

# HAPAX LEGOMENA AS POETIC DEVICES IN THE OLD ENGLISH *ANDREAS*

by

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(Under the direction of Dr. Jonathan Evans)

## ABSTRACT

The Old English poem *Andreas* has prompted more than its share of critical debate, much of it centering around the poem's literary quality. Scholars have found fault with the poem for what has been perceived as inapposite phrasing; a common conception is that the *Andreas* poet attempted to make his verse sound elevated or impressive, with little apparent understanding of the appropriate poetic uses of the phrases he employed. The dissertation proposes a reassessment of the poem and the poet's skill through an examination of the 160 hapax legomena appearing in it. Hapax legomena are words that appear only once in the Old English corpus. Close analysis reveals that in *Andreas*, hapax legomena concisely express poetic meaning through a complex confluence of cultural, literary, and linguistic influences in Anglo-Saxon poetry. These disparate influences unite briefly in the hapax legomenon, producing a new means of expression expanding the range of existing traditional poetic diction. As a result, a picture of the *Andreas* poet emerges as a creative, imaginative, and innovative *scop* who performed the complex cultural and artistic act of drawing both on the vocabulary of his traditional poetic inheritance and on the newer elements of the Christian story.

Chapter One presents the critical reception of *Andreas* and the relevance of a study of the hapax legomena appearing in the poem. Chapter Two outlines the contact of cultures that took place in Anglo-Saxon England and argues that the education of a poet could result in a heightened awareness of the history and formation of words and readiness to experiment with the creation of new ones. Chapter Three demonstrates the poet's deliberate creation and placement of hapax legomena; as a result, these words play a significant role in the interpretation of the poem, as they depict key images, concepts, and themes. Chapter Four further explores how hapax legomena provide the audience clues for an exegetical reading of the poem's scenes and characters. Chapter Five examines how the poem's hapax legomena mirror the syncretism of Anglo-Saxon culture.

INDEX WORDS: *Andreas*, Hapax legomena, Hapax legomenon, Anglo-Saxon, Poetry, Syncretism, Vocabulary, Andrew, Saint, Hagiography, Nonce-word, Germanic, Christian, Old English.

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## DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my parents, Kenneth and Caroline Green, and to all my family who came before me. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The Old English poem *Andreas*,<sup>1</sup> one of a number of recensions of the apocryphal story of the saint Andrew, has prompted more than its share of critical debate. At times, in fact, it appears to have attracted more controversy in the scholarly community than respect. It is just one member of a genre of apocryphal tales detailing the lives of the twelve apostles beyond what was recounted in the books of the New Testament, “pseudo-biblical” works of religious literature which were “rejected by the Church as spurious” (Lapidge 260). Although these works began appearing in the second century, Cynewulf’s poem *Fates of the Apostles* continues the apocryphal tradition centuries later (Boenig v). One of the controverted issues surrounding *Andreas* concerns its authorship; since *Andreas* directly precedes *Fates* in the Vercelli manuscript, there has been speculation that Cynewulf authored both poems, but although much debated, that theory has remained unsubstantiated (Brooks xxi). A second source of controversy involves the direct source of the poem. While versions of the legend abound, in languages as diverse as Old French and Arabic, the most probable sources are Greek or Latin. Of these, Robert Boenig selects the Greek *Praxeis Andreou kai Matheian eis ten Polin ton Anthropophagi* (Acts of Andrew and Matthew in the City of the Cannibals), and a complete Latin version located in the Codex Casanatensis, a twelfth-century manuscript, as the two works most closely related to the source used by the *Andreas*-poet (ii).

However, neither of these can be designated the immediate source of the poem, and for now that critical question remains unanswered (Boenig ix).

These venerable controversies notwithstanding, the most contentious and lively debate in recent years has been over the poem's literary quality. The poem has suffered markedly from the comparisons of those who hold it up to the standard of *Beowulf*, occasioned by particularly striking similarities of phrasing between the two poems. From this perspective on *Andreas*, however, scholars unfortunately have tended not to evaluate the poem on its own merits but instead to view it as a second-rate imitation of *Beowulf*. The main criticism leveled at *Andreas* is that the poet haphazardly appropriates phrasing from *Beowulf* in an attempt to sound elevated or impressive, with little apparent conception of the appropriate poetic usage of the phrases he employs. A recent editor, Kenneth R. Brooks,<sup>2</sup> echoes this mode of thinking in his introduction: "expressions which are appropriated in the signed poems and in *Beowulf* are found in *Andreas* in contexts to which they are not suited: Schaar and others have held these to be conscious imitations, but they may be stock formulas which the *Andreas* poet has used in a clumsy manner" (xxi). The extremes to which this approach may be taken are revealed in Brooks's comment that "Schaar . . . has also assembled a number of parallels between *Andreas* and other Old English poems, many of which he regards as clumsy or unnatural in their *Andreas* contexts" (xxv). In a chapter on "The Old English Period," J. E. Cross faults the poem for its "absurdities where the poet has incongruously inserted phrases found congruously in *Beowulf*, possibly to recall this poem, or to use whatever 'poetic' phrase he could interweave" (55). The damning result of this comparative evaluation of *Andreas* is summed up by Cross's final words on the poem: "*Andreas* to the Anglo-

Saxon listeners may well have been of the same standard and had the same effect as an average thriller of today” (55). Such an opinion, advanced in Volume 1 of *The Penguin History of Literature, The Middle Ages*, can hardly nurture the critical reputation of the poem.

The intent of this chapter is not to attempt to settle these longstanding scholarly disagreements; its concern is not with the authorship, sources, or analogues of the poem. Rather, as much of the criticism leveled at the poem has been directed at the lexical level, I wish to begin a reassessment of *Andreas* with an examination of its vocabulary. I hope to counter the perceptions of the poet as lacking creativity and artistic skill with a view of the poet as creative, imaginative, and innovative, one who performed the complex cultural and artistic act of drawing on both the traditional poetic inheritance and the new elements of the Christian story he was telling in a written medium that still bore witness to a past orality. At the same time, a concomitant goal is to justify the poem as worthy of study through a demonstration of its high degree of artistic achievement. Both benefits can be achieved through a study of the poem’s hapax legomena, a Greek term for “once-said words” (Lester 53), indicating words that appear only once in the Old English corpus. The most recent editor of *Andreas* earmarks 160 of the poem’s words as unique; the editor of *Exodus* finds 166 such words in a poem of 590 lines, while *Beowulf* contains hundreds of hapax legomena. In his introduction to the poem, the editor of *Exodus* praises its stylistic genius and points to its high number of unique words, saying, “Such hapax legomena may well be coinages” (49). In a similar vein, Klaeber comments that “[a] good many terms are nowhere recorded outside of *Beowulf*, and not a few of these may be confidently set down as of the poet’s own coinage” (lxiii). In each of these

statements, the incidence of hapax legomena is taken to be evidence of the poet's creativity and artistic skill; I wish to draw a similar conclusion from *Andreas* concerning the quality of the poet and poem. Certainly there are other ways of approaching the poem in an effort to appreciate its merit and creativity. Hapax legomena provide one, but not the only, portal through which to explore the poem on a lexical level. A less limited method would be to examine these words as kennings, which might open up greater interpretative possibilities. Since many of the terms cited here as hapax legomena are compound words—kennings, that is—an investigation of them that foregrounds their status as poetic figures might render their statistical status as hapax legomena of lesser importance than their standings as kennings in the traditional sense. Nevertheless, a study of hapax legomena affords us a focused way of discussing the poem and still leads to an appreciation of its value. Indeed, much of the discussion in this dissertation addresses the hapax legomena semantically and artistically as kennings.

While hapax legomena have been a longstanding object of interest in Old English studies, the narrowness of the unique words' scope has usually resulted in their being analyzed in conjunction with other topics rather than exclusively. For instance, a book like Fred C. Robinson's *Beowulf and the Appositive Style* considers the use and function of compounds, but not specifically hapax legomena, within a discussion of verbal apposition. In another instance, a study that is concerned with the lexical details of Old English poetry, Peter Clemoes' *Interactions of Thought and Language in Old English Poetry*, ends up including hapax legomena among its discussions of significant terms, although it may not distinguish these terms as unique. Nonce words have been more productive topics for the writers of dissertations, such as Norman Omar Waldorf's *The*

*Hapax Legomena in the Old English Vocabulary: A Study Based upon the Bosworth-Toller Dictionary* (1953), an exhaustive study whose primary goal is to list all the words which the 19<sup>th</sup>-century *Bosworth-Toller Dictionary* cites as occurring only once. Waldorf has certainly performed a time-intensive and valuable service, but the purpose of his study centers on a comprehensive catalogue of hapax legomena and their relation to dictionaries and not on the artistic use of these words in a particular poem. Another dissertation on the topic, Arnold V. Talentino's *A Study of Compound Hapax Legomena in Old English Poetry* (1970), has more in common with my approach. Rather than attempting to cover the breadth of hapax legomena, Talentino narrows his field to 889 unique words from eleven Old English poems, *Andreas* among them, and concerns himself with illuminating the meanings of these compounds and the principles behind their placement. His interest, however, seems to be more in the compound nature of the words than in their unique status. He says, "This analysis is not intended to suggest that the hapax legomena compounds function any differently from well attested compounds. For my purpose, I could use any type of compound found in Old English poetry" (37-38). In contrast, what differentiates my study from more standard ones is that they tend to analyze the linguistic features of the hapax legomenon, while I wish to view the unique word as a poetic device, as a special coinage for a specific poetic purpose. As such, I consider the cultural and poetic milieu in which the poet was composing, as well as the possible reaction of the audience of the time to the hapax legomenon, with the goal of a better interpretation and understanding of *Andreas*.

Some critics have found much to praise in the poem's diction. Clemoes accords a different status to *Andreas* as an innovative work that "launched an Old English poet into

a fabulous domain of spiritual adventure with only his native symbolic language to give him his bearings” (249). In addition, Clemoes points to the imagination, vigor, and scope of *Andreas*, particularly in comparison with the extant Old English prose version of the legend (249). This is one point, arguably, in the poet’s favor: since the poem’s sources are all in prose, one of the achievements of the *Andreas*-poet was his transformation of the prose source material into poetry. As Clemoes suggests, the task demanded much more than simple translation. Whether in Greek or Latin, the source must be translated not only into the native language of the poet but also into his or her native literary tradition, a process described well by S. A. J. Bradley in reference to Cynewulf’s achievement: “Cynewulf’s prime skill lay in the creative and often boldly imaginative transmutation of the topoi, the imagery and the idiom of his Latin material into the traditional alliterative metre, vocabulary, formulas and imagery of his Old English secular heroic verse” (110). I would like to underscore this process of transmutation for the *Andreas*-poet as well; in fact, the main contention here is that it lies at the heart of the hapax legomenon. Whereas, in reference to the *Andreas*-poet’s use of heroic diction, Brooks comments that “[h]is sometimes tasteless and inapposite use of this material shows that he was somewhat lacking in invention,” my approach to the poem through the portal of hapax legomena indirectly emphasizes the poet’s inventive, creative skill (Brooks xxvi). Daniel G. Calder, warning against viewing *Andreas* exclusively in light of *Beowulf*, adds, “It is also to disregard the more than 160 hapax legomena in *Andreas* itself. In fact, the pleasure the *Andreas* poet so exuberantly takes in the creation of a new poetic diction indicates the intensity of his desire to speak with an individual voice while still practising a communal art” (119). For the most part, this study views these “one-

time words” as fresh creations intended for the world of the poem, a region, as Clemoes reminds us, which was at the time relatively uncharted. As for the popular charge that the poet tastelessly and ignorantly lifted phrases from better poems to lend some panache to his own work, an examination of hapax legomena will show these supposed borrowings instead to be prime examples of the process of cultural and literary syncretism occasioned by the confluence of Germanic and Christian thought. It is this process, I argue, that gave birth to many hapax legomena and informs their spirit. Rather than merely filling out a half-line, they serve as indexes of the poet’s intention to highlight and expand certain meanings in his subject and as signposts for an exegetical interpretation of the poem.



## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Fol. 29b-52b in the Vercelli Book.

<sup>2</sup> All quotes from the poem are taken from Brooks's edition.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE ANGLO-SAXON BACKGROUND

It has long been recognized that in Anglo-Saxon poetry divergent strains of language, literature, and culture converge, occasioned by the establishment of Christianity in England. The existence of written Anglo-Saxon literature in itself evidences this contact of cultures, as Germanic encountered the Greco-Roman, the pagan encountered the Christian, and the oral came into contact with written. Almost a century and a half after their landing on the shores of Britain, the Anglo-Saxons became the targets of twin missionary efforts: Pope Gregory's band of missionaries, led by St. Augustine, concentrated its efforts in the south of England, while at the same time in the north Irish missionaries from Iona established a monastery at Lindisfarne from which they based their efforts in Northumbria and Mercia. After a span of 100 years, by the close of the seventh century, Christianity was officially situated in England (Pyles and Algeo 98-9).

The significance of this event for the language and literature of England, it has been said, was that "it brought England and the English speakers into the only living intellectual community of Europe, that of the Latin Church" (Millward 81). From the outset, religion and learning were inseparable, as the survival and spread of Christianity was dependent on the Anglo-Saxons' mastery of the Latin language (Lendinara 264). Concurrent with the propagation of the new faith was the founding of schools for the purpose of teaching potential clergy; such training perforce would have necessitated the study of Latin, for a knowledge of the language was essential for studying the Bible or

performing church offices (269). Additionally, other works studied in these monastic schools would have been written in Latin; “[t]hus Latin was the main object of study in the grammars and textbooks available to the Anglo-Saxons as well as being the language in which nearly all of them were written” (Gneuss 4). The proficiency which the Anglo-Saxons attained in this adopted language and their reputation abroad as Latin scholars existed synchronously with the development of a native literary tradition, occasioned by the simple fact that with the Latin alphabet in place, English could be recorded in writing (Millward 81). Hence, the earliest extant English literature began to be recorded in manuscripts. Alongside the dominance of the imported Roman alphabet, though, the runic alphabet was not forgotten; testifying to the continued use of runes is the eighth-century Franks Casket, whose surface is engraved with both runic and Roman inscriptions (Lendinara 265). Visually, too, the Franks Casket represents both cultural backgrounds; on its panels, depictions of Biblical stories exist side by side with Germanic legends (265). As these examples show, clearly Christianity did not replace the native culture. What we see, in art as well as in society, is an amalgam of traditions.

Anglo-Saxon literature, in particular, can be seen as merging “The literary form and language from north Germany” and “the literary impulse and intellectual goal from Rome” (Bolton i-ii). The interweaving of these two strains takes on a unique aspect in the poetry, where we find preserved in written form the hallmarks of Germanic oral verse: the alliterative line, vocabulary, syntax, methods of word-formation as well as Germanic legends, themes, and heroic ethos. In the so-called “secular poems” like *Beowulf* and *The Battle of Maldon*, these features of Germanic content are the most unadulterated by Christian modes of thought, but in general in the poetry one finds

varying degrees of Christian doctrine, Biblical and apocryphal stories, typology and Biblical exegesis; since much of this material was transmitted through Greek and Latin sources, Anglo-Saxon poetry also evinces the influences of Classical and post-Classical rhetoric and learning from such writers as Donatus, Diomedes, Priscian, and Cassiodorus (Gneuss 9). The merging of these two traditions, Germanic and Christian, is most pronounced in the scriptural and liturgical poetry represented by works such as *Genesis A* and *B*, *Exodus*, *Elene*, *The Dream of the Rood*, and *Andreas*. On the incorporation of Christianity into Anglo-Saxon literary, religious, and cultural traditions, Peter Clemoes remarks, “Thought and expression were not, as they once had been, the inseparable parts of a single cultural organism transmitted by indigenous social tradition. Poetic resources from the tradition were being applied to thought and sensibility from another” (241).

Helmut Gneuss identifies three broad categories of Anglo-Saxon learning: the first, spanning the seventh and eighth centuries, during which time figures like Hadrian at Canterbury and Bede at Jarrow exemplify the high level of education available; the second, comprising the ninth century, a period of lesser achievement in education, particularly Latin scholarship, that King Alfred makes reference to in the preface to his translation of Gregory’s *Regula Pastoralis*; the third, including the tenth and eleventh centuries, which saw an intellectual rebirth resulting in the revival of Latin learning and the increased production of manuscripts (Gneuss 5). Against this comprehensive background, we can examine questions of poet, audience, and work to determine, if possible, what interests, strengths, and restrictions each might have had.

In this context, personal, cultural, literary, and social factors that may have influenced a poet to create such words for a poem can be seen as more important to the

development of linguistic understanding than a theoretical approach consisting of a pure examination of the hapax legomena as they appear and function poetically in *Andreas*, an approach that could be said to follow a narrowly-New Critical, philological path. In other words, we are led to consider the question of why these hapax legomena exist at all.

Such a question of, as Talentino has phrased it, “why we have so many hapax legomena within the extant corpus of Old English poetry appears to remain largely uninvestigated” (25). The argument that these words were merely a matter of individual creativity would be sufficient if they appeared exclusively in the work of one poet or if they occurred in much higher proportions in one work; however, hapax legomena are not limited to one work or group of works, nor is there one work that can lay claim to containing the bulk of such words. Their wide distribution in poetry points to factors beyond a renegade poet’s display of linguistic virtuosity. It suggests the creation of words was a widespread practice in poetry, sanctioned by the poetic conventions of the time and encouraged by features of Anglo-Saxon culture and society.

More specifically, the nature of a poet’s background can be considered in order to search for clues as to why he or she may have been drawn to the creation of words. It seems likely that an Anglo-Saxon poet would have been exposed to, if not inculcated with, the particular species of education offered at a monastic school, so it should be enlightening to examine more closely what form that education took; we can reasonably assume that the manner in which the poet was taught and the subject-matter of study would have an influence on not only the individual poet’s practices but also, more broadly, on the literary practices of the Anglo-Saxon era.

The loci for learning in Anglo-Saxon England were the monastic schools established soon after the arrival of Christian missionaries. The intent of the education offered in the monastic classroom was the continuation and propagation of the faith, and as such, the emphasis of study appears to have been Latin, specifically Latin grammar, the mastery of which would enable students to read the Bible, patristic and historical writings, and even literary works, besides equipping them to conduct the mass and perform the divine office (Gneuss 5). According to Roman authors, the aims of learning grammar were twofold: first, to teach the correct way of speaking and writing; second, to use as a tool for interpretation, which for the Anglo-Saxons would entail Biblical exegesis (Gneuss 4). Other areas of medieval *trivium* and *quadrivium* such as arithmetic and astronomy, whose relevance for an understanding of the Scriptures was understandably less, received minimal attention; the study of grammar apparently dominated, to the marginalization of other fields of study (Lendinara 277). However, grammar, as it was studied by the Anglo-Saxons, had a broader sense than the modern usage suggests; in the context of Anglo-Saxon studies of late Roman authors, grammar included the study of phonology, morphology, and syntax (Gneuss 7).

The education offered at an Anglo-Saxon monastic school was singular in its rigor and emphasis. Its curriculum differed from that of a school on the continent in its concentration on certain works that gave students a unique training in Old English as well as Latin (Lendinara 276). Students would have had access to a number of works on Latin grammar—*Etymologiae* by Isidore of Seville being one—in addition to the writings of Anglo-Latin notables such as Aldhelm, Bede, and Alcuin (Gneuss 8). What was characteristically Anglo-Saxon was not only the works studied—challenging Latin texts

like Aldhelm's *Carmen de virginitate* and book three of Abbo of Saint-Germain-des-Prés's *Bella Parisiaca urbis*—but also the nature of their study: scholars delighted in the archaisms, neologisms, and grecisms of these texts. In fact, “[c]oncern with the display of this arcane vocabulary (which is often referred to as ‘hermeneutic’ because much of it derived originally from Greek-Latin word lists or *hermeneumata*) is found in nearly all Anglo-Latin literature of the tenth and eleventh centuries, but it also is reflected in various works in English” (Lendinara 276). The Old English poem *Aldhelm*, for example, contains a display of Latinate and Greek vocabulary (Lendinara 276). In prose, Byrhtferth's *Enchiridion*, a vernacular work, is adorned with little-known English words and Latin expressions (Lendinara 276). Here we begin to see that the studious Anglo-Saxon mind was deeply impressed with the study of grammar—the linguistic nature of a text—both for the knowledge of Latin it provided as well as for its methods of interpreting literary, especially Biblical, texts (Lendinara 277).

It has been hypothesized that the Anglo-Saxons' fascination with grammar was a natural outgrowth of their need to master Latin; they were “among the first peoples of Europe converted to Christianity who were not native speakers of Latin” (Lendinara 278). Possibly the very “foreignness” of Latin made its Anglo-Saxon students particularly attentive to the details of its grammar and, as a result, of their own as well. As an example, the many glossaries produced during the Old English period attest to this reciprocity between the study of Latin and a keen interest in the particularities of grammar. For the student of Latin, the demands of translation would make necessary an aid to elucidating the meanings of the most complex, obscure words a text had to offer; glossaries arose as exactly that sort of aid. As defined by Ælfric, a glossary is “‘glossa,

þæt is glesing, þonne man glesð þa earfoðan word mid eðran ledene’ (‘when one glosses the difficult words with easier words in Latin’))” (Gneuss 18). As Ælfric’s definition suggests, Latin-Latin glossaries were produced in England, but they were consulted alongside Greek-Latin and Latin-Old English glossaries (Gneuss 18-19); the glossaries, then, did not remain monolingual but documented an interaction of languages that connected the study of Latin to the vernacular as well. Hence, masters and students apparently saw a connection between the Latin they were examining and their native language; feasibly, then, they extended their findings and conclusions about Latin to Old English. It is likely that most students trained in monastic schools would have had access to glossaries, for they began to appear as early as the seventh century at the school of Theodore and Hadrian at Canterbury and were apparently so widespread that “all or most English libraries were equipped with glossaries” (Gneuss 20). Early seminal glossaries included the Corpus glossary (early ninth century) and the Épinal glossary (late seventh century) (Gneuss 20); equally notable is the Leiden glossary (Lendinara 274).

A brief examination of the two major forms the glossaries took may illustrate the particular way they contributed to and revealed the Anglo-Saxons’ attention to linguistic traits. Initially, when glosses appeared, they took the form of a *glossae collectae*, in which words are listed in order of appearance in a text, in clusters from each work; here, the lemmata (Latin words) and glosses are taken from an already-glossed work. A development from this form is the later compilation and arrangement of lemmata in alphabetical order. At first, the order within each letter category (A, B, C, etc.) was governed by the works from which the words were taken, but increasingly the order within each category came to be dictated by alphabetical arrangement, not the source



work (Gneuss 18-19). As glossaries of the tenth and eleventh centuries proliferated, they became more thorough and systematic, although they did not yet approach the status of dictionaries (Gneuss 20, 21). Still, a student consulting a glossary would have been made aware of the importance placed upon individual words and their meanings; in the eyes of his or her masters, a single word was powerful and influential and, as such, demanded study.

While the spread of glossaries may be the most noticeable testament to the Anglo-Saxons' reverence for the word, their etymological studies provide yet another indication of their interest in the meaning of a word and their ability to analyze its form in the search for that meaning. Etymology should be understood as a practice whose aim is "to disclose the true meaning of a word by tracing it back to its origins" (Gneuss 22). The practice would have been familiar to the Anglo-Saxons from two sources: first, the techniques of classical authors and grammarians; and second, the Christian custom of interpreting words and proper names from the Bible in a spiritually significant manner (Gneuss 22-23). Following these two precedents, Anglo-Saxons constructed etymologies for Latin words and Hebrew names and words, but rather than stopping at that point, they applied the techniques they had learned to formulate etymologies of Old English words as well (Gneuss 24). By extending the principles of etymology to their own language, Anglo-Saxon scholars revealed an inclination to view their language as they viewed Latin and Greek; apparently they regarded the principles they had learned from classical and Christian sources not as static formulae but as living, kinetic practices. In addition, the scholars indicated the delight they took in examining the composition of a word with an eye toward what it might reveal about the word's meaning. Although some of the

techniques employed in discovering the origin of a word later came into some disrepute, in their original forms the various techniques show a close attention to the makeup of the word, whether to its sounds, its similarity to other words in sound or form, the components which comprise it, or the words it is derived from (Gneuss 22). Clearly, this interest in word-formation would have exerted a formative influence upon a student, and perhaps particularly in the education of Anglo-Saxon poets. Training such as this would have given them the interest in and experience with analyzing the composition of words and creating words from available parts, following an Anglo-Saxon tradition of attention to the formation—and deconstruction—of words.

Education in Anglo-Saxon England is inevitably tied to the monastic schools, for they were “the principal seats of learning” which additionally “transmitted ancient learning to the Middle Ages” through the study of Latin texts (Lendinara 270). As such, the instruction they offered, with its concentration on Latin grammar by means of glossaries and etymologies, bespeaks a profound interest in morphology and semantics. Any poet or audience members who had been exposed to this pedagogy could be expected to be able to apply the same principles of morphology and semantics to their native language, whether in the creation of poetry or the appreciation thereof. While these factors alone do not dictate that a poet had to create new words or search out the occasional rare word for special effect, they do contribute to a literary and cultural atmosphere that would have accepted and even fostered some degree of experimentation with word choice and creation. In other words, innovation in these areas would not have been discouraged.

It has been said that “the most characteristic feature of their [the Anglo-Saxons’] learning . . . is their fascination with linguistic detail” (Lendinara 279). An awareness of this characteristically Anglo-Saxon predilection can inform our reading of their literary works, especially poetry. In particular, we can understand that the appearance of unique words should not be attributed solely to an individual poet’s whims but instead should be seen as a natural outgrowth of a specific intellectual and literary climate. According to this view, rather than being poetic oddities or aberrations, hapax legomena represent a specialized form of poetic diction; they form part of the Anglo-Saxon literary language and poetic practice. As a student, an Anglo-Saxon poet would have studied the discipline of *differentia*, the principles that govern word selection, and applied these principles to his or her native Old English as well as to the obligatory Latin (Gneuss 25); a poet, then, would have understood in a formal sense the concept of poetic diction and been quite conscious of the distinction between it and the diction of prose. The question of whether the hapax legomena found in prose can be said to serve the same function as those found in poetry is beyond the scope of this study. The chapters that follow, however, present the argument that hapax legomena are an extension of the Anglo-Saxon poetic vocabulary which, rather than being abnormalities, are deliberate coinages that fulfill a uniquely poetic role through their meaning and placement; moreover, they offer a glimpse into the syncretism of cultures and literary traditions that formed the background of their compositional milieu.

Yet another answer to the question concerning the rationale for the coinage of hapax legomena is provided by Arnold V. Talentino, who singles out what he terms “true hapax legomena,” (v) defining them as words which “were created by poets to fill a

particular rhetorical need within a given context” (xii). While my study does not contradict this perspective, it does, however, include a consideration which Talentino’s claim does not account for: the reception and interpretation of specific hapax legomena by Anglo-Saxon audiences. The approach in this study incorporates an awareness of a contemporary audience while acknowledging my own reading practices, influenced by New Critical training, that inform my analysis. I share this practice with Pauline Head, who says, “I examine the poetry from the point of view of its reception, speculatively describing its reading by an Anglo-Saxon audience but also drawing on modes of interpretation available to me” (2). In order to contend that hapax legomena serve as guideposts for an audience’s interpretation of the poem *Andreas*, then a description of those audience members is needed, for they cannot simply be equated with a modern-day audience. As Head reminds us, “Anglo-Saxon concepts of reading were probably very different from those that have dominated our own literary culture” (2).

The first assumption that must be set aside is that an audience of the time would have been literate. The use of the term “audience” instead of “reader” acknowledges the Anglo-Saxons’ greater reliance on listening to a work read aloud rather than the modern practice of silently reading to oneself. The concept of “audience” can be extended even further when one considers that “[l]iteracy was not limited to those who could read Latin; written texts could be transmitted in several ways” (Head 89). Hence, some members could read English, though not Latin, and for those could not read either language, a manuscript could be read aloud. In support of the argument that Anglo-Saxon audiences were highly cognizant of hapax legomena and involved in interpreting them, it is assumed that as either listeners or readers, Anglo-Saxons were familiar with the poetic

tradition and had a heightened awareness of words. In this view, a poet would have been mindful of and even have relied on these abilities in the use of digressions and allusions and, on the lexical level, of phrases and individual words, among them nonce words. An audience required such skills, for “Old English poetry is very language-focused,” and as a result, “Reading this poetry, making its meaning, involves reflecting on words—their sounds, the patterns they form . . . , their appearance on the page (Cynewulf’s runic signatures), and their double meanings” (Head 85). An audience would have brought this attentiveness to language and knowledge of the poetic heritage to *Andreas*. If we recognize the presence of an oral tradition in written poetry, then we can view a poem as “the work of a poet steeped in the oral-formulaic tradition and composing with the expectation that the audience will appreciate the mechanics of that tradition” (Renoir 73). What keeps the multiplicity of audience members’ experience and versions of the poem from losing any sense of cohesion is “the unifying role of tradition” which provides a frame of reference for the audience and poem (Foley, “Texts that Speak” 149-150). The audience then shares a responsibility for “interpret[ing] the text according to a shared body of knowledge that is [their] inheritance,” which is possible because “each of them brings to the process of interpretation a deep knowledge of how to read the text before him or her, of how to construe the traditional signals in their full metonymic, inherent meaning” (Foley 150). That knowledge and those signals from their poetic inheritance extend down to the level of the word. Clearly an Anglo-Saxon audience was expected to take an active role in the “reading” process, to such an extent that the members may be said to have been involved in the interpretation of the poem (Frank 157).

These ideas have particular relevance to a discussion of the reception of hapax legomena, for the uniqueness of such words demands that the audience must “exercise their individual judgment” in simply determining the meanings (Robinson 15). If we imagine how “the audience of *Beowulf* frequently had to infer the composite meaning of collocations which the listeners had rarely or never encountered before,” then surely we can extend that process of making meaning to unique words (Robinson 16). When faced with an unfamiliar word, a listener or reader would have drawn on a variety of sources of information, weighing their knowledge of the story, allusions to other stories, Christianity, Germanic legend, oral poetry, and the histories of individual words in an effort to ascertain a word’s meaning and significance. In this process, it would seem that meaning “was not perceived as being delineated and fixed, the goal to which interpretation was directed, but as something elusive, in process, and constructed by the reader through attention to language” (Head 87). As we shall see, deciding on the definition of a hapax legomenon, which might be viewed as something “delineated and fixed,” is only the first step towards an appreciation of its meaning, which involves an interplay between oral and written, traditional and new, and Germanic and Christian.

Before continuing with a consideration of unique words, we should weigh several objections that could be lodged against this study from the outset. The most basic criticism might be that given the fractional nature of surviving Anglo-Saxon poetry—some 60,000 lines of poetry, and 23-24,000 words, “only a fragment of what must have been the total Old English lexicon”(Lass 185, fn. 9)—the study is based on a false or faulty assumption; clearly, a great many words that are classified as hapax legomena might have actually been in limited poetic or even popular use at the time. This objection

cannot be supported or denied, especially within the parameters of this study. Its validity can only be acknowledged; it can merely be asserted, not established. Furthermore, it hardly needs to be stated that the challenge of Anglo-Saxon studies involves compensating for the incompleteness and indeterminacy of information. Investigation continues, not impeded by the consideration that further discoveries might very well alter our conclusions. Scholars should not be deterred from investigation and interpretation of hapax legomena by the concern that were the complete Anglo-Saxon poetic corpus to be discovered, their findings might seem to be outmoded and inaccurate.

Still, it would be overly optimistic if not erroneous to insist that every word cited as unique in *Andreas* (or any work) is what Talentino refers to as a “true” hapax legomenon, that is, a word “created in response to a rhetorical need” (v). Of the 160 nonce words that the editor of *Andreas* lists, a few are in fact not unique at all but appear, albeit with variant spellings, in other works. Some appear not to have been created especially for the poem, but instead are likely the only attested instance of a word in wider currency, while others hint at a wider use by their similarity to well-known words.<sup>1</sup> Of necessity, these words fall outside the scope of my study. In the chapters to follow, while acknowledging the circumscribed nature of hapax legomena, I maintain that some words surely are the products of an artistic imagination that are worthy of study as more than linguistic curiosities.

The miraculous discovery of the missing remainder of the Anglo-Saxon poetic corpus would certainly alter but would not invalidate the results of this study. Although the possibility that the actual number of hapax legomena might be much smaller than modern estimations should be acknowledged, I first wish to assert that some hapax

legomena do indeed exist. The sheer number of words attested only once mixed with the Anglo-Saxon fascination with grammar and diction makes it likely that there was a class of words created especially for the world of a particular poem and never used again.

Throughout this study, it is reasonable to assume that Anglo-Saxon poets would agree on two principles: first, that a word should be appropriate for its context; and secondly, that the less a word is used, the more conspicuous it will be and, thus, the more potential power it will have. If we agree with these principles as well, we should acknowledge that in a poem, a hapax legomenon appears in a certain context for which it is uniquely suited. Thus, it is even more remarkable when that word does not reappear in another work that shares the same context, whether it be a sea voyage, a battle, or the workings of God.

The lack of repetition of a given word in comparable settings of different poems argues even more for its being a true hapax legomenon. The second principle would seem to encourage the creation of new words within a poetic tradition already receptive to that practice. While a poet would certainly draw from the stock of Anglo-Saxon vocabulary as well as the traditional hoard of poetic diction, he or she may have likely realized that the more a word is used, the more it loses the power and force gained from its uniqueness. A poet, then, selected judiciously from the common word stock, the more exclusive class of poetic diction, and an extension of this poetic diction consisting of words created especially for the poem. For the Anglo-Saxon poet and audience, the most common words would have been the least arresting, although not without historical power and symbolism, while the words used primarily in poetry occurred less often and were more noticeable as such; the corollary to these two statements is that the hapax



legomena were used the least in the fabric of the poem and, as a result, enjoyed the highest visibility.

If it can be agreed that at least some of the words considered by this study are truly hapax legomena, then even if certain words thought to be hapax legomena were in fact in limited poetic use, they still would have been distinctive enough for an audience of the time, although not as distinctive as a unique word. This study purports to examine the poetic effects of one-time words, and it assumes that the effects achieved by such words are linked to their high visibility in the poem. However, as stated above, poetic diction also enjoyed a place of distinction as it was differentiated from the language of prose; thus, a poetic word that was rarely used would have had impact and visibility in verse, although not as much as would have a hapax legomenon. Simply because a word thought to be unique may have been instead unusual or rare, appearing in one or two other poems, does not undermine the study's findings. Of course, it is possible that a word thought to be unique could have appeared more frequently in poetry or even prose; however, given that the word is attested just once, the greater the frequency of the word assumed, the less the probability of that actually being the case.

A second line of objection to the study would argue that hapax legomena are not worthy of study because they were created either by error or by convenience. To credit scribal error, not poetic invention, for the hapax legomenon seems unlikely when one considers that it would seem more probable for a scribe to *normalize* an unusual word rather than create one, to attempt to correct what might be perceived as an error or oddity. A more likely assumption would be that these words were in fact created by the poet for a particular purpose within the poem.

If the poet's intent and creativity and the words' integrity are assumed, a more plausible criticism arises: the poet simply was in need of a word to satisfy certain metrical and alliterative requirements, and without an existing one at hand, he decided to create one. This possibility may be the case in certain situations. However, rather than attributing hapax legomena to convenience's sake, we might consider that for a poet of such caliber as the *Beowulf*- or even *Andreas*-poet to create a word to meet certain formal requirements of the verse, he or she must be searching for a particular meaning as well as, perhaps, a particular effect; a poet of lesser skill might have simply inserted a preexisting word whose meaning approximately suited the context.

A hypothesis more generous to the poet suggests that he or she could have chosen an existing word to satisfy the formal demands of the poetic line but instead constructed an original word which met those formal demands but just as importantly expressed as closely as possible the precise idea the poet had in mind—in fact, expressed it more precisely than any other existing alternative could have. The poet did not create a word destined to be a hapax legomenon out of lack; he or she was not attempting to fill a gap, either poetical (alliterative/metrical) or lexical. Instead, the purpose for this innovation was consciously to create words to enhance the artistry of the poem.

In an attempt to decipher their function in this or, indeed, any poem, a natural question to ask about the hapax legomena in *Andreas* is whether or not they tend to cluster in important passages. This question cannot be conclusively answered by a casual examination of the poem, for a cursory look reveals that while certain passages contain no hapax legomena at all, many contain at least one hapax legomenon; thus, a simple answer to the question is not possible. The formation of a more complex answer begins

by noting the simple mathematics of the situation: 160 hapax legomena exist in a poem of 1722 lines, meaning that roughly one hapax legomenon appears for every 11 lines of text. Clearly, the hapax legomena are not that evenly spaced throughout the poem; it is not uncommon for two instances of the device to be separated by only a few lines, and at times two may occur in the same line. At the other extreme, one may encounter a stretch of 20 or even 30 lines devoid of any hapax legomenon. So the question remains: is there any pattern to the occurrence of these words? More specifically, how strong a correlation exists between important passages in the poem and the incidence of hapax legomena?

Answering these questions requires closer consideration of the terms “important” and “passage.” Practical guidance in the delineation of where one passage ends and the next begins is provided by the divisions employed by Robert Boenig in *The Acts of Andrew in the Country of the Cannibals: Translation from the Greek, Latin, and Old English* and Kenneth R. Brooks in his edition of *Andreas and the Fates of the Apostles*. As to what defines a passage as “important,” a fairly loose set of criteria may be established: first, that a passage narrates an event or events of dramatic interest or thematic importance; second, that a passage consists of a speech treating central themes in the poem or revealing crucial insights about the speaker; third, that a passage has garnered critical attention. An example to illustrate the first criterion would be the scene in which the stone column releases a flood of water upon the Mermedonians; the second, Andrew’s speech appealing to God to release him from the torments of the Mermedonians; and the third, the poet’s so-called “self-interruption” (ll. 1478-1491).<sup>2</sup> Guided by these criteria, therefore, an examination of the last third of the poem reveals

there is no important passage that does not contain at least one hapax legomenon.

Examples of passages containing no hapax legomena include the episode where God intervenes and saves a youth who the Mermedonians are planning to slay for food (ll. 1135-1154); Andrew's speech to God on the second day of his torments (ll. 1281-1295); a scene in which six warriors attack Andrew in his prison cell but are repulsed by the sign of the cross on his forehead (ll. 1334-1344); and the speech of one of the townspeople to the other Mermedonians after the flood, admitting they have erred in imprisoning Andrew and rejecting God (ll. 1554-1568). While these passages may be of some interest dramatically, poetically, or critically, they are not typically considered central to the poem.

However, provisionally claiming that the passages without hapax legomena are not important is not the same as claiming that every passage containing hapax legomena is important, or that all such passages are equally important. We might expect to find fewer hapax legomena in less central episodes, while, by extension, more would occur in episodes of greater dramatic or thematic interest—that is, if we wish to regard these words which are attested only once in the written language as especially indicative of some underlying importance. Even a brief examination reveals that this conjecture indeed indicates a tendency in the poem. For instance, early passages which feature a high number of hapax legomena correspond to some of the most crucial episodes, dramatically and thematically. These include the following: the Mermedonians' plans for eating Matthew, and God's concern for Matthew and subsequent order to Andrew to rescue him (ll. 138-188); Andrew's story of Christ calming the waters (ll. 438-461); Andrew's extended praise of the steersman (ll. 469-509); Andrew's awakening in

Mermedonia and realization of the steersman's true holy identity (ll. 829-856); the followers' relation of their vision of heaven (ll. 857-891); Andrew's entry into the city of the Mermedonians, after which he overcomes the prison guards and opens the prison door (ll. 981-1003); the Mermedonians' gathering an army to collect the captives, their discovery that the guards are dead and the prison empty, and their despair (ll. 1067-1092); the Mermedonians' casting of lots to choose one of their own to sacrifice for food, the selection of a victim, and the preparation for his death (ll. 1093-1134).

On the basis of these and other examples, we can conclude that hapax legomena tend to appear more frequently in more central passages in the poem<sup>3</sup>; however, this tendency does not rule out the occurrence of hapax legomena in passages of lesser importance as well. Put another way, a central passage will probably contain hapax legomena, and, most likely, a higher than average number, but passages that have lower profiles may also contain hapax legomena in higher than average numbers. This fact is a point in the poet's favor: according to the practices of the time, the poet's linguistic creativity was not restricted to only select passages.

Our assertions thus far about the degree to which hapax legomena occur more often in more significant passages appear to be contradicted by lines 510 to 829, a stretch of lines beginning during the exchange between Christ and Andrew, precisely, in fact, at the beginning of Christ's speech in praise of God, and ending just as Andrew and his disciples have been miraculously ferried to Mermedonia. These lines bracket not only the discussion of Christ's miracles during his ministry on earth but also the prominent episode recounting what might be termed the "centerpiece" of the conversation over the sea waves: the apocryphal story of Christ's bringing a stone statue to life in the presence

of the Pharisees. These 320 lines attract attention in another way too, for they contain only 14 hapax legomena, a number far below the average for the poem; of these 14, five cluster in an “oasis” of 25 lines (ll. 761-785), a passage showing the willful disbelief of the onlookers even in the face of Christ’s miracle. Some 100 lines before, the disbelief of the high priest is described with three hapax legomena in two lines (ll. 674-675). The landscape of lines 510-829 looks unusual in *Andreas*, then, by featuring long stretches of text, “deserts” in which no hapax legomena occur, interrupted by an occasional “oasis” or cluster of such words; for the most part, the remaining hapax legomena are isolated and infrequent. While this section of the poem is not the only one in which few hapax legomena exist, it is by far the most extensive. By the principles outlined above, it would appear that the poet might not have accorded much importance to this component of Andrew’s discussion with Christ the Steersman. The critical attention paid to this central episode of Christ’s public miracle challenges such a conclusion, however. To resolve this apparent contradiction, a closer examination of the hapax legomena that do appear in this section of lines is essential.

If we begin with the isolated hapax legomena, we see that they tend to be appellations for basic terms in Anglo-Saxon religious poetry: domagende (570) “possessor of glory; i.e., glorious Lord”; grundwæge (582) “(way over the) earth; life’s expanse,” used to denote Christ’s physical and spiritual life on earth; heofonhalig (728) “of heavenly holiness,” a reference to Christ; and frumweorca (804) “creation,” the genitive form used in a reference to God as frumweorca fæder. With the exception of grundwæge, these words all reflect heavenly attributes of God and thus characterize God in the audience’s mind as a being of glory and power who manifests these qualities

through his great creative force; He is the origin of everything. Through these words, the poet emphasizes God's creativity and power, two of His attributes that are regularly praised throughout the poem. Thus, while terms denoting and descriptive of God and Christ are commonplace in this work and other Anglo-Saxon poetry, it should not be assumed that these hapax legomena play no especial role. Indeed, the isolated nature of their occurrence could very well contribute to their being more noticeable to an audience.

Turning next to an examination of the hapax legomena occurring in clusters, we encounter first sæholm (529) "ocean" and aryða (532) "ocean wave," words still referring simply to the ocean voyage and concluding a passage containing a number of other terms for "ocean" and "wave." The other two clusters of hapax legomena, however, are more specific and meaningful. The first occurs immediately prior to the speech of the high priest who disputes Christ's claim of divinity. Andrew recalls:

He on gewitte oncneow		
þæt we soðfæstes	swaðe folgodon,	
læston <b>larcwide</b> ;	he lungre ahof	
woðe <b>wiðerhydig</b> ,	wean <b>onblonden</b>	(672-675)

[He (the high priest) knew in mind that we followed the path of the righteous one, followed **the teaching**; he at once raised a **malevolent** shout, **mingled** with malice]

The close proximity of larcwide, wiðerhydig, and onblonden and their placement directly before the high priest's speech serve to emphasize the poem's portrayal of the malicious disbelief of those who choose not to follow Christ's teachings. After these lines occurs the central miracle in which Christ vivifies a stone statue, which then addresses the silent, stunned multitude. As Andrew narrates the event, however, soon their determination not to believe prevails over the witness of their own senses:

Ða ða yldestan	eft ongunnon	
secgan synfulle	(soð ne oncneowan),	
þæt hit drycræftum	gedon wære,	
<b>scingelacum,</b>	þæt se scyna stan	
mælde for mannum.	Man wridode	
geond beorna breast,	<b>brandhata</b> nið	
weoll on gewitte,	weorm blædum fag,	
attor ælfæle.	Þær <wæs> orcnawe	
þurh teoncwide	tweogende mod,	
mægga <b>misgehygd</b>	morðre bewunden.	(763-772)

[Then the eldest ones in turn began to say sinfully (they knew not the truth), that it was done through sorcery, **by means of devilish art**, that the beautiful stone spoke before men. Sin flourished throughout the breast of men, hatred **hot as a blazing torch** welled in the mind, the serpent blazing with blasts of flame, all-destructive poison. There was the doubting spirit evident through censorious speech, **the evil thought** of men wound with murder.]

We are faced with a slightly more specific, albeit still perplexing, state of affairs: the speech of the high priest and this passage both contain concentrations of hapax legomena. However, the account of the miracle itself which is bracketed by these passages contains only one hapax legomenon (in the phrase “heofonhalig gast” (728), “spirit of heavenly holiness); once again, we might expect to find a mass of such words in an episode of this significance. It should be considered, though, that the surrounding hapax legomena refer to the disbelief of the witnesses. Significantly, these points in the text correspond to the only passages where the skepticism facing Christ’s ministry is described. The latter passage is especially powerful, its hapax legomena denoting the intensity and sinfulness of the crowd’s response, which is clearly attributed to the devil, as in scingelacum, “by



means of devilish art”; the hatred described as “hot as a blazing torch” (brandhata) is also likened to a blazing serpent, a symbol of the devil, while “the doubting mind” (“tweogende mod”) stands in apposition to ‘the evil thought of men wound with murder’ (mæcga misgehygd) (772).

While acknowledging the exceptional nature of this distribution of hapax legomena, we can still conclude, then, that a guiding principle seems to be at work: namely, the poet is responding to the doubt and suspicion facing Christ even as he confirms his divinity, and through the placement and meaning of hapax legomena, the audience is meant to notice and contemplate the power of man’s sinful nature to respond to the miraculous with willful disbelief. As a result, we can conclude that the actual distribution of hapax legomena is more subtle and complex than might be expected by an initial analysis. Indeed, the presence of these unique words may make any passage in which they occur “important,” so that the words, and not our preconceptions, become the indicators of what is truly relevant. As we have seen, the hapax legomenon is a flexible tool whose guidelines for usage were not as elementary as we might like them to be. Moreover, we might speculate that the Anglo-Saxon poetic practices which governed its use were intentionally amenable to the needs of the poet and his or her material.

An example such as the one above demonstrates that despite the objections that may be raised against the artistic value of hapax legomena, the audience and poet were attentive to lexical choice. Brian Shaw argues that the audience for the poem was “trained to listen to the *scop*’s words with care” (172). Indeed, the poet’s own training would foster an interest in the nuances of word choice and creation. In addition, as the

example of lines 510-829 suggests, and examples in the following chapters bear out, hapax legomena provide keys to thematic and doctrinal meaning in *Andreas*.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> These words include symles (64), hwileð (495), scrid (496), biryhte (848), soðfæstlic (877), coste (1055), ding (1270), hnægen (1329), earh (1331), gemæl (1331), ondwist (1540), smeolt (1581), leoðolic (1628), aspedde (1631), beagselu (1657), and sinchroden (1673).

<sup>2</sup> The self-interruption has been the subject of articles by John Miley Foley and others.

<sup>3</sup> See Daniel G. Calder's comment: "The hapax legomena group themselves around key concepts, compounds which in their novelty dramatize the severity and importance of the two saints' missions" (123).

## CHAPTER 3

### HAPAX LEGOMENA AS INTENTIONAL ARTISTIC CREATIONS

Although the actual distribution of hapax legomena in *Andreas* may defy any expectations of regularity and consistency we bring to the poem, further examination of selected hapax legomena reveals that their placement and meaning are purposeful; the guiding principle at work that tends to correlate a higher incidence of these words with more central passages also governs their location and role within a passage. The initial goal of this study is to establish that hapax legomena can be deliberate artistic creations and not simply words that fulfill an alliterative, semantic, and metrical function; this chapter works towards that aim by showing how hapax legomena are often placed in significant positions, not only within a poetic line but also in relation to the action or theme of an episode. As a result, the location of the word can highlight its meaning, which in a majority of cases reflects an integral component of action, theme, or character. While the single nonce-word does not single-handedly promote this theme or character, it may direct the audience's attention to a salient feature of the action or speech that will guide them in their interpretation of the character of Andrew, for instance, or in an exegetical understanding of his similarity to Christ.

In this chapter a series of opening examples demonstrates the deliberate placement and construction of several hapax legomena. A second section explores how hapax legomena function within the process of generative composition, whereby a component of a unique word is echoed by words in nearby lines. The next section

presents examples to illustrate the nonce words' potential for characterization and thematic development; they can be viewed as integral to the interpretation of a passage. Lastly, the fourth section shows the planned nature of these coinages through an examination of the consistency of hapax legomena formed on the simplexes þryð-, hild-, and nið-. Analysis focuses on three compounds beginning in þryð- in reference to God, three compounds beginning in hild- in reference to the Mermedonians, and finally two other compounds referring to the Mermedonians beginning in nið-. As a whole, the purpose of these examples is to establish that rather than being haphazardly strewn throughout the poem, hapax legomena reveal an intentional creation and arrangement that enables them to play a role in the audience's understanding of the poem.

### I. Appearance of hapax legomena

Near the beginning of the poem, after a passage describing Matthew's capture by the Mermedonians, he offers up a mournful prayer—his first and only in the poem—in which he praises God and accepts his suffering as God's will, to which he will submit himself. This speech (ll. 63-87) features two hapax legomena in the form of compounds near the end of Matthew's entreaty:

Forgif me to are,	æلميhtig God,
leoht on þissum life,	þy læs ic lungre scyle,
ablended in burgum	æfter <b>billhete</b> ,
þurh hearmcwide	heorugrædigra,
laðra leodsceaðena,	leng þrowian
edwitspræce.	Ic to anum þe,



obey God stands in contrast to the reluctance Andrew initially reveals when God calls on him to rescue Matthew (ll. 190-201). Through the unique words in the speech, then, an audience perceives “Matthew’s typological association with Christ” (Bjork 120). Against the backdrop of these harsh descriptions, the hapax legomenon and the saintly bearing of Matthew that it illustrates stand out. Placed near the end of Matthew’s prayer, both billhete and fyrhðlufan highlight key concepts and serve to characterize both the violent Mermedonians and the saintly Matthew.

The response that God gives to Matthew, which marks the first time God speaks in the poem, contains only one hapax legomenon in twenty-one lines (ll. 97-117). Although tælmæt (“a measured number”) may seem unexceptional on the surface, it actually is strategically placed to focus attention on an essential element of the plot. The speech begins with God comforting Matthew with the promise of deliverance and ultimately a place in heaven; for the time being, God asks him to

Gepola þeoda þrea;	nis seo þrah micel	
þæt þe wærlogan	witebendum,	
synne ðurh searocræft,	swencan motan.	
Ic þe Andreas	ædre onsende	
to hleo ond to hroðre	in þas hædenan burg;	
he ðe alyseð	of þyssum leodhete.	
Is to þære tide	<b>tælmæt</b> hwile	
emne mid soðe	seofon ond twentig	
nihtgerimes,	þæt ðu of nede most;	(107-115)

[Endure the affliction of the people; the time is not much in which the enemy with cruel bonds, with wickedness through treachery, might torment you. I will send Andrew to

you at once as protector and as comfort in this heathen city; he will set you free from this persecution. Truthfully to the time is **a measured number** of days, indeed twenty-seven nights all told, that you will be freed from bondage.]

This solitary hapax legomenon, tælmæt, appears directly after the climactic lines in which God reveals that He will send Andrew to release Matthew from prison. As such, it alerts the audience to the practical matter of how many days Matthew must endure his imprisonment. This issue of time plays an important role in the plot, as evidenced by the later hapax legomenon frumrædenne (147; “previous arrangement, appointed time”) denoting the twenty-seven-day period that the Mermedonians have carefully fixed by recording it in writing. Hence, even what appears to be a pedestrian hapax legomenon, devoid of artistry or skill, can be seen to have been constructed with attention to placement, meaning, and effect.

## II. Lexical Generation

The deliberate nature of these newly-coined words becomes even more evident when surrounding words echo and reinforce their form and meaning. Such verbal repetition can consist of the multiple use of one word or, as in the examples considered, the repetition of a simplex in different compounds (Head 92). As noted by James Rosier, this process is also called “generative composition” because one instance of a word can be said to generate subsequent instances “within a few lines” (qtd. in Head 92). Rather than being an isolated occurrence, such repetition is a “‘habit of Old English composition’ that provides ‘coherence’ (193) and ‘continuity’ (200)” (qtd. in Head 92).<sup>1</sup> The poet makes unique words part of this compositional scheme as well.

Near the end of the sea-voyage, Andrew concludes his account of Christ’s miracles with a detailed story of Christ imbuing a stone statue with breath and speech so



that it could proclaim the truth of his deity to an unbelieving crowd. More than one critic has pointed to the dramatic irony of having Andrew relate stories about Christ to Christ himself, albeit in disguise; this episode reveals the human shortcomings Andrew still has to overcome in his path to sainthood. Further irony can be detected in Andrew's telling a story about the statue and then the three patriarchs who faithfully follow God's commands to spread his word abroad, given Andrew's own initial reluctance to obey God's order to rescue Matthew. In the story, the stone statue is sent to resurrect Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Even long dead, these patriarchs are revived, as Andrew's spirit will be revived as he does God's work, and follow the commands of the statue to spread a message of God's power as creator of the earth.

A hapax legomenon, frumweorca, appears in a phrase at the end of the explanation of the message they are to carry; after that half-line, we learn of people's reaction to this teaching—one of fright. The patriarchs' mission is described as follows:

	Sceoldon hie þam folce gecyðan
hwa æt frumsceaft	furðum teode
eorðan eallgrene	ond upheofon,
hwæt se wealdend wære	þe þæt weorc staðolade.
Ne dorston hie gelettan	leng owihte
wuldorcyniges word;	geweotan ða ða witigan þry
modige mearcland tredan.	Forlætan moldern wunigean
open, earðscræfu;	woldon hie ædre gecyðan

**frumweorca** fæder.

(796b-804a)

[They should declare to the people how at the beginning He exactly created the earth all green and heaven above, who the ruler was who established that work. Nor should they

neglect any longer the word of the king of glory; then the three wise men departed, proud, the marshland to tread. They left the tomb standing open, the sepulcher; they wanted at once to declare the father of **creation**.]

In this passage the hapax legomenon is in a significant position to reinforce and cap off the message of God to be preached: God as creator. Moreover, the form of frumweorca finds an echo in an earlier line (799b) about the ruler “þe þæt *weorc* staðolade” (who established that work) (emphasis mine). We see, then, the hapax legomenon intensifying the main point of the section, which is a particular perception of God as powerful creator of all things. This message of God’s power is one that Andrew will come to learn and rely on later in the poem rather than merely relating stories about it.

As the final hapax legomenon in this important and lengthy section of the poem consisting of the sea-voyage, and within that, the story of Christ’s miracle, frumweorca occupies a prominent position to point to one aspect of God that is crucial to the poem. We saw earlier lines and even a related word, weorc, reinforcing that point. In a similar manner, the hapax legomenon gastgehygdum can be seen to have been carefully constructed and placed in order to emphasize the echoes of its form and content positioned in nearby lines. Between frumweorca and gastgehygdum Andrew and his disciples arrive in the land of Mermedonia; however, since Andrew has been asleep, his followers explain how they came to the country, in the process describing a dream-vision of heaven that is a miniature poetic tour-de-force, a descriptive indulgence. Although he has not seen the heavenly vision, Andrew finally realizes the true identity of the steersman of the boat. His companions respond to this insight with their own revelation:

Him þa æðelingas	ondsweorodon,
geonge gencwidum,	gastgerynum:

“We ðe, Andreas,                      eaðe gecyðað  
 sið userne,                              þæt ðu sylfa miht  
 ongitan gleawlice                      **gastgehygdum.**                      (857-861)

[The noble retainers answered him, the youths with answers, with spiritual mysteries:  
 “We will readily reveal our voyage to you, so that you yourself might wisely perceive  
**innermost thoughts (spiritual thoughts).**]

To an audience knowledgeable of the legend of Andrew, this section would have been familiar, since it exists in both the Greek and Latin versions of the tale, but not in the Old English prose version. A sense of anticipation builds as the text approaches the passage and as the narrator sets up the account of heaven with these five lines and one hapax legomenon, gastgehygdum. At first, the youths are prepared to provide gencwidum, “answers, replies,” a reasonable enough response, but the next word, gastgerynum, “spiritual mysteries,” offers a more tantalizing hint of what the youths might reveal. Clearly, this word, provided by the narrator, finds a later echo in gastgehygdum in both form and meaning. Both words occur at the end of a line and a sentence, and both serve to preface the actual recounting of the heavenly vision; as such, they stand out as noticeable words in their contexts. More significantly, both words hint at the spiritual depths of the vision to come; together, they prime the audience to attend closely to the disciples’ vision by contributing a sense of anticipation and appreciation for what is to follow. The term gastgehygdum, though, is in a more prominent position by dint of its leading directly into the followers’ story, in addition to being unique. The examples of this word and of frumweorca demonstrate the deliberate, artistic manner in which hapax legomena can be constructed and placed within a poem to convey emphatically a

particular meaning to an audience. As such, they serve as guideposts for listening or reading.

These examples of a hapax legomenon finding an echo in a nearby word are not isolated; one occurs a few passages later, as Christ, appearing in the guise of a youth to Andrew and his followers, reprimands him once more for his initial reluctance to undertake this voyage. By this point, Christ's speech makes clear, Andrew should have learned a lesson about God's power and His ability and willingness to support those He loves. Then Christ commands Andrew to rise and prepare himself to enter the city, for he is honored and blessed by God:

	Ɗu in þa ceastre gong	
under burglocan,	þær þin broðor is;	
wat ic Matheus	þurh mænra hand	
hrinen <b>heorudolgum</b> ,	<b>heafodmagan</b>	
searonettum beseted.		(933b-943a)

[Go you into the city under the city wall, where your brother is; I know Matthew is assailed **with sword-wounds** through the hand of the wicked, **your near relative** surrounded by a web of guile.]

In one sentence, the poet invokes Matthew's current dire situation, perhaps as additional inspiration for Andrew. The two hapax legomena add weight to this injunction; the fact that they alliterate serves to connect closely the solicitous word heafodmagan with the horrors of the heorudolgum he is suffering, making the juxtaposition of these two words striking. The contrast between the torments of the Mermedonians and Andrew's close relation to Matthew is meant to stir emotion in the audience. Of the two hapax legomena, the first holds more significance. To begin with, it is the only nonce-word in the poem to

start with heoru- (or heoro-), although its other component, dolg, relates it to later hapax legomena denoting the torture Andrew suffers: seonodolg (1406) and dolgbennum (1397). Matthew's current torments are linked to Andrew's future sufferings in another manner: a mere ten lines later we find the word heoruswengum (952), not a unique item, but a poetic word detailing the "sword-strokes" that Andrew is promised he will soon suffer; as such, it provides a deliberate echo of the hapax legomenon at 942. Besides these two words, the poem contains three other words beginning with heoro-: heorodreorig ("sword-bloody"), heorogrædig ("bloodthirsty, ravenously hungry"), and heorogrim(m) ("cruel in battle, ferocious"). These terms are noteworthy: all of them refer to the Mermedonians, and, additionally, they all appear in *Beowulf*.

While no great divide in meaning appears to separate these words as they occur in *Beowulf* and *Andreas*, heorudolgum and heoruswengum may be viewed as more metaphorical terms. As it is used in *Beowulf*, heorosweng has the honor of being the sword-stroke with which Beowulf cuts off Grendel's head. This stroke is delivered by a real sword, but in *Andreas* we are to take heoruswengum less literally, imagining injuries inflicted not necessarily by swords but by any medium. In a similar manner, this method of interpretation can inform our understanding of the unique word heorudolgum. The form of the word—the components of which it is composed—resonate with older Germanic meanings and contexts, evoking, as we saw, the wounds gained in battles with legendary monsters. Through the hapax legomenon, though, an audience is encouraged to indulge in those familiar associations inherent in heoru and dolg while acknowledging the transformation of those associations in the Christian context of the poem. The same might be argued for heafodmagan; however, it is not a completely unique word: instead

of being created especially for the poem, it is the only attested instance of that particular form of heafodmæg, a poetic term that appears in *Beowulf* as heafodmaga (2151) and heafodmægum (588). Hence, despite the fact that in *Andreas* heafodmagan has a less literal meaning than in *Beowulf*, an audience might have recognized it as a poetic term; nevertheless, they would not have viewed it in the same way as a true hapax legomenon.

The “sword-wounds” or heorudolgum with which Matthew is afflicted are precursors to the “deep wounds” or dolgbennum later inflicted upon Andrew. As previously mentioned, dolgbennum finds an echo a few lines later in the unique seonodolg (1406, “sinew-cut”), both describing the third day of tortures endured by Andrew. A further pattern of consistency can be seen in two related words, sarbennum (“painful wound”) and dolgslegum (“jagged wound”), which describe Andrew’s injuries during his three days of captivity. The hapax legomena as well as the other two words certainly have associations to Germanic battle scenes and continue the pattern of battle-imagery applied to Andrew and the wounds he suffers.

Focusing on dolgbennum, we see that not only is its form significant, but its position is as well, since it is the culmination of a list of torments:

	Wæs se halga wer	
sare geswungen,	searwun gebunden,	
<b>dolgbennum</b> purhdrifen,	ðendon dæg lihte	(1395b-1397)

[The holy man was beaten with torments, bound with treacheries, pierced through **with deep wounds**, as long as the day was light]

It is a technique used again a few lines later, as Andrew describes his own injuries in a list of ever-increasing intensity (ll. 1404-1406a). In the passage above, it may be viewed that the severity of the dolgbennum causes the saint finally to cry out to God, as the next line

recounts: “Ongan þa geomormod to Gode cleopian” (1398). Thus, the hapax legomenon, besides being consistent with a pattern of composition of nonce-words to describe Andrew’s suffering, also expresses the intensity of that suffering in a way that could arrest the audience’s attention and help them understand why the saint is moved to speak aloud to God.

### III. Hapax legomena as keys to interpretation

If the previous examples illustrate with some success that the placement and meaning of a hapax legomenon are purposeful, then the next example shows how these two features, placement and meaning, can work together to enable that word to act as a key in unlocking a deeper level of significance, in this case in illuminating the character of Andrew. The passage itself (ll. 1455-1468) does not qualify as a central episode. Rather, it appears at a turning point in the narrative: on the third day of Andrew’s torments, God speaks to Andrew to assure him that His promise is still inviolate and that Andrew will suffer no longer at the hands of the Mermedonians. Andrew, turning, sees that in place of his blood a grove of blossoming trees has sprouted. This passage comes between God’s promise that the Mermedonians will no longer be able to harm Andrew and God’s physical rejuvenation of Andrew’s broken and torn body. By itself, the passage appears at a point of increasing narrative dramatic interest, although it contains no events as dramatic as those that surround it and no speeches of great importance. As a result, perhaps, it contains only one hapax legomenon, the genitive form magorædendes, “of the counselor of men, of the leader,” which occurs almost exactly halfway through the passage:

Þa þa folctogan	feorðan siðe,
egle ondsacan,	æðeling læddon
to þam carcerne;	woldon cræfta gehygd,
<b>magorædendes</b>	mod oncyrran
on þære deorcan niht.	Þa com dryhten God
in þæt hlinræced,	hæleða wuldor,
ond þa wine synne	wordum grette
ond frofre gecwæð,	fæder mancynnes,
lifes lareow.	

(ll. 1458-1466)

[Then the leaders of the host, the terrible adversaries, led the hero the fourth time to the prison; they wanted to pervert the thought of skills, the spirit **of the counselor of men**. Then the Lord God came into the grated building, the glory of heroes, and then greeted his friend with words and spoke comfort, the father of men, life's teacher.]

As has been suggested, the position of this passage at a turning point in the story may be thematically more significant than the events it relates, for at this time we see a transition from Andrew's being under the power of the Mermedonians to God's asserting His power to free Andrew and allow him to loose a flood upon the city. Significantly, then, both the position and the meaning of magorædendes reflect this transition in the narrative. Just as this night, "feorðan siðe," is the last time the Mermedonians will lead Andrew to a prison cell, so is the sentence in which magorædendes appears the last description of the Mermedonians' machinations attempting to undermine Andrew's faith; in the very next sentence, the Lord appears in order to abrogate the Mermedonians' position of power over Andrew. Analogously, the meaning of the hapax legomenon emphasizes this shift in power and the concomitant shift in Andrew's position in the city. As the genitive form



of a noun referring to “mod” (‘spirit’), magorædendes appears in this expression to be designating Andrew as a “leader” or “counselor of men,” a questionable appellation for an imprisoned man. However, as Robert Boenig explains in a note on this line, the word functions as “an anticipation of the role Andrew will soon adopt among the Mermedonians” (*The Acts of Andrew* 113). As a result, then, the solitary hapax legomenon serves as a focal point for the passage, acting as a fulcrum to designate the shift in the balance of authority, from the Mermedonians’ temporal, earthly power to God’s eternal omnipotence. Although the audience senses this shift in the passage through the hapax legomenon, the Mermedonians must experience the fury of a flood before acknowledging the limited nature of their power, the key to their eventual conversion.

Clearly, in the previous example the placement and meaning of magorædendes are hardly arbitrary, nor does it seem likely that the word arises from mere poetic convenience. To the contrary, by virtue of its location at a turning point in the narrative and its seemingly incongruous definition, magorædendes serves to draw an audience’s attention to the shift in power that is underway as well as the role Andrew is destined to play as God’s emissary of change. As such, then, it alerts the audience that particular attention should be paid to the character of Andrew and the contending forces of good and evil in the narrative at this point.

While it is certainly true that poets used the pre-existing resources of the native word-stock to designate Christian meanings, by the very fact of their newness, hapax legomena dramatize the fusion of native forms with newer meanings. As such, they bear close consideration, for as with magorædendes, a word that initially appears incongruous

or even nondescript may have its own logical purpose. The word sigebroðor may seem worthy of note purely due to its uniqueness; it appears in God's first address to Andrew, in which God orders him to travel to Mermedonia because:

Ðær ic seomian wat                      þinne **sigebroðor**  
mid þam burgwarum                      bendum fæstne;                      (183-184)

[There I know to lie your **glorious brother** with the body of citizens in fast bonds;]

A number of compounds in sige- appear in *Andreas*, among them sigedryhten ("mighty ruler, Lord"), sigerof ("gloriously bold, valiant"), sigesped ("mighty power"), and sigewang ("place of victory"); a comparable number, and some of the same words, also appear in *Beowulf*. Significantly though, the sige- compounds in *Beowulf* refer to physical battles, while those in *Andreas* refer to spiritual victories. A conjectural older meaning of sigebroðor, then, might be "victory-in-battle brother," while a contemporary contextual meaning is usually rendered as "victory brother" or, as above, "glorious brother." As "victory brother," the word may seem perplexing in the sense that magorædendes was, for how can an imprisoned man be perceived as victorious? In a Germanic reading, this indeed presents a paradox, but this paradox can be resolved by realizing that Matthew is experiencing a spiritual victory in the dungeon through his faith. Victory is a state of the soul, not the body. Moreover, Matthew is Andrew's brother in Christ, and it is of this spiritual kinship that God is attempting to remind Andrew.

The potential for characterization and thematic development hinted at in the brief examples of magorædendes and sigebroðor is more fully realized in more extended passages of greater dramatic interest in *Andreas* in which hapax legomena consistently provide an audience with clues and methods for reading. For instance, in another passage

(ll. 1201-1218), two unique words signal that a Germanic depiction of battle has been translated to a Christian context. The passage begins on a note of high excitement as the citizens of Mermedonia, urged by the devil, stream out of the city gates in pursuit of Andrew; in the face of this advancing horde, the leader of the opposing side, God, bolsters Andrew's morale with a few choice words of encouragement and advice, urging him to stand firm and trust in his leader. For our purposes, the passage gains further interest by containing two hapax legomena that almost exactly bracket the whole and focus the audience's attention on the forces arraigned against Andrew as well as the steadfast defense he has in his favor.

The first hapax legomenon, hildfrome, appears in the second line of the passage, as the narrator describes the Mermedonians, incited by the devil's accusations against Andrew, rushing in an armed crowd towards the city gates, where he is waiting:

Ða wæs beacen boden	burhsittendum;
ahleoƿon <b>hildfrome</b>	heriges brehtme,
ond to weallgeatum	wigend þrungon
cene under cumblum	corðre mycle
to ðam orlege,	ordum ond bordum. (1201-1205)

[Then a signal was given to the citizens; **those eager for battle**<sup>2</sup> ran with the clamor of an army, and the warriors crowded to the city gates, bold under the banners in a great host to the battle, with spears and shields.]

As has been shown, meaning and placement are often the primary factors to consider when evaluating hapax legomena. First, it should be noted that the sentence itself catches the imagination due to its visual portrayal of an active scene which raises our concern for Andrew, for we envision a literal army in pursuit of him. The word hildfrome appears



[They will not be able and will not be allowed to consign your body to death through guilty malice over my grace, though you may suffer a blow, a cruel **wicked blow**; I will remain with you.]

The hapax legomenon manslaga is often translated “wicked blow” instead of “manslaughter”; the final lines gain power from the tension between the word’s contextual meaning and its expected meaning. Perhaps we are meant to infer that the torments Andrew will suffer would prove fatal for any man not under God’s protection. Again, the word focuses our attention on the central events to come in the poem, namely the three days of Andrew’s torments. Additionally, the word’s placement at the end of God’s speech further assures that the word and the concepts it relates to will not be overlooked. Lastly, manslaga gains greater impact through juxtaposition with the final phrase, “ic þe mid wunige.” The ominous tone of impending violence established early in the passage and extended to “mirce manslaga” contrasts with the peaceful simplicity of God’s promise to remain with Andrew. The passage that began in the territory of Germanic battle poetry concludes with its feet planted firmly on the rock of Christian faith.

#### IV: Hapax legomena and simplexes

##### A. þryð- compounds

An examination of a simplex used in several words rather than of just one word can reveal a pattern of word-formation in the poem; in addition, as in the earlier examples of heafodmagan and heorudolgum, we can distinguish the difference that context makes in differentiating the *Andreas*-poet’s use of the simplex from its traditional meanings. If we consider the word þryð, meaning “might, power, force, strength,” we find that *Beowulf* and *Andreas* each contains three hapax legomena built on this word. The

meanings and uses of these words, however, are worlds apart. In *Beowulf*, two of the hapax legomena refer to the hall and its activities: ðrybærn (657; “mighty house, splendid hall”) and þryðword (643; “strong word”). An adjective, ðryðswyð (“strong, mighty”) appears twice: once in an early portrait of Hrothgar, whose fighters “mighty in strength of numbers” (131) are no match for Grendel; and in praise of Beowulf, “strong and mighty, Hygelac’s kinsman” (736), closely preceding his battle with Grendel. It seems safe to conclude that a pattern exists in the poem by which þryð is associated with the warrior code of the hall and physical prowess.

Similarly, in *Andreas* the poet forms words based on þryð in a manner consistent with the subject-matter of his poem, which is evident by a listing of the three hapax legomena: þryðcining (436; “glorious King,” in reference to God), þryðbearn (494; “glorious youth,” in reference to Christ), and þryðweorc (773; “glorious statue,” in reference to the statue that Christ vivifies). These examples demonstrate that in the context of a saint’s life, the concepts of power and might expressed through þryð have undergone a radical redefinition. A difference in the translation of þryðbearn quietly makes this point: while the poem’s editor glosses it as “glorious son or youth,” Robert Boenig translates it as “strong child of heroes,” preserving the older Germanic sense of the word (*The Acts of Andrew* 85). The contrast between these two meanings becomes significant within the context of the passage, in which Andrew is extolling the skill of the ship’s captain, unaware that he is actually addressing Christ. In the midst of a storm, Andrew speaks:

Ic wæs on gifene	iu ond nu <þa>
syxtyne siðum	on sæbate

mere hrerendum	mundum freorig,	
eagorstreamas	(is ðys ane ma),	
swa ic æfre ne geseah	ænigne mann,	
<b>þryðbearn</b> , hæleð	þe gelicne	
steoran ofer stæfnan.		(489-495a)

[I was on the ocean in a vessel in times long past and recent sixteen times, stirred the sea, the ocean currents, with frozen hands (this is yet another), without ever seeing any man, **glorious youth**, hero like you steer over the prow.]

Boenig's more literal translation of "strong child of heroes" suggests believably that Andrew wants to typify the ship's captain as one possessed of astounding skill. Within Andrew's use of the older sense of this word, however, lies an irony: Andrew identifies the captain as a "strong child of heroes" and not a "glorious son (of God)" because he does not yet recognize Christ's identity. The distance between the word's two senses indicates a misidentification on Andrew's part, and hints to an audience that Andrew will need more spiritual maturity before he will be prepared to battle the Mermedonians. As long as Andrew sides with the more traditional meaning of the hapax legomenon, he is shown to be stuck in an outmoded Germanic mindset, viewing Christ as purely a heroic figure instead of a savior.

Another closely-related compound based on þryð does not contain the ambiguity of þryðbearn; the unequivocal Christian meaning points to the firm foundation of Andrew's faith and his potential for sainthood. On the ocean voyage, the tempestuous seas frighten Andrew's followers, and Christ challenges Andrew to comfort them with his recollections of Christ's teachings. The narrator introduces the speech with praise for both Andrew and his disciples:

Ongan þa gleawlice                      gingran sine,  
**wuldorspedige** weras,                      wordum trymman:                      (427-428)

[He began then wisely to encourage his followers, **men rich in glory**, with words:]

The word wuldorspedige is of interest for being the only hapax legomenon in the poem to refer to Andrew's disciples and, incidentally, to begin with wuldor-. Given the nature of other compounds in the poem formed on wuldor-, such as wuldorcyninges (418a, "the king of glory") a few lines earlier in reference to God, the poet has bestowed a generous term on the group of men accompanying Andrew. Once he begins to speak, Andrew identifies another key group of characters in the poem by a hapax legomenon:

Ge þæt gehogodon,                      þa ge on holm stigon,  
 þæt ge on fara folc                      feorh gelæddon  
 on for dryhtnes lufan                      deað þrowodon,  
 on **ælmyrcna**                      eðelrice  
 sawle gesealdon.                      (429-433a)

[You suppose that, when you embark on the ocean, that you venture life among hostile people and suffer death for the love of the Lord, give up your soul among the domain **of foreign borderers**.]

Brooks argues that ælmyrcna is a more general appellation for "dwellers in a foreign country" (77) and not a specific term for Ethiopians, as it has sometimes been translated, or Mermedonians, as Boenig renders the word. Even if it is understood in a broader sense, the word would still undoubtedly point towards the primary antagonists in the poem and the potential for martyrdom at their hands. Andrew's 'comfort' does not end here, though; it modulates to a more heartening note with the invocation of God:



	Ic þæt sylfa wat,	
þæt us gescyldeð	scyppend engla,	
weoruda dryhten;	wæteregeſa ſceal,	
geðyd ond geðreatod	þurh <b>þryðcining</b> ,	
lagu lacende,	liðra wyrðan.	(433b-437)

[I know that myself, that the creator of angels, the lord of multitudes, protects us; by **the glorious king**, terrible water shall, restrained and overcome, the moving water, become calmer.]

In contrast to þryðbearn, the intent of þryðcining in Andrew’s speech is unmistakably Christian. Although it does not appear in apposition to the phrases “scyppend engla” (“the creator of angels”) and “weoruda dryhten” (“the lord of multitudes”), “the glorious king” becomes associated with them through their close proximity. Hence, through þryðcining an audience has no doubt that Andrew is making reference to God and that no ambiguity or error exists in his mind on this point. The older sense of þryð is still present in this hapax legomenon, but instead of superseding the word’s Christian meaning, the literal meaning of “glorious king” is instead extended to the only Lord to whom Andrew owes allegiance.

The final incidence of an original þryð compound in the poem occurs in a more central episode, as Christ orders the stone statue which he has brought to life to go forth and raise the three patriarchs from their graves. In contrast to the hapax legomena in the previous lines, which had stressed the disbelief of the witnesses of the miracle,<sup>3</sup> those in Christ’s command stress the power of belief:

Ða se þeoden bebead	<b>þryðweorc</b> faran,
stan <on> stræte	of stedewange,

ond forð gan	foldweg tredan,	
grene grundas,	Godes ærendu	
larum lædan	on þa leodmearce	
to Channaneum,	cyninges worde,	(773-778)

[Then the Lord ordered **the mighty work** to go, the stone on the street, from the floor, and to go forth to tread the way over the earth, the green grounds, to convey God's message as commands in the territory of the Canaanites, the word of the king,]

If any misgivings remain about the importance of this episode or the centrality of the stone statue, þryðweorc, the only hapax legomenon applied to the statue, should allay those doubts by linking it with the power and might of God. The nonce-word certainly conveys more than the phrase with which it is in apposition, “stan <on> stræte,” “the stone on the street.” The statue is a “mighty work” not because of its original maker but because it has been transformed by God and partakes of His power to effect a miracle:

beodan Habrahame	mid his eaforum twæm	
of eorðscræfe	ærest fremman,	
lætan <b>landreste</b> ,	leoðo gadrigean,	
gaste onfon	ond geogoðhade,	
edniwinga	andweard cuman	
frode fyrnweotan,	folce gecyðan	
hwylce hie God mihtum	ongiten hæfdon.	(779-785)

[to order Abraham with his two sons from the sepulchre to arise, to leave behind **the resting place in the ground**, to bestir their limbs, to receive life and youthfulness, to appear once again the venerable wise men of old, to reveal to the people what they understood the power of God to be.]

The theme that emerges from this passage is that the Lord has power to imbue the dead or inanimate with life and, more generally, that in order to carry out God's work, one must

be brought to life by Him and then be responsive to His will. The examples of the statue and later the patriarchs, denoted by the two hapax legomena in the passage, provide a model of faith and obedience that Andrew must learn to emulate.

In conclusion, the poet's consistent use of þryð in these three hapax legomena reveals not only the consideration given to forming these words but also how the original meanings inherent in þryð have been appropriated and in some cases transformed through the hapax legomena. These unique words serve as indications for an audience that in *Andreas*, spiritual might replaces physical strength as a force to be revered, and glory resides not in mortal men but in God and those He touches.

## **B. hild- compounds**

In describing the Mermedonians as well, the poet appropriates simplexes with already-established traditional connotations and applies them to the newer context of the saint's life. One word we might consider, hildeþrymme (1032), stands relatively alone, isolated from other hapax legomena, although echoes of it can be found in nearby passages. It occurs after Andrew has entered the city, felled the prison guards, and opened the prison doors, a highly dramatic episode which features a number of hapax legomena. Once Andrew goes inside the prison and greets Matthew, the number of original words noticeably decreases, although due to a lacuna in the manuscript, it is remotely possible that some nonce-words have been lost. The word hildeþrymme is placed in the middle of the passage in which Andrew and Matthew are preparing to lead the prisoners from the prison-house and out of the city:

Æfter þyssum wordum	wuldres þegnas,
begen þa gebroðor,	to gebede hyldon;

sendon hira bene	fore bearn Godes.	
Swylce se halga	in þam hearmlocan	
his God gret<t>e,	ond him geoce bæd,	
hælend helpe,	ær þan hra crunge	
fore hæðenra	<b>hildeþrymme;</b>	(1026-1032)

[After these words the glorious thanes, both the brothers, knelt in prayer, sent their prayer before the son of God. Thus the holy one in the chamber of sorrow greeted his God and asked Him for comfort, the Savior for help, before his body fell before **the armed might** of the heathens (Mermedonians).]

Although the passage occurs during a lull in the dramatic intensity of the poem,

hildeþrymme anticipates the impending dramatic conflict by reminding an audience what Andrew surely will face, the “armed might” of this formidable foe. As has been the case with other hapax legomena we have examined, this word is placed in a significant position in the passage, not only at the end of a line but also immediately before Andrew takes action to guide everyone from the prison. Thus, this “fulcrum point” in the passage corresponds with a unique word. The placement of hildeþrymme also enhances the suddenness of this mention of Andrew’s upcoming battle with the Mermedonians.

Expanding the range of the search, we find that the poem contains four hapax legomena built on hild-: in addition to the one already mentioned, hild<e>bedd (1092; “bed of violent death”), hildfrome (1202; “eager for battle”) and hildstapa (1258; “marching warrior”). Aside from this last word, which figuratively portrays ice and frost as warriors, the other three refer to the Mermedonians.

The *Andreas*-poet would have inherited a number of hild- compounds through the poetic tradition, to which other poets had added their own creations. *Beowulf*, for instance, features nineteen hapax legomena with hild as the first element; all relate to

weapons used in battle, the leaders of battle, and personal qualities such as valor necessary to battle. Applying hild- compounds to the Mermedonians may seem at first to glorify them, but in fact it accords with the practice in *Andreas* of characterizing the Mermedonians by their skill in battle and readiness to fight, a tendency that can be noticed through the high number of other epithets, including hapax legomena, that refer to these qualities. In the Germanic ethos, such qualities are not necessarily a detriment, but in general their context in *Andreas* makes them seem more threatening, as is the case with hildeþrymme. An additional factor to consider in determining the effect of hild- compounds is that in this poem, the qualities of being “eager for battle” or enjoying “armed might” are more figuratively meant than in a poem whose narrative is based more strictly on the traditional code. The Mermedonians may carry weapons of some sort, but those may be mental and spiritual as well as physical, for they attack the mind, soul, and body. Hence, the warrior ethos of a battle poem is transformed into a set of martial references that overlays this saint’s life, and even before Andrew converts the Godless people, the poem has effected a conversion of its own, which is evident through its hapax legomena.

### C. nið- compounds

Not all terms for the Mermedonians follow the pattern of hild- compounds, however. Earlier in the poem, just as Andrew and his followers have been deposited in the land of Mermedonia, the poet uses three hapax legomena which are noteworthy for their proximity and effects. As with the previously-mentioned hildeþrymme, the first of these unique words, niðhetum (“deadly enemies”), arrives with a suddenness calculated to catch an audience’s attention:

<Gewiton> ða ða aras	<eft> siðigean
eadige on upweg,	eðles neosan;
leton þone halgan	be herestræte
swefan on sybbe	under swegles hleo,
bliðne bidan	burhwealle neh,
his <b>niðhetum</b> ,	nihtlange fyrst,
oðþæt dryhten forlet	dægscandelle
scire scinan.	(829-836a)

[Then the messengers went to depart, blessed in ascent, back to seek their native land; they left the saint by the highway sleeping in peace under the shelter of the sky, the joyful one remaining near the city wall, near his **deadly enemies** for the space of a whole night, until the Lord allowed the lamp of day to shine brightly.]

Although the construction of niðhetum, as we shall see, is fairly typical, the word itself could introduce some surprise to an audience since there is a hiatus of over four hundred lines between hapax legomena describing the heathen people; in that span of lines, many of the poem's unique words denote elements relating to the sea voyage and the account of Christ's miracle. Adding to the surprise of niðhetum is the tranquil setting surrounding it: Andrew is seen "sleeping in peace under the shelter of the sky," and even after his enemies are mentioned, the narrative continues with the sun rising and dissipating the shadows of night. As restful as the scene may be, the sharp contrast provided by "near his deadly enemies" does not allow the audience to forget the immanent danger dwelling on the other side of the city wall.

The meaning of niðhetum presents a more threatening portrait of the Mermedonians than the compounds created with hild or even many other hapax legomena in the poem. Besides words that depict their affinity for and prowess in battle,

there are nonce-words relating to their heathen nature, such as dwolcræft (34; “sorcery”), and the deeds that flow from that, namely cannibalism: sylfætan (175; “self-eater”) and morðorcræftum (177; “violent or wicked deeds”). We are told that they are freoðoleas (29; “hostile, savage”) and caldheorte (138; “cold-hearted, menacing”), both striking descriptions, yet the force of nið elevates the Mermedonians as niðhetum to a more serious threat, deadly to both the body and the soul. We might also consider that in *Beowulf* hapax legomena in nið are used to describe the dragon (niðdraca; “malicious dragon”) and Grendel’s mother’s lair (niðsele; “hostile hall”). Although these are only two examples, they hint at the import of nið.

To extend our consideration of nið further, we can turn to the next hapax legomenon referring to the Mermedonians, mangeniðlan (916; “evil foes”). Since the occurrence of niðhetum, Andrew’s disciples have related the vision they had of heaven; after this vision, Christ appears and speaks at first only two sentences, containing two hapax legomena, mangeniðlan and grynsmiðas (“sorrow-smiths”):

ƿa he worde cwæð,	wuldres aldor:	
‘Wes ðu, Andreas, hal	mid ƿas willgedryht,	
ferðgefeonde!	Ic ƿe friðe healde,	
ƿæt ƿe ne moton	<b>mangeniðlan,</b>	
grame <b>grynsmiðas,</b>	gaste gesceððan.’	(913-917)

[Then he spoke words, the glorious Lord: “Hail to you, Andrew, with that glorious company, joyful in heart! I will guard you with peace, so that **the evil foes**, the grim **sorrow-smiths**, will not be able to harm you in spirit.”]

Following the extended vision of heaven, this greeting may startle by the juxtaposition of heavenly bliss and earthly torments, of “peace” and “evil foes.” Moreover, its brevity

and its compression of two unique words into two lines heighten the impact of this speech. Considered by itself, due to the connotations of nið in the poem, mangeniðlan may have a more intense meaning for the audience: before this episode, it has been used to describe the unbelieving reaction to Christ's miracle ("brandhata nið"; 768, "hatred hot as a blazing torch"), and it will appear again later in the poem as the "hatred" of the Mermedonians towards Andrew, a malice stirred up by the Devil (cf. 1303, 1394). For the Anglo-Saxon audience, then, our translation of "evil foes" may have been informed by an understanding of an enemy who carries hatred in his heart against the innocent and is led by the wiles of the Devil. Together, the words mangeniðlan and grynsmiðas reinforce one another, for in addition to being arresting, creative descriptions of the Mermedonians, they appear in both syntactic and poetic apposition to one another. As such, they remind the audience of the impending threat of the Mermedonians which Andrew will face; even in the midst of heavenly notions, the poet does not let that purpose stray far from the audience's awareness. Although the promise of Christ's protection is there, the emphasis rests on Andrew's enemies and their capacity for evil.

Hapax legomena, then, cannot be examined or interpreted in isolation. As the examples in this chapter indicate, these unique words interact with and depend on their placement within a line and passage, the surrounding words, and even the histories of the simplexes comprising them. The pervasive perception of an oblivious or inept *Andreas*-poet is challenged by the realization that the poet, when creating or using a new word, did so with an awareness of the connotations or contexts inherent in its components. What is more remarkable about this process of creation is that traditional elements are not merely extended with their older meanings intact but are in many cases translated through the



hapax legomenon into a new context, that of the Christian saint's life. The possibility that hapax legomena can mirror the syncretism of Anglo-Saxon culture is a topic to be explored in more detail in the next chapter.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Rosier, James. "Generative Composition in *Beowulf*." *English Studies* 58 (1977): 193-203.

<sup>2</sup> The hapax legomenon hildfrome could also be translated as "battle-bold" (Boenig) or "combat-strong."

<sup>3</sup> These three hapax legomena are scingelacum (766a; "by means of devilish art"), brandhata (768b; "hot as a blazing torch"), and misgehygd (772a; "evil thought").

## CHAPTER 4

### HAPAX LEGOMENA AS EXEGETICAL MARKERS

The divergent strains of culture, literature, and religion that intermesh in Old English verse inform its narrative style and characterization as well as its word choice and word formation. In a broad sense, “Old English poetic language, recorded at a time when several cultures intersected, represents a convergence of world views. . . . This literature is ‘dialogized’ and ‘heteroglossic’; it consists of more than one language, each one framed by its difference from the others with which it participates” (Head 85). An oral Germanic past and a written Christian tradition meet in the poetry, and “the Old English poets are in many cases likely to have had a foot more or less firmly planted in each of two worlds” (Foley, “Texts That Speak” 146). Reflecting on the effect of Christianity on Anglo-Saxon literature, Clemoes argues that “Christian revelation joined forces with the potentials which Old English poetry customarily recognized—Christian explicitness with the implicitness traditional to poetry’s symbolic language.” As a result, “[a]n alliance was forged between Christian explication and Germanic implication” (233), meaning the exegetical reading practices of the faith were allied with the symbolism of the poetic word-hoard. What we see on the level of narrative and the word is that no one side predominates; instead, there is a coexistence, “a merging of past and present,” which results in “a ‘dialogue,’ in the Bakhtinian sense” (Head 140).

Some charge there has been a tendency in criticism to privilege the more familiar side of this dialogue, the written nature of the text. Critics like Foley have emphasized

the dual nature of Old English verse and enjoined us to remember that "although the poems come to us in manuscript form, they are encoded in an idiom that owes much to a prior and ongoing oral tradition" ("Texts That Speak" 141). The significance of the oral background lies in the tradition it provides, a context that references conventional words and phrases, images and scenes. Although Foley does not refer specifically to hapax legomena, his idea that "fields of meaning are not limited to this text, or a set of extant texts, but resonate against the unspoken tradition which they in part instance" (148) provides a useful method of reading for familiar and even unique words in *Andreas*. The process of interpreting a hapax legomenon requires a consideration of the claim that "oral traditional structures convey worlds of meaning that are institutionally associated with them, bringing to the fore associations that are always immanent, always impinging on the act of (re-) creating verbal art" (Foley 148). Since most of the unique words examined are compounds, by virtue of their form they incorporate the traditional into the new through the associations their components evoke. Thus, assessing a nonce word necessitates an examination of much more conventional items from the word-stock. The "dialogue" within each word of past and present, oral and written, Germanic and Christian enables us to view poetic language as being "substantial (in sound and appearance) and thick with meanings" (Head 87).

### **I. Early examples of syncretism**

The syncretism of the poem *Andreas* that many of its hapax legomena evince is present in the very first lines. While presumably the audience would have expected the content of a saint's life, the poet greets them with forceful words that resonate back through the ages to *Beowulf* and the shadows of oral-formulaic poetry:



are indications that an older vocabulary is being transformed through a Christian context, in both familiar and novel ways. The dual nature of beoden is not unique to *Andreas*, but in a parallel action the poet has coined a word whose familiar form and meaning an audience must extend to suit the current characters and hagiographic genre.

The lines that follow build further on the heroic traits of the twelve men and culminate in another hapax legomenon, meotudwange ("the plain of the ruler"):

þæt wæron mære	men ofer eorðan,
frome folctogan	ond fyrðhwate,
rofe rincas,	þonne rond ond hand
on herefelda	helm ealgodon,

on **meotudwange**:

(7-11a)

[Those were renowned men over the earth, brave leaders of hosts and bold in battle, bold heroes, when shield and hand defended the helmet on the battlefield, on **the plain of the ruler**.]

An audience would have recognized the words wang, meaning "plain, field, or land," and meotud, which has a dual nature like beoden; the older denotation of "ruler, one who ordains" can be extended to "Creator, Lord." The sense, then, of meotudwange as a battlefield would also have been suggested by its apposition to herefelda, "battlefield."

The form of the word would not have surprised the audience either; one can compare it to the form of sigewang (1581), "victory-plain." Meotudwange marks the end of the initial train of thought in the poem, for beginning at line 11b, the narrator shifts from the introduction of the twelve apostles to the presentation of Matthew and the Mermedonians. In this prominent position, it acts as a culmination of the syncretic gesture present in the poem's initial lines. The poet has taken the Germanic word

meotud, which has a primarily poetic usage, and created a compound whose metaphorical meaning is “battlefield” but which the audience literally apprehends as “plain of the lord,” except that in this case, that term is redefined for God--”dryhten sylf, heafona heahcyning” (5b-6a) (the Lord himself, the high king of heaven). The confluence of Germanic and Christian in the poem challenges Brooks’s assertion that “meotud is used in its older sense of ‘fate’; cf. me(o)tudsceaf, ‘decree of fate,’ i.e., ‘death,’ *Beo* 1077, 1180” (61). As has been seen, although *Beowulf* and *Andreas* bear some striking similarities in phrasing, the differing contexts of the poems result in a shift in the denotations of certain words. This line of argumentation harks back to Roberta Frank, who in “‘Mere’ and ‘Sund’: Two Sea-Changes in *Beowulf*” demonstrates how a word could have one meaning in poetry, and another in prose, the varying contexts determining which meaning would come into play.

If a hapax legomenon is viewed as a vehicle to bridge the distance between Christian and Germanic traditions, then the individual nonce-word has the potential to challenge the expected reading of an image, line, or character. The word has the power to suggest more than the singular, anticipated meaning by its form, connotations, and connections to other words. An early hapax legomenon in the poem, morgentorht (241; “radiant in the morning”), exemplifies such possibilities for expansion of meaning. It appears at a significant point in the story, as Andrew approaches the seashore and spies a promising ship to ferry him to Mermedonia. Since it is early morning, the next lines seem an appropriate description of the sunrise:

	Ɗa com <b>morgentorht</b>
beacna beorhtost	ofer breomo sneowan,

halig of heolstre,                heofoncandel blac,  
ofer lagoflodas.                                 (241b-244a)

[Then came **the one radiant in the morning**, the brightest of beacons hastening over the oceans, holy from its hiding place, shining heaven-candle, over the water-floods.]

This is a scene familiar from the poetic tradition, one that is replicated a number of times within the poem. Additionally, the words and phrases in apposition to morgentorht would seem to encourage a literal reading of it and the scene: the kenning heofoncandel is reminiscent of other kennings for the sun such as wedercandel (372), dægchandle (835), and woruldcandel (in *Beowulf*); the phrase beacna beorhtost finds an echo in *Beowulf*: “Leoht eastan com, / beorht beacen Godes, brimu swaþpredon” (569b-570; “Light came from the east, the bright beacon of God, the waters became still”). By comparing the two descriptions, we can conjecture that certain elements of the descriptions of the sunrise were formulaic, such as the sun rising over the water and being termed a bright beacon. It is worth noting, too, that in both poems the sun is associated with God, whether explicitly in *Beowulf* or more allusively in *Andreas*’s “halig of heolstre” (holy from its hiding place).

For morgentorht, however, this association goes beyond the literal and becomes a figurative meaning, which the next few lines suggest as Andrew catches his first glimpse of the crew of the ship:

	He ðær <b>lidweardas</b> ,	
þrymlice þry	þegnas <mette>,	
modiglice menn,	on <b>merebate</b>	
sittan siðfrome,	swylce hie ofer sæ comon;	(244b-247)



[There he met **the boat-guards**, the glorious three thanes, valiant men, on **the ship** sitting eager, as if they had come over the sea;]

Context provides a close association between the sunrise and the appearance of the three sailors, whose identities are revealed by the next lines:

þæt wæs drihten sylf,            dugeða wealdend,  
ece ælmihtig,            mid his englum twam.            (248-249)

[that was the Lord himself, ruler of men, eternal almighty, with his two angels.]

Given these revelations, the morning radiance of morgentorht gains additional depth of meaning as an attribute of God. The word morgentorht can properly reflect the conventional meaning of a radiant sunrise, but additionally it can suggest that God and his angels are advancing as bright beacons over the ocean towards Andrew. As Clemoes observes, light and dark take on religious symbolism in the poem in addition to being “the same primeval imagery” and “the same traditional type of language” (254). Such a connection between light and godliness has Biblical precedence, and elsewhere in *Andreas*, Christ, Andrew, and other holy things are associated with light. The strongest similarity is found in the hapax legomenon sigeltorht (1246; “bright as the sun, radiant” or, alternately, “victory-bright one”) used of Andrew during his first day of torments: “Swa wæs ealne dæg oððæt æfen com / **sigeltorht** swungen;” (1245-1246a; “So was **the one bright as the sun** beaten all day until evening came;). The striking parallel between the form of the two words, both formed on -torht, allows us to associate the figurative meaning of sigeltorht with a possible figurative use of morgentorht. In both cases, then, the unique nature of these words alerts an audience to an alternate, Christian interpretation of a well-known image. As Clemoes suggests, the poet's adaptation of the image was “deeply thematic,” denoting the ‘sun-centered conqueror of darkness and cold

in our world” as well as the “primary element in the God-centered glory of heaven” (266).

Even for modern audiences, a hapax legomenon may encourage a reader to look beyond an apparently literal image to a more complex possibility informed by Christian thought. One nonce-word that could be easily overlooked is sylfætan (175), “self-eater” or “cannibal,” a term God uses to name the Mermedonians in his first speech to Andrew:

Đu scealt feran                      ond frið lædan,  
siðe gesecan,                      þær **sylfætan**  
eard weardigað,                      eðel healdaþ

**morðorcræftum.**

(174-177a)

[You shall go and venture, shall seek a journey, to where **the cannibals** occupy the earth, hold the country **by violent deeds**.]

Compounds in self- were not unheard of in Old English, although many were employed in reference to suicide, and this hapax legomenon seems to express the idea of "cannibal" in a most literal way. To apply an even more literal standard to the word, though, a cannibal is strictly an eater of others; a "self-eater" only makes sense when “self” is viewed in strict terms as one’s own (human) race. At a more figurative extreme, then, considering that God wields this term, “self-eater” may imply that the Mermedonians’ behavior can be perceived in a different way, as self-destructive. In a Christian sense, cannibalism is a sin that ‘eats away’ at a person’s soul; equally, it is an unholy breaking of bread that leads to damnation. In God’s use of sylfætan, thus, there may be a double implication: not only are the Mermedonians threatening the lives of Matthew and his fellow prisoners, but they are also destroying themselves by their cannibalistic actions, tellingly expressed via another nonce-word, morðorcræftum. As the hapax legomenon

sylfætan alerts its readers, for the Mermedonians, the flesh carries a physical-spiritual paradox: it nourishes the body but consumes the soul.

## II. Hapax legomena as exegetical markers

An individual nonce-word may point the way towards a more figurative reading that enables an audience to interpret a character within a Christian context. Furthermore, in the next passage under consideration, the hapax legomena foster an exegetical reading of the poem by developing the parallel between Christ and Andrew and identifying traditional topoi that are infused with Christian symbolism. The passage (ll. 469-509) occurs during the sea-voyage on which Andrew and Christ, in the guise of the captain, discuss Christ's works on earth and God's steadfastness. This entire section of the poem in general contains fewer hapax legomena than the more dramatic, action-centered episodes, and this particular set of lines occurs immediately prior to long stretches of text in which no hapax legomena appear at all. However, Andrew's words to the steersman in lines 469-509 include a total of 10 hapax legomena; in addition, it must be noted that a prior speech of Andrew's and the transitional narrative in between (ll. 427-468) contain an equally high number of hapax legomena, 8 total, which might lead one to believe that these two speeches, comprising between them a little less than 100 lines, feature concepts significant to subsequent events in the poem, elucidated to a reader through the unfamiliar words created by the poet. For comparison, in the groups of approximately 100 lines before and after these two speeches, lines 315-426 contain 5 hapax legomena, one of which is contested, and lines 510-616 contain 4 hapax legomena, which are in addition widely dispersed. Hence, Andrew's address in lines 469-509 and the high total of original words stand out from these surrounding episodes.

This passage consists of a speech Andrew makes in praise of the steersman who, unbeknownst to him, is actually Christ. Although at other times Andrew commends the captain on his seafaring skill, this speech comprises the most extended treatment of that idea. In this section of the poem, where Andrew exalts the deeds of Christ without realizing he is addressing his praise to the incarnate Lord himself, the dramatic irony is heightened by the contiguity between this speech and a prior speech in which Andrew relates his personal experience with Christ. Of course, the irony derives from the audience's knowledge that although Andrew personally knew Christ, he cannot recognize him now as the navigator with whom he is sitting and conversing. Robert Bjork emphasizes this lack of recognition as a feature which Andrew must overcome before he can wear the mantle of sainthood; however, despite the distance between Christ and Andrew, an understanding of the connection between them is paramount to an understanding of the poem (*The Acts of Andrew* 113). The request at the heart of Andrew's remarks reflects something of his limited perception and appreciation but yet puzzlement at the divine skill of the steersman:

	Wolde ic anes to ðe,
cynerof hæleð,	cræftes neosan,
ðæt ðu me getæhte,	nu þe tir cyning
ond miht forgeaf,	manna scyppend,
hu ðu wægflotan	wære bestemdon,
sæhengeste,	sund wisige. (483b-488)

[I would like to inquire of you after one skill, illustrious man, that you might show me, now that the king has granted glory and might to you, the creator of men, how you guide the sea-horse, the ship drenched with the sea.]

Despite the all-too human limitations that Andrew reveals in these lines, the narrator introduces them with phrasing that reminds the reader of Andrew's wisdom:

Ongan þa reordigan	rædum snottor,	
wis on gewitte,	<b>wordlocan</b> onspeonn:	
‘Næfre ic sælidan	selran mette,	
macræftigran,	þæs þe me þynceð,	
rowend rofran,	<b>rædsnotterran</b> ,	
wordes wisran.		(469-474a)

[The one wise in counsels began then to speak, the one wise in mind, unlocked **a store of words**: ‘Never have I met a better seafarer, one of mightier skill, as it seems to me, a bolder rower, **more wise in counsel**, one wiser in word.]

In these first few lines the poet introduces as well two hapax legomena, wordlocan (“a store of words”) and rædsnotterran (“more wise in counsel”). What we might notice at first is the deliberate echoes of these two words to be found in nearby half-lines, so that the words applied to Andrew are mirrored in Andrew's own description of Christ. We see through these verbal echoes Andrew's own process of sanctification, as he strives to make his life more like Christ's. However, we are reminded that Andrew's life is still an imitation, not a duplicate of Christ's through the comparative form of the adjectives applied to Christ: while Andrew is rædum snottor (wise in counsels), Christ is rædsnotterran (more wise in counsel), and in comparison to Andrew's being “wis on gewitte” (wise in mind) Christ is “wordes wisran” (wiser in word). These words seem an accurate depiction of Andrew's human shortcomings, such as his initial reluctance to follow God's command to travel to Mermedonia and save Matthew.

Reiterated and elaborated upon by Andrew, the point of the speech is an exaltation of the confident skill of the captain as he navigates the ship through the stormy waters. Near the end of his panegyric, Andrew marvels:

	Is þes bat ful <b>scrid</b> ,	
færeð famig heals,	fugole gelicost	
glideð on geofone	(ic georne wat	
þæt ic æfre ne geseah	ofer yðlade	
on sæleodan	sylicran cræft;)	
is þon gelicost,	swa he on lan<d>sceare	
stille stande,	þær hine storm ne mæg,	
wind awecgan,	ne wæterflodas	
brecan <b>brondstæfne</b> ,	hwæðere on brim snoweð	
snel under segle.		(496b-505a)

[This boat is fully **swift**, moves with foaming prow, like a bird glides on the ocean. (I readily know that I never saw over the wave-path such marvelous skill in a sailor.) It is almost as if he stood still on a tract of land, where the storm and the wind might not shake him, nor the floods of water break on **the high-prowed one**, however it moves on the ocean, swift under the sail.]

This vision of a sailor safely guiding a ship through rough waves becomes the central image for this passage. It also becomes a central metaphor, as the poet translates an essentially Germanic motif of the sea voyage into a Christian analogy of Christ guiding the body of believers through the trials and dangers of life. In other words, the poet infuses a traditional theme with an awareness of Christian typology, and the resulting passage can be read exegetically, as critics of the poem have noted, with the key images of captain, ship, and sea taking on Christian meaning and symbolism. Significantly, it is

exactly these key images the hapax legomena scrid ("swift") and brondstæfne ("the high-prowed one") in the passage depict.

In order to examine this cluster of hapax legomena, we might begin with the lines in which Andrew claims that although he has been on the ocean numerous times:

swa ic æfre ne geseah	ænigne mann,
<b>þryðbearn</b> , hæleð	þe gelicne
steoran ofer stæfnan.	<b>Streamwelm hwileð</b> ,
beatap <b>brimstæðo</b> .	(493-496a)

[I never did see any man, **glorious youth**, a hero like you, steer over the prow. **The ocean wave roars, the huge wave (wall of sea-water)** beats.]

On the surface, quite a cluster of hapax legomena appears to exist in these lines; however, the verb hwileð, as well as the later adjective scrid (496b), have similar forms elsewhere, so while they may have been unusual, it is more difficult to claim they could have had the uniqueness and impact of a freshly-created word. Still, the remaining frequency of 3 hapax legomena ( þryðbearn, streamwelm, brimstæðo) in three lines is high; even more noteworthy are the referents of these words: two refer to the immensity of the ocean's challenge, the other to the obvious quality of the man who can safely and confidently guide the ship through such obstacles. The word brimstæðo in particular indicates the steersman's skill, as it means, literally, "walls of sea water." Clearly, this passage seems to be saying, the "glorious son" (the literal meaning of þryðbearn) of God is skillful and mighty, one to be trusted on the treacherous sea-voyage, a metaphor for the journey through life.

While this arrangement of words underscores the trustworthy nature of God in contrast to the threatening forces of the waves, the vessel itself is denoted by a hapax

legomenon a few lines later—brondstæfne, “the high-prowed (ship)” (504a). The passengers on this mighty ship—literally Andrew and his followers, but metaphorically all believers in Christ—are emphasized by the hapax legomenon lidwerigum, “those weary of voyaging” (482a). Thus, significantly, almost all the hapax legomena in Andrew’s speech designate elements essential to an exegetical reading of the sea-voyage, pointing the audience’s attention towards those elements that enable such a reading. However, one hapax legomenon, fætedsinces (“of plated treasure”), might seem to be an exception to this pattern; it occurs early in Andrew’s speech, after he has made one request of the steersman:

	Ic wille þe,
eorl unforcuð,	anre nu gena
bene biddan;	þeah ic þe beaga lyt,
sincweorðunga,	syllan mihte,
<b>fætedsinces</b> ,	wolde ic freondscipe,
þeoden þrymfæst,	þin<n>e, gif ic mehte,
begitan godne.	(474b-480a)

[I will now ask for one further request from you, earl of unstained renown; although I might give to you few treasures, costly gifts, **plated treasure**, I would like to obtain your good friendship, powerful lord, if I might.]

The other hapax legomena examined in this passage designate the concepts of captain, ocean, and ship (and, by extension, passengers) central to an exegetical reading of Andrew’s speech and, indeed, to this entire section of the poem; fætedsinces, by contrast, may appear to be of lesser importance or relevance to this reading of the passage, as it relates to Andrew’s inability to provide the sailors with the customary fare for his passage



to Mermedonia. This aspect of the poem, though, and the word fætedsinces, reveal a significant distinction between this trip and other earthly voyages: simply put, believers need no fare or riches to be on this ship under Christ's guidance.<sup>1</sup> Admittance is not limited to those with physical wealth like plated treasure, linked armor, or any of the other signs of wealth and power that customarily change hands in Anglo-Saxon poems. The same message, that on this ship, under this captain, physical wealth no longer holds currency like spiritual wealth, appears in a frequently-cited passage earlier in the poem in which the narrator describes:

Gesæt him þa se halga	<b>holmwearde</b> neah,	
æðele be æðelum;	æfre ic ne hyrde	
þon cymlicor	ceol gehladenne	
heahgestreonum.		(359-362a)

[The saint then sat himself near **the ocean-guardian**, noble one by noble one; I never heard of a more splendid ship laden high with treasure.]

These lines have attracted some unfavorable critical attention due to their similarity to lines 38-39 of *Beowulf* describing the vessel which transports the corpse of Scyld Scefing to the next world. In the words of the *Beowulf*-poet,

	þær wæs madma fela	
of feorwegum	frætwa gelæded;	
ne hyrde ic cymlicor	ceol gegyrwan	
hildewæpnum	ond heaðowædum,	
billum ond byrnum;		(36-40)

[There was a great number of valuable things and of ornaments brought from distant parts; I have not heard of a more splendid ship adorned with war-weapons and armors, with swords and coats of mail.]

In comparing the two passages and contexts, critics have commented on the disparate uses of the similar phrasing, at times to the detriment of the *Andreas* poet; Brooks, for one, refers to the “absurdity of the present passage [in *Andreas*]” (74), and other commentators have taken this usage as evidence that the *Andreas*-poet was but an inept imitator of the *Beowulf*-poet’s skill. However, what these critics seem to overlook is that the description of treasure in *Beowulf* is informed by a literal, Germanic meaning, while gehladenne heahgestreonum in *Andreas* should be interpreted as metaphorical and Christian. Whereas in *Beowulf* the treasure on Scyld Scefing’s burial ship consists of the traditional hoard, the inherited concept of treasure evident elsewhere in this and other Anglo-Saxon poems, in the Christian story in *Andreas* the concept of riches is redefined as a spiritual rather than a physical treasure; thus, to the poet a ship conveying the saint Andrew and Christ in the shape of a steersman could indeed be described as “laden high with treasure.” One cannot confidently state whether or not the poet consciously borrowed the phrasing from *Beowulf* in order to point to the redefinition of the Germanic conception of wealth as that which is laid up in heaven, not on earth. Still, the audience’s understanding of fætedsinces is enhanced by realizing that such “plated treasure” is no longer a prerequisite for the journey through life, defined here as spiritual, not just physical.

In the same way that nearly all the hapax legomena in Andrew’s speech designate elements essential to an exegetical reading of the sea-voyage, the majority of hapax legomena used in passages describing the voyage relate to these same elements. Specifically, in the main extent of the voyage, from Andrew’s resolve to make the journey (line 230) up to his tale of Christ’s miracle (line 642), nearly two-thirds of the hapax

legomena denote the central elements of captain, sea, and ship, which carry key typological meanings. Of the thirty-five words recorded as unique, a full nineteen signify the ship (5)<sup>2</sup>, Christ as the sailor (5)<sup>3</sup>, and the ocean (9).<sup>4</sup> Although a skeptical reader might posit that these words were created purely for convenience's sake, the previous analysis of Andrew's speech (ll. 469-509) should offer persuasive evidence that these hapax legomena do not function merely as alternatives for common terms but that they serve as reminders to the audience of the central symbols in a typological<sup>5</sup> reading of the sea-voyage. The unique words not only draw attention—repeatedly—to these terms but also indicate that a deeper meaning resides within them. Ultimately, the hapax legomena point the audience toward a different, meaningful way of reading.<sup>6</sup>

### III. The formation of a Christian hero

In addition to the general process of redefinition the hapax legomena enable, these unique words also illuminate the character of Andrew, both in examples drawn from the sea-voyage passage and later in Mermedonia. While later hapax legomena develop the connection between Christ and Andrew, an early hapax legomenon, waroðfaruða (197; "eddying surf"), hints at Andrew's distance from God due to his lack of faith. As such, it becomes a significant indicator of Andrew's readiness and ability to act as an instrument of God. After God has commanded Andrew to travel to a far-flung, cannibal-inhabited land, his immediate reaction is incredulous and filled with excuses:

Ðæt mæg engel þin	eað geferan,
<halig> of heofenum;	con him holma begang,
sealte sæstreamas	ond swanrade,

**waroðfaruða** gewinn                      ond wæterbrogan,

wegas ofer widland.

(194-198a)

[That may your angel more easily travel, holy from the heavens; he knows for himself the expanse of the oceans, the salty sea-currents and the swan road, the tumult of **the eddying surf** and terrible water, the paths over the broad earth.]

It is significant that this is the first speech an audience hears from Andrew in the poem, and waroðfaruða is its only nonce word. Within the poem, Andrew's initial reluctance to comply with God's order is seen as an illustration of his still imperfect human character. As understandable as his response may be, it is still viewed as deeply flawed; Christ later cites it as a grave sin (ll. 926-932a). In the lines quoted, the repetition of terms referring to the ocean suggests that Andrew is reaching for an excuse by overemphasizing the dangers of the waters. Examining these terms more closely, we see that the hapax legomenon stands alongside common words like holm, the poetic usages "sealte sæstreamas" and wæterbrogan, and even a familiar kenning, swanrade. Andrew's desperation seems to be echoed in the jumbled assortment of nouns he hurriedly marshals to his defense.

Andrew's nervousness about the sea appears even more unwarranted, however, when viewed in light of a later story he relates while on the ship steered by Christ. After praising God for calming the stormy waters, Andrew remembers an earlier sea-voyage and Christ, who had the power to silence the storm:

Swa gesælde iu

þæt we on sæbate

ofer **waruðgewinn**

wæda cunnedan,

faroðridende.

Frecne þuhton

eagle **ealada**, eagorstreamas  
 beoton **bordstæðu**, brun oft oncwæð  
 yð oðerre;

(438-443a)

[Thus it once happened that we on the sea-boat tested the waves over **the tumult of the surf**, on the one ploughing through the sea. We thought the terrible **ocean path** dangerous, the ocean currents beat **the ship's side**, dark wave often answered another wave;]

Once again, through repetition the poet emphasizes the danger of the tempestuous ocean, although this time with a different intent: to dramatize the extent of Christ's power. The fervor of the description gives rise to three hapax legomena: besides bordstæðu, referring to the side of the ship, the other two, waruðgewinn and ealada, denote the waters. The connection between waruðfaruða and waruðgewinn, "the surf" and "the moving surf," in form and meaning is obvious. A comparison of the two can be instructive: while Andrew first calls on waruðfaruða gewinn (197) as an obstacle to his sailing to Mermedonia, he later offers waruðgewinn as an example of a force subdued by Christ. Clearly, as much as Andrew's story of Christ is meant to demonstrate his trust in God, his initial reluctance to rescue Matthew points to a lack of trust.<sup>7</sup>

There may be a veiled reference to these two hapax legomena in Christ's later words to Andrew when he comments on Andrew's not recognizing him on the voyage:

No ðu swa swiðe synne gefremedest  
 swa ðu in Achaia ondsæc dydest,  
 . . . . . swa ic þe feran het  
 ofer wega gewinn

(926-927; 931a-932b)

[You did not commit as great a wickedness as when you refused in Achaia . . . when I commanded you to travel over the strife of ways.]

It is intriguing to view “ofer wega gewinn” as a subtle allusion to Andrew’s prior inability to have faith in God’s plan. The crux of his doubt is his assumption that he would need to make the journey alone, unaided over “waroðfaruða gewinn ond wæterbrogan.” In an exegetical reading, given that references to the sea have the sense of “life’s journey,” Andrew has forgotten a larger truth: with faith in God, he will never be alone on the sea of life. Linked together through related hapax legomena, his subsequent journey and story prove that Christ has been with him and will continue to accompany him, even to the distant land of the Mermedonians.

**A. Lines 981-ff.**

Once Andrew enters the city of the cannibals, he is presented in a changed light. Up to this point, the audience has learned about Andrew from his words, which reveal both his faith and his shortcomings. We have seen him rejecting God’s request, initially. On the voyage over, Andrew has played the role of the Christian saint-to-be; he is not physically active, and indeed the majority of the time aboard ship is taken up with dialogue between Andrew and Christ. Afterwards, he does not even witness the vision of heaven; instead, his disciples have to describe the scene, leaving him to listen passively. Thus far, he has shown himself to be a man of faith, even if of imperfect understanding; he has had personal experience with Christ yet is still bounded by human limitations. Surely, the journey he takes is spiritual as well as physical, for just as important as his arrival in Mermedonia is his arrival at the realization of Christ’s identity. Moreover, since the battle before him is both physical and spiritual in nature, it is not simply an important but in fact a necessary step for Andrew to recognize Christ and learn of the heavenly vision and his destined place of glory in heaven. Having come this far on his

path to sainthood, and with Christ's words of preparation and encouragement, Andrew is ready for the next step, marching into Mermedonia.

Once he sets foot in the city, he enters the realm of the miles Christi, or warrior for Christ, a radical change of role that allows the poet to merge this Christian persona with that of the native Germanic warrior. After over nine hundred lines of preparation, Andrew quite suddenly takes action: he strides into the city under a cover of invisibility and liberates the prisoners, including Matthew, while striking the guards dead. This flash of action is begun with a prominently-placed hapax legomenon, modgeþyldig ("the one patient in spirit"):

Ða wæs gemyndig	<b>modgeþyldig,</b>	
beorn beaduwe heard;	eode in burh hraðe	
anræd oretta,	elne gefyrðred,	
maga mode rof,	meotude getreowe.	(981-984)

[Then was mindful **the one patient in spirit**, resolute man of battle; he went in the city at once, resolute warrior, supported by honor, a man valiant in spirit, faithful to the Lord.]

Since the previous lines conclude Christ's address to Andrew, after Christ returns to heaven this first line plays an important role in redirecting the audience's attention back to a transformed Andrew and his mission. In fact, the first few lines of the passage consist of verbs denoting Andrew's actions and phrases in apposition naming him, of which modgeþyldig is the first. Clearly, the poet is taking the opportunity to delineate carefully Andrew's character as a warrior for Christ. The hapax legomenon seems to anticipate a saintly attribute of Andrew's, in contrast to the flashes of impatience he has shown in the past. The audience may sense that Andrew is invested with a new serenity

in spirit and the ability to endure patiently the torments which he has been assured are forthcoming.

A contrast emerges when modgeþyldig is placed side-by-side with the other appellations for Andrew: “beorn beaduwe heard” (982a; resolute man of battle); “anræd oretta” (983a; resolute warrior); and “maga mode rof” (984a; man valiant in spirit). The militaristic nature of these three phrases is quite befitting the image of the Germanic warrior striding off into the jaws of battle. Although at first glance they might not seem to correlate very smoothly with modgeþyldig, together these attributes combine to form the qualities present in the Christian warrior. Importantly, a hapax legomenon heralds both the newness of Andrew’s role within the poem and this new persona formed by the fusion of two traditions.<sup>8</sup> The novelty of this word and the importance of its placement first in the “list” lend weight to this single Christian quality so that it will not be overpowered by the more familiar and evocative Germanic terms. As “meotude getreowe” reminds the audience, Andrew’s fealty is to the Lord God, again cementing his identity as a Christian warrior.

That identity is continued in the next series of dramatic events, which is highlighted with four prominent hapax legomena. Andrew’s steps quickly lead him to the heavily-guarded prison door, where he is outnumbered by seven guards. Then, suddenly, it is revealed that:

Ealle swylt fornam,  
 druron domlease;                      **deaðræs** forfeng  
 hæleð heorod<r>eorig<e>. (994b-996a)

[Death took them all, the ignominious ones fell. **Sudden death** seized the sword-bloody men.]



In the following lines Andrew prays his thanks to God for this deed, but in the lines just quoted, “death” is the subject and force that takes the guards in a display reminiscent of battle scenes where a warrior is hewn down. The second sentence restates the first, but with more detail and drama, provided in part by the new word deaðræs, which could be more loosely translated as “death-rush” or “death-onslaught.” Since compounds in deað- and -ræs occur in *Beowulf*, to take a noticeable example, the audience might be expected to recognize the form of deaðræs and piece together its meaning. In this context, however, there has been no battle; “hæleð heorodreorige” (996a; sword-bloody men) is not meant to be taken literally, as their deaths have not come by the sword. Instead, the hapax legomenon is a strong indication that the terms applied to this scene are to be read less as literal description and more as metaphorical evocation of a separate tradition. In this ostensibly Christian poem, a more traditional death scene takes place, invested with the ethos of the Germanic warrior. It is not coincidental that the unique form deaðræs appears at this crossroads of cultures.

After Andrew gives thanks to God, the action continues, as God’s power enables Andrew to open the prison door with a mere touch. While the action initially appears couched in Christian language:

Duru sona onarn

purh **handhrine**                      haliges gastes,                      (999b-1000)

[The door soon flew open through **the touch of the hand** of the holy stranger]

the conclusion of the action is expressed in terms suggestive of a Germanic hero:



the allusions are to the mead-hall, where drunken warriors heavy with mead sleep soundly after a night of boasting and reveling. Here, instead of being “beore druncen” (drunk with beer<sup>11</sup>), they are “dreore druncne” (drunk with blood), a grisly and arresting adaptation of a native figure of speech. Clearly, the “sleep” of the heathens is also meant to be metaphorical,<sup>12</sup> as is the depiction of the prison grounds as a deaðwang. Most importantly, the hapax legomenon deaðwang functions as a clue for reading (or listening) that provides an audience with hints of the metaphorical, Germanic sense of a phrase. With deaðwang in particular, a new word carrying traces of Germanic meaning is applied in a figurative way to a Christian story.

This localized concentration of hapax legomena has emphasized the dramatic nature of Andrew’s entering the prison. The last new coinage (morðorcofan, “the evil house”) occurs conspicuously just as Andrew steps into the prison and sees Matthew:

Geseh he Matheus	in þam <b>morðorcofan</b> ,	
hæleð higerofne	under heolstorlocan,	
secgan dryhtne lof,	domweorðinga	
engla þeodne;		(1004-1007a)

[He saw Matthew in **the evil house**, the valiant man under the dark chamber, praising the Lord, the ruler of angels, of glorious honors.]

The emphasis on the prison that morðorcofan begins is continued with subsequent compounds: heolstorlocan (1005; “dark chamber”), gnornhofe (1008; “sorrowful dwelling”), hearmlocan (1029; “chamber of sorrow”), and another hapax legomenon, clustorcleofan (1021; “prison house”). These two newly-coined words reinforce the evil, dark, and melancholy imagery assigned to the prison, which establishes a strong contrast

with the light imagery used to convey the joy and faith of the reunion of the two holy men. Most strikingly, as a result of their joyful meeting,

Hie leoht ymbscan

halig ond heofontorht.

(1117b-1118a)

[Light shone around them, holy and invested with heavenly radiance.]

Beyond this function of portraying Matthew's place of imprisonment, morðorcofan and clustorcleofan may serve a more essential purpose in the audience's typological understanding of the poem. For illustration, consider a closely-related hapax legomenon, neadcofan ("the house of constraint"), which appears in a later scene, as Andrew's second day of torments draws to a close:

	Niht helmade,
<b>brunwann</b> oferbræd	beorgas steape,
ond se halga wæs	to hofe læded,
deor ond domgeorn,	in þæt dimme ræced;
sceal þonne in <b>neadcofan</b>	nihtlange fyrst
wærfæst wunian	wic unsyfre.

(1305b-1310)

[Night covered, **dusky** spread over the steep hills, and the holy one was led to the dwelling, brave and zealous, in the dim building; he should remain faithful then in **the house of constraint** the period of one night, in the foul habitation.]

Leaving aside for now a consideration of brunwann, we might start by noting that apparently both passages refer to the same prison: Matthew's "evil house" has become Andrew's "house of constraint." The typological significance of these words is posited by Constance B. Hieatt in "The Harrowing of Mermedonia," in which she comments that "cofa as an element in a compound often suggests a grave" (53). It is telling that in her

reading of the poem, she brings her examination down to the level of the word, arguing that “the coherence of [*Andreas*] typology . . . extends to its heroic vocabulary and choice of Biblical references” (49). Significantly, Hieatt often chooses hapax legomena as words essential for revealing the typological meaning of a scene. In the earlier scene featuring morðorcofan (1004), the combined effect of this word and others is to suggest that this “gravelike prison” is Hell, and Matthew along with the other prisoners represents “the patriarchs and prophets awaiting redemption” (55). In freeing them, Andrew symbolically reenacts Christ’s harrowing of Hell. In the second scene, after Andrew is imprisoned, the word neadcofan (1309) also contributes to the sense that “the saint’s prison is, metaphorically, a grave” (53).

In both passages, then, the effect of these typological readings, enabled through two noteworthy hapax legomena, serves to link Andrew with Christ (55). The interplay of Germanic and Christian continues to manifest itself in this passage, as the traditional definitions of warrior and battle are refashioned, a transformation that can be viewed through the lens of the hapax legomenon. Andrew emerges as a new brand of hero, possessing the prowess of the Germanic warrior and the fortitude of the Christian saint and fighting a new spiritual battle through the familiar language of the physical. The ideal towards which Andrew strives is now that of a different hero of old—Christ—and the hapax legomena point an audience towards a typological reading of Andrew’s rescue of the prisoners and a subsequent perception of Andrew’s holiness. This element of the passage’s poetic diction mirrors the syncretism of the poem by investing traditional forms with fresh spiritual meanings, leading an audience to a deeper comprehension of Andrew’s character.

## B. Lines 1398-1428

An exegetical reading of the poem, nurtured by hapax legomena, is furthered in later, more dramatically intense episodes, as in the one in which Andrew, worn down by three days of torture at the hands of the Mermedonians, cries out to God in anguish and begs Him to take his life. In this central passage, Andrew alludes to Christ's passion as an example of how extreme suffering can lead even the most devoted servant to cry aloud to God, "hwæt forlætest ðu me?" (why have you forsaken me?) (1413b). The parallel between Christ and Andrew that this example suggests is further reinforced by repetition of key words: the narrator, at the beginning of the passage, describes Andrew as "þa geomormod" (the mournful one) who "cries out" (cleopian) to God (1398); a few lines later, Christ, the "dryhten hælend" (Lord Savior) (1408b) is described with a closely-related adjective, "geomor" and is said "to fæder cleopodest" (1410b). That this important parallel is presented here and reflected at the lexical level invites closer examination of the words in the passage and the ways they interact with the dramatic content. We find that the typological parallel of Christ and Andrew is extended as the hapax legomena emphasize Andrew's increasing similarity to Christ. As Robert Bjork explains, "Andreas's increasing recognition of and identification with the Savior signals his gradual induction into the communion of saints" (112). Impressively enough, this Christian reading of the episode is enabled by hapax legomena which are strongly rooted in the language reminiscent of traditional Germanic battle poetry.

The episode opens with the narrator applying the poetic word werigferð ("sorrowful in spirit") (1400a) to the saint, echoing the previously-mentioned geomormod (1398), before Andrew himself begins to speak, detailing his injuries as:

Sint me leoð<u> tolocen,      lic sare gebrocen,

banhus blodfag;                      benne weallað,

**seonodolg** swatige.

(1404-1406a)

[My limbs have been dislocated, my body broken with pain, my body stained with blood; wounds well, blood-stained **sinew-cuts**.]

The first hapax legomenon of the passage, seonodolg ("sinew-cuts"), comes at the end of this detailed list to conclude with a graphic statement of the deep, bloody wounds Andrew has suffered in God's service. It would seem the poet thought the combined impact of the hapax legomenon and its vivid depiction of "sinew-cuts" would have optimum dramatic effect as the culmination of the litany of Andrew's torments; thus, we see the careful formation and strategic placement of seonodolg to suit the content of the poem. Additionally, seonodolg provides an echo of dolgbennum (1397a), the closest previous hapax legomenon, which also expresses the idea of "deep wound" a mere nine lines prior. Since dolgbennum stands out as being the only hapax legomenon in its passage, the connection between it and seonodolg may have been even more evident to the audience of the time. The shared simplex dolg indicates that both hapax legomena were built from easily recognizable words: the words seonobenn ("injury to a sinew,"<sup>13</sup>) and feorhbenn ("moral wound," *Beowulf* 2740) were constructed from the same lexical building blocks. The recognizable form of the hapax legomenon could carry with it familiar echoes from the past: the wounds Andrew suffers in the Lord's service might be seen as reminiscent of the injuries borne by a warrior in the service of his lord; once again, the physical battle that acts as the focus of the traditional Germanic tale gains an additional spiritual dimension in this Christian context.

Once Andrew has been associated with a warrior, the next hapax legomenon, symbelgifa ("provider"), extends the connection to the ruler for whom the warrior fights. In a key sentence in the passage, Andrew offers up his soul to God for release from the Mermedonians' tortures:

	Bidde ic, weoroda God,
þæt ic gast minne	agifan mote,
sawla <b>symbelgifa</b> ,	on þines sylfes hand. (1415b-1417)

[I ask, God of hosts, that I might give up my spirit, **provider (lit. one who gives a feast)** of souls, into your own hand.]

We might begin by noting that “sawla symbelgifa” provides the only instance of description in these lines, appearing in apposition to “weoroda God” and pointing towards “þines sylfes hand” by reminding us into whose hand Andrew is asking for deliverance. Literally, symbelgifa means “feast-day donor” or “one who gives a feast,” by extension here, “provider (of souls).” Besides the prominence given to symbelgifa in this passage by its location in an appositive phrase, the word is noteworthy because it describes the Lord metaphorically, not the first or only time a hapax legomenon figuratively reflects and extends the activities and personages associated with feasting to a different context. Here, we see the natural association of the lord with the Lord; through one half-line, sawla symbelgifa, the poet concisely expresses the idea that this Lord provides a much more necessary and nourishing sustenance: spiritual aid for the soul. An audience is able to make this comparison due precisely to the use of this hapax legomenon; even though the literal form of the word is new and hence unfamiliar, the associations conveyed by its simplex combine to create a familiar meaning, one which an audience can then extend to this Christian poem.



The very next section features three more hapax legomena, heterofra ("of the fierce enemies"), oððeoded ("torn off"), and adropen ("shed") which intensify the nature of the enemies Andrew faces and the wounds he bears:

Du ðæt gehete	þurh þin halig word,
þa ðu us twelfe	trymman ongunne,
þæt us <b>heterofra</b>	hild ne gesceode,
ne lices dæl	lungre <b>oððeoded</b>
ne syne ne ban	on swaðe lagon,
ne loc of heafde	to forlore wurde,
gif we þine lare	læstan woldon;
nu sint sionwe toslopen,	is min swat <b>adropen</b> ,
licgað æfter lande	loccas todrifene,
fex on foldan.	(1418-1427a)

[You promised that through your holy word, when you undertook to encourage us twelve, that the violence **of the fierce enemies** would not harm us, nor a part of our body even **torn off**, nor would be no bone lying on the path, nor would a lock from our head be lost, if we would follow your teaching; now sinews are torn apart, my blood is **shed**, over the land my locks are lying scattered, hair on the ground.]

The poet has heightened these noteworthy lines by stressing the harm Andrew's enemies could inflict on him; heterofra, literally translated, has the sense of "the furiously hostile ones" or "the vigorously malicious ones," stronger sentiments than those conveyed by the translation "fierce enemy." The literal translation plainly expresses the vicious nature of Andrew's opponents. Continuing the focus on the Mermedonians and the harm they can cause, the last two hapax legomena in the passage are both verbs referring to Andrew's torments. The first, oððeoded, is formed from the verb ðeodan, "to join, attach," and in

this context refers to limbs being torn off, while the second, adreopen, is formed from the verb dreopan, “to drip, drop,” and a prefix, a-, which can act as an intensifier (Quirk and Wrenn 109); in this context it refers to blood being shed, although, if it is more intensive, it may designate an outpouring of blood rather than a mere trickle.

Thus, looking at the passage overall, despite the one occurrence of a hapax legomenon referring to God as symbelgifa, “one who provides,” the emphasis in Andrew’s outcry is on the ferocity of his enemies and the extent of the anguish they have provoked and could further inflict on him. The hapax legomena help to remind the audience of Andrew’s *imitatio Christi* by stressing his physical torments and those who cause them. Perhaps the most intriguing feature is the apparent incongruity of emphasizing the similarity between Andrew and Christ through new words that draw power from a pre-Christian ethos. The hapax legomena, then, point towards the central tension in this section of the poem, that between God’s promise of deliverance and the reality of earthly torments, and show that at this point Andrew is struggling to maintain faith in God’s promise as he is overwhelmed by the tortures of those antithetical to his faith.

### **C. Lines 1429-1445**

In the previous passage, demonstrating the tension between faith and persecution, Andrew appears at his lowest point; he questions God about His promise to safeguard his body and longs for death. The passage that follows provides a turning point by resolving that tension, while its two hapax legomena continue the parallel between Christ and Andrew. Beginning in line 1429, God answers Andrew’s plea and promises him protection and safety; in addition, He assures Andrew of the fidelity of His word, in a

way that may be analogous to the faithfulness of a leader or warrior to his promises uttered in the mead-hall. Finally, God puts an end to Andrew's physical suffering and demonstrates the renewal and regeneration that His love enables by raising up a grove of blooming trees in place of the blood Andrew has shed.

The only two hapax legomena in the passage occur within two lines of each other, at the end of God's response:

Geseoh nu seolfes swæðe,	swa þin swat aget	
þurh <b>bangebrec</b>	blodige stige,	
lices lælan.	No þe laðes ma	
þurh daroða <b>gedrep</b>	gedon motan,	
þa þe heardra mæst	hearma gefremedan.	(1441-1445)

[Behold now your own footprints, where your blood sprinkled through **the breaking of bones** on the bloody path, through the wound of body. No more will harm to you through **the stroke** of spears be done, those who have committed the most of cruel harms.]

By itself, bangebrec retains the essentially literal character of its components, “breaking” and “bone.” Clearly the word is related in meaning, though not in form, to the previously-discussed dolgbennum (1397) and seonodolg (1406), both of which make an implicit comparison between Andrew's wounds and the injuries a warrior would suffer in the service of his lord. However, the function of bangebrec within these lines seems more to draw an audience's attention once again to the parallels between the sufferings of Andrew and those of Christ, an effect that is strengthened by the second hapax legomenon, gedrep, meaning “the stroke [of a spear].” By invoking for one last time these physical torments, the poet emphasizes the redemptive nature of this passage, in which Andrew's suffering ceases and is literally replaced by blossoming trees. Through

the hapax legomena in this episode, an audience sees how the physical torments of battle are transformed into physical suffering endured for God—for His service and for His glory.

#### **IV: The Devil and the Mermedonians**

As the earlier example of heterofra, “the furiously hostile ones,” suggests, hapax legomena are employed to characterize both sides of the spiritual battle played out in the poem. While hapax legomena combined with other lexical clues link Andrew increasingly to Christ, they likewise serve to characterize the devil and implicate the Mermedonians with him, making their conversion at the end of the poem all the more dramatic. Indeed, the character of the Mermedonians is introduced early on, conveyed through two hapax legomena, freoðoleas (29; “hostile, savage”) and dwolcræft (34; “sorcery”) that are, respectively, the third and fourth unique words in the poem. In presenting the cannibalistic inhabitants of the foreign land, the narrator employs these two words to refer to characteristic acts of the Mermedonians, blinding and drugging their prisoners, which place them beyond the realm of ordinary cannibals. Already, the form of dwolcræft may indicate that these people are under the sway of the devil, for “dwol” has the meaning of “heretical” or “erroneous”; hence, in a theological sense, the Mermedonians are misled and in error because they are acting against God.

##### **A. Lines 122-160**

The next description of the character of the Mermedonians contains a cluster of hapax legomena that serve to typify their behavior. The passage begins by applying certain traditional Germanic terms to the Mermedonians: duguð (125b; “warriors”) and even hildfreca (126a; “fierce warriors”) carrying guðsearo (127a; “armor”), garas (127b;

"spears"), and bordhreoðan (128b; "shield-covering"). Although these terms could be used of any group of warriors, in this situation the connotations of the words are altered by adjectives that set the Mermedonians apart: they are said to be hæðene and bolgenmode (126a and 128a; "heathen" and "savage-minded"). Although the poet has not yet used any hapax legomena, he has conveyed a new Christian sense of the Mermedonian warriors through the adjectives modifying standard terms. The expected bearing of a warrior is further undercut when the scene shifts to a statement of the Mermedonians' intentions of eating their prisoners—definitely not a traditional attribute of a warrior!

After a consideration, perhaps, of this savage practice and the grisly fate in store for the captives, the narrator next depicts the Mermedonians with three nouns (besides hie, "they"), all descriptive, two of which are hapax legomena. Not surprisingly, the hapax legomena are the most descriptive and pejorative; they reveal the narrator's opinion most vividly. The section begins in a fascinating way, with two nonce-words in quick succession:

Hæfdon hie on rune	and on rimcræfte	
awriten, <b>wælgædige</b> ,	wera endestæf,	
hwæn<n>e hie to mose	meteþearfendum	
on þære werþeode	weorðan sceoldon.	
Cirmdon <b>caldheorte</b> ,	corðor oðrum <b>getang</b> ;	(134-138)

[They had in secret writing and in written figures set down, **those greedy for slaughter**, the appointed end of men, when they should be for a meal for those lacking-food-ones in the nation. **The cruel-hearted ones** assembled noisily, the crowd **pressed upon** the others;]

In contrast to hie ("they"), metebearfendum ("those ones lacking food"), and corðor ("crowd"), the hapax legomena wælgrædige ("those greedy for slaughter") and caldheorte ("the cruel-hearted ones") present an opinionated view of the Mermedonians, pointing to their greed and cruelty. We can imagine that the poet created these two words with the intention of more forcefully expressing these facets of the Mermedonians through new words. Moreover, by this point in the poem, the audience has already been shown why the Mermedonians can be legitimately described in such a manner.

The word wælgrædige is of particular interest for the verbal echoes that surround it. Its form is similar to that of the previously-used heorugrædigra (79; "the bloodthirsty ones"), a strong term (although not unique) used by Matthew in his prayer to God. A second echo exists a few lines later, in wælwulfas (149; "slaughter-wolves"), a striking but not unique word applied to the Mermedonians. In *The Battle of Maldon*, wælwulf is glossed as "warrior," but here it has a more pejorative sense of "cannibal," indicating a shift in the more customary usage. What is outstanding is the way the hapax legomenon wælgrædige is used to characterize the Mermedonians as a people who lust after slaughter and the way this sense is reinforced by two verbal echoes that bracket the word and further characterize the Mermedonians: heorugrædigra and wælwulfas. The poet's craft here is seen to be quite deliberate.

The next hapax legomenon, caldheorte, serves to condemn the Mermedonians further; literally "cold-hearted," the meaning can also be taken as "cruel-" or "evil-hearted," all of these senses expressing the perennial problem of the heathens: their hearts, frozen in cruelty. As the passage progresses, the poet offers an explanation for their cruel hearts by means of a unique term, dimscuan ("the dark shadow"):

reðe ræsboran	rihtes ne gimdon,	
meotudes mildse.	Oft hira mod onwod	
under <b>dimscuan</b>	deofles larum,	
þonne hie unlædra	eaueðum gelyfdon.	(139-142)

[the fierce ones did not heed the counselor of right, the Lord of mercy. Often their spirit ranged under **the dark shadow** of the devil's teaching, when they trusted in the strength of the wretched ones.]

In *Andreas*, there is a tendency for an otherwise familiar idea to be expressed metaphorically through a new, and hence unfamiliar term. The metaphorical nature of the noun dimscuan is more evident when contrasted with a similar construction from *Beowulf*, the striking description of Grendel as a “deorc deaðscua” (160; “a dark death-shadow”). While it could be argued that this construction is not entirely literal because it compares Grendel to a shadow that brings death, it is still describing something quite tangible—a monster. By contrast, the word for “dark shadow” in *Andreas* does not refer to a Christian monster, the Devil, but to a more abstract concept: his teaching. Interestingly, too, the words lar and lareow are commonly used in association with Christ's teaching and wisdom; here, the alliterative connection between dimscuan and deofles emphasizes the perverted form of teaching to which the Mermedonians are in thrall.

An indication of the effect created by these lines and, in particular, the hapax legomenon dimscuan can be found in Heatt's “The Harrowing of Mermedonia,” which states:

Following Christ, who suffered at the hands of modblinde menn (814a) but also healed the blind (581b), Andrew is to bring the light of salvation to men characterized by their attempts to reduce their prisoners to their own unseeing, bestial level by blinding them and forcing them to subsist on a diet of hay and grass (29-39), deeds of darkness committed under dimscuan (141a). (51)

The audience perceives the physical and spiritual challenge facing Andrew; the hapax legomenon signals not only a key element in the portrayal of the Mermedonians but also a new, metaphorical meaning being ascribed to a familiar idea.

A few lines later, another hapax legomenon, wilpege, extends the meaning of a common concept, in this instance that of feasting. It follows a hapax legomenon frumrædenne, whose meaning of “previous arrangement, appointed time” links it to a previous nonce-word, tælnet. The narrator outlines the Mermedonians’ plans for their captives:

þa wæs first agan	<b>frumrædenne</b>
þinggemearces	butan þrim nihtum,
swa hit wælwulfas	awriten hæfdon,
þæt hie banhringas	abrecan þohton,
lungre tolysan	lic ond sawle,
ond þonne todælan	duguðe ond geogoðe,
werum to wiste	ond to <b>wilpege</b> ,
fæges flæschoman;	(147-154a)

[Then was the period for **the appointed time** of measured time elapsed except three nights, as the wolves of slaughter had set it down in writing, that they thought the bone-rings to break, quickly to separate body and soul, and then to divide to the warriors and young men, to men for sustenance and for **a pleasant feast**, the flesh-home of the dead;]



The basic construction of wilþege would have been familiar to the audience, as a word later in the passage, foddorþege (160b; "meal, sustenance"), makes clear. Although wilþege could have been recognized as a variant of the poetic foddorþege, the discrepancies in their meanings are telling. Both follow graphic descriptions of a body being dismembered in preparation for eating, but while foddorþege expresses a neutral meaning of "meal," wilþege as "pleasant feast" is certain to confound the literal-minded reader. While it could be argued that such a term is inappropriate in this context, clearly the hapax legomenon is meant to be understood ironically. In the context of the heroic code, a "pleasant feast" might be held to celebrate some victory, and in a Christian context to celebrate one's victory through Christ (in the communion). In the context of the poem, however, this feasting carries no connotations of celebration, heroism, or piety; instead, it appears as a savage act of spiritual depravity. How fitting that a hapax legomenon would be crafted to deliver the biting irony of this observation, an irony that plays off of the audience's knowledge of both the Germanic and Christian traditions.

### **B. Lines 1058-1092**

The audience's early impression of the Mermedonians, formed in part by means of hapax legomena, is of their cruelty and bloodthirstiness. The deprecatory opinions inherent in these nonce words had not been brought together before in Anglo-Saxon poetry in a single compound; they express a metaphorical or ironic sense of concepts developed elsewhere in more familiar terms. As seen in the previous example, the Mermedonians fall short of both the Germanic and the Christian standards. In general, elsewhere in the poem Andrew and his enemies are described in terms of the Germanic warrior code only to show how they both deviate from that mode of conduct. After freeing Matthew and

the other prisoners (ll. 1044-1057), a lone Andrew proceeds to where he has heard the assembly of the Mermedonians may be found. He encounters a brass column and sits down by it, awaiting whatever may come:

Gesæt him þa be healfe,	hæfde hluttre lufan,	
ece <b>upgemynd</b>	engla blisse;	
þanon basnode	under burhlocan	
hwæt him <b>guðweorca</b>	gifeðe wurde.	(1063-1066)

[Then he sat himself by its side, had pure love, **eternal thought turned heavenward** to the bliss of angels; from there he waited under the city wall for what of **warfare** would be granted to him.]

Though Andrew could conceivably leave with Matthew and the other released prisoners, he follows God's commands, showing his faith and obedience to God by staying in the city and confronting the Mermedonians. It is these qualities that the hapax legomenon upgemynd ("eternal thought turned heavenward") underscores. The parallel positioning of upgemynd and guðweorca ("warfare"), both at the end of a first half-line, brings out their opposition in meaning and solidifies the audience's admiration for Andrew as a Christian hero. While he awaits guðweor[c], his thoughts are not of fear or selfish concerns, but rather are "turned heavenward" to God. This behavior is not typical of the Germanic man of action, but the hapax legomena point to a new definition of "hero" in this poem.

This closing impression of Andrew is the last the poet offers, for the scene immediately shifts to the Mermedonians, who are expecting to make a meal of the prisoners. A troop of warriors goes to the prison, evidently to procure the prisoners for food, and finds the doors open and the guards dead. They return to the people with their

disastrous discovery, and even the leaders despair, expecting hunger. The only hapax legomena in this passage occur in a cluster, within the space of five lines, beginning with the reaction of the people to the prospect of hunger, personified by the unique term beodgastes ("guest at table"):

	Pa wearð forht manig	
for þam færspelle	folces ræswa,	
hean hygegeomor,	hungres on wenum,	
blates <b>beodgastes</b> ;		(1085-1088a)

[Then many leaders of the people became afraid before the calamitous news, miserable, downcast, in expectation of hunger, of the pale **guest at table**.]

The warriors who discover the empty prison and deliver the news are portrayed with admiration tempered with approbation. The terms applied to them—wærleasra werod (the troop of the faithless), hæðene hildfreca (heathen fierce warriors), and eorre æscberend (the fierce spear-bearing ones)—reveal their fighting prowess while admitting that this prowess resides in heathens bereft of Christian faith. Moreover, their cruel intentions towards the helpless prisoners negate any sense that they might be following a heroic ethos. In a similar fashion, the leaders of the people are shown to be lacking in character and judgment. All quail before the specter of hunger, personified as a “pale guest at table.” Even the poem’s editor, Brooks, must admit that “there is nothing in the prose versions to correspond to this striking personification” (99). It should be noted as well how a series of concrete statements leads up to beodgastes to give it additional impact. The literal descriptions of the fear and misery of the people suddenly give way to the figurative, in the form of the eerie and vivid “blates beodgastes,” appearing in apposition to the normal hungres (hunger). In addition, the creativity of this

personification cannot be overlooked: it is imaginative and ironic to envision hunger as an expectant dinner guest, appropriately pale and (we assume) bloodless. The existence of this word makes a strong case for the artistic function of hapax legomena in the poem.

A hapax legomenon (hild<e>bedd, "the bed of violent death") of almost equal vividness follows a few lines later, as the people's leaders decide that their only resort is to eat the dead guards:

	Duruþegnum wearð	
in ane tid	eallum ætsomne	
þurh heard gelac	<b>hild&lt;e&gt;bedd</b> styred.	(1090b-1092)

[To the doorkeepers all together became in one time **the bed of violent death** disturbed by brute force.<sup>14</sup>]

The poem's editor is quick to note that the phrase "hild<e>bedd styred" is "apparently coined by the poet on the pattern of morþorbed in *Beo.* 2436" (100). In fact, the phrase in *Beowulf*, "morþorbed stred," is applied to Haethcyn's accidental killing of his brother, Herebeald. This term, once used in a Germanic context in *Beowulf* to describe a murder that must remain unavenged, is here used to denote a horrible, unjust deed about to be perpetrated by the Mermedonians, so once again the phrase is used to denote an unthinkable act. However, rather than accepting that *Andreas*'s "hildbedd styred" was lifted from a particular source, in this case *Beowulf*, we may surmise that this phrase is a throwback to some standard phrase in wider poetic use; the *Andreas*-poet need not have heard it only in *Beowulf*. Instead, both works could be drawing on a broader poetic tradition unfortunately lost to us as a whole but still evident in isolated survivals like these.

Individually, each hapax legomenon contributes to the depiction of the Mermedonians as followers of evil. After the sea voyage, when Christ appears to Andrew in the form of a child, the word mangeniðlan (916), with its links to niðhetum and other words containing nið, makes an emphatic point about the persecutors that Andrew will need not only to encounter but also to convert:

Ic þe friðe healde,  
 þæt þe ne moton                      **mangeniðlan**,  
 grame **grynsmiðas**,                      gaste gesceððan.                      (915b-917)

[I hold you in peace, that **the evil foes** may not be able, grim **sorrow-smiths**, to harm you in spirit.]

It is followed by a more striking and original expression in apposition, “grame grynsmiðas” (grim sorrow-smiths). However, the hapax legomenon grynsmiðas is not the only instance of a word built on smið in the poem; earlier, the Mermedonians are described as wrohtsmiðum as Matthew prays:

ðæt ðu me ne gescyrige                      mid scyldhetum,  
 werigum wrohtsmiðum,                      on þone wyrrestan,  
 dugoða demend,                      deað ofer eorðan.                      (85-88)

[that you do not condemn me in the presence of evil foes, of accused malicious foes, to the worst, judge of warriors, death beyond this earthly life.]

In these lines we see a similar effect as in lines 916-917 above, where two terms for the Mermedonians occur in apposition, in successive lines; the operative difference here is that neither scyldhetum nor wrohtsmiðum is a unique word, so their impact in these lines, while poetic, is not as emphatic as what can be achieved by mangeniðlan and grynsmiðas. Although wrohtsmiðum can be rendered, as here, as “malicious foes,” a more literal

translation would be “worker of evil” (Hall), “contriver of an accusation,” or, most literally, “slander-smith” or “strife-smith.” The implication of such a term seems to be that the Mermedonians, through their wicked ways, manufacture slander, strife, or enmity directed against others, namely, all outsiders. The hapax legomenon grynsmiðas can be translated in a similar way, as “evildoers,” but the more literal rendering of “sorrow-smiths” opens up further possibilities for interpretation. The inclusion of “sorrow” makes the audience aware of the effects that the Mermedonians’ slander and strife have. It may even make them question whether outsiders are the only ones who suffer from the wickedness of the Mermedonians; the possibility exists that the poet wants us to realize that they produce an equal amount of sorrow for themselves by following the devil’s teachings. Given that these fearsome people later renounce their allegiance to the devil and follow God’s word, finding a sympathetic potentiality in grynsmiðas does not seem unreasonable.

### **C. Lines 1093-1134**

After the contemplative nature of the first half of the poem, in which Andrew exchanges words with Christ and continues to learn at his knee, Andrew’s actions in Mermedonia propel the plot and build suspense. Corresponding to the greater intensity of action, there is an increase in the number of hapax legomena in these early scenes in Mermedonia. The passage describing the measures taken by the Mermedonians to stave off hunger contains five unique words, each separated from the other by four to nine lines, which direct the audience’s attention to the aggression of the cannibalistic people and indicate the momentous nature of the challenge Andrew faces. The poet chooses to

begin this passage with a view of the Mermedonian warriors that seems to place them far from a wild heathen land:

	beornas comon,	
wiggendra þreat,	wicgum gengan,	
on mearum modige,	mæðelhegende,	
æscum dealle.		(1094b-1097a)

[the warriors came, a host of fighters, went on horses, on proud horses, holding speech (deliberation), with proud spears.]

Clearly these terms are reminiscent of Germanic warriors; however, such time-honored phrases take on an ironic cast when contrasted to the subsequent behavior of these Mermedonian soldiers. The Mermedonians, starving for food, cast lots and choose an older man to die in a perversion of the apostles' casting of lots which begins the poem (Boenig, *Acts of Andrew* 102). To add to the drama, though, the old counselor offers his young son in his place, an offer which the townspeople do not hesitate to accept. The first hapax legomena (hellcræftum, "with hellish arts" and fetorwrasnum, "with tight bonds") appear as the lots are being cast:

hluton <b>hellcræftum</b> ,	hæðengildum	
teledon betwinum.	Ða se tan gehwearf	
efne ofer ænne	ealdgesiða,	
se wæs uðweota	eorla dugoðe,	
heriges on ore;	hraðe siððan wearð	
<b>fetorwrasnum</b> fæst,	feores orwena.	(1102-1107)

[They cast lots **with hellish arts**, with heathen rites reckoned among them. Then the lot fell just on one old companion who was a counselor from the host of earls, of the army on the front; quickly after he became fixed **with tight bonds**, despairing of life.]

“Hellish arts” is used in conjunction with the choice of a victim, but the audience knows it also describes the problem with the entire society: it is guided by “hellish arts” and the influence of the devil. A careful listener might connect hellcræftum with dwolcræft (34a), a hapax legomenon appearing quite early in the poem characterizing the sorcery and heretical machinations of the Mermedonians, through which they disrupt their prisoners' reason by a potion. As dwolcræft implies that the Mermedonians are theologically erring by opposing God, hellcræftum directly states under whose influence these people are operating. The rewards of such “hellish arts” are made manifest: through this process of selecting someone to devour, the audience sees how quickly, and even eagerly, their unholy hunger can cause them to turn on one of their own, and soon afterward, how selfish human nature can cause a father to betray his own son. A society guided by the devil allows the worst in human nature to run rampant. The respect due to an elder of the society, the bond between citizens, and the bond between father and son are all broken and betrayed in this episode to show the Mermedonians' depravity. In the lines above, the human bonds are replaced by “tight bonds” (fetorwrasnum) which bind the desperate counselor. This hapax legomenon might put the audience in mind of the “tight bonds” of servitude to evil in which the Mermedonians, ironically, are themselves enmeshed.

The poet continues to invoke the Germanic heroic ethos as an ironic counterpoint to the Mermedonians' ignoble behavior. While initially the poet created an ironic effect through the contrast between the presentation of the Mermedonians as Germanic warriors and their selfish actions, the distance between the Mermedonians and the heroic ideal is demonstrated after they welcome the exchange of the older man for his son:



þeod wæs oflysted,  
 metes modgeomre,                      næs him to maðme wynn,  
 hyht to hordgestreonium;                      (1112b-1114a)

[The nation was pleased with the mournful-hearted one for food, the joy of treasure was not for them, the comfort of hoarded treasure.]

Clearly these people are separated from the joys of treasure and hall, in addition to the joys of heaven, by their reprehensible behavior. While such lines may appear incongruous at first, referring as they do to the ritual of distributing treasure in the mead hall, the hoarded treasure built up by a prosperous group of Germanic warriors, they actually are part of a technique continued in the next hapax legomenon, guðfrec:

   þa wæs rinc manig,  
 guðfrec guma,                      ymb þæs geongan feorh  
 breostum onbryrðed                      to þam beadulace.                      (1116a-1118)

[Then was many a warrior, a man **eager for battle**, excited in his breast about the conflict surrounding the life of the young man.]

A warrior certainly should be “eager for battle” as the hapax legomenon describes, but not concerning a young boy whom he wants to slaughter for food. The use of beadulace, a poetic word for “battle” or “sword-play,” reinforces the Germanic feel of guðfrec; although its lineage may not derive from heroic tales, the components of guðfrec give it the appearance of being an authentic, long-standing item in the poetic word-stock. As much as the Mermedonians are portrayed with words and descriptions that invoke an ideal of the Germanic warrior, their behavior turns the warrior ideal on its head, which may be why it is embodied in a hapax legomenon. The unfamiliar form of guðfrec and incongruous reference to treasure alert the audience that conventional references and

meanings are not to be taken at face value but have instead become altered through the Christian lens of the poem.

The last two hapax legomena in the passage emphasize the savagery of the Mermedonians even more and intensify the level of excitement. The first shows the despicable actions of even the most exemplary people in the community:

Hie lungre to þæs,  
 hæðene **herigweardas**,                      here samnodan  
 ceastrewarena;                      cyrm upp astah.                      (1123b-1125)

[They quickly gathered an army of townspeople to the place, the heathen **temple guardians**; an outcry rose up.]

The unique term herigweardas ("temple guardians") stresses that those who might be thought to maintain some standard of order or moral conduct are misled by the devil's power through their "heathen" natures to capture a helpless youth so he can be slain for food. A few lines later, when the youth is bound fast and looking in vain for help, he could be viewed as a precursor to Andrew; the same phrase is used of both, "hearmleoð galan," "to utter sorrowful cries" (1127b, 1342b). If even one of their own receives no mercy from the temple guardians, what can Andrew expect at their hands?

The passage ends with a striking image of the sword's blade prepared to slay the youth; here also the last hapax legomenon, fyrmaelum ("marks made by fire"), is located:

Hæfdon æglæcan  
 sæcce gesohte;                      sceolde sweordes ecg,  
 scerp ond scurheard,                      of sceaðan folme,  
**fyrmaelum** fag,                      feorh acsigan.                      (1131b-1134)

[The adversaries had sought violence; the sword's edge should from the enemies' hand demand life, sharp and hard in the storm of battle, decorated with **marks made by fire.**]

First to note is the dramatic nature of this mini-cliffhanger, ending with a close-up of the extraordinary sword, expressed in the passage's most descriptive and eye-catching hapax legomenon. In a sense, the entire passage heads towards this image of a tool of evil aggression: it proceeds from the hellish arts to the tight bonds, to the warriors and temple guardians, and finally to the actual instrument, the knife. Secondly, the poet once more draws on his audience's knowledge of the Germanic heroic ethos as passed down through the poetic tradition. They would recognize that this sword will be used ingloriously to murder an innocent youth instead of being used to fight against enemies in battle, as it should. On the lexical level, even though the phrase "fyrmaelum fag" contains a nonce-word, it would have a ring of familiarity to the audience since it was not uncommon for fag to be applied to a sword that was carved or decorated with marks or images.

Reinforcing this Germanic sense of battle is scurheard, "hard in the storm of battle," a poetic word used as an epithet for a sword (Hall 298), which is also found in *Beowulf* (line 1033). An Anglo-Saxon audience's awareness of the poetic background of words, practices, and behavior would allow them to see, through the hapax legomenon, just how short the Mermedonians fall from the Germanic ideal, and both groups from the Christian standard.

#### **D. Lines 1345-1371**

The Mermedonians are further implicated by their association with the devil in a later passage (ll. 1345-1359) which recounts a scene present in both the Greek and Latin prose versions of the legend, a speech in which a hireling of the devil reports on the futility of attacking Andrew physically. On one level, the passage deserves examination

because it features three hapax legomena in the span of 15 lines, a number far above the average. On a thematic level, the passage develops the nature of the spiritual as opposed to the physical battle, an opposition reflected through the vocabulary.

After seven demons attempt to harm Andrew one night in his prison cell, only to be repulsed by God's mark of the cross on his forehead, one of the demon underlings responds to the devil's question, framed in typically Germanic terms, "Hwæt wearð eow swa rofum, rincas mine,/lindgesteallan, þæt eow swa lyt gespeow?" ("What happened to you, my warriors so bold, / shield-companions, that you have succeeded so little?" 1343-44):

H<im þa> earmsceapen	agef ondsware,
fah <b>fyrnsceapa</b> ,	ond his fæder oncwæð:
‘Ne magan we him lungre	lað ætfæstan,
swilt þurh searwe.	Ga þe sylfa to;
þær þu gegninga	guðe findest,
frecne feohtan,	gif ðu furður dearst
to þam anhagan	aldre geneðan.
We ðe magon eaðe,	eorla leofost,
æt þam <b>secgplegan</b>	selre gelæran
ær ðu gegninga	guðe fremme,
wiges woman,	weald hu ðe sæle
æt þam <b>gegnsege</b> .	Utan gangan eft,
þæt we bysmrigen	bendum fæstne,

oðwitan him his wræcsið; habbað word gearu

wið þam æglæcan eall getrahtod! (ll. 1345-1359)

[Then the wretched one gave him (the Devil) answer, the hostile **ancient foe**, and answered his father: “We might not quickly inflict injury on him, death through treachery. Go yourself; there you straightway will find a battle, fearsome fights, if you further dare to risk your life against the solitary one. We may easily give excellent advice to you, dearest of earls, about **the play of swords** before you at once make battle, tumult of war, whatever may be the outcome for you at **the exchange of blows**. Let us go again, so that we will mock the one fixed in fetters, to taunt him in his wretchedness; we will have a ready word against the adversary completely prepared!”]

To begin with, one feature to note about this portion of the poem is the unadorned nature of its expression, which is perhaps appropriate, since it consists of a speech put in the mouth of a lesser demon. Noteworthy for rhetorical flair is the parallelism of “þær þu gegninga guðe findest, / frecne feohtan” (1349-1350a) and “ær ðu gegninga guðe fremme, / wiges woman” (1354-1355a), as is the devil’s allusion to Andrew as “þam anhagan” (1351), a marked poetic term associated with a figure such as the Wanderer. In general, though, the devil appears to be fairly plain-spoken, a quality epitomized by his challenge of “Ga þe sylfa to” (1348b), “Go yourself to [it].” Thus, given the straightforward, undecorative characteristics of the speaker and the entire passage, the hapax legomena stand out all the more.

The first unique term, fyrnsceapa, “ancient foe,” is actually employed by the narrator to emphasize the speaker, the lesser demon, in apposition to earmsceapen, “the wretched one.” In the world of the poem, the first appellation for the devil is more typical than the second, for while the poet may occasionally craft a striking phrase like “grame grynsmiðas” (“grim sorrow-smiths,” 917a), he or she is more likely to characterize the devil<sup>15</sup> and his followers, the Mermedonians, as “enemies” by use of the word sceapa. John P. Hermann, in Allegories of War, explains that sceapa was a

common appellation for the Devil, along with feond, andsaca, and gewinna (40). Used alone, sceaþa appears twice in *Andreas* in different contexts to portray the Mermedonians as enemies of God and Andrew (cf. lines 1133 and 1291); it also appears as part of the unique compound folcsceaðan (1593; “enemies of the people”) in a passage later in the poem, following the dramatic descriptions of the flood and the Mermedonians’ subsequent realization of their unjust treatment of the saint.

Within that passage, two words, folcsceaðan and morðorscyldige (1599b; “guilty of deadly sin”), have the same referent: the fourteen most reprehensible Mermedonians who have the dubious honor of being swept away to their deaths by the retreating flood:

Nalas he þær yðe	ane bisencte,	
ach þæs weorodes eac	ða wyrrestan,	
faa <b>folcsceaðan</b>	feowertyne,	
gewiton mid þu wæge	in forwyrd sceacan	
under eorþan grund.	þa wearð acolmod,	
forhtferð manig	folces on laste;	
werdon hie <wifa>	ond wera cwealmes,	
þearlra geþinga	ðrage hnagran,	
syððan mane faa,	<b>morðorscyldige</b>	
guðgelacan	under grund hruron.	(1591-1600)

[Not at all was he there submerged alone in the waves, but also the worst of the multitude, fourteen guilty **enemies of the people**, went by means of the wave to depart in damnation under the ground of the earth. Then they became terror-stricken, many people left behind panic-stricken; they expected the death of women and men, the grievous results of more wretched times, after the ones guilty in sin, the warriors **guilty of deadly sin** perished under the ground.]

An examination of these lines reveals that those who perish in the flood are otherwise described as “*ða wyrrestan*” (1592b; the worst) and “*mane faa*” (1599a; the ones guilty in sin); thus, *folcsceaðan* and *morðorscyldige* are the only unitary terms representing the fourteen warriors. Arguably, then, besides being the most conspicuous descriptions of the Mermedonian evildoers, these terms also serve to focus attention on these “worst” offenders against God, particularly since the meanings of the two *hapax legomena* reinforce one another and make the audience conscious of the remaining evil of the Mermedonians at the same time that evil is being punished in an arresting fashion. Even more striking is the poet’s use of vocabulary to link the Mermedonians, especially these fourteen, to the Devil through the base *sceaða* in *folcsceaðan*; the compound itself is constructed similarly to the aforementioned *hapax legomenon* *fyrnsceaþa* (1346; “arch-fiend, ancient foe”) used by the narrator to describe the Devil. Thus, by applying to the Mermedonians a *hapax legomenon* *folcsceaðan* that bears close similarity to both *leodsceaða* and *fyrnsceaþa*, through especially effective word choice the poet manages to convey the evil nature of the fourteen Mermedonians who are swept away. We might also observe that the chasm into which they are swept is suggestive of hell.

While it is hardly surprising that Andrew’s opponents should be termed “enemies” or “foes,” it should be noted that this characterization is carried out intentionally and consistently, although not exclusively, through *hapax legomena* constructed upon certain base words, *sceaþa* and *nið*, which we have already observed are formulaic designations for the Devil and his followers. This portrayal, in addition, accords with the Anglo-Saxon conception of the Devil as an enemy in the “old strife,” a result of the Germanic notion of an old adversary “grafted to” the Christian idea of the

hostis antiquus (Hermann 41). Through this “complex cultural production,” “Christianity itself was transformed in this scene of intertextuality which opens up a distinctively Old English spirituality and literature” (Hermann 41).

Returning to the original passage (ll. 1345-1359), the next two hapax legomena, secgplegan and gegnsele, occur in lines of direct speech and, in fact, in the same sentence. As expressions for fighting, they appear alongside the more pedestrian “feohte,” “guð,” and “wig.” Their literal meanings, “play of swords” and “exchange of blows,” are more fanciful but still characteristically Germanic means of expressing the idea of battle. One might notice that these words continue the heroic language established by Satan, who called his six devils “my warriors so bold,/ shield companions” (ll. 1343-44). In his underling’s response, though, there is a commingling of two senses of “battle,” the physical and the spiritual. As seen before, the poet couches what is essentially a Christian struggle—one of spiritual fortitude—in terms evocative of a Germanic battle—one of physical strength. Hence, the hapax legomena secgplegan and gegnsele look Germanic in form and meaning but are metaphorically extended to the Christian realm of the spirit, a sense that is reinforced by the suggestion in the last sentence that the devils will call on words (non-physical weapons) to “mock” and “taunt” Andrew. They recognize, finally, what Andrew has known all along: the decisive battle will be spiritual, not physical.

This passage illustrates the way in which traditional means of expression are applied to a Christian context and, concomitantly, new means of expression are found to expand the range of traditional poetic diction. As a result, the novelty of the forms fyrnsceapa, secgplegan, and gegnsele draws attention to the adversarial, combative



relationship between God's and Satan's forces: Andrew is caught in the midst of a battle. Additionally, these words stress the physicality of the attacks on Andrew by the Devil and his followers, the Mermedonians; however, what the devils finally realize is that physical attacks are ineffective as a means of undermining Andrew's faith. In that regard, they seem representative of an older, outmoded mindset in their reluctance to grasp that the old physical battle of Germanic lore has been translated into a new realm of the spiritual battle for Christ.

The account of the devil's subsequent attack on Andrew, the final one of the onslaught he endures on the second night of captivity, uses hapax legomena as part of its strategy. This account is worthy of examination for its typological value, for "[a]part from his conversation with Christ, Andreas's conversations with the devil form the most important part of the poem, since only there does his alignment with Christ become absolute and his entrance into the communion of saints sealed" (Bjork 121). After witnessing the futility of a physical attack, the devil resorts to a verbal assault that draws attention to the words and tactics he employs against Andrew. Hence, it is fitting that the first line of the speech contains a hapax legomenon, aclæcræftum ("magical arts"):

þu þe, Andreas,	<b>aclæcræftum</b>	
lange feredes!	Hwæt, ðe leoda fela	
forleocle ond forlærdest!		(1363-1365)

[You yourself, Andrew, have a long time had recourse **to magical arts!** Listen, you have deceived and abandoned many people!]

The hapax legomenon makes it clear that the devil's first tactical move is to accuse Andrew of the very crimes the devil himself could rightly claim (Boenig, *Acts of Andrew* 111). The devilish alliteration in line 1363 effectively links the saint's name, Andreas,

even more closely with the unjust accusation contained in the hapax legomenon aclæcræftum.<sup>16</sup> This word can be closely associated with the devil because other words the poet has created with the simplex –cræft refer to evil deeds the Mermedonians have committed under the devil’s influence. The first such word in the poem, dwolcræft (34; “sorcery”), denotes the means by which the magicians brew a horrible mind-altering drug for the prisoners. The words that follow are morðorcræftum (177; “violent or wicked deed”), beaducræft (219; “armed hostility”), and hellcræftum (1102; “hellish or devilish art”). Although other words formed with –cræft occur in the poem with more positive connotations (e.g., wundorcræft, “marvelous skill,” applied to Andrew), all the words the poet has coined with –cræft are associated with devilish actions. We can conclude, then, that the word aclæccræftum is an ironic instance of a deliberate pattern of word-formation carried out by the poet. The very form of the word alerts an audience to the irony of its being applied to Andrew instead of the devil.

The second hapax legomenon appears in the next stage of the devil’s verbal assault on Andrew. The devil delights in his description of the anguish and ultimate death in store for Andrew at the hands of his followers; just as important as the physical wounds the saint will suffer is the abject mental state to which he will be brought, one without the comfort or joy of God’s presence. The hapax legomenon ætþringan (“drive out”) occurs at the very end of this line of argument, just as the devil has promised that the Mermedonians will:

...	æniga	ellenweorcum	
unfyrn faca	feorh	ætþringan.	(1370-1371)

[at once with glorious deeds very soon your life **drive out (destroy).**]

As with aclæccræftum, the prominent placement of ætþringan seems hardly accidental. The devil's promise, with its threat of disillusionment and death, ends with a word that due to its uniqueness is sure to heighten the audience's interest in that threat.

### **V: Oppositions in the end of the poem**

As hapax legomena are used throughout the poem to characterize both sides of the spiritual battle between good and evil, they appear in the end of the poem to highlight the opposed choices faced by Andrew and the Mermedonians. After the climactic episode of the flood, which concludes around line 1600, only 122 lines remain to resolve the remaining issues of the poem: the conversion of the Mermedonians, the resurrection of the drowned youths, the baptism of the populace and establishment of a church and bishop in their country, and lastly Andrew's plans to leave, with the coda of Andrew's ultimate fate. Within these lines, the hapax legomena convey the opposition of salvation (feorhræd) and damnation (helltrafum) between which the Mermedonians, and an audience as well, must choose. In addition, they suggest the choice that Andrew must make between the comforts of the city (wederburg) and the danger, and even death, that face him if he follows the pathway of the ocean (seolhpaðu) to do God's will in Greece. Boiled down to the essence of story and theme, then, the poem speaks through its hapax legomena.

Before Andrew leaves the transformed Mermedonia, he leaves instructions for the people's conduct towards the new bishop, Plato. After consecrating him, Andrew:

	. . . þriste bebead	
þæt hie his lare	læston georne,	
<b>feorhræd</b> fremedon.		(1652b-1654)

[earnestly asked that they would gladly follow his teaching, would advance **benefit for the soul (salvation)**.]

After this last half-line, the narrative shifts to Andrew's desire to leave the country, so his directions to the Mermedonians end with this unique term feorhræd ("benefit for the soul"); the half-line may mean that they are being instructed to act in accordance with their salvation, and even spread salvation to others. Acting in this manner will be a "benefit" to their souls, in contrast to the heathen temples at which they used to worship, expressed by the next unique word, helltrafum ("the heathen temples"). Before Andrew departs, he is privileged to see how the Mermedonians forsake their former devil-worship and its trappings:

Swylce se halga	herigeas þreade,	
deofulgild todraf	ond gedwolan fylde.	
þæt wæs Satane	sar to geþolienne,	
mycel modes sorg,	þæt he ða menigeo geseah	
hweorfan higebliðe	fram <b>helltrafum</b>	
þurh Andreas	este lare	(1687-1692)

[Thus the holy one subdued the heathen temples, destroyed devil-worship and overthrew heresy. That was a torment for Satan to endure, great sorrow of spirit, that he saw the multitude turn joyful in heart from **the heathen temples** through Andrew's gracious teaching.]

Here is the last glimpse in the poem of the losing adversary. If we recall the other hapax legomenon in the poem beginning with hell-, we will remember that hellcræftum (1102; "hellish arts") describes the way the Mermedonians cast lots to select one of their own to eat in the face of starvation. The contrast in their behaviors in passages using hell- compounds is thus marked but understandable, since they are separated by feorhræd

(salvation). Helltrafum harks back to their unconverted state in which they practiced hellcræft, from which they have been delivered.

A dramatic change has taken place in Andrew as well, as his earlier reluctance and doubt in following God's commands has grown into an earnest desire to seek God's will. Andrew is even willing to leave the comforts of the wederburg (1697a; "pleasant city") for the loneliness of the seolhpaðu (1714a; "seal's path"). The poem couches these opposed paths in language that evokes the joys of the hall and the solitude of the wanderer. Once again, the poet expands upon a traditional Germanic poetic formula for his or her exegetical purposes. By choosing to leave, Andrew aligns himself with the roving exile who wanders the ocean's paths, outcast from the richness and joy of the hall. Viewing him in this way, the audience can appreciate Andrew's obedience to God, which is so impressive as to be heroic. Andrew's saintly heroism is presented in a dramatic fashion by the contrast of wederburg ("pleasant city") with the following unique word, beaducwealm ("violent death"). God's will is paramount, as the narrator reports that:

Ʒa wæron gefylde	æfter frean dome	
dagas on rime,	swa him dryhten bebead,	
Ʒæt he Ʒa <b>wederburg</b>	wunian sceolde.	(1695-1697)

[Then the days in number were completed as the Lord had commanded, as the Lord had ordered him, that he should dwell in the **pleasant city**.]

The Mermedonians and their city itself have been transformed by being on the other side of feorhræd, or salvation.<sup>17</sup> After the evocation of the new-found pleasantness of Mermedonia, the narrative continues on a different note:

Ongan hine Ʒa fýsan	ond to flote gyrwan,
blissum hremig,	wolde on brimpisan

Achaie	oðre siðe	
sylfa gesecan,	þær he sawulgedal,	
<b>beaducwealm</b> gebad.		(1698-1702a)

[They began then to prepare him and to make ready a ship, triumphant in happiness, (he) himself wanted on the ship another time to seek Achaia, where he suffered separation of soul, **violent death**.]

The contrast between Andrew's current happiness and his future death creates both poignancy and irony, an effect augmented by beaducwealm (literally "death in battle"). Its placement in the last half-line intensifies the impact of this revelation, as does the unfamiliarity of the word. Although the audience might be expected to know Andrew's fate, they might not expect it to be announced in such a fashion. The hapax legomenon reveals that Andrew's status has shifted from that of a lonely exile to that of a Germanic warrior who will boldly offer service to his lord even if it results in his fall in battle; however, once again the uniqueness of the word reminds an audience that the battle will be spiritual, and the Lord eternal.

Any analysis of *Andreas* must acknowledge the importance of words—language, the logos—in the poem. Not only do words have the power to draw water from a marble pillar, but in a larger sense, as Clemoes has pointed out, "Andrew owed his victory to language," for "[w]ords gave the apostle . . . superiority in the contest between light and dark" (268). Moreover, the poet in the first instance spoke to "an audience trained to listen to the *scop*'s words with care" (Shaw 172), one that would have been responsive to the rich potential for meanings of the hapax legomena. It benefits us as modern readers to acknowledge and emulate the original audience's capacity for understanding these words. Doing so allows us to appreciate how the syncretism evinced by the use of unique

words reflected the dual heritage within which the poet worked; “the artistic translator may exploit the native, oral tradition to create a more densely textured version for an audience nurtured in a different aesthetic, one that demands close attention to the power of the word” (Shaw 176). Recapturing this aesthetic enables us in the detailed task of interpreting the rich textures of *Andreas*.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Brian Shaw, in "Translation and Transformation in *Andreas*," adds that "Christ has, of course, 'paid' the fare of all for the voyage to heaven, though the saint may well not comprehend the full import of the metaphysical message" (171).

<sup>2</sup> These are merebate (246), ægflotan (258), hornscipe (274), bordstæðu (442), and brondstæfne (504).

<sup>3</sup> These are lidweardas (244), scipferendum (250), scipweardas (297), holmwearde (359), and bryðbearn (494).

<sup>4</sup> These are holmwege (382), waruðgewinn (439), ealada (441), sessade (453), streamwelm (495), hwileð (495), brimstæðo (496), sæholm (529), and aryða (532).

<sup>5</sup> Even hapax legomena not denoting these central ideas can enhance a typological reading: for instance, gyrehwile (468), "time of terror," relating to the tempestuous waves on the sea-voyage.

<sup>6</sup> An additional hapax legomenon that falls beyond the limits of my survey is wudubate (905) "wooden ship," an isolated term that nevertheless carries a typological significance. Once Andrew realizes the identity of the ship's steersman, he learns the lesson of faith in God's protection and care, even though he could not literally see it at the time. Now he realizes the broader truth: God has cared for him as he has traveled over the waters, a metaphor for life's path, in the wooden ship, a symbol of the body of believers. There is a lesson here for an audience as well who is aware of the potential typological reading of the passage.

<sup>7</sup> It is tempting to see this theme continued much later in the poem with the hapax legomenon wordlatu (1522), "delay in obeying a command." It comes at a prominent position, just as the column releases its flood of water, and surely there is a pointed irony in the stone's obedience to Andrew and God: "Næs þa wordlatu wihte þon mare / þæt se stan togan" (1522-23; "There was not then any more delay in obeying the command before the stone split open.") Here is one last reference to Andrew's failing.

<sup>8</sup> Brian Shaw, in "Translation and Transformation in *Andreas*," comments on "the fusion of cultures that unites a Germanic warrior to the bearer of the Christian word" (173). The product, says Shaw, is a "new concept of Christian warrior," one "whose weapon is the speaking of truth" (168), a truth expressed through the power of the word.

<sup>9</sup> See lines 1646 and 1816 in *Beowulf*, where the phrase refers to Beowulf himself. There are two other occurrences in lines 3111 and 3169.

<sup>10</sup> The reader will remember meotudwange, one of the first hapax legomena in the poem, meaning "the Lord's (battle)field or plain."

<sup>11</sup> This phrase comes from line 531a of *Beowulf*, in Beowulf's famous rebuke to Unferth.



<sup>12</sup> Brooks' notes on ll. 1002-3 hint that *Beowulf* also contains the figure of speech equating sleep with death.

<sup>13</sup> According to J. R. Clark Hall's dictionary, seonobenn appears in the poem "'Be manna wyrðum' in Gr.", where GR=Bibliothek der Angelsaechs. Poesie ed. C. W. M. Grein and revised by R. P. Wuelker, Cassel, 1883-98.

<sup>14</sup> It should be noted that duruþegnum is also a hapax legomenon, just not a particularly interesting one, at least not on the level of the other two. The same principle applies to lifnere.

<sup>15</sup> Another word for the devil that is not covered here is hinca (1171), a word complicated because Brooks alone lists it separately; Krapp and other editors link it to the previous word to get the unique compound hellehinca, "cripple/limper of hell." No one is quite sure what to make of the meaning of this word. Brooks' note indicates that this conception of the devil may have been a European belief, although there is no evidence for its existence among the Anglo-Saxons. In other versions of the story of Andrew, the devil, when he appears, is described as an old man, a grizzled man, and in the poem, as a dark and ugly man with the appearance of a criminal.

<sup>16</sup> It should be observed that an earlier word, scingelacum (766), "by means of magical or devilish art," is related to aclæcræftum in meaning and use, for it is misapplied to Christ's miracle; it is the explanation the disbelievers find for the stone statue coming to life. The complication is that scingelacum is not a hapax legomenon in the strict sense of the word; it is a uniquely attested variant of words like scinnlac and scinnlæca.

<sup>17</sup> Credit must be given to Clemons, p. 271 for this idea; he says, in line 1717-22, in an "outburst of language," the city is transformed so that it can be described as a wederburg (a unique word) but also as a winburg and a goldburg (neither is a hapax legomenon).

## CHAPTER 5

### THE FAMILIAR MADE NEW

In using the native resources of word and expression to tell a non-native story, an Anglo-Saxon poet certainly did not have to create new words to convey unfamiliar concepts. In fact, “[n]ew concepts, such as those developed to articulate aspects of Christianity, were framed in familiar words that must have carried with them traces of previous meanings” (Head 92). Even so, new words were formed, but paradoxically these hapax legomena can still be viewed as “familiar words.” Since almost every unique figure considered so far has been a compound, an analysis of its workings should acknowledge that “[t]he histories of the two words constructing the compound would converge so that past meanings would be renewed and altered in present language” (Head 92). This chapter proposes an examination of those hapax legomena in *Andreas* that describe scenes, characters, and themes in terms that are both familiar and unfamiliar, traditional and fresh, formulaic and unconventional.

In her chapter on “Images of Storytelling: The Presence of the Past in Old English Poetry,” Pauline Head explores the manner in which Anglo-Saxon poetry, though ostensibly written, continued in fundamental ways to draw on the oral-formulaic tradition. The interconnection of the oral and the written results in a poetry that still retains “traces of oral composition and transmission” (89); even as it is written down, the poetry revives the oral and incorporates it into the written text by hearkening back to an earlier form and manner of composition (89). In that sense, then, “[e]ach grammatical

unit of Old English poetic language—even the word—is constructed, and each level of structural composition involves a return and reference to what has already been said” (91-2). Alain Renoir, in *A Key to Old Poems*, posits that the training of an oral-formulaic poet furnished him with “a stock of extremely flexible paradigms functioning at essentially three different but mutually supportive levels of composition . . . : (1) metrical and grammatical paradigms . . . ; (2) themes which act as paradigms for all types of situations . . . ; and (3) larger traditional topics” (qtd. in Head 142-43).<sup>1</sup> The *Andreas* poet, in constructing new words to add to the poetic vocabulary, followed in the footsteps of this oral-formulaic tradition by returning and referring to these paradigms. Our examination of hapax legomena thus far has concentrated mainly on the first type of paradigm Renoir identifies; however, it could be argued that through the creation of a new word, the poet utilizes all three levels. Since the building blocks of a hapax legomenon are deeply rooted in the traditional poetic diction, they carry certain connotations and associations with them, primarily contextual. While a new word will be crafted to fit into preexisting metrical and grammatical forms, even in a nontraditional context the word will resonate with traditional topics and themes. The components of a word, along with its form and immediate context of surrounding words, may evoke a scene of battle, the feasting hall, or the isolation of an outcast, even if these evocations appear to run counter to the larger context. As John Miles Foley has argued, “a poet uses a given register because it indexes the context in which he or she wants the communication to be received” (“The Poet's Self-Interruption” 45).

A passage from *Andreas*, ll. 1219-1252, shows this process at work as it describes a fundamental component of a medieval hagiography: a vivid depiction of the torments

undergone by the saint. Its collection of five hapax legomena draws on both Germanic and Christian traditions to enable the audience to bring their knowledge of the dual tradition to the portrayals of the cannibalistic Mermedonians and the saintly Andrew.

The episode begins in dramatic fashion, with the armed Mermedonians converging upon the solitary Andrew:

Æfter þam wordum com      werod unmæte,  
 lyswe larsmeoðas      mid **lindgecrode**,  
 bolgenmode; (1219-1221a)

[After the words came an immense company, wicked counselors with a **shield-bearing troop**, enraged]

The first hapax legomenon, lindgecrode, appears relatively early in the passage to focus the audience's attention on the armed might of the Mermedonians. As one of a number of hapax legomena portraying the cannibals as a warlike adversary or armed group, lindgecrode continues the depiction, begun in line 1205, of Andrew's opponents as a typically Germanic band of advancing warriors. This word provides an example of how the audience's expectations, aroused by its acquaintance with Germanic poetry and tradition, can be fulfilled in a novel way: the situation and even the image of a "shield-bearing troop" are familiar, but the poet chooses to express them through a unique word to reflect the new, distinctively Christian context of the poem.

This technique is extended by the use of the second hapax legomenon in the passage, welwange ("field of slaughter"), which appears after Andrew has been speedily caught and bound:

   þær wæs sec<g> manig  
 on þam **welwange**      wiges oflusted

leoda duguðe;                      lyt sorgodon  
 hwylc him þæt edlean              æfter wurde.                      (1225b-1228)

[There was many a warrior on **the field of slaughter** desirous of battle in the host of people; they cared not at all how the reward would come to them afterwards.]

Not only the meaning but also the form of this word would in all probability have been known to the audience of the time, for welwange resembles other words of Germanic origin customarily used in battle scenes; just a few hundred lines earlier, they would have encountered the hapax legomenon deaðwang (1003), “place of death,” while the more commonly used compounds wælbed, “bed of death” and wælrest, “bed of slaughter” are to be found in *Beowulf* and other poems. Again, the audience’s expectations of a compound fitting a particular form and denoting the concept of “battlefield” would be aroused and fulfilled in these lines, but in an unexpected way, by a word that *looks* traditional but is in fact new. After all, in this poem the “field of slaughter” is more metaphorical, and the poet heralds that distinctiveness through a word that resonates with the poetic tradition by dint of its similarity to existing Germanic terms but also appears noticeably fresh. In a way, too, this particular metaphorical expression of the spiritual struggle between Andrew and the Mermedonians as a physical battle heightens the drama of Andrew’s resistance to the forces of the devil. One wonders if the original audience might have found the spiritual struggle more meaningful or understandable when it was couched in the language of heroic poetry. At least, we may surmise this is what the *Andreas* poet thought was the case.

A useful contrast can be established through an examination of the next hapax legomenon, ceasterhofum “city dwellings, houses in the city,” as it appears amidst the descriptions of the saint’s sufferings:

	Storm upp aras	
æfter <b>ceasterhofum</b> ,	cirm unlytel	
hæðenes heriges.	Wæs þæs halgan lic	
sarbennum soden,	swate bestemed,	
banhus abrocen;	blod yðum weoll,	
haton heolfre.		(1236b-1241a)

[A storm rose up over **the city dwellings**, a mighty tumult of the heathen army. The body of the saint was afflicted with painful wounds, drenched with blood, his body shattered; blood welled in waves, with hot gore.]

While the representation of the Mermedonians as a storm rushing over the city is striking, it is not a commonplace of the Germanic tradition; hence, ceasterhofum does not appear in a customary context with a well-known meaning or form. As a result, it should not be expected to have the powerful resonance that words like lindgecrode and welwange could evoke as they blended the familiar with the novel.

The sense of ceasterhofum as a more “neutral” hapax legomenon in placement and effect is heightened by the power of the unique terms that precede and follow it. In fact, soon after ceasterhofum the passage shifts to an emphasis on Andrew’s forbearance under his sufferings:

	Hæfde him on innan
ellen untweonde;	wæs þæt æðele mod

asundrad fram synnum,            þeah he sares swa feala  
 deopum dolgslegum            dreogan sceolde.            (1241b-1244)

[He had inside within himself unwavering strength; the noble spirit was sundered from sins, although he should endure so many afflictions, deep jagged wounds.]

Whereas the passage begins with a more traditionally Germanic description of the Mermedonians as an advancing army, hungry for battle, as it draws to a close, the focus turns to Andrew and his saintly bearing, even under great pain. This movement is reflected in the last two hapax legomena in the episode, the first of which follows soon after:

Swa wæs ealne dæg            oððæt æfen com  
**sigeltorht** swungen;            sar eft gewod  
 ymb þæs beornes breost,      oðþæt beorht gewat  
 sunne swegeltorht            to sete glidan.            (1245-1248)

[So was **the one bright as the sun** beaten all day until evening came; torment soon penetrated about the breast of the hero, until the bright sun departed shining in the sky]

Andrew's association with the sun and light, established by the hapax legomenon sigeltorht, is furthered by means of wordplay: sigeltorht is echoed two lines later by swegeltorht, "shining in the sky," a possible reference to the holy saint himself or to God who protects him in the midst of his sufferings. The connection would have been a natural one for the poet to make, given the Biblical passages which characterize God and following in His path as "light." The invocation of the sun and brightness contrasts sharply with descriptions of the "storm" and the bloody torments the Mermedonians delight in inflicting. Together, the associations the poet brings to his portrayal of Andrew result in giving him an aura of invincibility and transcendence.

The passage concludes with further reassurance to the audience of Andrew's steadfast belief in God's protection:

Læddan þa leode	laðne gewinnan	
to carcerne.	He wæs Criste swa þeah	
leof on mode;	him wæs leoht sefa	
halig, heortan neh,	hige <b>untyddre</b> .	(1249-1252)

[The people then led the hateful adversary to prison. He was yet still dear to Christ in heart; for him his mind was light, holy, near to his heart, thought **unwavering**.]

This hapax legomenon, untyddre, also has an echo, in the lines “Hæfde him on innan; ellen untweonde,” “He had inside within himself unwavering strength” (ll. 1241b-1242a), which occur earlier in the passage, immediately after the recounting of Andrew's tortures; the adjective “unwavering” is repeated through two words, untyddre and untweonde, which are similar in form. In a subtle way, the word leoht in “him wæs leoht sefa” makes a connection to the images of light in the previous group of lines. This coda to the passage makes explicit what the previous lines had suggested through the word sigeltorht: the torments inflicted by the captors have not caused Andrew's mind, heart, or thought to waver. A hapax legomenon, untyddre, closes the passage on a strong note of faith and victory.

The hapax legomena in this brief passage underline the significance of the Germanic and Christian imagery applied to heathen and saint. Through the unique words, the audience can comprehend how the Mermedonians are depicted in a traditional manner as Germanic warriors. Through the hapax legomena lindgecrode and welwange, two words that seem familiar in meaning and even form, but are in fact brand new additions to the wordstock, the audience is reminded, though, that while the context may



seem familiar, it is in fact new. By contrast, ceasterhofum is not particularly powerful in its evocation of a Germanic context or meaning. An even greater contrast is established, however, between the first two hapax legomena and the last two, sigeltorht and untyddre, which draw on Christian associations to describe the saint's radiance and faith.

While a word may “index” a scene, at times the poet will simply include the scene in the poem, so that the entire theme or situation is already in place, instead of being conveyed solely through a hapax legomenon. *Andreas* draws heavily on scenes and *topoi* familiar from the Anglo-Saxon poetic tradition, transforming with native resources of word, expression, and scene what has been passed down as a Greco-Latin tale. The poem gains power from such syncretism, as in the brief invocation (ll. 1253-1262) of the traditional topos of winter weather in all its forms (ice, hail, snow, frost) which suddenly and apparently out of all season afflicts Andrew in his prison cell. According to Foley, “it is a decidedly Anglo-Saxon gloss on the Greek narrative,” for no counterpart exists in the Greek version, the Praxeis (“The Poet's Self-Interruption” 47). While on a literal level the insertion may puzzle, its logic requires a reader to accept that the elegiac standard of punishing winter weather, familiar from *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer*, can be borrowed for a new context, that of a saint's life. The connection between contexts that enables the scene to be translated across the boundaries of genre is that it depicts a state of mental torment, rendered in physical terms. Through his word choice and descriptions, the poet has called on “a ready and resonant analogy—the equally solitary, equally miserable figure of exile,” which adds an additional layer of meaning to this point in the story, “viewed from inside the syncretic poetics of Old English traditional verse” (Foley 47).



hildstapan, a military metaphor operates within the symbolic landscape of a traditional elegiac setting to depict Andrew's psychological state.

### **I. *Topos***

In *Andreas*, as in other Anglo-Saxon poems, the *topos* of the winter storm does not function alone as the only example of a "return and reference" to a theme or topic familiar from traditional poetry (Head 91-2). In his essay "The Hero on the Beach: An Example of Composition by Theme in Anglo-Saxon Poetry," David K. Crowne identifies two Anglo-Saxon motifs in *Andreas*: the Hero on the Beach and the Sea Voyage. These motifs "help to create [the narrative] in full extratextual resonance, bringing the immanence of tradition to the individual text and individual moment" (Foley, "Texts that Speak" 153). Alexandra Hennessey Olsen comments on the syncretism of the poem by noting that "the *Andreas* poet describes the voyage in his source as a merger of the apocryphal story and heroic imagery, although in his case, the heroic imagery is that of Germanic rather than of Roman tradition" (399). It is interesting to note in passing that in *Andreas* the hapax legomena denote key elements of the motif of the Hero on the Beach. The motif consists of "a concatenation of four imagistic details," those being "(1) a hero on the beach (2) with his retainers (3) in the presence of a flashing light (4) as a journey is completed (or begun)" (Crowne 371, 368). In the corresponding scene in the poem, as Andrew strides along the beach in search of a ship to ferry him to Mermedonia (ll. 235-253), the five hapax legomena featured reflect those details identified by Crowne: sandhleodū (236; "sand hills"), morgentorht (241; "radiant in the morning"), lidweardas (244; "boat-guards," "sailors"), merebate (246; "the ship"), and scipferendum (250; "sailors"). Without stretching the point too much, one might note that these words shift

the emphasis from Andrew and his retainers to Christ and his angels, who are in the guise of sailors. As previously discussed, *morgentorht* can fulfill a dual function as both an emblem for the sun (the “flashing light”) and Christ, metaphorically clothed in light. While “it is appropriate to characterize Andreas formulaically by a voyage that evokes the context of heroes who sail on the sea and helps identify Andreas as a heroic figure” (Olsen 405-6), we should also acknowledge that this *topos* is not preserved intact in the new context of the poem; the tradition is drawn upon but in the process is also transformed to suit the situation in the source material.

Within the *topos* of the sea voyage appear less extended but equally traditional themes that, despite their surface incongruity, fit into the logic of the storytelling by weaving together the native tradition and Christian saint’s life.<sup>2</sup> Such a theme emerges early in the ocean voyage, as the ship encounters stormy weather, and Andrew’s followers become afraid of the tumultuous waters. As throughout the first part of the poem, in this scene they are portrayed with terms that suggest a band of warriors; Andrew notes that “Nu synt geþreade þegnas mine, / geonge guðrincas” (391-392a; “Now are my followers subdued, the young warriors”) and “Duguð is geswenced, / modigra mægen myclum gebysgod” (394b-395; “The host is tormented, the troop of brave men greatly troubled”). When Christ the Steersman makes the reasonable suggestion that the youths be dropped off on land to await Andrew’s return, they respond quickly and vociferously; according to the poet, they could not consider:

þæt hie forleton	æt lides stefnan	
leofne lareow,	ond him land curon:	(403-404)

[that they forsake the beloved teacher at the prow of the ship, and choose land for themselves]

In this response, while the structure of the lines makes their choice between the ship and land more opposed, the poet's voice identifies Andrew as a figure of teaching rather than battle, linking him not with an earthly lord but with Christ, who was a teacher to his disciples, and even to his future role among the Mermedonians.<sup>3</sup> The disciples' own words, however, more strongly evoke a Germanic mindset, reaching back to an ancient ethos in adopting the voice of a loyal thane:

Hwider hweorfað we	hlafordlease,	
geomormorde,	gode orfeorme,	
synnum wunde,	gif we swicað þe?	
We bioð laðe	on landa gehwam,	
folcum fracode,	þonne fira bearn,	
ellenrofe,	æht besittap,	
hwylc hira selost	symle gelæste	
hlaforde æt hilde,	þonne hand ond rond	
on <b>beaduwange</b>	billum forgrunden	
æt <b>niðplegan</b>	nearu þrowedon.	(405-414)

[Whither will we go lordless, sad of heart, lacking goodness, wounded with guilt, if we desert you? We will be detestable in every land, despised of people, when the sons of men, valiant, in council deliberate, who of them ever best supported the lord at battle, when the hand and shield suffered hardship shattered with sword on **the battlefield at the play of strife.**]

This speech evokes the lament of the lordless thane not so much through individual words as through the emotion and sentiments expressed therein, yet at the same time the poet suggests a metaphorical dimension more in keeping with the spiritual nature of the poem. For instance, near the beginning of the speech the disciples employ two phrases

that do double Germanic-Christian duty: they will be “gode orfeorme” (deprived of benefit *or* goodness) and “synnum wunde” (wounded with guilt *or* sins). The lines that follow sound much more traditional in expression and thought, as the disciples reflect on their future outcast state, despised and shunned, particularly when questions of valor and fealty are debated. Their speech reflects a *comitatus* ethos in its expression of the personal shame and public disgrace of having deserted or outlived one’s lord; they speak of an alienation reminiscent of that experienced by the speaker in *The Wanderer*, although without the larger elegiac context. It may be that this reference to a familiar theme would enable the audience to relate more closely to the depth of the followers’ loyalty to Andrew. In providing a link to an oral tradition, it places the disciples in the ranks of more familiar figures. At the same time this traditional theme is so poignantly recalled, however, the audience may detect a reference of another type: an echo of the story of Ruth (Boenig, *Acts of Andrew* 83), which presents the disciples’ actions in a very different context. Thus, the speech has the potential to summon forth specific scenes from both traditions.

As the speech comes to a close, its emphasis shifts to a distinctly Germanic description of the rigors of battle. This detailed emphasis is enhanced by the form, placement, and meaning of two hapax legomena, beaduwange and niðplegan. First, they appear in the last two lines of the speech, a prominent position; even more striking is their parallel placement at the end of each first half-line. Accordingly, their meanings of “battlefield” and “play of strife” are central to the description of battle. Interestingly enough, although the forms of the words appear traditionally Germanic, employing the components beadu-, wang, and nið- customary in depictions of warfare, the hapax

legomena have the ability to transcend their literal meanings. The larger Christian context, the naming of Andrew as “lareow,” even the allusion to the Biblical figure of Ruth permit an audience to understand “battlefield” and “play of strife” metaphorically as elements of a spiritual battle; these words carry both senses within them in a way similar but not identical to meotudwange, an early hapax legomenon whose very form hinted at two levels of meaning, the literal “plain of doom” and the figurative “plain of the Lord.” While within beaduwange and niðplegan there may also be an acknowledgment that a spiritual battle may involve physical strife, the hapax legomena conclude the speech by encapsulating within their meanings both the Germanic and Christian strains that have been woven through the larger passage.

## II. Character

In addition to scenes, a character in this Christian drama may be portrayed with words and phrases that hark back to pre-Christian characters and stories in the audience’s memory. Within this process, a hapax legomenon does not seem out of place because it too contains elements that resonate in the audience’s poetic knowledge. An outstanding example of such a technique occurs on the second day of Andrew’s torments. There, the devil appears in reaction to a prayer that Andrew has cried aloud, and that evening he goes to Andrew’s prison cell to taunt him personally. Although the description of the devil is brief and contains just one nonce-word, it bears remarkable similarities to other poems and, as such, characterizes the devil in terms of Germanic legends and ethos:

þa com seofona sum	to sele geongan,
atol æglæca	yfela gemyndig,

morðres manfrea	myrce gescyrded,	
deoful <b>deaðreow</b>	duguðum bereafod,	
ongan þa þam halgan	hospword spreca:	(1311-1315)

[Then came one of seven going to the hall, horrible adversary mindful of evil, evil lord of murder shrouded in darkness, **murderously cruel** devil deprived of retainers, began then to the holy one to speak an insult:]

For a modern reader, the opening of this passage will doubtless bring to mind the description in *Beowulf* of Grendel's approach to Heorot:

Ða com of more	under misthleopum	
Grendel gongan,	Godes yrre bær;	
mynte se manscaða	manna cynnes	
sumne besyrwan	in sele þam hean.	(710-713)

[Then came Grendel walking from the moors under the cover of darkness (lit. misty hills), God's anger bore; the murderer meant some of mankind to ensnare in the high hall.]

Clearly, both the devil and Grendel bear God's anger as they draw near to the building where they intend to ensnare, or trick, their victims, either through words or deeds. More specifically, the *Andreas*-poet draws on familiar poetic epigraphs to portray the devil further as a traditional antagonist. In the first appositive applied to the devil, an audience encounters a resonant expression, "atol æglæca yfela gemyndig" (horrible adversary mindful of evil). In *Beowulf*, the phrase "atol æglæca" appears three times, in each instance to describe Grendel. In fact, it is used twice during the scene in Heorot, once when Grendel has arrived at the hall, and then during the fight with Beowulf. Another appositive used of the devil, "morðres manfrea" (evil lord of murder), can be found in



*Juliana* and *Elene*, while the following half-line, “myrce gescyrðed” (shrouded in darkness), may remind us again of Grendel, the walker of the moors.

After these two lines, heavily weighted with phrases which one suspects were familiar and resonant to the Anglo-Saxon audience, a hapax legomenon follows in yet another phrase in apposition, “deoful **deaðreow** duguðum bereafod” (**murderously cruel** devil deprived of retainers). This line continues the depiction of the Christian devil in terms appropriate for an outcast of Germanic society; associations of monsters are blended with those of an evil lord whose infamous cruelty has left him bereft of followers. Into this arena enters a new word, deaðreow. As does *Beowulf*, *Andreas* contains a noticeable number of unique words formed on the component deað-, five in the former poem, three in the latter. In addition, earlier the Mermedonians are called wæltreowe (1211a; “the savage ones”), which links them in a consistent way to the devil’s attribute of being “murderously cruel.” The word deaðreow may bring to mind the memorable description of Grendel as a “deorc deapscua” (*Beowulf* 160a; “dark death-shadow”), preparing an audience even more for the verbal attack the devil will launch upon Andrew. What we have seen, then, is how a hapax legomenon, along with surrounding phrases, can serve to characterize a Christian antagonist by evoking two types of Germanic outcasts: a monster and a cruel lord.

### III. Series of scenes

A hapax legomenon may combine with other words and phrases that surround it to index if not a particular scene, then a series of related scenes from the heroic tradition. The effect is to link past and present, often in uncommon ways. In lines 1492-1521, after God has freed Andrew from captivity, Andrew begins to release the climactic flood upon

the Mermedonians. As he addresses a stone pillar, the poet calls on terms that suggest a different landscape and connect this episode with other scenes from the oral tradition:

He be wealle geseah                      wundrum fæste  
under **sælwage**                                      sweras unlytle,  
stapulas standan                      storme bedrifene,  
eald enta geweorc;                                      (1492-1495a)

[By the wall he saw large pillars, columns standing marvelously firm under **the wall of a building**, storm-beaten, old work of giants.]

A number of allusions are operating here, both Germanic and Christian. The typological associations include overt references to Moses, as Andrew himself later in the speech compares the marble stone with the stone on which God inscribed the Ten Commandments (ll. 1509a-1513a). The situation should also remind an audience of the story of Christ's miracle which Andrew related on the sea-voyage, in which Christ addressed the stone statue and had it do his bidding in order to convert those who would doubt him. Such a comparison would indicate that Andrew has reached maturity in his sainthood through his suffering and acceptance of God's will. He is now able to effect a miracle of his own for the purpose of converting the Mermedonians.

Alongside these Christian parallels, traditional associations appear which may on the surface seem incongruous but which actually add layers of meaning to the episode.

After the hapax legomnon **sælwage**, the mighty columns or "sweras unlytle" are described by three phrases in apposition: "stapulas standan," "storme bedrifene," and "eald enta geweorc." Of "storme bedrifene," the poem's editor says, "strictly inappropriate, since the pillars are inside the prison; but this and similar expressions may perhaps be formulaic" (113). The other two expressions give stronger evidence that they

are manifestations of an older poetic ethos, particularly “eald enta geweorc.” This expression survives in several Old English poems, among them *The Ruin*, *The Wanderer*, and *Beowulf*. In *Beowulf*, enta ærgeweorc is used to describe the golden hilt of the sword that Beowulf gives over to Hrothgar (line 1679), while eald enta geweorc itself describes the gold-filled hoard which Wiglaf investigates after Beowulf’s battle with the dragon (line 2774). Some lines earlier this lair of the dragon had been described more minutely, with details that are reminiscent of those found in *Andreas*:

	Ða se æðeling giong,	
þæt he bi wealle	wishhycgende	
gesæt on sesse;	seah on enta geweorc,	
hu ða stanbogan	stapulum fæste	
ece eorðreced	innan healde.	(2715b-2719)

[Then the prince went, so that by the wall he wise in thought sat on a seat; he saw the work of giants, how the eternal earth-house within held the stone arches with pillars firm.]

Besides the familiar enta geweorc, we notice other elements in common with the passage from *Andreas*: first is the architecture of the wall, which could naturally be associated with a column but is interestingly enough not mentioned in the Latin, Greek, or other Old English version of the story. In both *Beowulf* and *Andreas*, then, a character stands or sits by a wall and looks about him, reflecting upon certain architectural features. Paramount among these features are columns, whose identifying trait in both passages is their fastness. These striking parallels would imply that both poems are making reference to a past *topos* from the oral tradition. The effect in *Andreas* is that of a dual opposition. In one direction, the poem is pulled back into the past, and the prison joins the ranks of

legendary structures erected in the mists of time past by unknown hands. At the same time, this literary history is made part of something new; whether that past *topos* was used in relation to dragons' lairs we cannot say, but clearly in *Andreas* an ancient structure, both architectural and poetic, is brought into the realm of a Christian poem, in a foreign land of Mermedonia.

This duality, by which the past is revived and brought into a present context, mirrors the dual nature of a hapax legomenon, which carries traces of past meanings and associations even as it combines them into a new creation. In these lines from *Andreas*, the word that does this is sælwage, and its meaning, "the wall of a building," seems intentionally rich in light of the discussion of enta geweorc. It appears that the structural feature of the wall does not come from whatever other versions of the saint's life the poet may have consulted; instead, the wall stems from a native poetic tradition. How appropriate, then, that the hapax legomenon takes this traditional feature and renames it, just as it is being brought into the new present context of a Christian poem. In the microcosm, it enacts the same merger of past and present as enta geweorc. On several levels, then, the audience witnesses the process of "a return and reference to what has already been said" (Head 91-2) in conjunction with the past being projected onto the present moment of composition.

A later hapax legomenon in the passage is related to this process. Once Andrew asks the column to release its river of water, he pays it a high but unusual compliment:

Hwæt, ðu golde eart,

**sincgife**, sylla!

(1508b-1509a)

[Listen, you are better than gold, **a rich gift!**]

It is not surprising that this praise does not exist in other versions of the poem, for it has a decidedly Anglo-Saxon flavor: Andrew implies that the column is to be prized more than a treasure such as gold which might be given by a lord to a deserving thane. The components of sincgife give it the appearance of a traditional word, as does its meaning, but the situation in which it is used is quite nontraditional. In fact, the allusion to a rich gift of gold could appear nonsensical until we recall the contexts of enta geweorc, used fourteen lines earlier. In *Beowulf*, “the work of giants” referred to the golden hilt of a sword and to a treasure-hoard filled with gold; it is not so improbable that these associations between columns and gold found expression in Andrew’s making a direct comparison between the two. Tellingly, in the Christian world of the poem, the column is judged the more precious, even though the historic worth of the gold is conveyed through the hapax legomenon. Just as sincgife emphasizes the gold, however, it also renames it, revealing its reduced status in the poem.

Understanding hapax legomena as mixtures of the new and the familiar can help interpret the word meaduscerwen. Whereas this hapax legomenon has puzzled a number of readers, it can be analyzed using the tools set forth in this chapter to show it is perhaps only a more extreme example of a process that has been charted throughout the poem. Following Andrew’s praise of the column, the word appears in the description of the killing flood that awakens the Mermedonians:

. . . .	Stream ut aweoll
fleow ofer foldan;	famige walcan
mid ærdæge	eorðan þehton,
myclade mereflod.	<b>Meoduscerwen</b> wearð

æfter symbeldæge; slæpe tobrugdon

searuhæbende.

(1523b-1528a)

[The stream welled out, flowed over the earth; foamy billows at dawn engulfed the earth, an increased flood of water. **Distress** arose after the day of feasting; armed men started from sleep.]

The poem's editor claims meoduserwen was formed on the model of *Beowulf's* ealuserwen, "dispensing of ale [evil drink]." According to Brooks, "the *Andreas* poet, needing a word alliterating on *m*, has replaced ealu by meodu, although in fact mead is not bitter (114), a comment that presupposes that the *Andreas* poet was merely following in another poet's footsteps, appropriating a preexisting word and changing the form in order for the alliteration to work, even if changing the drink (mead for ale) interfered with the appropriateness of the metaphor. Klaeber gives the poet more credit in his notes on ealuserwen, noting that "the author of *Andreas* (a better judge than modern scholars) understood the corresponding formation meaduserwen . . . to him it was 'plenty of (fateful) drink'" (156). In fact, arguably the poet here borrows words—meodu, "mead, drink" and scerwen, "serving, dispensation"—with traditional associations to craft a new word to express a complex concept in a highly creative and concise manner. A "serving of mead" carries with it strong associations of the feasting hall; it is part of the reward bestowed by a lord pleased with one's faithful service. It can be thought of as one of the perquisites of the hall, a drink in celebration of the unbroken covenant between lord and thane. Clearly, in this context if the audience brings even those elemental associations to this hapax legomenon, they will quickly note the disjuncture between those basic connotations and the present context, leading them to interpret the word ironically. The modern-day gloss "distress, panic" seeks to convey this irony. The phrase "æfter

syμβeldæge” continues the feasting metaphor; one wonders if it too should be translated ironically, perhaps as “disobedience,” since the Mermedonians have enjoyed no “feast day” with the Lord. On the other hand, as a sly reference to the Mermedonians’ cannibalistic habits, “day of feasting” could certainly be appropriate. Their “serving of mead” to cap off such a feast is, fittingly, a deadly flood.

We may speculate whether the description of the flood as “stream ut aweoll/fleow ofer foldan” (1522) and “famige walcan” (1523a) (“the stream welled out, flowed over the earth” and “foamy billows”) reminded the poet not only of a flood of water but also, perhaps, of an outpouring of mead. That connection may have been the genesis for the hapax legomenon. While critics have attempted to reconcile the form of meaduscerwen to its apparent meaning in the passage, if examined from the perspective adopted here, the word can be viewed as another instance of a new meaning being expressed through the conjoining of familiar meanings. As Head explains, “Whenever a poet, or any Anglo-Saxon composer of language, returned to a word already in use and reshaped it to suit a new purpose, she or he would necessarily reintroduce all of that word’s prior signification, explicit and implicit—all the residue of its previous use. The present meaning would be the richer for this inclusion of the past” (92). This process of renewal and alteration—return and reference—demystifies meaduscerwen.

While a nonce word like meaduscerwen arrests the audience’s attention by the exceptional nature of its form, meaning, and placement, other unique words appear much more conventional. Two such hapax legomena occur in what may seem an inconspicuous or even incidental location: the passage preceding God’s first words to

Andrew, in which God charges Andrew to venture to Mermedonia. The poet introduces God with phrases that may sound quite familiar:

	Ða sio stefn gewearð	
gehered of heofenum,	þær se halga wer	
in Achaia,	Andreas, wæs;	
leode lærde	on lifes weg,	
þa him <b>cinebaldum</b>	cininga wuldor,	
meotud mancynnes,	<b>modhord</b> onleac,	
weoruda drihten,	on þus wordum cwæð:	(167a-173)

[Then the voice became heard from the heavens, where the holy man in Achaia, Andreas, was; (he taught people on life's path) Then to him **the supremely bold one**, the glory of kings, the Creator of men, opened **his treasury of thought**, the Lord of hosts, and thus spoke in words.]

The word choice in these lines seems unexceptional until one realizes that two of these words have been classified as unique creations specific to this poet and this poem. What can be outstanding, though, about two hapax legomena that look conventional enough to blend into the background, so to speak? Randolph Quirk refers to lexical and alliterative collocations in Old English poetry whereby the poetic tradition establishes expectations of certain pairings of words, both alliterative and lexical (Bjork 10). Given “how important the basic laws of stress, word order, and alliterative collocation are,” “deviations from those norms can reinforce meaning in a poem” (qtd. in Bjork 12). Thus, since the uniqueness of these words would frustrate an audience's expectations, the resulting tension would emphasize the word's meaning even more. This technique is also mentioned in Greenfield and Calder's *A New Critical History of Old English Literature* as a means whereby a poet could put his or her individual stamp on a poem, rescuing it from



being overly formulaic and conventional. (Another method Greenfield and Calder mention of introducing originality and individuality into an Old English poem is the coining of compounds.) As relating to broad concerns, themes, and *topoi*, Greenfield and Calder say, "[i]n a larger way, originality in the use of formulas and themes depended upon the degree of tension created between the traditional associations evoked by these stylizations and the unique applicability they had in their specific contexts" (126). More appropriate to the topic of word choice is their comment that follows: "the poet, working on the degree of expectancy set up by the traditional collocations, or by his own creation of habitual patterns within his poem, could deliberately extend or frustrate that expectancy in several ways" (126). At the same time, the commonplace nature of their components and context makes them worthy of study as instances of how new words were integrated into the poetic tradition.

The first word to consider, cinebaldum, has a tangled background. The MS reading is cire baldu, which the editor has emended to cinebaldum, a hapax legomenon meaning "supremely bold." J. R. Clark Hall's *A Concise Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*, however, posits that cirebald may be cynebeald (a variant form is cyningbald), a hapax legomenon from *Beowulf* with the sense "royally brave, very brave" (line 1634). Thus, one must admit that the word in *Andreas* may be a unique creation or an extremely rare poetic word. In either case, it is worth noting that cinebaldum appears here as the first in a series of four terms in apposition denoting various qualities of God. The last three terms—"cininga wuldor" (glory of kings), "meotud mancynnes" (Creator of men), and "weoruda drihten" (Lord of hosts)—are all fairly standard poetic appellations for God, appearing multiple times even within *Andreas*. Through cinebaldum a tension between

the familiar and the new emerges: time-honored phrases in apposition provide a recognizable template for praise of God, yet heading the list and setting the pattern is a very unfamiliar word, its position and form proclaiming its newness while the phrases that follow integrate it into the poetic tradition. This new word should not be regarded as too much of an upstart when placed in such august company, but the tension existing between old and new is appropriate when one considers that the designations for God in the passage (“cining,” “meotud,” and “drihten”) also exemplify an analogous tension, between their old sense of an earthly ruler and the new sense of a heavenly ruler.

These tensions that inform the various designations for God play just as strong a role in the second hapax legomenon, modhord. Once again, the conventional nature of the expression “modhord onleac” makes the first, stronger impression over the newness of modhord due to its similarity to the expression “wordhord onleac” which appears twice in *Andreas* and also in *Beowulf*<sup>4</sup>; thus, the context and the form, and even the meaning of modhord would have been familiar to an audience. However, despite this familiarity surrounding the hapax legomenon, the word itself would have been decidedly novel, and it is within this contrast that the tension lies. Similarly to cinebaldum, an additional tension arises from the traditional context in which a lord or warrior would “unlock his word-hoard” and the Christian context in which the Lord God is envisioned as “unlocking his thought-hoard,” stepping into the old lord’s shoes, in a manner of speaking. The term modhord points to this fusion of traditions, since it too is a new element which, like God, “steps into the shoes” of a conventional expression. We see another example of this syncretism in line 470, in which Andrew is said to have “**wordlocan** onspeonn” (“unlocked a **store of words**”); here, the poet unlocks another

hapax legomenon, wordlocan, to accompany an often-used verb, onspeonn. An audience could recognize this construction later when Andrew reports the high priest “hordlocan onspeon” (671b; unlocked a store of thoughts). In this case, however, the more widely-used hordlocan replaces the unique wordlocan. In short, the method of composition visible in “modhord onleac” (172b) is also used in “wordlocan onspeonn” (470b); the poet utilizes a deliberate method of integrating a hapax legomenon into a lexical collocation already familiar to an audience. Moreover, in the case of “modhord onleac” the tension created from the contrast between a new word and the familiar expression in which it is used mirrors the tension attendant on the convergence of separate traditions, Germanic and Christian.

The very last hapax legomenon in the poem seems to draw the story to a close on a traditional note. As Andrew leaves the land of the Mermedonians, we know that he is sailing to his death in Achaia and will never return to this country. Fittingly, then, the poet casts Andrew’s departure as the funeral of a Germanic heroic leader; the audience may be reminded of the ship burial of Scyld Scefing that opens *Beowulf*. As Andrew’s ship sails out of sight, the poet inserts what appears to be a conventional kenning:

Hie ða gebrohton	æt brimes næsse	
on wægþele	wigan unslawne;	
stodon him ða on ofre	æfter reotan,	
þendon hie on yðum	æðelinga wunn	
ofer <b>seolhpaðu</b>	geseon mihton,	(1710-1714)

[Then they brought the eager champion onto the ship at the headland of the sea; they stood there then on the shore after lamenting as long as they might see the best of princes on the waves over **the seal’s path**]

On Andrew's voyage with Christ to Mermedonia, several traditional kennings for "ocean" are used: hranrade (266a; "whale's riding place") and hwælmere (370a; "whale-ocean"). Many more exist in the larger poetic corpus, including seolhbæð, "seal's bath," which bears a noticeable similarity in form and meaning to the word used above, seolhpaðu. Were it not a hapax legomenon, seolhpaðu would most likely blend into the background of these lines and cause hardly a ripple in the audience's consciousness. However, this form, which seems so familiar and comfortable, has one hitch: it is uniquely new. As such, it provides a reminder to the audience that this scene, which also seems familiar and comfortable, is actually *not* the pagan burial rite of a revered hero but the last view they (and the Mermedonians) will have of this Christian saint. In this context, the audience recognizes conventional words, expressions, customs, and scenes, but we must also remember that they are now being used for a different purpose. Even though the poem may end with the resounding epithet of praise for an earthly ruler, "þæt is æðele cyning!" (that is a glorious king!), one must keep in mind that in this setting the expression has been translated to the realm of praise for the spiritual leader, the Lord God. As unobtrusive as it may appear, a hapax legomenon like seolhpaðu provides the audience with this reminder by dramatizing in a simple word the confluence of cultures, Germanic and Christian, that characterizes the poem as a whole. It is a decisive and effective usage of the device.

#### **IV: Foreground and background**

Throughout this study, a central tenet has been focused on the contrast between the novelty of hapax legomena and the antiquity of the associations they summon forth. In fact, one can view these devices as playing a functional role in bridging the gap

between oral and written, Germanic and Christian, traditional and contemporary. They encompass these oppositions within themselves, creating a new meaning from established items in the word-hoard, forming a new word by means of the familiar technique of compounding; yet as much as the familiar goes into forming the new, the new recursively projects back to the traditional. As the audience encounters a new written word and acknowledges it as unfamiliar, they must at the same time cast their minds back to a complex of stories, events, themes, and words embodied in a past oral tradition. As Foley claims in “The Poet’s Self-Interruption in *Andreas*,” “traditional oral forms persist in manuscripts, not because they are merely useful, or charming, or stylistically correct, but because they continue to encode an immanent context, a referential background that deepens and complicates whatever more particular events occupy the foreground of a given work” (46). Since hapax legomena are comprised of such traditional forms, in a similar way they “encode an immanent context.” Foley establishes a multilayeredness in a literary work, a background of associations evoked by the poetic language [register] and a foreground of the events of the story. In the examples under examination here, the background of associations is fairly evident, whether it be to a scene of battle or a figure of exile, and while the hapax legomena may have contributed to those associations, they alone were not responsible for creating them. In such passages, too, there was often a marked contrast between the foreground and background, between the current story and a past scene or theme.

One of the most strikingly original elements of *Andreas* is contained in ll. 1478-1491, the so-called “self-interruption,” in which the poet breaks through the narrative to reflect on his or her own powers and fitness to continue. This “self-imposed intermezzo

is unique in surviving Anglo-Saxon poetry” and has no counterpart in the Greek or Latin redactions of the tale; as a result, it has garnered its fair share of critical attention (Foley 42). We might say that the poet is composing in uncharted territory, or, to use Foley’s terminology, that the foreground is “new.” In such a situation, it would seem particularly important to establish what “referential background” the poet uses to contextualize his decidedly nontraditional digression. Although the narrator mentions “eall þa earfeðo / þe he mid elne adreah / grimra guða” (ll. 1486-1487a), (all the hardships of fierce battles which he [Andrew] suffered with valor) and later refers to “weorna fela . . . heardra hilda” (ll. 1490a, 1491a) (a great number . . . of grievous battles), the passage as a whole is not couched in military terms; these phrases are simply an echo of the contexts (backgrounds) of previous descriptions of Andrew. Foley argues that the context provided is the poetic register itself, that since all half-lines in the passage but one (1479b) have echoes elsewhere in Anglo-Saxon poetry, they are the background, even if each half-line does not reference a specific context (55). In this sense, though, the “self-interruption” differs from other passages in the poem whose register encodes a familiar context or background in the form of a theme, setting, or topic.

The passage’s two hapax legomena, leoðworda and fyrnsægen, complicate the situation even more, for these words specifically are not part of the familiar poetic wordstock, nor do they reference a distinct context that might be easily identifiable, unlike other instances in which a hapax legomenon earmarks a background. The hapax legomena leoðworda and fyrnsægen do indeed contribute a great deal to the narrator’s brief admission of doubt, but unlike other hapax legomena we have examined, they do not contribute a particular web of poetic reference. In this respect, then, this passage is

more self-contained and less contextualized than Foley argues. True, the poet executes this unusual (or, to our knowledge, unique) maneuver through the familiar vehicle of poetic register, but neither the half-lines nor the hapax legomena serve to relate the self-interruption to a specific traditional theme.

Much has been made of the poet's possible motivations for deviating from the norm of the Greek/Latin story and of accepted Anglo-Saxon poetic practice. However, a more interesting approach would be to evaluate this episode within the whole of the poem by comparing it to surrounding passages and discovering its inner tensions, again using hapax legomena as touchstones for our perception of them. The poet pauses at what may be termed a "turn" in the poem, after the still-captive Andrew has been physically and spiritually rejuvenated by God, and immediately before Andrew addresses himself to the marble column which will release the flood of water onto the city. This interlude serves as a way of bridging the narrative gap between the end of Andrew's torments—the end of the Mermedonians' hold over him—and the beginning of Andrew's taking action to convert the Mermedonians. In other words, the interlude marks the shift of power from the captors to Andrew and as such functions as a "liminal field" in the poem, where power hangs in the balance. Into this power void enters the narrator and raises the issue of his own power as narrator at the same time as he questions that power by modestly asserting that there are limits to his ability.

A number of critics, such as Brian Shaw in "Translation and Transformation in *Andreas*", have commented on the importance placed on words and speech in the poem; it seems appropriate, therefore, that the poet, when speaking of his own task of telling the story, stresses the functionality of words, pointing out that he has "wordum wemde,

wyrd undyrne” (1480) (with words proclaimed the famous event).” He goes on to assert, however, that a more capable narrator must exist, one who is more knowledgeable of the tradition:

. . .	þæt scell æglæwra	
mann on moldan	þonne ic me tælige	
findan on ferðe,	þæt fram fruman cunne	
eall þa earfeðo	þe he mid elne adreah	
grimra guða.		(ll. 1483b-1487a)

[a man on the earth more learned in the Scriptures than I consider myself shall find that in mind, who from the beginning would know all the hardships of fierce battles which he [Andrew] suffered with valor.]

While the narrator appears to be doubting his own facility with Christian learning rather than his skill with the traditional poetic register, Foley suggests that he has in fact a command of both and instead is questioning the rightness of “their combination or ‘fit’” (56). The term æglæwra, then, could denote “a person ‘wiser in the law’ [who] would be a poet who could more easily adapt his fluency to this particular compositional task, who could match register and source text with more success or authority” (Foley 56).

Although Foley goes no further in his analysis of the passage, we can find the poet further exploring and even seeking resolution to this crisis of syncretism in the concluding two sentences:

. . .	Hwæðre git sceolon
lytlum sticcum	<b>leoðworda</b> dæl
furður reccan;	þæt is <b>fyrnsagen</b> ,



hu he weorna feala                      wita geðolode,  
 heardra hilda,                      in þære hæðenan byrig.                      (ll. 1487b-1491)

[Still yet must we further relate a part **of poetry (lit.: words in a poem)** in small portions; that is **an ancient tradition**, how he [Andrew] suffered a great number of afflictions, of grievous battles, in the heathen city.]

The passage's only two hapax legomena occur here, and while Foley postpones "the stylistic designations contained in the curious and tantalizing phrases lytlum sticcum and fyrnsægen" as "questions for another time" (57), a further consideration reveals that fyrnsægen and leoðworda represent the divergent inheritances the poet is attempting to reconcile: the poem is presented as the province of words (register) and tradition (source text).

In spite of his admission that a more competent poet might exist who could more smoothly mesh the Germanic poetic register with a Christian story, our narrator once again picks up his poetic burden and declares his intention to finish the story in the same manner as he has been telling it all along: by relating the "fyrnsægen" (ancient tradition) using "leoðworda dæl" (a portion of words in a poem). His resolution to continue composing in this manner supports Foley's statement that the poet "longs for a syncretic poetics" (57). By itself, the hapax legomenon leoðworda draws attention to the significance of words not only as sources of power within the narrative but also as the building blocks of the narrative itself, and the most elemental tools of the poet. In the next line, the hapax legomenon fyrnsægen, "ancient tradition," relates back to the sentiment expressed in lines 1483b-1487a and, together with leoðworda, drives home the point that a poet must have a command of both the story that has been passed down to him and discourse, which includes the words that convey the story. These structuralist

terms make a distinction between the components of a narrative text: the one, “story (*historie*), the content or chain of events (actions, happenings), plus what may be called the existents (characters, items of setting)”; the second, “discourse (*discours*), that is, the expression, the means by which the content is communicated” (Chatman 19). Reverence for the tradition of content (story) and form (discourse) did not prohibit the poet from exercising his creativity with respect to narrative discourse (Chatman 23). Indeed, considering that “[n]arrative discourse . . . divides into two subcomponents, the narrative form itself—the structure of narrative transmission—and its manifestation—its appearance in a specific materializing medium, verbal, cinematic, . . . .” (Chatman 22), the poet’s innovations extend to the form as well as the manifestation. He builds onto the account recorded in the Greek and Latin sources by placing Andrew’s struggle with the Mermedonians in the context of the heroic code, thus transforming Andrew by merging his role as a Christian saint into that of a more familiar Germanic warrior. Analogously, as the poet drew on the native resources of the language as well as its tradition of poetic language, he introduced additional words created especially for the poem, merging the familiar with the novel. In either case, the poet brought fresh elements to the tradition, whether of story or language.

By continuing to relate the story of Andrew, the narrator of *Andreas*—according to Foley—manages to overcome the dichotomy posed by an Anglo-Saxon poetic register and a Greek/Latin story. One way he is able to do so is through hapax legomena. The apparent oppositions which the poet must reconcile are encapsulated in these words. They contain the syncretism of Germanic and Christian; they epitomize the “return and reference” of oral and written; and they encompass both background and foreground. As

such, they do not so much bridge these oppositions as symbolize their coexistence, which, however, far from being static, dynamically has created something new.

The Modernist credo of "Make it new" would have only limited success and application in the creative world of the *Andreas*-poet. Unlike Eliot, who strove to use the fragments of the past to replace the missing religious and literary structures of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Anglo-Saxon poet wedded the past and present in his or her storytelling; by using the Germanic literary tradition to relate the tale of St. Andrew, the *Andreas*-poet was not compensating for any perceived lack in the story or time period but was simply using the tools at hand. The "self-interruption" demonstrates the poet's awareness of the divergent traditions he or she was bringing together and a desire for syncretism in the poem's story and words, an objective that could be fulfilled in part through *hapax legomena*. In these creations exists the tension between the familiar and the new found throughout the poem, as the poet invests recognizable scenes, imagery, and language with a consciousness of something novel. For the *Andreas*-poet, "mak[ing] it new" necessitated using a native, oral tradition and letting it take its place in this new world of the written Christian tale.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Found on pp. 54-5 of Renoir, Alain. *A Key to Old Poems: The Oral-Formulaic Approach to the Interpretation of West-Germanic Verse*. University Park, Pa., and London: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1988.

<sup>2</sup> Another example, not included in the chapter, is that of sæwerige (862), which could reference elegies such as *The Wanderer* or *The Seafarer* with its meaning “weary of the sea.” At the same time, it could refer to the journey or sið being a metaphor for life’s journey.

<sup>3</sup> See line 1707 of the poem, near the end, where Andrew is called a “lareow.”

<sup>4</sup> We find “wordhord onleac” in lines 316b and 601b of *Andreas*, and line 259b of *Beowulf*.

## CONCLUSION

The premise of this study is that a reassessment of *Andreas* could begin with an evaluation of the poet's use of approximately 160 hapax legomena against the backdrop of the cultural milieu in which the poet was composing. That milieu may have been reflected in the world of the poem itself, as a consideration of one passage will illustrate. As the poem draws to a close, the poet renders the conversion of the Mermedonians in detail, outlining the steps taken in converting a heathen people. After Andrew has brought the drowned youths back to life and baptized them, their countrymen crowd forward:

þa gesamnodon	secga þreate
weras geond þa winburg	wide ond side,
eorlas anmode,	ond hira idesa mid,
cwædon holdlice	hyran woldon,
onfon fromlice	fullwintes bæð
dryhtne to willan,	ond diofolgild,
ealde eolhstedas,	anforlætan.
þa wæs mid þy folce	fulwiht hæfen,
æðele mid eorlum,	ond æ godes
riht aræred,	ræd on lande
mid þam ceasterwarum,	cirice gehalgod.
þær se ar godes	anne gesette,

wisfæstne wer,	wordes gleawne,
in þære beorhtan byrig	bisceop þam leodum,
ond gehalgode	fore þam heremægene
þurh apostolhad,	Platan nemned,
þeodum on þearfe,	ond þriste bebead
þæt hie his lare	læston georne,

**feorhræd** fremedon.

(1636-1654a)

[Then assembled a crowd of warriors, men throughout the city far and wide, earls unanimous, and their women with them, said they wanted to obey faithfully, to receive promptly the bath of baptism to desire God, and to forsake devil-worship, old heathen temples. Then was baptism had with the people, noble ones with earls, and the law of God rightly established, rule (of conduct) in the country with the townspeople, the consecrated church. There the messenger of God set up a certain one, a wise man, wise of word, the bishop of the people in the bright city, and consecrated before the multitude by the apostlehood, named Plato, to the people in need, and earnestly asked that they would gladly follow his teaching, would advance **benefit for the soul (salvation)**.]

The poet details a historical as well as a spiritual process, one that takes place not only in the land of Mermedonia but also on the poet's own native soil. By choosing a native inhabitant and speaker, Plato, to be the bishop of the people, Andrew effectively integrates the new Christian faith into the culture and language of the Mermedonians. In actual history, this process was undertaken by the monks sent by Pope Gregory the Great in 597; notably, "[t]he first task of these monks would have been the training of a native English clergy capable of reading the Latin Bible and performing the Latin liturgy" (Greenfield and Calder 8-9). Near the end of the poem, the poet shows Andrew reenacting the historical English conversion and merging of cultures, significantly concluding the passage with a hapax legomenon, feorhræd, which can be translated as "salvation."

It is tempting to posit that the *Andreas*-poet was drawn to this tale of the salvation of a people by its parallels with events that occurred in his own country some centuries earlier. In addition to this devout motive, one wonders if the poet was attracted to the story of *Andreas* because it revolved around the meeting and, at least initially, the clash of disparate cultures and, presumably, different languages. Perhaps in the race of unconverted people inhabiting an island or isolated land, the Anglo-Saxon poet saw a similarity to his own people who, like the Mermedonians, underwent conversions through the missionary efforts of outsiders. Unquestionably, the story of the encounter between Christian and pagan has its echoes in the discourse of the poem, in which native elements are employed to tell a Christian legend, and in which the native word-stock gives rise to new expressions necessary for a Christian tale. While this encounter may seem more peaceable in the discourse of the poem than it does in its story, as the Christian and native elements coexist harmoniously rather than discordantly, it is worthwhile to note that before the Mermedonians are converted, Andrew never addresses them; a battle of language does occur between Andrew and the devils, but the struggle between Andrew and the Mermedonians is physical, not verbal. This silence can be explained perhaps by hypothesizing that they speak different languages, both spiritual and verbal. Once converted, the Mermedonians are integrated into the language and culture of the new faith, and genuine communication, both verbal and spiritual, is finally able to take place.

Thus, the syncretism of the poem's story is mirrored on both a literary and a lexical level, as the poet gathers his native resources of theme, expression, and word and through them conveys a Christian legend. The later tradition did not supplant the earlier one, but both were found necessary in artistic expression and, in fact, "reinforce[d] each

other for their mutual benefit" (Head 95). A poet and audience drew on their Germanic, oral past alongside their newer written, Christian culture. In *Andreas*, both cultural strains converge in the creative act of word-formation.

One might suspect that the older, native culture might be overshadowed or subsidiary to the newer Christian culture, which would dominate through its literacy and religious heritage. However, in *Andreas* at least, a more equitable paradigm exists in which both cultures are shown to be useful: they influence each other in the telling of the tale. A lack of acknowledgment of the poet's use of a dual tradition has been the source of some criticism lodged against the poem. To counteract such criticisms, we need to view the *Andreas* poet and his craft from a different perspective. Pauline Head appropriates the term "bricoleur" from Claude Lévi-Strauss to describe how an Anglo-Saxon poet works with the tools at hand, producing a final product determined by the tools that were available (92-3). Quoting Lévi-Strauss, Head explains that "[w]hat is achieved by the bricoleur depends upon what he finds in his store of materials; the result 'will always be a compromise between the structure of the instrumental set and that of the project' (21)" (93). Thus, those who would blame the *Andreas* poet for the novel mixture of traditions in theme, description, and word should reconsider the creative act of the poet, an act that included the coining of words to express the intersection of traditions in the story. Additionally, "[t]he bricoleur's work is routed through retrospection, takes shape as it progresses, and is 'limited by the particular history of each piece and by those of its features which are already determined by the use for which it was originally intended or the modifications it has undergone for other purposes'" (93).



These statements make clear the extent to which the *Andreas* poet's native Germanic tradition continued to play an integral role in the creation of a new poem, even one based on a story from another culture. More specifically, they echo the ideas expressed in this study concerning hapax legomena as syntheses of past and present, oral and written, and Germanic and Christian cultures. Head makes the connection between the bricoleur's "store" and a poet's word-hoard: "[j]ust as the bricoleur values his materials and keeps them for future use, the Anglo-Saxon poet and the speakers represented in the poems store words in their minds; words held in memory fill their treasure chests" (94). Viewed in this light, we may conclude that the *Andreas* poet deserves praise, not only for holding a vast storehouse of words and their histories in memory, but also for deliberately creating new words to express shades of meaning from both traditions. The hapax legomena in *Andreas* preserve the syncretism of Anglo-Saxon culture and the mastery and innovation of the poet, and further study of the poem and its background no doubt will continue to reveal its artistic value and raise its status in literary-critical estimation.

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## APPENDIX 1

### HAPAX LEGOMENA IN *ANDREAS* (listed in order of appearance)

cam<p>rædenne (4)  
meotudwange (11)  
freoðoleas (29)  
dwolcræft (34)  
symles (64)  
billhete (78)  
fyrhðlufan (83)  
tælnet (113)  
wælgrædige (135)  
caldheorte (138)  
getang (138)  
dimscuan (141)  
frumrædenne (147)  
wilpege (153)  
cinebaldum (171)  
modhord (172)  
sylfætan (175)  
morðorcræftum (177)  
sigebroðor (183)  
waroðfaruða (197)  
beaducræft (219)  
sandhleodu (236)  
morgentorht (241)  
lidweardas (244)  
merebate (246)  
scipferendum (250)  
ægflotan (258)  
hornscipe (274)  
scipweardas (297)  
holmwearde (359)  
hornfisc (370)  
holmwege (382)  
beaduwange (413)  
niðplegan (414)  
wuldorspedige (428)  
ælmyrcna (432)  
þryðcining (436)

waruðgewinn (439)  
 ealada (441)  
 bordstæðu (442)  
 sessade (453)  
 gryrehwile (468)  
 wordlocan (470)  
 rædsnotterran (473)  
 fætedsinces (478)  
 lidwerigum (482)  
 þryðbearn (494)  
 streamwelm (495)  
 hwileð (495)  
 brimstæðo (496)  
 scrid (496)  
 brondstæfne (504)  
 sæholm (529)  
 aryða (532)  
 domagende (570)  
 grundwæge (582)  
 larcwide (674)  
 wiðerhydig (675)  
 onblonden (675)  
 heofonhalig (728)  
 scingelacum (766)  
 brandhata (768)  
 misgehygd (772)  
 þryðweorc (773)  
 landreste (781)  
 frumweorca (804)  
 niðhetum (834)  
 heofonleoma (838)  
 tigelfagan (842)  
 biryhte (848)  
 arwelan (853)  
 gastgehygdum (861)  
 sæwerige (862)  
 soðfæstlic (877)  
 wudubate (905)  
 mængeniðlan (916)  
 grynsmiðas (917)  
 heorudolgum (942)  
 heafodmagan (942)  
 modgeþyldig (981)  
 deaðræs (995)  
 han<d>hrine (1000)  
 hildedeor (1002)

deaðwang (1003)  
 morðorcofan (1004)  
 clustorcleofan (1021)  
 hildeþrymme (1032)  
 coste (1055)  
 upgemynd (1064)  
 guðweorca (1066)  
 beodgastes (1088)  
 lifnere (1089)  
 duruþegnum (1090)  
 hild<e>bedd (1092)  
 hellcræftum (1102)  
 fetorwrasnum (1107)  
 guðfrec (1117)  
 herigweardas (1124)  
 fyrmælum (1134)  
 hinca (1171)  
 oncyðdæda (1179)  
 ecgheard (1181)  
 eadorgeard (1181)  
 hildfrome (1202)  
 manslaga (1218)  
 lindgecrode (1220)  
 welwange (1226)  
 ceasterhofum (1237)  
 sigeltorht (1246)  
 untyddre (1252)  
 heolstorscuwan (1253)  
 hildstapan (1258)  
 ding (1270)  
 brunwann (1306)  
 neadcofan (1309)  
 deaðreow (1314)  
 hnægen (1329)  
 earh (1331)  
 gemæl (1331)  
 fyrensceapa (1346)  
 secgplegan (1353)  
 gegnslege (1356)  
 aclæccræftum (1362)  
 ætþringan (1371)  
 dolgbennum (1397)  
 seonodolg (1406)  
 symbelgifa (1417)  
 heterofra (1420)  
 oððeoded (1421)



adropen (1425)  
bangebrec (1442)  
gedrep (1444)  
magorædendes (1461)  
leoðworda (1488)  
fyrnsægen (1489)  
sælwage (1493)  
widrynig (1507)  
sincgife (1509)  
wordlatu (1522)  
meoduserwen (1526)  
sorgbyrþen (1532)  
ondwist (1540)  
fyrgnastas (1546)  
eagsyne (1550)  
streamfare (1576)  
smeolt (1581)  
folcsceaðan (1593)  
morðorscyldige (1599)  
leoðolic (1628)  
aspedde (1631)  
feorhræd (1654)  
beagselu (1657)  
sinchroden (1673)  
helltrafum (1691)  
wederburg (1697)  
beaducwealm (1702)  
seolhpaðu (1714)

## APPENDIX 2

### HAPAX LEGOMENA IN *ANDREAS* (listed in alphabetical order)

aclæccræftum (1362)  
adropen (1425)  
ægflotan (258)  
ælmyrcna (432)  
ætþringan (1371)  
arwelan (853)  
aryða (532)  
aspedde (1631)  
bangebrec (1442)  
beaducræft (219)  
beaducwealm (1702)  
beaduwange (413)  
beagselu (1657)  
beodgastes (1088)  
billhete (78)  
biryhte (848)  
bordstæðu (442)  
brandhata (768)  
brimstæðo (496)  
brondstæfne (504)  
brunwann (1306)  
caldheorte (138)  
cam<p>rædenne (4)  
ceasterhofum (1237)  
cinebaldum (171)  
clustorcleofan (1021)  
coste (1055)  
deaðræs (995)  
deaðreow (1314)  
deaðwang (1003)  
dimscuan (141)  
ding (1270)  
dolgbennum (1397)  
domagende (570)  
duruþegnum (1090)  
dwolcræft (34)  
eadorgeard (1181)

eagsyne (1550)  
 ealada (441)  
 earh (1331)  
 ecgheard (1181)  
 fætedsinces (478)  
 feorhræd (1654)  
 fetorwrasnum (1107)  
 folcsceaðan (1593)  
 freoðoleas (29)  
 frumrædenne (147)  
 frumweorca (804)  
 fyrgnastas (1546)  
 fyrhðlufan (83)  
 fyrmælum (1134)  
 fyrnsægen (1489)  
 fyrnsceaþa (1346)  
 gastgehygdum (861)  
 gedrep (1444)  
 gegnslege (1356)  
 gemæl (1331)  
 getang (138)  
 grundwæge (582)  
 grynsmiðas (917)  
 gryrehwile (468)  
 guðfrec (1117)  
 guðweorca (1066)  
 han<d>hrine (1000)  
 heafodmagan (942)  
 hellcræftum (1102)  
 helltrafum (1691)  
 heofonhalig (728)  
 heofonleoma (838)  
 heolstorscuwan (1253)  
 heorudolgum (942)  
 herigweardas (1124)  
 heterofra (1420)  
 hild<e>bedd (1092)  
 hildedeor (1002)  
 hildeþrymme (1032)  
 hildfrome (1202)  
 hildstapan (1258)  
 hinca (1171)  
 hnægen (1329)  
 holmwearde (359)  
 holmwege (382)  
 hornfisc (370)

hornscipe (274)  
 hwileð (495)  
 landreste (781)  
 larcwide (674)  
 leoðolic (1628)  
 leoðworda (1488)  
 lidweardas (244)  
 lidwerigum (482)  
 lifnere (1089)  
 lindgecrode (1220)  
 magorædendes (1461)  
 mangeniðlan (916)  
 manslaga (1218)  
 meoduserwen (1526)  
 meotudwange (11)  
 merebate (246)  
 misgehygd (772)  
 modgeþyldig (981)  
 modhord (172)  
 morðorcofan (1004)  
 morðorcræftum (177)  
 morðorscyldige (1599)  
 morgentorht (241)  
 neadcofan (1309)  
 niðhetum (834)  
 niðplegan (414)  
 oððeoded (1421)  
 onblonden (675)  
 oncyðdæda (1179)  
 ondwist (1540)  
 rædsnotterran (473)  
 sæholm (529)  
 sælwage (1493)  
 sæwerige (862)  
 sandhleodu (236)  
 scingelacum (766)  
 scipferendum (250)  
 scipweardas (297)  
 scrid (496)  
 secgplegan (1353)  
 seolhpaðu (1714)  
 seonodolg (1406)  
 sessade (453)  
 sigebroðor (183)  
 sigeltorht (1246)  
 sincgife (1509)

sinchroden (1673)  
smeolt (1581)  
soðfæstlic (877)  
sorgbyrþen (1532)  
streamfare (1576)  
streamwelm (495)  
sylfætan (175)  
symbolgifa (1417)  
symles (64)  
tælmet (113)  
þryðbearn (494)  
þryðcining (436)  
þryðweorc (773)  
tigelfagan (842)  
untyddre (1252)  
upgemynd (1064)  
wælgrædige (135)  
waroðfaruða (197)  
waruðgewinn (439)  
wederburg (1697)  
welwange (1226)  
wiðerhydig (675)  
widrynig (1507)  
wilþege (153)  
wordlatu (1522)  
wordlocan (470)  
wudubate (905)  
wuldorspedige (428)