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Rewilding: Reimagining Nature After March 11, 2011

SUGA Keijiro

Rewilding: Reimagining Nature After March 11, 2011

SUGA Keijiro

Overview

I was granted a research year in 2014 and spent some time reflecting on what had been on my mind since the Great East Japan Earthquake of March 11, 2011. Initially, my interest was in ethnopoetics, and I wanted to inquire into different native traditions across the world (in North America, Oceania, and East Asia) regarding how people inhabit a land and how the value attached to the land is expressed verbally (poetry, songs, narrative) or figuratively (sculpture, drawing, material design). The life style of today's highly globalized consumerist society is far from sustainable. It only leads to the exhaustion of natural resources and the constantly growing wealth inequality among peoples of the world. Modernity, the era of European expansion and capitalism, has long since reached a deadlock without any guiding principle for the future. Ecological catastrophe too lurks ominously. In the 1980s "postmodern" was a buzzword, but nobody was sure how really to exit from the reigning modernity. The "post" in "postmodern" could only invoke the postponement of a solution. Then this millennium dawned as a new age of global, multi-agent terrorism. Fifteen years in, it seems to have become yet more apparent that this is the age of ubiquitous micro-wars at many different levels.

I needed to reconsider the basis to understand the world as it is. It seemed to me that a total revision of humankind's relationship with nature was necessary. A radical reconsideration comes from the point of convergence between 'ethnosophy' and 'ecosophy.' By ethnosophy I mean the totality of sustainable praxis, knowledge, and wisdom of a local tradition to deal with the environment. By ecosophy I mean a transcultural ecological view of the Earth as our only viable, closed system. The synthesis of these two will offer an episteme suitable to examine the status of life in general in this anthropocene (the era of the drastic changes in the environment caused by human activities after the industrial revolution). More than merely an "environmental issue" – this wording is inevitably human-centered – our approach tries to incorporate humanity's attitude towards other species, both animals and plants.

Thus set, this problematics gained a new significance after the Great East Japan Earthquake, which came first as a mega-scale natural disaster and then was followed by a technological catastrophe at the nuclear power plant. We are challenged by both nature and technology. I do not claim to have thought this through, but this basic framework remains strong.

I made research trips to Alaska (June 2014) and Haida Gwaii (August 2014), and then sojourned in Vancouver, London, and Seattle, visiting each city's impressive anthropological exhibitions. I gave some lectures and a paper on related topics in the 2014 academic year. With

Ursula Heise of UCLA, I was one of the two keynote speakers at the International Symposium on Literature and the Environment (ISLE) East Asia in November 2014 in Nago, Okinawa. The lecture given in English was titled “On the Rewilding Coast: Reflections After March 11, 2011.” In a considerably revised form the lecture was given again at UCLA and the University of Southern California in January 2015. Then in March 2015, I read a paper on Japanese photography after the earthquake at the American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA) held in Seattle.

I am currently president of the Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment (ASLE) Japan and have been working on theoretical narratives in this vein. In what follows I will mainly talk about the concept of *rewilding*, as this is the topos where ethnosophy and ecosophy come across each other.

Rewilding and Reinhabitation

I will begin with two terms, rewilding and reinhabitation, and discuss them in relation to the current socio-historical context of Japan after March 11, 2011. The situation after the catastrophic accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant is quite gloomy and will continue to be so, for the dispersion of radioactive materials is far from being contained. As of now, in January 2016, this is an ongoing accident, which may arguably be the worst nuclear disaster in human history, surpassing that of Chernobyl in 1986.

Given this framework, it is not too much to say that our modernity has been seriously questioned. What I aim to do here is to propose a more land-based future founded on a place-based ethics and way of life. Being sustainable is a must in globalized human economy, and being hospitable to other species – animals and plants alike – is another natural mandate imposed upon us. And these two words, rewilding and reinhabitation, point exactly to an alternative vision of our society’s ecological status.

Rewilding has gained considerable currency in conservative biology in recent years and has been put into practice in various parts of the world. Reinhabitation as I understand it was proposed by the American poet and thinker Gary Snyder and offers a powerful revisioning of our modern way of life. Their relevance to current critical thinking is at the center of this essay. In presenting this thread, I will follow more or less chronologically my own experience of various places. Each place has left its trace on my thinking. In a sense, places think through me, and this may turn out to be a way out of our usual habits of thought.

On the Coast of Minami Soma

In the past several years, since the Great East Japan Earthquake, some deep crisis of Japan’s modernity has become more apparent than ever. Needless to say, it is probable that we are constantly living a time of crisis at any given moment in history. Even so, some events can become a trigger to make people think about their destinies, both individual and collective. What can we do, then, as a response to the multi-layered crisis that we are forced to face?

Let me begin with a brief visit that I made to Minami Soma, Fukushima, in February 2013. The coastal area had been heavily hit by the tsunami and literally washed away. A vast empty space appeared. On seeing the empty tract of land, I was shocked to imagine that this had been rice-paddies before the earthquake, probably scattered with some houses here and there. It was a typical Japanese countryside washed away and reduced to its original, naked appearance by the natural disaster. In this emptiness there was a solitary red coke-vending machine which was mysteriously left behind after all the rubble had been cleared. The sadness of the scene was almost unbearable. Nearby on a hill by the sea was a local shrine that had been totally demolished. My friend Durian Sukegawa, a novelist and performer, was agape to see the ruined shrine, the central seat of *genius loci*, left as it was twenty-three months since its destruction by the earthquake.

Walking the deserted coastal land with him, I was constantly reminded of the true nature of this area. What came back with the tsunami was the original coastline of Fukushima. Historically, this was a wetland like so many coastal areas of Japan and was only recently (in the nineteenth century) drained and turned into an agricultural field. Then the tsunami reclaimed the land to the sea. From what I heard, for over a year after the tsunami, the salt water remained on this land, inviting back many creatures – birds, crustaceans, and such. They flourished for some time. Then again the water was drained. Now there is nothing but emptiness in this ecological no-man's land.

Almost five years have passed, but we are still in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake and the historical tsunami which followed. The tsunami led to the catastrophic meltdown and explosion at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant on the following day. As a result, radioactive material has been secretly spreading over the Pacific Ocean on an unprecedented scale. The whole situation, especially in the immediate vicinity of the exploded power plant, has not ameliorated at all. Nothing is under control. Still, the current administration, strongly backed by the industry, keeps ignoring it.

For the Japanese society, the Great East Japan Earthquake is undoubtedly the biggest collective trauma since World War II, and through the experience that followed, a deep structural division running through the nation and society has surfaced. There seems to be no exit in sight.

We have long been facing the end of modernity and its very human-centered, pervasive logic on which modern Japan has been functioning over the past hundred years. Yet even now, there are people who deny the dead-end of such logic and wish to prolong its afterlife. It is downright scary when those in charge of the governance of a society are the strongest proponents of a ferociously profit-oriented economy without any consideration for its long-range consequences. What suffers is, very simply put, the life of the land.

Two Contrasting Statements After March 11, 2011

Modernity, as a historical period, must have its entrance and exit. Chronologically, it began at a certain moment, most notably with the industrial revolution. Then it expanded in space as a conquering movement of the humanized areas (city in the broad sense) over wilderness. But this

period-movement is never free from its own material limitation. We are always brought back to the most basic condition of human existence: that we, as a human species, are totally dependent upon our physical, natural environment. Human society is embedded in nature as a very complex, auto-poetic whole. At each moment we are exposed to and traversed by all natural forces. Our body and mind are constantly affected by the fluctuation of the elements. To me, the situation after March 11, 2011 is a call for awakening and revising the contour of our modernity, its attitudes, its technological habits, its industrial conventions, and its globalized economy.

But some folks will never repent. In the days following March 11, I was horrified by a simple statement made in Japanese, and then profoundly moved by another. These were both uttered in the same language, Japanese, concerning the experience of the great earthquake, but the attitudes and thinking behind them were diametrically opposed.

The first statement, the one that shocked me, was that of the former PM Yasuhiro Nakasone who was instrumental back in the 1950s in bringing the whole package of nuclear industry into Japan. According to Nakasone, destruction by tsunami is the kind of disaster unavoidable for an archipelago nation facing the Pacific. That much is true. But then he goes on to say: "Now is the time to show the world how we Japanese have fought against the great nature's challenge and overcome it. We should not be defeated by nature."¹

It is his usual way to be grandiloquent and overly aggressive. To me, this statement uttered immediately after March 11, sounds vain, ignorant, and shameless. The kind of mindset that takes for granted the civilization/nature dichotomy in antagonistic terms has determined the basic rhetoric of modernity. But it is the very conception of 'human vs. nature' that needs to be revised all over. We humans owe everything to that which we have come to call *nature*. The non-human environment that surrounds us is incomparably larger than the realm of human potency. The human world is totally embedded in nature. But then, this balance may have been turned very rapidly into the opposite over the past half century or so. Do we now live in a world where nature is only what is left of humanity's voracious intervention?

Diane Ackerman, in her recent book *The Human Age*, aptly writes: "Today, instead of adapting the natural world in which we live, we've created a human environment in which we've *embedded* the natural world."² Sadly, this is the consequence not only of modernity but also of the entirety of human society's growth in a longer timespan since the Neolithic era. According to Ackerman, "We [humans] and our domestic animals now make up 90 percent of all the mammal biomass on Earth; in the year 1000, we and our animals were only 2 percent."³ In a sense, Nakasone's statement is but a continuation of the human-centered logic that has always been at work since the time we became human; and yet, it sounded all the more crazy and obscene when it was uttered right after the massive destruction caused by natural forces.

I was so disturbed by Nakasone's statement that I was deeply consoled by a statement made around the same time by an eleven-year old girl who was among the victims of the disaster. When her school was washed away by the massive tsunami, Rihoko Kikuchi of Yuriage, in the coastal area near Sendai, spent the cold night on the rooftop of her school building with her schoolmates. They were completely isolated, and the communication was cut. They did not know if their families were safe, and their families didn't even know if these children were alive.

Looking back on the night spent in sheer anxiety, here is what the girl told a newspaper reporter: “That night we saw a frightening number of stars in the sky. It was very sad, but without electricity and lights, the stars in the night sky were so powerfully bright. I wish I could be like that.”⁴

That night she waited for the dawn, holding hands with her younger brother, and it was only in the late afternoon of the following day, well over twenty-four hours after the tsunami, that her parents learned that the girl and her brother were safe at school. Such a challenge as the one she faced is one in which someone like Nakasone has no say. With the sight of death and destruction all around, she went through an experience that was well beyond the imaginary opposition of technology and nature. And going through this experience, the girl did not lose for a moment her sense of awe and gratitude to the stars.

The stark contrast between these two statements made me wonder what Japan’s modernity was all about. After the absolute experience of overpowering nature, the old politician’s habitual thinking was kept well alive and taken over today in the current administration’s irresponsible nuclear policies. But on the other hand, we have children of the devastated area such as Rihoko who never lost respect for nature and who try to invent hope for the suffering local community. This need for an invention of hope is probably the biggest lesson we learned from the experience of the Great Earthquake.

I stand by Rihoko’s attitude. The Iroquois nation in the northeastern North America has a so-called “Rule of Seven Generations.” Each time they hold a tribal meeting they renewed their pledge in the following manner: “Whatever we decide, we need to think over the possible influences that our decision may have for the following seven generations.”⁵ Seven biological generations probably will translate into the time-span of between a hundred fifty and two hundred years. It is exactly this kind of tangible sense of a longer time that is needed. With the overwhelming acceleration of life in modernity and constant exploitation of ‘now’ for the sake of instant profits, we are losing sight of our own position and situatedness within the whole planetary ecosystem. This lack needs to be attended to if we are to even survive, and furthermore not merely as a lonely species that has driven many of its natural companions into extinction.

On the Coast of Juneau, Alaska

Wilderness is now forced to dwindle. Before its total destruction, some measures should be taken. To me, the clue came from Alaska. I went to Juneau, Alaska, in July 2014. Southeastern Alaska is known as a bear territory and the area around Juneau is particularly interesting, as it is one of the very rare areas where brown bears and black bears coexist. I was there to meet the local photographer and writer Lynn Schooler, who knows both types of bears firsthand through many encounters and observations. He was a close friend of the late Michio Hoshino, undoubtedly one of the greatest wildlife photographers of the last century, up until Hoshino was killed by a grizzly bear in the Kamchatka Peninsula in 1996 at the age of forty-three.

Bears all over the world epitomize the power of the wild, and their presence can be the index of the wildness of the area. Juneau is an interesting capital where there is no road running

in from the outside; you must travel by sea or by air to reach it. And it was in the forest nearby that Lynn explained very nicely the natural transition of the land. In an interview I conducted with him, he concisely explained the process of rewilding of the land:

If you think about the passage of time and what it does to the land, how strong the life force is, what you can see here is where there used to be a town just a hundred years ago. Before that it was under the salt water and before that it was under the 2,000 ft. of ice, and now in a few hundred years it's already come back out of the ocean, took off an amount of the ice, become a town, grown a forest, had the forest cut away, and now just in the last hundred years it's already been replaced again. And this life force that does this is so strong that it shows us that the Fukushima area, too, can become a reservoir of life that affects everything around it. The area has great wilderness area possibilities.⁶

Here Lynn talks about nature's power of reclaiming the land. Historically, along the Southeastern coast of Alaska, there were many small settlements where people operated mostly in small-scale canneries. People here, many of them immigrants (interestingly, not a small number of them were from the Philippines), caught local fish and canned the meat for exporting. This was the kind of industry that lasted for a rather short period of time. After large fishing cannery boats were introduced, many of the coastal settlements were simply abandoned after people migrated to larger cities in search of jobs. In less than a century, these places have gone back to the forest. You can hardly tell that there once were inhabited houses. This area of Alaska seems to live on a different streak of time than ours. It is quite a revelation to know that a century is enough time for the forest to almost wipe out the traces of human inhabitation.

Also, the whole land has been in the slow process of so-called post-glacial rebound for centuries. Since the end of the last ice age, when all the ice which had covered the area thickly disappeared, the whole land has been slowly and constantly lifted. On the other hand, the glaciers high up on the surrounding mountains of Juneau are disappearing rather rapidly in recent years. In this area, geological time and the fact of global warming is felt everywhere. Yet there are bears, thriving strongly. Generally speaking, in much of our interaction with an other, we need an agent to mediate. The bear, which has long represented the power of the wild, can still fulfill its role as a mediator between us and nature-as-the-other. With the human-dominated realm expanding and the realm of the wild shrinking, the survival of bears is one of the challenges we face to keep our own sanity. To give them their share of the land is of utmost importance to recover a balance that necessarily calls for humans' self-restriction.

What I saw in Alaska immediately made me think of Fukushima's coastal land. After March 11, 2011, many photographers have visited the devastated area to capture the almost apocalyptic images of destruction. After three years, however, nothing is more important than to show the hints of recovery, how nature restores itself, how the once-humanized space is reclaimed by the natural logic of the respective land. By natural logic I mean the totality of sunshine, precipitation, temperature, terrain, and all those complex flows of the elements that make up a land's specific features. One photographer who focuses on the process of nature's self-restoration is Tomoaki

Akasaka, whose series “Distance” is an expression at the same time of mourning after the flood, and of the hope and solace that nature offers endlessly⁷.

His photographs taken in the Minami Soma area depict the constant working of natural forces. The elements are functioning as they always have. Plants, in a sense, are words uttered by the land. Consequently, animals, depending radically on the plants for sustaining their lives, are second-order words of the land, the land’s figures of speech. In fact, many unexpected things are happening in the area. There is *mizuaoi*, an endangered species of tiny blue flowers, which made an impressive comeback after the tsunami. There are swans and other migrating birds flocking in the lagoon-like pool made by the tsunami. There are herds of *inobuta*, a domestic hybrid of the boar and the pig, now gone wild and roaming the restricted area. With human control removed from the area, plants and animals are joyfully reclaiming much of the land.

On the Coast of Oostvaardersplassen, the Netherlands

Rewilding is a fact, always already. Whenever human intervention ceases, the land begins its process of rewilding with all of the flora and fauna. In my conversation with Lynn Schooler and Tomoaki Akasaka, the name of Oostvaardersplassen surfaced over and over again as a very successful and visible case of rewilding. This is a land which was created by drainage near Amsterdam. The work was begun in 1964, aiming to establish an industrial park, but after the project was completed the new-born land was abandoned for some time because of a financial problem. Miraculously, while the land was temporarily abandoned wild animals began to gather, and after the reintroduction of other species, including konics, the area became an unlikely sanctuary. This land became the subject of a very fine documentary film with a lot of breathtaking sequences called *De Nieuwe Wildernis*.⁸

My first reaction on learning the existence of this area was this: why can we not do something similar in Japan? Japan, as an island country with high mountains and a lot of precipitation, once had numerous and extensive marshlands on its coast. Those were vital parts of the original landscape of our islands. One of the old names of Japan, *Akitsushima*, can be translated as “The Land of Dragonflies.” Dragonflies are native to marshlands. But Japan’s history as rice producer for over a thousand years and particularly in the past hundred years turned marshlands into rice paddies and dry farming fields. Coastal marshlands are in fact the frontier of colonization. Imagine, for example the coast of Minami Soma. Originally a marshland, it was turned into rice paddies in the last century, shook by the earthquake, and washed over by the tsunami, reclaimed by the sea, submerged under the water after March 11, then drained again, leaving behind numerous tiny barnacles now dried up to show their little volcano-like shells.

But in the end only we can decide, only we can transform the coastal land into a new Oostvaardersplassen. There is an area around the melted down nuclear power plant where people are prohibited from entering for years and possibly centuries to come. What if we left that zone as a de facto sanctuary for wilderness? Plants and animals, even with their genes damaged by radiation, keep on reproducing and go through a ruthless process of natural selection; some may

thrive and some may die out, but otherwise they continue to incarnate the land's own logic without any human intervention. Rewilding can take place here too. It seems like an experiment worth pursuing.

In Lieu of a Conclusion

As a logical follow-up to my interest in rewilding, I visited Oostvaardersplassen in August 2015 with Tomoaki Akasaka to experience firsthand this land of extraordinary grace. Now maintained as a natural reserve, it is only partly open to the public. We asked for formal press coverage and were shown the most of this reserve, encountering herds of konics, red deer, and flocks of various birds. In Amsterdam we talked with Mark Verkerk, the director of the film, and Ton Okkerse, the producer. We have made a Japanese-subtitled version of the film. The film was first shown in Minami Soma on March 11, 2016 to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake. I hope this film will broaden our horizon on how to deal with the damaged land and the lives on it. Then something surprising might happen here too.

Notes

- 1 The Yomiuri Shinbun, April 10, 2011.
- 2 Diane Ackerman, *The Human Age: The World Shaped by Us*. W.W. Norton, 2014, p.12.
- 3 *Ibid.*
- 4 The Asahi Shimbun, May 23, 2011.
- 5 Keijiro Suga, *Yasei tetsugaku*. Kodansha, 2011. pp. 44-47.
- 6 My interview with Lynn Schooler, July 2014.
- 7 Tomoaki Akasaka and Atsunobu Katagiri, *Distance / Sacrifice*, Hama Naka Aizu Bunka Renkei Project, 2013.
- 8 *De Nieuwe Wildernis (The New Wilderness)*, directed by Mark Verkerk and Ruben Smit, EMS Films, 2013.

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**Jonathan Swift's Political Views
and Early Modern English Conservatism**

NAKAJIMA Wataru

Jonathan Swift's Political Views and Early Modern English Conservatism

NAKAJIMA Wataru

Jonathan Swift (1667–1745) is noted as a political opportunist or, to be more exact, a partisan opportunist in eighteenth-century political circles. He drastically changed sides from the Whigs to the Tories in 1710, when Robert Harley, 1st Earl of Oxford and Earl Mortimer (1661–1724), employed him as chief journalist for his propaganda scheme to back up the policies of his moderate Tory ministry. Yet Swift was expected to take an impartial stand in an effort to avoid extremes. He needed to take an apparently disinterested tone that would simultaneously gain the approval of the Tories and win the sympathy of the moderate Whigs. Thus his well-known political conversion has provoked an endless argument about the perspective from which his political writings should be interpreted: to put it briefly, whether he was a Whig or a Tory, or otherwise something else that would require a fresh approach, sometimes at the risk of appearing outrageous. To take an “authoritative” contrasting example (Higgins 4), F. P. Lock describes Swift as “a natural tory” (135), who upheld “conservative and authoritarian” political values at heart (179), typified by “order, stability and hierarchy” (136), while J. A. Downie presents him as a Whig, whose political belief is rather liberal, showing a respect for civil rights and an aversion to “the oppression of either a king or a ministry” (*Jonathan Swift* 259–60). Both types of interpretation have long carried their respective powers of persuasion, but all the more because of that, the debate is almost destined to be inconclusive.¹

To overcome such a dichotomous categorization of Swift's politics, it is worth noting Anthony Quinton's history of conservative thought in England in *The Politics of Imperfection: The Religious and Secular Traditions of Conservative Thought in England from Hooker to Oakeshott*. Concerning the early modern period, he stretches the lineage from Richard Hooker (1554?–1600) through Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) as “a digression” to Edward Hyde, 1st Earl of Clarendon (1609–74); the line continues from George Savile, 1st Marquess of Halifax (1633–95) to Henry St John, 1st Viscount Bolingbroke (1678–1751), David Hume (1711–76), Samuel Johnson (1709–84) and Edmund Burke (1729–97). The lineup is suitable at first glance, and chosen without relation to occupation: it includes a theologian, philosopher, politician, and even a litterateur. Indeed Quinton's attempt, though brief, makes a valuable contribution toward forming a sketch of conservative history in face of the prevalence of “progressive” Whig interpretations of history. It seems quite odd, however, that the two conspicuous apparent opportunists in the early years of the eighteenth century — Harley and Swift — are excluded from the list, in spite of possessing the same characteristics as Halifax, the most prominent “Trimmer,” who has generally been treated as a minor figure in this area. As the primary principle of conservatism, Quinton picks up traditionalism, which is represented in the deference

to “established customs and institutions,” and the “hostility to sudden, precipitate and, *a fortiori*, revolutionary change” (16). By his definition conservatism itself is essentially different from reactionism, immobilism, totalitarianism, and absolutism (19–21), and its core lies in the preference for “law and ‘mixed government,’”² so as not to give “absolute power” either to “the individual” or “the state” (22). Now what is important is that, on the basis of this assumption, Swift should be recognized as a conservative thinker. His political pamphlets were under the influence of Harley’s moderate politics, and, like Halifax, he persistently espouses mixed monarchy to protect the national polity of Britain regardless of party affiliation.

In this paper, therefore, the focus is on Swift’s political principles, especially on how he upheld the theory of the ancient constitution during his prime as a political writer. We will demonstrate that he can be placed in the tradition of conservative political thought above the ideological tug-of-war between the Tories and the Whigs.

The archetype of Swift’s political thought is expounded in *A Discourse of the Contests and Dissensions between the Nobles and the Commons in Athens and Rome, with the Consequences They Had upon Both Those States* (1701), which is known as his memorable first political tract. His initial aim for writing the *Discourse* was to defend four Whigs impeached for taking part in the negotiations for the Partition Treaties (1698, 1700) to settle the Spanish succession. John Somers, Baron Somers (1651–1716), a Whig leader at the time, was one of them, and Swift, then an obscure writer, tried to gain his backing. There is little doubt that Swift came over to the Whig side in the hope of winning public favor as a first step to satisfy his political ambition at the center of English politics (Hashinuma 63; Swift 1: xix-xx). While he set out to support the Whig cause, however, he fairly expressed his adherence to mixed monarchy in the *Discourse*. The point is that his constitutional theory is not necessarily bound by partisan constraints.

The *Discourse* is composed of Swift’s (rather biased) advisory account of the contemporary political situation in the form of historical reference to the politics in ancient times. His main emphasis is on the review of Athenian and Roman national polities. In his view, giving too much power to the people caused the ruin of both countries, and he pushes ahead with mixed monarchy as a sound governing system to keep the balance of power.

At the very beginning of the *Discourse*, comparing the three types of government — monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy — Swift upholds a mixed constitution as the best choice. In his explanation, “the Power in the last Resort” is supposed to be “held in Ballance among all Three,” and “it will be an eternal Rule in Politicks” that the “Ballance of Power” should “be carefully held by every State within it self” (1: 196–97; ch. 1). Added to that, he gives a detailed description of the component and character of the three parties, where he most values monarchic rule and shows his distrust of the common people. For example, Swift mentions the Crown (representing the function of monarchy) at the head, calling it “some one eminent Spirit,” who will “have great Influence on the People,” “grow their Leader in warlike Expeditions,” and “preside, after a sort, in their Civil Assemblies.” In other words, he appreciates its powerful potential to handle both foreign and domestic matters, with a managerial ability of parliament and a deterrence to the power of the commoners. Although he consistently supports *mixed*

government, it is highly notable that, in his heart essentially, monarchy — the rule by “a single Person” — is the most natural system to administer the country, especially when it faces national crises. He states: “[T]his is grounded upon the Principles of Nature and common Reason, which in all Difficulties and Dangers, where Prudence or Courage is required, do rather incite us to fly for Counsel or Assistance to a single Person than a Multitude.” Next comes the Lords (representing the function of aristocracy) as his possible second best, which consists of “such Men who have acquired large Possessions” (196). Swift recognizes the importance of sharing common values among the respectable classes. He considers men of property to be more suitable politicians than ordinary people because the former are less susceptible to corruption due to their affluence (Nakajima, “Riron” 13n6). He compliments the political credibility of the nobles, since they can smoothly “[unite] in Thoughts and Opinions,” and “[act] in Concert” to take measures for “preparing against Invasions from Abroad, and maintaining Peace at Home,” which will lead to the protection of their vested interests. With regard to the Commons (representing the function of democracy), Swift refers rather briefly: “The last Division [of power] is of the Mass, or Body of the People; whose Part of Power is great, and undisputable, whenever they can unite either collectively, or by Deputation to exert it” (*Discourse* 1: 196; ch. 1). Such conciseness itself would hint at his relative apathy and mistrust toward the multitude as a political force, and he frequently shows vigilance against the reinforcement of the power of the people. In sum, he is positively inclined to kingship among the three powers in order to operate a stable government, and this would lead us to see that his ideal polity is not a mixed government in a literal sense, but a mixed *monarchy*, with his preference given to the Crown.

Swift lays particular stress on the danger of “*Dominatio Plebis*, or *Tyranny of the People*,” and repeatedly argues that both Athens and Rome collapsed because of an excess of popular rule (*Discourse* 1: 209; ch. 2). As grounds for his distrust of the masses, he points to how public opinion is prone to change. He claims that it is “a great Error to count upon the Genius of a Nation as a standing Argument in all Ages,” because people tend to “frequently and entirely” change “their Temper and Genius.” He even declares that “the Genius of a Nation [. . .] in the Point of Government” will “vary, almost in every Age” as “in their Morals, their Learning, their Religion, their common Humour and Conversation, their Diet and their Complexion,” which may “have great Effects upon Men’s Notions of Government” (229–30; ch. 5). On top of that, interestingly enough, Swift gives a negative evaluation of the Puritan Revolution (1642–49), which he regards as virtually “a popular Usurpation” (231). Idealizing the reign of Elizabeth I (1533–1603; r. 1558–1603), for “the Power between the Nobles and the Commons” was “in more equal Ballance than it was ever before or since” (230), he insists:

But then, or soon after, arose a Faction in *England*; which, under the Name of *Puritan*, began to grow popular, by molding up their new Schemes of Religion with *Republican* Principles in Government; who gaining upon the *Prerogative*, as well as the *Nobles*, under several Denominations, for the Space of about Sixty Years, did at last overthrow the Constitution; and, according to the usual Course of such Revolutions, did introduce a Tyranny, first of the People, and then of a single Person.³ (230)

Here his instinctive antipathy to democracy emerges. In addition to his hatred of Puritanism as a clergyman of the Church of Ireland, Swift also detests “*Republican Principles*,” and describes the Revolution as the “overthrow” of the political constitution of England. At the same time, his criticism of the encroachment on the royal prerogative implies firm support for the power of the kings. On the other hand, it should be noted that Swift suggests a defense for the Glorious Revolution (1688–89). He observes that, after the Restoration (1660), the balance of power was endangered enough “to be overturned” by the two kings — Charles II (1630–85; r. 1660–85) and James II (1633–1701; r. 1685–88) — but the crisis was “very seasonably prevented by *the late Revolution*” (230; emphasis added). The Glorious Revolution did not end up in a civil one to allow the people to seize the power of the state. Instead, it can be seen to result in a conservative one to preserve the ancient constitution by securing the Protestant line — the abdication of the Catholic James and the invitation of the Protestant William III (1650–1702; r. 1689–1702) — with an ideological compromise both in the Tories and the Whigs.⁴ Viewed in this light, we can fairly say that Swift places top priority on the monarchical side among the three divisions of power. He even warns that the powers that be should make no concessions to popular pressure, reflecting on the examples of “the *Dissentions in Rome*, between the two Bodies of Patricians and Plebeians,” which were caused by the gradual predominance of the Commons (226; ch. 4).

Swift’s argument on the national polity has its basis in the historical consideration of politics even before the rise of the two-party system. This could suggest that, behind his motives for writing a Whig tract — incidentally, the Whigs were originally sympathetic to parliamentarism rather than royalism — he presents a constitutional theory which makes him deserve to be viewed as a conservative political thinker, rather than as a mere partisan author.

After failing to gain the patronage of the Whig Junto, Swift turned over to the Tory side. Harley had lost in the power game against Sidney Godolphin, 1st Earl of Godolphin (1645–1712), and went into opposition in 1708, but this eminent ex-Whig joined hands with the Tories, managed to overthrow the Godolphin ministry, and finally became the first minister of the Tory government in 1710. Swift got hired by Harley to work as a chief propagandist of his administration, and wrote partisan pamphlets to cement Tory control of parliament. In spite of changing sides for his own political interests, however, Swift advocated the theory of mixed monarchy above the Tory-Whig party lines, even in his commissioned tracts, *The Examiner* (1710–11; nos. 13–45) and *The Conduct of the Allies* (1711).

For instance, Swift writes as follows, assessing the state of the English national constitution:

We live here under a limited Monarchy, and under the Doctrine and Discipline of an excellent Church: We are unhappily divided into two Parties, both which pretend a mighty Zeal for our Religion and Government, only they disagree about the Means. The Evils we must fence against are, on one side Fanaticism and Infidelity in Religion; and Anarchy, under the Name of a Commonwealth, in Government: On the other Side, Popery, Slavery, and the Pretender from *France*. (*Examiner* 3: 13; no. 15, 16 Nov. 1710)

A “limited Monarchy” here is virtually synonymous with a mixed monarchy. On the one hand, as regal power is “limited,” parliamentary politics are relatively respected; on the other, republicanism is out of the question, labeled as “Anarchy, under the Name of a Commonwealth.” Now that radical commonwealthmen were just in a minority at the time, it would hint that Swift was on his guard against the growth of a democratic element (particularly the Commons) to the degree of interfering the influence of the Crown. Concerning the two-party system, Swift describes the interparty feud as an unhappy circumstance. Given that he takes the mutual moderation of both sides into account, the differences between the Tories and the Whigs appear in their “Means,” not in their ideas. In view of his inclination for theoretical discussion rather than concrete policy debates, he seems to care less for which party takes the reins of political action than for uniting common ideological features of both parties. He insinuates that party struggle will undermine the national interest, and makes positive remarks about the coalition framework which Harley undertakes. Keeping the balance of mixed monarchy would be a key concept in smoothly carrying out the nonpartisan government. Another important factor is religion, and Swift indicates that the “excellent” Anglican church system is supposed to be steadily maintained. While dissent is condemned as “Fanaticism and Infidelity” that should be screened out, devotion to Roman Catholicism is regarded as verging on “Slavery,” which would lead the country to bend its knee to France. Still more, enmity against France is illustrated in his unflagging support for the Protestant succession. Swift again acknowledges the settlement of the Glorious Revolution within a conservative framework, stating: “Most of the Nobility and Gentry who invited over the Prince of *Orange*, or attended him in his Expedition, were true Lovers of their Country and its Constitution, in Church and State” (5; no. 13, 2 Nov. 1710). What is implied in this extract is that the removal of James II from the throne to avoid the accession of his son, James Francis Edward Stuart, the Old Pretender (1688–1766), was an appropriate measure to avert the continuation of the Catholic kingship and protect the English national polity and, equally importantly, that the nobles and the commons together upheld the existing form of monarchic constitution. For Swift, politics is bound to “keep Things as much as possible in the old Course,” so the Revolution was a success in protecting the traditional church and state in England (6). Moreover, when he praises the successive reign of Queen Anne (1665–1714, r. 1702–14), he puts it thus:

Her Majesty is in the full peaceable Possession of Her Kingdoms, and of the Hearts of Her People; among whom, hardly one in five hundred are in the *Pretender's* Interest. [. . .] Neither perhaps is it right, in point of Policy or good Sense, that a Foreign Power should be called in to confirm our Succession by way of Guarantee; but only to acknowledge it. [. . .] [H]owever our Posterity may hereafter, by the Tyranny and Oppression of any succeeding Princes, be reduced to the fatal Necessity of breaking in upon the excellent and happy Settlement now in force. (*Conduct* 6: 27)

From this passage we can understand that the Revolution settlement is justified as a “happy” conclusion, and the “fatal Necessity” is aptly applied to the anti-French climate permeating

conservative English political circles.⁵ To overcome such a “fatal” national crisis, Swift seems to feel the need for the consolidation of Anglicanism, which can assume a crucial role in maintaining stable political order — under the rule of the ancient constitution — from the spiritual aspect (Speck 78). To that extent, the Revolution was a state of emergency which served to unify the nation beyond party affiliations.

These results could lead us to say that Swift’s adherence to a mixed monarchy — what is more, a thoroughly conservative type of monarchy that attaches overriding importance to the Crown — could be one of his unshakable beliefs that supersedes his chameleonic partisan attitude. His basic political standpoint did not change irrespective of the party he backed.

In order to prove that Swift’s political discourse bears the marks of the influence of English conservatism, as Quinton presents it, we need to investigate the political ideals of Halifax. Halifax wrote his most representative work, *The Character of a Trimmer* (writ. 1684, pub. 1688), at the very end of the life of Charles II. As a member of the Privy Council, he was closely involved in the Exclusion Crisis (1679–81), which gave origin to the party strife between the Whigs and the Tories. The Whigs supported the Exclusion Bill to block the succession of the king’s brother, the Duke of York (later James II), because of his Catholic faith; the Tories opposed it to advocate the royal authority and his claim to the throne. Halifax played a decisive role in defeating the Bill in defense of hereditary rights but, at the same time, he attempted to promote the Test Act (1673–1828) and restrain James’s despotism from his persistent anti-Catholicism. Despite his contribution to the prevention of civil war and the maintenance of English national polity under this middle-of-the-road settlement, Halifax incurred the enmity of both parties due to his apparently opportunistic nonpartisan manner.⁶ Although the nickname “Trimmer” was “put upon him angrily by his contemporaries,” he used it at his own will to justify a detached political attitude in *Character* (Raleigh vii).

Around the time of the Glorious Revolution, Halifax engaged in its peaceful settlement. He functioned as a liaison between James and William, and took measures to effect the former’s defection to France and the latter’s entry into England (Yamaguchi 46–48; Yamasaki and Yamaguchi 163–67). Halifax’s constant opportunism gained him persistent unpopularity in political circles, but he surely served to head off the crisis of civil war twice and protect the ancient constitution of England. He can be reasonably viewed as a precursor of partisan opportunists like Harley and Swift, and, above all, we can justifiably label Trimmer a conservative, if we take due account of his achievements in preserving traditional forms and social order against “revolutionary change” as Quinton suggests (16).

In *Character*, Halifax clearly expresses ill feelings against the masses. He regards them as having the nature to become “a formidable Adversary” to the powers that be, according to which, he declares that “[o]ur *Trimmer* [...] dreadeth a General Discontent,” which is “[i]n every shape [...] fatal,” and thus “no paines or Precaution can be too great to prevent it.” Normally the populace yields passive obedience to “Law and Authoritie,” but once “their passions are provoked,” they can “neither be convinced nor resisted.” Then he likens them to a wild “*Leviathan*,” with an intractable, destructive character. He hopes to keep it as “drowsie and

unactive" as possible for "the quiet of a Government" (Savile 241–42).

At this point, what has to be recognized is that Halifax is a distinct advocate of mixed monarchy. The essence of his views on the nation would be finely condensed in the following passage:

The dispute, which is the greater Beauty, a Monarchy or a Commonwealth, hath lasted long between their Contending Lovers [. . .].

We in *England*, by a happy use of this Controversie, conclude them both in the wrong, and reject them from being our Pattern, taking the words in the utmost extent; which is, that Monarchy is a thing which leaveth men no Liberty, and a Common-wealth such a one as alloweth them no quiet. Wee think that a wise mean between these Barbarous Extreame, is that which selfe preservation ought to dictate to our wishes, [. . .]. Wee take from one [Monarchy] the too great power of doing hurtt, and yet leave enough to governe and protect us; Wee take from the other [Common-wealth] the Confusion, the parity, the animosities, and the Lycence, and yet reserve a due care of such a Libertie, as may consist with men's Allegiance.

But it being hard if not impossible to be exactly even, our Government hath much the stronger Byasse towards Monarchy, which by the more generall consent and practice of mankind, seemeth to have the advantage in the dispute against a Common-wealth. (Savile 184–85)

Halifax depicts this totally well-balanced constitution as "a wise mixture" where "dominion and Liberty are so happily reconciled" (194). Of course, this "blessed constitution" must be via media Anglican (194), as "our Church is a *Trimmer* between the frenzie of Phanatick Visions, and the Lethargick Ignorance of Popish dreams" (243). As Halifax is deemed "one of the most prominent exponents of mixed government in the late seventeenth century" (Weston 122n68), it would not be beyond the realm of reason for Swift to have drawn on this useful theory.

Oddly enough, however, so far there has been no direct reference to Halifax found in Swift's writings. Yet, in *A Tale of a Tub* (1704), the author plainly shows deep involvement in religious and political matters at the time, picking up "*Exclusion Bills*," as well as "*Popish Plots*," "*Passive Obedience*," "*Prerogative*," and "*Liberty of Conscience*" (Swift, *Tale* 1: 42; introd.). These topics would have definitely attracted Swift's attention, and in view of his tenacious concern for contemporary national problems, we cannot definitively conclude that Swift knew nothing of the thoughts and actions of Halifax, a key player behind the scenes in this period.

Both Halifax and Swift were ideologically indifferent to party divisions, or rather, critical of party politics themselves (Raleigh ix–x). They also championed the Anglican establishment and mixed monarchy so as to protect the national polity — the ancient constitution — of England. From what has been discussed above, there is considerable reason to claim that Swift's politics embody conservative values along the lines of the traditional English political thought. If Halifax assumes a place in the history of conservatism as Quinton proposes, Swift also deserves to be

treated as a conservative thinker. His literary products in the late Stuart period were not just those of a mere political journalist: as suggested in the *Tale*, they can be read as “Speculations more becoming a *Philosopher*” (1: 42; introd.; emphasis added).

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Notes

- 1 See also Higgins 2–4; Nakajima, “Jonathan Swift’s Ideal Nation” 109–12; Oakleaf 35–36.
- 2 In the light of the tradition of the polity of England, this governing structure is regarded as almost equivalent to the so-called ancient constitution, which is composed of Crown, Lords, and Commons (Dickinson 62–64).
- 3 This “single Person” would indicate Oliver Cromwell (1599–1658; Prot. 1653–58), and Swift almost projects onto him an image of the incarnation of “*Dominatio Plebis*.”
- 4 Lockean theory was not so influential that it worked as a theoretical background to the Glorious Revolution. The Tories moderated their allegiance to the king into the allegiance to the Established Church, and many of the Whigs cherished conservative values including, for example, the maintenance of the current function of church and state, the retention of the vested interests of the wealthy, and the avoidance of the civil revolution, so that both parties could preserve the ancient constitution of England and justify their adjustments to the Revolution settlement. See Dickinson 13–90; Kenyon, *Revolution Principles* 2; Matsuzono 105–12; Nakajima, “Jonathan Swift’s Ideal Nation” 119–21; Western 1–4.
- 5 Incidentally, Harley, who represented the voice of the landed Tories bearing the financial burden of the War of the Spanish Succession (1701–14) against France, strove to proceed with peace negotiations in opposition to war advocates such as the Whigs and moneyed interests. He used Daniel Defoe (1660–1731) and Swift to manipulate public opinion for that purpose, and made shift to conclude the Treaties of Utrecht (1713–14). See Downie, *Robert Harley* 131–48.
- 6 Kenyon, Introduction 12–15; Yamaguchi 46; Yamasaki and Yamaguchi 147–54.

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**The Clause-Initial *þa* and the Finite Verb
in the Old English *Beowulf* and *Andreas***

ISHIGURO Taro

The Clause-Initial *þa* and the Finite Verb in the Old English *Beowulf* and *Andreas*

ISHIGURO Taro

1. Introduction

This current study examines clauses introduced by *þa* “then/when” and their finite verbs in two Old English (OE) narrative poems, *Beowulf* and *Andreas*, in order to find stylistic differences between the two poems. The clause-initial *nu* in *Andreas* was discussed elsewhere¹, where it was shown that there are some syntactic and pragmatic functions the single particle is assigned with. *Beowulf* and *Andreas* are poems of considerable length (3,182 and 1,722 lines long, respectively in their modern editions²). Elise Louviot reports that they contain a large amount of direct speech in their texts. She gives the following proportions: “*Genesis A*, 30% . . . ; *Beowulf*, 39% . . . ; *Andreas*, 53%” (1). It has been generally accepted that the *Andreas* poet had been influenced by *Beowulf*³. This study will discuss stylistic differences that appear in those clauses that are introduced by *þa*.

2. The *þa* Clause

Kuhn’s Laws describe an observable general tendency in OE poetry that unstressed light elements cluster at the beginning of a clause⁴. It is in accordance with the Laws that more than half the time the particle *þa* is found in a clause-initial position. In *Beowulf*, *þa* is found 146 times in a clause-initial position out of its total 260 examples, and in *Andreas*, 92 out of 160 examples. When calculated, it can be seen that the proportion of the number of examples with the clause-initial *þa* in these two poems are roughly the same, namely, 56% and 58%, respectively. It is interesting to note that the clause-initial *nu* is also found in almost the same proportion in both poems⁵. Some researchers regard the position of the finite verb as crucial in determining whether the clause-initial *þa* is an adverb or a conjunction⁶. The construction in which the clause-initial particle is immediately followed by the finite verb is hereafter designated by “*þa* + V + X”, and that in which the particle is immediately followed by anything other than the finite verb, by “*þa* + X + V”. The proportion of “*þa* + V + X” to “*þa* + X + V” is roughly two to three, as the following table shows:

	<i>Beowulf</i>	<i>Andreas</i>
<i>þa</i> + V + X	56	36
<i>þa</i> + X + V	90	56
totals	146	92

3. þa + V + X

The finite verbs found in the “þa + V + X” construction in *Beowulf* are the following five verbs, listed in the order of frequency:

- 48x wæs/wæron
- 5x com
- 1x gyddode, folgode, gebeah

There are 48 instances of the past tense form of *wesan* “to be” as in (1):

- (1) ða wæs Heregar dead (467)⁷
 “now that Heorogar was dead”

In fact, all but one of the 48 examples contain the singular *wæs*. The exception is found with the plural *wæron* in (2):

- (2) Ða wæron monige þe his mæg wriðon (2982)

Here as elsewhere, the clause-initial particle in this example is regarded as an adverb correlatively connected with another *þa* in the following line⁸, but R. D. Fulk translates this line as “They were many who bandaged his kinsman,” which shows that he has taken the *þa* as a demonstrative instead of an adverb. The fact that only one instance of *wæron* is found among so many instances of *wæs* should be behind his reinterpretation.

Five other examples in this group have the past tense form of *cuman* “to come” as in (3):

- (3) Ða com non dæges (1600)
 “Mid-afternoon arrived”

The other three are (4)-(6):

- (4) ond þa gyddode (630)
 “and then made a formal statement”
 (5) ond ða folgode feorh-geniðlan (2933)
 “and then pursued his mortal enemies”
 (6) ða gebeah cyning (2980)
 “then the king withdrew”

It should be noted that the *þa* is preceded by *ond* in (4) and (5).

This frequency of *wæs/wæron* in *Beowulf* as the finite verb in the “þa + V + X” construction (85%) is in good contrast with that of *wæs/wæron* in *Andreas* (50%), where only 18 out of 36 instances evince the “þa + V + X” construction:

- 18x wæs/wæron
- 8x com/comon
- 4x wearð
- 2x hleoðrade, reordode, gesamnodon
- 1x weorðedon

However, the singular form *wæs* predominates in *Andreas*. There is only one example with the plural *wæron*:

- (7) Þa wæron gefylde . . . dagas on rime (1695–96)⁹

“Then the number of days . . . was completed”

The examples of *com/comon* are with the singular form of the verb except the one in line 863.

Andreas uses some verbs that *Beowulf* does not use in its “*þa* + V + X” construction, which are:

wearð	“was/became” (92, 1085, 1386, 1595)
reordode	“talked” (364, 415)
hleoðrade	“resounded” (537, 1360)
gesamnodon	“gathered” (1067, 1636)
weorðedon	“honored” (1712)

The examples of *wearð* show that the verb may be employed instead of *wæs* in the passive construction, as in (8) and (9):

- (8) Ða wearð gehyred heofoncyniges stefn (92)
 “Then the wondrous voice of the heavenly king was heard”
- (9) Þa wearð acolmod, / forhtferð manig folces on laste (1595–96)
 “Then many of those left behind became frozen with fright, terrified at heart”

Two verbs, *reordode* and *hleoðrade*, introduce direct narration as in (10) and (11):

- (10) Þa reordade rice ðeoden / wær-fæst cining, word stunde ahof: / “Gif ðu þegn sie . . .”
 (415–17)
 “Then at once the powerful Lord, the king true to his pledge, spoke and uttered these words: ‘If you are a disciple . . .’”
- (11) Þa hleoðrade halgan stefne / cempa collen-ferhð . . . ond þus wordum cwæð: / “Wes ðu
 gebledsod . . .” (537–40)
 “Then the bold-spirited warrior spoke . . . and spoke these words: ‘May you be
 blessed . . .’”

4. *þa* + X + V

Beowulf has 90 examples of this construction. In examining the finite verbs that employ the “*þa* + X + V” construction, the following numbers of instances were revealed:

14x	wæs/wæron
5x	gefrægn
4x	(ge)wearð
3x	com/comon, ongan, ongeat, gewat

In this group, *wæs/wæron* does not predominate as much as in the other construction. The singular form *wæs* is found far more often than the plural *wæron*. The plural form is found twice (544; 1813–14¹⁰). Formulaic half-lines are conspicuous in this group. For example, the formula (12) is found in exactly the same form at 723, 1539 and 2550.

- (12) þa he gebolgen wæs
 “now that he was enraged”

Similarly, the sequence “*þa* him wæs . . . þearf” is found in (13) and (14). The sequence “*þa* ic . . . gefrægn” like (15) is found at 74, 2484, 2694, 2752 and 2773:

- (13) þa him wæs manna þearf (203)
 “now that he had need of men”
 (14) þa him wæs elnes þearf (2876)
 “now that he was in need of bravery”
 (15) Ða ic on morgne gefrægn (2484)
 “Then, as I have heard, on the morrow”

The “þa + X + V” construction occurs 55 times in *Andreas*. The following verbs are found three times or more as the finite verb:

- 6x (ge)wearð, ongan
 4x cwæð
 3x ætywde, het, onleac, gestah/stigon, wæs

The verb that predominates in the “þa + V + X” construction, *wæs*, occurs only three times. Instead, *(ge)wearð* is used more often. A similar expression with *wæs* found in the “þa + V + X” construction is constructed with *wearð*. Compare the two clauses in (16):

- (16) a. Ða wæs mod-sefa myclum gelissod / haliges on hreðre (892–93)
 “Then the saint’s mind was greatly gladdened in his breast”
 b. Ða þam halgan wearð / æfter gryre-hwile gast geblissod” (467–68)
 “Then the saint’s spirit was gladdened after his time of terror”

Two of the six examples appear in the prefixed form *gewearð* and echo the two examples of the same verb cited for the “þa + V + X” construction. Compare (17) with (8), and (18) with (9):

- (17) Ða sio stefn gewearð / gehered of heofenum (167–68)
 “Then . . . a voice was heard from the heavens”
 (18) Ða þæt folc gewearð / egesan geaclod (804–05)
 “Then the people were gripped by terror”

The “þa + X + V” construction in *Andreas* also shows formulaic phrases. They introduce direct speech which so much abounds in the poem as Louviot’s figures quoted above show. The four examples of *cwæð* “said” are found in the formula *worde cwæð* “spoke in words” as in (19):

- (19) Ða gen worde cwæð weoruda Dryhten (727)
 “The Lord of hosts still spoke these words”

The formula occurs at 913, 1206 and 1450. It is found twice each in *Genesis A* and *Genesis B*, and it also occurs once in *Juliana*. Another example with *ongan* “began” may also be linked to this formula:

- (20) Ða worde ongan / ærest Andreas æðelne geferan / . . . / gretan god-fyrhtne (1019–22)
 “Then Andrew greeted his noble, God-fearing companion . . . with this speech”

A formula characteristic of *Beowulf*, *wordhord onleac* (259) “unlocked a hoard of words,” is found with the clause-initial *þa* in *Andreas*:

- (21) Ða him Andreas ðurh ondsware / wis on gewitte, word-hord onleac (315–16)
 “Then Andrew, wise in his mind, unlocked his store of words in answer”

The same phrase occurs at 602. A different version of the same formula occurs in (22):

- (22) þa him cine-baldum cininga wuldor, / meotud man-cynnes, mod-hord onleac, / weoruda Drihten (171–73)

“when the glorious king, the creator of mankind, the Lord of hosts, unlocked the treasure of his mind to that very brave man”

5. Monosyllabic Verbs

Wæs is the predominant finite verb in the “*þa* + V + X” construction in both *Beowulf* and *Andreas*. I have reported that all the finite verbs in the “*nu* + V + X” construction are the present form of *wesan/beon* “to be” in *Andreas*, either as *is* “is,” *synt* “are” or *bið* “is/will be”¹¹. The contrast in the tenses of the finite verbs corresponds to the “now/then” dichotomy between *nu* and *þa*. All the finite verbs in both the “*þa* + V + X” and “*þa* + X + V” constructions are in fact in the past tense. Neither *Beowulf* nor *Andreas* has any instance where *þa* and the present form of verbs are used in the same clause.

The form of the finite verb being monosyllabic may be significant in the poet’s choice of this construction. The disyllabic plural form *wæron* occurs only once in the “*þa* + V + X” construction in either poem. The second most frequent verb after *wesan*, that is *cuman*, occurs as *com* except in one instance in *Andreas* (863) where the plural form *comon* is used. All the six finite verbs immediately following *nu* are also monosyllabic. What Mary Blockley calls “a classic problem in Old English syntax” (*Aspects* 121), whether the clause-initial *þa* is an adverb or a conjunction, has often been studied in terms of the position of the finite verb in relation to the particle¹². Joseph Bosworth and T. Northcote Toller in the entry “*þá*” in their *Dictionary* note: “When the word stands at the beginning of a clause and may be translated *then*, the verb generally precedes its subject; if it is to be translated by *when* the subject generally precedes the verb.” The repeated word “generally” must be taken note of. The note is a mere description of a general tendency observable in clauses introduced by *þa*. The position of the finite verb does not always dictate the function of the clause-initial particle, and the function of the particle does not always determine the position of the finite verb. In poetry, the metrical lightness of the finite verb likely contributes in some instances to it being placed immediately after the clause-initial particle. The fact that more disyllabic forms of the finite verbs, such as *ongan*, *gewearð* and *gefrægn*, are used in the “*þa* + X + V” construction can be used to corroborate this hypothesis. As such, the general tendency observed by Bosworth and Toller holds true, although one may argue for removing some monosyllabic verbs when conducting analyses.

6. Stylistic Differences in the *þa* Clause

As seen above, the frequency of *wæs* in the “*þa* + V + X” construction is considerably different between *Beowulf* and *Andreas*. Two verbs, *wæs* and *com*, predominate in the *Beowulf* examples, comprising 93%. In *Andreas*, on the other hand, *wæs* does not occur so often. The construction in *Andreas* makes repeated use of a few disyllabic verbs, *gewearð*, *ongan* and *becom*, which *Beowulf* does not employ in the same circumstance.

The most striking difference is in their use of what Louvriot calls an initial inquit, i.e. a sequence of words including a verb of saying that introduces direct speech. *Andreas* often uses

the *þa* clause to introduce direct speech as seen in (10), (11), and (19) through (22), while *Beowulf* has only two inquit with the clause-initial *þa*:

(23) Ða ðær wlonc hæleð / oret-mecgas æfter æþelum frægn: / “Hwanon ferigeað ge fætte scyldas . . .?” (331–33)

“Then a proud hero there asked the battle-challengers about their background: ‘From where are you bringing plated shields . . .?’”

(24) Ða se wise spræc / sunu Healfdenes; swigedon ealle: / “Ðæt, la, mæg secgan . . .” (1698–1700)

“Then the sage son of Healfdene spoke; all were hushed: ‘He . . . can well say . . .’”

The *mapelode* formula, as in (25), is almost unique to *Beowulf* and does not occur in *Andreas*. Louviot reports that the inquit is indeed rare outside *Beowulf* (48), where it appears 26 times.

(25) Beowulf mapelode, bearn Ecgþeowes: / “Ic þæt hogode . . .” (631–32)

“Beowulf made a speech, offspring of Ecgtheo: ‘I intended . . .’”

This formulaic inquit and *þa* do not occur together at all in the same clause.

Robert Foster regards *þa* as “an infinitely-repeatable marker of temporal sequentiality [which] carries little or no grammatical information” (404). Louviot reports, “In about 70 per cent of all instances, the beginning of a new episode after the end of a speech (be it another speech or not) is signalled with an adverb, almost always *þa*” (54). The particle actually occurs just as often at the beginning of a new episode in *Andreas*. Mary Clayton presents the text of the poem in paragraphs whose beginning is shown by indentation. There are 110 paragraphs in the whole edited text, 43 of which start with a clause-initial *þa* and 37 with a half-line that contains a non-clause-initial *þa*. The proportion of the half-lines that has *þa* at all in the total 110 episode-beginnings is 73%. The most recent edition of *Andreas* by Richard North and Michael D. J. Bintley has different divisions, and yet gives exactly the same proportion 73% (75 out of 103). But *Beowulf* has *þa* at the beginning of an episode less often. Fulk’s text is divided into 158 paragraphs shown by indentation, only 65 of which start with a half-line that contains *þa* at all¹³, about 41%. The less frequent appearance of initial inquit in a *þa* clause in *Beowulf* reflects the lower frequency of *þa* starting a new episode in the poem.

7. Conclusion

The current study looked at only two variations of one type of clause in *Beowulf* and *Andreas*. Analyses revealed that the choice of the finite verb and its position may be influenced by the metrical weight of the verb form. The “classic problem” of the grammatical function of the clause-initial *þa*, whether it is an adverb or a conjunction, is not as simple as it seems. It is recommended that monosyllabic verbs be analyzed and treated separately from other verbs. The study has also evinced some stylistic differences between the two poems, including their choice of verbs and their formation of initial inquit that introduce direct narration¹⁴.

Notes

1. I read a paper titled “The Clause-Initial *nu* in the Old English *Andreas*” at the English Linguistic

Society of Japan conference held in November 2016, to appear in its proceedings, *JELS* 34 (forthcoming 2017).

2. *Andreas* is in fact the third longest narrative poem, next to *Genesis A* which is 2,319 lines long. Part of *Genesis A* is a close translation from an Old Saxon poem while the rest is “an intelligent adaptation of the Vulgate” (Doane 56). *Andreas* is a translation from a Latin source now lost.

3. Richard North and Michael D. J. Bintley discuss the poet’s allusions to *Beowulf* in their most recent edition of the poem (62–81).

4. See Yasuko Suzuki’s tripartite article for a detailed review of the Laws.

5. In *Beowulf*, 25 clause-initial *nu* instances out of a total of 46 instances of *nu*, i.e. about 54%, while 25 out of 48, or about 52%, in *Andreas*.

6. Mary Blockley clearly states, “Clause-initial instances followed by anything other than the finite verb are conjunctions (Example: *þa*)” though she admits that there are problematic examples (“Subordinate Clauses” 7–8).

7. The examples and translations are taken from R. D. Fulk’s edition of *Beowulf*.

8. Fr. Klaeber notes in the glossary to his third edition, “[Sometimes] a slightly correl[ative] use of *þā* . . . *þā* is found: . . . 2982–83” (410). Bruce Mitchell and Fred C. Robinson also give these lines as an example of the correlative use in their glossary (296).

9. Examples from *Andreas* and their translations are taken from Mary Clayton’s edition.

10. The *þa* is preceded by *ond* in the latter.

11. “The Clause-Initial *nu* in the Old English *Andreas*” (forthcoming 2017). Is 1023, 1165, 1602; synt 391, 1425; bið 185.

12. See, e.g., S. O. Andrew, *Syntax*; idem, *Postscript*; Bruce Mitchell; Blockley, *Aspects*; and eadem, “Subordinate Clauses.”

13. The clause-initial *þa* starts an episode in 30 places while the other 35 have *þa* in the first half-line.

14. I would like to thank the anonymous reviewer of this article for his/her work and valuable comments. I am also grateful to Professor Brian G. Rubrecht, my colleague at the School of Commerce, who kindly helped me revise the draft.

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