

英国古哀歌における「罰」：  
*The Wanderer* と *The Seafarer* の一考察

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Punishment in the Old English Elegies:  
The Examples of *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer*

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**要 旨** 古英詩のうち哀歌のジャンルに属するとされる *The Wanderer* と *The Seafarer* について、100行強の詩のうち最後の数十行のキリスト教義の影響を重視し、詩のテーマを *consolatio* (consolation) とすることが現在主流の見方である。しかしながら、詩の大部分を占めるテーマは明らかに主人公の追放者が親しんだ宮廷、親戚、友人、王を失い孤独な航海を続ける悲しみと試練を詠い、また過去の栄光を懐かしむ点にある。作者はこの試練の原因を追放とし、試練という結果をもたらしたものを *Wyrd* (destiny) とする論理を展開し、聴衆に対して今享受する栄光は *Wyrd* によって必ずや報復を受けると予言する。アングロ・サクソン人にとって最も辛い試練とは *comitatus* (company) から追放され孤独になることであり、この試練を *Wyrd* による罰と考え、悲劇、栄枯盛衰を美しく描く言葉の響きを楽しむという、この民族の教養が作者の論理の展開に明らかに見られる。

### **Introduction**

In the Old English elegies, “solitude” can be regarded as one of the most enchanted motifs for ancient audience. Every one of the composers of the generally acknowledged elegies, such as *The Wanderer*, *The Seafarer*, *The Wife’s Lament*, *The Husband’s Message*, *Wulf and Eadwacer*, *Deor*, and *The Ruin*, by all means sets a high value on weaving a story in which “solitude”, “transience”, and “bereavement” are the core of the significant poetic elements, although his concerns vary from the defeated heroes to the separated lovers. “Exile” is also closely tied with “solitude” as they are the cause and the consequence of the cruel fate of aristocracy. What should be prudently noticed is that although their exile happens to be caused by some misfortune, the heroes in *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer* are content with their deported situations, as if they seem to deserve to be “punished”. In this paper, it is going to be examined that “solitude” was one of the most severe punishments for aristocracy banished from their mother countries, and will take into retrospect that what was lost was also an inevitable hardship that they who rejoiced in glory in the past were made to suffer from

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in Anglo-Saxon times.<sup>1)</sup> It is not always necessary to consider that every moral lesson or repentant phrase should be affected by Christianity, as most scholars will conclude, but it should not be underestimated that to appreciate its elegiac strains is based on the aristocratic entertainments of rhetoric in Anglo-Saxon times for audiences who enjoy desolation of the world. Scholars must set out in decoding this entangled sentimentalism of the old elegies.

### ***Sin or Repentance?***

It is inevitable that there must be some evidence related to “sin” when it comes to discuss the plausibility of “punishment”. Unfortunately, modern readers cannot expect to find its innumerable conspicuous precepts in the Anglo-Saxon elegies. Only one example is apparent, however not without difficulty in *The Seafarer*, which shows relatively less Christian doctrine in the context.

þeah þe græf wille	golde stregan	
broþor his geborenum,	byrgan be deadum	
maþmum mislicum,	þæt hine mid nille,	
ne mæg þære sawle	þe biþ synna ful	
gold to geoce	for Godes egsan,	
þonne he hit ær hydeð	þenden he her leofað.	( <i>The Seafarer</i> , 97–102) <sup>2)</sup>

Gordon expresses this passage as “Probably the most disputed passage of the poem.”<sup>3)</sup> The ultimate discussion here is whether this passage should be interpreted with a Christian effect or not. It is hardly acceptable that a few words appearing in a verse could decide the theme of the whole verse. In Anglo-Saxon period, it is almost impossible to separate Christian factors from the heathen, for “sin” could be identified with “fault”, while “God” with “fate” or “a heathen god”.<sup>4)</sup> “Wyrð” (fate, destiny) is often functioned equal to “God” in the old English poetry. No other lines but these may tell us a little of Christian doctrines in *The Seafarer*. This passage is situated just before the description of the existence of God and Heaven in the last of the verse, in which the author is certainly trying to preach. His terminology, however, could be interpreted to have both Christian and heathen notations although his recommendation of conversion is quite clear.

1. The words referring God or a lord of fate:  
 Meotudes egsa [103a]<sup>5)</sup>, Dryhten [106a], Meotod [108a], Wyrð [115b], Meotud [116a]  
 lufan Dryhtnes [121b]<sup>6)</sup>, þam Halgan [122b]<sup>7)</sup>, wuldres Ealdor [123b]<sup>8)</sup>, Dryhten [124a]  
 (*The Seafarer*)
2. The words referring to heaven, a paradise or the sky:  
 ar of heofonum [107b], in heofonum [122a] (*The Seafarer*)

Whether the contents are of Christian notation or not, it depends on how the audience take the theme of the verse, when its author is usually a monk. Therefore, regardless of whether the ter-

minology of the author is Christian or not, there must always be a possibility of referring to “God” as “Mighty Existence”, and “heaven” as “Valhalla”, the paradise of the Germanic warriors. The most remarkable aspect is that the author of *The Seafarer* does not clarify the essential meanings in the differences between the Christian God and heathen ones. That is because the passage including the word “sin” does not express what sort of sins a man committed. It simply states that “wealth” does not mean anything to human beings who are sinful. What sort of sins would the author try to preach to his audience? This is absolutely unknown in the context.

Although, in the end of the verse, the author might intend to introduce a hint of Christianity to his audience, the way of creating his own Christian world in the text is not deliberate. It is rather clear that his target is concentrated on producing a tragic and lamented situation for a hero to have the audience sympathize with him as follows:

Micel biþ se Meotudes egsa,	for þon hi seo molde oncyrrdeð;
se gestapelade	stiþe grundas,
eorþan sceatas	ond uprodor.
Dol biþ se þe him his Dryhten ne ondrædeþ:	cymeð him se deað unþinged.
Eadig bið se þe eaþmod leofaþ;	cymeð him seo ar of heofonum.
Meotod him þæt mod gestapelað,	for þon he in his meahte gelyfeð.
Stieran mon sceal strongum mode,	ond þæt on stapelum healdan,
ond gewis werum,	wisum clæne.
Scyle monna gehwylc	mid gemete healdan
†wiþ leofne ond wið laþne	*** bealo.
†þeah þe he ne wille	fyses fulne
oþþe on bæle	forbærnedne
his geworhtne wine,	Wyrð biþ swiþre,
Meotud meahtriga,	þonne ænges monnes gehygd. ( <i>The Seafarer</i> , 103–116) <sup>9)</sup>

This passage could provide a solution as to what “sin” the author refers to in this verse. He warns that human beings must not exceed their own “measure, standard”. Although he does not reveal an explicit fault of Anglo-Saxon dispositions, he clearly insists that human beings must control their tempers, keep their promises, be kind to both friend and foe, and fear their lord’s mighty power, just to be “real” human beings. Slaughter, boasting, exaggeration, gluttony, avariciousness are by all means common in Anglo-Saxon times. To preach “moderation” to an Anglo-Saxon audience is not to provoke the consciousness of “their sin”, but to show the author’s anxiety for their ignorance. Considering the fact that the author does not use the word “sin” in this passage, he seems as though he is trying to ask his audience to show repentance for their reckless way of life.

In the same way, how to become a real human being is lyrically expressed in *The Wanderer* which seems to be a verse much more heroic and less Christian than *The Seafarer*. The author of *The Wanderer* also presents his idea of Christian behaviour at the end, just like in the other one. His preaching to the audience to be good, however, is accounted only in the last five lines. Preceding the idea, he appeals at how rejoice in this world is transient, implying treasure, friends, lords, feasts, etc. As the

author of *The Seafarer* entreats, thus signifies the author of the other the meaning to be “wise” to the audience:

Forþon ne mæg wearþan wis	wer, ær he age
wintrā dæl in woruldrice.	Wita sceal gepyldig:
ne sceal no to hatheort,	ne to hrædwyrde,
ne to wac wiga,	ne to wanhydig,
ne to forht, ne to fægen,	ne to feohgifre,
ne næfre gielpes to georn	ær he geare cunne:
beorn sceal gebidan,	þonne he beot spricedð,
oþþæt, collenferð,	cunne gearwe
hwidre hreþra gehygd	hweorfan wille. ( <i>The Wanderer</i> , 64–72) <sup>10</sup>

This is also the significance of “moderation” preached to the audience. Here show the lines containing many difficult words to interpret. Above all, the compounds shown below are worth discussing in order to examine a quality of the Anglo-Saxons’ command of language.

hatheort (66a)	hat [hot] + heort [heart]
hrædwyrde (66b)	hræd [quick] + wyrde [speech]
wanhydig (67b)	wan [wanting] + hydig [careful]
feohgifre (68b)	feoh [cattle as property] + gifre [greedy]

Modern readers can enjoy the usage of Old English to create a new idea with the compounds. The author does not recommend a man to be “hot hearted”, “quick in speech”, “careful”, and “greedy in property”. These ideas definitely reveal the fact that the Anglo-Saxons were regarded, by a Christian author, as “short-tempered”, “gushing”, “reckless”, and “greedy”. The author of *The Wanderer* probably warns that they will be deprived of everything they possess in the world, when “the creation of destiny changes the world under the sky” (l.107). Therefore he suggests that their ways of living should be meaningless and human beings should be wise in their deeds.

As discussed above, the authors of *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer* never insinuate that the Anglo-Saxons are sinful, but timidly request that they should be wise and moderate in every action. Consequently, the Anglo-Saxon audience might have been directed to contemplate what is most significant in this world, although it is not credible that they admitted that their behaviour was absolutely sinful. With such a repentance of their being subject to vanity of the world, they happen to realize that they are to compensate for losing all in which they had rejoiced when destiny “*Wyrd*” changes the course of events.

### ***A State of Hardship***

What is the most severe suffering for the Anglo-Saxons? As stated above, their tribal characters tend to be sometimes careless in their speech, boastful, short-tempered and avaricious, or sometimes

timid and irresolute. This trait hints to us a story that the Anglo-Saxon audience, most of whom are noble warriors in royal courts, had almost the same tendency as ordinary people have in the modern world. They may have enjoyed themselves with food, drinking, boasting, rioting, and fighting, almost with anything the modern readers can share as an entertainment. Apart from the discussion as to whether this tendency could be regarded as a “sin” for a Christian warrior, there must be some standards that tell us their psychological phenomena of feeling happy or sad in those days. Both in *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer*, the exiles have lost something they enjoyed in their previous courts, and repeatedly confess that they are still longing for them. To exemplify what they set a high value on in their aristocratic society supports the hypothesis that they are “punished” from their destiny, unexpectedly deprived of everything they possessed in the past.

To begin with, one of the most eloquent lines in *The Wanderer* should be introduced in order to clarify the substantial the exile laments for. This seems to be a key passage, changing the theme of the verse from the lamentation of the exile in the first half to the author’s reasoning of inevitability of hardship in the last half. The exile speaks from his heart sentimentally as this:

Hwær cwom mearg?	Hwær cwom mago?	Hwær cwom mappumgyfa?
Hwær cwom symbla gesetu?		Hwær sindon seledreamas?
Eala beorht bune!	Eala byrnwiga!	
Eala þeodnes þrym!	Hu seo þrag gewat,	
genap under nihthelm,	swa heo no wære!	( <i>The Wanderer</i> , 92–96) <sup>11</sup>

Herein can it be exemplified that the exile’s concerns are concentrated on the high living in the royal court. He is longing for “horse”, “a young warrior”, “a lord”, “a hall”, “joy in the hall”, “a goblet”, “an armed warrior” and “glory of a king”, all of which are strongly related to battles and victory in Anglo-Saxon period. This depicts the fact that royal retainers usually gathered in their courts to enjoy their friendship and feasts. It is also noteworthy that the Old English words referring to “friend”, “kinsman”, “lord”, and “hall” have a variety of synonyms to emphasise the glory of chivalry in *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer*. Refer to the following examples:

<friend>	
iuwine	iu [former days] + wine [friend] ( <i>The Seafarer</i> 92)
leaf	[beloved] ( <i>The Seafarer</i> 112)
weard	[guardian] ( <i>The Seafarer</i> 54)
wine	[friend] ( <i>The Seafarer</i> 115)
winemæg	wine [friend] + mæg [kinsman] ( <i>The Seafarer</i> 16, <i>The Wanderer</i> 7)
duguð	[troop of the nobles] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 79, 97)
gefera	[companion] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 30)
freond	[friend] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 108)
gliwstæf	gliw [joy] + stæf [staff] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 52)
mago	[young man] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 92)
maguþegn	magu [young man] + þegn [retainer] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 62)
geselda	ge [with] + selda [hall] = [companion] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 53)

winedryhten	wine [friend] + dryhten [lord] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 37)
selesecg	sele [hall] + secg [man] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 34)
⟨kinsman⟩	
geboren	ge [with] + boren [born] = [born in the same family] ( <i>The Seafarer</i> 98)
hleomæg	hleo [protection] + mæg [kinsman] ( <i>The Seafarer</i> 25)
freomæg	freo [noble] + mæg [kinsman] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 21)
mæg, magan	[kinsman] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 109, 51)
⟨lord⟩	
giefstol	gief [give] + stol [stool] = [throne] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 44)
goldwine	gold [gold] + wine [friend] = [generous lord] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 22, 35)
maððumgyfa	maððum [treasure] + gyfa [giver] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 92)
mondryhten	mon [man] + dryhten [lord] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 41)
peoden	[chieftain] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 95)
⟨hall-related terms⟩	
bune	[goblet] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 94)
feoh	[property] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 108)
feohgifre	feoh [property] + gifre [greedy] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 68)
flet	[hall] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 61)
gold	[gold] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 32)
mearg	[horse] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 92)
meoduheall	meadu [mead] + heall [hall] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 27)
rice	[realm] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 106)
seledream	sele [hall] + dream [revelry] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 93)
seledreorig	sele [hall] + dreorig [dreary] = [sad at the loss of the hall] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 25)
sybla gesetu	sybla [banquet] + gesetu [dwelling] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 93)
þrym	[majesty] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 95)
wenian	[accustom, attract] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 29, 36)
winsæl	win [wine] + sæl [hall] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 78)
wingal	win [wine] + gal [merry] ( <i>The Seafarer</i> 29)
wist	[feasting] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 36)
woma	[tumult] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 103)

There are a number of “hall-related” words in the two verses, whereby it is highly likely to say that the authors tried to attract the attention of their audience with these expressions, which must have been very much familiar in their lives. Interestingly enough, the two verses consist of the idea that the most miserable situation for retainers was to be deprived of their fiends, kinsmen, and their gathering in the halls, which were regarded as indispensable factors in their lives. From the beginning to the end, the whole bodies of the verses are mingled with the miserable tone of losing one’s friends, kinsmen, lords, and halls, and of being alone on the surface of the sea. Thus is the exile’s “solitude” depicted in *The Wanderer*:

anhoga	an [solitary] + hoga [dwelling] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 1, 40)
ana	[one, alone] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 8)
anfloga	an [one] + floga [flier] ( <i>The Seafarer</i> 62)

cwicra nan	cwicra [alive]+nan [no one] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 9)
sundor	[apart] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 111)
weste	[desolate] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 74)
freondleas	freond [friend]+leas [less] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 28)
wineleas	wine [friend]+leas [less] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 45)
flet ofgiefan	flet [hall]+ofgiefan [abandon]=[die] ( <i>The Wanderer</i> 61)

The lines 25–29a in *The Wanderer*, the same idea as wishing for a hall “*meoduhealle*”, a treasure giver “*sinces bryttan*”, to entertain with joy “*wenian mid wynnum*”, in a state of being friendless “*freondleasne*”. It is clear that “solitary state”, i.e. without friends, is one of the most significant factors of exile. Being separated from one’s lords, friends and relatives seems to be to him a hardship from which he can never overcome. Therefore, it is also acceptable to assume that “friendship” and “relation” among the retainers in the royal courts are considered to be most admirable in a recital of heroic verses. In Anglo-Saxon society, a community respectively established in a hall could have been bound tight and strictly protected from its devastation. Moreover, being a member of a community could have brought one the sense of security, peace, family-ties, and allegiance.<sup>12)</sup> The most severe hardship for such royal retainers as in the elegies is depicted in being exiled from their own community. Wandering about is the main theme of *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer*, which is explicitly suggested with such words as “*bihon*” (*The Seafarer* 17), “*wræcca*” (*The Seafarer* 15), “*ealdstapa*”, land-stepper (*The Wanderer* 6), “*wræclastas*”, tracks of exile (*The Wanderer* 5, 32), “*feor*”, far (*The Wanderer* 21, 26, 90), “*forðweg*”, away (*The Wanderer* 81), “*wadan*”, journey (*The Wanderer* 5, 24).

In *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer*, what the heroes did in the past is understated to be a cause for their expulsion. It could be a crime, or a fall of their tribes, which is unknown in the verses. The theme of the two elegies is rather set on a long story of how miserably he was deprived of everything he had in the past. The hardship the exiles must experience is the main concern of both authors who try to attract the audience’s sympathy and lament on the wandering situations. No matter what fault (or sin) the exiles had made in the former lives, the authors intend to persuade the audience that human beings are to be created solitary and frail. Their lives themselves, their deeds, creations, community, and even their happiness is destined to be terminated sooner or later.

### ***Punishment by “Wyrð”***

As we see in the previous discussion, the hardship human beings are made to suffer from in this world is a destiny from which they can never escape, no matter what aristocratic family they come from. Then, how do the authors of *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer* lead to their conclusion toward this endless chain of man’s destiny? They provide their poems by all means with the elaborate trap, for their audience, “fear of Nature”.

Most scholars conclude that *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer* are deliberately created as a preachment to expostulate with savage Anglo-Saxon retainers on their boastfulness, resentment, greed, or

whatever was regarded as “wicked”, “heathen” and “sinful” in the Christian world.<sup>13)</sup> Is this, however, a general point of view when we study an example of Old English literature? Even if it was composed in the old times, the taste of the authors for literature is conspicuously directed toward the long lines of yearning for the lost world. A theme that occupies the most part of the poem is simply designed by the authors to appreciate the verse. The authors eagerly enjoy their literal techniques of gushing over the lamentation of exile. They spent most of the time in composing the longing-for-the-past-glory, and affixing a bit of Christian essence to the end, as if they were worn out in creating a wonderful rhetoric concerning heathen culture and lost their interest in showing the spirit of Christianity which seems to be the most significant task to convert a heretic into a civilized man.

At the end of the poems, the authors’ attention is focused on the function of “destiny” in the Anglo-Saxon world. They try to persuade the audience to believe that this world is transient and human beings cannot turn aside from the phenomena, for “*Wyrd*” is out there, watching people’s glory and controlling the course of events in the world. “*Wyrd*” is harsh and strict. It destines noble and rich people never to be able to enjoy their zenith of their prosperity forever. They must lose what they had in the past, and that is the rule of the “fate”. Although “*Wyrd*” seems quite familiar with the Anglo-Saxon audience, it is rather difficult to accurately interpret its essential meaning in every poem. That is an idea of “destiny”, “fate”, or “fortune”, and yet it depends on the context of every set of lines.<sup>14)</sup> The author of *The Wanderer*, which gives us a supreme example of euphemism in depicting the combination of “*Wyrd*” and “Nature”, intends to conclude that “*Wyrd*”, or “Nature”, devastates the world, while God saves man and the world. Hereof, again, is it remarkable that the author has an interest in expressing his eloquent technique of reciting how severe Nature is to man. He has almost forgotten to tell the meaning of the ultimate existence, for he only mentions the salvation of God in the last five lines. The author’s skill of lamenting is such an elaborated one as this:

Stondeð nu on laste	leofre dugupe
weal   wundrum heah	wyrmlicum fah —
eorlas fornoman	asca þryþe,
wæpen wælgifru,	wyrd seo mære—
ond þas stanhleoðu	stormas cnyssað;
hrið hreosende	hrusan binded;
wintres woma	(þonne won cymeð,
nipeð, nihtscua)	norþan onsended
hreo hæglfare	hæleþum on andan.
Eall is earfoðlic	eorþan rice:
onwended wyrdas gesceaft	weoruld under heofonum.
Her bið feoh læne,	her bið freond læne,
her bið mon læne,	her bið mæg læne;
eal þis eorþan gesteal	idel weorþeð. ( <i>The Wanderer</i> , 97–110) <sup>15)</sup>

The “What becomes of...” passage in lines 92–96 is followed by the lines above, which bring a splendid sequential effect to the story of the exile. Herein explored is the reasoning of the cause and

the result in the relation between man's lot and "Wyrð". After the horses, the treasure-giver, and everything the exile enjoyed in the past have gone (ll. 92–96), the high wall with the pattern of serpents still stands with no other warrior having survived the battles. Then a snowstorm overcomes the ruin, with the winter binding the ground frozen and night encompassing the world, the frail human being stands defeated. All of a sudden, people are deprived of everything, even their lives. "Desolation", "death", "storm", "rain, snow and ice", "winter", "night", "wind", "hail", all become man's enemy. Everything in the world is to be changed by "Wyrð". It causes a twist on a man's destiny with the devastation worked by Nature. Consequently, "Wyrð" has functioned in the same manner as the works of Nature. "Death" could be a part of "Wyrð". "Storm" could be a part of "Wyrð". People must realize, as the author wishes to say, that they will not be able to overwhelm the power of Nature. They must yield to the supremacy of "Wyrð". This is the ultimate rule of the world. The Anglo-Saxon audience must have been enchanted by the author's radiant works of speech. As stated above, he is making much use of the "fear" of Nature to make the audience believe in the transience of the world. However, considering the fact that he goes long way from the beginning nearly to the end portraying the destruction of the world and the helplessness of those that inhabit it, it is not too reckless to say that his intention of the poem sits on reasoning the connection between a man's deeds and his destiny. People who used be proud of their prosperity must be revenged by "Wyrð" unless people happen to notice their faults. "Pride will have a fall." The author insinuated in the end that the prosperous would be punished by "Wyrð" sooner or later. Regardless of the usual question as to whether the punishment is executed by a Christian God, it is absolutely clear that the devastation of the world has been created by Nature, the agent of destiny "Wyrð" in *The Wanderer*.

To take an example of the relation between "Wyrð" and its function as a punishment in *The Seafarer*, is much more complicated. In this verse, an effect of mingled allusions is tried to hint a delicate contrast between "Wyrð" and "Dryhten". The author defines the two concepts as opposite extremities.<sup>16)</sup> According to his differentiation, "Wyrð" implies devastation, while "Dryhten" creation of the world. The opposite relation of the two interests the author much more than the phenomenon that "Wyrð" functions as a punishment enforced on proud retainers:

Micel biþ se Meotudes egsa,	for þon hi seo molde oncyrræð;
se gestapelade	stiþe grundas,
eorþan sceatas	ond uprodor.
*****	
† þeah þe he ne wille	fyres fulne
oþþe on bæle	forbærnedne
his geworhtne wine,	Wyrð biþ swiþre,
Meotud meahtriga,	þonne ænges monnes gehygd.

(*The Seafarer*, 103–105, 113–116)

In a sense, *The Seafarer* is a verse composed by a more Christian-based recitalist than the one of *The*

*Wanderer*. However, it is hardly acceptable that the author of *The Seafarer* intended to produce the poem only to preach a part of Christian doctrine. This is because the author does not show any of the detailed explanations of how the Christian God is different from a heretic god. It is also obscure that the word “*Dryhten*” actually is meant to refer to the Christian God, for we cannot observe any difference in their characteristics between the power of God and that of the other. The author only states “God is mighty”.

In conclusion, “punishment” is the key to survey the structure of the two verses. Reasoning the functions of “hardship” and “punishment” in the stories, is highly valued by the authors in order to define “glory in the past” as “the cause to turn around destiny”, while “hardship for an exile”, “the result of ‘*Wyrd*’”. The punishment dealt out by “*Wyrd*” is inevitable for noble retainers.

### **Conclusion**

As discussed above, *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer* consist of a sequence of repentance and hardship throughout the poems in which the exiles contemplate the cause of hardship, i.e. what exactly they had enjoyed in their former courts. Once they had lost their most beloved ones, expelled from their community, the miserable situation brings them to believe that a man of glory must inevitably lose the treasures of the past, and instead, goes on to experience hardship. This is meant to be a reward for one’s past pride and glory. A man of glory is to be punished by destiny (*Wyrd*) in the end. It is the conclusion of the poets that human beings must realize the world will fall sooner or later and they will be solitary without friends, kinsmen and lords, unless they become “wise”. They are foolish enough to know nothing of their incapability toward the power of Nature. They are too ignorant to notice that their exaggerated attitudes should not be righteous to be humane. “*Wyrd*” does not permit the ignorance of people. It punishes those who are proud of their glory, and ignore the sense of moderation and their frailty under the mighty power of Nature. As the exile in *The Wanderer* makes a monologue “Forþon ne mæg wearþan wis wer, ær he age wintra dæl in woruldrice” (64–65b), man cannot become wise unless he suffers from hardship in his all life.

### **Notes**

- 1) Raises what should not be disregarded in terms of “glory” in the elegies, when the exiled heroes recall their remarkable lives in their mother countries, “the virtue of moderation”. That means a true hero should not overdo their brave deeds. This is going to be discussed later in this paper.
- 2) I. L. Gordon, ed., *The Seafarer* (London: Methuen & Co Ltd., 1969). Although the passage brings some indefinite interpretations to be concrete, Gordon takes Dr. Sisam’s as the best solution that “Though brother will strew with gold the grave for his brother born, bury [him] beside the dead with various treasures, that (i.e. the gold) will not go with him; nor can gold be a help to the soul that is full of sin in the presence of the terrible power of God, when he hoards it beforehand while he is still alive on earth.” 45–46.
- 3) Gordon, 45.
- 4) In *Oxford English Dictionary*, “sin” [OE: syn(n)] shows two possible interpretations. One is that “An act constituting transgression of divine law; a violation of a religious or moral principle.”, while the other “An offence against a principle or standard.”
- 5) In Gordon’s glossary, the word “*Meotod*” refers to “Ordainer of fate” or “God”, therefore this means “the terror of Mighty Existence”.

- 6) In *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*, Bosworth and Toller interpret “dryhten” as “a ruler, lord, the Lord”, therefore the meaning of the term is “love of a lord (God)”. Bosworth and Toller, *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991)
- 7) The term “þam Halgan” means “to the holy (God)”.
- 8) In *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*, “ealdor” is glossed as “an elder, chief, governor, prince”, while Gordon’s translation “Prince, Lord”.
- 9) The brief meaning of this passage is “The power of the lord is great, before which the earth will turn aside. He established the ground firm, the expanse of the ground and the paradise above. Foolish is the man who does not fear his lord: the death unexpectedly comes to him. Blessed is the man who lives humble; the grace of paradise comes to him. The lord controls the heart, therefore he trusts in his own power. Man must strongly control his heart, and controlling it, he must be true to his pledges and clean way of living. Each man must keep with moderation (measure) to friends and against foes\* \* \* (evil). Though he does not wish, full fire or conflagration burns up a friend he had made (This could be Germanic funeral.), fate is mighty, the lord is mighty, more so than the thought of any man.”
- 10) Dunning & Bliss comment on lines 65–69 that “Since many of the words used are ambiguous, and since adjacent words offer no certain guidance, the exact connotations must remain conjectural.” and “It is clear that a wise man will have none of these qualities.” T. P. Dunning & A. J. Bliss, ed., *The Wanderer* (London: Methuen & Co Ltd., 1978) 117–118. A brief translation is presented as “So, a man cannot be wise, before he posses a large number of winters in the world. |A wise man must be patient: not be too angry, not be too hasty of speech, not be a too persuaded man, not be too careless, not be too timid, not be too fawning, not be too avaricious, never too eager to reckless vow, before he has experience in full: a warrior must wait, when he pronounces promise, until, ready for action, he knows for certain in which direction the heart wishes to turn its intention.”
- 11) The translation is “What has become of a horse? What has become of a young man? What has become of a lord? What has become of a banqueting hall? What has happened to the rejoicing of the hall? Oh, a shining goblet! Oh, a mailed warrior! Oh, the glory of king! How the time passes away, it grew dark under the cover of night, as if the time was not at all there!”
- 12) Hugh Magennis remarks on the importance of community that “Ideas of community are reflected in the images of warmth and security of society found throughout Old English poetry and in antithetical images of dislocation and alienation.” Hugh Magennis, *Images of Community in Old English Poetry*, Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England 18 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) 3.
- 13) Dunning & Bliss express the substantial of *The Wanderer* that “We believe that the poem is an example, rather general in character, of the genre *consolatio*, and that the wisdom achieved by the *anhoga*, strikingly expressed in the final lines, is the consolation the poem provides.” See Dunning & Bliss, 80. Besides them, a large number of scholars concluded the poem has a Christian conversion in its theme, judging from the end of the poem.
- 14) “*Wyrd*” usually comes in the Old English glossaries as “course of events”, “fate”, “fortune”, “chance”, which can be assumed in the glosses of Latin texts. It is sometimes glossed “man’s lot” or more likely “(Christian) God” depending on the contents of texts.
- 15) The translation is “A wall now stands as a vestige in place of the beloved retainers, astonishingly high, decorated with serpentine patterns. A multitude of spears caused the death of warriors, a greedy weapon for carrion, the glorious destiny—and storms beat upon the stony slopes; snowstorm is falling, freezes the earth; tumult of winter (then it comes dark, the shadow of night grows dark) dispatches fierce driving hail from the north out of malice to warriors. All is fraught with hardship, the realm of the earth: the ordered course of events changes the world under the sky. Here is transitory wealth, here is a transitory friend; here is a transitory man, here is a transitory kinsman; all the foundation of this earth becomes useless.”
- 16) Leslie also mentions a pair of mighty powers with the comments that “In the tense gnomic statements of lines 115b–116, we have an assessment of the twin powers of the universe, which are stronger than any man can conceive. They include not only God but fate, the traditional Germanic concept of the course of events.” 117. Roy F. Leslie, “The Meaning and Structure of *The Seafarer*”, *The Old English Elegies: New Essays in Criticism and Research*, ed. Martin Green (London: Associated University Presses, Inc., 1983) 96–122.