ASPECTS OF CHRISTIANISATION AND CULTURAL ADAPTATION IN THE OLD ENGLISH *JUDITH*

When a religious writing was translated by an Anglo-Saxon poet two processes often occurred – Christianisation and cultural adaptation. If a writing was not specifically Christian, the poet would reinterpret and adapt it to exemplify the contemporary beliefs of Anglo-Saxon Christianity. Also, the poet would alter certain details to accord with the characteristics and concerns of his society – cultural adaptation. These processes occurred to varying extents. The more literal a translation, the less Christianisation and cultural adaptation can be discerned. Even so, translations such as *Genesis A* and *B*, *Daniel*, and *Exodus* are greatly influenced by these tendencies.[1]

In many societies, the processes of Christianisation and cultural adaptation were not seen as compromising the character of the original literary composition. In the second century CE, Eusebius recounts that scribes frequently changed details of the Scriptures to accord with current doctrine, as they saw themselves as being just as inspired as the original writers, and as having divine insight into the correct interpretation and exposition of the works.[2] The Anglo-Saxon poets most probably did not see themselves in such an extreme way, but they had no qualms about altering a passage to accord with the 'truth' – the current doctrines of Christianity. When an obviously non-Christian doctrine arose, such as Genesis' polygamy, it was surmounted by appealing to an allegorical meaning. In this way, the underlying themes and doctrines of Old Testament and Apocryphal books were often altered through translation into Old English. In fact, it is somewhat of a misnomer to term the process 'translation' in many cases. There was no real endeavour by the Anglo-Saxon translators to render a Scripture faithfully into their native language; rather, the Old English works are *adaptations* of the originals.[3]

Perhaps one of the most interesting adaptations is the Old English poem of *Judith* (*OEJ*). The original source is Jewish and, as we shall see, several doctrines in the Apocryphal book (*Jdt*) are quite different from those of Christianity, necessitating a considerable amount of Christianisation. Furthermore, the social attitudes and other such details in *Jdt* are quite different from those of the Anglo-Saxons, requiring a reasonable amount of cultural adaptation. As such, *OEJ* is a good work for illuminating Anglo-Saxon poetic practice and motivation in relation to the adaptation of religious works.

Recensions

Jdt was most probably composed in the second century BCE. The only texts of the book still extant are in Greek (hereafter *G*). However, there are a significant number of Hebraisms to posit an original Hebrew composition. *Jdt* was eventually accepted among the Jews as a religious writing of some standing, although it was excluded from the Hebrew canon. One point that must not be lost sight of is that the story was originally composed for Jews in a

predominantly Jewish cultural milieu. It was only later that Christianity adopted *Jdt* as part of its canon of sacred Scripture.[4] Eventually, after the centre of power shifted to Rome, a Latin translation of *Jdt* was produced by Jerome. In this, Jerome claimed to have used a 'Chaldean' (Aramaic) edition of *Jdt* for his translation. However, it seems that the Latin has more stylistic affinity with the Greek translations than with an original Aramaic, and that Jerome's work was at least hasty.

It was this Vulgate text (hereafter *V*) that the Anglo-Saxon poet of *OEJ* used for his adaptation of the story. So, by the time the story of Judith reached England, it had undergone at least two translations, from Aramaic/ Hebrew to Greek to Latin, and possibly even three – from Aramaic/ Hebrew to Greek to Aramaic to Latin. The *OEJ* was one further step. Unlike the other *Jdt* translators, the *OEJ* poet made no attempt at word-for-word rendition of the Latin. Rather, the poet recreated the story from the materials of the Vulgate, and infused it with the concerns and characteristics of his society. Enough of the original remains for interesting anomalies to occur when the poet's intentions clash with those of the original author, and especially when the poet tried to adapt the story to accord with the tenets of Christianity.

Christianisation

Jdt was composed from a conservative religious point of view. It is most likely that it was written during or after the upheavals of the Maccabean era. The High Priest, Joakim, supervises the war preparation (G 4:6,7=V 4:5–7) just as the High Priest Jonathan Maccabeus led his people (1 Maccabees 10:21).[5] Certainly, a sense of the sanctity of Jerusalem and of the sacrifices pervades *Jdt*, just as existed in the anti-Hellenistic climate of the Maccabean period.[6] The importance of the temple is also expressed in the reference to the administrative and political power of the priesthood: when Joakim gives orders for the defence of the country in *Jdt* 4:6–7, everyone obeys. This parallels the political power of Jonathan Maccabeus, and is reminiscent of the relative administerial autonomy and merging of politics and religion in the mid Second Temple Period.

Like the belief in the importance of Jerusalem and the priesthood, the author of *Jdt*'s theological views are similar to those of the author of 1 and 2 Chronicles. Defeat or victory depends upon obedience to God and His Laws, as expounded in 2 Chron. 15:2b–6. The people pay penance to God for their sins wearing sackcloth in order to avoid the wrath of the invading armies (G 4.9). Using a formulaic account much like the Chronicler's, the author of *Jdt* writes that, after suitable remorse, the Lord heard them, and 'εἰσεῖδεν τῆν θλῖφιν αὐτῶν' ('looked upon their affliction')*. After this, the author gives the obligatory summary of Israel's history in a speech (5:5–19). Again, this is done in traditional formulaic terms. As in Chronicles, Israel's history is presented as a succession of obeying and disobeying God – a very pious (but also very popular) way of viewing history.

Further stylistic indications of the author's conservatism are found in his emphasis on fasting (G 4:13b=V 4:12,15; G&V 8:6) and sacrifices (G 4:14=V 4:16). This places him

firmly on the priestly side of the politico-religious spectrum. Preoccupation with the finer details of the Jewish Law is also evident, as the author takes pains to point out that Judith fasts perpetually, *except* on the day before the Sabbath, the Sabbath, and other days designated by the priestly code. A particularly good example of the writer's conservatism shows when he condemns the eating of food set aside for the Temple, even under extreme duress (11:12,13). This contrasts with other more liberal views, exemplified by David's eating of the shew bread when being pursued (1 Samuel 21:6, cf Matthew 12:2–4). Also, the author of *Jdt* takes the traditional view that people inherit their forefather's sins (*Jdt* 7:28). Obviously, the writer is intent on observing the letter of the Torah. It is ironic, however, that he makes such a significant error as recounting that an Ammonite converts to Judaism, against the precepts of the Torah, ultimately causing *Jdt* to be left out of the Hebrew canon.[7]

The author's literary conservatism is shown by the appearance of pious themes. One such theme of Jewish literature is what I shall term 'vindication of Deistic primacy'. This typically involved a certain non-Jewish god or goddess being pitted against Yahweh in order to prove the Jewish God's dominance. This theme developed as mono-theism evolved, so that by the time Daniel was written, God was instead being tested against *humans* who dared to call themselves God.[8] By the end of *Jdt*, God has met His challenge (6:3), fulfilled Achior's prophecy (5:21, 14:18b) and vindicated Judith's faith (8:15ff, 9:11). The Pharisaical tendencies of the author are also present in his perception of God.[9] In *Jdt*, much as in Chronicles, God is pure, resides in the temple, has chosen Jerusalem as his special sanctuary, and is aloof. The people must display true sorrow for their sins before He will intervene to save them (4:13). However, God never actively intervenes; He never performs any miracles. Despite this, Judith does claim that God was the motivating force behind her success (*G* 16:3), and that God has an interest in humanity:

αὐτὸς ἔχει τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἐν αἷς θέλει σκεπάσαι ἡμέραις ἢ καὶ ὀλεθρεῦσαι ἡμᾶς πρὸ προσώπου τῶν ἐχθρῶν ἡμῶν. ('he has the power within any number of days that he chooses to shelter us or even destroy us in the face of our enemies'). (*G* 8:15b; cf *V* 8:20)

Also, Judith sings that Adonai Almighty will avenge his people on a day of judgement (*G* 16:17=*V* 16:20). However, the fact remains that God never actively intervenes. Rather, God is a passive recipient – receiving praises, supplications, and glorification. In fact, the ethic behind this seems to be one of 'God helps those who help themselves' with the proviso that God doesn't actually help at all.[10] The author pays lip service to the tradition that God directly involves himself in human affairs, but there is an underlying belief that this never actually happens. Instead, the Deity is regarded as being the unifying force behind the tenuous balance of the Universe. God makes the sun rise, but does not play a role in human existence such as in Exodus, nor is He intensely interested in humanity, in contrast to the Pauline God.

To an extent, the *OEJ* God shares this trait of passivity with the *Jdt* God. The similarity stems mainly from the lack of the miraculous in *Jdt* and its concomitant reflection in the Old English poetic adaptation. The *OEJ* poet did not choose to alter the action so much as to

affirm God's active primacy on Earth. However, the Anglo-Saxon God is portrayed as more directly involved in human affairs, if only in a covert manner. Judith is described as receiving help from God, and being protected by him (2–4). God most directly intervenes when Holofernes 'þohte ða beorhtan idese / mid widle [ond] mid womme besmitan.' (58,9). Here, 'Ne wolde þæt wuldres Dema / geðafian, þrymmes Hyrde, ac he him þæs ðinges gestyrde / Dryhten, dugeða Waldend' (59b–61a). Also, God inspires Judith with courage (94-5) and grants her victory (123–5), in contrast to Judith's request for strength in *Jdt* 13:7b, where there is no indication of God's answer – direct interaction with God is strictly avoided. All in all, the *OEJ* Christian God is more directly involved than the Jewish God, but the constraints of *Jdt*'s theological conception still manifest themselves in the Old English poem.

Despite these several similarities, many of the beliefs expressed in *Jdt* were incompatible with the ideology of the monastic poet of *OEJ*; the poet intended his adaptation of *Jdt* to exemplify the precepts of Christianity. An interesting example of this is the poet's statement that temporal things are worthless: '... tweode gifena in ðys ginnan grunde' (1–2a). This is quite opposed to the Jewish notion that God gives material rewards to those that serve him, just as Judith received all the valuable possessions of Holofernes and worldly esteem in *G* 15:11=*V* 15:14. The *OEJ* poet also includes this, but is quick to add that this was only secondary to the reward in heaven, and that it was this reward 'þe heo lange gyrnde' (346). However, the *OEJ* poet's attitude is not entirely original, being derived from *V*, which has Judith shun all those gifts whilst declaring them 'in anathema oblivionis' (16:23). The poet does not go as far as the Vulgate does for other reasons (see below), but still affirms the transitory nature of existence.

More blatantly, the poet has Judith invoke the Trinity: 'Ic ðe, frymða God [ond] frofre Gœst, / Bearn Alwaldan, biddan wylle / miltse þinre me þearfendre, / Ðrynesse Ðrym.' (83–85a). This notion of the tripartite deity is, of course, totally opposed to the theology of *Jdt*'s author, who is aghast at the thought that there could be any other god but Adonai (*Jdt* 6:2–3). Also, the poet introduces the concepts of Heaven and Hell, in contrast to the author of *Jdt,* who avoided any reference to an afterlife. When Holofernes is killed, his spirit does not descend to Hell; rather, the Assyrian is equated with his corpse, indicating that the author probably had no conception of a bi-partite being composed of body and spirit (*G* 13:8-9=*V* 13:10). The concept of an afterlife was always a blurry one for the Jews. There was much disagreement over life after death, with several opposing viewpoints: the Pharisaic notion of an afterlife with eternal punishment for the wicked, the Sadducee belief in the finality of bodily death, and the semi-traditional belief in the existence of a shadowy underworld called Sheol.[11] The *Jdt* author is not explicit on which view he holds; even so, it is certain that there is no after-life conception such as the Anglo-Saxon poet propounds. In *OEJ* , God abides 'on roderum' (5), and is the Lord of Heaven (124). Heaven is seen as a place to anticipate eagerly – the glorious culmination of godly acts on earth (341–345), as well as being the antithesis to 'cruelty' – swegles dreamas' are contrasted with 'reðe streamas' (348–9). In this, the poet is

not being original; the concept of Heaven is little different to that of other Anglo-Saxon works.[12]

However, Heaven is only fleetingly mentioned in contrast to the concept of Hell in the passage telling of Holofernes' death (107–121). There is a definite concept of the bi-partite nature of the human being: 'Læg *se fula leap* / gesne beæftan, *gæst* ellor hwearf ....' (111b–112a, emphasis mine). Hell is seen as opposite to Heaven in location; it is 'under neowelne' (113). It is also portrayed as a place of perpetual torment, infested by snakes (115). In an ominous tone, the poet describes the fate of the damned: 'Ne ðearf he hopian nó / þystrum forðylmed' (117b–8a). This description is reasonably explicit, and totally foreign to the designs of the *Jdt* author. Arguably the reference in *G* to fire and worms (16:17c) suggests some afterlife punishment, and could be a precursor to the gospel notion of hell (cf Mark 9:48). However, this is unlikely – being eaten alive by fire and worms is a physical, temporal punishment. Also, this reference is even more obscure in *V* 16.21, where even this reference is obscured. The *OEJ* notion of hellish snakes could be a result of the fusion of the gospel concept with the general Christian belief in the wickedness of serpents, perhaps coupled with some Germanic notion. Certainly, Hell was a popular topic for Anglo-Saxon religious poets. The *OEJ* description differs only marginally from the ones in *Christ III*, and *Judgement Day II*.[13]

Apart from these conceptual differences, the major Christian doctrine propounded in *OEJ* is that of being saved by faith. To some extent this tenet is held by the author of *Jdt*. However, faith is not really an important prerequisite for salvation in *Jdt*. Rather, the physical expression of collective obedience is the most significant factor in procuring God's help. In this way, the people of Bethuliah are judged according to actions – both their own and those of their forefathers. The people of Bethuliah are not saved by faith in God, but by physical acts – sacrificing, and Judith's killing of Holofernes. For the *OEJ* poet, the important thing is not these physical acts, but the mental state of having faith in God. This distinction comes directly from the dichotomy of works and faith that is the theme of the New Testament books of Romans and Galatians. The *OEJ* poet states that God inspired Judith with courage, 'swa He deð anra gehwylcne / herbuendra, þe Hyne him to helpe seceð, / mid ræde mid *rihte geleafan*.' (95b–7a, emphasis mine). Also, Judith receives a reward in Heaven because 'heo ahte soðne geleafan / a to ðam Ælmihtigan.' (344–5).

The final point to be made in regard to Christianity is the moral attitude of the *OEJ* poet. In *Jdt*, Judith lies in order to infiltrate the enemy camp – she claims that she is fleeing from the Hebrews (*G* 10:12b=*V* v10,12). She also gives expression to a series of falsities and double-entendres in *G* 11:5–19(=*V* v14–17) and *G&V* 12:4,14. The author has no qualms about this. In fact, he lauds it with Judith claiming that 'ηπατησεν αυτον το προσωπον μου' ('my face deceived him' – *G* 13:16), and with the High Priest blessing her for it (*G* 13:18–20=*V* v23–25). This was somewhat of a moral dilemma for the *OEJ* poet. All of Judith's double- entendres are omitted (although most of them would have occurred in the lost portion of the poem). Certainly, the OE Judith avoids mentioning anything about deception in her victory speeches of 152–158, and 177–198, differing from *V* 16:10–11's

emphasis of the use of sexuality in causing Holofernes' death. Apart from this, the moral attitudes displayed in *Jdt* is much like that in *OEJ*. Both authors condemn fornication as defilement (*G* 13:16b=*V* v20 and *OEJ* 59), and both abhor blasphemy (*Jdt* 3:8b,4:2 and *OEJ* 214).

With the introduction of Christian doctrine, the Old English poet was forced to delete references to overtly Jewish aspects of religion. Firstly, there is an obvious clash between *Jdt*'s emphasis on the primacy of Jerusalem and the Temple and the official Christian denial of predominant religious status to these two places. Whereas *G* 16:18-20=*V* 16:22-24 describes the pilgrimage of the people to Jerusalem to celebrate their victory, the *OEJ* poet deletes this entirely, and calls Bethuliah 'ðære beorhtan byrig' (326) – a term traditionally used for Jerusalem. This replacement of Jerusalem with Bethuliah is also shown when the poet terms it 'ðære haligan byrig' (203). Of course, anything to do with the Jewish Jerusalem – the temple, priesthood, and ritual – is omitted. The story of Achior is removed, as he converts to Judaism, Judith's song and most of her prayers are either omitted or altered to sound Christian, the High Priest does not make an appearance, and the people do not go to Jerusalem to celebrate, nor do they sacrifice to God. This tendency to omit creates sizeable gaps in the narrative, and also gives some indication of the original length of the work.

Length
As it stands, the Old English story of Judith begins at a point roughly parallel to the twelfth chapter of *Jdt*. Because of the obviously fragmentary nature of the poem, beginning half-way through a line, there has been some debate regarding its original length. Rosemary Woolf (1955:171), the strongest proponent of the view that the surviving text is almost complete, claims that the only part missing is a few lines of introduction. She cites parallelisms in the text and omissions, such as the story of Achior, to justify her opinion. Scholars have also noticed other structural parallels between the beginning and end of the poem, seeming to indicate that it is virtually one complete unit.[14] However, any such argument has little validity, as the Vulgate *Judith* is constructed in a similar manner. The first half of *V* (up to chapter 10) is an extended orientation, having no strong thematic ties with the second half. It serves to place the story in a historical context necessary to validate its status as a literary composition, and to locate the story in the correct spiritual context.[15] Despite introducing the characters and serving as a necessary prelude to the action, themes are not actuated, merely introduced. For example, Judith councils the elders to have faith in God, yet this theme only becomes actuated by Judith's entry into the camp and her beheading of Holofernes in the second half. As such, it is evident that the Vulgate version has a fairly strong structural and thematic division near where the *OEJ* poem begins. Seeing that the events occur in relatively the same order, the structural parallelisms that Doubleday (1975:438–40) and others note for the *OEJ* are true for the Vulgate also. The poet needed only to follow *V*'s plot loosely to derive the structure we can discern today.

Even so, the *OEJ* poet does make certain reductions which suggest that the preceding part

of the poem was significantly reduced. Doubleday (1971:437) and Pringle (1975:92) point out that Holofernes is made out to be a king, not a general. He is referred to as 'hlaford' (251), 'eorla dryhten' (21), and 'sinces brytta' (30). Presumably, this necessitates the elimination of Nebuchadnezzar from the first half, and reasonably sizeable sections of the narrative with it. Certainly, if the Anglo-Saxon poet was at all consistent, he would have avoided all references to specifically Jewish religious attitudes and practices, along with specifically Jewish cultural characteristics, and most probably would have omitted extraneous details of the plot. Given that any reference to Nebuchadnezzar, Achior and specifically Jewish terms and customs needed to be omitted, most of chapters 1, 2:1–6, 4:5–17, 5:5–6:20, 7:12,13,22,23, 8:1b,5,[9–27],28, and 9:1,6b can be plausibly eliminated. Of course, any such specific statement of omission has an element of subjectivity, as judgements are made on what the *OEJ* author would and would not have altered or adapted. Even in the text remaining as proposed above, the *OEJ* author would have needed to change some small details, such as the recipient of Judith's reproach in 8:9ff. Even so, it is too zealous an application of Occam's razor to pare away as much as Woolf contends. As Chamberlain (1975:146) points out, the reference to the 'fourth day' (*OEJ* 12b) needs at least a few lines of introduction to fill in the intervening days. Moreover, it points to the likelihood that the poem included the stipulation that the people were to pray for five days before capitulating (*V* 8:32). However, the most liberal proposals of a total length of over 1100 lines seem too long given the certain need for omissions (Chamberlain 1975:141, Timmer 1961:2). Rather, 200 lines would have been ample.

Literary Changes
Part of the underlying fabric of *Jdt* is the parallelisms to other Hebrew stories. Judith herself is not an orthodox character. She is obviously meant to be somewhat idealised – her name means 'Jewess', and she is the Jewish paradigm for some traditional aspects of womanhood in her loyalty, piety, and beauty. However, she does not act in a traditional manner. Most indicative of this is the fact that she upbraids her elders' theology (8:9–27). Also she has another woman run her household affairs (8:10), and she avoids the responsibility of re-marrying and having children. However, there is some attempt to keep her character within the pale of conservative acceptability. Thus, although Judith does not remarry, she has done her duty by marrying once, and appropriately mourns (8:4–6); also, she is not a burden to her community, but can sustain herself as well as helping the poor. Judith performs a literary function in that she is best explained as a 'type' character. She harks back to the woman judges of the Old Testament, especially Deborah. Deborah counselled her leaders, avoided having family duties, and also saved her people. The phrase 'by the hand of a woman' (*G* 13:15b=*V* v 19) is distinctly Hebrew, and is used in Judges 4:9 when Deborah tells Barak that Sisera will be 'sold' 'into the hand of a woman'. Also, like Deborah, Judith sings a song of praise (Judges 5:2–30 and *G* 16:1-17=*V* vv.1–21),[16] and like Deborah, organises the men for battle. This parallelism of type is quite common in Jewish writings of the Second Temple

period. However, when the *OEJ* poet came to translate the story, he either did not recognise the parallelisms, or did not wish to retain them. So, the *OEJ* Judith does not sing a victory psalm, and the formulaic 'by the hand of a woman' is omitted in her speech (177ff). This is important in that it misses the significance of the fact that a woman killed Holofernes, which is expressly emphasised in *Jdt* to recall Deborah's prophecy to Barak. Generally, the *OEJ* poet weeded out the Hebraisms that the Vulgate retained, or missed their significance entirely, thereby obscuring the original author's literary intentions in the poem.

Apart from the obscuring of these parallelisms, the Old English poet makes some drastic revisions to plot and characterisation. Although the original order of *Jdt* is generally retained, the *OEJ* poet has no qualms in omitting or reducing sizeable parts of the narrative, and introducing new material.[17] One such example of the expansionary tendencies of *OEJ* is in lines 1–6. This passage seems to be an extended commentary on *V* 12:8, except that it is so altered that little of the original text remains. The *OEJ* poet also expands on *V* 12:10a, resulting in *OEJ* 7–14. In this, the poet emphasises the lavishness of the feast, and gives details of the acceptance of the invitation to the feast. In general, the poet expands to give greater colour to the narrative. Conversely, he omits other pieces of the action, such as Ozaias' blessing of 13:23–26. Also, the characterisation is greatly reduced in *OEJ*. Only Holofernes and Judith are significant, whereas *Jdt* has a plethora of minor characters, including Achior, Joakim / Eliachim the Priest, Judith's maidservant, and Vagao the eunuch. In *OEJ*, Vagao is merely 'ðara beardorinca' (276), and Achior and the High Priest are omitted entirely.

The reasons for the changes in the *OEJ* are reasonably clear. Firstly, the *OEJ* poet aimed at speeding up the narrative, so that subplots and extraneous details were omitted. Secondly, Christianisation meant deleting large non-Christian portions of the original text. Thirdly, reducing the number of characters allowed the audience to follow the story more easily when the story was orally transmitted. Also, the change in the ending and the addition of a doxology (346–9) marks the story as a distinctly Christian one and useful for the education of the laity. Finally, the process of cultural adaptation required expanding on events of importance to the Anglo-Saxons, and reduction of those that were not.

Cultural Adaptation

Jdt was written from a Jewish perspective within a predominantly Jewish society. Some small changes were made in its translation into Latin so as to accord with the doctrinal concerns of Jerome (eg. *G* 15:11,16:19 cf *V* 16:23). In the process of rendering *V* into Old English, the poet also aimed to transmute aspects of the culture into a social medium closer to that of the Anglo-Saxons. Evidence of this is found in the emphases on various social events in *OEJ*. The feast is highlighted and expanded, as is the battle – both of great interest to the Anglo-Saxons, but not so centrally important to the Jews. Along with this, there are instances of difference in aesthetic perceptions. A possible clash in aesthetics occurs when the people of *Jdt* mount Holofernes' head on the ramparts (*V* 14:7). The monastic poet may have considered this too barbaric for inclusion, as it is avoided in *OEJ*.

Apart from the minor changes and descriptions that betray the Anglo-Saxon nature of the *OEJ* poet there are some major expansions in the story that display the preoccupations of the poet's society. One such example is Holofernes' feast. In *Jdt*, direct description of the feast takes only four verses (*V* 12:10, 17–20). This is expanded to twenty-three lines in *OEJ* (7–12, 15–33), showing the importance of the feast to Anglo- Saxon society. The principal use of the feast is to emphasise the depravity of Holofernes' men.[18] Unlike one of the feasts in *Beowulf* (607ff), there is no 'hæleða hleahtor' (611), but rather the bellowing of drunken 'weagesiðas' ('companions in misery/ evil' – 16). The Old English poet also uses the feast to condemn excesses of alcohol:

> Swa se inwidda   ofer ealne dæg
> dryhtguman sine   drencte mid wine,
> swiðmod sinces brytta,   oð þæt hie on swiman lagon,
> oferdrencte his duguðe ealle,   swylce hie wæron deaðe geslegene,
> agotene goda gehwylces.   (28–32).

The poet's condemnation of drunkenness continues throughout *OEJ*. Holofernes collapses (67–9), and finally drink causes his metaphorical death – a precursor of his actual demise: 'he on swiman læg / druncen dohlwund.' ('he lay unconscious / drunk [and] mutilated.' – 106–7). The poet's attitude is not unique. In several other Old English monastic works the same stance against drunkenness is taken, as in *Judgement Day II*, where Heaven is described as a place where drunkenness will vanish, as well as all other damaging pleasures of the world (232–3). This same disdain of drunkenness can in any case be discerned at work in *Jdt*. It is obvious that alcohol contributed to Holofernes' downfall, following on from the contemporary Jewish attitude toward drunkenness.[19] The *OEJ* poet reflects this attitude, and expands it to exemplify his doctrinal concerns.

Another significant point is the absence of Judith from the feast. In *V* 12:10b,12 Holofernes invites her to the feast, but the *OEJ* poet makes no mention of this. Judith is fetched from the 'gysterne' and placed in Holofernes' pavilion (40–5). This may indicate that it was considered unseemly for a woman to be at a feast in Anglo-Saxon society. *Beowulf* (639–641) presents a possible objection, where the Queen is present at a feast. Even so, this could have been an exception to a rule, as the Queen first serves every warrior in the hall, and as such is not a guest, but the host. In contrast, Judith is the guest of Holofernes. This may have been one of the considerations of the Anglo-Saxon poet in prohibiting her presence in the hall. What is certain is that the Feast becomes a focal point in *OEJ*, as it was in Anglo-Saxon society.

Along with the feast, war was an important part of traditional Anglo-Saxon culture. *Jdt* does not go into great detail about the final battle between the Bethulians and Holofernes' men. It begins with Judith's council (*V* 14:1–5), tells of the advance of the Bethulians (*V* 4:7), spends most time recounting the enemy's efforts to wake Holofernes (*V* 4: 8–19), and ends with their flight (*V* 5:1–6) and the spoils of war (*V* 5:7,8). In comparison, the *OEJ* poet

expands the preparation for war (199–204) and the actual fighting (215–245, 291–310) – both important occurrences in traditional literature. This battle is told in the traditional form of Anglo-Saxon poems. The preoccupation with armour and armouring scenes also occurs in *Beowulf* (1441–1472), and poems such as *The Battle of Maldon* have many incidental references to swords, and other items of armour. The motifs of carrion-animals (204–211) are also traditional ones, as in *The Battle of Brunanburgh* where the raven, eagle, hawk and wolf also play the role of scavengers of corpses (58-61).[20]

Perhaps the most interesting change the *OEJ* poet makes from *V* is in the battle tactics. The Jewish Judith councils the warriors to act as though they would descend upon the plain to fight Holofernes' men (*V* 14:2b), 'sed quasi impetum facientes' ('but only as a feint'). In short, Judith proposes a tactic fundamentally the same as Gideon's: to intimidate the enemy, and only attack when they are in confusion. The attack itself is not meant to defeat the enemy, but rather to force them to discover the dead Holofernes. From an Anglo-Saxon point of view this is unacceptable. The warrior ethic rested on fighting on equal terms. The enemy was not to be driven off by intimidation or confusion, but by the superiority of fighting prowess. Without this, there was little glory to be won. This is exemplified by Byrhtnoth's admission of the Vikings over the ford at the river Pante in *The Battle of Maldon* 84–102. It is notable that his men did not kill the invaders as they were coming out of the water – obviously, he wanted to fight on equal terms. Certainly, a warrior of the *OEJ* poet's era would have considered the Bethulians cowardly for not directly confronting the enemy. As such, the tactics are altered in the Old English poem. Firstly, Judith councils direct attack: 'in sceaðena gemong, / fyllað folctogan fagum sweordum, / fæge frumgaras.' (193b–5a). The first thing the warriors do is engage in a spear-fight, followed by a shower of arrows, and then with a sword-fight (212–235). It is only after the enemy admits that 'swyrdegeswing swiðlic eowdon / weras Ebrisce' (240–1) that they try to rouse Holofernes. This way, the Bethulians have acted in the best traditions of the Anglo-Saxon warrior ethic. No doubt this was necessary, else the audience would have derided the Bethulians as cowardly, defeating the purpose of the story.

In many ways this allows comment on a previous battle in the story – Judith's decapitation of Holofernes. Notably, this event is recognised by the poet as being on equal terms with a battle, identifying it as a 'guðe' (123). Parallels between the two conflicts have been noted in Doubleday (1971:440) and Hermann (1976:5). It is evident that the poet's ethical approach to the Judaeo-Assyrian battle holds true for Judith's beheading of Holofernes. The Judaeo-Assyrian conflict was a head-on one, with no deception or feints involved. Equally, Judith's 'battle' needed to be deception-free. It does end up being fought on equal terms, Holofernes' drunken state offsetting Judith's womanhood and situation in the enemy camp. However, eliminating any element of deception necessitated altering much of the Apocryphal Judith's strategy.

For the Jewish author, it was quite acceptable to deceive, as long as the ends justified the means. This is exemplified by Jael, who killed the sleeping Sisera after promising him

protection (Judges 4:8,21). Also, Judith's use of sexuality to manipulate situations had its precedents. Esther used her sexuality to gain political power, thus saving the Jews, and Tamar acted as a prostitute to force the correct application of the marriage laws (Genesis 38). So, Judith uses her sexuality to ensnare Holofernes. *G* 10:4b is somewhat more direct than *V*, stating that she meant to 'beguile' every man who would look at her. This attitude was a common contemporary one, with a chronologically-related work expressing plainly that:

> ... women are evil .... They scheme treacherously how they might entice him [a man] to themselves by means of their looks. And whoever they cannot enchant by their appearance they conquer by a stratagem. ('Testament of Reuben' 5:1,2 in Charlesworth (1983:782-5))

However, the Vulgate softens, expands and moralises on this, pointing out that 'omnis ista compositio non ex libidine sed ex virtute pendebat.' ('All this adornment did not proceed from sensuality but from virtue'–*V* 10:4a). Despite the view of women as constantly scheming evil, *Jdt* points out that this 'trait of womankind' can be put to good effect; again, it is not inherently evil if the end jusitifies the means. However laudable this use of sexuality may have been, the *OEJ* poet saw the matter from a different perspective. Since Judith was to be a Christian heroine, she could hardly use her sexuality and maintain the Christian ideal of modesty. Thus, Judith's sexuality is minimised in *OEJ*, and even made incidental. Instead of it being Judith's sexuality that induces lust in Holofernes, the Assyrian general is presented as being inherently vice-ridden. It is Holofernes' evil nature that causes him to lust, not Judith's beauty. So, Judith is exonerated from the charge of deception – she is not to blame, rather it is Holofernes himself.[21]

Despite emphasising the battle-action, the *OEJ* poet does not ignore the incident of trying to wake Holofernes. Rather, he expands it and makes it into a wittily ironic passage. The warriors mill around outside the tent becoming more and more agitated, coughing and making noises to rouse Holofernes. They then grind their teeth to rouse him 'mid toðon torn þoligende' (272). Finally, one of the soldiers ventures into the tent and finds the corpse. This passage is expanded from *V* 14:12–14, where Vagao enters the tent to wake his Lord. Vagao's announcement to the people is quite short and to the point (14:14–16b). In comparison, the speech of *OEJ*'s soldier seems apocalyptic: 'þæt þære tide ys / mid niðum neah geðrungen, þe (we) sculon nu losian, / somod æt sæcce forweorðan.' (286b–8a). From here, the enemy flees, followed by the Bethulians with their distinctly Anglo-Saxon armour (212ff), and the enemy's distinctly Anglo-Saxon 'scildburh' (304). At this point, the Bethulians have defeated the enemy honourably – through direct conflict. It is now quite acceptable to attack the retreating enemy, just as the Wessex warriors pursued the Norsemen and hacked them down.[22]

Unlike *V* 15:5,6, the poet does not mention that the rest of Israel came to help. Rather, Bethuliah seems to take the place of Jerusalem and even Israel, and the Bethulians the place of the Israelites. The whole 'cneoris' ('tribe/ nation'– 323) carries the spoil into Bethuliah; there is no mention of any other tribe fighting or obtaining any of the spoil. This obscures

the motives of the *Jdt* author. He wished to show that Israel was a united nation, and that God blessed Israel as a whole, and allowed the nation as a whole to conquer its enemies. The *OEJ* poet had no such motivation. Rather, the importance of the story lay in showing that God helps whoever has faith in Him. It is this difference in aim coupled with the omission of anything distinctively Jewish that causes the *OEJ* poet to omit reference to the rest of Israel.

Allegorical Interpretations
There have been varying degrees of emphasis and depth of interpretation applied to the Old English *Judith*, with some commentators abstracting characters into totally figurative representations of religious or political concepts, while others maintain their distance from such a view. The most widely accepted interpretation is that Judith in some way represents the Church, and Holofernes Satan.[23] However, the poet's motivation for creating this allegorical configuration has never been considered directly. Was his primary aim to create an abstract message – an affirmation of the Church's eventual triumph over Satan? I tend to disagree. Certainly, elements of abstraction and allegorisation exist in *OEJ*, but the allegory cannot be taken too far. Of course, this raises the question as to why the poet would even introduce abstractions of characterisation and situation, if not for the sake of allegory.

The answer to this ultimately lies in the processes of Christianisation and cultural adaptation. Consider the abstraction of Holofernes and his men. Holofernes is presented as demonic, even – it has been claimed – as Satan himself. His society is one of deception and excess. This is effectively portrayed by the 'fleohnet' – the two-way mirror that allows him to see out of his bed-chamber, but no-one to see in – and by the feast as an example of a demonic gathering.[24] However, is Holofernes truly Satan, and his army the hosts of Hell? Certainly there is no sense of this in *Jdt*. The Jews fight the Assyrians as they have done every other enemy – they slaughter them. The pious Jewish ethic was to annihilate any enemy, as any enemy of the Jews was an enemy of God Himself.[25] Thus, no qualms were held about vindictive slaughter, as expressed in Psalms 136:9 (LXX): 'μακαριος ος κρατησει και εδαφιει τα νηπια σου προς την πετραν' ('Blessed is the one who takes and smashes your [Babylon's] little ones against the stones'). It also permits the Jews to boast about their victory as if it were a spiritual triumph:

> 'υἱοὶ κορασίων κατεκέντησαν αὐτοὺς / καὶ ὡς παῖδας αὐτομολούντων ἐτίτρωσκον αὐτούς, / ἀπώλοντο ἐκ παρατάξεως κυρίου μου.' ('The sons of maidens pierced them through / and wounded them as fugitive's children [i.e. slaves]. They perished from the battle line of Adonai' – *G* 16:12=*V* 16:14).

Thus, to destroy an enemy was to destroy something that is against God. Whatever is against God is evil, therefore destruction of an enemy was destruction of evil.

However, this attitude presented a real doctrinal dilemma to any monastic poet. How could the injunction to love one's enemies be obeyed whilst slaughtering them? Also, as Cross (1971:274,277) has pointed out, the Anglo-Saxon monastic community regarded

offensive military action as difficult to justify. Some even considered it homicide (pp. 280–1). How then were these problems created by *Jdt*'s offensive military action to be circumvented? The answer was either to place the battle in a spiritual sphere (as in *Christ and Satan* 365-454), avoid battle altogether, to present the enemy as either overtly bestial or demonic (e.g. perhaps Grendel in *Beowulf*), or to de-humanise them, as is the case with the Vikings in the *Battle of Maldon*, who are never named individually. They are an amorphous and anonymous mass of 'hæðene scealcas' (181). Also, it was fairly common to attribute demonic qualities to the enemy. Not only did this aid in doctrinal consistency, but it was a propaganda technique – a demonic enemy is easier to hate than a real individuated one. Pringle (1975:88) has pointed out that the Vikings were described in such terms as 'inimici Christi' ('enemies of Christ') – a satanic attribute, while one such Viking is described as 'the son of the Devil ... hostile in every way towards God.' If these 'demonic' phrases were commonly used to designate the enemy they cannot be taken as too firm a proof for any figurative interpretation of the demonic identity of characters. Instead, they function as de-humanising epithets. This de-humanisation of the enemy was precluded from being total, as in *The Battle of Maldon*, as Holofernes needed to be characterised and individualised. However, every other person in his army is rendered anonymous – Vagao is just 'a soldier'. The poet also takes pains to de-humanise Holofernes. Seeing as the only state of non-humanity is either as a beast, or as a demon, Holofernes is characterised as both. He is a 'hæðenan hund' (110), 'þone atolan' (75) and 'se inwidda' ('the wicked one' – 28). His army is similarly characterised as demonic; apart from the attributive phrases, they all undergo death and revive (30–1) – a distinctly non-human trait. So, the demonic attributes that have been observed are not placed there as an attempt to allegorise, but rather to de-humanise, so as to avoid any possible doctrinal conflict or breach of social conscience.

Apart from characterisation, there is no thematic or structural justification for a deeply allegorical interpretation. Consider Judith's keeping of the spoils of war given to her. It seems strange that the Old English poet did not follow *V* 16:23 (and perhaps also *G* 16:19) in having Judith reject all her earthly gifts (see above). This is allegorically inconsistent with many interpretations of the poem, and demonstrates well the limits of any such interpretation. It would make far more sense for her to reject the spoils, symbolising the rejection of evil pleasures and showing no concern for transitory earthly wealth. This is better explained by the process of cultural adaptation: it was the reward of a victor to receive the spoil from the defeated enemy (*OEJ* 323–340). To give up this spoil would imply that the warrior was not worthy of it in some way, perhaps implying that some underhand tactic was employed. Apart from this, the only other explanation involves the extremely unlikely possibility of the poet consciously rejecting the *V* text, and using the *G* text.

In another vein, Hermann (1976) argues that the fight is not meant to be interpreted in literal terms, but as a spiritual allegory. He points out that medieval theology allowed only Satan to go straight to Hell, as Holofernes does (107–121). Holofernes is also designated by such terms as 'deofulcunda' (61) and 'se inwidda' (28). The Assyrians are described as the

'ealdgeniðlan' (228) – a term usually used for Satan. However, this individual characterisation makes it far from obvious that the battle need be interpreted in spiritual terms. If the 'spiritual' approach is valid, then why is Satan/ Holofernes defeated before his army is? Why is Satan/ Holofernes beheaded? If it is an apocalyptic allegory, then what is the significance in the fact that a few of the Assyrians survive (309–10)? If it is not apocalyptic, then why does Satan become incarcerated in Hell?[26]

To answer these questions, one must posit a totally new apocalyptic sequence and post-apocalyptic interpretation. In short, the theory that the battle is a spiritual warfare results in more questions that answers. Even if it were claimed that the action was not allegorical, but only the characters and certain physical items (such as the 'fleohnet'), it is difficult to explain why arrows and spears are used by the Bethulians, weapons which are traditionally evil (e.g. Ephesians 6:16), and shields and breastplates are not prominently mentioned, despite their importance in the classic spiritual warfare passage of Ephesians 6:13–17. Again, arguing from the viewpoint of cultural adaptation offers the best explanation: the arrows and spears were used because they were traditional Anglo-Saxon weapons. There is no significance in them apart from this.

In a similarly allegorical mode, it has been argued that the Bethulians represent God's people – members of His Church. Certain lexical items point to the replacement of *Jdt*'s Jerusalem with Bethuliah (see above). Although Bethuliah is not the Old Testament Jerusalem, Hermann (1976:7) argues that it is described in terms of the heavenly city of Revelations. However, there are many reasons not to equate the two, as it offers no explanation as to why certain events occur. For example, why do the people take the spoil of the supposedly demonic hosts into the city? What is the significance of this in 'spiritual' terms? If Bethuliah is meant to be the Heavenly Jerusalem, it only retains that identity for fleeting moments, moments which lend no consistency to an overall allegorical interpretation. Another attempt at justification of this allegorical notion has been proposed by pointing out that the Bethulians fight on equal terms in *OEJ*, unlike *Jdt* where they dare not engage the enemy. Presumably, God strengthened the members of His Church so that they could attack the enemy head-on. However, this is better explained by the concerns of an Anglo-Saxon poet who wished to allow the Bethulians to win the battle by their own warrior prowess as much as by God's aid. If the Bethulians were too weak-willed to even fight, they would be despised by the heroic-thinking members of Anglo-Saxon society. Also, by this the Old English poet points out that a person must put effort into their own redemption.

Some scholars have also sought a deeper meaning not in the spiritual aspect, but in the political realm.[27] Swanton (1987:155) suggests that *OEJ* in some way validated fighting against the Viking marauders, relating physical conflict to moral righteousness. Certainly, equating these is part of a tradition, stretching as far back as Constantine's adoption of the cross as his standard symbol, and further back into Jewish works. However, the passage was probably not meant to be highly political. It seems rather to be *consolatio*-like – an

encouragement to a besieged people. Also, or alternatively, it could have played a conversionary function in promising help to those who embraced Christianity.

It is evident that a consistent allegory cannot be applied to the interpretation of *OEJ*. However, this does not absolutely preclude elements of the abstract or allegorical. Holofernes does have demonic attributes, Bethuliah does have a 'holy-city' type aspect, and Judith does portray ideals of Christian woman-hood. However, it is inadvisable, and soon evident that to extend these interpretations too far results in anomalies. Rather, the *OEJ* poet had specific reasons for emphasising the inhumanity of Holofernes and his men that did not rely on an allegorising motivation, but rather in the processes of Christianisation and cultural adaptation. He infused Judith and Bethuliah with ideal qualities, but more to display these qualities than to suggest an abstract interpretation. It must be recognised that any representation a character takes on is necessarily shifting, as the characters themselves are not as important as the tropological message – that God redeems those who have true faith in Him.[28]

Conclusion

Although many of the previous commentators on the Old English *Judith* have made reference to the obvious changes made in translation from the Vulgate to the poem,[29] few have attempted to analyse these changes from a process-motivated point of view.[30] I differ from previous scholars in proposing that the significant processes which motivated the Anglo-Saxon poet to alter events are Christianisation and cultural adaptation. These offer a far more valid account of the imagery and structure in the work than any allegorical interpretation. Furthermore, they aid in predicting the original length of the poem by suggesting which details may have been omitted by the poet. By eliminating the midrash-style of allegorical poetic interpretation, we can see that the intention of *Judith* was primarily tropological – to encourage people to have faith in God, and perhaps even to instil a sense of hope into a besieged people.

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NOTES

* All quotations from the Old English *Judith* are taken from Timmer's edition. Quotations from the Vulgate are from *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*. Other biblical references derive variously from the *Septuaginta*, *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, and *Novum Testamentum Graece*.

[1] In fact, Ælfric tried to shy away from the insurmountable doctrinal difficulties when called upon to translate Genesis as it unavoidably recounted such non-Christian doctrines as polygamy ('Vorrede zur Genesis', in Grein (1872:22–24)). Here, he was unable to reconcile the literal Genesis account with the drastic changes that Christianisation demanded on the text.

[2] Eusebius book 5:28 records how certain groups 'tampered with the divine Scriptures without fear', and book 3.25 mentions some of the many apocryphal works produced in the first four centuries CE. Also, see Aland (1987: 69, §7).

[3] See Renoir (1962:146) and Timmer (1944:181) for a similar observation. Magennis (1995:61) terms it a 'free reworking of the original'.

[4] This was partly due to the fact that *Jdt* was included in the Septuagint. The LXX was adopted b Christianity as the definitive edition of inspired received Scripture before Christ's time. The Anglc Saxons, like the rest of the Western Church, regarded *Jdt* as canonical to some degree until th Reformation. See Enslin (1972:50,51) and the introduction to the *Septuaginta*.

[5] Torrey (1945:92) points out that Judith's age (*G* 16:21–25) equalled that of the Maccabean perioc

[6] See especially *Jdt* 4:2, also 4:11. Daniel 12:11 (most probably) refers to Antiochus Epiphane' defilement o f the temple (167 BCE) as the 'abomination of desolation', indicating the sense o awe that Jerusalem was held in by the more religious-minded people of the time. See Brockingtoi (1961:40–49).

[7] Deuteronomy 23:3.

[8] Dan. 3:15 (2nd century CE) cf 1 Kings 18:20–40.

[9] Or perhaps 'pre-Pharasaical'. It is quite possible that the author was not part of a Pharasaical grou as such, but merely represents the conservative side of the anti-Hellenisitic spectrum. Certainly, he i: not perfectly fluent in the details of the Torah, as shown by Achior's conversion. Also, *Jdt* omits an elements of the miraculous, unlike the Pharisees (cf Tobit). Even so, there are many other parallels. Se Oesterley (1935:100); Dancy (1972:69–70).

[10] This is an extreme version of the Pharisaic notion of God as existing, yet not usually intervenin in human affairs. As Josephus (*Antiquities* 13.5.9, *War* 2.8.14) states, the Pharisees believed that certair events are the work of Fate, but mostly they are determined by Man's actions.

[11] For Pharisee and Sadducee viewpoints see Josephus' *War* 2.8.14. For Sheol see Tobit 3:6,10; Ber Sira 14:16, 21:10, 41:4, Josephus' *War* 2.8.11,14.

[12] E.g. *Judgement Day II* 254–271, in Dobbie (1942:58–67).

[13] lines 1530–1548 & 176–231 respectively.

[14] Doubleday (1975:438–440) gives a structural analysis which emphasises such parallelisms. Cook (1896:note to line 1) points out a verbal parallel between lines 6b–7a and 344b–345a. Agreeing with Woolf are Campbell (1971:165), Huppe (1970:137) and Foster (1982:92). Among those whc believe the poet to be fragmentary are Renoir (1962:146), Chamberlain (1975:137), Timmer (1961:2) and Dobbie (1954:lix).

[15] By this I refer to the contemporary belief that historical events and periods were associated in some way with spiritual states, or events. Identifying Nebuchadnezzar as the King, for example, would bring up all the spiritual connotations associated with his reign in other parts of the Jewish corpus (e.g. Daniel).

[16] However, Judith's song does not follow Deborah's in form. Judith's is more like a battle psalm, with God called a 'warrior' (v.2) and with images of horsemen, battles, and judgement, with a possible element of the apocalyptic thrown in (*G* 16:15-17=*V* v18-21).

[17] The only obvious alteration is the reference to 10:21 in *OEJ* 46–53, coming after the parallel passage to chapter 12.

[18] See Magennis (1983:332–336).

[19] 'If you wish to live prudently, abstain completely from drinking ... then you shall not die before your allotted time.' 'Testament of Judah' 16:1–3, *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* in Charlesworth (1983: 795–802).

[20] See Fry (1972:102–105) for an extensive list of 'beasts of battle' devices.

[21] A possible objection to this interpretation could be found in the attributive 'ælfscinu' (14) which appears to mean 'beauty that incites sinful thoughts/ actions' (cf *Genesis A* 1877 & 2730). Even so, it is not necessarily true that this implies that Judith deliberately caused Holofernes' lust. In fact, it would be entirely out of character given the aim of the OE poet to exemplify Christian precepts. See Belanoff (1993:250,1) and Swanton (1987:160) for a discussion of this term. Likewise avoided is the use of flattery (*Jdt* 11:8) and ambiguity (eg. *V* 11:16). In fact, Judith does not even speak to Holofernes in the part of the poem remaining to us. However, Judith would have had only one such occasion available to her according to *V* – in the banquet scene. Woolf (1955:171) and Pringle (1975:95) argue that sexuality is important in the poem, specifically that Judith's chastity is a major concern of the poet. However, there are no further incidents apart from those in the Vulgate which emphasise chastity. *OEJ* merely retains the convictions of the *Jdt* poet.

[22] *Battle of Brunanburgh*, 17-31

[23] On the allegorical side are Hermann (1976), Doubleday (1971), and Astell (1989). Campbell (1971) accepts the allegorical view, but also maintains that *OEJ* is meant as a story as well (p.165). Pringle (1975:95) rejects allegorical interpretations, preferring an allegorical one. Chamberlain (1975:152,154–6) offers the best argument against allegory. He prefers a political meaning (pp.144,158), as does Cook (1896:xxix–xxxiii). For specific allegorical identifications of Judith and Holofernes, see Campbell (1971:155,165,172), Doubleday (1971:438), Hermann (1976:4), Tyler (1992:17), Astell (1989:120-3) – who identifies Judith as Christ and Holofernes as Satan, and Huppé (1970:166–70,186–7), who relates Holoferne's to the 'prince of darkness', and Judith to 'the daughter of faith'. By allegory here, I refer to the interpretation of a narrative as symbolising another non-superficial narrative.

[24] See Berkhout & Doubleday (1973) and Magennis (1983).

[25] e.g. see Judges 5:31, 1 Samuel 15:3

[26] cf Revelations 20:2–3. Although Satan is 'loosed for a season' after a millennium, this does not result in the apocalyptic battle. Also see *Christ and Satan*, 441–454 for a contemporary objection to Hermann's thesis.

[27] Chamberlain (1975:157–159) suggests the poem reflects the situation around the time of Æthelred. Cook (1896:xii,xv) relates its composition to the daughter of Charles the Bald, and Huppé (1970:147) considers Æthelflæd the Mercian a likely inspiration for the character of Judith, although he ultimately remains non-committal.

[28] This denies that realistic characterisation and the significance of individual characters is overwhelmingly important in *OEJ*. In fact, Holofernes and Judith are less realistically drawn than in *Jdt*. This is because the message was of primary importance; the characters themselves only serve to provide protagonists in a situation that illustrates this message. This is not to imply that the characters and situations are allegorical. *OEJ* is a straightforward narrative, with a moral to be deduced at the end. cf Campbell (1975:165)'s view, who maintains that Judith is both wholly allegorical and realistic simultaneously. I see the realism of Judith as not being a specific concern of the *OEJ* poet, unlike *Jdt*. Again, I stress that everything in *OEJ* is not allegory and symbol, but a narrative with infrequent touches of metaphor and symbolism. The fact that must not be lost sight of is that *OEJ* is a story with a moral, not a succession of symbols lying beneath a narrative veneer.

[29] Campbell (1971:165), and Magennis (1983).

[30] Doubleday (1971:436) analyses it from the 'principle' of contrast, or the process of contrasting major elements in the poem, and takes note of some of the changes made between the Vulgate and *OEJ*. Magennis (1995) likewise considers the poem in terms of aspects of its source.

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