Compound Diction and Traditional Style
in *Beowulf* and *Genesis A*

Jeffrey Alan Mazo

One of the most striking features of Anglo-Saxon alliterative poetry is the extraordinary richness of the vocabulary. Many words appear only in poetry; almost every poem contains words, usually nominal or adjectival compounds, which occur nowhere else in the extant literature. Creativity in coining new compounds reaches its apex in the 3182-line heroic epic *Beowulf*. In his influential work *The Art of Beowulf*, Arthur G. Brodeur sets out the most widely accepted view of the diction of that poem (1959:28):

> First, the proportion of such compounds in *Beowulf* is very much higher than that in any other extant poem; and, secondly, the number and the richness of the compounds found in *Beowulf* and nowhere else is astonishingly large. It seems reasonable, therefore, to regard the many unique compounds in *Beowulf*, finely formed and aptly used, as formed on traditional patterns but not themselves part of a traditional vocabulary. And to say that they are formed on traditional patterns means only that the character of the language spoken by the poet and his hearers, and the traditional tendency towards poetic idealization, determined their character and form. Their elevation, and their harmony with the poet's thought and feeling, reflect that tendency, directed and controlled by the genius of a great poet.

It goes without saying that the poet of *Beowulf* was no "unwashed illiterate," but a highly trained literary artist who could transcend the traditional medium.

There is another side to the coin. Brodeur is himself reacting to an earlier scholarly consensus, that the style and diction of this magnificent poem are to a great extent traditional, rooted in the ancient Germanic past.[1] Old English poetry shares its formal features and many of its subjects and themes with other poetic traditions, such as Old High German, Old Saxon, and Old Norse, all of which independently derive from a putative common

---

[1] See, for example, Klaeber 1950:lviii-lxxi, espec. lxvi.

Germanic oral tradition. The basic unit of Germanic poetry was a half-line of two stressed and a varying number of unstressed syllables; two half-lines were linked together by alliteration of either or both stressed syllables in the first half-line with the first stress of the second half-line. The number of unstressed syllables permitted, and even the matter of whether the lines were grouped in stanzas or not, varied both chronologically and geographically.

Francis P. Magoun, Jr. applied the findings of Milman Parry and Albert Lord for the living Serbo-Croatian tradition and the Homeric poems to Old English poetry, and concluded that the language of the Anglo-Saxon narrative poems is entirely formulaic and traditional.[2] In a previous article (1929) Magoun had explored the compound diction of *Beowulf*, focusing on the repeated use of the same first elements in the formation of compounds in that poem and in the Old Norse Eddic poetry. In contrast to Brodeur's findings, Magoun argued that the repetition of first elements in the compounds of *Beowulf* indicates a lack of originality, skill, and resourcefulness on the part of the poet, since the Eddic poets only infrequently formed more than one compound with a given first element. "In respect to the use of the very prominent feature of recurring first elements of different nominal compounds," he wrote, "the style of *Beowulf* is inferior to, or at any rate different from, that of the Eddic lays" (78). The *Beowulf* poet was a highly skilled artist, as Brodeur demonstrates, yet the paradox remains: the compound diction of the poem is at the same time both original and unoriginal—original in contrast to the compounds of other Anglo-Saxon poems, unoriginal from the standpoint of the elements that form compounds in *Beowulf* itself.

This paradox arises from the traditional oral compositional style—not the oral-formulaic technique as Magoun described it, to be sure, but from a traditional oral process nevertheless. In this article I describe how the diction of *Beowulf* reflects traditional technique; that is, how the features that distinguish the diction of this great poem from poems known to have been composed by literary artists result from the traditional process of composition. Both the striking originality of the diction and the unoriginality of the compositional elements stem from this process. I then compare *Beowulf* and the literary poems to various passages in the poetic Biblical paraphrase *Genesis A*, in order to explore further the traditional process of composition. This process is no less creative than is literary composition; in Magoun's terms, the style of *Beowulf* is not inferior to, but different from, the works of literary artists using the same language and verse form.

---

[2] Magoun 1953. The relevant work of Milman Parry may be found in Parry 1971; the definitive work is Lord 1960.

Magoun's claim that all Anglo-Saxon narrative poetry is formulaic is based on Milman Parry's classic definition of the oral formula, "a group of words which is regularly employed under the same metrical conditions to express a given essential idea" (Parry 1971:272; Magoun 1953:449). This definition creates several difficulties. What, in Anglo-Saxon poetry, is meant by "the same metrical conditions"? What is meant by an "essential idea"? How much similarity in phraseology between two phrases must there be for us to consider them formulaic? Magoun did not address these issues directly; he merely looked for half-lines which are repeated in whole or in part elsewhere in Anglo-Saxon poetry. Larry Benson (1966) revealed the shortcomings of Magoun's approach when he showed that two unequivocally literary works, the Old English *Phoenix* and *Meters of Boethius*, are as "formulaic" as any of the texts Magoun considered; according to Benson, the formulaic nature of the poetry is a reflection of an earlier, not an active, oral tradition.

This demonstration does not establish the literary quality of *Beowulf* or any other Anglo-Saxon poem; it does show that the stylistic feature of repeated phraseology is inadequate as a signpost of orality in Anglo-Saxon literature. The study of traditional composition in Anglo-Saxon nevertheless continues, concentrating on tradition-dependent features of the formulaic technique and on the concept of formulaic systems.[3] Few scholars would disagree that there was some form of oral composition common to the Germanic peoples before the advent of literacy, for there is no doubt that poems were orally performed and orally transmitted. There are three general approaches to the reconstruction of the traditional Anglo-Saxon oral compositional technique: theoretical extrapolation both from the formal aspects of meter and syntax in Anglo-Saxon and by analogy to other traditions, extrapolation from features of the extant Anglo-Saxon poetry of both literary and unknown origin, and the identification of features in the latter poems absent in literary works. The three approaches are interrelated, and equally valuable. The traditional composition of any Anglo-Saxon poem can never be unequivocally established; at most, we can show that a poem's style is consistent with the hypothetical traditional style.

Of greatest significance to this investigation of the diction of *Beowulf* are John D. Niles' studies of formulaic systems.[4] Niles takes as his point of departure Donald K. Fry's definition of the formula in Old English poetry as "a group of words, one half-line in length, which shows

---

[3] For extensive surveys of Anglo-Saxon oral-formulaic studies, see Foley 1985:41-47; Olsen 1986, 1988.

[4] For the priority of formulaic system over formula in the study of epic, see Lord 1960:30-31; also Kellogg 1965:66-67.

evidence of being the direct product of a formulaic system" (1967b:204). The formula is thus considered to be the surface reflection of the compositional process rather than the poet's primary *Kunstmittel*. Concerned that Fry's concept of formulaic system is neither formulated nor applied with sufficient rigor, Niles develops his own definition of the formula in Anglo-Saxon, which provides him with a standard for assessing traditional style. He considers the formula "a rhythmic/syntactic/semantic complex one half-line in length," one of "a set of verses (or *formulaic system*) of a similar metrical type in which one main verbal element is constant" (1981b:395). The formulaic system should be considered as the underlying pattern of which formulas are surface products; for practical purposes the system is best viewed as equal to the sum of its recorded members. The importance of this definition lies in its utility as a key to the poet's *habitual mode of thought*; Benson (1966:410-11) demonstrated the use of repeated phrases, not of flexible formulaic composition, in the literary poems. Niles shows how 33 of the first 50 half-lines of *Beowulf* can be seen as products of formulaic systems made up exclusively of verses from that poem; Magoun had deemed 37 formulaic using all 30,000 lines of extant Anglo-Saxon poetry for comparison.

Niles' analysis of the opening of *Beowulf* is founded on the theoretical reconstruction of formulaic technique based for the most part on extant poetry and on other oral traditions. In a different study (1981a) he focuses specifically on the compound diction of *Beowulf* and presents evidence that it is the product of flexible systems of composition, *in contrast to* the diction of the literary poem *Meters of Boethius*. He therefore takes issue with Brodeur's claim that the *Beowulf* poet transcends the traditional form. The poet was a master, but a master of traditional art. Niles discusses the variety of compounds formed in the two poems on given base-words, and shows that the striking originality of the diction of *Beowulf* may be the product of the traditional mode of composition, and hence that the unique compounds may be considered part of the traditional vocabulary.

The second aspect of the diction of *Beowulf*, the lack of originality of the compositional elements of the unique compounds, is also a product of traditional oral-formulaic technique. In the following discussion I compare the use of repeated first elements in the unique nominal compounds of *Beowulf* and in selected literary poems to demonstrate that the Beowulf poet used traditional elements and traditional techniques to form his unique diction. It is not so much a question of the traditional poet being restricted to a particular set of limiting words or particular base words through formulaic systems. The poet, whether literary or traditional, is not limited in his choice of compound elements; at least in the case of the oral poet, however, if he finds a particular first element useful

once, he is unlikely to discard it.[5] Any analysis of the unique compounds in Anglo-Saxon poems must deal only with broad statistical trends and not with specific elements of the diction. If we had more than the extant thirty thousand lines of Anglo-Saxon poetry, it is likely that many of the compounds now seemingly unique would appear in other poems. Many of the unique compounds in *Beowulf* indeed occur in other Germanic literature, for example, in Old Norse (Kellogg 1965:72):

Anglo-Saxon	Old Norse	Translation
beaduserce	*boðserke*	"battle-shirt"
earmbeag	*armbaugr*	"arm-ring"
eormengrund	*jormungrund*	"vast-earth"
handbona	*handbani*	"hand-slayer"
herewæd	*hervað*	"war-dress"
medoærn	*mjoðrann*	"mead-hall"

While many of the unique compounds might be repeated if there were more material, many of the compounds that occur only in poetry, and in only a small number of poems, may not have been part of the common poetic vocabulary but may have been coined independently by two or more poets. This study of the first elements of unique compounds is therefore important only in its broad results; the exact derivation of a particular compound, except in special circumstances, cannot be determined.

I have selected a number of Anglo-Saxon literary poems for comparison with *Beowulf.* The *Phoenix* is a poem of 677 lines from the Exeter Book manuscript. The first 300 lines are a close translation of a Latin poem, *De Aves Phoenice*, and the rest of the poem is an allegorical interpretation apparently original to the author (Greenfield 1965:16). Benson analyzed this poem in his response to Magoun, and it is an admirable example of the Anglo-Saxon literary style. At least four other poems are of clear literary origin. These are the signed poems of Cynewulf: *Juliana*, *Elene*, *Christ II*, and the *Fates of the Apostles*.[6] While an oral poet may be literate in the sense that he can compose his poems by the oral-formulaic technique and simultaneously commit them to writing (resulting in what Lord [1960:29] calls an *oral autograph text*), Cynewulf's use of his sources and the way in which he wove his runic signature into the poems indicate that he was composing in the literary manner.

---

[5] The edition of the Anglo-Saxon poems used in this study is Krapp and Dobbie 1931-53. In my analysis I make frequent use of the glossary in Klaeber 1950, and espec. Bessinger 1978.

[6] For a thorough discussion of Cynewulf and his poetry, see Calder 1981.

The diction of the *Phoenix* and Cynewulf's poems share certain distinctive characteristics. Despite the disparate length and subject matter, they have the same density of unique nominal compounds. There are 133 unique compounds in the 2,601 lines of the Cynewulfian corpus—that is, about one unique nominal compound every twenty lines. There are 32 unique nominal compounds in the 677 lines of the *Phoenix*, or about one unique compound every twenty lines.

The *Phoenix* and the Cynewulfian corpus are also similar in their degree of originality in the first elements of unique nominal compounds. Some 42 of the 133 unique compounds in the Cynewulfian corpus have first elements that occur in no other compounds in that corpus. Another 55 compounds, or 41 percent, have first elements that do occur in other unique compounds in the corpus. In the *Phoenix*, 23 unique compounds have first elements that form no other compounds in the poem, and only six, or 19 percent, have first elements that occur in other unique compounds in the poem. While the figures for the *Phoenix* are much lower than those for the poems of Cynewulf, the amount of material is much smaller. The first 700 lines of *Elene* yield figures quite close to those for the 677-line *Phoenix*. We can be reasonably certain that had we an amount of material from the author of the *Phoenix* equivalent to that from Cynewulf, the figures would be essentially the same.

It appears that Cynewulf and the author of the *Phoenix* formed their unique compounds by analogy to pre-existing words. Even with the limited amount of material available, the proportion of unique compounds with first elements that form other compounds within the text is quite high. But the proportion of first elements that form *more than one* unique compound is much lower. The literary poets exhibit a high degree of originality in the coining of new compounds, in that they do not tend to form at the most more than two or three, and rarely more than one, new compound with a given first element. Furthermore, the first elements with which they comprise unique compounds tend to occur in other compounds both in their own poems and elsewhere in Anglo-Saxon literature.

The unique nominal compounds in *Beowulf* stand out in sharp contrast to those in the literary poems. There are, first of all, many more of them in *Beowulf*, not only in absolute terms but in density as well: 509 distinct unique nominal compounds in the 3,182 lines of *Beowulf*.[7] One unique compound occurs on the average every six lines; the average in the literary poems is one in twenty. Only 88 of the 509 unique nominal compounds have first elements that occur in non-unique compounds in the poem. Another 378, or 74 percent, of the unique compounds have first

---

[7] Brodeur (1959:7) identifies 518 unique substantive compounds; I have excluded the nine participial compounds from my analysis.

elements that occur in another compound unique to the poem. Especially in contrast to the poems of Cynewulf, where only 41 percent of the unique nominal compounds share a first element with another unique compound, or the *Phoenix*, where the figure was 22 percent, it seems clear that the originality of the unique compounds of *Beowulf* does not extend to their compositional elements. The greater number of unique compounds in *Beowulf* is characterized not by a greater but by a lesser degree of originality. Unlike the literary poems, where the unique compounds are formations by analogy, the compounds of *Beowulf* may well have taken shape in the process of oral composition as the products of formulaic systems.

This difference in composition is clear from the pattern of distribution of repeated first elements among the unique compounds. In the *Phoenix*, no first element occurs in more than two unique compounds. In the Cynewulfian corpus, only three of the 99 first elements in unique nominal compounds occur in more than three: *gast-* ("spirit"), *here-* ("army"), and *sweord-* ("sword"). *Here-* occurs in six non-unique compounds in the poems of Cynewulf. In *Beowulf*, by contrast, 32 first elements, or 14 percent of the first elements that form unique compounds in the poem, occur in more than three such compounds. Of these, only two form more non-unique compounds than unique in *Beowulf*. Furthermore, the first elements that seem in general to serve as intensifiers, and hence influence the essential idea expressed by the compound the least, occur in large numbers of unique compounds in *Beowulf*:

First Element	Unique Compounds	Found Only in Poetry
beado-("battle")	8	2
gar-("spear")	4	6
heaðo-("battle")	8	3
heoro-("sword")	5	–
here-("battle")	12	2
hild(e)-("war")	20	1
inwit-("evil")	7	2
mægen- ("might")	5	2
wæl-("slaughter")	13	4 (3 in prose)
wig-("war")	10	4

These patterns, especially in contrast with the literary poetry, provide evidence of formulaic systems in the substantive compounds of *Beowulf*. The contradiction between artistic and elevated diction on the one hand, and cumbersome compounding on the other, can thus be resolved with the conclusion that the style of *Beowulf* is a traditional product of an oral-formulaic compositional technique.

This interpretation of the style of *Beowulf* conflicts with with the widely held view that the *Beowulf* poet formed his compounds with an eye towards particular effect in their immediate contexts, as Stanley Greenfield suggests (1965:75):

> The better scops could and did use their stocks of words, formulas, and themes individualistically. One of the methods by which the Old English poets achieved originality was the coining of compounds, as the *Beowulf* poet's immense wealth of newly minted compound words attests. In 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.

A number of influential scholars have examined various aspects of the diction of *Beowulf* from this perspective, arguing in each case for the aptness of the compounds in context.[8] These studies are all based explicitly or implicitly on the assumption that *Beowulf* is a literary work. Both assumptions, of literary or traditional oral composition, can account for the observable use of compound elements; artistic effect cannot be used as an argument for either one. A term may seem apt or ironic in its immediate context, but such an effect is subjective and could be coincidental if the diction and style are traditional.

The first elements of the compounds do not lack significance even if the diction of *Beowulf* is traditional. In traditional poetry the significance of a particular element would not be a function of its immediate context, but of the theme, the type-scene, the entire poem, or the tradition itself.[9] When those scholars who view *Beowulf* as a literary work consider the meaning of compounds outside their immediate contexts, the conclusions are compatible with the hypothesis of traditional style. In her most recent study, for example, Brady studies compounds in "the broader context of an entire passage or even of different passages appearing hundreds of lines apart."[10] Gregory Nagy's observations on the Homeric tradition hold true, I think, for *Beowulf* and the Anglo-Saxon poetic tradition (1979:3):

> Did the poet really *mean* this or that? Did he really *intend* such-and-such an artistic effect? My general answer is that the artistic effect is indeed

---

[8] See espec. the similar approaches of Bryan 1929 and Storms 1957; also Brady 1979, 1983.

[9] For a definition and discussion of "theme" in oral traditional poetry, see Lord 1960:68-98. Fry 1967a provides a good discussion of the concept as it is applied to Anglo-Saxon poetry.

[10] Brady 1983:200; see also Magoun 1949.

present—but this intent must be assigned not simply to one poet but also to countless generations of previous poets steeped in the same traditions. In other words, I think that the artistry of the Homeric poems is traditional both in diction and in theme.

An examination of the way in which particular poets formed unique compounds in other poems can provide further insights into the nature of the Anglo-Saxon oral tradition. One poem in particular, *Genesis A*, seems to include passages in the traditional style alongside clearly literary verse. *Genesis A* is for the most part a close paraphrase of some Latin Vulgate version of *Genesis*. Although there are numerous passages interspersed throughout the text of *Genesis A* that do not correspond to anything in the Latin texts, there are only two major additions: an extended introduction (ll. 1-111) and the "War of Kings" passage (ll. 1982-2101). The most recent editor of the poem (Doane 1978:87) points out that

> In the parts of the poem "freely" developed, the compounds are as frequent and exuberant as any in the corpus. These compounds are, however many, not characteristic of the poem as a whole, and occur frequently only in the "free" portions.

It should be interesting to examine the "free" passages of the poem along with selected passages that correspond to the known Latin versions, and to compare the diction of these passages to those of *Beowulf*, the *Phoenix*, and the poems of Cynewulf. I will discuss the style and diction of four passages from *Genesis A* of approximately equal length. The amount of material is too small for statistical treatment, but despite this limitation we can see definite differences among the four passages.

The first 111 lines of the poem are a non-biblical passage introducing standard Hexameral topics, such as the fall of the angels. It contains 14 unique nominal compounds, or one unique compound every eight lines. Of the 14 compounds, five have first elements that occur in other compounds in the passage. Only two of the unique compounds, *helleheaf* (38a) and *helltrega* (73b), share a first element.

The Sethite genealogy takes up 138 lines (ll. 1104-1242a). This passage is remarkably faithful to the original in structure and nomenclature, yet, according to Doane, it shows considerable formulaic inventiveness; what elaboration exists "stems from the traditional poetic stock, rather than from the exegetical tradition" (1978:251). The passage is apparently formulaic only in the sense that all of Anglo-Saxon verse is so. It contains seven unique nominal compounds, or one every twenty lines—the same density as the poems of Cynewulf and the *Phoenix*. Of the seven unique compounds, five share first elements with other compounds in the passage, and no two unique compounds in this passage have first elements in common. The stylistic similarity of the compound diction in

this passage and the literary poems confirms John W. Butcher's (1987) analysis of the diction and formulaic structure of the Sethite genealogy; he concludes that the poet used invented diction and original ideas as well as traditional formulas.

The third passage, the "War of Kings" (ll. 1960-2101), appears to be traditional in diction and style. Before line 1982 the expansions are solidly based on the Biblical text; thereafter, the Anglo-Saxon narrative is an entirely "free" expression of the theme of battle (Doane 1978:69). In this passage there are 27 unique nominal compounds, or one every five lines, a density even higher than that of *Beowulf*. Sixteen of the unique compounds share their first element with another compound in the passage, and eleven have a first element in common with another unique compound. The repeated first elements reflect, for the most part, the theme of battle: *folc-* ("nation, army"), *guð-* ("battle"), *hilde-* ("battle"), *orleg-* ("war"), and *wig-* ("battle").

At the end of the preserved portion of the poem comes the sacrifice of Isaac (ll. 2846-936); it is unclear whether the poet ever intended to carry the story of Genesis beyond this point. Robert Creed (1969) argues, using Magoun's approach, that this passage is highly formulaic. It contains five unique compounds in 90 lines, or one compound every eighteen lines, a density close to that of the Sethite genealogy, Cynewulf's poems, and the *Phoenix*. Only one of the five, *wuldorgast* (2813a), shares a first element with another compound in the passage.

The introductory passage, the Sethite genealogy, and the sacrifice of Isaac all show a low degree of originality in their coinage of new compounds and a high degree of originality in the elements that make up those compounds. The first elements of the unique compounds in these passages tend to be elements found in compounds commonly used in prose, and in common compounds used by the poet in the same passage, yet the poet tends to form only one unique compound on a given first element. These passages thus share a common style with the literary poems. The compounds in the "War of Kings" passage, on the other hand, have all the features of traditional style found in *Beowulf*: high degree of originality in the diction coupled with a relatively low degree of originality in the compound elements. Examining the first elements of compounds yields results with material too scant to exhibit formulaic systems in which the base words are constant.

It appears that the author of *Genesis A*, if indeed the poem was the work of an individual, was both literate and skilled in the traditional compositional technique. Even in the part of the poem that corresponds closely to the Vulgate, the poet composed in a direct fashion without conscious reinterpretation of the biblical text. Doane compares two passages, ll. 192-98a and 1504b-5, 1510b-17, that correspond to passages

closely related, both verbally and structurally, in the Vulgate. He concludes that the Anglo-Saxon passages are too much alike for the poet to have been consciously looking for different ways to express the same Vulgate statement, yet too different for the poet to have been consciously attempting to reproduce the similarity of the Vulgate passages (1978:81, n.77). Nevertheless, as Butcher shows, the poet's choice of words was not dictated merely by metrical expediency. In both the "free" introductory passage and in his paraphrase of the text of *Genesis*, the poet composed in a literate fashion, using traditional phrases perhaps, but not habitual formulaic thought; the text thus has the superficial formulaic quality of the *Phoenix*, the Cynewulf poems, and the *Meters of Boethius*. When the poet came to the war of kings, he expanded his source freely in the traditional style, using formulaic style and diction. He may have taken advantage of traditional thematic material to indulge his skill in this compositional technique.

Before line 1725 there are six references to the literary source of the poem: for example, *þæs þe us secgað bec* ("as books tell us," 227b, 1723b), and *us gewritu secað* ("the writings [Scriptures] tell us," 1121b). The latter half-line is repeated twice later in the poem (2565b, 2612b). Between ll. 1723 and 2565, however, there are five occurrences of the verb *gefrignan* ("to hear tell of"), the classic evocation of oral tradition with which *Beowulf* begins: *Hwæt, we Gardena in geardagum / þeodcyninga þrym gefrunon* ("We have heard of the glory of the kings of the spear-Danes in ancient times").[11] The first such instance is *þa ic aldor gefrægn* (1960a), which introduces the War of Kings, and *þa ic neðan gefrægn* occurs in this passage as well. Although literary poets do make use of such references for stylistic purposes, I feel this abrupt transition is further evidence of the poet's switch into the traditional oral-formulaic mode. Here indeed is a case of a literate poet who could compose in the traditional manner; the two compositional styles, however, remain distinct.

The paradox of originality in the diction of *Beowulf* has served as a point of departure for this discussion of several aspects of the Anglo-Saxon oral poetic tradition. Brodeur states that it is only through the assumption of his literacy that one can explain the difference between the *Beowulf* poet's art and that of any other Anglo-Saxon poet (1959:5). I have tried to show that the differences can also be explained by the thesis that he was, literate or illiterate, at home in the oral tradition. In neither case is the poet the slave of his tradition; in either, he is capable of high art. The

---

[11] See Magoun 1953 for a discussion of the phrases involving *gefrignan*.

traditional style of Anglo-Saxon oral poetry was fresh and vigorous, different from, but not inferior to, the art of the literary poets.[12]

University of California, Los Angeles

References

Benson 1966   Larry Benson. "The Literary Character of Anglo-Saxon Formulaic Poetry." *Publications of the Modern Language Association*, 81:334-41.

Bessinger 1978   J.B. Bessinger, Jr., ed. *A Concordance to the Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Brady 1979   Caroline Brady. "Weapons in *Beowulf*: An Analysis of the Nominal Compounds and an Evaluation of the Poet's Use of Them." *Anglo-Saxon England*, 8:79-141.

Brady 1983   _____. "'Warriors' in *Beowulf*: An Analysis of the Nominal Compounds and an Evaluation of the Poet's Use of Them." *Anglo-Saxon England*, 11:199-246.

Brodeur 1959   Arthur G. Brodeur. *The Art of Beowulf*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Bryan 1929   William Frank Bryan. "Epithetic Compound Folk-Names in *Beowulf*." In *Studies in English Philology: A Miscellany in Honor of Frederick Klaeber*. Ed. by Kemp Malone and Martin Ruud. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. pp. 120-34.

Butcher 1987   John W. Butcher. "Formulaic Invention in the Genealogies of the Old English *Genesis A*." In *Comparative Research on Oral Traditions: A Memorial for Milman Parry*. Ed. by John Miles Foley. Columbus, OH: Slavica Press. pp. 73-92.

Calder 1981   Daniel G. Calder. *Cynewulf*. Boston: Twayne Publishers.

Creed 1967   Robert P. Creed. "The Art of the Singer: Three Old English Tellings of the Offering of Isaac." In his ed., *Old English Poetry: Fifteen Essays*. Providence: Brown University Press. pp. 69-92.

Doane 1978   A.N. Doane, ed. *Genesis A: A New Edition*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

---

[12] Portions of this work originally appeared in Mazo 1981.

Foley 1985   John Miles Foley. *Oral-Formulaic Theory and Research: An Introduction and Annotated Bibliography*. New York: Garland.

Fry 1967a   Donald K. Fry. "Old English Formulaic Themes and Type-Scenes." *Neophilologus* 52:48-54.

Fry 1967b   _____. "Old English Formulas and Systems." *English Studies*, 48:193-204.

Greenfield 1965   Stanley Greenfield. *A Critical History of Old English Literature*. New York: New York University Press.

Kellogg 1965   Robert L. Kellogg. "The South Germanic Oral Tradition." In *Franciplegius: Medieval and Linguistic Studies in Honor of Francis Peabody Magoun, Jr*. Ed. by Jess B. Bessinger and Robert P. Creed. New York: New York University Press. pp. 66-74.

Klaeber 1950   Frederick Klaeber, ed. *Beowulf* and the Fight at Finnsburg. 3rd ed. with supplements. Boston: D. C. Heath.

Krapp and
 Dobbie 1931-53   George Philip Krapp and Elliott Van Kirk Dobbie, eds. *The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records: A Collective Edition*, 6 vols. New York: Columbia University Press.

Lord 1960   Albert B. Lord. *The Singer of Tales*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Magoun 1929   Francis P. Magoun, Jr. "Recurring First Elements in Different Nominal Compounds in *Beowulf* and the Elder Edda." In *Studies in English Philology: A Miscellany in Honor of Frederick Klaeber*. Ed. by Kemp Malone and Martin Ruud. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. pp. 73-78.

Magoun 1949   _____. "Danes, North, South, East, and West in *Beowulf*." In *Philologica: The Malone Anniversary Studies*. Ed. by Thomas A. Kirby and Henry Bosley Woolf. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press. pp. 20-24.

Magoun 1953   _____. "Oral-Formulaic Character of Anglo-Saxon Narrative Poetry." *Speculum*, 28:446-67.

Mazo 1981   Jeffrey Alan Mazo. "Substantive Compounds and Compositional Technique in Anglo-Saxon Poetry." A. B. Thesis, Harvard University.

Nagy 1979   Gregory Nagy. *The Best of the Achaeans: Concepts of the Hero in Archaic Greek Poetry*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Niles 1981a   John D. Niles. "Compound Diction and the Style of *Beowulf*." *English Studies*, 62:484-503.

Niles 1981b   _____. "Formula and Formulaic System in *Beowulf*." In *Oral Traditional Literature: A Festschrift for Albert Bates Lord*. Ed. by John Miles Foley. Columbus, OH: Slavica. pp. 394-415.

Olsen 1986   Alexandra Hennessey Olsen. "Oral-Formulaic Research in Old English Studies. I." *Oral Tradition*, 1:548-606.

Olsen 1988   _____. "Oral-Formulaic Research in Old English Studies. II." *Oral Tradition*, 3:138-90.

Parry 1971   Milman Parry. *The Making of Homeric Verse: The Collected Papers of Milman Parry*. Ed. by Adam Parry. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Storms 1957   Godfrid Storms. *Compounded Names of Peoples in Beowulf: A Study in the Diction of a Great Poet*. Utrecht: Dekker en Van de Vegt.