ABSTRACT

The End of the Journey: The Rhetoric of Conclusions in Old English Poetry

Ginger Fielder Hanchey, Ph.D.

Mentor: Jeannette Marsh, Ph.D.

For much of the twentieth century critics of Old English poetry dismissed it as aesthetically sub-par, especially complaining about its formulaic and repetitive nature. In the last thirty years or so Old English scholars have recovered its reputation by reading it from within its own oral-derived context; because Old English poetry originates from an oral tradition rather than a written one, we must begin our understanding of it with an understanding of its oral-traditional roots. Formulaic or repeated structures often designate rich and complex meaning for an audience attuned to its traditions. In this spirit, my dissertation looks at an oft-repeated theme--the idea of heaven as a homeland--and examines the ways in which this oral-derived feature works structurally to convey different kinds of meaning. In a surprisingly high number of poems, for example, it appears right at the end. As I argue, its structural placement there signals to an audience that the poem is coming to a close and additionally works as a metaphor for the act of poetic creation itself--the poem is a kind of journey that ends with a sense of stability.

The structural and metapoetic functions of the motif are developed extensively in sections one and two of this work. Section one examines the various ways that the motif works as a structural marker at the beginning or end of a speech act or at the beginning or end of a manuscript section division. It also accounts for the motif's relationship to a newly identified type-scene. Section two explores Anglo-Saxon conceptions of verbal art and particularly the cultural metaphor of verbal art as a kind of journey.

By understanding *how* traditional texts make meaning we come much closer to reading them at the most sophisticated levels possible.

The End of the Journey: The Rhetoric of Conclusions in Old English Poetry

by

Ginger Fielder Hanchey, B.A., M.A.

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Dianna M. Vitanza, Ph.D., Chairperson

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Approved by the Dissertation Committee

_____

Jeannette K. Marsh, Ph.D., Chairperson

_____

D. Thomas Hanks, Jr., Ph.D.

_____

Hope Johnston, Ph.D.

_____

Britt Mize, Ph.D.

_____

Jon E. Singletary, Ph.D.

_____

David J. White, Ph.D.

Accepted by the Graduate School

August 2013

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J. Larry Lyon, Ph.D., Dean

Page bearing signatures is kept on file in the Graduate School.

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Just as no Anglo-Saxon poem could exist outside the tradition in which it takes shape, neither could this project have been possible without the support and prior research of a great many people. In so many ways this dissertation owes its being to influences beyond me.

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For Dan and for Oliver,
who have walked with me
on this journey

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Þa us help bicwom,
þæt us to hælo hyþe gelædde,
godes gæstsunu, ond us giefe sealde
þæt we oncnawan magun ofer ceoles bord
hwær we sælan sceolon sundhengestas,
ealde yðmearas, ancrum fæste.
Utan us to þære hyðe hyht staþelian,
ða us gerymde rodera waldend,
halge on heahþu, þa he heofonum astag.

Then help came to us, that piloted us to salvation in port, God's Spirit-Son, and granted us grace that we might know a place where we shall secure our steeds of the deeps, our old horses of the waves, securely with anchors over the ship's side.

Let us found our hopeful expectation upon that port which the Ruler of the skies, the Holy One in the heights, laid open to us when he ascended into the heavens.
-Christ II (850-66)

Almost all of Old English poetry survives in just four manuscripts created around the year 1,000.[1] The poems in these manuscripts range from just a few lines to 3,182 lines and span several different categories of genre, including heroic poems, elegies, saints' lives, riddles, and gnomic verses.[2] Not counting riddles, forty-three poems can be found in these four manuscripts.[3] Though no one has documented it to my knowledge, at least eighteen of these Old English

[1] For more background, see Alexander, *A History of Old English Literature*. It should be noted that some manuscripts also contain other non-poetic texts.

[2] These genres are modern distinctions.

[3] I limit the current study to the poetry in these four major poetic manuscripts and do not include riddles in my survey of Old English poetry. The distinctive style of the riddles seems to preclude the use of the heavenly home motif.

poems end with some reference to an ultimate heavenly home.[4] Within the context of Old English studies, this number is significant--many projects that chart patterns in Old English poetry rely on numbers that are much smaller.[5]

To begin any kind of understanding of what this frequency might mean--of what significance it has for our understanding of Old English poetry, we must consider the poems from within their oral-traditional context. Old English poetry operates differently than Middle English poetry or Romantic poetry or modern poetry because it originates from a purely oral culture and thus requires sometimes very different interpretive strategies. Walter Ong and others have documented the different cognitive processes used to create and receive oral works as opposed to those used to create and receive literary ones; the technology of writing fundamentally changed the way we tell stories. For example, where once storytelling was additive in nature, writing technology made possible another way of thinking that led to subordinative storytelling.[6] Forms that were once the basic building blocks of storytelling like formulas, themes, and type-scenes dropped out of use. Formulas in Old English poetry, in general terms, are half-lines of poetry that appear in multiple places throughout the poetic canon; oral-traditional themes are groups of ideas or words that

[4] Two other poems included in Bradley's anthology but not in the four major manuscripts also end with the heavenly home motif: *Maxims II* and *Judgment Day II*.

[5] See Foley's account of scholarship surrounding the widely discussed "Beasts of Battle" theme, for instance, which appears in twelve iterations, *Immanent Art*, 224-31.

[6] Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, 36-8.

provide a kind of backdrop for an action or description[7] and so are to be distinguished from our modern, literary definition of a theme; and type-scenes are story-patterns that recur throughout the poetic canon. By the time oral theorists like Milman Parry and Albert Lord began charting and describing these repetitive features in the early twentieth century, modern readers had become insensitive to the rich nuances of the forms and judged oral-derived texts as aesthetically sub-par to their literary, i.e. written, counterparts.

In his seminal study *Immanent Art* as well as in many of his other publications, John Miles Foley argues for a new way of viewing oral-formulaic elements found in oral traditional works like Old English poetry. Though oral formulaic theorists too long dismissed the aesthetic quality of oral traditional works by treating them as dry equations, Foley reevaluates their artistic potential by trying to view them on their own oral-traditional terms and in doing so finds new ways of appreciating their aesthetic qualities. Rather than seeing the composer of the text as artist making artistic choices, oral formulaic theorists viewed the composer instead as an assembler of parts not originating with him. Foley warns against viewing a text as a series of slots to be filled with prefabricated formulas that were themselves little more than worn, unimaginative place-holders. For Foley, the problem with this view lies in its limitation of the aesthetic power of the texts. While formulas, systems,

[7] See Fry, "Old English Oral-Formulaic Themes and Type-Scenes." See also ch. 3 in this study.

collocations, and other kinds of iterations in oral-derived poetry may seem simplistic or unoriginal, they actually carry with them extra-textual associations steeped in tradition--what Foley labels "traditional referentiality." Thus, these iterations convey meaning that goes beyond what their single units denote. Poets may activate any number of associations by mentioning a simple formula, system, collocation, or other iteration, and poetic skill often involves activating them at just the right moment.

Of course these poems, born of an oral tradition and harboring oral modes of thought, survive in written--not oral--form, raising questions about how "oral" or how "literary" they really are. For years scholars debated the issue, though recently the argument has begun to wane as new scholarship recognizes a certain futility in the debate.[8] The term "oral-derived" acknowledges the ambivalent quality of works that survive in written, or literary, form, but which originate from a purely oral, or non-literary, culture. Thus, the phrase "oral-derived" allows scholars to concede the hybrid nature of many Old English poems, which often bear the imprint of both oral and literary cultures.

In order to fully appreciate an oral-derived text, then, it becomes necessary to interpret it somewhat differently than one would interpret a non-traditional or literary text; we must begin to look more closely at the associative meanings in play and sometimes we must first take the time to define them.

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[8] For a recent overview of the scholarship on this topic, see O'Brien O'Keeffe, "Orality and Literacy: The Case of Anglo-Saxon England," *Medieval Oral Literature*, 121-40. See also Mize, *Traditional Subjectivities*, 25-7; and Amodio, *Writing the Oral Tradition*.

Foley and others do this by looking outward. They use the larger field, Old English poetry for example, and catalogue appearances of an iteration to determine meanings often associated with it. Understanding the big picture informs the specific moment of iteration because the iteration acts metonymically.

In the following study, I wish to engage in this consideration of Old English aesthetics, looking not only at how oral-derived texts make meaning, but also at new possibilities for understanding some rhetorical features of oral-derived texts. The twenty similar poetic conclusions offer a beginning point for considering how a single motif can make meaning in Old English poetry.[9] The motif's frequent appearance at such a significant structural position suggests that it held a special structural use in Old English poetic tradition--a use that can be observed in contexts other than conclusions. By identifying all of the instances of heavenly home motifs in Old English poetry and considering their contextual placement, we can better chart the traditional referentiality of the motif and any structural uses it might carry. Part I of this study attempts such an examination and records and analyzes the various structural functions of the heavenly home motif. Throughout this project, I define the heavenly home motif as including a sense of a.) reaching heaven or being on a journey to heaven *or* b.) heaven being a final place. The motif does not have to be a collocation of ideas and it does not

[9] The twenty poems can be found in the four major poetic manuscripts (18) and in the various additional manuscripts (2) that Bradley includes in his anthology.

have to include a particular word.[10] I do not include in my tally of heavenly home motifs a reference to a journey if it does not also convey an accompanying sense of place, nor do I include any reference to heaven if it does not also convey an accompanying sense of home, either for divine beings or humans.

Chapter Two begins this structural catalogue and examines the heavenly home motif as a marker of various speech acts in Old English poetry. The motif appears at the beginning or end of many speeches and prayers and sets off the speech from the surrounding narrative.

Chapter Three extends this examination of the motif's structural uses and accounts for the motif's behavior within and contribution to a type-scene that I identify and call the "Divine Visitation" type-scene. To my mind this multiform has not yet been identified or described, though it appears at least fourteen times in the Old English poetic canon and in at least ten poems. As type-scenes go, it is rather small, following a two-part structure: 1.) a divine being speaks or a divine event occurs and 2.) the character(s) is(are) emboldened. This newfound spirit of boldness is almost always expressed through variation, a common technique in Anglo-Saxon poetry that involves repeating an idea with different words. Type-scenes are often accompanied by other elements that may commonly appear with

[10] See Foley, who argues effectively that Old English employs "a one-to-many relationship between an essential traditional idea and its verbal expression" (*Traditional Oral Epic* 355). He goes on to say that "[i]t is no accident…that we do not find occurrences of the "Hero on the Beach," "Exile," or any other Old English multiforms sharing a common fund of formulaic diction, nor is that 'lack' a sign that these narrative patterns are no 'true themes,'" (358). Though the heavenly home motif is a motif and not a theme, Foley's argument about the unconstraining nature of Old English is still relevant here.

the multiform, though they do not appear as part of the form in every iteration of it. The heavenly home motif is one of five common accompanying elements of the divine visitation type-scene and the others include "divine being or vision exits or vanishes," "night turns into day or darkness into light," "protagonist carries out task," and "beasts of battle theme is invoked." A comparison of the many iterations of the type-scene suggests that at least part of its referential meaning is a strong sense of transformation or change. As part of the type-scene, the heavenly home motif participates in this referential meaning, absorbing and carrying it with it in other appearances outside of the type-scene. Michael Drout's memetic theory helps explain the motif's relationship to the type-scene, and the transference of meaning from the type-scene to the motif and vice-versa. That the heavenly home motif works with the divine visitation type-scene to signal transformation or change is particularly interesting in light of the motif's popular use at the end of a poem, when a poet is transitioning from performance to ordinary speech, and also in light of its frequent appearance at the beginning or end of a manuscript section, which is examined in the next chapter.

Chapter Four continues to chart the structural uses of the heavenly home motif by observing the motif in its manuscript context. The motif often appears at the beginning or end of a manuscript section division, raising interesting questions about how an Anglo-Saxon scribe may have perceived the motif as a kind of structural marker. Chapter Four relies on the work of Old English manuscript scholars like Katherine O'Brien O'Keeffe and R.D. Fulk as well as of

performance theorists like Richard Bauman. Performance theory has been usefully applied to manuscript studies and helps account for not only how evidence of oral performance has been preserved in the manuscript texts, but also how scribes enact a kind of re-performance as they write out an oral poem. What was used by poets as a boundary for their oral performance was apparently also used by scribes as a boundary for a narrative unit in the manuscript. Manuscript evidence suggests that scribes, if not a broader Anglo-Saxon audience, recognized the heavenly home motif as a structural marker.

The evidence of the chapters in Part I of this study, then, suggest the heavenly home motif worked structurally in various ways in Old English poetry. Part II focuses on how the motif works specifically at the end of poems. As I argue, its structural placement there signals to an audience that the poem is coming to a close. I additionally argue that the idea of coming to the end of a journey that the heavenly home motif conveys also comments on the poem's activity; its conclusion is mimicked by the heavenly home motif and so the motif works as a metaphor for the act of poetic creation itself. Thus, the poem is a kind of journey that ends with a sense of stability.

Chapter Five begins this study with a brief introduction to metapoetics in Old English poetry. Though metapoetics is an established topic in classical studies (which examines other forms of oral poetry), it is a relatively unknown field in Old English studies. Antonina Harbus' *Cognitive Approaches to Old English Poetry* argues that Old English poets shaped their poetry on the concept of the mind, but fails to

provide anything close to a general survey of metapoetics in Old English poetry. To fill this void in scholarship and to better understand how the heavenly home motif might be a comment on poetic creation, I gather and examine metapoetic descriptions from the Old English canon, recognizing that any first step toward such an important topic must be the opening of the gate onto the field rather than an exhaustive and complete representation of the field itself. Metaphor theory outlined by scholars like George Lakoff and Mark Johnson helps illuminate the ways Anglo-Saxon poets conceived of their art, and the various metapoetic instances in Old English poetry suggest that Anglo-Saxons used many different approaches toward creating metaphors for poetry, including paratactic style, and semantic and phonological relationships.

While Chapter Five looks broadly at metapoetics in Old English poetry, Chapter Six focuses more specifically on a single metapoetic concept: the idea of poetry being a kind of journey. Many Old English poems feature journeying prominently, but the idea is bound up with verbal art in many other ways. Chapter Six offers a case study of the various associations between journeying and verbal art in a selection of Old English poetry, beginning with *Andreas*. In at least six ways the *Andreas* poet links verbal art to the concept of journeying. Other poems like *Exodus* draw from the concept of a journey for their narrative shape, even adapting a source's structure to follow the format of a journey. In another class of poems, the journeying theme takes on prominence not through the poem's structure, but through a high level of repetition of the journeying theme, as in *The Descent into Hell*. And finally, a group of autobiographical poems like *The Wife's Lament*, *The*

Seafarer, and *Widsith* equate the poetic tale with the experience of journeying. The strong cultural association between word-use and journeying evident in Old English poetry supports the idea that Anglo-Saxons may have conceived of the life-span of a poem as a kind of journey that runs out.

Chapter Seven closes the section by looking closely at endings and beginnings in Old English poetry and accounting for the ways that they work as metapoetic comments. Many poems, for example, begin with an account of creation at the opening of a poet's creative act and end with a reference to reaching an ultimate heavenly home at the moment a poet has reached the end of his song. A survey of poems that end with the motif demonstrates that the heavenly home motif fits thematically with the rest of the poem to varying degrees and suggests its conventional use as an ending. Various reasons may account for its popularity as a concluding device, including its traditional referentiality of transformation and victory. The transformational meaning of the motif helps ease the poet and his audience out of performance and into ordinary social exchanges, and its association with victory lends the poet and poem a sense of credibility and victory just as the performance ends. Because the motif implicitly or explicitly evokes God, it may also be used as a kind of good luck talisman just before the poet faces the judgment of his audience at the end of his poem. And finally, the heavenly home motif offers a sense of stability and continuance for a poem that must inevitably come to an end. Though the words of the poet cannot last forever, the idea of a heavenly homeland gives a reassuring sense of both humanity's and the poem's continuance in some other iteration.

By focusing on a single motif--in this case, the popular idea of a heavenly homeland--we can gain much understanding about how Old English oral poetry makes meaning and how Anglo-Saxons conceived of their verbal art.

PART I

STRUCTURAL USES OF THE HEAVENLY HOME MOTIF

CHAPTER TWO

The Heavenly Home Motif as Marker of Speech Acts

Throughout Old English poetry the heavenly home motif can be found at the end of speech acts like personal addresses or prayers. Its frequent use in these expressions bears a striking resemblance to its use at the end of Old English poems and prompts us not only to define this tradition, but also to consider how the motif and its placement at the conclusion of speeches or prayers makes meaning. In the following chapter I account for the many instances of the motif as a concluding device for speech acts, paying particular attention to its occurrences at the end or beginning of a character's speech who is on the verge of dying or departing the earthly realm. I use a speech in *Elene* to closely examine how the motif makes meaning in its context, noting that its structural placement lends an autonomy to the speech and contributes to the thematic tension of the passage. Comparing this particular speech to three others like it helps us understand that the motif acts as a connecting device between speech and narrative as well as between a character and his audience. After examining the way a motif works at the end or beginning of someone's last earthly words, I consider how it makes meaning at the end of two prayers in *Elene*, noting that Judas' characterization as the most eloquent rhetorician of his people lends the motif as he uses it to close prayers a certain rhetorical respectability. I also point to a metonymic feature of the motif at the end of Judas' prayers. Finally, I call attention to one last function of the motif in

examining how its repetition in *Elene* foregrounds plot development. In these many ways the heavenly home motif at the end of a speech act contributes meaning to the passages that surround it.

The Motif as Boundary Marker for Speech Acts

Numerous examples exist of Old English poetic characters closing their addresses with the heavenly home motif. The famous speech of the cross in *The Dream of the Rood* ends this way, with the cross describing its role in a person's final journey to heaven before the dreamer takes over again as the poem's speaker:

> "....ac ðurh ða rode sceal rice gesean
> of eorðwege æghwylc sawl
> weo þe mid wealdende wunian þenceþ."
> Gebæd ic me þa to þan beame bliðe mode,
> elne mycle, þær ic ana wæs mæte werede.[1]
>
> "…but through that Cross every soul which purposes to dwell with the Ruler shall find its way from the earthly path into the kingdom."
> Then, in happy spirit and with much fortitude I worshipped that tree where I was, alone with little company." (119-124a)

The heavenly home motif marks the significance of the shift in speakers. In *Christ and Satan*, Christ (502-10) and Satan (272-8) both have speeches that end with the motif as the last idea. Guthlac in *Guthlac A* likewise finishes his address to the demons who torture him with an allusion to a heavenly home (681b-4a).

Added to these examples is another subset of speeches that end with the motif--speeches given as the last words of a character before he or she dies or ascends to heaven. Judas' father's dying words in *Elene* (526-7) offer one example of

[1] Unless otherwise noted, all Old English quotations throughout this project are from *The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records*. The translations are taken from S. A. J. Bradley, *Anglo-Saxon Poetry* except where noted otherwise.

the motif extending meaning in multiple ways within a single text. Its structural placement at the end of the speech works referentially to offset Judas' father's words from the words that surround it. Because the motif closes so many poems and other speeches, it acquires referential meaning as a boundary marker of text. Judas' father's speech is embedded as a recollection in Judas' speech to his fellow Jews, and the heavenly home motif acts as a separating partition between the two. In this way Judas' father's speech is set apart as a kind of discrete entity within Judas' speech.

The preceding text corroborates this notion by lending special weight to the speech in another way. The poem builds climactic tension as Helen's and the Jewish nation's search for wisdom continually narrows until it finally culminates with Judas' father's speech. When Helen arrives to seek the true cross she whittles the crowd of learned Jewish men down from three thousand to one thousand to five hundred and finally to one man when Judas at last is forced to speak up among the Jewish intellectuals and explain to them the story for which Helen is looking--the account of Christ's death on the cross given to him by his father. In this way the speech itself is given special importance that is reiterated with the concluding heavenly home motif. The text points to the speech as a culminating moment, and its conclusion lends it an autonomy--the ending helps it resemble autonomous poems that also conclude with the motif.

The motif and its position also contribute to Judas' characterization as a man constrained by longstanding tradition. Judas' father's last words fittingly lay out Judas' inheritance, an inheritance in this case not of worldly goods but of cultural

shame, law and tradition, and finally an eternal home. Judas' people executed Christ, and his father passes both that information and the exhortation to keep it a secret onto Judas. If the secret is exposed, all of Jewish law and tradition will be overthrown and the Jewish people will no longer maintain control. Even the secret is a kind of inheritance, received as it is from his father who in turn received it from his father before him. The promise of a heavenly dwelling at the end of his father's address extends the bequeathal into something more closely resembling the giving of land or property in last testaments.[2] As the chief inheritance--"the best of rewards" and the most long-lasting, it occupies an appropriate position at the end of the speech, particularly in a poem that delights in establishing progressions of meaning, as demonstrated by Helen's narrowing of the multitude that precipitates the recollection. The heavenly home motif is the culminating inheritance.

As such, it also provides a strong motivation for Judas' refusal to help Helen find the true cross. Judas goes to extraordinary lengths to keep his people's secret from Helen. He first lies to her repeatedly and finally chooses to be thrown into a well to die of hunger rather than disclose the secret. Only after seven days of starvation does he finally agree to aid in the search. His father's warning, closed as it is with the promise of eternal life in heaven, binds him to secrecy. The concluding reference to heaven fortifies his father's words and raises the stakes; exposing the secret not only violates the dying wishes of his father, but it also jeopardizes his eternal reward.

[2] For more on Anglo-Saxon wills, see Drout, ch. 5, "Anglo-Saxon Wills and the Inheritance of Tradition."

The heavenly home motif at the end of Judas' father's speech conveys several meanings and resembles other uses of the motif in Old English poetry. *Christ II*, *Guthlac B*, and *Juliana*, for example, also contain speeches of the dying and departing who, like Judas' father, end or begin their remarks with a reference to a heavenly home. The motif sets off Christ's speech to his followers before he ascends to heaven in *Christ II*, appearing just before Christ begins his speech (472b-6). Similarly, it marks the end of Guthlac's dying address to his servant in *Guthlac B* (1023-46) and it marks the end of Juliana's speech to a multitude in *Juliana* just before she is executed and martyred (657b-69a).[3] While it seems natural to expect a reference to heaven in the context of dying or departing, particularly as a description of or reference to the next stage for the speaker, in three of these four instances the motif is used more intricately. Juliana introduces the motif as she warns her listeners to guard against enemies who might prevent them from entering heaven. The narrative that leads up to Christ's final words in *Christ II* ends with a foreshadowing of the reward Christ's thanes receive in heaven for praising him at his ascension and with Christ readying himself to enter heaven. Like its use in *Elene*, the motif as speech marker in these two poems accomplishes more than a simple acknowledgment of the afterlife that the dying/departing speaker is about to move into. Instead, as in *Elene*, the motif in *Christ II*, and *Juliana* refers to the afterlife with a view toward those still living on earth--that is, the reference to

[3] Though the motif does not fall precisely at the last of Juliana's speech, the two brief ideas that follow it—Juliana's command for them to pray for her when she is (implicitly) before God in heaven and a wish for them to have peace and love forever—are closely enough connected to the heavenly home motif to warrant classifying it as the end of the speech.

heaven as home is directed toward the ones who will be left behind when the departing ones finally make their way out of this world.

The motif then acts as an interesting bridge both between the speech and the narrative and also between the speaker and his or her audience. Appearing as it does on the borders between speech and narrative, it at once connects the two and marks their distinctions. In much the same way it also connects characters otherwise on the verge of being separated by death or a departure from the world. The assumption of the texts is that the speakers--Judas' father Symon, Christ, and Juliana--are unquestionably bound for heaven. The speakers in turn pass on the promise of heaven in whatever ways they can, marking their audiences for the same destiny that is immanent for them. As the text is linked by the motif--it connects narrative and speech--so too are the speakers and their audiences linked by the common destiny that it promises. It is interesting that this intricacy of meaning is not only limited to Cynewulf's signed poems, but also appears in three of four of them. The motif's similar functions in these poems present interesting data for the question of how "Cynewulfian" these and other poems really are.[4]

The Motif as a Boundary Marker for Prayer

On only two occasions in the extant body of Old English poetry, the heavenly home motif closes another kind of speech act: prayer. In both instances the prayer comes from the mouth of Judas in *Elene*, the Jewish nation's most eloquent

[4] For more on this discussion, see Puskar, "Hwa Þas Fitte Fegde: Questioning Cynewulf's Claim on Authorship," and Orchard, "Both Style and Substance: The Case for Cynewulf."

rhetorician.[5] The poem goes to great lengths to establish Judas as rhetorically gifted and this marked giftedness corroborates the idea that the heavenly home ending was considered an artful marker for the close of a rhetorical unit. Three times the text singles Judas out as exceptionally well-spoken (417b-19a; 543b-6; 589-95b). In fact, his facility with language is the first descriptive characteristic of him in the text; when he speaks up among the most elite of the learned Jews, the narrative introduces him as "wordes cræftig" ("artful with words" 417b) and "gidda gearosnotor" ("very skillful with speeches" 418a).[6] For good measure, the poem reiterates his unusual talent in two other places, leaving little doubt of Judas' rhetorical skill. His characterization as artful wordsmith suggests that his use of the heavenly home motif at the end of his prayers is somehow rhetorically satisfying. Whether this was an established closing for prayer in poetry or an interesting twist on the form--combining the established ending of other poetic forms with the format of prayer--is ultimately unknowable owing to the limited amount of Old English poetry that exists, but in either case Judas' characterization as master rhetorician imbues his prayers and their similar endings with a stylistic respectability.

The ending of his first prayer additionally works with the prayer's beginning to form an envelope structure, and this widely recognized Old English rhetorical

[5] It should be noted here that the heavenly home ending in Judas' second prayer comprises much of the prayer. The two prayers are not proportionally similar and neither are their endings; the second prayer of nineteen lines is much shorter than the first with seventy-six lines. The two endings also differ in that the heaven-home motif in Judas' second prayer involves other ideas: Stephen is in heaven for his great achievements which we can read about in books (821-6). Even though they appear differently in each of the prayers the fact remains that the motifs allow Judas to move out of his addresses to God.

[6] Translations my own.

device extends the argument that Judas closes his prayer in a manner worthy of his reputation.[7] The prayer concludes with a reference to the furthest reaches of time, an eternal existence, and it similarly begins with a reference to time's beginning, God's creation of the universe. The structures of time provide a satisfying framework for Judas' request. The two markers also work together to represent God's power to create and govern creation in a moment when Judas needs on his side a miraculous act of creation, smoke rising from the earth, and a higher governing authority than Helen. The creation/eternity pairing works here as it does elsewhere in Old English poetry to enclose a rhetorical unit.[8]

With so much evidence that Judas' endings act as an artful closure to his prayers, the question becomes whether or not the motif adds more to the text than simply a stylish signal to the audience of the prayers' conclusions. Besides tying off a rhetorical unit, and in this case a rather unusual tying off for prayer, does the motif contribute to the meaning of the prayer or of the poem in other ways? Taking context and repetition into consideration, the motif does seem to work as more than a structural marker.

Within the contexts of the two individual prayers, the motif appears also to act as a metonymic representation of faith. In both of the prayers Judas connects his belief in Christ with a concept of heaven as home. The first prayer comes after Judas has decided to help Helen in her search for the true cross. He prays that God will cause smoke to rise from the ground where the cross is buried. In this first prayer

[7] See Bartlett, *The Larger Rhetorical Patterns in Old English Poetry*, and Tyler, "Deliberate Verbal Repetition," 511 and 529.

[8] See ch. 6.

he moves directly from asking God for smoke to saying that this miracle will add to his belief that Christ rules homes in heaven:

> Forlæt nu, lifes fruma,
> Of ðam wangstede wynsumne up
> Under radores ryne rec astigan
> Lyftlacende. Ic gelyfe þe sel
> Ond þy fæastlicor ferhð staðelige,
> Hyht untweondne, on þone ahangnan crist,
> Þæt he sie soðlice sawla nergend,
> Ece ælmihtig, Israhela cining,
> Walde widan ferhð wuldres on heofenum,
> A butan ende ecra gestealda.
>
> Author of life! Let a pleasant smoke now rise up from the spot, drifting on the air beneath the sky's expanse. I shall the better believe and the more firmly found my spirit and my undoubting hope upon the crucified Christ, that he is truly the Saviour of souls, eternal, almighty King of Israel and shall everlastingly command the eternal abodes of glory in the heavens, for ever without end. (792b-801)

The heavenly home motif emphasizes for Judas the extent of his belief. He believes now, but such a miracle will help him "gelyfe þe sel" ("better believe" 795b) and this better belief is depicted with use of the heavenly home motif.

In his second prayer Judas again ties his newfound belief to a concept of a home in heaven. He begins this prayer not with an account of God's creation, but with an acknowledgement of his new belief. His second prayer, then, picks up where his first left off and offers a continuity of thought between the two. Much of this shorter second prayer involves the heaven-home concept and becomes more dense with the idea toward the end when Judas again reminds God of his newfound belief and asks to dwell in heaven. The precursor of his request to live in heaven is his new belief:

> Nu ic þe, bearn godes, biddan wille,
> Weoroda willgifa, nu ic wat þæt ðu eart

> Gecyðed ond acenned allra cyninga þrym...
> Læt mec, mihta god,
> on rimtale rices þines
> mid haligra hlyte wunigan
> in þære beorhtan byrig...
>
> Now I will entreat you, Son of God, Benefactor of the multitudes, now that I know you are the proclaimed and incarnate Majesty above all kings...Give me leave, mighty God, to dwell among the number of your kingdom, together with the congregation of the saints in the shining city… (813-821a)

The parallel use of "nu" ("now") in lines 813a and 814b connects Judas' belief with his request for forgiveness of sins and eternal life. Both instances of the motif at the end of Judas' prayers also mark his faith. The motif, as evidenced by Judas' prayers, can be used referentially to invoke faith in God and may function this way elsewhere in Old English poetry.

Repetition of the Motif to Foreground Plot Development

So far we have seen from Judas' prayers a strong likelihood that the motif was recognized as a satisfying way to conclude and also that the motif, in this one poem at least, could work referentially to indicate faith. It also works here in conjunction with other heavenly home iterations to advance plot while at the same time providing a coherence to this section of the poem. Tyler's work with repetition in Old English poetry attempts to explain why some instances of repetition come to the foreground of a text while other repetitions remain in the background. She concludes that foregrounded repetitions often combine with other conventions such as alliterative pairs, established collocations, formulas, thematic formulas, formulaic systems (*Old English Poetics* 136), and conceptual conventions ("Deliberate Verbal Repetitions" 522-3). Repetitions that are heavy in density, that are combined with

some thematic element that has been reworked, or that rely on polysemous words are also foregrounded (*Old English Poetics* 136).[9] The repetition of the heavenly home motif in *Elene* occurs seven times and the first four of these repetitions appear to be foregrounded and working together to advance meaning in the poem. Three of these four iterations appear at the end of a speech act. The end of a speech act is a privileged position through which the poem's development of plot and character can be traced, or at least traced in this particular section of the poem. The motif acts as a barometer of development; it remains a stable marker while all that is around it shifts and changes. Its presence helps an audience take stock of the degree of change in plot and character.

When the motif first appears in *Elene*, it comes at the end of Judas' father's speech as he exhorts Judas not to betray the secret of Christ's crucifixion on the cross (526-7). At this point in the narrative, Helen is pressing hard on the Jews to give over what information they have about Christ's death, and until he recites his father's dying words to his fellow Jews, Judas is the only bearer of that secret. He is also the most equipped to address the queen because of his rhetorical giftedness (417b-19a; 543b-6; 589-95b). He emerges from complete anonymity in the poem, out of the masses of thousands of Jews, into a perilous situation where he single-handedly bears the burden of the entire nation. Judas' dilemma and his own personal growth can be traced through appearances of the heavenly home motif. As he recites his father's last words, he knows that he is bound by loyalty to preserve

[9] For more on verbal repetition and its contribution to a poem's meaning, see the entire ch. 4, "Verbal Repetition and the Aesthetics of the Familiar" in Tyler's *Old English Poetics*, 123-56 and her book chapter "How Deliberate is Deliberate Verbal Repetition?" in *Doubt Wisely: Papers in Honour of E.G. Stanley*, 508-30.

the nation's secret. Betraying the secret not only means betraying his father and his homeland, but also amounts to forsaking his heavenly father and heavenly homeland. The promise of heaven as an eternal home rests on his obedience. With Helen closing in, his dilemma is established and punctuated by the heaven-home motif.

When the motif appears next, it is again used as a kind of threat to Judas. This time, however, instead of his father invoking it to keep Judas silent, it is Helen who invokes it to motivate Judas to talk:

> Gif ðu in heofonrice habban wille
> eard mid englum ond on eorðan lif,
> sigorlean in swegle, saga ricene me
> hwær seo rod wunige radorcyninges,
> halig under hursan, þe ge hwile nu
> þurh morðres man mannum dyrndun.
>
> If you want to have an abode with the angels in the celestial kingdom, a reward for victory in heaven, and on earth your life, tell me promptly where the Cross of the King of heaven rests, sacred beneath the soil, which for some time now you have hidden from people because of the wickedness of that murder. (621-6)

The motif appears at the beginning of Helen's short command and not at the end, but the repetition of the motif sounds out the discord of Judas' situation: either he discloses the secret and loses heaven according to his father, or he keeps hidden the secret and loses heaven according to Helen. The repeated motif highlights the impossibility of his situation and marks the tension in the narrative.

By the time the motif appears again at the end of Judas' first prayer he has made some progress towards a resolution, though his situation is still precarious. Judas has decided to help Helen, but needs a sign from God to guide her to the cross. The motif at the end of this first prayer resembles the previous two uses of the motif

in its causal contingency; that is, just as in the first two instances heaven was a reward for some kind of specific behavior (moral obedience and keeping the secret; divulging the secret to Helen), in this first prayer heaven and its referential meaning of belief will be the result of God's miraculous intervention. If Judas/God will do X then heaven with all its metonymic meaning will result. The if-then nature of the motif's uses in these first three repetitions bring the motif to the foreground and causes it to resemble Tyler's description of foregrounded repetitions that involve some kind of "thematic dimension...which brings together many layers of the poem, both explicit and implicit" (*Old English Poetics* 136). Judas' loyalty to kin, the fate of his nation, and his own fate are represented by the concept of a heavenly home. Each accumulation of the motif adds depth to Judas' situation.

By the time the motif appears again in Judas' second prayer it signals the happy resolution of his dilemma. It closes the prayer, which itself closes the chief drama associated with finding the location of the cross; God sends the smoke and Judas thanks him for it, ending with another repetition of the heavenly home motif. Its context of thankful relief is not the only signal that things are going right for Judas though. The motif further absolves him of guilt for divulging his father's and the Jewish nation's secret. It clarifies Judas' situation now that he has cooperated with Helen in spite of his father's warnings never to reveal the secret of Christ's crucifixion. This fourth iteration of the motif is interwoven with the story of Stephen, echoing a portion of Judas' father's speech in which the first heaven-home iteration appears. When his father tells him the story of Christ's crucifixion, he follows the narrative with an account of Stephen's faith and persecution (489-510).

The tale of Stephen does not appear again until the heavenly home ending in Judas' second prayer:

> Læt mec, mihta god,
> on rimtale rices þines
> mid haligra hlyte wunigan
> in þære beorhtan byrig, þær is broðor min
> geweorðod in wuldre, þæs he wære wið þec,
> Stephanus, heold, þeah he stangreopum
> worpod wære. He hafað wigges lean,
> blæd butan blinne. Sint in bocum his
> wundor þa he worhte on gewritum cyðed.
>
> Give me leave, mighty God, to dwell among the number of your kingdom, together with the congregation of the saints in the shining city where my brother is honoured in glory because he, Stephen, was faithful to you, though he was done to death by stoning. He has the reward of the struggle, splendour without cease: the wonders which he achieved are celebrated in books, in written records. (818-26)

The artful weaving of elements from his father's last words into his heavenly home closure suggests his clear conscience when confronting his father's memory. His father conveys an inheritance that is unbroken after all by the divulgence of the secret. Just as "[his] brother" Stephen suffered (489b), as recounted in his father's story, so too has Judas suffered, and just as Stephen is rewarded with a home in heaven, as recounted in Judas' second prayer, so may Judas be one day. The prayer reaches back and pulls from his father's speech a kind of affirmation; it marks the end of his dilemma with a reference to the beginning of it. In both moments the heavenly home motif closes out the speeches.

The first four repetitions of the heavenly home motif in *Elene* are united thematically; they appear in similar moments as Judas' predicament unfolds. They additionally appear in similar generic contexts; all four appear as part of a speech act and three of these four appear at the end of a speech act. They not only work

together to structure a time of tension in the plot--the beginning of Judas' conflicting responsibilities to the end--, but they also structure these mini-discourses, signalling the end of the speech or prayer. They work on multiple levels to mark important narrative development.

The eleven instances of the heavenly home motif marking the beginning or end of a speech act are only a beginning in the search to chart the structural uses of the motif. Their repeated presence as a discourse marker can be usefully added to other structural functions of the motif to further assess how motifs make meaning in Old English oral poetry. Chapter Three will note the appearance and behavior of the motif in another formulaic pattern: the "Divine Visitation" type-scene.

CHAPTER THREE

The Heavenly Home Motif as Part of the "Divine Visitation" Type-Scene

Examining the heavenly home motif within all of its distinctive contexts helps us understand it more fully. It appears with high frequency in a multiform that I call the "Divine Visitation" type-scene and its relationship to this multiform can be instructive in describing how the motif works extra-textually in Old English poetry. The "Divine Visitation" context itself, however, needs defining before we can determine the dynamics between it and the heavenly home motif.

The "Divine Visitation" multiform that is so often accompanied by the heavenly home motif appears no fewer than fifteen times in the Old English poetic cannon. The basic narrative pattern consists of two parts and is often accompanied by several of five other elements. The two basic elements are:

A. Divine visitation: Some divine being speaks or some divine event occurs. The speech is either an exhortation to a particular task, or an exhortation not to fear.

B. The character(s) is (are) emboldened. This mood is expressed through variation in all but two instances.[1]

[1] *Andreas* #1 and *Guthlac A* express the mood without variation.

This two-part structure resembles other simple patterns of action/mood found throughout Old English poetry: after Hrothgar bids Beowulf to enjoy the feast, for example, Beowulf is "glædmod" ("cheerful of mood" 1785) and when Judith readies to leave the heathen camp with the head of Holofernes in a bag, she is "ellenþriste" ("emboldened by courage" 133). What sets "Divine Visitation" apart from these other smaller units of mood-tags is not only the context of some divine presence, but also the accompanying elements that, in Foley's words, "help to particularize the generic action, to suit the theme [or type-scene] to its narrative context" (*Traditional Oral Epic* 338). These other elements make the two-part pattern recognizable as an entity; they provide the muscle for its bones in a way that helps constitute a fuller body of meaning. The following list describes the accompanying elements and indicates the number of poems that include each particular element:[2]

V. Divine being or vision exits or vanishes. (4/14)

W. Heavenly Home motif invoked. (8/14)

X. Night turns into day or darkness into light. (7/14)

Y. Protagonist carries out task. (8/14)

Z. Beasts of Battle theme invoked. (4/14)

Though their presence and placement within the type-scene varies, this is to be expected; Foley illustrates how adaptive accompanying elements can be in the

[2] Because of an interruption of the manuscript, the multiform in *Juliana* may or may not include some of these accompanying elements. I take it out of the tallies to provide the most accurate ratios of elements to multiforms.

"Sea Voyage" theme (*Traditional Oral Epic* 338-9). The "Divine Visitation" type-scene appears twice in *Elene*, four times in *Andreas*, and once in *The Dream of the Rood*, *Guthlac A*, *Guthlac B*, *Genesis A*, *Exodus*, *Christ and Satan*, *Juliana*, and *The Descent into Hell*. The following chart accounts for the basic form and accompanying elements in each of the type-scenes:

Table 1
The "Divine Visitation" Type-Scene in Old English Poetry

Elene #1	*Elene* #2	*Andreas* #1
A_1. Divine being appears (72-75a)	W_1. Heaven-Home invoked (800-801)	A. Divine voice appears and tells Matthew not to fear (88-9)
X_1. Darkness of night slips away (78b)	A_1. Divine event: smoke appears over crosses (802-3a)	W_1. Heaven-Home invoked (97-106)
A_2. Divine being tells Constantine not to fear	B_1. Judas is emboldened (803b-5)	V. Divine voice leaves (118-9)
B_1. Constantine is emboldened (85b)	W_2. Heaven-Home invoked (818b-825a)	W_2. Heaven-Home invoked (119b-20a)
V. Divine being and vision of cross leave (94b-96a)	B_2. Judas is emboldened (827-8b)	B. Matthew is emboldened (122-3a)
B_2. Constantine is emboldened (96b-98)	Y. Judas carries out task (827-8)	X. Night turns to day (123b-5a)
X_2. Day breaks (105b)	B_3. Judas is emboldened (839-41a)	Z. Beasts of Battle invoked (125-37)
Y. Carries out task (105)	A_2. Divine vision of cross	
Z. Beasts of Battle invoked (110b-113a)	B_4. Men emboldened (847-8b)	

Table 1–The "Divine Visitation" Type-Scenes in Old English Poetry–Continued

Andreas #2	*Andreas* #3	*Andreas* #5
A_1. Divine voice appears and gives Andrew a task (167b-88) A_2. Divine voice again gives Andrew task after Andrew questions it V. Divine voice leaves (225) W. Heaven-Home invoked (226b-29) B_1. Andrew emboldened (231b-4) X_1. Night turns into day (235) Y. Carries out task (235-6) B_2. Andrew emboldened (237a; 239a) X_2. Night turns to day (241b-44a)	A. Divine being appears and gives Andrew a task (910-7; 926-76) V. Divine being leaves (977) W. Heaven-Home invoked (977-80) B. Andrew emboldened (981-4) Y. Andrew carries out task (985)	A. Divine being appears and gives Andrew a task (1661b-74) Y_1. Andrew carries out task (1675) C. Andrew is emboldened (1676a) Y_2. Andrew carries out task (1677-94) W. Heaven-Home invoked (1680-6)

Table 1–The "Divine Visitation" Type-Scenes in Old English Poetry–Continued

Dream of the Rood	*Guthlac A*	*Guthlac B*
D. Night (1-3) A_1. Divine vision appears (4) A_2. Divine vision gives dreamer a task (95-121) W_1. Heaven-Home invoked (119-21) C. Dreamer emboldened (122-6a) W_2. Heaven-Home invoked (134-43) W_3. Heaven-Home invoked (144-56)	W. Heaven-Home invoked (680b-4a) A. Divine being appears and gives demons a task (684b-721) X. Brightness of day, servants of darkness (693; 696a) B. Guthlac and captives are emboldened (722-5a) Z. Beasts of Peace (733b-744a)	A. Divine being appears (936b-8a) B. Guthlac emboldened (938b-9a; 940b; 942a; 944b-5a)

Christ and Satan	*Andreas #4*	*The Descent into Hell*
W. Heaven-home invoked (502-511) A. Divine being appears: Peter and disciples see Christ (524-33) B. Disciples are emboldened (525b)	A. Divine event: Andrew dries flood with steps (1581-2) B. Citizens emboldened (1583-4a)	X. Dawn (1a; 17a) A_1. Divine event: Christ overcomes death B_1. John emboldened (25a) A_2. Divine visitation in Hell (33-55a) B_2. John is emboldened (55b-7a)

Table 1–The "Divine Visitation" Type-Scenes in Old English Poetry–Continued

Genesis A	*Exodus*
A. Divine being appears (1483-92) B. Noah is emboldened (1495a; 1498)	A. Divine event: God provides fire and cloud during exodus (71b-115). X. Morning (98) B_1. People are emboldened (101-3a) X. Evening (108) A. Divine event: fire (107-115) X. Darkness to light (113-5) B_2. People are emboldened (129a) Z. Beasts of Battle invoked after narrative of immanent battle (162-9)

This basic two-part form and the elements that often accompany it appear to be a consistent enough pattern to warrant a label. Though its relatively small size might cause it to resemble a theme more than a type-scene, its function within the narratives suggests it works more like a type-scene. Donald Fry first outlined the characteristics of a "type-scene" in 1968, distinguishing it from the "theme." He defines "theme" as "a recurring concatenation of details and ideas, not restricted to a specific event, verbatim repetition, or certain formulas, which

forms an underlying structure for an action or description." Unlike a theme, which undergirds an action or description, the "type-scene" *is* the action; as Fry defines it, the type-scene is the "recurring stereotyped presentation of conventional details used to describe a certain narrative event, requiring neither verbatim repetition nor a specific formula content" (53). The "Beasts of Battle" theme and the "Scourging" scene help illustrate the distinctions. The carrion birds and wolves that appear at the time of battles in Old English poetry illuminate the action and thus constitute a "theme." The narrative pattern in the "Scourging" scene is a series of "actions or motifs," defined by Foley as:

A. The enemy arrives with a large troop
B. They lead the prisoner from his cell and drag him about the city
C. The prisoner's wounds are described
D. They lead the prisoner back to his cell
E. The prisoner confronts night and mental torture (*Oral Epic* 346)

Michael Cherniss further describes the "theme" as being more abstract than the "type-scene"; though the theme can also be broken into "a pattern of ideas and details which underlies an action or description" (42), these ideas and details do not constitute a narrative action pattern.

Looking at the fourteen instances of this type-scene can provide insight into if and how the multiform works referentially. To say that that the "Divine Visitation" multiform always equals "x" and only "x" would be too reductive;

motifs and multiforms can be manipulated for a variety of purposes and as Foley demonstrates, traditional forms bear varying degrees of referential meaning. One traditional form may resonate loudly with extra-textual meaning while another may not evoke much meaning at all. Most, he notes, fall "somewhere between these two poles" (*Immanent Art* 194). But because any given form may not provide one single interpretive key--or because it may not be readily evokative--does not mean examining it for some degree of referential meaning cannot be productive.

Among the commonalities of the "Divine Visitation" multiform is a general sense of change and this overlap of meaning is enough to classify the form as bearing referential meaning. In almost every instance, the "Divine Visitation" multiform communicates strong degrees of transformation or change in a character's personality or circumstances. While the form certainly is not the only marker of narrative change or change in character in Old English poetry, its rhetorical usefulness in this way deserves recognition.

Examining its usefulness in *Andreas* gives a fair picture of how "Divine Visitation" can evoke expectations for change. Five iterations appear in *Andreas* and when viewed together they collectively demonstrate God's transformative power. Often the theme signals a change in plot but even when the plot remains relatively stable, the theme always indicates God's ability to enact change--even if that change happens in the attitude of a person rather than in his circumstances.

In the first iteration God's voice speaks to Matthew in prison and foretells three drastic changes: first, that Matthew will be transported from earth and its miseries to a home in heaven, and second, that Andrew will be exchanged for Matthew in Mermedonia and will take his place in the struggle. Matthew's spirit is then changed, following part B: "the protagonist is emboldened." This occurence of the type-scene shows a high degree of both external and internal change for Matthew. He will be physically removed from his imprisonment, just as he is altered emotionally for the remainder of it. God's power to transform in many ways is evident in this particular context.

In the second iteration, the focus of change moves from what God will do externally for Matthew--his removal from earthly imprisonment--solely to what God can do internally for Andrew--the strengthening of his faith. The poet plays with the "Divine Visitation" form to highlight Andrew's lack of faith here, thus exploiting the form to show God's power for change. When God first speaks--part A of the "Divine Visitation" multiform--part B: "the protagonist is emboldened" should follow. What follows instead is Andrew's reluctance to carry out God's commands. The poet relies on the audience's awareness of the form to sharply contrast what Andrew's response should be to what it actually is. When God instructs him a second time, Andrew is changed. While he is "sæne" ("hesitant" 204b; 211b) and "on gewitte to wac" ("too feeble of conscience" 212a) at first, he is now overwhelmingly bold:

> Þa wæs ærende æðelum cempan
> Aboden in burgum, ne wæs him bleað hyge,
> Ah he wæs anræd ellenweorces,
> Heard ond higerof, nalas hildlata,
> Gearo, guðe fram, to godes campe.
> Gewat him þa on uhtan...þriste on geþance...
>
> The errand, then, was announced to the noble soldier in the city. His heart was not timorous but he was single-mindedly set upon the courageous task, tough and brave-minded, not at all a sluggard in the fray but eager for the fight and ready for God's warfare…[W]ith the first light of day he went…bold of will… (230-237a)

The heavy degree of variation marks the contrast in Andrew's attitude; God has effected great change in his faith, and of course this change of faith is necessary for Matthew's change of situation. The two iterations work together to paint a larger picture of God's transformational power.

This picture is further developed with the third "Divine Visitation" iteration in which Andrew is miraculously transported and he sees Christ miraculously transformed (910-76). Both of these transformations confound physical law: heavenly beings move him from the sea to heaven itself and finally to Mermedonia, and Christ is able to physically change forms from earthly sailor to divine being. Andrew is already obediently following the path God laid out for him when the transformations take place, but the change it effects again in Andrew's faith, and even in his circumstances (the trip is condensed) speak loudly of transformation without necessarily altering plot.

The idea of God as transformer takes on one more dimension with the remaining two "Divine Visitation" occurrences. With his appearance, he has

transformed the attitudes and situations of Matthew and Andrew, he has physically transported Andrew and Andrew's thanes, and has physically transformed himself. With the fourth and fifth iterations the Mermedonians are changed from heathen cannibals to Christian disciples, and Christ's portrait as transformer is further extended. In the fourth iteration of the multiform Andrew becomes the agent of the divine; wherever he steps the flooding waters abate (1581-4a). As the people watch this divine spectacle they become "bliðe on mode / ferhðgefeonde" ("joyful in their mood, exultant in spirit" 1583b-4a).[3] God later appears once more to Andrew and bids him to change his plans of leaving the Mermedonian people; he wants Andrew to solidify their conversion (1661-74). Andrew carries out the task, and their great transformation is made complete; heathen temples are destroyed and the people are prepared for heaven as their new home, just as Matthew is poised for home in heaven in the first of the poem's "Divine Visitation" appearances. The five iterations work differently to suggest the same general concept of God's power to transform.

This underlying sense of transformation is also present in the other instances of "Divine Visitation" that occur outside of *Andreas*. In several instances it marks the particular transformation between life and death. The form appears just as Guthlac is poised between life and death in *Guthlac B* (936-45), and as Judas moves from certain death at the hands of Helen to life (800-48),

[3] This mood tag appears also in *Elene,* though not in the context of a divine visitation. Constantine's mood is described with the phrase "mod geblissod ferhðgefeonde" when he hears his mother's message that her journey to find the true cross has been successful (988).

as Matthew waits deliverance from tortuous life to sweet death in *Andreas* (88-137), and as the Emperor Constantine faces death the next day in battle (72-113). It is also used in two depictions of Christ's resurrection from the dead; once in *Christ and Satan* (502-25) and again in *The Descent into Hell* (1-57). The movement to life or to death is one of the most widely recognized of all transformations and its relatively common occurrence in the "divine visitation" multiform further suggests the transformationally-charged quality of the structure.

Several of the iterations also rely on the symbolic nature of the cross, long a symbol for the literal and metaphorical transformation from death to life. Both of the iterations in *Elene* deal prominently with the cross. Constantine sees a vision of the cross and commands a replica of it to be borne into battle (99-109a); Judas' divine vision, smoke sent by God, appears directly over Christ's true cross (802-3a). Like *Elene*, *The Dream of the Rood* is also a poem primarily about the cross and in which a "Divine Visitation" iteration coincides with the image of the cross. Unlike all of the other iterations, however, the one in *The Dream of the Rood* seems to involve the entire poem; rather than appearing somewhere inside the poem, the appearance of the cross (Part A) and the emotional response it elicits from the dreamer (Part B) constitutes the poem. The poem is the multiform, with flesh. Certainly the presence of the cross in three of the iterations is not enough to categorically say the multiform resonates with an idea of transformation, but its appearance does contribute to a larger picture of change, made up not only by a turn in plot or change in character (as we saw in *Andreas*), or by contextual

interest in life and death, but also by the simple component parts of the multiform.

The second basic part of the multiform is itself an inherent marker of change, as are two of the elements that often appear with the form: W-"heaven as home is evoked" and X-"night turns into day or darkness turns into light." Part B of the multiform, "the protagonist is emboldened," for instance demonstrates a change in mood. Transformation is an intrinsic part of the multiform. Constantine finds sufficient courage to advance upon the Huns and Hrethgoths only through the "Divine Visitation" account. Before the messenger appears he is "afyrhted, egsan geaclad" ("daunted and dismayed by fear" (56b-57a) and "modsorge" ("nurs[ing] a heartfelt anxiety" 61) as he looks out over the heathen forces waiting to attack his vastly outnumbered armies: "…rices ne wende / for werodleste, hæfde wigena to lyt" ("He had no hope for the kingdom because of the shortage of troops; he had too few soldiers" 62b-3). His dire situation and subsequent forebodings are made clear, and then completely overturned; with his vision of an angel and the cross his mood changes dramatically. His new eagerness for battle is apparent in the bustling activity that follows his vision. He makes commands that are to be fulfilled "ofstum myclum" ("with great urgency" 102) and stirs warriors at the break of day (105). Trumpets sound and the standard and cross are lifted high (107). The energy of the description can be attributed to Constantine's change of mood, Part B of the "Divine Visitation"

multiform: he is "þy blíðra ond þe sorgleasra" ("the happier, the less anxious at heart" 96b-97a) after the visitation.

In each of the "Divine Visitation" iterations this "change in mood" tag works much as it does in Constantine's story: the surrounding text corroborates the claim that the protagonist is emboldened. A character's change in mood is mirrored by an accompanying change in situation. Judas is encouraged by the smoke sent from God and knows it is a sign he will live (*Elene* 800-48); Andrew recieves strength from God's message to return yet again to the Mermedonians although he was earlier very ready to depart (*Andreas* 1661-86); and the dreamer draws strength from the cross's message though he was previously afraid (*Dream of the Rood* 1-156). The degree of change may not always be as dramatic as the one Constantine undergoes, but in each case some level of difference is indicated. Even in the mood-tag found in *Guthlac B*, which stands apart as perhaps the least plot-consistent, a fortification of spirit to meet the circumstances at hand is indicated. After fifteen years of living peacefully in his consecrated wilderness-home Guthlac receives a vist from the Holy Ghost (Part A: "divine visitation") and his spirit is strengthened (Part B: "emboldened"). The preceeding narrative makes clear that God's hand is on Guthlac for years before this instance of divine visitation; he was already strong of spirit as he faced demonic attacks. But his circumstances--his immanent death--call for a different kind of attitude, one that is ready to meet death in the most saintly way possible. Guthlac's shift in mood may not appear as drastic as Constantine's, but it indicates change nonetheless.

The accompanying element that most signifies the concept of transformation in the larger "Divine Visitation" theme is X: "night turns into day." This motif accompanies six of the fourteen "divine visitation" iterations and a reference to darkness accompanies a seventh.[4] We might easily overlook its metaphorical influence by excusing it as simply complementary to the "Divine Visitation" type-scene, as indeed it is: holy beings are often described as light and they often appear in dreams in the nighttime. But this relationship should not blind us to the motif's distinctive metaphorical power. Darkness turning to light or night turning to day resonates with transformative meaning, and the direction of change is positive. When the voice of God visits Matthew in prison, the voice--though not any embodiment--is "swylcehadre segl" ("like the bright sun" 89b) shining for Matthew in the midst of his hopelessness. When it returns to the heavens, Matthew is emboldened (Part B), and then night turns to day (X): he is "miclum onbryrded / niwan stefne. Nighthelm toglad, / lungre leorde. Leoht æfter com, / dægredwoma" ("greatly inspired anew. The shrouding night slipped away and quickly vanished. After it came the light, portent of the dawning day" 122b-5a). Though no specific mention is made of a dream (or even a vision of some embodied figure), the voice is accompanied by the night-turning-into-day motif. The motif, rather than acting as a plot

[4] The motif is used differently in the multiform that appears in *Guthlac A*. "Brightness of day" and "darkness" are both mentioned, but not in a temporal relationship. The divine messenger, Bartholomew, "dæghluttre scan" ("[shines] with the brightness of day" 693b) and binds "þeostra þegnas þreaniedlum" ("servants of darkness" 696). The contrast of light and darkness is striking enough in these few lines to recall the "dark turning to light" motif and possibly to evoke the same metaphorical thrust.

requirement in which night must be the setting for some dream, instead adds a metaphorical dimension to the story and this metaphor signals transformation.

The heavenly home motif, prevalent throughout so many of the "Divine Visitation" iterations and often repeated in those iterations, also lends a certain transformational quality to the larger "Divine Visitation" theme. Most obviously, it represents a change in home, a change in physical form, and a change of allegiance from earthly values to more divine ones. Like the "night turning to day" motif and the alteration of a character's perspective in Part B, it contributes to an underlying sense of change or transformation when it appears with the multiform.[5]

The "Divine Visitation" multiform always acts as a referential indicator of transformation, though these transformations are not always uniform. Guthlac's transformation from life to death is not identical to Andrew's transformation from doubt to belief, for instance; there is no easy one to one relationship among types of transformations. But because the multiform facilitates change in each of its appearances--and this seems to be its chief function--it can rightfully be said to impart referential meaning. The question now becomes how the "Divine Visitation" multiform interacts with the heavenly home motif, and specifically, how the motif might be influenced by the multiform's referential meaning.

[5] Its role role as a marker of change will be addressed more fully below.

Michael Drout's work with memetic theory seeks to explain just such questions. His termonology can be usefully employed to distinguish between traditional forms that appear together and to explain their relationship to one another. Drout suggests that applying memetic theory to oral-traditional texts allows us to better observe how forms become traditional or maintain their traditionality. For Drout, thinking of traditional forms in terms of memes and meme-plexes helps us explain how certain forms are promulgated or how they die out. At the heart of memetic theory is the interaction of different memes or meme-plexes. Drout draws on Richard Dawkins' concept of the meme and defines it as "the simplest unit of cultural replication, analogous to the biological gene; it is whatever is transmitted when one person *imitates*, consciously or unconsciously, another" (*How Tradition Works* 4). He uses the term "meme" to denote the smallest recognizable unit of replication, to be distinguished from what he calls a "meme-plex," or a collection of memes working together (4-5). Most memes are in actuality meme-plexes, or an agglomerate of replicated material. For instance, Drout explains that "Happy Birthday to You" could be described as a single meme or when viewed another way, as many memes working together to be replicated: music notations, words from the English language, the general idea of music, etc. (5). The two terms help differentiate the size or complexity of a meme in a given context, but all units are contextualized somehow and set amongst countless other units.

When applied to Old English poetry, memetic theory can help describe how and why certain traditional forms interact with one another. From Drout's "memes' eye view" the chief purpose of a meme is to survive; that is, to be replicated. One way memes can accomplish this is by attaching themselves to other memes or meme-plexes that have strong potential for replication (6-7). Drout's call for understanding "which memes are being replicated (formulae, themes, type-scenes)" in Anglo-Saxon poetry and how "they fit into the larger meme-plexes in which they are embedded" can in part be taken up with analysis of the heavenly home motif (40). Examining the convergence of the heavenly home motif with the "Divine Visitation" theme helps us not only understand more about which memes are being replicated and how they are being replicated, but it ultimately helps us assess how the heavenly home motif is used to make meaning in Anglo-Saxon poetry.

Of specific concern here is how the "Divine Visitation" meme-plex and the heavenly home motif are attracted to one another and how they influence or are influenced by each other. We might first look beyond memetic theory to account for at least one way they might be attracted to one another. Most simply, the two are semantically complementary. A reference to the divine, whether a divine being or event, might naturally evoke thoughts of heaven; and the ubiquitous nature of the heavenly home motif makes it an easy accompaniment. Just as Tyler's analysis of collocations acknowledges that complementary forms sometimes cluster together (*Old English Poetics* 39), we might reasonably

recognize the complementary nature of the "Divine Visitation" theme and the heavenly home motif.

But looking at divine appearances that are not structured by the two-part multiform suggests that this explanation alone cannot account for the attraction between the "Divine Visitation" multiform and the heavenly home motif. Multiple examples of divine appearances without the multiform and without the heavenly home motif suggest that "divine appearances" are not always a trigger for the heavenly home motif, and may possibly be less likely to pair with the motif than a divine appearance conveyed through the multiform.[6] Non-formulaic divine appearances in *Genesis A* and *Christ III* are examples. When God appears to Noah to tell him to build an ark in *Genesis A*, Noah carries out the task (element Y) but no mention is made of a heavenly home, of his empowerment or elevated spirit, of some transformation from day to night, or of any of the other elements familiar to the "Divine Visitation" multiform. Noah goes matter-of-factly about the business of warning his family and constructing the ark (1296-1326). The appearance lacks the transformational flair of the multiform. Though mention of a divine appearance to Noah might well stimulate thoughts of a heavenly home, no such reference appears. Other divine appearances in Old English poetry may preclude use of the multiform because

[6] Unfortunately such an intense search must remain outside the scope of my research for now. On a cursory look, however, it appears that divine visitations (and especially those that do not include accounts of Christ at Judgment but focus on other kinds of earthly visitations instead) do invoke the heavenly home motif more often when the visitations appear as part of the multiform.

they are directed to those outside God's favor. The multiform and the motif are not used, for example, when God appears to Adam and Eve after they have eaten from the apple in *Genesis A* (852-938) or when he addresses the multitudes at Judgment Day in *Christ III* (1515-90), perhaps because the glorious promise of heaven as home is invalid; it would only be relevant to explain what they have lost. Either way, no such reference appears. Because the motif may appear more frequently with the multiform than in divine appearances that do not make use of the multiform, the relationship of the motif and "divine visitation" cannot rest on the single explanation of semantic compatibility.

Drout's memetic theory takes us further in our efforts to understand how the heavenly home motif appears to be such a recurrent part of the meme-plex. Drout explains that traditions gravitate to other traditions in order to survive. The more often a meme can get itself replicated, the greater the chances are of it being replicated again. When memes attach to other memes with equal or superior success at being replicated, they maximize their potential for replication by piggy-backing on the other meme or meme-plex; the successful meme gets repeated and the accompanying meme is repeated with it. This kind of attachment can be characterized in three different ways: parasitic, commensal, or symbiotic ("A Meme-Based Approach" 2). Parasitic memes attach themselves to or imitate a host meme while at the same time threatening or contradicting it.[7] A commensal relationship, on the other hand, is one in which the host is neither

[7] For more on how parasitic memes work, see Drout, "A Meme-Based Approach," 14-16.

benefited nor harmed by the accompanying meme. The relationship between the "Divine Visitation" multiform and the heavenly home motif is best described as symbiotic; both forms seem to benefit from the presence of the other.

As briefly noted earlier, the heavenly home motif contributes to the underlying sense of change that the "Divine Visitation" multiform invokes. The motif represents a change of place and of allegiance and contributes to the thrust of transformation made possible through the "Divine Visitation" type-scene. In addition, and especially within the "Divine Visitation" multiform, it also represents a kind of paradigm shift in which worldly precepts bow to a greater power even as they continue to pose challenges for men and women who must still live on earth. The obstacles a character must face are put into perspective with the heavenly home reference. When God's voice or Christ himself returns to heaven in three of the iterations in *Andreas*, for example, Matthew is still imprisoned and Andrew must still face the impossible (traveling to Mermedonia and advancing into the city), but their earthly dilemmas are diminished with the reference to a different, more supreme realm (88-137; 167-244; 910-85). Similarly, the strength that the dreamer finds toward the end of *The Dream of the Rood* is in part represented by his awareness of an impending shift of dominions. He recognizes his earthly powerlessness, but he also recognizes how different his life will be in the coming world. In a culture where aloneness is consistently depicted as an exceedingly vulnerable state, he finds himself "ana…mæte werede" ("alone with little company" 123b-4a), a notion he reiterates a few lines

later, "Nah ic ricra feala / freonda on foldan" ("I do not have many powerful friends on earth" 131a-2b). But this acknowledgment gives way to thoughts of a happier, more secure home, just as the earthly dominion will eventually succumb to a new order in heaven. He considers:

> ...ac hie forð heonon
> gewiton of worulde dreamum, sohton him wuldres cyning,
> lifiaþ nu on heofenum mid heahfædere,
> wuniaþ on wuldre, ond ic wene me
> daga gehwylce hwænne me dryhtnes rod,
> þe ic her on eorðan ær sceawode,
> on þysson lænan life gefetige
> ond me þonne gebringe þær is blis mycel,
> dream on heofonum, þær is singal blis,
> ond me þonne asette þær ic syþþan mot
> wunian on wuldre, well mid þam halgum
> dreames brucan.
>
> …but they have passed on from here out of the joys of the world, and found their way to the King of glory. Now they live in heaven with the high Father and dwell in glory--and I hope each day for the time when the Cross of the Lord, which I once gazed upon here on earth, will fetch me from this transitory life and then bring me to where there is great happiness, joy in heaven, where the Lord's people are placed at the banquet, where there is unceasing happiness; and will then place me where I may afterwards dwell in glory and fully partake of joy with the saints. (132b-144a)

The dreamer will no longer live alone outside of the social order, but will instead be welcomed into the most social of settings: the feast. The contrast between earthly exile and a heavenly home demonstrates the great power shift to come, envisioned within the "Divine Visitation" multiform.[8] As it does in *The Dream of the Rood* and *Andreas*, the heavenly home motif represents a new order when it

[8] Foley discusses the "Joy in the Hall" theme and its relationship to the exile motif in *The Seafarer*, *Immanent Art*, 35-6. See also Opland, "*Beowulf* on the Poet."

appears with the "Divine Visitation" iterations. Because the heavenly home motif represents change in various ways, it has a natural attraction to the "Divine Visitation" multiform which always marks a turning point in character or narrative direction.

The heavenly home motif and "Divine Visitation" multiform combine to create a more intense mood of transition. Because they work together as a meme-plex, they share common referential meaning--meaning that they take with them even when they are repeated as individual memes outside of the meme-plex.[9] The referentiality two memes achieve when they are working together can be accessed by interlocutors versed in the tradition (Drout *How Tradition Works* 171). When the heavenly home motif appears independent of the "Divine Visitation" multiform, it can nevertheless carry with it at least one of the referential meanings of the meme-plex: intensified change.

This referential meaning bears consequences for our understanding of the heavenly home motif at the end of an oral poem or at the end or beginning of a speech, prayer, or section division in poetic manuscripts. The motif's referential meaning of transformation and change makes it a suitable candidate for

[9] This is the heart of Foley's "immanent art" theory. Meaning is conveyed metonymically; one part of a fuller tradition can stand in for the whole tradition. See also Drout: "The ability of the traditional referent to summon entire meme-plexes by metonymy means that the use of traditional referents is an enormously effective means of communication…Within this network not only traditional meme-plexes, but also subsidiary networks of traditional referents (often decoupled from the traditions they represent, because not every individual is equally participatory in every tradition) can create complex associations between themselves and other sets of traditions and their referents. The brain's pattern-finding abilities can also recognize patterns in these meta-networks, and the same process of metonymic traditional referentiality can in turn invoke these associations," *How Tradition Works*, 171-2.

punctuating the beginning or end of a rhetorical unit. It accounts in part for why Anglo-Saxon scribes, for instance, often created section breaks at the heavenly home motif, as will be described more fully in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Heavenly Home Motif and Section Breaks in Old English Manuscripts

The heavenly home motif appears at the end of at least twenty Old English poems, and twelve of these poems use the motif nowhere else in the poem.[1] To understand more fully how the motif functions as a rhetorical marker and particularly as a sign that a poem is coming to an end, it makes sense to examine how the motif functions structurally in other environments. I have already noted how the motif is frequently used to set off speech acts as well as how it is used as part of a type-scene pattern. In this chapter I wish to take a different approach by examining the motif in its manuscript context. By considering the physical presentation of text on the manuscript page and the ways in which the heavenly home motif corresponds to these varying presentations, I hope to gain information about how an Anglo-Saxon scribe may have viewed the motif and its functions. The physical texts may have something to communicate about the oral-traditional nature of the motif.

Of course, such an approach stems from Katherine O'Brien O'Keeffe's influential research on Anglo-Saxon manuscripts and developing literacy.[2] O'Brien O'Keeffe notes the ways that manuscript formatting stands in for oral features that would otherwise mediate an audience's reception of a work. As

[1] See ch. 7.

[2] See in particular *Visible Song*.

Anglo-Saxon culture moved from orality to literacy--however slowly and non-linearly that movement may have occurred--manuscript practices reacted to and reflected this shift. O'Brien O'Keeffe argues for a correlation between orality and formatting: the more a manuscript text is formatted, the further it is from a purely oral culture. Formatting develops out of a need to help readers understand the texts at hand, a need that would become more pronounced as memory and consciousness of oral tradition faded away.[3] As O'Brien O'Keeffe explains, "non-lexical graphic cues--hierarchy of script, capitals, lineation, significant space (for division of morphemes or larger units of meaning) and punctuation--all develop as graphic analogues to oral interpretative cues. Both oral and graphic cues function to regulate the reception of the work by an audience." She goes on to say, "The physical arrangement of a text on a page thus becomes a crucial constituent of its meaning" (5). Observing the ways in which the heavenly home motif is marked by textual formatting provides a better understanding of its oral-traditional function.

Of particular interest is the motif's frequent correspondence with section beginnings or endings in Anglo-Saxon manuscripts. Though not all poems in Old English manuscripts are divided into parts, many of the longer poems in the manuscripts are segmented. Manuscript practice varies even within a single codex, but most poems are divided by the insertion of blank space and

[3] The four major Old English poetic codices show varying degrees of this shift from orality to literacy, with the Exeter Book, the Vercelli Book, and the *Beowulf* Manuscript being "conservative and backward-looking," or closer to their oral roots, and the Junius Manuscript being "forward-looking" (*Visible Song* 186).

additionally marked by heavy punctuation, roman numerals, or large capital letters. A surprisingly high number of divisions occur just before or after the motif, suggesting a relationship of meaning between the two. As O'Brien O'Keeffe would describe it, the section break is a graphic analogue to an otherwise oral interpretative cue--the heavenly home motif. The prevalence of the motif at section divisions offers a rich field for inquiry and can eventually help us define the cue. Though the motif has never before been identified as related in any way to section divisions, its high frequency at the start and close of sections in Old English manuscripts has implications for our understanding of several important topics in Old English studies. It not only illuminates our understanding of section divisions and their purposes, but it also helps us chart the ways oral poetry was shaped and marked by features like motifs. In addition, it also ultimately allows us to sketch a fuller picture of our over-arching interest in the rhetoric of conclusions in Old English poetry.

Section divisions of poems in Old English manuscripts have perplexed scholars for decades.[4] At the fore of the discussion is the question of what

[4] Numerous theories about the function of poetic sections have been offered and subsequently dismissed, though their plurality testifies to the difficulty of the issue. At the beginning of the twentieth century Henry Bradley thought the sections must correspond to loose leaves of an exemplar (*Encyclopedia Britannica* 58-61). A few years later Israel Gollancz posited the numbered sections might have worked with something akin to a table of contents to ease reference (*The Cædmon Manuscript* xxxii), but as B. J. Timmer pointed out, no evidence of a table of contents in Anglo Saxon manuscripts exists ("Sectional Divisions" 321). Norman E. Eliason believed the sections to be scribal stints of copying rather than authorial stints of composition (*Suprasegmentals* 177), while David Marsden Wells later argued that the divisions were originally authorial but with scribal revisions. Wells attempted to explain the narrative discord between some breaks and plot development by suggesting that scribes manipulated section beginnings so that they might optimize the visual elements of the breaks. Scribes reworked authorial divisions,

purpose the breaks serve and the closely related issue of whether the breaks originate with the author or the scribe. Both approaches share concerns about the kinds of meaning section breaks impart to the text. The topic of section divisions remains puzzling because no single common feature of the breaks seems to exist. While a large portion of the divisions correspond with shifts in the narrative and thus suggest the segments act as structural units, many other sections defy narrative logic.[5] And although some sections within a poem may closely resemble one another in length--suggesting they are performing or reading segments--the section length of other poems varies greatly.[6] These

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divisions originally marking narrative units, so that sections would open with an array of different decorated letters. Though these speculations are now outmoded, they point to a core issue of section break studies. Along with other more accepted theories, they implicitly question the extent to which section breaks should influence our reading of the narratives.

[5] Early editors of the manuscripts and modern scholars alike point out that many of the breaks in Old English manuscripts do coincide with important narrative transitions and mark turns or bends in the narrative flow. In the introduction to his edition of *The Cædmon Manuscript*, Gollancz sees sectional divisions as "originally structural divisions [due to the poet]" (xxxii). Krapp's introduction to his edition of the Junius Manuscript claims, "In general these sectional divisions correspond to natural breaks in the thought," (xix) an idea that Dobbie echoes in the introduction to *The Exeter Book* (xvii). More recently, Muir remarks in his edition of *The Exeter Anthology of Old English Poetry* that he "agree[s] with Krapp and Dobbie that the sections do for the most part 'correspond to natural divisions of thought'" (19). Treharne notes generally that the sections in *Beowulf* and *Judith* "may have functioned to denote some type of shift or movement" (*Working* 106). Numerous *Beowulf* studies, as noted by Fulk, consult section divisions as guides to interpreting the poet's intention for structural design, a suggestion with which Fulk takes issue in light of his own conclusion that the divisions are of scribal rather than authorial origin ("Origin" 94-5). Nevertheless, the many references he cites suggests the wide acceptance of such a view (95, note 14).

[6] The Junius Manuscript, for instance, contains the rather evenly-divided *Genesis* and the less evenly divided *Daniel*, Henry Bradley, 4, 14.

Scholars have long considered the relative sizes of sections to be important indicators of section functions, linking length of sections to convenient reading or performative units. Henry Bradley argues, for instance, that the length of sections in *Genesis A* are "really a little *too* uniform" to be anything but apportioned with a view toward page layout (4); evidence that has been reinterpreted by others to suggest a concern for lengths of reading. Förster suggests a few years later that similarly sized manuscript sections facilitate silent reading by segments (85-7)

points of comparison--fidelity to narrative structure and similarity of length--continue to dominate discussion of section breaks though other avenues, in particular a study of rhetorical emphasis where the text breaks, offer new and productive ways of understanding the nature of sections in Old English poetry.

Two very similar section breaks in *Christ II* and *Guthlac B* demonstrate that structures other than narrative ones are recognized in Old English manuscripts. In these two instances, a section break marks a shift in personal agency and in a character's movement from one world into the next, and in addition, the lines after the break follow a not altogether simple grammatical pattern. The division in *Christ II* may at first appear surprising because it falls just a few lines before the end of a short speech. Its location receives prioritiy over an otherwise strong tendency to leave speeches uninterrupted, or at least uninterrupted when they occupy but a few lines of space or need only a few more lines before the speech ends. R. D. Fulk implicitly acknowledges this tendency when he catalogues a list of "anomalous" divisions that interrupt speeches. One break in the Vercelli Book (*Elene*, beginning of section five, ln. 364) comes "just thirteen lines short of the end of a lengthy speech by Elene," another break in the Vercelli Book (*Andreas*, beginning of section thirteen, ln. 1352) interrupts "a short speech of just thirteen

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while Gollancz soon after views them as portions for oral reading (xxxii). In her recent study Treharne likewise suggests that the numbered sections in *Andreas* found in the Vercelli Book and the numbered sections in *Beowulf* and *Judith* found in the *Beowulf* Manuscript "may correspond to the appropriate length of text for oral readings, and thus may have functioned in a way similar to chapters in modern books" (106, 103). Fulk explains that the tradition of dividing poems into sections may go back further to a time when segments may not have functioned as segments for oral reading, but rather as segments for oral performance (109).

lines," and still another in the Exeter Book (*Christ II*, beginning of section seven, ln. 517) interrupts a speech that takes up only "sixteen and a half lines" (107). Fulk labels the breaks as unusual because they split speech, narratively bounded units that would seem to deserve more consideration. At least in the case of the division in *Christ II*, however, the break may not be so senseless, but may instead be motivated by rhetorical considerations other than narrative ones. The break falls in the middle of an address made by angels to people looking on at Christ's ascension. The speech is short, and as Fulk notes, could easily be spared interruption by moving the break a few lines forward or backward. It consists entirely of three parts: an address to the people asking them why they stand in a circle watching, a description of Christ making his way into a heavenly home, and a promise that Christ will visit the earth again in judgment. The first and the third parts are shorter in length and provide less description than the second part, which is divided so that the heavenly home motif appears on either side of the break:

"Hwæt bidað ge,
Galiesce guman on hwearfte?
Nu ge sweotule geseoþ soþne dryhten
On swegl faranæ sigores agend
Wile up heonan eard gestigan,
Æþelinga ord, mid þasengla gedryht,
Ealra folca fruma, fæder eþelstoll.

VII

We mid þyslice þreate willað
Ofer heofona gehlidu hlaford fergan
To þære beorhtan byrg mid þas bliðan gedryht,
Ealra sigebearna þæt seleste
Ond æþeleste, þe ge her on stariað

Ond in frofre geseoð frætwum blican.
Wile eft swa þeah eorðan mægðe
Sylfa gesecan side herge,
Ond þonne gedeman dæda gehwylce
Þara ðe gefremedon folc under roderum."

"People of Galilee, why do you stand waiting in a circle? You clearly see the true Lord, Possessor of the victory, passing into heaven. He, the Sovereign of princes, together with this company of angels, will ascend from here up to his dwelling-place, the Author of all peoples up to the royal seat of his Father.

VII

We, together with a squadron like this, will carry the Lord, that best and noblest of all victorious sons, beyond the canopies of the heavens to that radiant city, together with this happy company which you gaze on here and see gleaming with adornments in their joy. However, he himself with a great legion will visit again the antions of the earth and at that time judge every deed which people have committed here below the skies."
(510b-26)

Section six, then, ends with the motif and section seven begins with what seems like another heavenly home motif. The narrative is divided between two kinds of descriptions of Christ's home-going. In the first, he is the agent of his journey and in the second, the angels are the agents of it. The split makes possible two iterations of the motif: one to close out a segment and another to open a new one. This division, so problematic from a perspective of narrative transition, provides both an end and a beginning that resembles a larger tradition of beginning and ending sections with the heavenly home motif.

It also resembles another division in another poem so closely that we might plausibly label the two as following a traditional rhetorical pattern. The division between sections fifteen and sixteen in *Guthlac B* also separates a

heavenly home motif so that the motif appears at the end of one section and the beginning of another. The function of the motif is the same in both instances; as in *Christ II*, the motif in *Guthlac B* helps depict a holy figure making his way to his heavenly home. Even more interesting, however, is the overlapping pattern of agency in both descriptions. Just as the section break in *Christ II* divides the action of Christ's ascension between Christ's activity and the angels' activity, so too does the break in *Guthlac B* divide Guthlac's heaven-going between Guthlac's activity and the angels' activity. Section fifteen closes with an account of Guthlac sending his spirit on the journey to heaven and section sixteen resumes with an account of the angels guiding it home:

> Ahof þa his honda, husle gereorded,
> eaðmod þy æþelan gyfle, swylce he his eagan ontynde,
> halge heafdes gimmas, biseah þa to heofona rice,
> glædmod to geofona leanum, ond þa his gæst onsende
> weorcum wlitigne in wuldres dream.
>
> XVI
>
> Ða wæs Guðlaces gæst gelæded
> eadig on upweg. Englas feredun
> to þam longan gefean, lic colode,
> belifd under lyfte.
>
> Then he lifted up his hands, a humble man refreshed by the sacrament, that glorious food, and likewise he opened his eyes, his head's holy gems, and then gazed rapturous of mood up to the realm of the heavens, to the rewards of grace and then he sent forth his soul, comely in its accomplishments, into the happiness of heaven.
>
> XVI
>
> Then the blessed soul of Guthlac was led on its upward way; angels carried it to lasting joy. The corpse chilled, lifeless down below the sky. (1300-8b)

In section fifteen Guthlac's death is described entirely with Guthlac as agent. The pronoun "he" and adjectives "eaðmod" ("humble") and "glædmod" ("rapturous of mood") take the nominative case and verbs like "ahof" ("lifted"), "ontynde" ("opened"), "biseah" ("gazed") and finally "onsende" ("sent") show Guthlac perfoming a series of activities before the section concludes. Immediately with the start of the new section, though, the active voice of section fifteen turns into a passive voice construction: "Ða wæs Guðlaces gæst gelæded" ("Then…the soul of Guthlac was led" 1305). When it reverts back to an active voice construction, the angels--and not Guthlac--have become the agents of activity: "Englas feredun…" ("Angels carried…" 1306b).

This shift in voice, coinciding as it does with a shift in sections, marks the transition Guthlac makes from life on earth to life in heaven. His body growing cold three lines after the break retains the active voice construction but now lacks any reference to Guthlac. While the earlier section is filled with physical descriptions of Guthlac directing his soul and his body--his hands, his eyes, even his digestive system as he partakes of the sacrament, now in the second section his body is "belifd under lyfte" ("lifeless down below the sky" 1308a). No possessive pronoun connects the body to the man, because the man is now beyond the threshold that separates the earthly realm from the heavenly one. The prepositional phrase "under lyfte" makes this division of spaces clear. The phrase is repeated with variation a few lines later when the song of angels can be heard outside of heaven from the earthly world "under heofonum" ("down

below the heavens" 1314b-16a). Even the noun variation of "heaven" in line 1317 and the accompanying verbal phrase suggest boundaries and divisions between one world and the next. Here, heaven is a "burgstede," a fortified enclosure with walls separating what is within from what is without, and as an enclosure it is "blissum gefylled" ("filled inside with ecstacies"). The language of the passage establishes a division of worlds, and the section break helps express this idea. Before the break, before Guthlac makes his way into his heavenly home, he is the agent of his activity, but after the break, after he begins the journey homeward, this agency passes into another's control as he now inhabits a new and distinct realm. The two sections, divided at such a critical moment of change in the narrative from one agent to another and from one realm to another, become themselves distinct realms of text.

In this instance, as in the instance in *Christ II*, the form of the manuscript reflects grammatical and narrative content. A comparison of the divisions on these two occasions advances our understanding of how section breaks at times work with the narrative in ways that may not be readily apparent to the modern reader. While the modern reader tends to think of narrative structure on broad, holistic levels, the evidence of the manuscripts suggest that Anglo-Saxons at least sometimes privileged smaller narrative structures with markers of importance like section divisions. A shift in agency describing the same basic activity may seem less important than, for example, a shift from narrative description to a

speech act, but the pattern that we see in *Christ II* and *Guthlac B* should alert us to the somewhat different value Anglo-Saxons placed on narrative structures.

Narrative structure remains the focal point of scholarly discussion surrounding Old English manuscript breaks because many of the breaks do correspond to shifts in narrative, and also because the idea makes good sense to modern readers accustomed to modern editorial practices that divide sections and chapters by structural considerations. Section breaks that fail to mirror narrative boundaries or transitions are often excused as the work of a scribe not attuned to the structural nuances of the text, an attitude that prioritizes narrative function over other possible functions of the breaks. In his very recent study of the fitt divisions in *Beowulf*, Fulk concludes that the divisions must be scribal in origin based largely on evidence that divisions made in the second scribe's hand often ignore narrative design. For Fulk, the different approaches to fitts in each scribe's work suggests there was no authorial guide, but it is the tendency toward non-narrative divisions that especially receives his attention. After discussing several examples of what he calls "irrationa[l]"[7] sectional divisions he reasons, "[W]hoever divided the poem this way did not understand its structure very well, and therefore it is likely that the divisions were made by someone other than the poet" (104). Fulk assumes the poet would have regarded manuscript breaks as markers of narrative structure, and he also ascribes to a

[7] This slanted language is not unique to Fulk. See also, for example, Henry Bradley (2) and Marsden Wells (1-2).

kind of scribal incompetency breaks that do not follow the progress of the narrative.

These assumptions might not be entirely just, particularly in light of evidence which suggests that scribal involvement in the transcription process was a kind of re-performance of its own[8] and that certain rhetorical patterns at the beginning and endings of section divisions account for a third possible motivation for the breaks--a motivation that at times may have taken precedence over structural concerns. In these instances, fitt divisions can be described as heightened rhetorical moments. Although scholarship occasionally acknowledges rhetorical patterns at section divisions, the topic has remained on the level of the incidental rather than inspiring focused inquiry.

The many instances of a section breaking at a heavenly home motif provides reason enough to consider the relationship between rhetorical features and fitt divisions, but the relationship takes on extra significance when added to existing, albeit underdeveloped, scholarship that recognizes various rhetorical features as motivators for sections divisions. Klaeber identifies several rhetorical

[8] See Doane: "Whenever scribes who are part of the oral traditional culture write or copy traditional oral works, they do not merely mechanically hand them down; they rehear them, 'mouth' them, 'reperform' them in the act of writing in such a way that the text may change but remain authentic, just as a completely oral poet's text changes from performance to performance without losing authenticity," "Oral Texts, Intertexts, and Intratexts," 80-1. Machan adds, "…A variety of the conscious alterations effected by scribes as they 'copied' texts are similar to the changes made by oral poets as they re-create songs…a model of improvisation can describe the performance qualities of both oral poets and scribes," "Late Middle English Texts," 237. See also Doane's work on the scribe as performer in "Ethnography" and the "Introduction" to *Vox Intexta*. Doane builds on Chaytor's theory of scribal reporformance, "The Medieval Reader," 49-56 and *From Script to Print*. See also O'Brien O'Keeffe, "Orality and the Developing Text of Cædmon's Hymn," 243-4.

elements that repeatedly fall at section divisions in *Beowulf* and he attributes these pairings to conscious design:

> [The author] likes to conclude a canto with a maxim, a general reflection, a summarizing statement, or an allusion to a turn in the events. He is apt to begin a canto with a formal speech, a resumptive paragraph, or the announcement of an action, especially of the 'motion' of individuals or groups of men…Altogether there is too much method in the arrangement of 'fits' to regard it as merely a matter of chance or caprice. (ci)

Klaeber additionally calls attention to three instances in Old English poetry when a section begins with the conjunction *oð þæt* (*Beowulf* XXV and XXVIIII and *Genesis A* XX). He excuses the oddity of starting a new section mid-sentence, arguing that to begin a section with the conjunction *oð þæt* is "not [an]…inadequate means of introducing a new item of importance" in spite of the fact that it creates a division within a sentence (ci).[9] Fulk agrees with Klaeber and further notes the ways in which the phrase is invested with poetic meaning often signaling change:

> …[I]t is not irrational that [*oð þæt*] should begin a fitt…since the expression is typically used to mark an instance of *edwenden* 'mutability' or, more particularly, 'change of fortune' (as in lines 100, 545, 1133, 1254, and so forth), a persistent them in *Beowulf*. It thus not inappropriately may mark the point at which one fitt changes to the next. ("The Origin" 102-3)

[9] Fulk notes that some dislike the notion of a sentence divided at a subordinating conjunction and so argue for the grammatical function of *oð þæt* as adverb rather than conjunction, an argument he finds not at all persuasive since "independent evidence that *oð þæt* could be an adverb is rather exiguous" and that the "analysis seems to be motivated chiefly by the desire that a fitt should not begin mid-sentence," "The Origin," 102. He accounts for the adverb arguments in footnote 24. See also "Some Emendations," 168-71.

The theme of mutability, represented by *oð þæt*, offers an attractive location at which to shift from one section to another. This argument is notable because it suggests the divisions are thematically encoded; in some instances at least they act not only as boundary markers of narrative units, but further emphasize a pervasive theme in Old English poetry--mutability. Transitions between sections echo the transitory nature of life. The section breaks both highlight thematic issues and divide the narrative according to plot.

Fulk also identifies another motif that prompts section divisions and that resembles the heavenly home motif in this role. Gift-giving or reward marks a division at at least five different locations in *Beowulf*; lines 662, 1050, 1383, 1888, and 2144 each begin a new section and evoke the motif. Fulk provides a tantalizingly brief excursion into the function of the motif at section headings. In an effort to make sense of a section division "plainly at odds with the structure of the narrative" (line 2144), he suggests the motif may have guided the decision for the break, as it "in fact provides the occasion for some other fitt divisions." He notes the importance given to the motif throughout the poem and concludes, "A scribe, knowing the significance of reward, might well have inserted a number at the mention here of payment, but it is difficult to believe that the poet would have done so" ("The Origin" 97). Fulk's attempts at understanding the gift-giving motif's function at section divisions is limited to a discussion of one particular section break that frustrates expectations. His dismissal of the motif-driven break as not of the poet results from an assumption that a poet would

have prioritized narrative structure, including structures like the beginning and endings of speech, over other concerns for placement of breaks like motifs or other rhetorical features. This assumption may be true, but it cannot be adequately proven until a full consideration of how motifs or other rhetorical features work at section divisions is first undertaken.

Examining the heavenly home motif at section divisions is a first step toward this goal. Statistically, the convergence of the heavenly home motif with section breaks is remarkable. Three of the four major Old English poetic codices contain poems with sections that coincide with the heavenly home motif; only the Nowell Codex does not.[10] Within each of these three codices, at least half of all the poems that are divided into sections employ the motif at section breaks. Two of the four poems in the Junius Manuscript, for instance, include section breaks that correspond with the motif (*Genesis* and *Christ and Satan*). In the Vercelli Book, two of the three poems with sections contain breaks that correspond with the motif (*Elene* and *Andreas*); the third poem, *Soul and Body I*, only has one division. Six of the twelve poems with sections in the Exeter Book include divisions marked with or guided by the heavenly home motif (*Christ I*, *Christ II*, *Christ III*, *Guthlac A*, *Guthlac B*, and *The Phoenix*). Also noteworthy is the number of motif-driven divisions within a single poem (See Table 2). Seven out of thirteen sections in *Christ and Satan*, for example, begin or end (or in some

[10] The Nowell Codex contains only two poems: *Beowulf* and *Judith*. Though the idea of heavenly home is a widespread motif throughout Old English poetry, it occurs nowhere in the very lengthy poem *Beowulf*. A consideration of this conspicuous absence might yield interesting results.

cases, begin and end) with the motif. Many of the poems that combine the motif and a section break at all combine them on multiple occasions; the pairing of a section break and the heavenly home motif in any given poem is almost never a singular event. Table 2 identifies manuscript divisions that also correspond with the heavenly home motif:

Table 2

The Heavenly Home Motif at Manuscript Section Breaks

Poems with Section Divisions (Number of Sections)	Heavenly Home Motif Appears at the Beginning or End of a Section	Total Number of Appearances of Motif at Beginning or End of a Section	Line Numbers Marking the Beginning of a Motif / Beginning or End of Section†
JUNIUS			
Genesis (42) (2 missing)	√	1	B82
Exodus (8) (1 missing)			
Daniel (6)			
Christ and Satan (12)	√	11	E114; E209; B228; B254; E306; E348; B441; E502; E549; B557; E588
VERCELLI			
Andreas (15)	√	4	E118; E225; E595; E947b
Soul and Body I (2)			
Elene (15)	√	5	B621; E792b; E1038b; B1043; E1306
EXETER			
Christ I* (5/12)	√	1/4	E261b; E342; B348; E434

Table 2 - The Heavenly Home Motif at Manuscript Section Breaks - Continued

Poems with Section Divisions (Number of Sections)	Heavenly Home Motif Appears at the Beginning or End of a Section	Total Number of Appearances of Motif at Beginning or End of a Section	Line Numbers Marking the Beginning of a Motif / Beginning or End of Section†
Christ II (5)	√	5	E512; B517; E586; B686; E850
Christ III (7)	√	2	B1199; E1634
Guthlac A (9)	√	2	B93; E811
Guthlac B (7)	√	1	E1300
Azarias (2)			
The Phoenix (8)	√	8	E263b; E341b; B350; E411b; B424; E583; B589; E655
Juliana (7)			
Maxims I (3)			
Deor (6)			
Judgment Day (2)			
Husband's Message (3)			
BEOWULF MS			
Beowulf (43)			
Judith (3)			

†"B" represents a motif that falls at the beginning of a section and "E" represents a motif that falls at the end of a section.
* *Christ I* is divided into five sections and twelve lyrics. I include both in the Table.

As Table 2 demonstrates, the heavenly home motif appears with high frequency at the start or close of a section, and its high rate of appearance there is remarkable. From a statistical standpoint, the heavenly home motif is almost three times as likely to occur at the beginning or end of a section as it is

somewhere else within a section.[11] Within the 19,354 lines of poetry surveyed the heavenly-home motif appears 123 times, for a rate of .0063 times per line, or .063 times per ten lines. That is to say, in the nearly 2000 (1935.4) 10 line sections under consideration, the heavenly-home motif occurs on average 6.3% of the time. By comparison, in the 3,220 lines at the beginning or ending of a section (161 sections, 10 lines at the beginning and end of each section), the motif occurs 43 times, at a rate of .0134 times per line, or .134 times per ten lines. In other words, the 43 appearances of the motif in the 322 beginnings or endings of sections means that the heavenly-home motif is apparent in 13.4% of those ten line groups with which sections begin or end. The motif is therefore more than twice as likely to appear in the ten lines at section beginnings or endings than in a random sampling of ten line groups. When the motif appearances and lines of the beginnings and endings themselves are considered uniquely from the overall total, the difference becomes even more pronounced. There are 80 appearances of the motif in 16,134 lines outside of section beginnings and endings, making the occurrence rate of the motif .005. (N.B., some of these motifs still occur at the beginning or end of speeches or other subsections within the poems). The motif therefore occurs on average in 5% of the ten line groups that do not begin or end sections, or only about 4/11 as often as it does in section beginnings and endings. Put another way, for every one appearance of the motif outside of beginnings and endings, there are nearly three appearances of the motif in beginnings and

[11] I am indebted to Britt Mize for his suggestion that I make a statistical comparison.

endings. These numbers point both to the general prevalence of the motif and the much higher relative concentration of the motif around the beginnings and endings of sections.

The more opportunities we have to examine the pairing of motif and section division, the more we are able to chart and categorize the various functions and behaviors of the motif. To begin this examination, I look at the ways in which the heavenly home motif-driven section divisions are similar to or different from other types of section divisions. I note in particular where the motif coincides naturally with narrative shift, but also where it does not. As has already been observed above, concerns such as strength of narrative turn and preservation of speech boundaries often take a back seat to a prioritization of the heavenly home motif. After describing the different degrees to which the motif seems to motivate section divisions, I turn toward a description of how the motif functions at section breaks. First, I account for the not uncommon practice of splitting a motif with a section division, which not only doubles the motif, but also acts as a means of connecting the two sections. I then note other patterns that suggest that the motif's presence at section divisions amounted to more than pure chance or coincidence, but instead constituted a tradition that could be invoked to serve different artistic and rhetorical purposes. Some specific patterns include parallel section endings as well as framed sections or sections which feature the motif as their climax. Finally, I show that the motif also provides opportunity for rhetorical address to an audience, as many times a

poem's speaker will slip into first person plural when discussing the idea of the heavenly home.

Because so much of the scholarship on section divisions in Old English manuscripts points to a pervasive use of the divisions to mark narrative shift, it seems that examining how the motif does or does not correspond to narrative shift could be a productive beginning to a broader study of its behavior and function. Several iterations of the motif at section divisions behave as we might expect them to, coinciding with both a narrative turn and a section break. For some section divisions there is nothing to suggest the break was motivated by anything other than a consideration of narrative transition. In these cases, the heavenly home motif falls at the beginning or end of a section whose narrative turns with the motif. The beginning of the second unnumbered section in *Guthlac A* (line 93), for example, marks a distinct turn in the narrative, which up to this point has offered a general discussion of wise ones who choose to follow God in hopes of a heavenly home. At the break, the narrative turns to the more specific story of Guthlac and his specific path to that heavenly home. The general in the first section gives way to the specific in the second, and the division marks this shift. The heavenly home motif falls at the start of this new transition. The motif corresponds thematically with the topic of narrative and at the same time coincides with the start of a new section and a new train of ideas.[12]

[12] Another example of the motif coinciding with both narrative and section shifts can be found in *Christ and Satan* at the end of the second section (lines 106-24).

In other instances, it is clear that several nearby narrative turns offer equally beneficial locations for section divisions, but it appears to be the addition of the heavenly home motif that makes one narrative turn more desirable than the others. The unnumbered ninth section in *Christ II*, for example, begins with a shift from God's earthly gifts to his heavenly gifts (686). This is only a brief excursus, however, into God's heavenly beneficence; the new section quickly moves into a discussion of the persecution of the Church after Christ's ascension. This second shift resembles the first in degree of narrative turn, but the originator of the division prioritizes the heavenly home motif over this other nearby--and otherwise equally compelling--transition.

Although we might expect to see a strong correlation between narrative transition and the heavenly home motif at section divisions, in many instances a motif falls at a break that is not motivated by a strong shift in narrative. Though the motif pairs with a section division, it does not correspondingly appear at a strong and obvious narrative turn. In many cases it is not difficult to identify a nearby narrative shift that is more distinct than any shift accompanying the heavenly home motif and section division, leaving us to conclude that--in these examples at least--the heavenly home motif plays a greater role in determining where a division should appear than concerns about narrative shift.

While scholarship overwhelmingly prefers thinking of section breaks as markers of narrative shift, the evidence of the manuscripts shows an at least occasional preference for the heavenly home motif over even strength of

narrative transition. The break between the eighth and ninth unnumbered sections of *Andreas* (line 950) falls at a reference to a heavenly home, though several other nearby narrative shifts would seem to make better divisions. As it is, the break falls in the middle of a lengthy speech from God to Andrew at a moment when God tells Andrew that Matthew will be rewarded with a heavenly home. If scribes prioritized narrative units like speech acts or thematic blocks, the break might fall more naturally at the beginning of the speech at line 926 or even ten lines later when God leaves off his chastisement of Andrew's disbelief and turns instead to his instructions for Andrew to free Matthew--the bulk of his speech. Though the division as it is does follow a shift from a focus on Matthew back to a focus on Andrew and the task before him, the mention of Matthew and his reward does not seem to be as strong a narrative turn as the two presented only a few lines earlier.[13]

The break at section nine of *Andreas* serves as an example of a not uncommon preference for breaks to fall at a heavenly home motif over a more distinct narrative shift--even at the expense of similarly apportioned section lengths. Had the division been placed at line 936 in *Andreas* when God begins to explain to Andrew his task--an explanation that occupies the rest of his speech and so a significant narrative turn--the ninth section would be only six lines

[13] See further discussion of this break below. Line 981 would offer a strong incentive for a break, as it follows a formulaic pattern that concludes the first two sections in *Andreas*. As I point out, however, a break at this juncture would create an unusually long section. For other examples of breaks at a heavenly home motif that seem inferior to other nearby narrative shifts, see the beginning of the second division in *Genesis A* (82) and the division between the sixth and seventh divisions in *Christ II* (517).

longer than the eighth section and only four lines shorter than the seventh. As it is, the ninth section is twenty lines shorter than the eighth section and eighteen lines shorter than the seventh. Not only would a break at line 936 seem more appropriate from the perspective of narrative transition, but it would also seem more appropriate from the perspective of section lengths for relatively equal readings or performances.

The same can be said for the break at line 619 in *Elene*. Section eight opens at the beginning of a conversation between Elene and Judas in a moment when Elene threatens Judas with his loss of a heavenly home; she wants information about the location of the cross and assures him he will lose access to any heavenly home if he fails to comply. A more natural narrative break might have come few lines earlier when Elene addresses Judas for the first time (line 604). Here, as in her next address, she also threatens Judas severely; but on this first occasion she threatens him with "swa lif swa deað" ("either life or death" 606a), a threat she extends in her next address to include the quality of his afterlife (621-6). Line 604 not only begins the conversation to come, but also provides a dramatic moment at which to begin a new section: Judas' choice between life or death. Another equally advantageous spot for the section break would be just ten lines earlier when Judas first responds to Elene (line 609). A break here would make as much narrative sense as the current break--with the beginning of a new speech and the dramatic appeal of Judas' reply to Elene's very provocative address--and it would also offer the additional advantage of evening out the

section lengths: section six would be 82 lines, section seven would be 81 lines, and section eight would be 89 lines. Even a third location appears at least as acceptable as the actual break. Moving the division twelve lines later when Judas begins another address to Elene would offer a comparable shift in narrative while also offering the advantage of more equal section lengths (section six--92; section seven--84; and section eight--77). With so many other attractive places to divide the text, it seems the presence of the heavenly home motif weighs forcefully in the choice. The motif is, after all, the only factor that tips Judas' second speech over the balance--a balance that could easily be said to lean already in other directions. The heavenly home motif frequently marks section breaks in spite of other, stronger shifts elsewhere and in spite of viable opportunities to create more evenly divided segments.

This preference for opening or closing a section with the heavenly home motif can also be observed in a category of instances that depict section breaks interrupting a heavenly home motif; the break creates a double opportunity for ending and beginning two sections with the motif.[14] In these instances, the motif appears on either side of the break with varying degrees of development and its behavior can provide clues for interpreting how the motif makes meaning in different contexts. In some poems, the motif appears with equal development on either side of the division (as in *Christ II* and *Elene*), while in other cases the motif may appear fuller on one side of the break than on the other (as in *Guthlac B*).

[14] The section divisions in *Christ II* and *Guthlac B* mentioned earlier fall into this category.

The motifs in these cases additionally depict varying relationships to the narrative flow. However the motif seems to be divided, the break makes possible two instances of the motif instead of one and each of these iterations is used to mark two discrete sections in the manuscript.

Just as the motif's development on either side of a break differs from example to example, so too does its function at times differ. Split motifs, or motifs that appear back-to-back with a section break in between, complement the narrative flow in different ways. In the *Christ II* example above, the motif is divided without any strong justification to be found from the larger narrative flow; the break interrupts a speech about Christ's ascension. In another instance in *Elene*, however, the break appears to be less of an interruption of a particular narrative account and more of a signal that a narrative is turning in a different direction. The motif closes out one idea and is again reiterated after the break before a new idea is introduced. The motif used in this way functions as a resumptive thread that echoes back to a previous idea before advancing a new one. But however the motifs are divided and however deeply they are connected to narrative transitions, the fact of their presence on either side of a dividing line affirms the high value Anglo Saxons placed on the motif as a marker of discreet section units.

The end of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth sections in *Elene* demonstrate both an evenness of the motif on either side of the break and also a use of the motif as a connector between one emerging narrative and another

narrative that has come to a close. Section twelve ends with ten lines describing the conversion and baptism of Judas, his hope in heaven, and finally, narratorial assurance that he was, indeed, accepted by God (1032-1042). Section thirteen picks up again with Judas' baptism and his hope in heaven before beginning a lengthy account of his new role as bishop and his ensuing effort to help Elene find the nails of the cross. The heavenly home motif is presented on either side of the break and in both instances it is used to describe Judas' efforts in this world to reach his heavenly home, but the second iteration simply summarizes what has already been established by the first. There is no elaboration in the second iteration, but only a shift into Judas' role as bishop:

Swylce Iudas onfeng
æfter fyrstmearce fulwhihtes bæð,
ond geclænsod wearð Criste getrywe,
lifwearde leof. His geleafa wearð
fæst on ferhðe, siððan frofre gast
wic gewunode in þæs weres breostum,
bylde to bote. He ðæt betere geceas,
wuldres wynne, ond ðam wyrsan wiþsoc,
deofulgildum, ond gedwolan fylde,
unrighte æ. Him wearð ece rex,
meotud milde, god, mihta wealdend.

XIII

Þa wæs gefulwad se ðe ær feala tida
leoht gearu
inbryrded breostsefa on þæt betere lif,
gewended to wuldre. Huru, wyrd gescreaf
þat he swa geleaffull ond swa leof gode
in worldrice weorðan sceolde,
Criste gecweme. Þæt gecyðed wearð,
Siððan Elene heht Eusebium
On rædgeþeaht, Rome bisceop,
Gefetian on fultum, forðsnoterne,
Hæleða gerædum to þære halgan byrig,

þæt he gesette on sacerhad
in Ierusalem Iudas þam folce
to bisceope...

Likewise Judas, after due time, received the immersion of baptism and, being faithful to Christ and dear to the Lord of life, was purified. His belief grew rooted in his soul when the Holy Ghost and Comforter occupied a dwelling in the man's breast and moved him to penitence. He chose the better part, the joy of heaven, and strove against the worser and put down idolatries and heresy and false religion. To him the everlasting King, God the ordaining Lord, the Wielder of mighty powers, was gracious.

XIII

So he who many times before had assiduously ignored the light, underwent the cleansing of baptism; his heart was inspired with the better life and directed towards heaven. Surely Providence had decreed that he should come to be so full of faith and so loved by God on earth and so pleasing to Christ. This was made apparent when Helen commanded Eusebius, buishop in Rome, a very wise man, to be brought to the holy city for advice and help in the people's deliberations, in that he appointed Judas to the priesthood in Jerusalem as bishop… (1032-56a)

The second iteration of the heavenly home motif and the second account of his baptism hardly seem necessary from a perspective of narrative development, but as a means of transitioning from one break to another or even one narrative idea to another (assuming the text and repetition may have preceded the insertion of a break), the repetition is as rhetorically effective as modern approaches to paragraph transitions. In his rhetorical handbook, Richard Marius encourages students to use "words or phrases in the first sentence [of a new paragraph] that look backward, tying the paragraph to what has come before and reaching forward to what is to come now" and to "begin a new paragraph by jumping back to an earlier point…making some verbal gesture that lets your reader know

that you are making such a leap" (95). The beginning of section thirteen appears to be such a gesture.

The rhetorical effect of dividing the two sections in this way seems particularly significant when examining the larger narrative context, much as an examination of context sheds light on the significance of the break at line 517 in *Christ II*. The importance of the motif at the section break can be gauged by the larger narrative flow of sections twelve and thirteen. Though the break and subsequent repetition of the motif do signal a shift in subject matter (from Judas' changed life in general to a more specific focus on his changed profession and then his role in finding the nails), a much stronger shift in subject matter occurs only ten lines before the actual break and would seem to provide a more suitable section division.[15] Much of section twelve describes Elene's and Constantine's responses to finding the true cross, including messages they send to one another and their arrangements for building a church in honor of the cross and the adornment of the cross with gold and jewels. Only in the last ten lines of the section is Judas mentioned, and these lines seem disconnected from the previous descriptions. That a break is reserved not for this dramatic narrative shift, but for dividing two mentions of the heavenly home motif suggests an aesthetic preference for the motif to open or close a section. Perhaps another function of a

[15] Another preferable location might be eighteen lines after the break. Judas has been made a bishop and renamed Cyriacus and line 1062 picks up with Elene's new mission to find the nails used to crucify Christ.

break that divides a motif rather than circumventing it is that such a division allows for more than one section to be marked with distinction.

Back-to-back motifs with a section break between them can be described as functioning in several ways. In *Christ II* and *Guthlac B*, the motifs and the divisions between them mark shifts in what seems to be a traditional narrative pattern. The motifs and breaks mark several kinds of distinctions common to both narratives; they show separation between a holy person and a body of heavenly beings and between an earthly world and a heavenly one. Elsewhere the motifs also provide transition from one section to another and finally offer the advantage of beginning or ending more sections in a rhetorically-proven, traditional way.

This tradition of dividing a section at some instance of a heavenly home motif is attested in still other ways. We have seen so far that a heavenly home motif often begins or ends a section in conjunction with a narrative shift, as we might expect as a result of the large body of scholarship that recognizes marking narrative shift as a primary function of section breaks. However, we have also seen evidence that the heavenly home motif often takes precedence over other considerations for section break locations, such as other narrative shifts that are equally appropriate or, as is frequently the case, even more appropriate than the turn represented by the heavenly home motif. In these examples, the heavenly home motif begins or ends a section when a stronger narrative turn occurs nearby. In some cases the stronger nearby turn additionally offers more evenly-

divided sections, but the heavenly home location wins out. The heavenly home motif also outweighs other kinds of considerations such as keeping small units of speech uninterrupted. At times the heavenly home motif appears on either side of a break, creating interesting parallels between meaning and page layout, as well as fluid transitions and multiple instances of the motif at the beginning or end of a section break. Certainly the evidence so far suggests a full and vibrant tradition in which Anglo-Saxons prefer using the heavenly home motif at moments of transition between sections. In this way the motif resembles the referential function of the "hwæt paradigm"; as Foley points out, "even within poetic texts [the "hwæt paradigm"] helps mark important rhetorical divisions" though it is most known for its use to open a tale (*Immanent Art* 215). In much the same way, the heavenly home motif functions metonymically to designate important rhetorical divisions, though it also features prominently at the conclusion of entire poems. Before turning in the next section to a study of the motif's use at the end of poems, we might further our understanding of the Anglo-Saxon preference for using the intra-poem motif; first, by looking more closely at certain patterns of sectional endings and beginnings both within and among individual poems, and secondly, by noting further the aesthetic and rhetorical advantages of beginning or ending a section with the motif.

Within a few poems, some heavenly home section breaks resemble one another to such a degree that it is likely they serve similar functions. Their similarities of idea, grammar, and manuscript placement (i.e. their occurrence at

a section break) suggest more than an incidental inclusion. Instead, the motifs in these instances appear to be working toward a common aim. Various patterns achieve different aesthetic ends, but their stylistic and rhetorical uses inevitably contribute to a poem's level of poetic sophistication. Parallel endings, framed sections, climactic moments, and rhetorical addresses of audience each illustrate the myriad ways a section draws aesthetic power from the heavenly home motif.

The ends of section one and two in *Andreas*, for example, parallel one another closely, creating an artful and satisfying conclusion for both sections. Section one establishes Matthew's dangerous predicament at the hands of the cannibalistic Mermedonians. Towards the end of the section God speaks to Matthew from heaven and the section closes with God returning to heaven. Section two offers a similar depiction of God yet again breaking through heaven to speak to one of his disciples. This time, he directs his speech to Andrew and when he is finished conversing he again makes his way back to heaven. The ends of both sections are strikingly similar:

Section one:

> Gewat him þa se halga helm ælwihta,
> engla scyppend, to þam uplican
> eðelrice. He is on right cyning,
> staðolfæst styrend, in stowa gehwam.
>
> So the [H]oly [One,] Protector of all creatures, Creator of the angels, departed to the fatherland on high. He is King by right, the immutable Governor, in every place.[16] (118-21)

[16] I emend Bradley's translation to include the phrase "Holy One," just as he includes the phrase in his translation of the recurring phrase "Gewat him þa se halga" in the second passage.

Section two:

> Gewat him þa se halga healdend ond wealdend,
> upengla fruma, eðel secan,
> middangeardes weard, þone mæran ham,
> þær soðfæstra sawla moton
> æfter lices hryre lifes brucan.
>
> So the Holy One, the Defender and the Ruler, Author of the angels above, Guardian of mankind, departed to return to the fatherland, the glorious home where the souls of those steadfast in truth may enjoy life after the body's dissolution. (225-9)

The passages begin with an identical formula, "Gewat him þa se halga" ("So the Holy One departed")[17] followed by a variation of "se halga" ("the Holy One"): "helm ælwihta" ("Protector of all creatures" 118b) in the first section and "healdend ond wealdend" ("Defender and Ruler" 225b) in the second. Another variation, this time accompanied by the genitive form "engla" ("of the angels"), immediately follows. Some mention of home ("eðelrice" in line 120a and "ham" in line 227b) appears before a general comment about the nature of God or heaven finally concludes the construction.

The formulaic nature of the passages alone cannot be used to make claims of artistic intentionality in these two particular instances; formulas recur in oral poetry without necessarily "speaking" to one another. Instead of playing off another particular iteration, formulas often reference a larger tradition (Foley *Immanent Art* 7-9). But in these particular iterations it is fair to claim that not

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Bradley's translations here obscure the fact that an identical formula is used in lines 118a and 225a.

[17] Translation my own.

only do the passages rely on a pattern in the narrative, but that their patterns were recognized by whoever added the section breaks. That each section builds to such a similar narrative moment and then breaks at the close of these formulaic passages indicates a method--employed here at least--of dividing sections. The narratives of the two sections follow a pattern that culminates in not only a similar narrative moment but also a similar grammatical one. The similar functions of the motif within similar passages suggests it was recognized here as a useful way to close a passage.

It must be acknowledged, however, that this method plays out only here in the first two sections of *Andreas*, though there are other similar formulaic passages in the poem that might also inspire section breaks but do not. The formula "Gewat him þa se halga" occurs in two other places in *Andreas* (977a; 1058a), and in one of these instances it is accompanied by a loose formulaic construction very similar to the one described in the previous two passages. Twenty-seven lines into section nine, God finishes a 51-line speech to Andrew and leaves him in much the same way he leaves him at the end of section two. Section nine:

> Gewat him þa se halga heofonas secan,
> eallra cyninga cining, þone clænan ham,
> eaðmedum upp, þær is ar gelang
> fira gehwylcum, þam þe hie findan cann.
>
> Then the Holy One, the King of all kings, in his humility ascended to return to the heavens, to that pure home where grace is to be had by any man who can find it. (977-80)

The passages are syntactically and lexically similar. Instead of two variations of "se halga" ("the Holy One"), the description provides only the one that includes the genitive modifier: "eallra cyninga cining" ("King of all kings" 978a). Like the other passages it moves into a reference to home ("ham" 978b) and like the passage at the end of section two, it provides an adverbial phrase describing the nature of heaven ("þær is ar gelang / fira gehwylcum, þam þe hie findan cann" "where grace is to be had by any man who can find it" 979b-80). Its narrative context additionally resembles the other passages: God speaks to Andrew then returns to his heavenly home.

The absence of a section break at this location raises important questions about the nature of section break divisions and also of formulas and formulaic constructions as markers of narrative division. If the first two formulaic constructions with their use of the heavenly home motif parallel one another so closely and additionally follow a pattern of manuscript layout, why would this third construction--so contextually, syntactically, and lexically similar to the others--fail to inspire a section division? The first response to this question must acknowledge the difficulty of applying a single, over-arching system to what was a developing practice of medieval manuscript production. While some patterns like narrative or motif-driven section divisions can certainly be identified and their behaviors observed, it would be unrealistic to expect any strict systematized approach to manuscript divisions. Foley notes that "to establish any one text or textual feature as standard is to mistake the ontology of oral traditional

structure" ("Editing Oral Epic Texts" 81).[18] Keith Busby similarly cautions against imposing all-encompassing rules onto any interpretation of manuscript layout. While he argues that certain patterns regularly appear in pre-fifteenth century Old French manuscripts, he ultimately recognizes that however prevalent these patterns may be, they may not always be present at moments when we might expect them. Any given feature of the Old French *mise en page* "is not always consistent within a single manuscript, or even within the work of a single scribe." Busby warns that "it is dangerous to impose a system on material that is not entirely systematic and which does not proceed from systematic premisses," though he balances this warning with the claim that we should still take any recurring features of manuscripts "with the utmost seriousness" (71). While we should approach manuscripts with an awareness of their potential for variability, this refusal to impress on them a given system should not prevent us from identifying patterns and asking--and attempting to answer--how these patterns work to make meaning, as well as accounting for when and why and how these patterns might deviate from the norm. At least in the case of the third formulaic construction in *Andreas*, a somewhat plausible explanation for its "missing" section division can be found.

Although the third formulaic construction is similar to the first two--it follows the same syntactical pattern, uses similar lexicon, functions the same way within the context of the storyline, and invokes the same broad tradition, it does

[18] See also Rubanovich, 668.

not coincide with a section break as the first two constructions do. Several factors might account for this. Most notably, the break at section nine, though not falling at this formulaic construction, does coincide with another heavenly home motif iteration. We observed earlier that this section break might have made better narrative sense had it been moved thirteen lines earlier when God begins giving Andrew instructions or even twenty-three lines earlier when God begins his speech. This would have created at least a 103 line section; four other sections would still be shorter. The presence of the heavenly home motif, however, seems to outweigh these other narrative concerns. What remains to be explained is how one heavenly home motif (947b-49) receives priority over a subsequent heavenly home motif (977-80) that has the advantage of being couched in a formulaic construction already used to close two sections in the same poem. The issue may be as simple as a consideration of section lengths. Section lengths in *Andreas* range from 94 lines to 131 lines. Breaking before line 981 would create a disproportionally large section of 158 lines--27 lines longer than the longest section. If sections were created as part of the process of writing out a poem, determining section breaks would be an incremental task. Rather than looking at a physical text from a bird's eye view and being able to identify the most significant places to break a text--and adjusting other sections accordingly, scribes most likely inserted breaks as they proceeded through a text.[19] In this way significant moments that might otherwise justify a break may

[19] See Doane's work, for instance, on scribal re-performance, which suggests the

fall too soon after the previous division to warrant inserting a new one. The third parallel construction in *Andreas*, then, appears too close to a previous break. From these examples in *Andreas*, alone, we see that creating section breaks involved a blend of several considerations including where the narrative turns, the appearance of a tradition-dependent motif, and even relative lengths of sections.

The similarities of the first and second sections in *Andreas* and particularly their parallel endings show how the motif can be used toward the same end within one poem. Its similar usage there, coupled with other, different patterns of usage elsewhere, indicates a diverse tradition wherein the motif marks the end of a passage or section not by chance, but by custom. While the distinct pattern in *Andreas* is limited to a single poem, other patterns emerge from among several different poems and also attest to the motif's marked function as a framer of text. The ascension of Christ, for example, provides an opening and a conclusion to several sections in *Christ and Satan* and *Christ II*. Sections nine and eleven in *Christ and Satan* and section seven in *Christ II* resemble one another and their common beginnings and endings suggest again that the motif was viewed as an appropriate means of delineating a passage.

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transcription process happened in developing time, rather than outside of it: "The performing scribe produced the text in an act of writing that evoked the tradition by a combination of eye and ear, script and memory," "The Ethnography…," *Oral Tradition*, 436. Doane elaborates on Chaytor's theory that the Anglo-Saxon scribe "brought not a visual but an auditory memory to his task," and "probably in many cases, a memory of one word at a time," "Medieval Reader," 51, 55.

Some patterns and their functions may be even more specifically defined. The similarities of the first two section endings in *Andreas* show a method of concluding those sections, but other section patterns demonstrate even more detailed functions. Not only does the heavenly home motif open or close sections (very often and in recognizable patterns); it also functions in other specific ways: it sometimes frames events in a section, provides a climax for a section, or even provides an opportunity for rhetorical address to an audience--all while appearing at the end of a section. The divisions just mentioned in *Christ and Satan* and *Christ II*, for instance, are artfully framed by the heavenly home motif. Each begins with a description of someone's ascension to heaven and each ends with a reference to humanity dwelling forever in a heavenly home. Such a pattern suggests a traditional use of these ideas to frame segments of narrative. *Christ and Satan*'s ninth section includes reference to the entire span of existence--from creation to Christ's sacrifice and finally to mankind's promise of an eternal existence in heaven. Though the body of section nine addresses various historical moments, it opens and closes with the heavenly home motif. The motif similarly frames the eleventh section of *Christ and Satan* and the seventh section of *Christ II*.

The motif acts as a clear narrative component in other ways as well. The fifth section of *Andreas* builds to a climax that features the heavenly home motif. The section breaks offset a segment of narrative with a strong theme running through it--the idea of life as a journey guided by God. This theme runs through

other sections as well, but not with the same kind of development and coordination with a section's beginning and end that is evident in section five. The divisions around section five create a small narrative unit that culminates with the heavenly home motif. It begins with Andrew asking the captain of the boat--or Christ, though he does not recognize him yet--how he can direct the ship with such skill in the midst of stormy weather. Christ answers him with a veiled metaphor comparing sea-voyages and the process of life:

> Oft þæt gesæleð, þæt we on sælade,
> scipum under scealcum, þonne sceor cymeð,
> brecað ofer bæðweg, brimhengestum.
> hwilum us on yðum earfoðlice
> gesæleð on sæwe, þeh we sið nesan,
> frecne geferan.
>
> It often chances that we are scudding over the seaway on a voyage in our ocean-steeds with the ships in charge of the crewmen, when a storm comes on. Sometimes it goes hard with us among the waves upon the sea, even though we survive and carry through the perilous journey. (511-16a)

Christ is much more than a sea-captain; his words spoken to Andrew suggest something very different to the audience aware of the captain's true identity. Life is difficult; we sometimes lack control, but in those stormy moments we have Christ as our captain navigating us safely home.

The journey metaphor is carried into the second and last question of the section. The captain asks Andrew about the extent to which Christ made himself known to his enemies while on earth, and this time Andrew's answer--like Christ's earlier one--features a reference to journeying. Andrew first recounts

Christ's many miracles, and ends with the feeding of the 5,000. While the other miracles Andrew mentions are listed briefly and with hardly any elaboration, this last miracle is turned into an opportunity for another description of the journey motif. Andrew situates this feeding within a context of journeying and rest: "Feðan sæton, / reonigmode, reste gefegon, / werige æfter waðe, wiste þegon, / menn on moldan, swa him gemedost wæs" ("Being on foot, they had sat down, dispirited; weary after the journey, they enjoyed their rest for they received food, the folk on the ground, which was most pleasant for them" 591b-4). This journey account is immediately followed by language that describes another kind of journey toward the ultimate resting place--heaven. Andrew claims God "speon / to þam fægeran gefean" ("has drawn us on towards that pleasant joy" 597b-8a) where "freo moton, eadige mid englum, eard weardigan / þa ðe æfter deaðe dryhten secað" ("happy and blessed among the angels, they may keep their dwelling-place, who after death come to the Lord" 598b-600). The section anticipates this culminating description of heaven as a homeland. It not insignificantly begins with dialogue that explores the life-as-journey metaphor. What follows is neatly tied back to the idea of journeying to a heavenly homeland, and on this climactic note the section concludes. The heavenly home motif, then, frames some narrative sections and also offers climactic intensity.

These aesthetic uses can be added to a long list of rhetorical ones that draw an audience into the performance experience. In many instances, the

heavenly home motif at a section break coincides with a rhetorical address to an audience. This convergence of heavenly home motif, section break, and acknowledgment of audience indicates the meaningful weight of the passage at hand. Scribes likely recognized the significance of an audience address combined with the heavenly home motif and marked its importance with a section division.

The heavenly home motif provides a convenient opportunity for an Anglo-Saxon scop to interact with his audience, an integral part of the performance atmosphere.[20] Though many aspects of any given performance have been lost, a few elements have been preserved in the texts and give us some sense of the poet's conscription of a rhetorical space. When a poet addresses or acknowledges his audience, he enacts what Bauman has termed a "key to performance" (*Verbal Art* 22). Numerous performance keys exist and they vary from poetic tradition to poetic tradition, but in general performance keys indicate to an audience that they might expect a certain kind of communal experience at the hands of the poet. Performance keys, then, on a broad level help shape a rhetorical community. When a poet pauses in the narrative to acknowledge the alternate story of his and his audience's shared reality, he is at the same time shaping a rhetorical space for his performance by establishing a collective identity amongst himself and his listeners. In creating a community that

[20] See Foley, *How to Read an Oral Poem*, 82-3.

identifies with him and also with one another, he also creates a space that is friendly and not hostile to his tale.

Though not from Bauman's perspective of performance theory, Julia Rubanovich examines the interstices of poet and audience in the medieval Persian *dāstān* genre and identifies at least four categories that describe moments of performative consciousness--that is, awareness of the act of creation and performance--in that particular oral tradition.[21] She labels such moments of consciousness "meta-communicative markers" and suggests their function is to "sustain interrelation between the narrator and his audience" as well as to "facilitate the addressee's aural reception of the text by means of punctuating shifts in the story-line" (666), much like the heavenly home motif that so often signals change in Old English poetry.[22] While any given tradition boasts a unique set of defining characteristics, some general overlap of traditions can usefully point to how oral traditions work; Rubanovich's description of meta-communicative markers in the *dāstān* genre can be broadly extended to describe the Old English poetic tradition and adjusted or redefined when necessary. Her articulation of how the storyteller acknowledges his craft in the medieval Persian

[21] The *dāstān* is a prose tradition connected with storytellers called *naqqālān*, Rubanavich, 653.

[22] As noted earlier, the motif signals narrative shifts and thus often corresponds with section breaks that also mark narrative shifts. Additionally, the motif marks change in the "Divine Visitation" type-scene (see ch. 3). It comes as no surprise then that it would also combine with rhetorical addresses that help audiences identify narrative shifts.

tradition can suggest ways of reading and interpreting performance-consciousness in Anglo-Saxon poetry. Her list of such moments includes:

1. Expressions indicating speaking and listening
2. Deictic references pertaining to time and those denoting space
3. Discourse markers facilitating the segmentation of discourse
    a. Storytelling formulas
    b. Connectors (*pas*-then; *va*-and; *aknūn*-now; *al-qiṣṣa*-so)
4. Manifestations of interaction 'storyteller → audience'
    a. Direct address of the narrator to the addressee
    b. Rhetorical questions
    c. Reconstruction of the storytelling event or some of its components (666-9)

Almost all of these Persian markers have parallels in the Old English tradition.

Of particular interest is the high frequency with which meta-communicative markers in Old English appear together with the heavenly home motif. The motif provides a convenient opportunity for rhetorical address for several reasons. To begin, it contains an inherent notion of community. The concept of a homeland inscribes a sense of communal identity and belonging for all those present at a performance. Invoking the motif also invokes an ultimate reality by which everything else is evaluated. All other stories, interactions, or behaviors matter only as they relate to this transcendent reality. By linking a poem to a larger tradition, and particularly one so deeply associated with power and ultimate judgment, a poet vests his poem with authority and credibility. Even without the strong associations of power, the motif's familiar place within the larger tradition of Old English poetry confers on the poem a certain amount of respectability or clout. The motif acts an "appeal to tradition," one of

Bauman's six keys to performance (*Verbal Art* 22) and sends a message to the audience that the poet/poem is worth hearing. The concept of a heavenly home resonates in various ways with an audience, making it an ideal medium for meta-communicative markers.[23]

In many instances these markers appear with the heavenly home motif at the beginning or end of a manuscript section or at the end of a poem. Their presence at a manuscript division suggests they carry significance (even if only through their association with the motif) to an Anglo-Saxon scribe. If certain scribal practices represent elements of aural reception as O'Brien O'Keeffe's work argues, these very explicitly audience-directed moments are distinguished in the manuscript by section divisions.[24] Manuscript layout signals the importance of the motif acting as a vehicle for meta-communicative markers. Scribes make visible on the page what would otherwise be lost without the performance context; in this case they signal the weight of the motif and markers by inserting divisions just before or after them.

A few examples demonstrate this trend. The end of section seven in *Christ II*, for instance, concludes with a heavenly home motif peppered throughout

[23] These ideas are developed further in ch. 7.

[24] Of course not every meta-communicative marker or collocation of meta-communicative markers is represented by a section division. I discuss elsewhere the danger of imposing systems on medieval manuscript production. The frequent pattern of meta-communicative markers paired with the heavenly home motif and found at a section break, however, demonstrates scribal attitudes toward these oral features.

with meta-communicative markers.[25] Section seven tells the story of Christ's ascension to heaven through speech from angels as well as narratorial description. At its close, the poet addresses his audience and in doing so refers to his performance in at least five distinct ways. Using Rubanovich's list, I make note of meta-communicative markers within the translated text:

> Hwæt, we nu gehyrdan hu þæt hælubearn
> þurh his hydercyme hals eft forgeaf,
> gefreode ond gefreoþade folc under wolcnum,
> mære meotudes sunu, þæt nu monna gehwylc
> cwic þendan her wunað, geceosan mot
> swa helle hienþu swa heofones mærþu,
> swa þæt leohte leoht swa ða laþan niht,
> swa þrymmes þræce swa þystra wræce,
> swa mid dryhten dream swa mid deoflum hream,
> swa wite mid wraþum swa wuldor mid arum,
> swa lif swa deað, swa him leofre bið
> to gefremmanne, þenden flæsc ond gæst
> wuniað in worulde. Wuldor þæs age
> þrynysse þrym, þonc butan ende!
>
> So, [III.B connectors] now [II. Reference to time] we have heard [I. Expression of listening; III.A Storytelling formula[26]; IV.A Direct address of narrator to the addressee; IV.C Reconstruction of the storytelling event] how the Child of salvation by his coming hither gave back health, and freed and defended folk here below the skies, illustrious Son of the ordaining Lord, so that every man alive, whilst he is dwelling here may choose as well the humiliation of hell as the glory of heaven, as well the radiant radiance as the loathsome night, as well the thronging of the heavenly multitude as the exiled state of darkness, as well joy with the Lord as sorrow with the devils, as well torment among evil beings as glory among the angels, as well

[25] For other examples of the heavenly home motif and meta-communicative markers falling at the end of a section break, see *Christ II* section nine and *Christ and Satan* sections seven, ten, and eleven.

[26] See Foley's discussion of what he calls the "Hwæt paradigm," which often includes the "we have heard" formula to open stories, *Immanent Art*, 214-23.

> life as death, according as he prefers to act whilst body and soul dwell in the world. For this may the Majesty of the Trinity have glory and gratitude without end. (586-99)

Each of the four major categories on Rubanovich's list is represented: expressions indicating speaking and listening, references to time or space, discourse markers facilitating the segmentation of discourse, and manifestations of interaction 'storyteller→audience.' The heavenly home motif pairs well here with performance consciousness. It offers a motive for halting the story progression--concern for the audience's spiritual well-being--and in halting it the poet provides his audience with space to interpret and process the story (II--references to time or space; III--discourse markers facilitating the segmentation of discourse) and to feel directly involved (I--expressions indicating speaking and listening; IV--interacting with the audience).

Though the motif and markers conclude segments in *Christ II* and other poems, they sometimes begin manuscript sections as in *Guthlac A*.[27] In these instances, the combined motif and rhetorical address again foster audience participation in addition to marking changes in the narrative. The second section of *Guthlac A* uses the motif and rhetorical address to transition into the specific story of Guthlac from a more general discussion of mankind in section one:

> Magun we nu nemnan þæt us neah gewearð
> þurh haligne had gecyþed,
> hu Guðlac his in godes willan
> mod gerehte, man eall forseah,
> eorðlic æþelu, upp gemunde

[27] For other examples, see also *Christ III* section fourteen and *Elene* section thirteen.

> ham in heofonum. Him wæs hyht to þam,
> siþþan hine inlyhte se þe lifes weg...
>
> Now [II Reference to time or space] we [IV.A Direct address of narrator to the addressee] can tell [I Expressions indicating speaking and listening] what has been recently made known to us in holy manner [III.A Storytelling formula]: how Guthlac held out his heart to the will of God, renounced all wickedness and earthly pre-eminence and set his mind on high, on the home in the heavens. In this was his trust, once he who prepares the pathway of life for souls had illumined him…(93-99)

The rhetorical address and the heavenly home motif work together to connect the audience more directly to the story as well as to aid the audience in story-interpretation: the motif and meta-communicative markers referentially signal a shift from one narrative segment to another. This referentiality is in turn represented visually on the manuscript page by the insertion of blank space.

Though the motif and meta-communicative markers often appear together, this by no means suggests an exclusive relationship between the two. Meta-communicative markers appear throughout the Old English poetic canon and are not always accompanied by the heavenly home motif. Still, the opportunities for community building that they both pose and their inherent concerns with the poet's authority through his use of tradition (either the theological tradition of judgment and heaven or the poetic tradition of relating to audience through known markers) dovetail relatively frequently and in interesting ways. As both Tyler and Drout recognize, any given traditional feature takes on added significance when paired with another weighted

feature.[28] The co-occurrence of rhetorical address and the heavenly home motif weighs heavily enough in the mind of the scribe to warrant recognizing its importance with a manuscript break. The three combine to form a highly evocative portion of narrative. Of course these convergences can provide a useful analogue when examining poems that conclude with the heavenly home motif and meta-communicative markers, as will be seen in the next section.

Manuscript division studies go a long way in helping us chart not only where the heavenly home motif appears, but also how it how it makes meaning for an Anglo-Saxon audience. If the formatting of a manuscript page encodes the cognitive processes of Anglo-Saxon scribes as O'Brien O'Keeffe demonstrates, then manuscript divisions offer significant opportunities for investigating how recurring characteristics there mean referentially. The high number of sections that begin or end with the heavenly home motif indicate the motif did bear referential meaning for an Anglo-Saxon audience. Its repeated use in similar conditions throughout much of the Old English poetic canon suggests that, among other possible referential meanings, it was commonly interpreted as a structuring device and shaper of text.

By recognizing the motif as a structuring element in the Old English register, we additionally further our understanding of the function of section divisions, a topic that has persisted in Old English studies for decades. Scholars

[28] See Tyler, *Old English Poetics*, 127; "How Deliberate is Deliberate Verbal Repetition?" *Doubt Wisely*, 508-30; and Drout, *How Tradition Works*.

have documented divisions motivated by narrative shifts and reading or performance sections (as well as other motives now dismissed, like the desire for a variety of decorated majuscules), but have given attention to motif-motivated divisions only occasionally and superficially. The overwhelming number of instances when a division occurs at a heavenly home motif calls into question the comprehensiveness of manuscript division scholarship to date. The heavenly home motif, along with other noted motifs like gift-giving and mutability, appear often enough at section divisions to suggest that divisions were motivated by other factors not yet fully explored within manuscript studies.

At least two broad categories help explain the significance of the heavenly home motif as a structuring element for manuscript sections and allay any doubts that the motif acts as more than a haphazard repetition. The first category and body of evidence shows a preference for the heavenly home motif to begin or end a section in spite of other alternatives that would be equally or even more suitable as markers of narrative shifts. The second category includes various patterns of section openings or closings that suggest more than an incidental resemblance, but instead point to a tradition of using the motif to structure segments of text. These patterns include aesthetic functions like the framing of a section, a climactic build-up for a section, and the echoing of section endings, and they also provide opportunities for rhetorical address to an audience. Section beginnings or endings rely on these stylistic functions often enough to suggest the motif's importance as a marker and shaper of text.

These conclusions will further our understanding of how the motif makes meaning at the ends of entire poems. Its referential meaning as a structuring device within poems can be usefully considered as we seek to understand its role in the conclusions of Old English poetry in the next section.

PART II: METAPOETICS IN OLD ENGLISH POETRY

CHAPTER FIVE:

Introduction to Metapoetics in Old English Poetry

Old English poetry refers often enough to scops or to the enjoyment of poetic performance, leaving no room for doubt of its high social value. More obscure, however, are Anglo-Saxon attitudes toward the making of poetry. While the appeal of poetic entertainment is obvious, a more careful consideration is necessary to piece out how Anglo-Saxons conceived of poetic processes. Antonina Harbus' *The Life of the Mind in Old English Poetry* takes one step toward defining Old English metapoetics. Harbus considers the mind as a metaphor for poetic composition in Anglo-Saxon poetry. She concludes that the Anglo-Saxon concept of the mind acts as a model for structuring poetry, so that the poem becomes a version of the mind: "Much of Old English poetry is structured on reminiscence…The model of the mind operating in Anglo-Saxon England might be seen to have radically affected the form and content of vernacular poetry, to be intimately associated with the poetic aesthetic" (13). Harbus' claim that Anglo-Saxons compared poetic design, at least on a deeply conscious level, to the workings of the mind resembles my own argument that they conceived of it as a journey. Before addressing the poetry-as-journey metaphor in detail, however, I will look more generally at other metaphors of poetry in Old English poems to determine what they suggest about Anglo-Saxon poetic self-consciousness.

Old English poets use a number of metaphors to describe poetic composition, as when they compare it to pouring mead or opening a store of treasure. The scop who sings at the Danish feast before Beowulf fights Grendel, for example, pours forth his song like the thane who pours celebratory mead. The comparison is not immediately obvious to modern readers, but instead is created through the paratactic style of the passage as well as through semantic and phonological relationships. The thane, we are told, "scencte scir wered. Scop hwilum sang / hador on Heorote" ("poured shining mead. Meanwhile the scop sang clearly in Heorot" 496-7a).[1] The side by side descriptions of the activities hint at a comparison that is further highlighted by the semantic relationship of "scir" and "hador"; just as the mead is shining, so too is the song clear. More interesting than this is the phonological play on the noun for mead: "wered" sounds strikingly like "word." The pouring of words, clear and fluid, offers multi-sensory imagery for an astute Anglo-Saxon audience, and provides a metaphor for poetic composition.

Perhaps the most prevalent metaphor for expressing significant verbal expression is that of the *wordhoard*, in which verbal skill is compared to stored treasure that can be hoarded or distributed at will. When Widsith begins the account of his lifelong journeying and poetic performance, he unlocks his wordhoard (1b). And as he tells us later, his poetry wins him "glædlicne maþþum / songes to leane" ("gleaming treasure in reward for a song" 66b-7a). Deor's experience also conflates valuables and poetry. The speaker's very name suggests the comparison, as does his assertion that skill for poetry earns riches like land:

[1] Translation my own.

> …[I]c hwile wæs Heodeninga scop,
> dryhtne dyre. Me wæs Deor noma.
> Ahte ic fela wintra folgað tilne,
> holdne hlaford, oþþæt Heorrenda nu,
> leoðcræftig monn londryht geþah,
> þæt me eorla hleo ær gesealde.
>
> …[F]or a time I was the poet of the Heodeningas, dear to my lord: Deor was my name. For many years I had a good standing and a loyal lord--until now Heorrenda, a man expert in poesy, has received the entitlement to land which the men's protector formerly granted me. (36-41)

Deor loses value in the sight of his lord, along with his valued possessions, when his talent for writing poetry is eclipsed by the poetry of someone else.

The *wordhoard* metaphor is also often used to describe other kinds of verbal expression, as when the wanderer yearns to talk to someone (14) or when Beowulf answers the Danish coastguard (258b), who first bids him to answer him formally (236). The concept of words as treasure is a culturally pervasive one, unlike, it seems, the concept of poetry as mead. To better account for other metaphors for poetic expression in Old English poetry, we might turn our attention to Cynewulf's conclusion to *Elene*, which expresses metaphors for poetry in various ways. In the following pages I explore the passage in detail.

One of the more overt Old English descriptions of poetic composition appears in Cynewulf's epilogue to *Elene*, in which Cynewulf describes the frustration and rewards of poetic composition through several different metaphors. The passage is notable because it reflects on poetic construction and also because it uses many metaphors both conventional and unique to this poem to describe the process. The

high concentration of metaphors contributes to a heightened poetic moment as the poet reflects on the process of creating poetry:[2]

> Þus ic frod ond fus þurh þæt fæcne hus
> wordcræftum wæf ond wundrum læs,
> þragum þreodude ond geþanc reodode
> nihtes nearwe. Nysse ic gearwe
> be ðære rode riht ær me rumran geþeaht
> þurh ða mæran miht on modes þeaht
> wisdom onwreah. Ic wæs weorcum fah,
> synnum asæled, sorgum gewæled,
> bitrum gebunden, bisgum beþrungen,
> ær me lare onlag þurh leohtne had
> gamelum to geoce, gife unscynde
> mægencyning amæt ond on gemynd begeat,
> torht ontynde, tidum gerymde,
> bancofan onband, breostlocan onwand,
> leoðucræft onleac. Þæs ic lustum breac,
> willum in worlde.
>
> Thus miraculously have I, being old and ready to go because of this fickle carcass, gleaned and woven the craft of words and for long periods pondered and winnowed my thoughts painstakingly by night. I was not entirely aware of the truth about this thing before wisdom, through the sublime Might, discovered to me in the thinking of my mind an ampler understanding. I was soiled by my deeds, shackled by my sins, harassed by cares, and bound and oppressed by bitter worries before the mighty King granted me knowledge in lucid form as solace to an old man, meted out his flawless grace and instilled it in my mind, revealed its radiance, at times augmented it, unshackled my body, laid open my heart--and unlocked the art of poesy, which I have used joyously and with a will in the world. (1236-51b)

Cynewulf's articulation of his experience writing poetry relies on various metaphors conveyed through a larger comparison equating the creation of poetry with God's forgiveness of human inadequacies. Cynewulf provides a dual account of his poetic and spiritual struggles so that the two appear intertwined and inseparable. As Britt

[2] Hyer also comments on the poetic intensity of this passage: "The section discussing the poetic process of 'word-weaving' is set off from the rest of the text of *Elene* by its rhyming half-lines," "Textiles and Textile Imagery in Old English Literature," 213.

Mize explains, "The exact nature of Cynewulf's sudden insight is not spelled out for us, but we can say at least that it involves a combination of newfound spiritual understanding…and a breakthrough in his ability to write poetry" ("Revelation and Community" 160). This two-part epiphany is compared to a "gife" ("gift" 1246b) and evokes the ultimate gift in Christian tradition, the salvation of the soul. Cynewulf's gift at once recalls metaphors in other traditions that credit gods with an ability to make poetry and at the same time diverges from them. While poets throughout the classical period continue to invoke deities of poetry (i.e. muses), Cynewulf's equation of poetic ability and forgiveness of sins aligns with a newer theological tradition. For Cynewulf, the ability to compose poetry symbolizes his right standing with God.

Within this composite description of spiritual and intellectual struggle various other metaphors help Cynewulf define his craft. Some of these metaphors are developed over several lines, while others occur at smaller linguistic levels. Cynewulf's comparison of his craft to weaving, for instance, is not developed beyond his use of the phrase "wordcrætum wæf" ("I wove with wordcrafts" 1237a).[3] The weaving-of-words metaphor may not at first appear distinctive or surprising because a wide range of cultures make use of it.[4] Its explicit appearance here in Cynewulf's *Elene*, however, is singular within the canon of Old English poetry; to my knowledge the metaphor appears nowhere else in the Anglo-Saxon poetic corpus or

[3] Translation my own.

[4] See Hyer's "Textiles and Textile Imagery in Old English Literature," 223-6. For a more recent study of weaving in Old English poetry, see Cavell, "Looming Danger and Dangerous Looms."

at least nowhere else so explicitly.[5] Still, Maren Clegg Hyer's assertion of a culturally recognized relationship between poetic and textile creations remains thought-provoking if not compelling. Hyer draws upon Allen Frantzen's work suggesting the loom was a site for storytelling in the Anglo-Saxon home (214-5), and upon John Leyerle's theory of the "interlace" or weaving structure of *Beowulf* (217-20) to suggest that Anglo-Saxon culture prepared the way for such a metaphor. Although Cynewulf's weaving metaphor stands out within the Anglo-Saxon poetic corpus, Hyer describes a culture at least fertile to the metaphor's potential.

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[5] Jenkins translates *Vainglory's* "wordum wrixlað" as "weave bold words," (16a), though this is a loose interpretation. Ironically, the title of the book in which this translation appears makes use of the Old English phrase and translates it more literally (*The Word Exchange: Anglo-Saxon Poems in Translation* 193).

Satan weaves and encourages a plot against God in *Genesis A*, though his weaving of thoughts here is not a specific allusion to verbal art (31a).

In her chapter "Word-Weaving and Other Metaphors," Hyer notes one other possible reference in Old English poetry to the weaving-of-words metaphor. She cites *Beowulf* 867b-74a as one that "may or may not [contain] textile imagery…similar to the weaving of words described in *Elene*"(213-4):

> Hwīlum cyninges þegn,
> guma gilp-hlæden, gidda gemyndig,
> sē ðe eal-fela eald-gesegena
> worn gemunde, word oþer fand
> sōðe gebunden secg eft ongan
> sīþ Bēowulfes snyttrum styrian
> ond on spēd wrecan spel gerāde,
> Wordum wrixlan.
>
> At times the scop,
> a thane of the king, glorying in words,
> the great old stories, who remembered them all,
> one after another, song upon song,
> found new words, bound them up truly,
> began to recite Beowulf's praise,
> a well-made lay of his glorious deed,
> skillfully varied his matter and style.

I agree with Hyer that the passage could possibly evoke textile imagery.

Cynewulf weaves his words, and he also picks them as though they were grains. Bradley translates "wordcræftum wæf ond wundrum læs," as "...miraculously have I...gleaned and woven the craft of words" (1236-7), highlighting the harvesting nature of the verb *lesan*. Though *lesan* does not always carry an agricultural connotation--Clark Hall glosses it as "to collect, pick, select, gather, glean"--there is certainly no reason to rule out such a usage here in the midst of a particularly poetic passage filled with various other metaphors and especially as it appears with the verb "reodian," which could be glossed as "to sift."[6] The idea of poetry-writing as a harvest is not an uncommon metalinguistic metaphor in other cultures. Among other traditions that employ the metaphor are the modern day Hausa and the ancient Latin traditions. Hausa oral poets in Niger equate the work of creating poetry with that of farming and generously sharing the harvest (Hunter and Oumarou 167-8) and Latin poets like Virgil and Tibullus create elaborate comparisons between poetry and agriculture.[7] Whether or not Anglo-Saxons broadly conceived of poetry writing in such a way is unclear. Cynewulf's use of the metaphor may be a manifestation of what Harbus argues is an underlying Anglo-Saxon conception of the mind as a storehouse of thought (*Cognitive Approaches* 36-8).

Beyond these more readily identifiable metaphors, presented as they are in small, compact linguistic units, Cynewulf relies on at least five other categories of

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[6] According to *A Concordance to the Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records*, *Elene*'s line 1237 includes the only instance of the preterite third-person singular form of *lesan*.

[7] See Henkel, *Writing Poems on Trees: Genre and Metapoetics in Vergil's* Eclogues *and* Georgics and Kelly, *Tibullus' Literary Farm: Rusticity and Poetics in* Elegies, Book 1.

specific metaphor to further define his artistic process. At various moments in the passage he compares his poetry writing to particular embodied experiences, using the MIND as BODY comparison as a foundational metaphor for the more specific comparisons between the mind and a sick body and the mind as a prisoner. These embodiments express the limitations that confront Cynewulf as he tries to compose. He also compares making poetry to the visual aspect of the embodied experience, drawing heavily on experiences of sight to again articulate his difference in feeling before and after his poem is completed. He additionally compares his poetic process to the social institution of gift exchange between a lord and his thane and in doing so makes use of the conceptual *conduit* metaphor that thrives in the English language today. And finally, we can say that he compares his creative experience to a journey, placing himself within a larger tradition that conceives of making poetry as a kind of journey.

Cynewulf situates his poetic difficulties and their subsequent dissolutions within the context of a sick body that God touches and makes well. In doing so he makes use of the MIND as BODY metaphor, in which mental workings are conceptualized through the more familiar experiences of the body. Universally speaking, forms of communication--like Cynewulf's poem--are often compared to bodily function--like Cynewulf's old and treacherous body (1236). Juliana Goschler confirms this in her efforts to define "embodiment": "The examples with the body as *source domain* support the idea of using directly perceptible domains (body parts and organs and physical features like strength/weakness, disease/health) to structure more abstract things (like…communication)" (44-5). Cynewulf's

description of his body, interwoven as it is with his description of his poetry writing, certainly helps structure the more abstract notion of communicating a story. The account begins with a claim to bodily failings (1236) and immediately moves to a discussion of poetic failings (1237-40). His use of several metaphors to describe his work in the night making poetry only magnifies the idea that the task is anything but simple. He weaves, he gleans, he sifts, but he does not know enough, does not have whatever it is the task requires, to communicate his story (1237-40). Cynewulf's ailing body and his ailing craft are treated as parallel topics of a single passage and thus derive meaning from one another, but they are further united when they find healing in the same moment through the same event. Even God's intervention is related through physical imagery and further extends the MIND as BODY metaphor. God does not merely grant Cynewulf's physical and mental well-being through fiat, but instead he physically touches and manipulates Cynewulf's body and in doing so enables both his continued and flourishing existence in the world as well as his ability to create poetry. God "bancofan onband" ("un[binds] [his] bone-chamber" 1249a) and "breostlocan onwand" ("loosene[s] [his] breast-enclosure" 1249b). Cynewulf is pleased with the results and says, "Þæs ic lustum breac, / willum in worlde" ("this I enjoy with pleasure, with a will in the world" 1250b-1a),[8] confirming not only his return to health, but also the thriving nature of his poetry. The MIND as BODY metaphor--and particularly the ailing body/ailing mind metaphor--provides Cynewulf with not only a language for relating his experiences

[8] The following in-text translations of *Elene* are my own.

writing poetry, but also a conceptual map for understanding what it is that is happening when he writes poetry.

Cynewulf uses the MIND as BODY metaphor in another particular way as he depicts himself as a prisoner confined in small spaces. After he describes his struggle to write poetry, he then provides a series of images in which he is physically restrained. He is "asæled" ("fettered" 1243a), "bitrum gebunden" ("bitterly bound" 1244a), and "bisgum beþrungen" ("encircled by troubles" 1244b). His limited movement and the accompanying account of his poetic failings derive from the common THOUGHT is MOTION and DISCOURSE SPACE is PHYSICAL SPACE metaphors combined with the MIND as BODY metaphor. Cynewulf contextualizes his trouble making poetry with images of a body fettered and kept within tight, circular limits and in doing so suggests that his thoughts are imprisoned and unable to move about naturally. His frustrations communicating, or filling discourse space, are conveyed through images of tight, confining physical space. When God intervenes and enables his artistic skill, the spatial language that before represents restraint now suggests expansiveness. God frees Cynewulf as a prisoner would be freed when he "eoðucræft onleac" ("unlock[s] the songcraft" 1250a). Here, the thoughts of the mind are unlocked instead of the body because the two are interchangable. God "bancofan onband" ("un[binds] [Cynewulf's] bone-chamber" 1249a), "breostlocan onwand" ("loosen[s] [his] mind" 1249b) and when he does, Cynewulf's thoughts expand. He comes away with "rumran geþeaht" ("a more roomy thought" or "a broader thought" 1240b) that is "gerymde" ("augmented"

1248b). Where he was a prisoner trapped in confines, he now becomes a poet with room for thoughts to move into a broader space.

Visual imagery in the passage also extends the embodiment metaphors and particularly contributes to a SEEING is UNDERSTANDING metaphor. [9] As Cynewulf weaves words and thinks over ideas, he situates himself in darkness without any visual illumination (1239a). Conversely, the knowledge God gives Cynewulf that enables his poetry writing comes "þurh leohtne had" ("in a luminous form" 1245b). These images further contribute to the metaphor COGNITIVE ABILITY is LIGHT and resembles the metaphor STUPIDITY is DARKNESS.[10] The dark/light imagery is accompanied by related images of visual obstruction and clearness. As he struggles to compose, Cynewulf describes himself as stained, or overlayed with discolorations that block parts of his original self from sight (1243a). The gift of understanding from God, however, is the opposite of stained--it is "unscynde" ("without corruption" 1246b). When God helps him compose, the obstructions are removed, the gift is uncovered and made visible (1242a) and is itself a "torht" ("clearness"

[9] Ibarretxe-Antuñano acknowledges the pervasiveness of vision metaphors for understanding "not only in languages such as English (Alm-Arvius 1993, Baker 1999, Danesi 1990), but also in other Indo-European and non-Indo-European languages (Ibarretxe-Antuñano 1999, 2002a, Sweetser 1990, Viberg 2008)" but ultimately argues for its non-universality. While she recognizes that "vision arguably plays a salient role in our conceptualization of the intellect," she also holds that "this saliency is neither shared by all cultures nor present in older stages in the Indo-European culture…," 256. For more on the SEEING is UNDERSTANDING metaphor, see Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 48, 103-4; Sweetser, *From Etymology to Pragmatics*; Danesi, "Thinking is Seeing: Visual Metaphors and the Nature of Abstract Thought," 221-37; and Goschler, "Embodiment and Body Metaphors," 42.

[10] Piirainen identifies these metaphors in a particular German idiom used to describe a mentally handicapped person as having "grown in the dark." The cultural concept originates with a knowledge of forestry and experience with light-starved trees growing crooked and so losing potential value, "Metaphors of an Endangered Low Saxon Basis Dialect—Exemplified by Idioms of Stupidity and Death," 346.

1248a). The visual obstructions like darkness and stains that characterize Cynewulf's artistic struggle finally lift and leave in their place light, clearness, and incorruption.

Cynewulf's metaphors so far strongly follow a before and after model that allows Cynewulf to characterize his creative process as a struggle suddenly interrupted by a breakthrough with good things that follow. Within these metaphorical depictions, he moves from despair to euphoria, from facing some kind of doom or destruction to looking out from a place of newness and hopefulness. Within the metaphor of Christian redemption, for example, Cynewulf is ruined by sin and destined for judgment, but through his newfound skill he understands himself as forgiven and newly pure through God's grace. As a dying man whose body betrays him, Cynewulf can only look forward to death, but finds himself instead healed and fully engaged with the world again via his poetry. This dramatic turn is again expressed through Cynewulf's imprisonment and surprising release. He is freed in a moment and left to move about at will. Finally, the visual imagery also follows a before and after pattern. Cynewulf's vision is impeded by darkness and blots, but the darkness is replaced by light, the blots give way to language of clearness and purity, and Cynewulf's night becomes day again with all its accompanying promise. Cynewulf's outlook pivots on the central moment of his creative breakthrough and in each metaphoric portrayal the breakthrough extends or enhances his earthly or spiritual life. His ability to compose poetry is life-giving.

Cynewulf additionally draws from the Anglo-Saxon social construct of the lord/thane relationship to illustrate his poetic process. He conceives of his poetry

as a gift from his lord, using both a noun and verb for gift and giving to describe whatever it is he receives from God that enables his skill (1246b, 1245a). This depiction of gift-giving resembles the typical instance of a *conduit* metaphor. Made famous by Michael Reddy, the *conduit* metaphor imagines words as objects that can be put into a container or open space and passed along to someone else who can then retrieve the message. Words are passed along through a conduit, be it a physical container or sometimes space itself.[11] The image of a lord handing a gift to a thane evokes this idea. God hands to Cynewulf the words he will need for his poem, and Cynewulf receives them.

Finally, we can also say that Cynewulf likens his experience of poetic composition to a journey. Cynewulf's epilogue is layered with metaphors that help describe his process of creating poetry. Some, like the weaving of words metaphor, are simple and overt, while others like the poet as prisoner metaphor are more extensive and take on meaning through an accumulation of images. Cynewulf's poetry as journey metaphor works in still another way and acquires meaning through the juxtaposition of two ideas. This is not an uncommon technique in Old English poetry.[12] Lori Anne Garner points to a similarly constructed metaphor in *The Gifts of Men* (3-6). In that passage, poetry writing is compared to architectural construction through a side by side depiction of them both: "…[T]he poem's typical Anglo-Saxon paratactic style," Garner explains, "ultimately leaves to its audience the task of discerning the actual relationship of these crafts to one another" (4). This

[11] "The Conduit Metaphor: A Case of Frame Conflict in our Language About Language," 1979.

[12] See Robinson's influential *Beowulf and the Appositive Style*.

kind of metaphorical construction is a result of the additive nature of oral poetry identified by Ong (37-8).

In much the same way, Cynewulf's passage also suggests a metaphoric understanding of poetry-writing as a kind of journey. In it, he juxtaposes one kind of journey with a description of his poetic processes. When Cynewulf begins his epilogue he describes an earlier period in which he is "frod ond fus þurh þæt fæcne hus" ("old and ready to die because of this treacherous home" 1236).[13] Embedded within this line is the conceptual metaphor *death is a journey*. The adjective *fūs* at times describes the quality of a warrior (Clark Hall glosses it as "expectant, brave, noble" among other possibilities), but here *fūs* falls under the more common category of being eager for some kind of journey. At least twenty-two of the thirty-six instances of *fūs* in Old English poetry--approximately two-thirds of its total usages--describe a journey of some sort.[14] This close association between *fūs* and journeying is present in Cynewulf's opening line of his epilogue. Paired as it is with its rhyming counterpart *hūs*, the adjective semantically conveys the idea of leaving one's home on a journey; the rhyme makes parallel the two words and highlights their semantic relationship. This extended meaning of journeying as a departure from life is also attested elsewhere. Three other instances of the adjective also convey the metaphorical idea of a death as a journey.[15] Guthlac, for example, alludes

[13] Translation my own.

[14] Examples are taken from the *DOE* and include Gen 154, 2870, Ex 125, 247, And 254, El 1217, 1236, Guth 944, 1038, 1047, 1077, 1298, 1331, 1374, Phoen 208, Max I 27, Rid 30a 1, Rid 30b, 1, Rid 73, 27, Beo 1473, MSol 57, and Men 215.

[15] See Guth 1298, MSol 57, and Men 215.

to the metaphor in the last words that he ever speaks: "Nu of lice is, goddreama georn, gæst swiðe fus" ("Now my soul, desirous of godly joys, is most eager to be gone from my body" 1298).[16] Like Cynewulf, Guthlac conceives of death as the setting out of his spirit from its bodily home. The traditional referentiality of Cynewulf's opening line, then, activates strong associations of journeying in its audience. Cynewulf, old and ready to die, prepares for a journey.

The journey upon which Cynewulf embarks, however, proves to be of a very different kind. Instead of setting out into the next world, as he is so very ready to do, Cynewulf begins composing poetry. While waiting on one kind of journey, he is taken on another, and as he tells us through other metaphors discussed above, this journey is fraught with difficulties but ultimately restores in him a sense of belonging and community. After God "leoðucræft onleac" ("unlocked the song-craft"), Cynewulf says, "Þæs ic lustum breac, / willum in worlde" ("This I have enjoyed with pleasure, with a will in the world" 1250-1).[17] Unlike later medieval tales of pilgrimage, journeys in Old English poetry often depict a solitary traveler cut off from community as Cynewulf seems to be during his artistic struggles--Cynewulf is ready to depart on the journey that most necessarily separates the individual from the group at the beginning of his poetic process. As a result of the clarity he receives, however, he is able not only to rejoin the world, but to share his own

[16] This conceptual metaphor appears elsewhere in Old English poetry and is not limited to the use of the adjective *fūs*. See, for example, *Andreas*, l. 155, in which the heathen Mermedonians care nothing for the "gastes sið" ("journey of the soul") after death.

[17] Translation my own.

newfound treasure with it.[18] The journey ends with communal joy as do so many Old English poems that conclude with the heavenly home motif. Cynewulf begins by waiting for one kind of journey, but this concept of journeying gives way in the very next line to the topic of poetic creation and suggests Cynewulf conceptualizes poetry as--at the very least--a substitute for journeying if not a kind of journey in itself.

The idea of linking verbal art and journeying can be found elsewhere in Old English poetry, but before moving to that subject, we might first draw a few conclusions about Anglo-Saxon poetic self-consciousness from the various metaphors examined here. To begin, it should be noted that references to poetic processes are not particularly prevalent in Anglo-Saxon poetry. Moments of poetic self-consciousness in Old English texts do exist, but not in the abundant style of Greek poetry, for instance.[19] No doubt many have yet to be identified.

The metaphors that do exist demonstrate the high value placed on verbal art in Anglo-Saxon culture: it is at times compared to treasure, to life, to health, and to spiritual salvation. Poetic composition is compared to some of the most socially important activities--the exchange of gifts between a lord and his thane and the pouring of mead during communal feasting. Anglo-Saxon poets use various means by which they express the processes of their own poetic activities and some

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[18] Mize first makes this observation: "Importantly, what happens after the receipt of this divine gift is not merely its safekeeping or private use….Cynewulf's private revelation leads directly to his transmission of the wonder of the Cross to his fellow human beings through poetry, which now, in composing *Elene*, he has put to public use in the service of the community of faith, 'willum in world' [joyfully in the world] (line 1251a)," "Mental Container," 162. Mize stresses the significance of the mental container metaphor in play and the mind being poured out, while I am stressing the solitary/communal nature of the journey metaphor.

[19] For classical studies that address metapoetics, see Torrance, *Metapoetry in Euripides*; Petrain, "Gems, Metapoetics, and Value"; Mojsik *Anthropology of Metapoetics*; and Harrison "The Primal Voyage and the Ocean of Epos."

comparisons are easier to identify than others. Old English metapoetic descriptions can be short linguistic units or extended over several lines; they can be achieved through paratactic style or through phonological relationships including rhyme and other similar sounds. For this reason they might not be easily or readily identifiable to a modern reader.

In the next chapter, I attempt to describe one particular metapoetic concept in more detail--the idea of poetry being a kind of journey--by establishing the strong association of poetry and journeying in the Old English poetic canon. Cynewulf makes use of the tradition at the end of *Elene*, but it is a wide and dominating idea in Anglo-Saxon poetry, and one, I think, worthy of investigation.

CHAPTER SIX

Poetry and Journeying in Old English Poetics

Anglo-Saxons draw on the motif of journeying to express ideas about poetry and other rhetorical endeavors. The strength of this association can be gauged by the many ways poets bring the two ideas together and by the many poems in the Old English canon that feature the motif. The idea of the journey figures prominently, for example, in *The Descent into Hell*, *Guthlac B*, *The Phoenix*, *The Husband's Message*, *Widsith*, *The Wife's Lament*, *The Wanderer*, *The Seafarer*, *Resignation*, *Exodus*, and *Andreas* in addition to appearing in other ways in other poems.[1] In some of these poems, the theme acts as a source of plot or structure for the entire poem or a significant portion of a poem, while in others it achieves prominence through its frequent repetition. In this chapter I will conduct a case study of the different ways the journeying motif is related to Anglo-Saxon conceptions of verbal art in a selection of Old English poetry.

One Poem, Many Associations--Andreas

Andreas provides several examples of how verbal art is tied closely to the concept of a journey in Anglo-Saxon culture, and an examination of that poem can act as a beginning point for identifying similar connections elsewhere.

[1] *Beowulf*, for instance, significantly uses the idea of the journey, though its importance there is still less weighty than in the many poems mentioned above.

Andreas contains many different connections between journeying and linguistic expression. The sheer variety of these connections within this single poem suggests that the conceptual pairing was somehow important to the *Andreas* poet, and perhaps even culturally pervasive.[2] In at least six different ways throughout the poem, journeying is tied closely to a concept of rhetorical speech. These will be addressed more fully below, but for now it seems fitting to first acknowledge them briefly together. Early in the poem, for example, words enable a journey; God's words act as fiat for whatever kind of journey God wants enacted. Words also characterize Christ as master rhetorician at the same time that he is characterized as master seafarer; his skill is two-part and the parts consist of a talent for navigating words and a talent for navigating the ocean. In

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[2] I do not go as far as labeling the association a "conceptual blending," although this may prove a productive avenue of investigation. Because the associations between journeying and rhetoric in *Andreas* lack a clear "unidirectional mapping from source to target domain" (Harbus *Cognitive Approaches* 52), as conceptual metaphors exhibit, it is tempting to understand these examples through the more multi-directional conceptual blending theory. It is difficult to claim that all of the *Andreas* examples work unidirectionally, with the more concrete notion of journeying mapped onto the more abstract concept of rhetorical composition. More consideration is needed, however, than the present study allows to establish that "the blended space [resulting from the journey input and the rhetorical speech input] has a dynamic, coherent, life of its own that is integrated and autonomous in ways that a mere alignment between structures is not" and that "there are many discrepancies and mismatches in the mappings that associate the inputs," Fauconnier, "Conceptual Blending and Analogy," *The Analogical Mind: Perspectives from Cognitive Science* 278-9. It seems reasonable to claim that any "dynamic, coherent," and "autonomous" "life of its own" accompanying the association of journeying and rhetoric may result from traditional referentiality and not necessarily from conceptual blending. The association takes on power and meaning through repetition in the larger Anglo-Saxon tradition. Whether or not it also carries independent meaning because of conceptual blending remains to be determined.

For more on conceptual blending, see Turner, *Reading Minds: The Study of English in the Age of Cognitive Science* and *The Literary Mind: The Origins of Thought and Language*; and Fauconnier, "*Mental Spaces: Aspects of Meaning Construction in Natural Language* and *Mappings in Thought and Language*; and Turner and Fauconnier, *The Way We Think: Conceptual Blending and the Mind's Hidden Complexities*.

Harbus additionally applies conceptual blending theory to Old English texts in *Cognitive Approaches to Old English Poetry* (Cambridge, 2012).

yet another interesting association, words both ease the tumultuous seafaring journey and parallel it; when Andrew calms his frightened thanes with the story of Christ calming the sea, he uses words about a journey to facilitate the literal journey at hand. God's two-part testing of Andrew further unites the concepts of journeying and rhetorical skill; God first requires that Andrew prove his faith by setting out on a difficult journey, and then by attesting to Christ's divinity through his words. This two-part test resembles a common Old English oral formula present in *Andreas* that also joins together journeying and speech; Christians must demonstrate faith with words and works, and journeying at times acts as an extension for this concept of works. Similarly, words and journeying are equated within the dual concept of traveling and preaching that presents itself in various places in *Andreas*. Over and over again and in a variety of ways, the poem unites journeying and rhetorical skill and provides us with plenty of material for considering the cultural association of the two. A specific examination of these examples in *Andreas* can help us appreciate the diversity of this association.

Within the earliest association of words and journeying present in *Andreas*, God makes clear that his word makes possible even the most impossible kind of journey. Just by speaking it into existence, God can set a journey in motion. In at least two instances in the poem, God's power to speak initiates some kind of a journey. The first instance shows God speaking Andrew's journey to Mermedonia into being. After Andrew questions his own ability to

make his way to the cannibalistic island, God chastises his doubt and explains his power to enable an otherwise impossible journey through his word alone. God describes another more difficult kind of journey--transporting an entire city with its inhabitants--that, should he wish it, could be spoken into being. Even that kind of journey according to God, "nis þæt uneaðe...gif hit worde becwið wuldres agend" ("…is not a thing difficult…if the Lord of glory says as much by his word" 205a-210). God creates a journey not through his hands, not through his will, but through his words. Words bring the journey into existence. Fittingly, after he explains the power of his words to create even the most unimaginable kind of journey, God switches to the imperative mood and speaks Andrew's journey into reality:

> Ðu scealt þa fore geferan...
> Scealtu æninga mid ærdæge,
> emne to morgene, æt meres ende
> ceol gestigan ond on cald wæter
> brecan ofer bæðweg. Hafa bletsunge
> ofer middangeard mine, þær ðu fere!
>
> You are to go this journey…This very morrow, with the first light of day you must forthwith board a ship at the seashore and scud over the ocean path upon the cold water. Have my blessing as you journey through the world. (216b; 220a-224)

This time, Andrew is immediately ready for the task and the journey takes shape (230-4). The passage concludes with the narratorial comment that "wæs ærende...aboden" ("the errand…was announced" 230a-1b). God proclaims the journey and his words bring it to being.

In yet another instance God again speaks a journey into being. This time he commands angels to ferry Andrew "ofer yða geþræc" ("above the jostling [of] waves" 823) to Mermedonia. This edict is predicated by a day-long speech from Andrew on the subject of Christ's teachings. Christ's speeches, then, are mimicked in Andrew's speech as he retells them, which finally gives way to God's speech that Andrew be miraculously transported to his destination. Andrew's speech acts as a precursor for God's decision to transport him, and God's speech is powerful enough to transport Andrew from the ship across the ocean waters to Mermedonia.

God's speech activates journeys, and Christ's speech is closely associated with his control of the sea. In this second association, it is not Christ's words that directly influence the journey as God's do on two occasions, but rather, Christ's talent for words mirrors his talent for seafaring. These talents act as the chief characterizations of the disguised Christ in the poem. Andrew is amazed by Christ's ability to navigate the ocean and his ability to navigate ideas through words. He wonders at both in various places,[3] but one passage especially unites the two in a sophisticated network of meaning in which Andrew's wondering at Christ's seafaring is framed by an acknowledgment of Christ's rhetorical skill. The passage comes after Christ has safely steered the ship through a storm that none thinks he will survive (377b-80a) and in the passage Andrew seeks to understand Christ's talent. He not only asks about Christ's ability to control the

[3] See ll. 553-4 and 855b, for instance.

ship, but he also marvels at Christ's ability to use words with skill. At the beginning of his address, he pairs Christ's dual talents, recognizing his talent both for steering the ship and for putting ideas into words. "Never have I met a finer, mightier mariner, as it seems to me," he begins, "a braver seaman, one more discerning in his deliberations or wiser of speech" ("Næfre ic sælidan selran mette, / macræftigran, þæs ðe me þynceð, / rowend rofran, rædsnotterran, wordes wisran" 471-4a). Here, Christ's status as a superior mariner almost depends upon his facility with words; it is part of his greatness as a steersman. He is mighty, brave, discerning, and wise of speech. The following thirty-one lines account for the miracle of Christ's seafaring, with Andrew noting in various ways the seaman's unusual gift (474b-505). He closes by again juxtaposing Christ's skillful seafaring with his equally impressive talent for words:

> Is þon geliccost swa he on landsceare
> stille stande, þær hine storm ne mæg,
> wind awecgan, ne wæterflodas
> brecan brondstæfne, hwæðere on brim snoweð
> snel under segle. Ðu eart seolfa geong,
> wigendra hleo, nalas wintrum frod,
> hafast þe on fyrhðe, faroðlacende,
> eorles ondsware. Æghwylces canst
> worda for worulde wislic andgit.
>
> It is very much as though it is standing still upon the land where storm and wind cannot shake it nor floods of water smash the tall prow, yet it is speeding upon the sea, swift under sail. You yourself, shelterer of warriors, are young, not at all old in years, yet you, a sea-rover, have in your heart the response of a noble man; of every word with regard to this world you know the wise meaning. (501-509)

Andrew frames his request for understanding Christ's seafaring with an acknowledgment of Christ's rhetorical skill. He does not merely refer to Christ's rhetorical skill in passing, but instead addresses it in what is itself an artistic and rhetorically significant design. It is as though Christ's fluency with words has inspired Andrew's own communication. As he tries to discover the secret of Christ's skill, he at the same time tries to emulate what he admires.[4]

Andrew's words play a significant role in the third association between journeying and rhetorical skill in *Andreas*, not because they are particularly skillful (or if they are this information is not specifically related to the audience), but because they mirror different journeys in interesting ways. This third association appears as the ship is tossed about in the midst of a storm. The disguised Christ suggests to Andrew that he comfort his thanes by telling them stories of Christ's life on earth. Christ himself first connects the difficult journey at hand with help in the form of story-telling, and this is the first of several layers of connections between journeying and word-use in this scene. Christ tells Andrew:

> ...Rece þa gerynu, hu he reordberend
> lærde under lyfte. Lnag is þes siðfæt
> ofer fealuwne flod frefra þine
> mægcas on mode. Mycel is nu gena
> lad ofer lagustream, land swiðe feorr

[4] Andrew marvels at Christ's verbal skill in other various places within the poem. See ll. 553-4 and 855-6, for example. In addition, the narrator also characterizes Christ as both a master seafarer and master spokesman. The ideas are united, for instance, through alliterating formulas in a single line: "Ða gen weges weard wordhord onleac," "Once more the Sentinel of the sea…unlocked the store of his words," 601.

> to gesecanne. Sund is geblonden,
> grund wið greote. God eaðe mæg
> heaðoliðendum helpe gefremman.
>
> "…[E]xpound those mysteries by which he taught men here below the sky. It is long, this journey across the tawny sea: comfort your men in their hearts. A goodly way is still to go across the ocean stream and the land extremely far to seek; the sand, the floor of the deep, is churned up with silt; but God can easily render help to seafaring soldiers." (419-26)

Christ suggests that Andrew ease the journey with words. In this way Andrew's words facilitate or make bearable the literal journey at hand.

Andrew's story also mirrors the specific journey at hand. Both narratives are organized around the story of a lord and his thanes making their way somewhere by sea and being caught in a storm that not only threatens the success of their journey, but also their lives. Just as Andrew tells the story to calm his thanes and make their endurance of the journey possible, so too does Christ calm his disciples by his word to the sea. Christ settles the water and stills the terror of his disciples through his words, and Andrew stills the terror of his thanes by recounting Christ's words. Christ's words make one journey possible, and Andrew's words make another journey possible. In these many ways Andrew's story runs parallel to the journey of the moment. Consequently, his words prove to be a kind of journey in themselves, structured as they are by a journey paradigm.

The fourth association between words and journeying in *Andreas* is a structural association and involves two tests that Andrew must undergo before

he arrives in Mermedonia and fulfills his mission from God. As part of the first test, Andrew must prove his faith by embarking on a next to impossible sea-journey. The errand is framed as a kind of trial; the poet makes clear Andrew's reluctance and further shows that God equates his acceptance or denial of the task as a marker of his faith (190-201; 212b-4a). After his initial hesitation, God warns him that he has no choice but to trust that God can help him on the journey "gif ðu wel þencest / wið þinne waldend wære gehealdan, / treowe tacen" ("if [he] honestly mean[s] to keep faith the true token with [his] Ruler," 212b-4a). Andrew must choose to trust God or part from him. When he boards the ship at the first light of day, he at the same time asserts his faith in God. But this is not his only opportunity to demonstrate the depth of his faith.

While the first test allows him to make his faith known through action, the second test gives him the chance to demonstrate his faith through words. On many occasions throughout the journey, Andrew has opportunity to articulate his faith in Christ, and these opportunities build to a climax after his thanes fall to sleep and Andrew talks with the disguised Christ about Christ. The seafaring Christ asks Andrew "wordum gesecgan...mægen þa he cyðde" ("to put into words the power that [Christ]…revealed" 624-5), and although Andrew eagerly fulfills this request throughout the journey, he eventually realizes that his interlocutor is less interested in learning new information than in allowing Andrew to testify to his beliefs through words. Andrew finally asks, "Hwæt frinest ðu me, frea leofesta, / wordum wrætlicum, ond ðe wyrda

gehwære...soð oncnawest" ("Dearest lord, why do you ask me curious questions…yet…you know the truth of each fact?" 629-31). Christ wants Andrew to further demonstrate his faith through words, and this time Andrew does not disappoint; he recounts stories of Christ for the next 173 lines until finally a divine sleep overcomes him and he is miraculously transported to Mermedonia (644-817). At this moment of divine interference, it is clear that Andrew has successfully passed both tests. Neither his presence on board ship nor his informative stories of Christ is really necessary--Christ moves him to Mermedonia by other means and obviously already knows these stories about himself. However, both trials allow Andrew to demonstrate--even develop--his faith before he takes on the great task of rescuing Matthew and converting the cannibalistic Mermedonians.

This two-part demonstration of his faith is highly reminiscent of a common Old English formula found throughout the Old English poetic canon and also found in *Andreas*--the *wordum ond dædum* formula.[5] The conceptual pairing of words and works in Anglo-Saxon poetry often equates to words and *journeying*, with journeying being the activity that stands in for faith-work. The formula as it appears in *Andreas*, for instance, implies this substitution. Andrew has just finished a story about Christ feeding tired journeyers with loaves and

[5] *A Concordance to the Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records* shows at least fifteen instances or variations of this formula.

fishes--turning the feeding of the 5,000 into a story oriented toward journeying. Three times journeying is emphasized in the short passage:

> …Feðan sæton,
> reonigmode, reste gefegon,
> werige æfter waðe, wiste ðegon,
> menn on moldan, swa him gemedost wæs.
>
> Being on foot, they had sat down, dispirited; weary after the journey, they enjoyed their rest for they received food, the folk on the ground, which was most pleasant for them. (591b-4)

The people came on foot, weary after journeying, and rested from their travels. Immediately after this modified biblical account, Andrew addresses the disguised Christ and tells him of Christ's words and works. What follows the formula proves most interesting, as it apparently serves as a variation of the formula, but one that refers to Christ's *words* as his *teachings* and to his *works* as his drawing of men on to their heavenly homeland:

> Nu ðu miht gehyran, hyse leofesta,
> hu us wuldres weard wordum ond dædum
> lufode in life, ond þurh lare speon
> to þam fægeran gefean, þær freo moton,
> eadige mid englum, eard weardigan,
> þa ðe æfter deaðe dryhten secað.
>
> Now you can hear, dearest man, how during life the Ruler of heaven has shown love to us in words and in deeds, and through his teaching has drawn us on towards that pleasant joy where, happy and blessed among the angels, they may keep their dwelling-place, who after death come to the Lord. (595-600)

Christ teaches and simultaneously leads men on a kind of journey to their eternal resting place. This pairing immediately follows and extends the *wordum ond dædum* formula--a formula appropriately situated at the tail of a story about

journeying. A similar construction is found in *The Phoenix*. Toward the end of the poem the narrator tells us, "Þæt sindon þa word...þe him to heofonum bið...mod afysed...þær hi dryhtne to giefe worda ond weorca wynsumne stenc...bringað" ("These are the words…of the holy whose hearts are inspired to be gone to the heavens…where they will bring the delightsome perfume of words and works" 655-60). The *worda ond weorca* formula is preceded by another pairing of *words* with the idea of journeying to heaven, much like the variation we find in *Andreas*. The words come from people who wish to journey to heaven; they will bring there both words and works.[6] This formula and its accompanying associations with words and journeying resembles Andrew's tests that require action (in the form of a journey) and testimony (in the form of speech), but it also resembles other associations between journeying and speaking found throughout *Andreas*.

Traveling and preaching are often equated in *Andreas* and appear together in several places throughout the poem. This pairing is at least the sixth association between words and journeying in *Andreas* and strongly resembles the biblical account of the Great Commission, in which Christ bids his disciples to go into all nations preaching the gospel (Matthew 28:16-20). In the first of three instances of this pairing in the poem, Andrew tells the boat captain of his errand and of God's commandment to him. He quotes God:

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[6] *Christ I* provides yet another very similar construction at the end of the poem. See lines 429-39. The *dædum ond wordum* formula is followed by an exhortation to the audience to praise God and receive the reward of passage into a heavenly homeland.

> "Farað nu geond ealle eorðan sceatas
> emne swa wide swa sæter bebugeð,
> oðde stedewangas stræte gelicgaþ.
> Bodiað æfter burgum beorhtne geleafan
> ofer foldan fæðm. Ic eow freoðo hehalde."
>
> "Go now throughout all the earth's surfaces even as widely as the water surrounds it or the plains extend a highway. Preach the sublime faith through the cities across the bosom of the earth; I shall keep safe watch over you." (332-6)

This notion of traveling and preaching appears again later in the poem when Andrew recounts a double miracle of Christ. In the first miracle, Christ commands a beautiful stone artifact to become real and talk--"...forð gan foldweg tredan, / grene grundas, godes ærendu / larum lædan" ("to go from that place into the street and to set out to walk the earth and its green plains, to carry God's news by preaching" 775-7a). The stone obeys and in turn commands the dead and buried patriarchs "...þam siðe gyrwan, / hwa æt frumsceafte furðum teode / eorðan..." ("to prepare for the journey, and to set out at the Lord's decreeing. They were to reveal to the people exactly who at the creation framed the earth" 795-8a). Like Andrew, the stone and Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob receive a two-part command to journey for the purpose of preaching.

In at least six ways, then, *Andreas* provides rich material for thinking about how Anglo-Saxons conceived of word-use as a kind of journey. In this single poem, God speaks journeys into being, Christ is described as both master rhetorician and master sea-captain, words ease the journey at hand and mirror it, journeys and words serve together as proofs of a complete faith, words and

journeying appear with and re-describe a common oral formula, and preaching is equated with journeying. One poem can demonstrate the depth of this association and its many avenues of expression. The connection between verbal art and journeying can also be detected by the many poems that rely on the idea of a journey for shape and structure.

Journey as Poetic Structure--Exodus and Andreas

Exodus and *Andreas* offer two examples of how poets organize their poems around the concept of a journey. Each not only provides an example of the tradition for study, but also a sense of the poet's conscious motivation for shaping his poem this way. The *Exodus* poet modifies his source in order to achieve a journey format, and the *Andreas* poet comments explicitly about his sense of order and shape for poetry. Both poems help us understand the cultural attachment to journeying in new ways.

As Nicholas Howe has convincingly argued, the Old English *Exodus* poet makes use of sea voyage motifs in unique ways that not only provide fine shades of meaning within the poem, but additionally function together to create a work thoroughly oriented towards a sea journeying theme.[7] This theme is most obviously announced, however, through the structure of the poem. Rather than

[7] See "*Exodus* and the Ancestral History of the Anglo-Saxons" in *Migration and Mythmaking*, 72-107. Howe studies the semantics of many sea-related words in *Exodus* and determines the poet uses their various shades of meaning to "expres[s] three levels of meaning: an account of the biblical exodus, an allegorical reading of the exodus as salvation, and a historical reading of the Anglo-Saxon migration," (99).

loosely following the biblical account, the Old English *Exodus* radically alters the story so that it follows the journey of the Israelites as they leave Egypt until they finally pass safely through the Red Sea where their Egyptian captors are drowned.[8] According to Howe, "The OE poet's decision to limit the Exodus story to the Red Sea crossing must be read as a deliberate aesthetic act" (103). Howe sees this aesthetic act as being politically motivated ("Falling into Place" 25). His scholarship here and in other places takes as its departure point the idea that Anglo-Saxons placed high value on their own myth of migration from the continent across the North Sea to England. As Howe sees it, the *Exodus* poet wanted to superimpose this cultural myth onto the biblical account to reinvest his own culture/community with a sense of divine purpose. This purpose included spreading Christian doctrine. Not only did the poem "serv[e] as an introduction to accounts of the Anglo-Saxon conversion," but it also "gave [Anglo-Saxons] a vision of the missionary as being devoted to the spread, and thus the future, of Christianity" (*Migration and Mythmaking* 107). Howe offers some compelling motives for the aesthetic decision to structure the poem around the journey to the Red Sea, though to his claim we might further add another: that Anglo-Saxons associated poetry with journeying and even conceived of composing poetry as metaphorically related to undertaking a journey. To shape

[8] See Howe, "*Exodus*," *Migration and Mythmaking*: "As a retelling of Exodus, the OE poem seems thoroughly deficient. *Exodus* doubly distorts the biblical story, first by omitting much of great importance [such as the wandering in the desert] and then by making too much of a single episode from a larger narrative….[T]here can be little doubt that the OE poet did more than emphasize the Red Sea crossing. For him, the crossing is the exodus…[T]he body of the poem told of the journey to and then across the Red Sea," (102).

a poem according to the activity of a journey provided great aesthetic satisfaction.

The *Exodus* poet begins his journey poem with an analogy between journeying and poetic storytelling; he opens his poem with a combination of journey references and traditional calls to performance. Several traditional formulas invoke the poetry-telling experience, including the "hwæt" ("listen") formula, the "we...gefrigen habað" ("we…have heard") formula, and the "feor and neah" ("far and near") formula (1).[9] The end of the proem, in its use of another performance key, again prods the audience to listen: "Gehyre se ðe wille!" ("Let him who will, give heed!" 7b). In the lines between these heavy allusions to poetic performance, the poet also makes multiple references to journeying. He refers to life as a "bealusiðe" ("hazardous journey" 5a), to a heavenly home as a final destination (5b), to Moses' exile (2b-3a) and to the exile of all mankind (2b-3a). The poet at once appeals to an audience's expectation for poetry while at the same time laying out themes of journeying. From the start, the poet announces both, which to an Anglo-Saxon audience may have sounded less disitinctive than they sound to a modern one. Stephen Harrison observes a very similar analogy in *The Aeneid*, citing a few lines at the beginning of Aeneas'

[9] Howe also addresses the opening formulas in *Exodus*, "Falling into Place," 23-4.
For more on the "Hwæt" paradigm, which in addition to the "Hwæt" formula also includes a reference to speaking or hearing and an instance of self-referentiality on the part of the speaker, see Foley, *Immanent Art*, 214-23. See also Parks, "The Traditional Narrator and the 'I Heard' Formulas in Anglo-Saxon England," 45-66.

voyage that he argues address both Aeneas' literal voyage but also the upcoming poetic voyage that will convey the story:

> Longa tibi exilia et vastum maris aequor arandum
> et terram Hesperiam venies, ubi Lydius arva
> inter opima virum leni fluit agmine Thybris
>
> Long exile is in store for you, and a vast surface of the sea to plough, and you will come to the land of Hesperia, where the Lydian Tiber flows with smooth stream amongst fields rich in men. (*Aeneid* 3.10-11)

Harrison claims, "The 'vast sea' is the voyage of the Trojans but also the voyage of the *Aeneid*: in both cases we are only at the beginning…Settlement in Italy will be the conclusion of both travel and literary work" ("The Primal Voyage and the Ocean of Epos" 6). For the *Exodus* poet, the crossing of the Red Sea will be the conclusion for the Israelites as well as for his poetic project. His literary trek there is paralleled by the Israelites' more literal journey.

The *Exodus* poet's special attention to the likeness of poetic composition and journeying manifests in yet another way. In addition to structuring his poem as a journey and opening his poem with the two ideas intertwined, the poet also writes song-making into key moments of journeying. In the first instance, he rewrites the biblical account so that the Israelites sing their way through the passage of the Red Sea. According to scripture, Moses and Miriam sing immediately after the account of the Israelites' crossing and the Egyptians' drowning, but their song is altered by the poet, who not only puts it in the voice of the people, but also puts it in their voice *as* they cross (299-309). The auditory

imagery of their song growing stronger (307-9) fits well with the visual imagery of the sea wall "soar[ing] upwards" (302). The poet recognizes and seizes the opportunity to bring song and path together at the climax of the story. Where the symbolism of journeying is at its richest, he adds the poetry of the people. The *Exodus* poet chooses one other key performative moment to give song and story to the Israelites. Just before the poem ends with the Israelites reclaiming their lost treasures from the Egyptians, the Israelites sing and tell war stories. In this next-to-last scene, the people sing from the shore and look back on the path that led them there, now flooded and sullied with the blood of Egyptians (565-79). Only ten lines after the description of singing ends, the poem closes. The placement of the great "hildespelle" ("battle story" 574)[10] appropriately commemorates both the journey's conclusion and also the poem's. It is a looking back on the poem that has come before and on the journey of the Israelites.

In one final way the *Exodus* poet fuses together journeying and word making and so contributes to the larger symbolism present in the poem's structure. The poet describes the Egyptians' and the Israelites' fates as journeys that succeed or fail, and at the same time as stories living on or disappearing. After the Egyptians die, the poet remarks that none came back home (456b-7a). Their journey comes abruptly to an end, and with that journey's end is also an end to their words. None returns to "sið heora secgan…/ bodigean æfter

[10] Translation my own.

burgum bealospella mæst" ("tell their journey[11] and proclaim through the cities the greatest evil tidings" 510-1). Their life-journey and their words are cut short. On the heels of this commentary comes another one like it, but in reverse: we are told that Moses gives the people everlasting words on the shore (516-64). The Israelites have successfully arrived safely on the other side of the sea, and the moment is marked with words that will never end. Unlike the Egyptians whose stories and journeys are cut off, the Israelites reach safe ground, making possible the retelling of their story for generations to come.

The *Exodus* poem serves as one example of how Old English poetry sometimes uses the concept of journeying as a structuring device for an entire poem. *Andreas* offers another means by which we can observe the way Old English poets use the idea of the journey to shape their stories.

The first half of *Andreas* depicts Andrew's spiritual development as a kind of journey that follows a literal voyage to the land of Mermedonia. Not only, then, is the structure of the first half of the poem determined by a journey narrative, but the concept of the journey metaphorically illustrates Andrew's spiritual condition. In this way *Andreas* resembles autobiographical poems that frame life stories using the journey format. This format seems to be preferable to the *Andreas* poet over the shorter, more repetitive and episodic accounts of his later struggles with the Mermedonians and demons. Though the poet makes no specific comment on the journey structure of the first half of the poem, we might

[11] I have replaced Bradley's glossing of "sið" as "fate" with "journey."

interpret his comments on the episodic structure of the second half as contrasting with that other, more ideal way of shaping his story. The poet's specific attention to his poetic art in the second half of the poem can be read also with the journeying structure of the first half in mind. Between two major narrative units in the second half of the poem, Andrew's repeated torture and his subsequent empowerment, the narrator breaks in and calls attention to his own craft:

> Hwæt, ic hwile nu haliges lare,
> leoðgiddinga, lof þæs þe worhte,
> wordum wemde, wyrd undyrne
> ofer min gemet. Mycel is to secganne,
> langsum leornung, þæt he in life adreag,
> eall æfter orde. Þæt scell æglæwra
> mann on moldan þonne ic me tælige
> findan on ferðe, þæt fram fruman cunne
> eall þa earfeðo þe he mid elne adreah,
> grimra guða. Hwæðre git sceolon
> lytlum sticcum leoðworda dæl
> furður reccan. Þæt is fyrnsægen,
> hu he weorna feala wita geðolode,
> heardra hilda, in þære hæðenan byrig...
>
> Listen! for a while now I have been proclaiming in words of poetry the story of the saint, the praise of what he achieved, a matter of revealed fact exceeding my capacity. It is a great task and a time-demanding discipline to tell what he performed in his lifetime, everything from the beginning. It needs a worldling better versed in tradition than I reckon myself, to find it within his intellect to know from the start all the hardships and the grim struggles which he endured with courage. But nevertheless we must narrate a certain amount of poetry more in short episodes. It is an ancient legend, how he suffered very many torments and harsh conflicts in that heathen city…. (1478-91)[12]

[12] For more on this passage, see Foley, *The Singer of Tales in Performance*, 200-7.

The poet endows poetry with a redactive quality; it cannot contain a whole life story, so it must at times narrate only portions of story. By implication, however, the poet also idealizes storytelling as more linear and complete than his individual skill can achieve. The story of Andrew, he tells us, "ofer [his] gemet" ("exceed[s] [his] capacity" 1481a) for retelling and "scell æglæwra / mann on moldan" ("needs a worldling better versed in tradition" 1483b-4a) than he himself is; one who knows more completely Andrew's story. While denigrating one's own talent is a common poetic trope, lamenting a lack of narrative completion is not, and the *Andreas* poet in several instances refers to storytelling as ideally a linear endeavor; he wishes to tell "eall æfter orde" ("everything from the beginning" 1483a), "fram fruman" ("from the start" 1485b). What he must do instead at this point, however, is tell Andrew's story not in an unbroken linear progression, but in "lyttlum sticcum" ("short episodes" 1488a). Still, not all poetry must be related in little portions, according to the poet, but only a share of it. The first half of *Andreas* seems relevant here and exemplifies the kind of linear retelling the poet regrets not achieving in the second half of the poem. Whatever the purpose of the narrative intrusion on the story--be it to mark an important narrative shift or to account for the structure of the narrative or to accomplish something else entirely--the poet provides an interesting comment on both the ideals and practicalities of poetry. The passage helps create a fuller picture of how Anglo-Saxons thought about poetry.

The two-part structure of *Andreas*, with its journey narrative of the first half (1-980) and its episodic narratives of the second (981-1722), tells a cohesive and miraculous story of conversion. The poem is framed, of course, by the Mermedonians who at the beginning of the story are in need of God and who by the end are fully established in the ways of Christ. Andrew is the agent of this conversion, but his own story makes clear that he, too, is in need of conversion. At the beginning of the poem his physical and spiritual locations differ from where God imagines he should be; the first half of the poem, then, is a story of God's getting Andrew to those physical and spiritual places. God moves Andrew to a place of faith that allows God to work miracles through him. As noted earlier, Andrew's responsibilities involve being present on the journey and recounting stories of Christ. The stories of Christ unfold with the journey, so that together, the stories and physical forward motion move Andrew to a point where God is satisfied enough to fully take over. As he sleeps, God places Andrew closer to the goal of converting the Mermedonians. The experience of bravely undertaking a frightening and life-threatening sea voyage only to realize later that Christ was physically present, guiding him and listening to his expressions of faith, must offer Andrew a fund of encouragement from which he can draw during his harrowing and torturous trials at the hands of demons and Mermedonians. His journey not only delivers him to Mermedonia, but it also carries him to a heightened faith.

The significance of the journey to Andrew's inner life is underscored by God's repeated attention to it. When Andrew acts reluctant to undertake the voyage, God makes his disappointment clear. He opens his speech with an interjection, "Eala, Andreas" ("Alas, Andrew!" 203a) and follows with a direct reference to the journey, "þæt ðu a woldest / þæs siðfætes sæne weorþan!" ("that you would ever be hesitant about the journey!" 203b-4). After the journey is complete and Christ reveals himself to Andrew, Andrew thinks of all he said in the presence of Christ on the ocean and becomes embarrassed, but Christ corrects him and makes clear that it was his initial hesitation and not his many words that was sinful. "No ðu swa swiðe synne gefremedest" ("You never sinned so much" 926), Christ tells him, "swa ðu in Achaia ondsæc dydest, / ðæt ðu on feorwegas feran ne cuðe þ ne in þa ceastre becuman mehte, / þing gehegan þreora nighta / fyrstgemearces, swa ic þe feran het ofer wega gewinn" ("as when you made protest in Achaia--that you knew nothing of travelling in distant parts and could not get to the city and accomplish the matter within the welter of waves" 927-32b). Clearly, God reads Andrew's willingness to embark on the journey as a measure of his faith. The journey has great significance to God, and plays an important role in the thematic development of the poem as well.

That half of the poem centers on a journey is surely no coincidence. Andrew's sea voyage depicts God's power to move people even in the face of impossible odds. Though the Mermedonians are so depraved that they eat other

human beings, the story of Andrew's journey prepares us for this other seemingly impossible conversion. The journey acts as a metaphor for what God does in the lives of people. Its structural and thematic significance to the poem resembles other Old English poems like *The Wanderer*, *The Seafarer*, and *Widsith* that draw on the journey as a format for their storytelling. While the plots of these poems are structured by the concept of a journey, other poems are influenced by the motif through the shear volume of its appearances within the poem.

Repetition of the Journey Motif--The Descent into Hell

Journeying plays a prominent role in *The Descent into Hell* through the motif's frequent recurrence, as it does in other Old English poems. Along with poems like *Guthlac B*, *The Husband's Message*, and *The Phoenix*, *The Descent into Hell* features references to journeys throughout, so that the motif takes on significance through repetition. The many journeys in *The Descent into Hell* collectively contribute to the poem's larger emphasis on humanity's victory through Christ, with place and movement acting as fundamental components of salvation. The poem begins with the Marys journeying to Christ's grave on Easter morning, a journey that multiplies with other meanings. Bradley has noted the echoic nature of their journey, explaining:

> The symbolic suggestion that the Marys are all righteous souls journeying towards the grave is reinforced…by the use of the word *hinsið*, 'going hence,' to denote their journey--a term elsewhere used as a euphemism for the soul's journey at death…. (391)

The Marys not only journey to Christ's grave, but they symbolically journey to their own. From these graves, however, the ultimate journey that ends all journeys can be made, thanks to the events of Easter morning. Christ also makes several journeys in the poem, the most important of which is of course his journey to hell to free the souls of the saints. Once he is there, John recalls Christ's earlier journey to him to give him war gear (70b-3a). John thinks of his own presence in hell as a journey that Christ has sent him on, but that Christ will also make (26-32).

Christ's journey to hell, like the journeys of John, the Marys, and all humanity, finds an ultimate destination in a heavenly Jerusalem, and any other movement or event can only be interpreted through this final and fixed reality. As a countering image of the various journeys throughout the poem, Jerusalem is described as immovable; it is "stille" and "gewunadest…in þære stowe" ("fixed" and "remain[ing] in that place" 99-100). The accompanying image of the Jordan is described in parallel terms, and is also "stille" and "gewunadest…in þære stowe" ("fixed" and "remain[ing] in that place" 104). The stasis described at the end of the poem calls attention to the journey motif throughout the poem.

Journey as Source of Story--(Auto)biographical Poems

While the category above makes multiple references to journeying throughout a given poem, another group of poems relies on one particular character's many journeys to endow that character with a fullness of personality

and to provide the plot for the story to come. In these autobiographical poems, the speaker frames his or her tale with an explicit reference to his or her journeys--or his subject's journeys--before telling the tale that follows. The speaker of *The Wife's Lament*, for instance, equates her misery with her continuing exilic journey at the opening of her tale:

> Ic þis giedd wrece bi me ful geomorre,
> minre sylfre sið. Ic þæt secgan mæg,
> hwæt ic yrmþa gebad, siþþan ic up weox,
> niwes oþþe ealdes, no ma þonne nu.
> A ic wite wonn minra wræcsiþa.
>
> This riddle, my personal experiencing, I put, about my most melancholy self. I can tell what tribulations I have endured recently or of old since I grew up, and never more than now. I have suffered perpetually the misery of my exile's paths. (1-5)

After the word "wræcsiþa" ("of miserable journeys")[13], the woman relates her tale.

The Seafarer also develops from the speaker's recognition of his journeys. Again, the speaker's hardships and journeys are equated at the outset of the developing story. As in *The Wife's Lament*, the speaker says he will tell his story, and then offers a variation of what his story is--the experience of his journeys:

> Mæg ic be me sylfum soþgied wrecan,
> siþas secgan, hu ic geswincdagum
> earfoðhwile oft þrowade,
> bitre breostceare gebiden hæbbe,
> gecunnad in ceole cearselda fela,
> atol yþa gewealc...

[13] Translation my own.

> I can tell the true riddle of my own self, and speak of my journeys[14]--how I have often suffered times of hardship in days of toil, how I have endured cruel anxiety at heart and experienced many anxious lodging-places afloat, and the terrible surging of the waves. (1-6a)

The speakers of *The Seafarer* and *The Wife's Lament* refer to their many journeys at the outset of the poems and these experiences of journeying provide the speakers with material for their poetic autobiographies.

Widsith opens similarly, although while *The Seafarer* and *The Wife's Lament* open in the voice of their speakers, *Widsith* relies on a narrator to introduce the autobiographical tale of Widsith. Though written from the third person point of view, the beginning lines of this poem nevertheless sound strikingly like the lines of the other autobiographical poems because they all describe the poem to follow as the product of a journey. Like the other poems, the narrator of *Widsith* also opens by equating poetry and journeying: "Widsið maðolade, wordhord onleac, / se þe monna mæst mægða ofer eorðan, / folca geondferdeæ oft he on flette geþah / mynelicne maþþum" (Widsith spoke forth, and unlocked the treasury of his words, he who had travelled through most of the peoples, nations, and tribes upon the earth" 1-4a). Because Widsith has journeyed, he may tell a tale born out of those travels.

This combination of ideas can be found in the interior of the poem as well, when the poet equates journeying with his power to create poetry: "Swa ic geondferde...freomægum feor folgade wide. / Forþon ic mæg singan ond

[14]I have replaced Bradley's translation of "siþas" as "experiences" with "journeys."

secgan spell" ("Thus I journeyed…I served far and wide. I can sing, therefore, and tell a tale…" 50; 53-4). The conjunction "forþon" makes the connection deliberate; because of his travels, the scop may sing of these experiences.

David Rollman has argued for an even more interesting relationship between journeying and poetry in *Widsið*. He suggests the speaker of the poem is an allegory of poetry itself and that the poem in general describes the functions and far reaching power of poetry. Rollman explains how the poem reflects Anglo-Saxon ideas of poetry as being similar to a kind of journey: "[W]hy, in the light of the obviously allegorical nature of the poet's name, should we believe that this is the attribute of an individual, rather than of his craft? Is not all poetry 'far-traveling'?" (433).

Rollman's observations fit well with the broader observations in this chapter: that themes of journeying and verbal art are many times and in many ways brought together by Old English poets. In the following chapter I will focus on how they are brought together at a poem's opening or its conclusion, and particularly by the traditional heavenly home ending.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Beginnings and Endings of Old English Poetry

Old English poems begin and end in significant ways that often reflect a particular moment in the poetic process. Not only do many Old English poems end with a life-journey's end in a heavenly home, but many also begin with some account of creation, birth, or the origin of a journey. Old English poets pair thematic material with certain structural positions, and by considering these pairings we can better understand the traditional referentiality of particular themes and structures. Because beginnings and endings of poems lie at the boundaries of performance and ordinary speech, these structural territories hold special significance. They convey information about not just the story at hand, but also about the poet's handling of an audience and about his attitude toward the poetic task. This latter category will be the subject of my investigation as I account for the many metaphoric beginnings and endings in Old English poetry.

The Beginnings

Genesis A, *Genesis B*, *Christ and Satan*, *Guthlac B*, and *Resignation* all refer to the creation of the world within their first ten lines. This observation may not be surprising when considering *Genesis A*, *Genesis B*, and *Christ and Satan* whose principal subjects are stories taken from Genesis, but each of the poems' creation

beginnings are distinctive, not only from one another, but also from any account of creation in the remainder of the poem. Neither of the *Genesis* poems provides a description at all of God's creation process as we find, for example, in *Caedmon's Hymn* or at the beginning of *Christ and Satan*, but instead, each briefly references creation before entering more fully into the thick of the plot. *Genesis A* begins with an exhortation to praise God the great creator, "heafod ealra heahgesceafta" ("sovereign of all his sublime creations" 4). Such an invocation takes on layered meaning, appearing as it does within a call to performance at the outset of this creative act. "A great duty is ours" (1a) the poet begins, and in so beginning with a collective first person address he transitions from ordinary communal interaction into a rhetorical space designated for poetry. The moment is charged with impending poetic performance, and the immediate reference to the ultimate creator, head of the most special of creations, must have held double meaning for an Anglo-Saxon audience. The poet goes on to say, "Næs him fruma æfre, / or geworden, ne nu ende cymþ / ecean drihtnes," ("Of him was never beginning nor origin nor will there come hereafter an end to the everlasting Lord" 5b-7a). God is the head, the source of all creation/s and yet is himself without any source. Here at the start of the poem, the poet muses on God who has no start.

Christ and Satan also begins with a reference to creation, but unlike *Genesis A*, it provides an account more closely resembling the creation of the world found in the biblical Genesis. While the narrative material that immediately

follows it--the fall of angels--relates to creation, the creation account by no means acts as a necessary source for the story. Instead it provides an entryway into the poetic performance in much the same way the references to creation in *Genesis A* do. As in *Genesis A*, the *Christ and Satan* poet marvels at God's power to create. The poet's own creative act pays homage from the outset to the ultimate creative act. Just as *Genesis A* does, the poem's opening activates an audience's expectations for poetry while at the same time introducing themes of creation. The first line of the poem, "Þæt wearð underne eorðbuendum" ("It has come to be no secret to earth's inhabitants" 1) functions in much the same way the "we have heard" formula functions; though it uses no first person, it does, however, circumscribe an audience for the poem and draws upon a collective memory while also establishing expectations for poetry. At the end of the opening account of creation in *Christ and Satan*, the poet again directly addresses the audience, posing the rhetorical question, "Hwa is þæt ðe cunne / orðonc clene nymðe ece god?" ("Who is there that can know to the full his design, except eternal God?" 17b-18). At the beginning of his own poetic design, the poet frames his brief account of creation with two indicators of impending poetic creation.[1] His opening artfully encloses an ode to creation within calls to poetic performance.

[1] Rubanovich includes rhetorical questions and storytelling formula in her definition of meta-communicative markers, which signal certain meanings and aid an audience's reception of a work, "Orality in Medieval Persian Literature," 666-71.

The openings to *Genesis A*, *Genesis B*, and *Christ and Satan* are thematically suitable to their respective poems' major narrative themes--each of the poems deals with the beginning of time in some way. Still, these poems quickly break away from their creation beginnings; the poems' beginnings are not integral to their subsequent plots. Similar openings are also present in poems like *Guthlac B* and *Resignation* that offer other kinds of stories not specifically related to the beginning of the world. *Guthlac B* tells the story of the saint's death, but opens with a reference to creation that sounds very like the opening of *Christ and Satan*. But while the beginning of *Christ and Satan* describes creation of the world and of humankind, *Guthlac B* focuses chiefly on the creation of humanity:

> Đæt is wide cuð wera cneorissum,
> Folcum gefræge, þætte frymþa god
> Þone ærestan ælda cynnes
> Of þære clænestan, cyning ælmihtig,
> Foldan geworhte. Đa wæs fruma niwe
> Ælda tudres, onstæl wynlic,
> Fæger ond gefealic.
>
> It is universally manifest to the races of men and celebrated among the peoples that the God of the elements, the almighty King, fashioned the first one of the species of men out of the purest earth, whereupon a new creation existed, that of the human stock--a happy order, beautiful and pleasing. (819-25a)

The poem continues the story of Adam and Eve's expulsion from the garden for the next forty-five lines, before transitioning to the very different story of Guthlac and later of his death. This opening differs from *Guthlac B*'s Latin source, *Chapter*

50 of Felix of Crowland's *Vita Sancti Guthlaci*.[2] *Chapter 50* begins not with a creation account, but with the observation that all humanity, no matter an individual's status on earth, reaches the same end through death (109). Such a beginning more seamlessly transitions into the story of Guthlac's death than does its Old English counterpart.

The Old English beginning creates new problems of connections and transitions, but it also offers whatever advantages might accompany the tradition; *Guthlac B* falls into a category of poems that rely on the Genesis creation account as their entryway into stories. If nothing else, the more familiar opening would have provided a stronger sense of poetic performance for an Anglo-Saxon audience. Other openings like the Hwæt paradigm, used in no fewer than nine poems according to Foley[3], demonstrate the established function of traditional openings in Old English poetry; calls to performance like the Hwæt paradigm and the creation account play an important role in oral and oral-derived poetry. The creation account opening offers the advantage of commenting on the process of poetic composition through metaphor. The parallelism of one creation, the poem, and the story of another kind of creation, God's formation of the world, must have offered aesthetic satisfaction. By using this beginning, Old English poets liken their work to the great divine work. They

[2] Calder and Allen, *Sources & Analogues*, 108.

[3] *Immanent Art*, 214.

fit themselves into a growing religious tradition and in this way provide legitimacy for their craft.

Poems that begin with an account of the creation of the world also resemble other poems that begin with some reference to birth, at least as far as the theme of their beginnings also metaphorically comment on a poetic process. *Elene* and *Christ II* each begin with a reference to Christ's birth, a theme in some ways similar to the account of creation. Both harbor connotations of divine beginnings, for instance, and of miraculous power. In each of the poems that begin by referring to Christ's birth, the theme appears differently. The *Elene* poet provides the setting of his story by counting the years after Christ's birth to the present time of the story:

> Þa wæs agangen geara hwyrftum
> tu hund ond þreo geteled rimes,
> swylce XXX eac, þinggemearces,
> wintra for worulde, þæs þe wealdend god
> acenned wearð, cyninga wuldor,
> in middangeard þurh mennisc heo...
>
> When, with the passing of the years, two hundred and three winters, tallied by number, and thirty more, chronologically counted, had gone by in worldly terms since God the Ruler, the Glory of kings, was born upon earth in human form… (1-6)

This kind of opening, of course, recalls the openings of historical accounts such as those found in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, but is the only one like it in the Old English poetic cannon. Its presence at the opening of a poem lends a feeling of historical legitimacy to the story of Elene and her search for the true cross, but it

also may be evidence of a larger tradition that transposed traditions of divine beginnings onto poetic ones.

Christ II also opens with an account of Christ's birth, but this account provides more narrative than that offered in the beginning of *Elene*; it describes the activities and characteristics of Mary, the shepherds, and the angels. Its treatment of the nativity at the opening of the poem has been attributed to a larger structural design amongst the three *Christ* poems; Bradley argues, for instance, that the opening connects *Christ II* and its treatment of the ascension to *Christ I* and its exposition of the nativity (216-7). In addition to this concern for the cohesiveness of the *Christ* poems, however, may lie another concern for providing an opening that resonates with tradition. The birth opening, like the one in *Elene* and like the creation beginnings, carries ideas of divine origination. These ideas, paired as they are with the origin of the poem, can be understood also as metaphorical commentary on the nature of poetic creation. Poetic creation is depicted here as akin to one of the most revered miracles in Christian tradition.

Though it lacks the spiritual force of the beginnings that refer to Christ's birth, *The Fortunes of Men* also opens with an account of a birth that is unnecessary to the plot that follows, but parallels the poetic activity at hand--the birth of the poem. *The Fortunes of Men* describes the various ways a man might meet the end of his life, but begins with a general reference to the birth of an individual; while his death may be distinctive and follow any number of possible

outcomes, his birth is described as being like anyone else's: "Ful oft þæt gegongeð, mid godes meahtum, / þætte wer ond wif in woruld cennað / bearn mid gebyrdum..." ("It very often happens through God's powers that man and woman bring forth a child by birth into the world…" 1-3a). The birth of the child headlines the birth of rest of the poem, which has less to do with birth than it does with death. After the birth in these first lines, the poet goes on to describe man's life as a kind of path or journey on which his parents first direct him: "Fergað swa ond feþað fæder ond modor" ("Thus his father and mother lead him along and guide his footsteps…" 7). The birth narrative at the beginning of the poem quickly moves into a journey narrative, another familiar topic for beginning--and especially for ending--Old English poems.

At least three Old English poems, *The Husband's Message*, *The Descent into Hell*, and *Guthlac A*, begin with the beginning of some journey. Manuscript damage to *The Husband's Message* prevents transcription, but Bradley supplies the general topics of the missing lines, "in which the speaker-persona refers to his origin as a tree, [and] to frequent journeys by ship…" (399). The combination of the speaker's origin and the origin of his journey resembles that found at the beginning of *The Fortunes of Men*, where the origin or birth of the man is followed by a reference to his subsequent life's journey.

The Descent into Hell also offers a kind of layered beginning that mimics the beginning of the poem. It pairs the start of a journey with the start of a day at the start of the poem. The bulk of the poem depicts hell at the time of Christ's

harrowing, but it opens with a dual reference to the beginning of day and the beginning of a journey. At the outset, the Marys start on their way to Christ's grave. "Ongunnon him on uhtan," "In the dawning they started," (1a) the poem begins, "…gierwan to geonge" "preparing themselves for the journey"[4] (3a). The pairing of the journey with dawn appears at least once more in this opening, reinforcing an idea of a new kind of progress, a beginning that has an origin but that is not immediately fulfilled. The idea appears a few lines later. Lines 6a and 7b provide parallel sentence constructions, linking the coldness of the grave due to nighttime[5] with the journey of the women to Christ's grave: "Ræst wæs acolad, / heard wæs hinsið" "The grave was grown chill; it was a cruel journey there." The women journey at the break of day. Bradley notes the surprising nature of the poem's beginning as it relates thematically to the rest of the poem and observes, "Because the action of the poem shifts quickly to hell at the time of the harrowing, and remains there, the opening scenario of the Marys journeying to Christ's sepulcher has sometimes been deemed a false start" (390). Bradley attempts to account for the appeal of such a beginning, noting the popularity of the story in the Anglo-Saxon imagination, but to his defense we might add the concern Anglo-Saxons show for beginning and ending poems in ways that comment somehow on the work of poetic construction itself. Though the opening of *The Descent into Hell* does not explicitly discuss the act of creating

[4] I have replaced Bradley's glossing of "visit" with "journey."

[5] Clark Hall glosses *acolian* as "to grow cold," a verb that in this context suggests an absence of sun and warmth in the nighttime

poetry, its strong themes of *journeying* and *beginnings* artfully coincide with the beginning of the poem. The Marys set out on a journey that ends as successfully as the poet might hope his own poetic journey will end. The opening of his poem holds as much promise as the breaking of that fateful day.

Guthlac A also opens at the beginning of a journey and the newness of the journey mimics the newness of the poem. The first five lines of *Guthlac A* describe the meeting of an anonymous soul just parted from his body and an angel. Line 6 begins with the angel's address to the soul about the journey that awaits him:

> "Nu þu most feran þider þu fundadest
> longe ond gelome. Ic þec lædan sceal.
> Wegas þe sindon weþe, ond wuldres leoht
> Torht ontyned. Eart nu tidfara
> To þam halgan ham."
>
> "Now you may journey to the place you have been striving towards long and often. I shall lead you; for you the ways will be smooth, and the light of heaven radiantly revealed. You are now a timely traveler to the sacred home." (6-10a)

The next 82 lines preceding the story of Guthlac discuss the various ways mankind approaches God, referring on multiple occasions to life on earth as a journey.[6] This beginning and its repeated reference to journeying sets up Guthlac's life as itself a kind of journey.[7] The poem, then, following Guthlac's journey as it does, becomes a kind of journey in itself. The poem is a story of a

[6] See ll. 29; 35-7a; 65-70a.

[7] *Guthlac A* resembles the class of poems that refer to life stories as journeys.

journey.[8] The opening of *Guthlac A*, with its more generic life-journey reference, establishes the journey theme at the outset of the poem but does even more than that. Because it begins with the beginning of a journey--and not simply a reference to any part of it--it figuratively comments on the process of making poetry and aligns poetic composition with journeying.

Surely it is no coincidence that so many poems open with some alternate account of a beginning. Rather, this body of poems and their similar styles of opening suggest a thoughtfulness among Old English poets for their craft. By beginning their poems with a reference to creation, birth, or the start of a journey, these poets subtly call attention to their own poetic activity at a critical moment when they are at the same time transitioning from ordinary communal interaction to poetic performance. What lies before them, they convey to an audience, is a new creation of its own right, a new being, a new kind of journey, and they are its master.

The Endings – Part I: Traditional Referentiality of Home *and* Journey

This consideration for the poem's identity is echoed at its end. Old English poets incorporate metaphors of composition into the endings of poems as well as into the beginnings. In the following section I will provide an account of heavenly home conclusions, considering the traditional nature of the ending

[8] The poet's insistence on Guthlac's experience being a journey is somewhat ironic. The poem's plot describes Guthlac's struggle to live in a specific place. This struggle for establishment is framed and frequently punctuated, however, by repeated references to Guthlac's experience as a journey. The stasis that he seeks is really his movement toward God.

and ultimately describing how its traditional nature calls attention to the poetic composition at hand. I start by accounting for other, non-metapoetic referents for *home* or *journey* that eventually help inform an understanding of how the heavenly home motif makes meaning at the conclusion of a poem. After considering what home and journey means to Anglo-Saxons, I turn to the conclusions themselves, first defining the parameters of the conclusion. Among features like the length and thematic elements of conclusions, I also examine the degree that the traditional conclusion strays from the style and theme of the poem. Finally, I consider how the placement of the heavenly home motif at the end of the poem, and often incorporating other meta-communicative markers, calls attention to the composition of the poem. I attempt to answer the question, "What do endings tell us about Anglo-Saxon attitudes toward poetry?"

Of course, defining the traditional uses of any oral-derived feature involves examining the feature collectively--that is to say considering any one iteration as part of a larger body of similar iterations. But it also involves using information already at our disposal about aspects of the feature. To articulate how the heavenly home theme works at the end of so many Old English poems, we might consider what *home* and *journey* meant for Anglo-Saxons, outside of an appearance, that is, at the end of poems.

Anita Riedinger provides the most detailed study of Anglo-Saxon words for and conceptions of home, noting its pervasiveness in the Anglo-Saxon imagination. She argues, "So basic a concept was 'home' among the Germanic

peoples in general, as well as the Anglo-Saxons in particular, that *eðel* was a character in the Runic alphabet" (52). The Old English lexicon includes numerous words for home and further attests to the prevalence of the concept:

> There are at least fourteen synonyms for "home" in Old English poetry: *eðel*, *eard*, *geard*, *ærn*, *bold*, *reced*, *cnosl*, *cyþþ*, *worðig*, *wic*, *eodor*, *hof*, *hus*, and *ham*. Some--like *eðel*, *eard*, *geard*--are often associated with a geographical setting, a home-*land*. Others refer primarily to an actual building--like *ærn*, *bold*, and *reced*--or to a simple enclosure--as in *eodor*, *hof*, and *hus*. A few specifically associate themselves with family, as do *cnosl*, *cyþþ*, and *eðel*. Regardless of their other denotations, Bosworth-Toller includes "home" in the definitions of all these words; and to the characters of Anglo-Saxon poetry, all could, and usually did, mean "home." (51)

According to Riedinger, almost every Old English poem refers in some way to home (53). She provides at least seven categories of meaning for various Anglo-Saxon uses of the words. Some synonyms for home could refer to social status, marital status, exile, reward and punishment, heaven and hell, birth and death, and victory and defeat (53-5).

Dee Dyas suggests these meanings are further colored by Christian ideology (105). Her study of Anglo-Saxon conceptions of pilgrimage leads her to believe that notions of home and journey absorbed so much Christian symbolism that they would almost always harbor such connotations for a contemporary Anglo-Saxon audience. She marvels at

> the extraordinary extent to which the concepts of exile and homeland rapidly became associated in Anglo-Saxon thought with Christian concepts of spiritual exile and the life of pilgrimage, and the profound spiritual resonance which words such as exile, stranger, home, homeland, city and journey would have therefore contained for a contemporary audience. (105)

Home and journey in Old English poetry, Dyas argues, is almost always bound up with Christian ideas.

In his study of the Anglo-Saxon myth of migration, Howe notes a further aspect of the Anglo-Saxon conception of home. Howe sees the migration myth as undergirding much of Old English literature (*Migration and Mythmaking* 3). Home as it results from the myth encompasses a broader definition than those examined by Riedinger. From the context of migration myth, home means a collective identity for an otherwise fragmented people, and at times this identity takes on Christian character (5-7; "Falling into Place" 14-34). Home is also a geographical place--Engla lond--that could be lost to other invaders if Anglo-Saxons did not remain spiritually astute (8-32).

In Theano S. Terkenli's "Home as Region," the geographer asserts that a distance from home helps one consider home more fully. The home-nonhome dialectic, as he calls it, provides tension that offsets the two concepts, making each more striking for the comparison (328-9). He goes on to note that "many literary and poetic references to home have been written either by someone in exile or when a home is in danger of being lost or changed in unwanted ways" (328). By both Howe and Dyas' accounts, Anglo-Saxons also understand home in terms of this home-nonhome dialect. The definition of home that Howe proffers results from a notion of journey and migration. The movement across the North Sea contributes greatly to an Anglo-Saxon idea of what home actually means. Howe focuses on the Anglo-Saxon idea of a journey as a collective

undertaking, producing a collective memory and identity--what they would attach to their idea of home. The collective migration from the continent is often reinterpreted symbolically in works such as the biblical accounts of the Junius manuscript; the exodus account, for instance, is recast as an alternate version of the Anglo-Saxon migration myth.[9] Dyas, by contrast, calls attention to different kinds of exiles and pilgrimages, most of which pertain to the individual rather than the group. She breaks stories of exile into two groups, voluntary and involuntary (71), but either kind leads to difficulty and the desire for home (80-1, 83, 89). Home is the opposite of the hardships of exile, and a heavenly home represents a complete restoration to God (73, 79). Howe makes a similar claim, arguing that the wandering and journeying in the Junius manuscript symbolizes mankind's displacement from Eden, the site of spiritual perfection:

> After the loss of Eden there would be no fixed home on earth, but only the restless shuttling of lone exiles and transplanted peoples from place to place. The price that humans pay for the sins of their ancestors, as we learn from the Bible, is the burden of place and displacement. ("Falling into Place" 17)

For Anglo-Saxons, place and movement could mean many things, and these ideas very often function in some kind of relation to one another. These traditional understandings of *home* and *journey* can influence our interpretations of the heavenly home motif at the conclusions of poems.

[9] See ch. 3 in *Migration and Mythmaking*, "*Exodus* and the Ancestral History of the Anglo-Saxons," pp. 72-107.

The Endings – Part II: A Survey

The Wanderer and *The Seafarer* have long been held as favorites among readers of Old English poetry, and the nature of their conclusions has remained a persistent topic of the discussion surrounding both poems. For some scholars, both conclude in ways that seem inharmonious with the rest of the text. They point out that *The Wanderer*'s Christian perspective at the end of the poem does not flow naturally out of the Germanic ethos that saturates the poem, and additionally that it does not adequately make answer to the wanderer's profound questioning of the meaning of life.[10] Editors and translators confront the issue and must inevitably provide a rationale for their division of narration and monologue based in part upon the degree to which they feel the speaker's faith in God is believable.[11] The conclusion to *The Seafarer*, with its strong homiletic feel, has also puzzled scholars. So discordant it sounded with the rest of the text to nineteenth-century readers, that it was simply excused as the work of a scribe or interpolator.[12] Klinck points out its rather incongruous structural appearance: "Although there is no mention of the sea in the second half of the

[10] Though the perspective is not their own, Mitchell and Robinson explain this viewpoint: "The wanderer's hopeless situation and despairing scrutiny of the meaning of existence seems too briefly answered by the Christian poet's assertion that all our hope is in God the Father," 281.

[11] See, for instance, Klinck, who asserts that such a statement could very well come from the mouth of the wanderer: "It is true that a positive religious faith emerges clearly only in the introduction and conclusion, but in the body of the poem there are hints of a broader perspective that will eventually transcend the tragedy which awaits heroes in this world." Klinck goes on to note these specific examples, 32.

[12] Ezra Pound called it a "dignified but platitudinous address to the Deity," (Alexander 146).

poem, the closing passage speaks of a journey (to the heavenly home, lines 117-18)" (39).[13] These sorts of textual studies are of course worthy of investigation, but as the above lines of inquiry demonstrate, the predominant question scholars have generally asked about Old English conclusions have focused on how a specific ending relates to a specific text. I want to ask instead how a specific ending might be a part of a larger tradition, and how the traditional nature of an ending affects the meaning it makes. Recognizing the oral-derived nature of conclusions has consequences for our understanding of a poem.

At least twenty Old English poems conclude with a heavenly home motif, a number that warrants a thoughtful consideration of how the motif may have been used traditionally. To offer some comparison, the "Beasts of Battle" theme appears in nine poems (Foley *Immanent Art* 224-31)[14] and the Hwæt paradigm appears in nine poems (214). Though motifs, themes, and other forms of patterned conventions are different traditional features, they function similarly enough to provide us with a sense that the heavenly home motif bears marks of tradition worth investigating. Twelve (*The Fates of the Apostles*, *Homiletic Fragment I*, *Juliana*, *The Wanderer*, *The Seafarer*, *Vainglory*, *The Rhyming Poem*, *The Whale*, *The Partridge*, *Maxims II*, *Judgment Day I* and *Judgment Day II*) of the twenty

[13] Klinck views this appearance as a positive structural feature, resurrecting themes of the first part of the poem at its end.

[14] Mize's *Traditional Subjectivities* points out that even the "Beasts of Battle" theme subjectivizes the issue of carrion animals awaiting the spoils of battle, and thus works like many other components of Old English poetry "to evoke a system of ethical positions and relationships," 19.

poems that conclude with a heavenly home motif use the motif only at the end of the poem, while the other eight (*The Dream of the Rood*, *Elene*, *Christ I, Christ II*, *Christ III*, *Guthlac A*, *The Phoenix*, and *The Order of the World*) contain multiple iterations of the motif. Each of these poems uses the motif in the epilogue or as the final idea of the poem, and the size of the expressed idea or of the epilogue can vary from one and a half to eighty-five lines.[15] That so many poems end with the motif--even when they make no other use of it--leads us to consider it as a traditional feature of Old English poetry. Its use as a tool for closing all kinds of poems, from gnomic to elegy to saint's life, provides a new way of thinking about it in the context of a single poem. A cursory examination of how it fits thematically with various poems suggests that its appeal for a poet surpassed its immediate thematic value. Though most of the poems that conclude with the heavenly home motif are colored somehow by Christian philosophy, the motif often comes across to modern readers as forced when it appears as a conclusion, in much the same way the motif sounds forced to some readers of *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer*.

The varying degrees to which the motif naturally flows out of what comes before it suggests its traditional--as opposed to thematic--appeal. *Guthlac A* demonstrates the ease with which at least one poet moves from plot to

[15] The Christian statement at the end of *The Wanderer* takes up one and a half lines, though the last five hypermetric lines are often considered an epilogue. The epilogues of *Christ II* and *Elene* both make up eighty-five lines.

conclusion. After Guthlac dies the poet describes angels carrying him to heaven, and then compares Guthlac's journey there to mankind's:

> Him þæt ne hreoweð æfter hingonge,
> ðonne hy hweorfað in þa halgan burg
> gongað gegnunga to Hierusalem,
> þær hi to worulde wynnum motun
> godes onsyne georne bihealdan,
> sibbe ond gesihðe, þær heo soð wunað,
> wlitig, wuldorfæst, ealne widan ferh
> on lifgendra londes wynne.
>
> …They do not regret it after their departure hence, when they pass over into the holy city and journey straight to Jerusalem, where they may for ever rapturously and eagerly gaze upon the face of God and upon the peace and the prospect of Jerusalem, there where she will surely abide, beautiful and glorious, for all eternity, in the bliss of the land of the living. (811-818)

The general description sounds like many other Old English conclusions, though it appears as the logical extension of the story that has come before it. Some specific account of a death precedes the motif-conclusion in several other poems also, including Cynewulf's *The Fates of the Apostles*, *Elene*, and *Juliana*, though these poems do not so smoothly transition from one account of a home-going to another more general one. Cynewulf's epilogues include the motif, but amidst other elements like the personal reflections on his soul.

The motif as it is used at the end of *The Dream of the Rood* demonstrates another level of the motif's (in)compatibility with a poem. The motif appears topical enough, but the transition from the plot to the motif lacks the finesse of the transition in *Guthlac A*. After the cross finishes his speech, the speaker worships it and devotes his life to the "forwðwege" ("onward way" 125a). He

considers friends and love ones who have "forð heonon / gewiton of worulde dreamum, sohton him wuldres cyning" ("passed on from here out of the joys of the world, and found their way to the King of glory" 132b-3) and now dwell in a heavenly home. Then he imagines his own journey there:

> …and I hope each day for the time when the Cross of the Lord…will fetch me from this transitory life and then bring me to where there is great happiness, joy in heaven, where the Lord's people are placed at the banquet, where there is unceasing happiness; and will then place me where I may afterwards dwell in glory and fully partake of joy with the saints.

This ending might alone make a satisfying conclusion, but the poet takes the heavenly home theme further and it is this addition that creates a distinction between the poem and its conclusion. The poet moves into a narrative that now focuses on Christ's harrowing of hell. The harrowing story sounds compressed after the longer first-person account the cross delivers that makes up the bulk of the poem, and in addition, twenty-two lines separate this narrative of Christ from the longer earlier one. These factors make it distinctive from the rest of the poem:

> Si me dryhten freond,
> se ðe her on eorþan ær þrowode
> on þam gealgtreowe for guman synnum.
> He us onlysde ond us lif forgeaf,
> heofonlicne ham. Hiht wæs geniwad
> mid bledum ond mid blisse þam þe þær bryne þolodan.
> Se sunu wæs sigorfæst on þam siðfate,
> mihtig ond spedig, þa he mid manigeo com,
> gasta weorode, on godes rice,
> anwealda ælmihtig, englum to blisse
> ond eallum ðam halgum þam þe on heofonum ær

> wunedon on wuldre, þa heora wealdend cwom,
> ælmihtig god, þær his eðel wæs.
>
> May the Lord be a friend to me, who here on earth once suffered on the gallows-tree for the sins of men. He redeemed us and gave us life, and a heavenly home. Hope was renewed with dignity and with happiness for those who had once suffered burning. The Son was victorious in that undertaking, powerful and successful, when he came with a multitude, the company of souls, into God's kingdom, the one almighty Ruler, to the delight of the angels and of all the saints who had previously dwelt in glory in the heavens, when their Ruler, almighty God, came where his home was. (144b-56)

Although in some ways distinct from the poem, it still complements it in many ways. The harrowing of hell chronologically follows the crucifixion, and both narratives provide some account of the salvation story, however different their narrative styles may be.

Maxims II provides still a further level of thematic and stylistic distinction between the poem and its conclusion. Gnomic in nature, it lacks the narrative structure of *Guthlac A* and *The Dream of the Rood*[16]; the conclusion is no cap to the plot or extension of it. It can be argued that the Christian nature of the conclusion corresponds thematically to a few maxims interspersed throughout the poem that also demonstrate Christian ideals. Even so, the majority of the maxims convey truths of everyday life, causing the conclusion to be somewhat distinctive on thematic grounds alone. Furthermore, the conclusion is distinctive

[16] Until recently, many scholars saw little connection between the different maxims presented in the poem, but Orchard argues for a cohesiveness: "It can be argued that each maxim is implicitly linked to its neighbor and that, far from being a haphazard list of commonplaces, *Maxims II* (like *Maxims I*) has a coherent organic structure," *Medieval England: An Encyclopedia*, 504.

from the few overtly Christian maxims, which make statements about what is known of God, while the conclusion highlights that which is "digol and dyrne" ("obscure and unknowable" 62):

> Meotod ana wat
> hwyder seo sawul sceal syððan hweorfan,
> and ealle þa gastas þe for gode hweorfað
> æfter deaðdæge, domes bidað
> on fæder fæðme. Is seo forðgesceaft
> digol and dyrne; drihten ana wat,
> nergende fæder. Næni eft cymeð
> hider under hrofas, þe þæt her for soð
> mannum secge hwylc sy meotodes gesceaft,
> sigefolca gesetu, þær he sylfa wunað.
>
> The ordaining Lord alone knows to where that soul will subsequently depart and all those spirits who depart into God's presence after their death-day, and await the judgment in the Father's embrace. The shape of the future is obscure and unknowable; the Lord alone knows it, the redeeming Father. No one returns here below the heavens who might tell people for certain what it is like, that creation of the Lord, the habitations of his victorious people where he himself abides. (57b-66)

Following as it does on the heels of all that is knowable, the final lines of the poem are highly distinguishable from the rest of the poem.

This rather extensive musing stands out also for its more complex style. The preceding maxims are almost always delivered in simple sentences that sound repetitive because they follow a common grammatical pattern and rely heavily on the same verbs, *bið* and *sceal*. The following excerpt demonstrates the uncomplicated grammar of the majority of the poem:

> Sweord sceal on bearme,
> drihtlic isern. Draca sceal on hlæwe,
> frod, frætwum wlanc. Fisc sceal on wætere

cynren cennan. Cyning sceal on healle
beagas dælan. Bera sceal on hæðe,
eald and egesfull. Ea of dune sceal
flodgræg feran. Fyrd sceal ætsomne,
tirfæstra getrum. Treow sceal on eorle,
wisdom on were. Wudu sceal on foldan
blædum blowan. Beorh sceal on eorþan
grene standan.[17]

The sword belongs in the lap, a lordly iron weapon. The dragon belongs in its barrow, canny and jealous of its jewels. The fish belongs in the water, spawning its species. The king belongs in his hall, sharing out rings. The bear belongs on the heath, old and awesome. The river must run from off the upland, a grey spate. The army must hold together, a legion of men assured of glory. In a man there must be faith, in a mortal wisdom. The tree belongs in the soil, burgeoning with leaves. The hill belongs on the earth, standing firm and green. (25b-35a)

This pattern of subject-verb-prepositional phrase followed by a variation or modification of the subject is common throughout the poem. The complex grammatical structure of the last lines differs noticeably. Its style and thematic elements set the concluding lines apart from the poem that comes before to a greater extent than the conclusion does in *The Dream of the Rood* and certainly than the conclusion does in *Guthlac A*.

The three poems demonstrate the range with which the heavenly home conclusion can be thematically and stylistically deployed in Old English poetry. While some heavenly home conclusions extend the style and theme of the poem organically with little to no change, others introduce new lines of thought or even distinct grammatical styles. Poems that fall into this latter category point to

[17] Old English take from *The Labyrinth*, 1 May, 2013.

the conclusion's traditional appeal. Though the heavenly home conclusion might not be the poem's most thematic or stylistic option from a modern perspective, it nevertheless provides traditional referentiality and offers its own kind of aesthetic.

Identifying a conclusion as conventional can help us account for seeming incongruencies between the body of a text and its conclusion and can additionally help us understand the traditional meaning the conclusion bears. Because heavenly home conclusions appear at the interstice of performance and ordinary communal interaction, we might do well to study it for its potential to communicate attitudes toward either of these social spheres. As a transition between the poem and ordinary speech, the heavenly home conclusion can offer valuable information about how Anglo-Saxons viewed the activity of poetic composition.

Such a study has been taken up most recently by Garner in *Structuring Spaces: Oral Poetics and Architecture in Early Medieval England*. Although the scope of her work surpasses the issue of metapoetics, she nevertheless addresses the topic through her examination of architectural poetics in Old English poetry. Garner argues that Anglo-Saxon architectural and poetic feats are born from the common idea that creation is a performative act. For Anglo-Saxons, building physical structures was comparable to building the structures of poetry. Her introduction features "the linking of verbal and material art forms through their performative aspects," particularly through her exposition of a passage from *The*

Gifts of Men in which the paratactic style of the poem suggests the similarities of verbal and material art (3-6). She additionally catalogues various scholarship that relies on architectural metaphors to describe the Anglo-Saxon poetic process. Although her concentration on Old English metapoetics fairly quickly gives way to the traditional referentiality of architectural descriptions in Old English poetry, her attention to the cultural metaphor is a significant step on the road to understanding Anglo-Saxon attitudes toward their art.

The heavenly home motif, when it is conventionally used to close a poem, offers similar possibilities of understanding. It is noteworthy that perhaps the most direct and lengthy poetic account of the making of poetry appears at the end of a poem and is accompanied by a heavenly home motif. Cynewulf's impulse to describe his poetic process at the end of *Elene* may have grown rather organically from a cultural understanding of a poem's conclusion as a reflection on poetic composition. Not only does a poem's conclusion negotiate the gap between poetic activity and ordinary communal activity, effectively becoming vulnerable to either topic, but it also affords a particular thematic parallel. That is to say, what is happening with the poem--its conclusion--is often mimicked by the heavenly home motif, and thus the motif calls attention to the act of poetic composition. Cynewulf transforms the metaphoric use of the conclusion to reflect on poetic processes into a more literal account of it. The traditional referentiality of the conclusion provides him that opportunity.

An Anglo-Saxon audience experienced in the tradition would have perhaps not needed such an overt statement as Cynewulf's to understand the motif as a comment--though less descriptive--on poetic artistry. The thematic parallel between a journey coming to an end and the poem coming to an end appears in so many iterations that the connection between the two was almost certainly perpetuated through tradition. Metapoetic journeys like the ones in Old English conclusions appear in far earlier oral traditions and have been recognized by scholars, though to my mind no such recognition has yet been articulated by scholars of Old English poetry. Harrison accounts for the rather extensive historical appearances of metapoetic journeys in classical literature:

> The image of the ocean for epic and the idea of the voyage of the poet through his work both begin in Hellenistic or earlier times, but are enthusiastically taken up by the Latin poets of the first century BC; though Callimachus is the perceived origin of the epic-ocean analogy, the metapoectic voyage seems to appear first in poetry in the work of Catullus…For Virgil and Horace these are familiar symbols which can be variously manipulated…. (9)

For Anglo-Saxon poets no less than for classical ones, a journey provided a way to conceive of making poetry and in many ways facilitates the reception of a poem. As I argue over the next few pages, the idea of a journey coming to an end is often used by Anglo-Saxon poets to mirror what is happening in the poem, signaling to an audience that the poem is about to conclude. I describe how the traditional motif of reaching a heavenly homeland provides a transition from artistic performance to ordinary communal interaction while at the same time lending both the poem and the poet legitimacy, increasing any likelihood of

the poem's survival within a culture that gave survival and memorialization supreme importance.

Like Virgil and Horace and others, Old English poets artistically position descriptions of journeys at structurally significant places in the poem, allowing the pairing to speak metaphorically of the poetic activity at hand.[18] Cynewulf's conclusion in *Christ II*, for example, offers a metaphor of life being a journey that additionally functions as another metaphor for the poetic process. The imagery of movement toward stasis corresponds to the poem's movement toward its conclusion:

> Nu is þon gelicost swa we on laguflode
> ofer cald wæter ceolum liðan
> geond sidne sæ, sundhengestum,
> flodwudu fergen. Is þæt frecne stream
> yða ofermæta þe we her on lacað
> geond þas wacan woruld, windge holmas
> ofer deop gelad. Wæs se drohtað strong
> ærþon we to londe geliden hæfdon
> ofer hreone hrycg. Þa us help bicwom,
> þæt us to hælo hyþe gelædde,
> godes gæstsunu, ond us giefe sealde
> þæt we oncnawan magun ofer ceoles bord
> hwær we sælan sceolon sundhengestas,
> ealde yðmearas, ancrum fæste.
> Utan us to þære hyðe hyht staþelian,
> ða us gerymde rodera waldend,
> halge on heahþu, þa he heofonum astag.
>
> It is at present very much like this: as though we are sailing across chill water upon the ocean-flood in ships, over the wide sea in steeds of the deeps, and navigating ocean-going boats of wood. The streaming sea is hazardous, inordinate the waves in which we pitch about through this frail world, and squally the oceans along

[18] Harrison makes this argument in his evaluation of Catullus 64 and *The Aeneid*, 2-3; 6-7.

> the deep water-way. Our plight would have been severe before we had voyaged to a landfall across the stormy horizon. Then help came to us, that piloted us to salvation in port, God's Spirit-Son, and granted us grace that we might know a place where we shall secure our steeds of the deeps, our old horses of the waves, securely with anchors over the ship's side.
>
> Let us found our hopeful expectation upon that port which the Ruler of the skies, the Holy One in the heights, laid open to us when he ascended into the heavens. (850-66)

The voyage across water--and we might assume also the making of the poem--is long and arduous, but finally reaches a point of safety. The spacial imagery of the passage helps express the turbulence and difficulty of the voyage. The sea is "sidne" ("wide" 852) and "deop" ("deep" 856), and the waves "ofermæta" ("inordinate" 854). The boat moves "across chill water," "over the wide sea," "across the stormy horizon." The haphazard alternation of horizontal and vertical descriptions also conveys a tumultuous and almost bewildering movement in the passage, motion that is finally stilled once and for all when the boat is brought to land by the Ruler of the Skies. The final lines of the poem emphasize the concept of stilling the journey. The idea appears again and again until the poem runs out at last. "Hyþe" ("port") is used twice (859; 864) and accompanies other nouns like "londe" ("landfall" 857), verbs like "sælan" ("secure" 862) and "staþelian" ("found" 864), and adverbial phrases like "ancrum fæste" ("securely with anchors" 863). The anchor thrown over the side of the ship just four lines short of the end of the poem is as much the traditional

heavenly home conclusion that stops the movement of the poem as it is the speaker's faith in God.

Though not all traditional conclusions are as explicit in their descriptions of journeys as the one in *Christ II* or in other journey poems like *The Wanderer*, *The Seafarer*, or *The Whale*, they do, however, all function metonymically to express an idea of a journey's end. Each of the twenty conclusions that I identify as part of the heavenly home concluding tradition bears some sense, expressed however briefly, of reaching heaven or of heaven serving as a final place. Traditional referents by nature work metonymically, drawing from a larger tradition without fully explicating that tradition; even the endings that lack the pictorial description Cynewulf provides in *Christ II* pack a connotative force. Their metonymic, traditional meanings, appearing in tandem with the end of the poem, work also metaphorically to express ideas about the life-span of the poem. They cue for the audience the immanent end of the poem.

They also provide a transition between the separate spheres of poetic performance and ordinary social interaction, and they accomplish this transition in sometimes various ways. Performance theorists recognize the resistance that oral poets must overcome in transitioning from these spheres as "breaking into performance."[19] Bauman identifies the means by which poets direct audience members into the poetic experience as "performance keys," and he explains that

[19] See Hymes, "Breakthrough into Performance," *Folklore: Performance and Communication*. 11-74.

performance keys help "frame" the creative act. Performance keys differ by culture.[20] Anglo-Saxons rely on the heavenly home motif as one such performance key to frame their art. The precarious transition from poetic performance to ordinary speech is symbolized by the ultimate transition: the transition from life to the afterlife, from earth to heaven.

One often-present component of the heavenly home conclusion that provides transition from poetry to speech is the use of first person plural. It acts as a buffer between the imaginative world of the poem and the real world because it calls attention to the poem-as-performance; it links the two worlds by looking backwards to the poem while at the same time acknowledging a real world outside of the poem. Cynewulf's many references to stability at the end of *Christ II*, for example, appear couched within, to use Harrison's words, an "indication of poetic tradition" (3)--the communally constructive "we."[21] Cynewulf imagines himself with his audience moving through life toward heaven, but the most immediate action of the performance community is of course the participation in the poem. The "we" as it is spoken and heard is formed through the poetic community, so that when Cynewulf says, "we are sailing across chill water," or "we [have] voyaged to a landfall across the stormy

[20] See Bauman, *Verbal Art as Performance*, and *Folklore, Cultural Performances, and Popular Entertainments: A Communications-Centered Handbook*.

[21] For more on the use of first person to indicate the opening or closing of poetic performance, see Warwick Frese, "The Art of Cynewulf's Runic Signatures," 324. See also Rubanovich, who categorizes the use of first person as a "meta-communicative marker" in the Persian *dāstān* oral tradition, 666-9).

horizon," or "we might know a place where we shall secure our steeds," just before the poem ends, he is effectively speaking not just about life, but about the more immediate collective experience--the making together of the poem. His statements resound with layered meaning.

A poet's use of first-person plural often sets the motif apart stylistically from the poem and in this additional way helps frame the poem and signal its end. The speaker of *The Seafarer*, for instance, muses over his life and others' lives more generally, but not until the very end does he revert to first-person plural. Gnomic statements like, "One of three things will ever become a matter of uncertainty for any man before his last day: ill-health or old age or the sword's hostile violence will crush the life from the doomed man in his heedlessness," and "For every man, therefore, praise from the living, speaking out afterwards, is the best of epitaphs" keep the audience at a distance that is finally collapsed with the heavenly home conclusion:

> Uton we hycgan hwær we ham agen,
> ond þonne geþencan hu we þider cumen,
> ond we þonne eac tilien, þæt we to moten
> in þa ecan eadignesse,
> þær is lif gelong in lufan dryhtnes,
> hyht in heofonum. Þæs sy þam halgan þonc,
> þæt he usic geweorþade, wuldres ealdor,
> ece dryhten, in ealle tid. Amen.
>
> Let us consider where we may have a home, and then think how we may get there and how we may henceforth also strive so that we might arrive in everlasting blessedness, where there is life originating in the Lord's love, and hope, in the heavens.

> Thanks be to the Holy One, that he has made us worthy, the Prince of glory, everlasting Lord, through all time. Amen. (117-24)

The speaker moves from thinking alone to thinking within a body of people before he will finally give over his space for musing to the public.

These lines from *The Seafarer* help demonstrate another means by which the heavenly home conclusion provides a transition from the action of the poem to the silence that awaits. The image of a heavenly home offers a resting place for the imagination that has been stirred by the poem. Heaven conveys an image of stillness and stability that prepares audience members for the intervening silence between performance and ordinary speech. In Old English poetry and particularly in the heavenly home motifs, heaven is largely characterized by what it is not rather than by what it is. It is generally a place to live on forever and praise God in tranquility. More specifically, though, it is a place without such threats to stability as age, death, toil, darkness, sorrows, rivalries, hunger, and weariness.[22] Its largely unknown quality, its traditionally limited description, might have had the effect of slowing the audience's imagination, or at least of setting it free to some extent from the poet's hold over it. In any case, its characteristic peacefulness is transferred to the audience just as the poet delivers the audience to silence.

Cynewulf's metaphor of a docking place in *Christ II* works similarly. He compares reaching heaven to mooring a boat, at of course the same time that he

[22] See *Christ III*, 1649-64.

is mooring his poem. When he begins the last sentence of the poem, "Let us found our hopeful expectation upon that port…," he is effectively delivering his audience imaginatively to a port where they can dock their thoughts. His assertion, "[W]e [have] voyaged to a landfall across the stormy horizon," hints at the imaginative strength required by the poetic task before it reaches a final calm.

The heavenly home motif helps the poet and audience transition between the poem to ordinary time, but it also functions in another important way by lending the poet and poem legitimacy. Foley describes an oral performance arena as dynamic and by no means automatically supportive of the poet.[23] Rather, the poet must win the respect of his audience, just as a literary writer must also earn his readers' respect if (s)he wishes to achieve acclaim. The heavenly home conclusion contributes to the poet's and poem's legitimacy in several ways.

To begin, it conscribes the poet and audience within a single spiritual community. Poems that use first person plural obviously join together both the poet and the audience, but even conclusions that do not use first person unite poet and audience through an imagined homeland. As Howe makes clear, one traditional referent of the Anglo-Saxon concept of home is a perceived cultural identity.[24] A reference to a heavenly homeland activates for the audience a sense of shared identity and purpose. Just before the poet must leave his audience to

[23] See "How to Read an Oral Poem," 40.

[24] See above.

their own judgment of his poetry, he pulls them close and joins them to him through the imagined heavenly home they will all share.

In a related way, the motif also conveys a sense of victory, another traditional referent of home for Anglo-Saxons.[25] As Reidinger points out, many Old English poems use the concept of home to indicate victory, and several of its uses this way mark a victory in battle. Reidinger gives the example of Grendel returning home after a successful raid of Heorot and argues "the *Beowulf*-poet enhances Grendel's terrible triumph here with a double emphasis on home" (56). Other triumphs in battle are emphasized through references to home elsewhere in *Beowulf*, as well as in poems like *Elene*, *Judith*, and *The Battle of Brunanburh* (56). Conversely, poems like *Exodus* emphasize defeat through a home motif; for all their boasting, the Egyptians do not go home, a detail stressed by the poet on multiple occasions (57).[26] Battle-victories are indicated by the home motif, though other kinds of victories are also included in the tradition. Reidinger cites Unferth's account of Breca's victory in a swimming match with Beowulf as one example, noting a double mention of Breca "supposed[ly]" winning and returning home. She finds the motif in what she labels "another unconventional battle" between the sun and the moon in *Riddle 29* (56). The traditional use of home to connote victory surely resonates in the heavenly home conclusions that depict the arrival at the ultimate home. The victory felt at the end of a battle or

[25] *Ibid.*

[26] See also *The Battle of Maldon*, whose characters refuse to go home lordless and choose instead the victory of loyalty on the battlefield.

some other contest, the victory of successfully navigating the path to a heavenly home, is shared amongst poet and audience at the end of the performance, not only further conscribing them as a community, but also lending legitimacy to the poet who has taken them there. In this contest of wit, the poet inscribes his own victory.

Having God on his side does not hurt, either. Poetic allusion to reaching heaven where one might spend eternity praising God may be a kind of good luck talisman, with the purpose of either allying oneself with the supreme Creator or of being allied with the supreme Creator at least in the minds of the audience. Such an allusion might not be very unlike the tradition of United States Olympic track athletes who in their televised interviews almost invariably thank God, as opposed to other kinds of athletes who do not seem burdened by any such tradition. Dolores Warwick Frese makes a similar claim about Cynewulf's runic signature, arguing, "In an age not entirely severed from the idea of 'word magic,' such a use of runic device as a means of mastery and power over the matter of the poem would seem to be a notion worth investigating" (324). Referencing a heavenly homeland may somehow provide a sense of accomplishment or safety for the poet.

Finally, we might also say that the heavenly home conclusion lends a kind of immortality to the poem. Achieving lasting fame unquestionably preoccupied the minds of Anglo-Saxon poets, who repeatedly memorialize this theme

through their poetry. Beowulf requests a barrow, and poets of works such as *The Seafarer* extol remembrances after death:

> Forþon þæt bið eorla gehwam æftercweþendra
> lof lifgendra lastworda betst...
> þæt hine ælda bern æfter hergen,
> ond his lof siþþan...
> awa to ealdre...
>
> For every man, therefore, praise from the living, speaking out afterwards, is the best of epitaphs…so that the sons of men may afterwards extol him, and his praise may endure for ever and ever…(72-3; 77-79a)

Though the words of a poem may not last forever, the heavenly home conclusion offers an illusion of permanence and continuance that Anglo-Saxons must have found very comforting. Just as all of life is ephemeral, so too is the poet's craft, but the addition of the heavenly home motif makes it seem less so. The final lines of *The Whale* bemoan "this transitory time," an allusion to a temporary life on earth, but also--because of its position at the end of the poem--a likely allusion to the temporary nature of the poetic experience. Immediately following this lament, however, is a reference to an eternal existence before the poem finally runs out. The concept of an afterlife makes even the conclusion of a poem less morbid.

Almost half of the poems that conclude with the heavenly home motif evoke some reference to eternity in the last line or even as the last word of the poem, suggesting the importance the idea played in the minds of Anglo-Saxons. In surveying the final words of each heavenly home conclusion, the concept of

time and eternity becomes evident: *Christ I* ends "wunað butan ende. Amen." (dwell without end. Amen. 439b)[27]; *Elene* ends "to widan feore. Amen." ("forever" 1321b) [28]; *The Seafarer* ends "in ealle tid. Amen." ("through all time. Amen. 124b); *Juliana* ends "on þa mæran tid. Amen." ("in that momentous time" 731b)[29]; *The Fates of the Apostles* ends "ece ond edgiong, ofer ealle gesceaft. Finit." ("eternal and ever renewed through all creation. Finit." 122); *Guthlac A* ends "on lifgendra londes wynne" ("in the bliss of the land of the living" 818); and *The Wanderer* ends "þær us eal seo fæstnung stondeð" ("where for us all the immutable abides" 115b). The concept of eternity seems especially important at the brink of performance and ordinary speech because it implies the possibility for a reverberation of the poem--the poem, like man, gets an afterlife of sorts. Even as it runs out it does not dry up completely, but flows into an imagined, though unseen, eternity.

The placement of the heavenly home motif at the end of a poem can be interpreted in various ways as a comment on poetic performance. As a transitioning device between the performance arena and the real world, it not only provides a means of exit for the poet, but also a means of garnering credibility. In several ways it delivers the poet and audience from the world of the poem to the everyday world, while at the same time offering its own stamp

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[27] Translation my own.

[28] *Ibid.*

[29] I have exchanged Bradley's glossing of *tid* as "hour" with "time."

of approval. For these many reasons the motif seems especially suited for closing a poem. The similarly suited creation/birth/journey's beginning opening of Old English poetry further attests to the thoughtfulness given to the outer limits of Old English poems, a thoughtfulness also found in other oral and literary traditions.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Conclusions

The heavenly home motif works in significant ways within the Old English poetic canon. It offers to modern readers a useful entry-point into the world of Old English oral-derived poetry, helping us further understand how traditional forms such as motifs make meaning. The motif's traditional meanings and structural uses make it a powerful determiner of meaning in the Anglo-Saxon wordhoard.

As Part I of this study demonstrates, both Anglo-Saxon poets and scribes often relied on the motif for structuring their art. The motif appears in structural positions in speech acts (11 instances) and in Old English manuscripts (42 instances), appearing at the beginning or end of these narrative units. In addition, it accompanies the "Divine Visitation" type-scene in more than half of the total iterations of the type-scene (8 iterations of the type-scene; 11 total instances). Most strikingly, it appears at the end of a poem almost as often as it does not (18 instances out of 43 poems surveyed).[1] Of the 121 total appearances of the motif in the Old English poetry surveyed, the motif works structurally in

[1] As explained earlier, the 43 poems surveyed include all of the poems in the four major poetic manuscripts except the riddles. Though not found in the four major manuscripts, *Maxims II* and *Judgment Day II* also end with the motif.

71 of these instances.[2] Thus, more than 58% of the time it is invoked, the heavenly home motif operates as or as a part of some kind of structural device. This number prompts us to consider a structural function as part of the traditional referentiality of the motif.

This referentiality to some extent explains the excessive popularity of the motif at the conclusion of a poem, but other inherent meanings also contribute to its effectiveness--particularly the motif's capacity for metaphoric comment on the nature of poetic creation. Though Old English studies have by in large neglected the topic of metapoetics, the heavenly home motif serves as a useful starting place for these kinds of discussions, in part because of its connection to the culturally pervasive idea that verbal art is a kind of journey. Throughout the poetic canon, poetry and rhetorical skill are repeatedly and in various ways associated with one another. The heavenly home motif's strong sense of journeying evokes this association, especially because it appears at a moment of poetic self-consciousness--the conclusion of the poetic performance. The activity of the poem--the end of performance--parallels the activity expressed through the motif--the end of a journey--and so the motif works as a metaphor of poetic construction. The poetry-as-journey metaphor appears in other oral and literary poetries, including Homeric poetry. It offers a range of stylistic and aesthetic

[2] This number does not include duplicated tallies. In other words, when an iteration of the heavenly home motif ends a speech act and at the same time also appears at the end of a manuscript section, I count it only once toward total structural uses. Thus, a single iteration of the motif can at times work structurally in multiple ways, though this is not reflected in the numbers above.

advantages for the poet, including offering a sense of stability at the transition between performance and ordinary social interaction.

Though outside the scope of this study, a lexical and semantic examination of the motif would provide additional material for considering the traditional nature of the motif, the meanings it conveys, and its aesthetic value. Many of the motifs use the same cluster of words or ideas, including home, heaven, dwelling, gift-exchange, and a visual experience. A close linguistic study of these concepts within iterations of the heavenly home motif could offer an even finer understanding of the motif and the meanings it makes.

Without question, Anglo-Saxons found useful ways to use the concept of a heavenly homeland in their poetry and though this study charts many of those functions, it does not exhaust the subject. That journey has not reached its end.

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