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A CANADIAN WILD ROSE: THE MYTH OF THE WANDERER IN JON FURBERG'S *ANHAGA*

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Orientadora: Prof.ª Dr.ª Maria Lúcia Milléo Martins.

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THE MYTH OF THE WANDERER IN JON FURBERG'S
ANHAGA

Esta Dissertação foi julgada adequada para obtenção do Título de "Mestre", e aprovada em sua forma final pelo Programa de Pós-Graduação em Inglês: Estudos Linguísticos e Literários.

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To all of those who wander in exile forgotten by history.

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Myths are often unsatisfactory, even tormenting. They puzzle and haunt the mind that encounters them. They shape different parts of the world inside our heads, and they shape them not as pleasures, but as encounters with the inapprehensible.

(A. S. Byatt, 2011)

RESUMO

A construção de mitos de origem de várias nações, na Europa e em outros continentes, sustentou-se por meio de versões romantizadas de heróis populares e idealizações de passados gloriosos com o propósito de forjar identidades nacionais uniformes. Contrariamente a outros países, o Canadá de origem inglesa criou um mito nacional baseando-se na "ausência" de qualquer mitologia ou passado mitológico canadense. Essa visão levou à noção de que a história no Canadá começou apenas recentemente, com os esforços civilizatórios dos colonos ingleses e franceses e sua luta contra a natureza canadense opressora. Contrapondo essa perspectiva, o autor canadense Jon Furberg se apropria do mito anglo-saxão do Andarilho, do poema em inglês antigo *The Wanderer*, em sua coleção de poemas intitulada *Anhaga* (1983), transformando o personagem do poema original em uma nova figura mitológica, um Andarilho canadense, que vaga por uma fria região selvagem enquanto relembra suas experiências e sua história de vida. Esta pesquisa apresenta uma investigação das maneiras pelas quais Jon Furberg reconta a narrativa do andarilho do poema anglo-saxão a partir da perspectiva de um mito canadense de deslocamento e exílio. Para isso, o estudo utiliza-se da abordagem comparativa em relação às ideias e temáticas apresentadas no poema medieval *The Wanderer* e em *Anhaga*, a fim de investigar questões históricas, políticas e culturais envolvidas na representação do mito do Andarilho canadense. A análise mostra como o Andarilho de Furberg representa a herança do país contida não apenas na língua, mas também em temas em comum e identidades criadas através de experiências de deslocamento e exílio, desconstruindo assim uma visão nacional antiga do Canadá de origem inglesa como um país que não possui qualquer mitologia própria significativa.

Palavras-chave: Literatura canadense. *The Wanderer*. *Anhaga*. Deslocamento. Exílio.

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ABSTRACT

The construction of origin myths of many nations, in Europe and in other continents, sustained itself through romanticized versions of folk heroes and idealized glorious pasts with the purpose of forging uniform national identities. Contrary to other countries, English-Canada created a national myth based on the "lack" of any Canadian mythology or mythological past. This view led to the notion that history in Canada started only in recent times, with the civilizing efforts of English and French settlers in their struggle against the oppressive Canadian nature. Opposing this perspective, Canadian author Jon Furberg appropriates the Anglo-Saxon myth of the Wanderer from the Old English poem *The Wanderer* in his poetry collection entitled *Anhaga* (1983), turning the character of the original poem into a new mythological figure, the Canadian Wanderer, who roams in the cold wilderness reminiscing about his experiences and his life story. This research presents an investigation of the ways that Jon Furberg retells the wanderer tale of the Anglo-Saxon poem from the perspective of a Canadian myth of displacement and exile. To do this, the study uses a comparative approach to the ideas and themes presented in the medieval poem *The Wanderer* and in *Anhaga* in order to investigate historical, political and cultural issues involved in the representation of the myth of the Canadian Wanderer. The analysis shows how Furberg's Wanderer represents the inheritance of the country contained not only in language, but also in common themes and in the identities created through experiences of displacement and exile, thus deconstructing an old national view of English-Canada as a country that lacks any meaningful mythology of its own.

Keywords: Canadian Literature. *The Wanderer*. *Anhaga*. Displacement. Exile.

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INTRODUCTION

During the nineteenth century, many European countries, influenced by Romantic ideas, were creating themselves as sovereign states based on the need to find a common national identity and unity among disparate cultural groups who were then living under a new social organization. The search for a romanticized identity led many to the roots of European cultures, the mythology of ancient peoples who inhabited the continent, as well as their epic and heroic literature from a glorified past, providing the wanted backbone for notions of identity based on national pride, and thus reinforcing and constructing the idealized history of many European nations. Before the nineteenth century, the mythicized concept of the "noble savage"[1] – which erased the struggles and the exploitation of the Native American peoples in favor of an embellished European perspective on the matter – also frequently appeared in the North-American imagination, together with a glorified view of the frontier's people, many times seen as heroes by the European descendants. Both of those elements were important in creating myths linking North-American countries to ancient heroic values, with clear resonances from the notions established by the European Romantic movement.

Not only the ideas of European Romanticism, but also the search for a mythical past influenced North-American countries in creating their own myths. Particularly in English-speaking Canada, there was a development of the country's own national and historical myth, which although focused on a European heritage and on the denial of the First Nations, was also in opposition to the common romantic view of Nature as a gentle entity who was worshipped and represented the heroic values of the ancient peoples. Canada was seen as a nation of empty spaces and of a ruthless, oppressive Nature. Moreover, the Canadian view, from the perspective of the descendants of the English-speaking colonizers, was one of "lack" of any mythology or ancient history to find in Canada, as those colonizers were far away from their original homeland in Britain and were at the same time newcomers in a "new" land. This view was also influenced by the colonizers' ignorance and disdain for the presence of religious tales and cultural myths from the indigenous peoples, and even the history of other European attempts of settlement

[1] A literary construct embodying the concept of an idealized indigenous or primitive individual, who has not been corrupted by civilization and thus stands as a symbol of heroism and the essential goodness in humanity.

in the country, as for instance the efforts of the Norse people many centuries earlier. Hence, from an English-Canadian perspective, the history of Canada, like its land, was emptied of tales and mythology, for the colonizers limited the country's rich history to only a small fraction of a timeline, in the form of the conflict between English and French settlers in their mechanist and "civilizing" efforts against an antagonistic and merciless Nature. This view is of such pervasiveness to become a recurring theme in Canadian literature since the first texts published in the country.

However, even this seemingly recent Canadian character of a displaced and exiled foreigner, struggling against a vast and empty natural world, has very old roots in English literary tradition. This tale appears as the mythological figure of the Wanderer among the ancient Germanic cultures, first showing up in English literature through the early Anglo-Saxon medieval texts, in poems such as *The Seafarer*, *The Wife's Lament*, *The Husband's Message* and, most famously, *The Wanderer*, all of which of unknown date and authorship. Among those, *The Wanderer* portrays the most common image of the character in Old English elegiac poetry: that of an outcast living in strange lands and surviving in an unforgiving wilderness, away from civilization; a character who bears a striking resemblance to the Canadian motif of the displaced immigrant.

The choice of investigating Jon Furberg's poetry in this study, a little-known Canadian poet from Vancouver, is because he did not miss this resemblance between Anglo-Saxon poetry and Canadian culture, exploring the many similarities of the two. In an attempt to make a conventional translation of *The Wanderer*, Furberg ends up developing a new work of poetry by recreating afresh the figure of the Wanderer from his own perspective, in a collection of poems called *Anhaga: Pray for Hardship and Other Poems* (1983). Through his dark and grim poetics, Furberg appropriates a fundamentally English *persona* and mythical figure from ancient Anglo-Saxon literature, the Wanderer, to talk about the experiences of exile and displacement from a recognizable Canadian perspective. This character appears as the speaker in several poems of Furberg's collection, being directly referenced as such in the opening poem "Ānhaga," a title which is by itself an Old English word that translates as "Wanderer."

By removing the main character of the Anglo-Saxon poem *The Wanderer* from its original context, Furberg creates his own mythical speaker inside the elegiac tradition of the Wanderer as presented in English literature, weaving elements of the Old English language and

literature into his poetry as well, originating something which Chris Jones calls "New Old English" ("New Old English" 1011). However, at the same time, the poet subverts the "Englishness" of such character by transposing it to a Canadian context. From this perspective, the myth of the Wanderer as told by Furberg contradicts a Eurocentric view that Canada "lacks" any mythology of its own by presenting a mythological tale that dialogues with the Canadian experiences of exile and displacement, experiences that go far back into the past, as the poet refers constantly to elements of the Norse culture, and continue to permeate many contemporary Canadian identities.

Considering there are no available academic studies on the subject of Jon Furberg's poetry in *Anhaga*, this study presents an original research that investigates the ways by which the poet appropriates the voice of the Wanderer from the original Anglo-Saxon poem to bring forth a Canadian myth of the Wanderer. For this discussion, the historical, political and cultural issues implicated in the representation of this myth are taken into account.

In order to understand the elements Furberg uses to create his mythological poetry, this study explores, in chapter 1, the concept of myth itself as presented mainly by Mircea Eliade and Joseph Campbell. The historical origins of the figure of the Wanderer, from his mythic background to his direct appearance in Anglo-Saxon literature, are shown through the discussions of Hilda Ellis Davidson concerning Germanic/Norse mythology and the Wanderer's intrinsic relation with it. The chapter also investigates the matter of displacement and exile from a Canadian perspective, correlating both concepts with Margaret Atwood's idea of the survivor in Canadian literature, as well as Northrop Frye's observation of the links between Canadian and Anglo-Saxon literature, with several examples of connections between the themes contained in the myth of the Wanderer and in Canadian poetry.

In chapter 2, the study delves into the original poem that was the source for Jon Furberg's poetic transcreation, the Anglo-Saxon *The Wanderer*. To analyze this Anglo-Saxon poem, I have translated the original text from Old English to Modern English, keeping the translation as close as possible to the poem's meter and vocabulary, so as to preserve its poetic origins. Based on the translation and the necessary process of interpretation involved in such task, the chapter then deals with the complexities of the Anglo-Saxon society and cultural worldview as shown through the eyes of the speaker in the poem. In this sense, concepts such as the Wanderer's so-called "mind-spirit," the winter and animal imagery, and the complicated transformation of the

speaker from an “earth-stepper” to a “wise in spirit” are the main aspects discussed in the chapter. Moreover, some brief elements of Anglo-Saxon poetry are also established, particularly those which Furberg employs in his own poetry.

Chapter 3 presents the main investigation of Jon Furberg’s poetry, with the analysis of 9 selected poems from *Anhaga*: “Ānhaga,” “Pray For Hardship,” “Exile,” “Nerthus,” “Blōdmōnath,” “Come Night,” “Midden Yard,” “Tumulus,” and “Others.” For the aspects of exile and displacement, the chapter works with, as the main theoretical basis, the discussion brought by Edward Said on the subject, together with Margaret Atwood’s *Survival*. The chapter’s goal is to answer how the poet weaves, throughout his poems, a mythological narrative of a Wanderer who dialogues with many common themes in Canadian literature, especially in what concerns the experiences of exile and displacement in the history of the country. The final part of this study presents a conclusion of the main subjects analyzed, recuperating the most important aspects found in the investigation.

CHAPTER 1

The Myth of the Wanderer in Anglo-Saxon and Canadian Literature

1. Introduction

Although contemporary life is dominated by rationalist and materialist views of the world, where the unknown tends to fade in the face of science, myths and mythologies are still present in the general imagination, for they do not emerge from the consciously logical mind, but from the innermost experiences of individuals and cultural groups. As David Leeming points out,

> . . . myths are created by the collective imagination as metaphorical projections of the way things are in life. Myths emerge from our experience of reality, from our instinctive need to clothe that experience in mimetic story and concept. It is also true that as our experience as cultures and as a species changes, so do our myths. Old myths (and related rituals) grow and new ones are born so that we can step out of our merely material lives and project onto a screen, as it were, our relation to the whole picture of existence. Again, it could well be that to repress this growth and this birth is as damaging to the culture and the species as the analogous repression of the dream messages of the psyche would be to the individual. (Leeming 18)

In this sense, the word "myth" has developed several meanings nowadays, as Mircea Eliade posits, being treated simultaneously with the academic meaning of "true story" or "sacred story" from the perspective of the ancient societies, and popularly with the meaning of "fable," "fiction," "illusion" or even "invention" (1). Despite the many individual interpretations of the word, Joseph Campbell points out how valuable and present myths are for human societies throughout history, and he theorizes that there are four possible functions of mythology and myth-making. The first is the metaphysical function, the sense of amazement before the transcendent mysteries of existence. The second is the cosmological function, as mythology creates an image of the

universe in a way that supports and is supported by the sense of mystery behind it, with this image corresponding to how a culture views and experiences reality and the world. The third is the sociological function, where the mythology supports and validates the current social order, integrating the individual with the group and establishing a system of sentiments followed by the culture. The fourth and final is the initiation function, the psychological guidance provided by mythology towards the individual's own spiritual realization and enrichment (Campbell 519).

This capacity of society to mythicize elements of reality is also the source of myth-making by many authors in literature, both oral and written. The creation of myths and the practice of storytelling are, in this sense, strongly intertwined, considering that much if not all of mythologies started originally in cultures that had no written record and relied on the oral passing of communal knowledge. This means that the myths were told mostly by the elders of the community as oral narratives, which were passed on generation through generation, constantly changing according to each storyteller and following the transformations of society. In the Western world, myth and tale tend to be put as different modalities of storytelling instead of a continuum, the first being a remnant of ancient sacred stories, and the latter a form of literature related to leisure; but as Mircea Eliade signalizes, "it is not always true that the tale shows a 'desacralization' of the mythical world. It would be more correct to speak of a camouflage of mythical motifs and characters; instead of 'desacralization,' it would be better to say 'rank-loss of the sacred.'" (200). From this perspective, myths as stories never really disappeared or completely lost their meaning in the contemporary world, they only went through a change of clothing as it were.

Moreover, mythology also traveled between their original oral narratives towards written literary texts, appearing in many works of literature as the main topic of discussion. Myths are used by writers, for instance, as metaphors about universal themes, such as the depiction of feelings and the human existence, or even as allegories for social and cultural issues. As Michelle Denham points out:

> It is the subject, the inspiration, the life-source of so much art that a large portion of existing literature could not exist if it had not reappropriated myth into its own story; I would hazard to say, perhaps none of it. And it is through

> literature that mythology continues down the generations. To fully understand mythology's function (and relevance) to society, one must first understand how intrinsically linked mythology and literature have become. From there, one must then look at how literature and society interact, specifically in terms of cultural production. (2)

Among many mythical archetypal characters who appear in connection to literature, such as the trickster, the hero, the demi-god or the doppelgänger, for instance, there is the figure of the Wanderer, who, according to Lisa Curtis, can be generally outlined by his ". . . movement, absence from society and home, engaging with wilderness . . .", as well as his limited visibility (iii). Because of this positioning of the Wanderer as an outcast in his community, he can point out the problems in society, allowing the latter to look at itself from the outside. In this sense, Phyllis Mazzocchi analyzes one of the main aspects of the Wanderer as its liminality, physically and metaphysically speaking, considering how the character roams spaces in and outside society, as well as the natural and supernatural worlds:

> The Wanderer is couched in a liminal realm on the brink or verge of being and maintains an active process state without a predetermined objective. This intermediary status of nonmovement within movement is characterized by an ambiguity apart from the dynamic of opposites, and may be likened to a persistent state of passage. (Mazzocchi 2)

The liminality in which the Wanderer finds himself, a situation in which he is alone and far away from his own culture and any other people, puts him in a state of awe in face of Nature's power and mystery. At the same time, as he is in a state of passage chosen by himself or forced upon him by others, the Wanderer has to reconsider his own position in the universe as understood by his culture, leading him to either accept his place outside the social order or to revolt against it. Finally, the Wanderer can find his place again by coming to terms with his situation and by becoming closer to aspects of the divine presented in Nature. In this sense, the narrative of the Wanderer deals as much with the characteristics of mythology itself as it is a tale in its own right. It has manifestations in many cultures, two of which, although

centuries apart, share some ancient literary continuity and cultural similarities: the medieval Anglo-Saxon and the contemporary English-Canadian.

2. The Wanderer in Anglo-Saxon Literature

The character of a displaced and exiled wanderer in struggle against the natural world has very old roots in the English literary tradition. The archetype of the Wanderer first appears as a literary character in early Anglo-Saxon medieval texts, in elegiac poems such as *The Seafarer*, *The Wife's Lament*, *The Husband's Message* and, most famously, *The Wanderer*, all of which of unknown date and authorship. Richard Hogg informs that the Anglo-Saxons were a confederation of Germanic tribes, mainly the Jutes, Saxons and Angles, who migrated from continental Europe, most likely from the area of what nowadays is north-west Germany and Denmark, to Britain in the 5th century B.C., spreading from East Anglia to the west and south of the island and the borders of Cornwall and Wales, to the north of England and the south of Scotland (Hogg 4). With them, they brought a series of mutually intelligible dialects that they called *Englisc*, which would later be referred to as the Old English language. The Old English written literature starts to appear only after the Christianization of the Anglo-Saxons, as they were originally an illiterate culture; as Donald Scragg says, the aforementioned elegiac poems and the major body of Anglo-Saxon poetry, with the exception of the *Beowulf* manuscript, is preserved in the late tenth-century anthology named *Exeter Book*, or *Codex Exoniensis*, containing several Old English poems and traditional riddles (51).

Amongst the poems in the anthology, *The Wanderer* portrays the most common image of this mythical character in the Old English elegiac poetry: that of an outcast living in strange lands and surviving in an unforgiving wilderness, away from civilization. Nonetheless, all of the elegiac poems have in common a *persona* living in a form of exile, who is suffering and in grief for the loss of a person or of a group of people. In *The Wife's Lament*, the speaker is a woman lamenting the departure of her husband, perhaps because of a war, and how such departure affected her social status, as she is left in the hands of the husband's family, who decides to exile her into the wilderness; living alone in exile, she mourns the loss of her husband and her social prestige. Coincidently, in *The Husband's Message*, the speaker is a man lamenting the loss of his wife because he was forced into an exile

caused by a family feud, and after he wanders through foreign lands and finds a home, he carves a message in wood for his wife, pledging her to come live with him in a new place. Both *The Seafarer* and *The Wanderer* explore the hardships of exile in the hands of the wintry Nature, one from the perspective of an old seafarer separated from his people by the isolation of a sea voyage, and the other from the perspective of an outcast warrior living without lord and companions. Even though the forms of exile are different among the poems, the *persona* inevitably has to struggle against harsh elements of nature and the feeling of solitude in an unknown and far away place.

The cultural portrayal of exile in Anglo-Saxon literature is, then, many times connected to the natural world, seen as inhospitable to humanity, for, as Stephanie Tyler explains, "outsidership" was considered one of the most severe forms of punishment in the eyes of Anglo-Saxon society (46). The displacement in relation to community, caused by cutting ties with family, the death of companions or loss of a lord, appears to be the main cause for grief in Anglo-Saxon elegiac poetry, which tends to use the natural landscape to further entrap the poetic *persona* in an exile within his or her mind, bringing about ". . . a complete loss of identity in earthly life" (Tyler 53). As Jennifer Neville points out, the concept of nature is so intrinsic in the Anglo-Saxon thought that they did not have any specific word for "Nature" as an entity, seeing the supernatural in the natural world and vice-versa. Even so, the wilderness was seen as external to humanity, mostly in representations of the human condition in pessimistic perspectives (Neville 53), and the world beyond the limits of society was more prone to be the domain of Otherworldly creatures and monsters. Society's fragility, in this sense, is what posits Nature as a threat, a notion exemplified in many Anglo-Saxon elegiac poems, particularly in *The Wanderer*. The mythological characteristic of the Wanderer in Anglo-Saxon literature is, therefore, also a metaphor for the dangers of losing any sort of link with the community, as the outcast must live at Nature's mercy and so, between this world and the Other.

Concerning the origins and the mythical element contained in the character of the Wanderer, a connection can be established with the Germanic pagan god known as Wōtan or Wōdan in the continent, Óðinn or Odin in Scandinavia, and Wōden in England. As mentioned by Hilda Ellis Davidson, in the Norse branch of Germanic paganism, Odin is described, amongst his many guises, as an one-eyed old man wearing a hat and carrying a spear or staff, known as ". . . the rider on the eight-legged steed, the wanderer up and down the earth, the god knowing the

secrets of travel between the worlds" (Davidson, "Gods and Myths" 140). This image of a wanderer of the liminal is not a unique characteristic of the Norse god Odin, as the Romans in ancient times equated the pan-Germanic Wōdan with Mercury, and

> even if Wodan, like Odin, resembled Mercury in wearing a hat, this is not enough to account for the identification; the Romans were not likely to be misled by superficial features of this kind. Mercury was the god of trade, the patron of wisdom and learning, the god who was carried by his winged sandals over land and sea, and the guide who directed souls to the Other World. (Davidson, *Gods and Myths* 140)

The etymological origin of the many names of this deity among the Germanic cultures of old, all coming from the Proto-Germanic theonym **wōđanaz*, points to a common religious concept shared across Northern Europe. Moreover, Aleks Pluskowski states that "early Anglo-Saxon society initially derived its symbolic repertoire from its homeland cultures, and it subsequently emulated, blended and invented, within the framework of a broadly shared north European pagan semiotic system" (120); although much that is known about the Anglo-Saxon Wōden is through sparse textual evidence and place names, he probably would have been seen as a Wanderer figure as well by the pagans in England, in continuity with the common Germanic concept of the god.

One of the most important aspects of Wōden's Norse counterpart, Odin, is his wisdom, acquired mostly through self-sacrifice in isolation, or in distant parts of this world and the Otherworld. The Old Norse poem *Hávamál* ("Sayings of the High One"), from the *Poetic Edda*[2], in which the speaker is Odin himself, tells about his most famous sacrifice:

> I know that I hung on a windy tree
> nine long nights,
> wounded with a spear, dedicated to Odin,
> myself to myself,

[2] All of the Old Norse poems cited here are from the *Poetic Edda*, a medieval collection of anonymous poems of unclear date, probably from many different authors and dates. The poems used here are from the Oxford World's Classics edition, translated by Carolyne Harrington, but the original poems in Old Norse, as well as their older translations in English, are available online.

> on that tree of which no man knows
> from where its roots run. (138-143)

Through this sacrifice of himself to himself in the branches of Yggdrasill – the World Tree connecting all the realms of the universe in Norse mythology – Odin gains the knowledge of the runes and their magical potential, elements which link the god with shamanic practices. According to Davidson:

> The World Tree is indeed the centre of the shaman's cosmology, as it is in the world of the northern myths. The essential feature of the initiation ceremony, whether among the Eskimos, the American Indians, or the Siberian peoples, is the death and rebirth of the young shaman, and the torments and terrors which he has to undergo if he is to gain possession of the esoteric knowledge necessary to him in his new calling. Before he can attain ability to heal and to pass to the realms of gods and spirits, he has to undergo a ritual death. (*Gods and Myths* 144)

He is, in many ways, a magician or wizard, knowing many spells and learning the mystical arts from giants and other beings. His knowledge of *seiðr*, which according to Catharina Raudvere was a type of technique based in divination and manipulation magic, practiced mainly by women and with sexual connotations (111), was considered a transgression of social norms involving "manliness." Loki, in particular, mocks this in the poem *Lokasenna* ("Loki's Quarrel"), pointing out Odin's "unmanliness" by his use of this type of magic (Larrington 89). Moreover, Odin also transgresses other aspects considered taboo in Germanic society, such as the breaking of oaths and treachery in general. In the *Gesta Danorum*, a twelfth-century book about the history of the Danes written by Saxo Grammaticus, it is told that Odin is also exiled for a time period because of the shame brought by his transgressions (169). Taking those elements into account, Odin represents the outcast aspect of the myth of the Wanderer.

Wōden's very name was indicative of how the Anglo-Saxons originally saw the god, as it was related to the Old English adjective *wōd*, meaning "ecstasy," "mad" or "furious," a fitting relation with his position as a wanderer between worlds and a shamanic magician, considering those attributes would have been seen as socially unusual

from an Anglo-Saxon perspective, belonging to the outside and supernatural world. Later on, in folklore, he was also the leader of the marching dead, associated with the Wild Hunt, the ". . . terrifying concourse of lost souls riding through the air led by a demonic leader on his great horse, which could be heard passing in the storm" (Davidson, "Gods and Myths" 148). This aspect further reinforces his part in dealing with the dead, the liminal and, thus, the Otherworld, as the myth of the Wanderer deals with the constant presence of death and the journey into the supernatural realm.

Another pagan god who seems to have a connection with the character of the Wanderer is Thor, or Thunor, among the Anglo-Saxons. In Norse mythology, he was described as

> . . . a huge man with a red beard, with a great voice and terrible, fierce, burning eyes. Outspoken, indomitable, he strode through the Northern heavens, filled with vigour and gusto. He set his reliance in his strong right arm and in his simple weapon, the hammer Mjǫllnir. With this he could overcome any giant or troll as long as physical might alone and not cunning magic was in question. Thor had no horse, like Odin and the other great gods, but he preferred to walk, or to ride in his chariot drawn by two goats, and he was accordingly known as Ǫku-Þór, Thor the Driver. (Davidson, "Thor's Hammer" 3)

Considering that the Anglo-Saxons shared the same Germanic source for their pagan mythology, it is likely that Thunor originally possessed similar characteristics to the Norse Thor besides the common origin of their names, one of those being his constant travels to foreign lands. In the Old Norse poem *Hárbarðsljóð* ("Harbard's Song"), he is depicted returning from his travels to the east after having destroyed many giants, and in *Hymiskviða* ("Hymir's Poem") he journeys to the underwater hall of Ægir, and then once more to the east; in the book *Gylfaginning* ("The Deluding of Gylfi"), contained in the *Prose Edda*[3],

[3] The *Prose Edda* is a work of literature written (or perhaps compiled) in the thirteenth century Iceland by Snorri Sturluson. It contains many elements of Norse mythology taken from the *Poetic Edda* and from other surviving pagan stories. The original, written in Old Norse, is available online, as well as the older translations in English. The version used for the analysis is from Penguin Classic's edition, translated by Jesse L. Byock.

Thor travels to Útgarðr, probably located in the land of the giants, and faces many challenges there. Several of his stories involve "the east," a land of mysteries and the unknown to the Anglo-Saxons, for according to Daniel Anlezark, what they ". . . believed about the East was entirely dependent on fictional tales of travellers like Alexander" (78); his travel to Útgarðr (meaning "Out-yard") is also significant, for this place means everything that is beyond Innangarðr ("In-yard"), the homeland enclosure. In this sense, Thor is presented with one of the main aspects of the Wanderer, that of a foreigner in a strange and possibly hostile land. However, contrary to Odin, he is a Wanderer connected to warriors instead of a magician and shaman, and he imposes on himself to leave his lands in order to guarantee the protection of his people, never actually being an outcast or an outlaw. Thor embodies, from this perspective, the main aspect of movement of the mythical archetype of the Wanderer.

What is unique in the Anglo-Saxon Wanderer is the fusion of the pagan and Christian world views, for the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons to Christianity involved much adaptation and syncretism with the original Germanic pagan customs and ideas. As John Niles points out:

> Since 'cultural paganism' encompassed not just religious ideas but also the beliefs, customs, values, hopes, fears and collective memories of a people, it did not die with the Conversion, but rather lived on both in the form of odd survivals and, more importantly, in deepset patterns of belief. (134)

This created a culture that combined traditions, intertwining original Anglo-Saxon pagan concepts and Christian stories and motifs. Because of that, Old English literature includes syncretism such as seen in Grendel, a pagan monster from the poem *Beowulf*, written between the eighth and eleventh century, who is described as being descended from Cain. Not only that, but the translation of Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*[4], by King Alfred, also introduces the Germanic myth of Wēland the Smith[5], and elements of the heroic legends of the Germanic

[4] A philosophical work from 524 A.D., of great importance for medieval Christian scholarship, although not a Christian work itself.

[5] A legendary Anglo-Saxon blacksmith, who appears in other Old English sources, such as the poems *Waldere*, *Deor* and *Beowulf*.

peoples appear in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, a collection of annals from the late nineth century telling the history of the Anglo-Saxons as a Christian people. The Old English *Orosius* portrays the pagan Germanic conquerors of Rome in a more sympathetic light than the Latin (i.e. Christian) version; and even in art this kind of syncretism is shown, as R.D Fulk and Christopher Cain point out the case of the *Franks Casket*, a carved box made of whalebone where scenes from early Germanic myths are depicted side by side with the destruction of Jerusalem and the adoration of the magi (3).

According to Stephen Greenblatt, this fusion also adapted the Christian cultural views to the Germanic tradition of individual and collective values, especially in terms of what constitutes a heroic behavior (6). The Germanic ethos involved risking death in combat as the ultimate way of gaining reputation, but loyalty to a lord was also an important part of a growing and more organized society, particularly the centrality and importance of the king as society's overlord, something that did not exist in the ancient Germanic communities and an element related to the later Christian view. To die in the service of the lord was to achieve glory, and to follow a lord in death was expected, although rarely observed both in poetry or in real life; therefore, Katherine O'Keeffe concludes that surviving a battle where one's lord has died was, then, a matter of shame, but fleeing and abandoning one's lord was an act of extreme cowardice, punishable by exile (103). Greenblatt also informs that, during the Viking invasions, those heroic values were many times observed in literature, albeit those who wrote the texts were living in a culture that had been Christian for centuries already:

> Even though the heroic world of poetry could be invoked to rally resistance to the Viking invasions, it was already remote from the Christian world of Anglo-Saxon England. Nevertheless, Christian writers like the Beowulf poet were fascinated by the distant culture of their pagan ancestors and by the inherent conflict between the heroic code and a religion that teaches that we should "forgive those who trespass against us" and that "all they that (sic) take the sword shall perish with the sword." The Beowulf poet looks back on that ancient world with admiration for the courage of which it was capable and at the same time with elegiac sympathy for its inevitable doom. (Greenblatt 6)

In this sense, the Anglo-Saxon character of the Wanderer deals with the fusion of elements of the ancient Germanic heroic values and, at the same time, the Christian concept of redemption and the aforementioned idea of inescapable doom. This fusion portrays the metaphysical comprehension of the Anglo-Saxon society, which together with the notion of the Wanderer as the one who travels between this world and the Otherworld, provides the Anglo-Saxon cosmological view concerning the mysteries of the universe. Finally, the Wanderer's transgressions show the social norms of the Anglo-Saxons, and his fate of being an exile provides a warning to those who wish to break those norms.

3. The Wanderer in Canadian Literature

The character of the Wanderer from a Canadian perspective is, contrary to the Anglo-Saxon character, not a well-known or studied mythological figure in Canadian literature, but a mythical idea which is nonetheless pervasive in many Canadian narratives and stories. The mythology surrounding the Wanderer is many times portrayed, in this respect, inside a mythological continuum, appearing in many literary works – notably in poetry – by English-speaking writers in Canada, as in Jon Furberg's *Anhaga*. The Wanderer archetype[6] is related to the sense of displacement of many individuals in Canadian culture, the feeling of being exiled from their original country for political, religious or economic reasons, outcast by wars, or othered by a different culture or environment. In this sense, the subject of exile, as James Clifford points out, is different from a diasporic scenario, where there is a collective displacement, for exile has a ". . . frequently individualist focus" (251).

The recent existence of Canada, largely contested in a contemporary critical context giving that only the country's geopolitical name is recent, not its native cultures and history, gave rise to what Imre Szeman calls a sense of belatedness in Canadian culture, of Canada arriving ". . . too late on the historical scene, at the end of a Western modernity that had completely mapped out the landscape in advance" (32). This matter may have influenced views of Canada as a country that "lacks" a romanticized historical past and a mythology the English-Canadians could call their own. Thus, nineteenth-century English-Canadian writers tried to fill this "lack" by creating a myth of nordicity,

[6] A recurrent mythological symbol or character.

that is, a common Northern origin for all the peoples in Canada, who could have formed, in this view, a mythological continuum with Northern Europe, originated in ancient times. The wilderness and cold of the North was used to show the toughness of the English-Canadian people, and also as a distinct origin in relation to other countries. This made up myth of Northernness was, in a way, related to the figure of the Wanderer, giving an elegiac tone to the narrative of the immigrants displaced from their original homeland in Northern Europe, as they travel through paths never before tread in the New World amidst an oppressive Nature.

Margaret Atwood, in her work *Survival* (1972), analyzes the impact the idea of harsh wilderness and weather has on Canadian literature, where narratives related to the image of survival constantly appear. *Survival* was and is criticized by many scholars, such as Robin Mathews, Joseph Pivato and others, especially for its generalizations concerning Canadian literature and the little attention paid to its literary pluralities, and Atwood recognizes that it was a work ". . . of its own time and place; it could hardly have appeared before, or after, or anywhere else" (Atwood n.p.). In this sense, Atwood herself said, in the newer editions of *Survival*, that if she were to revise the book there would have been many alterations and additions, especially in terms of her universalist focus, the absence of discussion about multicultural writing and the idea of a canonical body of Canadian literature. Nonetheless, as Heidi Slettedahl Macpherson points out, "whilst critics found it reductive and brash, and disliked what was perceived as Atwood's flippancy, a number of her ideas have found their way into general parlance." (16); *Survival* still presents relevant historical discussions about Canadian literature in a time in which those discussions were lacking. More importantly, Atwood's discussion of the idea of survival shows a common mindset among many Canadian authors writing during those years, like Jon Furberg himself:

> The central symbol for Canada – and this is based on numerous instances of its occurrence in both English and French Canadian literature – is undoubtedly Survival, *la Survivance*. Like the Frontier and The Island, it is a multi-faceted and adaptable idea. For early explorers and settlers, it meant bare survival in the face of "hostile" elements and/or natives: carving out a place and a way of keeping alive. But the word can also suggest survival of a crisis or disaster, like a

> hurricane or a wreck, and many Canadian poems have this kind of survival as a theme; what you might call "grim" survival as opposed to "bare" survival. (*Survival* 26)

In doing so, what she, at the time, understood as "traditionally Canadian" stories "are likely to be tales not of those who made it but of those who made it back from the awful experience – the North, the snowstorm, the sinking ship – that killed everyone else" (*Survival* 28). Because of this view, Atwood argues that, in several narratives from Canadian literature, Nature assumes an indifferent or hostile role in relation to characters who can do very little to survive, creating a sense of victimization, where death is meaningless and heroism accomplishes nothing. From this perspective, it is possible to see a theme in common with the Anglo-Saxon Wanderer in the connection between ideas of displacement that are closer to the grimmer aspects of surviving at the mercy of an untrustworthy Nature. This theme appears in Atwood's own poetry, as in the poem "Thoughts from Underground":

> When I first reached this country
> I hated it
> and I hated it more each year:
>
> in summer the light a
> violent blur, the heat
> thick as a swamp,
> the green things fiercely
> shoving themselves upwards, the
> eyelids bitten by insects
>
> In winter our teeth were brittle
> with cold. We fed on squirrels. (1-11)

The speaker, much like the speaker in *The Wanderer*, brings forth the feeling of being a foreigner in a hated landscape of extremes. The poet even goes one step further by stressing not only the harsh winter climate, but the summer climate as well, underscoring the wholesome of Canadian nature as a hellish experience, from its weather to its vegetation and animals in summer. Winter is no better, and the poet reinforces this season's roughness by showing the human fragility amidst the cold, instead of exploring the characteristics of winter itself.

Atwood also deals with the treacherous aspect of nature in the poem "Death of a Young Son by Drowning":

> He who navigated with success
> the dangerous river of his own birth
> once more set forth
>
> on a voyage of discovery
> into the land I floated on
> but could not touch to claim
>
> His feet slid on the bank,
> the currents took him;
> he swirled with ice and trees in the swollen water
>
> and plunged into distant regions, (1-10)

The connection between exile and bodies of water, which appears in Anglo-Saxon poems such as *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer*, is paralleled here in the form of a traveler of dangerous rivers, beginning with that of his birth, that is, the birth canal. The use of "into the land I floated on/ but could not touch to claim" (5-6) could represent the narrator's displacement and disconnection to the land, presumably the mother. Moreover, the idea of a cold Nature is brought in the poem in how this young son slips and falls into the icy currents of the river towards distant lands, like the Wanderer himself traveled through cold waters in the Anglo-Saxon poem, but in here also towards his ultimate death. Water assumes, in this sense, a mythological aspect as creator and destroyer, bringer of life and taker of souls, like the sea in *The Wanderer* and several supernatural rivers in the world mythologies.

Perhaps in continuation to the character of the Wanderer in the Anglo-Saxon tradition, themes related to this mythic archetype in Canada are also largely remembered by means of poetry that presents elegiac motifs. Northrop Frye theorizes about how the notions of loss and exile in Old English poetry find parallels not in Modern English literature from England, but actually in English-Canadian literature, as ". . . there is a feeling which seems to a modern reader more Canadian than English: a feeling of the melancholy of a thinly-settled country under a bleak northern sky, of the terrible isolation of the creative mind in such a country. . ." (146). This feeling that Frye points out is what Chris Jones calls the "strange likeness" of Old English: a language and literature which seem foreign at first sight, but are also recognizable as

English (*Strange Likeness* 5). Frye's argument can be seen in Canadian literature from several periods, such as the nineteenth-century poetry of Marjorie Pickthall:

> I chose the place where I would rest
> When death should come to claim me,
> With the red-rose roots to wrap my breast
> And a quiet stone to name me.
>
> But I am laid on a northern steep
> With the roaring tides below me,
> And only the frosts to bind my sleep,
> And only the winds to know me. ("Exile" 1-8)

Beyond the commonality of the theme of exile in a different land between this poem and *The Wanderer*, *The Seafarer* and others, the idea of the cold, deadly north and of being bound by this ambience can be easily associated with the dark aspects of Nature in Anglo-Saxon poetry and mythological imagination. Although the old Anglo-Saxon society and the contemporary Canadian society may differ in terms of culture, time and geographical space, certain cultural views survived through the ages in England, allowing the mythical character of the Wanderer to travel both mythically and literally speaking: mythically as the mythological archetype of the Wanderer survived in the English imagination and traveled through different stories around the world, and literally because the archetype was eventually transported to Canada, intersecting in a continuation of similar uses of poetic themes and literary representations between Anglo-Saxons and English-Canadians.

Following this perspective, the idea of North and winter is one important theme echoed in the Anglo-Saxon Wanderer and a strongly present element in Canadian literature. According to Atwood, ". . . popular lore, and popular literature, established early that the North was uncanny, awe-inspiring in an almost religious way, hostile to white men, but alluring; that it would lead you on and do you in; that it would drive you crazy, and, finally, would claim you for its own" (*Strange Things* 336[7]). The idea of North, then, is directly related to the concept of survival in the Canadian imagery, even though this idea, from an English-Canadian perspective, comes from those living in the south. As

[7] Kindle electronic edition of the book, with no page numbers; the numbers in citations from this book refer to the position of the passage in the Kindle e-reader.

Sherrill Grace explains, "North is multiple, shifting and elastic, it is a *process*, not an eternal fixed goal or condition. It is, above all, Other, and as such emphatically a construction of southerners" (16). As such, the North appears as one of the mythological frameworks for southern Canada, where a deadly and wintery atmosphere provides an explanation for the mysteries of the Other that is Nature in this view, considering that ". . . if you don't think right about the North, the ice-goddess will get you" (*Strange Things* 487). The Wanderer, as a mythical character related to suffering in cold and devastated lands and who mainly appears among cultures from the Northern hemisphere, is associated to this idea of North.

The image of winter, in this sense, is an extension of the idealized North, and Frye talks about this image in the capacity of Canadian poetry to evoke a stark sense of terror, in which "the immediate source of this is obviously the frightening loneliness of a huge and thinly settled country" (138), one having to count only on oneself in order to survive, complementing Atwood's view on the subject. As Frye elaborates, "when all the intelligence, morality, reverence and simian cunning of man confronts a sphinx-like riddle of the indefinite like the Canadian winter, the man seems as helpless as a trapped mink and as lonely as a loon" (138). The sense of entrapment in a wintery place is a theme that both the Anglo-Saxon Wanderer and many works from Canadian literature have in common, further showing the feeling of desolation in the former and the rigors of survival in the latter, reinforcing the inhospitality of the North as an exiling place. Furthermore, the theme of winter connects to mythological representations of death, an element present, for instance, in Amanda Jernigan's poetry:

> My little lack-of-light, my swaddled soul,
> December baby. Hush, for it is dark,
> and will grow darker still. We must embark
> directly. Bring an orange as the toll
> for Charon: he will be our gondolier.
> Upon the shore, the season pans for light,
> and solstice fish, their eyes gone milky white,
> come bearing riches for the dying year:
> solstitial kingdom. It is yours, the mime
> of branches and the drift of snow. With shaking
> hands, Persephone, the winter's wife,
> will tender you a gift. Born in a time
> of darkness, you will learn the trick of making.

> You shall make your consolation all your life.
> (Lullaby 1-14).

In this poem, the subject of darkness and cold is directly related to death in a clearly mythological imagery, similarly to what Furberg does in his poetry. Jernigan uses many references to Greek mythology, like Charon, the ferryman who travels between this world and the world of the dead, and the offering of orange to pay him in order to cross the river to the underworld. Like the Greek Hades, the land of the dead, the imagery she evokes is that of decay, with fish with eyes "milky white", as well as the "dying year" and the dying light of the winter's solstice. Finally, Persephone, the Greek goddess of the vegetation and queen of the underworld, is shown as the shaking "winter's wife", that is, wife of the chthonic god Hades, king among the dead. The speaker's soul shows several similarities to the character of the Wanderer in this poem, as a liminal being who was "born in a time of darkness" and who embarks in a journey of consolation through the memory of all the life that is gone.

The sense of displacement of the Wanderer strongly appears in English-Canadian poetry, especially in terms of isolation from the civilized world and the need to delve into the hostile wilderness, losing oneself in the process. This can be seen in "A Country Without A Mythology", by Douglas LePan:

> There is no law – even no atmosphere
> To smooth the anger of the flagrant sun.
> November skies sting, string like icicles.
> The land is open to all violent weathers.
>
> Passion is not more quick. Lightnings in August
> Stagger, rocks split, tongues in the forest hiss,
> As fire drinks up the lovely sea-dream coolness.
> This is the land the passionate man must travel.
> (13-20)

There are no filters outside the cities and the world created by humanity for humanity: the sunlight is harsher, the weather violent, the forests full of serpents hissing. The poet parallels the intensity of this brute environment with Nature's burning passion, which consumes even the most beautiful of views; a place fitting only for those who are also passionate, and an inevitable path the Wanderer must travel. The similarity with the Anglo-Saxon Wanderer is even stronger in the next

stanzas of the poem:

> Sometimes – perhaps at the tentative fall of twilight –
> A belief will settle that waiting around the bend
> Are sanctities of childhood, that melting birds
> Will sing him into a limpid gracious Presence.
>
> The hills will fall in folds, the wilderness
> Will be a garment innocent and lustruous
> To wear upon a birthday, under a light
> That curls and smiles, a golden-haired Archangel.
> ("A Country Without A Mythology" 21-28)

The waiting for a divine foundation or mercy from the heavens, a main topic in *The Wanderer*, is echoed in here, interposed between man and wilderness, God – or Goddess – in Nature. The imagery is in stark contrast with the previous passage, where fire, lightning and sharp edges are replaced by visions in the twilight about gentle lights, lustrous wilderness and mythological Archangels, an escape or divine recompense for those who have to suffer and wander aimless without a place to call home.

Although the mythical archetype of the Wanderer can present an elegiac tone like the Anglo-Saxon version, the themes related to this Wanderer in English-Canadian literature are not always as defeatist as its predecessor, for it can include elements of self-bargaining and self-discovery. According to Hallvard Dahlie, the theme of exile in Canadian literature started to manifest through writings of the colonial period, as for many of the colonizers the process of moving to the New World meant exiling oneself from the center to the fringes of civilization (10). In the twentieth century, however, there is a shift from the feeling of the exiled colonizer to a notion of exile caused by immigration in more general terms, the feeling of displacement and isolation an immigrant finds in adapting to a different country and culture, which creates experiences that are oftentimes unsettling and turbulent.

In this sense, Dahlie points out that "as many exiles discover, the common things they might share with others because of similar backgrounds are often undermined by their uncertainty as to how these elements apply in their new land, for they, as well as their worlds, have undergone transformations that are not always understood" (188). The feeling of displacement is one that encompasses many different Canadian experiences, presenting itself among the several immigrant

cultures living in the country today. Not limited to emigrated cultures, displaced identities also exist among individuals of the First Nations, as their original territories were confined, divided and overall changed by the European colonizers, and many of the native children were later exiled from their own culture through the Indian residential school system. As Atwood sees it, there is one element that seems to be common across the country, the feeling that:

> Canada is an unknown territory for the people who live in it, and I'm not talking about the fact that you may not have taken a trip to the Arctic or to Newfoundland, you may not have explored – as the travel folders have it – This Great Land of Ours. I'm talking about Canada as a state of mind, as the space you inhabit not just with your body but with your head. It's that kind of space in which we find ourselves lost. (*Survival* 12)

Although generalized in her argument, this state of mind seems indeed to be common at least among the poetry of English-Canadian writers, as exemplified before, and is fundamentally connected to Canadian Nature, as it represents the physical and metaphysical spaces as well as the divine aspect of it. Nature from a Canadian perspective provides the backbone for Campbell's metaphysical, cosmological and even sociological questioning that give meaning to a myth, in particular to a character like the Wanderer. For those who emigrate, the impact of displacement in a different culture, as well as the sense of exposition to a potentially hostile nature – as is the case in Canada – create anxieties and the urge to find one's place in a different country. The development of stories and myths that dialogue with such experiences, in this sense, is a way towards establishing a footing in the new land. In the case of the overwhelming Canadian nature, one of the possible ways to adapt to it can be found in the mythical and "prehistorical" past of the primeval societies, as Frye puts it (231), times when nature was seen as divine and powerful.

The myth-making of themes and characters in Canadian literature with parallels in ancient cultures such as the Anglo-Saxons may be related to a necessity to explain and express the fears of many individuals who thought of themselves as exiles in Canada. Furthermore, literature has given rise to as many different types of Wanderers as the pluralities of cultural experiences in Canada, having

many times in common an elegiac tone found in writings of exile and displacement. This tone, according to Priscila Uppal, shows how "the importance of recovering one's familial or cultural inheritances, and continuing one's ongoing relationship with the past in a rapidly changing present and future, is prevalent in these elegies from English-Canadian poets from diverse cultural backgrounds" (19).

The presence of mythical aspects of the Wanderer in the English-Canadian literature is related to a metaphorical movement of the myth towards the contemporary world, with the Wanderer's search between worlds contained in the link with different times and cultures. This link exists, for instance, in the continuation of language, especially the use of language as a site to explore grief over the experience of displacement, as the Wanderer tells the story of several elements that caused his exile and how things were before and are now.

English-Canadian literature, therefore, presents many themes in common with the Wanderer, from his apparition as a literary character in Anglo-Saxon elegies to his presence as a mythological archetype. He is present in the form of portrayals of the conflicts one faces in adjusting to a new place and culture, in the never ending exile and search to cope with the feeling of displacement. Moreover, the continuation of the character of the Wanderer in English-Canadian writing deals with the mysteries and the cosmological place of Canadian Nature, not limited to but many times connected to its dangers and general hostility towards migrants and immigrants roaming through it, and how getting lost in the wilderness of "the bush" can push one into both a physical and a psychological exile.

With those elements established, before analyzing the ways Jon Furberg takes this character in *Anhaga* and turns him into a myth of displacement for English-Canada, first it is necessary to look at the Wanderer's earliest iteration in English literature, the Anglo-Saxon poem *The Wanderer*. A thorough analysis of this Old English poem will allow to see aspects of the Anglo-Saxon's view regarding the experience of exile and displacement, as well as their relationship with nature, and so give the basis for Furberg's inspiration in writing the poems in *Anhaga*.

CHAPTER 2

The Wanderer

In discussing Jon Furberg's poetry, the subject of the Anglo-Saxon poem *The Wanderer* is essential to understand the elements which Furberg recreated in his poems in *Anhaga*. This late tenth-century poem falls under a mixture of the wisdom/elegiac genre of Anglo-Saxon poetry, and it is one of the most well-known Old English texts available, influencing not only Jon Furberg, but other authors as well, most famously J. R. R. Tolkien, who, according to Stuart D. Lee, deeply studied *The Wanderer* and reused it in a passage in *The Lord of the Rings* (202).

Before starting the analysis of *The Wanderer*, establishing some common characteristics of the Old English language and literature are necessary to further understand this culture's way of expression and poetry. Differently from much of nowadays literature in English, Anglo-Saxon poetry is, according to Donald Scragg, ". . . rooted in an oral tradition of poems composed, performed and passed on without benefit of writing" (50), and consequently modern views on poetry based on verse, stanzas, rhyme, free-verse, and others are quite alien to the reality of Old English texts. Furthermore, the authorship of most of the texts is unknown, as well as the specific dates they were written, especially considering that "all Old English poetry is of such uniformity in form and language that it is impossible to establish even relative dating with any certainty" (Scragg 52).

In this sense, the Anglo-Saxons employed the Germanic meter to their texts, which was based on continuous writing of alliterative verses, alternating stressed and unstressed words and syllables; this was done without separating the verses in stanzas, but through the *caesura*, a break between two halves of the line, with words alliterating between both parts. The punctuation was sparse as well, giving poetry the look of prose. Moreover, even texts in prose seem to use this poetic meter in their content, especially alliteration, and the *Beowulf* manuscript, for instance, contains both poetry and prose (Scragg 51). This suggests that the Anglo-Saxons probably did not observe a clear-cut separation between literary genres.

In terms of vocabulary normally employed in Old English poetry, there are two aspects which seem to be common: repetition and the use of *kennings*. Repetition of an idea through the use of variation is a specific feature of Anglo-Saxon literature, where the poet needed to

have the command of several synonyms for the main idea approached in the poem, sometimes traditional and many times newly created compounds, so as to explore the different aspects of the imagery being conveyed (Scragg 60). The second aspect is a special type of compound metaphors called *kennings*, also common in Old Norse poetry, which according to John Pope and R.D. Fulk involved the use of words such as *feorh-hūs*, "life-house", giving the meaning of "dwelling place of the soul or spirit", that is, a metaphor for "body" (45). The audience and the reader were expected to know many of those *kennings* through their common use in the oral tradition, as opposed to variation, which encouraged the poet to create several compound neologisms.

Taking these elements into account, the main objective of this analysis is to investigate the subject of exile in *The Wanderer* from a culturally located perspective. Differently from epic and clearly heroic poems such as *Beowulf*, *The Battle of Maldon* or *Waldere*, in *The Wanderer* there are no great battles or deeds, and no bolstering of feats in combat, only the sense of displacement, with a narrative concerned more with internal feelings and struggles, heroes and glory located in a nostalgic past. Considering this, quite oppositely to the heroic focus, the poem starts after a battle that was lost, with a single lonely survivor, the *ān-haga* ("wanderer" or "solitary-one"):

> Oft him ān-haga āre ġebīdeþ,
> metodes mildse, þēah-þe hē mōd-ċeariġ
> ġeond lagu-lāde lange scolde
> hrēran mid handum hrīm-ċealde sǣ,
> wadan wræc-lāstas. Wyrd biþ full ārǣdd. (1-5)
>
> [Often the solitary-one abides mercy for himself, / the measurer's mildness, though he in sad mood / through water-way long may have had to / move with his hands the hoar-cold sea, / wade exile-paths. Fate is fully set.]

The speaker is thus presented as a defeated figure, waiting for the mercy of the "measurer's mildness" (2), likely the Christian god, while living alone in an apparently cold environment, hinted by the use of "hoar-cold sea" (4). The speaker's need to "move with his hands" (4) through the cold waters shows that either he lost his companions in another country beyond the sea, or he was exiled specifically because he survived – or fled – a battle where his lord died, for as Katherine O'Keeffe points out, in Old English literature the touchstone of the

heroic life ". . . is the vital relationship between retainer and lord, whose binding virtue is loyalty" (101). This loyalty was expected from both sides, the lord through the act of giving treasures to his retainers, and the retainer through oaths of service to the lord. Death in the service of the lord was a better fate for a warrior than a life of disgrace due to the breaking of an oath, which ". . . should be understood in the context of the exile enforced as punishment on those who fled to save their own lives. The price of their cowardice was the loss of land rights for themselves and their kin" (O'Keeffe 103).

This idea is further stressed by the poet informing that the Wanderer is wading "wræc-lāstas", which can be interpreted both as "paths of exile" or "paths of punishment", offering different interpretations for the Wanderer's exile, but establishing his solitary and individualistic narrative. Regardless of the reasons for his isolation, "fate is fully set" (5), a sentence that reduces the gravity of whatever actions the *persona* may have taken to be put in this situation: if fate is indeed fixed, there was nothing to do to avoid the Wanderer's path of exile. However, the Anglo-Saxon concept of *wyrd* involves greater complexity than the common translation of the word as "fate" indicates. As Eric Gerald Stanley points out, in a general sense, "because *wyrd* is etymologically very close to the verb *weorþan*, the meanings of the verb are directly relevant to those of the noun. As the abstract of *weorþan*, *wyrd* may mean no more than 'that which happens or has happened, an event, occurrence, incident, fact'" (87). The word, in this sense, can take the meaning of "one's lot in the course of events". Moreover, Gwendolyn Morgan understands *wyrd* as:

> . . . a concept of fate without a modern equivalent. *Wyrd* is an arbitrary force whose purpose – if it has one – is unknown and unknowable to both men and the gods, a fate impervious and oblivious to human concerns yet in ultimate control of them. *Wyrd* does not deliberately help or harm: its influence is impersonal and follows a logic different from that operating in the affairs of man. (83)

The poet presents the character of the Wanderer in an almost stoic way, as *wyrd* dictates his situation and he is, therefore, unable to change any aspect of it. Following this perspective, the poet says:

> Swā cwæþ eard-stapa earfoþa ġemyndiġ,

wrāðra wæl-sleahta, wine-māga hryres. (6-7)

[So spoke the earth-stepper mindful of sufferings, / of wrathful battle-slaughters, ruin of beloved-kinsmen.]

If the words *ān-haga* and *wræc-lāstas* described the *persona* as an exile, that is, one who dwells alone in tracks of torment, *eard-stapa* truly introduces him as a wanderer, who carries the burden of remembrance about the cost and all the suffering that "battle-slaughters" (7) have caused him. After this beginning there is change of person from "he" to "I":

Oft iċ scolde āna ūhtna ġehwelċe
mīne ċeare cwiðan; nis nū cwicra nān
þe iċ him mōd-sefan mīnne durre
sweotule asecgan. Iċ tō sōðe wāt
þæt biþ in eorle indryhten þēaw
þæt hē his ferhþ-locan fæste binde,
healde his hord-cofan, hycge swā hē wille. (8-14)

[Often alone before each daybreak I should / bewail my care; not one is now alive / to whom my mind-spirit I dare / say clearly. I know indeed / that it is a noble custom in an earl / that he bind fast his spirit-locker / hold his hoard-cove, think as he will.]

For a long time, the existence of a single voice or two voices in the poem was considered a source of much debate in Anglo-Saxon studies, fueled by the argument of John C. Pope, in 1965, of two speakers appearing throughout the text: an *eard-stapa*, the *kenning* for "wanderer", and a *snottor*, the general reflections of a "wise man". This argument was later discredited and retracted by Pope himself, replaced by current views of the poem as ". . . something like a bildungsroman in miniature, setting before our eyes one who acquires insight from his trials, evolving from an ignorant sufferer into the role of the man who is described as **snottor**" (Pope and Fulk 90).

However, there is still the question of the presence of a narrator, visible in the sudden change, in verse 8, from a third-person *hē* to a first-person *iċ*, as if this narrator is now allowing the Wanderer to speak for

himself. At the same time, the "narrator" could be the Wanderer all along, talking about his experience as a now wise man, in relation to his path as a wanderer. Therefore, as Pope and Fulk point out in their standardized version of the original text of *The Wanderer*, "as we lack definitive answers to such questions, no attempt has been made in the text to delimit speeches with quotation marks" (91). The view adopted here is that of two speakers, a wise narrator and the Wanderer, who are different versions of the same *persona*; nonetheless, this separation is only to facilitate the analysis of the poem, and does not represent an attempt to put an end to the question.

In terms of the content of the previous verses, the Wanderer's narration of his situation brings elements of the cultural worldview of the Anglo-Saxons concerning the subject of the heart and the mind, as he has to bewail his care at daybreak, showing the need to be alone in a proper time of day to demonstrate his feelings. Malcolm Godden shows that, in a distinct way from modern views of the mind as something consciously accessible, which are based on Descartes, there is a common tendency in Anglo-Saxon texts to see the mind as one's inner self located in the heart, and "as perhaps follows from its location in the heart, the mind is seen as both a faculty of thought and a faculty of feeling or emotion" (303). This point can be seen in the richness of terms for the mind in the previous verses, containing the words "mōd-sefan" (10), "ferhþ-locan" (13) and "hord-cofan" (14), all relating the concepts of mind and feelings to the heart in an abstract sense. *Mōd-sefan* can be translated as "mind-spirit", linking concepts that would have been seen today as opposites; *ferhþ-locan* translates as "spirit-locker", denoting a place where the spirit must be restrained, namely the heart; finally, *hord-cofan*, "hoard-cove", portrays the meaning of a hideout for a treasure, this treasure being the mind or feelings, and the hideout being the breast.

Moreover, the speaker says that binding fast one's mind is "in eorle indryhten þēaw" (12), a noble custom in an earl/man, and he also stresses the need to "healde his hord-cofan, hycge swā hē wille", that is, to hold his hoard-cove and think as he will, perhaps showing that taking control or hiding this "inner self" was considered a positive habit in the Anglo-Saxon tradition, a demonstration of inner strength. The following verses continue this theme, together with the concept of *wyrd*:

> Ne mæġ wēriġ mōd wyrde wiþstandan,
> nē sē hrēo hyġe helpe ġefremman.
> For-þon dōm-ġeorne drēoriġne oft

> on hira brēost-cofan bindaþ fæste. (15-18)
>
> [He may not in weary mood withstand fate / nor provide help for the troubled mind. / Therefore the glory-eager ones often dreariness / bind fast in their breast-cove.]

Once more there is the presence of an oblivious *wyrd* against which the Wanderer cannot resist. Although the mention of his "weary mood" (15) is the reason for the Wanderer to fall victim to fate, it does not mean that a cheerful mental state could somehow "win" against *wyrd*: a happy mood would only help one to better endure fate. For this reason he could not "provide help for the troubled mind" (16), as the Wanderer is locked in a circular cycle of sadness caused by his focus on a dark *wyrd*. As in the previous verses, the poet uses again many words with different shades of meaning to represent the mind: "mōd" (15), meaning "mood", "mind" or "spirit"; "hyġe" (16), "mind" or "thought"; and "brēost-cofan" (18), "breast-cove", a compound that brings forth a meaning of "mind inside the heart". Those words are examples of the poetic resource of repetition, in this case to express different shades of meaning and, thus, portray the sense of the wanderer's deep, spiritual disturbance.

In this sense, Benjamin Waller notices how these different terms for the mind all seem to be related to a separate entity:

> . . . the mind resembles an animate entity with the capacity for fatigue; it also can take a physical position, therefore capable of being assaulted . . . the mind is not able to provide assistance, another indication of personified action. Finally, the mind is a space for securely storing dreary thoughts; it is yet again an enclosure that can be shut. (30)

The idea of animation has a parallel in the Norse concept of *hugr*, a cognate of the Anglo-Saxon *hyġe* with the same meaning of "mind" or "thought." Alexandra Sanmark informs that the *hugr* represented one of the many aspects of the soul for the Norse people, and that it could, like an animated entity, leave the body (161). The concept of *hyġe* in the poem seems to follow its Norse equivalent in how it is not confined by the body, explaining the Wanderer's constant effort to bind it in the heart.

Consequently, the notion of boundaries dividing mind, body and soul, common in nowadays thought, does not seem to apply to Anglo-Saxon mentalities about the human self. This is particularly true in terms of the understanding of the inner self, as Alexandra Ramsden posits:

> Notions of inner and outer in Anglo-Saxon thought about human nature, however, cannot be mapped onto dichotomies of spirit and matter, soul and body, or mind and body. As in the wider Western tradition, Old English views of the inner realm do not necessarily refer to the immaterial soul or mind. Indeed the complex relations between the various aspects of man are notoriously difficult to decipher in terms of a matter-spirit duality in Old English accounts. (57)

The following verses move from a general discussion of the mind to the attitude the Wanderer takes in relation to his feelings of displacement, as well as the effects of *wyrd* over his life:

> Swā iċ mōd-sefan mīnne scolde,
> oft earm-ċearigġ, ēðle bedǣled,
> frēo-māgum feorr, feterum sǣlan,
> siþþan ġeāra ġeō gold-wine mīnne
> hrūsan heolstre bewrāh, and iċ hēan þonan
> wōd winter-ċearigġ ofer waðuma ġebind, (19-24)
>
> [So my mind-spirit I had to, / often careworn, deprived of ancestral home, / far from noble-kinsmen, fasten fetters, / since years gone by my gold-friend has been / covered by the darkness of earth, and thence I downcast / waded winter-sad over binding waves,]

Here once more the Wanderer talks about his need to bind fast his "mōd-sefan" (19), though now it is possible to establish a direct connection of that word with the modern day meaning of "feelings", as he explains that "often careworn, deprived of ancestral home, / far from noble-kinsmen" (20-21), showing the depressing reasons for such need of self-control. As Edward Said puts it, "exile is strangely compelling to think about but terrible to experience. It is the unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true

home: its essential sadness can never be surmounted" (174). His depressive repetition of longing and negative feelings is not only a feature of Anglo-Saxon poetics, but a way to delve into this essential sadness, an aspect which Jon Furberg observed that, even though so distant in time and place in this Anglo-Saxon poem, resonates with contemporary experiences of displacement.

Further on, the fact that the Wanderer is described as "ēðle bedǣled" (20), which can be translated as "deprived of an ancestral home," portrays him as an individual without place. He is also far from his "frēo-māgum," a double meaning *kenning*, as it can mean poetically "noble-kinsmen," or more commonly "free-kinsmen": the first suggests an idealization of the wanderer's kinsmen as a noble people and, therefore, expresses his loss of this status as a social outcast; the second, on the other hand, allows for the interpretation of the wanderer as an individual confined by his exile, in opposition to his kinsmen. This second meaning raises an apparently paradoxical situation, as the idea of a wanderer involves open boundaries and freedom of movement; however, for the Anglo-Saxon culture, a wanderer was considered someone living outside of society, and therefore someone who did not abide by the communal rules. Outsiders like a witch, a medicine woman or man, a traveling bard or even a wanderer merchant had their place in Anglo-Saxon society, but they were not fully part of it, and so were seen as potentially dangerous; a complete outcast, on the other hand, was someone who lost his personhood, and could be killed on sight without the repercussion of the law. This gives the idea of no home to return to and no safe place for the *persona* in the world, hence his constant wandering, physically and mentally.

The speaker informing that "since years gone by my gold-friend has been / covered by the darkness of earth" (22-23) shows that many years have passed since his lord – addressed as "gold-friend", which can be understood in the sense of "giver of treasure" – and his companions died and were buried, and likely that the Wanderer has been in exile for quite a long time as well. The next verses, "and thence I downcast / waded winter-sad over binding waves" (23-24), indicate his exile in a place close to the cold sea, giving a northern direction to his present location in the poem. His state of mind, though, either projects his view of the landscape or is in tune with it:

sōhte sele-drēoriġ sinċes bryttan,
hwǣr iċ feorr oþþe nēah findan meahte
þone-þe in medu-healle mīne wisse,

> oþþe meċ frēondlēasne frēfran wolde,
> wēman mid wynnum. Wāt sē-þe cunnaþ,
> hū slīðen biþ sorg tō ġefēran,
> þām-þe him lȳt hafaþ lēofra ġeholena. (25-31)
>
> [sought hall-dreary a giver of treasure, / where I far or near might find / he who in the mead-hall might know about my people / or would comfort me friendless, / allure me with pleasures. He knows who understands / how cruel is sorrow as a companion, / to him who has little beloved friends.]

The poet's use in this passage of the compounds "sele-drēoriġ", "hall-dreary", and "medu-healle", "mead hall", as well of his general use of "hall" and "mead hall" throughout the poem, is indicative of the importance of this building in the Anglo-Saxon world, which, as Hugh Magennis mentions, is akin to the figure of the city in the wider Christian tradition (40). Furthermore, in literature, "hall imagery is in the first place an imagery of Germanic secular tradition, and some Christian poems present it as a sign of godlessness and wickedness. Even these poems find the traditional imagery useful, however, and hall and feasting remain as ubiquitous symbols of a way of life" (Magennis 44).

In this sense, the hall was the center of the communal life in Anglo-Saxon culture: the community gathered in the hall for feasting, storytelling, gift-giving, and in the case of the higher rankings of society, politics. More importantly, "at the centre of the hall culture of the Anglo-Saxons is the personal bond between lord and retainer, which has not been weakened by the officialdom and greater formality associated with written records" (Magennis 13). Following this perspective, the speaker's yearning for a hall can be understood in the context of the relationship between lord and retainer, visible in his search, "far or near" (26), for a "giver of treasure" (25), so he can then regain his previous status as a retainer and be once more part of the community who gathers in the hall. Moreover, the Wanderer's longing is not limited to social status, but also to sentimental bonds to the lord, as the speaker also says that the lord he wishes to find ". . . would comfort me friendless, / allure me with pleasures" (28-29), and how sorrowful it is to lack such a bond and have little "beloved friends" (31) in the world. The speaker then goes on telling about the effects of exile in his life, as well as his memories of the past:

> Waraþ hine wræc-lāst, nealles wunden gold,
> ferhþ-loca frēoriġ, nealles foldan blǣd. (32-33)
>
> [The exile-path holds him, not at all twisted gold, / frozen spirit-locker, not at all earth's wealth.]

The Wanderer stresses how *wyrd* has dealt him a path of exile and "nealles wunden gold" (32), where the twisted gold stands for the traditional gift of ornamental rings given by the lords to their retainers (Pope and Fulk 222); as well as a frozen "spirit-locker . . . not at all earth's wealth" (33), using again a poetic compound for the mind. "Foldan blǣd" can mean here the fruits or abundance of the land, drawing a comparison between the winter land where the Wanderer is in exile with his own frozen and melancholic spirit. His memory journey, in this sense, highlights the desirable aspects of his culture, in opposition to the cold existence without the gifts of his lord in a joyless exile. Indeed, the poet addresses this contrast and offers clues to understand the complex exchange between the speaker as a narrator and the aspects of memory in his narrative:

> Þone sorg and slǣp samod ætgædere
> earmne ān-hagan oft ġebindaþ,
> þynċeþ him on mōde þæt hē his mann-dryhten
> clyppe and cysse and on cnēo lecge
> handa and hēafod, swā hē hwīlum ǣr
> on ġeāar-dagum ġief-stōles brēac. (39-44)
>
> [When sorrow and sleep both together / the wretched solitary-one often bind, / it seems to him in mind that his liege-lord/ embraces and kisses him and on his knee lays / hands and head, as when he ere / in yore-days enjoyed the gift-giving.]

The first verse, where the poet says that both "sorrow and sleep" (39) bind the Wanderer, may bring forth the idea that the speaker is not only remembering his experience, but dreaming about it in his sleep. According to Antonina Harbus:

> Sleep is a metaphor for both sin and death in Old English texts, with many classical and biblical

> precedents. Sleep, through its metaphoric associations with physical and spiritual death, is considered an unhappy state likely to attract sorrow. The coincidence of sleep and sorrow has a doubly negative effect on the mind of the wanderer when delusion and despair produce dreams. (167)

Following this perspective, sorrow takes control of the mind during sleep, which "often bind" (40) the Wanderer. Dreaming is therefore deceptive, allowing the speaker to see in his mind illusions of his lord, who "embraces and kisses" him (42). Furthermore, by stating before that the Wanderer's exile deprives him of his lord's beloved counsel, ". . . suggests that the induction of the dream is the direct result of the absence of the lord's wise words" (Harbus 168). The closing images of the dream, where the Wanderer lays his "hands and head" (43) on the lord's knee, references the act of allegiance and social bonding, ending with a nostalgic remark of the past where he "enjoyed the gift-giving" (44). This creates a stark contrast with the next verses, intensifying the Wanderer's despair:

> Þonne onwæcneþ eft winelēas guma,
> ġesiehþ him beforan fealwe wǣgas,
> baðian brim-fuglas, brǣdan feðra,
> hrēosan hrīm and snāw hæġle ġemenġed.
> Þonne bēoþ þȳ hefiġran heortan benna,
> sāre æfter swǣsne. Sorg biþ ġenīewod. (45-50)
>
> [Then wakes up again the friendless man, / sees before him fallow waves, / sea-birds bathe, feathers broaden, / falling rime and snow mingled with hail. / Then are the heavier the wounds of the heart, / sore after a loved one. Sorrow is renewed.]

The first verse of this passage, "then wakes up again the friendless man" (45), gives evidence to the notion of the Wanderer being asleep or at least in a trance, and what he sees before him after awaking is the dreadful reality of loneliness amid nature, far away from his previous life as a retainer in Anglo-Saxon society. Moreover, the description of "fallow waves" (46) and "sea-birds" (47) points towards a location close to the sea, possibly the shores of a northern land such as

Scotland or Norway, considering the falling of “rime and snow” (48) mixed with hail. Jennifer Neville also mentions that:

> There is also some evidence that the weather endured by the Anglo-Saxons was more severe than that experienced now. While the rise of the Roman Empire was accompanied by an amelioration in climate, its fall coincided with a deterioration in climatic conditions. In the centuries following, the Anglo-Saxons lived through colder, stormier weather, rougher seas and more snow than that experienced previously, and worse weather than that experienced now. (4)

If so, the landscape aspects described in the poem could also point to an exile on an island or place uninhabited inside Anglo-Saxon England, where the foreign land represents simply the life in the natural world, outside civilization. Regardless of that, his waking up from a pleasant dream only serves to bring “wounds of the heart” (49), as he is reminded about the cold reality of longing for loved ones. Therefore, after a small glimpse of illusory happiness, “sorrow is renewed” (50).

This last verse is also a formula repeated through variation in the following part:

> Þonne māga ġemynd mōd ġeondhweorfeþ---
> grēteþ glēo-stafum, ġeorne ġeondsēawaþ---
> secga ġeseldan swimmaþ oft on-weġ,
> flēotendra ferhþ. Nā þǣr fela bringeþ
> cūðra cwide-ġiedda ---cearu biþ ġenīewod---
> þām-þe sendan sceal swīðe ġeneahhe
> ofer waðuma ġebind wēriġne sefan. (51-57)
>
> [When the memory of kinsmen roves through the mind--- / he greets with glee-signs, eagerly surveys--- / companions of men often swim away, / the soul of the floating ones. It never brings there many / known speech-songs --- care is renewed--- / he who shall send very frequently / over the binding waves the weary spirit.]

Even awaken, the Wanderer’s need for consolation seems to cause him a hallucination, this time not about his lord, but his former companions, and his “. . . memory of kinsmen” (51) becomes an actual

vision as he tries to greet them with “glee-signs” (52), which can be interpreted as joyful salutations or even songs (Pope and Fulk 186). But as an illusion, they “often swim away,” (53), and the following verse, “the soul of the floating ones” (54), provides a double metaphor in this sense: it can either mean that the spirit of his companions is fleeting, or that the Wanderer’s vision fades and fuses with the previous seabirds’ imagery, as they float and swim away “over the binding waves” (57). The crude reality does not bring any known voices that the wanderer so much craves for, and so “care is renewed” (55); “care” here is a variation for “sorrow,” repeating the cycle of good dreams turned negative. To conclude, the poet informs how, like his visions in the form of seabirds, the Wanderer has to send with frequency his “weary spirit” (57) over the waves, reinforcing the idea of the *persona* projecting his mind outside the body.

The speaker then resumes the use of “I,” ruminating about the impact of his experiences on his mind:

> For-þon iċ ġeþenċan ne mæg ġeond þās weorold
> for-hwon mōd-sefa mīn ne ġesweorce
> þonne iċ eorla līf eall ġeondþenċe,
> hū hīe fǣrlīċe flett ofġēafon,
> mōdġe magu-þeġnas. Swā þēs middan-ġeard
> ealra dōgra ġehwǣm drēoseþ and fealleþ; (58-63)
>
> [Therefore I may not think yonder this world / why my mind-spirit does not darken / while I think through all the life of earls, / how they suddenly gave up the floor, / brave young-thanes. So this middle-yard / each of all days decays and falls;]

According to Waller, the mind of the Wanderer is capable of traveling through memory and his own imagination, like a spiritual projection, but it is also constantly binding the scenes and images he sees (79). The imagery portrayed after he projects his mind and memory upon the world is one of doom, as earls “gave up the floor” (61), and this *middan-ġeard*, a compound used in the sense of “this world,” decays and falls into ruin. Nonetheless, despite this imagery, his “mind-spirit” does not grow dark, which is logically confusing even for the

speaker, considering what he has been through and how he sees the world now.

Starting here, the speaker's tone changes, and he begins to talk about wisdom and the reasons for why his mind-spirit did not darken after all:

> for-þon ne mæġ weorðan wīs wer ær hē āge wintra dæl
> on weorold-rīċe. Wita sceal ġeþyldiġ,
> nē sceal nā tō hāt-heort nē tō hræd-wyrde
> nē tō wāc wīga nē tō wan-hyġdiġ
> nē tō forht nē tō fæġen nē tō feoh-ġīfre
> nē nǣfre ġielpes tō ġeorn ær hē ġeare cunne. (64-69)
>
> [therefore a man may not become wise before he has his share of winters / in the world-kingdom. The wise man shall be patient, / nor he shall ever be too hot-hearted nor too hasty-worded / nor too weak in wars nor too wan-minded / nor too fearful nor too fain nor too fee-greedy / nor ever too eager for boasting ere he knows enough.]

His comprehension of the world, fruit of his own ". . . share of winters / in the world-kingdom" (64-65), allowed his wisdom to put darkness at bay and not consume his mind. What follows are several maxims of what is expected from a wise man, instructions of what not to be or do in order to find a path towards wisdom, where the Wanderer's individual experience is used by the poet as a representation of what was considered a virtue or a vice in Anglo-Saxon society. John Selzer also sees in this passage an influence from the Christian meditative tradition, based on the writings of St. Augustine. From this perspective,

> One must be patient and dispassionate and undespairing in order to keep faith in the face of transitoriness and disaster, in order to find a *bote*, a remedy, in God's stability. The *wita*, the *gleaw hæle*, will learn to see through the wasted riches, the frost covered ruins, the blasted halls, and the dead companions, to the knowledge they represent. The worldly trials that the poem so graphically portrays, it seems, are purgatorial

> experiences one must undergo in order to attain necessary knowledge. (Selzer 236)

The Wanderer's loneliness becomes, then, his strength, allowing him to transcend the earthly realm. This brings forth the complex Anglo-Saxon cultural matrix of a Christian religious system enveloping a more ancient and pagan worldview, particularly noticeable in poetry as it tended to be more conservative in its form and content. This is visible in how the maxims juxtapose Christian and secular Germanic moralities: too hot-hearted, hasty-worded, fearful, fain and fee-greedy represent the Christian morality of control over earthly emotions and the need of piety in order to find salvation for one's soul; whereas being too weak in wars, wan-minded and eager for boasting without knowledge portray the Germanic ideals of cultural heroes such as Beowulf, the need to be worthy for the sake of one's community. To escape the grim purgatory of mental exile, the Wanderer meditates on the complicated values of his society, and the wisdom contained in the combination of past and present morals to the individual who is no longer part of that society. In this way, this new image of the Wanderer, putting himself as a now experienced narrator, mirrors a common attitude among exiles that Said calls ". . . an urgent need to reconstitute their broken lives, usually by choosing to see themselves as part of a triumphant ideology or a restored people" (177).

The use of maxims, then, is socially significant, for according to Peter Clemoes, Anglo-Saxon "poetic narrative consistently tested accumulated wisdom about the foundations of society's integrity, and of what threatened them, in the stresses and strains of 'real' life" (xi). By exploring the Wanderer's path, the poet can highlight what was considered to be socially desirable behaviors:

> Beorn sceal ġebīdan, þonne hē bēot spriċeþ,
> oþ-þæt collen-ferhþ cunne ġearwe
> hwider hreðra ġehyġd hweorfan wille. (70-72)
>
> [A warrior shall abide when he speaks a vow, / until stout-hearted he knows clearly / whither the thought of the heart will turn.]

Once more the poet stresses patience as a requirement for wisdom, but this time in the warrior-like fashion of making vows before battles. Maybe here the speaker is challenging a culture of boasting and

making promises one cannot or does not truly wish to see to the end, hinted by a warrior's need to know clearly "whither the thought of the heart will turn" (72). This suggests the aforementioned bond between lord and retainer which culturally forces the latter to fight until death for the former, risking exile as punishment for failing in such task. Resentment for the reckless choices of his younger self shows that the narrative is not only about stressing the positive elements of society, but also its negative entrapments.

In this sense, the next picture portrayed by the poet is apocalyptic, showing the ephemeral nature of society:

> Onġietan sceal glēaw hæle hū gæstliċ biþ
> þonne eall þisse weorolde wela wēste standeþ,
> swā nū missenlīċe ġęond þisne middan-ġeard
> winde bewāwne weallas standaþ,
> hrīme behrorene, hrīðġe þā eodoras. (73-77)
>
> [A wise hero shall realize how ghostly it will be / when all the wealth of this world stands waste, / as now throughout this middle-earth various / walls stand whipped by the wind, / fallen upon by frost, the enclosures snow-sealed.]

There is here a tacit – but not passive, as wisdom provides endurance – acceptance of the fragile fate of the world, with the enclosure of the human realm of existence beaten by the forces of nature. The imagery of cold, wind and frost, as well as a world turned into wasteland, presents a striking resemblance with the Norse Fimbulvetr, the "Mighty Winter", culturally related to the Anglo-Saxons, and described by Snorri Sturluson in *The Prose Edda*:

> Snow will drive in from all directions; the cold will be severe and the winds will be fierce. The sun will be of no use. Three of these winters will come, one after the other, with no summer in between. But before that there will have been another three winters with great battles taking place throughout the world. (71)

From this perspective, beyond the common imagery of a mighty winter, the mention to battles echoes the end of the world for the Wanderer as caused by the death of his companions in battle. Moreover,

Fimbulvetr is the first stage of the Norse Ragnarök, the "Fate/Twilight of the Gods," which although representative of the end of the present world, signifies as well the birth of a new one. In a Christian sense, this rebirth could be interpreted as the ascension to Paradise, an aspect approached later in *The Wanderer*. Hence, the Wanderer's wisdom begets knowledge of the bigger picture, however grim it may be, and so an active role for the individual in the weaving of *wyrd*.

The exiled speaker detaches himself from the world through his wisdom, and so he can observe the decay of everything from the outside, as the

> Weorniaþ þā wīn-salu, wealdend licgaþ
> drēame bedrorene, duguþ eall ġecrang
> wlanc be wealle. Sume wīġ fornam,
> ferede on forð-weġe; sumne fugol oþbær
> ofer hēanne holm, sumne sē hāra wulf
> dēaðe ġedǣlde, sumne drēoriġ-hlēor
> on eorþ-scræfe eorl ġehȳdde. (78-84)
>
> [The wine-halls wane, wielders lie / deprived of delight, the host has all died / proud by the wall. Some the war took, / ferried in forth-way; some a fowl bore away / over the high ocean, some the hoary wolf / handed over to death, some dreary-faced / earl hidden in an earth-pit.]

What the Wanderer sees is a field of death, speaking at the same time from his memory of dead companions and the world as a whole. Again, there is a mention to a wine-hall, where its decline, as the hall is central to the Anglo-Saxon community, stands for the decline of the social bonds uniting the people, leading the wielders of power, the lords and rulers, to be "deprived of delight" (79). The appearance of the fowl and hoary wolf connected to death reveals a deeper meaning, for "the symbolic repertoire of early Anglo-Saxon society can broadly be described as 'zoocentric'. Animals were central to the ornamentation applied to every type of object, animal elements in personal names were common and animals were actively incorporated into mortuary rites . . ." (Pluskowski 103). In this sense, the use of the bird in the poem could be related to a view of birds that are associated with water, like swans and seagulls, as otherworldly animals, reinforced by their liminal nature as creatures that can transit between the earth, sky and sea, taking the soul of the dead over the high ocean.

This imagery of birds taking away the dead is particularly relevant in connection to shamanic practices, where birds ". . . represent ideal totems on account of their ability to travel large distances, necessary for journeying to the afterlife . . ." (Pluskowski 148). The Wanderer's visions throughout the poem may be allusions to such practices, especially if one considers how the character is himself a liminal figure, and constantly projects his *hyġe*, or "mind-spirit," in realistic images of his memories. Furthermore, the relationship between birds and the soul establishes a parallel with the Norse concept of *hugr*, one of the many parts that constituted the soul in the Norse view, for after leaving the body, ". . . the *hugr* most often appeared as a bird . . ." (Sanmark 161).

The hoary wolf, on the other hand, has a more threatening interpretation as a bringer of death, handing over to death those who fall prey to its teeth. The wolf was an important animal in Anglo-Saxon culture and to the Germanic peoples, evidenced by its appearance in art, in personal names, and its presence in Germanic mythologies. Like birds, the wolf also had some totemic importance, especially in the form of its association with the god Wōden/Odin, who in the Norse culture is accompanied by two wolves, Geri (Greedy One) and Freki (Ravenous One). The wolf was first and foremost an animal of battle and war, for "the Anglo-Saxon battlefield resonated with bestial energy; wild, uncontrollable animals were invoked for protection, to inspire aggression and fighting prowess, and the killing of foes was conceptualised in the terms of bestial violence and consumption" (Pluskowski 119). In the poem, the wolf is portrayed not as a bestial ally, but as a killer and devourer of the Wanderer's companions, a common description employed by later Anglo-Saxon poets, who saw the battle-fallen as food for wild beasts (Pluskowski 119). Significantly, such view also appears in the fate of Odin in Norse mythology, who will be devoured by the giant wolf Fenrir in Ragnarök.

The last verse of this passage mentions an earl hidden in an *eorþ-scræfe*. The word here can be translated directly as "earth-pit," in which case it could be understood as a common grave in the middle of the battlefield where even those of noble origin are buried, representing the fleeting nature of the world, and how titles, nobility and the social organization mean nothing in the face of death. The word can also be translated as "barrow," and the poet may be using this image as a portrayal of an ancient past, a time when the nobles were buried in burial mounds and their spirits were revered by the people. The famous

ancestors would be, therefore, hidden and forgotten, adding to the broad picture of decay in the poem:

> Īeðde swā þisne eard-ġeard ielda scieppend,
> oþ-þæt burgwara breahtma lēase,
> eald enta ġeweorc īdlu stōdon. (85-87)
>
> [Destroyed so this dwelling-place the creator of men, / until lacking the burg-keepers's clamors / the old works of giants stood idle.]

The "creator of men" (85) who destroyed the Wanderer's world is, of course, the Christian god, perhaps in the guise of purger of sinners. The poet conveys a feeling of a double reality, drawing a comparison between the speaker's projection of oneself into a waning future and his current lonesome life as an exile. The "old work of giants" (87) standing idle without the noises of the "burg-keepers" (86), the inhabitants of the city, is a reference to the old Roman constructions in the landscape of Anglo-Saxon England, seen as the remains of a civilization long gone. The abandonment and decline of even such giant structures accentuates the works of *wyrd* over the speaker and entire civilizations:

> Sē þonne þisne weall-steall wīse ġeþōhte
> and þis deorce līf dēope ġeondþenċeþ,
> frōd on ferhþe, feorr oft ġeman
> wæl-sleahta worn and þās word acwiþ:
> Hwǣr cōm mearh? Hwǣr cōm magu? Hwǣr cōm māðum-ġiefa?
> Hwǣr cōm symbla ġesetu? Hwǣr sindon sele-drēamas?
> Ēa-lā beorht bune! Ēa-lā byrn-wiga!
> Ēa-lā þēodnes þrymm! Hū sēo þrāg ġewāt,
> ġenāp under niht-helm, swā hēo nā wǣre! (88-96)
>
> [He who with wise thought this wall-stead / and this dark life thinks through deeply, / the old in spirit, far often remembers/ the swarm of deadly-slaughters and speaks this word: / Where is the horse? Where is the warrior? Where is the gift-giver? / Where are the seats of the feasts? Where are the hall-festivities? / Alas bright beaker! Alas byrnie-warrior! / Alas the glory of lords! How the

> time has gone, / vanished under the night-helm, as if it never were!]

Sē þonne is a common pronominal use in the poem when the narrator voice takes over, translating as "he who" or "one who", a person seen as wise by society due to being "old in spirit" (89) and therefore capable of thinking through the complexities of the world, as well as to remember the far too many battles and bloodshed in "this dark life" (88). What follows is a meditation on life in the Latin *ubi sunt* format, in which the Wanderer asks where are now the central elements that constituted his previous life, all related to a glorious past, like the horse, the warrior, the lord who distributes gifts for his retainers and the feasts in the hall. The second part of this meditation nostalgically references a heroic past of the "bright beaker" (94), the "byrnie-warrior" (94) and the "glory of lords" (95), contrasting the bright imagery with the now consumed hall under the darkness of night. Feasting in the hall is particularly important in expressing this contrast, as Magennis points out:

> The symbolism of the hall is exploited throughout Old English poetry in contexts of elegy as well as of celebration. Hall images provide a powerfully emotive framework for Christian narrative poets and for the poets of the Exeter Book lyrics, who find in *seledreamas*, 'hall-joys', an eloquent expression of lost happiness. (69)

A final element of relevance in the passage, as well as throughout the poem, is the mention to walls, in here a wall-stead. According to John Richardson, the wall ". . . has a significance in the poem as a representation of the border between life and death, which border is the principal concern of the poem" (284). This is particularly clear when the poet writes that:

> Standeþ nū on lāste lēofre duguþe
> weall wundrum hēah, wyrm-līcum fāg.
> Eorlas fornāmon æsca þrȳðe,
> wæpen wæl-ġīfru, wyrd sēo mære, (97-100)
>
> [Stands now on the way of the beloved host/ a wall wondrously high, decorated with the likeness of serpents. / The strength of ash-spears took away

> the men, / weapons slaughter-greedy, fate the mighty,]

The wall "wondrously high" (98) could be the liminal point of separation between the living and the dead, with the Wanderer's beloved companions standing at the other side. It could also be a representation of the battle that took their lives, hinted by the presence of "ash-spears (99) and "weapons slaughter-greedy" (100), the weapons used perhaps by the garrison of a fortress they tried to attack. The appearance of the wall, "decorated with the likeness of serpents" (98), appears to refer to some sort of serpentine decoration or ornamentation found in the remains of Roman buildings throughout Britain (Pope and Fulk 98), supporting the interpretation of a battle against one of these buildings.

At the same time, considering how those Roman constructions were seen as works of giants by the Anglo-Saxons, they could represent otherworldly gates in the poem. Moreover, as Victoria Thompson explains, the use of the word wyrm-līcum, "likeness of serpents" or "worm-body," has in itself an association with death, where "indigenous Germanic traditions about the underworld as 'the dark dwelling of corpses and serpents' merge with Christian imagery of hell as the home of the serpent of Eden, associated with the dragon and basilisk upon which Christ tramples" (133). This is especially relevant if one takes into account how the word "wyrm" can mean many things in Old English, ranging from "serpent" to "dragon" and "worm," the latter directly connected to dead bodies. The wall wondrously high in the likeness of serpents can be, as well, a gravestone, and so

> *The Wanderer* reveals an overlap between the imaginative worlds of poems and gravestones. It gives us a poetic reading of the function of a gravestone: something more permanent than a human being, an aristocratic accessory, more enduring than goblets, armour and weapons, but still part of this transitory life. (Thompson 144)

The passage again presents "fate the mighty" (100), in the sense of the relentlessness of *wyrd* as a concept and as an entity in opposition to the Wanderer. A portrayal of the transitoriness and the lack of control of humanity over this world and its fate is represented in the next verses, stressing the imagery of a cold and harsh nature in the likeness of the Norse Fimbulvetr:

and þās stān-hliðu stormas cnyssaþ,
hrīþ hrēosende hrūsan bindeþ,
wintres wōma, þonne wann cymeþ,
nīpeþ niht-scua, norðan onsendeþ
hrēo hæġl-fære, hæleþum on andan. (101-105)

[and storms strike these stone-slopes, / falling blizzard binds the earth,
the noise of winter, when wan comes, / the night-shadow grows dark, sends forth from the north / rough hailstorm, in enmity to the heroes.]

Nature is presented here as a direct enemy to humanity, a divine force of destruction sent by a god who is not benevolent. As Neville points out, this passage is interpreted by many as a "pathetic fallacy," where nature responds to the Wanderer's state of mind (49). However, the opposite is also possible, and the natural world is rarely shown in Anglo-Saxon poetry in a positive light; ". . . here again it is probably more accurate to say that it is represented as standing in opposition to human interests – that it is at best indifferent to human suffering and at worst actively hostile" (Neville 49). The mention of "the night-shadow" growing dark (104) and the "rough hailstorm" (105) sent from the north may be an allusion to the Viking invasions in England, considering the time when the poem was written. In this sense, winter, darkness and the heathen invaders are punishments of the Christian god, and nature his tool.

The poet compares the kingdom of earth with the kingdom of heaven towards the final verses of the poem, where

Eall is earfoþlīċ eorðan rīċe,
onwendeþ wyrda ġesceaft weorold under heofonum.
Hēr biþ feoh lǣne, hēr biþ frēond lǣne,
hēr biþ mann lǣne, hēr biþ mǣġ lǣne.
Eall þis eorðan ġesteall īdel weorðeþ. (106-110)

[All is burdensome in the kingdom of earth, / the creation of fates changes the world under the heavens. / Here wealth is fleeting, here friend is fleeting, / here man is fleeting, here kinsman is

> fleeting. / All this foundation of the earth becomes empty.]

Here the world of humankind is shown in an accordingly Christian view of earthly suffering, and so everything is temporary. *Wyrd* makes a final appearance, brought here as a plural "fates", as in the sense of "what happens", opposing the first appearance of *wyrd* in the poem as something fully fixed. The end will come and show that "all this foundation of the earth" (110) is not truly a firm standing but an artificial man-made construct in imitation to Heaven, in the same way that fate is not truly binding. The Wanderer is convincing himself that, like everything else, his hardship is also fleeting and bound to end in his death. Following this perspective, the final verses present a transformation in the *persona*:

> Swā cwæþ snottor on mōde, ġesæt him sundor æt rūne.
> Til biþ sē-þe his trēowe ġehealdeþ, nē sceal nǣfre his torn tō recene
> beorn of his brēostum acȳðan, nemþe hē ǣr þā bōte cunne,
> eorl, mid elne ġefremman. Wēl biþ þām-þe him āre sēċeþ,
> frōfre tō fæder on heofonum, þǣr ūs eall sēo fæstnung standeþ. (111-115)
>
> [So spoke the wise in spirit, sat himself apart in secret meditation. / Good is he who holds his faith, nor shall ever his anger too quickly / make known the warrior of his breast, unless he knows before the remedy, / as an earl, to accomplish it with courage. Well it will be he who seeks mercy for himself, / comfort from the father in the heavens, where that fastness stands for us all.

The verse "So spoke the wise in spirit" (111) is a final change of character in relation to "So spoke the earth-stepper" (6) in the beginning of the poem, from *eard-stapa*, "earth-stepper", to *snottor on mōde*, "wise in spirit", moving away from doubt and suffering towards illumination, and so from an earthly state to heavenly fastness. Therefore, "the speaker is no longer a wanderer who despairs at the loss of earthly things; now, as *snottor on mode*, he is consoled by the divine" (Selzer 236). This can also be interpreted as the movement from the

need of a community to the individual piety, or even a pagan warrior becoming a Christian hermit, reinforced by "Good is he who holds his faith" (112), showing that faith is more important than anything else for the wise.

The expression "sundor æt rūne" (111) indicates an isolation in such meditation, the individualistic focus of exile, which together with the verse "make known the warrior of his breast" (113) supports the idea of an inner monologue throughout the poem, in an exchange only between wanderer self and wise self. Contrarily to the boisterous image of warriors early in the poem, here the nobleman must keep hidden his warrior nature, exposing it only if ". . . he knows before the remedy, / as an earl, to accomplish it with courage" (113-114); the courageous nature is still there, but humility and self-control are more important.

Finally, the poem ends echoing the opening verse, but the now wise man seeks mercy for himself in the comfort in the "father in the heavens" (115), ignoring his past as the source of support, for Heaven is a foundation that will not decay, disappear with time or abandon him like the human world. In this way, Heaven becomes the new world where the Wanderer sees the end for his long journey of exile. As a *snottor*, he can face the worldly transitoriness and despair as his quest for an earthly lord to replace his dead liege is concluded through meditation, where he finds peace in a spiritual lord (Selzer 237).

This analysis illustrates the complexity of meanings in *The Wanderer*. From the defeated warrior to the wise man, the journey into the mind-spirit of this Anglo-Saxon Wanderer involves the suffering of being alone, the longing for a community, and, more importantly, the very nature of exile, concepts that resonate with many experiences of displacement throughout time and cultures. At the same time, the speaker's transforming meditation on the meaning of exile portrays the pagan and Christian values that forms the foundation of the historical Anglo-Saxon culture, which allowed mythological comparisons between this culture and its Norse cousin, as well as with the myths of medieval Christianity as a whole.

Considering these points, the main elements investigated in *The Wanderer* can, thus, be summarized in his path of exile from the wretched one to the wise one, involving a constant need to keep his "spirit-locker" under control throughout his meditation. As a liminal character, the speaker is always standing in front of a wall, which separates him from his dead lord and companions, a marker between life and death crossed only through the Wanderer's projection of his so called "mind-spirit". Finally, the mighty power of *wyrd*, the web of fate

which is seen by the speaker as impossible to overcome at the beginning of the poem, loses its grip on the speaker when he finally looks outside the earthly realm towards a foundation in the heavens and in the Christian god.

As such, taking the ancient and the contemporary elements of *The Wanderer* into account, it is now possible to investigate the correspondences between this poem and the poems in Jon Furberg's *Anhaga*, and the ways by which the author recreates the Wanderer in his poetry.

CHAPTER 3

Anhaga

Jon Furberg's *Anhaga* was published for the first time in 1983, after ten years of translating, retelling and finally of creating his own poems based on the Anglo-Saxon *The Wanderer*. The character who emerges in his poetry is not only a contemporary Wanderer, but also a Canadian one, linked with his ancient iteration through continuity in language and, most importantly, through the experiences of exile and displacement. Furthermore, the Wanderer in *Anhaga* is also, as will be discussed here, a mythological character taken and recreated by Furberg to dialogue with those experiences of displacement from an English Canadian perspective.

The titular poem of Jon Furberg's collection is "Ānhaga," a word the author points out as "the usual title of the Anglo-Saxon poem. The dictionaries translate it as 'wanderer,' but the parts suggest 'the haw,' the hawthorn or wild rose. One of the hardiest flowers" (*Anhaga* 72). His view of the word is telling, for the hawthorn or wild rose is common throughout cold climates in North America, being native to Europe and considered many times an invasive weed. The hawthorn is the basis of the imagery in "Ānhaga," where the poet interweaves the Wanderer, the wild rose and the idea of the cold North:

> Snow on the ground, yet roses
> blooming—the cold, clear flower.
> White heaven a hard waking to,
> and the fallow jagged, frost-buckled.
> Air ripe and cracking burns deep
> in cut lungs. (1-6)

Here Furberg replaces the animal metaphors from *The Wanderer* with a floral imagery, complementing his preferred etymology for the word *ānhaga*. The context in which this wild rose is capable of blooming is that of winter and cold, connecting this poem to Atwood's view of the survivor in English-Canadian literature, especially in terms of how disorientating and claustrophobic the environment seems through the poet's portrayal. The Wanderer's movement is replaced by the wild rose's stillness and toughness, a necessary trait in the North, but the poet also recreates the Wanderer's despair amid the wilderness through this stillness, a clear flower living among the dead:

> Earth overcast with iron,
> sky's forge steams and showers
> ash into gawking eyes, slack mouths.
> Felled horses still gout from flared
> noses and ears—it thickens fast. (7-11)

The aftermath of war connects "Ānhaga" and *The Wanderer*, with the human destruction represented by the iron covering the earth and the image of the sky burning and dripping ash like a blacksmith's forge. In this sense, Furberg merges medieval imagery with contemporary concepts, like the iron and forge giving at first the idea of swords and shields, but also standing for the destructive machinery and bombing of modern weapons, as the sky rains the ash and steam of explosions. What the poem distances itself most from the original *The Wanderer* is in how war is portrayed, for in "Ānhaga" there is no sense of a glorious past of warriors: war is not embellished, and Furberg details gruesomely the gawking stare and open mouths of those killed, the great horses of the fallen warriors in *The Wanderer* mere carcasses dripping blood in the ground. Instead of distant in the past, death is immediately close, as if the poet is narrating the unseen interval between the Wanderer's final battle and ensuing exile:

> And all about, stunned and swollen,
> the dead seem heavy clods in a field
> gashed by feet and hooves;
> shattered weapons stubble the furrows
> —sparse, twisted harvest.
>
> Yet these were men, spelled out of time.
> split open, spilled dry, their hair
> stuck to frosted stones. (12-19)

The description of the fallen dead is a reference to *The Wanderer* and how ". . . the host has all died proud by the wall" (*The Wanderer* 79-80) as "the strength of ash-spears took away the men" (99). The language employed by Furberg is, as was said before, much more visceral, and he creates a picture of a field where the crops are the dead and where the "weapons slaughter-greedy" (*The Wanderer* 100) are now shattered, the stubble after a harvest of bodies. There is a constant use of irony in "Ānhaga," a parallel traced between war and harvest, of farming the dead, and more importantly, the paradox of representing the

Wanderer without movement. In this sense, the author may be alluding to the constant number of wars in the process of colonization – particularly in North America, if one considers the winter atmosphere of the poem. Following this alternative perspective, the result of a conflict in the form of a harvest in the poem may represent the death of many peoples by the hands of European settlers, reddening the land before farming it. The hawthorn as an invasive and enduring weed would be, then, connected to this interpretation, with its stillness representing the resistance to recognize such bloody past.

Besides, those last two passages bear a striking resemblance to the way traditional Old Norse mythological poetry was composed, which also dealt with the darker aspects of the world and the subject of death, as it is possible to see in this stanza, from the poem "Völuspá" ("Seeress's Prophecy"):

> The corpses of doomed men fall,
> the gods' dwellings are reddened with crimson blood;
> sunshine becomes black the next summer,
> all weather is vicious . . . (41-44)

Furberg's use of Norse mythology in his poetry shows that the poet, like T. S. Eliot and others before him, makes use of mythopoeia, i.e. the process of myth making, here from a polytheistic perspective, moving the Christian speaker from *The Wanderer* and reenvisioning him in a pagan frame. In Furberg's mythopoeia, the literary character of the Wanderer regains his mythological form as the lonely exile, survivor among battles and the wilderness:

> Go look
> at their faces—all dead but you,
> Wanderer, you alone, and only your skin
> to enclose you—*Ānhaga*, the hawthorn.
> wild, winter rose. ("Ānhaga" 20-24)

Here there is the *persona* from *The Wanderer*, talking about him as the wretched earth-stepper. The Wanderer's loss, though, is a past that must be dug up and kept on the surface, and the decayed halls and enclosures snow-covered and beaten by the wind from the Anglo-Saxon poem are the Wanderer's own skin. According to Della Hooke, thorns and the hawthorn, in particular, were very common in Anglo-Saxon England, appearing especially as boundaries between farming lands and

as landmark features (239). Furthermore, the hawthorn appears as well in folklore, be it in its religious connection to the crown of thorns in the crucifixion of Christ (Hooke 104), or as John Gregorson Campbell points out, the hawthorn's association with the fairies and the otherworld in Scotland and Ireland (345). Therefore, Furberg's etymological choice for the word *ānhaga* has several layers of meaning, and the Wanderer in this passage is in this manner established as a mythological figure of the liminal, his skin the boundary between this world and the otherworld, the living and the dead, and nature and the human. From this point on, his mythic role is further explored in another poem, "Exile":

> where he walks
> sorrow keeps
> steadfast and grim,
> sole companion (1-4)

He is a tragic figure, not only one who suffers from his exile, but a bringer of sorrow as well, in direct dialogue with the character from *The Wanderer*:

> . . . He knows who understands
> how cruel is sorrow as a companion,
> to him who has little beloved friends. (29-31)

There is, however, a main difference between the two versions: in the Anglo-Saxon poem, the Wanderer is bound by the circumstances and the sorrow caused by his exile, while from Furberg's perspective the Wanderer embodies the very concept of displacement and exile, and so the poet explores through this embodiment the Wanderer's mythological function in society. As Edward Said stresses:

> . . . while it is true that literature and history contain heroic, romantic, glorious, even triumphant episodes in an exile's life, these are no more than efforts meant to overcome the crippling sorrow of estrangement. The achievements of exile are permanently undermined by the loss of something left behind forever. (174)

In this sense, the Wanderer in "Exile" is a response to the glorious past and the elements of the heroic contained in the original

Anglo-Saxon poem, focusing instead in the path of loneliness. Furthermore, there is no search for a replacement for the past, and what is lost remains forever so:

> path empty of travelers.
> no bracelet of wrought gold
> wound for his wrist;
> nor any bloom of meadow
> folded for his feet ("Exile" 5-9)

Here the poet brings back the element of movement from the mythical character, but the Wanderer's estrangement with the world is shown by means of the emptiness of his path. Together with the final lines of this poem, "his track is ever / through the freezing sea" (10-11), one can see how the poet takes the path of exile from the Anglo-Saxon Wanderer, through the "the hoar-cold sea" (*The Wanderer* 4), as well as he selects another part of the Anglo-Saxon poem to develop his Wanderer in "Exile":

> The exile-path holds him, not at all twisted gold,
> frozen spirit-locker, not at all earth's wealth.
> (*The Wanderer* 32-33)

Furberg's recreation of this passage in "Exile" continues the idea of a wretched outsider whose actions do not deserve any form of recompense or recognition, for the Wanderer is not a heroic explorer of the freezing North. This trope of the brave explorer, according to Lisa Bloom, comes from the perspective that "the difficulty of life in desolate and freezing regions provided the ideal mythic site where men could show themselves as heroes capable of superhuman feats" (6). The freezing site may be in both *The Wanderer* and "Exile", but the Wanderer is no lost hero, and so no gold or meadow awaits him ahead in his path.

The mythic aspect of the Wanderer's path in *Anhaga* appears clearly in two particular poems, "Nerthus" and "Blōdmōnath," which must be read closely together for they are thematically entwined and deal with complex mythological imagery. Quite tellingly, "Nerthus" is separated from the rest of the poems in the book, appearing before the Foreword, as if it was a guiding image to all the other poems. The very title of this poem is meaningful, for Nerthus was the name of a

Germanic goddess, mentioned by Tacitus, a famous first century Roman historian, when discussing the Germanic tribes. His description of the goddess deserves a full quote:

> There is nothing especially noteworthy about these states individually, but they are distinguished by a common worship of Nerthus, that is, Mother Earth, and believe that she intervenes in human affairs and rides through their peoples. There is a sacred grove on an island in the Ocean, in which there is a consecrated chariot, draped with a cloth, which the priest alone may touch. He perceives the presence of the goddess in the innermost shrine and with great reverence escorts her in her chariot, which is drawn by female cattle. There are days of rejoicing then and the countryside celebrates the festival, wherever she deigns to visit and to accept hospitality. No one goes to war, no one takes up arms, all objects of iron are locked away, then and only then do they experience peace and quiet, only then do they prize them, until the goddess has had her fill of human society and the priest brings her back to her temple. Afterwards the chariot, the cloth, and, if one may believe it, the deity herself are washed in a hidden lake. The slaves who perform this office are immediately afterwards swallowed up in the same lake. Hence arises dread of the mysterious, and piety, which keeps them ignorant of what only those about to perish may see. (translated by A. R. Birley, 58)

Nerthus is, in a sense, a wanderer herself, but one with a clear purpose of going and returning. The motherly aspect of the goddess is presented in Furberg's poem right at the beginning, together with her ominous presence:

> O Mother mighty form of night
> Guard us in hell
> In darkness shelter us (1-3)

She is the comforting divine Mother, even though she is not related to festivities or a bright imagery, but with the night, darkness and hell,

which despite being negative aspects on the surface, provide shelter for the people, as her elements guard them. This Mother Nature presented by Furberg agrees with the imagery of Nature as commonly held in Canadian literature: through her attributes, she is connected to the dangerous Northern "ice-goddess" Atwood mentions ("Strange Things" 487), as well as how terrible the Germanic goddess herself could be to those unprepared to see her. However, instead of portraying a dichotomy of human x Nature as featured in many works of Canadian literature, the poet presents a reverent fear of Nature, with the *persona* seeking shelter in this mysterious Mother whose domain the Wanderer has entered.

In the sense of a divine Mother Nature, Nerthus also appears in other poems by the author, such as "Spell For Barren Ground," where she is presented as "*Ērce, Ērce, Ērce*. Mother of Earth, / All-yielding, eternal power!" (1-2) and as ". . . *Folde*, O Mother of peoples" (16) – "Ērce" and "Folde" being two Old English names for the Earth or the land as divine beings. In "The Work Of Giants," Nerthus is the "Flowering Earth, who makes us / humankind raise our eyes—" (23-24), and in "Harvest," she is referenced as the wandering goddess mentioned by Tacitus, for the speaker says "let weapons be buried—iron / locked away when She comes." (4-5); finally, she is called "Dear Mother of night . . ." (3) in "Pray For Hardship", darkness being her other main aspect for the poet. Based on this evidence, Nerthus is a constant presence in Furberg's poetics, and in the poem "Nerthus," her figure as someone who can be called and appeased appears in stark contrast to Odin's character in "Blōdmōnath:"

> Arms and shoulders carved with serpents,
> waist girdled in bronze beaten gold—
> Odin who named all healed none:
> one knocked down a spear in his eye.
> one made to wear a mantle of fire,
> one a mere head frowning in mud! (1-6)

Presented as a horrible figure in this passage, Odin, like Nerthus, is also a recurrent deity in Furberg's poetics, appearing in "Tumulus" as ". . . *Odin* the wise, the singer of doom!" (13), and in "Come Night" with "deathshouts to Odin . . ." (3). Indirectly, Odin is also referenced in the poem "Hall of the Dead," as the author himself explains the title as an allusion to Valhalla (*Anhaga* 75), Odin's "hall of the slain", in the Old Norse language.

"Blōdmōnath" is the poem with the biggest amount of mythological references in *Anhaga*, especially in terms of the many aspects of Odin. In Norse mythology, Odin may be the *Alföðr* ("Allfather") and *Fjölnir* ("Wise One"), naming everything in the world as he was part of its creation, but he is also *Yggr* ("Terrible One"), *Skollvaldr* ("Ruler of Treachery) and *Hjaldrgoð* ("Battle God"). Beginning with the title of the poem, Furberg establishes a relationship between this view of Odin as a War God and the historical *Blōdmōnath* of the Anglo-Saxon calendar. This historical name means "Blood Month" in Old English, according to Ronald Hutton, the month of November in the Anglo-Saxon pagan calendar, which was a period ". . . when cattle were slaughtered before the winter set in, and some used in sacrifices" (Hutton 272). The god and the name of the Anglo-Saxon month are not the only things Furberg borrows from the Anglo-Saxon culture in "Blōdmōnath," for the poem also mirrors the Germanic meter used in Anglo-Saxon poetry, employing alliteration, the *caesura* and repetition to convey the brutality of the imagery.

The sacrificial nature of the Anglo-Saxon month is shown in a different manner in the poem, with human sacrifice taking the place of cattle. Thus, Odin heals no one, dealing only with ritualistic death: the spear is Odin's weapon of choice, and the piercing of an eye a reference to Odin sacrificing his own eye in exchange for the wisdom and the knowledge of the runes. The mantle of fire is, perhaps, the cremation of the soldier's body after death, and for the last ritual the poet portrays the beheading in battle.

The Father is therefore much crueler than the Mother, and the brightness of his appearance, girdled in bronze and gold, is the same brightness of war equipment before slaughter. Moreover, Odin is treacherous, a characteristic marked by the opening line telling that his arms and shoulders are "...carved with serpents" (1), as this animal represents danger, untrustworthiness and treachery. Finally, this stanza brings forth elements from the *The Wanderer*, where in the warriors' way stands a "wall wondrously high, decorated with the likeness of serpents" (98), whence the opening line of "Blōdmōnath." The difference is that in "Blōdmōnath" this wall is replaced by "arms and shoulders carved with serpents" (1): what stands in the exile path of the Wanderer is no longer a liminal marker between life and death, but the God of the Liminal and of Death himself.

In this sense, it is expected that Odin would abandon others to die, with the description of each death in "Blōdmōnath" echoing the deaths in *The Wanderer* as well:

> . . . some a fowl bore away
> over the high ocean, some the hoary wolf
> handed over to death, some dreary-faced
> earl hidden in an earth-pit. (81-84)

The main difference is imagery: while in *The Wanderer* the focus is on the metaphorical animals related to death and the soul of the dead, in Furberg's poem it is the visceral cause that matters most. The sense of doom and horror in war, though, is the common thread connecting both poems, and the feeling of helplessness in such a scenario is paralleled in "Nerthus:"

> In the house of Doom
> Dream us awakening
> In the barren and sealed belly
>
> O Mother drive us out
> Of the throat of hell
> Where we are eaten and broken. (4-9)

The imagery here depicts the potential of Nerthus, as a divine Mother-Nature, to give life back to those fallen in the battlefield. However, the poet here plays with paradoxes, for the womb is barren and sealed; one may argue that Nerthus in these stanzas is the all-encompassing Earth, with the speaker trapped in the consequences of a war which broke the divine cycle of peace established by Her passage. From this perspective, the poem "Nerthus" is a prayer and a plea to the eponymous Goddess. The North may still be malevolent in Furberg's poetry, as it is among several works in Canadian literature; however, it is not female as in Atwood's references to the Nature monster. The use of "Mother" itself already reverses this relationship, for no matter how dark and mysterious, she is a source of hope in the middle of suffering and death, a reaching hand to ". . . drive us out / Of the throat of hell" ("Nerthus" 7-8). Mother Nerthus' primal power of creation is represented as well in her capacity to awaken the fallen through dreams, and her being related to darkness is portrayed not in the negative sense of the word in the poem, but in her more chthonic aspect. In terms of myth, Furberg is bringing here the mythological figure of the Dark Mother, who Kathryn Madden says that

> . . . represents life, death, earth and sexuality, and deep transformational energy. She has been associated with nurturing, birthing, caring for children, the sick, the elderly, and the dying. The Dark Mother is often represented in myth as the Queen of the Underworld or one who travels to the Underworld. The Underworld does not necessarily represent Hell but more a place where souls reside between lives; thus, a space, or interval of liminality. (203)

In this context, her capacity to drive people out of the throat of Hell is related to the Dark Mother's liminal and underworldly aspects, and this liminality may be connected to the Wanderer figure as well. Furberg's use of "hell" may have a double meaning in this passage, referencing the common Christian view of a place of torment and suffering for the souls of the wicked, or – considering the poet's many uses of Norse mythology throughout *Anhaga* – the Norse concept of Hel. Hel appears in mythology as a goddess of the dead, but as Hilda Ellis Davidson points out, "most frequently we find the word *hel* used simply to signify death or the grave" ("The Road to Hel" 84), and the world of the dead is many times simply referred as Hel as well, with the idea of the world probably being older than the goddess, which would be a later personification of Hel according to John Lindow (172). The "throat of hell" ("Nerthus" 8) in the poem may be an allusion to this place/deity, as it insinuates both; the "barren and sealed belly" ("Nerthus" 6), from this perspective, could also mean the underworld of the dead, merging the figure of Hel with that of Nerthus.

Furberg works an interwoven relation between goddess and god, Nerthus and Odin, rescuer and dealer of death:

> Odin the craftsman red in the forgelight
> raises his hammer higher than doom
> to flash upon the shield of night:
> one trying to run away in the mist
> stops to look down nothing below his knees,
> dropped with a cry to Odin the deaf,
> legs blunt stumps like altar stones
> burned iron, cracked and half-buried,
> but the animals heard, hewed him down
> until he stared straight in heave
> and the wild dog's ecstasy! ("Blōdmōnath" 7-17)

The poet presents Odin's many skills in the guise of a craftsman, one that brings destruction to mankind at the drop of his hammer, with the imagery of red in the forgelight conveying violence and blood. His hammer strikes the "shield of night" (9), which has a great resemblance to the protection granted by Nerthus as a Dark Mother in "Nerthus". Displacement is represented here in a literal absence of place to stand, as the one being stricken tries to run away and finds "nothing below his knees" (11). Odin, "the deaf," is an apt title for a god who wanders and cares only for himself and his path, passing by without paying attention to the suffering of others. The final lines of this passage speak of the Wanderer's incapability to escape, with legs as blunt stumps, burned, cracked and buried, depriving him from one of his main characteristics, motion. "Like altar stones" (13) he is a sacrifice to Odin, to be consumed by wild animals, the Liminal God of ecstasy portrayed as the wild dog. Furthermore, the use of wild animals as threats to the speaker in this passage harks back to theme of the perilous Nature from Atwood's *Survival*, as well as the Anglo-Saxon *The Wanderer* and its use of animal imagery to represent the supernatural. Where Odin is a source of displacement, Nerthus is shown as a source of place:

> Great womb of night
> Dark witness spell us
> Out of hell jaw hell teeth
>
> Bear us forth Mother
> Strike us with breath
> So we crawl and speak ("Nerthus" 10-15)

The depiction of Nerthus connecting her to a "womb of night" and showing her as a "dark witness" highlights her presence as the Dark Mother. Also, her domain is multiple, brought by the poet in her role as a physical and imaginative creator of humanity, for not only she is the womb for birthing humanity, but she is also the one capable of spelling them out of hell. Furberg's use of the verb "spell" here has a powerful interpretation, for it means that Nerthus' creative potential lies in the power of words as well, even magical spells, considering the several meanings of the verb. This portrayal contradicts popular western views of darkness being opposite to life and growth, and the domain of evil: instead of putting the Wanderer in hell, she rescues him from it, and her strikes are not that of a hammer, but of breath. More importantly, through breath Nerthus gives back the Wanderer's most important

element, motion. In comparison, Furberg puts Nerthus' aspect as Mother Nature in the form of a counterbalance to Odin's own image in "Blōdmōnath":

> Odin the new field, and the sower,
> Odin the spoiled seed the cry for water:
> Odin the one pinned to a tree, warped, ugly limb,
> the forest afire, trees gnarled black,
> burls like warts, deadfalls roiling
> in steaming muck, nothing to glean;
> here men are hardwood, human bark
> burns hot and long smoke grey and
> sodden! (18-25)

From this take it is possible to see a reversal in the common position of a vilified Nature goddess in Canadian literature to that of a vilified god, without abandoning the melancholic and gloomy view that Frye and Atwood see as a common element between Canadian and Anglo-Saxon literature. Furberg embraces such view in this passage, mixing his imagery of destruction with Odin's mythical stories and characteristics: like the pagan god, Odin is the sower of favors and new fields, but at the same time those who receive these favors have a dark recompense later, with spoiled seeds and "the cry for water" (19). In many stories of Norse mythology, Odin at first helps famous warriors or nobles to only later be the cause of their deaths, as is the case with Sigmund in the *Völsung* saga, Haakon the Good and Erik Blood-Axe in the *Heimskringla* saga, and several others.

The third line of this passage is also clearly a reference to Odin's sacrifice of himself to himself, where "the one pinned to a tree" (20) refers to the Norse god hanging pierced by his own spear in the World-Tree Yggdrasil for nine days and nights. The mythological reference, however, brings none of the heroic and cosmic ideal of a self-sacrifice as presented in the sagas, for Yggdrasil is just a "warped, ugly limb" (20) in the middle of a forest fire, the poet showing a scene of complete degradation and destruction. The description of the forest is in itself vile and filthy, order turning into chaos, different from Odin's part in mythology as a terrible figure who, nonetheless, brings order to the cosmos through his actions. The final lines of this stanza are another reversal of a mythological story, in this case the creation of humanity by Odin, Hænir and Lodur in the *Völuspá* ("Seeress's Prophecy"):

> Until three gods, strong and loving,
> came from that company to the world;
> they found on land Ash and Embla,
> capable of little, lacking in fate.
>
> Breath they had not, spirit they had not,
> character nor vital spark nor fresh complexions;
> breath gave Odin, spirit gave Hænir,
> vital spark gave Lodur, and fresh complexions. (translated by Carolyne Larrington 17-24)

Ash and Embla, probably meaning "ash tree" and "vine", are, according to Carolyne Larrington, ". . . two pieces of driftwood washed up on the shore" (265) in this Old Norse poem. Elements of this story appear in "Blōdmōnath" when the *persona* says that "here men are hardwood, human bark" (24), portraying humanity as driftwood like in the Norse myth. However, instead of Odin giving it breath, he blows the fire so that the bark "burns hot and long smoke grey and sodden!" (25). In this sense, Nerthus is the one who gives breath to humanity, while Odin takes it away. Not limited to that, Odin also takes away one of the main things that make humanity human, that is, the capacity of speech:

> Men's tongues riddled but the constant sea
> is wide as god's eye; She lifts and sighs:
> Odin the long sun, longer dark,
> Odin the speechless master of song,
> Odin the reaper and the gatherer:
> Sky bulging and thundering, bloodswath
> through young, silver wheat green hay.
> One in a meadow her thighs stained;
> woman in labour struck in her belly.
> She is our harvest! ("Blōdmōnath" 26-35)

The mention to "men's tongues riddled" is not only related to this lack of speech, but when complemented by the imagery of the sea, it is also a reference to *The Wanderer* and its use of riddled and meditative speech. Moreover, the sea "is wide as god's eye" (27), perhaps a connection to the Christian nature of the Wanderer's meditation in the original, or even to Odin's single and all-seeing eye. However, it is also telling how the sea is treated as "she" by the poet; when combined with the portrayal of a woman in labor and her being connected to the harvest, it is possible to assume a relationship between this enigmatic

sea woman and Nerthus, especially if one considers how the original Germanic goddess used to inhabit an island in the sea. What she sighs about is a series of opposing domains attributed to Odin in Norse mythology, all relating in some way to his figure as a Wanderer: long sun and longer dark stand for his movement throughout the worlds as a liminal god – in parallel to the movement of the sun – particularly to dangerous and inaccessible places, and so darkness is longer than daylight. He is speechless and master of song because of his role as a passer-by poet and adviser, although he always talks in riddles and only to those he considers worthy of his time.

Odin's representation as a reaper and gatherer in this passage of "Blōdmōnath" is a reference to his role as psychopomp, a gatherer of souls. In the myths, Odin grants his divine help to many great warriors, only to later betray and lead them to their deaths, gathering the fallen into his otherworldly hall, Valhalla, to fight for him in Ragnarök, the end of times. Furthermore, his terrible passage through the air, with the "sky bulging and thundering . . ." ("Blōdmōnath" 31) is a reminder of his later role in folklore as the leader of the Wild Hunt,

> . . . the terrifying concourse of lost souls riding through the air led by a demonic leader on his great horse, which could be heard passing in the storm. Later still, the leader became the Christian Devil. There seems no real reason to assume from this that Wodan was ever a wind god, but it was natural that the ancient god of the dead who rode through the air should keep a place in this way in the memory of the people, and it reminds us of the terror which his name must once have inspired. (Davidson *Gods and Myths* 148)

The final imagery of this passage is, then, a representation of the insidiousness of war and the terror of Odin's presence in the form of a storm hitting the fields, a weapon striking a woman's belly, and of blood tainting Nerthus' peace and harvest. There is, in a way, an element of the uncanny and the inhuman in how Odin is portrayed by the poet in "Blōdmōnath," the bestiality involved in war and violence. The opposite, though, can be said about how Furberg chooses to show Nerthus in the final lines of his opening poem:

> Bring us the words
> Unlock your loom

And wrap us in human cloth. (“Nerthus” 16-18)

Here there are no tongues riddled, no human barks on fire, no wild animals lurking for blood. This prayer-like poem ends in a request to go back to what makes humanity human, a pledge which in many ways resonates with the loss of humanity in the hands of Odin in “Blōdmōnath.” “Bring us the words” reflects the original creation myth of Norse mythology, the giving of breath to the first humans, and the use of the word “loom” is also a reference to this mythology, as weaving is a skill related to goddesses in the Norse view, as they were seen as having the domain over magic and fate. Finally, “wrap us in human cloth” (18) is a strong image of the goddess’s power as a giver of everything that characterizes humanity. Moreover, the whole passage expresses a feeling of a motherly figure taking care of a child, like the stern Germanic goddess visiting the countryside and looking over to see if peace is being kept by the people, a peace which Odin is very keen on breaking:

Bring in the weaklings from all the stock.
It is the month of blood, the air already
full of the North. There will be feasting!
“As for our enemies, we shall leave them
only their eyes, so they can weep.”
(“Blōdmōnath” 36-40)

Instead of bringing words to those deprived of it, Odin asks for the weaklings “from all the stock” (36), the sacrificial human cattle for him in the month of blood. The feasting is, from this perspective, also reversed, for it is a feasting of human flesh for the wild animals. The main question the poet poses here is whose voice is speaking at the final lines of this poem: considering this voice belongs to Odin himself, there is one more element opposing “Blōdmōnath” and “Nerthus,” for in the former the speaker is the mythological source for the Wanderer, Odin the Wanderer, talking from the position of a divine passer-by, while in the latter the voice belongs to the original Wanderer from Anglo-Saxon literature, the exile speaking from a displaced and vulnerable perspective. This difference appears as well in the tones of both poems: “Nerthus” shows similarities with a prayer, an “us” requesting help from the divine, opposed by a distanced voice in “Blōdmōnath,” which narrates the wanderings of Odin and puts the suffering he causes in his path in a secondary position, separated in the text by indentations.

Finally, considering the brutality of the final lines of "Blōdmōnath" together with the mention of ". . . the air already / full of the North" ("Blōdmōnath" 37-38), it is possible that the poet is alluding here the destruction brought by the European colonization and imperialism in North America, in this case Canada, with Odin the War God standing as a metaphor for their presence. From this perspective, the continuing use of fire, Odin hammering down his path, as well as the destruction of forests and people in the poem, present a parallel with the British imperialist advance in forging Canadian history. According to Keith D. Smith, "while imperialism and colonialism are never the same in any two situations, Euro-Canadians imposed themselves on the territory and First Nations of western Canada in many ways parallel to British interventions elsewhere" (8). Violence is, of course, one of the main tools used in this imposition, and the poet depicts this aspect vividly in "Blōdmōnath."

However, Canada had one major difference in its colonization policy in relation to other British colonies, which was ". . . the creation of isolated enclaves called Indian reserves which represent a degree of segregation and potential for surveillance unparalleled in the British empire" (Smith 8). The surveillance could be represented by Furberg in how Odin and his eye are ever-present in "Blōdmōnath," and the isolation felt by the speaker in "Nerthus," trapped in the jaws of hell, might be a reference to this historical segregation, with the request to be made human again in the poem, an allusion to centuries of the British inhumane treatment of individuals from the First Nations[8]. In this sense, thematically speaking, both poems could also be taking the element of meditation from *The Wanderer* and expanding it to reflect anxieties concerning the inhumanity of several historical conflicts, especially the aftermath of displacement caused by wars. Moreover, these two poems, by working with the Wanderer from the perspective of the dichotomy between the human and the divine, provide a mythic narrative akin to the Norse and other mythological stories. By doing so, the poems highlight the Wanderer's own mythological place in Furberg's poetry.

A thematic continuation of the prayer-like poem "Nerthus," "Pray For Hardship" is another poem which reverses the meaning of a passage from *The Wanderer*. Contrary to the Anglo-Saxon Wanderer, who ". . . abides mercy for himself" (*The Wanderer* 1), the Wanderer in "Pray For Hardship" stands for a different perspective in life:

[8] "First Nations" is a nomenclature for the predominant Aboriginal peoples living in Canada, excluding the Métis and Inuit cultures.

Pray for hardship—
all earth's a common mound.
Dear Mother of night, I wake
and everywhere sharp-spiked stalks
drive mild flowers through the crust,
to stand pale in this cold. (1-6)

His request seems to be a strange one, especially ironic considering that a prayer normally involves a plead for something positive to befall someone. The poet here is exploring the facade of the Wanderer as the one who grows from his journey. For that, Furberg begins the poem focusing on the speaker's apparent acceptance of his fate in face of a bleak reality. The earth as a common mound in the second line points to the idea of a burial mound, and his view of the flowers' stalks going through the crust of the earth suggests he is looking from the inside of the mound. If following the previous idea that the Mother of Night can also be interpreted as the Norse Hel in Furberg's poetry, then the notion of the Wanderer as a liminal figure becomes clearer in this stanza, and in this way "Pray For Hardship" is a thematic continuation from his situation in "Nerthus." In this sense, he comes from the world of the dead to the world of the living to find that the darkness from the underworld is only replaced by the brightness of the snow in this world. This idea appears more clearly in the next stanza of the poem:

In white hell, mercy might
be simple warmth, sweet flesh,
should abide as snowy petals lofted
in kind air. But here fragrant crown
shrivels, rosehips blacken,
stem and root wrung across the blown land,
a field watered with blood. ("Pray For Hardship" 7-13)

Here the speaker develops on the notion of what constitutes the mercy the Wanderer seeks. "White hell" and "snowy petals" show once more the poet's use of a winter atmosphere to express the sense of isolation and despair of the Wanderer, in which mercy could be simply the feeling of warmth from another human being. Considering this choice of imagery in many of Furberg's poems analyzed here, it is important to explore the connection between this type of winter poetics

and the very idea of the "North" as an entity. As S.D. Grant explains, from a Canadian perspective, ". . . the north is often referred to as 'wilderness,' a place beyond southern civilization, agricultural settlement, or urban life. And in terms of size, it is massive" (16). Accordingly, the Canadian geographer Louis-Edmond Hamelin, who originally established the concept of "nordicity", defined that ". . . 70 per cent of Canada's lands and waters are in the north or mid-north" (qtd. in Grant 16), so this view and the tendency of the North to feature strongly in Canadian literature have, indeed, a justifiable origin. As Atwood highlights, "there is a sense in Canadian literature that the true and only season here is winter: the others are either preludes to it or mirages concealing it" (*Survival* 45). This position is visible in this stanza of "Pray For Hardship" and in most of Furberg's poetry, whose exploration of winter and the North's presence is twofold, featuring in his choice of imagery and in the form of his mythological references.

Having said that, the description of the place where the Wanderer stands as a "white hell" shows this massiveness of the North, a feature employed to represent sorrow in *The Wanderer,* transformed by Furberg in an all-encompassing presence in *Anhaga*. Moreover, in "Pray For Hardship" there is a continuation of the floral theme created by the poet, the wild rose no longer the lone survivor of "Ānhaga," its petal blown away like falling snow, the fruits of the hawthorn blackening, and the rose itself shriveling in the northern wind. Together with the mention of a blown land and "a field watered with blood" ("Pray For Hardship" 13), this stanza continues the idea that the poet is also exploring the bloody past of his country, as the Wanderer contemplates history and the many losses in this "white hell" on Earth:

> Then pray for hardship.
> Who measures us?
> *Metudes miltse*, Measurer's mercy.
> Man, be kind—what if you woke
> to find that all you know had died? ("Pray For Hardship" 14-18)

This stanza is a direct borrowing of a passage from *The Wanderer*, "the measurer's mildness . . ." (2) or mercy that the Wanderer abides for in the original. Differently from the Anglo-Saxon poem, in which the Wanderer knows this "Measurer" to be the Christian god, the speaker in "Pray For Hardship" is not certain about who measures humanity's acts. This uncertainty is the core for the

Wanderer's request to a prayer for hardship, as pain and difficulty in life broaden one's view of it. In this sense, the Wanderer here embraces his exile, and echoes his Anglo-Saxon alter ego in saying "therefore a man may not become wise ere he has his share of winters" (*The Wanderer* 64), with the share of winters in "Pray For Hardship" going beyond the meaning of "time," as the use of winter literally stands for the harsh conditions of this season and the lessons one can learn from those conditions. Hence the speaker's request that man be kind to one another, for like in the Anglo-Saxon poem, "a wise hero shall realize how ghostly it will be / when all the wealth of this world stands waste" (*The Wanderer* 73-74), and so to wake up and find that everybody one knows has died is the ultimate measurement of one's own actions. The unknown "Measurer" in "Pray For Hardship" is, thus, man himself, and so the poet subverts the notion of a divine fate presented in *The Wanderer*.

The final stanza allows several interpretations:

> Before dawn they stiffen.
> Gore and dung.
> The hunters gone.
> Nightcrows pluck at the carrion.
> Eyes first to yield,
> then the tongue. ("Pray For Hardship" 19-24)

The first lines are a reference to how in *The Wanderer* the speaker says that "often alone before each daybreak I should / bewail my care; not one is now alive" (8-9). However, here the focus is not on the speaker himself, but on the bodies of those who died, turned into food for the earth and the crows. Most importantly are the possible interpretations of who those hunters were, for they are clearly different from the warrior band of the Anglo-Saxon poem, and from the imagery of war as presented in other poems by Furberg. "Pray for Hardship," in this sense, explores the three facets of Nature in English-Canadian literature as explained by Atwood, which are:

> Nature seen as dead, or alive but indifferent, or alive and actively hostile towards man is a common image in Canadian literature. The result of a dead or indifferent Nature is an isolated or "alienated" man; the result of an actively hostile Nature is usually a dead man, and certainly a threatened one. (*Survival* 51)

The Wanderer in the poem is the isolated man under the gaze of an indifferent Nature, while the hunters are the victims of an actively hostile Nature. The choice for the word "hunters" instead of "warriors" or "soldiers" underscores this connection: they perished against Nature, not against one another. The final lines can simply be a description of this hostile Nature, the crows plucking the eyes and the tongue from the corpses of its victims, or they can be read separately from the rest of the stanza, representing the Wanderer himself observing the scene: his eyes are the first to surrender in tears, then the tongue in shock. The poet's mythological Wanderer gains wisdom from his suffering in exile, but no recompense or satisfaction from that wisdom.

In "Come Night," the poet delves deeper into this absence of closure for the Wanderer:

> Come night, the dream brings them:
> helpless horses, clanging steel,
> deathshouts to Odin—Ēala! Ēala!
> Again I bury him, cloak him in stones
> over and over. (1-5)

There is in here the element of dreaming, which also appears in *The Wanderer*, as when the speaker says that "it seems to him in mind that his liege-lord / embraces and kisses him . . ." (41-42). However, Furberg once again goes along a different road for his Wanderer's dream, for what he sees is not a comforting view of the past, but the horrors of war, with the corresponding appearance of Odin as the War God. Furthermore, the "deathshouts to Odin" show the cries of those who died in battle to be carried to Valhalla, that is, to get their recompense in the afterlife, but the shouts can also be of terror, as those dying see themselves cheated out of the War God's favors. As the sole survivor, the Wanderer is forced to relive the moment when he lost everything, burying an unidentified "him", possibly his friend or the lord from the Anglo-Saxon poem, over and over again. At the same time, the poem deals with the Wanderer's rhetorical questions about his glorified past in the Anglo-Saxon poem, as in "Where is the horse? Where is the warrior?. . ." (*The Wanderer* 92) and "Alas bright beaker! Alas byrnie-warrior! / Alas the glory of lords!" (94-95). In "Come Night," dreams are not escape routes from reality, they merely intensify the melancholic parts of memory: what he sees are helpless horses and the sound of weapons clanging against the steel of the warriors in armor. Suitably,

"alas", in its Old English form "Ēala", changes from an expression of grief in the original to a cry of despair in "Come Night."

His dreams are portrayed as binding, for as the speaker sees,

> Twilight calls me out to mourn,
> and I do, though who can hear?
> —all ears sealed like gates
> in the walled town of sleep. (6-9)

Coming from an opposite perspective in relation to the speaker in *The Wanderer*, here the poet presents a Wanderer who wishes to mourn with others instead of binding his own feelings in his "spirit-locker." In this sense, it is the situation of exile who traps the Wanderer in "Come Night," and not the shame of being an exile. The choice of twilight for his mourning, like the lamentation before each daybreak in the Anglo-Saxon poem, highlights the Wanderer's liminal character, with periods of time located in-between the moments of light and darkness in both poems. Moreover, his sense of desperation is made even more claustrophobic in that he is not freed in his dreams, for they are ". . . the walled town of sleep" (9) and so, every ear is sealed inside his own oneiric fortress. The Wanderer wakes up,

> And then day swells, this wide unfolding,
> as if the dead uncurled their winding shrouds
> and walked in frail light, remembering. (10-12)

The imagery is reminiscent of *The Wanderer*'s passage following the speaker's vision, where the poet says "Then wakes up again the friendless man" (45), who sees before him ". . . fallow waves / sea-birds bathe, feathers broaden" (46-47). The unfolding of the light and the dead uncurling their shrouds is an allusion to the spiritual meaning of the birds broadening their feathers in the Anglo-Saxon poem, in which they stand as a representation of the soul of the dead. The procession of the dead as brought in this stanza, remembering as they walk in the frail light, underscores the existence of many Wanderers, displaced individuals who have the role of memory and estrangement defining their path of exile. The winding shrouds, in this way, are the many layers of walls that these displaced Wanderers create to protect themselves against their own social otherness; like the speaker in *The Wanderer*, by uncurling and removing those shrouds, they are capable of seeing society from the outside:

> What country is this? Is this
> the country of the mad?
> In the first hour, the hour of mist,
> their shapes are meshed and tumbled.
> world of small shadows, webbed words. ("Come Night" 13-17)

Here there is a moment of criticism coming from the speaker in relation to non-exiles, akin to the social critiques contained in the maxims of *The Wanderer*. The first lines show estrangement concerning not only the matter of place, but of nationality and the communal institutions of a country.

In this sense, the Wanderer's view of exile is closer to what Said calls

> . . . an *alternative* to the mass institutions that dominate modern life. Exile is not, after all, a matter of choice: you are born into it, or it happens to you. But, provided that the exile refuses to sit on the sidelines nursing a wound, there are things to be learned: he or she must cultivate a scrupulous (not indulgent or sulky) subjectivity. (183)

From this perspective, the speaker ponders this society from his position as the other, looking at how misty the people living together in community are, the madness in which subjectivity and individual needs are surrendered to the pressure of fitting in. Thus, with a controlled individuality under the domination of power relations in society, each of those people living in community cast a small shadow, and their words are entangled in the discourses created by those in a position of power.

Just like the speaker of *The Wanderer* discusses the culturally located problems of a society based in the *comitatus* bond of lord and retainer, the speaker in "Come Night" mulls over the social fabric and the anxieties of the contemporary world. The speaker's critique ends in one final call back to *The Wanderer*:

> Braced against *Wyrd*, the stunned man
> twists his knuckles white, squeezing time
> into a seed—pain inside pain, king
> and kingdom gone down into darkness.

> Jaws locked shut, lungs knotted,
> ribs tight as a closed coffin;
> his thoughts rave, while his legs
> send down roots into ice. (“Come Night” 18-25)

Wyrd continues to be the main principle defining and tying the actions of the Wanderer, from his past incarnation who “. . . may not in weary mood withstand *wyrd*” (*The Wanderer* 15) to his contemporary figure. The fate of those in exile is portrayed as a boundless prison, working with the idea that “exile is never the state of being satisfied, placid, or secure. Exile, in the words of Wallace Stevens, is ‘a mind of winter’ in which the pathos of summer and autumn as much as the potential of spring are nearby but unobtainable” (Said 185). This dissatisfaction and insecurity, bottled up and growing inside the stunned man with the passage of time, is a seed of continuous pain, and every part of the body presents a limitation in the apparent unlimited movement of the Wanderer, from his jaws locking his speech to lungs knotting his breath.

Among the most limiting aspect of the Wanderer’s body in this poem is his chest. The speaker’s “breast-cove” in *The Wanderer* – his innermost feelings – becomes a closed coffin in “Come Night,” and his thoughts, like the speaker himself, wander about wildly, an element which also harks back to how the Anglo-Saxon Wanderer tended to project his mind in the original poem. Taking into account all these aspects, it becomes visible how the concept of the exile’s “mind of winter” is continuously explored towards the final line of “Come Night,” with the speaker’s legs as roots growing into the ice, and also in the general imagery employed by Furberg in his poetry.

Particularly, the poem “Midden Yard” delves into this state of mind surrounding the Wanderer:

> I don’t know for the world
> why the soul does not darken
> to remember them quick, and how
> swiftly they fled—courage and strength
> gone over to the far shore,
> all mortal kindness sunk in hollow skull. (1-6)

The poet starts the Wanderer’s rumination here by recreating a very similar passage from the Anglo-Saxon poem:

> Therefore I may not think yonder this world
> why my mind-spirit does not darken

> while I think through all the life of earls,
> how they suddenly gave up the floor (*The Wanderer* 58-61)

However, what the passage in *The Wanderer* suggests is a battle where the members of the speaker's warrior band died in a final stand, while in "Midden Yard" those being described are not the speaker's companions, but his enemies, fleeing to a far shore. What was originally the Wanderer's spirit getting dark due to losing everyone dear to him in the Anglo-Saxon poem, becomes in Furberg's portrayal the darkness of his violent acts on that day, consuming his soul. Curiously, Furberg's Wanderer describes the kind of actions the speaker in *The Wanderer* considered to be the mark of the unwise:

> Eager for glory, we sought battle,
> hoarding our fame, wearing our pride
> more proudly than armor—
> and when it walked it wore
> a mask of rust, shield slung
> on a bone arm. ("Midden Yard" 7-12)

In the following lines, the poet transgresses the maxims of the wise man presented in the original Anglo-Saxon poem:

> . . . The wise man shall be patient,
> nor he shall ever be too hot-hearted nor too hasty-worded
> nor too weak in wars nor too wan-minded
> nor too fearful nor too fain nor too fee-greedy
> nor ever too eager for boasting ere he knows enough. (*The Wanderer* 65-69)

The Wanderer in "Midden Yard," by going against every element of what constitutes a wise man – except weakness in wars – is presented as deserving his wretched path. This mask of pride and fame, which the Wanderer and his companions wore like an armor, is merely a rusty facade hiding their own weakness, exposed to the bone behind their search for glory. From a mythological perspective, this exposition of the Wanderer's past in "Midden Yard" is a reference to the Wanderer's complex archetypical figures, which are rarely presented as particularly virtuous or truly benevolent in nature. To name a few mentioned in the analysis, Odin, the utmost Wanderer in Norse mythology, faced exile by

his transgressions against the divine order, such as the breaking of vows and rape; Thor has his wits and character questioned and tested many times in his travels, being tricked by several foes. Finally, Nerthus, as a wandering goddess, may bring peace wherever she passes, but someone must be drowned in her name after her path is finished. The Wanderer is a contradictory myth for the poet as well, both an exile and the cause of exile of others.

Considering this, the poet in "Midden Yard" goes in a different direction in relation to other poems in *Anhaga*, for instead of talking about the Wanderer from the position of the oppressed, here Furberg explores his role as an oppressor:

> Each day weakens and sinks,
> till earth is a tumulus—
> mound of relics, dump of bone shards.
> Death is the common father of our deeds.
> We came and killed,
> never learned to weep. (23-28)

With this idea of the Wanderer as killer, the poet may be alluding to the violent history of the Anglo-Saxons themselves, who came from the continent and conquered the native Celtic peoples of Britain. In this sense, there is a continuity in English history, as a people and as a language of conquest and expansion, the same violence of the Dark Ages repeated in the English colonization of many parts of the world, including the history of Canada and therefore the context in which the poet is writing. The first lines suggest this continuity of time, with each day coming and going and the bodies of those killed piling up into a "tumulus," an archaeological term for a historical barrow. This archaeological burial mound carries the hidden weight of historic acts of dispossession and violence, for inside it lies relics and bone shards of the past. Besides, the poet's choice of Death as the father and not the mother of their deeds shows, once more, a relation to Odin as the Death God, building on the imagery of the god as portrayed in "Blōdmōnath," as well as the imagery more generally employed by Furberg to represent the negative aspects of the Wanderer as a mythological character.

The final lines of "Midden Yard" show the Wanderer's self-reflection, an important aspect of his mythic character. Here he concludes that, despite all the harm caused to others, he and his companions never learned compassion: like much of the English history of colonization, the Wanderer's legacy is one of denial for the damage

caused to individuals and cultures. Almost in direct continuation to this poem, "Tumulus" further explores the idea of this dark barrow of historical oppression, as well as the Wanderer's pessimistic outlook about his own situation and the society he craves for and simultaneously shuns:

> Look how they steal in on thin feet,
> the wan, shrivelled ghosts grubbing the waste.
> In the moaning wind, all wealth lies empty. ("Tumulus" 1-3)

In the next segment of the poem, the *persona*'s voice encompasses all the displaced individuals that are exiles inside the margins of society:

> They are here everywhere,
> heaping the midden anew, building the mound,
> scratching their sign upon standing walls
> hung with frost, houses abandoned, breathing ice. (4-7)

The image suggests the urban environment, the dirt of the accumulated garbage in the big cities being piled up like a mound, the graffiti markings signalizing the presence of marginalized social groups in abandoned buildings throughout a wasted landscape covered by frost. In this case, it is clear how Furberg leans heavily on a similar passage of *The Wanderer*:

> A wise hero shall realize how ghostly it will be
> when all the wealth of this world stands waste,
> as now throughout this middle-earth various
> walls stand whipped by the wind,
> fallen upon by frost, the enclosures snow-sealed. (73-77)

Although both poems use similar wording, the imagery and subject are different, for the focus of the Anglo-Saxon poet is on the future and on the fleetness of the human society in comparison to the world of the divine; in "Tumulus," however, the speaker observes the state of destitution already at place in the contemporary world. Both poems are also vague in terms of the exact location where the Wanderer's path of exile is taking him, but their choice of imagery

makes it possible to establish a relation to the poets' respective societies and literature: the north of Anglo-Saxon England in *The Wanderer*, and the Canadian urban landscape in "Tumulus." Taking into account the idea of displacement explored in the poems, this constant vagueness of location creates a sense of disorientation that mirrors the Wanderer's own path. The key difference between the path of the old and new Wanderers is that, while the Anglo-Saxon speaker wonders about the ghosts of the dead from his past, the Canadian Wanderer pays attention to the ghosts of the living, walking around in his present:

> These are the dead who still writhe,
> spirits lost and seeking old doors;
> they howl their names and the names of gods:
> *Tiw*, quick to battle, mounting a horse of steel;
> *Thunor*, whose hammer rings slaughter and tillage;
> and *Odin* the wise, the singer of doom! (8-13)

The lost spirits and the dead still writhing is a continuation of the idea of those marginalized in society, as well as a call to the actual experience of displacement, that is, the constant search for old doors, elements or other people who share the same culture as the one displaced, where he/she can find familiar aspects and a sense of belonging in the new place. To this marginalization in the contemporary world the poet juxtaposes a call for a recognizable past in the image of one the most ancient displaced individuals that came from far away to Canadian lands, the Norse sailors. They howl the names of three of their Scandinavian gods, Tyr, Thor and Odin, none of them relating to peace or the land: the Norse are displaced, but they came to conquer and do battle. The poet chooses not to romanticize these first Norse settlers and their place in Canadian history, preferring to shed light on them as part of the violent history of European colonization. In this sense, Furberg's choice of using the names Tiw instead of Tyr and Thunor instead of Thor is telling, for those are the Anglo-Saxon names for the similar Norse deities, and so they establish a connection to the English people and their own colonization of Canada, which eventually created, in its turn, many exiles.

The poet's juxtaposition of present and past concludes in the final stanza of the poem, where "In crumbling winehalls, landlords and fighters/ carouse in silence, dead and dreamless; / the whole host perished, backs to the wall." ("Tumulus" 14-16). Again, Furberg's

choice of words follows a passage from *The Wanderer*, in which "the wine-halls wane, wielders lie / deprived of delight, the host has all died / proud by the wall . . ." (78-80). Starting with this borrowed passage, the poet draws this Anglo-Saxon past nearer to the present reality by slight changes of wording that carry great differences in meaning in relation to *The Wanderer*, first and foremost his use of landlords and fighters in place of the original "wielders." Both landlords and fighters represent different social classes sharing the same "winehall," which in the modern sense could be a common area such as a pub or bar. Paradoxically, they carouse in silence, the tensions of centuries of history and conflict standing among them, and not against them like in the Anglo-Saxon poem. Thus, in "Tumulus," they lie with their backs to the wall, in dead vigilance against each other, sharing a common language unbroken since the time of the Anglo-Saxons, but othered by their experiences in life.

With this tale of exile, the Wanderer finds his place in mythology, dialoguing with real life experiences of many individuals who feel displaced or somehow othered inside or outside society. In "Others," Furberg explores this fundamental aspect of the Wanderer, who distinguishes himself clearly by saying that "mist yields slowly to a slow sun, / and I to a landsend, leaving no trace" (1-2). In the other poems, the Wanderer is the narrator, talking about several forms of exile and displacement; however, in "Others" the Wanderer finally finds the need to put himself as an "I" in order to talk about his own experience as an other, and to compare his own self to others:

> Others stumbled here, left no spoor
> or spawn. The path is marked by merestones,
> cairns piled against plague, towns charred
> to powder, glass ground to sand. (5-8)

Before the Wanderer was talking about his own unremarked and unnoticed path towards the land's end, but now he talks about the others who came before him. The poet uses terms related to animal tracks on the land to refer to those others, similarly to the animal metaphors in *The Wanderer* for the soul of the dead. At the same time, it is also an extreme form of presenting what was made of the former inhabitants' otherness: the carbonized towns in the Wanderer's path, marked by limiting boundaries of stone, suggest a continuation of the destruction theme shown in "Blōdmōnath," and by extension a possible reference to the killing of many individuals from the First Nations in the period of

the colonization of Canada. In this sense, the "merestones" are the landmarks erected by the colonizers to mark their control over the land, separating them from the indigenous "other."

If he started by talking about history, the speaker now, considering all he has seen, questions the meaning of wandering at all in the present, the emptiness behind his search for different lands:

> Sweep of an oar—for what shore?
> The damned are everywhere, scratching
> in the dark, hungry spirits in torn hides,
> or animal naked dance grotesque
> before a fire of overwhelming wrath.
> Children squat hideous as starving dogs.
> ("Others" 14-19)

Although originally the Wanderer "through water-way long may have had to / move with his hands the hoar-cold sea" (*The Wanderer* 3-4), here he asks himself why he did this, for everywhere he goes he only finds misery in the form of other wanderers like himself. The one whose spirit "the hoary wolf / handed over to death" (*The Wanderer* 82-83) becomes the famished wolf in a criticism to the inequalities of a stratified society. The imagery is that of those on the margins perhaps of a big city, no boundaries between human and animal, the hungry and the forgotten surviving in the savagery of an excluding system. Hence, the Wanderer's theme of the sole survivor is adapted by the poet and translated to contemporary concerns, and so he finishes "Others" by going back to the message contained in "Ānhaga" and "Pray for Hardship," that is, of "Rosehips and snow. Make peace / with the barrens and the whole/ ghostly company. Make peace for the last." ("Others" 20-22).

This message is one of paradoxes, fruits growing in the snow, the hawthorn in the desolate land of the dead, metaphors of resistance against insurmountable odds. Instead of asking for mercy, he advises to make peace with the ghosts of the Wanderer's former company, which in this sense can be interpreted as making peace with history. Burying the bloody past does not make the ghosts disappear, a message which resonates deeply within Canadian culture and its often forgotten legacy of war, especially for the descendants of the English colonizers. As Jonathan Hart puts it, "we are other to ourselves, and ourselves and our language and poetry are made up of other languages and cultures, even if the culture has forgotten them or tried to forget" (120). The figure of

the Anglo-Saxon Wanderer is, from this perspective, perfect for this message, a character from a forgotten culture that survived nonetheless, and one who has to deal with a shameful past, masked in a frozen nostalgic view of his life before exile that does not match the reality of his current situation. From this perspective, there is an uneasy but familiar otherness in Furberg's use of this speaker, for "to be a writer working through the Old English inheritance then, is to be something of an inner émigré, abroad in one's own tradition" (Jones, *Strange Likeness* 8). Therefore, the greatest irony brought by the poet, throughout his exploration and transcreation of the Wanderer as a myth, is that the English language itself is a constant reminder of such legacy of a bloody past, coming since the Anglo-Saxon times.

In this chapter, the several ways in which Jon Furberg recreated and transcreated the original poem of *The Wanderer* were presented, with the Anglo-Saxon speaker moved from his past to express the poet's views on the subject of exile and displacement. Using different wanderers from Norse and Germanic mythology, Furberg painted in *Anhaga* his own Wanderer, the wild rose in the Canadian winter. More importantly, the Wanderer as shown in Furberg's poetry presents the characteristics of a myth, for according to Mircea Eliade's definition of the term:

> Myth narrates a sacred history; it relates an event that took place in primordial Time, the fabled time of the "beginnings." In other words, myth tells how, through the deeds of Supernatural Beings, a reality came into existence, be it the whole of reality, the Cosmos, or only a fragment of reality- an island, a species of plant, a particular kind of human behavior, an institution. Myth, then, is always an account of a "creation;" it relates how something was produced, began to be. Myth tells only of that which really happened, which manifested itself completely. The actors in myths are Supernatural Beings. They are known primarily by what they did in the transcendent times of the "beginnings." (5)

The Wanderer in *Anhaga* is not simply an exile, he is ancestral Exile, coming from the ancient times of the Anglo-Saxons and from the very beginnings of the Norse/Germanic cosmological world. Although there is a hint of a past when he was not an exile, the mythic narrative

focuses on his situation now, the Wanderer as the eternal Exile who just revisits his past. Furthermore, as a supernatural being, he is the liminal walker, going back and forth between life and death and past and present, while dealing with the several "walls" erected by society and by his own self.

Considering these aspects, it is possible to compare this myth of the Wanderer developed by Furberg with Joseph Campbell's metaphysical function of mythology, as the sense of awe before the weight of exile and, above all, the reality of death, encompasses all the poems analyzed here. It is also possible to see elements of Campbell's initiation and sociological functions, as the journey of the Wanderer in *Anhaga* is both inwards as outwards, delving into his own mind and conflicts in order to question the contemporary problems and anxieties of society. However, as Furberg's poems show, his myth differs from older versions of the Wanderer archetype by focusing on removing the individual from society instead of integrating him in the current social order: the power of the myth of the Wanderer and its narrative lies in the character's status as the Exile, the ultimate displaced other.

Finally, as a man of his time and culture, Furberg was clearly influenced by the idea of a garrison mentality as coined by Frye and developed by Atwood, for his myth of the Wanderer is first and foremost that of a survivor, surrounded by both physical and mental walls. The "Canadianness" of this myth is, then, present in the themes explored by the poet, from the winter imagery to a dangerous Nature, the idea of a wild North and the constant presence of death defining the Wanderer's path of exile. Thus, Jon Furberg's poetry, through the myth of the Wanderer, speaks to the feelings of displacement in Canadian culture, as well as criticizes the many erasures in its conflicting history.

FINAL REMARKS

This study set out to investigate Jon Furberg's poetry in *Anhaga* and find the ways the author adapts, translates and transcreates the speaker from the Anglo-Saxon *The Wanderer* to create a myth of the Wanderer from the perspective of a Canadian historical context, exploring elements of what it is to be Canadian and an exile in Canada. To do so, the main goals of the investigation involved the matter of similarities and differences between the Anglo-Saxon poem and Jon Furberg's *Anhaga*, particularly in terms of the portrayal of the experiences of exile and displacement in both works, as well as the elements in Furberg's poetry that present characteristics of a new Canadian myth of the Wanderer. In order to answer the questions proposed, the analysis explored the main aspects of Canadian and Anglo-Saxon literature, as well as the mythological elements that influenced Furberg's poetics.

The feeling of loneliness and melancholy is ubiquitous in *The Wanderer* and in the poems in *Anhaga*, exemplified in both cases by empty wastelands, the idea of the Wanderer as a sole survivor, and the use of cold and winter as markers of hopelessness. Furberg also dialogues continuously with the Anglo-Saxon poem through the borrowing and translation of entire passages from *The Wanderer*, with subtle changes that give rise to entirely new meanings and possible interpretations in relation to the original. Exile and displacement are explored by the Anglo-Saxon and Canadian poets as culturally specific experiences, anchored in the relationship between lord and retainer in *The Wanderer* and in the conflict and disconnection with the environment in *Anhaga*. As was shown in the previous chapters, the lord-retainer relationship was one of the main basis of Anglo-Saxon society, centered around the hall life (O'Keefee 101; Magennis 44); at the same time, the role of nature as a hostile entity going against an isolated individual and the idea of a vast but trapping landscape forming a "garrison mentality" are two important parts of the Canadian literary imagination (Atwood "Survival" 51; Frye 225).

The cultural specificity of each version of the Wanderer appears too in the way the character is described, for he is the "earth-stepper" in the Anglo-Saxon poem and the "wild rose" in Furberg's poetry. One is fated to walk the earth in sorrow, and the other is fated to survive the wilderness in dread. For this reason, the Anglo-Saxon poem is generally interpreted as a form of elegy, while the imagery in Furberg's poetry

leans toward horror. Hence, the use of landscape and human constructions underline the Wanderer's own feelings in the poems, the sea and old Roman forts showing the vastness of what was lost as well as the fleeting nature of humanity in The Wanderer, and snow, deities of Death and decaying environments portraying the continuous horror and entrapping grip of the past.

Yet, despite cultural and timeframe differences, both works intersect in how the Wanderer, through his position of displacement created by a forced exile, assumes a stance of criticism regarding his society. Exile, in this sense, is also portrayed in the poems in *Anhaga* and in *The Wanderer* as a meditative experience, for the speaker negotiates his isolation in relation to his former society, weighing the good and the bad in his own history and in the values held by his community. Where the Anglo-Saxon and Furberg's poems diverge most is in how the Wanderer sees his past: in the original, the past is portrayed in a nostalgic way, the loss of the heroic age, and so the Wanderer is, at first, sorrowful and ashamed of his exile, seeking in his "mind-spirit" a way to find mercy and a new foundation in the Christian god. However, in Furberg's poems, the Wanderer is aghast of his past, depicted as bloody and destructive, without any heroic overtone, and so his exile and meditation involve not so much a search for mercy, but a recognition of the impacts of such past. Furthermore, the Wanderer's cry for a foundation in *Anhaga* is directed to pagan deities, particularly goddesses, subverting the Christian elements shown in *The Wanderer*.

As was analyzed in the first and third chapters, the use of pagan deities – more specifically, from the Norse/Germanic pantheon – is an important part of Furberg's mythopoeia surrounding the Wanderer. The use of deities like Odin and Nerthus underscores the mythic nature of the author's poems, making up the structure for the Wanderer as a mythological character. In going back to an ancient Anglo-Saxon poem to translate the poem to a new audience, the author also found himself ". . . embarked in a work not of translation, but of imagination and correspondence . . ." (Furberg 10), where he saw a continuation in language and imagery contained in English-Canadian literature, ". . . a species of literary ancestor, old words resounding with much of what the new words are grounded in" (Furberg 10). Based on his poetry in *Anhaga*, Furberg went even further into the Anglo-Saxon culture in order to find the connections with the Canadian imagination, looking for the Wanderer in the pre-Christian myths of this people.

Moreover, this choice of pagan elements for his myth of the Wanderer represents as well another form of subversion, for by omitting

the elements of Anglo-Saxon Christianity from *The Wanderer* in his poems, Furberg also avoided going to the source of what eventually would be the base for England as a nation and country, formed around a Christian identity. The author's appropriation, in this sense, is from what came before England and English culture per se, exploring the links in tone and themes between Canadian literature and Anglo-Saxon mythology, as Northrop Frye once observed (146). The kinship between Anglo-Saxon and Norse mythology assumes, then, another dimension in Furberg's poetics, bridging *The Wanderer* and the Norse presence in ancient Canadian history throughout the poems in *Anhaga*.

Regarding the characteristics of a new myth that the poems in *Anhaga* present, beyond the use of Norse/Germanic mythology as a foundation for the Wanderer, Furberg also explores the several different aspects of exile through the speaker, as if he is not only an exile, but personification of the experience of exile, resonating with the anxieties of English-Canadian culture. The lack of any recognizable timeframe in Furberg's poetry, having objects and places mentioned which range from ancient to contemporary origins, shows a view of the Wanderer as a timeless character, a defining characteristic of myths; from this perspective, the speaker in *Anhaga* inhabits the mythical time, neither here nor there. Yet, the Wanderer can be identified with the European immigrant, considering a historical context and the other mythological sources presented by the poet, and so there is also a constant sense of awe surrounding the character's place in the world as portrayed in the poems analyzed, a sense emphasized even more by his relationship with nature and the divine.

The intrinsic part played by nature in *Anhaga*, especially from its dangerous and deadly side, is a specific choice brought by Jon Furberg to the retelling of his Wanderer. Although natural landscapes do appear in the original *The Wanderer*, they are metaphors employed by the poet to introduce the state of mind of a man who was sundered from his community. Nature from an Anglo-Saxon perspective represents, like the Wanderer, the dangers contained outside the boundaries of society, and it is so brought in the original poem to highlight the need of a foundational space, be it human or heavenly, for the speaker. Contrary to this view, in *Anhaga* nature is also a character, a dark Mother Goddess, Nerthus, who is depicted in opposition to a Death God, Odin. Thus, Furberg continues the Canadian tradition of representing nature as a dark goddess, with the twist of her being a motherly figure: it is Odin, the Norse Wanderer, who is actively hostile and destructive to the speaker, paralleling the human Wanderer as a representative of English

colonization, with a hostile and destructive past towards the Canadian land and peoples.

Finally, in terms of culture, the English-Canadian tropes of the frozen North and the survivor in the wild nature are integral parts of Furberg's myth-making, featuring much more heavily than in the original Anglo-Saxon poem. Older myths are woven by the poet into a new story, a myth that can dialogue with the Canadian imagination, the Wanderer who searches for something that it is "lacking." And so, instead of finding mercy and a foundation in either the human or the heavenly plane as the Anglo-Saxon character, The Wanderer's journey in Furberg's myth goes to none of those directions, for in each poem he immerses himself deeper into the wilderness and the enticing divinity of the bush, becoming part of it. Truly, a Canadian wild rose.

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