Launching the Ship: Space, Power, and Identity in Longer Old English Narrative Poetry



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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements ..... *ii*
Abstract ..... *iii*
Abbreviations ..... *iv*
Notes on Texts and Translations ..... *vii*
Introduction *1*
Chapter One: Ark-imagery in Genesis A and Exodus *24*
1.1 Introduction 24
1.2 *Genesis A* 25
1.3 *Exodus* 47
1.4 Conclusion 72
Chapter Two: Launching Ships in Beowulf *76*
2.1 Introduction 76
2.2 The nautical terminology 78
2.3 The icy ship of Scyld Scefing 84
2.4 Beowulf's sea-voyages 105
2.5 Conclusion 124
Chapter Three: Tradition and Innovation in the Cynewulfian Group *126*
3.1 Introduction 126
3.2 *Elene* 127
3.3 *Christ B* 152
3.4 Conclusion 182
Chapter Four: The Ship Steered by Christ in Andreas *185*
4.1 Introduction 185
4.2 The twenty ship-terms 187
4.3 The multi-purpose roles of *ċēol* 190
4.4 The other five ship-simplexes 233
4.5 Conclusion 264
Conclusion *269*
Bibliography *274*

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Abstract

Ships in Old English poetry have multidimensional significance, transcending both physical and spiritual isolation, fusing the past with the present, escorting mankind across worldly turbulence, and carrying passengers on the life-journey towards the harbour of salvation. This thesis investigates the diverse nautical vocabulary and ship-imagery in seven of the longer Old English narrative poems: *Genesis A*, *Exodus*, *Beowulf*, *Elene*, *Christ B*, *Guthlac B*, and *Andreas*. The major approaches are namely textual scrutiny through cross-reference, and research into word-frequency, contextual and intertextual analyses.

Chapter One scrutinises two biblical narrative poems, *Genesis A* and *Exodus*, in comparison with the Biblical source. Chapter Two considers poetic diction denoting ships in *Beowulf*, unravelling the narrative intricacies and enriching understanding of cultural influences. In Chapter Three, I examine two signed poems by Cynewulf, *Elene* and *Christ B*, along with the Cynewulfian *Guthlac B*. The analysis in Chapter Four considers twenty terms denoting ships used by the anonymous *Andreas*-poet.

The recurring motif of 'ship' in Old English poetry serves as a potent symbol, reflecting the power and societal status of heroic figures such as Scyld and Beowulf. Beyond its literal representation, the ship emerges as a conduit for intellectual communication, a nexus where poetic imaginations converge, transcending temporal, spatial, and cultural boundaries. This multifaceted role underscores the significance of the ship as more than mere vessel; it becomes a dynamic emblem that resonates with the ethos of a bygone society, offering a glimpse into the complex interplay of power dynamics, social hierarchies, knowledge transmission, and spiritual pursuits within the Old English poetic tradition.

Abbreviations

AA	*Acta archaeologica*
AAA	*Arbeiten aus Anglistik und Amerikanistik*
AB	*Anglia Beiblatt*
AH	*Architectural History*
AM	*Annuale Mediaevale*
ANQ	*American Notes and Queries*
Årsbok	*Årsbok – Vetenskaps-societeten i Lund: Yearbook of the New Society of Letters at Lund*
Arv	*Arv: Nordic Yearbook of Folklore*
Archiv	*Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen*
Arkiv	*Arkiv för nordisk filologi*
ASE	*Anglo-Saxon England* (now *Early Medieval England and its Neighbours*)
ASNSL	*Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen*
ASPR	Krapp, George Phillip, and Elliott Van Kirk Dobbie, ed., *Anglo-Saxon Poetic Record*, 6 vols (New York, 1931–42)
BJRL	*Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*
B-T	Bosworth, J., *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary, Based on the Manuscript Collections of J. Bosworth, Edited and Enlarged by T. N. Toller; Supplemented by T. N. Toller* (Oxford, 1898).
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum Series Latina
Comitatus	*Comitatus: A Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies*
CLASP	*A Consolidated Library of Anglo-Saxon Poetry*
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum (Vienna)
DOE	Cameron, Angus et al. ed., *Dictionary of Old English: A to Le Online* (Toronto: Dictionary of Old English Project, 2024)
DR	Edgar, Swift, and Angela M. Kinney, ed., *The Vulgate Bible: Douay-Rheims Translation*, 6 vols (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010–13)
EJSS	*European Journal of Scandinavian Studies*

ELN	*English Language Notes*
ES	*English Studies*
ESC	*English Studies in Canada*
FG	*Filologia Germanica — Germanic Philology*
GRBS	*Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*
G-K	Grein, C. W. M., ed., *Sprachschatz der angelsächsischen Dichter; unter Mitwirkung von F. Holthausen; neu hrsg. von J. J. Köhler* (Heidelberg, 1912)
HTR	*The Harvard Theological Review*
JEGP	*The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*
JGL	*Journal of Germanic Linguistics*
JMA	*Journal of Maritime Archaeology*
JMH	*Journal of Medieval History*
JRS	*The Journal of Roman Studies*
K4	Fulk, R. D., Robert E. Bjork and John D. Niles ed., *Klaeber's Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg*, 4th ed. (Toronto, 2008)
LSE	*Leeds Studies in English*
MA	*Medieval Archaeology*
MCT	*Medieval Clothing and Textiles*
MÆ	*Medium Ævum*
MESN	*Mediaeval English Studies Newsletter*
MLR	*Modern Language Review*
MP	*Modern Philology*
MS	*Medieval Studies*
MW	*Medieval Warfare*
NGH	*Nachrichten der Giessener Hochschulgesellschaft*
NM	*Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*
NMS	*Nottingham Medieval Studies*
N&Q	*Notes and Queries*
OED	*Oxford English Dictionary*

OEN	*Old English Newsletter*
OT	*Oral Tradition*
PBA	*Proceedings of the British Academy*
PCS	*Papers in Comparative Studies*
PLL	*Papers on Language and Literature*
PMLA	*Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*
PQ	*Philological Quarterly*
QI	*Quaestio Insularis*
PSE	*Prague Studies in English*
RAC	*Rivista di archeologia Cristiana*
RES	*Review of English Studies*
RL	*Research in Language*
SBVS	*Saga-Book of the Viking Society for Northern Research*
SELIM	*Sociedad Española de Lengua y Literatura Inglesa Medieval*
SM	*Studi Medievali*
SP	*Studies in Philology*
SS	*Scandinavian Studies*
UTQ	*University of Toronto Quarterly*
WH	Orchard, Andy, ed., *Word-hord: A Lexicon of Old English Verse*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 2022)
YES	*Yearbook of English Studies*
ZAA	*Zeitschrift für Anglistik und Amerikanistik*
ZfdA	*Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur*
ZKTh	*Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie*

Notes on Texts and Translations

Translations of original texts cited in this thesis are my own, unless otherwise noted.

All Latin quotations in this thesis have been standardised to use the classical forms *u* and *i* in place of *v* and *j*.

All biblical quotations in this thesis are taken from the standard Vulgate; my own translations are based on the Douay-Rheims version.

The spellings and transcriptions of Old English cited in this thesis follow the chosen editions of each text. Diacritics and hyphenated compounds are basically derived from *CLASP*, with the proviso that the system employed here has been updated with regard the four different qualities of *g* (*g*, *ġ*, *ĝ*, and *ḡ*), which follows that in the *CLASP*-derived use of diacritics in Andy Orchard, ed. and trans., *Beowulf Rex* (forthcoming). Individual Old English terms are cited following the formats adopted in *WH*.

Bold type is used for emphasis, particularly to highlight verbal parallels (especially poetic diction for ships and seafaring) and the metrical or rhythmic features (specifically alliteration and sound effect) central to the discussion.

Introduction

> For flōd-wegas; ne wæs þæt nā fuġul ana,
> ac þǣr wæs ǣġhwelċes ānra ġelīċness:
> horses ond monnes, hundes ond fuġles,
> ond ēac wīfes wlite. (*Riddle 34* [36] 9–12a)[1]
>
> ('[The creature] journeyed the flood-ways; it was not just a bird, but there was the likeness of each one of these: horse and man, dog and bird, and also the countenance of a woman.')

The solution to this riddle is likely *bāt* ('boat'; see below).[2] In fact, among the ninety-one (as counted by Andy Orchard; ninety-five in the ASPR edition) *Riddles* preserved in the tenth-century manuscript the Exeter Book, at least five of them may point to 'ship' as a primary (or possible) solution, and many others are associated with ships or parts of a ship.[3] The ship becomes one of the most frequently repeated images in the surviving corpus of Old English *Riddles*, which reveals the prominence of ship-imagery in early medieval English literary imagination.[4] Yet the significance of this nautical image extends beyond the *Riddles* themselves. This thesis investigates how ships and seafaring are represented across longer Old English narrative poetry, arguing that maritime imagery functions not simply as a reflection of the real-world navigation, but

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[1] The texts and numbering of the Exeter Book *Riddles* are shown as in Andy Orchard, ed. and trans., *The Old English and Anglo-Latin Riddle Tradition* (Cambridge, MA, 2021); the numbering (and line numbers, if different) in George Philip Krapp and Elliot Van Kirk Dobbie, ed., *The Exeter Book* (New York, NY, 1936) are indicated in square brackets.

[2] For an up-to-date catalogue of riddle-solutions, see Jennifer Neville, *Truth is Trickiest: The Case for Ambiguity in the Exeter Book Riddles* (Toronto, 2024), pp. 255–98; on *Riddle 34* [36], see p. 272.

[3] Neville, *Truth is Trickiest*, pp. 264, 270, 272, 285–6, 290–1, and 293.

[4] On ship-riddles, see further Orchard, *A Commentary to The Old English and Anglo-Latin Riddle Tradition* (Cambridge, MA, 2021), pp. 367–70, 391–2, 399–401, 444–6, and 459–9; John D. Niles, *God's Exiles and English Verse: On the Exeter Anthology of Old English Poetry* (Exeter, 2019), pp. 146–7 and 149; Patrick J. Murphy, *Unriddling the Exeter Riddles* (University Park, PA, 2011), pp. 13–17 and 65; Dieter Bitterli, *Say What I am Called: The Old English Riddles of the Exeter Book and the Anglo-Latin Riddle Tradition* (Toronto, 2009), pp. 73–4 and 86–91; John D. Niles, *Old English Enigmatic Poems and the Play of the Texts* (Turnhout, 2006), pp. 31–43; Paul Sorrell, 'Oaks, Ships, Riddles and the Old English Rune Poem', *ASE* 19 (1990), 103–16; Craig Williamson, ed., *The Old English Riddles of the Exeter Book* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1977), pp. 186–92, 236–7, 239–41, 248–52, 314, 325–30, and 349–52; Frederick Tupper Jr., ed., *The Riddles of the Exeter Book* (Boston, MA, 1910), pp. 142, 145–7, and 154–7.

as a literary and symbolic medium through which Old English poets explore themes such as identity, treasure, and salvation. The *Riddles* therefore provide an important point of departure, revealing the imaginative flexibility and symbolic potential of the ship in Old English poetic tradition.

Ships are mentioned twice in *Riddle 1* [3], as *ċēol* ('ship', 'keel'; see Chapters Two and Four) and *wǣġ-fæt* ('wave-vessel'; unique to the text), surrounded by foam while sailing on the sea; in *Riddle 12* [14], the solution 'horn' is said to be carried by a *mere-hengest* ('sea-stallion'; see Chapters Three and Four); *Riddle 14* [16] is associated with 'anchor'; and in *Riddle 31* [33] ice is portrayed as 'cymlīċ from ċēole' ('comely from the vessel', 2a).[5] In the five ship-riddles, the sea-going vessel is often compared to animals (especially horses and birds), humans, or marvellous creatures. In *Riddle 17* [19] a swift warship (*snac*) is likened to a horse.[6] A merchant ship is described as a one-footed, open-mouthed strange creature with many ribs but without eyes or limbs in *Riddle 30* [32].[7] In *Riddle 34* [36] cited above, a ship becomes a marvellous creature more than just a bird, with multiple feet, feathers, eyes, and heads.[8] Similarly, in *Riddle 62* [64] a 'horse' (a simile for 'ship', as we shall see) is seen running in the plain, carrying a man and a hawk, reminiscent of the 'sea-horse' compounds for 'ship' (see

[5] Neville, *Truth is Trickiest*, pp. 109–17 and 263; Megan Cavell, 'Sounding the Horn in Exeter Book *Riddle 14*', *The Explicator* 72 (2014), 324–7.
[6] Neville, *Truth is Trickiest*, pp. 48–51 and 264; Orchard, ed. and trans., *Riddle Tradition*, pp. 751–2; Orchard, *Commentary*, pp. 367–70; Douglas Peter Allen Simms, 'Exeter Book *Riddle 19*: Its Runes and Transmission', *N&Q* 63 (2016), 351–4; Mark Griffith, '*Riddle 19* of the Exeter Book: *Snac*, an Old English Acronym', *N&Q* 39 (1992), 15–16; Agop Hacikyan, 'The Exeter Manuscript: *Riddle 19*', *ELN* 3 (1965), 86–8; Williamson, ed., *Riddles*, pp. 186–92. But see Miranda Wilcox, 'Mock-Riddles in Old English: Exeter *Riddles 86* and *19*', *SP* 93 (1996), 180–7, at 185–7, who believes that this riddle does not offer any solutions.
[7] Neville, *Truth is Trickiest*, pp. 49, 51, and 270; Orchard, ed. and trans., *Riddle Tradition*, p. 759; Orchard, *Commentary*, pp. 391–2.
[8] Neville, *Truth is Trickiest*, pp. 49, 51, and 272; Orchard, ed. and trans., *Riddle Tradition*, p. 760–1; Orchard, *Commentary*, pp. 399–401; Niles, *Enigmatic Poems*, pp. 85–100; Norman E. Eliason, 'Four Old English Cryptographic Riddles', *SP* 49 (1952), 553–65, at 562–5; Moritz Trautmann, 'Die Auflösungen der altenglischen Rätsel', *AB* 5 (1894), 46–51.

Chapters Three and Four).[9] Lastly, *Riddle 72* [74] contains both prosopopoeia and zoomorphism, since it describes an animated ship flying with birds, swimming in the sea, diving under the waves, and moving on land.[10] Notwithstanding the fact that the Exeter Book *Riddles* may have different origins, most of them are believed to be created at an earlier stage of Old English literature, probably during the time of the biblical poems and *Beowulf*, thus earlier than Cynewulf and *Andreas*.[11] The relatively high frequency of ship-related diction and images in the *Riddles* is suggestive of a common interest in nautical themes.

As the first among the ship-riddles and one of the two in the group that contain runes, *Riddle 17* [19] offers further clues concerning the popularity of ship-imagery in the vernacular riddle-tradition. This riddle begins with a formulaic opening 'iċ seah' or 'iċ (ġe)seah' ('I see [a creature]') found in around twenty riddles in the Exeter Book.[12] The ship is described by the speaker as travelling both on land ('on sīþe', 1a; 'ofer sǣl-wong', 2a [3a]) and on the sea (ᚠ ᚷ ᛖ ᚹ, transliterated as AGEW, reading 'weġa' in

[9] Neville, *Truth is Trickiest*, pp. 49 and 285–6; Orchard, ed. and trans., *Riddle Tradition*, p. 774; Orchard, *Commentary*, pp. 444–6.

[10] Neville, *Truth is Trickiest*, pp. 290–1; Orchard, ed. and trans., *Riddle Tradition*, p. 778–9; Orchard, *Commentary*, pp. 459–9; Thomas Klein, 'Of Water and the Spirit: Metaphorical Focus in Exeter Book *Riddle 74*', *RES* 66 (2015), 1–19; Mark Griffith, 'Exeter Book *Riddle 74 ac* "Oak" and *bat* "Boat"', *N&Q* 55 (2008), 393–5; Daniel Donoghue, 'An *anser* for Exeter Book *Riddle 74*', *Words and Works: Studies in Medieval English Language and Literature in Honour of Fred C. Robinson*, ed. Peter S. Baker and Nicholas Howe (Toronto, 1998), pp. 45–58; John D. Niles, 'Exeter Book *Riddle 74* and the Play of the Text', *ASE* 27 (1998), 169–207; Mercedes Salvador-Bello, 'Direct and Indirect Clues: Exeter Riddle No. 74 Reconsidered', *NM* 99 (1998), 17–29; Frank H. Whitman, 'OE *Riddle 74*', *ELN* 6 (1968), 1–5; Erika von Erhardt-Siebold, 'Note on Anglo-Saxon *Riddle 74*', *MÆ* 21 (1952), 36–7; Erika von Erhardt-Siebold, 'The Anglo-Saxon *Riddle 74* and Empedokles' *Fragment 117*', *MÆ* 15 (1946), 48–54.

[11] See, for instance, Murphy, *Unriddling*, pp. 3–12; R. D. Fulk, *A History of Old English Meter* (Philadelphia, PA, 1992), pp. 404–10; Williamson, ed., *Riddles*, pp. 3–12. See further Orchard, 'Enigma Variations: The Anglo-Saxon Riddle-Tradition', *Latin Learning and English Lore: Studies in Anglo-Saxon Literature for Michael Lapidge*, ed. Katherine O'Brien O'Keeffe and Andy Orchard, 2 vols (Toronto, 2005), I, pp. 284–304. For scholars who date the manuscript to the second half of the tenth century, see Bernard J. Muir, ed., *The Exeter Anthology of Old English Poetry*, 2 vols (Exeter, 2000), I, p. 1; Patrick W. Conner, *Anglo-Saxon Exeter: A Tenth-century Cultural History* (Woodbridge, 1993), pp. 48–94, esp. 77–9. On the general chronology of major Old English poems, see Fulk, *A History*, pp. 61–2 and 348–9.

[12] On formulaic openings and endings, see, for instance, Orchard, 'Enigma Variations', pp. 287 and 289–90.

reverse order in 5a [6a], for Old English *weġ* ‘way’ or *wǣġ* ‘wave’):[13]

> Iċ on sīþe seah ᛋᚱᚠᚻ hyġe-wloncne, hēafod-beorhtne,
> swiftne ofer sæl-wong swīþe þrǣġan.
> Hæfde him on hryċġe hilde-þrȳþe;
> ᚾᚠᛗ **næġledne** rād,
> ᚠᚷᛖᚹ. Wīd-lāst ferede,
> ryne-strong on rāde, rōfne ᛦᚠ
> ᚹᚠᚠᚻ For wæs þȳ beorhtre,
> swylcra sīþ-fæt. Saĝa hwæt hit hātte. (*Riddle 17* [19])

(‘I saw ᛋᚱᚠᚻ [SROH, ‘a **horse**’] proud-hearted, bright-headed on a voyage, swift over the fertile-plain, running strong. He had battle-strength on his back; ᚾᚠᛗ [NOM, ‘a man’] rode the **nailed** [one], ᚠᚷᛖᚹ [AGEW, ‘waves’ or ‘ways’] The far-track [one] carried, strong in running in the journey, a brave ᛦᚠᚹᚠᚠᚻ [COFOAH, ‘hawk’, ‘falcon’]. The voyage was therefore more splendid, the journey of such [creatures]. Say what it is called.’)

The riddling characteristics of the runes invite multivalent and overlapping interpretations. The transliterations of the runic clusters point to four specific images: ‘horse’ (SROH), ‘man’ (NOM), ‘waves’ (AGEW), and ‘falcon’ (COFOAH). Moreover, according to Mark Griffith, the first letters in each of the four clusters (**S**ROH, **N**OM, **A**GEW, and **C**OFOAH) constitute an Old English acronym: *snac*, a specific type of warship, rather than simply ‘ship’.[14] This explanation aligns with the description of a swift sea-going creature (3a), along with the appellation of the man onboard as a warrior (*wiga*).[15] Additionally, the first and the last runic clusters, ᛋᚱᚠᚻ (SROH, equal to Old English *hors*, a prosaic term for ‘horse’) and ᛦᚠᚹᚠᚠᚻ (COFOAH, reading ‘haofoc’ for

[13] Some scholars read AGEW as ‘wiga’ (‘warrior’). Griffith, ‘*Snac*’, p. 16; Murphy, *Unriddling*, p. 65; Williamson, ed., *Riddles*, pp. 190–1. Neville contends that *wiga* is ‘perhaps an oblique reference to *garsecg*, a poetic word for the sea that may literally mean “spear man”’, in *Truth is Trickiest*, p. 50.

[14] Griffith, ‘*Snac*’, p. 15. Simms further proposes that the runes are interpolations rather than the poet’s original design. Simms, ‘*Riddle 19*’, p. 351. On *snac*, see Thier, *Old English Sea Terms* (Ely, 2014), pp. 121–2; *B-T*, **s.v.** ‘*snacc*’.

[15] Griffith, ‘*Snac*’, p. 16.

hafoc, a largely prosaic simplex for 'hawk', 'falcon'), represent the two most conventional types of zoomorphism regarding an animated ship in Old English poetry. Sometimes the ship is addressed as a 'sea-horse', as in Cynewulf's *Elene* and *Christ B*, the Cynewulfian *Guthlac B*, *The Whale*, *Andreas*, and the Old English *Metres of Boethius* (hereafter *Metres*; see Chapters Three and Four). On other occasions, a ship is likened to a 'bird' by simile, as in *Beowulf* and *Andreas* (see Chapters Two and Four).

This riddle depicts a swift warship with nailed planks ('næġledne', 4b [5b]; the image is attested here, *Beowulf* 2023b, *The Husband's Message* 35a, and three times in prose glosses) sailing its way, carrying a man and a hawk.[16] The portrayal of the ship as *næġled* ('nailed') also contains double entendre. On the one hand, the image of a 'nailed' ship, presumably clinker-built, suggests an almost universal feature among real-world ships in the British Isles and Northern Europe in the early medieval period, as exemplified by the funeral-ship found under Mound 1 in Sutton Hoo.[17] On the other, the apparent ship-horse comparison and the association between *hors* and *næġled* are evocative of nailed horseshoes, in evidence since the period of Roman Britain (*c.* 43–410).[18] While four of the five ship-riddles (*Riddles 17* [19], *20* [22], *30* [32], *34* [36],

[16] The adjective *næġled* is used twice to explain Matthew XXVII.23 and 26 in the vernacular Gospel, as 'næġled on rode' ('nailed on the Cross') and 'on rode næġled' respectively, to explain Latin 'crucifigatur' ('crucified'), and once in the Lambeth Psalter, which together with 'ðurhðyġdon' ('thrust through') and 'dulfon' ('dug') interpret Latin 'foderunt' ('pierced', 'stabbed') in Psalm XXI.17. For the texts, see U. Lindelöf, *Der Lambeth-Psalter: Eine altenglische Interlinearversion des Psalters in der Hs. 427 der erzbischöflichen Lambeth Palace Library*, 2 vols (Helsingsfors, 1909–14), I, p. 32; W. W. Skeat, ed., *The Four Gospels in Anglo-Saxon, Northumbrian, and Old Mercian Versions*, 4 vols (Cambridge, 1871–87), I, p. 219.

[17] See further Arne Emil Christensen, 'The Viking Ships', *The Sea in History: The Medieval World*, ed. Michel Balard (Woodbridge, 2017), pp. 547–60, at 555–7; Ian Friel, 'Ships and Shipping in Medieval England', *The Sea in History*, pp. 605–18, at 607–9; Mike McCarthy, *Ships' Fastenings: From Sewn Boat to Steamship* (College Station, TX, 2005), esp. 52–62; Gillian Hutchinson, *Medieval Ships and Shipping* (London, 1994); A. C. Evans, 'The Clinker-built Boats of the North Sea, 300–1000 AD', *The North Sea: A Highway of Economic and Cultural Exchange*, ed. A. Bang-Andersen, B. Greenhill, and E. Harald Grude (Stavanger, 1985), pp. 63–78; Valerie Fenwick, ed., *The Graveney Boat* (Oxford, 1978). On this feature found in Sutton Hoo ship-burial, see for instance, Martin Carver, *Sutton Hoo: A Seventh-century Princely Burial Ground and Its Context* (London, 2005), pp. 3, 166–8, 176–7, 180–1, 258–60, 301, and 465.

[18] See, for instance, Sarah Larratt Keefer, '*Hwær cwom mearh*? The Horse in Anglo-Saxon England', *JMH* 22

and *62* [64]) depict the ship as loaded with warriors, passengers, animals, and food, emphasising the ship's function as a means of transport, elsewhere in the riddle corpus, the ship is called *mere-hengest* in *Riddle 12* [14] 6b, and the literal meaning of this compound is 'sea-stallion'. Here the ship-term itself becomes a mini-riddle for the audience to solve: the 'sea-horse' that ferries the speaking creature (probably a 'horn') in the sea is a 'ship', not a real horse. The poet differentiates the two images by using the monosemic simplex *wiċġ* ('horse', 5b), when a horse is depicted as carrying the same creature in the plain. In a similar vein, in *The Rune Poem*, a text that has a close relationship with the vernacular riddle-tradition, the sun and water are linked with the ship, a *brim-hengest* ('sea-stallion', 47a and 66a).[19] The poet relates runic ᛚ (L, for Old English *laȝu* 'sea') to seafaring:

> ᛚ biþ lēodum langsum ġeþūht,
> ġif hī sċulun nēþun **on nacan tealtum**,
> and hī sǣ-ȳþa swīþe brēgaþ,
> and sē **brim-hengest** **brīdles** ne ġȳmeþ. (63–6)[20]
>
> ('ᛚ [L, 'the sea'] appears to be vast to people, if they must venture **on a shaky ship**, and the sea-waves terrify them greatly, and the **sea-stallion** takes no heed of the **bridle**.')

This passage delivers a shared feeling about the sea: water-terror, or sea-terror.[21] The paralleled expressions, '**on nacan tealtum**' ('**on a shaky ship**', 64b), and 'sē **brim-**

(1996), 115–34, at 132; Charles Green, 'The Purpose of the Early Horseshoe', *Antiquity* 40 (1966), 305–8.

[19] On the background of the text, see Maureen Halsall, ed., *The Old English Rune Poem: A Critical Edition* (Toronto, 1981), pp. 21–32; Frederick George Jones, 'The Old English *Rune Poem*, an Edition' (PhD dissertation, Univ. of Florida, 1967), pp. 2–6. On the sun and ship, see Halsall, ed., *Rune Poem*, p. 67. On the dating of *The Rune Poem*, see Fulk, *A History*, pp. 277–8.

[20] For the text, see Robert E. Bjork, ed. and trans., *Old English Shorter Poems Volume II: Wisdom and Lyric* (Cambridge, MA, 2016).

[21] On the common topic of water-terror, see for instance, Andy Orchard, 'Fresh Terror, New Horror: Fear and the Unfamiliar in the Old English *Exodus*', *Fear in the Medical and Literary Imagination, Medieval to Modern: Dreadful Passions*, ed. Daniel McCann and Claire McKechnie-Mason (London, 2018), pp. 131–56; Michael Lapidge, '*Beowulf* and the Psychology of Terror', *Heroic Poetry in the Anglo-Saxon Period: Studies in Honor of Jess B. Bessinger, Jr.*, ed. Helen Damico and John Leyerle (Kalamazoo, MI, 1993), pp. 373–402; Alain Renoir, 'The Terror of the Dark Waters: A Note on Virgilian and Beowulfian Techniques', *The Learned and The Lewed: Studies in Chaucer and Medieval Literature*, ed. Larry D. Benson (Cambridge, MA, 1974), pp. 147–60.

henḡest brīdles ne ġȳmeþ' ('the **sea-stallion** takes no heed of the **bridle**', 66) indicate the risk of shipwreck and the loss of lives. Apart from the 'sea-horse' compounds for 'ship' in the *Riddles* and *The Rune Poem*, the feature of a ship being 'nailed' is further mentioned in another poem that is believed to have been composed at an early date: *Maxims I*.[22] A ship, as the poet says, must be nailed, and so a shield ought to be bound, where 'ship' is evidently coupled to 'shield':

> **Sċip** sċeal **ġenæġled**, **sċyld ġebunden**,
> **lēoht linden bord**; lēof wil-cuma
> Frīesan wīfe þonne **flota** stondeð;
> biþ his **ċēol** cumen and hyre ċeorl tō hām. (92–5)[23]
>
> ('A **ship** must be **nailed**, a **shield** [must be] **bound**, **light linden board**; when the **ship** comes to a stop, a beloved welcome-guest [comes] to the Frisian wife; his **ship** has come, and her husband [has come] to home.')

In addition to the varied ship-terms applied in this passage (a common, monosemic simplex ***sċip***, a polysemic simplex ***flota*** ('floater'), meaning either 'sailor' or 'ship', and a poetic term ***ċēol*** suggestive of an archaic, elevated style of language), the pairing of 'ship' with 'shield' merits further discussion.[24] First of all, both 'ship' and 'shield' share the same materiality (wooden planks and metal rivets), and epitomise the social status and power of the owner. Next, the verbs describing a ship being 'nailed' and a shield being 'bound' are interchangeable in this context.[25] What is more, the two terms (***sċip*** and ***sċyld***) share the same pattern of alliteration. The ship-shield connection may

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[22] On the dating, see Kazutomo Karasawa, *The Old English Gnomic Poems Maxims I and Maxims II* (Liverpool, 2024), pp. 85–6 and 112–3; Leonard Neidorf, 'On the Dating and Authorship of *Maxims I*', *NM* 117 (2016), 137–54.

[23] The text of *Maxims I* is taken from Bjork, ed. and trans., *Shorter Poems*.

[24] On the ship-shield comparison, see Karasawa, *Gnomic Poems*, pp. 71 and 275; Megan Cavell, *Weaving Words and Binding Bodies: The Poetics of Human Experience in Old English Literature* (Toronto, 2016), pp. 76–7.

[25] Cf. the Old Saxon biblical poem *Hêliand* 5536–8a, which dates to the ninth century. On the dating of *Hêliand*, see James E. Cathey, ed., *Hêliand: Text and Commentary* (Morgantown, WV, 2002), pp. 20–2.

therefore reveal a shared literary and cultural tradition since the early medieval period (see Chapter Two).

Both in the real world and in the literary renditions regarding ships and seafaring, the functions of the medieval vessel are multi-layered and multi-vocal, ranging from ritual component to religious symbol, surpassing mere practical usage.[26] Ship-symbolism has long been prominent in funeral-rituals since the prehistoric period in Britain and Northern Europe. Ships in the material world have been extensively studied, particularly in archaeological and iconographic contexts. Archaeologists and historians have provided full accounts of medieval ships, from the ship-shaped stone settings to funeral-ships on excavation sites, such as the Sutton Hoo ship (*c.* 600–*c.* 700), the Oseberg ship (*c.* 850), and the Gokstad ship (*c.* 900).[27] Beyond the shorter poems, the ship enjoys a prominent position in longer narrative poems including *Genesis A*, *Exodus*, *Beowulf*, Cynewulf's *Elene* and *Christ B*, *Guthlac B*, and *Andreas*. However, despite there being frequent uses of nautical diction and ship-symbolism in the surviving Old English corpus, the ship-motif remains underexplored in textual criticism.

Present scholarship can be categorised into several major strands. First of all, literary researchers have attempted to investigate ship-imagery in individual Old

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[26] Zbigniew Kobyliński, 'Ships, Society, Symbols, and Archaeologists', *The Ship as Symbol in Prehistoric and Medieval Scandinavia: Papers from an International Research Seminar at the Danish National Museum, Copenhagen, 5th–7h May 1994*, ed. Ole Crumlin-Pedersen and Birgitte Munch Thye (Copenhagen, 1995), pp. 9–19, esp. 11–12 and 17–18. See also Zbigniew Kobyliński and Kamil Rabiega, 'The Symbolic Role of Boats and Ships in Pagan and Christian Medieval Northern Europe', *Sacred Space: Contributions to the Archaeology of Belief*, ed. Louis Daniel Nebelsick, Joanna Wawrzeniuk, and Katarzyna Zeman-Wiśniewska (Warsaw, 2018), pp. 197–218.

[27] See, for example, Stephen Wickler, 'Early Boats in Scandinavia: New Evidence from Early Iron Age Bog Finds in Arctic Norway', *JMA* 14 (2019), 183–204; Ole Crumlin-Pedersen, *Archaeology and the Sea in Scandinavia and Britain: A Personal Account* (Roskilde, 2010); Ole Crumlin-Pedersen, O. Olsen and E. Bondesen, ed., *The Skuldelev Ships I: Topography, Archaeology, History, Conservation and Display* (Roskilde, 2002); Sean McGrail, *Ancient Boats in North-West Europe: The Archaeology of Water Transport to AD 1500*, rev. ed. (London, 1998); Crumlin-Pedersen and Thye, ed., *The Ship as Symbol*; Martin Carver, ed., *The Age of Sutton Hoo* (Woodbridge, 1992); Calvin B. Kendall and Peter S. Wells, ed., *Voyage to the Other World: The Legacy of Sutton Hoo* (Minneapolis, MN, 1992); Charles Green, *Sutton Hoo: The Excavation of a Royal Ship-burial*, 2nd ed. (London, 1986).

English poems. As most of the surviving verse-texts are believed to be composed by Latinate Christian poets, and recorded by Christian scribes, poems that contain seafaring scenes are often studied alongside Christian concepts such as the Ship-of-the-Church (where in the literary tradition the Church is likened to a ship, Christian believers to its crew, Christ to the pilot, the earthly temptations to the sea-storms, and the world to the sea) or the ship-of-life (where living one's life is compared to sailing on a ship).[28] The presence of Noah's Ark in *Genesis A* and *Exodus* is usually, if not always, analysed under such a framework, which is more often treated incidentally within broader analyses of the Flood narrative in the biblical verse (see Chapter One).[29] The varied ship-terms in *Genesis A*, additionally, have been briefly analysed by L. N. McKill, who likens the appellation of Noah's Ark as a 'sea-house' to the image of the legendary mead-hall Heorot in *Beowulf*, and contends that such creative vocabulary indicates a sense of order and protection as well as the poet's positive attitude towards traditional heroic values.[30] Aside from the Ark, other ship-imagery in *Exodus* has been considered. Miranda Wilcox, for example, focuses on the cloud-tent-ship metaphor in the poem, and underscores the ship's function as a symbol of protection rooted in biblical exegesis and the traditional Christian Ship-of-the-Church motif.[31] The icy, ring-necked funeral-ship of Scyld Scefing in the opening funeral passage in *Beowulf* 26–52 has also been the subject of considerable research (see Chapter Two). Some have

[28] On Christian ship-symbolism, see further Jean Daniélou, *Primitive Christian Symbols*, trans. Donald Attwater (Baltimore, MD, 1963), ch. 4.
[29] Joseph St. John, *Genesis Myth in Beowulf and Old English Biblical Poetry* (New York, NY, 2025), pp. 181–6; Charles D. Wright, '*Genesis A* ad litteram', *Old English Literature and the Old Testament*, ed. Michael Fox and Manish Sharma (Toronto, 2012), pp. 121–71; Daniel Anlezark, *Water and Fire: The Myth of the Flood in Anglo-Saxon England* (Manchester, 2006), pp. 175–210.
[30] L. N. McKill, 'The Artistry of the Noah Episode in *Genesis A*', *ESC* 13 (1987), 123–35, esp. 124–9.
[31] Miranda Wilcox, 'Creating the Cloud-tent-ship Conceit in *Exodus*', *ASE* 40 (2011), 103–50.

focused on the contested expression 'īsiġ ond ūt-fūs' ('covered with ice and eager to depart', or 'straining and eager to depart') in *Beowulf* 33a, while others choose to examine the personification of the funeral-ship.[32] The description of the mortuary ritual is strongly reminiscent of medieval textual accounts of ship-funerals in legends and historical writings across Europe, as well as the archaeological discoveries in the material world.[33] Two shorter poems on seafaring and exile, *The Seafarer* and *The Wanderer*, have also been associated with Christian nautical metaphors, especially the idea of the ship-of-life.[34] In scholarly investigations into the intimate relationship between *Beowulf*, Cynewulf's signed poems, and *Andreas*, some ship-terms and nautical expressions are likewise discussed.[35]

Secondly, a substantial body of research tends to focus on specific themes regarding ship-imagery and relevant nautical images, especially regarding the 'arrival or departure of heroes on a ship' type-scene in Old English poetry.[36] The similar

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[32] See, for example, Anatoly Liberman, 'The Icy Ship of Scyld Scefing: *Beowulf* 33', *Bright Is the Ring of Words: Festschrift für Horst Weinstock zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Clausdirk Pollner, Helmut Rohlfing, and Frank-Rutger Hausmann (Bonn, 1996), pp. 183–94; Neil D. Isaacs, 'The Convention of Personification in *Beowulf*', *Old English Poetry: Fifteen Essays*, ed. Robert P. Creed (Providence, RI, 1967), pp. 215–48, at 235–9. All references to *Beowulf* in my thesis are from R. D. Fulk, Robert E. Bjork, and John D. Niles, ed., *Klaeber's Beowulf*, 4th ed. (Toronto, 2008), hereafter K4.

[33] Francis Leneghan, 'Reshaping Tradition: The Originality of the Scyld Scefing Episode in *Beowulf*', *Transmission and Generation in Medieval and Renaissance Literature: Essays in Honour of John Scattergood*, ed. Karen Hodder and Brendan O'Connell (Dublin, 2012), pp. 21–36; Anlezark, *Water and Fire*, pp. 245 and 262–73; Andy Orchard, *A Critical Companion to Beowulf* (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 102–3; Alexander M. Bruce, *Scyld and Scef: Expanding the Analogues* (New York, NY, 2002); Clive Tolley, 'Beowulf's Scyld Scefing Episode: Some Norse and Finnish Analogues', *Arv* 52 (1996), 7–48; Audrey L. Meaney, 'Scyld Scefing and the Dating of Beowulf Again', *BJRL* 71 (1989), 7–40; R. D. Fulk, 'An Eddic Analogue to the Scyld Scefing Story', *RES* 40 (1989), 313–22; Thomas D. Hill, 'The Myth of the Ark-born Son of Noe and the West-Saxon Royal Genealogical Tables', *HTR* 80 (1987), 379–83, at 383; H. M. Belden, 'Scyld Scefing and Huck Finn', *MLN* 33 (1918), 315; H. M. Chadwick, *The Origin of the English Nation* (Cambridge, 1907), pp. 274–95. See further Earl R. Anderson, 'A Submerged Metaphor in the Scyld Episode', *YES* 2 (1972), 1–4.

[34] Antonina Harbus, 'The Maritime Imagination and the Paradoxical Mind in Old English Poetry', *ASE* 39 (2010), 21–42.

[35] Andy Orchard, 'The Originality of *Andreas*', *Old English Philology: Studies in Honour of R. D. Fulk*, ed. Leonard Neidorf, Rafael J. Pascual, and T. A. Shippey (Cambridge, 2016), pp. 331–70; Andy Orchard, 'The Word Made Flesh: Christianity and Oral Culture in Anglo-Saxon Verse', *OT* 24 (2009), 293–318, esp. 298–307; Alison M. Powell, 'Verbal Parallels in *Andreas* and Its Relationship to *Beowulf* and Cynewulf' (unpubl. PhD dissertation, Univ. of Cambridge, 2002); Peter Clemoes, 'Style as the Criterion for Dating the Composition of *Beowulf*', *The Dating of Beowulf*, ed. Colin Chase (Toronto, 1997), pp. 173–85, at 176 and 180.

[36] See, for example, Francis Leneghan, 'The Departure of the Hero in a Ship: The Intertextuality of *Beowulf*,

descriptive patterns found in classical literature and Old Saxon poetry clearly indicate a shared interest in the theme among authors across space and time.[37] Two recent articles by Mercedes Salvador-Bello and Francis Leneghan have demonstrated this common leitmotif in Old English texts including the Regnal Tables, *Beowulf*, Cynewulf's *Elene*, and *Andreas*. While this type-scene in *Beowulf* plays a key role in the royal succession narrative as a tribute to ancient, legendary tribal leaders and heroes, in *Elene* and *Andreas* it glorifies the Church along with its disciples and saints, and condemns the Church's enemies.[38]

Individual nautical images and diction, such as 'anchor', 'sail', and 'prow', have also been extensively analysed in comparison with the Latinate Christian tradition.[39] Roberta Frank, for instance, bases her investigation into Old English *ancor* ('anchor'), a loanword from Latin *ancora* ('anchor'), on textual evidence in both Old English prose and verse.[40] Thomas D. Hill focuses on Cynewulf's *Christ B*, analysing the presence

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Cynewulf and *Andreas'*, *SELIM* 24 (2019), 105–32; Judy King, 'Launching the Hero: The Case of Scyld and Beowulf', *Neophilologus* 87 (2003), 453–71; Salvador-Bello, 'The Arrival of the Hero in a Ship: A Common Leitmotif in OE Regnal Tables and the Story of Scyld Scefing in *Beowulf*', *SELIM* 8 (2001 for 1998), 205–21; Joseph A. Dane, 'Finnsburh and *Iliad* IX: A Greek Survival of the Medieval Germanic Oral-formulaic Theme, the Hero on the Beach', *Neophilologus* 66 (1982), 443–9; Donald K. Fry, 'Launching Ships in *Beowulf* 210–216 and *Brunanburh* 32b–36', *MP* 79 (1981), 61–6; Janet Thormann and John F. Vickrey, 'Variations on the Theme of "The Hero on the Beach" in *The Phoenix*', *NM* 71 (1970), 187–92; Donald K. Fry, 'The Heroine on the Beach in *Judith*', *NM* 68 (1967), 168–84; Donald K. Fry, 'The Hero on the Beach in Finnsburh', *NM* 67 (1966), 27–31; D. K. Crowne, 'The Hero on the Beach: An Example of Composition by Theme in Anglo-Saxon Poetry', *NM* 61 (1960), 362–72.

[37] See further Elizabeth S. Greene, 'The Critical Element in the Embarkation Scenes of the *Odyssey*', *GRBS* 36 (1995), 217–30; David A. Krooks, 'The Hero on the Beach in the Old Saxon *Heliand*?', *JGL* 3 (1991), 161–74; Alain Renoir, 'The Hero on the Beach: Germanic Theme and Indo-European Origin', *NM* 90 (1989), 111–16; Fredrik J. Heinemann, 'The Hero on the Beach in *Fóstbraeðra Saga*', *Neophilologus* 68 (1984), 557–61; James D. Johnson, 'The Hero on the Beach in the Alliterative *Morte Arthure*', *NM* 76 (1975), 271–81.

[38] Leneghan, 'Departure', pp. 128–9; Salvador-Bello, 'Arrival', pp. 214–15.

[39] On *seġl* ('sail'), see, for instance, Megan Cavell, 'Sails, Veils, and Tents: The *segl* and Tabernacle of Old English *Christ III* and *Exodus*', *MCT* 12 (2016), 27–39; Stanley R. Hauer, 'The *segl* in the Old English *Exodus*', *Archiv* 225 (1988), 334–9. On the homographic simplex *stefn* ('prow' in nautical connotation), see Kurt R. Jankowsky, 'OE *staefn/stefn* in Old Germanic and Indo-European Environment', *In hôhem prîse: A Festschrift in Honor of Ernst S. Dick, Presented on the Occasion of his Sixtieth Birthday, April 7, 1989*, ed. Winder McConnell (Göppingen, 1989), pp. 199–211; Kenneth Sisam, 'OE. *stefn*, *stefna* "stem"', *RES* 13 (1962), 282–3.

[40] Roberta Frank, 'Old English *ancor* "anchor": Transformation of a Loanword', *Germanic Texts and Latin Models: Medieval Reconstructions*, ed. Karin E. Olsen, Antonina Harbus, and Tette Hofstra (Leuven, 2001), pp. 7–27. This nautical term occurs twenty-six times in prose and verse. See further Thier, *Sea Terms*, pp. 16–19.

of anchor and ship in light of the Christian notion of the anchor-of-hope and the ship-of-life.[41] Texts produced in the Alfredian period have been extensively studied in modern scholarship, especially concerning the Boethian concept of ship-of-the-mind and Christian anchor-symbolism.[42] More recently, Eleni Ponirakis summarises possible sources of the Alfredian nautical metaphor, and draws a parallel between the image of King Alfred and the traditional God-as-steersman metaphor.[43] In a similar vein, Richard North has situated *Andreas* in an Alfredian context, arguing that Christ the skipper in this poem is implicitly likened to King Alfred, which is suggestive of Alfred's naval prowess and seafaring skills.[44]

Another group of scholars adopt historical approaches to ship-imagery, interrogating textual accounts in prose works, where the ship functions as a symbol of royal identity and military strength. Michael J. Swanton, for instance, has studied the records of the naval force of King Alfred the Great (*c.* 849–899) and the ship-terms in existing prose accounts.[45] The relationship between Sutton Hoo and the funeral of Scyld Scefing has long been a subject of comparative analysis. Central to this

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[41] Thomas D. Hill, 'The Anchor of Hope and the Sea of this World: *Christ II*, 850–66', *ES* 75 (1994), 289–92.

[42] Eleni Ponirakis, 'Steering the Ship of the Mind: Politics and Theology in the Nautical Expression of the Layered Mind in the Alfredian Translations', *SELIM* 29 (2024), 53–70; Martin Carver, 'Travels on the Sea and in the Mind', *The Maritime World of the Anglo-Saxons*, ed. Stacy S. Klein, William Schipper, and Shannon Lewis-Simpson (Tempe, AZ, 2014), pp. 21–36; Miranda Wilcox, 'Alfred's Epistemological Metaphors: *Eagan modes* and *scip modes*', *ASE* 35 (2006), 179–217, esp. 183–5, 189–94, and 197–201; Soon Ai Low, 'The Anglo-Saxon Mind: Metaphor and Common Sense Psychology in Old English Literature' (PhD dissertation, Univ. of Toronto, 1998), esp. chs. 4 and 5.

[43] Ponirakis, 'Steering the Ship', pp. 55–67.

[44] Richard North, 'King Alfred as the Skipper in *Andreas*', *The Age of Alfred: Rethinking English Literary Culture c. 850–950*, ed. Amy Faulkner and Francis Leneghan (Turnhout, 2024), pp. 429–53. While the Vercelli Book, in which the only extant copy of *Andreas* is found, is thought to have been produced in the second half of the tenth century, North and Bintley propose a hypothesis which suggests *Andreas* was composed very approximately in *c.* 890 by King Alfred's chaplain Æthelstan from Mercia. See Richard North and Michael D. J. Bintley, ed. and trans., *Andreas: An Edition* (Liverpool, 2016), pp. 97–115.

[45] Michael J. Swanton, 'King Alfred's Ships: Text and Context', *ASE* 28 (1999), 1–22. See further Edwin Gifford and Joyce Gifford, 'Alfred's New Longships', *Alfred the Great: Papers from the Eleventh-centenary Conferences*, ed. Timothy Reuter (London, 2003), pp. 281–9.

discussion is the question of the extent to which the real-world ship-burial reflects the ship-imagery in a medieval text, or whether the literary representation draws upon material practice.[46] Frank effectively challenges a common tendency to treat Sutton Hoo as a material analogue to *Beowulf*, warning that such comparisons risk collapsing the distinction between archaeological evidence and literary imagination.[47] Recent scholarship, however, has seen a renewed interest in reassessing *Beowulf* in dialogue with archaeological findings.[48]

Equally important is the approach to Old English lexicology and historical linguistics with respect to ship-terms and other nautical diction, especially those containing poetic metaphors.[49] In a recent monograph, Katrin Thier collects Old English terminology for ships and seafaring, including different types of 'ship' and words that depict parts of a ship, providing useful background information from

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[46] For studies on the relationship between *Beowulf* and archaeological evidence in the last century, see Leslie Webster, 'Archaeology and *Beowulf*', *Beowulf: An Edition with Relevant Shorter Texts*, ed. Bruce Mitchell and Fred C. Robinson, rev. ed. (Malden, MA, 2008), pp. 183–94; Martin Carver, 'The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Sutton Hoo: An Interim Report', *The Archaeology of Anglo-Saxon England: Basic Readings*, ed. Catherine E. Karkov (New York, NY, 1999), pp. 279–316; Catherine M. Hills, '*Beowulf* and Archaeology', *A Beowulf Handbook*, ed. Robert E. Bjork and John D. Niles (Exeter, 1997), pp. 291–310; Robert P. Creed, ''Sutton Hoo and the Recording of *Beowulf*', *Voyage to the Other World*, pp. 65–75; Rosemary Cramp, 'The Hall in *Beowulf* and in Archaeology', *Heroic Poetry in the Anglo-Saxon Period*, pp. 331–46; Sam Newton, *The Origins of Beowulf and the Pre-Viking Kingdom of East Anglia* (Cambridge, 1992); Roberta Frank, '*Beowulf* and Sutton Hoo: The Odd Couple', *Voyage to the Other World*, pp. 47–64; Barbara Row, 'Royal Power and Royal Symbols in *Beowulf*', *The Age of Sutton Hoo*, pp. 167–74; L. Whitbread, '*Beowulf* and Archaeology: Two Further Footnotes', *NM* 69 (1968), 63–72; Charles L. Wrenn, 'Sutton Hoo and *Beowulf*', *Mélanges de linguistique et de philologie, Fernand Mossé in memoriam* (Paris, 1959), pp. 495–507; Rosemary Cramp, '*Beowulf* and Archaeology', *MA* 1 (1957), 57–77; Sune Lindqvist, 'Sutton Hoo and Beowulf', *Antiquity* 22 (1948), 131–40.

[47] Frank, '*Beowulf* and Sutton Hoo', p. 331.

[48] Francis Leneghan, 'Dishonouring the Dead: *Beowulf* and the Staffordshire Hoard', *QI* 21 (2020), pp. 1–22; Howard Williams, '*Beowulf* and Archaeology: Megaliths Imagined and Encountered in Early Medieval Europe', *The Lives of Prehistoric Monuments in Iron Age, Roman and Medieval Europe*, ed. Marta Díaz-Guardamino, Leonardo García Sanjuán, and David Wheatley (Oxford, 2015), pp. 77–97; John Hines, '*Beowulf and Archaeology — Revisited*', *Aedificia Nova: Studies in Honor of Rosemary Cramp*, ed. Catherine E. Karkov and Helen Damico (Kalamazoo, MI, 2008), pp. 89–105; Gale R. Owen-Crocker, *The Four Funerals in Beowulf and the Structure of the Poem* (Manchester, 2000), pp. 11–42 and 114–32.

[49] See, for example, Charles T. Carr, *Nominal Compounds in Germanic* (London, 1939), pp. 75, 256–7, 202, 342, and 424; Hertha Marquardt, *Die altenglischen Kenningar: Ein Beitrag zur Stilkunde altgermanischer Dichtung* (Halle, 1938), pp. 121–2, 125, 145, 150, 154, 172, 225–9, and 245–6; Rudolf Meissner, *Die Kenningar der Skalden: Ein Beitrag zur Skaldischen Poetik* (Bonn, 1921), pp. 218–20; Heinrich Schnepper, 'Die Namen der Schiffe und Schiffsteile im Altenglischen: eine kulturgeschichtlich-etymologische Untersuchung' (PhD dissertation, Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel, 1908).

historical linguistics, archaeological evidence, and textual occurrences.[50] Furthermore, some nautical terms in poetic vocabulary have been included in scholarly discussions. Dennis Cronan emphasises the use of synecdoche, where a part is used to address the whole, or in the other way round, and the different meanings of some poetic ship-terms in prose and verse respectively.[51] Henry Cecil Wyld also conducts a brief survey into ship-terms in verse.[52] Griffith further analyses some nautical terms in glossaries.[53] Moreover, a number of studies have postulated a convergence between 'ship' and zoomorphism. The 'sea-horse' compounds have been explored by (for example) Earl R. Anderson.[54] Karin E. Olsen has evaluated the metaphorical importance of some ship-terms in Old English and Old Norse poetry, and focuses on the animated ships (including the traditional ship-horse comparison attested both in Old English and Old Norse).[55] Additionally, scholars have debated contested manuscript readings that may refer to 'ship', including *Beowulf* 568a (see Chapter Two) and *The Dream of the Rood* (hereafter *Rood*) 91a, or the meanings of specific ship-terms, such as *bolca* ('deck or gangway [of a ship]') and *ancor*.[56] Others have examined the nautical diction in

[50] Thier, *Sea Terms*, pp. 14–147.
[51] Dennis Cronan, 'Poetic Meanings in the Old English Poetic Vocabulary', *ES* 84 (2003), 397–425, at 397–8, 407, 417, and 419. See further Dennis Cronan, 'The Poetics of Poetic Words in Old English', *Old English Philology*, pp. 256–75, at 263–4.
[52] Henry Cecil Wyld, 'Diction and Imagery in Anglo-Saxon Poetry', *Essential Articles for the Study of Old English Poetry,* ed. Jess B. Bessinger, Jr. and Stanley J. Kahrl (Hamden, CT, 1968), pp. 183–227, at 195–200.
[53] Mark Griffith, 'Old English Poetic Diction Not in Old English Verse or Prose — And the Curious Case of Aldhelm's Five Athletes', *ASE* 43 (2014), 99–131, esp. 120 and 122–6.
[54] Earl R. Anderson, '*Sæmearh* and Like Compounds: A Theme in Old English Poetry', *Comitatus* 3 (1972), 3–10; Meissner, *Die Kenningar der Skalden*, pp. 218–20.
[55] Karin E. Olsen, 'Metaphorical Density in Old English and Old Norse Poetry', *Arkiv* 117 (2002), 171–95, at 179, 192–3; Karin E. Olsen, 'Animated Ships in Old English and Old Norse Poetry', *Animals and the Symbolic in Mediaeval Art and Literature*, ed. L. A. J. R. Houwen (Groningen, 1997), pp. 53–66; Karin E. Olsen, 'Metaphorical Language in the Early Poetry of Northwest Europe' (PhD dissertation, Univ. of Toronto, 1995), esp. 124–75, see also pp. 39, 42, 44–5, 93, and 121.
[56] Yinghan Li, 'Revisiting OE *holm-wudu* in *The Dream of the Rood*: The Salvific Ship and the Name of Mary', *ES* 107 (2026), 509–23; Leonard Neidorf and Na Xu, 'The Textual Criticism of *The Dream of the Rood*', *ES* 101 (2020), 519–36, at 525–6; Heather Maring, 'Two Ships Crossing: Hybrid Poetics in *The Dream of the Rood*', *ES* 91 (2010), 241–55; T. E. Pickford, '*Holmwudu* in *The Dream of the Rood*', *NM* 77 (1976), 561–4; Carl T. Berkhout, 'The Problem of *holmwudu*', *MS* 36 (1974): 429–33; Eduard Kolb, '*Beowulf* 568: An Emendation', *ES* 46 (1965), 322–3;

individual poems, such as *Exodus*, through which the poet creates wordplay to promote Christian concepts, and two battle-poems, *The Battle of Brunanburh* (hereafter *Brunanburh*; see Chapters One and Four, and Conclusion) and *The Battle of Maldon* (hereafter *Maldon*; see Chapters One, Three, and Four).[57]

Together, these studies provide important insights into the nautical diction and ship-imagery in the surviving Old English corpus from various aspects. However, research to date focuses on either an individual text or a specific category of ship-terms. While the research-findings indicate a shared nautical vocabulary and literary tradition among a particular group of texts, little is known about the intricate interrelationships between poems that contain parallel diction and expressions for ships and seafaring. Although relevant themes and imagery (such as wood and water) in Old English literature have been extensively explored in book-length studies, the diction for and image of 'ship' in the poetic corpus have yet to receive a sustained and systematic investigation, especially in the longer narrative poems.[58]

Among such poems in the surviving corpus, seven contain seafaring passages: two biblical poems that are believed to have been composed at the earlier stages of Old

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H. Lamar Crosby, 'Two Notes on *Beowulf*', *MLN* 55 (1940), 605–6. On *bolca*, see Michael Korhammer, 'Old English *bolca* and *mægþa land* — Two Problems, One Solved', *Words, Texts and Manuscripts: Studies in Anglo-Saxon Culture Presented to Helmut Gneuss on the Occasion of his Sixty-fifth Birthday*, ed. Michael Korhammer, Karl Reichl, and Hans Sauer (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 305–24, at 305–10; on *ancor*, see above.

[57] On *Exodus*, see for instance Eric Weiskott, 'Puns and Poetic Style in Old English', *Etymology and Wordplay in Medieval Literature*, ed. Mikael Males (Turnhout, 2018), pp. 191–211, esp. 196–208. On the two battle-poems, see Paul Cavill, 'Ships and *Brunanburh*', *ES* 98 (2017), 549–61; Marijane Osborn, 'Norse Ships at Maldon: The Cultural Context of *aeschere* in the Old English Poem "*The Battle of Maldon*"', *NM* 104 (2003), 261–80.

[58] On wood, tree, and timber, see, for example, Michael D. J. Bintley, *Trees in the Religions of Early Medieval England* (Woodbridge, 2015); Michael D. J. Bintley and Michael G. Shapland, ed., *Trees and Timber in the Anglo-Saxon World* (Oxford, 2013); Della Hooke, *Trees in Anglo-Saxon England Literature, Lore and Landscape* (Woodbridge, 2010). On sea, water, and flood, see Carolyn Twomey and Daniel Anlezark, ed., *Meanings of Water in Early Medieval England* (Turnhout, 2021); Maren Clegg Hyer and Della Hooke, ed., *Water and the Environment in the Anglo-Saxon World* (Liverpool, 2017); Klein, Schipper, and Lewis-Simpson, ed., *The Maritime World of the Anglo-Saxons*; Sebastian I. Sobecki, ed., *The Sea and Englishness in the Middle Ages: Maritime Narratives, Identity and Culture* (Cambridge, 2011); Sebastian I. Sobecki, *The Sea and Medieval English Literature* (Cambridge, 2008); Anlezark, *Water and Fire*.

English literature, *Genesis A* and *Exodus*; the heroic epic *Beowulf*; two of the four signed poems of Cynewulf, *Elene* and *Christ B*, and one verse saint's *Life* that is traditionally attributed to Cynewulf or his school, *Guthlac B*; and finally, a verse version of the *Acts of Saint Andrew and Matthew*, *Andreas*.[59] The poems in question are preserved in all four of the major Old English manuscripts: the eleventh- or late tenth-century Junius Manuscript (*Genesis A* and *Exodus*), the late tenth- or early eleventh-century Nowell Codex (*Beowulf*), the late tenth-century Exeter Book (*Christ B* and *Guthlac B*), and the late tenth-century Vercelli Book (*Elene* and *Andreas*).[60] Altogether, these texts contain over 10,000 lines, constituting approximately one-third of the extant poetic corpus.

The body of this thesis is divided into four main chapters. In each chapter, I analyse one group of longer narrative poems under investigation. Chapter One is dedicated to two of the earliest biblical poems in vernacular poetry, *Genesis A* and *Exodus*; Chapter Two studies the heroic epic *Beowulf*; Chapter Three analyses Cynewulf's *Elene* and *Christ B*, and compares Cynewulf's stylistic expressions with the seafaring passage in *Guthlac B*; finally, Chapter Four provides an extensive account of the twenty variants for 'ship' in the Old English *Andreas*.

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[59] On the dating and relationship, see below.

[60] Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Junius 11 < https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/objects/d5e3a9fc-abaa-4649-ae48-be207ce8da15/>; London, British Library, Cotton MS Vitellius A XV < https://searcharchives.bl.uk/catalog/040-001102971>; Exeter, Exeter Cathedral Library MS 3501 < https://theexeterbook.exeter.ac.uk/index.html>; Vercelli, Biblioteca Capitolare, CXVII < http://vbd.humnet.unipi.it/beta2/index.html>. See further Helmut Gneuss and Michael Lapidge, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts: A Bibliographical Handlist of Manuscripts and Manuscript Fragments Written or Owned in England up to 1100* (Toronto, 2014), pp. 201–3, 322–3, 491–3, and 681–5; Samantha Zacher, *Preaching the Converted: The Style and Rhetoric of the Vercelli Book Homilies* (Toronto, 2009), pp. 5–9; Leslie Lockett, 'An Integrated Re-examination of the Dating of Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 11', *ASE* 31 (2002), 141–73; David Dumville, 'The Beowulf-manuscript and How Not to Date it', *MESN* 39 (1998), 21–7; Kevin Kiernan, *Beowulf and the Beowulf Manuscript*, rev. ed. (Ann Arbor, MI, 1998); Conner, *Anglo-Saxon Exeter*, pp. 48–147, esp. 77.

Genesis A and Exodus

The Old English *Genesis A* (2319 lines) is among the earliest longer narrative poems in the extant corpus.[61] The only surviving copy is found in the Junius (or 'Cædmon') Manuscript, along with another relevant biblical poem *Exodus* (590 lines). The latter is commonly dated between 700 and 800 by scholars who believe that *Exodus* was possibly composed before or roughly in the same period as *Beowulf*.[62] The manuscript contains three ship-illustrations at pp. 66 and 68, which form a visual parallel to the descriptions of the Ark in the two poems. Both texts contain descriptions of the Flood and references to Noah's Ark (*Genesis A* 1285–1554; *Exodus* 362–79).[63] Both texts also draw heavily on Christian-Latin and vernacular sources, employing unusual terms for the Ark (such as *mere-ċist* 'sea-chest', *mere-hūs* 'sea-house', *þell-fæsten* and *wudu-fæsten* 'plank-fortress' in *Genesis A*; *māþm-hord* 'treasure-hoard' in *Exodus*) distinct from the rest of the Old English corpus.[64] Finally, both texts share several other

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[61] On the dating of *Genesis A*, see further Fulk, *A History*, pp. 3, 23, 61–2, 64, 74, 248, 369, and 391–2, who convincingly dates the poem to the eighth century. A. N. Doane, ed., *Genesis A: A New Edition, Revised* (Tempe, AZ, 2013), pp. 51–5, gives a date before 750 or before 825 (if the poem is of Northumbrian origin). On the catalogue description of the manuscript and illustrations, see pp. 1–35. On the interpolation of *Genesis B* into *Genesis A*, see, for example, Peter J. Lucas, 'Loyalty and Obedience in the Old English Genesis and the Interpolation of *Genesis B* into *Genesis A*', *Neophilologus* 76 (1992), 121–35, at 121 and 133–4.

[62] On the relationship of *Exodus* and *Beowulf* and the relative chronology, see, Peter J. Lucas, ed. *Exodus*, 3rd ed. (Liverpool, 2020), pp. 69–71, who believes *Exodus* was composed earlier than *Beowulf*; see further Fr. Klaeber, 'Concerning the Relation between *Exodus* and *Beowulf*', *MLN* 33 (1918), 218–24. For a contrasting view of chronology, see Fulk, *A History*, pp. 61 and 348–9.

[63] On the importance of the Flood narrative and Exodus in the Christian tradition, see, for instance, Jean Daniélou, *From Shadows to Reality: Studies in the Biblical Typology of the Fathers*, trans. Dom Wulstan Hibberd (London, 1960), pp. 69–112 and 153–226.

[64] On Germanic elements in *Genesis A*, see Horst Richard Paul Battles, 'The Art of the *scop*: Traditional Poetics in the Old English *Genesis A*' (PhD dissertation, Univ. of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1998). On the two poems' potential sources including Old Latin, Vulgate, and liturgical texts, see further Lucas, ed., *Exodus*, pp. 51–60; Doane, ed., *Genesis A*, pp. 56–94; Paul G. Remley, *Old English Biblical Verse: Studies in Genesis, Exodus and Daniel* (Cambridge, 1996), esp. chs. 2 and 3; Richard Marsden, *The Text of the Old Testament in Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 52–3 and 441–3; Paul G. Remley, 'The Latin Textual Basis of *Genesis A*', *ASE* 17 (1988), 163–89; Edward, B. Irving, '*Exodus* Retraced', *Old English Studies in Honour of John C. Pope*, ed. Robert B. Burlin and Edward B. Irving (Toronto, 1974), pp. 203–23; J. R. Hall, 'The Old English *Exodus* and the *Antiquitates Judaicae*: More Parallels', *ASNSL* 216 (1979), 341–4; Joseph B. Trahern, 'More Scriptural Echoes in the Old English *Exodus*', *Anglo-Saxon Poetry: Essays in Appreciation for John C. McGalliard*, ed. Lewis E. Nicholson and Dolores Warwick Frese (Notre Dame, IN, 1975), pp. 291–8; Aaron Mirsky, 'On the Sources of the Anglo-Saxon *Genesis* and *Exodus*', *ES* 48 (1967), 385–97; Samuel Moore, 'On the Sources of the Old-English *Exodus*', *MP* 9 (1911), 83–108.

maritime expressions that are rare in the corpus or are only found in these two poems.

The phraseology for the Ark in *Genesis A* lies mainly in the account of the Flood (1285–1554), which generally corresponds to Genesis VI.11–IV.19, from God seeing the sin of humanity on earth to the second covenant with Noah after the Flood.[65] Although the poet follows the overall storyline of Genesis, the Old English version fundamentally differs from the Vulgate in terms of poetic diction and imagery.[66] The enlarged narrative of the Israelites' crossing of the Red Sea in *Exodus*, which is loaded with nautical vocabulary and Germanic heroic motifs, has led to scholarly discussions of topics with respect to traditional Christian concepts such as the interpolated cloud-tent-ship imagery (75–92), and the poet's descriptions of Noah as a wise sailor and his Ark as the greatest of treasure-hoards on earth (362–76).[67]

Beowulf

Just as in the two biblical poems, maritime elements abound in *Beowulf*, a 3182-line Old English heroic epic about the legends of Germanic heroes preserved in the Nowell Codex. Not only the protagonist but also the main plots are closely associated with ships and the sea. On the one hand, Beowulf is portrayed as a hero of exceptional aquatic skills which are gifts from God (1270–3 and 2180–3).[68] On the other, ship-imagery is

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[65] The poet briefly mentions the genealogy of Noah and his three sons (1234b–45a; as in Genesis V.28–9 and 32, and VI.9–10) with no reference to the Flood or the Ark.

[66] For scholars who propose a literal reading of the poem (which is considered as a vernacular, heroic rendition of the biblical story), see, for instance, Wright, '*Genesis A* ad litteram'; Nina Boyd, 'Doctrine and Criticism: A Revaluation of *Genesis A*', *NM* 83 (1982), 230–8; Irving, '*Exodus* Retraced'. On traditional approaches (which focus on Christian allegorical and typological traditions), see, for example, Doane, ed., *Genesis A*; Bernard F. Huppé, *Doctrine and Poetry: Augustine's Influence on Old English Poetry* (Albany, NY, 1959), pp. 131–216.

[67] See further Amy Faulkner, 'Death and Treasure in *Exodus* and *Beowulf*', *ES* 101 (2020), 785–801; Phyllis Portnoy, 'Ring Composition and the Digressions of *Exodus*: The "Legacy" of the "Remnant"', *ES* 82 (2001), 289–307; Peter J. Lucas, 'Old English Christian Poetry: The Cross in *Exodus*', *Famulus Christi: Essays in Commemoration of the Thirteenth Centenary of the Birth of the Venerable Bede*, ed. Gerald Bonner (London, 1976), pp. 193–209; Trahern, 'More Scriptural Echoes'; James W. Earl, 'Christian Traditions in the Old English *Exodus*', *NM* 71 (1970), 541–70; Robert T. Farrell, 'Eight Notes on Old English *Exodus*', *NM* 67 (1966), 364–75.

[68] Franics Leneghan, 'Beowulf, the Wrath of God and the Fall of the Angels', *ES* 105 (2024), 383–403; Daniel

more generally tied with several key themes in *Beowulf*, where the high-horned vessel ferries both the living and the dead, blood-feud and peace, destruction and prosperity, disgrace and fame.[69]

The poetic diction denoting 'ship' in *Beowulf* demonstrates its structural significance and narrative intricacies, enriching understanding of cultural influences.[70] The rich display of nautical motifs and expressions in the poem not only demonstrates the poet's predilection for maritime themes and nautical motifs, but also reveals the significance of ship-imagery in terms of the negotiation between Germanic and Christian conventions.[71]

The 'Cynewulfian' corpus

Written by one of the few named authors of Old English poetry, the four signed poems by Cynewulf, who wrote his name in runic mini-riddles, are often studied in association with a group of poems reminiscent of his language and style, often labelled 'Cynewulfian'.[72] Cynewulf has greatly influenced *Guthlac B* (if indeed it was not

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Anlezark, 'All at Sea: Beowulf's Marvellous Swimming', *Myths, Legends, and Heroes: Essays on Old Norse and Old English Literature in Honour of John McKinnell*, ed. Daniel Anlezark (Toronto, 2011), pp. 225–41. See also Lee C. Ramsey, 'The Sea Voyages in *Beowulf*', *NM* 72 (1971), 51–9.

[69] On high-horned ships and figure-heads, see, for instance, Katrin Thier, 'Steep Vessel, High Horn-ship: Water Transport', *The Material Culture of Daily Living in the Anglo-Saxon World*, ed. Maren Clegg Hyer and Gale Owen-Crocker (Liverpool, 2011), pp. 49–72; Crumlin-Pedersen, *Archaeology and the Sea*. Rupert Bruce-Mitford, 'Ships' Figure-heads in the Migration Period and Early Middle Ages', *Antiquity* 44 (1970), 146–8; H. E. F. Vierck, 'The Origin and Date of the Ship's Figure-head from Moerzeke-Mariekerke, Antwerp', *Helinium* 10 (1970), 139–49; Rupert Bruce-Mitford, 'A New Wooden Ship's Figure-head Found in the Scheldt, at Moerzeke-Mariekerke', *AA* 38 (1967), 199–209.

[70] On the unity of *Beowulf*, see Arthur G. Brodeur, *The Art of Beowulf* (Berkeley, CA, 1971), pp. 71–87; Arthur G. Brodeur, 'The Structure and the Unity of *Beowulf*', *PMLA* 68 (1953), 1183–95; Arthur E. Du Bois, 'The Unity of *Beowulf*', *PMLA* 49 (1934), 374–405. See further Leonard Neidorf, *The Art and Thought of the Beowulf Poet* (Ithaca, NY, 2022). For a summary of the scholarly discussions on the structure and unity of *Beowulf* in the nineteenth century and the twentieth century, see T. A. Shippey, 'Structure and Unity of *Beowulf*', *A Beowulf Handbook*, pp. 149–74.

[71] For a comparative study on the seafaring narrative in *Beowulf* and the theme of voyage in the Christian saints' *Lives*, see for instance, Malcolm Alexander Fleck, 'The Narrative and Descriptive Influence of Latin Hagiography on *Beowulf*' (PhD dissertation, Univ. of Toronto, 2019).

[72] See, for instance, Claes Schaar, *Critical Studies of the Cynewulf Group* (Lund, 1949); Satyendra K. Das, *Cynewulf and the Cynewulf Canon* (Calcutta, 1942); Earl R. Anderson, *Cynewulf: Structure, Style and Theme in his Poetry* (London, 1983); Kenneth Sisam, 'Cynewulf and his Poetry', *PBA* 18 (1932), 303–31.

written by him, given the now-lost ending lines of the poem, where Cynewulf elsewhere leaves his signature), the *Physiologus* poems (especially regarding *The Whale*, which contains similar nautical terms and expressions), *The Phoenix*, and *Andreas* (see below).[73] All these poems, except *Andreas*, are supposedly generally in the same historical period (*c.* 750–*c.* 850; sometimes called 'the Cynewulfian period').[74]

Three longer texts in this group, Cynewulf's *Elene* and *Christ B* and the Cynewulfian *Guthlac B*, contain detailed, idiosyncratic descriptions of ships, revealing Cynewulf's fascination with seafaring and ships. The poet adapts his source-materials from both Christian and Old English traditions, and the nautical motif in these three poems is closely associated with Christian themes of belief and salvation.

Andreas

The final narrative poem considered is *Andreas* (1722 lines). The poem is found before one of the four signed poems of Cynewulf, *The Fates of the Apostles* (hereafter *Fates*) in the Vercelli Book, and its language and style are evocative of both *Beowulf* and Cynewulf's signed works.[75] Ever since the discovery of the runic signature of

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[73] For more recent studies on Cynewulf's influence, see, for instance, Mercedes Salvador-Bello, *The History of the Physiologus in Early Medieval England* (Turnhout, 2024), pp. 181, 229, 311–12, and 385; Andy Orchard, 'Alcuin and Cynewulf: The Art and Craft of Anglo-Saxon Verse', *JBA* 8 (2020), 295–399, at 324, 331, 338, 345, and 392–3; R. D. Fulk, 'Cynewulf: Canon, Dialect, and Date', *Cynewulf: Basic Readings*, ed. Robert E. Bjork (New York, 1996), pp. 3–21; Fulk, *A History*, pp. 351–68. On Cynewulf's potential influence on *The Phoenix*, see also Harriet Soper, *The Life Course in Old English Poetry* (Cambridge, 2023), pp. 128–30; Otto Hietsch, 'On the Authorship of the OE *Phoenix*', *Anglo-Americana: Festschrift zum 70. Geburtstag von Leo Hibler-Lebmannsport*, ed. Karl Brunner (Vienna, 1955), pp. 72–9, at 79. See further Holly Elizabeth Jagger, 'Body, Text and Self in Old English Verse: A Study of Beowulfian and Cynewulfian Rhetoric' (PhD dissertation, Univ. of Toronto, 2002), pp. 208–74; Powell, 'Verbal Parallels'. For scholars who disagree, see, for instance, Das, *Cynewulf Canon*, at xvi.

[74] Salvador-Bello, *Physiologus*, pp. 181 and 31; Fulk, *A History*, pp. 3, 61–2, 348–9, and 368. See further Fulk, "Cynewulf"; Patrick W. Conner, 'On Dating Cynewulf', *Cynewulf: Basic Readings*, pp. 23–55.

[75] On relationships and parallels, see Richard North, 'Meet the Pagans: On the Misuse of *Beowulf* in *Andreas*', *Aspects of Knowledge: Preserving and Reinventing Traditions of Learning in the Middle Ages*, ed. M. Cesario and Hugh Magennis (Manchester, 2018), pp. 185–209; North and Bintley, ed. and trans., *Andreas*, pp. 58–81; Orchard, 'Originality', pp. 355 and 358–9; Bill Friesen, 'Visions and Revisions: The Sources and Analogues of the Old English *Andreas*' (PhD dissertation, Univ. of Toronto, 2008); Orchard, *Companion*, pp. 163–68 and 274–326; Powell, 'Verbal Parallels', pp. 273–82; Jagger, 'Body, Text and Self', pp. 240–74; Anita R. Riedinger, 'The Formulaic Relationship between *Beowulf* and *Andreas*', *Heroic Poetry in the Anglo-Saxon Period*, pp. 283–312; Anita R. Riedinger, 'The Poetic Formula in *Andreas*, *Beowulf*, and the Tradition' (PhD dissertation, New York Univ., 1985);

Cynewulf in 1888, there has been much debate over the authorship of *Andreas* in relation to Cynewulf.[76] Recent scholars have reached a consensus that the *Andreas*-poet and Cynewulf are not the same person.[77] The poem focuses on the mission of Saint Andrew (Andreas) to Mermedonia, where he saves the imprisoned Saint Matthew, and converts the local cannibals to Christianity, which is one of the most famous legends of Saint Andrew in medieval Christendom.[78] Despite the popularity of the medieval story, the immediate source of *Andreas* is believed to be a now-lost Latin translation of a Greek text named *Πράξεις Ανδρέου καὶ Ματθεία εἰς τὴν πόλιν τῶν ἀνθρωποφάγων* ('Acts of Andrew and Matthew in the Country of the Cannibals', hereafter *Πράξεις*).[79] Compared with the Greek and Latin analogues, the *Andreas*-poet amplifies certain passages in the storyline, especially Andreas's sea-voyages to and from Mermedonia (220–980 and 1654b–1722), making seafaring a central theme in the

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Hans Schabram, '*Andreas* und *Beowulf*: Parallelstellen als Zeugnis für literarische Abhängigkeit', *NGH* 34 (1965), 201–18.

[76] Kenneth R. Brooks, ed., *Andreas and the Fates of the Apostles* (Oxford, 1961), xviii–xxii.

[77] Fulk, 'Cynewulf', pp. 7–8.

[78] Robert Boenig, *Saint and Hero: Andreas and Mediaeval Doctrine* (London, 1991), pp. 28–9 and 109; Ellen B. Baumler, 'Andrew in the City of the Cannibals: A Comparative Study of the Latin, Greek, and Old English Texts' (PhD dissertation, Univ. of Kansas, 1985), pp. 1–2. On the popularity of Saint Andrew in medieval England, see Claudio Cataldi, 'St Andrew in the Old English Homiletic Tradition', *Hagiography in Anglo-Saxon England: Adopting and Adapting Saints' Lives into Old English Prose (c. 950–1150)*, ed. Loredana Lazzari, Patrizia Lendinara, and Claudia Di Sciacca (Turnhout, 2014), pp. 293–308, at 296–7; Kevin R. Kritsch, 'Apostles, Apostolicity and Apocrypha: The Literary Reception and Treatment of the Twelve Apostles in Anglo-Saxon England with a Study of the Cult of St. Andrew' (PhD dissertation, Univ. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2014), pp. 101–237, esp. 107, 146, and 240; Mary M. Walsh, 'St. Andrew in Anglo-Saxon England: The Evolution of an Apocryphal Hero', *AM* 20 (1981), 97–122, at 101. See in general, Jan N. Bremmer, ed., *The Apocryphal Acts of Andrew* (Leuven, 2000); Peter M. Peterson, *Andrew, Brother of Simon Peter, his History and his Legends* (Leiden, 1963).

[79] On sources of *Andreas*, see Orchard, 'Originality'; North and Bintley, ed. and trans., *Andreas*, pp. 1–8; Friesen, 'Visions and Revisions'; Powell, 'Verbal Parallels', pp. 8–15; Robert Boenig, trans., *The Acts of Andrew in the Country of the Cannibals: Translations from the Greek, Latin and Old English* (London, 1991), at xxvi–xxxiv; Baumler, 'City of the Cannibals'; Michael J. B. Allen and Daniel G. Calder, trans., *Sources and Analogues of Old English Poetry: The Major Latin Texts in Translation* (Cambridge, 1976), pp. 14–34; Milton Reimer, 'The Old English *Andreas*: A Study of the Poet's Response to his Source' (PhD dissertation, Univ. of Texas, 1965); Brooks, ed., *Andreas*, xv–xviii; George Philip Krapp, ed., *The Vercelli Book* (New York, NY, 1932), xxxvi–xxxvii; Charles Wycliffe Goodwin, ed. and trans., *The Anglo-Saxon Legends of St. Andrew and St. Veronica* (Cambridge, 1851), iii–vi. Only one sentence of the Latin translation survives, preserved in a fragmentary Old English homily known as *Blickling Homily 19*. For editions of the text, see Richard J. Kelly, ed. and trans., *The Blickling Homilies*, 2 vols (London, 2003–9), pp. 158–63; Richard Morris, ed. and trans., *The Blickling Homilies of the Tenth Century* (London, 1874–80), pp. 228–49.

narrative.[80] The focus on seafaring pinpoints the author's interest in voyaging narrative in both Latinate Christian and Old English traditions.[81]

The main methodologies of my research are cross-reference and textual scrutiny, by which I focus on both contextual and intertextual significance of the image of and diction for 'ship' in each major text in question. When analysing individual texts, I focus on both the lexicological features of the nautical diction as well as the verbal parallels in different cultural contexts: the Old English corpus, Latinate Christian literature, and Germanic literary tradition. When discussing definition of terms and word-frequency, I depend on online resources which include *DOE* and its corpus; *CLASP* (especially *Word-hord* by Orchard; hereafter *WH*); *B-T*; and *A Thesaurus of Old English*.[82] For sources of some religious texts, I consult the *Fontes Anglo-Saxonici* database where relevant.[83] Apart from *B-T*, *DOE*, and *WH*, I also consult the Old English verse dictionary by Grein-Köhler (hereafter *G-K*).[84]

As one of the major goals of my thesis is to analyse the 'evolution' of nautical

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[80] Friesen, 'Visions and Revisions', p. 10; Rosemary Woolf, 'Saints' Lives', *Continuations and Beginnings: Studies in Old English Literature*, ed. E. G. Stanley (London, 1965), pp. 37–66, at 53; Robert E. Diamond, 'Theme as Ornament in Anglo-Saxon Poetry', *PMLA* 76 (1961), 461–8, at 467. For a table comparing plot elements in *Andreas* and its analogues, see Powell, 'Verbal Parallels', pp. 11–12. Three main Latin versions of the legend of Saint Andrew are preserved in the Codex Casanatensis (hereafter *Casanatensis*), the Codex Vaticanus (hereafter *Vaticanus*), and the Bonnet Fragment respectively. There are two Old English prose accounts found in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 198, fols 386r–394v and Princeton, University Library, W.H. Scheide Collection 71, fols 136r–139v.

[81] Fabienne L. Michelet, 'Lost at Sea: Nautical Travels in the Old English *Exodus*, the Old English *Andreas*, and Accounts of the *Adventus Saxonum*', *The Sea and Englishness*, pp. 59–79, at 72. On the practice of highlighting special meanings of the journey by extending the narrative in the New Testament, see Floyd V. Filson, 'The Journey Motif in Luke-Acts', *Apostolic History and the Gospel: Biblical and Historical Essays Presented to F. F. Bruce*, ed. W. Ward Gasque and Ralph P. Martin, (Exeter, 1970), pp. 68–77, at 70.

[82] *Dictionary of Old English: A to Le online*, ed. Angus Cameron et al. (Toronto, 2024) <https://doe.artsci.utoronto.ca>; J. Bosworth, *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary, Based on the Manuscript Collections of J. Bosworth, Edited and Enlarged by T. N. Toller; Supplemented by T. N. Toller* (Oxford, 1898) < https://bosworthtoller.com/>; Andy Orchard, ed., *Word-hord: A Lexicon of Old English Verse with a Particular Focus on the Distribution of Nominal and Adjectival Compounds*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 2022) <https://clasp.ell.ox.ac.uk/db-latest/>; Jane Roberts and Christian Kay with Lynne Grundy, *A Thesaurus of Old English* (Glasgow, 2017) < https://oldenglishthesaurus.arts.gla.ac.uk/>.

[83] *Fontes Anglo-Saxonici: World Wide Web Register* <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/fontes/texts>.

[84] C. W. M. Grein, ed., *Sprachschatz der angelsächsischen Dichter; unter Mitwirkung von F. Holthausen; neu hrsg. von J. J. Köhler* (Heidelberg, 1912).

diction in the literary history of Old English, the issue of dating individual poems is fundamental to the arguments. I adapt R. D. Fulk's general chronology of Old English poetry as proposed in his *A History of Old English Metre*, with slight variations.[85] To be more precise, *Genesis A* and *Beowulf* are the earliest among the seven longer narrative poems under investigation; *Exodus* may have been composed sometime after these two, but earlier than Cynewulf; Cynewulf's signed works are written after the biblical poems and *Beowulf*, with *Guthlac B* in roughly the same period or slightly later; lastly, *Andreas* is the latest in the group. Unravelling the rich symbolism and vocabulary of 'ship' in Old English poetry, this thesis elucidates an intricate web of cultural, religious, and literary impacts upon the evolution of poetic ship-imagery.

[85] Fulk, *A History*, pp. 3, 61–2, and 348–9.

Chapter One: Ark-imagery in Genesis A *and* Exodus

Siððan wīde rād wolcnum under
ofer holmes hrinċġ hof sēleste
fōr mid fearme. (*Genesis A* 1392–4a)[1]

('Then the greatest house rode widely under the clouds, across the circle of the ocean, fared with the freight.')

1.1 Introduction

The animated object in the passage above is Noah's Ark, which is described as the greatest house in the world, carrying Noah, his family, and the chosen species as precious goods. Maritime elements, especially 'ship', play substantial roles in the narratives of *Genesis A* and *Exodus*. Whilst the language of Genesis and Exodus in the Vulgate is plain and concise, the Old English versions emphasise the presence and allegorical function of ships. Previous scholarship has generally confined itself to brief discussions on individual sea-terms or expressions, or has redirected its focus toward topics such as the Flood narrative in the two poems, and the sea-battle imagery and the cloud-tent-ship passage in *Exodus*, rather than an overview of ship-symbolism in *Genesis A* and *Exodus*.[2]

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[1] Quotations from *Genesis A* in this thesis are based on Doane, ed., *Genesis A*. See also Daniel Anlezark, ed. and trans., *Old Testament Narratives* (Cambridge, MA, 2011); Colette Stévanovitch, ed., *La Genèse du manuscrit Junius XI de la Bodleienne*, 2 vols (Paris, 1992).

[2] See further St. John, *Genesis Myth*, pp. 172–87; Carl Kears, *MS Junius 11 and its Poetry* (Suffolk, 2023), pp. 34–66 and 102–34; Emma Knowles, 'Rethinking the Red Sea in the Old English *Exodus*', *ES* 104 (2023), 217–39; Lucas, ed., *Exodus*, 67–8 and 89–97; Sharon Elizabeth Rhodes, 'Turning the Tide: Fathoming the Great Flood in Old English Literature' (PhD dissertation, Univ. of Rochester, 2016), pp. 14–99; Wilcox, 'Cloud-tent-ship'; Sarah Elliott Novacich, 'The Old English *Exodus* and the Read Sea', *Exemplaria* 23 (2011), 53–66; Anlezark, *Water and Fire*, pp. 175–209; Lucas, 'Christian Poetry', esp. 195–203; J. R. Hall, 'Old English *Exodus* and the Sea of Contradiction', *Mediaevalia* 9 (1983), 25–44; Paul F. Fergusson, 'Noah, Abraham, and the Crossing of the Red Sea', *Neophilologus* 65 (1981), 282–7; J. R. Hall, '*Niwe flodas*: Old English *Exodus* 362', *N&Q* 22 (1975), 243–4; John F. Vickrey, '*Exodus* and the Battle in the Sea', *Traditio* 28 (1972), 119–40; Earl, 'Christian Traditions'; Francis Lee Utley, 'The Flood Narrative in the Junius Manuscript and in Baltic Literature', *Studies in Old English Literature in Honor of Arthur G. Brodeur*, ed. Stanley B. Greenfield (Eugene, OR, 1963), pp. 207–26. On wordplay involving seafaring diction in *Exodus*, see Weiskott, 'Puns', esp. 196–208.

Here, I focus on the image of the Ark in *Genesis A* (1285–1554) and two passages containing ship-symbolism in *Exodus* (75–107 and 362–79) to illustrate the commonalities as well as differences between relevant details in the two Old English poems and their sources, which include the Vulgate, early medieval Christian exegetical writings, and Germanic poetic tradition. Specifically, I contend that the two Christian narrative poems not only demonstrate substantial textual parallels in nautical expressions but also suggest the *Exodus*-poet's indebtedness to *Genesis A*.

1.2 *Genesis A*

The most descriptive biblical passage about the Ark (Latin *arca*) is Genesis VI.14–16. Here God commands Noah to build a massive Ark out of squared lumber and pitch. In God's design, the Ark is to be three hundred cubits long, fifty cubits wide, and thirty cubits tall, with a door, a window, small cabins, and three decks:

> Fac tibi **arcam de lignis leuigatis**. Mansiunculas in arca facies et bitumine linies intrinsecus et extrinsecus. Et sic facies eam: trecentorum cubitorum erit longitudo arcae, quinquaginta cubitorum latitudo, et triginta cubitorum altitudo illius. Fenestram in arca facies, et in cubito consummabis summitatem eius, ostium autem arcae pones ex latere; deorsum, cenacula et tristega facies in ea.
>
> ('Make yourself **an Ark of squared wood**. Make small rooms in the Ark and coat it with pitch inside and out. And this is how you will make it: the length of the Ark shall be three hundred cubits, the width fifty cubits, and the height thirty cubits. You shall make a window in the Ark, and finish its top in a cubit, and you shall set the door of the Ark in the side; below, you shall make lower, middle, and the third storeys in it.')

The Ark (*arca*) is mentioned in Genesis VI.11–IV.19 twenty-eight times, and *arca* is the

only term used throughout the Latin text, mostly in prepositional phrases indicating space such as 'in arcam' ('into the Ark') and 'ex arca' ('out of the Ark'), with only a few exceptions. Throughout the narrative, only three short phrases pertain to the motions of the Ark: 'et **eleuauerunt** arcam in sublime a terra' ('and [the waters] **elevated** the Ark high above the earth', Genesis VII.17), 'porro arca **ferebatur** super aquas' ('and the Ark **was carried** over the waters', Genesis VII.18), and '**requieuit**que arca' ('and the Ark **rested**', Genesis VIII.4). Only in the last sentence does the Ark become the subject of an active verb in the sense that it 'rested' upon the mountains of Ararat. Generally, there are no other descriptive adjectives or short phrases for the Ark in Genesis, except in the quoted paragraph above. Genesis VI.14 particularly specifies the wooden quality of the Ark: 'fac tibi arcam de **lignis leuigatis**' ('make yourself an Ark of **squared wood**').

By contrast, the poet of *Genesis A* employs traditional poetic devices such as variation (as in *Cædmon's Hymn*, which contains several appellations of God within nine lines) and envelope-patterning (or ring-structure, where the first and last components of a text, or part of a text echo each other; see below), and has an expanded seafaring narrative and a much richer vocabulary for Noah, the Ark, and its voyage in the Flood.[3] Noah, who is often compared to Christ by medieval exegetes, now takes on the role of navigating the Ark in *Genesis A*.[4] The Vulgate eulogises Noah as 'uir iustus atque perfectus' ('a just and perfect man', Genesis VI.9). Bede (*c*. 672–735)

[3] See further Battles, 'Art of the *scop*', esp. 76–7, 174–6, and 201–2. For a brief introduction to the envelope-pattern, see Catherine A.M. Clarke, 'Envelope Pattern and Ring Structure', *The Encyclopedia of Medieval Literature in Britain*, ed. Siân Echard and Robert Rouse (Chichester, 2017).

[4] On examples of Noah-Christ comparison by authors such as John Chrysostom, see Daniélou, *From Shadows to Reality*, p. 101.

interprets the role of Noah as 'praesul arcae' ('leader of the Ark') in his commentary.[5] The poet of *Genesis A* employs simple maritime diction, saying that Noah is 'forð-weard sċipes' ('captain of the ship', 1436b) and 'flot-manna frēa' ('lord of float-men', 1475a). Besides the verbal presentation of Noah as the skipper of the Ark and leader of seafarers, the poet adds to the brief biblical account of the Ark, and presents the vessel as the greatest ship on earth.

As well as describing the Ark as a 'ship', the poet addresses the vessel as a *ċist* ('chest') in the sea, a *hūs* ('house') on the waves, a *fæsten* ('fortress') made of wood, and a *bord* ('board') in the water. Some of the appellations never occur again in surviving texts. Why does the poet of *Genesis A* employ such peculiar, varied phraseology for the Ark? What details are added to the poetic rendition? What are the specific and significant differences between the Ark in the Vulgate and in the Old English *Genesis A*? What are the poet's inspirations and sources? In this section, I argue that the image of the Ark in *Genesis A* represents a successful example of an Old English poet's fusion of Latin Christian exegetical materials and Germanic heroic vocabulary, potentially offering inspiration for subsequent generations of Old English poets (see Chapters Two, Three, and Four).

In the first sub-section, I categorise the poet's varied diction for Noah's Ark into two basic groups: simplexes and compounds, and analyse the poet's idiosyncratic expressions for the Ark. Then, I focus on passages that demonstrate the poet's

[5] For the Latin text, see C. W. Jones, ed., *Bedae Venerabilis Opera Pars II Opera exegetica 1.1. Libri quatuor in principium Genesis usque ad nativitatem Isaac et eiectionem Ismahelis adnotationum*, CCSL 118A (Turnhout, 1967), p. 115.

characterisation of the Ark with the chosen diction for ships and seafaring, and compare the Old English rendition with the Vulgate. This section reveals the poet's inclination for maritime images in both Latin Christian literature and Germanic heroic traditions.

1.2.1 The poet's nautical vocabulary

Compared with the Vulgate, the poet of *Genesis A* shows a predilection for varied seafaring diction. As perhaps the earliest poem of the group of texts in question, *Genesis A* displays a cluster of characteristic terms for the Ark that occur only or mainly in this poem; it also shares with later poems some rare nautical expressions.

There are seven simplexes for the Ark in *Genesis A*, which can be further divided into three smaller clusters. First are three 'common' terms for 'ship', with the first two being largely poetic: the homographic and polysemic simplex *fær* (1307a, 1323b, 1394b, 1419a, and 1544a), the purely poetic term *lid* (1332a, 1410b, and 1479a) and the common word *sċip* (1302b, 1306b, 1391b, 1417a, and 1436b). The meaning of *fær* as 'vessel', 'ship' is limited to poetry, mainly in *Genesis A*, when it specifically signifies Noah's Ark.[6] Elsewhere in verse, the meaning of 'vessel' is found only in *Beowulf* 33b, denoting Scyld's funeral-ship (see Chapter Two). In *The Metrical Calendar* (previously called *The Menologium*) 18a and 167a it refers to the 'coming' of certain months, and in *Metre 31* (of the Alfredian *Metres of Boethius*) 4a *fær* means 'gait'.[7] This simplex

[6] *DOE*, **s.v.** '*fær*', definition 3: 'in poetry: means of transport; vessel, ship (mainly in *Genesis A*, ref. to Noah's Ark)'; *G-K*, **s.v.** '*fær*': 'vehiculum, nauis'; See further Dennis Cronan, 'Poetic Words, Conservatism and the Dating of Old English Poetry', *ASE* 33 (2004), 23–50, at 25, 27–8, and 45.

[7] *WH*, '*fær*', which excludes 1419a, but adds 2380a in the calculation. However, the word-form 'fære' (2380a) is quite doubtful, and both two recent editors, Anlezark and Doane, suggest readings other than 'the Ark'. Doane, ed., *Genesis A*, p. 379; Anlezark, ed. and trans., *Old Testament Narratives*, p. 165.

mainly denotes movements such as ‘journey’ and ‘departure’ in prose. It seems to have a common Germanic origin, cognate with Old Icelandic *far* (‘ship’; ‘journey’; ‘track’; found in both prose and verse), and it does not appear to have been originally restricted to poetic usage.[8] The application of *fær* as ‘ship’ is limited to *Genesis A* and *Beowulf*, potentially implying a special relationship.[9]

One polysemic term *earc* (‘the Ark’, 1313b, 1333a, 1354b, 1357a, 1366a, 1389a, 1403b, 1423a, 1450a, 1461b, and 1488a) is a calque for Latin *arca* (‘chest’, ‘coffin’, ‘the Ark’; mainly in prose). It appears around one hundred and forty times in the corpus, mainly referring to either Noah’s Ark or the Ark of Covenant, as in *Genesis A*, *Psalm 131* (of the *Paris Psalter*) 8.2a, and *Elene* 399a; occasionally it refers to ‘chest’, ‘coffin’, as in *Riddle 59* [61] 2a.[10]

The Ark is also presented by three non-nautical terms: *cofa* (its meaning as ‘the Ark’ is found only in 1464b; primarily for ‘coffer’, ‘enclosed place’; prosaic), *hof* (‘the Ark’, 1316b, 1345b, 1393b, and 1489a; primarily for ‘house’), and *hūs* (‘the Ark’, 1442b; prosaic).[11] The simplex *cofa* appears nineteen times overall, including three times in verse, with reference to ‘chamber’ in *Riddle 61* [63] 4a and *Psalm 104* 26.3a. The third simplex, *hof*, appears frequently in verse, around forty-five times in the corpus.

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[8] Cronan, ‘Poetic Words’, p. 28.
[9] Cronan, ‘Poetic Words’, pp. 25 and 27–8.
[10] The first fifty *Psalms* in the *Paris Psalter* appear in prose form, whilst the rest are composed in verse (therefore titled the *Metrical Psalms*). Patrick P. O’Neill suggests the ninth century as the possible composition date for the Old English *Psalms*. Patrick P. O’Neill, ed. and trans., *Old English Psalms* (London, 2016), at xv. Malcolm Godden and Susan Irvine propose 890–950 for the translation and adaptation of Boethius’s *Consolation of Philosophy* into Old English. Godden and Irvine, ed. and trans., *The Old English Boethius: An Edition of the Old English Versions of Boethius’s De consolatione philosophiae*, 2 vols (Oxford, 2009), I, pp. 150–1. On chronology that includes *The Metres* and Cynewulf, see further Fulk, *A History*, pp. 3, 61, and 348.
[11] On the manuscript form ‘fære’ (1394b) as either ‘ship’ or ‘fear’, see Doane, ed., *Genesis A*, p. 333. In 1380a *hof* means ‘building’, when the Flood destroys the buildings in the world. See further Orchard, ‘Fresh Terror’, pp. 132–3.

The last simplex, *hūs*, with approximately two thousand occurrences, mostly means 'house', 'building'. What is noteworthy is that *hūs* has extended, metaphorical meanings in religious contexts: 'church building', the Temple, Heaven, or 'mind'.[12] In addition, the same simplex subsequently forms two *-hūs*-compounds as their second elements to signify the Ark in *Genesis A*.

The second group consist of nine rare compounds, with seven of them unique to *Genesis A*. These compounds fall into four sub-categories based on the dominant image each of the second elements in the compounds can evoke: 'chest', 'house', 'fortress', and 'board'. First is the unique compound *mere-**ċist*** ('sea-**chest**', 1317a). The second sub-category includes four unique compounds with first elements meaning 'sea' and second elements denoting 'house': *ġeofon-**hūs*** ('sea-**house**', 1321a), *mere-**hūs*** ('sea-**house**', 1303a and 1364a), *holm-**ærn*** ('sea-**house**', 1422b), and *sund-**reċed*** ('sea-**building**', 1335b). The simplex *ærn* occurs nine times in prose and three times in verse, including *Beowulf* 2225a and *Exodus* 216b; *reċed* is found twenty-six uses in poetry and once in a gloss, glossing 'triclinio' ('dining room'). The third group includes two *-fæsten*-compounds with first elements meaning 'wood', 'plank': ***þell**-fæsten* ('**plank**-fastness', '**plank**-fortress', 1482a; unique) and ***wudu**-fæsten* ('**wood**-fastness', '**wooden**-fortress', 1312a; six occurrences; four times in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*; hereafter *ASC*).[13] The comparison of the Ark to a 'wooden-fortress' is reminiscent of

[12] *DOE* does not include the meaning of the Ark in the entry, but the context in *Genesis A* clearly points to this interpretation.

[13] The rare compound *wudu-fæsten* describes the city of Durham as a wooden fortress in a shorter poem *Durham* 6a, which is dated to the early twelfth century. For a summary of scholarly opinions on dating *Durham*, see Helen Appleton, 'The Old English *Durham* and the Cult of Cuthbert', *JEGP* 115 (2016), 346–69, at 346. The same compound is used in military contexts in *ASC*; its uses in MSS A, C, and D are preserved in different versions of the same military event, the camping of King Alfred's army in a safe site surrounded by woods and water in case of the Vikings' attack (year 893 in MS A, 894 in MSS C and D); in MS E *wudu-fæsten* denotes the wooden stronghold of

the description of Augustine of Hippo (354–430) in *De Civitate Dei* ('About the City of God') XV.26, who states that the Ark represents the City of God, and is saved by the wood-of-the-Cross.[14] In the last sub-category are two compounds contributing to the physical description of a ship's board or plank, with *wǣġ* as the first element: *wǣġ-**bord*** ('wave-**board**', 1340a, unique), and *wǣġ-**þel*** ('wave-**plank**', 1358a, 1446a, and 1496a; once in *Andreas* 1711a).[15] An adjectival compound as a modifier for the Ark, *næġled-**bord*** ('with nailed **ship planks**') occurs in 1418b and 1433b, and elsewhere in *Riddle 56* [58] 5a.[16] All terms mentioned above clearly refer to the materiality of the Ark as a wooden object. Altogether, these four basic meanings (the chest, the house, the wooden fortress, and the ship's wooden board) have deep roots in etymology (*arca* as 'chest') and ecclesiastical typology (the Ark as the prefiguration of the Church and as a symbol of the City of God), and stress the material aspects of the Ark with Old English words for 'wooden board' or 'plank'.[17]

Apart from prosodic concerns (most ship-terms alliterate in their lines), the variety of ship-terms in 1285–1554 reveal an Old English poet's sense of an audience of diverse knowledge backgrounds. The simple calque *earc* might have seemed opaque to those who did not have a prior knowledge of Latin and the Bible. As a result, when the poet

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the Britons by the River Thames, who fought with the Roman army. None of the examples listed here refer to 'ship'.

[14] The Latin text reads: 'procul dubio figura est peregrinantis in hoc saeculo ciuitatis Dei, hoc est ecclesiae, quae fit salua per lignum, in quo pependit mediator Dei et hominum, homo Christus Iesus' ('[the Ark] is undoubtedly a figure of the City of God, that is, of the Church, which, as it is travelling in this world, is saved by the wood [the Cross] on which hung the mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ'), in B. Dombart and A. Kalb, ed., *Sancti Aurelii Augustini De civitate dei libri XI-XXII*, CCSL 48 (Turnhout, 1955), p. 493.

[15] Cf. *ġeofon* ('sea'; purely poetic; twice in *Exodus*, four times in *Beowulf*, twice in *Elene*, and nine times in *Andreas*).

[16] Cf. *næġled-cnear* ('nailed vessel') in *Brunanburh* 53b. Cf. an Old Saxon compound *neglit-skipu* ('nailed-ship') in *Hêliand* 1186a. See further Thier, *Sea Terms*, pp. 86–8.

[17] On the Ark as archetype of the Church, see Catherine E. Karkov, *Text and Picture in Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge, 2001), p. 90. On the importance of the wood of the Ark in association with the Cross, see Daniélou, *Primitive Christian Symbols*, pp. 68 and 93; Hugo Rahner, 'Das Schiff aus Holz', *ZKTh* 67 (1943), 1–21.

first introduces the Ark, he uses perhaps the commonest term for 'ship': *sċip* (1302b). Not until the sixth reference to the Ark does the poet use the term *earc* (1313b). Through traditional ship-terms, the concept of the Ark as a large vessel is clearly established to the audience. All ship-terms that appear before 1313b are of Germanic origin: '**sċip** […] **mere-hūs** miċel […] on **sċipes** bōsme ('in the **ship's** bosom') […] **fær** […] **wudu-**fæsten […] earc'. This poetic technique of variation by using existing, familiar terms prior to unfamiliar or polysemic terms is often called 'specifying apposition', and is commonly employed in Old English poems such as *Beowulf* (see especially Chapter Two).[18] They are provided when the poet needs to reiterate certain important themes with peculiar diction that might be unfamiliar to the audience.

A similarly strategic introduction of a Latin nautical term to the English audience can be found in the Latin work of Bede. In *Expositio Actuum Apostolorum* ('Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles') XXVII.15, when Bede introduces the appearance and function of an *ancora* (its only calque in Germanic languages before *c.* 1000 is Old English *ancor*), he compares *ancora* to the millstones on ships used in the British Isles (see Chapter Three).[19] Further textual evidence of stone-made anchors can be found in *Riddle 14* [16] 9b–10a, which states that an anchor can be secured by stones: 'stānas mōton fæste ġehabban' ('stones can hold [me, the personified anchor] fast'). Anchor-symbolism can be found in the Vulgate, such as Hebrews VI.19.[20] Many Greek

[18] See further Fred C. Robinson, *Beowulf and the Appositive Style* (Knoxville, TN, 1985); Brodeur, *Art of Beowulf*, esp. 247–53. A term Robinson used earlier is 'clarifying variation'. See Fred C. Robinson, 'Two Aspects of Variation in Old English Poetry', *Old English Poetry: Essays on Style*, ed. Daniel G. Calder (Berkeley, CA, 1979), pp. 127–45, at 131, 132, 134, 137, and 138.

[19] For the text, see M. L. W. Lainster and D. Hurst, ed., *Bedae Venerabilis Opera Pars II Opera exegetica 4. Expositio Actuum apostolorum. Retractatio in Actus apostolorum. Nomina regionum atque locorum de Actibus apostolorum. In epistulas VII catholicas*, CCSL 121 (Turnhout, 1983), pp. 93–4. On *ancor*, see Introduction.

[20] Paul states 'quam sicut anchoram habemus animae tutam ac firmam' ('which [referring to 'spem' 'hope' in

and Latin Christian authors draw from this nautical imagery, such as Clement of Alexandria (*c.* 150–*c.* 215).[21] Saint Ambrose (*c.* 339–397) mentions maritime metaphors including anchor and anchoring quite frequently in his treatises and letters.[22]

As Genesis frequently mentions *arca* as a background ('in arcam' 'into the Ark', 'ex arca' 'out of the Ark'), so the poet of *Genesis A* puts ship-terms in collocation with prepositions, such as 'earce innan' ('inside the Ark', 1366b), 'on þæt sund-reċed' ('in that sea-building', 1335b), 'on wǣġ-þæl' ('onto the wave-plank', 1358a and 1446a) and 'of wǣġ-þæle' ('from the wave-plank', 1496a). Sometimes the poet refers to the deck or roof of the vessel to signify the locations where characters' actions take place: 'earce bordum' ('outside the Ark's deck', 1354b), 'under earce bord' ('under the Ark's deck', 1333a and 1357a), 'ofer næġled-bord' ('over the nailed ship planks', 1433b), 'under hrōf' ('under the roof', 1360b) or 'under bord' ('under the board [of ship]', 1369), 'under salwed bord' ('under the dark board', 1481a), and 'under wǣġ-bord' (1340a). There are two uncommon expressions that are linked with the image of 'bosom', 'enclosure' of a ship: '**on lides bōsme**' ('**in the ship's bosom**', 1332a and 1410b; elsewhere only in *Brunanburh* 27a, a poem preserved in the entry for 937 in MSS A, B, C, and D of *ASC*) and '**on sċipes bōsme**' (1306b; elsewhere only in *Exodus* 375a, and *Beowulf* 35a and 896a; see 1.3 below).[23] The simplex *bōsm* can mean 'the hold of a

Hebrews VI.18] we have as an anchor of the soul, both secure and steadfast'). On anchor-symbolism, see further Daniélou, *Primitive Christian Symbols*, pp. 61, 64, and 67; Hugo Rahner, *Greek Myths and Christian Mystery*, trans. Brian Battershaw (London, 1963), pp. 347 and 375.

[21] Cf. *Παιδαγωγός* ('Pedagogue') II.ii.22.4 and III.xi.59.2; *Προτρεπτικὸς πρὸς Ἕλληνας* ('Exhortation to the Greeks') XII.4. For the Greek texts, see M. Marcovich, ed., *Clementis Alexandrini Paedagogus* (Leiden, 2002), pp. 81 and 182; M. Marcovich, ed., *Clementis Alexandrini Protrepticus* (Leiden, 1995), p. 171.

[22] Cf. *De interpellatione Iob et Dauid* ('The Prayer of Job and David') VI.ix.34; *De Iacob et vita beata* ('Jacob and the Happy Life') II.vi.28. In Karl Schinkel, ed., *Ambrosius, De Iacob, De Ioseph, De patriarchis, De fuga saeculi, De interpellatione Iob et David, De apologia David, Apologia David altera, De Helia et ieiunio, De Nabuthae, De Tobia*, CSEL 32.2 (Prague, 1897), pp. 48 and 294.

[23] For an edition of *Brunanburh*, see Alistair Campbell, ed., *The Battle of Brunanburh* (London, 1938). The text of

ship', and it can also figuratively describe the sea, heaven, and the Virgin Mary.[24] Similarly, the other two compounds which mean 'bosom' and are often closely associated with 'ship', *bearm* (see 1.3 and Chapter Two) and *fæþm* (see Chapters Three and Four), can be read as engaging with the Christian idea of 'the embrace of God'.[25] To emphasise the beginning and end of a particular time-frame, the poet of *Genesis A* repeats the same nautical expression at the significant moments of the narrative. This phrase, 'on wǣġ-þæl', first occurs in 1358a, where Noah and his family enter onto the Ark before the coming of the Flood:

> Him þā Nōe ġewāt, swā hine nerġend hēt,
> **under earce bord** eaforan lǣdan,
> weras **on wǣġ-þæl** and heora wīf somed […] (1356–8)
>
> ('Then Noah departed, as the Saviour had commanded him, to lead his offspring and their wives together, men **onto the wave-board**, **under the Ark's deck** […]')

The phrase '**on wǣġ-þæl**' (1358a) functions not only as a variation for '**under earce bord**' (1357a) but also as a signifier that marks the beginning of Noah's voyages. Noah and his family climb onto the 'wave-board', into the chambers under the ship-deck (cf. Genesis VII.13). When the Flood subsides, Noah sends out a raven in search of any exposed land 'on wǣġ-þæl' (cf. Genesis VIII.7). The releasing of the raven is Noah's first attempt to seek new land in the postdiluvian world:

> Nōe tealde þæt hē on nēod hine,
> ġif hē on ðǣre lāde land ne funde,
> ofer sīd wæter sēċan wolde
> **on wǣġ-þele**. (1443–6a)

Exodus quoted in the thesis is taken from Lucas, ed., *Exodus*.

[24] *DOE*, **s.v.** '*bōsm*'; *G-K*, **s.v.** '*bōsm*': 'sinus, gremium, pectus, interna'.

[25] *DOE*, **s.v.** '*bearm*' (which can mean either 'bosom' or 'lap'); '*fæþm*'; *G-K*, **s.v.** '*bearm*': 'gremium, sinus'; '*fæðm*', definitions 4: 'Schutz und Schirm' and 5: 'sinus, gremium; interna, pectus'.

> ('Noah determined that he [Noah] in his need, if he [the raven] did not find a shore on that journey, would carry on **in a wave-plank** seeking over wide water.')

According to Genesis VIII.7, the raven flies from one place to another, not returning to the Ark. The Old English poet goes further, reminding the audience of the danger of secular enticements by stating that 'sē fēonde' ('this enemy', 1447a) stops on the floating bodies of the dead on the sea-surface (1446b–8; also an obvious allusion to the 'beasts of battle' type-scene; see Chapter Three).[26] Noah then makes two more attempts by letting out a dove, and the second attempt results in the dove bringing back an olive branch (cf. Genesis VIII.8–11). At the third attempt, the dove does not come back (cf. Genesis VIII.12–17). Then at God's command, Noah leads the disembarkation, after the decrease of the Flood (cf. Genesis VIII.18–19), as indicated by the same phrase 'of wæġ-þele' (1496a):

> Hē fremede swā and Frēan hȳrde,
> **stāh** ofer **strēam-weall**, swā him sēo **stefn** bebēad,
> lustum miċlum, and ālædde þā
> **of wæġ-þele** wrāðra lāfe. (1493–6)

> ('He did so and obeyed the Lord; he **ascended** over the **stream-wall** with great joy, as the **voice** had commanded him, and then led out **from the wave-plank** the remnants of the quarrelsome ones.')

By the same collocation '**on**' or '**of**' + **wæġ-þæl**', the poet of *Genesis A* brings together the three crucial moments during the Ark's voyage in the Flood: the embarkation, the search, and the disembarkation. The same phrase 'on the wave-plank' thus forms an envelope-pattern, as do repeated nautical phrases in the case of Beowulf's sea-voyages

[26] The raven in Genesis is commonly interpreted by medieval commentators as a symbol of the apostates, who leave the Church because they are attracted by the temptations of the world. See Doane, ed., *Genesis A*, pp. 337–8.

to Denmark (see Chapter Two).[27]

The maritime compound *strēam-weall* ('stream-wall', i.e. 'ship's wooden side', 1494a) only appears in *Genesis A*. Two other terms signify a close association with ships and embarkation (or disembarkation), the verb *stīgan* ('climb', 'ascend') and the homographic simplex *stefn* ('voice', 1494b; 'ship's prow or stern' in seafaring contexts such as *Beowulf* 212a).[28] The collocation of *stīgan* with 'ofer strēam-weall' suggests Noah's movement onto the Ark's upper structure, from which he directs the creatures onboard to descend onto the earth. More significantly, the poet's use of *stefn* creates a deliberate overlap between the aural and the spatial: while the immediate sense refers to the divine 'voice' by which God instructs Noah, this homographic word-form also evokes the 'prow' or 'stern' of a ship in maritime contexts. The passage may suggest Noah's position at the forward part of the Ark, where he acts as the mediator of divine authority, and commands the passengers on the vessel. This association between the prow of a ship and the exercise of divine instruction also anticipates the similar positioning of Christ as commander aboard the ship in Andreas (see Chapter Four).

In *Genesis A* 1285–1554, the poet employs sixteen different terms that denote Noah's Ark, including seven unique compounds, suggesting a high level of artistry.

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[27] On the envelope-patterning in *Genesis A*, see Colette Stévanovitch, 'Envelope Patterns in *Genesis A* and *B*', *Neophilologus* 80 (1996), 465–78. On the pattern used in other Old English poems, see Michael Fox, *Following the Formula in Beowulf, Örvar-Odds Saga, and Tolkien* (Cham, 2020), esp. 22–6; Ward Parks, 'Ring Structure and Narrative Embedding in Homer and *Beowulf*', *NM* 88 (1988), 237–51; Anderson, *Cynewulf*, pp. 46–8 and 55–6; John D. Niles, 'Ring Composition and the Structure of *Beowulf*', *PMLA* 94 (1979), 924–35; Walter H. Beale, 'Rhetoric in the Old English Verse-Paragraph', *NM* 80 (1979), 133–42; H. Ward Tonsfeldt, 'Ring Structure in *Beowulf*', *Neophilologus* 61 (1977), 443–52; Constance B. Hieatt, 'Envelope Patterns and the Structure of *Beowulf*', *ESC* 1 (1975), 249–65; John Leyerle, 'The Interlace Structure of *Beowulf*', *UTQ* 37 (1967), 1–17; Adrien Bonjour, *The Digressions in Beowulf* (Oxford, 1950), pp. 9–10; Adeline Courtney Bartlett, *The Larger Rhetorical Patterns in Anglo-Saxon Poetry* (New York, NY, 1935), pp. 9–29.

[28] On *stīgan* (along with *astīgan* and *ġestīgan*) and ships, see Maring, 'Two Ships Crossing', pp. 249–51. Another example of Old English poets' wordplay on *stefn* is in *Rood*, where *stefn* primarily denotes 'stem' (30a) and 'voice' (71b) and echoes the image of the ship (91a). See Li, 'Revisiting OE *holm-wudu*', p. 518.

These appellations are noteworthy in terms of formation and collocation. Through the employment of apposition, the poet skilfully familiarises the audience with the concept of *earc*, and combines Christian nautical and biblical terminology with vernacular poetic convention.

1.2.2 Envisioning the Ark

The poet's selections of ship-terms in *Genesis A* highlights the image of Noah's Ark, rather than that of an ordinary ship. Sometimes the Ark is represented as a 'coffin', 'chest', 'house', and 'fortress', but behind these appellations is the emphasis on the wooden quality of the Ark. In addition, peculiar to this poem are two images tied to the Ark: '(sea-)chest' (*cofa* and *mere-ċist*) and 'wood-fortress' (*þell-fæsten* and *wudu-fæsten*). The comparison of the Ark to a '(sea-)house' (*hof*, *hūs*, *ġeofon-hūs*, *holm-ærn*, *mere-hūs*, and *sund-reċed*) is also unique to *Genesis A*. Elsewhere in the corpus, only one unique term contains the ship-house comparison, *ȳþ-hof* ('wave-house', referring to Elene's fleet) in *Elene* 252a (see Chapter Three).

The poet's stress on the physicality of the Ark may have derived from the exegetical tradition. Some early Christian writers describe the Ark as a vessel made from perfect, incorruptible wood.[29] Bede goes further, and links the image of the Ark with the idea of the perfection of Christians and the Church. In his commentary on Genesis, Bede states that Noah is just and perfect ('iustus autem atque perfectus'), alluding to the Christians who are to be made perfected through the life-voyage ('esse

[29] Daniélou, *From Shadows to Reality*, at 90.

possunt in hac pereginatione perfecti'), that the one hundred years of building the Ark epitomises the perfect end of the establishment of the Church ('atque ad finem perfectum deducitur'), and that the planks of the Ark symbolise believers of the Christian faith ('ligna de quibus facta est fideles sanctae ecclesiae mystice denuntiant').[30] Another factor is the close connection between the Cross and the Ark (and the Ship-of-the-Church) by early medieval exegetes such as Justin Martyr (*c*. 90–165).[31] Bede further expounds on this association, emphasising the Ark's length of three hundred cubits as a symbol of the Tau sign (Greek letter T), which resembles the shape of the Cross.[32] In addition, Bede comments that the 'squared wood' ('arcam de lignis leuigatis', Genesis VI.14) epitomises stability, which plays an important role in the perfection of the chosen ('ad eandem electorum perfectionem aeque respicit'), because the square shape enables an object to resist turbulence and overturn.[33]

In the earliest depiction of the Ark in *Genesis A* 1302b–13 (cf. Genesis VI.14–16; see above), the poet uses six different ship-terms, including two compounds sharing the essential meaning of a secure building, including 'house' or 'fortress'. Seeing the prevalence of sins in the unclean world, God decides to punish the sinful, and commands Noah to build an Ark for the chosen:

Ongyn þē **sċip** wyrċan,
mere-hūs miċel. On þǣm þū monegum sċealt

[30] For the text, see Jones, ed., *Bedae Venerabilis Opera Pars II Opera exegetica 1.1*, pp. 102–3 and 105.
[31] On Cross-ship symbolism, see Rahner, *Greek Myths*, at xxi, 45, 46–68, 75, 81–3, 86, 373–5, 377–8, and 380–3; Daniélou, *From Shadows to Reality*, pp. 91 and 98–100. See also Maring, 'Two Ships Crossing', pp. 242–3; Sandra McEntire, 'The Devotional Context of the Cross before A.D. 1000', *Old English Literature: Critical Essays*, ed. R. M. Liuzza (London, 2002), pp. 392–403, at 397–8. On the significance of the Cross in early medieval England in general, see Catherine E. Karkov, Sarah Larratt Keefer, and Karen Louise Jolly, ed., *The Place of the Cross in Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, 2006).
[32] Jones, ed., *Bedae Venerabilis Opera Pars II Opera exegetica 1.1*, p. 106. On the Tau sign, see Daniélou, *Primitive Christian Symbols*, pp. 136–46.
[33] Jones, ed., *Bedae Venerabilis Opera Pars II Opera exegetica 1.1*, p. 105.

reste ġerȳman, and rihte setl
ǣlcum æfter āĝenum eorðan tūdre.
Ġe**sċȳ**pe **sċy**lfan **on sċipes bōsme**.
Þū þæt **fær** ġewyrc fīftiġes wīd,
ðrīttiġes hēah and þreo-hund lang
eln-ġemeta, and wið ȳða ġewyrc
ġefēg fæste. Þǣr sċeall fæsl wesan
cwic-lifiġendra cynna ġehwilċes
on þæt **wudu-fæsten** wōcor ġelǣded
eorðan tūdres; **earc** sċeall þȳ **māre**. (1302b–13)

('Begin to build yourself a **ship**, a **great sea-house**. You shall make room in it as a resting-place for many, and a proper place for each of earth's offspring according to their own nature. Make a shelf **in the ship's bosom**. You shall make that **vessel** fifty cubits wide, thirty high and three hundred long by ell-measure, and make its joints fast against the waves. There shall the seed of every kind of living creature be led into that **wooden-fortress**, the increase of earth's progeny; the **Ark** shall be **larger** [than any other ships] thereby.')

Together with the recurring ship-terms, the short sentence with double alliteration (1306) solidifies the image of the Ark as a 'ship': 'ġe**sċȳ**pe **sċy**lfan on **sċi**pes bōsme' ('make a shelf in the ship's bosom').[34] Though some details from Genesis VI.14–16 such as the door, the window, and the three storeys are left out in the Old English poet's retelling, the measurements for the size of the vessel are as precise as in the Bible, perhaps out of the poet's concern to remind the audience of the Ark's shape.[35]

To the Old English poet, the most important feature of the Ark is its magnitude as the largest construction ever made, which is not explicitly stated in the Vulgate. The poet reiterates that the Ark is a 'mere-hūs miċel' (1303a), a giant wooden-fortress that can shelter a multitude. The statement that the Ark shall be larger at the end of the

[34] On types of alliterations, see Andy Orchard, 'Artful Alliteration in Anglo-Saxon Song and Story', *Anglia* 113 (1995), 422–63, at 431 and 433.
[35] Doane, ed., *Genesis A*, p. 327.

passage creates an envelope-pattern concerning God's divine instruction: '**onġyn** þe **sċip wyrċan**, **mere-hūs miċel** […] **earc sċeall** þȳ **māre**' ('**begin** to **build** yourself a **ship**, a **great sea-house** […] the **Ark shall** be **larger'**).

One characteristic of the ship-terms in *Genesis A* is their frequent collocation with an adjective meaning 'great', 'magnificent' (often a superlative), including *miċel* ('big'), *mǣst* ('greatest'), *hēah* ('high', 'lofty'), and *sēlest* ('best').[36] From God's instruction to build an Ark (1302b) to the disembarkation (1496), the poet employs seven such collocations. Four compounds are included, namely 'ġeofon-hūsa **mæst**' (1321a), 'holm-ærna **mæst**' (1422b), 'mere-hūs **miċel**' (1303a), '**miċele** mere-ċieste' (1317a), along with three simplexes: '**hēah** hof' (1489a), 'fær **sēleste**' (1419a), and 'hof **sēleste**' (1393b).[37] Indeed, the comparison of Noah's Ark in *Genesis A* might have inspired the *Exodus*-poet, who creates an idiosyncratic expression 'māðm-horda mæst' ('greatest treasure-hoard') in *Exodus* 368a when he refers to Noah's Ark (see 1.3 below).

After God's command for the Ark to be built (1302b–13; cf. Genesis VI.14–16), the poet distorts the biblical narrative sequence. Before resuming the narration of God's first covenant with Noah (1327–55; cf. Genesis VI.17–21), the poet mentions that Noah begins to build the Ark (cf. Genesis VI.22), and that God oversees the long building process of this vessel:

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[36] There are several occasions in *Genesis A* where the manuscript readings give *hēan* ('low') but the contexts mean *hēah* ('high', 'lofty'), such as 'hēan lyft' ('lofty air', 1401b). See *Doane*, ed., *Genesis A*, p. 432. The term *hēan* often has derogative undertones including 'wretched' (as in *Genesis A* 1595a), 'in humble condition' (as in 866a, 921b, and 2275b), and 'miserable' (as in 879a). I emend the manuscript form to *hēah* in the relevant quotations when *hēan* refers to 'high', 'lofty', 'magnificent'.

[37] The manuscript reading in 1489a is *hēan*. However, given the context (God asks Noah and his family to disembark the *hēan* house, i.e. the Ark), the meaning of *hēan* does not fit into the plot, and therefore the emended form *hēah* is used in my quotation. See Anlezark's translation for 1489a as 'high building' in *Old Testament Narratives*, p. 107. The whole half-line 'of þǣm hēan hofe' is repeated verbally in 2458a, where this adjective 'high' describes the house of Lot and hints at the state of being protected by God, when the evil people in Sodom want to harm the angels in the house.

Ġeseah þā ymb wintra worn wǣrfæst metod
ġeofon-hūsa mæst ġearo **h**līfigean,
innan and ūtan eorðan līme
ġefæstnod wið **fl**ōde, **fær** Nōes,
þȳ **sēlestan**. Þæt is **syndriġ cynn**;
symle bið þȳ **h**eardra þe **h**it **h**rēoh wæter,
swearte **sǣ-s**trēamas **s**wīðor bēatað. (1320–6)

('Then, for many winters, the covenant-keeping Ruler saw **the greatest of sea-houses** towering readily, with earth's pitch inside and out, **fastened** against the **flood**, the **ship** of Noah, the **best** of its kind. That is a **distinct kind**; it always becomes tougher when the raging water, the dark sea-streams, beat upon it more fiercely.')

The passage above exemplifies how the poet combines both Christian concepts with vernacular poetic convention in the portrayal of the Ark. In this seven-line passage, the Ark's special quality of being the 'greatest' ship or architecture in the world is mentioned three times: '**ġeofon-hūsa mæst**' (1321a), '**þȳ sēlestan**' ('**best of its kind**', 1324a), and '**syndriġ cynn**' ('**distinct kind**', 1324b; a possible wordplay on *sund* 'sea'). With the verb *ġefæstnian* ('fasten', 'secure'), the poet presents the Ark as a ship with planks made watertight with pitch for later in the Flood despite the fierce attacks of the water.

This image of the caulked Ark gestures towards the common patristic image of a ship moored by anchor of faith and hope (such as in *Christ B*; see Chapter Three). In 1322b, the poet revisits a detail in Genesis VI.14 missing in *Genesis A* 1302b–13, 'eorðan līme' ('the pitch of earth').[38] Bede, in his commentary on Genesis VI.14, regards pitch as an embodiment of the eternal, unshakable, perfect Christian faith

[38] On the exegesis of pitch as 'faith', 'virtue', see Doane, ed., *Genesis A*, pp. 329–30; Lucas, 'Loyalty and Obedience', pp. 121 and 133–4; Utley, 'Flood Narrative', pp. 209–10. For counter-arguments, see Wright, '*Genesis A* ad litteram', 133–6; Boyd, 'Doctrine and Criticism', pp. 233–4.

('constantia fidei […] uniuersa perficitur […] fidei in omnibus uirtute muniuntur', 'constancy of faith […] the whole is perfected […] faith is secured in all things by strength').[39] Here the *Genesis A*-poet seems to draw from Bede's interpretation by explaining that the Ark, the greatest architecture on earth, is 'secured' by pitch in the Flood.

Another similarity between *Genesis A* and Bede's commentary is the Ark's capability of becoming 'heardra' ('tougher', 'harder', 1325a) when facing greater, stormy waves in the Flood, a quality emphasised by Bede in his commentary on Genesis VI.13–14.[40] The poet underscores the steadfastness of the Ark and the ferocity of the Flood by sound effects commonly found in Old English verse.[41] He applies sibilant phrases such as '**s**wearte **s**ǣ-**s**trēamas **s**wīðor' ('dark sea-streams fiercely', 1326), and frequently employs fricative words which alliterate in five out of seven lines, especially in the last four lines on the sea-voyage (the glottal *h*, 1321 and 1325; the labiodental *f*, 1323; and the lingua-alveolar *s*, 1324 and 1326). Using the onomatopoeia of fricative sounds and sibilance, the poet brings to life a vivid description of the Ark sailing through the stormy seas.

The same emphasis on the image of the Ark as the 'greatest' craft in the earth is restated in the poet's description of the Ark's actual sea-voyage in 1386b–1406, where

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[39] Jones, ed., *Bedae Venerabilis Opera Pars II Opera exegetica 1.1*, p. 106.
[40] Jones, ed., *Bedae Venerabilis Opera Pars II Opera exegetica 1.1*, p. 104.
[41] On sound effects in nautical terms, see Rebecca Shores, 'Sounds of Salvation: Nautical Noise in Old English and Anglo-Latin Literature', *Meanings of Water*, pp. 109–26; Orchard, 'Word Made Flesh', pp. 299 and 302. On sound effects in Old English poems, see, for instance, Matthew D. Coker, *Supernatural Speakers in Old English Verse: Poetic and Spiritual Power in Early Medieval Society* (Leeds, 2023); Orchard, 'Word Made Flesh', pp. 300–302; Neil Rhodes and Chris Jones, 'Sound Effects: The Oral/Aural Dimensions of Literature in English: Introduction', *OT* 24 (2009), 281–92; Chris Jones, 'Where Now the Harp? Listening for the Sounds of Old English Verse, from *Beowulf* to the Twentieth Century', *OT* 24 (2009), 485–502; Robert P. Creed, 'The *Beowulf*-poet: Master of Sound-Patterning', *Oral Traditional Literature: A Festschrift for Albert Bates Lord*, ed. John Miles Foley (Columbus, OH, 1981), pp. 194–216.

the poet uses ‘hof sēleste’ (1393) and four appositions in simplex form. The poet starts with ‘earce’ and ends with the same word in the sequence, presenting a loose chiastic structure in the paragraph with ‘hof sēleste’ in the central position: ‘**earce**’ (1389a) — ‘**sċip**’ (1391b) — ‘**hof sēleste**’ (1393) — ‘**fær**’ (1394b) — ‘**earce bord**’ (1403b). The outer tier is signalled by the same Latin-derived term *earc* specifically denoting the Ark; the second tier has two ordinary simplexes for ‘ship’, *sċip* and *fær*; and finally, the third and central tier demonstrates the poet’s unique way of addressing the Ark, ‘hof sēleste’, the greatest house.

Chiasmus also appears in 1417–24a, when the Ark stops at the mountain-top in Armenia, after a hundred and fifty days of floating in the Flood. The poet employs four nominal compounds for the Ark, including one unique compound with the basic meaning of ‘house’, *holm-ærn* (1422b), and three simplexes. The verb *ahebban* (‘lift up’, 1419b) which appears in the passage in the third-person past tense as ‘ā**hōf**’, perhaps signals sound-play with the unusual ship-term ***hof***:

> Fōr **fāmiġ sċip** .l. and .c.
> nihta under roderum, siððan **næġled-bord**,
> **fær sēleste**, flōd up **āhōf**,
> oðþæt rīm-ġetæl rēðre þrāge
> daĝa forðġewāt. Ðā on dūnum ġesæt
> **hēah** mid **hlæste** **holm-ærna mǣst**,
> **earc Nōes**, þe Armēnia
> hātene sindon. (1417–24a)

(‘The **foamy ship** fared one hundred and fifty nights under the skies, after the flood **lifted** the **greatest ship** with **nailed planks**, until the number-tally of the fierce season of days passed forth. Then, **high** with its **load**, the **greatest of sea-houses**, the **Ark** of Noah, settled upon the hills, which are called Armenia.’)

The chiastic sequence thus develops as ‘fāmiġ sċip’ (1417a) — ‘fær sēleste’ (1419a) — ‘holm-ærna mæst’ (1423b) — ‘earc Nōes’ (1424a). Two simplexes for the Ark, *sċip* and *earc*, occur at the outer tier of the chiastic order; they also signify the beginning and the end of the passage. Two collocations meaning ‘greatest vessel’, ‘fær sēleste’ and ‘holm-ærna mæst’, are in the inner tier of the structure. In addition to two superlatives meaning ‘the greatest’, *sēlest* and *mæst*, there are two descriptive adjectives for the Ark, *fāmiġ* (‘foamy’, 1417a) and *nægled-bord* (1418b and 1433b). The simplex *fāmiġ* and all three *fāmiġ*-compounds are closely associated with sea or ships in poems including *Exodus*, *Beowulf*, Cynewulf’s *Elene*, and *Andreas*, as we shall see in later chapters. The simplex *bord* (‘shield’, ‘side [of a ship]’, ‘plank’, ‘gunwale’) in the latter compound is polysemic, and three out of eight *-bord*-compounds are related to ships.[42] Of the three *-bord*-compounds, two are preserved in *Genesis A*.

The portrayal of the Ark as a ‘vessel with nailed planks’ (*holm-ærn*; *nægled-bord*) in *Genesis A* is clearly modelled on real-world clinker-built ships (see Introduction). Similar wording denoting ‘nailed planks’ can be found in other Old English poems. A third occurrence of *nægled-bord* appears in *Riddle 56* [58] 5a as ‘naca nægled-bord’ (‘ship with nailed planks’). The adjective *nægled* (six occurrences; see Introduction) is attested in *Riddle 17* [19] 5b, which clearly points to ships.[43] The Old English *Maxims I* reveals what a ship in early medieval England should typically look like (see Introduction): ‘sċip sċeal ġenægled’ (‘a ship should be nailed’, 92a), with the cognate

[42] Cf. *fāmiġ-**bord***; *nægled-**bord***; *wǣg-**bord***.
[43] Williamson, ed., *Riddles*, pp. 189–90.

ġenæġled ('nailed'; elsewhere found only in prose).[44] A unique nominal compound *næġled-cnear* specifically denotes Viking clinker-built ships in *Brunanburh* 53b, as an example of the possible influence of the Norse language in later Old English.[45] The second element is a rare simplex *cnear* ('ship' in *Brunanburh* 35a; elsewhere once in a gloss, glossing 'nauis actuaria', 'light, swift vessel'), which is closely associated with Old Norse *knǫrr* ('ship', 'cargo-ship').[46] The specific reference to the invaders' vessels as *cnear* in a poetic sense of 'warship' in *Brunanburh* reveals the poet's artful strategy of downgrading the enemies by binding such specified, Norse-originated ship-terms with the invaders' cultural identity (see Conclusion).

In addition to descriptive details such as 'foamy', 'world's greatest', and 'with nailed planks', the Ark is further portrayed as 'hēah mid hlæste' ('high with load', 1422a). The simplex *hlæst* ('cargo', 'load') is attested only six times in the corpus, including *Genesis A* 1422a and 1515a and *Beowulf* 52b (Scyld's ship-funeral; see Chapter Two). The 'cargo' on the Ark, as the poet of *Genesis A* clearly designates, not only stands for the survivors of the Flood, but also symbolises the souls of Christians

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[44] *B-T*, **s.v.** '*ge-nægled*'; *G-K*, **s.v.** '*ge-nægled*': 'clauatus'. In prose *ġenæġled* customarily collocates with 'on rōde', referring to the Crucifixion, such as in the Old English homilies and the Lindisfarne and Ruthwell Gospels of Saint Matthew (see also Introduction). For the examples, see Peter Clemoes, ed., *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The First Series, Text* (Oxford, 1997), p. 219; Donald G. Scragg, ed., *The Vercelli Homilies and Related Texts* (Oxford, 1992), p. 33; Joyce Bazire and J. E. Cross, ed., *Eleven Old English Rogationtide Homilies*, 2nd ed. (London, 1989), p. 134; Arthur Napier, ed., *Wulfstan: Sammlung der ihm zugeschrieben Homilien nebst Untersuchungen über ihre Echtheit* (Berlin, 1883), p. 230; Skeat, ed., *The Four Gospels*, I, p. 219.

[45] On *cnear* and *knǫrr*, see for instance, Cavill, 'Ships and *Brunanburh*'; Alice Jorgensen, 'Reading Emotion in *The Battle of Brunanburh*', *Neophilologus* 100 (2016), 663–76, at 666; William Sayers, 'The Etymology and Semantics of Old Norse *knǫrr* "Cargo Ship": The Irish and English Evidence', *SS* 68 (1996), 279–90. John D. Niles, 'Skaldic Technique in *Brunanburh*', *SS* 59 (1987), 356–66, at 359–60; Fry, 'Launching Ships'; Campbell, ed., *Brunanburh*, pp. 108–9 and 114.

[46] The ninth-century gloss is found in an eighth-century copy of Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* ('Ecclesiastical History of the English People'), preserved in London, British Library, Cotton MS Tiberius C. ii. For the gloss, see Herbert Dean Meritt, *Old English Glosses: A Collection* (London, 1945), p. 7. The corresponding Latin passage is about Roman general Julius Caesar's expedition to Britain by about eighty transport ships and light vessels ('nauibus circiter onerariis atque actuariis lxxx'). For the text, see Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors, ed., *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford, 1969), p. 20.

on the Ship-of-the-Church prefigured by the Ark. The treasures, as the poet specifies, are safely stored in the bosom of the Ark (1306b).[47]

Earlier, in 1345–6a, through the mouth of God, the poet explicitly states that 'ġewīt þū nū mid hīwum on þæt hof gangan, gāsta werode' ('now go walking with the family [of Noah] into that house, a group of souls'). The expression of the 'gāsta werode' entering the *hof* is a metaphor for human souls entering the *hof*, the building of the Church. Correspondingly, after employing 'hēah mid hlæste', the poet enunciates that the Ark is a treasure-hoard: 'þæs þe hēah hlioðo horde onfēngon' ('when the high slopes [sea-waves] received the hoard [the Ark]', 1439). Then *Exodus*-poet seems to have drawn from the same image of a high, towering treasure-ship, when addressing the Ark as the greatest treasure-hoard ('māðm-horda mæst') in *Exodus* 368a (see 1.3 below).

The Ark in *Genesis A* can thus be seen as an amalgam of several traditional images in Christian-Latin and Germanic poetic conventions. The poet's selection of ship-terms manifests strong biblical and exegetical influence. Aside from that influence, the poetic strategies, collocations, and compounding in *Genesis A* demonstrate discernible traces of a Germanic heroic tradition. By employing conventional poetic techniques such as repetition, variation, chiasmus, and envelope-patterning, the poet delineates the image of the Ark with typical features of a contemporary North-Sea ship but at the same time infuses the image with Christian connotations. In the following section, I focus on ship-symbolism in *Exodus*, and discuss that poet's potential debt to *Genesis A*.

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[47] On the theme of treasure, see further Faulkner, *Wealth and the Material World in the Old English Alfredian Corpus* (Woodbridge, 2023); Faulkner, 'Death and Treasure'; Faulkner, 'The Language of Wealth in Old English Literature: From the Conversion to Alfred' (DPhil dissertation, Univ. of Oxford, 2019); Elizabeth M. Tyler, 'The Collocation of Words for Treasure in Old English Verse' (unpubl. PhD dissertation, Univ. of Oxford, 1994).

1.3 *Exodus*

As one of the earliest extant Old English poems, *Exodus* has attracted scholarly attention because of the number of poetic compounds in its 590 lines (which appear comparatively even more densely than those in *Beowulf*), and the poet's fusion of Germanic and biblical themes and styles, such as life-journey, 'beasts of battle' type-scene, treasure, Baptism, and salvation (see Introduction). The poem is based on the accounts of Moses leading the Israelites crossing the Red Sea and the drowning of the Egyptian army in Exodus XIII.18–XIV.31, to which the poet adds many details that are not found in the Vulgate.

Specifically, several themes of spiritual seafaring have been added to *Exodus*. There are two passages that contain ship-symbolism in the poem, which will be scrutinised in detail below. Unlike the other Old English poems discussed here, *Exodus* does not contain many terms for 'ship'. In *Exodus* 75–107, when the Israelites are encamped near the city of Etham, at the edge of the wilderness, a miracle shows up. The poet inserts an image of a figurative ship, which symbolises Christian salvation through the Ship-of-the-Church on a life-voyage.[48] The poet mentions the sail, the rope, and other components of a ship, but no explicit wording for 'ship', neither simplex nor compound, occurs in the passage. The only direct term in the whole poem is the simplex *sċip* in *Exodus* 375a, in a second passage where the poet mentions Noah and the Ark. The *Exodus*-poet interposes a short passage on Noah's story in 362–79 as recorded in

[48] See further Lucas, ed., *Exodus*, pp. 67–8 and 89–97; Weiskott, 'Puns', esp. 196–208; Wilcox, 'Cloud-tent-ship'; Lucas, 'Christian Poetry', esp. 195–203.

Genesis, which is termed by some scholars the Noah Digression or Episode.[49] Yet the nautical motif is made manifest by the poet's varied seafaring phraseology. I argue that there exists a greater affinity between *Exodus* and *Genesis A* than generally supposed, and that the *Exodus*-poet establishes two images of 'ship', one based on general Christian ship-symbolism, the other specifically on Noah's Ark in *Genesis A*, to strengthen the Christian idea of ship of salvation in *Exodus*.

In successive sub-sections, I explore the *Exodus*-poet's portrayal of the Israelites and Noah as sea-voyagers, an image opposite to the land-dwelling, evil Egyptians. Then, I analyse the image of the figurative ship in *Exodus* 75–107, and scrutinise the poet's wordplay on polysemic or homographic words that indicate the presence of a ship. Finally, I examine the contextual significance of the Noah Episode and compare the depictions of the Ark in *Exodus* and *Genesis A*.

1.3.1 The Israelites and Noah

Despite the scarcity of ship-terms, the *Exodus*-poet hints at a visual picture of sailing on a figurative vessel by establishing a contrasting pair of images. According to the Bible, the Israelites cross the Red Sea on dry land, because the sea is miraculously divided (cf. Exodus XIV.21–2). Strikingly, however, the *Exodus*-poet addresses the escaping Israelites as brave 'seafarers', as if they cross the Red Sea onboard ships: *sǣ-*

[49] For relevant discussions, see Lucas, *Exodus*, 67–8; Daniel Anlezark, 'Old English Biblical and Devotional Poetry', *A Companion to Medieval Poetry*, ed. Corinne Saunders (London, 2010), pp. 101–24, at 109–11; Anlezark, *Water and Fire*, pp. 195–210; Hugh Fogarty, '*Exodus* 362–446 and the Book of Wisdom', *N&Q* 42 (1995), 4–7; Fergusson, 'Noah, Abraham'; Stanley R. Hauer, 'The Patriarchal Digression in the Old English *Exodus*, Lines 362–446', *SP* 78 (1981), 77–90; Hall, '*Niwe flodas*'; Robert T. Farrell, 'A Reading of the OE. *Exodus*', *RES* 20 (1969), 401–17, at 402–6 and 410; Utley, 'Flood Narrative', pp. 208–9.

mann (‘seafarer’, 105b and 479a), and *sǣ-wīcing* (‘seafarer’, 333a; unique). This type of appellation is opposed to *land-man* (‘land-man’, ‘native people’, 179a; found four times, three of them in prose), a compound exclusively denoting the Egyptian army. The compound *land-man* is probably a translation of the phrase ‘populus terrae’ (‘people of the land’) in the Vulgate, but the *Exodus*-poet goes beyond the neutral meaning of ‘populus terrae’, and hints at a hierarchy between the two groups: the sea-people are those who are able to sail in the spiritual ship-of-life, a means of Christian salvation, whilst the land-people, the Egyptians who do not believe in God, cannot board the salvific vessel.[50] The compound *sǣ-mann* is attested eight times in verse, twice as a name, and in MSS C and E of *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos* (‘The Sermon of the Wolf to the English’) by Wulfstan the Homilist (died 1023).[51] No such contrast is found in its uses in *Beowulf* (329a and 2954a) or *The Rune Poem* (45a), but a much later poem *Maldon*, which includes *sǣ-mann* (29b, 38a, and 278b), conveys the same contrast between two sides in a battle, the land-people and sea-people, albeit with reverse connotations. There, the ‘land-man’ stands for the righteous side, the English army, whilst the term ‘sea-man’ refers to the Viking invaders who raided England on their ships (see Conclusion).[52]

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[50] On the land-man and sea-man contrast, see Peter J. Lucas, ‘*Landmenn* and the Destruction of the Egyptian Idols: Two Notes on the Old English *Exodus*’, *N&Q* 37 (1990), 139–41, at 139–40; Nicolas Howe, *Migration and Mythmaking in Anglo-Saxon England* (New Haven, CT, 1989), pp. 92–3. The ship-of-life is a common theme in Anglo-Latin and Old English literature. Cf. Alcuin’s *Versus de Patribus Regibus et Sanctis Euboricensis Ecclesiae* (‘Poem on the Bishops, Kings, and Saints of the Church of York’) 1379–87. For an edition, see Peter Godman, ed., *Alcuin: The Bishops, Kings, and Saints of York* (Oxford, 1982). Cf. *Prose 22* of the Old English *Boethius*, Godden and Irvine, ed. and trans., *The Old English Boethius*, I, pp. 484–9.

[51] For occurrences in *Sermo Lupi*, see Dorothy Bethurum, ed., *The Homilies of Wulfstan* (Oxford, 1957), pp. 264 and 271.

[52] Mark Griffith, ed., *The Battle of Maldon: A New Critical Edition* (Liverpool, 2024), pp. 148–9. See also George Clark, ‘Naming the Enemy and Identifying Ourselves: The Warriors of *Maldon*’, *Essays on Aesthetics and Medieval Literature in Honor of Howell Chickering*, ed. John M. Hill, Bonnie Wheeler, and R. F. Yeager (Toronto, 2014), pp. 35–52. For counter-arguments, see also Leonard Neidorf, ‘*II Æthelred* and the Politics of *The Battle of Maldon*’, *JEGP* 111 (2012), 451–73, esp. 459 and 471–2; Sara M. Pons-Sanz, ‘Norse-derived Terms and Structures in *The*

Another simplex for 'seafarer' used in *Exodus* is *flota* (133a, 223a, and 331b). This term is largely prosaic, with around forty-five occurrences in prose, and thirteen in verse. It denotes 'ship' in *Beowulf* 210b, 218a, 294b, and 301b, *Andreas* 397b, and *Maxims I* 95b, but is exclusively used to address an invading army as 'sailors' in a derogatory sense in two post-Alfredian battle-poems. In *Brunanburh* 32a, *flota* describes the military ally of the Scots, Vikings, and Britons, alongside the otherwise unattested *sċip-flota* ('ship-floater', 11b; unique; see Conclusion). In *Maldon* 72b and 227a, *flota* is used of the Vikings.[53] Though the two battle-poems are composed in traditional style and diction, the undertones of the 'sailors' are fundamentally different from the same image in earlier poems. Both *sǣ-mann* and *flota* denote the righteous side in *Exodus*. As a result of the historical reality of seaborne Viking depredations, they refer to the Viking invaders near the end of the Old English period. In a similar vein, the eleventh-century *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos* employs *sǣ-mann* to signify 'pirate', along with *flot-mann* ('float-man', 'sailor'). The second term is largely prosaic, attested fourteen times in prose, and occurs in only one poem, *Genesis A* 1475a for the righteous Noah.

By contrast, the image of 'seafarer' is mainly positive in *Exodus*. As for Noah, the *Exodus*-poet confirms that this biblical figure is a 'snottor sǣ-lēoda' ('wise sea-prince', 374a), a designation that echoes the renowned story about Noah's Ark in Genesis and his roles as 'forð-weard sċipes' (*Genesis A* 1436b) and 'flot-manna frēa' (1475a). Other

Battle of Maldon', *JEGP* 107 (2008), pp. 421–44. See further C. E. Fell, 'Old English *wicing*: A Question of Semantics', *PBA* 72 (1986), 295–316.

[53] The Battle of Brunanburh took place in 937, and Maldon in 991, but the composition periods of the two poems are not certain. Both poems follow traditional style and diction, but they differ greatly in metrical patterns. See further Fulk, *A History*, pp. 61, 277, and 415–18. Griffith dates *Maldon* between 991 and mid-eleventh century. Griffith, ed., *Maldon*, p. 26.

examples in *Exodus* that manifest the poet's purposeful allusion to nautical images in *Genesis A* include Noah, the Ark, and the Flood. The image of the Ark has long been closely associated with the Ship-of-the-Church motif in Christian writings (see 1.2 above). The association between *sǣ-lida* ('sea-traveller') and a salvific voyage, as in *Exodus* 374a, is also attested in *Andreas* 471a and 500a, referring to Christ disguised as a skipper and Christians on a spiritual voyage respectively (see Chapter Four).[54] The seafarers are often portrayed as pious pilgrims in exiles in religious poems including *The Seafarer* and *The Wanderer*.[55] The Israelites 'sailors' are 'fūs on forð-weġ' ('eager for the journey', 129a and 243a), despite the urgent situation. The poet mentions 'journey' many times to strengthen the theme of life-voyage, or *līf-weġ* ('life-way', 104b; elsewhere attested only in *Guthlac A* 768a and in a prose work of Wulfstan). The same journey leads to different destinies on both sides, for the land-dwelling Egyptians and the spiritual seafarers, the Israelites.

Though at first the journey across the Red Sea seems to be a *bealu-sīþ* ('dangerous journey', 5a; elsewhere attested in *The Seafarer* 28b) because of the evil Egyptians' exploitation and oppression upon the Israelites, the *Exodus*-poet soon implies that the exile is, in a unique compound, a *lāþ-sīþ* ('hateful journey', 'death', 44a) and a 'lēofes

[54] See further Patrizia Lendinara, 'Old English *lida* and the Sailors of the North Sea', *FG* 9 (2017), 79–107, esp. 81, 84–5, and 90–1. The poetic compound *sǣ-lida* is found elsewhere in *Maldon* 45a and 286a; it also appears as a personal name Sælide in a late eleventh-century charter of Essex about a person's possession of lands, where the name is recorded as one of the witnesses. The charter is preserved in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS 155. For the text of the charter, see Cyril Roy Hart, ed., *The Early Charters of Essex*, 2nd ed. (Leicester, 1971), p. 44.

[55] On the theme of 'peregrinatio pro amore Dei' ('pilgrimage for the love for God') in *The Seafarer* and *The Wanderer*, see Sebastian L. Sobecki, 'The Interpretation of *The Seafarer* — A Re-examination of the Pilgrimage Theory', *Neophilologus* 92 (2008), 127–39; Dorothy Whitelock, 'The Interpretation of *The Seafarer*', *The Early Cultures of North-west Europe: H. M. Chadwick Memorial Studies*, ed. Cyril Fox and Bruce Dickins (Cambridge, 1950), pp. 259–72, at 271. See further E. G. Stanley, 'Old English Poetic Diction and the Interpretation of *The Wanderer*, *The Seafarer* and *The Penitent's Prayer*', *Anglia* 73 (1955), 413–66; Ida Gordon, 'Traditional Themes in *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer*', *RES* 5 (1954), 1–13.

sīðes' ('beloved journey', 53b). It is ominous to the Egyptians but auspicious to the Israelites because the Israelites would gain rebirth, but the Egyptians would meet death.[56] It is a *spild-sīþ* ('destructive journey', 153a; unique), because the land-men, the Egyptians, initially seek to slaughter the Israelites along the journey, but ironically, they later get drowned in the sea. The journey leads to their own destruction.

1.3.2 The cloud-tent-ship metaphor

Before describing the death of the Egyptians, the *Exodus*-poet invents a new image in the plot, a figurative ship in the sky. The poet first introduces the pillar of the cloud as in Exodus XIII.21–2 and XIV.19–20 and 24:

> Hæfde weder-wolcen wīdum fæðmum
> eorðan and up-rodor efene ġedǣled,
> lǣdde lēod-werod, līġ-fȳr ādranc,
> hāte heofon-torht. (75–8a)
>
> ('The weather-cloud, with its wide embrace, had divided earth and the high heaven evenly; it led the band of people, the flame-fire shone, hot and heaven-bright.')

The cloud-fire-pillar is God's creation, which, according to Exodus, drifts in the sky during the day, and is ablaze during the night, so that the Egyptians can walk day and night (cf. Exodus XIII.21–2). When the Egyptian army approaches, the pillar goes behind the Israelites' campsite, with one side dark (towards the Egyptians) and one side bright, so the Israelites are safely separated (cf. Exodus XIV.19–20). The *Exodus*-poet then adds the image of a virtual ship:

> Dæġ-sċealdes hlēo

[56] On the duel meaning of *lāþ-sīþ* (the death-journey of Egyptians' first-born babies and the departure of the Israelites; both types of journeys are repellent to the Egyptians), see Lucas, ed., *Exodus*, pp. 80–1.

wand ofer wolcnum; hæfde wītiġ God
sunnan sīð-fæt **seġle** ofertolden,
swā þā **mæst-rāpas** men ne cūðon,
ne ðā **seġl-rōde** ġesēon meahton,
eorð-būende ealle cræfte,
hū **āfæstnod** wæs **feld-hūsa** mǣst,
siððan hē mid wuldre ġeweorðode
þēoden-holde. (79b–87a)

('The protection of day-shield moved over the clouds; the wise God had the sun's journey covered over with a **sail**, such that no one knew the **mast-ropes**, nor could earth-dwellers, with all their skill, see how the **sail-yard**, the greatest of **field-houses** [tents] was **made fast**, after He honoured those loyal to God with glory.')

In this passage, by using synecdoche, the *Exodus*-poet mentions three terms that directly refer to different components of a ship: *seġl* (81a; mainly prosaic), *seġl-rōd* ('sail-rod', 'sailyard', 83a), and *mæst-rāp* ('mast-rope', 'halyard', 82a); the last two compounds are only found here. The poet plays on the polysemic simplex *seġl*, which would normally mean 'sail', as of a ship, or 'veil', 'curtain', as of the Ark of the Covenant in the Tabernacle (cf. Exodus XXVI.31 and XXXVI.35).[57] Besides the image of a ship, by employing a verb *āfæstnian* ('secure', 'fasten', 85a), the poet describes the status of the ship as being tied up fast.

After the cluster of seafaring terms, the *Exodus*-poet employs a further unique compound, *feld-hūs* ('field-house', 'tent', 85b) to denote the figurative ship, explicitly associating this image with the Tabernacle and therefore stressing the commonality of the Ship-of-the-Church and the Tent of the Church (the Tabernacle).[58] The poet describes the invisible ship as a 'field-house', not only because this image alludes both

[57] Lucas, ed., *Exodus*, pp. 89–90.
[58] Lucas, ed., *Exodus*, p. 90.

to the camping of the Israelites in the desert and to the Tabernacle, as Peter J. Lucas points out, but also because this compound itself calls to mind another dwelling in the Bible, Noah's Ark. The seemingly abrupt change of images from the ship to the tent in this passage may thus be interpreted differently. Two surviving compounds, *ġeofon-hūs* and *mere-hūs*, specifically denote Noah's Ark in *Genesis A*. Symbolically, the Ark is another important Old Testament image that represents spiritual salvation, and the depiction of the Ark as a 'sea-house' in *Genesis A* evokes its symbolic significance as a shelter for mankind, an emblem of the Christian Church in the sea of this life (see 1.2 above). The *Exodus*-poet may also consider this connection with the Ark as 'sea-house' in *Genesis A* when addressing the figurative ship as 'field-house' in *Exodus*. It is called a 'field-house' because this unseen vessel, a shelter for the Israelites, is safely anchored on high, above the campsite of the 'eorð-būende' ('earth-dwellers' in *Exodus* 84a). It is a salvific ship above the field of the earth.

The earth-dwellers realise that God has set up a *wīċ-steall* ('camping-ground', 92b, another unique compound) for them there, as they see the holy sails billowing in the sky. The vivid description of the sails towering (*hlīfian*, 'stand up', 'tower above', 89a), floating among the white clouds naturally summons up the image of a towering ship floating in the sea:

> Fyrd eall ġeseah
> hū þǣr **hlīfedon** **hāliġe seġlas**,
> lyft-wundor lēoht; lēode onḡēton,
> duĝoð Israhēla, þæt þǣr Drihten cwōm
> weroda Drihten, wīċ-steal metan. (88b–92)

('The army all saw how the **holy sails towered** there, a light, sky-wonder; the people perceived, the host of Israel, that there

God, the Lord of Hosts, had come to establish the camp-site.')

Here again the poet employs synecdoche. The bright 'hāliġe seġlas' ('holy sails', 89b) stand for the holy ship, which is then made visible to the earth-dwellers, a *lyft-wundor* ('sky-wonder', 90a, another unique compound) that moves in motion. In the following passage, the poet hints again at the presence of a ship. The poet turns to the image of the cloud-fire-pillar in Exodus:

> Him beforan foran fȳr and wolcen
> in beorht-rodor, **bēamas** twēġen,
> þāra ǣghwæðer efn-ġedǣlde
> hēah-þeġnunga hālġes gāstes,
> dēor-mōdra sīð daĝum and nihtum.
> Þā iċ on morgen ġefræġn mōdes rōfan
> hebban here-bȳman hlūdan **stefnum**,
> wuldres wōman. (93–100a)

> ('Fire and cloud advanced before them into the bright-sky, the two **beams**, each of them equally divided the high-services of the Holy Spirit, guiding the journey of the brave-spirited by day and by night. I have heard that then the brave-hearted ones raised the war-trumpet with loud **voices** in the morning, the sound of glory.')

The *Exodus*-poet alludes to the medieval exegetic tradition, linking the cloud-fire pillar with the Holy Spirit and the Tabernacle.[59] The polysemic simplex *bēam* ('beam', 94b) can denote 'tree' or 'the Holy Cross' in certain contexts.[60] While there is only one pillar of cloud by day and one pillar of fire by night in Exodus XIII.21–2, the *Exodus*-poet doubles the number, which, according to Lucas, symbolises the shape of the Cross made of two beams.[61] Three out of four compounded word-forms in this passage are unique:

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[59] Lucas, ed., *Exodus*, p. 91. See further Daniélou, *From Shadows to Reality*, pp. 181–2.
[60] Cf. 'wuldres bēam' ('Tree of Glory', referring to the Cross of Christ in Crucifixion) in *Exodus* 568a, *Rood* 97b, and *Elene* 217b; *siġe-bēam* ('victory-beam', 'the Cross'), found nine times in the corpus, including six times in *Elene* and twice in *Rood*.
[61] Lucas, ed., *Exodus*, p. 91.

beorht-rodor (‘bright-sky’, 94a), *efen-ġedǣlan* (‘divide equally’, 95b), and *hēah-þēnung* (‘high-service’, 96a). Once again, the poet emphasises the journey motif by describing the Israelites’ exile as ‘dēor-mōdra sīð’ (‘journey of the brave-spirited’, 97a). In the following lines, the poet further underscores the notion of the Cross as the holy sail that controls and navigates the figurative ship and the Israelites:

> Forð ġesāwon
> līfes lāt-þēow **līf-weġ** metan;
> **seġl** sīðe wēold, **sǣ-menn** æfter
> foron **flōd-weġe**. Folc wæs on **sālum**,
> hlūd herġes ċyrm. Heofon-bēacen āstāh […]
> (103b–7)

> (‘Then they saw the guide of life [God] measure the **way of life** before them; the **sail** controlled the journey, and the **sea-men** travelled along the **way of flood**. The army was **happy**, loud the troop’s clamour. The heaven-beacon **ascended** […]’)

The poet uses three phrases to integrate three Christian notions together: the ‘**līfes** lāt-þēow’ (‘guide of life’, 104a) paired and alliterating with ***līf***-*weġ* (104b), and ‘līf-**weġ**’ paired and echoing ‘flōd-**weġe**’ (‘flood-way’, ‘ocean’, 106a; elsewhere in *The Seafarer* 52a and *Riddle 34* [36] 9a). The ‘guide of life’ stands for God, the ‘life-way’ the life-voyage, the ‘flood-way’ the sea of this life. Additionally, the poet further enhances this association by a concatenation of sea-terms here, following the same strategies as before: *seġl*, a synecdoche for ‘ship’; *sīþ*, echoing *līf-weġ* and *flōd-weġ* in the previous and following lines respectively; *sǣ-mann*, as contrasting with the doomed *land-man* (the Egyptians); and finally, ‘flood-way’, foreshadowing the Israelites’ crossing of the Red Sea and the drowning of the Egyptians. Moreover, the sail is said to have controlled or governed the journey (‘seġl sīðe wēold’, 105a) of the ‘sea-men’. This innovative

usage of the sail contradicts the familiar figure. The ship itself, or more precisely the Ship-of-the-Church, guides the way of life for the Christians, under divine instruction.[62]

The *Exodus*-poet shows a fondness for paronomasia, or punning wordplay.[63] Besides the clustering of nautical terms and the apparent references to the Ship-of-the-Church and life-voyage, there are some words that blur the primary meanings and nautical connotations through the poet's wordplay upon polysemic, homographic, or morphographically similar terms. Apart from *stefn* ('voice', 99b), another example is 'folc wæs on sālum' ('the army was happy', 106b), with *sǣl* ('happiness') echoing *sǣlan* ('fasten with a rope', 'moor') and *sāl* ('rope', 'cable') both in sound and in word-form.[64] Furthermore, the *Exodus*-poet effectively utilises verbs relevant to seafaring. In addition to 'seġl sīðe wēold' (105a), the poet employs a verb *astīgan* ('go up', 'climb') in the half-line 'heofon-bēacen āstāh' ('the heaven-beacon ascended', 107b), which frequently describes the action of embarking on ships in the Old English poetic tradition.[65]

Earlier, we have seen how the *Exodus*-poet guides the audience with carefully designed compounding, dense occurrences of sea-terms, and the ship-puzzle for the audience to solve. Indeed, the image of the figurative ship is creatively established on the basis of the poet's adaptation of that of the cloud-pillar from Exodus. The audience must have a reasonable amount of biblical knowledge to fully understand the sudden

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[62] On the Ship-of-the-Church as a medieval patristic commonplace, see Daniélou, *Primitive Christian Symbols*, pp. 58–70. See also Birgitte Munch Thye, 'Early Christian Ship Symbols', *The Ship as Symbol*, pp. 186–96.
[63] On paronomasia in Old English literature, see further Roberta Frank, 'Some Uses of Paronomasia in Old English Scriptural Verse', *Speculum* 47 (1972), 207–26; Robinson, 'Some Uses of Name Meanings in Old English Poetry', *NM* 69 (1968), 161–71; Robinson, 'The Significance of Names in Old English Literature', *Anglia* 86 (1968), 14–58.
[64] *B-T*, **s.v.** '*sál*'; '*sǽl*'; '*sǽlan*'; *G-K*, **s.v.** '*sāl*'; '*sǣl*'; '*sǣlan*'.
[65] Maring, 'Two Ships Crossing', pp. 249–51.

appearance of the ship-symbolism, to enable them to piece together the riddling terms for sail, sail-yard, halyard, and seafaring and find the solution. Though the poet mentions a symbolic ship in the sky yet avoids any direct wording in 75–107, the passage as a whole functions as a foreshadowing of the fates of Israelites and Egyptians later in the poem, akin to the Flood story in Genesis.[66] A clear message is conveyed: the chosen survive on the ship of salvation as a God-given gift, and the faithless are swallowed by the flood-waves through divine punishment.

1.3.3 Verbal echoes of Genesis A

Apart from the cloud-sail-ship, the poet presents a more concrete example of Christian ship-symbolism in the shape of Noah's Ark. As elaborated in 1.2 above, both the Ark and the Flood are important to the ship-symbolism and to story of the Lord's covenants in Genesis. The *Exodus*-poet seems to be aware of this, and inserts a passage about Noah's survival in the Flood in 356–76, before returning to describe the death of the Egyptians in the Red Sea in 447–515.[67] When the Egyptians are about to overtake the Israelites, God works a miracle. The sea which split into water-walls to reveal a dry sea-bottom for the Israelites now falls onto the pursuing Egyptians, and drowns the Egyptian army (447–515):

> Strēamas stōdon, storm up ġewāt
> **hēah tō heofonum**, here-wōpa mæst. (460–1)

('The streams stood still, the storm ascended **high to the**

[66] For example, Arthur G. Brodeur comments that 'this figure of the sail, with its invisible mast, cables, and spars, seems grotesque', in 'A Study of Diction and Style in Three Anglo-Saxon Narrative Poems', *Nordica et Anglica: Studies in Honor of Stefán Einarsson*, ed. Allan H. Orrick (The Hague, 1968), 97–114, at 111.
[67] See further Anlezark, *Water and Fire*, pp. 195–210.

heavens, greatest of battle-screams.')

The *Exodus*-poet creates a Doomsday-like scene in the passage, where the animated sea-waves 'stand' high above the terrified people, the sea-storm is roaring as if it can even reach the heaven, and the Egyptians' desperate yelling of agony becomes the greatest *here-wōp* ('battle-scream', 461b; unique).[68] This dreadful scene is reiterated as 'holm-weall āstāh, mere-strēam mōdiġ' ('the sea-wall ascended, the bold sea-current', 468b–9a). Such a horrific scene of overwhelming flood may evoke for the audience the catastrophic scene of the Flood in Genesis. The phrase 'hēah tō heofonum' ('high to the heavens') in *Exodus* 461a parallels with 'hēah on heofenum' ('high in the heavens') in *Genesis A* 97a, which refers to the seats abandoned by the fallen angels.[69] Immediately after *Exodus* 461, the poet creates a devastating scene of the flood turning into blood, a sign of Last Judgement.[70] As in Genesis, all sinful beings are killed by the merciless power of the flood, albeit in a much more brutal way:[71]

Lāðe ċyrmdon (lyft up ġeswearc)
fæĝum stæfnum, **flōd blōd ġewōd**. (*Exodus* 462–3)

('The loathsome ones cried out [the sky darkened above] with fated voices, **blood pervaded flood**.')

The sky turns hopelessly dark, the doomed Egyptians crying, and the flood reaping lives of the pathetic enemies. The most striking language use in the flood narrative is perhaps that of the three short words in 463b, 'fl**ōd** bl**ōd** ġew**ōd**' ('blood pervaded flood'), all rhyming.[72] Syntactically succinct and metrically harmonious, the three words become

[68] On the allegorical association between the drowning of the Egyptians as the death of sins of Christians in Baptism, see Vickrey, 'Battle in the Sea', p. 125.
[69] On empty seats in heaven in *Genesis A*, see Doane, ed., *Genesis A*, p. 293.
[70] Lucas, ed., *Exodus*, p. 133.
[71] On the connection between blood-flood and the Last Judgement, see Lucas, ed., *Exodus*, p. 132–3.
[72] Cf. 'fl**ōd** bl**ōde** wēol' ('flood boiled with blood') in *Beowulf* 1422a, depicting Grendel's Mere where the heroes find Æschere's head. Orchard, 'Fresh Terror', p. 150; Orchard, 'Artful Alliteration', pp. 439–40.

an ‘outstanding example of internal rhyme’.[73] The collocation of two monosyllabic simplexes, *flōd* (‘flood’) and *blōd* (‘blood’), powerfully enhances the condensed image of the fusion of flood and blood, which can be interpreted in two different ways. The flood is reddened by the blood of the Egyptians because the Egyptians are drowned in the flood; or, the flood devours the Egyptians’ corpses, and sucks their blood. There the Egyptians face ‘mere-dēaða mǣst’ (‘greatest of sea-deaths’, 465a). In *Exodus*, the unique compound *mere-dēaþ* (‘sea-death’) signifies drowning, the spiritual shipwreck of the faithless, a popular theme in medieval Christian writings.[74]

A series of images concerning seafaring manifest the Egyptians’ painful experience of drowning. Even the sand stifles them, making them unable to breathe; their corpses will be buried under the sand in the depths of the sea. Doomed to die, they perish in the cold, salt-water:

> Mæġen wæs on cwealme
> fæste ġefeterod, forðganges nep,
> **searwum āsǣled**. Sand bāsnodon,
> witodre wyrde, hwonne **waðema strēam**,
> **sīn-calda sǣ**, **sealtum ȳðum** [...] (469b–73)
>
> (‘The army was firmly fettered in slaughter, the action of progress was **restrained by weapons**. Sand awaited the fixed fate [of the Egyptians], when the **stream of waves**, the **extremely cold sea**, with **salt waves** […]’)

Here the poetic verb *āsǣlan* (‘fetter’, ‘bind’, 471a) connotes the idea of ‘restrain’, ‘fetter’. Deriving from *sǣlan*, the word primarily denotes the action of ‘fastening something with rope’.[75] Ironically, however, the Egyptians are hindered by their

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[73] Lucas, ed., *Exodus*, p. 43.
[74] On the shipwreck of faith, see Daniélou, *Primitive Christian Symbols*, p. 64; Rahner, *Greek Myths*, pp. 86, 343, 347, 365, 366, 383, and 390.
[75] The verb *sǣlan* contains a metaphoric connotation with the ‘binding of the heart’ in *The Wanderer* 21b.

armour and weapons, the man-killing tools, which become obstacles in the flood rather than life-protecting aids. By contrast, the elect, the Israelites, safely reach their new home, because their belief is firmly bonded with the salvific ship, '**bēamas** twēġen', the Holy Cross. The same term *āsc̄elan* is employed in *Genesis A* 2197a (when God instructs Abraham that he should not fetter his heart with sorrows), and *Elene* 1243a (when the poetic persona of Cynewulf recalls the experience of being fettered by sins). The verb always collocates with gloomy terms and is suggestive of ill omens such as sorrow, sin, and killing. The poetic contexts containing *āsc̄elan* are all didactic in nature. The imagery of 'binding' contains a religious message: one should not falsely bind his or her mind with ill thoughts and evil doing.

At the end of the passage, the poet employs three short phrases depicting the quality and power of the flood: 'waðema **s**trēam, **s**īn-calda **s**æ, **s**ealtum ȳðum' ('stream of waves, the extremely cold sea, with salt waves', 472b–3).[76] The three half-lines alliterate on the sibilant *s*, producing a powerful, sonic effect that mimics the sounds of stormy waves (see above). The first element *sīn* ('extreme', 'perpetual') in the unique compound ***sīn-cald***, might be another potential wordplay upon the term *syn* ('sin'), therefore metaphorically denoting the sinful Egyptians in the Red Sea. The images of 'cold water' and 'salt-water' are two typical maritime expressions in Old English poetic tradition.[77] They often contain hidden moral or religious messages, and will be discussed fully below.

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[76] For *sin-ceald* ('extremely cold', 473a; unique), cf. *sin-cealdu* ('extreme cold'; unique) in *The Phoenix* 17b.

[77] See further Anita R. Riedinger, 'The Old English Formula in Context', *Speculum* 80 (1985), 294–317, esp. 296–7 and 304; Thomas D. Hill, 'The Tropological Context of Heat and Cold Imagery in Anglo-Saxon Poetry', *NM* 69 (1968), 522–32; Vivian Salmon, 'Some Connotations of "Cold" in Old and Middle English', *MLN* 74 (1959), 314–22. On the commonplace motif of extreme coldness as a hellish punishment, see Lucas, ed., *Exodus*, p. 135.

Along with the presence of blood, terror is another thematic concept that the poet frequently draws upon in the plot. Take for instance the pairing of *heolfor* (‘clotted blood’) and the unique compound *blōd-eġesa* (‘blood-terror’) in 477–8. The word *heolfor* is overwhelmingly poetic and is attested twelve times in the corpus, including *Exodus* 450a and 477b. Though there is *blōd-eġesa* among the Israelites when the ‘sailors’ are following them with great effort, the ‘sǣ-manna sīð’ (‘the sea-men’s journey’, 479a) is safe, once God makes the foamy sea-waves ebb away upon the sea-bottom, as a divine judgement (477–87):

> Wæs sēo hǣwene lyft **heolfre** ġeblanden.
> Brim berstende **blōd-eġesan** hwēop,
> **sǣ-manna sīþ**. (477–9a)
>
> (‘The vault of heaven blended with **gore**. With **blood-terror**
> the bursting sea threatened the **sea-men’s journey**.’)

Now even the sky takes on the hue of blood. In the passage is a purely poetic verb *hwōpan* (‘threaten’, seven occurrences, including *Exodus* 82b, 121b, 448b, and 478b), which is also attested in *Genesis A* 2637b. This verb is associated with the idea of divine instruction in *Genesis A*, where God reproaches and threatens Abimelech, king of Gerar, because he unknowingly abducted Abraham’s wife Sarah (cf. Genesis XX.1–18). The story ends with the king’s realisation that Sarah is Abraham’s wife, after which the king sends Sarah back to Abraham, and gives the couple compensation. Akin to the Genesis story, the Crossing of the Red Sea functions as God’s trial of Moses and his people. The sea-turbulence traditionally symbolises secular temptations, and at the same time represents a divine test of faith in patristic writings, which often appears with relevant

nautical notions such as the ship-of-life and shipwreck in patristic writings.[78]

The term *hwōpan* in *Exodus* is endowed with more significance. In three out of four uses of *hwōpan*, the verb collocates with *eġesa* (‘terror’) as symbol of death and judgement: ‘bǣl-eġesan hwēop’ (‘with fire-terror [the fire-pillar] threatened [the Israelites]’, 121b), ‘flōd-eġesa […] dēaðe hwēop’ (‘flood-terror […] with death [the ocean] threatened [the Egyptians]’, 447b–8b), and ‘blōd-eġesan hwēop’ (‘with blood-terror [the sea] threatened [the Israelites]’, 478b).[79] The poet’s aim is to emphasise the *flōd–blōd* connection as above by these coined compounds. The fire-pillar and flood would punish the Israelites who choose to disobey Moses, the servant of God, and annihilate the Egyptian army which turns away from God’s instructions.[80] Terror of this kind is not unfamiliar in *Genesis A*. A similar account of the heavenly flame punishing the faithless in Sodom occurs in *Genesis A* 2540b–62a, where the poet mentions ‘terror’, ‘threat’ three times, twice using unique compounds, *cwealm-þrēa* (‘death-terror’, 2509b), *hēah-þrēa* (‘high-threat’, ‘high-terror’, 2547b), and ‘bryne and brōĝa’ (‘with burning and terror’, 2554a). As for water-terror, the poet of *Genesis A* employs ‘wæteres brōĝan’ (‘terror of the water’ 1395b), where the destructive Flood kills all other living beings but cannot undermine the foundation of the Ark, because God protects it.

As the *Exodus*-poet narrates in 488–500, the handiwork of God strikes down the

[78] For the examples of the worldly sea-storms as God’s trial, see Rahner, *Greek Myths*, pp. 342, 344, 347–8, 352–3, 363–4, 370, 373–5, and 378.
[79] On the *Exodus*-poet’s inclination for using varied unique compounds for ‘fear’, see Orchard, ‘Fresh Terror’. On the relationship between *hwōpan* and the *-eġesa*-compounds in *Exodus*, see esp. 134.
[80] The etymological meaning of Moses is often interpreted by patristic fathers as ‘de aqua acceptus’ (‘taken from water’) or ‘servat domino’ (‘servant of God’). For the examples, see Matthias Thiel, *Grundlagen und Gestalt der Hebräischkenntnisse des frühen Mittelalters* (Spoleto, 1973), p. 361.

Egyptians, as they are chasing the Israelites along the dry sea-bottom. The sea-walls are described as *fāmiġ-bōsma* (494a), another compound only witnessed here.[81] Then the *flōd-eġesa* ('flood-terror', 447b; again, unique to *Exodus*) haunts the Egyptians as a foretaste of their forthcoming destruction. The sea waves which make way for the Israelites, swallow the Egyptians, and take their lives:

> **Flōd fāmgode** (fǣġe crungon),
> laƀu land ġefēol — lyft wæs onhrēred.
> Wicon weall-fæsten, wǣġas burston,
> multon mere-torras […] (482–5a)
>
> ('The **current foamed**, the fated ones collapsed, the sea fell onto the land, the sky was stirred up, the ramparts gave way, the walls burst asunder, the sea-towers dissolved […]')

Aside from the unique compound *mere-torr* ('sea-tower', 'towering sea', 485a), the second compound *weall-fæsten* ('wall-fastness', 'fortress', 283a and 484a) in the passage is attested in *Genesis A* 1058b (the fortress that is named after Enoch, Cain's first son; cf. Genesis IV.17), and later in *Psalm 79* 12.1b (the wall built around the vine from Egypt, which is later taken down; cf. Psalm LXXX.12). In the prose corpus, it appears in a charter (grant of land near Rochester, by King Æthelred to Bishop Cuthwulf in 868).[82]

With 'flōd fāmgode' ('the flood foamed', 482a), the *Exodus*-poet further inserts an image closely associated with ships and seafaring yet without visual representation of them in Exodus. The simplex *fāmiġ* (mainly found in glosses and verse) mostly means foamy water (or sea) or foamy ships in poetry (see Chapter Four). It appears three times

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[81] The compound *fāmiġ-bōsma* is difficult to interpret. See *DOE*, **s.v.** '*fāmig-bōsma*'; *G-K*, **s.v.** '*fāmig-bōsm*': 'sinum spumosum habens'.

[82] For the text of the charter, see Walter de Gray Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum: A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon History*, 3 vols (London, 1885), II, p. 132.

in *Genesis A*, once denoting the foamy Ark ('fāmiġ sċip', 1417a), twice denoting the foamy Flood ('fāmiġ sæ', 1452b and 'fāmiġ flōdas', 2215a). In *Exodus*, the unique compound *fāmiġ-bōsma* (494a) reiterates the phrase 'flōd fāmgode' (482a), both phrases depicting the waves that bring God's judgement upon unbelievers. Two other unique or rare *fāmiġ*-compounds, *fāmiġ-bord* ('with foamy sides', unique to *Metre 26* 26b) and *fāmiġ-heals* ('foamy-necked' in *Beowulf* 218a and 1909a, and *Andreas* 497a), also serve as index to ships (see Chapters Two and Four). The linkage of the two texts extends further. The expression 'flōd fāmgode' in *Exodus* 482a is close to 'fāmiġe flōdas' in *Genesis A* 2215a, implicitly comparing the drowning of the Egyptians in Exodus with God's cleansing of the Old World in Genesis.

Four out of eight *flōd*-compounds in poetry are found in *Exodus*, including three unique compounds, *flōd-eġesa* (447b), *flōd-weard* ('flood-guard', 494b), and finally, a contested and unique word *flōd-blāc* ('flood-pale', 498b), which indicates the poet's inclination toward the Flood story in Genesis. The meaning of the fourth *flōd*-compound, *flōd-weġ*, is two-fold, similar to the Flood in *Genesis A*: in the midst of the judgmental flood, death awaits the faithless and sinful, whilst the pious Christians find salvation on the ship of Christian faith. What is clear is that the 'flood-guard' (494b) is God himself, who would protect his believers along their life-voyage. The compound *flōd-blāc*, according to *DOE*, can either mean 'pale through fear of the water' as a physical description of the drowned Egyptians, or 'dark as the water', serving as an onomastic pun on 'Aegyptus' ('Egypt') as 'darkness'. This etymological interpretation (or paronomasia) is propagated by medieval Christian writers such as Jerome (*c.* 342–

430) and Gregory the Great (*c.* 540–604).[83] Both interpretations are valid, considering a knowledge of onomastics and interest in wordplay that may be attributed to the *Exodus*-poet: pale as drowning in the flood, and dark as the name Egypt implies. Comparatively, however, the second interpretation that connects the Egyptians with 'dark' may be more suitable for the context in 496–500a, where the Egyptians' souls free from the drowned corpses:

> […] þæt ðȳ **dēað-drepe** drihte swǣfon,
> synfullra swēot. Sāwlum lunnon
> fæste befarene, **flōd-blāc** here,
> siððan hīe onbuĝon **brīm-yppinge**,
> **mōd-wǣġa** mǣst. (496–500a)

> ('[…] so that the host of the sinful band, sank into slumber through that **death-blow**. Tightly enveloped, they gave up their souls, the **flood-dark** army, when they had yielded to the **towering surge** the greatest of **mind-waves**.')

All four compounds are unique, and the final three constitute a greater challenge for interpretation: *dēaþ-drepe* ('death-blow', 496a), *flōd-blāc*, *brim-ypping* ('mounting mass of water', 'sea-manifestation', 499b), and *mōd-wǣg* ('mind-wave', 'courage-wave', 'wave representing God's will', 500a). The sea (*brim-ypping* and *mōd-wǣg*) is manifestation of God's will (*mōd*).[84] When the enemy sink to the sea-bottom, they finally realise the mighty power of 'mere-flōdes weard' ('guardian of the sea-flood', here God):

> Mæġen eall ġedrēas

[83] *DOE* **s.v.** '*flōd-blāc*'. Lucas, ed., *Exodus*, p. 139. Jerome states 'Aegyptus tenebrae uel tribulatio' ('Egypt, "of darkness" or "tribulation"') for three times in his *Liber interpretationis Hebraicorum Nominum* ('Book on the Interpretation of Hebrew Names'). See Paul de Lagarde, Germain Morin, and Marc Adriaen, ed., *Sancti Hieronymi Opera Pars I Opera exegetica 1*, CCSL 72 (Turnhout, 1959), pp. 143, 151, and 156. Gregory the Great seems to know this etymological connection too, when interpreting the meaning of the Egyptian Sea in *Moralia in Job* XXXIII.10 as such: 'bene autem mare Aegyptium dicitur, quia peccati obscuritate fuscatur' ('it is rightly called "the Egyptian Sea" because it is darkened by the obscurity of sin'). Marc Adriaen, ed., *Sancti Gregorii Magni Opera Moralia in Iob libri XXIII–XXXV*, CCSL 143B (Turnhout, 1979), p. 1689.

[84] Lucas, ed., *Exodus*, pp. 139–40.

ðā þe ġedrenċte, duĝoð Ēġypta,
faraon mid his folcum. He onfond hraðe,
siððan **grund ġestāh** Godes andsaca,
þæt wæs mihtiġra **mere-flōdes** weard; […]
(500b–4)

('The host entirely perished, the army of Egypt, those that He drenched, the Pharaoh with his people. The adversary of God quickly discovered, after he **had sunk to the bottom**, that the guardian of the **sea-flood** was mightier; […]')

In an ironic tone, the *Exodus*-poet unusually employs the verb *ġestīgan*: the corpse of the enemy 'grund ġestāh' ('had reached the ground', 'had sunk to the sea-bed', 503a). The verb is cognate with and similar in meaning to *astīgan* (107b), which generally signifies 'climb', 'ascend' denoting an upward moment, but it is used in a reverse, downward sense ('sink', 'go down'). The poet avoids directly employing diction for 'ship' and 'embarkation' as the verb traditionally suggests. Instead, by employing a cognate verb with modification, the poet successfully builds a cognitive gateway to the image of the figurative ship in 75–107. The passage thus heightens the contrast between the Egyptians sinking down and the Israelites rising high up on the invisible ship of faith. The only compound *mere-flōd* ('sea-flood', 504b) in this passage possibly has the same origin as many other previously mentioned terms in *Exodus*. In terms of chronology, *Genesis A* is perhaps the earliest surviving text that preserves this poetic compound (145a and 1341b), and *mere-flōd* (1341b) is closely connected with the biblical Flood. The *Exodus*-poet's possible debt to *Genesis A* is particularly manifested in the Noah Episode in 356–76. The diction in the passage below clearly resembles corresponding phraseology in *Genesis A*:

Nīwe flōdas Noe oferlāð,
þrym-fæst þēoden, mid his þrymm sunum,

> þone dēopestan **drenċe-flōda**
> þāra ðe ġewurde on woruld-rīċe.
> Hæfde him on hreðre **hālġe trēowa**;
> forþon hē ġelædde ofer **laĝu-strēamas**
> **māðm-horda mæst**, mīne ġefrǣġe. (362–8)

> ('Noah voyaged over **new floods**, the **prince secure in might**, with his three sons, the deepest **drowning-floods** that ever happened in the world-kingdom. He had the **holy faith** [i.e. the covenant] in heart; therefore, he led the **greatest of treasure-hoards over sea-streams**, [as] I have heard.')

Both the biblical Flood in Genesis and the Crossing of the Red Sea in Exodus symbolises Baptism, through which the sins are cleansed by water.[85] The Flood itself brings death to the damned, and life to the saved. It is perhaps based on this concept that the *Exodus*-poet digresses from the biblical plot, and introduces the story of Noah (356–76), where he evidently makes this two-fold image of the Flood by 'nīwe flōdas' (362a) and *drenċe-flōd* ('drowning-flood', 364b; elsewhere found only in *Genesis A* 1398b).[86] As previously, no direct diction for 'ship' occurs here, but ship-symbolism is deeply embedded in the wordplay. When evaluating Noah's deeds, the poet says that Noah bears 'hālġe trēowa' ('holy faith', 'holy covenant', 366b) in his heart.[87] The homograph *trēow* ('covenant', 'faith') can signify 'tree' or 'the Cross' in other contexts, notably in *Rood*.[88] As for the sense of 'covenant', the most direct allusion is to Genesis VI.18 (God making covenant with Noah for entry into the Ark) and IX.9–17 (God making a new covenant for all surviving creatures, that no Flood will inundate the earth

[85] On 'nīwe flōdas' ('New Floods') and Baptism, see Lucas, ed., *Exodus*, pp. 122–3; Hall, '*Niwe Flodas*'. Cf. 'nīwan stefne' ('new time') in *Genesis A* 1555b and 1886a. On the association between 'nīwe flōdas' in *Exodus* and 'nīwan stefne' in *Genesis A*, see Patrick McBrine, *Biblical Epic in Late Antiquity and Anglo-Saxon England: Divina in Laude Voluntas* (Toronto, 2017), pp. 334–5.
[86] On the pairing of 'nīwe flōdas' and 'drenċe-flōd', see Hall, '*Niwe Flodas*', p. 244.
[87] Cf. *trēow-rǣden* ('true covenant'; unique) in *Genesis A* 2307a.
[88] Both *bēam* ('tree', 'beam', or 'light') and *trēow* frequently refer to the Cross in *Rood*. See further Andy Orchard, '*The Dream of the Rood*: Cross-References', *New Readings in the Vercelli Book*, ed. Samantha Zacher and Andy Orchard (Toronto, 2009), pp. 225–53, at 229–30 and 250.

again).

As the ‘hālġe trēowa’ in the Flood can be interpreted as ‘holy tree’, or ‘holy wood’, it may designate the image of the Ark as the holy timber in the ocean, an expression that can be found both in Genesis in the Vulgate and *Genesis A*. The Vulgate uses the polysemic *arca* (‘the Ark’, ‘the Ark of Covenant’, ‘chest’, all wooden artefacts) throughout Genesis, and a phrase ‘arcam de lignis leuigatis’ (‘[Noah should make] an Ark of squared wood’) in Genesis VI.14. As I have shown above (1.2), the poet of *Genesis A* addresses the Ark as a ‘ship’, a ‘sea-chest’, a ‘sea-house’, and a ‘wooden-fortress’ (*wudu-fæsten*) in the varied wording for the Ark, and all images are intimately intertwined with wood. To the *Exodus*-poet, Noah not only embraces the holy covenant in his heart, but also bears the holy tree, the Ark in his mind, a representation of the Cross and Christian faith, the archetype of Christian ship-symbolism.[89]

The poet’s unconventionality is also manifested in the use of a second non-maritime term for the Ark, in the form of another unique compound, *māþm-hord* (‘treasure-hoard’, 368a).[90] The first element *māþm* (‘treasure’) usually signifies ‘gifts and treasures that are exchanged between kings and warriors’, and the second element *hord* (‘hoard’) ‘the accumulation of these items’. It is noteworthy that both words often appear in traditional heroic contexts in Old English corpus.[91] The compound itself refers to the Ark and its passengers (Noah, his family, and the chosen species), with the

[89] See McEntire, ‘The Devotional Context of the Cross’, pp. 397–8; Maring, ‘Two Ships Crossing’, pp. 242–3; Daniélou, *Primitive Christian Symbols*, pp. 67–9.
[90] Cf. *hord-māþm* (‘hoard-treasure’; unique) in *Beowulf*1198a. The collocation ‘māðma hord‘ (‘hoard of treasures’) is found in *Beowulf* 2799a and 3011b, and in a writ of King Edward confirming the grant of all possessions of earl Leofric and his wife to the minister in Coventry, where the phrase denotes the spiritual treasure of God (‘mādme hord on heofonan’).
[91] Faulkner, ‘Language of Wealth’, p. 63. On *māþm*, see pp. 38–9, 43–4, 61, 102, 133–4, 162–3, and 176–7.

saved (the Israelites) being the spiritual treasure onboard the vessel of Christian faith and salvation, in sharp contrast to the devil (the Egyptian army) who indulges in secular treasure and sinks in the Red Sea.[92] Identifying Noah's Ark with the '**māðm-horda mæst**' in *Exodus* 368a is highly reminiscent of the Ark in *Genesis A*: '**mere-hūs miċel**' (1303a), '**miċele mere-ċieste**' (1307a), '**ġeofon-hūsa mæst**' (1321a), and '**holm-ærna mæst**' (1422b).[93] Yet the image in *Exodus* is more sophisticated. While the poet of *Genesis A* focuses on the notion of the Ark as a building, the *Exodus*-poet explicitly associates the image of the Ark with the Christian concept of spiritual wealth.

This Christianised idea of a ship (specifically the Ark in the cases of *Exodus* and *Genesis A*) of spiritual treasures is essentially distinct from the Germanic heroic motif of 'treasure-ship'. Typical examples occur in heroic poems such as *Beowulf*, where the ship itself is an accumulation of secular riches including gold, weapons, and jewels after the loot or in a ship-funeral (see 1.2 above and Chapter Two). In Chapters Three and Four, I demonstrate how later poets, Cynewulf and the *Andreas*-poet in particular, inherit this fashion of altering the traditional heroic image of a 'treasure-ship' into a more Christianised symbol of God-given gifts.

Further evidence of the *Exodus*-poet's potential allusion to *Genesis A* lies in two poetic compounds in the passage. The first is *laĝu-strēam* ('sea-stream', 367b), which appears in *Genesis A* 1923a and 2451b. The second compound is *þrym-fæst* ('power-fast', 'secure in might' in *Exodus* 363a; elsewhere attested in *Genesis A* 15a, 1908a, and

[92] See for instance, Faulkner, 'Language of Wealth', pp. 38–9; McBrine, *Biblical Epic*, p. 334; Anlezark, *Water and Fire*, pp. 197–8; John F. Vickrey, '*Exodus* and the Treasure of Pharaoh', *ASE* 1 (1972), 159–65, p. 162; Brodeur, *Art of Beowulf*, p. 261.
[93] McBrine, *Biblical Epic*, p. 335.

2616a, *Rood* 84b, *Christ B* 457a, *Andreas* 323a and 479a, and *Riddle 45* [47] 4b). The *Exodus*-poet portrays Noah as 'þrym-fæst þēoden' ('power-fast prince', 'mighty prince') who voyages with his sons over the New Floods. This adjective is also found in *Genesis A* 15a, 1908a, and 2616a, collocating with *þēoden* ('prince', 'lord') or *þēod* ('nation'):

'**Þrym-fæst þēoden** […] þrymm' ('**The mighty prince** [voyaged with] sons', *Exodus* 363a)
'Þeġnas **þrym-fæste þēoden** […]' ('The servants [angels honoured] **the mighty Lord**', *Genesis A* 15)
'**Þēoda þrym-fæste** þeġnum […]' ('**The mighty nations** with thegns', *Genesis A* 1908)
'**Þrym-fæste** twā **þēoda** […]' ('The two **mighty nations** [arose]', *Genesis A* 2616)

This collocation, *þrym-fæst* + *þēoden* ('prince', 'lord') or *þēod* ('nation'), is attested in only five texts, where ship-symbolism is key to the poets' promulgation of Christian salvation (except in *Christ C*). As in *Genesis A*, three uses collocate with *þeġn* ('thegn', 'servant'), depicting God and his servants:

'**Þēoden þrym-fæst** [...] þeġna [...]' ('**The mighty Lord** [summoned] servants', *Christ B* 457)[94]
'**Þrym-fæst þēoden** [...] þeġna [...]' ('**The mighty Lord** […] servants', *Christ C* 943; 77 in Clayton's numbering)[95]
'**Þēoden þrym-fæst** [...] þeġnas [...]' ('**The mighty Lord** […] servants', *Andreas* 323)
'**Þēoden þrym-fæst** […]' ('**The mighty Lord** […]', *Andreas* 479a)[96]

In describing Noah as 'þrym-fæst þēoden', a further connection between the texts above is perceivable. Through this designation, the *Exodus*-poet likens Noah to God, as in most religious circumstances this expression is an honorific title for God.[97] Besides

[94] All references to Cynewulf's signed poems and *Guthlac B* are based on Robert E. Bjork, ed. and trans., *The Old English Poems of Cynewulf* (Cambridge, MA, 2013).
[95] Mary Clayton, ed. and trans., *Old English Poems of Christ and his Saints* (Cambridge, MA, 2013); Krapp and Dobbie, ed., *The Exeter Book*.
[96] Quotations of *Andreas* in this thesis are taken from North and Bintley, ed. and trans., *Andreas*.
[97] In Christian tradition, Noah is represented as an analogue of God. Cf. Genesis VI.9, where Noah is described as 'cum Deo ambulauit' ('walked with God'). Traditionally, the poetic simplex *þēoden* is primarily for earthly lords and princes. *B-T*, **s.v.** '*þeóden*'; *G-K*, **s.v.** '*þēoden*, *þīoden*', definition 1: 'vom weltlichen Herrn'; *WH*, '*þēoden*'.

this expression, Noah, as mentioned earlier above, is addressed as 'snottor sǣ-lēoda' (374a), a voyager in the sea, who gains *feorh-ġebeorg* ('life-protection', 369a, another compound only found here) for his descendants, the human race, a chance of eternal salvation. Finally, the *Exodus*-poet delimits the domain of the varied words with a direct term for 'ship':

> Ēac þon sǣda ġehwilċ
> **on bearm sċipes** beornas feredon,
> þāra þe under heofonum hæleð bryttiað. (374b–6)
>
> ('Moreover, troopers carried **into the ship's bosom** every seed that heroes distribute under the heavens.')

The expression of '**on bearm sċipes**' ('**into the ship's bosom**', *Exodus* 375a) is exclusively shared by *Exodus* and *Beowulf* (see Chapter Two).[98] The representation of Noah's Ark in *Exodus* is no less complex than its counterpart in *Genesis A*. Although the *Exodus*-poet devotes barely twenty lines to the Genesis story, the passage interweaves a concise poetic form with resonant theological implications. Details in the vivid depiction of the Ark upon the Flood-waters function allegorically and synthetically, going far beyond their literal meanings: *drenċe-flōd* typifies Judgement Day and echoes the drowning of the Egyptians in *Exodus*, 'hālġe trēowa' the Holy Cross and the holy Wood (Ship) of the Church, *māþm-hord* the spiritual treasures of Christian faith and salvation, and finally, 'nīwe flōdas' Baptism and a new, Christian way of life.

1.4 Conclusion

This chapter has illustrated the importance of ship-symbolism in both biblical narrative

[98] Cf. 'on bearm nacan' ('into the bosom of the ship') in *Beowulf* 214a.

poems: Noah's Ark in *Genesis A* 1285–1554 and *Exodus* 362–79, and the virtual ship in *Exodus* 75–107. The various ship-terms used in *Genesis A*, as well as the two original passages about spiritual sea-voyage in *Exodus*, indicate both poets' fondness of maritime images and seafaring themes compared with the Vulgate. The image of the Ark in *Genesis A* testifies to the poet's spiritual and intellectual roots in Christian theology and Germanic diction. The picturesque appellations of the Ark as a 'sea-chest', 'sea-house', and 'sea-fortress' showcase the poet's deep appreciation of nautical concepts and phraseology in the poem's potential sources. These compounds also illustrate a fascination for the vessel being as big as a fortress. The *Exodus*-poet, through the strategic use of lexical clustering, scatters terms for a ship's components (75–107), which lead the reader to their mental reconstruction of the vessel as an awe-inspiring ship. With the Germanic heroic image of a 'treasure-hoard', the *Exodus*-poet further invites the audience to associate the image of the Ark with treasure-hoards in heroic poems, and to strive for the spiritual treasure of Christian faith.

The dynamic interactions between texts and audience are also borne out in the manuscript illustrations in the Junius Manuscript. The illustration of the voyaging Ark on p. 66 in the manuscript perhaps sheds light on how ship-symbolism in *Genesis A* and *Exodus* is adapted in visual arts. The half-page illustration abounds in Christian metaphors and Germanic features, and forms a visual parallel to the text on the same page (*Genesis A* 1314–26, where Noah obeys God's command to build the Ark). The general appearance of the Ark is that of a long, wooden, ring-prowed ship, with some

details typical of ships found in manuscripts and funerary sites (see Introduction).[99] Some other elements are more creative, reminiscent of the idea of the Ark as a 'sea-house', 'sea-fortress', and 'treasure-hoard' in the two poems. There are two towers near the prow and the stern of the vessel respectively, on each rooftop of the side towers a weather-cock; a giant, three-storey building with wooden-roof on the deck; a door by the side of the building; several windows on the stone-walls; doodles of animals, plants, and Noah's family; an animal-head (probably a dragon-head) as the prow of the vessel and the animal's tail as the stern.[100]

The illustration, similar to many medieval drawings, is poly-scenic, functioning to elongate the narrative so that the audience may have a synoptic overview of whole storyline of the Ark. In the middle of the picture God stands on the waves, looking at Noah's family, who are about to climb onto the Ark with a ladder by the prow; Noah the skipper guides a large steering-oar by the stern, with the middle of the oar fixed by a ring to the ship-plank and the waves beating the ship's side. At the top floor of the stone-building onboard, Noah releases a bird (which seems more like the raven than the dove) in search of new land. This overall image interweaves the description in the Vulgate (door, window, cubits, three floors) with that in the Old English poems (a giant, wooden ship with buildings on the deck, Noah the chieftain, and a tall, dragon-headed prow). It remains possible that the illustrator was not directly responding to the poetic texts, but rather drawing upon broader biblical, artistic, and vernacular traditions

[99] Typical illustrations of this kind include London, British Library, Cotton Claudius B. iv, 15r and 15v, and British Library Add. 28162 7v.
[100] See further Karkov, *Text and Picture*, at viii, 89–93, and 99.

circulating in early medieval England. Even so, the connections between textual presentations of the Ark in *Genesis A* and *Exodus* and the manuscript illustrations, particularly Noah's Ark at p. 66, signify a continuous and coherent theme of spiritual voyage in the manuscript. Furthermore, the visible, perceptible appropriations of Christian values and concepts in Germanic heroic language and visual art express a prevalent affection for ship-symbolism among Old English poets and their audiences.

Taken together, these two biblical poems (*Genesis A* and *Exodus*) and their visual counterparts in the Junius Manuscript establish not merely a shared thematic interest in ships and seafaring, but an interpretative framework in which ship-imagery articulates divine trial and spiritual salvation. The following chapters examine how the same symbolic significance is reconfigured across poetic genres and time, from heroic epic to verse saints' *Lives*.

***Chapter Two: Launching Ships in* Beowulf**

> […] þǣr æt hȳðe stōd, hringḡed-stefna
> īsiġ ond ūt-fūs — æðelinges fær; […]
>
> ('[…] there at the harbour stood the ring-prowed vessel, icy and eager to depart, the princely ship; […]', *Beowulf* 32–3)

2.1 Introduction

The ship-funeral of the legendary Scyld Scefing appears in *Beowulf* 26–52, shortly after the narrative begins. The poet's portrayal of a pagan mortuary rite, enhanced by nautical phraseology and the poet's vivid description of the funeral-ship, has consistently attracted comment. Scyld Scefing, who arrives at the shore on an oarless boat as a child, orders in old age a funeral-ship decked with treasures before he dies.[1] Structurally, this passage foreshadows other funerals in the poem, especially the last, Beowulf's burial.[2] This passage is also renowned for its various analogues in Old English literature, Norse legends, Latin saints' *Lives*, and early medieval mortuary practices in the British Isles and Northern Europe (see Introduction).

There are also a couple of occasions where the poet employs repeated phraseology and collocations to highlight the ship-imagery. In a digressive episode (884b–7), while establishing the ship-imagery, the poet also mentions the ship of another Germanic hero,

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[1] On the positive and negative sides of treasure in *Beowulf*, see Stanley B. Greenfield, '*Gifstol* and Goldhoard in *Beowulf*', *Old English Studies in Honour of John C. Pope*, pp. 107–17. On the negative image of the treasure in the dragon's hoard, see Mark Dreisonstok, 'The Pagan-Christian Concept of Wealth and its Relationship to Light in *The Heliand* and in *Beowulf*, with Consideration of Additional Anglo-Saxon Works' (PhD dissertation, Georgetown Univ., 2000), pp. 111–14. See further Faulkner, *Wealth and The Material World*, pp. 10–18 and 95–8; Faulkner, 'Language of Wealth', pp. 35–63; Tyler, 'Collocation of Words'; Earl R. Anderson, 'Treasure Trove in *Beowulf*: A Legal View of the Dragon's Hoard', *Mediaevalia* 3 (1977), 141–64.

[2] Orchard, *Companion*, pp. 91–2; Niles, 'Ring Composition', p. 930; Tonsfeldt, 'Ring Structure', p. 451; Hieatt, 'Envelope Patterns', pp. 256 and 260; Leyerle, 'Interlace Structure', p. 14; Bonjour, *Digressions*, pp. 9–10; see further Owen-Crocker, *Four Funerals*; Bartlett, *Rhetorical Patterns*, pp. 9–29.

Sigemund the dragon-slayer, who sacks the dragon's treasure-hoard, and loads his boat with precious jewels and gold.[3] In the Finnsburg episode, the poet switches the narrative to the miserable fate of Hildeburh, who has married King Finn in Frisia, but later becomes a victim of intertribal conflicts and blood-feud. After the war, the Half-Danes plunder King Finn's hall, loot the royal family, taking all their possessions along with her back to their fleet, bound for Denmark (1154–9a). Contextually, the two passages not only share the same 'treasure-ship' motif but also parallels with Scyld's ship-funeral.

The repeated expressions in the hero's two sea-voyages to and from Denmark have also aroused significant scholarly interest. Despite the gap of more than a thousand lines, the two voyages form an envelope-pattern signalling the start and completion of Beowulf's Danish mission which comprises about half of the poem. The two seafaring passages also fit into the recurrent 'arrival' or 'departure' type-scene in Old English poetic tradition (see Introduction).

Despite the abundance of scholarly research into the poem, the poet's idiosyncratic nautical expressions and the 'treasure-ship' motif have somewhat escaped scholarly attention. The ship in *Beowulf* certainly plays a vital role in generating plots throughout

[3] On Sigemund and his dragon slaying, see Christine Rauer, *Beowulf and the Dragon: Parallels and Analogues* (Cambridge, 2000), esp. 42, 45, and 48; Andy Orchard, *Cassell's Dictionary of Norse Myth and Legend* (London, 1997), pp. 139–40; Mark Griffith, 'Some Difficulties in *Beowulf*, Lines 874–902: Sigemund Reconsidered', *ASE* 24 (1995), 11–41; Paul Sorrell, 'The Approach to the Dragon Fight in *Beowulf*, Aldhelm, and the "Traditions Folkloriques" of Jacques Le Goff', *Parergon* 12 (1994), 57–87, esp. 70–2; Annelise Talbot, 'Sigemund the Dragon-Slayer', *Folklore* 94 (1983), 153–62. On dragon fight in *Beowulf*, see further; Zacharias P. Thundy, 'The Dragon in *Beowulf*: Cain's Seed, Heresy, and Islam', *Essays on Old, Middle, Modern English and Old Icelandic in Honor of Raymond P. Tripp, Jr.*, ed. Loren C. Gruber (Lewiston, ME, 2000), pp. 201–30; Joyce Tally Lionarons, '"Sometimes the Dragon Wins": Unsuccessful Dragon Fighters in Medieval Literature', *Essays on Old, Middle, Modern English and Old Icelandic*, pp. 301–16, at 307–8; Joyce Tally Lionarons, '*Beowulf*: Myth and Monsters', *ES* 77 (1996), 1–14.

the poem.[4] The diction in *Beowulf* reveals a high level of originality especially in terms of compound nouns and adjectives: a great number of terms are unique to *Beowulf*, and sometimes the poet deliberately coins compounds to suit particular occasions.[5] In general, the *Beowulf*-poet's characteristic employment of nautical diction, especially poetic simplexes, unique or rare compounds, and uncommon collocations contributes to the rich vocabulary and originality of the poem. In this chapter, I focus on the nautical diction in 26–52, 198b–306a, 884b–97, 1154–9a, and 1880b–1921a. By placing *Beowulf* in a wider textual and material tradition, I scrutinise the verbal parallels in these passages and the poet's representations of treasure-ships as well as the manifold functions of ship-imagery in *Beowulf*.

2.2 The nautical terminology

Akin to the poet of *Genesis A*, the *Beowulf*-poet employs diverse wording for 'ship' in the poem, along with relevant adjectives that describe the ships' physical features centring around the high, curved prows. Simplexes for 'ship' display a noteworthy variety. These words cover *bāt* (211a; common), *brenting* ('ship', 2807b; unique), *ċēol* (38b, 238b, 1806b, and 1912b), *fær* ('ship', 33b; frequent in prose by other meanings),

[4] For discussions on the narrative of the whole poem, see John. M. Hill, *The Narrative Pulse of Beowulf: Arrivals and Departures* (Toronto, 2008); E. G. Stanley, 'The Narrative Art of *Beowulf*', *Medieval Narrative: A Symposium*, ed. Hans Bekker-Nielsen et al. (Odense: Odense University Press, 1979), pp. 58–81.

[5] See Brodeur, *Art of Beowulf*, pp. 1–38. On poetic diction in *Beowulf*, see also A. L. Harris, '*Beowulf*: Studies in the Diction' (PhD dissertation, The Univ. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1976); Katherine O'Brien O'Keeffe, 'Diction, Variation, the Formula', *A Beowulf Handbook*, pp. 85–104; William Whallon, 'The Diction of *Beowulf*', *PMLA* 76 (1961), 309–19. On compounds in *Beowulf*, see further Jonathan Davis-Secord, *Joinings: Compound Words in Old English Literature* (Toronto, 2016), pp.167–91; John D. Niles, 'Compound Diction and the Style of *Beowulf*', *ES* 62 (2008), 489–503. On the *Beowulf* poet's penchant for invention in terms of rare words and compounds, see Andy Orchard, '*Beowulf* and the Art of Invention', *Old English Lexicology and Lexicography: Essays in Honor of Antonette DiPaolo Healey*, ed. Maren Clegg Hyer, Haruko Momma, and Samantha Zacher (Cambridge, 2020), pp. 19–36.

flota (‘ship’, 210b, 218a, and 301b; ‘floater’, ‘sailor’, 294; frequent in prose), *naca* (‘ship’, 214a, 295b, 1896b, and 1903b; poetic), *sċip* (35b, 302b, 896a, 1154b, 1895b, and 1917b; common), and *wudu* (‘ship’, 216b, 298a, and 1919a).[6] Two of these seven simplexes are polysemic: *flota*, with its primary meaning ‘floater’, can depict either ‘ship’ or ‘sailor’; and *wudu* which originally means ‘wood’, can denote ‘ship’, ‘spear’, ‘tree’, ‘the Cross’, and so on. As mentioned in Chapter One, *fær* is homographic, and the word-form has multiple meanings such as ‘expedition’, ‘ship’, and ‘danger’; besides, the sense of ‘ship’, ‘vessel’ is exclusively shared between *Genesis A* and *Beowulf*. It is possible that the unique term *brenting* denotes a ‘high-prowed ship’ if its root can be traced to the purely poetic adjective *brant* (‘high-prowed’, *Beowulf* 238b and 568a, *Elene* 238a, and *Andreas* 273b), exclusively used to modify ‘ship’; see Chapter Four).[7]

There are eleven compounds for ‘ship’ in *Beowulf*, a number testifying to the poet’s ingenuity. Such nautical terms for ‘ship’ also reveal the *Beowulf*-poet’s predilection for certain base-words in poetic coinage. The first group consists of three compounds with base-words meaning ‘sailor’, ‘traveller’, and ‘floater’. The unique compound *ȳþ-lida* (‘wave-glider’, ‘wave-traveller’, 198b) derives from two poetic simplexes, *lida* (‘sailor’, ‘traveller’) and *lid* (‘ship’; purely poetic; not used in *Beowulf*).[8] The second

[6] Cf. *sċip-here* (‘ship-army’; unique) in *Beowulf* 243a. But cf. the uses of *here* and ‘sċip here’ in *ASC*, which predominantly describe the Viking invaders especially regarding entries for the tenth and eleventh centuries. See Charles Plummer, ed., *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel, with Supplementary Extracts from the Others: A Revised Text on the Basis of an Edition by John Earle, Reissued in 1952 with a Bibliographical Note by Dorothy Whitelock*, 2 vols (Oxford, 1952), I, p. 360. On the meaning of *wudu* as ‘ship’ as unique to *Beowulf*, see Cronan, ‘Poetic Meanings’, pp. 407 and 417. The simplex *naca* appears ten times in five poems: *Beowulf* 214a, 295b, 1896b, and 1903b, *Andreas* 266b and 291b, *Riddle 56* [58] 5a, *The Husband’s Message* 40b, *The Rune Poem* 64b, and *The Seafarer* 7b.

[7] *DOE*, **s.v.** ‘*brenting*’; *G-K*, ‘*brenting*’. Cf. *brant*; *brand-stefn* (‘high-prowed’, unique to *Andreas* 504a). For the characteristic collocation *brant* + a ship-term in the three texts, see Chapter Four.

[8] There are only two *-lid*-compounds attested in verse, denoting either ‘ship’ or ‘sailor’: the polysemic *ȳþ-lid* (see Chapter Four), and *sǣ-lida* (see Chapter One).

element *-lida* likely suggests the idea of 'speed'.[9] The second in this category is *sǣ-genġa* ('sea-goer', 'ship', 1882b and 1908b), elsewhere attested only once in the *Enchiridion* ('Manual') of Byrhtferth of Ramsey (*c.* 970–*c.* 1020), denoting 'seafarer' instead of 'ship'.[10] The third is *wēġ-flota* ('wave-floater', 1907a; elsewhere in *Elene* 246a and *Andreas* 487a). There are six *-flota*-compounds in verse, all limited to this small range of texts discussed here: *Beowulf*, Cynewulf's *Elene*, *Guthlac B*, *The Whale*, and *Andreas* (see Chapter Four).[11] Four of them denote 'ship', and three of the four ship-compounds are uniquely preserved in *Andreas* or *Guthlac B*, with *wēġ-flota* as an exception. The limited distribution of this type of compound in the surviving corpus might suggest that *Beowulf* is possibly the source of later poets' coinage of *-flota*-compounds.

In the second group are three compounds with the base-noun *stefna* ('bow [of a ship]', 'prow') as the second element. Two of them are unique: *hringed-stefna* ('ring-prowed ship', 32b, 1131a, and 1897b; also found in *Elene* 248b), *bunden-stefna* ('ships with twisted prow', 1910a; unique), and *wunden-stefna* ('ship with curved prow', 'ship with braced timbers', 220a; unique).[12] The first element *hringed* ('ringed', 'made of rings') in *hringed-stefna* is attested only in *Beowulf* 1245b and 2615b, and in a gloss

[9] Cf. *glīdan* ('glide'), which refers to the motion of gliding or sliding smoothly and unobstructedly in the sky or on a surface. *DOE*, **s.v.** '*glīdan*'; *B-T*, **s.v.** '*glīdan*'; *G-K*, **s.v.** '*glīdan*'.

[10] On Byrhtferth of Ramsey, see further Michael Lapidge, 'The Library of Byrhtferth', *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain Volume I: c. 400–1100*, ed. Richard Gameson (Cambridge, 2011), pp. 685–93.

[11] Cf. *ǣġ-flota* ('wave-floater') in *Andreas* 258a, unique; *ġeflota* ('floater', 'swimmer') in *The Whale* 7a; unique; *hærn-flota* ('billow-floater', 'wave-floater') in *Guthlac B* 1333b, unique; *sæ-flota* ('sea-floater') in *Andreas* 381a. The only *-flota*-compound that does not refer to 'ship' is *sċip-flota* in *Brunanburh* 11b; as discussed in Chapter One, the 'floaters' in late battle-poems mainly refer to the Viking invaders.

[12] Two *stefn*-compounds for 'ship' are used by the *Andreas*-poet: *brand-stefn*, unique, and *hēah-stefn* ('high-prowed') which is found only in *Andreas* 266b and *The Whale* 13b. Cf. '**hringed-stefna** […] **fær**' in *Beowulf* 32b–3, '**hēah-stefn naca**' in *Andreas* 266b, and '**hēah-stefn sċipu**' in *The Whale* 13b.

for Latin ‘hamata’ (‘hooked’; feminine adjective).[13] In both lines in *Beowulf*, *hringed* collocates with *byrne* (‘mail coat’, ‘byrnie’).[14] While the root word *hringe* is polysemic (‘ring’, ‘fetter’, ‘sound’), all the *hringe*-compounds in verse are based on the meaning of ‘ring’, unique to one text. Surprisingly, eight out of the twelve *hringe*-compounds are exclusively used by the *Beowulf*-poet.

When it comes to the second compound *bunden-stefna*, the first element in this somewhat problematic compound possibly derives from *bindan* (‘bind together’, ‘brace [a ship]’), and the *Beowulf*-poet uses a similar, equally-opaque expression ‘wudu bundenne’ (‘wood-braced ship’, ‘tightly-bound ship’, 216b).[15] Meanwhile, both existing *bunden*-compounds are unique to *Beowulf*.[16] The primary meaning of *wunden*, which appears in the third compound *wunden-stefna*, is ‘wound round’, but all *wunden*-compounds in verse adapt extended meanings with the same sense of ‘twisted’, ‘curved’, or ‘patterned’.[17] Four of the five *wunden*-compounds in poetry are found in *Beowulf*, all unique, and half of them, *wunden-hals* and *wunden-stefna*, are relevant to ships.

The third group of ship-compounds in *Beowulf* contains four compounds based on simplexes for ‘ship’ used in the poem, with the first element emphasising either the ‘sea’ or the ring-prowed shape: *hringe-naca* (‘ring-prowed ship’, 1862a; unique), *sæ-bāt* (‘sea-boat’, 633a and 895b; also found in *Andreas* 438b and 490b), *sæ-wudu* (‘sea-

[13] Cf. Old Norse Hringhorni (‘Ring-horned’), the name of Norse god Baldr’s ship.
[14] Cf. ‘heaþo-stēapa helm, hringed byrne’ (‘battle-prominent helmets, ringed byrnie’, 1245); ‘brūn-fāĝne helm, hringde byrnan’ (‘bright-shining helmet, ringed byrnie’, 2615b).
[15] *DOE*, **s.v.** ‘*bindan*’; ‘*bunden-stefna*’. See further K4, clxix and pp. 130–1. Cronan, however, regards ‘wudu bundenne’ as retaining the literal meaning of *wudu* (‘wood’) instead of a synecdoche for ‘ship’, ‘Poetic Meanings’, p. 407. On ‘wudu bundenne’, see also Crosby, ‘Two Notes’.
[16] Cf. *bunden-heord* (‘with hair bound up’, 3151b), denoting the Geatish woman in Beowulf’s funeral. See further K4, p. 270.
[17] Cf. *wunden-feax* (‘with twisted mane’, 1400a); *wunden-hals* (‘[of ship] with curved neck’, 298a); *wunden-mæl* (‘patterned blade’, 1531a); *wunden-stefna* (220a). Cf. *wunden-locc* (‘curly-haired’) in *Judith* 77b, 103b, and 325a and *Riddle 23* [25] 11a, which has similar meaning as ‘twisted’.

wood', 226a; unique), and *sund-wudu* ('sea-wood', 208a and 1906b; elsewhere attested in *Christ B* 677b; see Chapter Three), each worthy of further discussion. There are three *-bāt*-compounds in the corpus, and they appear either in *Beowulf* or *Andreas* or in both texts. In addition to *sǣ-bāt*, the other two terms are unique to *Andreas*, *mere-bāt* ('sea-boat', 246b) and *wudu-bāt* ('wooden-boat', 905b; see Chapter Four). A relevant *bāt*-compound is *bāt-weard* ('boat-guard', 'boat-keeper') in *Beowulf* 1900a. Regarding the two *-wudu*-compounds, *Beowulf* seems to be the earliest text that contains *-wudu*-compounds for 'ship'.[18] The only other *sund*-compound for 'ship' attested in poetry is *sund-reċed* (see Chapter One). Given the *Beowulf*-poet's considerable interest in Old Testament stories, effectively Cain and the Flood, *sund-wudu* may be a deliberate borrowing of *sund-reċed* from *Genesis A* or from a lost intermediary between the two poems.[19] The replacement of *reċed* ('hall') by *wudu* creates a visual image of 'sea-wood' appropriate for the audience to envision a fast-moving ship.

In addition to the nominal terms for 'ship', the poet further employs a series of adjectives to praise a typical contemporary North-Sea ship. Many of these terms reappear in Cynewulf's signed poems and in *Andreas* (see Chapters Three and Four): *brant* (238b and 568a), *cymlīċe* ('finely', 'pleasingly', 38a), *fāmiġ-heals* (218a and 1909a), 'īsiġ ond ūt-fūs' (33a), *nīw-tyrwed* ('newly-tarred', 295a; unique), two unique terms meaning 'wide-bosomed', *sīd-fæþme* (1917b) and *sīd-fæþmed* (302b)

[18] Cf. *brim-wudu* ('sea-wood') in *Elene* 244b and *Guthlac B* 1331b; *flōd-wudu* ('flood-wood'; unique) in *Christ B* 853a; see Chapter Three.

[19] See further Leneghan, *Dynastic Drama*, esp. 195–235; Malcolm Godden, 'Biblical Literature: The Old Testament', *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature*, ed. Malcolm Godden and Michael Lapidge, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, 2013), pp. 214–33, at 215 and 223–4. On the *Beowulf*-poet's interest in the Flood narrative, see Rhodes, 'Turning the Tide', pp. 100–50; Orchard, '*Beowulf*', *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature*, pp. 137–58, at 150–3; Anlezark, *Water and Fire*, esp. 291–367; Orchard, *Companion*, pp. 134 and 138–41.

respectively, *wunden-hals* ('with curved neck', 298a; unique), and *sǣ-ġēap* ('sea-spacious', 'sea curved', 1896b; unique).[20] The simplex *īsiġ*, which remains a crux, only appears in *Beowulf* 33a and *Blickling Homily 16* denoting 'icy woods'.[21] Given that all (-)*īsiġ*(-)compounds have the sense of 'cold as ice' or 'covered with ice', each unique to one text, the *īsiġ* ship in *Beowulf* 33a possibly has the same connotation of a ship 'covered with ice', as it is about to voyage to the realm of the dead.[22]

Akin to the *Exodus*-poet, the *Beowulf*-poet mentions some components of a ship. The words the poet uses include *ancor* (303a and 1883b; see Introduction and Chapter Three), *ancor-bend* ('anchor-rope', 1918a; unique), *bolca* (231a; elsewhere found in *Andreas* 305b and 602a, and in two glosses for Latin 'foras', 'foros', 'outside'), *mæst* ('mast', 36a, 1898b, and 1905a), *seġl* (1906a), *seġl-rād* ('sail-riding', 'sail-road', 1429b; unique) and *stefn* (212a).[23] When referring to the ship's deck, the *Beowulf*-poet seems to prefer *bolca* to a common polysemic simplex *bord* ('[ship's] board', 'shield'). There exists, however, a contested term *ford* ('ford', 'water-way', 568a). This term appears in the passage about Beowulf's fight with the sea-monsters during his sea-competition

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[20] Cf. Beccel's ship described as 'lēoht, lāde fūs' ('light, eager for the voyage') in *Guthlac B* 1332a. Cf. *wīd-fæþme* ('wide-bosomed') in *Andreas* 240b (for 'ship') and 533a (for 'sea'). Cf. *horn-ġēap* ('wide-gabled') peculiar to *Beowulf* 82a (referring to Heorot) and *Andreas* 668a (denoting the Temple in Jerusalem; see Chapter Four).

[21] On the ambiguous term *īsiġ*, see *DOE*, **s.v.** '*īsiġ*'; *G-K*, **s.v.** '*īsig*'; Patrick Stiles, '*Beowulf* 33a and Hapax Legomena', *Neophilologus* 104 (2020), 255–61, at 257–9; K4, at 115–6; Orchard, *Companion*, pp. 54–5; Liberman, 'Icy Ship'; D. R. Howlett, 'New Criteria for Editing *Beowulf*', *The Editing of Old English: Papers from the 1990 Manchester Conference*, ed. Donald G. Scragg and Paul E. Szarmach (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 69–84, at 77; Giulia Mazzuoli Porru, '*Beowulf*, v. 33: *īsiġ ond ūtfūs*', *Studi linguistici e filologici per Carlo Alberto Mastrelli* (Pisa, 1985), pp. 263–74; Dieter Bähr, 'Altenglisch *īsig* (*Beowulf*, Zeile 33)', *ZAA 19* (1971), 409–12; Ernst A. Ebbinghaus, 'Reviewed Work(s): Heyne-Schückings *Beowulf. 2. Teil: Kommentar. Siebzehnte Auflage* by Else von Schaubert; Heyne-Schückings *Beowulf. 3. Teil: Glossar. Siebzehnte Auflage* by Else von Schaubert', *JEGP* 62 (1963), 676–8, at 677; W. P. Lehmann, '*Beowulf* 33, *īsig*', *MLN* 74 (1959), 577–8; Willy Krogmann, 'Ae. *Īsig*', *Anglia* 56 (1932), 438–9.

[22] Cf. *eall-īsiġ* ('all-icy'; unique to the Old English *Boethius*) in *Metre 24* 23a and the corresponding Chapter 36 of the prose *Boethius* (both denoting the 'all-icy Saturn'); *īsiġ-feþera* ('icy-feathered; unique) in *The Seafarer* 24a; *īsihte* ('icy'; unique) in the prose *Life Saint Mary of Egypt*, referring to the 'icy coldness of winter'. Cf. *īs-caldd* ('ice-cold') in *The Seafarer* 14b and 19a and *Metre 27* 3b.

[23] Cf. *ancor-rāp* ('anchor-rope') in *The Whale* 14b.

with Breca (535–81a). According to the context and the aforementioned adjective *brontne* before *ford*, this term may be potentially emended to *bord*.[24]

To sum up, the varied wordings for 'ship' in *Beowulf* demonstrate the *Beowulf*-poet's idiosyncratic poetic coinage of ship-terms, and suggest an intimate connection with specific poems in the later period in terms of nautical diction: two of Cynewulf's signed poems, *Elene* and *Christ B*, the Cynewulfian poem *Guthlac B* (see Chapter Three), and *Andreas* (see Chapter Four). My discussions in the following sections will highlight the specific functions of ship-terms in *Beowulf*.

2.3 The icy ship of Scyld Scefing

Gale Owen-Crocker identifies the ship-funeral of Scyld Scefing (26–52) as the 'focus and climax' of the opening section of *Beowulf*.[25] The narrative begins with the death of Scyld Scefing, the Danish tribal lord, who dies at the appointed time in old age (26–7). Scyld's body is then carried to the shore (28–31) and further to an icy ***hringed-stefna*** (32b), an 'æþelinges **fær**' ('princely **ship**', 33b) standing by the harbour, '**on bearm scipes**' (35b), under a mast (32–6a), surrounded by many treasures from afar, including weapons and jewellery (36b–46).[26] By listing the types of funeral goods and stressing the amount, the poet leads the audience to envisage the extravagance of the ship-

[24] *DOE*, **s.v.** '*brant*', definition 2; '*ford*', definition 2.a. Walter John Sedgefield emends *ford* to *forð* meaning 'ship', because *brant* 'is always used of ships', in *Beowulf: Edited with Introduction, Bibliography, Notes, Glossary, and Appendices* (Manchester, 1910), p. 157. For the scholarly emendation of *ford* to *bord* meaning 'ship', 'side of a ship' in *Beowulf* 578a, see Andy Orchard, ed. and trans., *Beowulf Rex: The Making and Unmaking of Monsters and Kings* (forthcoming); Kolb, '*Beowulf* 568'.

[25] Owen-Crocker, *Four Funerals*, p. 12.

[26] Scyld's body is placed 'on bearm scipes', where a chamber is possible. Chambers can be found on burial ships in real world practices. One typical example is the wooden chamber built on the ship in Mound I, Sutton Hoo. Martin Carver, *Sutton Hoo: Burial Ground of Kings?* (London, 1998), pp. 116–34.

funeral.[27] As the peculiar expression ‘ne hȳrde iċ cymlīcor ċēol’ (‘I have never heard of a comelier ship’, 38) conveys, this ship is the greatest, most magnificent treasure-ship so far.[28] Then Scyld’s people place a towering golden banner and set the ship out for its voyage (47–9a).[29] The crowd mourn their loss of their king, and the fully loaded funeral-ship embarks on a route of which no one on earth knows its destination (49b–52). Yet the poet does leave a clue about the fate of the ship for the audience to trace: an expression to the effect that the ship finally sails to the embrace of God the Father (‘on frēan wǣre’, ‘into the Lord’s keeping’, 27b; cf. ‘on fæder bearme’, ‘in his father’s care’, 21b).[30]

The passage serves several purposes: showcasing the contextual significance of ship-terms, underlining the poet’s thematic focus on the ‘treasure-ship’ motif, and establishing a connection with Scyld’s arrival and Beowulf’s barrow.[31] In terms of nautical diction, the poet inserts a cluster of sea-terms within a short seven-line passage (32–8). Specifically, there are four ship-terms, three adjectives as modifiers, and two terms *mǣst* (‘mast’, 36a) and *hȳþ* (‘harbour’):

> Þǣr æt **hȳðe** stōd, **hringed-stefna**
> **īsiġ** ond **ūt-fūs** — æðelinges **fær**;
> āledon þā lēofne þēoden,
> bēaĝa bryttan, **on bearm sċipes**,
> mǣrne be **mǣste**. Þǣr wæs mādma fela
> of feor-wegum, frætwa ġelǣded.

[27] For a discussion on reader-response theory and *Beowulf*, see Yvette Kisor, ‘The Aesthetics of *Beowulf*: Structure, Perception, and Desire’, *On the Aesthetics of Beowulf and Other Old English Poems*, ed. John M. Hill (Toronto, 2010), pp. 227–46, at 239–46.
[28] For the ‘I have never heard of’ expression, see also Chapters Three and Four.
[29] The description of Scyld’s golden banner on the ship as ‘hēah ofer hēafod’ (‘high over the head’) and the mentioning of *hlæste* (‘cargo’, ‘load’) onboard in *Beowulf* 48a and 52b further parallel the description of the Ark as ‘hēah mid hlæste’ (‘high with load’) in *Genesis A* 1422a.
[30] See further K4, pp. 115 and 268.
[31] On other parallels to Beowulf’s barrow, see, for instance, Richard North, *The Origins of Beowulf: From Vergil to Wiglaf* (Oxford, 2006), p. 78.

> Ne hȳrde iċ **cymlīcor ċēol** ġeġyrwan
> hilde-wǣpnum ond heaðo-wǣdum,
> billum ond byrnum; […] (32–40a)
>
> ('There at the harbour stood the ring-prowed vessel, icy and eager to depart, the princely ship; they laid down then the beloved lord, the ring-giver, in the bosom of the ship, the renowned one by the mast. A treasure-hoard of riches and trappings from distant ways was loaded there. Never have I heard of a comelier ship adorned with war-weapons and armours, swords and corselets; […]')

Most of the eye-catching expressions are pertinent to the funeral-ship. Along with the treasures in its bosom, the funeral-ship, rather than the human characters or the details about the funeral-ritual, stands in the spotlight. The poet omits not only the process showing how the ship is carried from the land to the sea, but also any funeral-rituals, except the mourning and lamenting for the dead king. There is no description of Scyld's clothing or the funeral site. Indeed, the narrative focus centres around the physical features of the ship, its curved prow, the shining ice, and the luxury of its cargo. This passage is structured around apposition (***hringēd-stefna* — *fær* — *sċip* — *ċēol***), which is frequently used in *Beowulf* (see above). The compound *hringēd-stefna*, as the second element indicates, should primarily refer to a 'curved prow'. Yet with the specifying appositions, the poet makes it clear that *hringēd-stefna* is an example of synecdoche.

The first simplex in this passage, *fær*, is unusual. Its meaning of 'ship' is found only in *Genesis A*, where it exclusively refers to the Ark, and here in *Beowulf*. Both occurrences denote an ancient, legendary vessel, a treasure-ship. The only difference is that the Ark carries humans and livestock, representing spiritual treasure in *Genesis A*, whilst Scyld's funeral-ship is decked with secular treasure in *Beowulf*. Whilst there are several other available simplexes for 'ship', their unusual adherence to *fær* in *Genesis*

A and *Beowulf* demonstrates a possible connection between the two poems.[32]

The second simplex is part of the collocation '**on bearm sċipes**', which reoccurs in 896a (denoting the treasure-ship of Sigemund), and *Exodus* 375a (for Noah's Ark which is also described as a 'treasure-hoard'; see Chapter One). A variant of this pattern is '**on bearm nacan**' (214a), for Beowulf's ship, which is also portrayed as a treasure-ship in the poem (see below).[33] There seems to be an established connection between this collocation, which is inseparable from the typological image of a 'treasure-ship'. In *Exodus*, the Ark carries spiritual wealth (the chosen creatures and faith) from a Christological standpoint (see Chapter One); in *Beowulf*, both Scyld's funeral ship and Sigemund's ship represent a conventional heroic value system that appreciates secular treasure. This association perhaps evolves from the description of the Ark as an ancient, magnificent 'treasure-ship' in *Genesis A* and *Exodus*. Indeed, it has been well attested that the Old Testament stories, especially those in Genesis and Exodus, are significant sources of inspirations for the *Beowulf*-poet, who draws from themes such as the migration myth and the Flood.[34] Additionally, the examples above lends further support to arguments for direct borrowing in *Beowulf* from *Genesis A*.[35]

Apart from a potential association with *Genesis A*, '**on bearm sċipes**' is reminiscent of '**on fæder bearme**' (21b), a phrase that seems to derive from the Latin '**in sinu patris**' ('**in the bosom of father**') that appears in the Bible several times.[36]

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[32] Cronan, 'Poetic Words', p. 25.
[33] Cf. 'on lides bōsme'; 'on sċipes bōsme' (see Chapters One and Four and Conclusion).
[34] Anlezark, *Water and Fire*, pp. 291–367; Howe, *Migration and Mythmaking*, pp. 147–8 and 163–4.
[35] See further Leneghan, 'Wrath of God'; Andy Orchard, *The Craft and Cunning of Anglo-Saxon Verse* (Oxford, 2022), pp. 261–71.
[36] Thomas D. Hill, "*On fæder bearme*: *Beowulf*, Line 21', *N&Q* 66 (2019), 2–5.

The phrase ‘in sinu’, as observed by Thomas D. Hill, hints at the idea of ‘protection’, ‘guidance’, and ‘close contact’.[37] Evidence in Old English glosses takes ‘**of bearme fador**’ and similar collocations for the Latin phrase in the Bible, providing some proof that this Christological connotation must be known to the audience in early medieval England.[38] The simplex *bearm* is one of the three simplexes with the base-meaning of ‘bosom’ that can refer to both the hold of a ship and the embrace of the divine (see Chapter One). Christian elements are frequently found in *Beowulf*, and it is likely that the *Beowulf*-poet uses *on bearm* as an allusion to the Bible, in order to indicate that Scyld’s ship now enters the Father’s embrace, the heavenly *hȳþ*.[39] This simplex is often used in Christian texts such as Cynewulf’s *Christ B*, to denote the harbour of salvation (see Chapter Three). With the rich nautical diction in the passage, the poet makes the theme of life-voyage perceptible to the audience. It is implied in the poem that Scyld Scefing arrives in the land of the Danes as a fatherless child. When Scyld departs from the mundane world, he returns on the ship to the embrace of the Father (see above).

The third and last simplex, *ċēol*, appears most frequently in poetic texts.[40] The *DOE* notes forty-five instances in the corpus, including thirty-three times in verse; there is also a unique compound with *ċēol* as the first element: *ċēol-þel* (‘ship-plank’) in *The Husband’s Message* 9a. Despite the fact that the literal meaning of *ċēol* is ‘keel’, Cronan argues that this term is common enough since the time of Saint Gildas (died *c.* 570), and therefore it is ‘neither synecdochic nor poetic’, based on the sixth-century usage of

[37] Hill, “*On fæder bearme*’, pp. 3–4.
[38] Hill, “*On fæder bearme*’, p. 4.
[39] See further Thomas D. Hill, ‘Scyld Scefing and the *stirps regia*: Pagan Myth and Christian Kingship in *Beowulf*’, *Magister Regis: Studies in Honor of Robert Earl Kaske*, ed. Arthur Groos (New York, NY, 1986), pp. 37–47.
[40] See further Their, *Sea Terms*, pp. 43–5.

ċēol in a Latinised form 'cyul' in *De excidio Britanniae* ('On the Ruin of Britain') XXIII (*c*. 540) by Saint Gildas describing the coming of the Saxons (in Latin, the 'aduentus Saxonum') in three long-ships.[41] Saint Gildas is the earliest witness to *ċēol*, describing how: 'tribus ut lingua eius exprimitur, **cyulis**, nostra **longis nauibus**' ('[the Saxons arrived] on three ***cyulis***, as addressed in their language; in ours, "**long ships**"').[42]

Griffith, however, argues that *ċēol* represents an archaic, elevated poetic style, based on the three occasions of *ċēol* in prose texts, and the twelve instances in glosses.[43] This term is witnessed twice in *ASC* MSS D and E narrating the first invasion of Julius Caesar by eighty ships ('mid hund-ehtatiġum ċēolum'; Preface to MS D) and that of Hengest and Horsa by three ships ('on þrīm ċēolum'; MS E 449) respectively, and once in a tenth-century Latin endorsement of an eighth-century grant of King Æthelbald of Mercia (died 757), concerning the remission of dues for a ship ('ānes ċēoles') in London.[44] The two uses in *ASC*, as Frank suggests, might be 'learned' echoes of Saint Gildas, perhaps aiming at 'heroicising' the 'ancestral pirates'.[45] The three occurrences in prose are either involved in the migration myth, or part of a royal document. This simplex is much employed by the *Andreas*-poet (*Andreas* 222a, 253b, 256b, 273b, 310b,

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[41] Cronan, 'Poetic Meanings', p. 397. On 'cyul', see further François Kerlouégan, *Le de excidio britanniae de Gildas: Les destinées de la culture latine dans l'île de Bretagne au VIe siècle* (Paris, 2019), pp. 197, 237, and 447; Michael Winterbottom, ed. and trans., *Gildas: The Ruin of Britain and Other Works* (London, 1978), p. 149; Hugh Williams, ed., *Gildae De excidio Britanniae, fragmenta, liber de paenitentia, accedit et Lorica Gildae: The Ruin of Britain, Fragments from Lost Letters, the Penitential, Together with the Lorica of Gildas* (London, 1899), p. 53. *DOE*, however, rules 'keel' out as the meaning of *ċēol*. *DOE*, **s.v.** '*cēol*'. See further *OED*, **s.v.** 'keel', definition 2. See also *G-K*, **s.v.** '*cēol*, *cīol*': 'Kiel, Schiff'.

[42] The Latin text is cited from Winterbottom, ed. and trans., *Gildas*, p. 97. Another vernacular ship-term transliterated in Latin in *De excidio Britanniae* is *curucus*, or *curuca*, which equals Irish *curach*, Welsh *corwc*, Modern Welsh *corwg*, *corwgl*, *cwrwgl*, and Modern English coracle, see Williams, ed., *Gildae*, p. 44; Kerlouégan, *Le de excidio britanniae de Gildas*, pp. 197, 199, 228, 234, 237, 299, 451, 530, and 558.

[43] Griffith, 'Poetic Diction', pp. 122–4.

[44] For the texts, see Susan Irvine, ed., *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition, Volume 7, MS E* (Cambridge, 2004), p. 16; G. P. Cubbin, ed., *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition, Volume 6, MS D* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 1; Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum*, I, p. 221.

[45] Roberta Frank, 'Poetic Words in Late Old English Prose', *From Anglo-Saxon to Early Middle English: Studies Presented to E. G. Stanley*, ed. Malcolm Godden, Douglas Gray, and Terry Hoad (Oxford, 1994), pp. 87–107, at 95.

349a, 316b, 380a, 450a, 555a, 854a, and 899b), who seems to have borrowed many nautical expressions from *Beowulf* (see Chapter Four).

The adjective *īsiġ* (‘icy’, ‘covered with ice’), which stems from *īs* (‘ice’), and modifies *hringed-stefna* (33a), is often believed to either take on some extended meanings beyond ‘icy’, or to require emendation (see 2.2 above). However, the same ship-compound *hringed-stefna* reappears in a seafaring scene of the wandering Hengest during winter, along with *īs-ġebind* (‘ice-binding’):

> Hengest ðā ġyt
> wæl-fāgne winter wunode mid Finne;
> hē unhlitme eard ġemunde,
> þēah þe ne meahte on mere drīfan
> **Hringed-stefnan** — h**olm** st**orme** wēoll,
> **w**ann **w**iþ **w**inde, **w**inter ȳðe belēac
> **īs-ġebinde** — […] (1127b–33a)
>
> (‘Hengest still stayed with Finn a slaughter-stained winter; he eagerly remembered his homeland, though he could not drive the **ring-prowed ship** on the sea — the sea welled with storm, struggled with wind, winter locked up the sea, **ice-binding** — […]’)

Hengest fails to return home. The reason, nevertheless, is not complex: he cannot sail his ring-prowed ship across the sea during the winter (1127b–36a). The repeated pairing of the same ship-compound and *īs*-derived terms (*īsiġ* and *īs-ġebind*) in 32b–3a and 1131–3a seems to be another detail deliberately designed by the poet, in order to piece together two seafaring scenes (Scyld’s ship-funeral and Hengest’s voyage) one thousand lines apart.

In the passage above are two short expressions with assonance. One is ‘h**olm** st**orme wēoll**’ (‘the sea welled with storm’, 1131b), somewhat reminiscent of the

previously discussed ‘fl**ōd** bl**ōde wēol**’ (1422a) and ‘fl**ōd** bl**ōd** ġew**ōd**’ in *Exodus* 463b (see Chapter One). The other expression is ‘**w**on **w**iþ **w**inde’ (‘struggled with wind’, *Beowulf* 1132a), which contains back-linked alliteration on *w*, perhaps producing a sound effect imitating the winds in the natural world.

To sum up, in this passage, the poet seems to have drawn largely from particular religious models (including *Genesis A*) for diction for ships and seafaring. The appositive style and the rich nautical diction employed in *Beowulf* 26–52 in turn constitute a significant influence on later poets, who also have a keen interest in nautical themes (see Chapters Three and Four). By deploying recurrent nautical terms and parallel phrasing, the poet skilfully creates a cohesive network of maritime motifs, which supports the poem’s thematic and structural integrity.

There seems to be echoes between the ship-funeral (26–52) with other important events in the poem, such as Scyld’s arrival on a boat, and Beowulf’s barrow. The poet’s expression of ‘tō ġesċæp-hwīle’ (‘at the fated time’, ‘at appointed time’, 26b) which refers to the time of Scyld’s death, echoes the mysterious arrival of the infant Scyld from the water to the lordless Danes narrated at the beginning of *Beowulf*. It has been long observed that the name Scyld (‘shield’) Scefing (‘the son of Scef [Sceaf]’ or ‘of the sheaf’) is closely tied with agricultural myths, especially the veneration of sheaf in England and Europe during the pre-Christian period, and that the thirteenth-century *Abingdon Chronicle* has a similar account of monks demarcating a disputed land by letting a shield with sheaf drift along the waterway, which happens during Edmund’s

reign (941–6).[46] As the surviving account narrates, the monks place a sheaf of corn on a shield 'in nauicula' ('on a small boat'), and let the vessel sail on its own, which miraculously floats against the current, and settles the territorial disputes by delineating a flooded island for the monastery.[47] The two Christianised versions of the agricultural myth surrounding the name Scyld Scefing bear several similarities. Both vessels navigate of their own accord. Both carry sheaf and shield, literally or figuratively. In both stories, the 'sheaf on a shield' saves the people from adversities.

Moreover, the mysterious appearance of the infant Scyld (with treasures on an oarless boat) has many recognisable analogues to heroes in ancient and medieval legends (such as Bergelmir, Perseus, and Pekko) and in the Bible (such as Moses in Exodus II.3–5).[48] The presence of oarless treasure-ships marks both the arrival and the departure of the legendary overlord Scyld Scefing in the self-contained passage in *Beowulf* 1–52, and contextually hints at a recognisable motif in biblical literature and pagan myths.

A second echo of Scyld's funeral-ship in *Beowulf* is the treasure-ship of Sigemund (884b–7). In a digressive passage, a member of Hrothgar's court praises Beowulf by relating in verse Sigemund's feat of killing a dragon, 'hordes hyrde' ('keeper of the hoard', 887a), and plundering its treasures. As the poet describes, Sigemund loads the *bēag-hord* ('hoard of rings', 894a; unique) and the 'beorhte frætwa' ('shining treasures', 896b) onto his ship:

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[46] Leneghan, *Dynastic Drama*, p. 146; K4, p. 111; North, *Origins of Beowulf*, pp. 36–9; Richard North, *Heathen Gods in Old English Literature* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 182–94. For the Latin text and an English translation of the passage, see Orchard, *Companion*, pp.102–3. See also Chadwick, *Origin*, pp. 274–95.
[47] Orchard, *Companion*, pp. 102–3.
[48] Fulk, 'Eddic Analogue'; Belden, 'Scyld Scefing'; Chadwick, *Origin*, pp. 274–95.

[…] **sǣ-bāt** ġehlēod,
bær **on bearm sċipes** beorhte frætwa,
Wælses eafera; […] (895b–7a)

('[…] the son of Wæls loaded the **sea-boat**, brought the shining treasures **into the bosom of the ship**; […]')

As before in *Beowulf* 33–5, the two ship-terms adopt the same order, with the rare compound *sǣ-bāt* followed by the simplex *sċip* in the repeated expression '**on bearm sċipes**' (896a). Apart from '**on bearm sċipes**', the two passages (32–8 and 884b–7) share a similar phraseology when referring to 'treasure', *bēag*(-) and *frætwa*. The expression 'beorhte frætwa' ('shining treasures', 896b) first appears in 214b, in Beowulf's first ship-voyage to Denmark (see 2.4 below).[49] The involvement of a ship in Sigemund's feat indicates the distance of the hero's voyage. This also implies that the treasures on Scyld's funeral-ship originate from the spoils of war, either from tribal conflicts or heroic deeds.

The third analogue comprises a longer passage, and laments the tragic blood-feud between the Half-Danes and the Frisians in the Finnsburg episode. Following the failure of a marriage alliance, the two tribes resort to armed conflicts. The outbreak of hostilities results in the funeral of Hildeburh's kin (1107–24), and the queen's return to her home-country of Denmark on a booty-laden ship (1154–9a). The funeral of Hildeburh's kin, which involves cremation, is recognised as similar to the funerals of both Scyld and Beowulf.[50] The Half-Danes seem to take back with them all they can

[49] Elsewhere in the corpus, the collocation is found in *Daniel* 710a, *Christ C* 1635a, *Elene* 88b, and *Riddle 12* [14] 7b. In the three religious texts, the phrase points to the Christian faith or the Cross as spiritual wealth; in the *Riddle*, it refers to the decorations on a drinking or musical horn. A ship-term *mere-hengest* (see Introduction and Chapter Four) occurs in one line before 'frætwum beorhtne' in *Riddle 12* [14]. See Orchard, *Commentary*, pp. 358–60.
[50] Owen-Crocker, *Four Funerals*, p. 1. See further Richard North, 'Tribal Loyalties in the Finnsburh Fragment and Episode', *LSE* 21 (1990), 13–43.

find in King Finn's royal hall, including their kinswoman Hildeburh. Ironically, the queen's sea-voyage echoes that of Scyld Scefing with an undertone of sorrow. The death of Finn and the return of Hildeburh epitomise the fall of a once-prosperous royal house, and mark the rupture of the line of dynastic succession in Frisia.[51] Hildeburh is taken back to her tribe along with the rest of the booty, portrayed as a tradeable luxury item instead of a distinguished noblewoman:

> Sċēotend Sċyldinga **tō sċypon feredon**
> **eal in-ġesteald** eorð-cyninges,
> swylċe hīe æt Finnes hām findan meahton
> **siġla**, **searo-ġimma**. Hīe on sǣ-lāde
> drihtliċe wīf **tō Denum feredon**,
> **lǣddon tō lēodum**. (1154–9a)

> ('The shooters of the Scyldings **carried all household-properties** of the earthly king **to the ships**, **the jewels and crafted gems** as they might find at Finn's home. On the sea-voyage they **carried** the noble woman **to the Danes**, **brought her to her people**.')

There are two chiastic structures within this passage. The first is 'tō scypon feredon' — treasure-term ('eal in-ġesteald') — treasure-terms ('siġla', 'searo-ġimma') — 'tō Denum feredon'. This includes an envelope structure spanning the whole passage, marked by 'feredon', preterite indicative of verb *ferian* ('carry'): 'tō scypon feredon' (1154b) and 'tō Denum feredon' (1158b). The last phrase 'tō Denum feredon' is part of the second chiastic structure: in the last two half-lines (1158b–9a), the poet applies 'tō Denum feredon, lǣddon tō lēodum', namely prepositional phrase ('tō' + place) — verb — verb — ('tō' + place). After the battle-victory, just as Scyld's funeral-ship and Sigemund's sea-boat, the Half-Danes' ships are decked with trophies of all kinds, the

[51] Leneghan, *Dynastic Drama*, pp. 70–1.

captured queen included. The poet uses only one term for 'ship', *sċip* (1154b), but employs three terms for 'treasure' through variation: first a unique compound *in-ġestealdland* ('household-property', 1155a); then a simplex *siġle* ('jewel', 'necklace', 1157a, 1200a, and 3163b), a term mainly used in prose texts and glosses; and finally *searu-ġimm* ('crafted gems', 1157a, 2749b, and 3102b) which is attested seven times. The poet probably aims to emphasise the queen's degradation as a 'treasure' on board rather than her past identity as a venerable royal member (such as Scyld).

The fourth analogue, which is Beowulf's funeral, or more precisely, his barrow, seems part of the poet's deliberate envelope-patterning. It has been noted that the magnificent ship-funeral of Scyld Scefing forms a heightened contrast to the ominous funeral of Beowulf at the end of the poem (3137–82).[52] Whilst the departure of Scyld's funeral-ship represents a dynamic beginning of a prosperous ancestral society, the entombment of Beowulf under earth not only signifies the end of Beowulf's life-voyage, but also foretells the devastation of this once-thriving kingdom.

Both Scyld's ship and Beowulf's barrow are emblems of the heroes' impregnable prowess and their unchallengeable kingships. Held at the request of the heroes before their deaths, the two funerals largely serve as reverence and *ġemynd* ('remembrance', 'memorial', 2804a). At the grand ceremonies on the funeral sites, the heroes' bodies are placed in majestic structures, with an extravagant display of luxurious funerary goods. Yet Beowulf's barrow is also loaded with weapons and shields, just like a ship setting out for a sea battle. Both the funeral-ship and the barrow are positioned in the margin

[52] Orchard, *Companion*, pp. 91–2; Niles, 'Ring Composition', p. 930; Tonsfeldt, 'Ring Structure', p. 451; Hieatt, 'Envelope Patterns', pp. 256 and 260; Leyerle, 'Interlace Structure', p. 14; Bonjour, *Digressions*, pp. 9–10.

of the kingdom by the seaside. Scyld's ship stops 'æt hȳðe' ('at harbour', 32a), the boundary between the known and unknown, then sails into the deep water (42a, 46a, and 48b–9a), the unmapped realm to human world. Beowulf's barrow is located 'æt brimes nōsan' ('on a cape by the sea', 2804b), 'on Hrones Næsse' ('on Whale's Ness', 2805b and 3136b). Although Beowulf's body is cremated and later buried, the choice of placing the barrow on a promontory by the sea derives from Beowulf's own decision. The costal location is chosen so that the seafarers might easily recognise the mound as 'Bīowulfes Biorh' ('Beowulf's Barrow', 2807a). This deliberation is stressed again in 3158.

Beowulf's barrow is itself depicted akin to a ship. It is '**hēah ond brād**' ('**high and broad**', 3157b), visually parallel to the towering funeral-ship of Scyld and Noah's Ark, human shelters promising peace and safety from robbery, blood-shedding, or any coming strife. There lies, however, a difference between Beowulf's barrow and the ring-prowed funeral-ship. Except for its height and volume, the poet does not provide any description of the exterior features of the barrow. There seems to exist an association between this mentally constructed ship and the real-world ship-burials and burial-mounds with ship-settings in England and Northern Europe.[53] Though separate images, Scyld's funeral-ship and Beowulf's barrow unavoidably undergo superimposition and fuse into a composite figure strikingly akin to the Gokstad, Oseberg, and Sutton Hoo funeral-ships: a great burial-mound encompassing a funeral-ship laden with the bodies of high-ranking people, and with weapons, armours, and treasures looted from different

[53] See Orchard, *Cassell's Dictionary*, pp. 21–2 28–9, 59–60, 126–7, and 155.

parts of the world. It is this envisioning of the ship that strengthens the structural connection between 26–52 and the closing lines in *Beowulf*.

Various analogues of Scyld's arrival and departure are also evident in biblical stories, Latin accounts, and Norse legends, all associated with ships. A case in point is the royal lineage from Noah to Scyld who is sometimes recognised as a descendent of Sceaf, the fourth son of Noah. According to some surviving royal genealogies, Sceaf is born in the Ark. The West Saxon Genealogical Regnal List in *ASC* 855 (for 857) traces the bloodline of King Æthelwulf of Wessex back to Sceaf described as the Ark-born son of Noah; and similar records are also mentioned by post-Conquest authors such as William of Malmesbury (*c*. 1095–*c*. 1143), who willingly accept the Scyld — Sceaf (Scef) — Noah (Ark) association.[54] Though no Norse evidence indicates the coming of Scyld or Sceaf on a boat, the *Chronicle* (*c.* 978) by Æthelweard (died *c*. 998) lists this detail. Æthelweard, drawing on a now-lost version of *ASC*, directly identifies Scyld as son of Sceaf, and gives a parallel account of the mystic arrival of Sceaf on a boat, regarding him as a fatherless child:

> Ipse Scef cum **uno dromone** aduectus est in insula oceani que dicitur Scani, **armis circundatus**, eratque ualde **recens puer**, et ab incolis illius terrae **ignotus**. Attamen ab eis suscipitur, et ut familiarem diligenti animo eum custodierunt, et post **in regem eligunt**; de cuius prosapia ordinem trahit Aðulf rex.[55]
>
> ('And Sceaf was brought with **one light ship** to the island in the

[54] Anlezark, *Water and Fire*, pp. 245 and 262–73; Orchard, *Companion*, pp. 101–2; Hill, 'The Myth', p. 383; Chadwick, *Origin*, p. 274. For a collection of relevant texts, see Bruce, *Scyld and Scef*, pp. 97–8, 110–11, and 153–7. On later medieval authors' corrections, or replacements of Scef with legitimate sons of Noah in the Ark, see pp. 48–9.

[55] For the Latin text, see Alistair Campbell, ed., *The Chronicle of Æthelweard* (London, 1962), p. 32. On the source of the *Chronicle*, see for example Daniel Anlezark, *Constructing the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* (Cambridge, 2025), p. 36; Wojtek Jezierski, '*Æthelweardus redivivus*', *EME* 13 (2005), 159–78; Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England, c. 550–c. 1307* (Ithaca, NY, 1974), pp. 35–6 and 42–6; Campbell, ed., *The Chronicle of Æthelweard*, xvii–xviii. See also Anlezark, *Water and Fire*, pp. 246–7.

> ocean called Skaane, **surrounded by arms**, and was **a very young boy**, and **unknown** to the inhabitants of that land. Nevertheless, he was received by them, and they raised him like kindred with attentive care, and afterwards they **chose** him **as king**; from whose family King Æthelwulf draws his lineage.')

Æthelweard frequently uses the Latin term *dromon* ('light ship'; ultimately drawn from Greek), suggesting that Sceaf comes to the Danes by a tiny boat without oars.[56] The description in this passage evidently parallels the beginning of *Beowulf*: a fatherless young boy ('recens puer') arrives by a light ship ('uno dromone'); no one among the Danes knows his mystic origin ('ignotus'), but he is taken good care of and finally is chosen to be their king ('in regem eligunt').

Another similar account is the ship-funeral of the British Saint Gildas, which is perhaps the closest analogue to Scyld's ship-funeral.[57] This record is found in a surviving ninth-century prose text, the Latin *Vita* ('Life') of Saint Gildas written by an anonymous monk of Rhuys. When Saint Gildas feels the coming of death, he commands his followers to place his body onto a boat, and let this oarless boat float along the water, so that God will decide the final resting place of the ship:

> Tollite me et **in navim** deponentes supponite humeris meis **lapidem** illum, super quem recumbere solitus eram: nemo autem ex vobis **in navi** mecum remaneat, sed impellentes eam **in mare permittite** ire, quo **Deus voluerit**. **Providebit** autem Dominus **sepulturae** mihi **locum**, ubi fuerit ei placitum.[58]
>
> ('Lift me up and put me down **in the ship**, place that stone under my **shoulders**, on which I was accustomed to repose: but let none of you stay **in the ship** with me, but **push it out into the sea**, whither **God wishes**. And the Lord will **provide a place** for my **interment**, where it shall please him.')

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[56] On *dromon*, see Campbell, ed., *Chronicle of Æthelweard*, p. xlvi.
[57] Angus Cameron, 'Saint Gildas and Scyld Scefing', *NM* 70 (1969), 240–6.
[58] Quotations of the *Life of Gildas* are taken from Hugh Williams, trans., *Two Lives of Gildas by a Monk of Ruys, and Caradoc of Llancarfan* (London, 1899), p. 56.

This passage demonstrates many similarities with the funeral of Scyld Scefing. Both Saint Gildas and Scyld command their peoples to conduct ship-funerals for themselves with detailed instructions: their bodies to be brought onboard; specific items to be placed by the corpses (earthly treasures for Scyld, and a plain stone for contemplation and rest for Saint Gildas); no presence of followers (or human sacrifice) on ships; and funeral-ships to be pushed out onto the water, without any steersman. Most importantly, both voyages of the funeral-ships are said to be divinely steered. In the prose *Vita*, although many people want to seek the saint's body, the ship sinks into the sea by God's will ('nutu Dei nauis cum sancto corpore demersa est in profundum maris'), but later the ship, along with the saint's unharmed body, shows up near an oratory and a small river, both in honour of the Cross.[59]

The Norse legends likewise bear witness to ship-funerals akin to Scyld's, including those of the Norse god Baldr and the sea-king Haki. The death of Baldr is depicted in a thirteenth-century account, *Gylfaginning* ('The Beguiling of Gylfi'), the first part of *Prose Edda* written by Icelandic scholar Snorri Sturluson (1179–1241):

> **Hringhorni** hét **skip** Baldrs. **Hann var allra skipa mestr**. Hann vildu goðin fram setja ok gera þar á bálfǫr Baldrs. En **skipit** gekk hvergi fram. Þá var sent í Jǫtunheima eptir gýgi þeiri er Hyrrokkin hét. […] Þá gekk Hyrrokkin á **framstafn** nǫkkvans ok hratt fram í fyrsta viðbragði svá at eldr hraut ór hlunnunum ok lǫnd ǫll skulfu. […] Þá var borit út á **skipit** lík Baldrs, ok er þat sá kona hans Nanna Nepsdóttir, þá sprakk hon af harmi ok dó. Var hon borin á bálit ok slegit í eldi. Þá stóð Þórr at ok vígði bálit með Mjǫllni. (*Gylfaginning*)[60]
>
> ('**Hringhorni** was the name of Baldr's **ship**. **It was the biggest of**

[59] Williams, trans., *Two Lives of Gildas*, p. 58.
[60] The Old Norse text is taken from Anthony Faulkes, ed., *Snorri Sturluson: Edda, Prologue and Gylfaginning*, 2nd ed. (London, 2005), p. 46.

> **all ships**. This the Æsir planned to launch and perform on it Baldr's funeral. But the **ship** refused to move. So they sent to Giantland for a giantess called Hyrrokkin […] Then Hyrrokkin went to **the prow of the boat** and pushed it out with the first touch so that flame flew from the rollers and all lands quaked […] Then Baldr's body was carried out on to the **ship**, and when his wife Nanna Nep's daughter saw this she collapsed with grief and died. She was carried on to the pyre and it was set fire to. Then Thor stood by and consecrated the pyre with Miollnir.')[61]

The ship of Baldr Hringhorni ('ring-horned', 'with curved prow') is named after its most visible physical feature, the curved prow. It is said to be the biggest ship on earth. This special compound for Baldr's ship, Hringhorni is coined in a way similar to *hringēd-stefna* and *hringē-naca* in *Beowulf*. In addition to this compound, Snorri employs two more compounds relevant to 'ship': *skip* ('ship') and *framstafn* ('prow'). In the story, at first this ship refuses to move. It seems that it senses the death of its master, and grieves for the loss, as if it has a mind of its own, which is reminiscent of Grani, Sigurðr's horse, who mourns its master's death.[62] When the giantess kicks the prow of Hringhorni, and tries to push it, the ship is on fire, but stays still. When Baldr's body is finally placed amidships, Thor consecrates the body with his hammer Mjǫllnir, and starts performing the ritual. Similar to the funerals in *Beowulf*, there is a woman (Baldr's wife) keening for the dead. Furthermore, treasure is still inseparable to the ritual, along with sacrifice that involves humans (Baldr's wife and a dwarf named Lit, who is killed and thrown into the ship-pyre by Thor) and an animal (Baldr's horse), a common pre-Christian funerary offering in the British Isles and Northern Europe.[63]

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[61] Translation of *Gylfaginning* is taken from Faulkes, trans., *Snorri Sturluson: Edda* (London, 1987), p. 49.
[62] Orchard, *Cassell's Dictionary*, p. 60.
[63] See further Matthias S. Toplak, 'Ritual Killings as Resource Complex in the Viking Age Funeral Ceremony', *Human Sacrifice and Value: Revisiting the Limits of Sacred Violence from an Anthropological and Archaeological Perspective*, ed. Matthew J. Walsh et al. (New York, NY, 2024), pp. 300–19; Davide M. Zori, 'Viking Death: Pre-Christian Rites of Passage and Funerary Feasting', *The Routledge Handbook of Death and the Afterlife*, ed. Candi

Alongside the horse is its harness, which implies that Baldr will ride his horse, and sail his treasure-ship in the afterlife:

> En at þessi brennu sótti margs konar þjóð […] Óðinn lagði á bálit **gullhring** þann er Draupnir heitir. Honum fylgði síðan sú náttúra at hina níundu hverja nótt drupu af honum átta gullhringar jafnhǫfgir. Hestr Baldrs var leiddr á bálit með ǫllu reiði.[64]
>
> ('This burning was attended by beings of many different kinds […] Odin laid on the pyre a **gold arm-ring** called Draupnir. It afterwards had the property that every ninth night there dripped from it eight gold rings of the same weight. Baldr's horse was led on to the pyre with all its harness.')[65]

Similar to the cursed burial-treasures from the dragon's hoard in *Beowulf*, the gold ring Draupnir is imbued with magic. Another Norse analogue is found in the account of the sea-king Haki's ship-funeral in *Ynglinga Saga*, a text about Norwegian kings often attributed to Snorri.[66] Haki's death and funeral seem to bear some characteristics of those of Scyld and Beowulf. Haki fights bravely his enemies, slays King Eiríkr, and is finally wounded badly in the last battle:

> Gekk Haki konungr fram svá hart, at hann felldi alla þá, er honum váru næstir, ok at lykðum felldi hann Eirík konung ok hjó niðr **merki** þeira bræðra. Þá flýði Jǫrundr konungr til skipa ok allt lið hans. Haki konungr fekk svá stór sár, at hann sá, at hans lífdagar myndi eigi langir verða. Þá lét hann taka **skeið**, er hann átti, ok lét **hlaða dauðum mǫnnum ok vápnum**, lét þá flytja út til **hafs** ok leggja **stýri** í lag ok draga upp **segl**, en leggja eld í tyrvið ok gera **bál á skipinu**. Veðr stóð af landi. Haki var þá at kominn dauða eða dauðr, er hann var lagiðr á bálit. **Sigldi skipit síðan loganda út í haf, ok var þetta allfrægt lengi síðan**. (*Ynglinga Saga*, ch. 23)[67]
>
> ('King Haki advanced so strongly that he killed all those who got

K. Cann (New York, NY, 2018), pp. 327–41; Orchard, *Cassell's Dictionary*, pp. 21–2, 59, 95, 135–6, 138, 154–5, and 158–9; Howard Williams, 'An Ideology of Transformation: Cremation Rites and Animal Sacrifice in Early Anglo-Saxon England', *The Archaeology of Shamanism*, ed. Neil S. Price (London, 2001), pp. 193–212.

[64] Faulkes, ed., *Snorri Sturluson: Edda, Prologue and Gylfaginning*, pp. 46–7.

[65] Faulkes, trans., *Snorri Sturluson: Edda*, pp. 49–50.

[66] Orchard, *Cassell's Dictionary*, pp. 78–9 and 186.

[67] The text is taken from Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson, ed., *Heimskringla I*, 3rd ed. (Reykjavik, 1979), p. 45.

> nearest to him, and in the end he brought down King Eiríkr and cut down the brothers' **standard**. Then King Jǫrundr fled to the ships with all his troop. King Haki was so badly wounded that he realised that his days were numbered. Then he had a ***skeið*** ['warship'] taken that he owned, and **had it loaded with dead men and weapons**, then had it taken out to **sea** and had the **rudder** put in place and the **sail** hoisted, and resinous fir-wood set fire to and a **pyre** made **on the ship**. The wind was blowing off the land. Haki was at the point of death or already dead when he was laid on the pyre. **Then the ship sailed blazing out to sea, and that was very famous for a long time afterwards**.')[68]

The standard ('merki') taken down by Haki is a symbol of transfer of royal power, marking Haki's victory over his enemy. The association between the standard and the tribal lord is reminiscent of Scyld and his golden banner in *Beowulf* 26–52. Like Scyld and Beowulf who die at the appointed time, and command their thegns to prepare subsequent funerals, Haki orders his warship ('skeið') to be loaded with corpses and weapons ('hlaða dauðum mǫnnum ok vápnum'). The fully loaded treasure-ship is then ignited by the pyre on the deck ('bál á skipinu'), following the common Norse custom, with rudder ('stýri') and sail ('segl') made ready for the journey. In the end, the ship on fire sets out on the sea ('hafs'), which becomes a long-standing impression across generations ('**sigldi skipit síðan loganda út í haf, ok var þetta allfrægt lengi síðan**'). These monumental funerals of Haki, Scyld, and Beowulf do not simply end with the heroes' bodies in tombs. They transform into enduring symbols to immortalise the heroes' lifelong fame, brave deeds, royal identity, and material wealth.

Also regarded as a remote analogue to Scyld's ship-funeral, the Rūs' (Rūsiyyah) nobleman's ship-funeral is witnessed by the tenth-century Arabic traveller Aḥmad ibn

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[68] The translation is taken from Alison Finlay and Anthony Faulkes, trans., *Snorri Sturluson: Heimskringla Volume I, The Beginnings to Óláfr Tryggvason*, 2nd ed. (London, 2016), pp. 25–6.

Faḍlān.[69] The Rūs' people are generally believed to be a Slavicised Swedish tribe of merchants trading along the banks of River Volga.[70] According to Ibn Faḍlān's *Risālah* ('Epistle'), the Rūs' folk perform a ship-funeral of a dead nobleman in a cold season (probably winter), with many details similar to those of the funerals in *Beowulf*:

> 'They had placed him in his grave […] **for ten days** […] I noticed that the boat had been beached and that it was supported by four *khadhank* props. These props were surrounded by what looked like huge structures of wood. The boat had been hauled on top of the wood. The Rūsiyyah approached, going to and fro around the boat uttering words […] They produced a couch and placed it on the boat […] An **aged woman** whom they called the Angel of Death turned up […] the **coldness** of the climate […] They carried him inside the **yurt** that was on the ship and rested him on a quilt, propping him up with the cushions. They placed the alcohol, fruit, and basil […] bread, meat, and onions […] a dog […] **all his weaponry** […] They made **two horses gallop into a sweat**, cut them into pieces with a sword […] two cows […] a cock and a hen […] female slave […] The **deceased's nearest male relative** […] set fire to the wooden structures under the boat. The people came forward with sticks and firewood. They each carried a lighted stick that they threw on top of the wood. […] The flames grew higher and higher and blazed fiercely. […] The Rūsiyyah then built a structure like **a round hillock over the beached boat**, and placed a large piece of *khadhank* in the middle. They **wrote the man's name and the name of the king** of the Rūsiyyah on it. Then they left.'[71]

Common features between this funeral and Beowulf's build up to a long list: the likely winter season (*Beowulf* 33a), ten days of preparation for the final-resting place (3159b), a funeral-pyre (3137–8), a barrow or hillock (3156–8), a large wooden monument

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[69] See, for example, H. M. Smyser, 'Ibn Faḍlān's Account of the Rūs with Some Commentary and Some Allusions to *Beowulf*', *Franciplegius: Medieval and Linguistic Studies in Honor of Francis Peabody Magoun, Jr.*, ed. Jess B. Bessinger and Robert P. Creed (New York, NY, 1965), pp. 92–119.

[70] See further Wladyslaw Duczko, *Viking Rus: Studies on the Presence of Scandinavians in Eastern Europe* (Leiden, 2004).

[71] The quoted translation of the Arabic text is extracted from James E. Montgomery, trans., *Mission to the Volga by Aḥmad ibn Faḍlān* (New York, NY, 2017), pp. 35–8. Ibn Faḍlān's description of the whole funeral-ritual is lengthy; only the most relevant details are kept in the citation in this thesis. For an alternative version of English translation, see Paul Lunde and Caroline Stone, trans., *Ibn Fadlān and the Land of Darkness: Arab Travellers in the Far North* (London, 2012).

placed by or on the mound (*bēacen* ‘monument’, 3160a; ‘banner’, 2777a; the meaning of ‘monument’ usually appears in funerary inscriptions), horse march or gallop (3169–70), a mourning crowd (3148b–9), a female lead participant (3150–5a), funerary goods (3163–8), and a male relative (Wiglaf).[72] As regards Scyld’s funeral, the list includes the mourning crowd (49b–50a), funerary goods (36b–44a), a beacon of noble identity (the golden banner in 47b), and most importantly, the funeral-ship itself.

As both Ibn Faḍlān’s account and *Beowulf* 26–52 reveal, the ship provides substantial space for ritualistic performance in a high-status ship-funeral. The *Beowulf*-poet and Ibn Faḍlān, however, hold opposite attitudes towards the same funerary tradition. The traveller’s seemingly realistic narrative focuses on the otherness of the ship-funeral. The undertone reflects the traveller’s moral contempt for the mortuary practice of an alien people in an alien region, because their religious customs are totally alien to Islamic practice. The Rūs' people, together with the funeral-ship, are portrayed as primitive, barbarous, and morally corrupt. It is on this funeral ship that lurid heathen rituals take place, including cremation, inebriation, slaughters of human and animal lives, rape, and group orgy. Contrary to the demoniacal representation of the Rūs nobleman’s funeral-ship, the passage in *Beowulf* 26–52 epitomises a less critical undertone towards values and customs that the poet imagines for his culture’s heathen past. By reframing the ship-funeral in a typically Christian tradition, the poet allows the audience to valorise ancestral heritage whilst understanding Scyld’s treasure-ship through a new, Christian lens.

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[72] *DOE*, **s.v.** ‘*bēacen*’, definition 3.b: ‘monument, freq. in inscriptions’.

2.4 Beowulf's sea-voyages

In addition to the treasure-ships of Scyld, Sigemund, and the Half-Danes, Beowulf's ship is described as a treasure-ship with typical Germanic features. There are strong affinities between the two passages about Beowulf's arrival in the land of the Danes (198b–306a) and his subsequent departure after killing Grendel and the monster's mother (1880b–1921a).[73] In terms of structure, the two passages form an envelope-pattern covering nearly half of the poem.[74] In this section, I examine the two passages respectively, and then compare their inner connections as well as the literary parallels in relevant Old English poems. As indicators of the beginning and ending of Beowulf's mission in Denmark, the two ship-passages drive the storyline forward and form the first half of the poem.[75] The paired seafaring narrative also demonstrates the *Beowulf*-poet's highly selective and creative phraseology for ships and seafaring, which situates not only the ship-passages but also the whole poem in a wider literary context.

2.4.1 The arrival

The poet's description of Beowulf's first sea-voyage can be divided into 198b–238 and 294–303a. Within these relatively short passages, the *Beowulf*-poet employs a dazzling

[73] Hieatt, 'Envelope Patterns', pp. 256 and 263–64. See further Owen-Crocker, *Four Funerals*, pp. 133–6; Tonsfeldt, 'Ring Structure'; Leyerle, 'Interlace Structure'.
[74] Hieatt, 'Envelope Patterns', p. 260.
[75] One of the most-contested structural issues of *Beowulf* is whether the structure of the poem is bipartite or tripartite, or neither. See for example Orchard, *Companion*, ch. 3; Shippey, 'Structure and Unity'. While many scholars tend to see the issue as an either-or problem, Kathryn Hume points out a possibility of viewing the structure of the poem as both bipartite and tripartite. The tripartite structure is based on the hero's actions of killing the three monsters (Grendel, Grendel's Mother, and the Dragon), while the bipartite structure is based on the hero's lifecycle (youth and old age), in 'The Theme and Structure of *Beowulf*', *SP* 72 (1975), 1–27. See also Richard North, 'Gold and the Heathen Polity in *Beowulf*', *Gold in der europäischen Heldensage*, ed. Heike Sahm, Wilhelm Heizmann, and Victor Millet (Berlin, 2019), pp. 72–114, esp. 95 and 111, who argues that *Beowulf* 'is but one, a continuum'.

display of vocabulary to refer to his ship, including both simplexes and compounds. From 198b to 238, the poet mentions the ship ten times, with nine different words. First, in 198b–9a, Beowulf orders a good 'wave-glider' to be built for the mission: 'hēt him **ȳð-lidan gōdne** ġeġyrwan' ('he commanded a good wave-glider to be made ready'). Then after preparation, the ship sets out, and commences this *wil-sīþ* ('desired journey', 216a):[76]

Fīftȳna sum
sund-wudu sōhte; seċġ wīsade,
laĝu-cræftiġ mon land-ġemyrċu.
Fyrst forð ġewāt; **flota wæs on ȳðum,**
bāt under beorge. Beornas ġearwe
on **stefn stigon**. **S**trēamas wundon,
sund wið **s**ande. Seċġas bæron
on bearm nacan beorhte frætwe,
gūð-searo ġeatoliċ; guman ūt sċufon,
weras on wil-sīð **wudu bundenne**.
Ġe**w**āt þā ofer **w**æġ-holm **w**inde ġe**f**ȳsed,
flota fāmī-heals **fuĝle ġelīcost**,
oð þæt ymb ān-tīd ōþres dōĝres
wunden-stefna ġewaden hæfde,
þæt ðā līðende land ġesāwon,
brim-clifu **b**līcan, **b**eorgas **s**tēape,
sīde **s**æ-næssas; þā wæs sund liden,
eoletes æt ende. Þanon up hraðe
Wedera lēode on wang **stigon**,
sæ-wudu sældon […] (207b–26a)

('As one of fifteen, [Beowulf] sought the **sea-wood**; a warrior guided the way, a sea-crafty man, to the boundaries of the land. Time passed on; **the ship was on the waves, the boat under the cliff**. Men eagerly **climbed onto the prow**. The streams

[76] See further David R. Evans, 'The Sequence of Events in *Beowulf*, ll. 207–216', *MÆ* 32 (1963), 214–16, who proposes a theory involving dinghies in the departure scene: Beowulf's ship is anchored off-shore; the warriors board the ship via dinghies; the navigators arrive at the prow, and steer the ship back to the shore; then the crew load the ship via gangplank (*bolca*); finally they push the ship off the sand to depart. Evans also proposes a difference between *flota* and *bāt*: the former refers to a warship-type vessel, and the latter refers to a small skiff or dinghy. For counter-argument, see Stanley B. Greenfield, '*Beowulf* 207b–28: Narrative and Descriptive Art', *N&Q* 13 (1966), 86–90, at 88, who compares the departure passage in *Beowulf* with that in *Brunanburh* 32b–4, denies the involvement of dinghies, and argues that the prow is the closest part to the shore, where the Viking warriors enter the ship in *Brunanburh*. Fry also finds Evans' differentiation of *bāt* and *flota* untenable, and believes that the ship is grounded in the sand with an anchor, in 'Launching Ships', pp. 62–3 and 65–6.

> eddied, the sea against the sand. The warriors bore shining treasures, splendid war-gear, **into the bosom of the ship**; men shoved out, warriors on their desired journey, on **the wood-braced ship**. Then, blown by the wind, the **foamy-necked ship** departed, over the ocean's expanse, **most like a bird**, until in due time of the following day **the ship with curved prow** had journeyed on, so that the voyagers saw land, the shining sea-cliffs, the steep mountains, the broad sea-promontories; then the waves were passed, the voyage at an end. From there quickly the men of the Geats **climbed** onto the plain, **moored the sea-wood** […].')

The envelope-patterning is signified not only by two *-wudu*-compounds, *sund-wudu* (208a) and *sǣ-wudu* (226a), but also by the same verb that indicates embarking and disembarking a ship: *stīgan* in 'on **stefn stigon**' ('**climbed** onto the **prow**', 212a) and 'on wang **stigon, sǣ-wudu** sǣldon' ('**climbed** onto the plain, moored the **sea-wood**', 225b–6a).[77] After Beowulf and his thegns reach land, the poet uses another expression, '**brontne ċēol**' ('**towering ship**', 238b), when Hrothgar's coastguard first speaks of Beowulf's ship. The poet also creates a chiastic structure in the passage above: *sund-**wudu*** — (***flota*** — ***stefn***) — '**wudu** bundenne' — (***flota*** — *wunden-**stefna***) — *sǣ-**wudu***.

The nine ship-terms in 198b–238 include: *ȳþ-lida* (198b), *sund-wudu* (208a), *flota* ('ship', 210b and 218a), *bāt* (211a), *naca* (214a), 'wudu bundenne' (216b), *wunden-stefna* (220a), *sǣ-wudu* (226a), and *ċēol* (238b). The term *sċip-herġe* ('ship-army', 'fleet', 243a) appears in the coastguard's speech, who mentions a possibility of an intruding naval force, instead of addressing Beowulf's ship: 'þē on land Dena lāðra nǣniġ mid sċip-herġe sċeðþan ne meahte' ('so that no enemy could intrude into the land

[77] On the expression 'on stefn stigon', see Crosby, 'Two Notes', p. 605, who finds potential association between 'on stefn stigon', the Old Norse compound *stafn-búar* ('forecastle-men'), and the Viking ships with raised decks at both the bow and prow, and suggests a possible translation as 'in the prow' or 'on the forecastle'.

of the Danes with a fleet', 242–3b).[78] Besides the ship-terms, the poet further employs descriptions such as 'ȳþ-lidan gōdne' ('good wave-glider', 198b–9a), 'beorhte frætwe, gūð-searo ġeatolic' ('shining treasures, finely-equipped war-gears', 214b–15a) and 'fāmī-heals fuġle ġelīcost' ('foamy-necked, most like a bird', 218).[79] The foamy-necked treasure-ship moves as swift as a bird, decked with heroes and treasures. These varied perspectives suggest that the ship has an exceptional quality like that of Beowulf. The poet's skill highlights not only the necessary heroic aura surrounding the legendary figure Beowulf, but also the grandeur of his feat, centred around agility and prowess as well as his ability to crew an expedition.

It seems that the poet tries to avoid using the same word more than once when describing Beowulf's ship. The word *flota* is the only exception, appearing twice in this short passage. Among the nine ship-terms, four are compounds (*ȳþ-lida*, *sund-wudu*, *wunden-stefna*, and *sǣ-wudu*), and five are simplexes (*flota*, *bāt*, *naca*, *wudu*, and *ċēol*). Out of the four compounds, three occur once (*ȳþ-lida*, *wunden-stefna*, and *sǣ-wudu*), all unique to *Beowulf*.[80] Regarding simplexes, more than half of the five words are poetic: *naca* is found only in poetry; when meaning 'ship', *flota* occurs mainly in poetry; and *ċēol* is a word frequently used in poetic contexts.

The sequence of ship-terms in this passage is another vivid example of the poet's strategic utilisation of specifying apposition: *ȳþ-lida* (198b) — *sund-wudu* (208a) —

[78] The compound *sċip-herġe* appears in Old English prose texts much more often than in verse (about sixty times). So far these are only two known occasions in verse, *Beowulf* 243a and *Metre 8* 31a.
[79] The compound *gūþ-searu* ('battle-equipment', 'war-gear') is used only in *Beowulf* 215a and 328a and *Andreas* 127a; *ġeatolīċ* ('finely-equipped') is exclusively shared between *Beowulf* and *Elene*, in *Beowulf* 215a, 308a, 1401a, 1562a, and 2154a and *Elene* 258a and 331a.
[80] Cf. a neuter compound *ȳþ-lid* (see Chapter Four).

flota (210b) — *bāt* (211a) — *naca* (214a) — 'wudu bundenne' (216b) — *flota* (218a) — *wunden-stefna* (220a) — *sǣ-wudu* (226a) — *ċēol* (238b). The first term, *ȳþ-lida*, and the last term, *ċēol*, seem separated from the rest of the group, probably because the meaning of *ċēol* as 'ship' is clear, and with *ȳþ-lida* the *Beowulf*-poet seems to play on the image of 'wave-glider', likely implying that Beowulf is a 'good seafarer'. The word *flota* is a 'vague term', with multiple meanings such as 'sailor', 'a sea-going vessel', 'ship', and 'fleet'.[81] Specifically, every time *flota* appears in the text, the next line provides a defining term with some concrete meaning. The first example is *flota* and *bāt* as a pair: '**flota** wæs on ȳðum **bāt** under beorge' ('the **ship** was on the waves, the **boat** under the promontory', 210b–11a).[82] The second example employs a simile (218): '**flota** fāmī-heals **fuġle** ġelīcost' ('the foamy-necked ship most like a bird'). Robinson marks a third example in *Beowulf* 294b–5: '**flotan** ēowerne, nīw-tyrwydne **nacan** on sande' ('your sea-going **vessel**, newly-tarred **ship** on the shore').[83] In both cases, the poet makes the meanings of the word *flota* unmistakably clear. The poetic language, while demonstrating the poet's artistry of diction, also displays change and variety in terms of word-building and creating visual pictures.

Of all the words and expressions used to signify Beowulf's ship, four simplexes (*flota*, *bāt*, *naca*, and *ċēol*) appear in a literal sense to mean 'ship', two words focus on the material of the ship (*sund-wudu* and *sǣ-wudu*), two on the ring-prowed shape of Beowulf's ship ('wudu bundenne' and *wunden-stefna*), and only one word epitomises

[81] Michael Lapidge, '*Beowulf* and Perception', *PBA* 111 (2001), 61–97, at 82.
[82] Lapidge, '*Beowulf* and Perception', p. 82; Robinson, *Appositive Style*, p. 63.
[83] Robinson, *Appositive Style*, p. 63.

an image of speed (*ȳþ-lida*, if the second element is connected to *līdan* 'glide').[84] The *Beowulf*-poet uses *ȳþ-lida* to introduce the ship (198b), before Beowulf sets out his journey: 'hēt him ȳð-lida gōdne ġeġyrwan' (198b–9a). From 198b to 238, the image of Beowulf's ship is gradually clarified and visualised by the varied appellations of the ship. When the poet uses key words, for instance, nearly each key word comes with a modifier: 'flota wæs on ȳðum' (210b), 'bāt under beorge' (211a), 'on bearm nacan' (214a), 'wudu bundenne' (216b), 'flota fāmī-heals' (218a), and 'brontne ċēol' (238b). Among the six examples, four constitute two pairs by the poet's careful patterning. In the above examples, the poet connects the two half-lines, '**flota wæs on ȳðum**' (210b) and '**bāt under beorge**' (211a) by using prepositional phrases along with the varied simplexes (simplex meaning 'ship' + prepositional phrase indicating location). When linking '**wudu bundenne**' (216b) and '**flota fāmī-heals**' (218a), the poet changes the pattern by employing adjectives following the varied simplexes (simplex meaning 'ship' + adjective indicating physical features). Among the six phrases, five are relevant to the shape of the ship or the location such as on the waves, and under the promontory.

Moreover, seven out of the ten occasions where 'ship' appears are specifically chosen to fit into the alliterative scheme, including two lines with double alliteration: '**s**und-wudu **s**ōhte; **s**eċġ wīsade' ('[Beowulf] sought the sea-wood, a man guided [the way]', 208) and '**w**eras on **w**il-sīð **w**udu bundenne' ('man on a desired voyage, the wood-braced ship', 216).[85] As Arthur G. Brodeur states, the *Beowulf*-poet is extremely

[84] I am grateful to Professor Richard North for his comment on *ȳþ-lida*.
[85] Double alliteration is frequently employed in *Beowulf*. See further Thomas A. Bredehoft, *Early English Verse* (Toronto, 2005), pp. 19, 30–1, 47, 60, 134–5; Fulk, *A History*, pp. 217–8; Orchard, 'Artful Alliteration', p. 432; David L. Hoover, *A New Theory of Old English Metre* (New York, NY, 1985), pp. 53–5; A. J. Bliss, *The Metre of Beowulf*, rev. ed. (Oxford, 1967), esp. 37–8, 43, and 91–2.

good at 'grouping together different poetic appellations for a single referent in variations, each appellation expressing one aspect of the referent, so that the sum of the members of the variation presents a total description or characterization'.[86] The poet repeatedly mentions the ship with various appellations within this short passage, especially between 208–20a, when the ship is travelling. The varied ship-terms create an overall image of the ship. It is broad, roomy, and tall; it is undoubtedly a well-made wooden craft, with ring-shaped prow, designed for fast and safe voyages; when it is dashing ahead on the surface of the sea, its momentum breaks the waves into white foams.

Beowulf's ship is linked with the natural environment as it departs from the shore, and most expressions are emphasised by back-linked and (or) double alliteration: 'flota wæs on ȳðum, bāt under beorge' (210b–11a); '**s**trēamas wundon, **s**und wið **s**ande' ('the streams eddied, the sea against the shore', 212b–13a); 'ġe**w**āt þā ofer **w**ǣġ-holm **w**inde ġe**f**ȳsed **f**lota **f**āmī-heals **f**uġle ġelīcost' ('blown by the wind, the foamy-necked ship departed, over the ocean's expanse, most like a bird', 217–18b); and 'land ġesāwon, **b**rim-clifu **b**līcan, **b**eorgas **s**tēape, **s**īde **s**ǣ-næssas' ('[The sea-farers] saw land, the shining sea-cliffs, the steep mountains, the broad sea-promontories', 221b–3a).[87] Apart from the reinforced alliteration in each line, the poet also uses other techniques such as assonance in, for example, the phrase 'w**und**on, s**und** […] s**and**e'. In '**b**rim-clifu **b**līcan, **b**eorgas stēape', the poet applies a similar strategy while depicting the coastal landscape:

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[86] Brodeur, *Art of Beowulf*, p. 41.
[87] The compound *wǣġ-holm* is unique to *Beowulf*. A variation of the *-holm*-compound with the meaning of 'sea' is *sǣ-holm* peculiar to *Andreas* 529b. On back-linked alliteration, see Orchard, 'Artful Alliteration', p. 433.

noun referring to location + adjective as modifier. Now the image of the ship is becoming more concrete compared with the vague term *ȳþ-lida* (198b).

In the second half of Beowulf's first sea-voyage (294b–303a), the poet mentions the hero's ship again when the coastguard finishes his speech, and has the vessel anchored to the shore: '**flotan** ēowerne, **nīw-tyrwydne nacan** on sande' (294b–5) and '**wudu wunden-hals**' ('**ship with curved neck**', 298a). He promises to take good care of Beowulf's ship, and safeguard the vessel, treating it as a treasure-hoard. When Beowulf and his thegns leave the shore, the poet specifically offers a glimpse of what the ship looks like: '**flota stille** bād, seomode **on sāle sīd-fæþmed sċip**, **on ancre fæst**' ('the **ship** stayed **still**, the **broad-bosomed ship** lingered **on its rope**, **made fast with anchor**', 301b–3a).

In his nautical diction, the poet conducts similar strategies: the repetition of the key image (the ship) by various appellations (repetition and variation), specific patterns (simplex + prepositional phrase indicating location, or simplex + compound adjective indicating physical feature), in harmony with the metrical scheme of each line. By repeatedly mentioning Beowulf's ship while adding new features as the narrative goes on, the image of the ship is constantly refreshed and embellished. As Michael Lapidge states, 'the process of perceptual redefinition, of movement from the vague to the definite, takes place at all levels of the poem's narrative'.[88] Furthermore, by the explicit ship-bird comparison, the poet links this fictional ship to an omnipresent creature. Though the poet's contemporary audience might have learned about seafaring, they

[88] Lapidge, '*Beowulf* and Perception', p. 81.

might not have the personal experience. In this way, the ship-bird simile in this passage contributes to the audience's imagination: the image of Beowulf's ship crossing the sea is transformed into that of a swift, agile seabird, gliding across a watery surface, impelled by the wind.[89] Nevertheless, it is well attested that in many occasions of the poem, the hero's actions are guided by divine will.[90] The 'desired' journey points to not only the eagerness of the Danes for a saviour and the hero's willingness to complete the challenging mission, but also very possibly the will of God for the hero to slay Grendel and his mother, the descendants of Cain, symbols of sin and evil.[91]

This ship-bird comparison is achieved by the word *ġelīcost* ('most like', 218b), which appears four times in superlative form in this poem.[92] Clearly the *Beowulf*-poet uses this word with careful consideration: three times out of five, *ġelīcost* functions to connect something supernatural to the natural, comparing the strange light from Grendel's eyes to fire (727a), Grendel's sharp nails to steel (985b), and the miraculously melting giant sword to ice (1608b). There are thirty-one similes marked by the *(ġe)/(on)līcost* component in the Old English corpus, whereas most of the similes belong to the anthropocentric (or theocentric) and anthropomorphic (or theomorphic) type.[93] Of all the four similes in *Beowulf*, two belong to the anthropocentric-

[89] It is possible that the poet indicates a seagull. The neck of a seagull is usually white, which coincides with the white, foamy neck of a sailing ship breaking the ocean waves.
[90] See, for example, Leneghan, 'Wrath of God'.
[91] On the Grendel-Cain lineage created by the poet, see, for instance, Leonard Neidorf, 'Cain, Cam, Jutes, Giants, and the Textual Criticism of *Beowulf*', *SP* 112 (2015), 599–632; Ruth Mellinkoff, 'Cain's Monstrous Progeny in *Beowulf*: Part I, Noachic Tradition', *ASE* 8 (1979), 143–62; Ruth Mellinkoff, 'Cain's Monstrous Progeny in *Beowulf*: Part II, Post-Diluvian Survival', *ASE* 9 (1981), 83–97; Stephen C. Brandy, 'Cain, Grendel, and the Giants of *Beowulf*', *PLL* 9 (1973), 235–49; Oliver F. Emerson, 'Legends of Cain, Especially in Old and Middle English', *PMLA* 21 (1906), 831–929, at 863–6 and 878–86. See further David Williams, *Cain and Beowulf: A Study in Secular Allegory* (Toronto, 1982).
[92] Cf. 'liġġe ġelīcost' ('[the light from Grendel's eyes] most like fire', 727a); 'stȳle ġelīcost' ('[Grendel's nails] most like steel', 985b); 'īse ġelīcost' ('[the melting sword] most like ice', 1608b).
[93] Mariana Oleniak, 'Old English Simile of Equality: The Highest Degree of Similarity', *RL* 16 (2018), 471–93, at 472 and 481.

ecomorphic type (727a and 985b): the features of a human or anthropoid figure are compared to certain natural phenomena (the light from Grendel's eyes to fire, and Grendel's nails to steel).[94] One falls into the artefactocentric-ecomorphic type (1608b): the characteristics of an artefact (the sword) are compared to certain natural phenomena (melting ice).[95] One can be categorised into the artefactocentric-zoomorphic type (218b): the large artefact, Beowulf's ship, is compared to a bird.[96] In the arrival passage, therefore, the *ġelīcost* simile conveys a clear message: Beowulf's ship, which is certainly the focus of the voyage, possesses some qualities perhaps otherwise not found in the natural world, other than in birds (i.e. the speed). Though without any magical power, it bears a resemblance to a supernatural being. By using the active voice (*ġewāt*, 217a), the *Beowulf* poet makes the ship move by itself, transforming this inanimate object into a living creature, which moves like a gliding sea-bird. Indeed, the portrayal of Beowulf as a skilled steersman might also suggest the poet's allusion to a Christian literary tradition, where Christ, angels, and Christian saints are depicted as steersmen.[97] A similar description appears in *Andreas* when Andreas praises the miraculous navigational ability of Jesus Christ who is disguised as a steersman (see Chapter Four).

What is more, the 'fuĝle ġelīcost' simile is situated in a broader contextual nexus in Old English poetry. The same expression appears in an Old English religious poem, *The Phoenix* ('fuĝle ġelīcast', 585b), a poem which is thought to be composed no earlier

[94] Oleniak, 'Old English Simile of Equality', p. 482.
[95] Oleniak, 'Old English Simile of Equality', pp. 483 and 489–91.
[96] Oleniak, 'Old English Simile of Equality', pp. 475, 483, and 489–90.
[97] See also North and Bintley, ed. and trans., *Andreas*, pp. 255–6; Daniélou, *Primitive Christian Symbols*, pp. 59–60; Rahner, *Greek Myths*, pp. 344, 348, and 373–5; Georg Stuhlfauth, 'Das Schiff als Symbol der altchristlichen Kunst', *RAC* 19 (1942), 111–41, esp. 133–4.

than the time of Cynewulf.[98] The *Phoenix*-poet eulogises the spiritual journey of the departing soul and body by comparing them to a bird flying towards the city of glory:

> Swā nū æfter dēaðe þurh dryhtnes miht
> somod sīþiaþ sāwla mid līċe,
> fæġre **ġefrætwed**, **fuĝle ġelīcast**,
> in ēad-welum æþelum stencum,
> þær sēo sōþfæste sunne līhteð
> wlitiġ ofer weoredum in wuldres byriġ. (583–8)[99]
>
> ('So now, after death, through Lord's might, the fairly **adorned** souls and bodies journey together **most like a bird**, in happiness, with noble fragrances, to the place where the righteous sun shines wonderfully over the hosts inside the city of glory.')

Birds are identified with secular and religious themes in Old English poetry, which function to symbolise salvation, represent human emotion, and surpass boundaries.[100] It is generally acknowledged that the first part of the Old English *Phoenix* is based on *De aue phoenice* ('About the Phoenix Bird'), usually attributed to Lactantius (*c*. 250–*c*. 325), and that the second part of the poem (381–677) which contains the abovementioned 'fuĝle ġelīcast' passage, is the poet's own work.[101] Though the word *fuĝel* ('bird') appears in both prose and verse, it is occasionally used in a figurative sense such as 'of the Son of God, the saints': 'swā sē fæla fuĝel flyġes cunnode' ('so the faithful bird tested flight', *Christ B* 645), and 'fuĝlas sċȳne, beorhte gebredade, blissum hrēmġe' ('beautiful birds, splendidly restored, exulting in joy', *The Phoenix*

[98] On the dating, see Fulk, *A History*, p. 403.
[99] All quotations of the Old English *Phoenix* in my thesis are cited from Christopher A. Jones, ed. and trans., *Old English Shorter Poems: Volume 1, Religious and Didactic* (Cambridge, MA, 2012).
[100] See, for instance, Heather Maring, 'Birds of Creation in the Old English Exeter Book', *JEGP* 120 (2021), 429–64. See further Michael J. Warren, *Birds in Medieval English Poetry: Metaphors, Realities, Transformations* (Cambridge, 2018), esp. chs. 1 and 2.
[101] Jones, ed. and trans., *Shorter Poems*, xv. See further Carol Falvo Heffernan, 'The Old English *Phoenix*: A Reconsideration', *NM* 83 (1982), 239–54; Daniel G. Calder, 'The Vision of Paradise: A Symbolic Reading of the Old English *Phoenix*', *ASE* 1 (1972), 167–81; J. E. Cross, 'The Conception of the Old English *Phoenix*', *Old English Poetry: Fifteen Essays*, pp. 129–52. For the Latin text of *De aue phoenice*, see M. C. FitzPatrick, '*Lactanti De ave phoenice*: With Introduction, Text, Translation, and Commentary' (PhD dissertation, Univ. of Pennsylvania, 1933).

591b–2).[102] The bird becomes the embodiment of pious, saintly souls ascending towards the heavenly home, who are represented just as birds drifting in the sky. The diction for 'treasure' and the bird-simile in '**ġefrætwed, fuĝle ġelīcast**' ('adorned […] most like a bird', 585), which describe the souls' ascension to Heaven, are also reminiscent of Beowulf's bird-like treasure-ship.

The Christian elements in *Beowulf* are less ubiquitous than in many other Old English poems, but the idea of a bird-like ship gliding along a voyage designed by God might readily arouse the audience's association with similar images in other religious poems.[103] While in some religious contexts, birds are closely connected with border-crossing and liminality (as in *The Seafarer*), sensual experience and emotional empathy (as in *Genesis A*), and salvation and spiritual journey (as in *Phoenix* and in Cynewulf's *Christ B*), there are commonalities between the ship-bird simile in *Beowulf* and the bird image in other Old English poems.[104] The strong association between birds and border-crossing appears in *Beowulf*, too, when Beowulf's bird-like ship glides across the ocean, the 'threshold' of Beowulf's journey rather than the destination.[105] What is more, as Noah's raven and dove in *Genesis A* 1335–1482b are endowed with emotional capacities, the bird-like ship in *Beowulf* facilitates the audience's sensual imagination

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[102] *DOE*, **s.v.** '*fugel*'.

[103] On Christian elements in *Beowulf*, see, for example, Paul Cavill, 'Christianity and Theology in *Beowulf*', *The Christian Tradition in Anglo-Saxon England: Approaches to Current Scholarship and Teaching*, ed. Paul Cavill (Woodbridge, 2004), pp. 15–40; Susan Irvine, 'Christian and Pagan Elements', *A Beowulf Handbook*, pp. 175–92; C. E. Fell, 'Paganism in *Beowulf*: A Semantic Fairy-tale', *Pagans and Christians: The Interplay between Christian Latin and Traditional Germanic Cultures in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. T. Hofstra, L. A. J. R. Houwen, and A. A. MacDonald (Groningen, 1995), pp. 9–34; Fr. Klaeber, *The Christian Elements in Beowulf*, trans. Horst Richard Paul Battles (Kalamazoo, MI, 1996); Thomas D. Hill, 'The Christian Language and Theme of *Beowulf*', *Companion to Old English Poetry*, ed. Henk Aertsen and Rolf H. Bremmer Jr. (Amsterdam, 1994), pp. 63–77; Larry D. Benson, 'The Pagan Coloring of *Beowulf*', *Old English Poetry: Fifteen Essays*, pp. 193–213; Robert D. Stevick, 'Christian Elements and the Genesis of *Beowulf*', *MP* 61 (1963), 79–89.

[104] Maring, 'Birds of Creation', esp. 439–41.

[105] As Maring observes, 'typically in Old English poems the sea represents a threshold for heroes to cross rather than a destination', in 'Birds of Creation', p. 450.

of *wil-sīþ* (216a), Beowulf's willing journey.[106]

Moreover, the *Beowulf*-poet depicts the arrival of the hero by using type-scenes echoed by Cynewulf and *Andreas* (see Introduction and Chapters Three and Four). In addition to the 'arrival' or 'departure' type-scenes analysed by Salvador-Bello and Leneghan, my discussion focuses on another category: 'ship loaded with weaponry', which is repeatedly mentioned in *Beowulf* but remains largely unexamined. Beowulf's ship is described as a treasure-hoard, decked with gleaming weapons and battle-gear:

> Seċġas bǣron
> **on bearm nacan beorhte frætwe,**
> **gūð-searo ġeatolīċ**; […] (213b–15a)
>
> ('The warriors bore **shining treasures**, **splendid war-gear**, **into the bosom of the ship**; […]')

Shortly after the passage on Beowulf's sailing ship (207b–24a), the poet reiterates the image of Beowulf's treasure-ship when the ship arrives at the Danish shore:

> Hwæt syndon ġē **searo-hæbbendra,**
> **byrnum** werede, þē þus **brontne ċēol**
> ofer laĝu-strǣte lǣdan cwōmon,
> hider ofer holmas? (237–40a)
>
> ('Who are you, **armour-bearers**, equipped with **mail-coats**, who come here **in your towering ship** over the sea-street, hither over the waves?')

The 'ship decked with weaponry' image is echoed in 38–40a, when the *Beowulf*-poet illustrates Scyld's funeral-ship loaded with fine weaponry:

> Ne hȳrde iċ cymlīcor **ċēol** ġeġyrwan
> **hilde-wǣpnum** ond **heaðo-wǣdum**,
> **billum** ond **byrnum**; […] (38–40a)

[106] For discussion on Noah's raven and dove in relation to the technique of transmorphism in *Genesis A*, which represents nonhuman characters with emotions and sensations, and engages the audience in empathetic identification with the birds and in the imaginative, sensual experience transcending species boundaries, see Maring, 'Birds of Creation', pp. 452–4.

> ('Never have I heard of a **ship** more finely loaded with **war-weapons** and **armours**, **swords** and **corselets**; […]')

Though the two passages seem somewhat dissimilar in form, a similar expression appears just a couple of lines before the 'ne hȳrde' passage: '**on bearm sċipes**' (35b), echoing '**on bearm nacan**' (214a), and reinforcing the connection between Scyld's funeral ship passage and Beowulf's ship passage. A third parallel is found in the aforementioned Sigemund episode (884b–7a) in *Beowulf*. The expression '**bær on bearm sċipes beorhte frætwa**' (896) forms a substitutional parallel to '**bǣron on bearm nacan beorhte frætwe**' (213b–14), which only differs in the simplexes meaning 'ship' (*sċip*, 896a; *naca*, 214a). Together the two expressions form an envelope-pattern.[107] By applying closely similar expressions in the two hero's ships, the *Beowulf*-poet carefully draws a parallel between Beowulf and Sigemund for their monster-fighting feats, thus emphasising the heroic characteristics of Beowulf and heralding the success of Beowulf's mission.[108] Even before Beowulf arrives at Heorot, the *Beowulf* poet augurs victory for Beowulf over Grendel and his mother: his ship is loaded with sea-skilled soldiers and war-gear, embarking on a willing journey ahead. The 'treasure-ship' type-scene will be further discussed in the following section on Beowulf's departure from Heorot.

2.4.2 The departure

Aside from the contextual significance of the arrival passage in *Beowulf* 198b–306a,

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[107] Hieatt, 'Envelope Patterns', 260.

[108] Cf. *sǣ-bāt*, which is used to describe both Beowulf's ship in 633a (when Beowulf speaks to Queen Wealhtheow that having arrived in Denmark in the 'sea-boat' with his thegns, he is determined to fulfil his mission to kill Grendel) and Sigemund's in 895b (the plunder of the dragon's hoard).

the passage forms part of larger envelope-patterning with the departure passage in 1903–13b, which distinguishes the long episode on Beowulf's Danish mission from the rest of the poem. At the end of Beowulf's stay in Denmark, the *Beowulf*-poet invites the audience's memory of the hero's swift, ring-necked ship. Despite the separation of nearly 1600 lines, spanning almost half the poem, the two passages are intricately connected not only regarding the parallel narrative structure signified by the hero's arrival and departure by ship, but also in terms of nautical phraseology, so further supporting the unity of *Beowulf*.[109]

In the departure passage, the poet denotes Beowulf's ship ten times, and most of the ship-terms have their counterparts in the arrival passage. Simplexes are used five times: *sċip* (1895b), *naca* (1896b and 1903b), *ċēol* (1912b), and *wudu* (1919a). The rest are compounds: *hringed-stefna* (1897b), *sund-wudu* (1906b), *wēġ-flota* (1907a), *sǣ-genġa* (1908b), and *bunden-stefna* (1910a). In harmony with the arrival passage, most of the simplexes in the departure passage are used in poetic context, and all the compounds are either unique to *Beowulf* or rare in the corpus. As discussed above, *sund-wudu* appears only three times (*Beowulf* and *Christ B*); *hringed-stefna*, four times (*Beowulf* and *Elene*); *wēġ-flota*, three times (*Beowulf*, *Elene*, and *Andreas*); *sǣ-genġa*, three times (twice in *Beowulf*, and once in Byrhtferth's *Enchiridion*); and *bunden-stefna*, unique to *Beowulf*. These varied wordings of 'ship' in the departure passage not only echo the arrival passage in *Beowulf*, but also strengthen the connections between

[109] To sum up Brodeur's view, the unity of the poem not only lies within individual scenes (a phrasal unity) but also runs through the whole poem (a structural unity). Brodeur, *Art of Beowulf*, p. 221.

Beowulf and Cynewulfian poems as well as *Andreas* (see Chapters Three and Four).[110] Furthermore, the *Beowulf*-poet uses parallel terms and phrases to form an envelope structure, reinforcing the link between the two voyages on the sea, and highlighting the opening and end of Beowulf's mission in Denmark. The nautical narrative impresses readers with a sense of completeness, strengthened by the poet's use of repetition which serves a specific structural function in *Beowulf*.[111] Of the five compounds listed above, *sund-wudu* is found in both the arrival passage and the departure passage (208a and 1906b); *bunden-stefna* has its counterparts in similar word-forms in the arrival passage ('wudu bundenne', 216b and *wunden-stefna*, 220a); and *hringed-stefna* appears in Scyld's ship-funeral (32b), the captivity of Hildeburh (1131a), and Beowulf's departure (1897b). In addition to the varied appellations of Beowulf's ship, the adjective *fāmiġ-heals* (1909a) in the departure passage appears in the arrival passage too (218a). Both scenes involve a coastguard or harbour-guard, denoted by three *-weard*-compounds unique to *Beowulf* (*ēġ-weard*, 'wave-watch', 'sea-guard', 241b; *bāt-weard*, 1900a; *hȳþ-weard*, 'harbour-guard', 1914b). Similarly, the ship is impelled by the wind in the two journeys ('winde ġefȳsed', 215b; 'wind ofer ȳðum', 1907b; *lyft-ġeswenċed*, 1913a). While the poet uses *sīd-fæþmed* earlier (302b), *sīd-fæþme* is found in 1917b. The *Beowulf*-poet uses the same, tripartite set of maritime diction as Beowulf's first sea-voyage:

> '**Sāle**' (302a) — '**sīd-fæþmed sċip**' (302b) — '**on ancre fæst**' (303a)
> '**Sǣlde**' (1917a) — '**sīd-fæþme sċip**' (1917b) — '**oncer-bendum fæst**' (1918a)

[110] Brodeur, *Art of Beowulf*, pp. 8–9.
[111] Brodeur, *Art of Beowulf*, p. 223.

The ‘moored ship’ occurs twice in the short departure passage. Before Beowulf leaves Denmark, the poem reads: ‘sǣ-genġa **bād** āgend-frēan, sē þe on ancre **rād**’ (‘the sea-goer **waited** for the lord, and **rode** on anchor’, 1882b–3b).[112] The two monosyllabic verbs, ‘**bād**’ (preterite singular of *bīdan* ‘wait’) and ‘**rād**’ (preterite singular of *rīdan* ‘ride’, which is closely associated with horse-riding and seafaring), are connected by end-rhyme.[113] The poet personifies the ship by saying it is ‘waiting’ for the people and ‘riding’ on anchor, so creating a moving image of the ship.[114]

In both the arrival and departure passages, the poet emphasises the movement of the ship when it is on the sea, making it the subject of the narrative and the doer of the actions, collocating with verbs including ‘ġewāt’ (preterite singular of *ġewītan* ‘depart’, 217a), ‘ġewaden’ (past participle of *ġewadan* ‘advance’, ‘move forth’, 220b), ‘þunede’ (preterite singular of *þunian* ‘groan’, ‘creak’, 1906b), ‘fōr’ (preterite singular of *faran* ‘proceed’, ‘fare’, 1908b), and ‘flēat’ (preterite singular of *flēotan* ‘sail’, ‘float’, 1909a). When the ship arrives at the seashore, and the journey is thus accomplished, the ship is transformed back into an inanimate object controlled by human, in status of stasis. The focus of the narrative switches back to the human characters, who take action to tie up the ship (226a and 1917a). In a similar vein, the image of ‘treasure-ship’ appears again in the departure passage, as another parallel to 213b–15a:

> Þā wæs on sande sǣ-ġēap **naca**
> hladen **here-wǣdum**, **hringed-stefna**
> **mēarum** ond **māðmum**; **mæst** hlīfade
> ofer Hrōðgāres **hord-ġestrēonum**. (1896–9)

[112] Cf. ‘flota stille bād’ (301b).
[113] Both *B-T* and *G-K* give three definitions: ‘ride a horse’; ‘[of a ship] ride on the waves’; ‘ride’, ‘press upon’. *B-T*, **s.v.** ‘*rīdan*’; *G-K*, **s.v.** ‘*rīdan*’.
[114] On the personification of ships in *Beowulf*, see Isaacs, ‘Convention of Personification’, pp. 235–9.

> ('Then, on the seashore the sea-spacious **ship** was loaded with
> **battle-gear**, the **ring-prowed ship** with **horses** and **treasures**,
> with the **mast** towered over Hrothgar's **hoard-treasures**.')

Because Beowulf has completed his mission, Hrothgar rewards him with gifts. A variant to the 'ship decked with weaponry' type-scene, this passage creates a scene of 'ship decked with weaponry and hoard-treasures'. Among the four compounds in this passage, *sǣ-ġēap* and *here-wǣd* ('battle-gear') are uniquely used in *Beowulf*; *hringed-stefna*, as has been discussed above, appears three times in *Beowulf* and once in *Elene*; *hord-ġestrēon* ('hoard-treasure') occurs in *Beowulf* 1899b and 3092a, *Juliana* 22a, *Andreas* 1114a, and *Metre 14* 11a.[115] Whilst the unique term *sǣ-ġēap* describes the spacious, curved ship of Beowulf, a rare *-ġēap*-compound, *horn-ġēap*, describes the great mead-hall Heorot in *Beowulf* 82a, and the Temple in Jerusalem in *Andreas* 668a, in the same expression 'hēah ond horn-ġēap' ('high and wide-gabled'). The three architectural patterns represent the summit of the Germanic heroic ideal and of Christian belief (see Chapter Four). The distribution of abovementioned terms in the Old English corpus further indicates a Beowulfian linkage with the Cynewulfian poems and *Andreas*: the appearances of these compounds are restricted to *Beowulf*, Cynewulfian poems, and *Andreas*, with only one exception in *Metre 14*.

After the ship arrives at Beowulf's homeland, the weapons and treasures are carried out from the ship: 'hēt þā up beran æþelinga ġestrēon, frætwe ond fǣt-gold' ('he had the noble's treasures unloaded, ornaments and gold', 1920–1a).[116] The word

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[115] On the close association between *ġestrēon* (and the *-ġestrēon*-compounds) and ancestral, royal, collective, or dynastic wealth, the transmission of wealth and nobility, and the dynastic heritage in earlier poems including *Genesis A*, *Exodus*, and *Beowulf*, see Faulkner, *Wealth and the Material World*, pp. 12–16, 154, and 171–2; Faulkner, 'Death and Treasure'; Faulkner, 'Language of Wealth', esp. 47–51; Tyler, 'Collocation of Words', pp. 121–43, 197–8, and 315–42.

[116] On treasure in *Beowulf*, see further Faulkner, 'Language of Wealth', pp. 35–63.

frætwe here is mainly poetic, also appearing in 37b (Scyld's funeral), 214b (Beowulf's arrival), and 896b (Sigemund's ship), all involving the presence of a 'treasure-ship'.[117] The 'treasure-ship' type-scene also appears in the Finnsburg episode (1154–9a) mentioned before, where the 'sċēotend Sċyldinga' ('the shooters of the Scyldings', referring to the Half-Danes; 1154a) plunder the treasures of King Finn, and load the booty along with Hildeburh onto ships back to Denmark. The ships are treasure-carriers loaded either with gifts given by lords from far away as symbols of friendship, as in the case of Hrothgar and Beowulf, or with the heirlooms after people loot foreign lands following their military victories, as in the case of the 'sċēotend Sċyldinga'. The recurring motif of the 'treasure-ship' clearly exemplifies the coherent structure of unity in *Beowulf*.

The hero's treasure-ship plays an important role in the structure of the storyline as a marker of Beowulf's two sea-voyages. The two passages (198b–306a and 1880b–1921a) are skilfully linked with each other by the poet's repetitive nautical diction and idiosyncratic expressions. As the poem develops, the image of Beowulf's ship becomes more concrete, and gathers greater significance. It is more than a means of transport that transcends natural bounds. The swift, wide-bosomed, ring-prowed ship, together with its treasures onboard, underscores Beowulf's role as a God-chosen hero fighting evil in a distant land.

[117] The word *frætwe* is closely linked with fertility in *Beowulf*, as gift of war equipment usually implies the trait of leadership of the recipient. Faulkner, 'Language of Wealth', p. 61.

2.5 Conclusion

The ship, as a common image in Old English poetry, symbolises the power and the awe-inspiring social status of ancient heroes such as Scyld and Beowulf. In *Beowulf*, as the poetic phraseology denoting ships and seafaring shows, the voyaging scenes are intricately linked through patterned expressions and recurring diction. While the image of 'ship' in *Beowulf* is intertwined with the traditional motif of treasure, each 'treasure-ship' in the poem carries different undertones for the poet, and embodies traditional social values. The treasure-ship of Scyld Scefing symbolises the summit of secular authority, an epitome of the golden age of an ancestral society. The embellished description of a conventional ship-funeral that involves mortuary goods and a ring-necked funerary vessel reflects the conciliatory attitude of a Christian author who seeks to relocate the past and pagan ancestry in a Christological framework. The descriptions of Scyld Scefing and his funeral-ship strongly suggest potential influence from both *Genesis A* and Christian theology.[118] By invoking expressions such as 'in the bosom of the Father' and implicitly aligning Scyld with biblical genealogy, the poet effectively reinterprets this legendary narrative through a Christian lens.

Meanwhile, the poet preserves the traditional Germanic diction associated with ships. The two maritime episodes involving Sigemund and Hildeburh exemplify conventional uses of the 'treasure-ship' motif in relation to two popular themes in Germanic culture, monster-slaying and blood-feud. The treasure-ship of Sigemund symbolises heroic valour and triumph. By contrast, the Half-Danes' ships loaded with

[118] On Virgilian influence on *Beowulf*, see further North, *Origins of Beowulf*, esp. chs. 3 and 4.

Hildeburh and other booty embody the rupture of dynastic succession and the cruelty of blood-feud. In the case of Beowulf's epic sea-voyages, the poet invests in the hero's vessel his reflection upon the concept of a divine mission.

Chapter Three: Tradition and Innovation in the Cynewulfian Group

> Þǣr meahte ġesīon, sē ðone sīð behēold
> brecan ofer bæð-weġ, brim-wudu snyrġan
> under swellingum, sǣ-mearh plegean,
> wadan wǣġ-flotan. (*Elene* 244–6a)
>
> ('There one who beheld that journey might see the sea-wood hasten under the swellings [of the sail], the sea-steed play, the wave-floater advance, burst forth through the bath-way.')

3.1 Introduction

Similar to his vernacular predecessors, Cynewulf shows the same predilection for maritime themes and diction, especially in two of his four signed poems, *Elene* and *Christ B*. Both poems have many commonalities: they are written by one poet; both centre around the Christian journey-motif; and both contain rich, parallel nautical phraseology. One of the most impressive descriptions in Cynewulf's *Elene* is as above, where Elene's fleet is portrayed as 'sea-horses' prancing, racing towards the enemies. Written by a learned and Latinate Old English poet, *Elene* presents a number of Christian journey-motifs, along with typical Germanic heroic vocabulary and type-scenes (see 3.2).[1] The nautical expressions, especially the animated ships, seem to have inspired later poems, such as *Guthlac B* (widely believed to be written by Cynewulf, or at least modelled on his signed works) and *Andreas* (see Chapter Four).[2] In *Christ B*,

[1] On the influence of Latin literary tradition on Cynewulf, see further Orchard, 'Alcuin and Cynewulf', pp. 324–33; Janie Steen, *Verse and Virtuosity: The Adaptation of Latin Rhetoric in Old English Poetry* (Toronto, 2008), pp. 110–38; Orchard, 'Computing Cynewulf: The *Judith*-Connection', *The Text in the Community: Essays on Medieval Works, Manuscripts, Authors, and Readers*, ed. Jill Mann and Maura Nolan (Notre Dame, IN, 2006), pp. 75–106; Andy Orchard, 'Both Style and Substance: The Case for Cynewulf', *Anglo-Saxon Styles*, ed. Catherine E. Karkov and George H. Brown (Albany, NY, 2003), pp. 271–305

[2] For scholars who regard Cynewulf as the author of *Guthlac B*, see for example Bjork, *Cynewulf*, at xi; Orchard, 'Both Style and Substance', pp. 272–3 and 294–6; Fulk, 'Cynewulf', pp. 5–6. See also Jane Roberts, ed. *The Guthlac Poems of the Exeter Book* (Oxford, 1979), pp. 44, 60–2, and 71, who disagrees because the putative lost lines at the end of *Guthlac B* in the manuscript 'are not enough for a Cynewulf signature'.

Christian ship-symbolism is more overt, where Cynewulf relies on Latin homiletic and patristic sources from both English and Continental authors including Gregory and Bede (see 3.3). As analysed below, the narrative focus in *Christ B* shifts from a single story in chronological order to more abstract notions and contemplative language concerning the idea of salvation after life-voyage.

The first two chapters have demonstrated the earliest existing literary archetypes of ship-symbolism in Old English poetry, namely *Genesis A*, *Exodus*, and *Beowulf*. The major source of the seafaring narratives in *Genesis A* and *Exodus* is the Vulgate; of *Beowulf* the Germanic legends, alongside *Genesis A*. The works of Cynewulf, in addition, epitomise a later stage of Latinate Christian influence on vernacular literature. In the following discussions, I suggest a complex web of sources regarding Cynewulf's nautical vocabulary.

3.2 *Elene*

The narrative of Cynewulf's *Elene*, largely based upon the Christian hagiographic tradition, develops its plot from a Latin version of *Acta Cyriaci* ('Acts of Cyriacus') preserved in *Acta Sanctorum* ('Acts of the Saints') for May 1–4 published in 1680, and variously updated.[3] Despite this overall resemblance, Cynewulf elaborates some plot

[3] The sixty-eight-volume *Acta Sanctorum* is collected and edited by the Bollandists over the centuries, and has been the base-text of academic research. For the Latin text of *Acta Cyriaci*, see *Acta Sanctorum Maii Tomus I* (Antwerp, 1680), cols. 445–8; for the version published in 1860, see pp. 450–5. See also Alfred Holder, ed., *Inventio Sanctae Crucis* (Leipzig, 1889). For a comparative edition of Old English and Latin texts, see also Ferdinand Holthausen, ed., *Cynewulf's Elene (Kreuzauffindung): mit Einleitung, Glossar, Anmerkungen und der lateinischen Quelle*, 4th rev. ed. (Heidelberg, 1936). See further Orchard, 'Computing Cynewulf', pp. 88 and 105; Stephan Borgehammar, *How the Holy Cross Was Found: From Event to Medieval Legend with an Appendix of Texts* (Stockholm, 1991). For the Old English prose version of the story, see Mary-Catherine Bodden, ed. and trans., *The Old English Finding of the True Cross* (Cambridge, 1987).

details in the original story and enriches them with his own emphatic adaptations.[4] For instance, Cynewulf employs classical Germanic diction and type-scenes in his extended battle narrative, where Emperor Constantine the Great (272–337) fights against the barbarians along the River Danube (17b–68 and 99–152), with Cynewulf's varied diction for treasure and weaponry and the 'beasts of battle' type-scenes.[5] While his fondness for traditional Germanic motifs in the original Christian story of Saint Helena finding the True Cross remains unquestionable, Cynewulf's meticulous attention to the maritime setting of the story, which the Latin source does not recount at length, marks a decisive disparity. Cynewulf likewise interpolates some maritime elements in the greatly prolonged battle narrative of the war between the Roman army and the barbarians (17–152), and also composes a lengthy, original passage on Elene's sea-voyage (214b–75).

Previous studies mostly focus on either one specific group of ship-terms, or other motifs and type-scenes, leaving the overall ship-imagery in this poem largely unexamined. In this section, I discuss the maritime diction Cynewulf employs, and argue for its contextual connections with other surviving Old English poems.

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[4] P. O. E. Gradon, ed., *Cynewulf's Elene*, rev. ed. (Exeter, 1996), pp. 15–22; Holthausen, ed., *Cynewulf's Elene*, xi–xiii. See further Jackson J. Campbell, 'Cynewulf's Multiple Revelations', *Cynewulf: Basic Readings*, pp. 229–50, at 320, who questions the precise source of *Elene*. See also C. A. Regan, 'Evangelicism as the Informing Principle of Cynewulf's *Elene*', *Cynewulf: Basic Readings*, pp. 251–80, at 253, who believes Cynewulf has a direct approach to *Acta Cyriaci*.

[5] On the theme of treasure in *Elene*, see for example, Faulkner, 'Language of Wealth', esp. 65–6 and 69–71. On the 'beasts of battle' type-scene in *Elene*, see Joseph Harris, 'Beasts of Battle, South and North', *Source of Wisdom: Old English and Early Medieval Latin Studies in Honour of Thomas D. Hill*, ed. Charles D. Wright, Frederick M. Biggs, and Thomas N. Hall (Toronto, 2007), pp. 3–25, at 4, 8, 15, and 20; Mark Griffith, 'Convention and Originality in the Old English "Beasts of Battle" Typescene', *ASE* 22 (1993), 179–99, at 192–5; Hrafnhildur Bodvarsdottir, 'The Function of the Beasts of Battle in Old English Poetry' (PhD dissertation, State Univ. of New York, 1976), esp. 148–61; Donald K. Fry, 'Themes and Typescenes in *Elene* 1–113', *Speculum* 44 (1969), 35–45; Francis Peabody Magoun, 'The Theme of the Beasts of Battle in Anglo-Saxon Poetry', *NM* 56 (1955), 81–90, at 85.

3.2.1 The salvific ship of Constantine

The putative Latin sources have barely any description of the watery environment in the brief narration of Constantine's wars against the 'barbarorum' ('barbarians'). Alongside the name of River Danube, the only aquatic diction is *ripa* ('bank') in the phrase 'per ripas Danubii' ('along the banks of the Danube').[6] By contrast, Cynewulf alters the original narrative, and establishes a more sophisticated set of watery metaphors in his battlefield story. He adds several terms and collocations to underscore the location of the battlefield near the riverbanks, and to motivate the audience's active association of the poem with the Old English *Exodus*. Furthermore, Cynewulf juxtaposes two images representing opposite destinies: the drowned, pagan Germanic army in the cold water, with Constantine on a triumphant, salvific ship. In what follows, I investigate the subtleties in Cynewulf's careful selection of watery phraseology, and the potential allusion to *Exodus*, hitherto overlooked.

Peculiar to *Elene* is *þrȳþ-bord* ('ship of majesty'), a contested term in 151b. In a sharp contrast to the Germanic invaders who are drowned in the Danube, Emperor Constantine steers his ship ('þrȳð-bord stēran') in the river to return to his fortress after the victory of war, a detail that is not seen in the Latin:

> Cōm þā **wigena hlēo**
> þeġna þrēate **þrȳð-bord stēran**,
> **beadu-rōf** cyning burga nēosan. (150b–2).
>
> ('Then the **protector of warriors** came with a band of thegns,
> the **battle-brave** king, to **steer the ship of majesty** and seek
> the fortress.')

[6] For the short passage, see *Acta Sanctorum Maii Tomus I*, p. 445.

For some scholars, the manuscript reading of 'þrȳð-bord stēnan' seems inappropriate in the context. Instead, they support emendations of manuscript forms or non-maritime interpretations of the phrase, with the ship-term translated as 'strong shield'.[7] Lexicographers often emend the manuscript form to *þrȳþ-bold* ('building of power').[8] P. O. E. Gradon provides a more satisfactory solution: while retaining *þrȳþ-bord*, the manuscript form 'stēnan' (or *stǣnan*, 'to stone', or 'to adorn with precious stones') should be emended to *stē(o)ran* ('to steer'), because the scribal confusion of *n* and *r* 'is not uncommon' in early medieval England.[9] In a more recent edition of *Elene*, Robert E. Bjork believes that the verb *stenan* does not make any sense in the context of the poem.[10] Regarding the original watery elements in the battle narrative in *Elene*, one might suggest that the image of 'Constantine steering his magnificent ship of victory along the Danube' gains greater strength than existing interpretations regarding *Elene* 151b. The Beowulfian diction employed in Constantine's return voyage on a ship of majesty invites an intertextual reading of the passage, linking the image of Constantine amidships with that of Germanic heroes such as Beowulf.

In the image of Constantine, the 'beadu-rōf cyning' ('battle-brave king', 152a) and the 'wigena hlēo' ('protector of warriors', 150b) on a triumphant ship, there lies some

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[7] Some scholars emend to 'þrȳð-bold sēċan' ('to seek the building of power'): Krapp, ed., *The Vercelli Book*, p. 70; Holthausen, *Cynewulf's Elene*, p. 6. Some others support 'þrȳð-bord stēnan' ('to adorn the strong shield with stones'), including Charles W. Kent, ed., *Elene: An Old English Poem, Edited with Introduction, Latin Original, Notes, and Complete Glossary* (Boston, MA, 1889), pp. 24 and 71; Julius Zupitza, *Cynewulf's Elene mit einem Glossar* (Berlin, 1883), p. 7. Still others choose 'þrȳð-bord sċēnan' ('to crush the strong shield'), such as J. M. Kemble, *The Poetry of the Codex Vercellensis with an English Translation, Part II* (London, 1856), p. 10; Jacob Grimm, *Andreas und Elene* (Kassel, 1840), pp. 55 and 146. See further Krapp's notes on early scholarship, *The Vercelli Book*, p. 135; *B-T*, **s.v.** '*þrýþ-bord*' ('a strong shield').

[8] See, for instance, *G-K*, **s.v.** '*þrȳð-bold*'.

[9] Gradon, ed., *Cynewulf's Elene*, p. 151. See further Gradon's explanation at 151–2. See in general, Michael Lapidge, 'The Archetype of *Beowulf*', *ASE* 29 (2000), 5–41.

[10] Bjork, ed. and trans., *Cynewulf*, p. 254.

quality traceable to Beowulf, described in similar terms by the *Beowulf*-poet. Very possibly, Cynewulf has borrowed the two expressions used in the narration and description for maritime or seafaring scenes in *Beowulf*. The first case in point is the compounded adjective *beadu-rōf* ('battle-brave') in *Elene* 152a, which is attested only in four texts by three authors: *Beowulf*, *The Fates of the Apostles*, *Elene*, and *Andreas*, with *Beowulf* being probably the earliest text. In *Beowulf* 3160a, this term serves as a tribute to Beowulf, who is buried under a towering and spacious barrow on the headland by the sea, so that the 'wēġ-līðendum' ('seafarers') might recognise this monument of the 'battle-brave' hero from afar (3156–60).

Likewise, the purely poetic collocation 'wigena hlēo' (150b) resembles 'wīgendra hlēo' in *Beowulf* four times, *Christ A* once, and *Andreas* four times. Twice in *Beowulf* it points to Beowulf the monster-slayer (1972b and 2337b), in 429b it denotes the Danish ruler Hrothgar, and in 899b it refers to Sigemund the dragon-slayer.[11] In 899b, right after a traditional 'treasure-ship' scene (893–7), this term comprises the *Beowulf*-poet's approbation for Sigemund's feat: the hero kills the dragon, plunders the dragon's hoard, and loads his *sæ-bāt* with treasures 'on bearm sċipes' (see Chapter Two). In 1972b the poet describes Beowulf, who finishes the grand feat of killing Grendel and his mother, and returns to his homeland on a ship. In 2337b, when Beowulf, the aged protector of warriors decides to kill the dragon, and orders a war-shield to be made, the Sigemund passage is spontaneously evoked. In total, three of four uses of 'wīgendra

[11] The line where Beowulf addresses Hrothgar as 'protector of warriors' (429b) comes after Beowulf's boasting about his previous deeds: he kills sea-monsters at night 'on ȳðum' ('in the sea', 421b).

hlēo' in *Beowulf* appear after watery elements.[12] The departure of Constantine on the ship back to his fortress also implicitly echoes the 'arrival' or 'departure' type-scene in *Beowulf* and other Old English poems (see Introduction and Chapter Two). Unlike the Beowulfian usage of the collocation, in the three later texts this collocation 'protector of warriors' is highly religious, addressing either pious Christians (Constantine in *Elene* 150b, and Andreas in *Andreas* 1450b and 1608a) or Christ (*Christ A* 409a, and *Andreas* 506a and 896b) as 'protector of warriors'.[13] The religious aura in *Elene* 150b–2 is obvious, and requires that it permeates the scene with contempt for heathens.

In the battle narrative, Cynewulf employs two parallel phrases to specify the location of the barbarian army, 'ymb þæs wæteres wylm' ('around the water's surging', 39a) and 'ymb þæs wæteres stæð' ('around the water's bank', 60a), and a different phrase 'ēaġ-strēame nēah' ('near the water-stream', 66b), to mark the campsite of Constantine's army.[14] The collocation *ymb* ('around') + 'wæteres' is exclusive to Cynewulf's *Elene*. Both phrases depict the same scene: the encampment of the invading barbarians by the Danube, who are threatening the natural border of the Roman Empire, and are later defeated and drowned in the river.[15] Cynewulf says that it is 'ēaġ-**strēame nēah**' where Constantine has his Roman army encamped. It is by the same location that

[12] In 1963–5b, the *Beowulf*-poet briefly recalls Beowulf's return journey on his ship (1888–1924).
[13] With *Beowulf* dated to the eighth century, and *Christ A* between late eighth and middle of tenth. See Fulk, *A History*, pp. 61 and 397.
[14] The simplex *stæþ* ('shore', 'bank') is majorly prosaic, and is attested in only three poems: *Elene* 38b, 60a, 227a, and 232a, *Riddle 20* [22] 19a, and *Maldon* 25a. Cf. 'sǣ-strēamum nēah' in *Exodus* 250b.
[15] On the crucial military function of the Danube during the Roman Empire period, see Brian Buchanan and Emily Hanscam, 'Rivers and Walls: The Materiality of Roman Frontier Waterscapes on Hadrian's Wall and the Lower Danube', *Rivers and Waterways in the Roman World: Empire of Water*, ed. Andrew Tibbs and Peter B. Campbell (London, 2024), pp. 228–44, at 238–40; Andrew G. Poulter, 'The Lower Danubian Frontier in Late Antiquity: Evolution and Dramatic Change in the Frontier Zone, *c.* 296–600', *Zwischen Region und Reich: Das Gebiet der oberen Donau im Imperium Romanum*, ed. Peter Herz, Peter Schmid and Oliver Stoll (Berlin, 2010), pp. 11–42. See further Timothy C. Hart, *Beyond the River, Under the Eye of Rome* (Ann Arbor, MI, 2024); Emily Hanscam and John Karavas, ed., *The Roman Lower Danube Frontier: Innovations in Theory and Practice* (Oxford, 2023); J. J. Wilkes, 'The Roman Danube: An Archaeological Survey', *JRS* 95 (2005), 124–225.

later at night Constantine dreams about the Cross (69–98), a symbol of victory ('siġores tācen', 85a) over the massive barbarian armies. In contrast, the Latin (in whatever form) never specifies where Constantine has the dream. Besides, the invading army are drowned, a detail that is not seen in the Latin: 'sume drenċ fornam, on lago-strēame līfes æt ende' ('some were drowned in the water-stream, their lives at an end', 136b–7).

Drowning is closely associated with the idea of divine punishment in *Genesis A* and *Exodus*. The *Exodus*-poet, for example, treats drowning (which is evocative of the Last Judgement) as a severe means of punishing the sinful deprived of earthly treasure (*Exodus* 33–6).[16] Whoever pursues worldly wealth, and conducts evil deeds is invariably doomed to *dēaþ* ('death', 34a) and *hryre* ('destruction', 'fall', or 'descent into Hell', 35a) in cold water.[17]

Similarly, the Flood which Noah and the chosen creatures escape is exclusively called a *drenċe-flōd* in *Genesis A* 1398b and *Exodus* 364b, reflecting a shared horror at the rage of God (see Chapter One). Such allegorical, literary representations of drowning in *Genesis A* and *Exodus* may continue to influence later poets such as Cynewulf. Just as God punishes the Egyptian pursuers of Moses and his people, and drowns them in the Red Sea in *Exodus*, Cynewulf places Constantine's enemy in a

[16] Lucas, ed., *Exodus*, pp. 46, 55, 58, 76, and 132. On the emended form 'ġedrenċed' in *Exodus* 34a, see Anlezark, ed. and trans., *Old Testament Narratives*, pp. 327. See also Lucas, ed., *Exodus*, p. 79. *DOE* has included *Exodus* 34a in the entry '*gedrenced*', under the meaning of 'drowned', 'sunk'.

[17] The poetic compound *dryht-folc* ('people', 'multitude') in *Exodus* 34b is mostly used in earlier poems, and has strong affiliation to a sense of divine judgement or punishment: *Genesis A* 1718b, *Exodus* 34b (drowning of the Egyptian), 322a, and 590b (as in 34b), *Christ C* 1041a (judgement upon humans), and *Riddle 24* [26] 17a (human protected by God). In *Exodus* it always collocates with the superlative *mǣst* ('greatest'). When meaning the Israelites in *Exodus*, it dwells in the on-verse (322a). When denoting the Egyptians, the collocation situates itself in off-verses, and alliterates on *d*, with *dēaþ* or its compounded form in 34 ('dēaðe ġedrenċed driht-folca mǣst') and 590 ('on dēað-stede, driht-folca mǣst', 'in the death-place [battlefield], the greatest of peoples'). But cf. 'dȳfde on wætre' ('[the object was] immersed in water') in *Riddle 24* [26] 3a. Though *dryht-folc* does not denote the 'punished sinful people' in the Exeter *Riddle*, this riddle contains an image of the mysterious creature being soaked in the water (probably a gospel book during the book-making process) in 1–5a. See further Orchard, *Commentary*, pp. 381–3.

similar situation. Many heathen invaders are drowned in the Danube (*Elene* 136b–7; see above). This scene seems to be an implicit allusion to the Old English *Exodus* (as well as the Vulgate), where both heathen races, the Egyptians and the Germanic invaders, lose their lives in the cold water.[18]

The compound *ēġ-strēam* ('water-stream') occurs six times in five poems: *Genesis A* 1415a (denoting the great Flood in Genesis), *Christ C* 1167b (recalling the biblical story of Christ walking on the water in Matthew XIV.22–33 and John VI.12–21), *Beowulf* 577a (on Beowulf's fight with the sea-monsters; see below); *Elene* 66b and 241a (the latter on Elene's voyage to Jerusalem); *Juliana* 673b (in a passage about the Roman official Eleusius's shipwreck after killing Saint Juliana).[19] In all five poems, this compound is situated in religious contexts, closely relevant to biblical images in the three earlier texts, *Genesis A*, *Christ C*, and *Beowulf*.[20] The allusions to the Bible in *Genesis A* and *Christ C* are straightforward, whilst the connotation in *Beowulf* requires a contextual reading. Several lines before Beowulf's exclamation of his narrow victory in an earlier fight with monsters, the poet specifically mentions the appearance of the heavenly light from the east and the quelling of the sea-storm (569b–70), suggesting God's presence: 'lēoht ēastan cōm beorht bēacen Godes, brimu swaþredon' ('light came from the east, the bright beacon of God, the waves became still'). With the

[18] For an argument that the Egyptians in *Exodus* are imagined by the poet as Germanic pagans from the Continent, see North, *Heathen Gods*, pp. 58–62. See further Howe, *Migration and Mythmaking*, esp. ch. 2, who argues that the Israelites' journey in *Exodus* represents the migration myth in early medieval England.

[19] Cf. a similar word-form, *ēa-strēam* ('river-stream') found in *Genesis A* 216a, *Daniel* 384a, *Andreas* 1261a, and in two charters: *Charter 678* (grant of lands; dated to 958, from King Edgar to his minister Eanulf) and *Charter 311* (grant of lands, dated to 854, from King Æthelwulf to two churches in Winchester). The earliest usage of the compound is religious: it denotes the four rivers in heaven in *Genesis A* 216a, and the earthly environments under God's regulation in *Daniel* 384a.

[20] On an early date of *Christ C*, see Fulk, *A History*, p. 399.

eastern light typically symbolising Christ and the location of Jerusalem, here the *Beowulf*-poet brightens the theme of Christ calming the storm, a popular motif frequently mentioned in the Bible (cf. Matthew VII.23–7, Mark IV.35–41, Luke VIII.22–5, and Psalm LXXXIX.9 and CVII.29).

Just as Moses and his followers in *Exodus*, who defeat the unbelieving Egyptians by the sea and journey across the Red Sea on a metaphorical ship, Constantine believes in the Cross in his dream-vision, defeats the unbelieving Germanic horde by the Danube, and sails triumphantly back. Both *Exodus* and *Elene* demonstrate the same type of dichotomy: the drowning of the unbelievers in the cold water, in contrast to the survival of the faithful on a ship. The watery elements added to the battle story of Constatine in *Elene* not only gesture towards *Exodus* and *Beowulf*, but also further strengthen the overall presence of ship-symbolism in the poem, linking Constantine's salvific ship with the vessel of his mother Elene, who embarks on a God-ordained voyage to the Holy City.

3.2.2 A 'desired journey' to Jerusalem

Both *Elene* and the Latin analogue provide a background of how the journey of Helena starts: it happens upon an order from the Roman emperor Constantine, Helena's son, who sees the sign of the Cross in his dream, later shows the object during the war against Germanic invaders, wins the battle, and afterwards hopes to rediscover the True Cross in Jerusalem. The Latin analogue gives two short sentences respectively on Constantine's command and Helena's journey in the simplest language:

> Misit suam matrem Helenam ut exquireret sanctum lignum Crucis Domini et in eodem loco ædificaret ecclesiam. […] Vicesima et octava die secundi mensis in sanctam civitatem Hierusalem introvit una cum exercitu magno.[21]
>
> ('He [Emperor Constantine] sent his mother Helena to find the Holy Rood of the Cross of God and establish a church in that place. […] On the twenty-eighth day of the second month, [Helena] went into the Holy City of Jerusalem, with great troop.')

By contrast, Cynewulf reshapes this account. At first glance, what the poet says about Constantine who 'his mōdor hēt fēran fold-weġe folca þrēate' ('ordered his mother to travel the earth-way with a troop from his armies') may seem quite conventional: a land journey is suggested in his poem (though the geography dictates a sea journey to reach Jerusalem from Italy or Dacia). Yet the poet soon inserts an Old English seafaring type-scene of launching or mooring a ship of a hero full of treasures and weapons, which is also common to *Beowulf* and *Andreas* (see Chapters Two and Four). Unlike Andreas, who is terrified of the perilous journey when receiving the divine instruction to sail on an evangelic mission, Elene is immediately prepared for the *sīþ-fæt* ('journey' in *Elene* 220a and 229b; commonly found in prose), because it is a *will-sīþ* ('desired journey', 223a).

What matters here is the term *will-sīþ*, which occurs only five times in the corpus, mostly in verse, but it is highly associated with the idea of divine protection. The only example in prose is Bede's early eighth-century *Historia* (III.xiii in the Old English version; III.xv in the corresponding Latin version), when bishop Aidan instructs priest Utta, who is seeking advice for his upcoming journey to Kent as a diplomat of a royal

[21] The Latin text is taken from *Acta Sanctorum Maii Tomus I*, pp. 445–6.

marriage.[22] The bishop gives Utta some oil, foretells the tempest, and teaches him to pour the oil into the sea when the sea-storms comes, so as to stay on a 'desired journey' ('on eowerne wil-sīð').[23] In the poetic tradition, this compound is intertwined with Beowulf's willing-departure for his Danish task in the double-alliterative line in *Beowulf* 216: '**weras on wil-sīð** wudu bundenne' ('**warriors on a desired journey**, on a wood-braced ship'). The sea-voyages of Beowulf are potentially ordained by God to eliminate the doomed heirs of Cain in Denmark.

The Christian motive is also manifest in a similar pattern in *Andreas* 1046: '**weorod on wil-sīð** wolcnum beþehte' ('**the troop on a desired journey**, with the clouds [God] covered [above the troop]'). Such travel-imagery in *Andreas* establishes a bond with the symbolism of the cloud-tent-ship in *Exodus* 71b–92, a good omen of God's protection on a divine-led journey (see Chapter One). The same association between *will-sīþ* and divine ordainment occurs in *Christ A*. After the Ascension, Christ will open life ('lif ontȳneð', *Christ A* 19b) to the pious believers, but will not grant a 'desired journey' to those who are damned for their vulgar deeds: 'ōþrum forwyrneð wlitigan will-sīþes, ġif his weorc ne dēag' ('[the Lord] denies to others the glorious, desired journey, if his deeds do not avail', 20b–1).[24]

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[22] For the story in the Old English text, see Thomas Miller, ed., *The Old English Version of Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, 4 vols (London, 1890–8), I, pp. 198–201. For the corresponding passage in Latin, see Colgrave and Mynors, ed., *Bede's Ecclesiastical History*, p. 260.

[23] Miller, ed., *Bede's Ecclesiastical History*, p. 200.

[24] For the text, see Clayton, ed. and trans., *Christ and his Saints*, p. 2. Fulk provides a rough dating for *Christ A* between the late seventh to the middle of the ninth century. Fulk, *A History*, p. 396.

3.2.3 Journey to the East

Cynewulf also gives additional detailed descriptions for the journey of Helena, mother of Constantine, who is asked by her son to sail to Jerusalem to find the True Cross on which Christ is crucified (*Elene* 219–75). A cluster of seafaring terms and collocations appears in a passage where Elene and her thegns start the voyage on their ships:

Fearoð-henġestas
ymb ġeofenes **stæð** ġearwe **stōdon**,
sælde sæ-mēaras, sunde ġetenġe.
Đā wæs orcnāwe idese sīð-fæt,
siððan wæġes helm werode ġesōhte.
Þær wlanc maniġ æt Wendel-sæ
on **stæðe stōdon**. Stundum wrǣcon
ofer mearc-paðu, mæġen æfter ōðrum,
ond þā ġehlōdon hilde-serċum,
bordum ond ordum, byrn-wīġendum,
werum ond wīfum, **wǣġ-henġestas**.
Lēton þā **ofer fīfel-wæġ** **fāmġe** sċrīðan
bronte brim-þisan. **Bord** oft onfēng
ofer ēarh-ġeblond ȳða swengas;
sǣ swinsade. **Ne hȳrde iċ** sīð ne ǣr
on ēġ-strēame idese lædan,
on mere-strǣte, mæġen fæġerre.
Þǣr meahte ġesīon, sē ðone sīð behēold,
brecan ofer bæð-weġ, **brim-wudu snyrġan**
under swellingum, **sæ-mearh plegean**,
wadan wæġ-flotan. Wigan wæron blīðe,
collen-ferhðe, cwēn sīðes ġefēah,
siððan tō hȳðe **hringed-stefnan**
ofer lago-fæsten ġeliden hæfdon
on Crēca land. **Ċēolas** lēton
æt sæ-fearoðe, sande bewrecene,
ald ȳð-hofu, **oncrum fæste**
on brime bīdan beorna ġeþinġes
hwonne hēo sīo gūð-cwēn gumena þrēate
ofer ēast-wegas eft gesōhte. (226b–55)

(‘The **sea-stallions stood** readily by the ocean’s **seashore**, the **sea-steeds tied up** near to the sea. The journey of the lady was well-known, since [she] sought the wave’s protector with the

> troop. Many bold [men] **stood** there, on the **seashore** at the Mediterranean Sea. At times they advanced in the march-path, one kinsman after another, and then loaded up the **sea-stallions** with the battle-shirts, shields and spears, mail-coated warriors, men and women. Then [they] let the **foamy, towering sea-speeders** glide **across the waves of sea-monsters**. The **ship's plank** often received the beatings of the sea, over the waters' surging; the sea sang. **I have never heard** a lady lead a more splendid army in the sea-stream, in the sea-path. There one who beheld that journey might see the **sea-wood hasten under the swellings** [of the sail], the **sea-steed play**, the **wave-floater advance**, **burst forth through the bath-way**. The bold-spirited warriors were happy, the lady rejoiced in the journey, **after** the **ring-prowed ships** had journeyed across the water-fastness **to the harbour** in the Greek land. [The crew] left the **ships** on the sea-shore, surrounded by sand, the **old wave-houses made fast with anchor** in the sea, waiting for the outcomes of warriors, when the war-lady would seek them again with a band of men across the eastern-ways.')

This long sea-voyage passage loaded with traditional seafaring diction and motif in *Elene* has no parallel in the Latin, whereby it may be an addition by Cynewulf. Along with a high density of unique or rare maritime phraseology, Cynewulf demonstrates an elevated level of poetic artistry in the narrative. Apart from repeated collocations such as '**stæð** […] **stōdon**' ('**stood** […] **by the seashore**', 227) and '**on stæðe stōdon**' ('**stood on the seashore**', 232a), Cynewulf employs some nautical terms that are found in narrative poems discussed in this thesis: the verb *sǣlan* (228a) as derived from *sāl* (see Chapters One and Two, and 3.3 below), *fāmiġ* (237b; see Chapters One, Two, and Four), *brant* (238a), the polysemic simplex *bord* (238b) denoting the ship's plank, the expression 'under swellingum' ('under the swelling [of the sails]', 245a, found only in this passage), the simplex *hȳþ* (248a), '**ald ȳð-hofu**' ('**old wave-house**', 252a; which is repeated by Cynewulf as '**ealde ȳð-mēaras**', '**old sea-steeds**' in *Christ B* 863a; see 3.3

below), and '**oncrum fæste**' (**'made fast with anchor**', 252b; see Chapter Two and 3.3).

Some idiosyncratic expressions also demonstrate traces of potential indebtedness and influence, such as '**ofer fīfel-wǣġ**' ('**across the waves of sea-monsters**', 237a; see Chapter Four) and '**ne hȳrde iċ**' (240b; see Chapter Two), and when onlookers saw '**brecan ofer bæð-weġ**, **brim-wudu snyrġan**' ('**the sea-wood hasten, burst forth through the bath-way**', 244; see Chapter Four).[25] Besides, some weaponry terms Cynewulf employs in the seafaring passage show the same traces of shared diction between *Beowulf*, *Elene*, and *Andreas*, such as *hilde-serce* ('battle-shirt', 234b; unique), *byrn-wīġend* ('mailcoat-warrior', 224a and 235b), and '**bordum ond ordum**' ('**with shields and spears**', 235a, attested only in *Elene* and *Andreas*).[26] In the vivid portrayal of animated ships, Cynewulf uses one metaphorical verb and three appositional infinitive clauses (243–6a), each containing at least one metaphorically used word for a lively semantic relationship: '**brecan** [...] **snyrġan** [...] **plegean** [...] **wadan**' ('**break through** […] **hasten** […] **play** […] **advance**').[27]

Cynewulf mentions the fleet ten times by nine ship-terms, each used once, except *sǣ-mearh* ('sea-steed', 228a and 245b). There is only one simplex in this passage, the

[25] The expression in 244 is a mixture of different types of alliterations, including double-alliteration, cross-alliteration, and back-linked alliteration: '**b**recan ofer **bæð**-**we**ġ, **b**rim-**w**udu **s**nyrġan'. Double-alliteration is formed by '**b**recan' and '**bæð**-**we**ġ' in the on-verse; cross-alliteration by '**bæð**-**we**ġ, **b**rim-**w**udu'. The last term 'snyrġan' has back-linked alliteration on *s* in alignment with 'under **s**wellingum, **s**ǣ-mearh plegean' in the following line. See further Orchard, 'Artful Alliteration', pp. 431 and 433. On double-alliteration, see Fulk, *A History*, pp. 129–30, 181, and 217–8. On animated ships, see Olsen, 'Animated Ships'. On '**brecan ofer bæð-weġ**' in *Elene* and *Andreas*, see Powell, 'Verbal Parallels', pp. 218–19.

[26] Many *hilde*-compounds for weapons and armours, such as *hilde-bill* ('battle-blade'), *hilde-bord* ('battle-shield'), and *hilde-ġeatwe* ('battle-trappings') are unique to *Beowulf*. Cf. a rare compound *byrn-wiġa* in *Beowulf* 2918a. Cf. '**wordum ond bordum**' ('with words and shields') in *Elene* 25b; '**ordum ond bordum**' in *Andreas* 1205b.

[27] Olsen, 'Metaphorical Density', pp. 192–3. On animated ships in Old English poetry, see Olsen, 'Animated Ships', pp. 60–6.

archaic term *ċēol* (250b; see Chapters Two and Four). The sequence of the ship-terms occurs as follows: ***faroþ-hengest*** (‘**sea-stallion**’, 226b; unique) — ***sǣ-mearh*** (228a; elsewhere attested only in *Andreas* 267a, and *The Whale* 15a) — ***wǣġ-hengest*** (‘**sea-stallion**’, 236b; elsewhere only in *Guthlac B* 1329a) — ***brim-þīsa*** (‘**sea-speeder**’, 238a; elsewhere only in *Andreas* 1657b and 1699b) — ***brim-wudu*** (244b; elsewhere only in *Guthlac B* 1331b) — ***sǣ-mearh*** — ***wǣġ-flota*** (246a; elsewhere only in *Beowulf* 1907a and *Andreas* 487a) — ***hringed-stefna*** (also three times in *Beowulf*) — ***ċēol*** — ***ȳþ-hof*** (252a; unique).[28] Only the first and the last compounds in the sequence are unique, and the others are shared at least with *Beowulf*, *Guthlac B*, or *Andreas*. Unlike traditional apposition, it is not until the second-to-last instance that the poet finally uses a simplex for ‘ship’. Each of the first three compounds consists of a first element meaning ‘sea’ and a second element denoting ‘horse’ (which are not present in earlier poems such as *Genesis A*, *Exodus*, and *Beowulf*), while the two compounds in the fourth and fifth positions have *brim* (‘sea’) as the first element. Unlike the strategies of variation in *Beowulf* and *Andreas*, Cynewulf chooses to let the unfamiliar compounds be used to interpret each other in the semantic web of his text.

The eight compounds for ‘ship’ can be further divided into four groups, according to the second elements. The first group includes three ‘sea-horse’ compounds, *faroþ-hengest*, *sǣ-mearh*, and *wǣġ-hengest*. The second group has two terms with vague meaning, *brim-þīsa* and *wǣġ-flota*. The third group consists of two compounds based on a ship’s materiality, *brim-wudu* and *hringed-stefna*. Lastly, there is an emended form

[28] Cf. *hof* in *Genesis A*; see Chapter One.

ȳþ-hof, which is the only *-hof*-compound that denotes 'ship' with the base-meaning of 'dwelling', reminiscent of the 'sea-house' compounds in *Genesis A* (see Chapter One).[29] The *-þīsa*-compounds are found in a limited range of texts: *Elene*, *Guthlac B*, *Andreas*, and *The Whale*; the *-flota*-compounds for 'ship', in *Beowulf*, *Elene*, *Guthlac B*, and *Andreas*; the *-wudu*-compounds for 'ship', in *Beowulf*, *Rood*, *Elene*, *Christ B*, *Guthlac B*, and *Andreas*.[30] The *-stefna*-compounds are mainly used by the *Beowulf*-poet, with *hringed-stefna* in *Elene* 248b as the only exception. Potentially, some ship-compounds may have been inspired by, or directly borrowed from earlier works such as *Beowulf*, while others, including *brim-þīsa* and the 'sea-horse' compounds, may be Cynewulf borrowing from the vernacular riddle-tradition.

The comparison of a ship to an animal in compounding is common in Old Norse, including the 'sea-horse' compounds. There are numerous Old Norse poetic terms which compare the ship to different types of animals, such as *haf-Sleipnir* ('sea-Sleipnir') and *segl-vigg* ('sail-horse') which liken the ship to a horse, as well as some base-words for ship-compounds: *vargr* ('wolf'), *hreinn* ('reindeer'), *elgr* ('elk'), and *asni* ('ass').[31] In skaldic poetry, the commonest practice is to employ relevant diction of 'horse' to denote 'ship', as there are more than two-hundred and sixty words

[29] The manuscript form is 'yð liofu'; on this commonly accepted emendation, see further Bjork, ed. and trans., *Cynewulf*, p. 240; Gradon, ed., *Cynewulf's Elene*, p. 37. Grimm interprets as 'navigia, eigentlich undarum domus' ('boats, really the house of the waves'), in *Andreas und Elene*, p. 147.

[30] Cf. *sċip-flota* in *Brunanburh* 11b, denoting the Viking pirates (see Chapter One). On the contested ship-term *holm-wudu* in *Rood* 91a, see Li, 'Revisiting OE *holm-wudu*'.

[31] Olsen, 'Animated Ships', p. 55. On Old Norse ship-kennings with horse-terms as base-words, see Judith Jesch, *Ships and Men in the Late Viking Age: The Vocabulary of Runic Inscriptions and Skaldic Verse* (Woodbridge, 2001), pp. 140–1, 144, 148, 151, 153, 160, 162, 170–7, 211, 214, 236. For a list of metaphorical kennings comparing the ship to animals in Old Norse poetry, see Meissner, *Die Kenningar der Skalden*, pp. 218–20. See further 'Kennings for SHIP', *The Skaldic Project*, <https://skaldic.org/m.php?p=kenningref&i=2828>, which provides a list of ship-kennings in Old Norse poetry.

containing ship-horse comparison in the skaldic corpus.[32] A particular function of the ship-as-animal comparison in Old Norse poetry is to help the poet illustrate an experience commonly practiced in the poems' contemporary society.[33] Perhaps it is true that the skalds and Eddic poets are much more imaginative in creating ship-beast kennings than Old English poets, but the influence of Christianity in early medieval England may offer a more convincing explanation for the relative scarcity of ship-as-animal compounds in Old English compared with Old Norse.[34] While Scandinavian tradition retains a more heroic conception of the sea as an adversary to be conquered, the Christianised Old English poets readily accept the concept of a safe sea-journey protected by God.[35]

Indeed, the ship-as-animal compounds are comparatively rare in the Old English corpus, with the 'sea-horse' group mostly found in Cynewulfian works.[36] The Old English equivalents are absent in earlier longer poems such as *Beowulf* and also in the Old English riddle-tradition which includes the Exeter Book *Riddles*, and in the *Rune Poem* (see Introduction). The fact that Cynewulf employs both nautical terms from *Beowulf* (which does not include any ship-horse comparison) and the 'sea-horse' compounds in the riddle tradition might indicate that the poet draws from two distinct sets of literary practices: the longer narrative poems influenced by Christian literary

[32] Olsen, 'Animated Ships', p. 54. On the varied patterns of such formulation of kennings, see pp. 54–5. For a comprehensive list of ship-horse kennings, see Meissner, *Die Kenningar der Skalden*, pp. 209–12. See also R. D. Fulk, 'Kennings in Old English Verse and in the Poetic *Edda*', *EJSS* 51 (2021), 69–91, at 78 and 81.
[33] Olsen, 'Animated Ships', p. 54. On the popular idea among the Vikings who perceive the sea as a personal challenge, see p. 66.
[34] Olsen, 'Animated Ships', pp. 61 and 66.
[35] Olsen, 'Animated Ships', p. 66.
[36] Anderson, 'Sæmearh', pp. 5–6 and 8–9. Olsen, 'Animated Ships', pp. 60–4. See further Marquardt, *Die altenglischen Kenningar*, pp. 189 and 228–9.

tradition (especially *Beowulf*), and the vernacular riddle tradition.

In existing 'sea-horse' compounds, there are only two simplexes for 'horse', *hengest* ('stallion', 'horse'; two uses in poetry; seven uses in prose) and *mearh* (poetic) that function as the second elements. The surviving corpus witnesses nine 'sea-horse' compounds in poetry, including six *-hengest*-compounds and three *-mearh*-compounds.[37] Surprisingly, most of them (eight out of nine) are found in the works by Cynewulf and his followers: five in *Elene* and *Christ B* (*faroþ-hengest*, *sæ-mearh*, *sund-hengest*, *yþ-mearh*, and *wæg-hengest*; which count more than half), two in the Cynewulfian *Guthlac B* (*laȝu-mearh* and *wæg-hengest*), and three in *Andreas* (*brim-hengest*, *sæ-hengest*, and *sæ-mearh*; see Chapter Four). Two compounds are unique to either *Elene* or *Christ B* (*faroþ-hengest* and *sund-hengest*).

What is intriguing is the reason why the Old English poets are more interested in coining 'sea-horse' compounds than other types of ship-as-animal terms. In their comparisons, this animated image of a stallion in water is further linked with horse-riding on land. In other words, the sea is compared to land, and the ship to a horse. It has been argued that Cynewulf applies such a 'sea-horse' metaphor chiefly to develop the idea of dangerous sea-crossing and the need to control the ship, which is analogous to the dangers of horse riding.[38] On the contrary, I argue that the ship-horse and sea-land comparison latent in the 'sea-horse' compounds deftly expresses Cynewulf's advocacy for safe journey under Christ's protection, wherein lies the simple truth that

[37] Cf. *yþ-hengest* ('sea-horse', denoting the fleet of Danish king Sweyn Forkbeard) in a clearly poetic passage in *ASC* MSS C, D, and E 1003, when Sweyn sails back to his fleet from Salisbury.
[38] Anderson, '*Sæmearh*', pp. 5–6.

the protected journey is just as harmless as horse-riding in the broad field, which is different from the riddling nature of the same group of compounds in the vernacular riddle-tradition.

From a macroscopic perspective, the occurrence of 'sea-horse' compounds might be associated with the migration myth in early medieval England, and horses' crucial roles across different spheres of society, especially in military, royal, and religious scenarios.[39] Two renowned ancestors of Germanic origin, who arrive in England from the sea on their ships in 449, are said to be Hengest and Horsa, with both names etymologically denoting 'horse', 'steed'.[40] In *Beowulf*, horses appear in mortuary rituals (Beowulf's funeral in 3169–82), and on other formal, royal, or gift-giving occasions (cf. 234–6, 286–7a, 314b–15, 853–7a, 1035–49, 1399–1400a, 1896–9, and 2163–76).[41] The description of the fleet as 'sea-horses' and the varied diction for battle-scenes in *Elene*, not only suits Elene's royal identity, but also acknowledges a kind of cavalry in the mission as a holy war against the heathens, ordained by God.

Apart from these lexical and semantic characteristics, some ship-terms in *Elene* appear in particular expressions that are exclusively shared with other poems discussed here. As Chapter One demonstrates, the image of 'wood on the sea' may also convey traditional Christian connotations concerning themes of Ship-of-the-Church or ship-of-

[39] Walter Gilbey, *The Great Horse*, 2nd ed. (London, 1899), pp. 11–13. See further Cris Fern, 'Early Anglo-Saxon Horse Culture and Funerary Ritual (*c.* AD 450–650): Active Mythology in a European Context', *The Ritual Killing and Burial of Animals: European Perspectives*, ed. Aleksander Pluskowski (Oxford, 2012) pp. 164–83; Stephen Pollington, 'The Role of Horsemen in Anglo-Saxon Warfare: "A Nobleman Should be on a Horse's Back"', *MW* 1 (2011), 44–7; Kerry Cathers, 'An Examination of the Horse in Anglo-Saxon England' (unpubl. PhD dissertation, Univ. of Reading, 2002).

[40] On Hengest and Horsa, see Richard Sowerby, 'Hengest and Horsa: the Manipulation of History and Myth from the *adventus Saxonum* to *Historia Brittonum*', *NMS* 51 (2007), 1–19; Brian D. Joseph, 'Using Indo-European Comparative Mythology to Solve Literary Problems: The Case of Old English Hengest', *PCS* 2 (1982–3), 177–86, at 181; Joan E. Turville-Petre, 'Hengest and Horsa', *SBVS* 14 (1953–7), 273–90.

[41] Jennifer Neville, 'Hrothgar's Horses: Feral or Thoroughbred?', *ASE* 35 (2006), 131–57.

life. The term *brim-wudu* in *Elene* 244b refers to the fleet, by which Elene arrives at Jerusalem, finds the True Cross, and converts the locals to Christianity. More importantly, Cynewulf creates a picturesque scene of a 'sea-wood' breaking through the sea-waves, akin to a war-horse in battle, and the whole line is further paralleled by the *Andreas*-poet (see Chapter Four).

The pattern of verb + preposition + noun for location + *brim-wudu* + *snyrian* ('hasten') might have inspired the anonymous poet of *Guthlac B*, who makes a slight alteration in *Guthlac B* 1331, with '**blāc ofer burh-salo**' ('[the sun] bright over the stronghold-building') in the on-verse (see below). Beccel, servant of Saint Guthlac of Crowland (*c.* 673–714), punts a boat through the fens to deliver the sad news of Guthlac's passing to the saint's sister (*Guthlac B* 1326b–35a). All these texts have the same double alliteration on *b* collocating with *ofer* in the on-verse, and the *brim*-compounds for 'ship' in the off-verse, either in the form of a 'sea-wood' or a 'sea-horse':

'**Brecan ofer bæð-weġ, brim-wudu snierġan**' (*Elene* 244)
'**Brecan ofer bæð-weġ**' (*Andreas* 223a)
'**Brecað ofer bæð-weġ brim-henġestum**' (*Andreas* 513)
'**B**lāc **ofer b**urh-salo. **Brim-wudu sċynde**' (*Guthlac B* 1331)

The first three of these passages display similarities in style and diction, and give priority to the themes of journey and salvation through the symbolic representations of the ships of Elene and of Saint Guthlac's servant respectively. While the abovementioned original expression becomes a model for later poets, Cynewulf also openly draws inspiration from *Beowulf*. The nautical expression 'siððan tō hȳðe hringed-stefnan' ('after the ring-prowed ships [arrived] at harbour') in *Elene* 248 probably models on 'þǣr æt hȳðe stōd, hringed-stefna' ('there at harbour stood a ring-

prowed ship') in *Beowulf* 32. In a similar vein, *Guthlac B* 1333 has 'ġehlǣsted tō hȳðe, þæt sē hærn-flota' ('the loaded [sea-steed hastened] to harbour, so that the billow-floater'; see below). All three lines uniformly adopt a structure containing preposition + 'hȳðe' + ship-compound alliterating on *h*:

> 'Þǣr **æt hȳðe** stōd, **hringed-stefna**' (*Beowulf* 32)
> 'Siððan **tō hȳðe hringed-stefnan**' (*Elene* 248)
> 'Ġehlǣsted **tō hȳðe**, þæt sē **hærn-flota**' (*Guthlac B* 1333)

Aside from full-line verbal parallels, Cynewulf may have intentionally drawn from the 'treasure-ship' motif in *Beowulf*. Similar expressions of ships loaded with battle-garments can be found in *Elene* 234–6 (see above). In *Beowulf*, ships are mostly described as being decked with armours and weapons. Here, the terms for weaponry are akin to those in *Beowulf*. By contrast, the equivalent Latin does not contain any detailed descriptions of weaponry, and the only relevant diction is 'exercitu magno' ('with a large troop').[42] Statistically, Cynewulf has four half-lines depicting the treasures taken onto the ship. Among the terms, *hilde-serce* ('battle-shirt') occurs only in *Elene* 234b, and this poetic coinage may derive from *Beowulf*, which contains twenty-five -*hilde*-compounds, eighteen of which are unique to the poem. Among the eight -*hilde*-compounds shared with other poems, three occur in Cynewulf's signed works. Moreover, a word similar to *byrn-wīġend* ('mailcoat-warrior') in *Elene* 224a and 235b is a rare compound *byrn-wiġa* in *Beowulf* 2918a. The 'treasures' on Elene's fleet denote not only the weapons as deterrents to the unbelievers of God in Jerusalem, but also Elene herself. As the expression 'ne hȳrde iċ' (*Elene* 240b) suggests, such a

[42] *Acta Sanctorum Maii Tomus I*, pp. 445–6.

scene of warships decked with warriors and treasures offers cultural heritage and collective memory. This expression, along with a nautical setting, also occurs in *Beowulf* 38 and *Andreas* 360b–1 (see Chapters Two and Four).

The seafaring passage in *Elene* 226b–55 may have directly inspired the poet of *Guthlac B*. In a passage narrating the sorrowful journey of Guthlac's servant, who leaves the island to bring the news of Guthlac's death to the saint's sister, the poet repeatedly mentions the boat with parallel phraseology reminding the audience of Cynewulf's *Elene*:

> Đā āfyrhted wearð
> ār, elnes biloren, ġewāt þā ofestlīċe
> beorn unhyðiġ, þæt hē **bāt** ġestāg,
> **wǣġ-henġest** wræc, **wæter-þīsa** fōr,
> snel under sorgum. Swegl hāte scān,
> blāc ofer burg-salo. **Brim-wudu scynde**,
> **lēoht, lāde fūs**. **Laĝu-mearg snyrede**
> gehlǣsted **tō hȳðe**, þæt sē **hærn-flota**
> æfter sund-plegan sond-lond ġespearn,
> grond wið grēote. (1326b–35a)
>
> ('Then the servant became frightened, deprived of valour, then the unhappy man departed quickly, he boarded that **boat**, drove the **wave-stallion**, the **water-burster** proceeded, swift under his sorrows. The sun shone warmly, shining over the stronghold-building. The **sea-wood hurried**, **light, eager for the voyage**. The loaded **sea-steed hastened to harbour**, so that after its sea-play [voyage], the **billow-floater** trod upon the sandy shore, the ground against the gravel.')

What is common in the half-lines containing ship-term is that they all follow a pattern of ship-term + verb except 1332b, where *hærn-flota* stands alone: '**bāt ġestāg**' (**'boarded a boat**', 1328b), '**wǣġ-henġest wræc**' ('**drove the sea-stallion**', 1329a), '**wæter-þīsa fōr**' ('**the water-burster proceeded**', 1329b), '**brim-wudu scynde**' ('**the**

sea-wood hurried', 1331b), '**laḡu-mearg snyrede**' ('**the sea-steed hastened**', 1332b). Composed of only two constituents (noun + verb), this pattern is less obviously identifiable than those with more constituents.[43] Yet in effect, because of the high frequency of the ship-term + verb collocation (five pairs) in the six-line short passage in *Guthlac B*, an audience might be expected to recognise such a pattern, and therefore identify the form and then the meaning of the rare or unique compounds for 'ship'.

As in Cynewulf's *Elene*, the description of the servant's voyage in *Guthlac B* seems to come from the poet's own imagination. In the likeliest Latin source of *Guthlac B*, the early eighth-century prose *Vita sancti Guthlaci* (' Life of Saint Guthlac') by Felix presented to the East-Anglian King Ælfwald (died 749), the navigational diction is succinct.[44] The prose author only states 'arrepta **nauicula** portum reliquit ac deinde […] coepto **itinere** perrexit' ('having boarded the **small boat**, he left the harbour, and then […] commenced the **journey**, and continued onwards'). With only one ship-term *nauicula* ('small boat', 'small ship'), the author implies that the vessel is a boat used for in-land travels.[45] The nautical expressions in *Guthlac B*, however, make the voyage of Beccel reminiscent of the voyages of Beowulf and Elene. The apparent association of the phraseology in *Guthlac B* with sea-voyages invites comparison with *Elene*. When adopting ship-terms, the poet of *Guthlac B* puts the monosemous simplex *bāt* (1328b)

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[43] Cf. '**flota** wæs on **ȳðum**, **bāt** under **beorge**' in *Beowulf* 210b–11a; '**bāt** on **sæwe**, **flēot** on **faroþe**' ('the **boat** on the **sea**, a **raft** on the **waves**') in *Resignation* 100b–1a. The line numbers and text of *Resignation* is based on Krapp and Dobbie, ed., *The Exeter Book*. While in some scholarly editions the poem *Resignation* is regarded as one poem, some scholars believe that it is a fragment consisting of two separate poems, and a leaf in the Exeter manuscript that contains the ending of the first poem, and the beginning of the second poem has been lost. See Jones, ed. and trans., *Shorter Poems*, pp. 354–5. See also Alan Bliss and Allen J. Frantzen, 'The Integrity of *Resignation*', *RES* 27 (1976), 385–402. In Bjork, ed. and trans., *Shorter Poems*, the term *bāt* occurs in *Resignation (B)* 31b.

[44] On the dating and authorship of the prose *Vita*, see Roberts, ed., *Guthlac Poems*, p. 1.

[45] The Latin text cited above is taken from Bertram Colgrave, ed. and trans., *Felix's Life of Saint Guthlac* (Cambridge, 1956), p. 158.

as an appositive of the subsequent rare or unique compounds for 'ship': *wǣġ-henġest* (1329a; uniquely shared between *Guthlac B* and *Elene*), *wæter-þīsa* ('water-burster'; found only in *Guthlac B* 1329b and *The Whale* 50a), *brim-wudu* (1331b; preserved only in *Guthlac B* and *Elene*), *lagu-mearh* ('sea-steed', 1332b; unique), and *hærn-flota* (unique).

In this passage, the high frequency of the phraseology for 'ship' demonstrates a connection between the two poems: at least one element in each compound appears in *Elene*, as well as the previously mentioned '**tō hȳðe** þæt sē **hærn-flota**' (1333) mirroring *Beowulf* 32 and *Elene* 248. Two verbs that describe the motion of the servant's ship appear in *Beowulf* and *Elene*: *snyrian* (see above), and *ġesċyndan* ('hasten') in *Beowulf* 918a and 2570a and *Elene* 30b. The boat is said to be '**snel** under sorgum' ('**swift** under his sorrows', 1330a; see also Chapter Four) and '**lēoht**, **lāde fūs**' ('**light**, **eager for the voyage**', 1331a), which calls to mind 'īsiġ ond **ūt-fūs**' in *Beowulf* 33a and '**fugle ġelīcost**' in 218a (see Chapter Two).

Both ships of Scyld and Beowulf imply a God-led journey, though the hint is subtle (see Chapter Two). By the same token, Elene's fleet on the voyage is portrayed in a way akin to a triumphant band of cavalry-horses galloping towards the doomed enemy, under divine guidance. By contrast, the general image of 'ship' in *Guthlac B* varies. The servant of Saint Guthlac sails on a solo voyage, wishing to deliver the sad news to the world. The servant's boat is sorrow-laden, instead of being decked with spiritual treasure.[46] The trip of Beccel seems to be an in-land boat-trip starting from the

[46] See further Stephen D. Powell, 'The Journey Forth: Elegiac Consolation in *Guthlac B*', *ES* 79 (1998), 489–500; Roberts, ed., *Guthlac Poems*, p. 57.

marshland in Crowland, where Saint Guthlac chooses to withdraw into solitude.[47]

In Felix's portrayal, Beccel is presented as 'formidine tremefactus' ('trembling with fear') when he perceives the miracles after the saint's death. Whilst the prose author emphasises Beccel's spiritual frailty, the poet of *Guthlac B* also describes Beccel as unhappy, frightened, and lacking courage (1326b–8a). The poet further adds some Cynewulfian expressions to foreground the sadness of the servant travelling on the boat (see Chapter Four): 'hāte æt heortan' ('hot in heart', 1336a; cf. *Elene* 628a, *Christ B* 500a and 539a, and *Andreas* 1709a) and 'wōpes hrinḡ' ('sound of lamentation', 'sound of sorrow', 1339b; cf. *Elene* 1131b, *Christ B* 537b, and *Andreas* 1278b). Both collocations are peculiar to *Elene*, *Christ B*, *Guthlac B*, and *Andreas*.[48]

These textual resemblances between *Guthlac B* and Cynewulf's signed works exemplify the poet's intentional allusion to the Cynewulfian navigational phraseology. The parallel passages in *Elene* and *Guthlac B* appear to mirror each other only in word-form and expressions, instead of metaphorical undertones. To a great extent, the sorrow-laden ship is metaphorically emblematic of the poet's own intense empathy for the life-work and the passing of Guthlac.

With Cynewulf's emphasis on the image of ships loaded with treasure and weaponry, *Elene* shows a close association with earlier verse such as *Beowulf*. Although

[47] The swampy hermitage of Guthlac, albeit described as remote and far-fetched in the prose *Vita*, is perhaps more accessible. See further Helen Appleton, 'Water, Wisdom, and Worldliness in the Anglo-Saxon Prose *Lives of Guthlac*', *Meanings of Water*, pp. 211–39, at 222; Kelly A. Kilpatrick, 'The Place-names in Felix's *Vita sancti Guthlaci*', *NMS* 58 (2014), 1–56, at 37.

[48] See further Orchard, 'Both Style and Substance', pp. 281–2; for parallels between *Guthlac B* and Cynewulf's signed poems, see pp. 281–5. On the contextual significance of 'wōpes hrinḡ' in the corpus and a possible association with the ritual in Baldr's ship-funeral, see North and Bintley, ed. and trans., *Andreas*, pp. 281–2. See also Richard North, 'Old English *wopes hring* and the Old Norse Myth of Baldr', *Early Medieval Art and Archaeology in the Northern World: Studies in Honour of James Graham-Campbell*, ed. Andrew Reynolds and Leslie Webster (Leiden, 2013), pp. 893–909, who argues that the expression 'wōpes hrinḡ' epitomises compunction, a figure of speech drawn from pre-Christian Anglian or Danish mythology.

Christ B contains a series of nautical diction akin to *Elene*, the ship-symbolism maps a somewhat different picture. Below, I also illustrate Cynewulf's utilisation of nautical narrative in *Christ B*, which showcases a more prominent influence of Christian ship-symbolism from the Latinate literary tradition.

3.3 *Christ B*

As in *Elene*, ship-symbolism and traditional diction also play an indispensable role in *Christ B*, a work by Cynewulf greatly indebted to Latin homiletic literature and the Vulgate Bible. The poem has two main acknowledged Latin source texts: *Homily* 29 of Gregory the Great and Bede's *Hymn for Ascension Day*.[49] Cynewulf generally adapts the major contents in the final three sections in Gregory's *Homily 29*, and takes great liberties with the original prose text.[50] He offers much more detailed descriptions of specific Christian themes he wants to emphasise, such as the different kinds of gifts of men. This is a popular topic that can be found in other Old English poems including *The Fortunes of Men*, *The Gifts of Men*, and *The Wanderer*, all in the Exeter Book.[51] A difference is also observed in the employment of maritime imagery, which is scarcely mentioned in the Latin sources by Gregory and Bede. In his Old English rendition, by

[49] For the Latin text of Bede's *Hymn for Ascension Day*, see Michael Lapidge, ed., *Bede's Latin Poetry* (Oxford, 2019), pp. 363–73.

[50] For the identification of Cynewulf's Latin models, see, for example, Orchard, 'Alcuin and Cynewulf', pp. 324–33; Bjork, ed. and trans., *Cynewulf*, at xii and 243; Michael Lapidge, 'Cynewulf and the *Passio S. Iulianae*', *Unlocking the Wordhord: Anglo-Saxon Studies in Memory of Edward B. Irving, Jr*, ed. Mark C. Amodio and Katherine O'Brien O'Keeffe (Toronto, 2003), pp. 147–71; Anderson, *Cynewulf*, p. 24; John Pope, 'The Lacuna in the Text of Cynewulf's *Ascension* (*Christ II*, 556b)', *Studies in Language, Literature and Culture of the Middle Ages and Later*, ed. E. Bagby Atwood and Archibald A. Hill (Austin, TX, 1969), pp. 210–19, at 214–19; Schaar, *Critical Studies*, p. 32; A. S. Cook, ed., *The Christ of Cynewulf: A Poem in Three Parts: The Advent, The Ascension, and The Last Judgement* (Boston, MA, 1909), at xliii–xlv and pp. 116–8.

[51] Stanley B. Greenfield and Daniel G. Calder, *A New Critical History of Old English Literature with A Survey of the Anglo-Latin Background by Michael Lapidge* (New York and London, 1986), esp. 188–92. This common catalogue feature in the poems might also have attracted the Exeter Book compiler. See Niles, *God's Exiles*, pp. 81 and 130.

contrast, Cynewulf refers to seafaring twice, firstly in an extended passage on the theme of men's talents as God-given gifts (*Christ B* 659–82), later in an original passage on men's spiritual journey towards salvation at the end of *Christ B* (850–66).

In this section, I analyse ship-symbolism in *Christ B* 676b–8a and 850–66 respectively. The first instance is part of a twenty-four-line passage on the theme of gifts from God. Cynewulf draws from enumerative models including the *alius*-construction in Latin literature (particularly the Gregorian counterpart in *Homily 29*), and the *sum*-construction and specific examples of gifts in Old English poetic tradition.[52] The navigational scene in the first instance (676b–8a) manifests a leitmotif in *Christ B*: the salvific ship is God's gift for mankind. I then scrutinise how the same idea is amplified in the second passage (850–66). I also demonstrate the contextual functions of the two passages on seafaring in *Christ B*, and expound the distinctive verbal parallels between *Christ B*, Cynewulf's putative sources (*Beowulf* and Latin patristic materials), and other Old English poems such as *Andreas* and *The Whale*.[53] This section will demonstrate how Cynewulf expands on the theme of the salvific ship by building on maritime elements from both Latin patristic sources and vernacular literary tradition.

[52] See further Charles D. Wright, *The Irish Tradition in Old English Literature* (Cambridge, 1993), esp. 49–105; Nicholas Howe, *The Old English Catalogue Poems* (Copenhagen, 1985), esp. 104–32.

[53] See, for example, A. S. Cook, ed., *The Old English Elene, Phoenix, and Physiologus* (New Haven, CT, 1921), at lxii. For previous scholarship on the relationship between *The Whale* and Cynewulf, see Lynn Felicia Dufield-Landry, 'A Stylistic and Contextual Study of the Old English *Physiologus*' (PhD dissertation, Univ. of Southwestern Louisiana, 1993), pp. 2–3.

3.3.1 The three sea-terms in 676b–8a

The first sea-voyaging scene in *Christ B* is presented in a section on the topic of men's gifts from God (659–82). When interpreting the meaning of 'accepisti dona in hominibus' ('you have received gifts among men') from Psalm LXVII.19, Gregory repeatedly says that the Lord 'dedit dona hominibus' ('gave gifts to mankind') three times, in the beginning, middle, and end of the passage, presents verbatim five out of the nine God-given gifts listed in 1 Corinthians XII.8–10, and adds virtue as the sixth gift to men, using six short parallel clauses, each starting with the dative 'alii' ('to another'). The structure of the long passage reads as follows: 'dedit dona hominibus […] dedit uero dona hominibus […] alii […] alii […] alii […] alii […] alii […] alii […] alii […] dedit ergo dona hominibus' (*Homily 29*.10).[54] When adapting the same parallel structure, Cynewulf spends twenty-four lines elaborating on eleven specific types of gifts, marked by envelope-patterning ('ūs ġiefe sealde', '[God] gave us gifts', 660b and 'his ġiefe bryttað', '[God] dispenses his gifts to us', 682b), chiasmus ('ūs ġiefe sealde' — 'ġiefeð', 'gives' — 'his ġiefe bryttað'), and eleven *sum*-constructions in *Christ B* 659–82. The general structure of the narrative reads: '**ūs ġiefe sealde** […] sumum […] sē mæġ […] sum mæġ […] sum mæġ […] sum mæġ […] sum mæġ […] sumum […] **ġiefeð** […] sum mæġ […] sum mæġ […] sum mæġ […] sum mæġ […] sum […] **his ġiefe bryttað**'.

The category of gifts in *Christ B* is notably different from Gregory's *Homily 29*.[55]

[54] Gregory's Latin text cited in this thesis is taken from Raymond Étaix ed., *Gregorius Magnus Homiliae in evangelia*, CCSL 141 (Turnhout, 1999), p. 253.
[55] J. E. Cross, 'On *The Wanderer* Lines 80–84: A Study of a Figure and a Theme', *Årsbok* (1958–9), 75–110, at 79.

The poet states eleven examples of talents and skills that can be further categorised into two groups, with the first six examples associated with 'literate' or 'intellectual' aspects (such as astrology, eloquence, law, and music), and the latter five belonging to practical or physical skills employed in seafaring, battlefields, fighting, and the like.[56] The first example in the second group is navigational ability through the sea-storms.

> Sum mæġ framlīċe
> ofer **sealtne sæ** **sund-wudu** drīfan,
> hrēran **holm-þræce**. (676b–8a)
>
> ('One man can bravely drive the **sea-woods** over the **salt sea** and stir up the **sea-storm**.')

Cynewulf seems to have been familiar with stories of ancient, legendary heroes with extraordinary martial and navigational skills such as Beowulf (see Chapter Two).[57] Beowulf's power is given by God, and his mission to Denmark is also divinely appointed. The same ideology is applied in *Christ B*: men's mastery over battles and seafaring are heavenly gifts. Cynewulf employs three maritime words here, two relevant to the nautical environment, *sæ* and *holm-þracu* ('sea-storm'; poetic), and one denoting 'ship', *sund-wudu*. While the diction of seafaring and the overall structure are notably simpler compared to those in the poem's concluding part, Cynewulf nevertheless emphasises seafaring as a divine gift.

The compound *sund-wudu* is exclusive to *Beowulf* and *Christ B* (see Chapter Two). All three lines containing *sund-wudu* have double alliteration on the consonant *s*, and all concrete words in each line contain at least one fricative *s*, *f*, or *þ*. The high level of

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[56] See also Peter Clemoes, *Rhythm and Cosmic Order in Old English Christian Literature: An Inaugural Lecture* (London, 1970), pp. 12–13. For a table comparing the occurrences of occupations mentioned in *Christ B*, *The Fortunes of Men*, and *The Gifts of Men*, see Howe, *Catalogue Poems*, p. 107.

[57] On the *Beowulf*-poet's influence on Cynewulf, see, for example, Orchard, 'Alcuin and Cynewulf', pp. 337–8; Orchard, 'Art of Invention'; Schaar, *Critical Studies*, pp. 235–50.

sibilance employed in narratives on seafaring, as Orchard argues, demonstrates the Old English poets' acute awareness of the sound effects produced by such 'watery words'.[58] For the *Beowulf*-poet, *sund-wudu* is a tool for the poem's envelope-patterning, and at the same time the second element *wudu* ('wood') stresses the physicality of Beowulf's ship. For Cynewulf, this compound is also in apposition to other *sund-* and *-wudu*-compounds in *Christ B* 850–66 (see below).

The poetic simplex *sund* forms ten compounds as the first element, but only three of them depict 'ship', preserved in three interrelated poems: *sund-reċed* unique to *Genesis A* 1335b, *sund-wudu* in *Beowulf* 208a and 1906b and *Christ B* 677b, and *sund-hengest* ('sea-stallion') which is peculiar to *Christ B* 852b and 862b (see above). The third term in this group, *sund-hengest*, contains a ship-horse comparison and represents a rarer type of compounding. Cynewulf's choice of *sund-wudu* invites closer scrutiny.

The *Beowulf*-poet quite often employs the simplex *wudu* and its compounds either alone or in noun + adjective phrases, including *sæ-wudu*, *sund-wudu*, *wudu*, 'wudu bundenne', and 'wudu wunden-hals'. Meanwhile, there are sixteen *-wudu*-compounds in verse, and seven out of the nine used in *Beowulf* are unique to the poem. The poet also creates several unique *-wudu*-compounds for weapons, timbers, and musical instruments, such as *bæl-wudu* ('wood for the funeral pyre') in *Beowulf* 3112b, *bord-wudu* ('wooden shield', 1243a), *gamen-wudu* ('joy-wood', 'lyre', or 'harp', 1065a and 2108b); the use of *wudu* as a descriptive term underlines the physicality of the relevant objects.[59]

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[58] Orchard, 'Word Made Flesh', pp. 299 and 302.

[59] Pirkko Anneli Koppinen, 'Breaking the Mould: Solving the Old English *Riddle 12* as *wudu* "Wood"', *Trees and*

Cynewulf, by contrast, employs four *-wudu*-compounds in his signed poems, all of which denote 'ship' except *camp-wudu* ('conflict-wood', 'spear', *Elene* 51a): *sund-wudu*, *flōd-wudu*, and *brim-wudu*. The physicality of a wooden ship is reminiscent of the ship-Cross comparison (since both are made from wood) commonly found in patristic writings and *Rood* (see Chapter One).

Preserved in five Old English texts are five *-wudu*-compounds meaning 'ship': *brim-wudu* in *Elene* and *Guthlac B*, *flōd-wudu* in *Christ B* 853a, *holm-wudu* ('sea-wood'; unique; referring to the Cross interpreted as a ship) in *Rood* 91a, *sǣ-wudu* in *Beowulf*, and *sund-wudu*. All these poems are connected: *Beowulf* seems to have influenced Cynewulf; the ship-symbolism in *Rood*, *Elene*, and *Christ B* is similar; and Cynewulf seems to have been a source of *Guthlac B* (see above).[60]

Unlike the *Beowulf*-poet's focus on pagan heroes and legendary figures, the four later poems centre around Christ or Christian saints, directly aligning their narratives with the hagiographic tradition. Their sea-voyage episodes reconfigure vernacular poetic conventions to underscore themes of faith and salvation. The uses of *-wudu*-compounds extend beyond literal description, evoking Christological associations with the Holy Cross, Noah's Ark, the Church, ultimately pointing towards spiritual salvation. Such maritime imagery not only reflects a Christian hermeneutic, but also underscores the didactic and evangelical purposes of these texts.

The materiality of wood invokes a direct connection to sacred objects,

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Timber, pp. 158–74, at 168–9. On wooden weapons or those with wooden components, see, for instance, Owen-Crocker, '"Seldom … Does the Deadly Spear Rest for Long": Weapons and Armour', *The Material Culture of Daily Living*, pp. 201–30; Carver, *Sutton Hoo*, pp. 134, 128–9, and 244. On wooden ships, see Introduction.

[60] Li, 'Revisiting OE *holm-wudu*', esp. 515–18.

ecclesiastical architecture, and the concept of salvation.[61] The 'flood-wood' (*flōd-wudu*) would remind an attentive audience of the Flood and Noah's Ark, as rendered in *Genesis A*. Similarly, the more generic sense of 'sea-wood' can function metaphorically, aligning with patristic typological traditions that associate the 'sea-wood' with the Holy Cross or the Church of God (see Chapter One).[62] The most contentious term in this cluster, both formally and semantically, is *holm-wudu* in *Rood* 91a, which has sparked controversy over whether this compound demands a non-literal interpretation or an emendation (see Introduction). Recent scholarship, however, finds the 'sea-wood' image in *Rood* 91a linked to the name of Virgin Mary (92b), both imbued with maritime symbolism and the idea of salvation.[63] Mary, whose name Christian writers and poets since Jerome widely interpret as 'stilla maris' ('drop of the sea') or 'stella maris' ('the star of the sea'), serves as a celestial guide for Christian voyagers, a Pole Star on high, ensuring safe passage for pious souls toward the harbour of hope in the afterlife.[64]

Among five -*wudu*-compounds denoting 'ship', two occur in *Christ B*, and one in *Elene*. The two compounds in *Christ B*, *flōd-wudu* (853a) and *sund-wudu* (677b), appear in thematically linked seafaring passages (676b–8a and 850–66), serving dual poetic functions. Structurally, they create intra-textual coherence between the passages; thematically, they foreground Cynewulf's symbolic treatment of the ship of the soul as both a divine gift and a salvific vehicle. This method of compounding also parallels the

[61] See in general, Bintley, *Trees in the Religions*; Bintley and Shapland, ed., *Trees and Timber*; Hooke, *Trees in Anglo-Saxon*; Thomas H. Ohlgren, 'The Pagan Iconography of Christian Ideas: Tree-lore in Anglo-Viking England', *Mediaevistik* 1 (1988), 145–73.
[62] For a discussion of the wood-of-the-Cross and many examples in Greek and Latin Christian works, see further Rahner, *Greek Myths*, at xxi, pp. 45, 46–68, 75, 81–3, 86, 373–5, 377–8, and 380–3.
[63] Li, 'Revisiting OE *holm-wudu*', pp. 511–15.
[64] On the association, see Mary Clayton, *The Apocryphal Gospels of Mary in Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge, 1999), p. 196.

Rood-poet's embellishment of the ship-motif through maritime imagery ('sea-wood'). Cynewulf likewise emphasises the ship's wooden materiality in *Christ B*, establishing a figurative connection between the vessel and Holy Cross, with its ship-symbolism and theological significance.

The second sea-term in *Christ B* 676b–8a is part of a collocation '**ofer sealtne sǣ**' ('**over the salt sea**'). One might associate the image of salt-water of the sea with Isidore's definition of *mare* ('sea'): the sea is salty ('salsae'), and 'proprie autem mare appellatum eo quod aquae eius amarae sint' ('specifically, [it is] called as "sea" because its waters are bitter') in *Etymologiae* XIII.xiv.1.[65] The modifier *sealt* ('salty' or 'salt') often collocates with the nouns for 'sea' and 'water'.[66] The salt water traditionally represents either the earthly submission to God's power or divine punishment in religious contexts, and invites the audience to interpret this imagery from Christological perspectives.

Though less common in poetry, the patterned expression ***ofer*** or ***on*** + '**sealtne sǣ**' in *Christ B* 677a appears elsewhere in two Alfredian texts, *Metre 19* 16a and *The Metrical Preface to the Pastoral Care* 2a.[67] The scene in *Metre 19* is didactic: the poet

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[65] For the Latin text, see W. M. Lindsay, ed., *Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi: Etymologiarum sive originum*, 2 vols (Oxford, 1911) I.

[66] Cf. 'sealt wæter' ('salt water') in *Genesis A* 198b; 'sealte flōdas' ('salt floods') in *Psalm* 68 14.4b; 'sealte sǣ-strēamas' ('salt sea-streams') in *Andreas* 196a and 749a, *Psalm 79* 11.2, and *Psalm 95* 11.3a; 'sealte sǣ-wæġas' ('salt sea-ways') in *Daniel* 388a; 'sealte strēamas' ('salt streams') in *The Husband's Message* 4b and *The Phoenix* 120b; 'sealtes swelg' ('salt swallow') in *Andreas* 1532a; 'sealte ȳða' ('the salt waves') in *Exodus 442b*, *Psalm* 76 13.2b and *Psalm 77* 15.1b; 'sealtera wætera' in *Psalm 76* 13.4b; 'sealtne mersċ' ('salt marsh') in *Exodus* 333b and *Psalm 106* 33.2a; 'sealtne wæġ' ('salt wave') in *Daniel* 320b; 'sealtum ȳðum' in *Exodus* 473b; *sealt-ȳþ* ('salt-water') in *The Seafarer* 35a and *The Panther* 8a.

[67] Cf. '**ofer sealt wæter**' in *Beowulf* 1989b, when Hygelac asks why Beowulf dares to undertake his mission 'over the salt sea'. See further Fulk, *A History*, p. 319. It remains an ongoing issue whether the *Metres* is composed by the king; however, much less doubt has been cast on its Alfredian background. On the relationship, see, for example, Thomas A. Bredehoft, *Authors, Audiences, and Old English Verse* (Toronto, 2009), pp. 72–3 and 79; Adrian Papahagi, 'The Transmission of Boethius' *De consolatione philosophiae* in the Carolingian Age', *MÆ* 78 (2009), 1–15; Malcolm Godden, 'King and Counselor in the Alfredian *Boethius*', *Intertexts: Studies in Anglo-Saxon Culture Presented to Paul E. Szarmach*, ed. Virginia Blanton and Helene Scheck (Turnhout, 2008), pp. 191–207; Malcolm Godden, 'Did Alfred Write Anything?' *MÆ* 76 (2007), 1–23, at 23; Janet Bately, 'The Alfredian Canon Revisited:

compares seeking worldly treasures and honours (24–27) to hunting land animals such as the harts '**on sealtne sǣ**' (15–17a) and rebukes such misbehaviour (28–47).[68] The poet of *The Metrical Preface to the Pastoral Care* recalls the great mission of Augustine of Canterbury, sent by Pope Gregory the Great to convert King Æthelberht and his people to Christianity '**ofer sealtne sǣ**' (*The Metrical Preface to the Pastoral Care* 1–3a).[69] The sailing scene in *Christ B* 676b–8a may perhaps be interpreted accordingly. Contextually, the expression '**ofer sealtne sǣ**' also poetically alludes to the evil temptations as God's trial for the faithful, echoed in the ending lines of *Christ B*.[70]

Cynewulf goes on to employ another sea-term, *holm-þracu* ('sea-storm') attested only in the Cynewulfian group: *Christ B* 678a and *Elene* 727b, *The Phoenix* 115a, and *Andreas* 467a. In all these texts, *holm-þracu* carries symbolic meaning, representing God's eternal might, in contrast to fleeting worldly temptations. The maritime environment, no matter how awe-inspiring to humans, is God's creation, under divine governance. Hence in *Elene* Cynewulf praises God who holds power over judgement ('āhst dōma ġeweald', *Elene* 725b) and glory of might ('wuldres miht', 726b), as God creates the natural world, including the 'sea-storm' and the wide bosom of the sea ('sǣs sīdne fæðm', 726a). Similarly, in *The Phoenix* 115a, the *Phoenix*-poet also suggests how light from heaven illuminates the 'sea-storm', which figuratively denotes God's omnipotence. In *Andreas*, *holm-þracu* occurs after a passage recalling the biblical story

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One Hundred Years On', *Alfred the Great*, pp. 107–20; Kenneth Sisam, *Studies in the History of Old English Literature* (Oxford, 1953), pp. 293–7.

[68] Cf. '**on sealtne wæġ**' in *The Whale* 27b, also in a figurative scene, where the sea-weary sailors land on the back of the satanic sea-monster Fastitocalon from the sea, who are later swallowed by the devil as a punishment of religious frickleness. The text of *The Whale* is taken from Jones, ed. and trans., *Shorter Poems*.

[69] Cf. '**ofer sealtne mere**' in *The Metrical Calendar 103a*, which also draws on the evangelic, divinely-protected mission of Saint Augustine of Canterbury.

[70] On the metaphor in early Christian literary tradition, see Daniélou, *Primitive Christian Symbols*, pp. 64–5.

of Jesus calming the storm (see above). When Andreas and his thegns fall asleep with *wæter-eġsa* ('water-terror', *Andreas* 435b) on the ship after enduring a storm, God miraculously calms the 'sea-storm', and stills their fear (see Chapter Four).

The picturesque depiction of the 'salty sea' and the 'sea-storm' produces a dual meaning in 'sund-wudu drīfan' ('drive the sea-wood', *Christ B* 677b). The poetic description of steering a *sund-wudu* on the salty sea in this Cynewulfian passage is reminiscent of the sea-journeys of the apostles and saints known to the literati in early medieval England, such as those of Saint Augustine, Saint Paul, and Saint Andrew.[71] They travel to foreign lands on ships to convert the heathens, such as Augustine voyaging 'ofer sealtne sǣ' to England, and Andreas on a *wudu-bāt* (*Andreas* 905b) sailing to Mermedonia (see Chapter Four).

The significance of this imagery lies in the central theme of *Christ B*: navigational ability not only points to the practical skill for a safe sea-voyage, but also a spiritual gift God promises to Christians. The capacity of steering the ship-of-life through the worldly temptations is key to Christian salvation, a concept Cynewulf again underlines at the end of the poem. In what follows, I examine how Cynewulf integrates two central motifs in Christian theology, ship-symbolism and the theme of divine benefaction, throughout the poem's phraseological, structural, and thematic frameworks.

3.3.2 The theme of life-voyage

Artfully arranged, the concluding lines in *Christ B* evoke the Christan theme of a

[71] Charles D. Wright, '*Insulae gentium*: Biblical Influence on Old English Poetic Vocabulary', *Magister Regis*, pp. 9–21, at 20–1.

spiritual voyage (850–66), adapted from Gregory's *Homily 29* and elsewhere.[72] This concluding section which can be divided into three parts, contains several typically Cynewulfian expressions. Cynewulf reuses some rare collocations already used exclusively in some earlier parts in *Christ B* and his other signed works.[73] Both the first part (850–3a) and the last part (858–66) emphasise the image of an animated ship, a 'sea-horse', and contain the same sequence and similar word-formation for terms meaning 'ship': '**ċēolum**' — '**sund-henġestum**' — '**flōd-wudu**' and '**ċēoles**' — '**sund-henġestas**' — '**ȳþ-mēaras**'.[74] The second part (853–8a) forms an interim section between the first and the third, where Cynewulf uses extensive maritime words to describe the danger of seafaring. The third part elaborates on a classic Christian trope of mooring and anchoring the ship of one's soul into the harbour of hope, which is unsurprisingly found at the end of Christian texts such as Aldhelm's late-seventh-century *Carmen de uirginitate* ('Poem on Virginity'; 2801–11) and Alcuin's late-eighth-century *Versus de patribus regibus et sanctis Euboricensis ecclesiae* ('Poem on the Bishops, Kings, and Saints of the Church of York'; 1656–8).[75]

After illustrating how secular and spiritual treasures differ essentially in 804–20a (the former will be burnt on Judgement Day, a detail not found in the Bible), Cynewulf portrays a scene of Christians sailing their ships across worldly turbulence in the first part of the passage (850–3a), echoing the '**sund-wudu drīfan**' passage (676–8a):

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[72] Orchard, 'The Word Made Flesh', pp. 302–3; Olsen, 'Animated Ships', p. 64. On Gregorian imagery of anchor of hope, see Frank, 'Old English *ancor*'; Hill, 'The Anchor of Hope'.
[73] Orchard, 'Word Made Flesh', p. 305.
[74] Orchard, 'Word Made Flesh', pp. 303–4.
[75] Orchard, 'Word Made Flesh', p. 304. On the dating of two works, see Michael Lapidge and James L. Rosier, trans., *Aldhelm: The Poetic Works* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 13–4; Peter Godman, ed., *Alcuin: The Bishops, Kings, and Saints of York* (Oxford, 1982), at xlii–xliii.

> Nū is þon ġelīcost swā we on **laĝu-flōde**
> **ofer cald wæter** **ċēolum līðan**
> **ġeond sīdne sæ**, **sund-henġestum**,
> **flōd-wudu** ferġen. (850–3a)
>
> ('Now it is most like that we **sail** the **ships** on the **sea-flood on the cold water**, on **sea-stallions through the wide sea**, travel in **flood-woods**.')

From an exegetical perspective, through the hint of 'somed siþian sāwol on līċe, in þām gæst-hofe' ('at the same time travel with the soul in the body, in that guest-house', 819–20a) and 'þæt we gæstes wlite [...] ġeorne biþenċen' ('that […] we should eagerly consider the countenance of our soul', 848–9b), Cynewulf identifies this sea-voyaging scene as a spiritual journey, instead of a physical one.[76] In terms of lexical choice, Cynewulf incorporates two images associated with 'ship' while choosing relevant terms, and adapts diction modifying the harsh natural environment during a sea-voyage. The first image of 'ship' is 'sea-horse'; the second 'flood-wood', reminiscent of the common patristic ship-Cross comparison as well as wooden ships in earlier poems such as *Genesis A* and *Beowulf* (see Chapters One and Two).

Cynewulf employs clarifying apposition, yet he reverses the traditional order. First, he refers to every Christian's ship-of-life with a poetic simplex *ċēol* (851a), which explains two compounds *sund-henġest* (852b) and *flōd-wudu* (853b) occurring after the simplex. With another *-wudu*-compound *sund-wudu* having appeared in 677b, Cynewulf employs for the first time in *Christ B* a *-henġest*-compound for 'ship'.

The unique compound *flōd-wudu* not only follows the word-building convention of the 'sea-wood' compounds, but also serves to trigger an association with the giant

[76] For a detailed analysis of this passage, see Orchard, 'Word Made Flesh', pp. 302–3.

wooden vessel, the great Ark in the Flood. The first element *flōd*, which can depict either water in the natural world or the Flood in the Bible, is frequently employed by the poet of *Genesis A* to describe the great Flood (see Chapter One). The second element *wudu* also functions to align implicitly the image of a wooden vessel with the Holy Cross in *Christ B*.

Besides the three terms for 'ship', Cynewulf further adapts poetic sea-terms and diction from earlier poems: *laĝu-flōd* ('water-flood', 850b), found also in *Genesis A* 127a in a passage depicting God's separation of light from dark above the sea, and '**ġeond sīdne sæ**' ('through the wide sea', 852a), reminiscent of '**on sīdne sæ**' ('on the wide sea') in *Beowulf* 507a, where Unferth mentions Beowulf's swimming contest with Breca. Apart from echoing the 'wide' feature of the sea by appropriating it from *Beowulf*, Cynewulf might have also been inspired by another expression '**cealde strēamas**' ('cold streams') in *Beowulf* 1261a when portraying the sea-of-life in *Christ B*.

The image of 'cold' water in Old English poetic tradition is often associated with evil, hostility, punishment, and defeat (see Chapters One and Four).[77] The *Beowulf*-poet uses '**cealde strēamas**' when introducing Grendel's Mother, who lives in a dangerous, hellish mere, and plots a ferocious onslaught against Heorot after knowing Grendel's death. Like the 'cold streams' where many monstrous sea-creatures and Grendel's Mother dwell, the '**cald wæter**' ('cold water') in *Christ B* 851a is a treacherous environment full of enemies and evil temptations to the Christians (cf. '**sīn-**

[77] Griffith, ed., *Maldon*, p. 166; Richard Dance, '*The Battle of Maldon* Line 91 and the Origin of "Call": A Reconsideration', *NM* 100 (1999), pp. 149 and 153; E. G. Stanley, 'Old English Poetic Diction and the Interpretation of *The Wanderer*, *The Seafarer*, and *The Penitent's Prayer*', *Anglia* 73 (1955), 414–66, at 436–7. See further Lucas, ed., *Exodus*, p. 135; Riedinger, 'Formula', pp. 296–7 and 304; Hill, 'Tropological Context'; Salmon, 'Some Connotations of "Cold"';

calda sæ', 'extremely-cold sea' in *Exodus* 473a, denoting the doomed Egyptian army eventually drowned in the Red Sea as a divine punishment; see Chapter One).[78]

In terms of collocation in poetry, '**cald wæter**' always comes after a preposition ***on*** or ***ofer***, and it appears in only three poems: *Christ B*, *Andreas*, and *Maldon*.[79] Cynewulf's envisioning of sailing the ship on the cold water, verbalised as '**ofer cald wæter**' ('on the cold water', 851a) and '**ċēolum līðan**' ('sail on the ship', 851b), may have inspired the *Andreas*-poet, who utilises the patterned phrase ***on*** or ***ofer*** + '**cald wæter**' three times in *Andreas* 201a, 222b and 253a, with the latter two alliterating with *ċēol* in the same line. In 310a, the *Andreas*-poet alters the collocation as '**ofer cald cleofu**' ('over cold cliffs') + '**ċēoles**'. While '**ċēolum līðan**' is found in *Christ B*, the *Andreas*-poet employs the short phrase in 256b (see Chapter Four). Near the end of the period, the *Maldon*-poet utilises the collocation with variation in 'ongan ceallian þā **ofer cald wæter**' ('[he] did call out over the cold water', *Maldon* 91) when describing Byrhtnoth communicating with the Viking enemy near the River Blackwater in Essex, in August 991.[80] Apart from the alliterative functions of *ceallian–cald* in the line (both should be pronounced *k*, as Richard Dance argues), the image of 'cold' water hints at the gloomy future of Byrhtnoth's side, contrary to that of the Vikings, who stand '**ofer sċīr wæter**' ('over the bright water', 98a) and are about to win the battle.[81] The

[78] Griffith, ed., *Maldon*, p. 166; Dance, '*Maldon*', pp. 149 and 153. On the historical background, see Mark Atherton, *The Battle of Maldon: War and Peace in Tenth-century England* (London, 2021); Donald G. Scragg, ed., *The Battle of Maldon, AD 991* (Oxford, 1991).
[79] Quotation from *Maldon* in this thesis is taken from Griffith, ed., *Maldon*.
[80] On the possible association of 'ongan ceallian' with taunts in battlefields, see p. 166; Dance, '*Maldon*', p. 146 and 149; Hans Peters, 'Zum skandinavischen Lehngut im Altenglischen', *Sprachwissenschaft* 6 (1981), 85–124, p. 106; E. G. Stanley, 'Old English "*-calla*", "*ceallian*"', *Medieval Literature and Civilization, Studies in Memory of G. N. Garmonsway*, ed. Derek Pearsall and R. A. Waldron (London, 1969), pp. 94–9, at 98.
[81] Dance, '*Maldon*', p. 149; Alan J. Fletcher, ''*Cald wæter*, *scīr wæter*: A Note on Lines 91 and 98 of *The Battle of Maldon*', *NM* 85 (1984), 435–7.

Andreas-poet and the *Maldon*-poet choose to underline the image of 'cold water' by repetition and by the *cald–sċīr* contrast respectively. Nonetheless, the poetic emphasis in *Christ B* is not only on the 'cold water' itself but also on the ship. Cynewulf frequently repeats the ship and uses three different, poetic terms of 'ship' (*ċēol*, *sund-hengest*, and *flōd-wudu*) in such a short passage (*Christ B* 850–3a). What he constantly emphasises is still the safety of a divinely steered ship in the life journey.

To further arouse the audience's fear of spiritual shipwreck and their piety towards God, Cynewulf illustrates at length the danger of sea-voyage in the following lines (853b–8a). What he stresses in the second part is the difficulty of the life-voyage before a Christian reaches the eternal harbour of joy and hope:

> Is þæt **frecne** strēam
> ȳða **ofer-mæta** þe we hēr inn **lācað**
> ġeond þās **wācan woruld**, **windġe holmas**
> **ofer dēop ġelād**. Wæs sē **drohtað strang**
> ærþon we tō lande **ġeliden hæfdon**
> **ofer hrēone hryċġ**. (853b–8a)

> ('The stream is **fierce**, the waves **beyond measure**, that we toss on here through this **weak world**, the **windy waves over the deep path**. The **way of life** was **strong** before we **had travelled** to the land **over the rough ridge**.')

Cynewulf reinforces the imagery of a perilous maritime environment by varied poetic techniques. Apart from the intricately designed patterns such as the ***lāc–wāc*** rhyme in 854b–5a and double alliteration in the on-verse ('**w**ācan **w**oruld' and '**h**rēone **h**ryċġ'), he also sets a contrasting pair of 'wācan woruld' ('the weak world', 'the frail world') and 'drohtað strang' ('the way of life [was] strong', 'the way of life [was] hard'). From an eschatological perspective, the world is *wāc* ('weak', 'frail') because both the

worldly life and the material existence are transient, and will perish or turn into dust on Judgement Day (cf. Psalm CII.26 and Hebrews I.11). By employing hypallage (the fickle-minded Christians struggling in the world), Cynewulf uses the modifier *wāc* to warn his audience of the danger of worldly temptations.[82] Christians are tested in such irresistible ways that some finally turn from God, and shipwreck their faith.

This explains why the way of life is *strang* ('strong', 'hard', or 'fierce'): by using a succession of lines studded with adjectives, Cynewulf reminds that the spiritual journey is full of tempests, a 'strong' experience similar to a real-world sea-voyage his audience might have experienced. Hence the sea-streams are *frēcne* ('fierce', 853b), the waves *ofer-mǣte* ('beyond measure', 854a), the ocean *windiġ* ('windy', 855b), the sea-path *dēop* ('deep', 856a), the way of life *strang* (856b), and the ocean-ridge *hrēoh* ('fierce', 858a). To Cynewulf's audience, the term *drohtoþ* ('way of life', 'manner of living', 856b) serves as an empathetic signifier evoking the caution which they should exercise in life.[83]

The overwhelming nature of circumstances at sea in this passage is an allusion to God's trial of belief, a symbolism commonly found in the Bible and early Christian writings.[84] The dual meaning of this sea-voyaging scene evokes both the audience's familiarity with real-world journeys across the ocean and an awareness of spiritual salvation led by God, the only saviour in this *wācan woruld* (855a).

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[82] Hypallage is a figure of speech originating from Latin poetic tradition, where the position of an adjective describing one object is transferred somewhere else to describe another relevant object. See too Michael Lapidge, 'Hypallage in the Old English *Exodus*', *LSE* 37 (2006), 31–9, at 32.

[83] *DOE*, **s.v.** '*drohtoþ*, *drohtnoþ*'; *WH*, '*drohtoþ*, *drohtnoþ*'; *B-T*, **s.v.** '*drohtaþ*'; *G-K*, **s.v.** '*drohtað*, *-oð*': 'conditio vitæ, conversatio, statio, labor'.

[84] For the examples in early Christian literature, see Daniélou, *Primitive Christian Symbols*, pp. 58, 62–5, and 68.

The poetic depiction of the freezing, hostile watery environment in this passage is a common topic in Old English literature.[85] Difficult sea-travels are often seen as a trial of belief for Christian travellers and pilgrims, such as the storm Germanus and Lupus encounter on the way to Britain recorded in Bede's *Historia* I.xv, or the tempest Jonah goes through (cf. Jonah I.3–15) in a number of Old English homilies.[86] Successful sea-journeys, by contrast, are testimony to God's protection against evil storms, and only God can lead the ship of one's soul to the right destination.[87] According to Cynewulf, Christians should travel on sea-stallions in the cold sea, and reach the harbour of hope:

> Þā ūs help becwōm,
> þæt ūs **tō hælo** **hȳðe ġelæde**,
> Godes Gǣst-Sunu, ond ūs **ġiefe sealde**
> þæt we oncnāwan magun ofer **ċēoles** bord
> hwǣr we **sǣlan** sċeolon **sund-henġestas**,
> ealde **ȳð-mēaras**, **ancrum fæste**.
> Utan ūs tō þǣre **hȳðe** hyht staþelian,
> ðā ūs ġerȳmde rodera wealdend,
> hālġe on hīehþu, þā hē heofonum āstāg. (858b–66)
>
> ('Then the help came to us, that led us **to salvation in the harbour**, the Spititual-Son of God, and **gave** us **gifts** that we may recognise over the **ship's** board, where we should **moor** the **sea-horses**, the **old wave-mares**, **made fast with anchors**. Let us establish hope to that **harbour** which the ruler of the heavens opened for us, holy from heights, when he ascended to heaven.')

The spiritual gift ('ġiefe sealde', 860b) which Christ the *Gǣst-Sunu* ('spiritual son of God', 860a) gives people is salvation. Only under the guidance and protection of Christ can people find the way to the heavenly harbour of hope (859) and moor their 'sea-

[85] See further Heide Estes, *Anglo-Saxon Literary Landscapes: Ecotheory and the Environmental Imagination* (Amsterdam, 2017), esp. 35–43; Helena Znojemská, 'Sailing the Dangerous Waters: Images of Land and Sea in *The Seafarer*, *The Panther* and *The Whale*', *PSE* 24 (2005), 87–105.
[86] Michelet, 'Lost at Sea', pp. 62–4.
[87] Daniélou, *Primitive Christian Symbols*, p. 64.

horses' securely.[88] Cynewulf again employs specifying apposition in the passage, as he arranges '**ċēoles**' — '**sund-hengestas**' — '**ȳþ-mēaras**' (861b–3a), in the same order as '**ċēolum**' — '**sund-hengestum**' — '**flōd-wudu**' (851b–3a). He starts with the same simplex *ċēol* in the phrase '**ofer ċēoles bord**' ('over the ship's board', 861b), then applies two 'sea-horse' compounds, *sund-hengest* (862b) and *ȳþ-mearh* (863a). The 'sea-horse' compounds also imply a ship-horse metaphor Cynewulf aims to achieve in the poem (see 3.2). Compared with the first section depicting a sailing scene (850–3a), the third section (858–66) marks the end of the voyage, and concentrates on the image of mooring and anchoring the ship. Akin to tethering a horse, anchoring the ship in seafaring is a symbol of safety.

The same theme of a faithful Christian's safe arrival in heaven, and a set of similar elements appears in the last lines of *The Wanderer*. After nineteen lines devoted to the 'ubi sunt' motif (92–110), the poet of *The Wanderer* hints at a spiritual voyage with signal words such as *trēowe* ('faith', 112a), affliction of heart ('torn […] of his brēostum', 112–13a, suggesting the spiritual, inner struggles during the life-voyage), and eternal stability in heaven ('on heofonum […] fæstnung', as opposed to earthly transience in 92–110).[89] Unlike the poet of *The Wanderer*, who underscores the volatility and temporality of worldly existence, however, Cynewulf's focus is on the idea of the heavenly gift. Sailing on a divinely-steered ship in the open sea is as safe as

[88] Cf. *Beowulf* 301b–3a, 1883b, 1905–6a, 1917a, and 1918a, and *Elene* 252 (see Chapter One and 3.2).
[89] For the text, see Bjork, ed. and trans., *Shorter Poems*, pp. 8 and 10. On the popular 'ubi sunt' motif in Old English literature, see Claudia Di Sciacca, 'The "*Ubi sunt*" Motif and the Soul-and-Body Legend in Old English Homilies: Sources and Relationships', *JEGP* 105 (2006), 365–87; Roy F. Leslie, ed., *The Wanderer*, rev. ed. (Exeter, 1985), pp. 16–21 and 40; J. E. Cross, '"*Ubi sunt*" Passages in Old English: Sources and Relationships', *Årsbok* (1956), 25–44.

riding a tamed horse on land (850–3a), and so is the process of fastening the 'sea-horse' in the heavenly harbour.

Besides their role in the appositive construction in the passage in *Christ B*, the 'sea-horse' compounds become the pivot in the chiastic structure. By employing *hȳþ* (859b and 864a), the verb *sǣlan* (862a), two 'sea-horse' compounds (862b and 863a respectively), and *ancor* (863b), Cynewulf creates a loose chiastic structure highlighting the importance of mooring the ship-of-mind to the harbour of hope. The chiastic order of ***hȳþ*** — ***sǣlan*** — ***sund-henġest*** […] ***ȳþ-mearh*** — ***ancor*** — ***hȳþ*** leaves in the reader an impression of the central position of the ships.[90] This chiastic pattern (A – B – C – C – B – A) also manifests the narrative focus on stability rather than mobility. The structural efficacy further lies in the passage's phonetic cohesion (double alliterative structure in '**ea**lde **ȳ**ð-mēaras **a**ncrum', 863) and lexical mirroring. Lexical parallels within his own works and other poems include '**tō hǣlo hȳðe ġelǣde**' (859; cf. '**on hǣlo hȳðe ġelǣdde**' in *Psalm* 106 29.1), '**ond ūs ġiefe sealde**' (860b; cf. '**ond ūs ġiefe sealde**' in *Christ B* 660b), '**ancrum fæste**' (863b; see below).

With regard to the two 'sea-horse' compounds, the compound *ȳþ-mearh* is uniquely shared between *Christ B* and *The Whale*, an Old English version of the allegorical story of the sea-monster Aspidochelone (Fastitocalon in Old English) in the medieval *Physiologus* tradition, which is also preserved in the Exeter Book.[91] Both poets use 'sea-horse' compounds including *ȳþ-mearh*, and mention the act of anchoring

[90] Anderson mentions a shorter but more standard chiastic structure of *sǣlan — sund-henġest* and *ȳþ-mearh — ancor* (862–3), in '*Sæmearh*', p. 6.
[91] For a recent, detailed contextual and comparative study on *The Whale* regarding its Latin counterparts and the popular medieval *Physiologus* tradition, see Salvador-Bello, *Physiologus*, esp. 334–56.

the ship, but the same image has opposite allegorical meanings in the texts.[92] For the *Whale*-poet, the purpose of narrating the story of the giant, whale-shaped, man-eating sea-monster Fastitocalon is to warn of the danger in wrongly mooring their ships of mind to evil, and to emphasise the repercussions of spiritual shipwreck, quite unlike what Cynewulf does in *Christ B*.[93] In the light of phraseology, however, it is likely that Cynewulf's signed works, especially his seafaring diction such as the 'sea-horse' compounds, may have inspired the *Whale*-poet in the latter's poetic expansion of the story of the sea-monster Fastitocalon from the Latin *Physiologus*.[94]

The history of anchor-symbolism can be traced back to the Bible and early patristic writings (see Chapter One). For some Christian authors such as Clement of Alexandria, the anchor represents secure belief in God, the heavenly skipper.[95] Ambrose also refers to the idea of the anchor of faith in *De Iacob et vita beata* II.vi.28: 'sed quasi in litore tutissimo aduersum insurgentes fluctus saecularium procellarum mentem inmobilem fida statione placidare' ('as if on the safest shore, against the rolling waves of earthly tempests, [they should] calm the unshaken mind with faithful anchorage'), with 'statione' equating to 'anchorage'.[96]

Gregory, one of the most influential patristic authors in medieval England, with

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[92] On the image of anchor in *The Whale*, see Salvador-Bello, *Physiologus*, pp. 343–4, 347, and 349.
[93] Anderson, '*Sæmearh*', pp. 6–7.
[94] The expressions in *The Whale* 13–18 suggests potential Beowulfian and Cynewulfian influences (see also Chapter Two): adjective compound + *sċip* in *Beowulf* ('**hēah-stefn sċipu**' in *The Whale* 13b), 'anchor' and 'rope' + 'fast' in *Beowulf*, *Elene*, and *Christ B* ('**oncyr-rāpum** […] bi staþe **fæste**', 14b and 18a, though not in the same line), *sāl* or *sǣlan* in *Beowulf*, *Elene*, and *Christ B* ('**sǣlað**', 15a), 'sea-horse' compounds in *Elene* and *Christ B* ('**sǣ-mēaras**', 15a), and additionally, an adjective of Beowulfian origin, 'collen-ferhþe' ('brave-spirited', 17a; see Chapter Four). I adapt an emended form 'sǣlað' instead of the manuscript reading 'setlaþ' (15a), a word that is never attested in Old English corpus. See further Salvador-Bello, *Physiologus*, p. 344.
[95] Cf. *Προτρεπτικὸς πρὸς Ἕλληνας* XII.4: the Word of God ('ὁ Λόγος ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ') shall be the skipper ('κυβερνήσει') and the Holy Spirit will bring believers to anchor (indicated by the verb 'καθορμίσει') themselves in the heavenly harbour ('τοῖς λιμέσι'). Marcovich, ed., *Protrepticus*, p. 171.
[96] Schinkel, ed., *Ambrosius, De Iacob*, p. 48.

the nautical expression which mentions 'anchorae fune' ('anchor rope') in his *Moralia in Iob* ('Morals on the Book of Job') I.i has inspired many prose writers, including Bede. The Gregorian sentence reads: 'ut eorum semper exemplo ad orationis placidum litus quasi anchorae fune restringerer, cum causarum saecularium incessabili impulsu fluctuarem' ('so that by their example I might always be fastened to the peaceful shore of prayer, as if by an anchor rope, while being tossed about by the unceasing surge of worldly affairs').[97] Bede specifically repeats Gregory's language in *Historia* II.i: Gregory can always secure himself at the peaceful shore of prayer ('ad orationis placidum litus'), as if fastened by an anchor rope ('quasi anchorae fune restringeretur') while floating ('fluctuaret') over the sea of worldly affairs.[98] The passage above is cited almost verbatim in the anonymous *Life of Gregory*, possibly written by a monk at Whitby.[99] The two examples indicate the popularity of the Gregorian imagery of the anchor rope among the learned in early medieval England, likely including Cynewulf.

The collocation '**made fast with anchor**' appears in only three texts: *Beowulf*, *Elene*, and *Christ B*. The four short passages below, with parallels in bold, suggest signs of direct borrowing:

> […] flōta stille bād,
> seomode on **sāle** **sīd-fæþmed sċip**,
> **on ancre fæst**; […] (*Beowulf* 301b–3a)

[97] For the text, see Marc Adriaen, ed., *Sancti Gregorii Magni Opera Moralia in Iob libri I–X*, CCSL 142 (Turnhout, 1979), p. 2.

[98] Bede has 'uidelicet ut eorum semper exemplo, sicut ipse scribit, ad orationis placidum litus quasi anchorae fune restringeretur, cum incessabili causarum saecularium inpulsu fluctuaret' ('namely, so that by their example, he might always, as he himself writes, be fastened to the peaceful shore of prayer, as if by an anchor rope, while being tossed about by the unceasing surge of worldly affairs'); cited from Colgrave and Mynors, ed., *Bede's Ecclesiastical History*, p. 124.

[99] The text reads: 'ut eorum semper exemplo ad orationis placidum litus, quasi anchore fune restringerer cum causarum secularium incessabili inpulsu fluctuarem' ('so that by their example, I might always be fastened to the peaceful shore of prayer, as if by an anchor rope, while being tossed about by the unceasing surge of worldly affairs'), cited from Bertram Colgrave, *The Earliest Life of Gregory the Great by an Anonymous Monk of Whitby* (Lawrence, KS, 1968), p. 76. On the relationship between Bede and the anonymous author of the *Life*, see pp. 56–9.

('[…] the ship stayed still, the **broad-bosomed ship** lingered **on its rope**, **made fast with anchor**; […]')

> […] **sǣlde** tō sande **sīd-fæþme sċip**
> **oncer-bendum fæst**, […] (*Beowulf* 1917–18a)

('[…] he **moored the broad-bosomed ship** on the beach, **made fast with anchor-rope**, […]')

> **Ċēolas** lēton
> æt sæ-fearoðe, sande bewrecene,
> **ald ȳð-hofu**, **oncrum fæste** […] (*Elene* 250b–2)

('They left the **ships** on the sea-shore, surrounded by sand, the **old sea-houses made fast with anchor** […]')

> […] þæt we oncnāwan magun ofer **ċēoles** bord
> hwǣr we **sǣlan** sċeolon sund-hengestas,
> **ealde ȳð-mēaras**, **ancrum fæste**. (*Christ B* 861–3)

('[…] that we may recognise over the **ship's** board, where we should **moor** the sea-horses, the **old wave-mares**, **made fast with anchors**.')

In *Beowulf,* the repeated diction forms an envelope structure for Beowulf's Danish mission (see Chapter Two). The anchor-rope is not present in *Elene*, but the key phrase 'oncrum fæste' (252b) and the word seashore (*sand*, 251b) remain the same. Following the *Beowulf*-poet, Cynewulf uses a variety of voyage terms while depicting this scene in *Elene*: different appellations of ship (*ċēol*, 250b; *ȳþ-hof*, 252a), and nouns featuring a maritime environment (*sǣ-faroþ* 'seashore', 251a; *sand*, 251b; *brim*, 253a). The identifiable parallel diction in *Christ B* indicates the poet's conscious reworking of the same nautical imagery:

> '**Ċēolas**' — [different verb] — '**ald ȳð-hofu**' — '**oncrum fæste**' (*Elene*)
> '**Ċēoles**' — '**sǣlan**' — '**ealde ȳð-mēaras**' — '**ancrum fæste**' (*Christ B*)

The 'moored ship' type-scene with similar expression is found in *Elene* 226b–8, where Cynewulf employs a 'sea-horse' compound: '**fearoð-hengestas** […] **sǣlde sǣ-mēaras**'.

Neither the anchor nor the rope is mentioned in this passage, but Cynewulf keeps the presence of the sea (228b) and the verb meaning 'moor' (228a).

The abovementioned parallels manifest that the 'moored ship' type-scene is exclusively shared by a small group of poems, mainly *Beowulf* and the Cynewulfian poems. The action of mooring the ship upon reaching the shore marks a crucial moment in narratives of divinely-ordained missions. After being fastened to the shore, the animated, giant, bird-like wave-floater transforms into an immobile, inanimate yet secure object, awaiting the return of their voyagers.

The peculiar imagery of an 'old' ship ('**ald ȳð-hofu**' and '**ealde ȳð-mēaras**') in *Elene* and *Christ B* conveys a sense of timelessness and primordial continuity, subtly evoking biblical archetypes such as Noah's Ark (especially in the case of *ȳþ-hof* in *Elene* and the 'wave-house' diction in *Genesis A*) or the apostolic boats: vessels of salvation that embody the long history of redemption (see Chapter One). At the same time, the epithet 'old' sanctifies the image of 'ship' in both texts, endowing it with authority, framing it as an instrument of God's will, akin to Moses' Ark of the Covenant, and honouring the divine covenant between God and humans in terms of salvation through life-voyage.

Cynewulf repeatedly draws on navigational themes in his poem, but in his *Hymn for Ascension Day*, Bede envisions the destination of the journey of the souls in a less maritime setting: 'portae perennis aetheris' ('gates of eternal heaven', 23.2) and 'arce regni' ('citadel of the kingdom', 31.4).[100] As for Gregory's *Homily 29*, the only two

[100] Lapidge, ed., *Bede's Latin Poetry*, pp. 368 and 372. The Latin *porta* is sometimes associated with the polysemic Old English *port* ('port', 'market town'). Cf. the prosaic compound *port-ġeat* ('gate of town', 'city-gate'), which

explicit sea-terms in the Latin *Homily* of Gregory are 'fluctuet' ('may waver', denoting the soul floating on the sea-of-life) and *anchora* where Gregory suggests his audience fix their anchor-of-hope on the eternal homeland ('spei uestrae anchoram in aeternam patriam figite').[101] The only two objects relevant to ships and seafaring in the passage are the anchor and the harbour. Cynewulf might deliberately employ this anchor-of-hope motif in *Christ B* from patristic models, and therefore create the 'sea-horse' compounds to suggest that sailing the ship-of-life is as safe as travelling on land under God's protection.[102]

Another key image in the chiastic structure ***hȳþ*** — ***sǣlan*** — ***sund-hengest*** […] ***ȳþ-mearh*** — ***ancor*** — ***hȳþ*** in *Christ B* that is correlative to the image of the anchor rope is *hȳþ*, the heavenly harbour of salvation. Akin to that of anchor, the imagery of the harbour finds its roots in early patristic writings.[103] To Ambrose, the Church is a 'portus salutis' ('harbour of salvation'), a 'fidae stationis' ('trusty place of anchorage'), a 'portus maritimi' ('sea-port') standing firmly 'circa fluctus' ('by the sea'), but is not disturbed by the sea-turbulence, where the Christian believers could safely beach their 'uentis quassata nauigia' ('wind shaken ships'), as is stated in his *De patriarchis* ('The Patriarchs') V.27.[104] In his *De moribus ecclesiae Catholicae* ('On the Morals of the Catholic Church') XXXIV, Augustine elaborates on the idea of faith as spiritual harbour

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appears twice in Ælfric's *Homily 33*, twice in the Old English *Legend of the Seven Sleepers*, and twice in glossary (including one use in Ælfric's *Glossary*), both glossing Latin 'porta'. For the texts, see Clemoes, ed., *Ælfric*, pp. 459–60; Hugh Magennis, ed., *The Anonymous Old English Legend of the Seven Sleepers* (Durham, 1994), pp. 490 and 492; Lowell Kindschi, 'The Latin-Old English Glossaries in Plantin-Moretus MS. 32 and British Museum MS. Additional 32246' (PhD dissertation, Univ. of Stanford, 1955), p. 135; Julius Zupitza, ed., *Ælfric's Grammatik und Glossar* (Berlin, 1880), p. 318. *B-T*, **s.v.** '*port-geat*'; *G-K*, **s.v.** '*porte*'.

101 Orchard, 'Word Made Flesh', pp. 302–3; Hill, 'Anchor of Hope', p. 290.

102 Hill, 'Anchor of Hope', p. 292.

103 See Rahner, *Greek Myths*, pp. 85–6, 341, 345–6, 348–50, 353, 363, 365, 370, 374–8, 381, 384, and 389.

104 Schinkel, ed., *Ambrosius, De Iacob*, p. 140.

in a maritime setting: people should differentiate 'superstitionis sirenas et portum religionis' ('the sirens of superstition and the harbour of religion').[105]

The simplex *hȳþ*, common in prose and glosses, appears only nine times in seven poems: *Beowulf* 32a (see Chapter One); *Elene* 248a (see above); *Guthlac B* 1333a (see above); *Christ B* 859b and 866a; the ninth-century Old English *Psalm 106* 29.1b, when the speaker praises God's guidance towards the harbour of hope; the Alfredian *Metre 21* 11a and 13a, when the translator describes 'ġesælþum sāwla rædes' ('the joys of the salvation of the souls') as the 'hyhtlicu hȳþ' ('hopeful harbour'), the destination where 'hēaum ċēolum modes ūsses' ('the tall ships of our minds') would reach and dwell (*Metre* 21 9–19). The same simplex forms only a single compound in the verse corpus, *hȳþ-weard* in *Beowulf* 1914b. Only *Christ B*, *Psalm 106*, and *Metre 21* explicitly refer to a spiritual harbour.

While the Old English *Metres* is commonly dated to the Alfredian period, and the *Metres*-author seems to be indebted to Cynewulf (see Chapter Four), the Old English *Psalms* clearly represents a shared written vernacular tradition of the Latin Psalms which, according to Orchard, is perhaps known to 'a literate, Latinate Christian author' such as Cynewulf.[106] One parallel between Cynewulf's *Christ B* and the Old English *Metrical Psalms* is the expression '**tō hælo hȳðe ġelædе**' ('**led to salvation in the**

[105] The Latin text is taken from John Kevin Coyle, *Augustine's De moribus ecclesiae Catholicae: A Study of the Work, Its Composition and Its Sources* (Fribourg, 1978), p. 299. On the symbolism of the sirens in classical and Christian literary tradition, see Rahner, *Greek Myths*, esp. 353–71; see also pp. 330, 345, and 376–7. On the close relationship between siren-imagery and the Anglo-Latin *Liber Monstrorum* ('Book of Monsters'), see Andy Orchard, 'The Sources and Meaning of the *Liber monstrorum*', *I monstra nell'Inferno dantesco: Tradizione e simbologie* (Spoleto, 1997), pp. 73–105, at 81–3 and 99–105.

[106] Orchard, 'Word Made Flesh', pp. 306–7. The major source of the Old English *Prose Psalms* is the Roman Psalter (*Psalterium Romanum*) that is said to be revised by Jerome; as for the *Metrical Psalms*, there are 'no obvious major external influences', as observed by O'Neill. See further O'Neill, ed. and trans., *Old English Psalms*, at xxiii.

harbour') in *Christ B* 859, which also appears in *Psalm 106* 29.1 almost verbatim as '**on hǣlo hȳðe ġelǣdde**'. Although both poets share the same thematic concern of spiritual salvation and the expression '**hǣlo hȳðe ġelǣde**', the texts diverge in semantic emphasis. The *Psalm*-poet is primarily concerned about the danger of the life-voyage in the passage, and places the spiritual voyage almost in the middle of the text, with simple terms for 'ship' and 'harbour'.

Despite the simple diction for 'anchor' and 'harbour' in *Christ B*, Cynewulf reinforces the notion of heavenly gift by repeatedly mentioning '**Godes Gǣst-Sunu ond ūs ġiefe sealde**' ('**God's Spiritual-Son**, **and gave us gifts** [or **grace**]', 660b and 860b), which unifies the poem with further thematic coherence. Exclusive verbal parallels also invite the audience's active engagement with the same theme in other signed poems by Cynewulf. The term *gāst-sunu* ('spiritual son') as well as the collocation '**g**odes **g**āst-sunu' with double alliteration are both unique to *Christ B* and *Elene* 673a, showcasing Cynewulf's artistry in coining words and collocations (since then often called 'Cynewulfian'), as well as his interest in the theme of spiritual gifts. A slightly different expression is preserved in *Elene* 182, where Cynewulf eulogises Christs' Passion: '**ġ**eōmre **gāstas**, **ond him ġiefe sealde**' ('the sorrowful souls, and **gave** them **gifts** [or **grace**]'), with double-alliteration in the on-verse.[107] Christ gives his believers 'ġiefe' by the True Cross, the sign of victory. The collocation '**ġife sealde**' ('**gave gifts** [or **grace**]') appears ten times in the corpus, but the collocation ***gāst*** (or a *gāst*-compound) + '**ond him** (or "**ūs**") **ġiefe sealde**' is found only in four texts.

[107] Some translators give 'grace' for 'ġiefe', such as Bjork, ed. and trans., *Cynewulf*, p. 155.

The diction in *Elene* and *Christ B* may have ultimately come from the Old English *Daniel*. The three youths (Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego) refuse to worship the golden idol made by King Nebuchadnezzar, because they believe in '**gāsta** hyrde, **ðe him ġife sealde**' ('the shepherd of **souls** [Christ], **who gave them** [the three youths] **grace**', *Daniel* 199; cf. Daniel III.17–18).[108] Elsewhere this collocation occurs in two double-alliterative lines in *Guthlac A*: '**gæstum ġ**earwað **ond him ġiefe sealde**' ('prepared [the way of life] for **souls**, **and gave him** [Guthlac] **gifts**', 100) and '**ġ**eornost **g**rētte **ond him ġiefe sealde**' ('[the angel] approached [Guthlac] most eagerly, **and gave him gifts**', 357, without *gāst* in the on-verse), where the poet highlights the spiritual gifts (or grace) Guthlac receives from God in the marshland by this repeated diction.[109]

Besides the verbal parallels mentioned above, there are several other expressions in the ending part of *Christ B* pertaining to the motif of the Christian journey. A patterned expression, '**ærþon** we **tō londe ġeliden hæfdon**' ('**before** we **had sailed to land**', 857), is echoed in '**ærþon** hȳ **tō lande ġeliden hæfdon**' in *Juliana* 677. Both *Juliana* and *Christ B* share the same maritime diction and motif. In *Juliana*, the relevant passage takes on an ironic tone in comparison with the journey motif in *Christ B*. Cynewulf's concern is more than the physical shipwreck of Roman senator Heliseus/Eleusius. Heliseus and his crew escape on a ship ('tō sċipe', *Juliana* 672a) out of fear after killing Juliana, and suffer a long journey on the *ēġ-strēam* (673b; poetic; denoting the Flood in *Genesis A* 1415a). Finally, they are wrecked, as a result of 'þearlic þrēa' ('severe punishment', 'severe calamity', 678a).

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[108] Quotations from the Old English *Daniel* are taken from Anlezark, ed., *Old Testament Narratives*.
[109] The text is taken from Roberts, ed., *Guthlac Poems*.

A version close to what may be Cynewulf's Latin source has been detected by Lapidge.[110] The Latin text simply says that the ship of Eleusius is attacked by a 'tempestas ualida' ('mighty tempest'). Twenty-four men die, after which their bodies are driven by the sea-waves to a deserted place ('in locum desertum'), and devoured by wild beasts and birds ('ab auibus et feris corpora eorum deuorata sunt'), instead of being drowned in the deep sea, as in Cynewulf's *Juliana*.[111] Cynewulf does not use any diction that specifically denotes 'punishment':

> Þǣr þrītiġ wæs
> ond fēowere ēac fēores onsōhte
> þurh wǣġes wylm wigena cynnes,
> hēane mid hlāford, hroþra bidǣled,
> hyhta lēase helle sōhton. (*Juliana* 678b–82)
>
> ('There thirty [men] of the warrior kind and four besides,
> sought death through the water's surge, abject with [their] lord,
> deprived of joys, without hope, they sought hell.')

As the villains' corpses are destroyed by the surging water, their wretched (*hēan*, 681a) souls sink down to the hell in the abyss of the sea. Cynewulf then emphasises the loss of hope and eternal joy due to their sin, being 'hroþra bidǣled' ('deprived of joys', 681b) and 'hyhta lease' ('without hope', 682a). Cynewulf underlines their doom by returning to the treasure motif in the following lines, announcing that their earthly possessions, such as *feoh-ġestealdǣ* ('wealth-possession', 685b), *bēag* ('ring', 687b), and 'æpplede gold' ('embossed gold' or 'apple-shaped gold', 688a; elsewhere found only in *Elene* 1259a and *The Phoenix* 506b), are all confiscated.[112] A still more severe punishment is

[110] The closer Latin version (which was known to Bede and Alcuin) is now preserved in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 10861. For the text, see Lapidge, '*Passio S. Iulianae*', pp. 156–65. For the background, see pp. 147–55.
[111] Lapidge, '*Passio S. Iulianae*', p. 165.
[112] The adjective *æpplede* ('apple-shaped', 'embossed') appears three times, exclusive to Cynewulfian poems, always collocating with *gold*. For possible meanings, see *DOE*, **s.v.** '*æpplede*'. *G-K* gives 'in pomorum formam

that their souls will never reach the harbour of salvation. To the audience, the expression '**ærþon we** (or "**hȳ**") **tō londe ġeliden hæfdon**' in *Juliana* and *Christ B* functions as a thread running through these two texts, heightening their commonality in the theme: spiritual shipwreck and divine punishment.

The anonymous writer of the prose *Vita* of Juliana approaches the theme of a divinely-guided journey on a boat (*nauis*) by a comparatively more implicit contrast: the tempest and the shipwreck Eleusius encounters versus the tempest and the safe anchoring of Sephonia.

Shortly before the writer mentions the death of Eleusius, he introduces Sephonia, who carries Juliana's body for proper funeral, and is attacked by sea-storms during her voyage. Though Sephonia also encounters a 'tempestas ualida' ('strong storm'), the boat miraculously changs direction, and finally reaches Campania (in what is now Italy) safely. The episode of Sephonia is omitted by Cynewulf, who finds another way to elaborate on the theme of a salvific journey. Near the end of *Juliana*, Cynewulf continually refers to the travel motif, though he does not employ any ship-terms:

> Mīn sċeal of līċe
> **sāwul on sīð-fæt**, nāt iċ sylfa hwider,
> eardes uncȳðþu; of sċeal iċ þissum,
> sēċan ōþerne ær-ġewyrhtum,
> gongan iu-dǣdum. Geomor hweorfeð
> ᛣ ᛦ ond ᚧ. (699b–704a)

('My **soul** must **depart** from my body, I don't know where that unknown land is; I must find another [land] from this land, by former works, travel with deeds of old. Sorrowfully, ᛣ, ᛦ and ᚧ [together spelling CYN for *cynn*, meaning 'race',

redactus' ('reduced to the form of apples'). *G-K*, **s.v.** '*æplēde*, *æpplēde*'.

'people'] must disappear.')[113]

Wæs ān tīd tō læt
þæt iċ yfel-dǣda ǣr ġesċomede,
þenden **gǣst** ond līċ ġeador **sīþedan**
on sund on earde. (712b–15a)

('I was too late at that time to have felt shame for my previous evil-deeds, when my **soul** and body **journeyed** together, in unity in the earth.')

Cynewulf develops the story into the voyage of the soul, twice through the mouth of a speaker, in an envelope structure: '**sāwul on sīð-fæt**' ('soul in journey', 700a) and '**gǣst** […] **sīþedan**' ('soul […] journeyed', 714).[114] Together with this clear reference to the voyage of the soul, Cynewulf creates thematic parallels to his narration of Eleusius's shipwreck: the transience of worldly life (death of the crew in 675b–6; the oblivion of humans in 703b–4a), the soul's departure from the body (of Juliana in 669b–71a; of the speaker in 699b–700a), the 'evil-deeds' (the severe punishment in 678a; the speaker's past deeds in 702b–3a and 713a), and anxiety for a journey that cannot reach the harbour ('ærþon hȳ tō londe ġeliden hæfdon', 677; also a journey towards an unknown land in 700b–2a).[115]

Aside from destruction, the idea of hope is another important motif for Cynewulf. The devastating phrase 'hyhta lease' ('without hope') in *Juliana* 682a offers a contrasting link to the earlier 'hyht staþelie' ('fixed hope', 437b), where the devil asks why Juliana fixes her trust in God just as the devil himself fixes his hope in Satan. Similar to Cynewulf's recycling strategy of 'ærþon wē (or "hȳ") tō londe ġeliden

[113] On the runic signature of Cynewulf in *Juliana* 695b–718a, see Orchard, 'Alcuin and Cynewulf', pp. 384–6.
[114] On the double envelope-patterning and the chiastic feature in *Juliana* 695–718a, see Orchard, 'Alcuin and Cynewulf', p. 385.
[115] Cf. the unknown destiny of Scyld's funeral ship in *Beowulf* 50b–2.

hæfdon' in *Christ B* 857 and *Juliana* 677, the same collocation '**hyht staþelian**' appears in *Christ B* 864b, but in a positive sense opposite to '**hyht staþelie**' in *Juliana* 437b. As Cynewulf exhorts his audience in *Juliana*, the unprotected sea-voyage of the sinful will always result in the shipwreck of the soul. In *Christ B*, Cynewulf particularly stresses two key factors crucial to salvation: human potentiality, and the salvific ship itself. By inserting images familiar in real-world seafaring such as mooring, anchor, harbour, as well as the horse-imagery, Cynewulf assures his audience that as long as they hold firm belief in God, and resist temptation, the spiritual voyage towards the heavenly harbour can always be safely accomplished with the protection of God.

3.4 Conclusion

The parallel passages discussed above demonstrate Cynewulf's Christian reappropriation of traditional Germanic poetic expressions in *Elene* and *Christ B*. The shared diction between his signed poems and earlier works also suggests Cynewulf's conscious borrowing from two sets of literary traditions. Such Christological reworking of maritime diction in earlier Old English verse repurposes traditional nautical terms, collocations, and metaphors as paradigms for the idea of the Christian life-voyage.

As demonstrated in 3.2, whilst the general plot of *Elene* is based upon the story of Helena, much of the maritime phraseology is Cynewulf's own creation, possibly modelled on vernacular exemplars such as the Old English *Exodus* and *Beowulf*. Some verbal details (such as the 'arrival' or 'departure' type-scene) also show the same direction of poetic indebtedness. The 'sea-horse' compounds, on the other hand, show

Cynewulf's creativity in compounding, which in turn become a major source for *Guthlac B* and other poems.

The intimacy of *Elene* and the Germanic tradition, its heroic phraseology, the descriptive narrative, and Cynewulf's interest in saint's *Lives* might represent an earlier stage of his poetic composition, compared with the theme, style, and language in *Christ B*. The repeated poetic collocations in the seafaring scenes in *Elene* and *Christ B*, moreover, also demonstrate that Cynewulf seems to invite his audience to connect the two poems, and to compare the thematic and textual nuances in ship-imagery.

On the one hand, the nautical vocabulary is reminiscent of the Germanic poetic tradition. On the other, Cynewulf depends heavily on Latin-derived homiletic and patristic sources. The major narrative focus is on illustrating Christian concepts regarding salvation, such as the ship-of-life, the theme of divine gift to mankind, and spiritual shipwreck.

The ship, depicted as a vessel for Christian souls and an animated vehicle of grace, transcends the liminal divide between the terrestrial and the celestial. The anchor rope, emblematic of 'fides caritate formata' ('faith formed by love'; cf. Galatians V.6), functions as a bond between believers and God, representing a steadfast assurance amid chaos, tethering the journeying soul to the heavenly haven. Finally, the harbour emerges not only as a sacred terminus but also as a sacred space beyond earthly habitat, where the salvific journey culminates in the soul's reunion with God. Inscrutable to the human mind, this celestial haven is the beatific destination towards which all Christians must navigate their spiritual voyage.

Together, the three elements constitute a well-rounded image of the imagined life-voyage, an evident hermeneutic of salvation: the departure from worldly existence and turbulence onboard the salvific ship of the soul, the dichotomy of anchoring in eternal hope and surviving the earthly struggles and evil enticements, and the *consummatio* where the storm-tossed, sea-weary souls find their eternal shelter and reunion with God in the calm harbour of heaven. The salvific ship is indeed, as Cynewulf shows in *Christ B*, the greatest gift from God.

***Chapter Four: The Ship Steered by Christ in* Andreas**

[…] is þes bāt ful sċrīd,
færeð fāmiġ-heals fuġole ġelīcost,
glīdeð on ġeofone […] (*Andreas* 496b–8a)

('[…] this foamy-necked boat goes very quickly, glides over the ocean most like a bird […]')

4.1 Introduction

The nautical descriptions in *Andreas* are extremely redolent of earlier works, especially *Beowulf* and Cynewulf's signed poems. When Andreas sees Christ (who is then disguised as a skipper) easily steering the ship amid the fearsome sea-tempest, the apostle explains that he has never seen any helmsmen with better navigational skills (*Andreas* 487–505a), and that the foamy-necked ship glides as swift as a bird (see above), recalling to mind the almost identical expression in *Beowulf* 218 (see Chapter Two). Indeed, the verbal parallels between *Beowulf*, Cynewulfian poems, and *Andreas* have been extensively studied by critics (see Introduction), yet the transmission of specifically nautical diction from *Beowulf* to *Andreas* has not been fully taken into consideration. The much-extended seafaring scenes in *Andreas* deserve closer scrutiny.

The main plot of *Andreas* is about how Andreas sails on a ship steered by Christ to Mermedonia, the land of the Cannibals, where he saves the captive Matthew, converts the survivors of the flood, and establishes a church. Compared with this Old English poem, the Greek and Latin analogues treat sensitively the diction concerning Christ and the ship. Although the ship is often mentioned in *Πράξεις* 4–16, the author only uses *πλοῖον* ('ship', 'boat') and its diminutive *πλοιάριον* ('small boat'), and one

modifier *μικρόν* (‘small’), to describe the ship steered by Christ.[1] The two ship-terms are taken straight out of the Greek New Testament, especially the accounts of Christ calming the stormy sea, and of Christ walking on the turbulent water towards the apostles’ ship (see 3.2.1). Similarly, in *Casanatensis* 4–18 and *Vaticanus*, the authors use the equivalent *nauis* (‘boat’, ‘ship’) and its diminutive *nauicula* (‘small boat’), and the modifier *paruus* (‘small’). The two Latin ship-terms are also used in the corresponding passages in the Vulgate. The Greek and Latin ship-terms often appear alone, or collocate with verbs meaning ‘boarding’, ‘sitting in’, ‘steering’, ‘disembarking’, and ‘embarking’. Regarding the analogues, Andrew’s ship is simply a means of transport, somewhat marginalised in the narrative.

In *Andreas*, by contrast, the poet portrays the divinely steered ship as a much more important object that should be interpreted symbolically, making the image central to the narrative. There are 921 lines out of 1722 in the form of speeches (a relatively high proportion in Old English verse), through which the poet frequently mentions the divinely-steered ship.[2] Contrary to the ‘small boat’ in the Greek and Latin analogues and the Vulgate, the poet uses altogether twenty terms denoting ‘ship’ and various rare or unique poetic adjectives as modifiers, such as *wīd-fæþme* (‘wide-bosomed’, 240b and 533a; unique), *hēah-stefn* (266b; elsewhere only in *The Whale* 13b), and *fāmiġ-heals* (497a; also twice in *Beowulf*). The varied nautical vocabulary serves not only to

[1] For the Greek and Latin texts, see Dennis Ronald MacDonald, *The Acts of Andrew and The Acts of Andrew and Matthias in the Country of the Cannibals* (Atlanta, GE, 1990), pp. 70–169 (Greek text with English translation); Franz Blatt, ed., *Die lateinischen Bearbeitungen der Acta Andreae et Matthiae apud anthropophagos* (Giessen, 1930), pp. 32–95 (texts of *Πράξεις* and *Casanatensis*) and 96–148 (text of *Vaticanus*). The texts are translated by Boenig, trans., *Acts of Andrew*.

[2] Bartlett, *Rhetorical Patterns*, p. 103; Andreas Heusler, ‘Der Dialog in der altgermanischen erzählenden Dichtung’, *ZfdA* 46 (1902), 189–284.

highlight the skill of a talented poet, but also as structural signifiers (as in the case of *Beowulf*) during the development of the plot.

The introduction is followed by a brief section on the twenty ship-terms in *Andreas*, then by two sections on the six simplexes for 'ship': 4.4 focuses on *ċēol*, the most frequently used ship-term in the poem; 4.5 on the other five simplexes, *naca*, *lid*, *bāt*, *flota*, and *sċip*. In each sub-section, I scrutinise in detail the poet's nautical vocabulary, focussing on the metrical patterns and poetic techniques especially regarding alliteration, apposition, and repetition, and demonstrating the multiple functions of the twenty variants of 'ship' employed in *Andreas*. I examine the stylistic features of the ship-terms and the nautical expressions in *Andreas* on a contextual basis, with close attention to the poem's verbal parallels with *Beowulf* and Cynewulf's *Elene* and *Christ B*. In addition, several Alfredian poems containing patterned expressions and themes are considered for clarifying the main topic of this chapter. I also consider the Greek and Latin sources and analogues. While assessing commonalities of the seafaring passages between *Andreas* and its analogues, the present chapter also tries to exhibit their differences. I contend in this chapter that the *Beowulf*-poet, Cynewulf, and the *Andreas*-poet, with originality as their common denominator, differ significantly in terms of poetic expression.

4.2 The twenty ship-terms

In *Andreas*, the terms for 'ship' appear mainly in 220–980 (when Andreas travels to Mermedonia on a ship steered by Christ), and in a relatively concise section on his trip

back to Achaea at the end of the poem (1654b–1722). In terms of proportion, the relevant passages consist of almost half of the poem. The ship-terms can be categorised into two basic groups. The first group consists of six simplexes: *bāt*, *ċēol*, *flota*, *lid*, *naca*, and *sċip*. As mentioned previously, the occurrences of simplexes including *ċēol*, *flota*, and *naca* are almost invariably limited to Old English verse. The simplex group can be further divided into two sub-groups: variations that only appear in simplexes in *Andreas* (*ċēol* and *naca*), and variations that appear not only in simplexes but also serve as stem words in compounds (*bāt*, *flota*, *lid*, and *sċip*). The simplex *ċēol* appears twelve times in *Andreas* (222a, 253b, 256b, 273b, 310b, 349a, 316b, 380a, 450a, 555a, 854a, and 899b), *naca* twice (266b and 291b), *bāt* twice (444b and 496b), *flota* once (397b), *lid* three times (398a, 403b, and 1707b), and *sċip* twice (240b and 512a). Most of the simplexes, except *lid*, occur only in the first seafaring passage.

In the second group, there are fourteen compounds for 'ship': *ǣġ-flota* (258a; unique), *brim-henġest* (513b; elsewhere twice in *The Rune Poem*; see Introduction), *brim-þīsa* (1657b and 1699b; also once in *Elene*), *horn-sċip* ('horn-ship'; unique), *mere-bāt* (246b; unique), *mere-þīsa* ('sea-burster', 257b and 446b; unique), *sǣ-bāt* (438b and 490b; also twice in *Beowulf*), *sǣ-flota* (unique), *sǣ-henġest* ('sea-stallion', 488a; also once in a glossary; see below), *sǣ-mearh* (267a; also twice in *Elene* and once in *The Whale*), *wǣġ-flota* (487a; also once in *Beowulf* and once in *Elene*); *wǣġ-þel* (1711a; also three times in *Genesis A*), *wudu-bāt* (unique), and *ȳþ-lid* (278a and 445a; unique).[3] Among the fourteen compounds, half of them (seven) are uniquely preserved

[3] Cf. *þell-fæsten* (see Chapter One); *benċ-þel* ('bench-board') in *Beowulf* 486a and 1239a; *ċēol-þel* ('ship-plank') in *The Husband's Message* 9a. Cf. *wudu-fæsten* (see Chapter One). The Old English-Latin gloss for 'ipotamus' is

in this poem.

Despite the high level of originality in terms of compounding, none of the first elements (*ǣġ*, *brim*, *horn*, *mere*, *sǣ*, *wǣġ*, *wudu*, and *ȳþ*) or second elements (*bāt*, *flota*, *henġest*, *lid*, *mearh*, *sċip*, *-þīsa*, and *-þel*) in the fourteen compounds are unfamiliar: they occur either as simplexes or as part of the compounds in the major poems previously discussed in the thesis. With regard to the second elements, these poems may have been the *Andreas*-poet's inspirations: *Genesis A* (*-þel*, *wudu-*), *Exodus* (*-lida*), *Beowulf* (*-bāt*, *-flota*, *horn-*, *-lida*, *-þel*), and Cynewulf (*-henġest*, *-mearh*, *-þīsa*). Most of the first elements in the ship-terms denote 'sea' or 'wood', as commonly in comparable poetic coinage, except *horn-*, which will be discussed in detail below.

The same pattern of distribution applies to the rare compounds that contain these first and second elements. Elsewhere in the corpus, they mostly occur in poems including *Beowulf* (*sǣ-bāt* and *wǣġ-flota*, for Beowulf's and (or) Sigemund's ships), *Elene* (*brim-þīsa*, *sǣ-mearh*, and *wǣġ-flota*, all denoting Elene's warship), and *Genesis A* (*wǣġ-þel*, meaning Noah's Ark), together with one example in *The Whale* (*sǣ-mearh*, 15a; when the sailors falsely anchor the 'sea-horse' to the giant sea-monster), and two occurrences in *The Rune Poem* (*brim-henġest*, 47a and 66a; when sailors travel across the sea on the 'sea-horse', hoping for good weather, scared of the sea-waves; see Introduction). The only exception is *sǣ-henġest*, which supplies a calque in a Latin-Old English glossary, glossing Latin 'ipotamus' ('hippopotamus'), itself derived from Greek *hippos* ('horse') and *potamos* ('river').[4]

found in London, British Library, Cotton MS Cleopatra A. III.

[4] Cronan argues that the *Andreas*-poet and the glossator form the same word out of different purposes: the former

The compounds can be categorised into three sub-groups based on the second elements: six compounds with monosemic simplexes meaning 'ship' or 'parts of a ship' (*mere-**bāt***, *sǣ-**bāt***, *wudu-**bāt***, *ȳþ-**lid***, *horn-**sċip***, and *wǣġ-**þel***), three 'sea-horse' compounds (*brim-**henġest***, *sǣ-**henġest***, and *sǣ-**mearh***), and five compounds with polysemic second elements meaning 'floater', 'goer', which can refer to either 'sailor' or 'ship' (*ǣġ-**flota***, *sǣ-**flota***, *wǣġ-**flota***, *brim-**þīsa***, and *mere-**þīsa***). As with the simplexes, most of the compounds occur in the first seafaring passage in *Andreas* 220–980 (Andreas's voyage to Mermedonia), except *brim-þīsa* and *wǣġ-þel*. Although the second elements of the two compounds have relatively vague meanings, the first elements of the two compounds, *brim* and *wǣġ*, already appear in *brim-henġest* and *wǣġ-flota* in the first passage. In the following discussions, I demonstrate the idiosyncratic way they collocate with other relevant terms and expressions in the lines, and discuss how the nautical phraseology fits into the traditional way of describing sea-voyages in Old English poetry.

4.3 The multi-purpose roles of *ċēol*

The term *ċēol* occurs twelve times in *Andreas*, far more frequently than other simplexes denoting 'ship'. Its occurrences in the heroic contexts in earlier texts by Saint Gildas and in *Beowulf*, along with its Germanic origin (see Chapter Two), might have attracted the *Andreas*-poet, perhaps aiming at heroicising the salvific ship steered by Christ. The

'on a traditional poetic model', the latter 'an individual response to a specific lemma'. Cronan, 'Poetic Meanings', p. 398. See further Manfred Voss, 'Strykers Edition des alphabetischen Cleopatraglossars: Corrigenda und Addenda' *AAA* 13 (1988), 123–38; William G. Stryker, 'The Latin-Old English Glossary in MS. Cotton Cleopatra A.III' (unpublished PhD dissertation, Stanford Univ., 1955).

uses of *ċēol* by the poet fall into three groups. In the first, the poet employs *ċēol* to explain the unique compounds denoting ships in adjacent lines. A detailed analysis of the expressions in *Andreas* sheds light on the shared phraseology of ships in *Beowulf*, Cynewulf's *Elene*, and *Andreas* as well as on the connections between these poems. Moreover, the close morphological and syntactical resemblance between *Beowulf* and *Andreas* may indicate intentional borrowing by the *Andreas*-poet, who freely employs the *Beowulf*-poet's appositive style while creating unique compounds referring to ships.[5]

In the second group, *ċēol* collocates with specific phrases and verbs, and forms patterned expressions found not only in *Andreas* but also in *Beowulf*, Cynewulfian, and Alfredian poems (see below). My discussion also suggests that, albeit certainly aware of specific nautical expressions in earlier texts, the *Andreas*-poet deliberately recasts the contexts of such expressions and the traditional topoi, advocating Christian values and themes such as the mission of evangelisation, the omnipresence of Christ after his Ascension, the life-voyage, and the ship-Church simile, whereas in some of the poem's analogues such Christian connotations are more implicit.

In the third group, *ċēol* follows a preposition functioning as an adverbial of place. By repetition, the *Andreas*-poet highlights the location where Christ, called *cyning* ('King') or 'cyninga wuldor' ('Glory of Kings'), stays and speaks with Andreas. The

[5] See, for example, Irina Dumitrescu, '*Beowulf* and *Andreas*: Intimate Relations', *Dating Beowulf: Studies in Intimacy*, ed. Daniel C. Remein and Erica Weaver (Manchester, 2020), pp. 257–78; North and Bintley, ed. *Andreas*; Friesen, 'Visions and Revisions'; Powell, 'Verbal Parallels'; Carol Hughes Funk, 'History of *Andreas* and *Beowulf*: Comparative Scholarship' (PhD dissertation, Univ. of Denver, 1997); David Hamilton, '*Andreas* and *Beowulf*: Placing the Hero', *Anglo-Saxon Poetry: Essays in Appreciation*, ed. Lewis E. Nicholson and Dolores Warwick Frese (Notre Dame and London, 1975), pp. 81–98; Brooks, ed., *Andreas*, xxii–xxvii; Peters, 'Relationship'. See also Robinson, *Appositive Style*.

repeated expressions demonstrate a special emphasis on the theme of the immanent existence of Christ, professing evangelisation across the sea as the mission for every Christian.[6]

4.3.1 Ċēol and the appositive style

In three out of twelve uses of *ċēol*, the term is near compounds referring to 'ship', and such uses of *ċēol* are present only in *Andreas*. The second elements in these ship-compounds are usually vague in meaning, and the poet seems to employ *ċēol* to clarify or explain the meaning of these compounds. The poetic, esoteric nature of the ship-compounds in turn emphasises the heightened, archaic tone of *ċēol*.

The three passages represent additions of the *Andreas*-poet when compared with their analogues. In the first passage, Andreas has just met Christ and two of his angels disguised as sailors on the ship, and asks Christ where they have come from:

> Hwanon cōmon ġē **ċēolum** līðan,
> mā-cræftiġe menn, on **mere-þīssan**,
> āne **æġ-flotan**? (256–8a)
>
> ('Where have you come from, sailing in **ships**, men superior in skills, in the **sea-burster**, alone in the **wave-floater**?')

In *Πράξεις* 5 and *Casanatensis* 5, when the apostle Andrew asks where Christ and the two angels are going (instead of where they have come from), the ship is described as a 'little boat' by *πλοῖον* and *μικρόν* and 'parua nauicula' respectively. By contrast, the

[6] On the continuing presence of Christ after his Ascension as the central tropological concern in *Andreas*, and the poet's interest in advocating evangelisation through the narrative of Andreas's 'Apostolic Commission', see Samuel Cardwell, '"Go Now": Mission and Commission in the Old English *Andreas*', *Parergon* 39 (2022), 1–25. On the theme of evangelisation in *Andreas*, see further Tristan Major, *Undoing Babel: The Tower of Babel in Anglo-Saxon Literature* (Toronto, 2018), p. 209; Patrick McBrine, 'The Journey Motif in the Poems of the Vercelli Book', *New Readings in the Vercelli Book*, pp. 298–317, at 308–13.

Andreas-poet mentions the action of sailing (‘ċēolum līðan’, 256b) and the superior skills of the divine figures (*mā-cræftiġ*, ‘superior in skill’; unique to *Andreas* 257a and 472a), along with two ship-compounds unique to *Andreas* (*mere-þīsa*, 257b; *æġ-flota*, 258a).[7] The Greek, Latin, and Old English analogues all focus on the planned destination of Christ’s ship, whereas in *Andreas* the origin of the three sailors and their ships (‘hwanon cōmon’, 256a) outweighs the planned destination. In 258b–9, before Christ acknowledges Mermedonia as his place of departure, the poet has Andreas ask the question for the second time: ‘hwanon ēaĝor-strēam ofer ȳða ġewealc ēowiċ brōhte?’ (‘from where did the ocean’s current bring you, from over the rolling of the waves?’). The addition underscores the affinity of Christ the skipper with Andreas’s mission, and propagates ideas such as apostolic evangelisation across the open sea and ‘peregrinatio pro amore Dei’ (see Chapters One and Three).

In the second passage, Andreas asks for permission to board the ship despite the penury of the apostle and his thegns (254–351), where the details of the negotiation differ from the Greek and Latin versions.[8] The poet inserts heroic vocabulary reminiscent of that in *Beowulf*, including the diction for a contemporary North-Sea ship:

> Wolde iċ þē biddan, þēh iċ þē bēaga lȳt,
> sinċ-weorðunga, syllan meahte
> þæt ðū ūs ġebrōhte **brante ċēole,**
> **hēa horn-sċipe**, ofer hwæles ēðel
> on þære mæġðe; bið ðē meorð wið god,
> þæt ðū ūs on lāde līðe weorðe. (271–6)

(‘I would ask you, though I might give you few rings, treasures and adornments, that you brought us in the **towering**

[7] Cf. *laĝu-cræftiġ* (‘sea-skilled’), unique to *Beowulf* 209a.
[8] For a comparative analysis of the passages on the fare in *Andreas* and its analogues, see North and Bintley, ed. and trans., *Andreas*, pp. 66–8.

> **vessel**, **high horn-ship**, over the whale's home, to that nation; there will be a reward for you from God, for being kind to us on our journey.')

The expression 'þēh iċ þē bēaga lȳt, sinċ-weorðunga, syllan meahte' ('though I might give you few rings, treasures and adornments') in 271b–2 reappears in 476b–7, where Andreas asks Christ the skipper again to ferry them to Mermedonia. Although he does not have much earthly possessions, he still wishes to establish *fēondsċipe* ('friendship', 478b) with Christ. Similarly, Andreas reiterates the idea of reward (*meorð*, 275b): Christ the skipper will receive the holy *ġife* (480b) from heaven for Andreas's voyage.[9]

In the third passage, the ship sets sail to Mermedonia. As in *Πράξεις* 7 and *Casanatensis* 7–8, the *Andreas*-poet mentions the terror of water, but provides more details of the sea-turbulence and the terror among the crew:

> Þeġnas wurdon
> ācolmōde; ænigˇ ne wēnde
> þæt hē lifgende land beġēte,
> þāra þe mid Andrēas on ēaĝor-strēam
> **ċēol** ġesōhte. Næs him cūð þā ġȳt
> hwā þām **sæ-flotan** sund wīsode. (376–81)
>
> ('The thegns became frightened at heart; none of those who had sought the **ship** in the water-stream with Andreas expected that he would ever reach the shore alive. They did not know yet who guided that **sea-floater** in the sea.')

No parallels to this passage are found in the analogues. There is, however, an expression akin to '**næs** him **cūð** þā ġȳt **hwā þām** sæ-flotan sund wīsode' ('they **did not know** yet **who** guided **the** sea-floater in the sea') in *Beowulf* 50b–2: 'men **ne cunnon** seċġan tō sōðe […] **hwā þǣm** hlæste onfēng' ('men **do not know** for sure […] **who** received **the**

[9] On the contested manuscript reading of 'meorð', see North and Bintley, ed. and trans., *Andreas*, pp. 37, 45, and 229. *WH* and *B-T* retain 'meord', whilst *G-K* gives both word-forms in one entry. *G-K*, **s.v.** 'meord, meorð': 'μισθός, merces, premium'.

cargo'). Earlier in the funeral passage, *ċēol* occurs in 'ne hȳrde iċ cymlīċor **ċēol**' (38; see Chapters Two and Three). For the pagan Danes, the fate of Scyld's body and funeral-ship remains unknown, yet for the Christian audience of *Beowulf*, at the end of the voyage, the funeral-ship will deliver Scyld's soul to the embrace of God. So does the divinely steered ship in *Andreas*: the passage further echoes popular Christian concepts such as God's mastery over the sea and the ship-of-life (see Chapters One and Three).

In each of the three cases, *ċēol* is followed by a unique compound denoting ships in the half-lines below: *ǣġ-flota* (258a), *horn-sċip* (274a), *mere-þīsa* (257b), and *sǣ-flota* (381a). The poetic sea-compound in the third passage, *ēaĝor-strēam* ('water-stream', 379b), is found only in the major verse-texts discussed here: *Genesis A* 1374b (referring to the Flood), *Beowulf* 513a (when Unferth mentions Beowulf's past swimming competition with Breca in the furious sea), four times in *Andreas*, and *Metre 20* 118b and 122b (about God's power over water and fire, and land and sea). It seems likely that the *Andreas*-poet coins these compounds based on his knowledge of nautical terms in relevant texts such as *Beowulf* and the Cynewulfian poems. Three of the four compounds consist of a first element meaning 'ocean', 'sea' (*mere-*, *ǣġ-*, and *sǣ-*) and a second element which does not explicitly denote ships: *-þīsa* and *-flota*. Preceding *ǣġ-flota*, *mere-þīsa*, and *sǣ-flota* in one half-line or one full line ahead, *ċēol* offers clarity. The *Andreas*-poet employs apposition in these three passages containing *ċēol*, with a reversed order, which leads to greater precision. Through verbal parallels with *Beowulf*, the poet also underlines the ornate nature of *ċēol* in the tradition, associating the divinely steered ship in *Andreas* with the celebrated ships of Germanic heroes (see

Chapter One and below).

The two *-flota*-compounds (*ǣġ-flota* and *sǣ-flota*) in the first and third passages require further scrutiny. There are four known *-flota*-compounds denoting 'ship' in the extant Old English corpus, preserved in *Beowulf*, *Elene*, *Guthlac B*, and *Andreas*: *ǣġ-flota* in *Andreas* 258a; *hærn-flota* in *Guthlac B* 1333b (unique); *sǣ-flota* in *Andreas* 381a (unique); and *wǣġ-flota* shared between in *Beowulf* 1907a, *Elene* 246a, and *Andreas* 487a. In the prose corpus, *unfriþ-flota* ('fleet arriving without an agreement') denotes the fleet of the Viking army, and is peculiar to *ASC* MSS C, D, E, and F 1000.[10] This unique compound certainly looks poetic, reminiscent of *sċip-flota* in *Brunanburh* 11b, a poem which appears in the entry for 937 (see Chapter One and Conclusion).

There are two more *unfriþ*-compounds for 'ship' in the prose corpus, both limited to prose texts, and all uses except one are unique to *ASC*: *unfriþ-here* ('fleet arriving without an agreement') in entries for 1007 (MSS D and E; for the Viking armies) and 1009 (MSS C, D, and E; referring to the invading fleet of Thorkell the Tall); *unfriþ-sċip* ('fleet arriving without an agreement') in the entry for 1046 (MS E; denoting the Welsh invaders).[11] The compound *unfriþ-sċip* also appears in *II Æthelred* (or *Æthelred's*

[10] Earlier editors regard the two elements in *unfriþ-flota* as two separate words in the manuscripts, while in some recent editions and online databases (including the *DOE* corpus) they are given as a compound. For earlier editions, see Charles Plummer, ed., *Two of the Saxon Chronicles*, I, p. 133; for a comment, see II, p. 180; Benjamin Thorpe, ed. and trans., *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: According to the Several Original Authorities*, 2 vols (London, 1861), I, pp. 248–9. *B-T*, **s.v.** '*unfriþ-flota*'. See further C. E. Fell, '*Unfrið*: an Approach to a Definition', *SB* 21 (1982–5), 85–100, who argues that *unfriþ* should be interpreted as 'the absence of safeguards or protection', 'outside the area of agreement'. Similarly, the phrase 'for unfriþe' in the Old English *Orosius* (when Ohthere voyages to the North Cape, and sees an inhabited land on the far side of a long river) should mean 'because they had made no prior agreement'. Fell, '*Unfrið*', pp. 94–5.

[11] *DOE*, **s.v.** '*unfriþ-here*'; '*unfriþ-scip*'. Cf. two compounds found in law texts: *fyrd-sċip* ('war-ship'; unique to *VI Æthelred*, which is about the statutes made at Enham in 1008) and a contested term *friþ-sċip* (unique to *Rectitudines singularum personarum*, 'The Rights and Duties of Each Person'). *B-T*, **s.v.** '*friþ-scip*': 'guard-ship'. Yet the twelfth-century Latin translation reads 'in hosticum' ('against the enemy'). For the Old English and Latin texts, see Felix Lieberman, ed. and trans., *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen: Herausgegeben im Auftrage der Savigny-Stiftung*, 3 vols (Halle, 1903), I, p. 254–5 and 444. Both *DOE* and Liberman suggest an emendation of *friþ-sċip* to *fyrd-sċip*. *DOE*, **s.v.** '*fyrd-scip*'; Lieberman, ed. and trans., *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen* II, p. 82: 'Schiff der Landesflotte; vielleicht besser *fierdscipe*'.

Ordinance on Hostile Ships) written in *c.* 1000. The text reads: 'ond ælċ ċēap-sċip frið hæbbe, þe binnan mūðan ċuman, ðēah hit unfrið-sċype sȳ, ġif hit undrīfen bið' ('and each merchant ship shall have peace that comes to the estuary, even if it is a ship not from the peace area of the present treaty, provided that it is not brought ashore [by shipwreck or sea-storm]').[12] The corresponding twelfth-century Latin translation is as follows: 'et omnis ċēap-sċip (id est nauis institoris) pacem habeat, que in portum ueniet, licet nauis sit inimicorum, si non sit abacta tempestatibus' ('and let every *ċēap-sċip* — that is, the merchant's ship, have peace, which comes into the port, even if it is a ship of enemies, if it is not driven away by tempests'). As Fell points out, the Latin translation 'nauis inimicorum' ('ship of enemies') may not be correct, because *unfriþ-sċip* may refer to a ship that comes from a country outside the area of agreement (*friþ*).[13]

While the *Beowulf*-poet uses the simplex *flota* more often (four times) than Cynewulf (never) and the *Andreas*-poet (once), the *Andreas*-poet seems to be more interested in applying, or creating *-flota*-compounds in his work: three out of the four extant *-flota*-compounds are found in *Andreas* (*ǣġ-flota*, *sǣ-flota*, and *wǣġ-flota*). The *Beowulf*-poet and Cynewulf only use one *-flota*-compound in their works, *wǣġ-flota*, which also appears in *Andreas*. The *Andreas*-poet may have been inspired by the employment of *wǣġ-flota* in *Beowulf* and *Elene*, thereby creating *ǣġ-flota* and *sǣ-flota*. The poet also deploys wordplay on *flota* and its compounds to evoke the dual connotations of 'sailor' and 'ship'.

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[12] The Old English and Latin texts are taken from Lieberman, ed. and trans., *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen* I, p. 222. For *undrīfen* and *unfriþ-sċip*, see II, p. 228 ('*undrifen*': 'nicht [durch Schiffbruch ans Land] angetrieben'; '*unfriðscyp*': 'Schiff nicht aus dem Friedensgebiet [vorliegenden Vertrages]').

[13] Fell, '*Unfrið*', pp. 96–7.

The third term *mere-þīsa* appears in *Andreas* 257b (‘**on mere-þissan**’) and 446b (‘**on mere-þyssan**’), collocating with the preposition *on*. In both cases, *mere-þīsa* is explained by a simplex referring to ships; in 257b it is adjacent to *ċēol* (56b); in 446b it is explained by *bāt* (444b), which also appears in the form of preposition + ‘ship’: ‘**on bātes fæðm**’ (‘**in the bosom of the ship**’; see also Chapters One and Two). Of the three *-þīsa*-compounds for ‘ship’, the *Andreas*-poet applies the term more often (four times) than Cynewulf (once) and the author of *Guthlac B* (once), highlighting the spiritual aspect of Andreas’s ship-voyage. Ultimately, the ‘wave-floater’, or ‘ocean-speeder’ will assist his evangelisation in a foreign land, his martyrdom and sanctity in Achaea, and his soul ascending to the harbour of eternal happiness in Heaven.[14]

By matching *horn* with *sċip* in the fourth compound, the poet emphasises the physical shape of the vessel, associating the ship with elaborate architecture in both Germanic and Christian traditions. The term *horn-sċip* forms a pair with the preceding simplex *ċēol*, in the pattern of adjective meaning ‘high, tall’, + noun meaning ‘ship’: ‘**brante ċēole, hēa horn-sċipe**’ (273b–4a). The latter two adjacent phrases, ‘**brante ċēole**’ and ‘**hēa horn-sċipe**’, pair with each other as complementary appositions, helping the audience to visualise the image of the magnificent ship steered by Christ.

A similar expression of ‘high horned-ship’ is preserved in the ninth-century Old Saxon biblical poem *Hêliand*, which reads ‘**hôh hurnid-skip**’ (2266a), when Christ is calming the storm at sea.[15] Although *Hêliand* is significantly longer than both *Beowulf*

[14] On the early Christian symbolism of mast and rigging as cosmic ladder to Heaven, see Daniélou, *Primitive Christian Symbols*, p. 60.

[15] The text of *Hêliand* is from Otto Behaghel, ed., *Heliand und Genesis, 10. Auflage, bearbeitet von Burkhard Taeger* (Tubingen, 1984). For a comparison of the scene in *Andreas* and *Heliand*, see Gayle A. Henrotte, ‘The *Heliand* and *Andreas*: Jesus Stills the Waves’, *Medieval German Literature: Proceedings from the 23rd International Congress*

and *Andreas* combined, the descriptions of ships in *Hêliand* are scant compared with the two Old English poems. The poet only uses *skip* ('ship') and *hurnid-skip* ('horned-ship') when referring to the vessel. It has been argued that the *Hêliand*-poet is very familiar with the Germanic sociolect.[16] Orchard notes that despite the various verbal parallels between *Hêliand* and Old English poetry, *Beowulf* and *Hêliand* share fewer than thirty parallels, and only four are found between *Hêliand*, *Beowulf*, and *Andreas*.[17] What specifically attracts the three poets in the image of the 'high horned-ship' is the term *horn*, and its figurative architectural meaning.

There are thirteen compounds with *horn* ('curved', 'horned', or 'gabled') as the first element in the corpus, of which nine are preserved in verse-texts. There are also sixteen compounds with *horn* as the second element, including two unique terms in poetry: *gūð-horn* ('battle-horn') in *Beowulf* 1492a and *feohte-horn* ('battle-horn') in *Psalm 74* 9.1b. It seems that the Old English poets are more inclined to use (-)*horn*(-) compounds than prose writers. All nine *horn*-compounds in verse are rare words favoured by a few poets; seven are found in *Beowulf*, Cynewulf's *Elene*, or *Andreas*; most of them are employed in *Beowulf* and *Andreas*.[18] Another *horn*-compound that

on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, Michigan, May 5–8, 1988, ed. Albrecht Classen (Göppingen, 1989), pp. 39–50. See also Megan Cavell, 'The Binding of Religious Heroes in *Andreas* and the *Hêliand*', *ES* 96 (2015), 507–24.

[16] Harald Haferland, 'Was the *Heliand* Poet Illiterate?', trans. Valentine A. Pakis, *Perspectives on the Old Saxon Heliand*, pp. 167–207, at 173. For comparative studies on *Hêliand* and Old English poetry, see further Paul Battles, 'Wretches and *Recken*: Exile in *The Heliand*, *Beowulf*, *The Hildebrandslied*, and Beyond', *Neophilologus* 109 (2025), 103–23, esp. 107–13; Paul Battles, 'Intertextuality and Sociolectal Differentiation in Old Saxon and Old English Verse: A Stylometric Analysis Using N-grams', *MP* 119 (2022), 443–67; J. E. Cathey, 'The Historical Setting of the *Heliand*, the Poem, and the Manuscript', *Perspectives on the Old Saxon Heliand: Introductory and Critical Essays with an Edition of the Leipzig Fragment*, ed. Valentine A. Pakis (Morgantown, VA, 2010), pp. 3–33; Thomas A. Bredehoft, 'Old English and Old Saxon Formulaic Rhyme', *Anglia* 123 (2005), 204–29; Douglas Peter Allen Simms, 'Reconstructing an Oral Tradition: Problems in the Comparative Metrical Analysis of Old English, Old Saxon and Old Norse Alliterative Verse' (PhD dissertation, Univ. of Texas-Austin, 2003).

[17] Orchard, ed. and trans., *Beowulf Rex* (forthcoming). According to Battles, the four Old English poems that share the greatest number of parallel expressions with *Hêliand* are *Genesis B* (82 instances), *Beowulf* (25), *Metres* (25), and the *Paris Psalter* (25). Battles, 'Intertextuality and Sociolectal Differentiation', pp. 454–6, 458–60, and 465.

[18] The seven compounds are: *horn-boġa* ('curved bow') in *Beowulf* 2437b, *Judith* 222b, and *Psalm 75* 3.1a; *horn-bora* ('horn-bearer') in *Elene* 54a, and twice in glosses for Latin *cornice* ('horn-blower', 'trumpeter'); *horn-fisċ*

collocates with *heah* is *horn-ġēap* found only in *Beowulf* 82a and *Andreas* 668a, depicting Heorot and the Temple in Jerusalem respectively, in the same phrase '**hēah ond horn-ġēap**' ('**high and wide-gabled**', '**high and antler-gabled**').

The employment of *horn-ġēap* in *Beowulf* and *Andreas* is worth further discussion.[19] The pairing of *horn-ġēap* and Heorot in *Beowulf* seems natural, since the great mead-hall Heorot is named after a 'hart' or 'stag' in Old English, an adult male deer with impressive horns.[20] In *Beowulf*, the poet also subsequently describes a figurative image of a wounded, strong-horned stag ('**heorot hornum trum**') hunted down on the shore of Grendel's mere in *Beowulf* 1368–72.[21] The harried stag that awaits death by the burning water ('fȳr on fōde', 'fire on the water', 1366a) not only contrasts the action of Beowulf who dives into the water to fight Grendel's Mother (1492–5a); it also symbolises Grendel's attack on the royal mead-hall Heorot (115–71a and 710–823a).[22] As Leneghan proposes, the *Beowulf*-poet possibly knows the association between stags and royal power in Germanic culture, and thus develops a metaphor of Heorot as a hunted stag ambushed by Grendel, a wolf-like predator.[23] Furthermore, the *Beowulf*-poet inserts 'Babylonian allusions' in his account of Heorot, highlighting the theme of the transience of earthly riches in the poem.[24] The poet also

('horned fish') unique to *Andreas* 370b; *horn-ġēap*; *horn-reċed*; *horn-sæl* ('gabled hall') in *Andreas* 1158b and *Riddle 1* 38b [3 8b]; *horn-sċip*. The term *horn-fisċ* is probably a metathesised form of *hran-fisċ* ('whale-fish'), attested in *Beowulf* 540b and the Old English *Alexander's Letter to Aristotle* B22.1.

[19] Powell, 'Verbal Parallels', pp. 117–18; Brooks, ed., *Andreas*, xxiv; Peters, 'Relationship', p. 855; Johannes Hoops, 'Altenglisch *geap*, *horngeap*, *sægeap*', *Englische Studien* 64 (1929), 201–11, at 207; George Philip Krapp, ed., *Andreas and The Fates of the Apostles, Two Anglo-Saxon Narrative Poems* (New York, NY, 1906), pp. 114–15.

[20] *DOE*, **s.v.** '*heorot*, *heort*', definition 3.c; *WH*, 'Heorot, Hiorot, Heort'; *G-K*, **s.v.** '*heorot*, *heort*'.

[21] See further Thijs Porck and Berber Bossenbroek, 'A Hart with its Head Held High: A New Emendation for *Beowulf*, Line 1372a', *ANQ* 33 (2020), 4–8, at 6.

[22] Orchard, *Companion*, p. 156; Marcelle Thiébaux, *The Stag of Love: The Chase in Medieval Literature* (London, 1974), p. 17. See further L. E. Nicholson, '*Beowulf* and the Pagan Cult of the Stag', *SM* 27 (1986), 637–69.

[23] Francis Leneghan, '*Beowulf* and the Hunt', *Humanities* 11 (2022), 1–22, at 2–4 and 13.

[24] Major, *Undoing Babel*, pp. 242–3.

presents the image of Heorot as an Edenic space: the manner in which Grendel enters Heorot seems to resonate with the serpent's entrance into the Garden of Eden.[25] Moreover, the poet delivers the description of Heorot as *horn-ġēap* soon after the passage on Scyld's ship-funeral, which also carries Christian allusions to stories of the ship-funerals of the saints (especially in the case of Saint Gildas), and of the ships with saints' relics in the river in early and medieval Christian tradition (see Introduction and Chapter Two). Both Scyld's funeral-ship and Heorot share the same spiritual metaphors in *Beowulf*.[26]

Kenneth R. Brooks contends that *horn-ġēap* is less appropriately employed to describe the Temple in Jerusalem in *Andreas* than Heorot in *Beowulf*.[27] However, there is one common feature in the depictions of the '**hēah ond horn-ġēap**' Heorot in *Beowulf* 82a, the '**hēa horn-sċipe**' in *Andreas* 274a, and the '**hēah ond horn-ġēap**' Temple (668a): they are massive structures created by humans. Both Heorot and the Temple are going to burn down.[28] As George Philip Krapp notes, *horn*-compounds are often used to describe buildings, such as *horn-reċed* ('gabled hall', unique to *Beowulf* 704a) and *horn-sele* ('gabled hall'; unique to *Genesis A* 1821a).[29] C. P. Biggam further argues that *horn* means 'angle', 'projection' in architecture, and that *horn*-compounds indicate the additions or extensions to a roofline of a building (such as finial, turret, and cross-beams), and are less likely to denote 'gable-points'.[30] Biggam's research

[25] Godden, 'Biblical Literature', pp. 214–33, at 223.
[26] On the connection between the stag and Germanic royal halls, and Heorot as a metaphor for the hall conceived as a ship, see K4, pp. 119–20.
[27] Brooks, ed., *Andreas*, xxiv.
[28] North and Bintley, ed. and trans., *Andreas*, pp. 247–8.
[29] Krapp, ed., *Andreas*, pp. 114–15.
[30] Biggam builds her research on textual and archaeological evidence, and suggests that *horn-reċed* should be translated as 'house with horn-like cross-beams' or 'hall with finials'. C. P. Biggam, '*Grund* to *hrof*: Aspects of the

reinforces the correlations of Heorot, the ship, and the Temple with regard to the common architectural features. Moreover, the image of Noah's Ark is an archetype of the Ship-of-the-Church motif, and the vessel is described as a great 'sea-hall' or 'sea-house' and '**hēah** mid hlæste' in *Genesis A*, which adds further credence to the ship-Church association in *Andreas* (see Chapter One). The ship and the Temple in *Andreas* serve the same symbolic function as Noah's ark: the architecture of each represents the Christian church.[31] The *Andreas*-poet is familiar with the traditional ship-Church metaphor, and may borrow the specific phraseology of *Genesis A*.[32]

Unlike David Hamilton, who argues that the repetition and borrowing in *Andreas* often 'thwart' traditional collocations to create different meanings, I contend that the intentional borrowing of the traditional expression '**hēah ond horn-ġēap**' from *Beowulf* is not a reversal.[33] The *Andreas*-poet downplays the well-received image of the ancestral mead-hall in *Beowulf* to endow the traditional collocation with a Christian flavour. By deliberately borrowing and altering '**hēah ond horn-ġēap**' into '**hēa horn-sċipe**' (274a), and copying the Beowulfian phrase in the same compound (668a), the *Andreas*-poet extrapolates the veiled message in the Greek and Latin analogues, and elevates the ship to the same prestigious position, as the legendary mead-hall Heorot, and as the Temple in Jerusalem, the spiritual centre of Christendom. In this sense, it is justifiable that the ship shares the same visual image, 'high, magnificent, and with

Old English Semantics of Building and Architecture', *AH* 45 (2002), 49–65, at 52 and 59–60. On the double roles of the *horn* as the gable-end and ornamental feature such as pinnacle or finial in the churches, see John Blair, *Building Anglo-Saxon England* (Princeton, NJ, 2018), pp. 57 and 133.

[31] Anlezark, *Water and Fire*, pp. 212–13 and 354.

[32] On parallels between *Andreas* and *Genesis A*, see Orchard, 'Originality of *Andreas*', pp. 341, 344, and 356–7.

[33] Hamilton, '*Andreas* and *Beowulf*', pp. 81–98, esp. 86.

horned projection', as Heorot and the Temple.

Both derivatives of *brant*, *brand-stefn* (*Andreas* 504b) and *brenting* (*Beowulf* 2807b) are relevant to ships. All uses of *brant* (including *Beowulf* 568a; see Chapter Two) form the expression of *brant* + a ship-term meaning 'towering ship': '**brante ċēole**' (*Andreas* 273b), '**brontne ċēol**' (*Beowulf* 238b), '**brontne bord**' (568a), and '**bronte brim-þīsan**' (*Elene* 238a). When the Danish coastguard sees Beowulf's ship arriving at the seashore, he rushes to the shore on horseback (*Beowulf* 229–36), and questions the seafarers' purpose and background. In both *Beowulf* and *Andreas*, *ċēol* is accompanied by *brant*, and both poets use the expression of the preposition *ofer* + a compound or phrase for 'sea' in the next line: '**brante ċēole** […] **ofer hwæles ēðel**' ('**over whale's home**', *Andreas* 273b–4), and '**brontne ċēol ofer laĝu-strǣte**' (*Beowulf* 237–8a).

Besides the mirrored phraseology in *Beowulf* and *Andreas*, in Cynewulf's *Elene* *brant* precedes *brim-þīsa* which appears only in *Elene* 238a and *Andreas* 1657b and 1699b. In *Andreas*, the term is used in Andreas's return journey from Mermedonia; in *Elene*, it appears in a sea-voyage passage about the journey of Elene to Jerusalem with her fleet (see Chapter Three). The *ofer* + sea-compound expression precedes *brant* + ship-term in the line ahead, but the collocation 'towering ship' + 'in the sea' is still found in '**ofer fīfel-wǣġ** […] **bronte brim-þīsan**' in *Elene* 237a and 238a. While Cynewulf uses *brim-þīsa* instead of *ċēol*, he adds another adjective *fāmiġ* to describe the 'sea-burster' (see Chapters One, Two, and Three). The simplex *fīfel* ('giant', 'sea-monster') and the four known *fīfel*-compounds only exist in poetry, each unique to one

text: *fīfel* in *Waldere Fragment II* 10a, *fīfel-cynn* (‘giant kind’) in *Beowulf* 104b, *fīfel-dor* (‘gate of sea-monsters’) in *Widsith* 43a, *fīfel-strēam* (‘mighty stream’) in *Metre 26* 26a, and *fīfel-wæġ* in *Elene* 237a. The small range of the distribution may suggest some relationship between *Beowulf*, Cynewulf’s *Elene,* and the Alfredian *Metres*.

The poet of *Metre 26* depicts a version of the foamy, towering ship (26–8a), using a structure akin to that of the abovementioned passage in *Elene*. The storyline of *Metre 26* develops around the journey of the hero Ulysses (the Latin name for Greek Odysseus) across the sea. After participating in the ten-year Trojan War with his fleet of one hundred ships (‘ān hund sċipa’, *Metre 26* 15b), Ulysses, king of Thrace and Retia, starts his return journey from Troy on a large ship:

> […] ferede **on fīfel-strēam, fāmiġ-bordon, ðrīe-rēðre ċēol**; þæt bið ðæt mæste Crēcisċra sċipa. (26–8a)
>
> (‘[…] the **ship** departed **to the stream of the sea-monsters**, **with foamy sides** and **three banks of oars**; that is the greatest of Greek ships.’)

The image of Ulysses’s ship is more substantial: it is ‘fāmiġ-bordon’ (‘with foamy sides’, 26b), ‘ðrīe-rēðre’ (‘having three banks of oars’, 27a), and is the greatest among the Greek ships (27b–8a). In *Prose 38*, which is the prosaic counterpart of and the primary source for *Metre 26*, the author only uses ‘sume hundred sċipa’ (‘about one hundred ships’), ‘nā mā sċipa þonne ān’ (‘no more ships but one’), and the modifier *þrīe-rēðre* (‘having three banks of oars’) to highlight the type and number of Ulysses’s fleet.[34] Such expressions are not found in the Latin *Boethius*.

[34] Godden and Irvine, ed. and trans., *The Old English Boethius*, I, pp. 349–57.

The *Metres*-poet uses the *fīfel*-compound to refer to the sea, and the *fāmiġ*-compound to emphasise the visual impression of the ship (see Chapters One, Two, and Three). Although the poet does not use the word *brant*, the meaning of 'towering', 'giant', 'grand' is implied by the compound *þrīe-rēðre*, a calque of the Latin *tri-remis* ('trireme').[35] It appears only in two Alfredian texts, *The Metres* and Old English *Orosius*, depicting warships of ancient royal figures Ulysses and Octavian.[36] The trireme is a type of ancient Greek or Roman warships with three banks of oars, mentioned by many ancient Latin writers such as Livy and Caesar.[37] Susan Irvine associates the significant expansion of the Ulysses story with King Alfred's personal interests in naval power, and attributes the intentional mentioning of the trireme in text to the king's admiration for such vessels.[38] Notably, the costly triremes, capable of accommodating up to two hundred people onboard, are juxtaposed with the contemporaneous Alfredian longships equipped with some sixty oars per ship.[39] The reference to the '**ðrīe-rēðre ċēol**' in *Metre 26* further evokes comparisons with '**brontne ċēol**' and the '**brante ċēole**' in *Beowulf* and *Andreas* respectively.

Thomas A. Bredehoft identifies some similar passages in *Elene* and *Metre 26*, giving particular attention to the *fīfel-* and *fāmiġ*-compounds.[40] The unique parallels

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[35] The image of trireme in *Metre 26* echoes that of the Ark, which also has three decks. See further Orchard, *A Literary History of Old English Verse* (forthcoming).
[36] On the Alfredian background of the Old English *Orosius*, see, for example, Malcolm Godden, 'The Old English *Orosius* and Its Sources', *Anglica* 129 (2011), 297–320.
[37] Lionel Casson, *Ships and Seafaring in Ancient Times* (London, 1994), pp. 60–1.
[38] Susan Irvine, 'Ulysses and Circe in King Alfred's *Boethius*: A Classical Myth Transformed', *Studies in English Language and Literature: 'Doubt Wisely': Papers in Honour of E. G. Stanley*, ed. M. J. Toswell and E. M. Tyler (London, 1996), pp. 387–401, at 391.
[39] Casson, *Ships and Seafaring*, p. 63. For a detailed introduction to trireme, see pp. 60–77. See also Gifford and Gifford, 'Alfred's New Longships'; Swanton, 'King Alfred's Ships', pp. 1 and 13. See further Ryan Lavelle, *Alfred's Wars: Sources and Interpretations of Anglo-Saxon Warfare in the Viking Age* (Woodbridge, 2010).
[40] Bredehoft, *Authors*, p. 93.

between *Beowulf*, *Elene*, *Andreas*, and *Metre 26* might suggest a shared Alfredian background of *Andreas* and *Metre 26*.[41] In addition, while it is generally agreed that *Andreas* is heavily influenced by Cynewulfian poems and *Beowulf*, scholars have further argued for an Alfredian context for *Andreas*.[42] The close textual resemblance in the poets' depictions of the ships in *Metre 26*, *Beowulf*, *Elene*, and *Andreas* may lend credence to this hypothesis. Presumably, the poet of *The Metres* and the *Andreas*-poet were once in the same workplace at the king's court. There remain several possibilities: the theory that the *Metres*-poet read *Andreas* at the royal court, or vice versa; or that both poets share the same sources (*Beowulf*, Cynewulfian poems, and so on) available at Alfred's court.[43]

Another example concerning the shared phraseology of 'ship' in *The Metres* and *Andreas* appears just a few lines later in *Metre 26* 26b: when describing Ulysses in a ship (24b–7a) leaving ninety-nine ships behind in Troy (21–4a), the poet of *The Metres* uses the phrase '**hyrnde ċīolas**' ('horned ships') derived from *horn* and *ċēol* to show what Ulysses's fleet is like:

Đā ðā Aulīxes	lēafe hæfde,
Đracia cining,	þæt hē þonan mōste,

[41] For other shared phraseology between *Andreas* and *The Metres*, see Cavell, 'Religious Heroes', pp. 516 and 518; Bredehoft, *Authors*, p. 93.

[42] North and Bintley, ed. and trans., *Andreas*, pp. 97–8; Orchard, 'Both Style and Substance', p. 293. North further argues that the *Andreas*-poet is probably a priest of King Alfred. North, 'King Alfred as the Skipper'.

[43] Bredehoft, who agrees with Fulk's dating of *Andreas* (in the ninth century) and Orchard's chronology (*Beowulf* — Cynewulf's *Fates* — *Andreas*), argues that *Exodus*, Cynewulf's signed poems, and *Andreas* 'might have been read at Alfred's court', and that the poet of *The Metres* who might have worked at Alfred's court 'must have known' *Genesis A*, *Exodus*, *Beowulf*, *Elene*, *Juliana*, and *Andreas*, in *Authors*, p. 98. For a detailed list and discussion of the unique parallels *The Metres* shares with *Genesis A*, *Beowulf*, Cynewulf's *Elene* and *Juliana*, and *Andreas*, see *Authors*, pp. 72–3 and 83–103. On the possible circulation of *Beowulf* in the Alfredian court, see Leneghan, *Dynastic Drama*, pp. 235 and 240–4; Anlezark, *Water and Fire*, p. 371. For a hypothesis that a copy of *Beowulf* was given to King Æthelwulf (Alfred's father) as bride-price, see North, *Origins of Beowulf*, pp. 317–8. For an opinion that *Beowulf* is composed in an Alfredian context, see further Craig R. Davis, 'Gothic *Beowulf*: King Alfred and the Northern Ethnography of the Nowell Codex', *Viator* 50 (2019), 99–129; Craig R. Davis, 'An Ethnic Dating of *Beowulf*', *ASE* 35 (2006), 111–29; Craig R. Davis, *Beowulf and the Demise of Germanic Legend in England* (London, 1996), esp. 171–3.

hē lēt him behindan **hyrnde ċīolas**
niġon and hundniġontiġ, […] (21–4a)

('When Ulysses, king of Thrace, had leave to depart, he left behind him ninety-nine **horned ships**, […]')

The prose version describes the fleet during the arrival journey only as 'sume hundred sċipa' ('some hundred ships'), and the ship in his return journey as *þrē-rēðre*.[44] *Metre 26* provides a longer, more elaborate description of Ulysses's fleet. He leaves behind him ninety-nine '**hyrnde ċīolas**' out of the 'ān hund sċipa', and has only one ship with three banks of oars, a foamy-necked 'sea-horse', greatest of Greek ships, to take him back home.[45]

As we have seen, the collocation 'horned' + 'ship' appears only as '**hyrnde ciolas**' here and as '**horn-sċipe**' in *Andreas* 274a; also as '**hôh hurnid-skip**' in the Old Saxon *Hêliand* 2266a. The only two examples in Old English support the hypothesis that both *Andreas* and *The Metres* have a shared Alfredian background.[46] The 'towering ship' and 'horned ship' expressions in *Beowulf*, Cynewulf's *Elene*, *Andreas*, and *Metre 26* also indicate intimate relationships between these poems.

4.3.2 Launching the ship across the 'cold' water

The second group of verses employing *ċēol* includes four passages which are found in *Beowulf* and Cynewulf's *Christ B* respectively. The first two passages in this group appear in the form of *ċēol* + verb meaning 'sail', 'launch' + 'on cald wæter' in one full

[44] Godden and Irvine, ed. and trans., *The Old English Boethius*, I, p. 350.
[45] The modifiers are *mere-hengest* (25a, attested only in *Riddle 12* [14] 6b and *Metre 26*), *fāmiġ-bordon* (26a), *þrīe-rēðre* (27a), and 'mæste Crēciscra sċipa' ('greatest of Greek ships', 27b–8a).
[46] Bredehoft lists only one unique parallel between *Andreas* and *The Metres*: the term *drȳ-cræft* ('witchcraft', 'sorcery') in *Metre 26* 98b and *Andreas* 765a, without further analysis, in *Authors*, p. 93. Except one occurrence in *Andreas* and three occurrences in *Metre 26*, *drȳ-cræft* mostly survives in prose texts for about one hundred times, 'disproportionately frequent in Ælfric', according to *DOE*.

line. In the first passage, Christ, disguised as a skipper, suggests to Andreas that he should launch the ship at dawn on the 'cold' sea:

> Sċealtū ǣninga mid ǣr-dæġe,
> emne tō morgene, æt meres ende
> **ċēol ġestīgan, ond on cald wæter**
> brecan ofer **bæð-weġ.** (220–3a)
>
> ('You must by all means in the early day, precisely in the morning, at the edge of the sea, **climb onto the vessel**, and **in cold water** break through the **bath-way**.')

In the second passage, through the voice of the narrator, the *Andreas*-poet describes an imagined picture of Christ, and of his angels safely steering the ship across the 'cold' waves, who look like noble seafarers to Andreas:[47]

> Wǣron hīe on ġesċirplan **sċip-fērendum,**
> eorlas onlīce, **ēa-līðendum**,
> þonne hīe on flōdes fæðm **ofer feorne weġ**
> **on cald wæter ċēolum lācað**. (250–3)
>
> ('They were noblemen in costumes like **ship-travellers**, **sea-voyagers**, when they **ride in ships** in the flood's bosom, **over a distant path, in cold water**.')

The first passage also contains another patterned expression 'burst forth through the bath-way' (see Chapter Three and below). In the first passage, the *Andreas*-poet uses '**ċēol ġestīgan** […] **on cald wæter**'; about twenty lines after, the poet varies the wording to describe Christ the skipper and two angels by using the verb *lācan* ('move', 'sail', 253): '**on cald wæter ċēolum lācað**' ('**in cold water, ride in ships**').[48] The poet also employs unique or rare poetic compounds of sea and seafarers in the two passages.

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[47] On the *Andreas*-poet's portrayal of Christ as a royal figure (implicitly compared to King Alfred), see North, 'King Alfred as the Skipper', esp. 432–4.

[48] *DOE*, **s.v.** '*lācan*', definition 1.b: 'to ride or dance on the waves, keep afloat, sail', where the dictionary gives three examples, *Christ B* 854b (on spiritual voyage), *Juliana* 674a (about Eleusius's shipwreck), and *Andreas* 250 (see Chapter Three).

The sea-compound in the first passage, *bæþ-weġ* (‘bath-way’) occurs only four times in three poems: *Exodus* 290a (where Moses speaks to the folk that he will split the Red Sea by his rod), Cynewulf’s *Elene* 244a (see Chapter Three), and *Andreas* 223a (above) and 513a (parallel to *Elene* 244a). In the second passage, the poet may coin two unique compounds relevant to sea-voyage: *sċip-fērend* (‘ship-traveller’, 250b), and *ēa-līþend* (‘sea-voyager’, 251b).[49]

The expression ***ċēol*** + **verb meaning ‘sail, launch**’ + ‘**on cald wæter**’ is unique to *Andreas* and *Christ B*, with each occurrence in one full line. In the aforementioned passage in *Christ B* (see 3.3.2), the narrator compares the voyage-of-life to the voyage on a ship over the dangerous waves:

> Nū is þon ġelīcost swā we on **laĝu-flōde**
> **ofer cald wæter** **ċēolum līðan**
> ġeond sīdne sæ, sund-henġestum,
> flōd-wudu ferġen. (850–3a)
>
> (‘Now it is most like that we **sail** the **ships** on the **sea-flood on the cold water**, on sea-stallions through the wide sea, travel in flood-woods.’)

What is noteworthy in the passage is Cynewulf’s use of two unique compounds meaning ‘ship’: *sund-henġest* (852b) and *flōd-wudu* (853a). The term *laĝu-flōd* (‘water-flood’) is found four times in glosses, and ten times in poetry, including five times in Cynewulfian poems: *Juliana* 674a, *Christ B* 806a and 850b, *The Phoenix* 70b, and *Andreas* 244a. With the three lines in *Andreas* and *Christ B* placed together below, a more direct sense of the syntactical and phraseological resemblance between the

[49] Cf. *sċip-farend* (‘ship-voyager’), which has a similar word-form, peculiar to the Old English version of Bede’s *Historia* (title of III.xiii, which is about Bishop Aidan’s prophecy of a sea-storm and Utta’s sea-voyage; for the story, see Chapter Three). For the text, see Miller, ed., *Bede’s Ecclesiastical History*, p.15.

passages can be established:[50]

‘**Ċēol ġestīgan, ond on cald wæter**’ (*Andreas* 222)
‘**On cald wæter ċēolum lācað**’ (253)
‘**Ofer cald wæter ċēolum līðan**’ (*Christ B* 851)

Powell notes that the verb *līþan* in *Christ B* 851b is used in *Andreas* 256b (‘ċēolum līðan’, ‘sail the ship’).[51] The expression ‘**ofer**’ or ‘**on cald wæter**’ is formulaic, found in in *Christ B* once, *Andreas* three times, and *Maldon* once. While the two texts share the same seafaring diction, the nature of the sea voyage in each text, according to Powell, is different. The journey in *Andreas* 220–3a and 250–3 is a literal one, while in *Christ B* it is figuratively an analogy for the sea of the earthly life. The patterned expression of the ‘cold’ water foreshadows disaster in battle poems.[52] In *Christ B* 851a, the phrase indicates the sea-of-life preceding either damnation or salvation; in *Andreas* 201a, Andreas complains to God that he does not know the route across the cold water; and in *Maldon* 91a, Byrhtnoth, son of Byrhthelm, communicates a crucial decision (to let the Vikings come to land) by calling across the cold water, which leads the army to a fatal end. By analysing the connotation of ill omen in the collocation ***ceallian*** **(‘call’)** + ‘**ofer cald wæter**’ in *Maldon* 91, E. V. Gordon translates *cald* as ‘fateful’, which has a similar sense in the Old English *Soul and Body*, and Old Norse *Atlakviða* (‘The Lay of Atli’) of the *Poetic Edda*.[53] Brooks also suggests a meaning of ‘fateful’, ‘threatening’ for *cald* or *ceald* in the collocation in *Andreas*.[54] Anita R. Riedinger translates ‘ofer

[50] Cf. *Brunanburh* 53–6: ‘næġled-cnearrum […] ofer dēop wæter’ (‘on nailed vessels […] across deep water’). See also Thier, *Sea Terms*, p. 88.
[51] Powell, ‘Verbal Parallels’, p. 216.
[52] Riedinger, ‘Formula’, pp. 296–7 and 304.
[53] E. V. Gordon, ed., *The Battle of Maldon* (London, 1937), p. 49, n. 91. For the rhythmic balance between *ceallian* and *cald* in the line, and the poet’s emphasis on the connection between the action of ‘shouting’ and water, see Dance, ‘*Maldon*’, pp. 148–9 and 153.
[54] Brooks, ed., *Andreas*, pp. 68 and 70.

cald wæter' in *Christ B*, *Andreas*, and *Maldon* as 'over the fateful water' based on Gordon's and Brooks's discussions.[55] Similarly, Tolkien has 'over the fatal water' in his manuscript draft Oxford, Bodleian MS. Tolkien A 30/2, which contains a complete translation of the poem first published in 2023.[56] Tolkien further comments that *cald* is a 'pregnant word […] with double implication (1) applied to the actual water and (2) to the fatal crossing that marked turn of the battle and the beginning of disaster'.[57]

The sense of *cald* as 'fateful' is suggested by similar expressions in the Old English poetic corpus. For instance, the collocation '**hrēoh wæter**' ('**fierce water**') is found in *Genesis A* 1325b, in an aforementioned passage based on the Flood story in the Vulgate (see Chapter One). The poet stresses the impregnable quality of Noah's Ark: when the 'hrēoh wæter' and 'swearte sǣ-strēamas' ('dark sea-streams') beat against the Ark, it always becomes tougher. Another example is the expression '**ofer strang wæter**' ('**over the violent water**') in *Psalm 76* 16.2b, which eulogises God's divine guidance through the worldly turbulence of the sea-of-life (13–17). The counterpart in Psalm LXXVI.20 (in both the Vulgate and the Roman Psalter) reads '**in aquis multis**' ('**in the great waters**' or '**in many waters**'). While adapting the Latin text into Old English, the *Psalm*-poet replaces the modifier *multus* ('great') with *strang*, a term with a comparatively more intense meaning, which carries the alliteration on *s*.[58] This filler word presumably functions not only for alliteration, but also to deliver the theological

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[55] Riedinger, 'Formula', pp. 296–7 and 304.
[56] Peter Grybauskas, ed., *J. R. R. Tolkien: The Battle of Maldon together with The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth Beorhthelm's Son and 'The Tradition of Versification in Old English'* (London, 2023), p. 64.
[57] Grybauskas, ed., *J. R. R. Tolkien*, p. 72.
[58] The first two lines in *Psalm 76* 16 reads: '**w**ǣrun **weg**as þīne on **w**īdne **s**ǣ and þīne **s**tīġe ofer **s**trang **w**æter' ('your ways were in the wide sea, and your paths over the violent water'). Whilst the first line alliterates on *w*, the consonant s in the last term ***sǣ*** forms the alliteration of the next line; the consonant w in the last term ***wæter*** in the second line in turn echoes the alliteration in the first line. As for 'on wīdne sǣ', the Latin Psalm gives only *in mari* ('in the sea').

and didactic messages in the Latin Psalms.[59]

Moreover, the double-alliterative phrase '**sīdne sǣ**' ('**the wide sea**') in *Christ B* 852a is only found in the on-verses in three other texts: *Beowulf* 507a ('**on sīdne sǣ**'), *The Phoenix* 103a ('**ofer sīdne sǣ**'), and *Psalm 145* 5.2a ('**and sīdne sǣ**'). In *Beowulf*, the phrase is uttered by Unferth, who talks about Beowulf's swimming competition with Breca in the wide sea (506–15a); in *The Phoenix*, the phrase is used to describe the phoenix gliding (*glīdan*, 102b) over the wide sea in the dawn (*dæġ-rēd*, 98a); in *Psalm 145*, it is the wide sea created by God.[60] Compared with the Latin sources of *The Phoenix* and the *Metrical Psalms*, the 'open sea' expression in the Old English texts seems to be taken from the vernacular corpus. The corresponding passage in Psalm CXLV only mentions *mare*, but the *Psalm*-poet inserts a modifier *sīd* ('wide') before *sǣ*, again for the purposes of alliteration and the poetic convention. While the Latin source poem *De aue Phoenice* features few maritime elements, the poet of *The Phoenix* supplements the source text with many marine details of the sea, including the patterned expression of a bird gliding '**ofer sīdne sǣ**'.

The image of 'something gliding across the sea' appears in *Beowulf* and *Andreas*, too, such as Beowulf 'gliding in the sea' (on a boat, or swimming) in the swimming competition with Breca ('**glidon ofer gār-seċġ**' in *Beowulf* 515a), and the whale 'gliding in the sea' ('**glād ġeond gār-seċġ**' in *Andreas* 370b–1a). A common

[59] Anya Adair, 'Hateful Hills and Joyful Dread: Emotive "Filler Words" in the Old English *Metrical Psalms*', *ES* 98 (2017), 15–25. On the functions of 'ornamental alliteration' in the *Metrical Psalms*, see Francis Leneghan, 'Making the Psalter Sing: the Old English *Metrical Psalms*, Rhythm and *Ruminatio*', *The Psalms and Medieval English Literature: From the Conversion to the Reformation*, ed. Tamara Atkin and Francis Leneghan (Cambridge, 2017), pp. 173–97.

[60] The text in *Psalm 145* 5.1–2 reads as follows: 'sē þe heofon worhte, hrūsan swylċe and sīdne sǣ samed æt-gædere' ('who created heaven and earth likewise, and the wide sea altogether').

denominator of the two expressions is the compound meaning 'sea': *gār-secġ*, with a literal meaning of 'spear-man'.[61] This compound mainly appears in prose, and is a common term for 'sea' in Old English. In verse it is mainly attested in poems discussed here: *Genesis A* (once), *Exodus* (four times), *Beowulf* (three times), *Andreas* (four times), *The Metres* (twice), and the *Metrical Psalms* (twice).

Moreover, the image is closely associated with dawn, the time of day which is favoured by Old English writers rather than dusk.[62] Just as in *The Phoenix*, the *Andreas*-poet describes the veil of night gliding away when 'the tumult of dawn' (*dæġ-rēd-wōma*, 125a; elsewhere only in *Guthlac B* 1292b) slides in. The dawn is also featured when *Andreas* and his fellow disciples are about to start their sea-journey. Three hundred lines later, the poet uses a simile, and compares the ship to a bird gliding over the sea (497b–8a): '**fuĝole ġelīcost, glīdeð on ġeofone**', reminiscent of the same expression in *Beowulf* (see Chapter Two).

4.3.3 Seeking the ship of salvation

The third passage in this second group including *ċēol* contains the expression '**ċēoles nēosan**' ('**seek the ship**', 310b). In this passage, Christ talks with Andreas on the ship, asking Andreas why he wants to seek the vessel:

> Hū ġewearð þē þæs, wine lēofesta,
> ðæt ðū **sæ-beorgas** sēċan **woldes**,

[61] The first element *gār* means ('spear'), and the second element *secġ* is homographic: the same word-form can either mean 'warrior', 'ocean', 'sedge', or 'sword'. The compound is often associated with the Greek sea-god Poseidon (Neptune in Roman myth) or his son Triton. *DOE*, **s.v.** '*gār*', definition 1.a.ii; '*gār-secg*'. See also *G-K*, **s.v.** '*gār*': 'cuspis hastæ, hasta, sagitta, telum, jaculum'; '*gār*': 'procella? vgl. *gār-secg*?'; '*gār-secg*, *gār-sæcg*': 'oceanus'; *B-T*, **s.v.** '*gár*'; '*gár-secg*', definition 1: 'a spear-man, the ocean'; definition 2: 'a sea'.

[62] George Clark, 'The Traveler Recognizes his Goal: A Theme in Anglo-Saxon Poetry', *JEGP* 64 (1965), 645–59, esp. 651.

> **mere-strēama** ġemet, māðmum bedǣled,
> ofer ċald cleofu **ċēoles nēosan**? (307–10)
>
> ('How did it happen, dearest friend, that you **wanted** to visit the **sea-cliffs**, the edge of the **sea-streams**, deprived of treasures, and to **seek the vessel** over the cold cliffs?')

In the Greek and Latin analogues, neither the ship nor the maritime environment is mentioned by Christ. The divine skipper only says that everyone is fleeing from Mermedonia, and asks why Andrew wants to visit the place (cf. *Πράξεις* 5 and *Casanatensis* 5). Yet the Old English poet chooses to highlight the danger during the sea-voyage, and the presence of the ship in the dialogue, with varied nautical diction. There are two maritime compounds, both of which are rare and overwhelmingly poetic. The first term, *sǣ-beorg* ('sea-cliff') survives in *Exodus* 442a and *Andreas* 308a, in two Old English charters as a place-name, and in a gloss, defining Latin 'Capharnaum maritimam' ('Capernaum by the sea'; cf. Matthew IV.13).[63] The second term, *mere-strēam* ('sea-stream') is purely poetic, and occurs sixteen times in the corpus, including *Exodus* (three times) and *Andreas* (twice). The portrayal of 'cold' sea-cliffs, furthermore, is evocative of the 'cold sea' motif. The same phrase '**ċēoles nēosan**' occurs in *Beowulf* 1806b. After killing Grendel and his mother, Beowulf completes his mission in the land of the Danes, and 'wants' to find his vessel to depart as soon as possible:

> […] **wolde** feor þanon
> cuma **collen-ferhð**, **ċēoles nēosan**. (1805b–6)
>
> ('[…] the **brave-spirited** stranger **wanted** to be far from there, and **seek the ship**.')

[63] For the gloss, see Skeat, ed., *The Four Gospels*, I, p. 37.

In addition to the verb *willan* ('want') and the phrase '**ċēoles nēosan**', the two passages have one detail in common: both heroes, Beowulf and Andreas, are willing to depart on a ship: Beowulf back home, Andrew to a foreign land. The different contexts, nevertheless, hint at its differing connotations. While the *Beowulf*-poet seems to lay emphasis on the bravery of the hero (*collen-ferhþ*, 1806a), the *Andreas*-poet tends to expand the suggested meaning by describing the harsh topographical conditions surrounding the ship. Underlying this difference may be the different aesthetic concerns of the poets.[64] The departure of Beowulf echoes both Beowulf's arrival (205–29) and that of Scyld Scefing who, through God's will, as a small child is found in a boat by the Danes, and grows up to save them (6–11 and 43–6), and departs by means of a ship-funeral after his death (see Chapter Two).[65] Apart from its structural function, the ship in *Beowulf* is predominantly a means of transport and a symbol of the heroic past. The Christian morals in *Beowulf*, as previously demonstrated in this thesis, are much less explicitly expressed than the narrative in *Andreas*.

To the *Andreas*-poet, the ship is a symbol of divine trial, a beacon of the Christian faith: for every Christian, finding the ship despite the perilous environment is analogous to finding true faith.[66] By interrogating Andreas's purpose and stressing the difficulty of the sea-journey through the mouth of Christ, the *Andreas*-poet metaphorically reconstructs the meaning of the 'wish to seek the vessel' expression extracted from *Beowulf*, and encourages the Christian audience to understand the expression in

[64] See further Shannon Godlove, 'The Reluctant Apostle: Heroic Rhetoric and Human Frailty in the Old English *Andreas*', *Medieval Perspectives* 30 (2015), 181–205; Francis Leneghan, 'Teaching the Teachers: The Vercelli Book and the Mixed Life', *ES* 94 (2013), 627–58.
[65] Leneghan, *Dynastic Drama*, pp. 26–7 and 42.
[66] McBrine, 'Journey Motif', pp. 308–13.

Andreas from a spiritual perspective. Equating the action of 'seeking the ship' with the notion of 'finding Christ the saviour' in the poem, the *Andreas*-poet also inserts another message: that the presence of Christ is perpetual, a promise to all Christians in their life-journey.[67] By comparison, the Christian motif of divinely-guided journey is present but less overt in *Beowulf* (see Chapter Two). The *Andreas*-poet foregrounds the theme, and makes the seafaring scenes pivotal to the plot, appealing for the audience's attention to the importance of finding and steering one's ship-of-life under God's guidance. Given this semantic widening, the sudden appearance of the phrase 'māðmum bedǣled' ('deprived of treasures', 309b) is not a coincidence: in another passage containing *ċēol* (360b–6), the poet further indicates the real treasures a Christian should pursue.

4.3.4 The treasure-laden ship motif

The fourth passage in the second group of instances of *ċēol* in *Andreas* contains the patterned expression 'iċ ne hȳrde cymlīċor ċēol' + verb meaning 'equip, load' + noun or nominal phrase meaning 'treasure' or 'weapon' (see Chapters Two and Three). Although *Πράξεις* 9 and *Casanatensis* 9 also contain a similar expression to 'I have never seen', the narrative focus is only on the sailing skill of Christ, instead of wider ship-imagery.[68] In the passage in *Andreas*, the narrator accentuates the treasure-ship by applying the adjective *cymlīċe* ('finely', 'comely') in its comparative form, and the

[67] Cardwell, '"Go Now"', esp. 15–22.
[68] Following the expression, both *Πράξεις* and *Casanatensis* mention that the ship goes as if on land. Boenig, trans., *Acts of Andrew*, p. 35; MacDonald, *Acts of Andrew*, pp. 90–1; Blatt, ed., *Die lateinischen Bearbeitungen*, pp. 50–1.

poetic compound *hēah-ġestrēon* (‘high-treasure’, ‘lofty-treasure’), which occurs in four poems composed by Christian authors: *Beowulf* 2302a, *Andreas* 362a, *Solomon and Saturn* 131a, and *Instructions for Christians* 120b. Andrews says, in praise of the ship he is in:

> […] æfre **iċ ne hȳrde**
> þon **cymlīcor** **ċēol** ġehladenne
> hēah-**ġestrēonum** […] (360b–2a)
>
> (‘[…] **never have I heard of any comelier ship** laden with **lofty treasures** […]’)

Similarly, in *Beowulf*, the narrator marvels at the luxuriously decked funeral-ship of Scyld: ‘**ne hȳrde iċ cymlīcor ċēol**’ (38) and *þēod-**ġestrēon*** (‘mighty treasure’, 44a; unique to *Beowulf*), which may represent an archaic, elevated style.[69] The *Beowulf*-poet employs varied treasure-terms and expressions, including *hilde-wǣpen* (‘battle-weapon’; preserved in *Beowulf* 39a and *Riddle 88* [92] 5a), *heaþu-wǣd* (‘battle-dress’; unique to *Beowulf*), ‘billum ond byrnum’ (‘swords and corselets’, 40a), and ‘mādma mænigo’ (‘many riches’, 41a). These two passages also contain the aforementioned ‘arrival’ or ‘departure’ type-scene in Old English poetry, and the ‘ne hȳrde iċ’ expression (see above). The phraseology and collocations reminiscent of *Beowulf* may be specifically chosen by the *Andreas*-poet to kindle a collective memory of a traditional treasure-ship metaphor.[70]

Current scholarship recognises four uses of this phrase in Old English: *Beowulf* 38a and 1842b, *Elene* 240b, and *The Metrical Calendar* 101a.[71] As the above passage

[69] See also Powell, ‘Verbal Parallels’, pp. 119–20 and 270.
[70] For counter-argument, see Peters, ‘Relationship’, pp. 856 and 861, who claims that the nautical parallels in *Andreas* should derive from the ‘common property’ of Old English poetry.
[71] Leneghan, ‘Departure’, p. 116.

in *Andreas* shows, this minor variant (‘ic ne hȳrde’, 360b) should be added to this list.[72] The usage is entirely restricted to verse. Except *Beowulf* 1842b where Hrothgar praises Beowulf’s eloquence, all have direct associations with either the ‘treasure-ship’ motif (*Beowulf* 38a, *Elene* 240b, and *Andreas* 360b) or an individual’s ship-sailing prowess (*Elene* 240b and *The Metrical Calendar* 101a).

In this context, *Elene* reads as follows: ‘**ne hȳrde iċ** sīð ne ǣr **on ēġ-strēame** idese lædan, **on mere-strǣte**, mæġen fæġerre’ (‘**I have never heard** a queen lead a more splendid army **in the sea-stream**, **in the sea-path**’, 240b–2). A sea-voyage can clearly be inferred from the context. As in *Andreas*, the ‘treasures’ which the fleet carries include Elene and the Christian faith brought to Jerusalem. A parallel expression in *The Metrical Calendar* also has a clear reference to a maritime environment: ‘**ne hȳrde iċ** guman ā fyrn ǣniġne ǣr ǣfre bringan **ofer sealtne mere** sēlran lāre, bisċop brēmran’ (‘**never have I heard of** any man before, who has ever brought a better doctrine **over the salt sea**, a more renowned bishop’, 101b–4a).[73] By the phrase ‘ofer sealtne mere’ (103a), the poet insinuates the presence of a ship as a means of transport across the sea. While the latter two examples directly denote persons, they also connote their maritime prowess. Unlike *Beowulf*, *Elene* and *Andreas* highlight the angelic or saintly feature of the spiritual treasures in the saints’ ships (see Chapters Two and Three).[74]

Although Brooks deems it incongruous for the *Andreas*-poet to depict the ship as

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[72] See also Leonard J. Peters, ‘The Relationship of the Old English *Andreas* to *Beowulf*’, *PMLA* 66 (1951), 844–63, at 854, who identifies the ‘ne hȳrde iċ’ expression in *Beowulf*, *Elene*, *Andreas*, *Metre 8* (in a varied form of ‘ne herdon’, ‘[no men] heard’), and *The Metrical Calendar*. The collocation ‘cymlīcor ċēol’, as Peters argues at the same page, is possibly a conventional ‘poetic stereotype’ to describe ships in an elevated style, because of the alliteration and synecdoche in the phrase. The phrase ‘cymlīcor ċēol’ also appears in *Riddle 31* [33], which is not counted by Peters.

[73] The Old English text of *The Metrical Calendar* is from Jones, ed. and trans., *Shorter Poems*.

[74] Leneghan, ‘Departure’, p. 70.

'ġehladenne hēah-ġestrēonum' ('laden with mighty treasures'), other scholars have argued that the echo is purposeful.[75] The *Andreas*-poet is extremely good at extending or transferring traditional images so as to fulfil his own poetic and authorial purpose; therefore, the world's comeliest treasure-ship of Scyld in *Beowulf* and the one steered by Christ in *Andreas* may be read in different ways.[76] Hamilton asserts that the *Beowulf*-poet creates this image based on 'the life that surrounds and antedates *Beowulf*', while the *Andreas*-poet requires his audience to understand the image of the treasure-laden ship metaphorically.[77] Apparently, the *Beowulf*-poet admires the Christian concept of the departing soul as a treasure, but the message is relatively muted as compared with *Andreas*. The funerals of the heroes in the poem, on a boat or in a barrow, are surrounded with treasures of all kinds; various references to Christian salvation and damnation also abound in the poem (see Chapter Two).

This affinity between *Beowulf* and *Andreas* is also interpreted by other critics in relation to the *Andreas*-poet's authorial purpose, aiming to draw a contrast between the secular treasure in traditional poems, and the spiritual treasure to which a Christian should aspire. For example, Leneghan suggests that by applying Beowulfian allusions in this passage, the *Andreas*-poet reveals a Christian message: the 'apostolic mission' of Andreas is 'a heroic endeavour as worthy of praise as the great pagan kings of old'.[78] In a similar vein, Amy Faulkner argues that the two treasure-ships in *Beowulf* and *Andreas* form a contrast between secular and sacred possessions, and that the traditional

[75] The passage in *Beowulf*, in Brooks's view, is the 'proper place' for this 'treasure-ship' image. Brooks, ed., *Andreas*, xxiv.
[76] Powell, 'Verbal Parallels', pp. 119–20; Hamilton, '*Andreas* and *Beowulf*', p. 92.
[77] Hamilton, '*Andreas* and *Beowulf*', p. 92.
[78] Leneghan, 'Departure', p. 123.

image of the treasure-laden ship conveys a different meaning in *Andreas*.[79] Comparing the 'treasure-ship' image in *Andreas* with those in two Old English biblical poems *Genesis A* and *Exodus*, Anlezark argues for a 'deliberate inversion of heroic ideal' by the *Andreas*-poet, and points out that the only types of treasure Andreas and his thegns have are the *word-hord* ('word-hoard'), and themselves.[80] From the typological perspective, the treasure-ship in *Andreas* is reminiscent of the image of Noah's Ark as the great 'sea-chest' and 'treasure-hoard' in *Genesis A* and *Exodus* (see Chapter One). Both Noah's Ark and Andreas's ship are precious vessels representing Christian doctrines and values, resonating with the Ship-of-the-Church motif in the Christian tradition.

Compared with the treasure-terms in *Beowulf* 39–41a, the *Andreas*-poet only uses the rare term *hēah-ġestrēon* (362a). The compound's connotation of 'spiritual treasure' is also explicit in in *Solomon and Saturn* 319a (where the sinful hide *hēah-ġestrēon* to please the demon); additionally, it denotes the earthly riches in *Instructions for Christians* 120b (on the uselessness of worldly wealth to God). All three poems eulogise Christian belief, and condemn secular riches. In *Andreas*, after mentioning *hēah-ġestrēon* (362a), the poet reveals the true meaning of the 'treasures' by enumerating all the characters onboard:

Hæleð in sǣton,
þēodnas þrym-fulle, þeġnas wlitiġe.
Đā reordode rīċe þēoden,
ēċe æl-mihtiġ; hēht his enḡel gān,

[79] Faulkner, *Wealth and the Material World*, p. 160; Faulkner, 'Language of Wealth', p. 227.
[80] Anlezark, *Water and Fire*, p. 213. For his discussion on the theme of treasure and the 'treasure boat' image in *Exodus* and *Genesis A*, see esp. 189 and 208. See also North and Bintley, ed. and trans., *Andreas*, pp. 68–9.

> mærne maĝu-þeġn, ond mete syllan, […] (362b–6)
>
> ('The heroes sat on [the ship], chieftains full of might, beautiful thegns. Then the Powerful Prince spoke, Eternal Almighty; [he] commanded his Angel, renowned young thegn, to come and serve the meal, […]')

This passage here echoes the previously discussed 'wish to find the vessel' passage, and the undertone is evident. Though Andreas has no secular treasures ('māðmum bedæled', 309b) by the time he meets Christ by the ship ('**ċēoles nēosan**', 310b), the poet unveils the true treasures when the narrative focus moves on to the characters on the vessel: the divine instructor Christ and the angelic hosts, and Andreas and his renowned young thegns ('mærne maĝu-þeġn'), who are good models for all Christians to follow.[81]

Although *Beowulf* and *Andreas* share three rare *-ġestrēon*-compounds including *hēah-ġestrēon*, the image of treasure in *Andreas* forms a contrast to that of the *þēod-ġestrēon* in *Beowulf* 44a, with the same second element traditionally referring to the treasures of a king, a people, or ancestors (see Chapter Two).[82] While the *þēod-ġestrēon* in Scyld's funeral-ship is derived from the worldly possessions of the common people as indicated by the polysemic term *þēod* ('people', 'nation'; 'mighty' as prefix), the first element *hēah* in *hēah-ġestrēon* suggests a sense of 'lofty', 'divine', 'supreme' that features the treasures on the divinely- steered ship in *Andreas*.[83] In this sense, the term *hēah-ġestrēon* echoes other *hēah*-compounds denoting divine beings such as God and the archangel, therefore functioning as a reminder of the true nature of the treasures

[81] The poetic compound *maĝu-þeġn* ('young-retainer') appears fourteen times in the corpus, including six times in *Beowulf*, and five times in *Andreas*.

[82] The three *-ġestrēon*-compounds are *hēah-ġestrēon*, *hord-ġestrēon* (see Chapter Two), and *sinċ-ġestrēon* ('precious treasure') in *Beowulf* 1092b and 1226a and *Andreas* 1656b.

[83] Other *hēah*-compounds with similar senses include: *hēah-engel* ('arch-angel') in *Andreas* 885a, *hēah-fæder* ('lofty-father', 'God as father') in *Andreas* 791a and 875a, *hēah-frēa* ('lofty-lord') in *Christ A* 253a and 424a, and *hēah-gāst* ('lofty spirit', 'Holy Spirit') in *Christ A* 358a.

in Andreas's ship.

There is a third poem where this patterned expression occurs, albeit without any treasure-terms. The Exeter *Riddle 31* [33] constitutes the only other example in which *ċēol* collocates with *cymlīċ*:

> Wiht cwōm æfter wēge wrǣt-licu līþan,
> **cymlīċ from ċēole** cleopode tō londe,
> hlinsade hlūde; […]' (1–3a)
>
> ('The splendid creature came, sailing on the waves, **comely from the vessel**, calling to land, resounding loudly; […]')

The first three lines of *Riddle 31* [33] demonstrate a personified creature coming into view, sailing on the ship, and calling out aloud. The opening lines contain a characteristic feature of the riddles: a description of a fantastic creature from the third-person perspective in the formulaic opening.[84] While the most widely accepted solution to *Riddle 31* [33] is iceberg, some question the manuscript reading of 'ċēole' (2a), emending 'ċēole' to 'cealde', 'cōle', 'ceolde', or 'ciolde' meaning 'cold', whereas others propose another possible emendation, 'ċēolan' (dative singular of *ċēole* 'throat', 'gorge'), contending that this creature cannot cry out 'from the ship', because 'metaphorically, the iceberg as a wave-glider is equated with a ship; it does not ride one'.[85]

The previous interpretations of *Riddle 31* [33] as a poem about an iceberg travelling on the sea are widely accepted, and the emendations made by scholars have

[84] Murphy, *Unriddling*, p. 10; Orchard, 'Enigma Variations', pp. 289–91; Jonathan Wilcox, 'Tell Me What I Am: The Old English Riddles', *Readings in Medieval Texts: Interpreting Old and Middle English Literature*, ed. David F. Johnson and Elaine Treharne (Oxford, 2005), pp. 46–59, at 47.

[85] Williamson, ed., *Riddles*, pp. 139–40; Moritz Troutmann, 'Zu meiner Ausgabe der altenglischen Rätsel', *Anglia* 42 (1918), 125–41, at 134; A. J. Barnouw, 'Review of *Die altenglischen Rätsel (Die Rätsel des Exeterbuchs)* by Moritz Trautmann', *Neophilologus* 3 (1917), 77–8.

enriched the critical imagination of the text. One question that needs to be asked, however, is whether the manuscript reading 'ċēole' needs to be altered and emended to other words that it does not mean 'ship'. The key to the answer may lie in this rare collocation of 'cymlīċ' with 'ċēole', which resonates strongly with the expression '**cymlīċor ċēol**' in *Beowulf* and *Andreas*. Conceivably, it may be the striking resemblance of this peculiar expression witnessed only in *Beowulf*, *Andreas*, and *Riddle 31* [33] that produces scribal puzzlement in *Riddle 31* [33] 2a. Perhaps Orchard's argument for a 'deliberate confusion' between *ċēol* and *ċēole* ('throat, gorge') can best interpret the perplexing word form in the poem.[86] Orchard recalls *Riddle 16* [18], which depicts a seaborne creature with a mouth 'on ċēole' in a similar manner, and notices in *Riddle 31* [33] several verbal parallels recalling *Beowulf* and *Andreas*, including the '**cymlīċ ċēol**' expression.[87] Therefore the manuscript reading 'ċēole' has multilayered functions. If *ċēol* is taken literally as 'keel' in *Riddle 31* [33], the image of the possible solution (an iceberg) could be visualised as an object that has a keel and journeys on the water, akin to a ship. Moreover, 'ċēole' collocates with 'cymlīċ', reminiscent of the formulaic expressions in *Beowulf* and *Andreas*. In addition, in the contextual aspect, 'ċēole' may be wordplay of 'ship' and 'throat', just as in *Riddle 16* [18].[88] From this perspective, the various rare or unique compounds used by the *Andreas*-poet, such as *ǣġ-flota*, *horn-sċip*, *mere-þīsa*, and *sǣ-flota* discussed in this chapter, may also function as 'mini-riddles' for the poem's audience, providing clues

[86] Orchard, ed. and trans., *Riddle Tradition*, p. 759; *Commentary*, pp. 394–5.
[87] Orchard, *Commentary*, pp. 394–5.
[88] Orchard, *Commentary*, pp. 366–7 and 394–5.

for the audience to infer the connections between *ċēol* and the rare or unique poetic compounds *ċēol* 'translates' and form judgements on these poetic variants for 'ship' based on the contexts.[89]

While Cynewulf uses a traditional treasure-ship motif, and employs nautical diction to highlight the importance of the true treasure and the danger of potential shipwreck (see Chapter Three), the *Andreas*-poet draws from traditional vocabulary for 'ship' and 'treasure' (Scyld's ship-funeral in particular), establishes verbal parallels with Beowulfian ship-imagery, and urges the audience to associate conventional treasure-ship imagery with Christian ideology.

4.3.5 The ship and divine agency

Scyld's funeral-ship in *Beowulf* and the ship steered by Christ in *Andreas*, though they demonstrate many similarities in terms of style and diction, also differ considerably in the meaning of key images such as ship and treasure. In this section, I analyse passages containing **preposition + *ċēol*** in *Andreas*, compare expressions shared between *Andreas* and other Old English poems, and explicate how the *Andreas*-poet stresses the recurring motif of 'Christ the saviour onboard' by repurposing this patterned expression in the poem.

While some Christian concepts are more implicit in *Beowulf* compared with Cynewulf's signed works and *Andreas* (see Chapter Two), the *Andreas*-poet consistently emphasises the presence of divine power onboard by repeating the same

[89] Robinson, *Appositive Style*, pp. 14, 16, and 63.

expression **preposition + *ċēol***. Contrary to the *Beowulf*-poet with his Scandinavian heathens, the *Andreas*-poet demonstrates a different attitude towards the heathens in Mermedonia. After the destructive flood raised by God, fourteen cannibals in Mermedonia are executed in the salty water (1592–5a), and the rest are exempted from damnation after they 'onfēngon fulwihte ond freoðu-wǣre' ('received baptism and covenant of peace', 1630).[90] Here the *Andreas*-poet follows his sources (cf. *Πράξεις* 32 and *Casanatensis* 32).

The third group of *ċēol*-usages in *Andreas* contains five passages, where the simplex follows a preposition (*in*, *of*, or *on*), emphasising the place where the action happens. The first passage marks the end of the third fitt, when *Andreas* and his men have embarked, ready to start the voyage across the sea (see above):

> Þā **in ċēol** stigon **collen-fyrhðe**,
> ellen-rōfe; ǣġhwylcum wearð
> on mere-faroðe mōd ġeblissod. (349–51)
>
> ('Then the **brave-spirited** men climbed **onto the vessel**, strong and cheerful; each one's mind was made pleasant on the deep-sea tide.')

All the compounds in this passage are poetic. The term *ellen-rōf* ('brave', 'strong', 350a) occurs twenty-six times in the corpus, including seven times in prose, five times in *Genesis A* (1119b, 1782b, 1844a, 1875a, and 2036a), four times in *Beowulf* (340a, 358a, 1787b, and 3063a), once in Cynewulf's *Juliana* (382b), and three times in *Andreas* (350a, 410a, and 1392b). In thirteen out of twenty-six occurrences, *ellen-rōf* appears in

[90] On the figurative meaning of Flood and Baptism in *Andreas*, see Michael D. J. Bintley, '*Aquas ab Aquis*: Aqueous Creation in *Andreas*', *Meanings of Water*, pp. 191–210; Amity Reading, 'Baptism, Conversion, and Selfhood in the Old English *Andreas*', *SP*112 (2015), 1–23; Anlezark, *Water and Fire*, at 210–30; Mary M. Walsh, 'The Baptismal Flood in The Old English *Andreas*: Liturgical and Typological Depths', *Traditio* 33 (1977), 137–58; Thomas D. Hill, 'Figural Narrative in *Andreas*: The Conversion of the Mermedonians', *NM* 70 (1969), 261–73.

Genesis A, *Beowulf*, Cynewulf's *Juliana*, and *Andreas*. The term *mere-faroþ* ('ocean-tide') is used only in *Andreas* 289 and 351a and *Riddle 58* [60] 2a.

One term in this passage is worthy of further scrutiny: *collen-ferhþ* (349b), a poetic term that is used positively in almost all instances, including those in *Andreas* (see Chapter Three).[91] The term also forms a very rare *ċēol*/*col*- assonantal collocation with *ċēol* (349a). Altogether, the compound appears thirteen times in seven poems that can be categorised into three groups: the *Beowulf* — Cynewulf's signed poems — *Andreas* circle; *The Wanderer* 71a and *The Whale* 17a, two shorter poems found in the Exeter Book; and *Judith* 134b, preserved in the Nowell Codex together with *Beowulf*. In ten out of thirteen occurrences, *collen-ferhþ* is found in *Beowulf* and the Cynewulfian group (including *Andreas*). The *Andreas*-poet employs it four times (349b, 538a, 1108a, and 1578a), *Beowulf*-poet twice (1806a and 2785a), and Cynewulf four times (*Elene* 247a, 378a, and 409a and in *Fates* 54a; both preserved in the Vercelli Book together with *Andreas*). Both *The Whale* and *Judith* have once been credited to Cynewulf in earlier scholarship (see also Introduction and Chapter Three).[92] The *Judith*-poet certainly borrows 'distinctive formulations' from Cynewulf.[93] What is more, apart from Cynewulf's *Fates* and *Judith*, all the other poems share maritime settings and nautical

[91] North and Bintley, ed. and trans., *Andreas*, p. 273.

[92] While *Judith* is not a signed poem by Cynewulf, Cook is the first to term *Judith* as 'Cynewulfian' based on the phraseological resemblance between *Judith* and Cynewulf's signed works, believing that *Judith* 'if not by Cynewulf s own hand, emanated from what, in the larger sense, might be termed the Cynewulfian school.' A. S. Cook, ed. *Judith: An Old English Epic Fragment* (Boston, MA, 1888), at xiv. Later scholars tend to be more conservative in terming *Judith* as Cynewulfian; see Federico Brigatti, 'The Old English *Judith*: Sources, Analysis and Context' (PhD dissertation, Univ. of Glasgow, 2001), esp. 19, 222, and 230–1. Other scholars such as Marie Nelson just address the poet as 'anonymous'. Marie Nelson, *Judith, Juliana, and Elene: Three Fighting Saints* (New York, 1991), pp. 45–6. However, scholars generally date *Judith* between the second half of the ninth century and the first half of the tenth century, during or shortly after King Alfred's reign. Griffith dates the poem between the late ninth century and the late tenth century, and prefers a later date based on linguistic and metrical evidence. Mark Griffith, ed. *Judith*, rev. ed. (Exeter, 2001), pp. 44–5.

[93] Orchard, 'Computing Cynewulf', p. 98.

diction, especially *Beowulf*, *Elene*, *Andreas*, and *The Whale*.

The previously mentioned '**cuma collen-ferhð, ċēoles nēosan**' passage in *Beowulf* 1806 is another example of the *collen-ferhþ* + *ċēol* collocation with the rare *col-/ċēol* assonance. While the Beowulfian passage depicts the hero's willingness to board the ship, another occurrence of this expression merits further discussion: '**collen-ferþe**; **ċēolas** stondað' ('brave-spirited; the vessels stand') in *The Whale* 17a (see also Chapter Three). The three texts share the same alliterative pattern, with *collen-ferþ* (the hard *c*) and *ċēol* (the palatalised *ċ*) in the same line:

> 'Cuma **collen-ferhð, ċēoles** nēosan' (*Beowulf* 1806)
> '**Collen-ferþe**; **ċēolas** stondað' (*The Whale* 17a)
> 'Þā in **ċēol** stigon **collen-fyrhðe**' (*Andreas* 349)

The three collocations convey different meanings. Even though *Beowulf* is composed by a Christian author and Christian elements are sometimes expressed in the poem quite openly, the ship in the passage primarily epitomises a heroic, ancestral past (see Chapter Two). The scene in *The Whale*, as discussed in Chapter Three, is ironic, and suggests a metaphorical emphasis on human fragility. Here the seemingly-safe action of mooring the '**hēah-stefn sċipu**' with '**oncyr-rāpum**' (13–15b; see Chapter Two) leads to the catastrophic ending of the presumptuous who anchor their ships of life to the devil instead of God.[94]

So far as this religious dimension is concerned, the passage in *Andreas* shows an affinity with both *Beowulf* and *The Whale*, but also demonstrates several differences in context, meaning, and structural function. When Andreas is about to embark on the ship

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[94] Dufield-Landry, 'A Stylistic and Contextual Study', p. 116. Cf. '**hringed-stefna** […] **fær**' in *Beowulf*, '**hēah-stefn naca**' in *Andreas*, and '**hēah-stefn sċipu**' in *The Whale* (see Chapter One).

with his crew, they are for the first time described by the poet as *collen-ferþ* (*Andreas* 349b). Unlike the scene in *The Whale*, Andreas's journey is a safe one, because Christ will guarantee the safety of the sea-journey for these brave-spirited Christian heroes. Then the poet introduces the next stage of the main plot: that Andreas begins his voyage, where he receives divine trial and teaching.

After the boarding of Andreas and his crew, the poet develops the plot by complementing it with a Christian dimension: repeatedly emphasising this 'Christ on the vessel' image, and thus making the Christian motif the major component in his narrative. More often, *Πράξεις* and *Casanatensis* seem to stress the position of Andrew onboard, instead of that of Christ. The other four passages in this third group have the same pattern of **preposition** + ***ċēol*** + ***cyning*** (**'king'**) or **'cyninga wuldor'** (**'Glory of Kings'**) + **verb**. In the second passage, Andreas mentions the biblical story of Christ calming the sea in front of his disciples (see above), and this image of Christ rising ('cyning sōna ārās'; 450b) from the ship's hold when the disciples cry out on the vessel ('clypian on ċēole'; 450a) in 449b–50 is overlapped with that of Christ the skipper on the boat ferrying Andreas in the storyline:

> Þā sēo menigo ongan
> **clypian on ċēole**, **cyning sōna ārās** […] (449b–50)
>
> ('When many began to **cry out on the vessel**, the **King rose up at once** […]')

Some lines before the second passage, Andreas reminds his audience that as long as a man is 'a thegn of the King of Glory' ('þeġn […] wuldor-cyninges', 417a and 418a), Christ will save him from ***waroþ-ġewinn*** (**'tumult of the waves'**; unique to 439a), from

wæter-eġsa (435b; uniquely shared between *Beowulf* and *Andreas*), and from '**eġesa ofer ȳð-lid**' ('**terror over the seafarers**', 445a). The poet stresses the danger of the waves by using two unique nautical compounds with *waroþ* ('shore', 'strand') as the first element: the self-rhyming compound *waroþ-faruþ* ('shore-tide', 197a), and the self-alliterating *waroþ-ġewinn* (439a), both unique to *Andreas*.[95] The sense of 'danger', 'struggle' culminates in the poet's repetition: *faruþ* ('current') is replaced by *ġewinn* ('hardship', 'struggle') in *waroþ-ġewinn*. Together with 'eġesa ofer ȳð-lid' (445a), the two phrases bring to mind '**waroð-faruða ġewinn** ond **wæter-brōĝan**' ('the **tumult of sea-tides**, and the **terror of the water**', 197) that occurs earlier in the poem. By highlighting the weakness of human beings facing the rough and chaotic sea-of-life, the *Andreas*-poet thus creates a sharp contrast between Christ the saviour and the panic-stricken crew (449b–50). The poet further strengthens this image of 'Christ the saviour onboard' (555), repeating the expression of **preposition** + ***ċēol*** + **verb** + '***cyninga wuldor***' as follows:

> Him ðā **of ċēole oncwæð** **cyninga wuldor**,
> frægn fromlīċe fruma ond ende […] (555–6)
>
> ('Then **from the vessel answered** the **Glory of Kings**, the Beginning and End, asked him boldly […]')

Three hundred lines after the third passage noted, the poet continues to enhance the impression of 'Christ on the vessel' (854) by reiterating the same pattern of **preposition** + ***ċēol*** + **verb** + '***cyninga wuldor***' in the whole line:

> […] **in** þām **ċēole wæs** **cyninga wuldor**,

[95] Self-alliterating and self-rhyming compounds often appear in *Beowulf* and associated poems including *Andreas*, which are invented for special purposes. More than one third of the unique self-alliterating compounds are found in *Beowulf* (twenty-one) and *Andreas* (fourteen). There are less than twenty self-rhyming compounds, with three terms used in *Beowulf*, two in *Andreas*. See further Orchard, 'Art of Invention', pp. 23–30.

waldend wer-ðēode. (854–5a)

('[…] **on** that **vessel was the Glory of Kings**, Ruler of Humanity.')

Apart from '*cyninga* ***wuld****or*' (854b), Christ is addressed as '**wald**end wer-ðēode' ('Ruler of Humanity') in the following on-verse.[96] In both verses the poet seems to juxtapose *wuld-*/*wald-* by assonance, which strengthens the coherence in the passage. The term *wer-þēod* ('nation of men, humanity') in the passage mainly exists in poetry, which is used by the *Beowulf*-poet once (899a), Cynewulf nine times (*Elene* 17a, 643b, and 968a; *Fates* 15b; *Juliana* 9b, 507b, and 643b; *Christ B* 600b and 714a), and the *Andreas*-poet four times (137a, 543b, 573b, and 855a).

In the fifth passage in this group, when the journey is about to come to an end, Andreas remembers that when he climbs onto the vessel ('þā iċ on ċēol ġestāh', 899b), God is never far away:

Nū iċ, god dryhten, onḡiten hæbbe
þæt ðū on faroð-strǣte feor ne wǣre,
cyninga wuldur, þā iċ **on ċēol ġestāh** […] (897–9)

('Lord God, now I have understood that you were never far away on the tidal street, **Glory of Kings**, when I **climbed onto the vessel** […]')

The poet not only cements the audience's impression of 'Christ the saviour on the vessel', but also links the first passage to the fifth by using the same patterned diction in his narrative. The action in this fifth passage (*ġestīgan*, 899b) echoes that in the first (*stīgan*, 349a) passage. It is worth noting that the two phrases are parallel in structure:

'Þā **in ċēol stigon** collen-fyrhðe' (349)
'Þā iċ **on ċēol ġestāh**' (899b)

[96] Cf. 'waldend wer-ðēoda' in *Christ B* 714a, 'þēoda waldend' in *Daniel* 360a, *Elene* 421b, and *Andreas* 1451b.

The presence of *faroþ-strǣt* (‘tidal street’, ‘sea-path’; unique to 311b and 898a) in the fifth passage also reminds the audience of its appearance earlier in the poem, when Christ warns Andreas about the danger of ‘cold’ cliffs and the tidal road. The compound also echoes *mere-faroþ* (351a), when Andreas and his crew are ready to embark. The nautical expressions and phraseology used in the first and fifth passage effectively link the two passages together, serving as an envelope structure that signifies Andreas’ departure and arrival. While the first passage marks the embarkation on Andreas’s ship, the fifth passage, which sounds like a celebratory speech made upon the successful completion of a mission, heralds the landing of the vessel. In fewer than a hundred lines following the fifth episode, Andreas and his thanes are airlifted to the wall of Mermedonia at dawn, while they are asleep on the ship in the middle of the sea. This miracle signals the end of the outward sea voyage. By repeatedly mentioning the presence of Christ on the vessel, the *Andreas*-poet keeps reminding the audience of the importance of belief in God on the life-voyage.[97]

Moreover, the image of Christ as the steersman or the protector is common in early Christian literature. A typical example occurs in the Alfredian Old English *Boethius*, *Prose 22*, where Christ is described as ‘āna staðol-fæst wealdend and stīora and stēor-rōðer and helma’ (‘a stead-fast Ruler, and pilot, and rudder, and helm’), who controls everything in the world ‘swā swā gōd stīora ānum sċipe’ (‘just like a good pilot [controls] a ship’), ‘mid ðæm stīor-rōðre his goodnesse’ (‘with the rudder of his goodness’;

[97] On the *Andreas*-poet’s frequent use of repetition within the poem, see, for example, Powell, ‘Verbal Parallels’, 64–104.

mentioned twice in *Prose 22*).[98] Such a God-steersman comparison is not found in the Latin version of Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy*. Of all the words and expressions for 'pilot' in this passage, the collocation 'staðol-fæst wealdend' is perhaps most notable. While other terms denoting 'steersman' are usually employed in prosaic contexts, the term *wealdend* ('Ruler', 'God') is primarily preserved in poetry; the compound *staþol-fæst* ('stead-fast', 'well-established') in this passage is predominantly used in Old English prose texts, where it only appears six times in five poems. All five texts are either Cynewulfian or (pre-)Alfredian: Cynewulf's *Juliana* 374b and *Christ B* 490a, *Andreas* 121a and 1336a, *Metre 11* 99a, and *Solomon and Saturn* 240b.[99] The *Andreas*-poet seems quite familiar with the traditional Christian image of Christ as the steersman, and intentionally alludes to this conventional image of Christ by strategically repeating the **preposition** + ***ċēol*** collocation in the sequence of the narrative. By sharpening the image of Christ as a noble sailor and saviour on the ship, the poet emphasises the theme of the persistent presence of Christ with his followers after Ascension, which is reiterated by the poet throughout his narrative of Andreas's sea-journey.[100]

The *Andreas*-poet deconstructs and transfers the established meanings of traditional collocations containing *ċēol* in the poem, so as to establish new or refreshed images of the ship based on the vernacular tradition, and eventually achieve the authorial purpose of championing Christian values and morals in *Andreas*.

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[98] Godden and Irvine, ed. and trans., *The Old English Boethius*, I, p. 485.pp. 485–6 and 488. See also Dorothy Whitelock, 'The Prose of Alfred's Reign', *Continuations and Beginnings*, pp. 67–103, at 80.
[99] On the dating of *Solomon and Saturn*, see Anlezark, ed. and trans., *The Old English Dialogues of Solomon and Saturn* (Woodbridge, 2008), pp. 49–57; Patrick P. O'Neill, 'On the Date, Provenance and Relationship of the *Solomon and Saturn* Dialogues', *ASE* 26 (1997), 139–68.
[100] Cardwell, '"Go Now"', pp. 14 and 25.

4.4 The other five ship-simplexes

This section focuses on the rest of the simplex group for 'ship' in *Andreas*: *naca* and *lid*, both closely associated with the homographic *stefn*; and *bāt*, *flota*, and *sċip*, all of which also generate compounds for 'ship'. As in the case of *ċēol*, the examples listed in this section reveal the poet's originality in comparison with the Greek and Latin analogues. Meanwhile, the striking verbal parallels to *Beowulf* and Cynewulfian poems discussed here adds further credence to the *Andreas*-poet's indebtedness to this small group of earlier Old English poems.

4.4.1 naca

The term *naca* appears twice in *Andreas*: 'hēah-stefn naca' (266b), and 'of nacan stefne' ('from the ship's prow', 291b). In both cases *naca* follows or is followed by the homographic word-form *stefn* (here 'ship's prow'). The two uses are embedded in lines not far from each other (266b and 291b), right at the beginning of the first sea-journey passage, emphasising the physical quality of Andreas's high-prowed ship. It is from the prow that the hero and his crew board and disembark from the ship.[101] It is also from the prow that Christ, in the guise of the skipper, talks to the hero. While the poet emphasises the confusion and fear of Andreas concerning the sea-journey (189–201), the poet also foretells a safe, divinely-driven voyage through the words of Christ, laying

[101] While Brooks presumes the ship should be steered from the prow, North and Bintley bring the Oseberg and Gokstad ships in the Viking period to the discussion, suggesting the steering oar or rudder of a ship in the period should be at the stern instead of the prow. Brooks, ed., *Andreas*, p. 79; North and Bintley, ed. and trans., *Andreas*, p. 236.

emphasis on the image of Christ steering from the high prow. Early on, Christ tells Andreas that Christ and the two angels in disguise are seafarers who often steer the high-prowed ship over the waves:

> Wē of Marmedonia mæġðe syndon
> feorran ġeferede; ūs mid flōde bær
> **on hrān-rāde** **hēah-stefn naca**,
> **snellić sæ-mearh**, **sunde** bewunden,
> oðþæt wē þissa lēoda **land** ġesōhton,
> **wǣre** bewrecene, swā ūs wind for-drāf. (264–9)

> ('We are men of Mermedonia travelled from afar; **a high-prowed ship**, **swift sea-steed**, bore us over the waves, **on the whale-road**, surrounded by the **sea**, until we reached the **land** of men, driven off by the **sea**, just as the wind compelled us.')

The passage contains both sea-terms ('on hrān-rāde […] sunde […] wǣre') and *land*. The phrase '**hēah-stefn naca**' pairs with '**snellić sæ-mearh**' in the next line. This mixed image of the ship as both a high-prowed seagoing vessel and a swift sea-horse bear resemblance to both the traditional North-Sea ships with curved prows and nailed planks as depicted in *Beowulf* and the 'sea-horse' image in Cynewulf's *Elene* and *Christ B*. The 'snellić sæ-mearh' expression also can be read in dialogue with the Greek and Latin analogues. The prose authors compare Christ's mastery of steering the ship during the sea-voyage to the skill of driving a wagon or chariot on dry land (cf. *Πράξεις* 9 and *Casanatensis* 9). The *Andreas*-poet further develops this land-sea analogy by addressing the ship as 'snellić sæ-mearh' before Andreas embarks on the ship, and thus establishes a clear contrast between the danger of the sea and the safety of the divinely steered ship, which is likened to a horse. Furthermore, the adjective *snellić* ('swift') is shared only between two passages in *Andreas* and *Beowulf* in verse. The collocation

‘**snellić sæ-mearh**’ in *Andreas* 267a is evocative of ‘**snellić sæ-rinċ**’ (‘swift sea-warriors’) in *Beowulf* 690a, which describes Beowulf’s thegns when they are about to sleep in Heorot, waiting for Grendel’s attack (see also 4.4.5).[102]

In the second use of *naca*, from the ship’s prow, Christ tells Andreas that they will ferry him across the sea to reach Mermedonia. As in the passage above, the poet mentions both the sea and the land by ‘ofer fisċes bæð’ and *land*. The upcoming sea-voyage is portrayed as unproblematic:

> Him ond-swarode engla þēoden,
> nereġend fīra, **of nacan stefne**:
> ‘‘Wē ðē ēstlīċe mid ūs willað
> ferigan frēolīce **ofer fisċes bæð**
> efne tō þām **lande** […] (290–4a)
>
> (‘The Lord of Angels answered him, Saviour of Men, **from the ship’s prow**: “We will carry you with us freely and gladly, **over the fishes’ bath**, right to the land […]”’)

In both uses, ‘**hēah-stefn naca**’ and ‘**of nacan stefne**’ are closely associated with the actions of steering the ship, and reaching the destination. While the Greek and Latin analogues portray the ship as a small boat, the *Andreas*-poet focuses on the sea-land and ship-horse comparison. The high-prowed ship itself is a guarantee of divine protection. A similar collocation ‘**æt nacan stefnan**’ (‘at the prow of the ship’) is found in *The Seafarer* 7b, when the narrator complains about the tough sea-journey over the cold, billowing waves in winter. The narrator says that he has suffered times of tribulations (*ġeswinc-dagas*, unique to 2b), endured heart-sorrows (*breost-caru*, 4a), known in the vessel a care-dwelling (*car-seld*, unique to 5b), and:

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[102] Cf. ‘**sæ-men snelle**’ (‘**swift seafarers**’, ‘**brave sailors**’) in *Maldon* 29b, in the speech of a Viking herald to address the Viking invaders. The unusual double alliteration in the off-verse, according to Griffith, may be the poet’s intention to highlight the Vikings’ disdain for ‘old rules’. Griffiths, ed., *Maldon*, p. 149. See also pp. 12, 41 and 55–6.

> […] atol ȳþa ġewealc, þǣr mec oft biġeat
> nearo niht-waco **æt nacan stefnan**,
> þonne hē be clifum cnossað. (6–8a)[103]
>
> ('[…] the terrible surging of waves, where the narrow night-watch often found me **at the prow of the ship**, when the ship collides with the cliffs.')

In *The Seafarer*, while the phrase 'æt nacan stefnan' is still linked with the action of steering the ship, there is a change in the steersman. Fragile as the Seafarer is, he struggles to keep watch in the dark night, while someone else is steering the ship over the roaring billows near the cliffs.[104] Both poets emphasise the limitation of human power. Andreas, answering the Lord's request to go to Mermedonia, confesses that he has *wæter-brōĝa* ('terror of the water' in *Andreas* 197b) as well as limited knowledge of the foreign people and the sea route, while an angel may easily complete the task:

> Đæt mæġ enġel þīn ēað ġefēran
> <hēah> of heofenum, con him holma begang,
> **sealte sǣ-strēamas** ond swan-rāde,
> **waroð-faruða ġewinn** ond **wæter-brōĝan**,
> wegas ofer wīd-land. Ne synt mē winas cūðe
> eorlas el-þēodiġe, ne þǣr ǣniġes wāt
> hæleða ġehyġdo, ne mē here-strǣta
> **ofer cald wæter** cūðe sindon. (194–200)
>
> ('Your angel can do that more easily, from <on high> in heaven, he knows the road of the ocean, the **salty sea-streams** and the swan-road, **the turmoil of the shore-tides** and the **terror of the water**, ways over the open land. They are not familiar friends to me, the foreign men, nor do I know the mind of the men there, nor are the army-roads **over the cold water** familiar to me.')

Apart from the varied sea-terms in the passage, the poet just here links the sea with terror and difficulty, using diction that is traditionally associated with gloomy images:

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[103] The text of *The Seafarer* is taken from Ida Gordon, ed., *The Seafarer, with a Bibliography Compiled by Mary Clayton* (Exeter, 1996).

[104] On the theme of pilgrimage in *The Seafarer*, see Chapter One.

'sealte sæ-strēamas' (196a), 'waroð-faruða ġewinn' (197a), *wæter-brōĝa* (197b), and 'ofer cald wæter' (201a; see above). In *The Seafarer*, the solitary Seafarer is shown facing all kinds of difficulties (billows, coldness, hunger, loneliness, and so on) when he sails alone on the sea, which forms a contrast to the end of the poem, where the poet composes a didactic passage on the theme of salvation through life-voyage. The crucial importance of God's help is illustrated through a sharp contrast of images: a human skipper struggling to survive a gloomy maritime environment 'æt nacan stefnan' in *The Seafarer* and Christ the skipper predicting a safe sea-journey from the same position on the ship in *Andreas*.

4.4.2 lid

In *Andreas,* the term *lid* appears three times (*lid*, 398a, 'æt lides stefnan', 'at the ship's prow', 403b; 'tō lides stefnan', 'to the ship's prow', 1707b). It also generates two unique compounds, *lid-weard* ('ship-keeper', 244b), evocative of the *-weard*-compounds in *Beowulf* (see Chapter Two), and *lid-wērigˇ* ('voyage-weary', 482a).[105] In 398a *lid* seems to stand alone in the half-line, and it functions as the clarifying apposition to interpret the vague term *flota* in the previous line (see 4.4.4). The relevant lines read as follows:

Lǽt nū ġeferian **flotan** ūserne,
lid tō lande ofer laĝu-fæsten, […] (397–8)

('Let me now bring our **ship**, the **vessel to the shore**, across

[105] Cf. *mere-wērigˇ* ('sea-weary') in *The Seafarer* 12a; *sæ-wērigˇ* ('sea-weary') in *Andreas* 826a and 862a. The manuscript reading in *Andreas* 826 is 'sæ-wēriġe', followed by Krapp, whilst in Brooks's and North and Bintley's editions it is emended to 'slǽp-wērigˇ' ('sleep-weary'), a term elsewhere found only in *Riddle 2* [4] 5a. North and Bintley, ed. and trans., *Andreas*, p. 254; Brooks, ed., *Andreas*, p. 90; Krapp, ed., *The Vercelli Book*, p. 114.

the fastness of water, […]')

When the narrative goes on to note the phrases '**æt lides stefnan**' and '**tō lides stefnan**', it may not be a coincidence that the *Andreas*-poet choses **the preposition + *lid* + *stefn*** format. The homographic simplex *stefn* in the seafaring passages in Old English poetry has aroused some scholarly attention in the last century (see Introduction, Chapter Two, and Conclusion).

The term *stefn* has a strong association with the actions of boarding and alighting from the ship in passages depicting sea-journeys. In *Andreas*, there are two details which include the actions of disembarking from the ship via the prow: 'þafigan ne woldon þæt hīe forlēton **æt lides stefnan lēofne lārēow**, ond him land curon' ('they would not agree to leave **at the ship's prow the beloved teacher**, and to prefer the land for themselves', 402b–4), and 'ðā iċ lǣdan ġefræġn lēoda weorode **lēofne lārēow tō lides stefnan**, mæċġas mōd-ġeōmre' ('then I heard that a crowd of people escorted **the beloved teacher to the ship's prow**, men of mournful mind', 1706–8a).

The first instance happens during Andreas's first sea-voyage. When Christ the skipper asks Andreas's thegns whether they are willing to wait for Andreas by the shore (395–400), they refuse to abandon the beloved teacher Andreas ('lēofne lārēow', 404a) from the prow. The second example marks the end of Andreas's mission, a condensed 'departure' type-scene when the 'lēofne lārēow' (Andreas) is escorted by the melancholic crowd to the shore, boarding the ship via the prow, which signals the end of this God-given mission (see also Introduction and Chapter Two).

While the alliterating phrase '**lēo**f **lā**rēow' is more frequently used by prose authors

especially Ælfric (*c.* 955–*c.* 1010), it appears four times in three poems: 'lēofne lārēow' in *Andreas* 404a and 1707a, 'þone **lēofestan lārēow** ġecorenne' ('the **dearest**, chosen **teacher**') in *Guthlac B* 1004 (Felix's *Vita* only has 'uirum Dei', 'man of God'), and 'þīne **lārēowas lēofe** in mōde' ('[let] the **teacher be beloved** in [your] mind') in *Precepts* 13.[106] In *Guthlac B* it is used to describe Saint Guthlac, a beloved teacher to his disciple who witnesses the saint's death (see Chapter Three). In *Precepts* it connotes God, as the following line reads 'þā þeċ ġeornast tō gode trymmen' ('those who exhort you to the good most eagerly', 14). Indeed, the simplex *lārēow* ('teacher') often refers to Christ, saints, or the Church Fathers who are distinguished Christian teachers.[107]

In *Andreas* the term *lārēow* appears altogether four times. In two instances it denotes Christ: *lārēow* (1321b), and 'līfes lārēow' ('teacher of life', 1466a). It occurs twice in 'lēofne lārēow' (404a and 1707a) to denote Andreas (see above). But this collocation may also serve as a *double entendre* in 404a. Immediately after 404, the poet stresses the outcome of abandonment of 'lēofne lārēow': the thegns will be *hlāfordlēase* ('lordless', 405b), *ġeōmor-mōd* ('sad-hearted', 406a), 'gōde orfeorme' ('lacking benefits', 406b; the homonymic word-form can be a word play on *god* 'God'), and 'synnum wunde' ('wounded with sin', 407a); they will also be hated and despised in every land (408–9a).[108] Such expressions are evocative of the results of abandoning Christ the teacher of life and the Christian religion.

After Andreas completes his mission in Mermedonia, and proves his loyalty and

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[106] The text of *Precepts* is taken from Bjork, ed. and trans., *Shorter Poems*.
[107] *DOE*, **s.v.** '*lāreow*', definition 1.
[108] *DOE*, **s.v.** '*god*', '*gōd* adj.', '*gōd* noun'; *G-K*, **s.v.** '*god*', '*gōd* adj.', '*gōd* n.'.

faith to God, the poet describes the saint as ‘lēofne lārēow’ to the Mermedonians (1707a), stressing Andreas’s status as a Christian teacher. Just as what Saint Guthlac is to his disciple in *Guthlac B*, so is Andreas to his followers: Andreas now becomes a beloved teacher to the newly converted Mermedonians, and possibly an eligible skipper who is able to safely navigate the ship back home. By stressing the position ‘tō lides stefnan’ (1707b), where Christ steers the ship, and teaches Andreas divine lessons, the poet suggests that Andreas has been endowed with the saintly prowess to steer not only the physical ship, but also his ship-of-life, and perhaps the Ship-of-the-Church too, for the life-long mission of evangelisation.

Following 1706–1708a is a short passage depicting the sorrowful crowd bidding farewell to Andreas at the headland. Here the poet inserts some expressions that show potential indebtedness: ‘hāt æt heortan’ (1709a) which is mainly attested in Cynewulfian poems (see Chapter Three), *wǣġ-þel* (1711a) that is also used in *Genesis A* (see Chapter One), and ‘wuldres āġend’ (‘Lord of Glory’, 1715b), which is found only in *Christ C* 331b, Cynewulf’s *Juliana* 223b, and *Andreas* 210b and 1715b. The passage reads as follows:

> Đā iċ lǣdan gefrægn lēoda weorode
> lēofne lārēow **tō lides stefnan**,
> mæċġas mōd-ġeōmre. Þǣr maneġum wæs
> **hāt æt heortan** hyġe weallende.
> Hīe ðā ġebrōhton **æt brimes næsse**
> on **wǣġ-þele** wigan unslāwne;
> stōdon him ðā on ōfre æfter rēotan,
> þendon hīe on ȳðum æðelinga wunn
> ofer seolh-paðu ġesēon mihton,
> ond þā weorðedon **wuldres āġend**,
> cleopodon on corðre, ond cwǣdon þus […] (1706–16)

> ('Then I heard that they, with a company of men, led the beloved teacher **to the ship's prow**, men sad at heart. In many there their thoughts were **surging hot in heart**. Then they brought the vigorous soldier to the **wave-planked ship** at the headland of the sea; then they stood on the seashore, weeping after him, the joy of noble men, as long as they could see him over the waves along the seal-paths, and then they worshipped the **Lord of Glory**, cried out in chorus and thus said […]')

Here the role of Andreas is completely different. In the first sea voyage, along with his disciples, Andreas is also a disciple of Christ. They sit below the prow of the ship, and listen to Christ's divine counsel. When Andreas is about to leave Mermedonia, he takes over the ship as the skipper steering the ship from the prow, as the poet indicates by using 'tō lides stefnan' (1707b). The harsh maritime environment or the sea route is no longer a problem to the saint, whose faith has been strengthened during the mission. Andreas's saintly quality as both a good skipper and a beloved teacher in the ending part of *Andreas* echoes an Alfredian concept of human intellect and passion: that the human mind enjoys a high status, and that men can reach the level of angels and God intellectually.[109] The Boethian concept of *intelligentia* ('intelligence', 'knowledge'), which refers to the understanding of ultimate truth, and can be acquired only by God, is now interpreted as 'ġewis andġit' ('unfailing intellect', 'perfect understanding') in the Alfredian corpus, which can also be achieved by angels and wise men.[110]

Such a type-scene of 'farewell to the beloved hero near the seashore' is not uncommon in the existing Old English poetic corpus. Other typical examples include two passages concerning the first and the last funerals in *Beowulf* (26–52 and 3137–55).

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[109] See further Malcolm Godden, 'Anglo-Saxons on the Mind', *Learning and Literature in Anglo-Saxon England: Studies Presented to Peter Clemoes on the Occasion of his Sixty-fifth Birthday*, ed. Michael Lapidge and Helmut Gneuss (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 271–98, at 274–7.

[110] Cf. *Chapter 41* of the B text and *Prose 32* of the C text, in Godden and Irvine, ed. and trans., *The Old English Boethius*, I, pp. 378–9 and 537–8.

In the ship-funeral, the mournful crowd stand at the shore witnessing the ring-prowed ship departing with Scyld's corpse and earthly riches. Compared with the first funeral, the poet provides more details concerning that of Beowulf (without the ship but with treasures).[111] While the cremation is taking place, the grieving crowd gathers at the headland of the sea ('Hrones Næsse', 'Whale's Ness', 3136b), weeping for the departure of the much-beloved hero. Beowulf orders Wiglaf to choose a burial site close to the sea (2802–8): a mound built at the headland by the sea ('**æt brimes nōsan**', 2804b, and '**on Hrones Næsse**', 2805b), which serves as a reminder for the seafarers, both local and foreign, 'þæt hit sǣ-līðend syððan hātan Bīowulfes Biorh, ðā ðe brentingas ofer flōda ġenipu feorran drīfað' ('so that seafarers can call it Beowulf's Barrow afterwards, those who steer tall ships from afar over the mists of the deep'; 2806–8). The funeral scene takes on deeper sadness when a woman keens ('sang sorg-ċearigġ', 'sang sorrowfully', 3152a), till 'heofon rēċe swealg' ('heaven swallowed the smoke', 3155b).[112] A similar description can be found in *Andreas* in the passage discussed above (1706–16), where the crowd witnesses the departing ship from the headland ('æt brimes næsse') as long as they can see each other.

Familiar descriptions of a crowd of sorrowful people holding a farewell ritual (which includes weeping and singing) for the departing hero near the open water can be found in other Old English poems. Though different in details and length, all three

[111] While Beowulf's funeral is not a sea-journey itself, it still contains a key element in sea voyages: a treasure-laden journey. Ramsey, 'The Sea Voyages', p. 59.

[112] This seems to be a stock image of women in Northern European literature, where they are portrayed as mourners in different occasions. K4, p. 270. See further Helen Bennett, 'The Female at Beowulf's Funeral: Filling in the Blanks / Hearing the Spaces', *Exemplaria* 4 (1992), 35–50; Tauno F. Mustanoja, 'The Unnamed Woman's Song of Mourning over Beowulf and the Tradition of Ritual Lamentation', *NM* 68 (1967), 1–27.

scenes discussed take place in a liminal environment between the land and the sea. By depicting the sad 'farewell upon seashore' type-scene, the *Beowulf*-poet and *Andreas*-poet insinuate in a gloomy tone a sense of ominous foreboding about the subsequent disasters, albeit with different authorial purposes. The deaths of Scyld and Beowulf result in turmoil for future generations: the Danes are attacked by Grendel and his mother, the monstrous descendants of Cain; Beowulf's kingdom is invaded and exploited by foreign enemies. Perhaps the *Beowulf*-poet aims to emphasise the importance of the Christian faith and divine protection (see Chapter Two). After Beowulf's death, his kingdom is to be destroyed, his people slaughtered. In Andreas's case, the farewell scene prefigures his destined martyrdom in Achaea (*Andreas* 1698–1705), where he fulfils his goal of evangelisation, and joins the embrace of God.

The phrase 'hāt æt heortan' in the farewell scene is often closely related to intense emotions such as lamentation, sorrow, and struggle. The phrase is attested nine times in six poems: *Andreas* (1709a)*, Elene* (628a), *Christ B* (500a and 539a), *Guthlac B* (1209a, 1336a, and 1143a), *The Phoenix* (477a; in an original passage not based on *De aue phoenice*), and *The Seafarer* (11a; in the form 'hāt ymb heortan' 'hot around the heart').[113] Except in *The Phoenix*, this collocation describes a sorrowful mind. The lines in *The Phoenix* read:

> Bēoð him of þām wyrtum wīċ ġestaþelad
> in wuldres byriġ weorca tō lēane,
> þæs þe hī ġehēoldan hālġe lāre
> **hāte æt heortan**, **hiġe weallende**
> dæġes ond nihtes dryhten **lufiað**, […] (474–8)

[113] The use in *Guthlac B* 1143a is a slightly different version: 'hāte, heortan nēah' ('hot, near to the heart'). Cf. 'hefiġ æt heortan' ('heavy in heart', 1009a and 1052a), which function as a clarifying phrase for the vague 'hāt æt heortan'.

> ('Dwellings will be established for them out of those herbs in the city of glory, as a reward for their works, because they held to the holy teaching **hot in heart**, **love** the Lord during day and night, **the mind welling up**, […]')

Here 'hāte æt heortan' is explained by 'hiġe weallende' ('the mind welling up', 477b) and the verb *lufian* ('love', 468b). In Cynewulf's *Elene* (though not a farewell scene), this phrase describes the feelings of Judas, who must face interrogation from Elene: 'him wæs ġeōmor sefa, **hāt æt heortan**, ond ġehwæðres **wā**' ('his spirit was sorrowful, **hot in heart**, and **woe** was in each matter', 627b–8b).

Similarly, in both occurrences in *Christ B*, Cynewulf depicts those who witness the ascension of Christ, with clarifying appositions meaning 'mind' or 'sorrowful' in the adjacent lines: 'him wæs ġeōmor sefa **hāt æt heortan**, hyġe murnende' ('their spirit was sorrowful, **hot in heart**, their mind mourning', 499b–500b), and 'þǣr wæs wōpes hringȝ; torne bitolden wæs sēo trēow-lufu **hāt æt heortan**, hreðer innan wēoll, beom brēost-sefa' ('there was the sound of lamentation, surrounded by grief, the true love was **hot in heart**, the chest welled within, the mind burned', 537b–40a).[114] The same technique and similar expressions (such as 'ġeōmor sefa', 'hāt æt heortan' and *-sefa*-compounds) are employed in *Guthlac B*. When Beccel observes Guthlac being tortured by illness and passing away from the earthly life: 'oft mec ġeōmor sefa ġehþa ġemanode, **hāt æt heortan**, hyġe gnornende nihtes nearwe' ('often my sad soul, my sorrowful mind, **hot in heart**, reminds me of care at night', 1208–10a). The same expression recurs as 'gnorn-sorge wæġ **hāte æt heortan**, hyġe ġeōmurne, mēðne mōd-sefan' ('his lamenting-sorrow was **hot in heart**, a sad mind, a weary soul', 1335b–7a). The variant

[114] On 'wōpes hringȝ', see 3.2.3.

‘hefiġ æt heortan’ also collocates with terms denoting a sorrowing heart: ‘him ðæt in ġefēol **hefiġ æt heortan**. Hyġe-sorge wæġ, miċle mōd-ċeare’ (‘that struck **heavy in heart**. He felt mind-sorrow, great mind-care’, 1008b–10a), and ‘mōd-sorge wæġ, **hefiġe æt heortan**’ (‘he felt mind-sorrow, **heavy in heart**’, 1051b–2a).

The phrase ‘fūsne on forþ-sīþ’ (‘ready for the outward-journey [or death]’, 1148a) which occurs several lines after ‘hāte, heortan nēah’ (1143a), not only signifies that Guthlac’s spirit is ready for the posthumous journey to heaven, but also exhibits parallels with Scyld’s funeral-ship described as ‘icy and ready to depart’ (see Chapter Two). Though a ship-funeral is not involved in Guthlac’s death in *Guthlac B*, Beccel sails a boat to Pega (1326b–35a) and performs a *fūs-lēoþ* (‘song of departure [or death]’; shared only between *Christ B* 623b, *Guthlac B* 1346a, and *Andreas* 1549b) as part of the funeral-ritual (see Chapter Three). While the narrative in each farewell scene in *Beowulf* (Scyld’s ship-funeral and Beowulf’s funeral), *Guthlac B* (the passing of Saint Guthlac), and *Andreas* (the departure of Andreas from Mermedonia) have a lot in common, such as lamentations, the involvement of maritime elements, including ships, *Andreas* and *Guthlac B* share more common features in terms of phraseology, such as ‘lēofne lārēow’ and ‘hāt æt heortan’. The combined image of the ship’s prow and a sorrowful mind in *Andreas* are also evocative of the aforementioned passage in *The Seafarer*, when the poet depicts the image of the solitary seafarer struggling to steer the ship ‘æt nacan stefnan’ (7b) on the ‘īs-cealdne sǣ’ (14b) in the dark night, ‘hāt ymb heortan’ (11a), with frozen feet and a ‘mere-wēriġes mōd’ (‘sea-weary mind’, 12a).[115]

[115] Cf. ‘īs-calddne wǣġ’ (19a). See also Chapter Two.

The next three sections will discuss the other three simplexes *bāt*, *flota*, and *sċip*, which also occur as the second elements in several compounds for 'ship' in *Andreas*. The simplexes, along with their compound forms, function either as appositives of other terms for 'ship' in the poem, or in patterned expressions parallel to relevant poems such as *Beowulf* and *Elene*.

4.4.3 bāt

The simplex *bāt* appears thirty-one times in the Old English corpus, including six occurrences in poetry, in three groups of poems: *Beowulf* 211a, *Andreas* 444b and 496b, and three poems in the Exeter Book, including *Guthlac B* 1328b, *Resignation* 100b, and *The Husband's Message* 6a (5b in Krapp and Dobbie's edition). [116] The usage in *Beowulf* is '**flota** wæs on ȳðum, **bāt** under beorge' (210b–11a), each half-line containing one ship-term and one sea-term respectively. As discussed in Chapter Two, *bāt* functions as a clarifying apposition to the vague term *flota*, and helps the audience to narrow down and pinpoint the exact meaning.[117] The passage in *Resignation* shows a similar parallel pattern, when the poetic persona confesses that he does not know why he should buy a ship despite the lack of gold and support of friends: '**bāt** on **sǣwe**, **flēot** on **faroþe**' (100b–1a). The *Resignation*-poet applies *bāt* as the clarifying apposition to interpret the rare simplex *flēot* ('raft', 'vessel', found only in *Resignation* and a gloss

[116] The line numbers and text of *The Husband's Message* are taken from Bjork, ed. and trans., *Shorter Poems*. See further Roy F. Leslie, ed., *Three Old English Elegies: The Wife's Lament, The Husband's Message and The Ruin* (Exeter, 1961).

[117] Robinson, *Appositive Style*, p. 61–3. On Evans's argument that the heroes reach their ship (*flota*) in the sea by a small dinghy (*bāt*) from the shore, see Evans, 'Sequence of Events'. On Fry's counter-argument that the two terms denote the same kind of ship, see Fry, 'Launching Ships', p. 62. See also Chapter Two.

for Latin *ratis* ‘raft’) that follows *bāt*. Thanks to damage in the corresponding folio in the manuscript, the missing words in *The Husband’s Message* 2–7 make it difficult to provide a thorough contextual analysis of *bāt*, which reads: ‘ful oft iċ on bātes’ […] (‘very often I on the boat […]’).[118] As mentioned in Chapter Three, the poet of *Guthlac B* also uses *bāt* in a seafaring passage (1328b–32) that bears a close resemblance to *Elene*, as a clarifying apposition of the following ship-compounds: *bāt — wǣġ-henġest — wæter-þīsa — brim-wudu — laĝu-mearh — hærn-flota*.

The first use of *bāt* in the form ‘**on bātes fæðm**’ (‘**in the bosom of the boat**’) in *Andreas* 444b has the same clarifying function as in abovementioned texts. The only difference is that *sǣ-bāt* (438b) appears six lines before this simplex:

> Swā ġesǣlde īu, þæt wē **on sǣ-bāte**
> **ofer waruð-ġewinn** **wæda** cunnedan,
> **faroð-rīdende**. (438–40a)
>
> (‘So it happened once that we **on a sea-boat over the tumult of the waves** tested the **water**, **riding through the current**.’)

In this passage, the poet mentions the difficulty of sea-voyage through the mouth of Andreas. The compound *sǣ-bāt*, shared only between *Beowulf* and *Andreas* (see Chapter Two), is easy to understand because *bāt* is monosemous. Therefore *sǣ-bāt* does not need any simplex for ‘ship’ as its clarifying apposition to further explain the meaning. With the preposition *on*, it forms a preposition + noun pattern (‘**on sǣ-bāte**’) that parallels ‘**ofer waruð-ġewinn**’ (‘**over the tumult of the waves**’) in the next half-line. The simplex *wæd* occurs thirteen times in prose and ten times in verse: once in *Exodus*, three times in *Beowulf*, once in *The Whale*, and once in *Riddle 5* [7] all in the

[118] Leslie gives ‘on bātes [bôsme]’ (‘in [the bosom of] the boat’). Leslie, ed., *Three Old English Elegies*, p. 49.

same manuscript. Both compounds *waroþ-ġewinn* and *faroþ-rīdende* (‘riding through the current’) are unique to *Andreas*.[119] The involvement of *faroþ*-compound also suggests the *Andreas*-poet’s potential tribute to earlier poetic tradition. The first element *faroþ* (‘sea’, ‘current’, ‘beach’) is a rare poetic simplex, appearing three times in *Beowulf*, three times in *Andreas*, and once in *Resignation* (see above). The earliest extant uses of the *-faroþ*-compounds can be traced back to the period of biblical poetry and riddle-tradition: *brim-faroþ* (‘sea-coast’, ‘sea-way’) in *Daniel* 321b, *mere-faroþ* (‘sea-current’) in *Andreas* 289 and 351a and *Riddle 58* [60] 2a, and *sǣ-faroþ* in *Daniel* 322a and *Elene* 251a. All *faroþ*-compounds are found in texts written or influenced by Cynewulf: *faroþ-henġest* in *Elene* 226b, *faroþ-lācende* (‘seafaring’) in *The Whale* 5b, 20a, and 80b and *Andreas* 507b, *faroþ-rīdende*, and *faroþ-strǣt* (‘sea-path’) in *Andreas* 311b and 898a. Possibly this simplex is similar to *ċēol*, both representing an archaic, elevated style in terms of poetic nautical vocabulary. This might explain why the *Andreas*-poet employs *faroþ* and its compound forms nine times.

Three lines after this passage, when Andreas mentions the rising terror of the water among the sailors in certain previous seafaring experience, the poet employs *bāt* in ‘**on bātes fæðm**’ (444b), which forms a parallel with ‘**of brimes bōsme**’ (‘**from the sea’s bosom**’, 444a) in a pattern of preposition + noun + noun:

Hwīlum upp āstōd
of brimes bōsme **on bātes fæðm**
eġesa ofer **ȳð-lid**. (443b–5a)

(‘Sometimes there rose up **from the sea’s bosom in the hold**

[119] *DOE*, **s.v.** ‘*faroþ-rīdende*’: ‘sailing’, ‘seafaring’; *WH*, ‘*faroþ-rīdende*’: ‘ploughing through the sea’; *G-K*, **s.v.** ‘*rīdan*’, definition 3: ‘incumbere’. North and Bintley give ‘riding the tide’, in North and Bintley, ed., *Andreas*, p. 336.

of the boat terrors among the wave-gliders.')

As previously discussed, *bōsm* and *fæþm* sometimes are used to describe the hold of a ship, but they can also have figurative connotations such as the embrace (or protection) of the divine, and the enclosure of the sea. In verse, the prosaic simplex *bōsm* appears eighteen times, mainly in *Genesis A* (three times) and the *Riddles* (eight times), with one use here in *Andreas* 444a; *fæþm*, which is also prosaic, is comparatively used more often by Old English poets, including four times in *Genesis A*, four times in *Exodus*, seven times in *Beowulf* (none describing ships), six times in Cynewulf (including twice for the sea in *Elene*), and six times in *Andreas*.[120]

When *bōsm* occurs in *Genesis A*, it is always in the abovementioned pattern (see Chapter One).[121] The *Beowulf*-poet does not use *bōsm*, but employs *bearm* ten times (including three times for ships; see Chapter Two) and *fæþm* seven times.[122] As for the six uses of *fæþm* in *Andreas*, half have watery connotations.[123] Additionally, the *Andreas*-poet employs the unique compound *wīd-fæþme* (240b and 533a; see below). But sometimes *fæþm* carries negative connotations, such as 'of fēonda fæðme' ('in the grasp of the enemy', referring to Pharaoh) in *Exodus* 294, 'in dracan fæðme' ('in the dragon's embrace', suggestive of the sinful being swallowed by the dragon in hell) in *Elene* 762, and 'on banan fæðme' ('into the slayer's embrace', referring to the devil) in

[120] Cf. 'sæs sidne fæðm' ('the embrace of the broad sea') in *Elene* 728a; 'in dracan fæðme' ('in the embrace of the dragon') in *Elene* 765b; 'on fæðme' ('in the embrace [of Judas]') in *Elene* 880a; 'brimo fæðmeð' ('the embrace of the sea') in *Elene* 971b; 'engla fæðmum' ('in the angels' embrace') in *Christ B* 651b; 'in fæmnan fæðm' ('in the embrace of the Virgin') in *Christ B* 788a.

[121] Cf. *sweġl-bōsm* ('sky-bosom', 'heaven') peculiar to *Genesis A* 9b; *fāmiġ-bōsma* in *Exodus* (see Chapter One).

[122] Cf. *sīd-fæþme* and *sīd-fæþmed* in *Beowulf* (see Chapter Two).

[123] Cf. 'on flōdes fæðm' (252a); 'ofer foldan fæðm' ('across the embrace of the earth', 336a); 'on bātes fæðm' (444b); 'on banan fæðme' ('in the embrace of the slayer', 616b); 'fæðmum' ('in the embrace [of the angels]', 824a); and 'þurh flōdes fæðm' (1616a).

Andreas 616b.[124] The description of the passengers' water-terror here, arising from the holding of the sea and the embrace of the ship may also arouse further contemplation of the sea (representing worldly temptations in patristic writings, and often associated with evil creatures) and the ship (the Ship-of-the-Church, and the ship-of-life).[125]

The polysemous compound *ȳþ-lid* in this passage may denote either a ship or a sailor, and is problematic. Some scholars prefer 'crew' (such as North and Bintley) while others accept 'ship' (as in *B-T*).[126] As a consequence, the phrase 'eġesa ofer ȳð-lid' (445a) can be interpreted as either 'terrors among the crew' or 'terrors on the ship'. Because the *Andreas*-poet has the habit of illuminating obscure compounds using a preceding simplex as appositive (as in the case of *ċēol*), and the poet has already cued the audience for a possible meaning of 'ship' with the simplex *bāt* in the antecedent half-line 444b, it is therefore likely that the polysemous compound *ȳþ-lid* (445a) refers to a ship rather than its crew. Immediately after *ȳþ-lid* (445a) and two lines after 'on bātes fæðm' (444b), the poet mentions the ship again, using *mere-þīsa* (446b), narrating God's presence onboard:

> Ælmihtiġ þǣr,
> meotud man-cynnes, **on mere-þyssan**
> beorht bāsnode; […] (445b–7a)
>
> ('The Almighty there, the Creater of Mankind, bright on the sea-burster, awaited this; […]')

Just as *ċēol* explains *mere-þīsa* (257b), *bāt* explains this unique compound (446b). The

[124] See further Lucas, ed., *Exodus*, p. 81; North and Bintley, ed. and trans., *Andreas*, p. 242; Bjork, ed. and trans., *Cynewulf*, pp. 244 and 255.
[125] Daniélou, *Primitive Christian Symbols*, pp. 60 and 65; Rahner, *Greek Myths*, pp. 341–53, 363, 370, 373, and 375.
[126] While *B-T* and *G-K* define *ȳþ-lid* simply as 'ship', *WH* provides other possibilities: 'wave-traveller; seaman; crew; ship'. See *B-T*, **s.v.** '*ȳð-lid*'; *G-K*, **s.v.** '*ȳð-lid*': 'nauigium; nauis'; *WH*, '*ȳþ-lid*'. North and Bintley, for example, translate *ȳþ-lid* in *Andreas* 445a as 'crew'. See North and Bintley, ed. and trans., *Andreas*, pp. 141 and 369.

preposition + ship-term expression, '**on mere-þyssan**' (446b) further echoes the aforementioned '**on ċēole**' (450a):

> Þā sēo meniġo ongan
> clypian **on ċēole**, cyning sōna ārās […] (449b–50)
>
> ('When many began to **cry out on the vessel**, the **King rose up at once** […]')

As the story proceeds, Andreas asks if Christ the skipper can teach him how to tame the 'sea-horse' on a sea-journey, because the hero has completed sixteen sea-voyages, but never seen a skilled sailor like Christ, 'stēoran ofer stæfnan' ('steering from the stern', 495a). One skill of Christ which Andreas hopes to cultivate is:

> […] hū ðū **wæġ-flotan** wære bestēmdon,
> **sæ-henġeste**, sund wīsiġe.
> Iċ wæs on ġifene īu ond nū þā
> syx-tȳne sīðum **on sæ-bāte** […] (487–90)
>
> ('[…] how the **wave-floater**, drenched in the water, the **sea-stallion**, you direct in the sea. I have been on the ocean before now for sixteen journeys on a **sea-boat** […]')

Although there is no simplex for 'ship' in this passage, the first compound *wæġ-flota* (cf. *Beowulf* 1907a and *Elene* 246a) needs no clarification. The *Andreas*-poet has already introduced the sense of *flota* and that of *-flota*-compounds earlier in the poem: *æġ-flota* (258a), *sæ-flota* (381a), and *flota* (397b). The meaning of *sæ-henġest* (488a) can be inferred from both the preceding appositive *wæġ-flota* in this passage and a 'sea-horse' compound *sæ-mearh* (267a; explained by *naca*, 266a) around two hundred lines earlier. The phrase '**on sæ-bāte**' (490b) in this passage will be familiar to an audience that has seen the same phrase (438b). Apart from the compounds for 'ship' in this passage, when meaning 'sea', the homographic simplex-form *wær* is uniquely

employed by the *Andreas*-poet (269a and 487b).[127]

Six lines after '**on sǣ-bāte**' (490b), the poet applies the simplex *bāt* (496b), when Andreas compliments the sailing skill of Christ, who makes the foamy-necked ship glide in the ocean like a swift bird:

> Is þes **bāt f**ul sċrīd,
> **færeð fāmiġ-heals fuĝole ġelīcost**,
> glīdeð on **ġeofone**. (496b–8a)
>
> ('This **foamy-necked boat goes** very quickly, glides over the **ocean most like a bird**.')

In these lines, both *fāmiġ-heals* and *ġeofon* are poetic terms. This ship-bird comparison is not found in *Πράξεις and Casanatensis*. This description of a foamy necked ship in *Andreas* is a unique parallel to '**flota fāmī-heals fuĝle ġelīcost**' in *Beowulf* 218. Both poets use the same type of a variant simile structure different from the basic pattern **noun** or **pronoun** + **noun (dative form)** + ***ġelīcost***.[128] Both *fāmiġ-heals* in the on-verse and the simile 'fuĝle ġelīcost' in the off-verse are unusual in the entire corpus.[129] The striking resemblance between the two passages in *Beowulf* and *Andreas* can be interpreted as either a direct Beowulfian influence on the *Andreas* poet or 'the demands of prosody'.[130] The bird-ship simile can be read both as the *Andreas*-poet's embellishment based on the land-sea comparison spoken by Andrew in *Πράξεις and Casanatensis* (see 4.4.1), and as a further proof of poetic indebtedness to *Beowulf*.

The third and final occurrence of *fāmiġ-heals* is in *Beowulf* 1909a. When the hero

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[127] See further North and Bintley, ed. and trans., *Andreas*, p. 229, who relate the word-form in *Andreas* 269 to *wǣr* ('covenant'), and recognise the manuscript reading as wordplay which is not only 'untranslatable' but also reminds the audience of Andreas's 'inability' to figure out the identity of Christ the skipper.
[128] Oleniak, 'Old English Simile of Equality', pp. 478 and 483.
[129] Powell, 'Verbal Parallels', pp. 128–9 and 276.
[130] Oleniak, 'Old English Simile of Equality', p. 478. For an argument that the *Andreas*-poet intentionally mocks the *Beowulf*-poet because of the nostalgia for 'heathen values' in the poem, see North and Bintley, ed. and trans., *Andreas*, p. 66.

heads back to his homeland, the *sǣ-genġa* floats in the water:

> […] **sǣ-genġa** fōr
> **flēat fāmiġ-heals**, forð ofer ȳðe, […] (*Beowulf* 1908b–9)
>
> ('[…] the sea-goer fared, foamy-necked floated forwards over the waves […]')

The verb *flēotan* is rarely found in verse. Besides *Beowulf* 542b and 1909a, it appears only in *Genesis A* 1447b, *The Wanderer* 54a, and *Psalm 103* 24.4b, plus twelve times in prose. Only in *Beowulf* 1909a and *Psalm 103* 24.4b does *flēotan* depict the motion of a ship. As Powell observes, the pattern in '**flēat fāmiġ-heals**' ('with foamy-neck floated') in *Beowulf* 1909a is the same as that in '**færeð fāmiġ-heals**' ('with foamy-neck proceeds') in *Andreas* 497a: verb of motion + *fāmiġ-heals*.[131] The *Andreas*-poet seems to combine two expressions containing *fāmiġ-heals* in *Beowulf*, '**flota fāmiġ-heals fuġole ġelīcost**' (noun + *fāmiġ-heals* + 'fuġole ġelīcost') and '**flēat fāmiġ-heals**' (verb + *fāmiġ-heals*), and seems to form the pattern '**bāt** […] **færeð fāmiġ-heals fuġole ġelīcost**' (noun + verb + *fāmiġ-heals* + 'fuġole ġelīcost') in the poem.

The image of a 'foamy-necked' ship in *Beowulf* and *Andreas* may come ultimately from *Genesis A*. As briefly illustrated in Chapter One, *fāmiġ* is closely associated with sea and ship. It is found eight times in poetry and seven times in prose, including *Genesis A* 1417a, 1452b, and 2215a, *Elene* 237b, *Andreas* 1524b, *Riddle 1* 49b and 62b [3 19b and 32b], and *Solomon and Saturn* 157a. In three occurrences it describes the physical appearance of a ship: '**fōr fāmiġ sċip**' ('**the foamy ship fared**') in *Genesis A* 1417a, 'lēton þā ofer fīfel-wǣġ **fāmiġe** scrīðan brante **brim-þyssan**' ('then they let the

[131] Powell, 'Verbal Parallels', p. 128.

foamy, towering **sea-burster** glide over the mighty waves') in *Elene* 237–8a, and '**ċēol** […] **fāmiġ** rīdan ȳða hryċġum' ('the **foamy ship** rides on the ridge of the sea') in *Riddle 1* 58b–63a [3 28b–33a]. The '**fōr fāmiġ sċip**' collocation in *Genesis A* 1417a is adapted by the *Beowulf*-poet in '**sǣ-genġa fōr** flēat **fāmiġ-heals**' in *Beowulf* 1908b–9a. The two collocations share three similar or same constituents: the same base verb *faran*, a noun for 'ship', and *fāmiġ* or its compound form. The image of a foamy ship is further illustrated by Cynewulf in *Elene* with more details: it is towering, gliding over the *fīfel-wǣġ*. The '**ofer fīfel-wǣġ fāmiġe**' expression in *Elene* may likewise ultimately inform the *Metres*-poet in *Metre 26* 26–8a: with three banks of oars, Ulysses's large warship departs the seashore '**on fīfel-stream**, **fāmiġ-bordon**' ('**to the stream of the sea-monsters, with foamy sides**'). Both poems contain a *fīfel*-compound depicting the sea in the on-verse and *fāmiġ* or a *fāmiġ*-compound denoting the foamy appearance of the ship in the off-verse, thus achieving the effect of alliteration and intertextuality.

The *Andreas*-poet encourages a strong link between *Beowulf* and *Andreas* in terms of plot, and encourages the audience to compare different meanings in the two passages. Beowulf's second sea-voyage, which contains the ship-bird comparison, marks the end of the first part of the poem (see Chapter Two). However, the journey back to the hero's homeland on a speedy, foamy-necked ship does not lead to a good end. The last fight of the *laĝu-cræftiġ* ('water-crafty', 209a) hero Beowulf is indeed ironic: Beowulf, who has demonstrated superb skills of swimming, sailing, and battling on and in the water, fights against a supernatural creature in a hellish environment (the dragon's cave which a stream flows through), and ultimately dies there (see Introduction and Chapter Two).

Anlezark, in his argument for a purposeful connection between the sea and Beowulf built by the *Beowulf*-poet, recognises the sea as a significant symbol in the characterisation of classical and biblical figures such as Aeneas as well as Christ (who walks on the Sea of Galilee; see 3.2.1).[132] Both Beowulf and Christ are good steersmen; both are saviours of the people; and both sacrifice their earthly lives for their peoples (Christ for mankind, Beowulf for the Geatish people). Yet their deaths mark a difference. Beowulf ventures into the dragon's hoard out of the pursuit of fame (*lof-ġeorn*, 'keen for glory', 'eager for fame', 3182b) and the cursed gold (*gold-hwæt*, 'gold-spell', unique to 3074a) for the benefit of his people.[133] But Christ is immortal, and omnipresent after his Ascension. The foamy-necked, bird-like *bāt* steered by Christ leads Andreas to the right route that every Christian should follow: the abandonment of secular treasure and the conversion of the heathens. In summary, the image of Christ in *Andreas* is multi-layered: Christ is a skilful skipper, the spiritual treasure on the ship, and finally a boat-keeper (*lid-weard*, 244b and *sċip-weard*, 297b) for every Christian's ship-of-life.

Among the thirty-two compounds with *weard* meaning 'guard', 'keeper', only three compounds literally mean 'ship-keeper' in verse, and they are uniquely used in *Beowulf* or *Andreas*: the *Beowulf*-poet coins *bāt-weard*, whereas the *Andreas*-poet has *lid-weard* (244b) and *sċip-weard* (297b). However, the 'ship-keeper' semantically varies in *Beowulf* and in *Andreas*. The ship-keeper in *Beowulf* is a human whose job is

[132] Anlezark, 'All at Sea', p. 239.
[133] On the composite meaning of the prosaic compound *lof-ġeorn* in *Beowulf*, see K4, pp 271–2; on possible Norse influence, see lxxiii and clxxi.

to take care of ships, while the one in *Andreas* is Christ the skipper. While *-weard-* compounds are frequently used by the *Beowulf*-poet, and most examples are peculiar to the poem, they all refer to different types of jobs, such as the harbour-guard (*hȳþ-weard*, 1914b; unique), the hall-guard (*ren-weard*, 770a; unique), the guard against the giants (*eoten-weard*, 668b; unique) and the boat-keeper (*bāt-weard*, 1900a; unique), with the exception of *gold-weard* ('gold-guard', 3081b; unique), a designation of the dragon guarding its hoard, a watery, hidden space where a hot stream with dreadful flames runs through it (*Beowulf* 2545–9). Such a distribution further highlights the special relationship between *Beowulf* and *Andreas*, especially concerning nautical diction.

While the *Andreas*-poet connects the image of the boat-keeper with Christ who also protects the hero and his thegns, the poet may also draw upon other *-weard-* compounds denoting God as Guardian in earlier religious poems, such as *brego-weard* ('Princely Guardian') unique to *Genesis A* 2335b and 2748a, *heofon-weard* ('Guardian of Heaven') unique to *Genesis A* 120a and 1796a, and *līf-weard* ('Life-Guardian') peculiar to *Elene* 1035a. By fusing the image of an ordinary ship-keeper (such as *bāt-weard* in *Beowulf*) with that of Christ who is Guardian of Mankind in Christian tradition, the *Andreas*-poet further strengthens the motif of the omnipresence of Christ after Ascension. The poet endows the common image of boat-keeper with a Christian figuration, creating a more profound impression of Christ as the boat-keeper of his believers.

4.4.4 flota

As previously mentioned, the term *flota* (397b) can denote either a ship or the ship-crew. It forms seven compounds in the corpus, three of which are found in *Andreas*: *ǣġ-flota* (258a), *sǣ-flota* (381a), *wǣġ-flota* (487a; elsewhere in *Beowulf* 1907a and *Elene* 246a; see Chapters Two and Three). The other four compounds are found in *The Whale* 7a (*ġeflota*, referring to the whale), *Guthlac B* 1333b (*hærn-flota*; see Chapter Three), *Brunanburh* 11b (*sċip-flota*; see Chapter One and Conclusion), and additionally, *ASC* (*unfriþ-flota*; see above). Apart from *unfriþ-flota*, all the compounds appear in verse. Apart from *sċip-flota* and *ġeflota*, all other *-flota*-compounds in the corpus denote a ship or a fleet. The *Andreas*-poet firstly uses *ǣġ-flota* (258a), when Andreas asks where Christ the skipper has come from by the sea-shore:

> Hwanon cōmon ġē **ċēolum** līðan,
> mā-cræftiġe menn, on mere-þissan,
> **ā**ne **ǣġ-flotan**? (256–8a)
>
> ('Where have you come from, sailing in **ships**, men superior
> in skills, in the sea-burster, alone in the **wave-floater**?')

The compound *ǣġ-flota*, which contains the prefix *ǣġ-* as the first element and the polysemous simplex *flota* as the second element, is an appositive of *ċēol* (see 4.3), and alliterates on the vowel in ***ā**ne* ('one'). Likewise, the second compound of this kind in *Andreas*, *sǣ-flota* (381a), is an appositive of the simplex *ċēol*, and alliterates on *s* in the on-verse that links ***s**und* in the off-verse. After Andreas and his thegns board the ship, they still have not figured out that the experienced skipper is Christ (see 4.3.1):

> Þeġnas wurdon
> ācolmōde; ǣniġ ne wēnde
> þæt hē lifgende land beġēte,

> þāra þe mid Andrēas on ēaĝor-strēam
> **ċēol** ġesōhte. Næs him cūð þā ġȳt
> hwā þām **sæ-flotan** **s**und wīsode. (376–81)
>
> ('The thegns became frightened at heart; none of those who had sought the **ship** in the water-stream with Andreas expected that he would ever reach the shore alive. They did not know yet who guided that **sea-floater** in the sea.')

After Andreas thanks Christ for the meal, Christ promises that the ship will ferry the hero and his thegns safely to Mermedonia across *laĝu-fæsten* ('water-fastness', found only in *Elene* 249a and 1016a and *Andreas* 398b and 825b, always collocating with *ofer*). Sixteen lines after *sæ-flota* (381a), the poet employs *flota* (397b) followed by the poetic, monosemous simplex *lid* (398a). The order of the two simplexes is unusual in terms of apposition, as the poet normally puts the monosemous, commoner word for 'ship' first, and a polysemous, less specific term for 'ship' second. The choice of the two simplexes, besides the concern for apposition, mostly results from his consideration of alliteration: *flota* in the off-verse alliterates with *ġeferian* ('ferry') in the on-verse, whereas *lid* alliterates with *land* and *laĝu-fæsten* (398; see 4.4.2):

> Lǣt nū ġe**f**erian **flotan** ūserne,
> **lid** tō **l**ande ofer **l**aĝu-fæsten, […] (397–8)
>
> ('Let me now bring our **ship**, the **vessel** to the shore, across the fastness of water, […]')

In the fourth and last passage where Andreas asks Christ to teach him how to steer a ship safely across the ocean, the poet applies the third *-flota*-compound, *wǣġ-flota*, which appears in two of *Andreas*'s likely models, *Beowulf* and *Elene*, and do not need to be further explained by any other simplexes (see 4.4.3):

> […] hū ðū **wǣġ-flotan** **wære** bestēmdon,
> **sæ-henġeste**, **sund** wīsiġe. (487–8)

> ('[…] how the **wave-floater**, drenched in the water, the **sea-stallion**, you direct in the sea)

In *Casanatensis* 9, Andrew asks Christ to teach ('discas') him the skill of steering ('artem gubernationis'); in *Πράξεις* 9, Andrew orders Christ to show him the technique. The prose authors focus on the initiative of Andrew, his eagerness to improve navigational skills. Yet the Old English poet is more inclined to provide a detailed description of how Christ steers the ship in the sea. Apart from structural alliteration whereby ***w****ǣġ-flota* alliterates with ***w****ær* in 487 and ***s****ǣ-hengest* with ***s****und*, the poet demonstrates variation in the two compounds for 'ship', together with *sǣ-bǣt* (490b). By portraying the ship steered by Christ as the 'wave-floater', the 'sea-horse', and the 'sea-boat', the poet reminds the audience that this divinely steered ship is central to the narrative.

4.4.5 sċip

As with the previously discussed simplexes, the collocations containing *sċip* and the relevant compounds in *Andreas* are likely adapted from earlier Old English poems such as *Beowulf* and *Elene*, rather than from any of the poem's Greek and Latin analogues. The term *sċip* is commonly used in prose (more than 500 times) and verse (27 times), and it also appears in *Genesis A* (five times), *Exodus* (once), *Beowulf* (six times), and Cynewulf's *Juliana* (once). The *Andreas*-poet employs this term twice (240b and 512a). There are five compounds that have *sċip* as the first or second element in verse, and three are uniquely found in *Andreas*: *sċip-fēr**e**nd* (250b, denoting Christ; see 4.3.2), *sċip-weard* (297b, denoting Christ; see 4.4.3), and *horn-sċip* (see 4.3.1). They either

refer to Christ disguised as a skipper and a sailor, or the ship steered by Christ. The other two compounds are *sċip-flota* in *Brunanburh* 11b (see Chapter One and Conclusion), and *sċip-here*, found in *Beowulf* 243a and *Metre 8* 31a in verse, as well as around sixty times in prose (see Chapters One and Two).

The poet first employs *sċip* (240b) when Andreas and his thegns find a wide-bosomed ship (‘**wīd-fæðme sċip**’) by the sea-shore. The description of a ship as wide-bosomed, as previously mentioned, also metaphorically epitomises divine protection when one enters the Ship-of-the-Church (see 4.4.3). This collocation **‘wide-bosomed’ + *sċip*** is unique to *Beowulf* (302b and 1917b) and *Andreas* (240b). The term *wīd-fæþme* which appears in the collocation in *Andreas* modifies respectively the ship in 302b and the waves in 533a in the poem.

Perhaps the *Andreas*-poet borrows the image of a ‘wide-bosomed ship’ from the *Beowulf*-poet yet without copying other constituents denoting the ship ‘fastened to the shore with anchor-ropes’ in the original passages (see below). In the three *-fæþme(d)*-compounds, the first elements *sīd* and *wīd* share the same meaning of ‘wide’, ‘broad’; the second elements derive from the same verb *fæþman*, *fæþmian* (‘embrace’) which occurs only in *Beowulf*, *Elene*, *Andreas*, *Maxims I*, and *Psalm 77*, and additionally three times in glosses.

The idea of ‘safely anchoring one’s mind or the ship-of-life’ is common in Christian writings and widely applied in Old English literature, such as Alfredian translations of works including Greogory’s *Pastoral Care* and Augustine’s *Boethius* (see Introduction). However, the *Andreas*-poet seems uninterested in elucidating this

idea. Although many terms denoting parts of a ship do appear in *Andreas*, including *mæst*, *seġl*, *stefn* (and *stefna* 'bow [of a ship]'), *streng* ('cable'), and *ȳþ-bord* ('gunwale'; elsewhere found in *The Gifts of Man* 57b), there is no 'anchor' in this Old English poem (or its Greek and Latin analogues), an important component in both traditional Christian ship-symbolism and Germanic seafaring scenes. Both the *Beowulf*-poet and Cynewulf draw on anchor-imagery, yet the *Andreas*-poet is more concerned with the voyage, rather than the actions during embarkation and disembarkation. Moreover, by reiterating the presence of Christ, the poet delivers a clear message: Christ is the heavenly skipper, the guardian of mankind, and the anchor of the ship. None of the hardships at sea, storm or wind or the sea-waves, can shake the ship, swift under the sail. Andreas describes how steadily the ship stands by the shore:

> […] þǣr hine storm ne mæġ,
> wind āweċġan, ne wæter-flōdas
> **b**recan **brond-stæfne**, hwæðere on **b**rim **s**nōweð
> **snel under seġle**. (502b–5a)

> ('[…] where neither the storm nor the wind, nor the water-floods could shake her or break the **high-prowed ship**, yet in the sea [the ship] sails **swift under the sail**.')

The passage contains two maritime compounds. The first compound *brand-stefn*, as mentioned previously, is unique to *Andreas* and perhaps suggestive of Beowulfian influence (see also Chapter Two and 4.3.1); the second compound *wæter-flōd* appears only in *Andreas* 503b, *Psalms 62* 3.2a and *87* 17.2a, and twice in prose. The three half-lines 504–5a also contain double alliteration ('**b**recan **b**rond-stæfne' and '**s**nel under **s**eġle') and back-linked alliteration ('**s**nōweð **s**nel under **s**eġle'). The description of a ship as '**snel under seġle**' ('**swift under the sail**') further shows affinities with '**snell**

under sorgum' in *Guthlac B* 1330a (see Chapter Three). It seems that the adjective *snel* ('swift', 'brave') and its variant *snellić* are often associated with movement in the sea.[134] The *Andreas*-poet is certainly aware of this, as both adjectives are used to describe the ship (see 4.4.1).

The poet elaborates on the image of Christ steering the ship later in a second passage containing *sċip* in *Andreas*. Still disguised as a skipper, Christ tells Andreas that he and his crew often meet the storms at sea while steering their ships among retainers ('sċipum under sċealcum'), but they always break through the *bæþ-weġ* on the *brim-henġest*:

> Oft þæt ġesǣleð, þæt wē on **sǣ-lāde**
> **sċipum** under **sċ**ealcum, þonne **sċ**ēor cymeð,
> **brecað ofer bæð-weġ** **brim-henġestum**; […] (511–13)
>
> ('Often it happens that we **burst forth through the wave-way** during the **sea-journey**, on **ships** among retainers, **on the sea-horses**, when the storm comes; […]')

The simplex *sċip* explains *brim-henġest* in the following line. The *Andreas*-poet uses the same Cynewulfian expression '**brecan ofer bæð-weġ**' in 513a, and combines the first element *brim* in *brim-wudu* in *Elene* 244b with the second element *mearh* in *sǣ-mearh* in *Elene* 245b. Thus, the compound *brim-henġest* in *Andreas* 513b can fit into both the alliterative frame and the image of a ship in the Cynewulfian expression. Powell argues that the *Andreas*-poet has adopted the image of a ship breaking through the sea in *Elene*, but 'erroneously transferred' the ship to an 'animate subject', because

[134] Cf. *Exodus* 220b (describing the Israelites who are addressed as *flotan*, 223a), *Beowulf* 690a, *Guthlac B* 1330a, *The Gifts of Man* 56b (modifying the sailors rowing the ship), and *Maldon* 29b. The adjective in *Beowulf* 2971a describes Wulf, a Geatish hero, who joins Hygelac in battle against Ongentheow. The Geats, especially the heroes, are often addressed as sea-men, sailors, voyagers in *Beowulf* (209a, 221a, 255a, 329a, 502a, 690a, 1623b, 1818a, 2954a, and 2955a).

the subject of *brecan* in *Andreas* 513a is Christ along with his angels in the guise of sailors, whereas in *Elene* 244a the subject is the ship itself.[135] However, *brecan* is closely associated with the image of a ploughing horse, and it may be the *Andreas*-poet's deliberate design to switch the subject of the verb to humans, which is s less a mistake than a poetic liberty.[136]

The 'sea-horse' compounds are often closely associated with either the danger during the steering and mooring of a ship, or a speedy sea-voyage.[137] The connotation of the 'sea-horse' compounds in *Andreas* indicates the latter, as the 'sea-horse' is here safely controlled by Christ. As Olsen observes, three inter-related comparisons, the ship-horse comparison, sea-land comparison, and wave-mountain comparison, are frequently indicated by the rare or unique compounds in *Andreas*, and play prominent roles in creating a distinctive set of images in the poem.[138] This expression in *Andreas* further suggests a connotation of a 'broken' or 'unbroken' horse, and the shift of the subject implies a sense of restraining from overspeed, and highlights Christ's position in charge of the ship, while *brecan* in *Elene* 244a mainly functions as an appositive to a series of verbs, denoting the varied movements of Elene's ship.[139]

I suggest that the difference lies in the *Andreas*-poet's emphasis on the Christian concept of the perils in the life-voyage. In both occurrences of 'brecan ofer bæð-weġ' in *Andreas*, the harsh maritime environment is emphasised by 'on cald wæter' (222b),

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[135] Powell, 'Verbal Parallels', p. 219.
[136] North and Bintley, *Andreas*, p. 228, n. 223; Powell, 'Verbal Parallels', p. 219; Brooks, ed., *Andreas*, p. 70, n. 223. North and Bintley also mention the image of a bull-calf which 'dūna briceð' ('breaks the downs') in *Riddle 36* [38] 6.
[137] Anderson, '*Sæmearh*', pp. 5–9.
[138] Olsen, "The Dichotomy of Land and Sea in the Old English *Andreas*', *ES* 79 (1998), 385–97, at 385.
[139] Olsen, 'Dichotomy', pp. 388–9. *DOE*, **s.v.** '*brecan*', definition 6b: 'to discipline'.

sċēor (‘storm’, 512b), and *earfoþlīċe* (‘with hardship’, 514b). The *Andreas*-poet is certainly aware of the implication of *brecan* and the connotation in the ‘sea-horse’ compounds in the Old English poetic tradition. Two of the ultimate goals of this poem are to emphasise the idea of salvation through belief in Christ, and to advocate for the theme of the omnipresence of Christ after Ascension and the image of Christ as steersman (see above). Indeed, compared with its Greek and Latin analogues, *Andreas* contains more extensive and detailed passages on water-terror and natural disasters at sea, which can evoke in the audience a sense of vulnerability. The poet alters the subject on purpose, so that the prominence of Christ is again strengthened: it is not the ship which has a supernatural power, but Christ, who navigates the ship and protects the human passengers from the seemingly-invincible hardships at sea.

4.5 Conclusion

In previous chapters, I have demonstrated that a particular predilection for the theme of voyaging is deeply embedded in the Old English poetic tradition. Substantial evidence is found in biblical poems (*Exodus* and *Genesis*), heroic epics such as *Beowulf*, verse saints’ *Lives* including Cynewulf’s signed poem *Elene* and the Cynewulfian *Guthlac B*, and ecclesiastical poems like Cynewulf’s *Christ B*. The voyaging scenes in *Andreas* are notably different, due to the poet’s deliberate expansion on Andreas’s journeys. In the poet’s intricate rendition, the ship steered by Christ not only serves as a vehicle, but also emerges as a crucial component in the narrative, evolving over time into a symbol of salvation. Based on biblical and patristic models of seafaring and journeying, the

poet elaborates and enriches the maritime narrative in the original story. This creative élan demonstrates his fascination with the journeys of the apostles, and encapsulates a Christian moral framework centred around evangelisation and salvation, emphasising the life-voyage guided by Christ as a thematic motif. The *Andreas*-poet's advocacy for Christian values granted the poem an inclusion in the Vercelli Book in addition to its apostolic narrative, a manuscript composed primarily of texts revolving around Christian concepts of preaching, spiritual journey, evangelism, and salvation.[140]

Apart from *Beowulf* and Cynewulfian influences, the rare nautical terms and collocations that also appear in other earlier poems including *Genesis A* and the *Riddles* further suggest that the *Andreas*-poet may have knowledge of some established nautical poetic patterns in the vernacular tradition. Furthermore, the intertextual connections with Alfredian texts, especially poems, may lend additional support to the dating and background of *Andreas*.

The *Beowulf*-poet draws inspiration for many metaphors from Christian sources, but he seems more conservative than Cynewulf and the *Andreas*-poet, especially with regards to the diction for ships.[141] For instance, he is more inclined to coin compounds describing the physical shape and material of ships such as *hring-naca* (1862a) and *sǣ-wudu* (226a). Unlike the *Beowulf*-poet, Cynewulf and the *Andreas*-poet show a predilection for poetic metaphors, freely employing the 'sea-horse' compounds for ships. The *Andreas*-poet demonstrates a much richer variety and a higher level of

[140] McBrine, 'Journey Motif', p. 317; Leneghan, 'Teaching the Teachers', p. 653. See further Regan, 'Evangelicism', p. 276.
[141] Clemoes, 'Style as the Criterion', p. 175.

originality in phraseology by the six simplexes and fourteen compounds for ‘ship’. Half of the rare compounds are uniquely shared with poems including *Beowulf* and Cynewulf’s *Elene*, but the poet also shows a fondness for inventing new compounds by leveraging both first and second elements that occur in earlier poems.

The three Old English poets’ varied word-choices suggest different authorial purposes. The *Beowulf*-poet focuses on the visual and literal dimensions of the voyaging and ship-funeral scenes, and the traditional meaning of relevant topoi such as the ‘treasure-ship’ and ‘the arrival or departure of the hero on the beach’. As Chapter Two elaborates, the ship-funeral of Scyld Scefing in the opening part of *Beowulf*, though very similar to Saint Gildas’s ship-funeral, is essentially designed to recall the audience’s memory of the heroic, glorious past, as well as ancient ancestral customs. Furthermore, the departure and arrival passages narrating Beowulf’s sea-journey to the Danish kingdom also serve structural functions as part of envelope-patterning in the poem, featuring repetition and variation of the phraseology of ships.

By contrast, both Cynewulf and the *Andreas*-poet employ similar traditional themes of ships and seafaring, but imbue the stories of Christ and Christian heroes with Christian values and doctrines to emphasise the figurative meaning of ships and seafaring deeply-rooted in the Christian tradition. By referring to the well-established image of steering a ship in a stormy sea, both poets aim to stress the Christian notion of the life-long journey through earthly perils and temptations, where one must sail the ship-of-life towards the goal of salvation.

Compared with Cynewulf, who has only a comparatively brief section for sea-

voyages in *Elene* (226b–55) and *Christ B* (850–66) respectively, the *Andreas*-poet uses almost eight hundred lines for Andreas's voyages to and from Mermedonia. The poet greatly expands the original story (cf. *Πράξεις* 4–16 and *Casanatensis* 4–18), with an idiosyncratic nautical vocabulary reminiscent of the poem's Old English analogues. Deeply embedded in the ship-voyage narrative are the poet's advocation of evangelisation across the water for contemporary Christians, and the idea of the immanent presence of Christ after Ascension, manifested by the presence of the skipper during Andreas's ship-voyage. Apart from the Christian conception of life-voyage, the poet also stresses, with a display of words signifying ships, another theme in the Christian tradition: the ship as the Christian Church.

Similar to Noah's Ark in *Genesis A* and *Exodus*, the ship steered by Christ in *Andreas* symbolises the Christian Church, the only means of survival in a storm-tossed world. The spiritual motifs of Ship-of-the-Church and ship-of-life common in works by early and medieval Christian writers constitute the central axis along with other themes, such as the transience of worldly treasure and the immanence of God, aligned concentrically throughout the whole poem. This axis is also studded with twenty variants signifying ships, which, in effect, impart a heightened sense of unity and coherence, rendering the entire composition both cohesive and self-contained. Regarding apposition, the simplexes function as elucidating tools for the rare and unique compounds containing obscure elements in word-forms within *Andreas*. In terms of context, the patterned expressions containing these variants resonate with other Old English poems on seafaring, placing *Andreas* firmly within the broader poetic

tradition. Metaphorically, the diction for ships and seafaring serves the poet's primary objective of promoting the Christian belief in evangelisation and salvation, symbolising the challenging voyage across the sea-of-life.

Conclusion

> Ġewītan him þā Norþ-menn næġled-cnearrum,
> drēoriġ daraða lāf, on Dinges-mere
> ofer dēop wæter […] (*Brunanburh* 53–5a)[1]
>
> ('Then the Northmen retreated to their nailed vessels, the gore-stained remnant of spears, on the Dinges Sea, across the deep water […]')

The previous chapters have scrutinised in detail the rich display of ship-imagery and nautical diction in the longer narrative poems. These poems provide invaluable clues to an intricate web of cultural, religious, and literary impacts upon the dynamic evolution of ship-imagery across time. From biblical poetry and heroic epic to homiletic verse and saint's *Lives*, the concept of the 'ship' constitutes the focal component of individual narratives. Indeed, the function of the ship is multidimensional. It serves for the poets to develop an individual pattern for each poem, meditate on both the pagan past and the Christianised present, symbolise heroic identity, and echo larger cultural contexts in early medieval England.

By the tenth century, vernacular literature has shifted its focus from conventional themes onto more practical aspects, especially the dangers of the constant incursions by Vikings (and their allies), arriving on ships of their own. Ship-imagery thus becomes a cutting tool for political propaganda, as scholars have argued in the cases of prose

[1] The place-name Dinges-mere has long been a crux for modern interpretation. For more recent comments, see Paul Cavill, 'Bromborough, Brunanburh, and Dingesmere Revisited: A Response to Michael Deakin', *N&Q* 70 (2023), 224–31; Michael Deakin, 'Bromborough, Brunanburh, and Dingesmere', *N&Q* 69 (2022), 65–71; Paul Cavill, 'Escaping from Brunanburh and John of Worcester', *ES* 103 (2022), 899–919; Dave Capener, *Brunanburh and the Routes to Dingesmere* (Birkenhead, 2014); Paul Cavill, 'Coming Back to Dingesmere', *Language Contact in the Place-names of Britain and Ireland*, ed. Paul Cavill and George Broderick (Nottingham, 2007), pp. 27–41.

works on the naval force of an English king (Introduction). In vernacular poetry of this period, 'ship' primarily epitomises the 'evil' invaders from the Continent and the North.

As the quotation above demonstrates, the feature of a ship being 'nailed', which has a positive connotation of safety in *Genesis A*, *Riddles 17* [19] and *56* [58], *The Husband's Message*, and *Maxims I*, is now employed in the portrayal of the vessels of the villains. The archaic terms in this seafaring passage (such as *drēorigġ*, 'blood-stained' and *daroþ*, 'spear', 54a) lend further credence to the *Brunanburh*-poet's use of traditional heroic vocabulary.[2] The appellations of the invaders' ships as *cnear* and *nægled-cnear* (see Chapter One), which specifically denote the Norse ship-type, are indicative of the poet's conscious pairing of specific ship-imagery with the attackers (see Chapter One). The altered meaning of a 'cargo-ship' (as Old Norse *knǫrr*) to 'warship' reveals how traditional meanings of ship-terms evolve (or shift) across time in early medieval England. Alternatively, the *Brunanburh*-poet may just want to call the Viking ships 'tubs' or transports, in mockery. Moreover, the army fleeing onto their ships by the water differs from the traditional 'departure' type-scene as commonly found in earlier poems such as *Beowulf* and *Andreas*, a contrast which might also be the poet's deliberate design.

The Viking-Scot-Briton allies arrive 'on lides bosme' (27a; cf. *Genesis A* 1332a and 1410b), where traditionally the treasures are loaded (see above); later the defeated war-chief Anlaf (King of Dublin) escapes to the prow of the beached ship ('to lides

[2] The polysemic adjective *drēorigġ* is mainly prosaic, found around seventy times in the surviving corpus; yet in verse it usually means 'blood-stained' as in *Beowulf* 1417a and 2789b (which is the case of *Brunanburh*). *DOE*, **s.v.** '*drēorig*'; *WH*, '*drēorigġ*'. The term derives from *drēor* ('blood', mainly poetic), which appears eleven times, including *Genesis A* (twice), *Exodus* (once), *Beowulf* (once), and *Andreas* (three times). Similarly, *daroþ* (purely poetic) appears early, attested eight times in the corpus, including once in *Beowulf*.

stefn', 34a; cf. *Andreas* 1707b) in the sea.[3] While in earlier poems the two collocations portray a positive image, the conventional wording here in *Brunanburh* is limited to the ships of the enemies. In an ironic tone, the *Brunanburh*-poet establishes a contrast with the traditional treasure-ship motif, where the heroes, saints, and treasures are loaded. Apart from *lid* which is exclusively used in collocated forms here, the poet seems to avoid using established, or recognised terms for 'ship' throughout. There is no evidence for *bāt*, *ċēol*, *sċip*, or *fær* in *Brunanburh*, albeit this is a relatively short poem. The only exception is the polysemic term *flota* specifically describing the invaders as 'sailors' or 'ship-sailors' (*sċip-flota*, 11b), still in a derogatory sense (see Chapter One). The highly selective vocabulary for 'ship' in *Brunanburh* further demonstrates an Old English poet's awareness of his rich poetic heritage, while he displays a substantial level of creativity and sensitivity.

This thesis has demonstrated a previously overlooked aspect of nautical discourse in longer narrative poems: the prevalence of ship-imagery and disproportion in distribution of the diction and parallels for ships and seafaring in the entire Old English corpus. From the archetype of Christian ship-symbolism (Noah's Ark) to ships of heroes, saints, and common Christian believers, vernacular verse has witnessed both a common interest in and the development of ship-symbolism. Compared with the analogues in other languages, the term 'ship' is central to the themes and narratives of the major longer narrative poems considered here.

In *Genesis A* and *Exodus*, Noah's Ark is described as a house on the sea protected

[3] Fry, 'Launching Ships', pp. 62–3 and 65–6. See further Campbell, ed., *Brunanburh*, p. 108.

by God, a treasure-chest that represents divine knowledge and eternal life, and a sea-fortress that epitomises the Church and steadfast Christian belief. Additionally, in *Exodus*, the metaphorical image of the cloud-tent-ship above the Israelites calls to mind the traditional 'Ship-of-the-Church' motif, which highlights the theme of salvation through sea voyage in *Exodus*. It may be argued that this phenomenon seems to indicate the sensitivity of Old English poets to the semantic nuances behind poetic diction, showing awareness of the exclusive connotations of the Ark as a 'chest' and as a 'house' in Latin exegetical tradition. In *Beowulf*, ships are tightly allied to heroic motifs such as the 'arrival or departure of a hero on the ship' and the 'treasure-ship', yet ship-symbolism is also deeply embedded in the poet's promotion of Christian values especially regarding the idea of a salvific ship.

The three poems from the Cynewulfian group, *Elene*, *Christ B*, and *Guthlac B*, show the same appetite for appropriating vernacular legacies into Christianised narratives. Though all are based on Latinate Christian models, the three poems freely employ Germanic diction for 'ship', expand original seafaring passages, and advertise Christian ship-symbolism in familiar language and collocations. In a contextual sense, the patterned expressions containing the twenty variants in *Andreas* resonate with both earlier and contemporary verse on seafaring. Metaphorically, the diction for 'ship' serves the poet's primary objective of advocating Christian beliefs in salvation, symbolising the voyage over worldly adversities across the sea-of-life. Building on poetic tradition, the *Andreas*-poet strengthens the collective memory and perception of sea-voyage, and anchors this poem in both the Old English poetic and the Christian

literary traditions of ship-symbolism.

My research suggests several directions for future research. First and foremost, further work might extend the present study beyond the corpus of longer narrative poems to a broader range of Old English texts, such as shorter poems or the prose works. Moreover, future research might examine ship-imagery and ship-terms in early and contemporary Latin and Germanic texts, which would help articulate the interplay of language contact and cultural exchange in the early medieval period. Further research might also explore the development of nautical vocabulary and ship-symbolism in the history of English language and literature: from Old English to Middle English, then to English in the modern world, thus providing a wider picture of how relevant imagery and diction are formed and transmitted in history.

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