2. THE WANDERINGS OF SATURN: A PSYCHOGEOGRAPHICAL READING OF THE OLD ENGLISH DIALOGUES OF SOLOMON AND SATURN

Rachel A. Burns

Rachel A. Burns is a postdoctoral research assistant for the ERC-funded research project, A Consolidated Library of Anglo-Saxon Poetry, based at the University of Oxford.

Email: rachel.burns@ell.ox.ac.uk.

Introduction

In the Old English poem *Solomon and Saturn II* (*SolSatII*), an educated pagan named Saturn arrives in Jerusalem to engage in a wisdom-contest with the biblical King Solomon.[1] Saturn's pursuit of book-learning has taken him on far-reaching travels through an array of Mediterranean, East European, Central Asian, Middle Eastern and North African sites:[2]

[1] Daniel Anlezark discusses medieval wisdom literature in relation to the dialogues of Solomon and Saturn (*The Dialogues of Solomon and Saturn*, esp. pp. 12–23). All quotations from the dialogues are from Anlezark, *Dialogues*; translations are my own unless otherwise stated. The history of the term 'wisdom poetry', and problems of that category are addressed by John D. Niles in *God's Exiles and English Verse*, pp. 77 n. 21, 111. Anlezark identifies Jerusalem as the setting of the debate (*Dialogues*, p. 39). For an alternative view, see O'Neill, 'On the Date', p. 146.

[2] In *SolSatII*'s sister-poem, *Solomon and Saturn I* (*SolSatI*), Saturn, rather than the narrator, delivers a reduced version of this list of travels, making explicit his purpose of engaging with books: 'Hwæt! Ic iglanda eallra hæbbe | boca onbyrged, þurh gebregdstafas | larcræftas onlocen Libia and Greca, | swylce eac istoriam Indea rices' (Listen! I have tasted the books of every island, through cunning letters unlocked the lore-crafts of Libya and Greece, and so also the history of the kingdom of India, *SolSatI* 1–4, punctuation altered from Anlezark's

Land eall geondhwearf,

Indea mere, East Corsias,

Persea rice, Palestinion,

Niniuen ceastre, ond norð Predan,

Meda maððumselas, Marculfes eard,

Saulus rice, swa he suð ligeð

ymbe Geallboe and ymb Geador norð,

Filistina flet, fæsten Creta,

wudu Egipta, wæter Mathea,

cludas Coreffes, Caldea rice,

Creca cræftas, cynn Arabia,

lare Libia, lond Syria,

Pitðinia, Buðanasan,

Pamphilia, Pores gemære,

Macedonia, Mesopotamie,

Cappadocia, Cristes eðel

Hieryhco, Galilea Hierusalem

[[Saturn] travelled the land completely: the sea of India, East Corsias, the kingdom of Persia, Palestine, the city of Ninevah, North Predan, the treasure-halls of the Medes,

edition). These two poems are attested together in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 422 (hereafter, CCCC 422), alongside a prose text and a verse fragment (*SolSatFrag*), which together constitute the Old English dialogues of Solomon and Saturn. The poems were both written in the early tenth century, possibly by the same author or by authors in the same circle of influence (Anlezark, *Dialogues*, pp. 1–2, 11–12, 49–57). On the literary traditions which represent Saturn as a traveller and associate him with wisdom, see Anlezark, *Dialogues*, pp. 31–39. Anlezark interprets 'East Corsias' ('East Corsias', 8b) as 'East Cossias', and 'North Predan' ('norð Predan', 10b) as 'the North Parthians', Anlezark, *Dialogues*, pp. 78–79. For further discussion of difficult names and these terms as corruptions, see O'Brien O'Keeffe, 'The geographic list of *Solomon and Saturn II*', p. 136. I have utilised these discussions of names in my own translation.

the land of Marculf, Saul's kingdom, as it lies south by Gilboa and north by Gadara, the hall of the Philistines, the fortress of Crete, the wood of Egypt, the waters of Midia, the cliffs of Horeb, the kingdom of Chaldea, the arts of the Greeks, the Arabian race, the lore of Libya, the land of Syria, Bithinia, Buthanasan, Pamphilia, the border of Porus, Macedonia, Mesopotamia, Cappadocia, Christ's native country, Jericho, Gallilee, Jerusalem.]

(*SolSatII*, 7b–23).

If this list is an itinerary of Saturn's journey prior to his arrival in Jerusalem, it is a haphazard one. Some of the sites are listed in a geographically proximate order: from line 4b, we move westward from Parthia into Media, and then south-west into Chaldea (in modern-day Iran).[3] The list then jumps to the Holy Land ('Saulus rice', 12a), and such cross-regional transition is found throughout the list (e.g. from Persia to Palestine in line 9, or between Syria and Bithynia in lines 18b–19a). The list leapfrogs areas that it has already named or later returns to: Egypt is mentioned in line 15, and is then passed over in the movement from Arabia to Libya in lines 17a–18b, while Mesopotamia is skipped over between Chaldea and Israel (11b–12a), but appears later in line 20b). The list also transitions between continents, crossing the Mediterranean Sea between Crete and Egypt in lines 14–15 and moving across the land-border between Europe and Asia in line 20. This spatial disorganisation is reflected in the grammatical construction of the list: some of the place-names are direct objects of *geondhwearf* (roamed throughout, 7b); others are possessive modifiers of objects, which are either topographical (such as 'wudu', woods, 'cludas', cliffs, and 'lond', land), relate to

[3] For the suggestion that *norð Predan* indicates Parthia and that *Marculfes eard* corresponds with Chaldea, and on the textual corruptions which add difficulty to identifying many of the list's sites, see O'Brien O'Keeffe, 'Geographic List', pp. 136–8.

human settlement (e.g. ‘rice’, kingdom or ‘cynn’, people) or else refer to a nation’s knowledge (‘cræftas’, crafts; ‘lare’, lore); all (bar ‘Geallboe’ and ‘Geador’) are in apposition to ‘land eal’.[4]

It has been suggested that the arrangement of the sites in the geographic list is not particularly meaningful, and is determined primarily by the needs of alliterative metre.[5] However, between lines 8 and 23 there are only seven full lines in which a place-name in the on-verse alliterates with a place-name in the off-verse, while many of the words which take alliterative stress are not themselves place-names. For example, in lines 14–15, ‘Filistina’ alone of the four place-names takes metrical alliteration, while ‘flet’, ‘fæsten’, ‘wudu’ and ‘wæter’ carry the alliterative framework across the two lines. By using place-names as possessive modifiers of alliterating nouns, the poet has given himself the ability to flexibly arrange the sites in a variety of different orders. Furthermore, Saturn’s non-linear movement is not reflected in the account of the travels of Apollonius of Tyre given by Jerome’s *Epistula* LIII.4, which Anlezark persuasively proposes as a model for this section of *SolSat*II.[6] Although Apollonius’ journey may be characterised as meandering, moving northwards out of Persia and around the Black Sea before coming back across the continent towards India, it can certainly be read as a reasonably coherent path. The Old English poet’s stylistic control

[4] O’Brien O’Keeffe writes: ‘Syntactically, the thirty-two items in the list are in apposition to *land* and should be variations on it. Yet not every item is a land; some are people, and some, oddly, are neither people nor places but abstractions such as “Creca *cræftas*” and “*lare* Libya”. Towards the end of what remains of the list there are simply place-names without modifiers of any sort’ (‘Geographic List’, p. 127).
[5] O’Brien O’Keeffe, ‘Geographic List’, p. 130.
[6] Anlezark, *Dialogues*, pp. 36–7. I give here the translation of Jerome’s letter from ed. Fremantle, *St Jerome*, p. 97: ‘He entered Persia, traversed the Caucasus and made his way through the Albanians, the Scythians, the Massagetae, and the richest districts of India. At last, after crossing that wide river the Pison, he came to the Brahmans […]. After this he travelled among the Elamites, the Babylonians, Chaldeans, the Medes, the Assyrians, the Parthians, the Syrians, the Phoenicians, the Arabians, and the Philistines. Then returning to Alexandria he made his way to Ethiopia to see the gymnosophists and the famous table of the sun spread in the sands of the desert. Everywhere he found something to learn, so that as he was always going to new places, he became constantly wiser and better’. Numerous sources have been proposed for the geographical locations named in the list of Saturn’s travels, on which see O’Brien O’Keeffe, ‘Geographic List’.

of metrical alliteration, and his distinct approach from the model in Jerome's *Epistula*, together suggest that the geographical disorganisation of the list is purposeful.

Indeed, while the individual transitions between sites from half-line to half-line may appear meandering and chaotic, a sense of salvific direction emerges when these are considered as a whole. The list repeatedly returns to locations within the Holy Land (lines 9a, 12–13, 14a and 22b–23)[7] and the majority of the other sites named are located in the Turkish, Middle-Eastern and North African countries which surround this area.[8] Jerusalem is not just Saturn's ultimate destination, it is a centre of gravity in his long and ranging travels. The placement of Jerusalem at the centre of the world is a common feature of many late medieval *mappae mundi*, arising from geographic schemes informed by 'religious or devotional intent'.[9] In his chapter of this volume, Daniel Anlezark discusses the symbolic position of Jerusalem, both as the city of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection and as an authoritative centre of the Eastern church.[10] Israel's centrality in the travels of *SolSatII* is analogous to such cartographic practice, and other aspects of the list's organisation imply that the poet is exploiting the anagogical significance specific to this Eastern geography: within the references to Israel and its immediate neighbours, there is a shift from the evocation of Old Testament geography ('Saulus rice', 12a, and 'cludas Coreffes', 16a) to that of the New Testamant ('Cristes eðel', 23b, 'Galilea', 24a, 'Hierusalem', 24b). Furthermore, geographical coherence is restored at line 23 when Saturn at last reaches 'Christ's home', and makes his way through the biblical landscape. However, while modern-day Jericho and Jerusalem are

[7] We might include in this list 'cludas Coreffes' (16a), which O'Brien O'Keeffe reads as 'rocks of Horeb' ('Geographic List', pp. 127, 133). Horeb is another name for Mount Sinai, which, while located in Egypt, is a site of great significance in the Old Testament, being the location at which Moses receieved the Ten Commandments (Exodus 19 and 20).

[8] There is a scattering of outliers: two references to sites in modern-day India, one reference to Libya, and two references to mainland Europe in the form of Greece and Macedonia.

[9] Appleton, 'The northern world of the Anglo-Saxon *mappa mundi*', p. 282. Appleton notes, however, that this is not the case with the Anglo-Saxon *mappa mundi*¸ where it is 'the scale of the world' that the map emphasises, rather than any one human settlement.

[10] Further, on the 'symbolic' importance of Jerusalem and the Temple to Lactantius and Jerome, whose writings may have influenced the poet of *SolSatII*, see Anlezark, *Dialogues*, p. 37.

only twenty-five kilometres apart, the list takes a detour between them to Galilee in the north of Israel. This may be an extension of the non-linear journeying of the list, or it may suggest that in a spiritual sense, Galilee, as the region of Christ's birth, is closer than Jericho to Jerusalem.[11]

Whether lines 7b–23 give an account of a route undertaken by Saturn, or whether they simply summarize various journeys undertaken at different times, the configuration of sites arises from a sense of geography as something defined spiritually as well as spatially.[12] For an early medieval English author looking East, physical movement towards Jerusalem could also be read as spiritual movement towards salvation, bestowed by the divine and ecclesiastical authority of the city.[13] The structure of the poem indicates that this metaphor is intended specifically to illuminate the person of Saturn, for the list immediately follows the highly formulaic opening of the poem:

> HWÆT! IC FLITAN GEFRÆGN on fyrndagum
> modgleawe men middangeardes ræswum,
> gewesan ymbe hira wisdom. Wyrs deð se ðe liehð
> oððe ðæs soðes ansæceð. Saloman was bremra,
> ðeah ðe Saturnus sumra hæfde
> bald breosttoga, boca cæga,
> leornenga locan.

[11] Note also that Christ visits Jericho directly before his arrival in Jerusalem (Luke 18 and 19).
[12] See O'Brien O'Keeffe, 'Geographic List', p. 130.
[13] Powell argues that the Solomon-figure of the dialogues represents specifically Christian and English forms of wisdom, '[supporting] a fantasy of English superiority relative to a foreign and pagan Other' ('Orientalist fantasy in the poetic dialogues of *Solomon and Saturn*', esp. pp. 119, 143).

[Listen! I have heard of a struggle between wise-minded men in bygone days, sages of middle-earth, conversing about their wisdom. Worse does he who lies or denies the truth. Solomon was more renowned, although Saturn, thought-leader, had the keys of certain books, locked learnings.]

(SolSatII 1–7a)

The formula of the first five verses is found in seven other Old English poems.[14] Between this formula and the narrative action proper, several of these poems offer a description — typically lavish with tropes of heroic praise — of a person or people relevant to the narrative (though not necessarily the protagonist).[15] In lines 4b–7a of *SolSatII*, Solomon's fame is contrasted with Saturn's possession of book-knowledge, after which the geographical list begins. This, then, is the information the author chooses to prioritise at a narrative position typically reserved for a key moment of praise or censure: we do not discover what kind of learning Saturn has procured, or what his objectives are, we learn only of his haphazard travels through pagan lands and his inexorable movement towards the Christian authority of Jerusalem. It does, however, become clear that these travels bring with them a psychological toll, for soon after his arrival Saturn tells Solomon that his mind 'dreoseð' (drips away, 60b) in pursuit of books, causing an oppressive sense of burning around his heart (61–62).

[14] The formula consists of: a statement by a narrative *ic* ('I') or *we* ('we') that something has been heard about (here, *gefrægn*) regarding the actions (here, a debate or conversation) in *fyrndagum* (bygone days) of a certain person or group of people, who are often described using variation, here as 'wise-minded men' and 'sages of middle-earth'. The word *hwæt* often though not universally acts as an opening exclamation in this formula. The other poems with versions of or variations on this formula are: *Beowulf*, *Andreas*, *Fates of the Apostles*, *Juliana*, *Daniel*, *Exodus* and *Vainglory*. Looser variations on the formula open *Dream of the Rood* and *Judgement Day II*.

[15] In *Beowulf* we learn of the martial exploits of Scyld Scefing; *Andreas* and *Fates of the Apostles* offer praise to the twelve apostles; *Daniel* expounds the blessings of the Hebrews; *Exodus* speaks of Moses' acquisition of God's commandments; *Vainglory* briefly describes the otherwise unknown 'frod wita' (wise counsellor, 1a) whose wisdom the narrator relays to the reader. The panegyric tone of these descriptive passages contrasts with the corresponding passage in *Juliana*, which instead details the persecution of Christians by the emperor Maximian.

The act of wandering and the role of authority in delineating the spaces occupied by individuals are core interests of the modern philosophical field of psychogeography, which examines the interactivity of environment with human mentality.[16] Psychogeography has generally been studied in the contexts of its twentieth-century origins and its later practitioners, but it has been proposed that a tradition of psychogeographical literature stretches back at least as far as the work of Defoe.[17] In this chapter, I will make the case that *SolSatII* represents an earlier branch of this tradition, with principles rooted in the writings of the Church fathers and established in the practicalities of monastic life. I will argue that the geographic list deliberately presents Saturn's disordered wanderings as a spatialised metaphor for the senselessness of his pursuit of secular wisdom. I will examine the affinities between the geographic list and three other episodes in the Old English dialogues which are concerned with the act of wandering, thereby locating Saturn's waywardness within a broader theological scheme in which physical and mental stillness are critical moral virtues. I will locate the poem's consistent association of wandering with sin and mental distress in the context of influential patristic and biblical literature on the vice of *acedia*; specifically, I will argue that the poem models its psychological treatment of wandering on the extended travel metaphor used in Psalm 119 of the Bible (henceforth, Ps. CXVIII, following Vulgate numeration). We will find that while the dialogues share with later psychogeographical literature an association between wandering and subversion, that wandering is condemned by the Old English texts, where it is typically celebrated by early modern and modern counterparts. Ultimately, in a reinforcement of monastic values and practice, *SolSatII* presents holy books and texts as the cure for a wandering mind.

[16] Further, on the field of psychogeography, its interests and the relevance of wandering in the form of the *dérive*, see below.
[17] Coverley, *Psychogeography*, esp. pp. 18–20, 37–41; note also Coverley's interpretation of Peter Ackroyd.

Psychogeographical criticism and Old English verse

Psychogeography is a varied and continuously developing area of theory and practice.[18] In his seminal essay of 1955, 'Introduction to a Critique of Urban Geography', Guy Debord defines psychogeography as 'the study of the precise laws and specific effects of the geographical environment, consciously organized or not, on the emotions and behavior of individuals'.[19] However, the heterogeneity of the field in following decades has now made a comprehensive definition impossible.[20] Most famously associated with the activities of the radical left-wing group Situationists International (SI) in the 1950s and 1960s, it is an area of thought that continues to provoke new work across disciplines related to arts, social science and technology.[21] At the roots of psychogeographical study is the SI's practice of the *dérive* (literally, 'drift' or 'drifting'), a playful form of travel undertaken by one or more people through an urban landscape, characterised by 'randomness'; participants observe the 'psychogeographical contours' of an area (for example: connections and ruptures between neighbourhoods, routes of passage, points of entry and exit).[22] This exercise in wandering

[18] Bonnet, in 'Psychogeography', gives an overview of the changing history and distinct phases of psychogeographical work.
[19] Debord, 'Introduction to a Critique of Urban Geography'.
[20] Richardson notes that the discipline of psychogeography 'is hard to pin down in any formalised way', being characteristically 'disruptive, unsystematic, random' ('Introduction: A Wander through the Scene of British Urban Walking', p. 1). Coverly summarizes the 'bewildering array of ideas' referred to by the term 'psychogeography' in his literary analysis of psychogeographic writing and film from the eighteenth century to the twenty-first.
[21] Indeed, the term originates with the Situationists; on this, and the activities of the SI, see Richardson, pp. 1–2. Some select examples of recent work making explicit use of psychogeographical approaches or technique to address contemporary issues, or which utilise new technologies to enhance traditional psychogeographical analyses, follow: Elias discusses the landscape of the internet in 'Psychogeography, Détournement, Cyberspace'; Ellard considers the power of new technologies to '[transform] how we relate to our surroundings' in *Places of the Heart: The Psychogeography of Everyday Life*; in 'Psychogeography in the Age of the Quantified Self — Mental Map Modelling with Georeferenced Personal Activity Data', Meier and Glinka present 'algorithmic approaches to aggregate, analyse, and visualise personal activity data'; in her article '"Hurry up please, it's time!" A psychogeography of a decommissioned university campus', Kelly engages in attentive walking to critique contemporary attitudes to the 'economic function' of universities.
[22] Debord does question the extent to which such travel can truly be random, or guided by 'chance', but the wandering aspect of the *dérive* is established in his personal memories of 'slipping by night into houses undergoing demolition, hitchhiking nonstop and without destination through Paris during a transportation strike in the name of adding to the confusion, wandering in subterranean catacombs forbidden to the public'. Of psychogeographical contours, he writes, 'The ecological analysis of the absolute or relative character of fissures

was one of a number of strategies used by the SI to challenge the delineation of space for certain purposes by authorities and by capitalist interests; reinterpreted in different ways by modern practitioners, the *dérive* continues to hold significant currency in psychogeographical work. Theorists and practitioners at different points in the field's history have been shown to exhibit a range of motivations and objectives, mediated by new technologies and changing politics, including a desire to look beneath the banality of everyday life, an automatist engagement with chance, the fermentation of revolution, and a connection with a history embedded in the landscape.[23]

From this diverse array of responses to an indefinite concept, two recent commentators have offered comprehensive perspectives on the field: Richardson writes that 'psychogeography is about crossing established boundaries', and Coverley defines it broadly as 'the point at which psychology and geography collide, a means of calibrating the impact of place'.[24] Both of these descriptions apply well to Saturn's navigation of sacred geography in *SolSatII*, and they both provide useful points of departure from which to examine other episodes of wandering in the dialogues. Critical analysis has traced literary precursors of modern psychogeography as far back as the early eighteenth century, sharing such typical features as the portrayal of walking as a subversive act, and anti-authoritarianism.[25] It is my contention that *SolSatI* and *SolSatII* occupy a yet earlier position in this tradition, and that they represent how such a tradition manifested in England long before the reformation, in an

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in the urban network, of the role of microclimates, of distinct neighborhoods with no relation to administrative boundaries, and above all of the dominating action of centers of attraction, must be utilized and completed by psychogeographical methods.' The quotations here and above, including the translation of *dérive*, are from Debord 'Theory of the Dérive'; see also Bonnet; Richardson, pp. 1–2. For a critique of Debord's idea of the *dérive*, see Coverley, *Psychogeography*, pp. 123–27.

[23] Coverly, *Psychogeography*, esp. Introduction.

[24] Richardson, p. 2; Coverley.

[25] Löffler (*Walking in the City: Urban Experience and Literary Psychogeography in Eighteenth-Century London*) applies psychogeographical analysis to eighteenth-century literary texts as early as Tom Browne's *Amusements Serious and Comical* (1700); Coverley argues that Daniel Defoe's account of London in *Journal of the Plague Year* (1772) is 'the prototype psychogeographical report' (pp. 18–20, 37–41). On features typical of psychogeographical literature, see Coverley, p. 16.

environment of early medieval monastic literacy. I will begin by examining the mental and physical behaviours of each wandering subject, locating these in the context of theological thought on sadness and the vice of *acedia*. I will go on to consider the implications of sinful wandering for monastic communities, and how the poems' perspectives on wandering correspond with patristic literature known in early medieval England.

In undertaking this analysis, I hope also to prompt further application of psychogeographic criticism to Old English verse texts. Such core concerns of psychogeographic literature as the distinction between *walker* and *voyeur*, the exploration of neglected 'non-places', or the practice of mental travel from physical confinement may give rise to new perspectives on such well-studied episodes as Grendel's voyeurism towards Heorot from the hinterland of the moor in *Beowulf*, the imaginative travel of the Seafarer, or the threat and promise of Wulf's desired entry to the speaker's island-prison in *Wulf and Eadwacer*.[26] Such research would build on an enormous body of existing scholarship, and it is impossible to summarize succinctly here the breadth of work in the field of Old English verse which pertains to the varied concerns of psychogeography.[27] Themes of particular relevance to this chapter — the relationship between physical and mental journeying, and the intersection of physical place and human mentality — have stimulated research which, while not explicitly psychogeographic in its outlook, nevertheless forms a formidable body of psychogeographically-aligned criticism.[28]

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[26] On the phenomenon of 'non-places' and associated literature, see Coverley.

[27] For example, a psychogeographical analysis of Grendel's movement between mere and hall, across the non-space of the moors, would follow a number of papers handling the spatial organisation and representation of power in *Beowulf*'s landscape, including: Abram, 'At home in the Fens with the Grendelkin'; Appleton, 'The Role of Æschere's Head'; Langeslag, 'Monstrous Landscape in Beowulf'; Elden, 'Place Symbolism and Land Politics in *Beowulf*'; Gelling, 'The Landscape of *Beowulf*'.

[28] Neville's *Representations of the Natural World in Old English Poetry* is an important precursor to much recent work in the realm of eco-criticism, especially Chapter 3, 'Constructing society: outside and inside, powerlessness and control', pp. 53–88. For an overview of scholarship on the early medieval English literary environment which precedes recent ecocritical approaches to Old English texts, including Neville's book, see Estes, *Anglo-Saxon Literary Landscapes: Ecotheory and the Environmental Imagination*, pp. 28–31. Estes' book also offers fresh ground for examining the relationship between lived environments and their human occupants. Mental and physical wanderings in such poems as *The Seafarer* and *The Wanderer* are the subjects

Wandering through the dialogues: a thematic comparison of four passages.

Including the geographic list, there are four passages in the two poetic texts of the dialogues which feature episodes of wandering. In each case, the act of wandering is connected to distress, ignorance and sin. The first of these passages is from *SolSatI*, where Solomon compares a person who does not know the words of the Pater Noster to a wandering beast:

> Unlæde bið on eorþan, unit lifes,
> wesðe wisdomes, *weallað swa nieten,*
> *feldgongende* *feoh* butan gewitte,
> se þurh ðone cantic ne can Crist geherian
> *worað* he windes full
> […]
> Fracoð he bið ðonne and fremede frean ælmihtigum,
> englum ungelic *ana hwearfað*.
>
> [he is unhappy on earth, useless in life, empty of widsom, *roams like an animal, field-faring cattle* without wits, he who cannot glorify Christ through the canticle, wanders full of wind […] he is vile and strange to the almighty Lord, unlike the angels *he wanders alone*]

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of several important scholarly essays: Clemoes, '*Mens absentia cogitans*', esp. pp. 66–67, 69–70; Leneghan, 'Preparing the Mind for Prayer: *The Wanderer*, *Hesychasm* and *Theosis*'; Harbus, 'Travelling Metaphors and Mental Wandering in Old English Poetry', pp. 117, 123 (and on metaphors of the wandering mind in the context of *The Wanderer*, esp. pp. 124–26); Harbus, *Cognitive Approaches to Old English Poetry*, pp. 45–46; North, 'Heaven Ahoy! Sensory Perception in *The Seafarer*' (and on Augustinian influence on the poem's depiction of journeying, pp. 9–10 n. 7).

(*SolSatI*, 21–25, 34–35, emphases added)

The wandering of the man is invoked four times in this passage, twice to compare him to an animal (22, 23), once to say he is 'full of wind' (25), and once to show him as outcast from the heavenly company of angels (35).[29] It has been noted that the image of the of the field-going cattle is also found in the Old English *Soul and Body* poems: in these texts of the Vercelli Book and Exeter Book respectively, the soul berates the prostrate body for its sins, saying that it would have been better if the body had been made a mindless animal rather than a baptised man, now that damnation awaits him (*Soul and Body I*, 76–87; *Soul and Body II*, 71–81).[30] This may signal that the ignorant man of *SolSatI* 21–35 is understood to face this same judgement as a result of his spiritual deficiency. The connection between such deficiency and the act of wandering is emphasised by the alliterative scheme, which binds each verb of motion with a noun in the series of similes and metaphor: 'wesðe' (waste) and 'weallað' (roams); 'feldgongende' (field-faring) and 'feoh' (cattle); 'worað' (wanders) and 'windes' (wind).[31] The internal vacancy of the subject suggested by 'waste' and 'wind' is further emphasised by the paired alliteration on the prefix 'un-' in both on-verse and off-verse of line 21 ('unlæde', unhappy 21a; 'unit', useless 21b).[32] This has the further effect of emphasising those qualities which are ideal in a person, and which in each case have been inverted by the 'un-' prefix: a man should be both happy ('-læde') and useful ('-nit').[33] In this

[29] This section is also disucssed by Anlezark, *Dialogues*, pp. 41–2, 101.
[30] Wright, *Irish Tradition*, p. 256; see also Anlezark, *Dialogues*, p. 101.
[31] N.B. Anlezark emends *worað* from MS *warað* on grounds of sense, see *Dialogues*, p. 101.
[32] On the metrical flexibility of the *un-* prefix in *Beowulf*, see Kendall, 'The prefix un- and the metrical grammar of *Beowulf*'.
[33] This pairing of qualities is evocative of Augustine's precept on man's interaction with the physical world in *De doctrina Christiana*, in which he argues that the things of the world are made to be a) enjoyed or b) used (or else, both). On the relationship of this idea in Augustine to wandering, see below, pp. 34–35.

account, sadness and vacancy are not in conflict; rather, the apposition of *unlæde, unit* and *wesðe* suggests that these states are different aspects of the same deficiency.[34]

A more detailed account of personal misery in connection with wandering occurs in *SolSatII*, when Saturn poses a difficult question to Solomon: why do apparently equal people suffer unequal fortunes in the world? Solomon replies with an affecting vignette of a mother watching her son grow up to become an exile:[35]

> Modor ne rædeð ðonne heo magan cenneð,
> *hu him weorðe geond worold widsið sceapen.*
> […]
> Heo ðæs afran sceall oft ond gelome
> grimme greotan, ðonne he *geong færeð,*
> hafað wilde mod, werige heortan,
> sefan sorgfullne, *slideð geneahhe*
> werig, wilna leas, wuldres bedæled.
> Hwilum higegeomor *healle weardað,*
> *leofað leodum feor*; locað geneahhe
> fram ðam unlædan, ægen hlaford.

> [A mother, when she gives birth to a son, doesn't know *how his long journey will come to pass for him through the world*. […] Again and again, she must weep bitterly for that son, when, young, he *goes off*, has a wild mood, a weary heart, a sorrowful mind. *Often he falls* weary, empty of desire, deprived of glory. Sometimes, sad-

[34] Anlezark notes that 'Unlæde' is the first word spoken by Saturn in *SolSatI*, and that this corresponds with 'a pervasive concern with understanding the nature of the failure and unhappiness of the *unlæde* ("unhappy", "unfortunate") man' in *SolSatII* (*Dialogues*, pp. 50, 56, 101, 102, 131–32, 138).
[35] For a discussion of this passage see also Shippey, *Poems of Wisdom and Learning in Old English*, p. 22.

sprited, *he watches the hall, lives far from people*; often his own lord looks away from the unhappy man.]

(*SolSatII*, 193–205, emphases added)

The woman's son goes on a journey ('geong færeð', 199), but like the ignorant man of *SolSatI* 21–35, he has no stated destination. Rather, his route is described in terms of being away from both hall and people in an implicit state of exile. As in the passage on the ignorant man in *SolSatI*, this episode presents a detailed and appositive account of the wanderer's mood: wild, weary, sad, empty and inglorious. It is unclear whether this despair arises from or is the cause of the son's exile; cause and effect are tangled together, with references to his wandering (199b, 201b, 203b–204a) enveloping descriptions of his variant moods and emotions (200-201a, 202–203a).

The final of the four passages describes a man led astray by the devil:

Đonne hine ymbegangað gastas twegen;
oðer bið golde glædra, oðer bið grundum sweartra,
oðer cymeð ***
ofer ðære stylenan helle,
oðer hine læreð ðæt he lufan healed
Metodes miltse ond his mæga ræd,
oðer hine tyhteð ond on tæso læreð,
yweð him ond yppeð earmra manna
misgemynda, ond ðurh ðæt his mod hweteð,
lædeð hine ond læceð ond hine geond land spaneð

oððæt his ege bið æfðancum full,
ðurh earmra scyld yrre geworden.

[Then two spirits come about [the doomed man], one is as bright as gold, the other as dark as the earth; one comes *** the other from steely hell; one teaches him that he should hold love for God's mercy, and the teaching of his kin; the other tempts him and directs him toward injury, reveals to him and shows the more shameful of men's misunderstandings, and through this whets his mind, *leads him and abducts and entices him throughout the land* until his eyes are full of spite/injury/envy, through miserable sins he has become wrathful/gone astray.][36]
(*SolSatII*, 308–19, emphases added)

Line 317, 'lædeð hine ond læceð / ond hine geond land spaneð oððæt' ([he] leads him and abducts and entices him throughout the land), calls back to Saturn's own cross-continental travels and echoes in particular *SolSatII* line 7 ('Land eall geondhwearf', [he] travelled the land completely).[37] These lines bookend what remains of the poem with episodes of geographical meandering, and so hint at a demonic aspect to Saturn's own travels.[38] Again, the psychology of the wandering sinner comes into detailed focus in the highly physical and affecting image of line 318, where the eyes of the wandering man are full of spite, pain or jealousy ('his ege bið / æfðancum full'). This passage makes the most explicit connection

[36] Note the productive ambiguiy of 'æfðancum' and 'yrre geworden', which offer multiple perspectives on the emotions experienced by the wandering man. For this reason, I have here presented multiple concurrent translations for each, separated by a forward slash.
[37] Furthermore, Anlezark (*Dialogues*, p. 49) sees a connection between this passage and that of the young exile discussed above, suggesting that '[the] character of the tempted man recalls and extends the characterisation of the unhappy twin in the hall, turning away from the wisdom offered by his kinsman'.
[38] Note that the imperfect ending of *SolSatII* on p. 26 of CCCC 422 means that the poem survives in an incomplete form (on which see Anlezark, *Dialogues*, p. 2).

between wandering and sinfulness of the four, and is the only one to introduce an aspect of spiritual or demonic interference.

The clearest correspondence between these four passages is the association of wandering with detailed and heterogenous accounts of mental distress, partaking of aspects of despondency, sadness, weariness, ignorance and even anger.[39] In the case of the geographic list, the expression of associated mental distress follows in lines 59b–62 of *SolSatII* (as briefly discussed above):

> Mec ðæs on worolde full oft
> fyrwit frineð, fus gewiteð,
> mod gemengeð. Naenig manna wat,
> haeleða under hefenum, hu min hige dreoseð,
> bysig aefter bocum. Hwilum me bryne stigeð,
> hige heortan neah haedre wealleð.

[Very often curiosity asks me that in the world, departs with haste, confuses the mind. No man knows, warrior under heaven, how my mind drips away, busy after books. Sometimes a burning ascends within me, the mind near the heart, wells up oppressively.][40]

> (*SolSatII*, 59b–62)

The secrecy which Saturn has previously maintained around his state of mind is suggestive of shame; this sense that sadness is shameful is made concrete in *SolSatII*, when Solomon

[39] On the manifold nature of *acedia* in early Christian thought, see Wenzel, *The Sin of Sloth*.
[40] Note that there are a number of differences between the two manuscript variants of this text; for example, MS A (CCCC 422) reads 'dreoseð' (falls, drips away 60b), where MS B (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 41) reads 'dreogeð' (strives). See further Anlezark, *Dialogues* pp. 1–6, 196–98.

declares, ‘Unlæde bið ond ormod se ðe a wile geomrian on gihðe; se bið Gode fracoðast’ (Unhappy and hopeless is the one who always wants to be sad in care. He is most hateful to God, 73–74). Despair has been recognised as a psychological sin in Christian thought at least since the writings of the fourth-century hermit and mystic Evagrius Ponticus, who adopted the classical Greek term ἀκηδία (*acedia*, ‘lack of care’) as one of the eight vices.[41] In the writings of both Evagrius and his contemporary John Cassian, we find *acedia* linked to an account given in Psalm 90.6 of the ‘Demon of Noontide’; this demon attacks the isolating monk at midday, and compels him to wander out of his cell in search of stimulation.[42] Scholars have associated the ‘noontide demon’ with the dark spirit who leads the sinner astray in *SolSatII* 308–19, while the monk’s need for stimulation chimes with the ‘fyrwit’ (curiosity) which drives Saturn to travel the world. *Acedia* is a complex term, incorporating aspects both of slothfulness and despondency,[43] and this polysemous history of meaning is perhaps reflected in the appositive construction of ranging emotions expressed in the four Old English passages on wandering.

SolSatI makes its interest in *acedia* yet more explicit through a direct allusion to Psalm CXVIII. 28. In the Greek translation of the Septuagint Bible, this verse reads as follows: ‘ἔσταξεν ἡ ψυχή μου ἀπὸ ἀκηδίας’ (my spirit has dripped away because of *acedia*). In the Vulgate, the term *acedia* is replaced by the word *stultitia* (foolishness, weakness), but the body of the Psalm verse is otherwise much the same: ‘destillavit anima mea prae stultitia’

[41] Wenzel, 1–2. The complex history of this term is discussed further later in Wenzel. Cassian links *acedia* with the related theme of *tristitia* (‘dejection’, or ‘sorrow’), and Gregory the Great combines the two into the single vice of sloth in his reformed list of seven vices (Irvine, ‘Acedia, Tristitia and Sloth’, p. 96; Leneghan, p. 124 n. 9. See also Wenzel, p. 25). Gregory writes of the twofold sinfulness of *tristitia*: it represents a sinner’s fear of punishment after death, and causes them to turn to worldly comforts (*Moralia in Iob*, Book XXXI). Ælfric’s treatise on *The Vices and Virtues*, written at the turn of the eleventh century, addresses the vice of *tristitia* differently, as being a sadness that emerges from the loss of worldly goods, experienced by someone who loved them too much (See Leneghan, p. 127). On the knowledge of Evagrian thought in early medieval England, through material imported by Theodore of Tarsus and Hadrian, and through the works of John Cassian, see Leneghan, pp. 126–27. See also the chapter in this volume by Eleni Ponirakis.
[42] Irvine, p. 95; Wenzel.
[43] Wenzel.

(my soul has dripped down because of *stultitia*).[44] Saturn paraphrases this verse in *SolSatI* 59b–61a, when he says that 'no man knows how my mind drips away, busy after books'. As well as anchoring Saturn's character and his wandering pursuit of knowledge to the vice of *acedia*, this allusion exposes a host of further correspondences between the Old English texts and Psalm CXVIII. The psalm is structured around a sustained metaphor of travel in which obedience to the laws of God are configured as a foot-journeys on correct 'ways' (*viae*), while acts of wandering or straying (*errare*) are associated with sin and disobedience.[45] The psalm opens with a benediction for those who 'ambulant in lege Domini' (walk in the law of the Lord, Ps. CXVIII. 1), and closes with the singer's plea for help, as he has lost his way like a sheep ('erravi quasi ovis perdita', Ps. CXVIII. 176).[46] It is the first-person singing voice of the psalm which undertakes the metaphorical journeying in the text, often expressed as requests, e.g. 'deduc me in semita mandatorum tuorum' (lead me in the path of your commandments, CXVIII. 35), or as declarations of faith, e.g. 'recogitavi vias meas et converti pedes meos ad testimonia tua' (I have reflected upon my ways, and I have turned back my feet towards your testimonies, CXVIII. 59).[47] Crucially, the metaphorical pathways do not represent virtues, but rather the 'laws' (*mandati*) and 'commandments' (*leges*) of God, which are themselves virtuous; the direction of the singer's journey is governed by God's unquestionable authority.

[44] Vulgate quotations throughout are from Weber-Gryson. This is the wording of the *Hebraicum*, Jerome's third and final translation of the Book of Psalms. Both the *Romanum* and *Gallicanum* versions of the Psalter were more widely-attested in early medieval England, but on the availability of the *Hebraicum* from at least as early as the beginning of the eight century, see Keefer and Burrows, 'Hebrew and the *Hebraicum* in late Anglo-Saxon England'. Both the *Romanum* and *Gallicanum* versions read 'dormavit' (slept) in place of 'destillavit' (dripped down), with the verse reading, 'My soul slept because of *tædio*'. Latin *tædio* has varied meanings including 'weariness', 'boredom', 'suffering', 'disgust' (s.v. *tædio*, DMLBS) and s.v. *tædio*, Lewis and Short.

[45] In service of this metaphor, the text makes repeated use of a small set of verbs and nouns related to travel (various conjugations of *ambulare*, to walk; *quaerere*, to seek; *currere*, to run; *reverti*, to return; *errare*, to stray, and the nouns *semitae*, pathways; *viae*, ways or roads; *pedes*, feet).

[46] Note also the association here, but not in all cases throughout the Psalm, of wandering with field animals, as in *SolSatI*.

[47] In his commentary on Psalm CXVIII, which was known in England and survives in Northumbrian manuscripts of the eighth century, Cassiodorus suggests that the psalm is narrated by a 'chorus' of voices (Walsh, ed., *Explanation of the Psalms*, pp. 174–75). See also 'lucerna pedi meo verbum tuum et lux semitae meae' (your words are an oil-lamp for my feet, and a light for my paths, CXVIII. 105).

At several points, the experiences of the singer of CXVIII correspond closely with those of Saturn in the dialogues. The singer is not just a traveller, but one who travels widely in search of God's teaching, drawn by authority towards knowledge; early in the psalm he describes himself as an outsider who needs God's truth to be revealed to him.[48] This aligns with Saturn's multinational pursuit of learning, and his inevitable movement towards the sacred authority of Jerusalem in search of the knowledge that will truly satisfy him: the Pater Noster prayer (*SolSatI*, 1–12). Solomon does indeed teach Saturn about the prayer, which he characterises as a song to be invoked ('singan soðlice', *SolSatI*, 85a). The Psalm itself is intended to be sung, and the singer also promises to 'utter a hymn' ('fundant […] hymnum') in response to receiving God's teachings (CXVIII. 171), and even alludes to this song being sung after long travels.[49] Solomon tells Saturn that knowledge of the Pater Noster will be 'more beloved to him than all this bright creation founded from the earth, of gold and of silver' ('leofre ðonne eall ðeos leohte gesceaft gegoten fram ðam grunde goldes and silofres', *SolSatI*, 30–1), which echoes the praise of Ps. CXVIII. 72: 'melior mihi est lex oris tui super milia auri et argenti' (better to me is the law of your mouth, above thousands of gold and of silver). The context of the wisdom-debate itself might draw upon Ps. CXVIII. 23, 'sedentes principes adversum me loquebantur' (seated princes spoke against me), particularly in the description of Solomon and Saturn as 'middangeardes ræswum' (princes of middle-earth, *SolSatII*, 2b).[50]

[48] 'et ambulabo in spatioso quia praecepta tua quaesivi' (and I will walk in wideness, because I have sought for your teachings, CXVIII. 45); 'advena ego sum in terra ne abscondas a me mandata tua' (I am a foreigner on the earth, do not conceal your commandments from me, CXVIII. 19). The word *advena* means literally, 'one who arrives', which is how the geographic list presents Saturn following the poem's formulaic introduction, as discussed above.

[49] 'carmina erant mihi praecepta tua in domo peregrinationis meae' (your teachings were my song in the house of my pilgrimage, CXVIII. 54).

[50] See also CXVIII. 61, 'principes persecuti sunt me sine causa' (princes have pursued me without reason).

The extent of the engagement between the two main poems of the dialogues and Ps. CXVIII has not been previously noted.[51] Furthermore, the importance of this biblical text to the fabric of *SolSatI* and *SolSatII* suggests something important and perhaps unexpected about the fate of their pagan protagonist, Saturn. Anlezark notes that Saturn is 'sincere' in his pursuit of Christian knowledge,[52] and we have already observed that Jerusalem has exerted a repeated and almost gravitational pull on his travels. Ps. CXVIII suggests that even a traveller who has strayed from God's truth will achieve salvation if he seeks out the correct path: 'tuus ego sum salva me quoniam praecepta tua quaesivi' (I am yours, save me since I have sought your teachings, CXVIII. 94). Manuscript lacunae obscure the endings of both *SolSatI* and *SolSatII*, but in the verse fragment which sits between the two longer poems in CCCC 422, Solomon is declared to have overcome Saturn.[53] This defeat prompts Saturn to express joy, 'Næfre ær his ferhð ahlog' (Never before had his heart laughed, *SolSatFrag*, 9b), while the text reminds us that he had 'feorran gefered' (travelled from far off, *SolSatFrag*, 9a). This signals a great change from the distress expressed by Saturn earlier in the debate and associated with his wanderings more generally. Despite Saturn's intellectual deficiencies,[54] it appears that his pursuit of Christian knowledge may allow him to achieve salvation; his straying and wandering has become correct and Christian movement through exposure to a sacred text.

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[51] In addition to what is discussed above, a further possible correspondence may exist between the numerous references to the sinfulness and punishment of 'the proud' in Psalm CXVIII (*superbi*, verses 21, 51, 69, 78, 122), and the two descriptions of Saturn's people, the Chaldeans, as proud (*SolSatII* 30b, 149a). Two further connections between Psalm CXVIII and the dialogues have been previously noted by scholarship: in *SolSatI* the Pater Noster is credited with the ability to rescue souls from Hell, and Godel ('Irish Prayer in the Early Middle Ages II', p. 74) notes that this ability is usually attributed to Psalm CXVIII (see also Anlezark, *Dialogues*, p. 26); Wright draws attention to a connection between 'drops' and Psalm CXVIII, not in connection with *SolSatI* lines 59b–62, but in connection with an earlier passage on torments faced by the devil (p. 238; see also Anlezark, *Dialogues*, pp. 102–03).

[52] Anlezark, *Dialogues*, p. 13.

[53] For a theory that this fragment was originally the conclusion to *SolSatII*, see Anlezark, 'The Stray Ending'; Anlezark, *Dialogues*, pp. 45, 49.

[54] On which, see Wilcox, 'Eating Books: The Consumption of Learning in the Old English Poetic *Solomon and Saturn*', pp. 116–17; Powell, pp. 122–124; Anlezark, *Dialogues*, pp. 41, 101; Beechy, 'Wisdom and the Poetics of Laughter in the Old English *Dialogues of Solomon and Saturn*', esp. 139–140.

I have spoken both of a gravitational 'pull' exerted by Jerusalem upon Saturn, and also of his active wanderings, and this tension raises a question about the agency of the four wandering figures in the poems. Saturn's challenge to Solomon implies that his journey has been undertaken voluntarily (*SolSatI*, 13–20), however, a pagan tradition of Saturn as an exile is reproduced in the *Institutiones* of Lactantius, which has parallels in the dialogues and may have been known in early medieval England.[55] Saturn's mental distress adds nuance to the idea of agency, for his suffering appears to be the result of his 'curiosity', and it is this 'curiosity' which appears to exert control: it asks Saturn questions, and is eager to set out in the world (57b–58b). The impression that Saturn is compelled in his travels by forces beyond his control is further suggested by the parallel between his world-wide wanderings, and the wanderings of the sinner led across many lands by a demon in *SolSatII*, 308–19, as discussed above. The wanderings of the ignorant man in *SolSatI* (21–25, 34–35) represent his lack of Christian knowledge, and while he is not driven the subject is presented as possessing no more autonomy or agency than an animal. The young exile of *SolSatII* (193–205), like Saturn, seems to depart independently (*geong færeð*, 199). His displacement is figured not, as in the other passages, by where he wanders to, but by where he has wandered from: he exits the hall, he lives away from people, and his lord looks away from him. The angels ('englum', *SolSatI*, 35a) in the account of the ignorant man and the lord ('hlaford', *SolSatI*, 205b) in the account of the young exile represent parallel models of authority. This analogy between secular, heroic hierarchy and heavenly order is a typical trope in Old English verse. As well as representing the sinfulness of spiritual wandering in material and social terms, the comparison points to the sinfulness of challenging divinely-appointed authorities on earth, or absconding from the spaces they rule over.

[55] Anlezark, *Dialogues*, pp. 31, 35–36.

Approaching acts of wandering as a monastic concern

The Dialogues were most likely written in the context of early-tenth-century monastic reform, composed for a learned religious audience.[56] I have previously explored pedagogical function in *SolSatI*, arguing that the poem incorporates exercises designed to train readers in exegetical analysis, and identifying the dialogues as participants in 'a monastic poetics'.[57] These contexts provide a rationale for the texts' concern with mental aberration in the pursuit of knowledge, with the four metaphorical episodes of wandering providing distinct exempla of what such straying might look like to someone with access to a monastic library: ignorance of Christian learning (the episode of the ignorant man); the pursuit of pagan knowledge or purposeless engagement with non-Christian literature (Saturn's wanderings); deviation from figures and standards of authority (the exile of the young man); and the risk of following bad teachings over good ones (the episode of the sinner led by a demon). The dialogue-structure of both *SolSatI* and *SolSatII* further lends to the poem the pedagogical aspect of famous dialogue literature circulating in early medieval England, such as Boethius' *De Consolatione de Philosophiae* and Gregory's *Dialogues*.[58] Indeed, in Book II of his *Dialogues*, on the life of St Benedict, Gregory tells a story about sin and wandering in a monastic setting (emphases on aspects related to wandering added):[59]

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[56] Anlezark has persuasively argued that the author of the dialogues is likely to have been St Dunstan or one of his circle at Glastonbury during the reign of King Athelstan (*Dialogues*, pp. 49–57). For alternative arguments proposing composition during the Alfredian period, see O'Neill; Wade, 'Language, Letters and Augustinian Origins in the Old English Poetic *Solomon and Saturn I*'. In his introduction, Anlezark contextualises the dialogues, addressing a number of sources and related genres with teaching functions, see *Dialogues*, esp. pp. 16–17, 24, 36–37; on the 'learned' character of the dialogues, see Anlezark, *Dialogues*, 'Introduction'.

[57] Burns, '*prologa prima*'; I follow Winfried Rudolf's comments on the pedagogical function of medieval riddles in teaching exegetical skills ('Riddling and Reading: Iconicity and Logogriphs in Exeter Book *Riddles* 23 and 45', esp. p. 501). 'Monastic poetics' is a term used by O'Camb (*Toward a Monastic Poetics* and 'The Exeter Book'); see also Niles.

[58] Note that Solomonic dialogues are a distinct and heterogenous tradition, which Anlezark summarizes (*Dialogues*, 12–15).

[59] Another episode of demonic wandering in patristic writing, which may provide an analogue to Saturn's wanderings in *SolSatI*, occurs in Evagrius' *On Thoughts*, Book 9, 'There is a demon known as the one who leads astray, ['wanderer'] who especially at dawn presents [himself] to the brothers, and leads around the mind of the solitary from city to city, from house to house, from village to village' (translation from Cassiday, *Evagrius*

> In uno autem ex eis monasteriis quae circumquaque construxerat, quidam monachus erat qui ad orationem stare non poterat: sed mox ut se fratres ad studium orationis inclinassent, ipse egrediebatur foras, *et mente vaga terrena aliqua et transitoria agebat.*
>
> [Also, in one out of those monasteries which [Benedict] had built all around, there was a certain monk who was not able to remain at prayers: but as soon as the brothers turned to the study of prayers, he would go outside, *and with a wandering mind occupied himself with something earthly and transitory*.]

The monk was sent to St Benedict himself for correction, but when this failed to have a permanent effect, Benedict came himself to the monastery:

> Cumque vir Dei venisset ad idem monasterium, et constituta hora, expleta psalmodia sese fratres in orationem dedissent, *aspexit quod eumdem monachum qui in oratione manere non poterat, quidam niger puerulus per vestimenti fimbriam foras traheret.*
>
> [And when the man of God went to that same monastery, and the hour was established when the singing of psalms was completed and the brothers gave

Ponticus, p. 96). For discussion of this passage see also Leneghan, pp. 124–25. Links between *SolSatII* and the writings of Gregory have been observed by Hill ('Two Notes on *Solomon and Saturn*', pp. 218–19), who notes that the account of the damned sinner in *SolSatII* draws from Gregory's description of the stages of sin in his *Moralia in Iob*, and Anlezark, who points to a shared interest in 'psychological process' between the two texts (*Dialogues*, p. 138). This attention to 'psychological process', then, seems to be part of a broader association between wandering, sinfulness and misery made across the dialogues and ultimately drawn from patristic tradition.

themselves to prayer, *[Benedict] noticed that a certain dark little boy drew that same monk who was not able to remain in prayer outside by the border of his vestments*.]

In this anecdote about Benedict's encounter with a restless monk, wandering is both physical (the monk would leave the place of prayer) and mental (his 'wandering mind' was concerned with 'earthly and transitory things'). The passage is concerned particularly with the interrelated governance of both space and time by communal rules: at the time the brethren must kneel down inside, the aberrant monk walks outside, and it is at the particular time between the singing of psalms and the saying of prayer that the devil appears to lead him astray. The problem of wandering is here presented as a subversive violation of the monastic rhythms required for both individual devotion and collective organisation. Gregory addresses the more abstracted issue of the 'wandering mind' in Book XIX of his *Moralia in Iob*: a wandering mind is a symptom of a deficiently 'light' (*leves*) soul, easily lifted into motion by a force like wind; virtuous advice can provide weight, steadfastness and constancy.[60] Gregory's reference to 'wind' may have influenced the episode of the ignorant man (*SolSatI*, 26a) who wanders 'windes ful' (full of wind). Elsewhere in the *Moralia*, Gregory notes that the rigour of habit and ritual is not enough to guarantee salvation, for mental wandering may be a precursor to sin (emphases added):[61]

Nam saepe corde perverso necdum processit usque ad effectum operis deliberatio cogitationis, et adhuc fortasse per habitum intus astringitur, *qui jam mente foris vagatur*.

[60] Liber XIX, Caput viii. Latin text from Migne, *PL* 76, col. 100.
[61] Liber XXV, Caput viii. Latin text from Migne, *PL* 76, col. 331.

> [For often, the heart being corrupted, but the deliberation of thought not yet advanced all the way to an effected action, and perhaps even now through religious life [he] is internally constrained, *who already wanders outside in [his] mind*.]

St Benedict himself addresses material and administrative concerns around practices of wandering in his *Rule*. He criticises the itinerant order of 'Girovagi' monks, who are 'semper vagi et numquam stabiles. et propriis voluptatibus et gule illecebris servientes' (always wandering and never stable, serving their own pleasures and the enticements of gluttony, Chapter I).[62] Here, wandering is not a compulsion brought on by the vice of *acedia*, but is rather an action that enables the pursuit of ungodly gratifications. As part of instruction for the organisation of a monastery, Benedict advises: 'Ad portam monasterii ponatur senex sapiens […] et cuius maturitas eum non sinat vagari' (At the gate of the monastery let one be placed who is old and wise […] and whose maturity does not permit him to wander, Chapter LXVI). In this instance, wandering is a problem that might afflict monastic administration. Much of the *Rule* concerns temporal organisation of the monastery's inhabitants, particularly those chapters dedicated to the Offices (see Chapters VII–XVII), but spatial organisation is also key, such as the instructions for monks' sleeping arrangements (Chapter XXII), methods of punishment (Chapter XXIV), and guidance on whether monks who leave a monastery should be allowed to return (Chapter XXIX). Other orders had different spatial and temporal systems of organisation, for example, the isolation of anchorites, or the constant movement of Girovagi. Literary-pedagogical warnings against the perils of physical and mental wandering therefore have as much of a role for collective organisation as for individual salvation. The spatialisation of authority which we encounter both in Saturn's circuitous route to Jerusalem

[62] Latin text from Logeman, *The Rule of S. Benet*, p. 11.

and in the episode on the young exile who abandons the hall may have emphasised for the reader that the spatial and temporal arrangement of monastic life was not to be strayed from.

Books as an antidote to the wandering mind in the dialogues.

While warning the reader about the perils of wandering away from wisdom and authority, the poems also offer an antidote which can bring fixity and stillness to the mind: the power of holy books and texts. Leneghan has written about a similar process at work in the composition of *The Wanderer*, which is intended as a 'meditative tool' for monks, drawing upon treatises by Evagrius and Cassian on the achievement of *hesychasm*, 'stillness in prayer'.[63] God's disdain for wilful ignorance, and the power of Christian literature to overcome such ignorance with spiritual learning, is enshrined in the gnomic verse wisdom of the Exeter Book poem, *Instructions for Christians* (63–65, 83–86):[64]

> Swa hwilc man swa mæg and nu nele
> Geleornian hwaet-hwugo, he bið lað Gode,
> And his saul bið swið scyldig.
> […]
> Se ðe leornunge longe fyligeð
> Halgum bocum her on worulde,
> Heo ðone gelaeredon longe gebetað
> And þone unlaerdan eac gelaereð.

[63] Leneghan, esp. pp. 123–4, 139–40.
[64] Old English from Jones, *Old English Shorter Poems*, p. 143.

> [So, if a man may but does not now wish to learn something, he will be hateful to God, and his soul will be very guilty. […] He who for a long time attends to learning, through holy books here in the world, he will long amend the learned, and also teach the unlearned.]

Benedict's own stipulations regarding monastic reading in the *Rule* imply that engagement with books has a curative and even penitential aspect (by association with the season of Lent) for brethren:[65]

> Otiositas inimica est anime et ideo certis temporibus occupari debent fratres in labore manuum certis iterum horis in lectione divina.
>
> [Idleness is the enemy of the soul, and therefore the brothers ought to be occupied at certain times in manual labour, and at certain times in divine reading.]
> (Chapter XLVIII.1)
>
> In quadragesime vero diebus a mane usque ad tertiam plenam vacent lectionibus suis […]. In quibus diebus quadragesime accipiant omnes singulos codices de bibliotheca quos per ordinem ex integro legant
>
> [Truly, in the days of Lent, from morning until the completion of the third hour let them have time for their readings […]. During those days of Lent, let everyone recieve a book from the library, which they are to read in order in its entirety]
> (Chapter XLVIII.14–16)

[65] Latin text from Logeman, pp. 81–3.

In the dialogues, books repeatedly feature two characteristics which demonstrate their role as antidote: they explicitly encourage virtue; and they espouse a fixed spatiality to counter wandering motion.[66] This association arises in one of the riddlic exchanges of *SolSatII*:

SATVRNVS CVAEÐ:

Ac hwæt is se dumba, se ðe on sumre dene resteð?

Swiðe snyttrað, hafað seofon tungan,

hafað tungena gehwylc . xx . orda,

hafað orda gehwylc engles snytro,

ðara ðe wile anra hwylc uppe bringan,

ðæt ðu ðære gyldnan gesiehst Hierusalem

weallas blican ond hiera winrod lixan,

soðfæstra segn. Saga hwæt ic mæne.

SALOMON CVAEÐ:

Bec sindon breme, *bodiað geneahhe*

weotodne willan ðam ðe wiht hygeð,

Gestrangað hie ond gestaðeliað staðolfæstne geðoht,

amyrgað modsefan manna gehwylces

of ðreamedlan ðisses lifes.

[SATURN SAID: But what is that voiceless thing, which rests in a certain valley? It is very wise and has seven tongues, each tongue has 20 points, each point has the

[66] Powell comments briefly on the power of books in relation to journeying in *SolSatII*, writing that 'books are a place one can go to seek shelter — or in this case, wisdom — during an intellectual or spiritual storm before leaving again on one's own educational journey' (p. 125).

wisdom of an angel, each and every one of these will bring you up *so that you see the golden walls of Jerusalem shining*, and the joyful chorus gleaming, a sign of the righteous. Say what I mean.

SOLOMON SAID: Books are illustrious, *they earnestly announce the fixed mind to anyone who thinks a wiht, it strengthens and establishes firm-fixed thought, cheers the mind of each man* from the mental strife of this life.]

(*SolSatII*, 52–64)

The subject of this exchange is not known until Solomon responds, 'Bec' (books, 60). His response precisely mirrors precisely the sequence of attributes which Saturn uses in his riddle: each speaker first addresses the greatness of books and the way books speak, before moving to consider the power of books, both to counter wandering with fixed spatiality, and also to counter sadness. This mirroring by Solomon shows him responding to every aspect of Saturn's puzzle in a display of his God-granted wisdom and its superiority over Saturn's pagan education. The exchange aligns geographical and mental fixedness: Saturn states that books have the power to raise up a reader until they can see Jerusalem — the setting of the poem and the seat of biblical learning — and Solomon responds that a book 'strengthens and establishes firm-fixed thought'. It is fitting that Saturn, who is limited by his pagan outlook throughout the poems, and who critics have often described as overtly literal in his understanding, sees only the material, geographical aspects of fixedness.[67]

There are several such references to books across the two poems, two of which occur in *SolSatI*:

[67] For the argument that *SolSatII* line 89a and the subsequent episode of the Pater Noster battle can be read as training for monks to read both literally and spiritually, see Burns, '*prologa prima*'. For interpretations of Saturn as a character who interprets too literally, see: Powell, p. 128; Wilcox.

Þonne him bið leofre ðonne eall ðeos leohte gesceaft
gegoten fram ðam grunde goldes and silofres,
feðerscette full fyrngestreona,
gif he æfre ðæs organes owiht cuðe.

[Then it will be more beloved to him than all this bright creation founded from the earth, of gold and silver, *the four corners* full of ancient treasure, if he ever knew a wiht of that song [the Pater Noster].]
(*SolSatI*, 30–33)

Forðon hafað se cantic ofer ealle Cristes bec
widmærost word; he gewritu læreð,
stefnum steoreð, ond him stede healdeð
heofona rices

[Therefore, the canticle has, above all the books of Christ, the most far-famed words; it teaches the scripture, *steers voices, and keeps an appointed place for them in the kingdom of heaven*.]
(*SolSatI*, 49–52)

The canticle, or the Pater Noster, is variously imagined in *SolSatI* as a written and an oral text; in the second of these two extracts we can see it compared superlatively both to 'the books of Christ', but also described as steering 'voices'.[68] In each extract, the Pater Noster is

[68] O'Brien O'Keeffe argues that the battle of the letters engages with a tradition of 'tension' between written and spoken language (*Visible Song*, pp. 51–59).

linked to imagery suggestive of fixed spaces and destinations: in lines 30–33, the favourable comparison of the Pater Noster to a map-like description of creation, with its 'four corners'; in lines 49–52, the power of the prayer to 'steer' voices, who we are led to believe must belong to mortal souls, for the prayer also 'keeps an appointed place for them in […] heaven', spatialising their salvation. This image draws on a tradition of early-medieval cartography in which maps were used to communicate spiritual and political messages, as discussed by Helen Appleton in her chapter of this volume. Another example of the spatial representation of grace in Old English verse comes at the end of the Exeter Book poem, *The Wanderer*, where the final image that the speaker gives us of the hope he has in heavenly salvation is that of *fæstnung* ('fixity') in heaven, 'the place of God'.[69] A metaphor of books as guardians of sea-travellers occurs early in *SolSatII*:

> Sige hie onsendað soðfæstra gehwam,
> *hælo hyðe*, ðam ðe hie lufað.
> [They send victory to each of the righteous, *safety through a port*, for those who love [books].]
> (*SolSatII*, 67–68).

I have argued elsewhere that aspects of the Pater Noster battle in *SolSatI* are intended to provide monastic readers with exempla of the practice of *lectio divina*, or divine reading, and affirmations of its value.[70] Anlezark has argued that *SolSatI* may have been intended as a 'sequel' to *SolSatII*, with the Pater Noster battle offering a salvific answer to the problem of the wandering sinner at the end of *SolSatII*.[71] It would certainly be fitting if the first poem in

[69] Leneghan, p. 131, and see also p. 137.
[70] Burns, '*prologa prima*'.
[71] Anlezark, *Dialogues*, p. 56.

the sequence (*SolSatII*) proffered the antidote of books to the wandering mind, and the second poem (*SolSatI*) gave advice on how best to read them.[72]

Conclusions

The psychogeographical contours affecting the wandering figures of the dialogues draw a contrast between established practices or communal knowledge on the one hand, which are figured as spatially fixed and psychologically curative, and movement at odds with such practices or authority on the other hand, which are figured as spatially aberrant and haphazard, as well as mentally distressing. Named structures and spaces appear in the dialogues — field, hall, and temple — but the episodes of wandering, much like source-material in the discussed patristic literature, expend more focus on describing motion towards or away from members of a social or Christian community, and the psychology of the wanderers. Spiritual and mental peace are to be found by engaging with holy texts which, map-like, will help the reader reach fixity of both thought and place.

Daniel Defoe, William Blake, Robert Louis Stevenson and other writers of the early Modern period have been identified as 'unacknowledged forebears' of the psychogeographical tradition later claimed by Debord and the Situationists.[73] Unsurprisingly, the episodes of wandering in the tenth-century dialogues reveal very different perspectives on the conjunction of space and authority than is imagined by Debord in his theory of the *dérive*. For Debord and his contemporaries, the individual's resistance to received definitions of space was a means of rescuing both the city and the individual from authoritarian and

[72] Anlezark also notes of Jerome's description of travelling pagans in *Epistula liii*: 'Reading the book is not enough, as its meanings are enigmatic, and only with the "key" can the mystery be understood', a reference perhaps linked to Saturn's unlocking of books in *SolSatII* (*Dialogues*, p. 38). On runes in *SolSatI*, see further Birkett, 'Unlocking Runes?', esp. pp. 108–09.
[73] Coverley, esp. 14, 34–65; see also Ackroyd, 'Englishness', p. 339.

capitalist domination; for St Dunstan and his contemporaries, such resistance would have certainly meant damnation for the individual, and threatened the community as a whole. This is perhaps not so much a distinct outlook on the act of wandering, as on pleasure and the value of subjective experience. As influential a contemporary as Augustine is acutely aware of the pleasure an individual finds in the earthly wanderings of human life, and he makes it clear that such pleasure it entirely misplaced:[74]

> Quomodo ergo, si essemus peregrini, qui beate vivere nisi in patria non possemus, eaque peregrinatione utique miseri et miseriam finire cupientes, in patriam redire vellemus [...] quod si amoenitates itineris, et ipsa gestatio vehiculorum nos delectaret, et conversi ad fruendum his quibus uti debuimus, nollemus cito viam finire, et perversa suavitate implicati alienaremur a patria, cujus suavitas faceret beatos: sic in hujus mortalitatis vita peregrinantes a Domino.
>
> [Therefore how would it be, if we were travellers abroad, who were not able to live happily unless in our homeland, and in any case were feeling miserable through travel and desiring to end our misery, we might desire to return to our homeland […] but if the pleasantness of the journey and the conveyance of the vehicles themselves delight us, and having inverted that which we ought to use into what is to be enjoyed, we are unwilling to quickly finish the course, corrupted and embraced by sweetness, we are alienated from the homeland whose sweetness would make us truly happy: so it is in this mortal life, wandering away from God.]
>
> (*De doctrina Christiana*, I. iv)

[74] Latin text from Migne, *PL* 34, cols. 20–1. On the metaphor of life-as-journey, Augustinian thought and the 'Christian imperative to travel purposefully', see Harbus, 'Travelling Metaphors', pp. 128–29.

Thus, this highly intellectual Old English verse collection grapples with issues which have continued to trouble philosophers some thousand years later: the interaction of spatiality and human mentality, and the control and definition of communal spaces by authorities. The subversive act of wandering has a literary history that goes back further than Defoe, indeed to the earliest centuries of English writing.

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