumph.
	Salva, ara, salve, victima,	Hail altar, hail victim,
30	de passionis gloria,	for the glory of the passion,
	qua vita mortem pertulit	on which Life suffered Death
	pro morte vitam reddidit. Amen	and returned life for death. Amen.

1c.

Pange, lingua, gloriosi prelium certaminis	Sing my tongue the battle
et super crucis tropaeo dic triumphum nobile,	of the glorious conflict,
qualiter redemptor orbis immolatus vicerit.	speak of that famous triumph,

won upon the trophy of the cross
 of how the world's redeemer,
 conquered by being sacrificed.

De parentis protoplasti fraude facta condolens,
 5 quando pomi noxialis morte morsu corrui,
 ipse lignum tunc notavit, damna ligni
 ut solveret

Grieving at the harm done,
 to the first-born of the creator,
 when he fell in death
 by the bite of the harmful apple,
 He himself even then honoured a tree
 in order to undo the damage
 [caused] by a tree.

hoc opus nostrae salutis ordo depoposcerat,
 multiformis proditoris arte ut artem falleret
 et medelam ferret inde, hostis unde leserat

This act was required,
 by the plan of our salvation so that
 the trick of the multiformed deceiver
 would be overthrown by a trick,
 and the remedy would be brought
 from there, where the foe inflicted
 pain.

10 Quando venit ergo sacri plenitudo temporis,
 missus est ab arce patris natus, orbis conditor[is],
 atque ventre virginali carne factus prodiit.

When therefore the fullness
 of sacred time arrived,
 the son was sent from the citadel

of the father, creator of the world,³
and was made flesh and came forth
from the virginal womb.

Lustra sex qui iam peracta tempus implens corporis	When thirty years had passed,
se volente, natus ad hoc, passioni deditus	fulfilling His physical lifespan
15 agnus in crucem levatur immolandus stipite.	according to His own will, born for
	this, the lamb was given up
	to suffering, raised upon the cross,
	to be sacrificed upon the tree-trunk.

Hic acetum fel, arundo, sputa clavi lancea.	Here the vinegar, gall, reed,
Mite corpus perforatur, sanguis, unda profluit,	the spitting, the nails, and spear;
terra Pontus, astra, mundus quo lavantur flumine.	His gentle body is broken,
	blood and water flow forth:
	Earth, ocean and stars-the universe-
	are washed by the flood.

Crux fidelis, inter omnes arbor una nobilis	Faithful cross, above all others
20 (nulla silva talem profert fronde florem, germine).	one and only noble tree,
Dulce lignum, dulces clavos, dulce pondus sustinet!	(No ordinary forest bears such

³ Given that *natus* and *conditor* are both nom., it seems more fluid to read *orbis conditor* appositively with *patris*. It also seems to make more sense. The creator of the world and the father are one in the same while the son would be the one sent out of heaven and made flesh.

a flower from leaf and seed.)

It supports such sweet wood,

sweet nails, sweet weight!

Flecte ramos, arbor alta, tensa laxa viscera,

et rigor lentescat ille, quem dedit nativitas,

ut superni membra regis mite tendas stipite.

Bend your branches, lofty tree,

relax your rigid fibers,

let the stiffness soften,

which its birth bestowed, and may

you stretch out the limbs of the

celestial king gently on your trunk.

25 Sola digna tu fuisti ferre pretium saeculi,

atque portum praeparare nauta mundo naufrago,

quem sacer cruor perunxit fusus agni corpore.

You alone were worthy,

to bear the ransom of the world,

(you) the ship (worthy) to prepare,

safe for the ruined world, a harbor,

which the holy blood has anointed,

pouring from the body of the lamb.

2. Eleventh-century hymn by Heribert Eichstätt⁴

Salve, crux sancta,	salvæ, mundi gloria,	Hail, holy cross, hail, glory of the
vera spes nostra	vere ferens gaudia,	world, our true hope, which truly
Signum salutis,	salus in periculis,	brings joy, sign of salvation,
Vitale lignum	vitam portans omnium.	salvation in danger, life-giving wood
		that bears the life of all.

5	Te adorandam,	te crucem vivificam	It is you, cross, who should be
	in te redempti,	dulce decus seculi,	adored, it is you, who give life,
	semper laudamus.	Semper tibi canimus	that we always praise, for we were
	per lignum servi,	per te, lignum, liberi.	redeemed in you, sweet glory of the
			world. We are always singing to you
			we who became slaves because of a
			piece of wood, and were freed,
			because of you, a piece of wood.

	Originale	crimen netans in cruce,	Christ, you who destroyed original
10	nos et a pravis,	Christe, munda maculis.	sin on the cross, cleanse us also of
	Humanitatem	miseratus fragilem	evil defilement. Have pity on frail
	per crucem sanctam	lapsis dona veniam.	mankind and grant forgiveness to
			those who have fallen by the holy
			cross.

⁴ As found in Inge B. Milfull's comprehensive study *The Hymns of the Anglo-Saxon Church* (Cambridge University Press, 1996) 461-62.

Protege, salva, benedic, sanctifica	Protect, heal, bless, and sanctify all
populum cunctum crucis per signaculum.	the people by the sign of the cross.
15 Morbos averte corporis et anime.	Prevent ailments of the body and the
Hoc contra signum nullum stet periculum.	soul. In the face of this sign no
	danger shall persist.

Sit deo patri laus in cruce filii,	Praise be to God the Father in the
sit coequalis laus sancto spiritui.	cross of the Son; equal praise be to
Civibus summis gaudium sit angelis,	the Holy Spirit. May the exaltation
honor sit mundo crucis exaltatio.	of the cross be a joy to the citizens
AMEN	high above, the angels, may it be
	honour to the world. Amen

3. The Book of Cerne (Cambridge, University Library LI.1.10)

Salve sancta crux quae in corpore christi dedicata

Salve sancta crux quae in corpore christi dedicata
 es. et ex membris eius tamquam margaritis ornata. antequam
 te ascenderet dominus timorem terrenum habuisti. Modo
 uero amorem caelestem obtines pro uoto suscepseris. Scires
 5 enim a credentibus quanta gaudia habeas. Quanta mune
 ra praeparata. Securus ergo et gaudens uenio ad te.

Ita ut et tu exultans suscipias me discipulum eius qui
 pependit in te. o bona crux⁵ quae decorem et pulchritu-
 dinem de membris domini suscepisti. Diu desiderata sollicite
 10 quaesita. et aliquando iam concupiscenti animae preparata
 Accipe me ab hominibus et redde me magistro meo. ut
 per te me recipiat. qui per te redemit me. Amen.

[Save us, o holy cross, which has been sanctified by the body of Christ
 and which has been adorned by his limbs like pearls. Until
 the Lord was nailed on you, you were the terror of the earth. Indeed,
 you obtained the love of heaven only when you were taken up as a pledge.
 5 For you know that only in believing will we have great joy and
 the promised gifts. Confidently and joyfully I come to you
 so that you may happily receive me, a disciple of Him who
 hanged on you. O good cross, which received perfect form and beauty
 from the members of the Lord, solicitously I have desired
 10 and sought you. Even now I prepare my soul for you.
 receive me from among men and return me to my Master
 that through you I may be received by Him who through you
 redeemed me. Amen.]

⁵ A cross has been placed above *crux*. Kuypers 21.

4. Aelfwine's Prayerbook (London, British Library, Cotton titus D. xxvi + xxvii)

4a. O crux viride ligno, f. 67v⁶

O CRUX VIRIDE LIGNO QVIA SVPER TE pependit

redemptor Israelis. O quam dulce lignum, quam dulcis clauis,

quam dulcia ferens pondera, O quam pretiosum lignum, quam

pretiosa gemma, que Christum mervit portare, per quem salus

mundi facta est.

[O cross, your wood is green because upon you hung

the savior of Israel. O what sweet wood, what sweet nails,

what sweet burdens you endure, O what a precious wood, what

precious gem, which was worthy to carry Christ, through which

the health of the world was made.]

4b. Ecce lignum crucis, f. 68r⁷

CUM HOC DICIS, PROSTERNE IN TERRAM ET DIC. Ecce lignum crucis, in

quo salus mundi pependit, uenite adoremus. Pater noster. Credo in Deum. O crux

gloriosa, o crux adoranda, o lignum pretiosum et admirabile signum, per quod et

diabolus est uictus, et mundus Christi sanguine est redemptus. Amen. Pater

5 noster.

⁶ Günzel 124.

⁷ Günzel 124.

O pie crucifer, cunctorum redemptor populorum, qui pro salute seculi mortem crucis pertulisti, benigno me uultu respice, et quas tibi offero, tuas laudis suscipe. Amen. Pater noster. Salve crux pretiosa, et inclita cordi meo amantissima, que in sacro Christi corpore sublimiter es dedicata, et ex membris eius tamquam

10 margaritis ornata. Respice illius qui in te pependit famulum, me scilicet miserum peccatorem, per eundem salutatorem Dominum, qui per te redemit omne seculum. Amen. Pater noster.

O Bona Crux, que decorem et pulchritudinem de membris domini suscepisti, quem toto corde adoro totis uisceribus concupisco. Amen. Pater noster.

15 O crux adoranda tu es spes mea et salus mea, et consolatio mea, quoniam in te pependit redemptor meus, cuius sanguine sancto meruisti uota perfundi. Amen Pater noster.

O Iesu Clementissime noli tunc abesse. Dum superuenerit mihi mortis hora horibilis. Presentis sint sancti, quorum misericordiam super hoc exoro. Dum

20 superuenerit mihi mortis hora horibilis. Opto ut me tunc uideam auxilium gratie super me. Dum superuenerit mihi mortis hora horibilis. Sit laus tibi. Sit gloriosa. Sit honor. Sit decus. Sit potestas. Tibi per immortalia secula seculorum. Dum superuenerit mihi mortis hora horibilis. Pater noster.

[When you say this prayer, prostrate yourself onto the ground and say:

Behold the wood of the cross, on which the health of the world hung, come let us adore it. Pater noster. Credo in Deum.

O glorious cross, O cross worthy of adoration, O precious wood and marvelous

5 token, through which both the devil was conquered and the world through the blood of Christ was saved. Amen. Pater noster.

O pious cross-bearer, saviour of all people, who for the health of the world endured death on the cross, look at me with a kind face and receive my praises of you, which I offer you. Amen. Pater noster.

10 Hail precious and famous, and most dear to my heart cross, which was sublimely consecrated by the holy body of Christ, and by his limbs decorated as with pearls. Look kindly upon the servant of him who hung upon you, that is, upon me, wretched sinner through this same Lord and saviour, who redeemed the whole world through you. Amen. Pater noster.

15 O good cross, who received its beauty and majesty from the limbs of the Lord, whom I adore with all of (my) heart and desire with all my inmost being. Pater noster.

O cross worthy of adoration, you are my hope and my health, and my consolation since on you hung my saviour by whose holy blood you have deserved the

20 pouring forth of prayers. Pater noster.

O most merciful Jesus, do not be absent when the terrifying moment of death should overtake me. Let the saints be present whose mercy I implore, when the terrifying hour of death should overtake me. I wish that then I myself may see the help of grace upon me, when the terrifying hour of death should overtake me. Let

25 there be praise to you. Let there be glory. Let there be honor. Let there be grace. Let thine be the power through deathless eternity, when the terrifying hour of death should overtake me. Pater noster.]

4c. Tuam crucem adoramus, Domine, f. 69rv⁸

Tuam crucem adoramus, domine tuamque sanctam resurrectionem laudo et glorifico, qui dignatus es nasci, pati, mori et resurgere a mortuis. Salua me et miserere mei. Sitque super me signum crucis tue, et defendas me a malis preteritis, presentibus et futuris et exterioribus⁹ et inferioribus per signum sancte
 5 crucis tue, et a persecutionibus omnibus liberermur, et per huius signaculum crucis prosternentur inimici et fugentur demonia. Per istus crucis signaculum a periculis mundi liberemur. Crux mihi uita. Crux mihi salus. Crux mihi resurrectio, in uitam aeternam. Amen.¹⁰

[Lord, we adore your cross, and I praise and glorify your holy resurrection, you who thought worthy to be born, to suffer, to die, and to rise again from the dead. Save me and pity me, and let the sign of your cross be above me, and defend me from evil in the past, present, and future, externally and internally. Through the
 5 holy sign of your cross, we were set free from all persecutions, and through the sign of the cross enemies were thrown to the ground and demons were driven away. Through the sign of the cross we were set free from the dangers of the world. To me the cross is life. To me the cross is health. To me the cross is resurrection, in eternal life. Amen.]

⁸ Günzel 126.

⁹ Manuscript reads *exteriobus*

¹⁰ Günzel 125.

4d. Deus, qui uoluisti, f. 71v-72r

Deus, qui uoluisti pro redemptione mundi a Iudeis reprobati, a Iudo oscuto tradi,
 uinculis alligari et agnus innocens ad uictimam ducis atque conspectibus Pilati
 offerri, a falsis quoque testibus accusari flagellis et obprobriis uexari et conspu,
 spinis coronari, colaphis cedi, cruce eleuari, atque inter latrones deputari,
 5 clauorum quoque aculeis perforari, lancea uulnerari, felli et aceto potari, tu per
 sanctissimas has poenas tuas ab inferni poenis me libera, et per sanctam crucem
 tuam salua et custodi, et illuc perduc me miserum/am peccatorem/tricem, quo
 perduxisti tecum crucifixus latronem; tibi cum Deo patre et Spiritu sancto honor,
 uirtus et gloria, nunc et in omnia secula. Amen.

[Lord, who wanted to be rejected by the Jews for the redemption of the world, to
 be betrayed by the kiss of Judas, to be tied with bonds, to be sacrificed like an
 innocent lamb, to be brought before the scrutiny of the governor Pilate, to be
 accused by witnesses, to be tormented with whips and insults, and to be spit upon,
 5 to be crowned with thorns, struck and raised on the cross, and to be condemned
 among thieves, to be pierced with the points of the nails, to be wounded by a
 lance, to be made to drink vinegar. Liberate me from the punishments of hell
 through these holiest of your sufferings and save and protect and lead me, a
 wretched sinner, through your holy cross where you led with you the crucified
 10 thief; to you with God, the father and holy spirit, may there be honor, power, and
 glory now and in all ages. Amen.

5. The Vespasian Psalter: (London, BL Cotton Vespasian A. i)¹¹

5a. Salve crux sancta et ueneranda, f.158v-59r

Salve crux s̄ca et ueneranda. gloriosa et laudanda./ que inter omnes arbores una
 es nobilis. cui nec lignū paradisi / s̄citate et dignitate potest coequari quia in
 corpore dedicata / es x̄pi. Quid digne de te dicere. qua laude te competent
 p̄dicare./ quibus uerbis fragilitas humana te congrue potest adorare./ quam
 5 distinctae angelicorum dignitates spirituū supplic̄t ad/orant et uenerantur.
 glorificantemq: uelud, insuperabile regis/ sui uexillum. et gloriosum creatoris
 triumphum; Quid tue s̄citati / in creaturis potest comparari. sine qua nullus ab
 initio sc̄li licet / s̄cs esset et iustus potuit saluus fieri: Qui tui misterii
 –p̄fundi/tatem. et s̄citat̄is magnitudinem sensu comprehendere. uel uerbis/ plene
 10 potest enarrare. cum signum tue imaginis tantam in se con/tineat uirtutem. ut
 quocūq:modo exprimatur aduerse potesta/tes et dibolica fantasmata inde fugentur;
 Merito tibi totus/ [159r] orbis subicitur. omnisq: creatura –p̄sternitur. quae
 redēptio totius/ mundi et –p̄tectio facta es universi generis humani. Unde/
 commendo Animam meam et corpus meum sub tue defensionis/ protectione et
 15 obsecro te illius qui in te pependit Amore. et te/ suo dedicauit p̄ fundendo
 sanguine: ut semp et ubique me siue/ dormientem siue uigilantem defendas. ab
 omni deceptione/ ab omni lesione diaboli. et ab omni pollutione mentis et
 corporis./ necnon ab omnibus inimicorum omnium et scandalis. et in hora exitus

¹¹ I here defer to Sherman M. Kuhn's edition of the prayers, *The Vespasian Psalter* (Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1965) 318-20.

mei quando morte p̄uentus tuum auxiliū inuocare/ non ualeo. p̄ tui uenerabile
 20 signum quod fronte gero sacro/ crismate inpressum. esto mihi adiutrix aduersus
 principes/ tenebrarum et terrores eorum. et fac tuo inexpugnabili munimi/ne –
 p̄tectum ad redemptionem non ad dampnationē illius con/spectibus presentari qui
 me redemit. et in ultimo aēne beatitu/dinis loco. tuo auxilio fultum collocari. et
 quando in fine sc̄li/ cunctis astris splendidior. et sole clarior angelicis inuecta ob/
 25 sequiis apparueris; non sinas me cum infidelib: dampnari. sed/ cum benedictis
 aeterni patris filii in regnum facias introduci./ O crux gloriosa. O lignum
 pretiosum et ammirabile signum/ in quo est salus uita. et resurrectio n̄ra. salua
 omnes in te libe/ratos. et uera tuo uexillo signatos. et defende me ab ira et
 īdigna/tione eius qui in te triumphauit et esto mihi aduersus insidias/ diaboli et
 30 contra omnia pericula presidium. et in omnib: tribula/tionibus et angustiis solatiū.
 p̄ dñm n̄rm iħm xp̄m aeterni patris filiū./ qui cum eo et sp̄u sc̄o uiuit et regnat d̄s
 p̄ sc̄la. Am̄./

[Hail holy and venerable cross, glorious and praiseworthy, you alone among all
 the trees are noble. Not even the wood of paradise is able to equal you in holiness
 and worthiness because you have been consecrated in the body of Christ. What is
 fitting to say about you? With what praise are they capable of speaking of you?

5 By what words can human frailty adore you fittingly, whom the varied ranks of
angelic spirits worship, adore, venerate, and glorify like the unconquerable
standard of its king and the glorious triumph of its creator? What among
creatures is to be compared with your sanctity without which no matter how holy
and just, nobody from the beginning of the world can be saved? Who can
10 comprehend the depth of your mystery and the magnitude of your holiness or
express fully with words since the sign of your image contains so much
strength in itself? So that whatever way is expressed, opposing powers and
demonic phantasms will be put to flight. By your merit the whole earth is
subjected to you and every creature is prostrate, by which you have been made the
15 redemption of all the world and protection of all the race of men, whence I
command my spirit and my body under the protection of your defense, and I
entreat you by that one who was suspended on you for love and who consecrated
you through his flowing blood, so that always and forever, you defend me
whether sleeping or vigilant from all deceptions, from all the legions(?) of the
20 devil and from all the pollution of the mind and the body and also from all
enemies and all obstacles and at the hour of my end, when, prevented by death, I
am unable to invoke your aid. Through your venerable sign which I bear upon
my head, the impressed chrism, be to me a helper against the princes of darkness
and their terrors, and make your unassailable guardianship for the redemption not
25 for the damnation, presented in the sight of that one who redeems me. And in the
end, I am placed in eternal beatitude, placed by the support of your aid, and when
in the end of the age, you appear, carried by obedient angels, more splendid than

all the stars and brighter than the sun, do not allow me to be damned with the
 unbelievers but allow me to be introduced with the blessings of the eternal Father
 30 into the kingdom of the Son. O glorious cross, o precious wood and admirable
 sign in which there is health, life and our resurrection, save all those freed and
 truly designated by your banner and defend me from the wrath and indignation of
 he who triumphed in you and be to me a protection against the snares of the devil
 and against all dangers, and be a solace in all tribulations and straights through
 35 our Lord Jesus Christ eternal Son of the Father who lives and who reigns with
 Him, God, and the Holy Spirit forever. Amen.]

5b. [A]ue¹² s̄ca crux omnium arborum gloriosissima, f. 159r-160r:

[A]ue s̄ca crux omnium arborum gloriosissima. p̄tiosissima. et splendissima. que
 tactu conditoris s̄cificata. et ei' sacratissimo/ cruentata sanguine benedicta
 pmanes et gloriosa in s̄cla. Quaesi/ in paradysi tellure orta non fuisti. tamen
 pretiosior cunctis ei'/ [159v] arborib: extitisti. non decore frondium propriorū aut
 5 pulchritudine florum. siue dignitate fructuum sed castissimis mēbris/ regis aet̄ni.
 quem dum omne sc̄lm redimeret sustinuisti; Modo / ergo non solum uirtutis tue
 ubiq: splendes lumine puro. uerum/ etiam nomen tuum cuncto p̄tiosior est
 mundo. transq; aethera/ fulges. lumine sc̄lm reple. totum orbem plustras. Te
 angelice/ mirantur potestates. mundi adorant principes. et demonum/ expauescunt

¹² Room was left for the A capital but left blank.

- 10 satellites. Tu pdita restauras. restaurata conser/uas. conseruata sc̄ificas.
destructa reparas. infirmos sanas./ dolentia et merentia laetificas. mortuos
uiuificas. et cuncta bona/ aedificas. In p̄sentia tui infernus gemit. satanas fugit.
mors/ expauescit. et omnis uirtus contraria audire nomen tuum/ p̄timescit. Sicut
enim magnalia dñi n̄ri ih̄u xp̄i qui hostia/ pro nobis in te pependit manent
- 15 incomprehensibilia; sic lau/dem tuā et uirtutem tuam nulla mortalis umquā
preualet promere lingua. Ille equidem est fructus tuus piissimus./ dulce lignum.
dulce pomū. dulces clauos. dulce pondus. dulce/ onus sustinens. Tu felix sola
sustinuisti talentum mundi. qua/ propter emptio nulla est in te. p̄tium nullū –p te.
ap̄ptiatio/ nulla sup te. Deniq; in comparatione tua aurū est ut stipula./ gemme ut
- 20 fauillae. et ut sentina om̄is mundi gl̄a; sol ut nebu/la. et cuncta que transeunt tibi
inequalia sunt. Non orbis/ quadriformes partes tam felicem ferunt arborem. in
radice./ fronde. flore. fructu. sc̄oq; germine; Proinde nos serui inuti/les.
cantando. gemendo. atq; lamentando –p̄sternimus p̄ces/ ante conspectum tuum.
et te adoram' crux ueneranda. crux/ colenda. crux adoranda. p cuius lignum
- 25 sumus redempti. cuius/ signo firmati. et cuius uirtute nunc usq; sumus saluati. Te
igitur/ inuocamus. te adoramus. tu esto salus n̄ra. tu uirtus. tu inex/ [160r]
pugnabilis murus. tu –p̄tectio. tu defensio. gaudiū. consolatio./ lux. uia. uita.
redemptio. spes. arma inuictissima. et liberatio/ sc̄a. in uita positos nos salua. et
in morte cum te inuocare non/ possumus potenter libera. a demoniis eripe. a
- 30 morte subtrahe./ ianuas paradysi inpende et redemptori n̄ro km̄o qui in te
pe/pendit. post hanc miserrimā uitā o crux gloriosa nos coniunge./ De inimicis

- n̄ris p signum s̄cē crucis libera nos d̄s n̄r. et concede/ nobis ut qui ad uitam
dignatus es resurgere his paschalibus/ solemniis mortificati uitiis. a te ualeamus
nunc et semp curari./ et hic et ubiq: benedici. et omni tempore sanari. atq: p om̄ia
35 sc̄la/ scificari. Am̄; Salua igitur beata et benedicta et adoranda crux./ quia p te
confractum est iugum captiuitatis nre. p te est deletu/ cyrographum dampnationis
nre. p te uenit salus mundi. et re/demptio totius sc̄li. in te pependit saluator isrl.
in te triūphauit/ rex angelorum. in te passus est saluator sc̄lorum. in te uirtus
infirmata/ salus uulnerata. et uita est occisa. X̄pō igitur in te pendente/
40 contremuit omnis terra. lux diei defecit. sydera sunt obscurata/ mors deuicta.
tartara disrupta. diabolus alligatus. paradysus/ apertus. propter que omnia corde
contrito. corpore –pstrato./ imploro te alma crux x̄pi. p amara uerbera. p dira
uulnera./ p atra pocula. p pretium sacri cruores.¹³ et p clauos eiusdē dñi n̄ri/ ih̄u
x̄pi sacris manib: et pedib: infixos p p̄tiosam eius mortem./ p benedictam
45 sepulturam. et p resurrectionem eius sc̄am et p/ tium¹⁴ et uirtutem insuperabilem.
salua me p te redemptum. et erue de ore draconis. cuius saluator caput contriuit.
qui cū/ patre et sp̄u s̄cō uiuit et regnat sine fine. am̄.

[Hail holy cross, most glorious, most precious and most splendid of all trees,
sanctified by the touch of the creator, and drenched in his most holy blood. You

¹³ Read *cruoris*. The facsimile does show a verticle mark above the *r* which might be indicate this correction.

¹⁴ Presumably a scribal error.

will remain blessed and glorious forever. You who, even if you did not originate in the soil of paradise, you were, however, more precious than all its trees. Not

5 through the fairness of your own leaves or the beauty of the flowers or the worth of the fruit, but through the most chaste limbs of the eternal king, whom you held up while he redeemed the entire world. Not only do you radiate everywhere with the pure light of your power, but also your name is more precious than the whole world, and you shine out across the skies, fill the world with light, and illuminate

10 the entire globe. The angelic powers gaze at you in wonder, the princes of the world adore you, and the demon's minions are terrified of you. You restore those who are lost, keep safe those whom you have restored, sanctify the saved, repair what has been destroyed, heal the sick, gladden the sad and disconsolate, give the dead life, and establish all good things. In your presence, hell groans, satan flees,

15 death is terrified, and every hostile power dreads to hear your name. Just as the mighty works of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hung upon you as a sacrifice, for us remain incomprehensible, so no mortal tongue will ever be capable of expressing your praise and power. He is your most virtuous fruit. You who bore the sweet wood, sweet apple, sweet nails, and sweet weight, you alone, happy one, bore the

20 price of the world, on account of which there is no buying you, no price for you, no way to estimate your value. Finally, compared to you gold is as stubble, gems are like dust, all the world's glory, like dregs; and the sun is as a cloud; you are unlike all transient things. The quadriform regions of the globe do not contain a tree so happy in its root, branch, flower, fruit and holy seed. And so we useless

25 servants, singing mourning and lamenting, strew our prayers before your sight,
 and we adore you, o cross, who must be venerated, worshiped, and adored,
 through whose wood we are redeemed, by whose sign we are strengthened, and
 by whose power we are saved. You therefore we call upon; you we adore. Be
 our salvation, our power, our unassailable wall; be our protection, defense, joy,
 30 consolation, light, way, life, redemption, hope, unconquerable arm and holy
 liberation. Save us while we are in life, and in death when we can not call upon
 you, deliver us powerfully. Free us from the demons, rescue us from death,
 open(?) the gates of paradise, and after this most miserable life, join us, o glorious
 cross, to our most most dear redeemer who hung upon you.

35 Deliver us, our Lord, from our enemies, by the sign of the holy cross, and grant
 us, you who deigned to rise again to life, that we might be cleansed of our vices
 by these paschal rites and might be cured by you now and forever, and be blessed
 here and everywhere, and made whole for all time, and sanctified for ever and
 ever. Amen.

40 Save us therefore, holy and blessed cross, worthy of adoration, because through
 you the yoke of our captivity was broken, through you the charter of our
 damnation was erased, through you came the world's salvation, and the
 redemption of the whole universe. On you hung the savior of Israel, on you the
 king of angels triumphed, on you suffered the savior of the worlds, on you Power
 45 was made weak, Salvation was wounded, Life itself was killed. While Christ
 hung upon you, all earth trembled, the light of day died, the stars were darkened,
 death was overcome, Tartarus broken open, the devil bound, paradise opened, and

so on account of all these things, with a contrite heart, with body prostrate, I
 implore you dear cross of Christ, through the bitter stripes, the dire wounds, the
 50 poisoned cup, the price of that holy blood, and by the nails driven into the holy
 hands and feet of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by his precious death, and blessed
 burial, and by his holy resurrection and by (?) and unconquerable power, save me,
 and redeem me through you and deliver me from the mouth of the dragon, whose
 head was crushed by the savior, who with the Father and the Holy Spirit lives and
 55 reigns, forever. Amen.]

5c. Te sancta dei crux humiliter adoro, f. 160rv

Te s̄ca dī crux humiliter adoro. ut pectus meū tua uirtute/ munias. cor custodias.
 mentum purifices. uitam s̄cifices. mores/ emendes. cor meum celesti sapientia
 illustres mihiq: misero eū/ qui in te passus est placatum facias. O lignum uitale.
 et ara/ [160v] salutifera. te adoro spem uite aeternae deprecans. ut p te hostia/
 5 fructifera. et grata dō existam. eiusq: qui in te pependit crucifixio/ totum quod in
 me sibi contrarium sit consumat. et carnalē/ aestum temperet iram extinguat.
 linguam a uaniloquio/ compescat. et precatis uerba in os meum conformet et
 omnē/ pollutionem mentis purificet et me ad plenum in uitā honestā/ componat;
 ipso annuente. cuius regum et imperium sine/ fine pmanet in sc̄la sc̄lorum.
 10 Amen./

[O holy cross of God, I humbly adore you, so that you fortify my heart with your
 power, that you guard the heart and purify the mind, sanctify life, change my

habits, make bright my heart with your heavenly wisdom, make me, the miserable
 one- calm by the one who had suffered on you. O vital wood and saving altar, I,
 5 pleading for the hope of eternal life, adore you. And so to you, fruitful and
 agreeable host, I give my existence. May he who hung crucified on you take up
 so many things within me contrary to himself and extinguish wrath and lessen
 bodily heat. May he curb the tongue of useless talk, conform the words of my
 mouth with prayer, purify every pollution of mind, set me as much as possible in
 10 an honest life. By his wish, whose kingdom and power remains through all ages,
 world without end. Amen.]

6. Æcerbot Charm (London, British Library, Cotton Caligula A. vii)¹⁵

Her ys seo bot, hu ðu meaht þine æceras betan gif hi nellap wel wexan oþþe þær
 hwilc ungedefe þing on gedon bið on dry oððe on lyblace. Genim þonne on niht,
 aer hyt dagige, feower tyrf on feower healfa þæs landes, and gemearca hu hy aer
 stodon. Nim þonne ele and hunig and beorman, and aelces feos meolc þe on
 5 þaem lande sy, and aelces treowcynnes dael þe on þaem lande sy gewexen, butan
 heardan beaman, and aelcre namcūpre wyrte dael, butan glappan anon, and do
 þonne haligwaeter ðær on, and drype þonne þriwa on þone staðol þara turfa, and
 cweþe ðonne ðas word: Crescite, wexe, et multiplicamini, and gemaenigfealda, et
 replete, and gefylle, terra, þas eorðan. In nomine patris et filii et spiritus sancti sit
 10 benedicti. And Pater noster swa oft swa þaet oðer. And bere sibþan ða turf to
 ciricean, and maessepreost asinge feower maessan ofer þan turfon, and wende

¹⁵ As edited in Elliott Van Kirk Dobbie, ed., *The Anglo-Saxon Minor Poems* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1942) 116-18.

man þæt grene to ðan weofode, and sibban gebringe man þa turf þær hi aer
 waeron aer sunnan setlgange. And haebbe him gæworht of cwicbeame feower
 Cristes maelo and awrite on aelcon ende: Matheus and Marcus, Lucas and
 15 Iohannes. Lege þæt Crites mael on þone pyt neopeweardne, cweðe ðonne: Crux
 Matheus, crux Marcus, crux Lucas, crux santus Iohannes. Nim ðonne þa turf and
 sete þær ufon on and cweþe ðonne nigon sibon þas word, Crescite, and swa oft
 Pater noster, and wende þe þonne eastward, and onlut nigon siðon eadmodlice,
 and cweð þonne þas word:

20 Eastward ic stande, arena ic me bidde,
 bidde ic ðone maeran domine, bidde ðone miclan drihten,
 bidde ic ðone haligan heofonrices weard,
 eorðan ic bidde and upheofon
 and ða soþan sancta Marian
 25 and heofones meaht and heahreced,
 þæt ic mote þis gealdor mid gife drihtnes
 toðum ontynan þurh trumne geþanc,
 aweccan þas waestmas us to woruldnytte,
 gefyllan þas foldan mid faeste geleafan,
 30 wlitigian þas wancgturf, swa se witega cwaeð
 þæt se hæfde are on eorþrice, se þe ælmyssan
 dælde domlice drihtnes þances.

Wende þe þonne III sunganges, astrece þonne on andlang and arim þær letanies
 and cwaeð þonne: Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus oþ ende. Sing þonne Benedicite

- 35 aþenedon earmon and Magnificat and Pater noster III , and bebeod hit Criste and
 sancta Marian and þære halgan rode to lofe and to weorþinga and to are þam þe
 þæt land age and eallon þam þe him underðeodde synt. Ðonne þæt eall sie
 gedon, þonne nime man uncup sæd æt aelmesmannum and selle him twa swylc,
 swylce man æt him nime, and gegaderie ealle his sulhgeteogo togædere; borige
 þonne on þam beame stor and finol and gehalgode sapan and gehalgod
 40 sealt. Nim þonne þæt sæd, sete on þæs sules bodig, cweð þonne:
 Erce, Erce, Erce, orþan modor,
 geunne þe se alwalda, ece drihten,
 æcera wexendra and wridendra,
 eacniendra and elniendra,
 45 sceafra hehra, scirra waestma,
 and þære bradan berewaestma,
 and þære hwitan hwaetewaestma,
 and ealra eorþan waetma.
 Geunne him ece drihten
 50 and his halige, þe on heofonum synt,
 þæt hys yrp si gefriþod wið ealra feonda gehwæne,
 and heo si geborgan wið ealra bealwa gehwylc,
 þara lyblaca geond land sawen.
 Nu ic bidde þone waldend, se ðe ðas woruld gesceop,
 55 þæt ne sy nan to þæs cwidol wif ne to þæs cræftig man
 þæt awendan ne mæge word þus gecwedene.

Ponne man þa sulh forð drife and þa forman furh onsceote, cweð þonne:

Hal wes þu, folde, fira modor!

Beo þu growende on godes faepme,

60 fodre gefylled firum to nytte.

Nim þonne aelces cynnes melo and abacæ man innewerdre handa bradnæ hlaf and gecned hine mid meolce and mid haligwætere and lecge under þa forman furh.

Cwepe þonne:

Ful æcer fodres fira cinne,

65 beorhtblowende, þu gebletsod weorþ

þaes haligan noman þe ðas heofon gesceop

and ðas eorþan þe we on lifiaþ;

se god, se þas grundas geworhte, geunne us growende gife,

þaet us corna gehwylc cume to nytte.

70 Cweð þonne III Crescite in nomine patris, sit benedicti. Amen and Pater noster þriwa.

[Here is the remedy, by which you can improve your fields, if they will not grow properly, or if any harm has been done to them by sorcery or witchcraft.

Take then at night before daybreak four sods from four sides of the land and mark how they stood before.

5 Then take oil and honey and yeast and milk of all the cattle that are on the land, and part of every kind of tree growing on the land, except hard trees, and part of every well-known herb, except burdock only, and pour holy water on them, and then let it drip three times on the bottom of the sods.

And then say these words:

10 Crescite, grow, et multiplicamini, and multiply, et replete, and fill, terram, the earth. In nomine patris et filii et spiritus sancti sitis benedicti.

And Our Father as often as the other.

And afterwards carry the sods to church and have a priest sing four Masses over the sods, and turn the green sides to the altar. And afterwards take the sods back
15 to where they stood before, before the setting of the sun.

And have made for them four crosses made of 'quickbeam' and write on the end of each: Matthew and Mark, Luke, and John. Lay that cross at the bottom of the pit (where each sod had been cut out).

Say then:

20 Crux Mattheus. Crux Marcus. Crux Lucas. Crux Sanctus Johannes.

Then take the sods and lay them on the crosses. And say then nine times these words: Crescite and as often the Our Father.

And then turn to the east and bow humbly nine times, and say then these words:

Eastwards I stand, for favors I pray.

25 I pray the great Lord, I pray the mighty prince,
I pray the holy Guardian of the heavenly kingdom.
Earth I pray and sky,
and the true holy Mary,
and heaven's might and high hall,
30 that by the grace of the Lord
I may pronounce this charm, by my firm will,

to raise up these crops to our worldly benefit,
 to fill this earth by our firm faith,
 to make beautiful these grasslands; as the prophet said
 35 that he would have favors on earth
 who dealt out alms judicially,
 according to the will of the Lord.

Then turn three times with the course of the sun, then stretch yourself along the
 ground and say litanies there. And say then *Sanctus Sanctus Sanctus* to the end.
 40 Sing then *Benedicite* with arms outstretched and *Magnificat* and our Father three
 times. And commend it (the land) to Christ and Holy Mary, and to the Holy
 Cross in praise and worship, and to the benefit of the owner of the land and all
 those who are subject to him.

When all this is done, then take unknown seed from beggars and give them twice
 45 as much as you take from them. And collect all the plowing implements together,
 bore a hole in the plow-tail and put in incense and fennel and hallowed soap and
 hallowed salt in it.

Then take the seed and place it on the body of the plow. Say then:

Erce, Erce, Erce, mother of earth,
 50 may the omnipotent eternal Lord grant you
 fields growing and thriving,
 flourishing and bountiful,
 bright shafts of millet-crops,
 and of broad barley-crops,

55 and of white wheat-crops,
 and of all the earth's crops.
 May the eternal Lord grant him
 and his saints who are in heaven,
 that his produce may be safe against every foe,
 60 and secure against every harm
 from witchcraft sown throughout the land.
 now I pray the sovereign who created this world
 that no woman may be so eloquent, and no man so powerful,
 that they can upset the words thus spoken.
 65 Let a man drive forth the plow and cut the first furrow, say then:
 Hail to thee, earth, mother of men,
 may you be fruitful under God's embrace,
 filled with food for the benefit of men.
 Then take flour of every kind and have a loaf of bread as big as the palm of your
 70 hand, and knead it with milk and with holy water, and lay it under the first furrow.
 Say then:
 Field full of food for the race of man
 brightly blooming be you blessed
 in the holy name of Him Who created heaven
 75 and the earth on which we live.
 The God who made this earth
 grant us the gift of fertility

that each grain may be profitable to us.

Then say three times: *Crescite. In nomine patris sitis benedicti, Amen. And Our*
 80 *Father three times.]*

7. Cotton Tiberius A. iii

7.a The Good Friday ceremony: A list of prayers, readings, psalms, and collects (Ker 186. Art. 6)¹⁶

1. First lesson: Osee the prophet, *In tribulatione sua*, vi. 1-6.
2. Response: *Domine audiui*
3. Collect: *Deus a quo et Iudas*
4. Second lesson: *Dixit Dominus ad Moysen*
5. Tract: Psalm 139, *Eripe me Domine*
6. *Passio Domini nostri Ihesu Christi secundum Iohannem*

[The alter is stripped of its cloth]

7. *Orationes sollemnes*

[The cross is set up before the alter]

8. *Popule meus* is sung by a deacon
9. Response: *Agios o Theos, Agios Yschiros, Agios Athanatos eleison ymas*
10. Antiphon: *Sanctus Deus*

[The cross is carried before the altar]

¹⁶ See Symons 41-45. For all the prayers, I rely on the thorough cataloguing system of N. R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1957)

11. Repeat no. 8-10 substituting *Quid ultra* for *Popule meus*.

[The cross is unveiled]

12. Antiphons: *Ecce lignum crucis, Crucem tuam adoramus Domine, Dum Fabricator mundi*, Fortunatus's *Pange lingua*

[The abbot prostrates himself three times along with the all those on the right side of the choir.]

13. Seven penitential psalms: 6, 31, 37, 50, 101, 129, 142

14. Prayers to the cross:

a) Penitential psalms 6, 31, 37 and collect:

Domine ihesu Christe, adoro te in cruce ascendentem; deprecor te ut ipsa crux liberet me de diabolo percutiente.

Domine ihesu Christe, adoro te in cruce uulneratum; deprecor te ut ipsa uulnera remedium sint animae meae.

[Domine ihesu Christe, adoro te in sepulchro positum; deprecor te ut non ipsa mors sit uita mea.]

Domine ihesu Christe, adoro te descendendum ad inferos liberantem captiuos; deprecor te ut non ibi me dimittas introire.

Domine ihesu Christe, adoro te resurgentem ab inferis ascendentem ad caelos; deprecor te, miserere mei.

Domine ihesu Christe, adoro te uenturum iudicaturum; deprecor te ut in tuo aduentu non intres in iudicio cum me peccante, sed deprecor te ut ante dimittas quam iudices. Qui uiuis et regnas.

b) Penitential psalms 50, 101 and collect:

Domine, Ihesu Christe gloriosissime conditor mundi, qui cum sis splendor gloriae
 caeternus Patri Sanctaque Spiritui, ideoque dignatus es carnem ex immaculata uigine
 sumere et gloriosas palmas tuas in cruce patibulo permisisti configere, ut claustra
 dissipares inferni et humanum genus liberares de morte;
 respice et miserere mihi misero, oppresso facinorum pondere multarumque
 nequitiarum labe polluto; non me digneris derelinquere, piissime Pater, sed indulge
 quod impie gessi.

Exaudi me prostratum coram adoranda glorisissima cruce tua, ut merear tibi mundus
 assistere et placere conspectui tuo. Qui cum Patre.

c) Penitential psalms 129, 142 and collect:

Deus omnipotens, Ihesu Christe, qui tuas manus mundas propter nos in cruce posuisti
 et de tuo sancto sanguine pretioso nos redemisti;

Mitte in me sensum et intellegentiam quomodo habeam ueram paenitentiam et
 habeam bonam perseuerantiam omnibus diebus vitae meae. Amen

[The abbot will kiss the cross]

20. The abbot repeats no. 13-14 with those on the left side of the choir.

21. Dramatic Imitatio ceremony:

Nam, quai ea die depositionem corporis Sauatoris nostri celebramus, usum
 quorundum religiosorum, imitabilem ad fidem indocti uulgi ac neophytorum
 corroborandam, aequiparando sequi si ita cui uisum fuerit uel sibi taliter placuerit,
 hoc modo decreuimus: sit autem in una parte altaris, qua uacuum fuerit, quaedam
 assimilatio sepulcri uelamenque quoddam in gyro tensum quo, dum sancta crux
 adorata fuerit, deponatur hoc ordine. Veniant diaconi qui prius portauerunt eam et

inuoluant eam sindone in loco ubi adorata est; tunc reportent eam canentes antiphonas *In pace in idipsum*, alia: *Habitabit*; item: *Caro mea requiescet in spe*, donec ueniant ad locum monumenti, depositaque cruce, ac si Domini nostri Ihesu Christi corpore sepulto, dicant antiphonam *Sepulto Domino, signatum est monumentum ponentes milites qui custodirent eum*. In eodem loco sancta crux cum omni reuerentia custodiatur usque dominicam noctem Resurrectionis. Nocte uero ordinentur duo fratres aut tres aut plures, si tanta fuerit congregatio, qui ibidem psalmos decantando excubias fideles exercent.

22. Mass of the Presanctified:

a) *Oremus. Praeceptis salutaribus moniti, Pater noster, Libera nos quaesumus*

Domine

b) Silent communion

23. Vespers

24. Usual duties resume

7b. Sing þas sealmas swa oft swa þu oftust mæge, f. 58 (Ker 186 art. 10c)

- 1 Domine ne in ira tua [ps.6] [B]eati quorum [ps. 31] [D]omine ne in ira tua. [ps. 37]
 Kyrrieleyson chriteleison kyrreieleison pater noster qui. Adoramus te
 christe et benedicimus tibi. Quia per crucem tuam redemisti mundum.
 Per signum crucis de inimicis nostris libera nos deus noster. per triumphum
 5 sancte crucis tue. De potestate inimicorum nostrorum uisibilium and inuisibilium
 eripe nos omnipotens deus.

Domine Ihesu Christe adoro te in cruce ascendentem deprecor te ut
ipsa crux liberet me diabolo percutiente.

Domine Ihesu Christe adoro te in cruce uulneratum deprecor te ut ipsa
10 uulnera remedium sint anim[a]e me[a]e.

Domine Ihesu Christe adoro te in sepulchro positum deprecor te ut ipsa mors sit
uita mea. amen.

Miserere mei deus [ps. 50]. Inclina [ps. 85]. Domine exaudi i[ps101]. Kyrieleison.
christeleison kyrieleison. Pater noster. Adoramus te Christi. Ut Supra. per
15 signum sancte crucis. per triumphum sancte crucis.

Domine Ihesu Christi adoro te descendentem ad inferos liberantem captiuos
deprecor te ut non [illuc]¹⁷ me dimittas introire.

[D]omine Ihesu Christe adoro te resurgentem ab inferis. Ascendentem ad celos
Deprecor te miserere mei. amen.

20 Domine Ihesu Christi adoro te uenturum et iudicaturum deprecor te ut non
intres in iudicium cum me peccatore. Sed deprecor te ut ante
dimittas quam iudices. Qui cum Deo coeterno patre in unitate
spiritus sancti uiuis et regnas deus per omnia secula seculorum amen.

De profundis [ps129]. Domine exaudi. ii [ps.142].

25 Deus omnipotens Iesu Christi qui tuas mundas mundas¹⁸ propter me in cruce
posuisti et de tuo sancto sanguine precioso me redemisti mitte
in me sensum et intellegentiam quomodo habeam ueram penitentiam
et habeam bonam perseuerentiam omnibus diebus uit[a]e me[a]e. saluator mun/di

¹⁷ Added by a later hand.

¹⁸ MS "manus," corrected by a later hand from "mundas."

Ihesu Christe qui cum coeterno patre in unitate spiritus sancti. uiuis per omnia.

- 30 Domine Iesu Christi qui per crucem passionis tue me redemiste et sanguinem
tuum preciosum pro me fudisti. Salua me per lignum sancte crucis quam
in honore gloriosi nominis tui deuotissime adoro. per.¹⁹

Obsecro te Ihesu Christi fili dei uiui per sanctam crucem tuam ut dimittas delicta
(f. 59) mea. per beatam crucem rogo custodi caput meum et per delectabilem

- 35 crucem custodi oculos meos. per uenerandum crucem custodi os
meus. per admirabile signum sancte crucis tue custodi aures meas. per
gloriosum crucem custodi manus meas. per sanctam crucem tuam custodi
manus meas.²⁰ et per sanctam²¹ crucem²² custodi genua mea. per honorabilem
crucem²³ custodi pedes meos. et omnia. membra mea ab insidiis et
40 ab omnibus impugnationibus diaboli. et omnium malorum hominum.
per dedicatam crucem in corpore Christi. Custodi animam meam et libera
me in nouissimo die et tribue mihi uitam eternam saluator mundi
qui cum patre et spiritus sanctus.

Þonne þu hæbbe þis gefylled þonne gebletsa þu þe mid þissere.

- 45 Sanctifica me domine signaculo sancte crucis ut fiat mihi obstaculum
contra seua iacula inimicorum defende me domine per lignum sanctum. et per
pretium iusti sanguinis tui quo nos redemisti.

- 1 [Penitential psalms]²⁴ Lord, not in anger. Of those happy ones. Lord, not in

¹⁹ "per" serves as a shorthand for the incipit of the prayer "per signum crucis."

²⁰ This repetition was not corrected by the later scribe.

²¹ The correcting scribe added "et beatam."

²² "tuam" placed after "crucem."

²³ "tuam" placed after "crucem" by later hand.

²⁴ These incipits are found in the *RC*. See Symons, p. 14 and 15.

your anger. Kyrieleyson. Christeleison. Kyreileison. Our Father. We adore you
Christ, and we praise you who redeemed the world through your cross.

Through the sign of the holy cross free us our God from our enemies. Through the
5 triumph of your cross, save us from the power of our enemies visible and invisible,
omnipotent God.

Lord Jesus Christ, I worship you ascending on the cross. I entreat you that
this cross might free me from the persecuting devil.

Lord Jesus Christ, I worship you wounded on the cross. I entreat you that these
10 very wounds might be a cure to my soul.

Lord Jesus Christ, I worship you stretched out in the tomb. I entreat you that
this death might be my life. Amen.

[Psalms] Pity me, God. Incline. Lord, listen. Kyrieleison. Christeleison.

Kyrieleison. Our Father. We adore you, Christ. [Repeat] as above. Through the
15 holy sign of the cross. Through the holy triumph of the cross.

Lord Jesus Christ, I worship you descending into the world below, freeing the
captives. I entreat you that you might not permit me to enter that place.

Lord Jesus Christ, I worship you rising again from the world below, ascending to
the heavens. I entreat you to have mercy on me. Amen.

20 Lord Jesus Christ, I worship you who are about to come and judge. I entreat you
not to enter in trial against me, a sinner. But I entreat you to dismiss me before you
judge. You who live and reign, with the co-eternal father, in the unity of the Holy
Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

[Incipits of Psalms] On high. Lord, listen. ii.

25 Omnipotent Lord, Jesus Christ, who placed your pure hands on the cross on
my account, and with your holy precious blood, you redeem me, send to
me insight and understanding, as to how I may have true penitence and
I may have good perseverance all the days of my life. Savior of the world, Jesus
Christ, you who, with the co-eternal father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, live
30 forever and ever. Lord, Jesus Christ, you, who through the cross of your passion
redeemed me and you poured forth your precious blood for me. Save me through
the wood of the holy cross, which in honor of your glorious name I most devoutly
worship. Through the holy sign of the cross. I beg you, Jesus Christ, son of the
living God, through your holy cross that you might dismiss my crimes, through the
35 blessed cross, I ask you to guard my head, and through the most beloved cross,
guard my eyes, through the venerable cross guard my mouth, through the
admirable sign of your holy cross guard my ears, through the glorious cross, guard
my hands, through your holy cross, guard my hands, and through your holy and
blessed cross guard my knees, through your honorable cross, guard my feet, and all
40 my members from plots and from all assaults of the devil and all evil men; through
the cross consecrated in the body of Christ, guard my soul and free me on the last
day and grant to me eternal life, savior of the world who is [one] with the father
and the holy spirit.

[Old English rubric: When you have completed this, then bless yourself with this]²⁵

45 Sanctify me, Lord by the holy sign of the cross so it may be to me a shield against

²⁵ "bletsian" has the added connotation of making the sign of the cross. See *Daniel* and the O.E. *Gospel of St. Luke*.

savage darts of enemies; defend me, Lord, through the holy wood and through the just price of your blood by which you redeemed us.

7c. Gif þe þince þaet ðine fynd (Ker 186 art. 10d)

1	Gif þe þince þaet ðine fynd	If it seems to you that your enemies
	þe hwirlice embe þridien	surround you (in turn,)
	þonne gang þu on gelimlicre	than go into a suitable place
	stowe. 7 þae þa halgan rode	and invoke the protection
5	to gescildnesse gecy. 7	of the holy cross and
	asette þe aþenedum	stretch out (your arms
		And say first this-)
	Ave alma crux que mundi	“Hail, kind cross, you that
	pretium portasti. que	bore the price of the world
	vexilla regis eterni	You that carried the standard of the
10	ferebas. In te enim christus	eternal king. For in you Christ
	triumphavit. per te et ego	triumphed. I too through you
	miser et peccator famulus tuus.	wretched and sinning your servant,
	nomen. O sancta crux omnes	(name). O, holy cross, I will
		conquer all the enemies
15	in me insurgentes vincam	rising up in me.
	inimicos. per ²⁶ [signum sancte crucis	Through [the holy sign of the cross

²⁶ The scribe's abbreviation.

	de inimicis meis libera nos deus meus].	liberate us from my foes, my God].
	7 sing þonne þas sealmas op ende.	and sing the psalms to the end.
	Domine deus meus.	“Lord my God,
20	Usquequo domine [ps. 12]. Exaudi	How long Lord. Listen,
	Domine iustitiam meam. kyrieleison	Lord, to my justice. <i>kyrieleison</i>
	christeleison. kyrieleison.	<i>Christeleison. kyrieleison</i>
	pater noster. Per signum	<i>Pater noster.</i> Through the holy
	Sancta crucis de inimicis meis	sign of the cross, liberate us from
25	libera nos deus meus. Adoramus te	my foes, my God. We adore you
	Christe. Ut supra. Salva me christe	Christ. On high. Save me
	sal[59v]uator per uirtutem crucis.	Christ, the savior, through the
		power of the cross.
	Qui saluasti petrum in mari	You who saved Peter in the sea.
	miserere <i>mihi</i> .	Pity me.”
30	[7 cweþ þis gebed þis gebed	And say this
	þaer to] ²⁷	prayer also.
	Redemptor et salvator noster	“Our redeemer and savior
	unice et ²⁸ unigenite fili	only and begotten son of

²⁷ The phrase “þis gebed” occurs twice in the manuscript.

²⁸ Manuscript reads “7 cweþ þis gebed þaer to.”

	omnipotentis dei qui per crucis	the Almighty God who, through the
35	patibulum uim et fortitudinem	gallows of the cross, destroyed the
	Satane destruxisti. Concede	might and bravery of Satan.
	ut ego miser et peccator	Grant that I, wretched and sinning,
	famulus tuus. ill ²⁹ sancte	your servant, by the holy sign
	signo crucis munitus ac protectus	of the cross fortified and protected,
40	omnium mihi aduersantium machinas.	might be able to break asunder the
	disrumpere ualeam. qui uiuus.	plans of all my enemies. He who
		lives. ³⁰
	Stand þonne upp sume hwile. 7	Then stand up for some while
	sing þisne sealm þriwa aþenedum	and sing this psalm thrice arms
	earnum. Domine qui multiplicati	extended. "Lord who multiplied"
45	7 cweþ þaer aefter þis gebed.	And say thereafter this prayer:
	Hoc signaculo sancte crucis	"By this holy sign of the cross
	prosternantur domine omnis	cause all my enemies, Lord,
	inimici mei tam uisibiles quam	both visible and invisible,
	inuisibiles, tam presentes quam	both present and absent,
50	absentes. tam potentes. Quam	both potent and impotent,
	inpotentes. AMEN	to be overthrown. Amen"
	And sing þisne	And sing this psalm
	sealm op ende. Sing hine	to the end. Sing it

²⁹ Likely, a scribal abbreviation for "illius."

³⁰ Psalm incipit.

	[aþenedum earmum swa þu	arms extended as
55	oftust maege]	often as you can:
	Ad te domine leuauī. ³¹	“To you, Lord, I have raised.
	kyrrieleison christeleison	<i>kyrrieleison. christeleison.</i>
	pater noster. 7 cweþ þas preces.	Our Father”. And say the preces:
	hoc signum crucis erit in celo	“This sign of the cross will be in the
60	cum dominus ad iudicandum	sky when the Lord in judgment
	uenerit. Per signum.	will come. Through the sign.
	Omnis terra.	All the world.
	Domine exaudi orationem.	Lord, listen to my prayer.
	Deus qui per crucem et passionem	Lord, who through the cross and
65	tuam redemisti mundum. Libera	your passion redeemed the world,
	me ab omnibus peccatorum	free me from all dangers of my sins
	meorum periculis. et ab omnium	And from all
	machinis aduersantium.	the schemes of my enemies.
	qui [uiuis].	You who lives”
70	7 wyrc swyþe gelome	and make very
	Cristes mael on þinum	often the cross of Christ on your
	heafde. 7 on þinre heortan. 7	head and on your heart and (say)
	Ecce crucem domini fugite partes	“Behold the cross of the Lord! Flee
	adverse	ye hostile powers!
75	uicit leo de tribu	The lion from the tribe of Juda,

³¹ Manuscript reads “aþendum earmum swa þu oftust maege” after “levavi.”

iuda (radix) david alleluia

the scion of David, has won,
alleluia.”

And cweþ þis eft. Hoc

and say this again: “By the

signaculo sancte crucis.

holy sign of the cross.”

7d. Hae sunt quattuor cause (Ker 186 art. 10e):

1 Hae sunt quattuor cause QUIBUS Sancta CRUX ADORATUR. Prima causa est,

Qui in una die septem cruces adit, aut septies unam crucem adorat.

Septem porte inferni clauduntur illi, et septem porte paradysi aperiuntur ei.

Secunda causa est. Si primum opus tuum ad crucem. Omnes demones,

5 si fuissent circa te. Non potuissent nocere tibi.

Tertia causa est. Qui non adoret ad crucem. Non recipit pro se passionem

Christi. Qui autem adorat declinat, recepit eam et liberabitur.

Quarta causa est. Quantum terrae pergis ad crucem, quasi tantum de

hereditate propria offeras domino.

1 [Here are (four) reasons that the holy cross is adored. The first reason is, whoever approaches seven crosses in one day, or adores one cross seven times, then to him the seven doors of hell are shut, and the seven doors of paradise are opened to him.

The second reason is, if your first concern be to the cross, all demons, if they

5 should be around you, would not be able to harm you. The third reason is,

whoever does not adore the cross, does not receive for himself the Passion of

Christ; he who does adore and bow however, receives it and is liberated. The fourth reason is, the amount of ground you traverse on the way to the cross is what you will offer to the Lord as your own property.]

7e. Domine Iesu Christe f. 60 (Ker 186 art. 10f)

Domine Iesu Christe, pro sancta cruce tua apud me sis, ut me defendas.

Domine Iesu Christe, pro benedicta cruce tua intra me sis, ut me reficias.

Domine Iesu Christe, pro beata cruce tua circa me sis, ut me conserues.

Domine Iesu Christe, pro gloriosa cruce tua ante me sis, ut me deducas.

5 Domine Iesu Christe, pro ueneranda cruce tua post me sis, ut me gubernes.

Domine Iesu Christe, pro laudanda cruce tua supra me sis, ut me benedicas.

Domine Iesu Christe, pro magnifica cruce tua in me sis, ut me ad regnum tuum/
perducas. Amen.

[Prayer to the Cross with seven requests:

Lord Jesus Christ, because of your holy Cross, be near me, so that you may
protect me.

Lord Jesus Christ, because of your blessed Cross, be within me, so that you may
restore me.

Lord Jesus Christ, because of your enriching Cross, be around me, so that you may
keep me safe.

Lord Jesus Christ, because of your glorious Cross, be before me, so that you

may conduct me.

- 5 Lord Jesus Christ, because of your venerable Cross, be behind me, so that you may direct me.

Lord Jesus Christ, because of your praiseworthy Cross, be above me, so that you may bless me.

Lord Jesus Christ, because of your magnificent Cross, be in me, so that you may bring me to your king. Amen.]

7f. Per gloriosam et uirtutem sancte crucis fol. 60 rv (Ker 186 art. 10 g)

Per gloriosam et uirtutem sancte crucis tue Domine Iesu Christe, cuius signaculum mihi inpono corde et corpore, salua me. Hostem et arma atque uenena illius omnia repelle a me. Concupiscentias carnales mortifica in me. Sub umbra alarum tuarum protege me. Per hoc signum quoque sancte crucis tue a

- 5 languoribus diuersis et cladibus uariis et periculis cotidianis libera me. Et si qua, domine, pro peccatis meis infirmitas seu tribulatio mihi euenerit, tu eam sicut uis et sicut scis, tempera et mitifica. Et presta, ut in te et per
fol. 60 v te protectus. Numquam / diabolo siue inimicis meis uiribilibus tradar. Sed tu
potius, bone Christe, in misericordia tua et non in furore corripe me. Et ubicumque
10 oberrauero a te, reuoca me ad te. Atque reuocatum, paterna pietate semper custodi ad gloriam nominis tui quod sit benedictum in secula. AMEN.

[Through the glory³² and the virtue of your holy cross, Lord Jesus Christ, whose sign I place on my heart and body, save me. Drive away from me the hostile one and all his weapons and poisons. Kill in me carnal desires. Under the shadow of your wings protect me. Through this sign too of your holy cross, Lord, liberate me

5 from diverse diseases and various disasters and from daily dangers. And if on account of my sins there should befall me any illness or affliction, just as you please and know how, temper and alleviate it and vouchsafe that I, protected in you and by you, should never be delivered to the devil or to my enemies. But rather, good Christ, in your mercy and not in rage seize me. And wherever I will

10 have wandered from you, call me back to you, and once you have called me back, always guard me with fatherly care. To the glory of your name, may it be blessed forever. Amen.]

8. Aue alma crux, que mundi pretium portasti, Cotton Titus D. xxii (fol. 64v)

1 Aue alma crux, que mundi pretium portasti, que uexilla regis eterni ferebas, in te enim Christus triumphauit, et ego miser et peccator *seruusque* tuus, amen. O santa crux omnes in *nos* insurgentes *uincamus*. Hoc signaculo sancte crucis prosternantur, Domine, omnes inimici mei, tam uisibiles quam inuisibiles, tam

5 presentes quam absentes, tam potentes quam inpotentes. Amen.³³

³² I translate "gloriosam" as a noun.

³³ Günzel, *Aelfwine's Prayerbook* 122.

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