

アングロ-サクソン年代記755年の劇的構造

The Dramatic Structure of the Entry for 755 in
Anglo-Saxon Chronicle

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アングロ-サクソン年代記の中で755年の記述がもつ特異な点は、描写が他の記述に比べてかなり細部にまでわたっていることにある。この記述は、一般に北欧サガを連想させる描写であるとされている。しかし、物語の構造上ゲルマンの代表的な英雄詩とも類似性があると思われる。英雄詩では、typesceneと呼ばれる構造を道しるべとして即興で物語が歌われたと考えられる。Typesceneには、いくつかの構成要素があり、個々の詩人はこの構成要素を選択し、意図に応じて特別な意味あいを構成要素に付与した。年代記755年の記述には、そのような付加的意味が構成要素に与えられることはなかったが、英雄詩の物語の構造を史的事実からませることで、描写を細部にまで及ばせ、英雄詩が作り上げる劇的な展開と同様の効果をあげている。

An outstanding feature of the entry for 755 in comparison with other entries in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* is its dramatic description despite of the historic nature. Its descriptiveness lies in the fact that the entry for 755 contains many precise illustrations of actions of the characters, which are rarely observable in an annal. It is, therefore, justified to examine the entry for 755, not only from the historical point of view, but from the point of view of the rhetoric of the oral formulaic tradition. "The rhetoric of the oral formulaic tradition" in this paper means a formulaic typescene.

On composing a narrative the application of the oral formulaic tradition is certainly not restricted to the verse. Whereas the oral

formulaic tradition has been discussed within the heroic poems, the prose can be an object of its application ⁽¹⁾. The structure of prose in the oral tradition is seldom seen as formulaic. The entry for 755 written in prose has been so far discussed by many scholars only in connection with the Nordic sagas, and the comparison of the entry for 755 with the heroic poems has not been investigated. I agree that the entry for 755 might have had a close relationship with the audience of the oral tradition. In my opinion, it is no wonder that the entry has a saga-like feature because of the composition within the oral formulaic tradition ⁽²⁾. For its nature of the boundless application of the rhetoric of the oral formulaic tradition, the comparison of the entry for 755 with the heroic poem would bear fruit to explain the dramatic feature of the entry for 755.

The typescene with which I will compare the entry for 755 is an enlarged version of Earl Anderson's "tragic court flyting." This version of the typescene is originally proposed by him as follows ⁽³⁾:

This typescene has associated with it four narrative details, all four of which must be present: (1) a hall is shared by two peoples who have a background and/or strong potential for hostility; (2) there is an exchange of taunts, insults, or threats and (3) the appearance of a symbolically provocative weapon, or weapons; and (4) the verbal and symbolic provocations and/or hall....(300-1)

To generalize his typescene I would like to suggest that the details he enumerates from the heroic poems must be represented by the things appearing in the scene. Those are a hall, a fire, a treasure, a sword, a door, survivors, darkness, and light. Even if the list is not necessarily a complete one, I think they are the essential elements to

construct the typescene which the poets in the oral tradition have used as their guiding tools. Symbolic meanings of these elements play important roles for the audience in understanding the narrative framework. The images obtained through the individual elements appeal to the audience dramatically (4).

The typescene mentioned above, the "tragic hall fight" I would like to call, deals with feud between two peoples. The feud leads to a treacherous action of one party against the other and to a tragic outcome. The incident is developed with a hall in the middle of it.

The entry for 755 is reported in the narrative framework similar to the typescene. Thus I will examine how much the entry for 755 in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and the typescene have in common, and how those elements of the typescene work in the progress of the narrative. At the same time I will try to explain that some of the sagas and the heroic poems are constructed by the same narrative framework.

Before I go into the examination of the individual elements, the theme of the entry for 755 must be made clear.

The entry for 755 deals with the feud between Cynewulf and Cyneheard culminated in a tragic hall fight between the two troops, though the entry does not clearly mention the reason for the feud between them. The entry for 755 only tells that "her Cynewulf benam Sigebryhte his rices" (1), and that "he wolde adraefan anne aetheling se waes Cyneheard haten - ond se Cyneheard waes thaes Sygebryhtes brothur" (8-10)⁽⁵⁾. The deadly feud, therefore, can be explained in two ways. One is that Cynewulf is afraid of being taken feud upon by Cyneheard. The other is that Cyneheard is afraid of being murdered by Cynewulf, for both of them can be legitimate

successors to the kingdom. Cyneheard's sudden action of besieging Cynewulf in Merantun thirty years after Sigebyht's death, cannot be a premeditated action of vengeance. It is safe to think that Cyneheard has been looking for a chance of killing Cynewulf in order to usurp the throne. This view is supported by the following address of Cyneheard to Cynewulf's thanes: "ond the gebead he him hiera agenne dom feos ond londes, gif hie him thaes rices uthon" (29-31).

The first importance of the typescene is attributed to the image of the hall which shows a close connection with the sword image. A hall is not limited to a large room like a court, but it can be any place where the inner world is separated from the outer world. A hall significant for a king in keeping a band of warriors stands in the center of the scene. In *Beowulf* the importance of the halls like Heorot lies in the fact that the halls must primarily represent the well-organized warrior society that is a symbol of protection and safety for the people, despite Heorot represents the unsound warrior society, because Grendel can pay a visit every night without any apparent fear for vengeance from the Danish warriors.

In the Finn episode a hall represents the same direction as Heorot. The hall is used as a tool to entrap a person for fulfillment of revenge⁽⁶⁾. The *Finnsburh Fragment* reports that the Frisian king Finn invites the Danes to his hall and slays Hnaef by a night attack. The similar scene appears in the *Nibelungenlied*, as Kriemhild invites the Burgundians to Attila's court. Kriemhild premeditates a conspiracy to avenge Siegfried's death on the Burgundians before the invitation and to get the information on whereabouts of the hidden treasure of the Nibelung.

In either case, the sword plays an important role to incite the

feud. Even though Kriemhild has planned to avenge on Hagen and Gunther for their murdering her husband Siegfried, the introduction of Siegfried's sword in the presence of Kriemhild, which makes her hysteric, causes the scene to appear more thrilling. Hunlafing, Hnaef's sword, plays the same role in the Finn episode as Siegfried's dose in *Nibelungenlied*; Hengest is in a dilemma between truce and vengeance before he is shown Hunlafing and after that the scene rushly tends to the blood feud. Further, in the Ingeld episode, an old man goads a young Heathobard to revenge the old feud by reminding him of his father's sword carried by a Dane in the wedding ceremony of Ingeld and Freawaru.

In the main story of *Beowulf* the sword is also of importance: Unferth offers his sword to Beowulf when Unferth realizes that Beowulf deserves to challenge Grendel's mother (1455-64). This action, however, has a special meaning. The transference of the sword to Beowulf means, at the first hand, the transference of the responsibility to accomplish his task of conquering Grendel's mother and take revenge for the Scyldings. Additionally the action suggests that Unferth's attitudes change from hostility to friendship. The sword is also used as transference of duty, when Beowulf is ready to fight with Grendel.

Just like the halls in other three cases, Heorot in the darkness of night is a place of mischief, in which Grendel kills Handscioh and finally finds his own fate. To both Grendel and the Danes, therefore, the hall signals the ominous events which are to take place immediately.

In the entry for 755 the similar implication is given to the word "bur," when Cyneheard besieges Cynewulf resting in it. Even if the

situation is not described so dramatically as heroic poems for the absence of an inciting sword, the significance of the hall as a place of contrivance is splendidly expressed by the precise description of Cyneheard's besieging the "bur." If he wants, Cyneheard can encounter with Cynewulf in the field. Cyneheard chooses to take an alternative of assaulting Cynewulf at night. Cyneheard's intention is suggested by his action of "beeode," when he has heard of Cynewulf's staying at Merantun. His sneaky plan is linked to the hall image. The similarity of the entry to the hall image of the typescene does not mean that the annalist distorts the historical fact, but that he gives emphasis to the fact with the rhetoric of the oral tradition.

Another typical feature of heroic poems such as the entry for 755 is a transition of scenes by the passage of time. This element is closely related to the action in the darkness and the full disclosure of tragedy in the morning light. A night attack takes place, and the tragic massacre in the hall is disclosed in the morning light. In the entry for 755 we are told that the troop left behind by the king learns of his death when day breaks. Hildeburh in the Finn episode mourns in the morning light over the tragic event which has happened between the Frisians and the Danes. The similar transition is found in the main story of *Beowulf*; Grendel's mother attacks Heorot after Grendel's death⁽⁷⁾. Her attack happens at the very night when the Danes hold a banquet for celebrating the deliveration from troublesome Grendel. Especially in *Beowulf*, the cycle of the contrastive elements such as light and darkness, or joy and sorrow, is outstanding, and produces an impending effect on the development of the story. This scene is impressive enough for audience to imagine

the horrible state of their mind by the word "hream" in the midst of the joy. Also in *Nibelungenlied* the fatal fight seems to be near at hand when Volker is at the night watch. As T. Andersson studies, a fight takes place at night in the Germanic heroic poems, and as E. Stanley shows "morgen" is associated with something tragic in the Germanic poetry⁽⁸⁾.

The *Grettis saga*, which is often discussed from the viewpoint of its similarity to *Beowulf* also depicts attack by Glamr, and the fight takes place in a hall. Glamr is a goblin that was once a man. His habit of wandering at night is suggested by "En er varathi ok solargangr var sem mestr, letti heldr aprtgongunum," and many phrases like "Nu ligr dagrinn" (35.7), "tha var alljost" (33.10)⁽⁹⁾, etc, and they indicate that the story is framed in the time cycle of night and day, which is observable in *Beowulf* too. Night action and its full disclosure in the morning light, therefore, forms a typical feature of the typescene.

In the entry for 755, the phrase "Tha on morgenne" marks the change of the scenes from the night attack to the disclosure in the next morning. This typical transition of scenes by mentioning the passage of time is linked to the tragic news of Cynewulf's death, and has the same effect as the Dane's "morgensweg"⁽¹⁰⁾.

The Germanic poets tend to describe the warriors fighting at the door of the hall. Like characters in the formulaic narrative, Cynewulf goes to the door to defend himself skillfully until he sees Cyneheard among the enemies. There is a practical reason why they describe a fight at the door. The door is available to prevent enemies from plunging into the hall and forcing the defenders into a severe situation. In addition to the practical reason, there is a rhetorical

reason why the poets draw our attention to the door scene. The door scene can pin down the attention of the audience to individual fights, so that the heroic narrative focuses individual fights as representatives of the total process of battles. At the same time, the door has another signification. There is a place focused upon by a narrator to draw a line between two sides as Alain Renoir discusses in *A Key to Old Poems* ⁽¹¹⁾. The door is also used as a tool for that purpose. The most typical example is found in the main story of *Beowulf*. Even though Grendel is called "mearc-stapa" (103), the poet focuses upon the door of Heorot rather than the moors as the boundary between the world of Grendel and the world of the Danes. The door of Heorot is depicted as an opening from one world to the other.

In connection with a night attack, in the typical heroic poem, warriors realize an attack by some kind of light. The light derives from the weapons or armours the attackers bear. At the beginning of *Finnsburh Fragment* the young hero Hnaef wakes his companions and asks to protect themselves. It is not clearly described how he recognizes the attack of the Frisians, but it is suggested by the brightly shining moon. In the entry for 755 no comment indicates how Cynewulf anticipates the attack, but the place where he is attacked suggests the way he recognizes the attack. So far as the manuscript reading of "bur" is preserved ⁽¹²⁾, the assault is possibly done at night. It may be by a light of torches or a flash of weapons that he learns of the attack. An alternative way of recognizing the approach of enemies is noises. In *Grettis saga* Grettir recognizes the arrival of Glamr by large noises. Noises are, however, excluded because Cyneheard's besiege is achieved without being realized by Cynewulf's men. They besiege Cynewulf in the manner Cynewulf alone can learn

of it.

Rather comical treatment of the night attack is found in *Nibelungenlied*, 30 Aventiur, where Hagen and Volker recognizes the Hunnish warriors hiding in the darkness while they are at the night watch. The two Burgundians then address them, but the Huns go away instead of attacking. The poet exploits the element of night attack in order to make fun of the Huns.

There are often some survivors of the first fight to take vengeance on the enemies. In the Finn episode Hengest survives the night attack by Finn in order to take vengeance. In a sense, Grendel's mother is also a survivor of the battle, even though she does not take part in it. In the entry for 755, one warrior survives each fight, even if each survivor does not take any role afterwards except of implying further fight. The element of the existence of survivors is included in the typescene so that a poet can use it every time he needs survivors in order to develop a story with a new feud.

Finally, another important element of the typescene is treasure. Besides the Finn episode and *Beowulf*, there are many stories telling the return of the hero with a ship full of treasure. In the entry for 755 there is no mention of treasure. This fact shows that the entry for 755 is distinctive of the poems by its purpose. Cyneheard intends to usurp the throne in the entry, while in the heroic poems heroes are awarded treasure for their deeds.

As is commented in Bright's *Old English Grammar & Reader*, halls are often set on fire by the attackers. Though Heorot is not broken by the fight between Beowulf and Grendel, the narrator tells the ominous fate that the hall is to be destroyed by a fire. In the *Nibelungenlied* the poet combines fire with blood ⁽¹³⁾.

From the arguments above, the entry for 755 in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* shares some features of the oral formulaic tradition with the heroic poems and the sagas. These shared elements help to give a dramatic effect to the historical fact and to distinguish the entry for 755 from the other entries of the *Chronicle*. They also help to make the description of the entry for 755 vivid and unique as a historical report. Unlike many literary works, the entry does not give special connotation to the individual elements. In composing a poem in the oral tradition, the addition or exclusion of the elements of the typescene gives each poem a unique impact. Thus in the entry for 755 the writer follows the traditional style of poetry writing in illustrating the event, but he avoids misleading elements lest they should regard this entry as a fictional report. Thereby, the stress is put on the first fighting between Cynewulf and Cyneheard. The vengeance of Cynewulf's thanes seems so distinctive of the entry for 755 because of the direct speech that the significance of the entry apparently lies in the vengeance of the thanes. The intention of the annalist, however, is to write down a historical report about the usurpation with much coloring of heroic deeds. Though the revengeful loyalty is of the secondary importance, it is true that the close combination of the feud with the loyalty to the lords gives the narrative of the entry for 755 a dramatic effect.

Notes

1. The structure of the sagas is investigated in the light of the formulaic pattern by Jesse Byock; *Feud in the Icelandic Sagas* (Berkeley; Univ. of California, 1982).
2. See C. L. Wrenn, *A Study of Old English Literature* (London; George G. Harrap & Co. LMT, 1967) 202-5.

3. Earl R. Anderson, "Formulaic Typescene Survival: Finn, Ingeld, and the *Nibelungenlied*," ES 61/4 (1980).
4. As is mentioned in *Bright's Old English Grammar & Reader*, (Fort Worth; Harcourt Brace Jonanovich College Publishers, 1971), "in the feuds described in the Icelandic family sagas where farmsteads were often surrounded by night and set afire and everyone inside them either burned over alive or else cut down at the exit...."
5. The citations are made from *Sweet's Anglo-Saxon Reader* (London; Oxford Univ. Press, 1975).
6. Kathryn Hume, "The Concept of the Hall in Old English Poetry," ASE 3(1974).
7. "Hream wearth in Heorote; heo under heolfre genam
cuthe folme; cearu waes geniwod,
geworden in wicun"(11.1302-4b)

All the citations of *Beowulf* in this paper are from Heine Schuecking's *Beowulf* (Muenchen; Verlag Ferdinand Schoening, 1963).

8. Eric G. Stanley, "Old English Poetic Diction and the Interpretation of the *Wanderer*, the *Seafarer* and the *Penitent's Prayer*," Anglia LXXIII(1956).

Thodore M. Andersson, "The Discovery of Darkness in Northern Literature," in *Old English Studies in Honour of John C. Pope*, ed. by Robert Burlinn(Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1974).

9. The citations of *Grettis saga* are from *Altnordische Saga-Bibliothek* (Halle, 1900)

- 10."The waes on uhtan mid aer-daege
Grendles guth-craeft gumum undyrne;
the waes aefter wiste wop up ahafen,
micel morgen-sweg."(11.126-9b).

11. Alain Renoir, *A Key to Old Poems* (University Park; The Pennsylvania State Univ. Press, 1988).
12. Manuscripts B and C have "burh" in stead of "bur."
13. *Das Nibelungenlied* (Wiesbaden; F. A. Brockhaus, 1979) ed. Helmut de Boor. Aventiur 36, stanza 2111-2124.