

Rhyme in *dróttkvætt*, from Old Germanic Inheritance to Contemporary Poetic Ecology II: Rhyme as an Inherited Device of Old Germanic Verse

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Abstract: This paper is the second in a three-part series on the distinctive type of rhyme in the Old Norse *dróttkvætt* meter, argued to have emerged through the metricalization of uses of rhyme within a short line found across Old Germanic poeties. Whereas the first paper outlined the argument and its background, this paper explores uses of rhyme in Old Germanic poeties other than Old Norse. Rhyme involving the stressed syllable or word stem irrespective of subsequent syllables is shown to be a device of these poetic systems. Especially in Old English, such rhyme is used to support and reinforce the basic meter and may even fill a metrical function in the place of additional alliteration. The type of rhyme is argued to be an inherited feature of the poetic system, an argument also supported by the metricalized use of rhyme in Old Norse *dróttkvætt* poetry. Because some theories of the Old Germanic poetic form require viewing rhyme as competing and interfering with its rhythm, the rhyme-compatible model used here is outlined.

Keywords: rhyme, alliterative poetry, oral meter, Germanic, eddic, skaldic

This paper paints the second part of a triptych. Whereas the first scene displays the basic argument for the background of rhyme in the Old Norse *dróttkvætt* meter, the portrait of rhyme in Old Germanic poeties other than Old Norse is presented here. The Old Germanic poetic form as well as that of Old Norse *dróttkvætt* have been introduced in the first part of this triptych. Here, rhyme in Old English is considered first, then rhyme in Old Saxon, with emphasis on rhymed words within a short line, followed by some considerations of rhyme in Old High German. The argument developed through this triptych is that rhyme in Old Norse *dróttkvætt* is developed from an inherited usage of rhyme in Old Germanic meters, yet some models of the background

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of Old Germanic meters envision its rhythms as antithetical to rhyme, which would be inconsistent with rhyme as a device inherited as an integrated part of the Old Germanic poetic form. The working model for the Old Germanic meter used here is therefore presented explicitly. The metricalization of alliteration on the first strong position in a b-line is argued to be driven by salience of alliteration's metrical function, while the constraint against repeating the same alliteration on the b-line's second metrically strong position concerns redundancy. This model also accounts for the operation of double alliteration in an a-line and its potential for metrical compensation by either cross alliteration, rhyme, or other devices. End rhyme between an a-line and a b-line does seem to exhibit a distinct markedness in the Old English poems that are the metrically most regular. However, this markedness is argued neither to reflect that rhyme was fundamentally opposed to alliteration *per se* nor that the meter was fundamentally opposed to marking the final strong position with either alliteration or rhyme. Instead, the priority is proposed to be the salience of the metrically primary alliteration within a linear and integrated rhythmic progression.

Old English Rhyme's Predominant Location

The most detailed and extensive study of rhyme in Old English has been done by Inna Matyushina (2011; 2018). She identifies "around 400 formulas using rhyme" between strong positions within a short line of Old English poetry (2011: 32).¹ This calculation is based on a broadly inclusive approach to rhyme on stressed syllables irrespective of any following syllables, noting that, in Germanic languages, stressed syllables are the first syllables of words or word stems. Her calculation includes:

- Rhymes that match the vowel of that syllable (assonance plus consonance of the syllable's close, called in Old Norse *aðalhending*, although I prefer not to generalize Old Norse terms to the whole Germanic corpus, since rhyme's formal principles and patterns of use were not uniform across Germanic languages)
- Rhymes in which the vowel varies (consonance of the syllable's close only, called in Old Norse *skothending*, and called by some scholars 'off-rhyme', although 'off-rhyme' also gets used for other things as well and is not used here)

¹ Matyushina does not explicitly state that this number only described examples within a short line, but she elsewhere discusses over 700 examples of rhyme linking a-lines to b-lines (2018: 270).

Also, Matyushina includes both:

- Rhymes in the classic sense of a contrast in the onsets of those syllables
- Rhymes in which the onset is the same (alliteration and rhyme on the same syllable)

Matyushina's 400 examples thus include 88 examples of lexical repetitions with morphological variations and other *figura etymologica* (2011: 33), and an unspecified number of full syllables repeated in different words or morphemes across compounds, which is common in paired names (2011: 36–37). This breadth of inclusion highlights the array of repetitions within which rhymes occur, and it mirrors the array of devices that could accomplish metrically required alliteration. However, when rhyme was not metricalized, it becomes unclear whether repeated elements of names were perceived as the same device as repeating only a stressed vowel and the following consonant or consonants, distinctions which seem to be significant in Old Norse. Conversely, Matyushina observes eight examples of paired words in which the stressed syllable varies only by a second sound in a consonant cluster, like *freond and feond* ['friend and fiend'], and 28 in which the vowel of the rhyme also varies (2011: 39). These examples blur the boundary between lexeme repetition, *figura etymologica*, and rhyme.

Matyushina finds that the vast majority of rhymes occur in what she calls a 'binary formula' – i.e. two words within a short line linked by a coordinating conjunction, a structure that Paul Acker describes as a 'syndetic formula' (1998: 3–33). Matyushina identifies around 280 examples (2011: 40–41) of such formulae. The second most prominent category in her data is formed of compounds in which the two elements rhyme, like *þryðsmynd* ['exceedingly-powerful'], of which she identifies 62 examples (2011: 34n.7). Together, these two categories of rhyme constitute approximately 85% of Matyushina's ca. 400 examples. The overwhelming majority of rhymes is thus within a short line.

The conventionalized use of rhyme is reflected in socially circulating rhyme collocations, often found paired in a syndetic formula. Thomas A. Bredehoft identifies 34 pairs of rhymed words found within a short line more than once in the corpus; his survey is oriented to determining whether they are formulaic in their phraseology, they form ordered or unordered pairs (i.e. the rhymed words' order is regular), and/or they are regularly used in the same metrical line type (2005b: 224–228). The most common of these is *miht : drihten* ['might : lord'], identified in 81 examples, although slightly more than half of these appear in the psalms (2005b: 227–228). The uses in the psalms illustrate that the particular texts preserved may impact the prominence of a collocation

within the corpus, and prominence in socially significant texts like the psalms may have also impacted the prominence of the collocation more generally (cf. Rankin 1909). Several recurring rhyme pairs regularly appear as syndetic formulae (Bredehoff 2005b: 215). Rhyme in such collocations often appears to foreground a semantic connection between the words (2005b: 219), pointing to rhyme as also having a rhetorical function, which would reciprocally have stabilized collocations (Frog 2021: 280–282). However, the same could be said for any syndetic formula with rhyme (Matyushina 2011: 39–41), since a syndetic formula, by definition, links two words with a conjunction (Acker 1998: 3–33).

Bredehoff's data on rhyme collocations including the stressed-syllable vowel while varying the onset and attested in 2 to 81 tokens constitutes 204 tokens (2005b: 225–228). Of these, 202 are identified with an a-line or a b-line.² Almost exactly 40% of these occur in a-lines and 60% in b-lines. This percentage changes by a fraction if only those pairs not forming compounds like *þryðs wyð* are included, while the 15 tokens of compounds are distributed with one third found in a-lines and two thirds in b-lines. However, several rhyme pairs exhibit preferred usage in a-lines or b-lines.³ Within her broader range of examples of rhyme, Matyushina identifies 286 examples of rhymed words in syndetic formulae that do not also alliterate. Of these, she finds that 223 or 78% occur in b-lines (2011: 41–42), noting that examples that would also alliterate would be excluded from b-lines, because alliteration is required on the first strong position but the same alliteration should be avoided on the second.

The conventional usage of rhymed words within a short line is further underscored by Bredehoff's identification of an open-slot formula of which the two slots are regularly completed by words linked by rhyme (2005b: 213–214).⁴ The formula can be described as *X Y PREFIX-feng*, in which X is the grammatical subject, Y is the object, and the verb is a form of *fon* with a prefix, as in *sund grunde onfeng* (Andreas 1528b) ['the sea the land seized on']. The formula is interesting because the variability of the prefix shifts in the verb's semantics, so it is more formally than semantically regular. The emergence of an open-slot formula of this type is contingent on rhyme collocations and on the usage of

² Two tokens are not included here as these are only indicated as occurring in chronicles.

³ This is ambiguous for low-frequency collocations, but the *miht : drihten* collocation is used in b-lines in 80% of 80 tokens (the 81st being in a chronicle), whereas 100% of the 15 tokens of the *wide : side* collocation are used in a-lines.

⁴ Following Acker, an 'open-slot formula' is a phraseological unit with regular lexical material but that is completed in use by filling open 'slots' with additional lexical material (1998: 40).

rhyme as an integrated feature of the poetic register. The evidence supports a long-standing integrated position of rhyme in the poetic idiom, especially within short lines.

Metrical Functions and Conditions of Rhyme in Old English

Matyushina observes that rhyme appears as a device that is complementary to, and supportive of, metrically required alliteration. She finds rhyme on the first strong position in a b-line, which carries metrical alliteration, with the first strong position in an a-line in 354 examples, and with the second strong position in an a-line in 306 examples. This is often through full-syllable repetition, so that the syllable simultaneously alliterates and rhymes, but alliteration may also be on one strong position and rhyme on the other (2018: 270). This use of stressed-syllable repetition or rhyme supports or reinforces alliteration. Rhyme on the second strong position of the a-line with that of the b-line is much less common, identified in only 60 examples (*loc. cit.*); these will be left aside for focused address in the following section. She finds the correlation between rhyme and the strong positions that conventionally carry alliteration as the more prominent pattern in poems considered typologically older, like *Beowulf* and *Elene*, while typologically younger poems increasingly prefer to place rhymes on the second strong position in b-lines, which she views in relation to the rise of end rhyme (*loc. cit.*).

Within hypermetric lines, Matyushina brings rhymes between the second strong positions of a-lines and b-lines into a different focus. Since the second alliteration required in a hypermetric a-line is not permitted in a hypermetric b-line, she suggests “that alliteration by itself is not enough to organize a prosodically overburdened half-line, so hypermetric lines require an additional sound device to assist the alliteration” (2018: 262). This use of rhyme reinforces the connection between the a-line and the b-line in the same manner as cross alliteration. Matyushina observes that in short lines of type S|Ssx (Sievers’ type D) and Ssx|S (Sievers’ type E) that “rhyme [between parts of the Ss compound word] helps with the alliteration to underline metrical relatedness of all stressed syllables, including those with secondary stress,” and the rhyme simultaneously “makes the whole word stand out in the line, which corresponds to its semantic significance in the poetic language” (2011: 35n.7). Matyushina keeps a distance from discussing Old English uses of rhyme as ‘metrical’, yet her study shows that it operates in relation to the periodic meter.

The metaphor of lexical ‘weight’ or ‘burden’ can be used for the types of lines with which Matyushina correlates added phonic patterns like alliteration and rhyme. Such lines should thus be ‘buoyed’, balanced, or validated through phonic links between words. Her evaluation is supported by Bredehoft’s (2005a: 59–60) argument that SsSs lines, like *soðfæst and swiðfeorm* (*Genesis A 9a*) [‘righteous and bounteous’], require cross alliteration within the short line to compensate for its exceptionally heavy structure. Matyushina’s analysis brings into clearer focus an underlying principle of Old English poetics, whereby added phonic patterning supports the meter, being at least desired if not metrically required.

In oral poetry, 100% metrical regularity should never be expected, whether owing to accident, flourish, or potential for flexibility,⁵ and traditions may incorporate alternative strategies for integrating a stretch of text into the phonic texture of performance. Metrical well-formedness can thus be considered a matter of degree with potential for metrical compensation in cases of deviation from ideals (Frog 2021: 284–286). Alliteration connecting short lines is, however, at the core of this meter, and regular to the point that editors consider it reasonable to change the wording of a line where alliteration is lacking. The compensation of metrically required main alliteration by rhyme is extremely exceptional and restricted to ‘late’ poems (Matyushina 2018; Frog 2022b). However, additional alliteration – i.e. both strong positions alliterating on the same sound – is required in certain types of a-lines, although these conventions are regular within groups of poems or dialects but may vary between them (Bredehoft 2005a). Although *Beowulf* is often used as the text on which studies related to meter or register are based, it is thus not consistently representative of the corpus (see also Fulk 1992). Nevertheless, *Beowulf* remains illustrative, considered among the best early poems for representing the meter (Russom 2002), and can therefore provide a frame of reference for metrically required additional alliteration. In *Beowulf*, Geoffrey Russom observes that when there appears an a-line of a Ssx|S type, like *bānhringas bræc* (*Beowulf* 1567a) [‘vertebrae broke’], both strong positions carry alliteration (2017: 58). In a-lines of a structure Sx|Sx or S|xSx, where the first weak position is filled by a monosyllabic word, like *grim ond grædig* (*Beowulf* 121a) [‘grim and greedy’], both strong positions carry alliteration “in 98 percent of the 112 a-verses” (Russom 2017: 62). Double alliteration was also conventional in other verse

⁵ E.g. research on Russian folk poetry of recent decades normally approaches this problem in statistical terms, allowing a poem to be identified as ‘in a certain meter’ although 20% of lines diverge from it, with some scholars considering even a deviation of 25% of lines not excessive for such an identification (Bailey 1993; 1995: 483; Skulacheva 2012: 53).

types (Fulk 1992: 220–221; Russom 1998: 74). As noted above, additional alliteration is similarly conventional for hypermetric a-lines (Bredehoft 2005a: 52) as well as accompanying anacrusis in certain line types (Fulk 1992: 129–130, 220–221). The purpose here is not to present an inventory of all the possible conditions to which conventions of additional alliteration apply, only to observe that they are manifold and extensive.

In poems where additional alliteration is treated as required, cross-alliteration may be used as an alternative (Bredehoft 2005a: 60–61). Cross alliteration describes an interweaving of two patterns of alliteration across the strong positions of an a-line and the following b-line in an **A B A B** pattern (Bredehoft 2005a: 60–61). Although the status of cross alliteration has been debated, including in hypermetric lines, Mark Griffith counts nearly 500 examples of cross-alliteration on fully stressed syllables in the metrically more regular poems of the corpus, finding it in roughly one of every sixty lines (2018: 132). He contrasts this with what he calls ‘transverse alliteration’, in which metrically required alliteration is framed by the second alliteration in a chiastic structure (**A B B A**), only found roughly once in four thousand lines (*loc. cit.*, and see also 137–142). The avoidance of the chiastic pattern can be attributed to its reception in time as a non-linear progression: the metrically required alliteration is first heard, and then the closing strong position produces an alliteration with the first strong position – i.e. framing the other alliteration and making it potentially interpretable as metrically primary since it marks the beginning of the line. In contrast, cross alliteration is stadal, beginning the second pattern after the first and also concluding after it, echoing the primary alliteration rather than competing with it. Being received in this way allows cross alliteration to be a relatively common feature added for stylistic or rhetorical effect, yet it can also be used with a metrical function as a form of metrical compensation in the place of required added alliteration (Bredehoft 2005a: 60–61).

Sievers made a move toward recognizing metrical compensation for additional alliteration through rhyme. He recognized that additional alliteration was conventional, and that, under the same metrical conditions, alternatives could be found in its place. He observed that, in lines of *Beowulf* where double alliteration was expected but lacking, there often appeared a syndetic formula, of which the paired words rhyme (1893: 39), but his picture was incomplete. Calvin Kendall (1991: 115) noted that, alongside a pair of rhymed words, a pair of semantically contrasting words was also accepted as a form of metrical compensation for additional alliteration in *Beowulf*. Bredehoft (2005a: 61–62) tested Kendall’s observation against the corpus: he found that the principle generally holds, but is concentrated in certain poems or dialects of poetry.

However, the metrical compensation of an additional alliteration by a pair of rhymed words within a short line is identified in only five poems, although it is found repeatedly only in *Beowulf*, *Daniel*, and *Andreas* (2005b: 211, Table 1). The data is thus quite thin, indicating that this device was present but not uniformly applied for metrical compensation by poets in the tradition. Finding rhyme compensating for secondary alliteration multiple times in *Beowulf* in particular points to rhyme having a metrical function even in the earliest distinguishable period of Old English poetry.

Taken together, Bredehoft's and Matyushina's analyses show that rhyme was not only perceived but also applied with a metrical function or could have a function in relation to meter. Of course, rhyme was not a regular, periodic metrical feature. It often appears as complementary to the metrical requirements of a line as an added form, much as rhyme or alliteration may be used in prose. However, the minimal metrical alliteration of one strong position in the a-line linking it to the first but not the second strong position in a b-line was not sufficient for all line types. Although not uniform throughout the corpus, the meter exhibits a systematic principle of requiring an additional phonic patterning device in these lines. In contrast to the basic metrical alliteration connecting the a-line to the b-line, this additional device is *regularly but not systematically* an additional alliteration on the same sound, but the meter also accepts compensation of the additional alliteration by either cross-alliteration or rhyme – i.e. rhyme could fill a metrical function in lines where an additional alliteration was required.⁶

Whereas Bredehoft advanced a dual model with rhyme and cross alliteration as alternatives to additional alliteration, Matyushina reveals that the rhymes form one set of phonic devices within a hierarchy of devices that could be added to metrically required alliteration. Within this hierarchy, double alliteration was an ideal, followed, it seems, by cross alliteration, and so on. Cross alliteration and uses of rhyme illustrate that the constraint on the second strong position in a b-line was against over-use of the *same* alliteration that filled the metrical function in its first strong position. However, additional phonic devices could also be used in this position, supporting the connection between the a-line and the b-line and buoying burdened line structures like those of hypermetric lines.

Recognizing this role of rhyme complicates viewing the metrical compensation of alliteration by rhyme in the poem *Judgement Day II* (Fulk 1992:

⁶ On an analogous use of rhyme as a compensation for alliteration in the Finnic trochaic tetrameter (commonly known as 'Kalevala-meter'), see Frog 2022b.

262–264 and cf. 259), as not necessarily purely owing to foreign influence, but potentially as an extension of rhyme's use in metrical compensation for additional alliteration (Frog 2022b: 76; see also Matyushina 2018). Use of rhyme within short lines was sufficiently established to develop both rhyme collocations and formulaic phraseology completed by rhyme pairs and both this use of rhyme and rhyme linking strong positions between an a-line and b-line appear to be integrated into the poetic system.⁷ Matyushina's argument that the lexical 'burden' of lines correlates with added phonic patterns suggests that, potentially in many cases, rhyme may be doing work commensurate to additional alliteration rather than being purely ornamental, stylistic, or simply built into a syndetic formula that happened to be used. Future detailed analyses may reveal additional principles in the meter that have gone unnoticed owing to the tendency to focus exclusively on alliteration. For instance, the use of rhyme and other phonic devices in b-lines, where an additional alliteration on the second strong position is only possible with cross-alliteration, may be revealed to follow a regular and systematic principle most often realized through rhyme.

Metrical Governance of Old English End Rhyme

End-rhymes linking the cadence of an a-line and a b-line warrant particular address, because the examples of this device, although not very common, reveals that the poetic device was not only perceived, but that its use had metrical consequences. Mark Griffith (2018: 78–81) has brought this rhyme structure into focus. Whereas Matyushina identified 60 examples of this structure in the corpus according to her parameters (2018: 270), Griffith excluded the *The Riming Poem* and defines rhyme as including the stressed vowel and varying the onset; he counts 45 examples (Griffith 2018: 78–84). Griffith finds that, in the poems that are metrically more strict (23 examples), such end rhymes regularly co-occur with an additional alliteration in the a-line. The additional alliteration occurs in these cases (**A Ar A r**) even when it is not otherwise metrically required by other conditions. In these poems, this type of end rhyme thus exhibits a metricalized status: use of this type of rhyme seems to activate a requirement of additional alliteration to be acceptable (Griffith

⁷ In this view, a poetic organizing principle can be considered to advance from being an added feature to holding an integrated role in an oral-poetic system when its use exhibits structuring by conventions (e.g. underlying the formation of rhyme collocations used within a short line), requirements or constraints (e.g. accompanying end rhyme between short lines with double alliteration), and/or functions (e.g. use in metrical compensation for additional alliteration).

2018: 78–81). Griffith interprets the additional alliteration as reflecting end rhyme as threatening the normal line structure, because the rhyme connects the lines by their endings on their cadences rather than by the onsets of the initial strong positions of the lines (Griffith 2018: 81).

Matyushina also views rhyme as violating “the metrical hierarchy of stresses in the long line” (2011: 42). She asserts that “the consolidation of the short line, the whole of which is filled by the rhyme formula, destroys the autonomy of the long line, weakening its prosodic rhythm” (*loc. cit.*). This view is rooted in an idea that rhyme was opposed to the rhythm of the meter in a fundamental way – a view that aligns well with Matyushina’s model of the breakdown of the Old English meter as end rhyme became dominant in the poetic ecology (2018). It also resonates with interpretations of *dróttkvætt*’s distinctive rhythm being linked to metricalized rhyme (Smirnitskaya 1994 [forthcoming]), to which Matyushina subscribes (2018: 274). However, this explanation seems to reproduce the dominant discourse about rhyme and alliteration as competing metrical organizing principles; it appears problematic under scrutiny.

A central issue with Griffith’s interpretation is that it is not clear that there is a fundamental difference between end rhyme’s emphasis on the final strong position and that produced by cross alliteration (**A B A B**), which is a relatively common added phonic device. Although cross alliteration is used with polysyllabic words, it may also involve monosyllables. For example, in the line *Ic ðe, frymða god / ond frofre gæst* (*Judith* 83) [‘I, from you, god of inceptions / and spirit of comfort’], cross alliteration gives weight to the cadence on the parallel heads of noun phrases naming the Christian God (*god, gæst*). The combination of semantic weight and alliteration could open these words to foregrounding in oral delivery, making them of equal or greater prominence relative to those bearing metrically required alliteration. In the cases with end rhyme, if alliteration were only on the first strong position in the a-line, the end rhyme pattern would form the same structural progression (**A r A r**). Rhyme within a short line predominantly occurs in b-lines (Bredehoft 2005b: 225–228; Matyushina 2011: 41–42) without systematically activating a requirement of additional alliteration in the a-line (e.g. *Andreas* 747: *godes ece bearn / þone þe grund ond sund*, **A X Ar r**). Rhyme on the final strong position in a long line thus does not itself destabilize the meter. There seem to be no grounds to assume that the second strong position in a b-line receives significantly greater prominence through end rhyme across an a-line and b-line owing to an inherent quality of the phonic device itself.

This rhyme structure’s use appears sufficiently regular to have established a convention of accompanying it with additional alliteration already in the earliest poems. Put simply: it is integrated into the poetic form to the point of

being linked to a regular metrical condition. If such end rhyme was perceived as problematic for the alliterative form in a way that cross-alliteration was not, it seems paradoxical that poets would use it at all, let alone use it with sufficient regularity that it was the only rhyme structure to develop an associated metrical requirement for acceptable use. The metrical requirement for the use of this type of end rhyme appears to have been an established part of the poetic system already before the earliest recorded poems. The modern discourse on alliteration and rhyme as competing poetic organizing principles in connection with this poetry is rooted in the collapse of the Old Germanic meter as rhymed poetry rose to dominance. A perception of end rhyme between short lines as destabilizing the alliterative meter would seem to be contingent on recognizing end rhyme as a poetic device for linking lines in pairs. This seems anachronistic for the metricalization of its accompaniment by additional alliteration already before the earliest poems when end-rhymed verse only spread through Europe during the Middle Ages.⁸ A more nuanced explanation is needed. I propose that this requirement is driven by a combination of two factors.

The first factor is that this structure of rhyme including the vowel can only be used in a pattern equivalent to cross alliteration (**A r A r**). I advance that the combination with metrically required alliteration only on the second strong position of the a-line (**X Ar A r**) would produce a non-linear progression comparable to chiasmic alliteration (**A B B A**), which can be found but seems generally to be avoided (see Griffith 2018: 137–145). Perceiving the rhyme on the final strong position forms a connection back to the first metrical alliteration. This would potentially ambiguate the primacy of the b-line's first strong position in its metrical function by having the final strong position make an equivalent connection with the same metrical position rather than with a position subsequent to it. This view is contingent on rhyme being perceived as a phonic patterning device on equal footing with alliteration. I thus propose that complementary use of alliteration and rhyme are governed by the same metrical principles. Accordingly:

- (a) A second phonic pattern of rhyme or alliteration in a long line must either be completed before or on the first strong position in a b-line (i.e. metrically required alliteration's fixed position) or only begin after the first position carrying metrical alliteration

⁸ For recent work on rhyme, see Fabb, Sykäre 2022.

The meter's basic principle that the second strong position in a b-line cannot alliterate with the first combines with principle (a) to account for both additional patterns of alliteration and also of rhyme including the vowel. In the case of rhyme, principle (a) accounts for both end rhyme between short lines and rhyme within a short line, as well as the absence of other patterns of rhyme that would violate the principle (e.g. Griffith 2018: 81).

The second factor concerns forming linkages between a pattern of alliteration and any pattern of rhyme incorporating the vowel within a long line. Rhyme pairs within a short line commonly carry alliteration on the first member (**Ar r A X** or **A X Ar r**). When one member of the rhyme pair also alliterates, the rhyme is integrated in the linear progression of the line's metrical rhythm. Consequently, the rhyme becomes perceivable as an extension of metrical alliteration rather than as competing with it. In this light, the Old English metrical requirement that end-rhymed short lines be accompanied by double alliteration in the a-line may be rephrased as a generalized requirement for the use of rhyme:

- (b) At least one member of a rhyme pair including the stressed vowel must also carry the metrically required alliteration

When rhyme does not appear to be generally opposed to alliteration, principle (a) would require that metrical alliteration always begin on the strong position preceding the end rhyme (**A r A r**), and principle (b) requires that one member of the rhyme pair also carries the alliteration, regularly resulting in the pattern observed by Griffith (**A Ar A r**). According to this model, the co-occurrence of double alliteration with end-rhyme on an a-line and a b-line becomes viewed as the result of a general principle governing both additional alliteration and rhyme involving the stressed vowel and an accompanying principle governing the use of rhyme. These principles hold for the most metrically regular poems, which are predominantly those seen as oldest.⁹ If the account here is roughly correct, rhyme was metrically integrated into the Old English poetic system, and the metrical compensation of additional alliteration through uses of rhyme within a short line are an extension of rhyme's integrated role in the meter.

⁹ For an associated discussion of the principles in Old English charms and how they diverge from what is observed here, see Griffith 2018: 148–150.

Comparison with Old Saxon

Bredehoff's analysis of Old English rhyme is in a comparative study of rhyme in Old Saxon alliterative verse. Old Saxon poetry impacted Old English especially in connection with the spread of Christianity, including through the translation and adaptation of Old Saxon poems into Old English. Bredehoff focuses on recurrent rhyme pairs as a methodological strategy to assess whether Old English received influence from the Old Saxon usage of rhyme (2005b: 205). His comparison was thus strategically aimed at the question of whether parallels between Old English and Old Saxon are the results of that era of cultural contacts or have deeper historical roots.

The Old Saxon corpus is only about one fifth the size of that of Old English. Bredehoff identifies only six recurrent rhyme pairs, one of which is within a compound and two of which are somewhat complicated (2005b: 220, 229). One of the complicated rhyme pairs is found in only a single instance in Old Saxon with the second example in the Old English *Genesis B*, which was translated from Old Saxon, and a third example in the Old English *Guthlac A* (2005b: 205). The relationship between the Old Saxon and Old English examples is open to interpretation. The second complicated case is of *mahtig : drohtin* ['powerful : lord'], found in eight instances. Although Bredehoff does not otherwise survey stem-syllable rhymes with contrasting vowels, he feels *mahtig : drohtin* is important to include because it corresponds to the most common rhyme collocation in the Old English corpus, *miht : drihten*.

In contrast to the variety of Old English poems that are characterized as earlier or later and as better or worse representatives of their contemporary poetic system (Russom 2002), a caveat of the Old Saxon corpus is that it is largely constituted of the epic *Heliand*. This is a single poem written by or dictated from, it seems, from a single poet. Consequently, a prominently recurrent formula might be specific to the poet's idiolect or to a local dialect (cf. Reichl 2022: 33–36). In addition, the Christian subject matter of *Heliand* both contributes to and limits what phraseology appears. As an epic in the era of religious change, this raises questions of how widely representative the poem is of the broader idiom. The most common Old Saxon rhyme collocation is found in 41 examples and contributes significantly to the relative frequency of rhyme pairs in the corpus (Bredehoff 2005b: 220, 229). If its use is generally representative, it would be proportionate to around 200 examples in the Old English corpus, where *miht : drihtin* was the most frequent rhyme collocation, found in only 81 examples, weighted in translations of the Psalms. The Old Saxon rhyme pair is the phrasal formula *Iudeo liudi* ['Jewish people'] and its variations, probably specific to Christian epic, and potentially coined

by the *Heliand* poet. The formula supports stem-syllable rhyme as used by Old Saxon poets and suggests that it was operative when the poetic form was being adapted to Christian subjects, rather than rhymes only being preserved in archaisms. At the same time, this formula highlights the corpus's limitations and the possibility that *Heliand* skews the image of the register and its relation to meter.

The Old Saxon evidence seems to point in conflicting directions. The 'new' formula *Iudeo liudi* points to current value and prominent use, while the relatively sparse evidence for recurrent rhyme pairs could point to the decline of rhyme in the tradition and that its existing uses were fossilizing. The ambiguity here may be linked *Heliand*'s dominance in a relatively small corpus. Bredehoft's comparative study is successful in making a strong case for stressed-syllable rhyme including the vowel within a short line as an integrated feature of the Old Saxon poetic register. In other words, rhyme was not simply something that occurred by accident or as a spontaneous textural feature: its use exhibits conventionalized patterns within the meter and some words were linked by alliteration with sufficient regularity to appear as conventional rhyme collocations. That some of these, like *Iudeo liudi*, operate as formulae (2005b: 223), is a further indicator of conventionalization – i.e. that phrasal units that were regularly used to express a coherent unit of meaning could be internally organized by rhyme.

The number of recurrent Old Saxon rhyme pairs is limited, while comparison with the Old English evidence reveals that some of these appear related or somehow shared while others appear independent (2005b: 221–224). Matyushina's argues for the gradual rise of rhyme in the historical evolution of the Old English poetic ecology (2018). However, there is a sufficient mismatch of the rhyme pairs between Old English and Old Saxon that Old English rhymes do not look like they generally originate through translation, although this might be possible for isolated cases like that in the Old English *Genesis B*. Also, the relatively few and infrequent rhyme collocations in Old Saxon makes it improbable that use of rhyme pairs within a short line was taken up from Old Saxon as an emblematic device of imported Christian poetry and were then adapted into and spread through the Old English idiom. In other words, there is no reason to think that this feature was absent from Old English poetry and that it was received by Old English poets as a characteristic feature of Old Saxon compositions that was then desirable to adopt and was then generalized to the Old English poetic system. Formally, the recurrent rhyme pairs of Bredehoft's data are found more frequently in b-lines than the corresponding rhyme pairs he identifies in Old English: two out of three rhymes including the vowel are found in b-lines, rather than two out of five as in Old English.

The predominant use of rhyme pairs in b-lines thus aligns more strongly with the metricalization of this type of rhyme in even lines / b-lines in *dróttkvætt*.¹⁰ The weight of probability falls to Bredehoft's conclusion that rhyme has deep roots in both traditions, and each developed on its own trajectory.

Bredehoft advances that, “[a]lthough, in general, rhymes are less varied in Old Saxon than in Old English, they are at least as frequent in the surviving poems, and so they are just as likely to have been functional for Old Saxon poets” (2005b: 220). He contends that “it seems likely that rhyme could appear in place of double alliteration in both traditions” (2005b: 223). He identifies no examples, but this hypothesis finds some support in the tendency to use rhyme pairs in b-lines in accord with the corresponding type of rhyme in *dróttkvætt*. The Old Saxon corpus is so much smaller that the lack of examples of metrical compensation may easily be an accident of the data. This data is dominated by a single epic poem and the Old English corpus reveals that use of rhyme in metrical compensation varies between poets. Conventional rhyme pairs nevertheless indicate that rhyme was perceived and held an established position in the poetic idiom. In the light of rhyme's use in Old English, this position as an added device likely had a comparable role in relationship to the meter, although its conventions of use cannot be assumed identical.

Some Considerations of Old High German

The corpus of Old High German alliterative verse is both extremely limited and problematic (e.g. Stanley 1984). Although Matyushina seems to have covered rhyme in Old High German in her dissertation (1986), I have not had access to this and am unaware of any other survey of rhyme focusing on the Old Germanic meter. Sievers points out a rhyme-based syndetic phrase filling a short line in *The Wessobrunn Prayer* 6b – *enteo ni uuenteo* [‘end nor limit’] (1893: 49). However, I have made no attempt at a detailed survey the corpus. Nevertheless, the Old High German Merseburg Charms exhibit several examples of rhyme that seem likely to have been perceivable and warrant discussion here.

Although the Merseburg Charms are generally viewed as in the same alliterative meter as would have been used in epic, they exhibit similar variations

¹⁰ Examples with the participation of stressed vowels present 22 in a-lines, 38 in b-lines; the *mahtig* : *drohtin* collocation presents 2 in a-lines, 6 in b-lines (see Bredehoft 2005b: 229). For both types, the tendency appears to be that one third of examples appears in a-lines and two thirds in b-lines.

to what is seen in Old English charms, where the meter functioned somewhat differently (Stanley 1984; Roper 2011; see also Griffith 2018: 148–150). Under comparative scrutiny, features such as extensive lexical repetition in parallelism seem to belong to a common Germanic charm tradition (Stanley 1984; Tolley 2021: 331–342; cf. Matyushina 1994: 133). Variations from metrical ideals in these texts include bypassing a word expected to carry alliteration in the first strong position of an a-line and having it instead on the second, and double alliteration in the b-line (Stanley 1984). The two Merseburg Charms do not exhibit stem-syllable rhymes with a vowel within a short line, yet they illustrate that multiple forms of rhyme were salient. The use of rhyme in the charms connects with the charms' lexical and phonic repetitions in parallelism. They generally show also that stem-syllable rhymes were within the tradition's repertoire of poetic devices.

In the *First Merseberg Charm*, lines 2–3 read:

suma hapt heptidun suma heri lezidun
suma clubodun umbi cuoniouuidi

some fettered the captured some armies inhibited
some severed around sharp bonds

Line 2a includes a stem-syllable rhyme with variation of the vowel, which complements the double alliteration: *hapt* : *heptidun*. This type of combination of alliteration and rhyme in a $C_1(C_2)V_1C_3(C_4) : C_1(C_2)V_2C_3(C_4)$ pattern was not foregrounded above, but it is discussed by Matyushina as an established device in both Old English (2011; 2018) and in Old Norse eddic poetry (1994: 129–137), in addition to being used in *dróttkvætt*, where metrically required alliteration and rhyme excluding the vowel may be on the same positions. The parallel series above is then made salient by both repeating the initial word *suma* and ending with a morphological rhyme following the stressed syllable, so that each short line begins and ends with the same phonic sequence: *heptidun* : *lezidun* : *clubodun*. Line 4a is linked to line 4b through a similar end rhyme:

insprinc haptbandun inuar uigandun
spring free of fetter-bonds escape the enemies

In this case, *haptbandun* is a compound of *hapt* and *bandun*, in which *-and-* has secondary stress in contrast to its counterpart in *uigandun*, but this is comparable to Old Norse *dróttkvætt* rhymes that are occasionally allowed between

lexically stressed and unstressed syllables (cf. also e.g. *Vǫluspá* 17.5–6). The density of lexical and phonic repetition through this short poem suggests that the rhymes were salient.

The Second Merseburg Charm is also characterized by heavy lexical repetition in parallelism. Lines 3–5 read:

thu biguolen Sinhtgunt Sunna era suister
 thu biguolen Friia Uolla era suister
 thu biguolen Uuodan so he uuola conda

then incanted Sinhtgunt Sunna her sister
 then incanted Friia Uolla her sister
 then incanted Uuodan as he well could

A stem-syllable rhyme occurs that reinforces the first metrically strong position in the a-line and connects it to the first strong position in the b-line in *biguolen* : *Uolla* in line 4 and in *biguolen* : *uola* in line 5.¹¹ This use of rhyme on the first positions of both the a-line and the b-line was observed as the most common pattern for linking short lines in Old English (Matyushina 2018: 270). The rhyme simultaneously reinforces the parallelism between these lines by placing the name (*Uolla*) and verb (*uola*) in the same relation to *biguolen*.

These examples represent a genre that applies the basic alliterative meter with both different flexibility than Old Germanic epics and with additional principles that lead to the salient production of repetitions.¹² Although the examples do not illustrate rhymes including the vowel within a short line, they present forms of rhyme both within a short line and linking short lines within a long line that are generally consistent with what was discussed in Old English. They offer general evidence that forms of rhyme were salient and of stem-syllable rhymes being used as a device in the poetry. Bringing the phenomenon of rhyme into focus in these examples highlights the potential for the role of rhyme to be more prominent in connection with the devices of repetitions common in Germanic charms. The Old High German evidence is thin owing to the exceptionally small and fragmentary corpus. Nevertheless, the Merseburg Charms' evidence for rhyme as a poetic device used in the poetry

¹¹ The conditions that made Old Norse rhymes of /l/ : /ll/ awkward are linked to the history of phonological changes in the language (Matyushina 1994: 108–109 and cf. 119) and did not hold for Old High German.

¹² Cf. Matyushina's (2011; 2018) discussions of relationships between lexical repetitions and rhyme.

supports the probability that the b-line *enteo ni uuenteo* reflects the same type of rhyme within a short line observed in Old English and Old Saxon.¹³

Excursus on the History of the Old Germanic Meter

Addressing the history of rhyme in Old Germanic poetics requires at the very least outlining a position on the history of the poetic form, because the perspective taken on the origin of the poetic form can impact the view on rhyme's relationship to it. This is particularly important in the engagement with Matyushina's work, who views rhyme as violating "the metrical hierarchy of stresses in the long line" (2011: 42), within her broader model of the breakdown of the Old English alliterative meter as end rhyme became dominant in a poetic ecology (2018). This view is explicitly opposed for Old English above, and it also seems inconsistent with usage of rhyme as a device with deep historical roots in the Old Germanic poetic system, which is argued for in the present triptych of articles.

Matyushina's approach to the meter is built on a view of the final strong position in a Germanic long line as historically the weakest in a fundamental and inflexible way. Rhyme on both strong positions in a b-line thus becomes contradictory, although rhymes are found in this position across Old English, Old High German, Old Norse and Old Saxon, not to mention emphasis received by this position in cross alliteration, and alliteration linking the second strong position of a b-line to the following long line.¹⁴ This is a view rooted in the identification of strong positions through alliteration and a corresponding interpretation of alliteration's regular absence from the final strong position as reflecting that it is markedly weaker (see also Smirnitskaya

¹³ Of course, the single example leaves this only a probability, since rhyme-based collocations and idioms were not necessarily exclusive to Old Germanic poetry, and the possibility of interference from Latin cannot be completely excluded.

¹⁴ Some formulaic phrases also seem to give semantic weight to the word in the final strong position. Individual words exhibit conventional patterns of use regarding whether or not they carry alliteration (Borroff 1962; Cronan 1986; Roper 2012) and also in which position in a short line or a long line they are used (Smirnitskaya 1994 [forthcoming]; Frog 2021), so neither use in alliteration nor position in a long line can be assumed *a priori* to correlate with semantic weight in a phrase or clause. It may also be noted that some larger rhetorical structures could foreground the b-line, such as the so-called 'envelope pattern', which can manifest as repeating sounds and words from several lines earlier; when the close of an envelope pattern is in a b-line, it may emphasize the final strong position (see Bartlett 1935: 9–29).

1994 [forthcoming]). This interpretation resonates with ideas of meters as language-driven (e.g. Smirnitskaya 1993). Such models tend to propose that a meter emerges as a spontaneous formalization of rhythms of a one-time contemporary language into an ideal periodic structure. Once it has emerged, the language-driven meter gradually falls into discord with historical language change, until it collapses when being replaced in conjunction with a new religion, medievalization, modernization, or some other radical cultural transition. I do not generally reject that the Old Germanic verse form likely followed a dipod rhythm. However, the model seems overly idealized and regular, without accounting for the poetic form's potential for variation in rhythm whereby the final strong position might sometimes receive emphasis, if only as a type of rhythmic variation. Such a possibility is reflected in devices found across Old Germanic poetics that engage this position. A fundamental problem with a purely language-driven model is that it imagines the spontaneous emergence of meter as both independent of poetics inherited and being adapted from an earlier language phase (cf. Suzuki 1988) and also independent of influences from outside of the particular language. This model of the Old Germanic poetic form also seems to suffer from a circularity: it takes as a point of departure the observation of how alliteration is metricalized, interprets the rhythm of the poetic form through that alliteration, and then interprets any phonic pattern connected to the final strong position as contravening the rhythm because that position is excluded from the metrically required alliteration. It is a description-based explanation that does not account for *why* alliteration would be metricalized on the third strong position in a long line rather than, for example, the first, which a dipod rhythm predicts should be the strongest; it also does not account for why the metrically required alliteration is excluded from also occurring on the final strong position in a long line. Further, this model does not account for why certain a-line rhythms but not others require double alliteration, which in turn underscores the exclusion of double alliteration from the b-line.

The origin of the Old Germanic alliterative verse form is unclear. Systematic line-internal alliteration or alliteration as a device linking lines into couplets is characteristic of Celtic, Germanic, and Finnic poetics.¹⁵ These form an isogloss of poetry traditions in Northern Europe. Although alliteration is sometimes viewed as an organic outcome of word-initial stress according to

¹⁵ Alliteration is also found in Italic languages as a prominent phonic device but it was an added device rather than being systematic to a poetic form (e.g. Salvador-Gimeno 2021). This type of alliteration is distinct from so-called vertical alliteration, which links lines together in series by their onsets, as in Mongolian oral poetics.

language-driven theories of meter, Nigel Fabb finds that alliteration may be found in poetics around the world, but it is unusual for it to be metricalized (2015: ch.5). Indeed, word-initial stress has continuity in Finnic and several other Uralic languages and traces back to Proto-Uralic, yet only in Finnic languages is alliteration a systematic organizing principle of the oral poetry. Alliteration is unambiguously an innovation in Finnic. Its position in an isogloss of other poetics characterized by systematic line-internal alliteration points to this as a contact-based development. Alliteration in Celtic and Germanic exhibit formal similarities (e.g. Travis 1943; Salmons 1992: 164–165). The connections between them appear to antedate language changes that pre-date the most intensive period of contacts between Germanic and Finnic speakers (Salmons 1992: 165; Stifter 2016: 66), which carried a flood of loanword vocabulary into Proto-Finnic and, as I have argued extensively elsewhere, had transformative impacts on Finnic poetics (Frog 2019). Thus, (a) broader evidence of Germanic impact on Finnic language and poetics, (b) the relative periods of intensive Finnic–Germanic language contacts and (c) the language phase in which Celtic–Germanic formal similarities could be shared or impact one another, along with (d) the general direction of influence from Finnic to Germanic, lead to the conclusion that alliteration became a systematic feature in Finnic poetics through (North) Germanic influence (Frog 2019: esp. 42–47). The isosyllabism of insular Celtic poetics also seems to be a historical development, whereas the most archaic Celtic poetic form seems to have been an accentual meter of two to three strong positions in a short line more similar to the Old Germanic meter (Russom 1998: 205–206; Mees 2008: 204–205; see also Tranter 1997: ch. 8; Stifter 2016). The use of repeating phonic patterns to organize lines into parts and to create cohesion, either between those parts within a line or in paired lines, appears to be among the most deeply rooted common structures of the Germanic and Celtic poetics. When the participation of Finnic poetics in the isogloss of systematic alliteration traces to transformative impacts from Germanic language contact, a similar process may also be behind the parallel innovations in Celtic and Germanic poetics. The flow of early cultural influence is far more likely to be from Celtic to Germanic rather than the reverse, raising serious doubts about purely language-driven modelling of the Old Germanic meter.

Alliteration may be considered to belong to the constituency of the meter, which can be distinguished from rhythm (Kristján Árnason 2007: 82). Following Kristján Árnason (2007), rhythm concerns principles on which positions and other units are counted, organized, and realized in a poetic form, and constituency concerns the formal elements and structures of which units of composition are constellations. Kristján views the constituency of a feature

like alliteration and rhythm as in a symbiotic relation: the constructions of alliteration are involved in creating the alternation between strong and weak positions, while the schemes by which alliteration operates are dependent on the rhythm rather than the reverse (2007: 108). Discussing the case of Old Norse poetry, he advances “that alliteration and rhyme depend on the rhythm, but that the rhythm does not depend on rhyme and alliteration” (2007: 86). He continues that the phonic patterning devices make those positions “in some sense more prominent in the text [...] without being rhythmically stronger” (*loc. cit.*), and ultimately that the phonic devices such as “alliteration communicate constituency more than rhythm” (Kristján Árnason, p.c.).

If alliteration’s metricalization in Germanic verse is considered historically rooted in a function of linking the b-line to the a-line, then its regular position in a b-line can be viewed as driven by salience in that function in the flow of oral performance. Salience is a concept complementary to constituency and rhythm. Salience concerns the relative degree of perceivability of elements and features of the poetry (metrical, linguistic, or otherwise). Salience can be particularly important to take into account in oral and oral-derived poetries, where verbalization may offer more fluid flexibilities in articulation than are visible in reified orthographic script (e.g. Tranter 1997: 161–165), while metrical well-formedness may be perceived on a spectrum of degree in the flow of performance (Frog 2021: 252–254). Comparison can be made to line-internal alliteration in the Finnic tetrameter. Unlike Germanic alliteration, Finnic alliteration prefers inclusion of the vowel following the initial consonant (so-called ‘strong’ alliteration), whereas alliteration that does not include the following vowel (so-called ‘weak’ alliteration) exhibits a proximity constraint linked to salience, normally limiting its use to adjacent words.¹⁶ This proximity constraint differs in that Finnic alliteration operates independent of rhythm, so it may occur in metrically weak positions, and it does not have a metrical function of systematically linking lines.¹⁷ I propose that the function of systematically linking lines historically drove the alliteration in the b-line to be as close as possible to the a-line, leading it to be metricalized as regularly positioned on the first position of a b-line rather than on a regular position in the a-line (cf. Ragnar Ingi Aðalsteinsson 2014: 44–47). This explanation is

¹⁶ This constraint has been found for North Finnic poetries (Leino 1970: 180), but has not to my knowledge been tested in poetries of Estonia (on alliteration in these poetries, see e.g. Leino 1986; Sarv 1999; Krikmann 2015; Frog 2019; on the differences in usage of rhyme in relation to alliteration in Old Germanic and Finnic alliterative meters, see Frog 2022b).

¹⁷ For a discussion of the historical factors behind the operation of alliteration in this poetry, see Frog 2019.

consistent with the widely observed phenomenon in traditional meters that they tend to exhibit greater regularity toward the end of the line as opposed to the beginning (a pattern to which it is opposed if the short line is viewed as the primary unit of composition). It is also consistent with the second but not the first position in an a-line carrying alliteration under conditions where phrasal stress makes the word in the second position ‘stronger’ than the word in the first, although the equivalent is not permitted in the b-line. Metrically, establishing the connection in the first strong position of the b-line would make an additional alliteration in the b-line superfluous. The metricalization of a contrast with the required alliteration in the b-line’s second strong position can then be seen as a reflection of superfluity in relation to that alliteration’s metrical function, irrespective of the relative strength of that position. Although this explanation is based on observed patterns of the poetic form, salience of the connection across the caesura accounts for metrical conventions of the b-line in terms of the metrical function rather than a hypothetical driving rhythm extrapolated from the meter. Within this model, neither cross alliteration nor rhyme on the final strong position in a b-line are problematic for the poetry’s rhythm because the model does not define the fourth position as *necessarily* less prominent than other strong positions.

This scenario sets double alliteration in a-lines in a different light. The a-line largely replicates the model of the b-line, which, ideally, results in metrically required alliteration on the first strong position of each short line, with a third metrically strong position between them. However, the metrical alliteration in the a-line is not required to fall on a particular position. The accentual meter’s basis on phrasal stress requires that the a-line’s first strong position carry alliteration unless the second strong position is filled by a word of greater ‘weight’ (Heusler 1925–1929). Nevertheless, when alliteration is on the first strong position in an a-line, double alliteration can then be seen as ‘permitted’ on this intermediate position in contrast to the final strong position. Whereas double alliteration in an a-line supports the salience of alliteration’s metrical function, double alliteration in the b-line would be redundant. The requirement of double alliterations in Ssx|S and other types of a-lines can then also be viewed in terms of the salience of alliteration in its metrical function – a function that is not necessarily exclusive of signposting strong positions (cf. Russom 2017: 58, 62).¹⁸ The requirement of double alliteration in normally

¹⁸ This issue is particularly interesting where the requirement of double alliteration is not bound to the rhythm of an a-line *per se* but to the lexical makeup of the a-line within that rhythm. This is the case with SxSx a-lines. Russom interprets these as having a trochaic Sx|Sx rhythm, yet double alliteration is only required when the first weak position is filled by a light

the first and second positions in hypermetric a-lines can be considered not only in terms of salience, but in terms of the avoidance of metrical ambiguity: it becomes a technique that avoids a lapse of two strong positions without alliteration before connecting to the b-line; it also avoids potential misinterpretations of a line's metrical organization, so that absence of alliteration on the third strong position signals that the b-line remains pending.

Cross alliteration appears as an alternative to double alliteration, creating a complementary connection between the a-line and the b-line (Bredehoft 2005a: 60–61). Cross alliteration might be viewed as predominantly a stylistic device, yet it receives a metrical function when used in compensation for a required double alliteration. However, cross alliteration is far less common than double alliteration and thus must be considered generally less desirable. That double alliteration appears markedly less desirable than an additional alliteration may be viewed from several angles. Although it might be related to a concern for over-alliteration (cf. Ragnar Ingi Aðalsteinsson 2014: 246), cross alliteration was clearly not unmetrical and seems not to have been in tension with the b-line's rhythm, as discussed above. Within the flow of performance, cross alliteration may have been less desirable as metrical compensation for double alliteration because that requirement would only be filled retroactively, when cross alliteration would be realized on the final strong position in a b-line. The delay might have had an aesthetic effect, and possibly have had a predictive dimension of anticipating cross alliteration when a required double alliteration was lacking. Rhyme within an a-line as compensation for double alliteration does not directly support the connection to the b-line, but it supports a linear chain of phonic connections as a progression across the first three strong positions and also signposts those strong positions. At least in Old English, the proposition above that rhyme including the vowel requires one member of the pair to also carry metrical alliteration makes salient the integration of rhyme with the linear progression of the line's rhythm. This principle simultaneously supports a priority of alliteration as the main device creating cohesion through the long line, to which additional patterns were organized as subordinate and secondary.

monosyllabic word, not when it is filled by the second syllable of the first word or a prefix of the second, leading him to propose that alliteration is required to mark the left boundary of the second foot (2017: 62–63). In texts transcribed in metrical rather than semantic units, I have found this type of line written with an S xSx structure, suggesting an S|xSx rhythm (e.g. Frog 2022a), but this does not resolve anything, since the same rhythm is implied for lines in which the second weak position is a prefix, although such lines do not require double alliteration.

The metrical convention of additional alliteration for certain types of lines points to an importance of the line-internal integration of strong positions into the acoustic texture up through the connection with the b-line, tethering to its first strong position in particular as the metrically regular mooring post for the long line. Salient integration is also relevant to rhyme within compound words like *þryðsmynd* as well as cross-alliteration within an a-line of an SsSs type (Bredehoft 2005a: 59–60). Such integration seems historically to have concentrated on the strong positions making salient the connection between the a-line and the b-line (e.g. Matyushina 2018: 270). However, there is no indication that the final strong position of the b-line was ever systematically excluded from such patterns or from the phonic signposting of strong positions. Instead, the priority seems to have been on the salience of the first strong position of the b-line producing cohesion with the a-line. The meter systematized the metricalization of alliteration on the b-line's first strong position, which should contrast with the second, but added phonic devices were not excluded from this position. According to this model, rhyme was a phonic device that could do metrical work in the final position that alliteration could not, without violating a “metrical hierarchy of stresses in the long line” (*pace* Matyushina 2018: 42).

Rhyme in Old Germanic Poetry

The work done on rhyme in Old English shows that stressed-syllable and word-stem rhymes were integrated into the poetic idiom. Although such rhyme was only exceptionally used in a metrical function to compensate additional alliteration, rhyme appears as an established device for reinforcing metrical alliteration and for buoying burdensome lines by integrating words carrying metrical primary and secondary stress into the acoustic texture of a long line. Old Saxon poetry shows parallel uses of rhyme independently integrated into the idiom especially in rhyme pairs used within a short line. These are only attested as elements of added form complementary to requirements of the meter. Nevertheless, use in the metrical compensation of additional alliteration may be inferred as probable but absent owing to limitations of the corpus largely to a single poem, even though direct evidence is lacking. The Old High German evidence is still thinner, but reveals rhymes used in comparable ways to those observed in Old English as well as a rhymed syndetic phrase that forms a b-line, paralleling syndetic formulae in Old English and Old Saxon. Together, the Old English, Old Saxon, and Old High German

evidence supports a view that rhyme was likely an integrated feature of West Germanic poetics that seems most likely to trace back to a common heritage. The Old English evidence is argued to reveal rhyme as metrically regulated and thus as having an integrated role in the meter rather than as competing with a meter to which rhyme was arbitrary. The evidence of rhyme collocations also in Old Saxon, their regular use within a short line, and the perceivability of rhyme as a device even in the scant Old High German evidence, make it probable that the metrical regulation of rhyme is equally rooted in the West Germanic tradition.

Comparison to the metricalized rhyme in Old Norse *dróttkvætt* makes this a strong conclusion, and reciprocally makes strong the conclusion that *dróttkvætt*'s rhyme originates from the same Germanic heritage. The formal equivalence of the type of rhyme makes it clear that this is a Germanic rhyme form. The metricalization of stem-syllable rhymes including the vowel in *dróttkvætt* even lines / b-lines is also consistent with the tendency for rhyme pairs with contrasting onsets to occur in b-lines in Old English and with a still greater tendency in Old Saxon, not to mention the one example in Old High German. When the metrical conventions of the b-line are viewed as driven by salience rather than by a fundamental contrast in the relative emphasis of its strong positions, rhyme as an added feature can be viewed as used to reinforce metrical alliteration, the internal cohesion of lines, and also to signpost strong positions without interfering with the rhythm of long lines. Although the origin of the Old Germanic meter remains obscure, the very deep roots of its connections with Celtic metrics invite the possibility that rhyme as well as alliteration may trace back even to that early era of contacts. Although this possibility remains conjecture, the devices of phonic patterning commonly brought into comparison to suggest impacts of Irish (or Welsh) poetry on *dróttkvætt* (Travis 1943, etc.) have been revealed above to potentially be rooted in a Proto-Germanic heritage. Consequently, the possibility of a historical relationship between the Germanic and Celtic poetics also requires reassessment.¹⁹

¹⁹ This thriptych precipitated as a response to a conversation with Haukur Þorgeirsson over a very long lunch at a Chinese buffet. I would like to thank Geoffrey Russom and Kristján Árnason for their valuable comments and criticisms on an earlier version of the three articles.

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