Rhyme in Alliterative Oral Poetry : A Look at Old English, Old Norse, and Finno-Karelian Traditions

Frog

Frog

 https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5967-6281

Rhyme in Alliterative Oral Poetry

A Look at Old English, Old Norse, and Finno-Karelian Traditions

Rhyme has received little concentrated attention in Old Germanic and Finnic alliterative poetries. Its absence is often taken for granted or it simply remains invisible. Although it may come into focus in connection with particular lines, passages, or poems, alliteration is viewed as the older and truer poetic organizing principle, leaving rhyme to be considered as insignificant, late, or of foreign influence, if it is addressed at all. The present chapter looks briefly at rhyme in Old English, Old Norse eddic poetry, and Finno-Karelian kalevalaic poetry. Attention is given to how rhyme's usage relates to the principles organizing the poetic form and how it may become integrated into particular formulae, lines, or stretches of lines, conditioning their variation. Differences in the operation of rhyme in each tradition are considered in a concluding discussion.

The Old Germanic Alliterative Metre

Old Germanic poetries are based on an inherited, accentual, alliterative metre, in which, simplifying somewhat, each long line is made up of two short lines, called an a-line and a b-line, linked by alliteration. Because so many things are called 'lines' in Germanic poetries, the German term *Langzeile*, plural *Langzeilen*, will be used to refer to long lines here with the hope that it will make the distinctions less confusing for unfamiliar readers. A short line is customarily organized in four positions, two strong and two weak, although they can be in almost any order, and the number of positions in a short line may vary in practice. One or both strong positions of the a-line carry alliteration with usually the first but not the second strong position of the b-line, a metrical principle that is, in general, remarkably regular in both Old English and Old Norse to the point that editors have long considered its absence an error and as grounds to edit a line's phrasing. The following examples illustrate these patterns in Old English, presenting alliteration on only the first strong position in the a-line, then only on the second, followed by an example of alliteration on both; so-called hyper-metric lines are not addressed here (all translations are by the present author unless otherwise

indicated; the caesura between short lines is indicated through six spaces between the a-line and b-line; line-end punctuation has been removed):[1]

> **s**igora dryhtne   þæs þe hio **s**oð gecneow
> (*Elene* 1139)
> lord of victories   from whom she knew the truth

> Nu ic þe **h**alsige   **h**eofonrices weard
> (*Sat* 420 = 423)
> Now I entreat you   heaven-kingdom's ward

> **m**etod **m**oncynnes   **m**æge Lothes
> (*GenA* 2923)
> meter of mankind   kinsman of Lot

The medieval processes of documenting Old Germanic poems is generally unknown, but it may have impacted how rhyme appears in the corpora. Poems were written out as continuous text on manuscript pages rather than laying out lines in a column as in modern editorial practice. Nevertheless, the metre is salient in reading; many Old Norse lines even include expletive particles relevant to metrical reading but not to meaning (a type of particle often omitted when oral poetry is transcribed). The process of writing was likely different for different texts, but may have made some or many texts more formally uniform (cf. Ready 2019: ch. 3). The attention to metrical form in transcription increases the likelihood that the presence or absence of rhyme is consistent with poetic ideals.

Rhyme in Old English

Rhyme in Old English poetry has long been recognized (e.g., Sievers 1893: 146–149), especially its most common form in the use of rhymed words within a short line. Thomas A. Bredehoft (2005b: 207–208) emphasizes that the topic has been neglected and remained poorly understood. Scholars have predominantly looked at end rhymes that include the stressed syllable and link an a-line to a b-line as in later rhymed verse; rhyme pairs within a short line get viewed as ornament or idiom (Bredehoft 2005b) and morphological rhymes have received very little attention either in their use (Zacher 2002: 355–356) or in their avoidance (Frank 2003: 242). End rhyme is seen as 'a bookish device': it appears as a salient feature in a few poems, such as the passage of sixteen *Langzeilen* at the end of *Elene* (1236–1251), which immediately precede the poet Cynewulf's runic signature. Old English had a number of poetic devices that seem quite subtle today (Bartlett 1935), but rhyme's relative frequency in *Beowulf* (Table 1) does not point to it as one of these.

---

1   Old English poems are referenced by sigla and line numbers as used in the Dictionary of Old English Web Corpus, unless otherwise cited.

Within an a-line	11
Within a b-line	4
A-line to b-line end rhyme	5
Successive b-line end rhyme	4
Successive a-line end rhyme	3
B-line to a-line end rhyme	3
B-line to a-line with an intermediate line	1

Table 1. Rhymes from the stressed syllable in the 3,182 *Langzeilen* of *Beowulf* according to Fulk et al. (2008: clxi n.5).

A common view is that, in a poem like *Beowulf*, 'there is no instance in which it [end rhyme] is unquestionably intentional' (Fulk et al. 2008: clxi). Distinguishing between ornament and accident is methodologically problematic without a way to determine social practice, as in the following line (Bredehoft 2005a: 58):

> l*æra*ð ond l*æst*a*ð   ond his lof r*æra*ð
> (*Guthlac A* 24)
> teach and follow   and his glory raise

Potential functions of rhyme become visible when they correlate with another factor. R. D. Fulk (1992: 262–263) identifies six instances of rhyme or near-rhyme in the poem *Judgement Day II* within lines where alliteration is lacking or non-ideal (3, 6, 28, 82, 147, 266 and cf. line 4 of 301 lines). The rhymes link the a-line and b-line in four lines where alliteration is lacking and in two lines where alliteration is on the b-line's second strong position (from which it is normally excluded). Although the number is small (2% of lines), the regular co-occurrence indicates that rhyme was able to compensate for a lack of metrically conventional alliteration in the line, in a type of *metrical compensation* (Frog 2021: 284–286). Such compensation may also occur elsewhere in an isolated line (Fulk 1992: 259), noting that, in Old Germanic poetries, /st/ does not alliterate with /s/:

> æfre embe st*unde*   he sealde sume w*unde*
> (*Maldon* 271)
> in almost every moment   he distributed some wound

Although end rhyme as compensation for alliteration is viewed as a pattern characteristic of late poetry (Fulk 1992: 264), Calvin Kendall (1991: 115) observes that, in *Beowulf*, a pair of rhymed or semantically contrasting (e.g., 'north'–'south') words was accepted in an a-line where double alliteration was metrically expected. Old Germanic short lines are formally distinguished into types according to the arrangement of strong and weak positions, and how these relate to linguistic stress and the number and quantity of syllables in the line (e.g., Sievers 1883). In Old English, certain types of *Langzeilen* customarily require a second alliteration in the a-line. This can

be accomplished by simply having both strong positions carry alliteration with the first strong position in the b-line or by having so-called double alliteration, in which the first strong position in the a-line alliterates with one strong position in the b-line and the second strong position in the a-line alliterates on a different sound with the other strong position in the b-line. Bredehoft (2005a: 51–62) tests Kendall's finding concerning rhyme against the corpus. He shows that rhyme can have a function in relation to metre as an alternative to additional alliteration, although this usage concentrates in particular poems or dialects of poetry. These Germanic rhymes do not depend on full end rhyme; those surveyed by Bredehoft are always on a stressed syllable, and several do not include any following syllables, for example (2005a: 61):

> **eard** w**eard**igað,   eðel healdað
> (*Andreas* 176)
> the land, defend   the possession, hold

> br**oð**or **oð**erne   blodigan gare
> (*Beowulf* 2440)
> one brother the other   with a bloody spear

Alliteration remained systematic, but stressed-syllable rhymes offered a compensatory alternative to additional alliteration.

Bredehoft's survey of rhymed words reveals that many rhyme pairs such as these circulated as a stable part of the poetic idiom (2005a: 51–62; 2005b). He further shows that conventional rhyme pairs in Old English are paralleled in Old Saxon. Differences in the variations and conventions of usage of rhyme pairs in each of these languages suggest that the usage of rhyme goes back to a common language phase, and that the use of rhymed stem syllables within a short line in particular has roots in an early period of the poetry (2005b). Bredehoft further reveals that rhyme could be integrated into constructions in the poetic idiom, as in the following b-line construction, where a monosyllable carries alliteration, its stem rhyming with an immediately-following noun, followed by a prefixed form of the verb *fon* (2005b: 213–214):

> h**ond** r**ond** ge*feng*   his hand the shield seized
> (*Beowulf* 2609b)

> w**eal eall** be*feng*   a wall all encompassed
> (*Ruin* 39b)

> s**und** gr**und**e on*feng*   the sea the land seized on
> (*Andreas* 1528b)

> b**ord ord** on*feng*   the shield the point caught
> (*Maldon* 110b)

Rhyme is here integrated as an organizing principle that structures the relation between the two nouns; it shapes variation by conditioning word choice (on which, see also Frog 2021). The examples suggest that, rather than generating new rhymes, this construction was customarily completed with a conventional rhyme pair.

Although stressed-syllable rhyme with or without end rhyme is statistically infrequent in the Old English corpus, it held an integrated position in the idiom and was used, under certain conditions, with a metrical function. Unlike alliteration, rhyme may occur in both strong positions in a b-line (Kendall 1991: 114n.31). However, the metrical constraint is not that alliteration is excluded from both b-line positions, but that both b-line alliterations cannot be *the same* as the metrical alliteration linking short lines, thus double alliteration is also allowed, in which each strong position in the b-line alliterates on a different sound. Alliteration remains generally uniform in its metrical role of linking short lines to form a *Langzeile* and rhyme does not compete with it in this role. Outside of this primary metrical function – i.e. in metrically motivated secondary alliteration – rhyme could be employed as an alternative. Metrical compensation of alliteration by rhyme in *Langzeilen*, as in *Judgement Day II*, is undoubtedly connected with changes in the poetic ecology, but these changes may have been more complex than simply introducing rhyme as a foreign or learned poetic feature; it may have involved an extension of rhyme's potential for compensation from secondary to primary alliteration.

Eddic Forms among Old Norse Metres

Old Norse poetries evolved away from the inherited Germanic form in two significant ways. On the one hand, the poetic form became shorter, stylistically more dense, and poetic syntax changed so that breaks between longer clauses could only occur between *Langzeilen* or so-called *Vollzeilen*,[2] leading poems to be performed in short groups of *Langzeilen* that tended to crystallize[3] into relatively stable verbal stretches of text (see also Kristján Árnason 2006). On the other hand, Old Norse poetic forms diversified. *Eddic* has become the common term in research to describe poetry considered to be Old Norse forms of the common Germanic tradition, while *skaldic* refers to forms of poetry linked to so-called court poetry, peripheral to the present discussion (Clunies Ross 2005). Eddic metres fall into two main categories: *fornyrðislag*, which basically corresponds to the Old Germanic form, and *ljóðaháttr* with its derivatives; *ljóðaháttr* is composed in combinations of Old Germanic *Langzeilen*, and *Vollzeilen* [full lines] (sg. *Vollzeile*; I retain the German term). *Vollzeilen* are formed with two or three strong positions

---

2   The long Germanic form often placed breaks between longer clauses between an a-line and b-line, so that the meter carried the flow of narration forward; Old Norse poetry only allowed this in parallelism between a-lines and b-lines and in short interjections.

3   On crystallization, see Siikala 1990 [1984]: 80–86.

without a caesura and alliteration on any two strong positions, while *ljóðaháttr Langzeilen* are more flexible than in *fornyrðislag* with some differences in their formal conventions (e.g., Sijmons & Gering 1906; Hollmérus 1936); for example:

> **V**eiztu ef **f**yrstr ok øfstr   **v**artu at **f**ǫrlagi
>   þá er ér á **Þ**iaza **þ**rifoð
> (*Ls* 51.1–3)
> You know if first and foremost   you were at the death scene
>   then when you attacked Thjazi

The tighter textual units in which eddic poems are composed are commonly called strophes; some *ljóðaháttr* poetry seems to have become regularly stanzaic, composed in two pairs of alternating *Langzeilen* and *Vollzeilen* (the example is a half-stanza).

Formal regularity was taken to an extreme in skaldic poetry, which was composed in regular stanzas, attributed to named poets, and the stanzas were so highly crystallized in transmission that variation in oral transmission seems to have remained minimal. Skaldic poetries may employ the same metres as eddic poetry but they also include more complex metrical forms that incorporate stressed-syllable rhymes that were metricalized in the metre called *dróttkvætt* (Kristján Árnason 1991). As in Old English, the metrical use of rhyme is in the short lines that are linked in pairs by alliteration, which would seem to point to rhyme as an integrated feature already in Northwest Germanic.

Rhyme in Eddic Poetry

Rhyme has been recognized in eddic poetry, but distinguishing intentional use from accident has remained problematic (Harris 1985: 106), and the phenomenon has generally received much less attention than in Old English (though see Sijmons & Gering 1906: ccxviii–ccxix, ccxlv–ccxlvii). End rhyme with stressed syllables is rare. According to the survey of Barend Sijmons & Hugo Gering (1906: ccxlvi), there are more examples of such end rhyme of consecutive *Langzeilen* in *Beowulf* than in the whole eddic corpus, even when including the cases of end-rhymed *Vollzeilen* below. Rhymed pairs linked by a conjunction within a short line are also much less common than in Old English. Not including personal names, Sijmons & Gering (1906: ccvii) identify only seven examples,[4] all end-rhymed. Three are in *ljóðaháttr* a-lines (*Háv* 62.1, *Skm* 29.1, *Sd* 20.4), two in *fornyrðislag* a-lines (*Br* 14.5, *Grt*

---

4   Elena A. Gurevič (1986: 41) counts eleven, which excludes Sijmons & Gering's example of *Sd* 19.5–6 owing to different scansion and not including their example of *Br* 14.5 owing, it seems, to its syntax; Gurevič's additional six examples thus seem to include paired compounds with the same second element (*Háv* 41.4, *Rþ* 43.3–4; Gurevič 1986: 35) plus four examples based on rhymes that do not include the stressed syllable.

79

4.1) and one in a *fornyrðislag* b-line (*Sg* 66.2), and the last is in a *ljóðaháttr* b-line but it is problematic and may instead be scanned as a *Langzeile* with end-rhymed short lines (*Sd* 19.5–6);[5] such rhymes are not found within a *Vollzeile*:

> S***napir*** ok g***napir***   er til sævar kømr
> (*Háv* 62.1–2)
> Snaps and cranes his neck   when he comes to the sea

> Tjaldi þar um þá borg   t***jǫldum*** ok sk***jǫldum***
> (*Sg* 66.1–2)
> Deck there around that mound (pyre)   with tapestries and shields

Skaldic poetry shows that rhyme was a recognized poetic feature. Two types of stem-syllable rhyme were distinguished by whether they included the same vowel or had different vowels (e.g., -***und***- : -***ǫnd***-). There is nothing unusual about two or even three -$V_1C_1(C_2)$- : -$V_2C_1(C_2)$- rhymes in a *Langzeile* or *Vollzeile*:

> bu***ndn***um rǫ***ndum***   bleikum skjǫldum
> (*Atk* 14.7–8)
> with bound shields   bright shields

> Heyrða ek se***g***ja   í sǫ***g***um fornum
> (*Od* 1.1–2)
> I have heard it said   in ancient sagas

> Mik ba***ð*** hann gœ***ð***a   gulli rau***ð***u
> (*Od* 15.5–6)
> He bade that I be endowed   with red gold

>   gla***ð***r inn gó***ð***a mjǫ***ð***
> (*Gm* 16.6 [*Vollzeile*])
>   glad, the good mead

Bredhoft identifies eighty-one Old English lines containing a rhyme of *miht* [might, power] and *drihten* [lord], but the eddic system seems to generally avoid stem-syllable rhymes with the vowel (cf. Kellogg 1988). Pairs and sets of conventional rhyme words are part of the skaldic system, yet none of the pairs identified by Sijmons & Gering are rhymed more than once in the eddic corpus (cf. *HHv* 12. 3 and *Am* 104.5–6, where related words are used without completing rhyme). Eddic rhymes on stressed syllables with the vowel thus seem marked, which is consistent with such rhymes generally occurring either on both strong positions in a short line or on the second

5   The rhymed pair is in the *Langzeile hveim er þær kná óviltar oc óspiltar* (*ó*- being a prefix); scanning the rhyme pair as a b-line (cf. the runic inscription below) leaves the *Langzeile* without alliteration; scanning it with the caesura between *óviltar* and *ok* links the a-line and b-line by both alliteration and end rhyme.

strong positions of an a-line and a b-line, comparable to cross alliteration (an example of Class I below):

> bað hann Sifiar v**er**   sér fora hv**er**
> (*Hym* 3.5–6)
> he asked Sif's man (i.e. Thor)   to fetch him a cauldron

Stem-syllable -$V_1C_1(C_2)$- : -$V_1C_1(C_2)$- rhymes are found without rhyming the final syllable, as in the following exceptional example, where a single rhyme continues across two *Langzeilen*, each with triple alliteration, with rhyme on the second alliteration in each a-line (notably a theonym) and on a different strong position in the b-line:

> ǫnd gaf **Óð**inn   **óð** gaf Hœnir
> lá gaf L**óð**urr   oc lito g**óð**a
> (*Vsp* 18.5–8)
> breath gave Odin   spirit gave Hœnir
> form gave Lóðurr   and good appearance

A survey of stem-syllable rhymes is currently lacking, but Sijmons & Gering's (1906: ccxlvi) survey of short-line end rhyme on stressed syllables shows this to be nearly exclusive to *fornyrðislag*, with ten examples (plus one excluded here as belonging to an inventory of names: Þul *Kálfv* 4III.5–6). They identify only one example in *ljóðaháttr*, and that in a *Langzeile* that they considered contextually out of place (*Vm* 38.6–7); the problematic example mentioned above may be a second, and an example discussed below could be a third. Sijmons & Gering's examples are listed in Table 2. 'Heavy' and 'light' is a syllabic quantity distinction: 'light' syllables can only fill a strong position with a second syllable in a process known as *resolution*, so a light disyllable (i.e. a two-syllable word with a light stressed syllable) is metrically equivalent to a heavy monosyllable.

Class I:	Light monosyllables	2	(*fornyrðislag*)
Class IIa:	Heavy monosyllables	1	(*fornyrðislag*)
	Light disyllables	4	(*fornyrðislag*)
Class IIb:	Light disyllables (compound)	1	(*fornyrðislag*)
Class IIIa:	Heavy disyllables	2	(*fornyrðislag*)
Class IIIb:	Heavy disyllables (compound)	1	(*ljóðaháttr*)

Table 2. End rhyme linking an a-line and b-line according to Sijmons & Gering (1906: ccxlvi); the problematic example above would be Class IIIb; the possible example discussed below would be Class IIa in *ljóðaháttr*.

In each class, patterns seem to emerge. The second Class I example (*HHI* 13.7–8) has the same metrical structure as the one quoted above. Formal

similarities and differences appear between lines in Class III (*HHII* 25.5–6, *Sg* 3.7–8, *Vm* 38.6–7, and cf. *Sd* 19.5–6 above), but the data is too limited to be confident of a relation, while there is only one example of Class IIb (*Am* 54.5–6). Examples of Class IIa stand out because all are in parallel short lines while no examples of other classes are (the *ljóðaháttr* example below that is interpretable as Class IIa also conforms to this pattern):

> Varð ára **ymr**   oc iárna gl**ymr**
> (*HHI* 27.1–2)
> There was the splash of oars   and ring of iron

> grjótbjǫrg gn**ata**   enn gífr r**ata**
> (*Vsp* 52.5–6)
> craggy cliffs clash   and witches travel

> Brestanda b**oga**   brennanda l**oga**
> (*Háv* 85.1–2)
> A stretching bow   a burning flame

> Hreingálkn hr**utu**   enn hǫlkn þ**utu**
> (*Hym* A24.1–2)
> The sea-wolf shrieked   and submerged rocks echoed

> Sumir úlf sv**iðu**   sumir orm sn**iðu**
> (*Br* 4.1–2)
> some wolf roasted   some serpent sliced up

Although five examples is not many, the exclusive relation between parallel constructions and Class IIa rhymes account for half of Sijmons & Gering's examples in *fornyrðislag*, each in a different poem. Cross-alliteration and other double alliteration commonly occurs in parallel short lines in *fornyrðislag* (Sievers 1893: 70), to which Class IIa rhymes, *not stressed-syllable rhymes generally*, present an alternative. It is therefore probable that Class IIa rhymes reflect a conventional construction integrating a particular type of rhyme with parallelism.

End rhyme between a b-line and following a-line also appears, although scholars have dismissed it (Gering 1927: 120):

> sjúkum kálfi   sjálfráða þr**æli**
> vǫlu vilm**æli**   val nýfeldum
> (*Háv* 87)
> a sick calf   a self-thinking thrall
> a seeress's good word   a corpse fresh-slain

The only example of full end rhyme of *Langzeilen* including the stressed vowel is in the opening of the poem *Þrymskviða*, where it has been attributed (anachronistically) to influence from ballad traditions (de Vries 1928):

Reiðr var þá Vingþórr   er hann v***aknaði***
ok síns hamars   um s***aknaði***
(*Þkv* 1.1–4)
Angry was then *ving*-Thor   when he woke
and his hammer   was lacking

The couplet's uniqueness makes it fruitless to speculate about the rhyme's motivation.

A variation of *ljóðaháttr* places *Vollzeilen* in series, normally characterized by parallelism with lexical repetition. Sijmons & Gering (1906: ccxlvi) identify one unambiguous example of end-rhymed *Vollzeilen*:

þeim er hangir með h***ám***   from those who are hanged with skins
ok skollir með skr***ám***   and dangle with dried skins
(*Háv* 134: 11–12)

The rhyme here may echo lexical repetition while conforming to the different alliterations, enabled, in this case, by synonyms that rhyme. Correspondence to Class IIa type rhymes is an outcome of a light disyllable or heavy monosyllable as the preferred cadence of *Vollzeilen*.

End rhymes on unstressed syllables have received even less attention (though see Sijmons & Gering 1906: ccxlvii). A Class IIa rhyme introduces a parallel series characterized by morphological rhymes that produces the texture of the following *fornyrðislag* strophe, where it may also operate as an alternative to additional alliteration:

Brest***anda*** b***oga***   brenn***anda*** l***oga***   A stretching bow   a burning flame
gín***anda*** úlf***i***   gal***and***i kráku   a yawning wolf   a cawing crow
rýt***anda*** svín***i***   rótlausum við***i***   a squealing swine   a rootless tree
vax***anda*** vág***i***   vell***anda*** katl***i***   a rising billow   a boiling kettle
(*Háv* 85)

Syllable rhymes in skaldic verse may be between lexically stressed and unstressed syllables, which appears in eddic end rhyme as well:

fundu á l***andi***   lítt meg***andi***   found on land   little capable
(*Vsp* 17.5–6)

An example of unstressed syllables linking non-adjacent *Langzeilen* is also found, where the two words also alliterate:

Þaðan koma meyjar   margs v***it***andi
þrjár ór þeim sal   er und þolli stendr
Urð hétu eina   aðra Verð***andi***
(*Vsp* 20.1–6)
Thence came maidens   much knowing
three from that hall   which under the tree stands
Urðr one was called   a second Verðandi

Unstressed-syllable rhymes are also found in complex patterns. In the following strophe, the first a-line rhymes with the second b-line, forming partial rhymes with the intermediate short lines, and resonating with a-lines in the second long-line couplet:

> Hefir þú er**indi**   sem erf**ið**i
> segðu á lopt**i**   lǫng tíð**indi**
> opt sit**jand**a   sǫgor um fallaz
> ok ligg**jandi**   lyg**i** um bellir
> (*Þkv* 10)
> Was the errand successful   for the trouble
> tell from the air   long tidings
> oft from the one sitting   escape stories
> and the one lying   a lie bellows

The morphological rhyme of *sit**jand**a* : *ligg**jandi*** is comparable to that of *gín**and**a* : *gal**andi*** : etc. above. Although these *Langzeilen* have different metrical alliterations, they exhibit phonic verse parallelism, an ordered repetition of a series of sounds at the scope of the line:

> **o**pt s**i**t**jand**a   sǫ**g**or **um** fa**ll**az
> **o**k ligg**jandi**   ly**g**i **um** be**ll**ir

The phonic verse parallelism makes the rhyme of *sitjanda* : *liggjandi*, which participates in it, more salient.

Phonic verse parallelism is a device used elsewhere and does not necessarily entail rhyme. In the following example, formula repetition was given priority in the first *Langzeile*, but varying the verb from *eta* [to eat] to *sofa* [to sleep] eliminates alliteration (initially on *átta* [eight]); this lack is compensated through phonic parallelism with the following *Langzeile*:

> **Sva**f **v**æ**t**r **Fre**yja   **át**ta **n**óttu**m**
> **svá v**ar hún óð**f**ús   í **jǫt**unhei**m**a
> (*Þkv* 28.5–8)
> Freyja did not sleep   for eight nights
> she was so madly eager to come   to giantlands

Metrical compensation for lack of alliteration is nevertheless rare in eddic verse. The following example, interpreted by Sijmons & Gering (1906: ccxlvi) as end rhyme between *Vollzeilen*, is interpretable as compensating the second *Vollzeile*'s single alliteration with the preceding *Vollzeile* where line-internal alliteration is expected:

> á þik Hrímnir h**ari**   on you may Hrímnir glare
> á þik hotvetna st**ari**   on you may everything stare
> (*Skm* 28.3–4)

A *Vollzeile*'s single alliteration with a preceding *Langzeile* is found in a few instances without rhyme (e.g., *Háv* 80.1–3; *Gm* 27.13), and use of *stari* [may stare] here in the place of *hari* [may glare] would be a choice of rhyming synonyms that disrupts alliteration, in contrast to being motivated by it as in the case of *með hám* [with skins] : *með skrám* [with dried skins] above. The structure of *ljóðaháttr* (ideally) anticipates one or more *Vollzeilen* here, so Sijmons & Gering (1906: ccxlvi) view this rhyme as a late feature being chosen over alliteration. Other editors instead scan this as a *Langzeile* (Neckel & Kuhn 1963: 75), making another example of a Class IIa line, uniquely in *ljóðaháttr*. In either case, it is linked to parallelism and follows the principles of repetition customary for sequential *Vollzeilen*, which Class IIa examples in *fornyrðislag* do not, with the exception of *Hávamál* (85.1–2), a poem predominantly in the *ljóðaháttr* metre.

A clear case of rhyme in the place of alliteration is found in a runic charm text, dated to the eleventh century, composed in a variant of the *ljóðaháttr* metre (the second 'l' of **hulaʀ · auk · bulaʀ** is in parentheses because the words are *hapax legomena* and the runes are ambiguous):

Runaʀ iak risti a r(i)kjanda tre	Runes I carved on the ruling tree
swa reþ saʀ riki mǫgʀ	thus interpreted the powerful lad
asiʀ a ardagum	gods in days of yore
h*ul(l)ar* ok b*ul(l)ar*	hurlys(?) and burlys(?)
mæli þæʀ ars sum magi	may for you speak arse as stomach

(Nielsen et al. 2001: 211–212)[6]

Rhyme instead of alliteration in a *Vollzeile* is striking owing to the date of the inscription and because the verses' phraseology otherwise appears linked to recognizable poetic diction (Naumann 2018: 63–66).

A second case is found in a mid- to late-thirteenth-century manuscript variant of a quotation of the poem *Lokasenna* in Snorri Sturluson's poetic treatise called *Edda*. The stem-syllable rhyme involves a *hapax legomenon* of unknown meaning and is considered some sort of corruption. However, the change cannot be attributable to simple misreading[7] and a copyist seems to have rephrased the line, treating rhyme as a reasonable alternative to alliteration:

---

6   Editors commonly layout the text as a regular *ljóðaháttr* stanza, treating *æsir á árdǫgum* and *hul(l)ar ok bul(l)ar* as forming a *Langzeile*, but *æsir á árdǫgum* scans as a well-formed *Vollzeile* (cf. *áss í árdaga* [the god in days of yore]: *Gm* 6.6), the separation of the two lines by different phonic patterning, and the association of consecutive *Vollzeilen* with magic (a variation of *ljóðaháttr* called *galdralag* [charm metre]) make interpretation as *Vollzeilen* more probable.

7   *Floptir þú* is exchanged for *né legskaðu* [why not silence yourself], losing the negation and with only a single letter in common aside from the pronoun *þú/-ðu*.

Ærr ertu nú orðinn   ok ørviti
  hví fl*optir* þú L*optr*
(Snorri Sturluson 2012: 34; cf. *Ls* 29.1–3)
Mad you've now become   and out of your wits
  why are you ???-ing Loptr

The Class IIIb end rhyme below (*Vm* 38.4–8) is the only example in a *ljóðaháttr Langzeile* identified by Sijmons & Gering (though see also note 5 above). They considered the line an interpolation (Gering 1927: 173) as an 'extra' line between a *Langzeile* and *Vollzeile* that together form a single clause, interrupting both the immediate syntax and the poem's stanzaic rhythm. However, the preceding *Langzeile* lacks alliteration. The dense pattern of alliteration and rhyme connects back to this *Langzeile*, producing metrical compensation through interlinear alliteration and rhyme:

*h*vaðan Niǫrðr um k*om*   með ása son*om*
*h*ofom ok h*ǫrgom*   *h*ann raeðr *h*unnm*ǫrgom*
  ok varðað hann ásom alinn
(*Vm* 38.4–8)
whence came Njǫrðr   among the sons of gods
temples and sacrificial sites   he oversees a great many
  and he was not raised among gods

Although end rhymes are generally rare in eddic poetry, they appear prominently in some lists of names. For example, whereas Sijmons & Gering (1906: ccvii) count only seven rhymed word pairs within a short line in the corpus, they identify seventeen of rhymed personal names. Rhyme appears as a conscious strategy for ordering information, yet the abundance of phonically matched names in some lists suggests that at least some of these are generated through reduplication with variation of a name's onset (*rhyme reduplication*) or stressed vowel (*ablaut reduplication*). The following is from a two-strophe inventory of river names:

Nyt ok *Nǫt*   N*ǫnn* ok Hr*ǫnn*   Nyt and Nǫt   Nǫnn and Hrǫnn
Sl*íð* ok Hr*íð*   S*ylgr* ok *Ylgr*   Slíð and Hríð   Sylgr and Ylgr
V*íð* ok Ván[8]   V*ǫnd* ok Str*ǫnd*   Víð and Ván   Vǫnd and Strǫnd
(*Gm* 28.4–9; cf. Snorri Sturluson 2005: 9, 29, 33)

It is probable that several or many of the names in this list were produced through reduplication, even though most of the names are analysable as meaningful or can be related to meaningful words (von See et al. 2019: 1331–1347). Production through reduplication thus does not appear random but guided to recognizable vocabulary.

8   This name can also be interpreted as *Vǫ́n* and thus rhymed with *Vǫnd* and *Strǫnd*.

Rhyme is less dense in the much longer inventory of dwarf names in *Vǫluspá*, which includes an example of end-rhymed short lines:

Nár ok N*áinn*   Nipingr D*áinn*   Nár and Náinn   Nipingr Dáinn
(*Vsp* H13.5–6)

Stem-syllable rhyme without name endings is also found, but less frequently than full end rhyme:

Fjalarr ok Frostri   F*inn*r ok G*inn*arr
(*Vsp* 9–10)
Fjalarr and Frostri   Finnr and Ginnarr

Þekkr ok Þ*or*inn   Þ*rór*, V*itr* ok L*itr*
(*Vsp* 12.3–4)
Þekkr and Þorinn   Þrór, Vitr and Litr

The poem *Vǫluspá* entered writing in two independent versions along with quotations from oral knowledge in *Edda*. The different versions allow perspectives on variation, which, in rhymed names, occurs in their onsets rather than their rhymes, suggesting a role of rhyme in remembering the lists (see also Jackson 1995: 17). The following *Langzeilen* are presented from one version with variations of a second in square brackets; names that rhyme vary by their onsets, while the last name, which neither alliterates nor rhymes, varies in its ending:

F*íli*, K*íli*   Fundinn, Ná*li* [Vá*li*]
Hepti, V*íli* [F*íli*]   Hanarr Svíurr [Svíðr]
(*Vsp* 13.1–4)

Fíli, Kíli   Fundinn, Náli [Váli]
Hepti, Víli [Fíli]   Hanarr, Svíurr [Svíðr]

Names that seem produced from ablaut reduplication also vary while maintaining the formal relation that links them:

Variant 1: *B**ívǫrr**, B*ávǫrr   Bǫmburr, Nóri
Variant 2: *B**ifurr**, B*áfurr   Bǫmburr, Nóri
(*Vsp* 11.5–6)

Stylistic features often persist through lexical and phrasal variation and renewal (cf. Kuusi 1994). The role of the formal relationship between names and what is most probable in variation reflects a hierarchy between a formal organizing principle and the words it organizes. *Vǫluspá* is rich in complex sound patterning. Parallelism in the following series of lines produces salient morphological rhymes (cf. also Gunnell 2013: 71):

Hittuz æsir   á Iðavelli
þeir er horg ok hof   há timbr*uðu*
afla logð*u*   auð smið*uðu*
tangir skóp*u*   ok tól gor*ðu*
(*Vsp* 7.3–8)
The gods met   on Iðavǫllr
they who shrines and temples   high timbered
forges set   ore worked
tongs wrought   and tools made

A second version of the poem has a different second *Langzeile*. Formally, the *Langzeile* differs by being internally structured by parallelism rather than forming a single clause, but its role in opening the parallel series and beginning the rhyme is the same:

Hittuz æsir á Iðavelli	The gods met on Iðavǫllr
afls kost*uðu* alls freist*uðu*	forges cast everything attempted
afla logð*u* auð smið*uðu*	forges set ore worked
tangir skóp*u* ok tól gor*ðu*	tongs wrought and tools made
(*Vsp* H 7.3–8)	

Parallelism and morphological end rhymes function as conditions that shape variation in the regularly-reproduced passage (see also Reichl 1985: 631).

Stressed syllable rhyme including the vowel is rare in eddic poetry outside of lists of names. Conventional rhyme pairs do not seem established *for the generation of new lines*, but the multiple versions of *Vǫluspá* show that rhyme could be an integrated part of socially-circulating lines, and that morphological rhymes could be maintained as a formal feature of multi-line passages. There are two late cases where rhyme appears to compensate for absent alliteration within a line, and a third where compensation may be interlinear, all notably found in the more flexible *ljóðaháttr* metre. The Class IIa lines show that rhyme was integrated into constructions that generated new *Langzeilen*, even if the idiom did not maintain a stock of regular rhyme pairs, while the number of examples in other Classes remains remarkably few, reducing the likelihood that these were produced freely or accidentally. Class IIa rhymes appear as a construction-specific alternative to additional alliteration, but additional alliteration does not appear as strongly motivated as in the case of Old English and morphological rhymes on unstressed syllables are more common in parallelism. In these respects, rhyme on stressed syllables seems to have narrow and limited uses.

The Kalevalaic Poetic Form

Kalevala-metre poetry is here considered as referring to North Finnic forms of the common Finnic tetrameter (on terms for the Finnic tetrameter, see Kallio et al. 2017; on the poetic form in English, see also e.g., Leino 1986). This poetry was extensively documented especially across the nineteenth and early twentieth century, yielding a corpus of over 150,000 items, of

which more than 87,000 are published and digitized in a searchable database, used in this study (*SKVR*). Variation by language and dialect is not a concern here and the poetry will be discussed centrally in terms of Karelian and Finnish dialect areas where the metre and language use were less affected by changing word lengths. In simplified terms, lines were made up of eight syllables with rules controlling the placement of long and short stressed (i.e. initial) syllables in a trochaic rhythm. Verses were commonly only 2–4 words long without a caesura. Two of these words should normally alliterate; *strong alliteration*, including the vowel of the stressed syllable, was the ideal, while *weak alliteration*, in which vowels differ, was an alternative with a preferential hierarchy of vowel similarity (Krikmann 2015). Alliteration was not metricalized: there is no link between alliteration and metrical position, and its absence was not a violation (see Frog 2019a: 42). Whereas a *Langzeile* is almost never without alliteration in a poem like *Beowulf* or *Vǫluspá*, stressed-syllable alliteration is lacking from easily 15% of kalevalaic lines, which can rise to 20–25% in narrative poetry (varying by region: see Kuusi 1953). The poetry is characterized by semantic and syntactic parallelism, although parallelism is not required of every line (Saarinen 2017). The length of lines inclined them to crystallize into formulae, while the short form of the poems, comparable to eddic poetry, inclined them to be verbally quite regular at a textual level, although the variable multi-line units are never called strophes (Frog 2016b; on such units, see also Lord 1995: 22–68; Frog 2016a).

Rhyme in Kalevalaic Poetry

Researchers of kalevalaic poetry have tended not to look at rhyme (although see Kuusi 1949: 97–98) and it has only begun receiving attention in recent years (e.g., Kallio et al. 2017; Saarinen 2018: 166, 179). Recurrent patterns of sounds at the end of words and at the ends of metrical lines are nevertheless widespread. Finnic languages are heavily inflected, commonly using case endings where Germanic languages would use prepositions. In addition, the poetry's syllabic rhythm motivates the extension of words, for instance with the diminutive *-(i)nen* (genitive singular *-(i)sen*) or verb affixes such as *-ttaa/-ttää* or *-ttoa/-tteä* and *-lla/-llä* (/a/ or /ä/ in the affix vary to agree with the preceding vowels of a word). Parallelism thus easily produces rhymes of two and sometimes more syllables. Although /a/ and /ä/ are a minimal pair, they are phonologically close enough that their combination is the most common alternative to strong alliteration for /a/ or /ä/ (with /ä/ and /e/ not far behind for /ä/: see Krikmann 2015: 17). This near-equivalence is also relevant when considering rhyme, where /a/ and /ä/ commonly alternate in the inflections of parallel words.

Uses of rhyme appear more prominently in certain dialects of singing and with certain singers. Miihkali Perttunen belonged to a family of talented singers who were adept at manipulating the tradition. Rhyme is particularly prominent in the following passage (the text follows the collector's transcription and /š/ alliterates with /s/; line-end punctuation is systematically removed from quotations):

Vaka vanha Väinämö*ińi*	Sturdy old Väinämöinen
Otti olk*isen* or*íhin*	took a straw stallion
Herneȟ-vart*isen* hepo*iseñ*	a pea-stalk horse
Meren jeätä juokšo*maȟe*	to run the sea's ice
⁵ Šomerta širehti*mäȟe*	jaunt gravel
Hüppäsi hüvän *šelällä*	hopped onto the good one's back
Hüvän laukin lautai*sella*	the good horse's hindquarters
Löi on virkkuo vit*śalla*	struck *(on)* the horse with a rod
Helähütti helmis-pe*ällä*	clouted with a beaded belt
¹⁰ Ajoa k*arettelouve*	drives, rumbles
Männä lui*keroittelouve*	goes, twisting
Šelvällä mereñ *šelällä*	on the sea's clear back
Ulap*alla* auki*ella*	on the open water
(*SKVR* I₁ 58.1–13)	

Of these thirteen lines, lines 10 and 11 lack stressed-syllable alliteration, which is common in two-word lines, and line 13 has vocalic alliteration between /u/ and the diphthong /au/, which is less than ideal (e.g., Frog & Stepanova 2011: 197, 201). Sung performance wholly or largely neutralizes lexical stress, allowing lack of alliteration on lexically-stressed syllables to be compensated by alliteration on metrically-stressed syllables in the trochaic rhythm (Frog & Stepanova 2011: 201; Frog 2019b: 11–12). In line 11, the lexically-stressed syllables (*mä-*, *lui-*) do not alliterate, but the second of these alliterates with the penultimate syllable in the final lift (*-lou-*). Phonic verse parallelism is also common (Frog & Stepanova 2011: 201; Frog 2019b: 12). The full rhyme of the final three syllables in lines 10 and 11 is augmented by repeating the consonants in the preceding two metrical positions, further integrating the lines into the acoustic texture of performance. Rhyme is prominent through the passage. Interlinear grammatical rhymes in parallel lines are common: the poetic form conventionally places longer words at the end of a line,⁹ frequently producing end rhymes at the intersection of grammar and poetic form. Line-internal grammatical rhymes are also common, and the density of rhymes in the last two of these lines operates as metrical compensation for the non-ideal vocalic alliteration in the last line. Where ideal alliteration is lacking, other recurrent sound patterns can buoy a line in the flow of performance.

Rhymes are not bound by parallelism. For example, the formulae in the first three lines above are used again when describing the horse being shot from under the hero, inflecting the name *Väinämöińi* in a prepositional phrase, leading it to rhyme with the preceding series of diminutives used for the object of the verb:

9   This convention is subordinate to the placement of long and short syllables, for which the flexible first foot is a valve. For example, the four-syllable *helähytti* [clouted] in line 9 would appear at the end of the line, but the short stressed initial syllable (*he-*) is not acceptable in a metrically strong position outside of the first foot.

Ampu olk*isen* orihiñ	shot the straw stallion
Herneḣ-vart*isen* hepo*señ*	the pea-stalk horse
Alta vanhañ Väinämö*iseñ*	from under old Väinämöinen
(*SKVR* I₁ 58.31–33)	

Miihkali's use of rhyme might be compared to Cynewulf's in Old English, illustrating how one person may use the idiom. His father's performance of the first passage above lacks the density of rhyme and did not use line 11 in parallelism with line 10 (*SKVR* I₁ 54), while other dialects commonly reproduced the crystallized units forming sequences without the sort of virtuoso dynamism of Miihkali and his family (Frog 2016b).

As a rule of thumb, formulaic lines with alliteration are more socially stable and enduring than those without. Nevertheless, lines lacking customary alliteration seem to be more socially stable when they participate in an environment dense with rhymes. In the following example, the first line completely lacks alliteration, usual for the formula (in which the verb varies), but it is commonly integrated into the acoustic texture of the poem through morphological rhymes with parallel lines. The couplet in lines 95–96 is also used in other contexts, but morphological rhymes support its second line which otherwise has only weak alliteration on metrically-stressed positions (***mai**lle risti**mät**tö**mille***):

	Jouvut m*aille* vierah*ille*	got into strange lands
95	Paik*oille* papi***ttomille***	into priestless places
	M*aille* ristimä***ttömille***	into unchristened lands
	(*SKVR* I₁ 79.94–96)	

Couplets with morphological end rhyme where both lines lack conventional alliteration are found, like the following:

otas tuuli purt*ehesi*	take, wind, into your craft
ahava venos*ehesi*	cold, dry wind into your boat
(*SKVR* I₁ 79.162–163)	

However, there are very few and highly localized examples: three-syllable end rhyme did not have the density within lines to sustainably compensate multiple lines lacking alliteration.

Whereas reduplication was observed with names in Old Norse above, kalevalaic poetry employed reduplication paradigms for line-internal parallelism, producing some enduring formulae. Rhyme reduplications forming two, four-syllable words were socially sustained without customary alliteration or other metrical compensation than the alliteration of metrically-stressed syllables within the rhyme. The following line is found in Finnish-language areas (note that *-läi-* is metrically stressed):

| h***yöryläinen***, p***yöryläinen*** | hustle-one, roundy-one |
| (*SKVR* VII₃ 573.6) | |

Lotte Tarkka (2013: 154–156) observes that the formation of such lines can be considered as onomatopoetic. As in the case of Old Norse names above, reduplication generally connects with vocabulary in the language so that the pairs are interpretable as independent words (Kuusi 1949: 98). The poetic register facilitates these connections because of its extensive use of archaisms, various dialectal forms, and affixes, along with the flexing and blurring of semantics connected with alliteration and parallelism: the poetic lexicon often diverges from the language of everyday speech while still being recognizable or familiar. *Hyöryläinen* [hustling-one] is not formed from a word **hyöry* but links to a family of words like Finnish *hyöriä* [to bustle, rush about, swarm]; *pyöryläinen* [roundy-one] is similarly formed from or related to Finnish *pyöreä* [round]; *-lainen/-läinen* forms an adjective of belongingness, from *-la/-lä*, normally indicating 'place of', and the diminutive *-inen* makes this an adjective 'of the place of', like *Suomi* [Finland] > *suomalainen* [Finnish person, Finnish]. The reduplication paradigm on which the line has formed is metrically structured, yet the expression *hyöryläinen-pyöryläinen* is comparable to English idioms like *hulrey-burley*; it is particular to use in this line, with a regional development of use of *hyöryläinen* to otherwise refer to a mythic bee and use of *pyöryläinen* in a formula for the sun. Rhyme reduplications like *hyöryläinen, pyöryläinen* commonly connect with words recognizable from other contexts that are at least not inconsistent with the poetic use. The formal relation of rhyme is also maintained through variations, although the change in semantics may be surprising:

h**yöryläinen**, v**yöryläinen**   hustle-one, landslide-one
(*SKVR* VI$_1$ 3653.2)

v**yöryläinen**, p**yöryläinen**   landslide-one, roundy-one
(*SKVR* XII$_1$ 3863.5, 4467.3)

Line-internal rhyme reduplication by itself is rare; rhyme reduplication is more common across parallel lines. As in lines 10 and 11 in the longer passage above, it may involve a difference in word length by one syllable. The greater frequency of interlinear rhyme may be a combination of: (*a*) its use with longer words that commonly gravitate to the end of a line; (*b*) its use within phonic verse parallelism; and (*c*) its common use in line-internal morphological rhyme. End rhyme thus does not stand out as a distinct poetic device, being simultaneously an organic outcome of combinations of grammar and poetic form on the one hand and as a frequent component of additional types of phonic repetition on the other.

Interlinear rhyme may combine with the reduplication of a whole word at the beginning of the next line. This increases rhyme density in a line where customary alliteration is lacking:

työ**n** **t**arb**e**hin k**eäntelekse**   work with the need for turning
k**eäntelekse**, v**eäntelekse**   turning, twisting
(*SKVR* VII$_5$ 4879.6–7)

It is also found in examples where both lines lack customary alliteration:

Niinpä tuo Ohto k*eäntelekše*   so indeed brings Ohto turning
K*eäntelekše*, v*eäntelekše*   turning, twisting
(*SKVR* I$_4$ 1242.b.5–6)

Interlinear rhyme may equally accompany lexical repetition without alliteration:

nyt se mehtä k*ääntelekse*   now the forest turns
nyt se mehtä v*ääntelekse*   now the forest twists
(*SKVR* VI$_2$ 4912.4–5)

Within a line, pairs generated through ablaut reduplication are more common than those of rhyme, since it produces alliteration, for example:

l*iitelekse*, l*oatelekse*   moving, preparing

k*ahtelekse*, k*eäntelekse*   looking, turning

Formulae based on ablaut reduplication also exhibit variation that maintains the formal relation between the two words, for example:

l*entelekse, l*iitelekse*   flying, moving
(*SKVR* VII$_2$ 2892.3)

k*uuntelekse, k*eäntelekse*   listening, turning
(*SKVR* I$_1$ 637.7)

Use of such lines in parallelism produces an interlinear pattern that can also compensate for lines lacking customary alliteration:

l*iitelekse*, l*oatelekse*   Moving, preparing
k*atselekse*, k*eäntelekse*   Looking, turning
nokalla k*olistelekse*   With its beak banging about
(*SKVR* VII$_2$ 2889.5–7)

Spreading a formula based on ablaut reduplication across lines can make a parallel series more uniform. Rather than one line having alliteration and not the other, the combination of interlinear rhyme and alliteration can produce phonic verse parallelism:

arv*eleepi*, k*ahteleepi*   guesses, looks
väänt*eleepi*, k*äänteleepi*   twists, turns
(*SKVR* VI$_1$ 48.37)

Ablaut reduplication with shorter words is less common. Lines based on ablaut reduplication of two-syllable words can be found, but they are

relatively unusual and thus were not as well-maintained socially, for example (cf. Kuusi 1949: 98):

   si**itti** siivet, **s**u**itti** sulat   begot wings, gathered feathers
   (*SKVR* VII$_1$ 380.20, 381.26; VII$_4$ 2708.31, 2709.30)

Two-syllable reduplications are more often simply reduplications of whole words, which is characteristic of a number of formulae in which different verbs may be used (see also Harvilahti 2015), such as:

   souti päivän, **souti** toisen   rowed a day, rowed a second
   (*SKVR* VI$_1$ 11.13)

Although the pattern of ablaut reduplication is distinct from rhyme reduplication, especially in Old Norse monosyllables like *Nyt* : *Nǫt*, its use in kalevalaic poetry is predominantly in four-syllable words with variation in the first (i.e. stressed) vowel, yielding both alliteration and salient rhyme.

    Alliteration in kalevalaic poetry is systematic, but not being metricalized opens it to flexibility. Just as line-internal alliteration employs strong alliteration as an ideal followed by alliterations with other vowel combinations on a spectrum, line-internal alliteration on lexically-stressed syllables is an ideal followed by alliteration on metrically stressed syllables and interlinear patterns of phonic repetition like phonic verse parallelism and rhyme. Rhyme is widely found in the poetry and it appears integrated with particular formulae and passages in ways that structure how they vary; it is also a common device to compensate a lack of stressed-syllable alliteration in a line where it has sufficient density within and/or across lines. Rhyme has tended to be overlooked in research partly because of its organic relations to morphology and parallelism and lack of regularity in the poetic system, and partly because it participates in other patterns of phonic repetition, like variations based on ablaut reduplication, that tend not to be viewed in terms of rhyme (although see Kuusi 1949: 98). These factors simultaneously make rhyme a significant feature in producing the texture of a stretch of text while it seems to remain unmarked among devices for generating phonic repetitions.

Conclusion

Rhyme has integrated roles in each of these alliterative poetry traditions but it functions differently in each poetic system. Stem-syllable rhymes seem to have deep roots in the Old Germanic poetries with particular prominence of use in short lines. Old English, Old Saxon, and Old Norse skaldic poetries exhibit conventional pairs of rhyme words and integration in the idiom (in skaldic *dróttkvætt*, see Frog 2016c), whereas the same words are never used for rhyme in two different lines in the whole eddic corpus. Nevertheless, the type of syllable rhyme varying the vowel, which was also metricalized in

some skaldic metres, is common in eddic poetry, and rhyme on unstressed syllables appears integrated, with particular salience in extended series of short-line parallelism. The compensatory metrical role of Old English rhyme for additional alliteration has a parallel in eddic Class IIb rhymes, which are, however, so narrowly conventionalized that they may be an archaism. Stressed-syllable rhymes only seem actively used in eddic lists of names. Changes in the Old English poetic ecology seem to have enabled rhyme to compensate an absent metrical alliteration in a *Langzeile* on a limited basis, as in *Judgement Day II*, and scant parallels in Old Norse *ljóðaháttr* could point to a parallel development. However, the earlier changes in the Old Norse poetic ecology metricalized stressed-syllable rhymes in skaldic poetry while generally excluding them from eddic poetry. Kalevalaic poetry looks extremely rich in rhymes compared to the Old Germanic traditions, owing centrally to alliteration remaining unmetricalized alongside a combination of word length and the syllabic metre's motivation to extend words with affixes, repeated in canonical parallelism, facilitating morphological rhymes. Whereas metrical regularity inhibited the omission of alliteration from the Germanic *Langzeile*, kalevalaic poetry exhibits strong alliteration on lexically-stressed syllables as an ideal on a spectrum, with rhyme on the lower end, where it blurs into other types of sound repetition. Whereas differences between rhyme in Old English and Old Norse reflect changes in the respective poetic ecologies, the differences between rhyme in kalevalaic poetry and its Germanic counterparts ultimately come down to differences in their flexibility regarding alliteration on the one hand and the facilitation of rhyme by the register on the other.

In each tradition of poetry above, examples emerge of rhyme creating a formal link between words and lines of different types. This formal relation becomes a part of individual formulae and whole groups of lines. Crystallized formulae are not immune to variation, but the formal relation operates at a level above the lexicon. As a consequence, variations occur within it, so that a relationship of rhyme is maintained between words unless the structuring principle itself is also discarded or exchanged for another. The role of rhyme thus not only shapes traditional phraseology; it also creates conditions in which variation occurs (see also Reichl 1985). This is, of course, true of any structuring principle. Changing one word in an alliteration must similarly result in one of three outcomes: (*a*) it conforms to the pattern of alliteration, maintaining it; (*b*) diverges from the pattern of alliteration, so that the organizing principle no longer operates, or not as it did; or (*c*) diverges and compensates that alliteration with an alternative, whether on a different but proximate word or motivating co-variation with another word to produce a new alliteration, or, if allowed by the particular poetry, and perhaps only under particular conditions, rhyme.

In this chapter, rhyme has been brought into focus with consideration of how it operates in poetic systems with systematic alliteration, including as compensation. It should be noted that bringing any such feature into focus can give an exaggerated impression of its presence and significance. Key here, however, is that rhyme is integrated into all three poetic forms, where, in addition to being used ornamentally and perhaps sometimes accidentally,

it operates to varying degrees in relation to alliteration and can affect word choice and variation within units of different scope.

References

Sources

Dictionary of Old English Web Corpus. Accessed 21 June 2022. https://tapor.library. utoronto.ca/doecorpus/

Neckel, Gustav, & Hans Kuhn (eds.) 1963. *Edda: Die Lieder des Codex Regius nebst vewandten Denkmälern I: Text*, 4th edition. Heidelberg: Winter Universitätsverlag.

SKVR = *Suomen Kansan Vanhat Runot* 1908–1997. I–XV. Helsinki: SKS. Accessed 5 May 2022. https://skvr.fi/

Snorri Sturluson 2005. *Edda: Prologue and Gylfaginning*. Edited by Anthony Faulkes. 2nd edition. London: Viking Society for Northern Research.

Snorri Sturluson 2012. *The Uppsala Edda: DG 11 4to*. Edited by Heimir Pálsson. 2nd edition. London: Viking Society for Northern Research.

Bibliography

Bartlett, Adeline Courtney 1935. *The Larger Rhetorical Patterns in Anglo-Saxon Poetry*. Morningside Heights: Columbia University Press.

Bredehoft, Thomas A. 2005a. *Early English Metre*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Bredehoft, Thomas A. 2005b. Old English and Old Saxon Formulaic Rhyme. *Anglia: Zeitschrift fur Englische Philologie* 123(2): 204–229.

Brink, August 1920. *Stab und Wort im Gawain: Eine stilistische Untersuchung*. Studien zur englischen Philologie 59. Halle a. S.: Max Niemeyer.

Buchan, David 1972. *The Ballad and the Folk*. London: Routledge & Kegan.

Clunies Ross, Margaret 2005. *A History of Old Norse Poetry and Poetics*. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer.

Frank, Roberta 2003. The Discreet Charm of the Old Saxon Weak Adjective. In *Anglo-Saxon Styles*. Catherine E. Karkov & George Hardin Brown (eds.). Albany: State University of New York Press, 239–252.

Frog 2016a. Linguistic Multiforms: Advancing Oral-Formulaic Theory. *FF Network* 48: 6–11, 14. Accessed 15 July 2022. https://www.folklorefellows.fi/ffn-48/

Frog 2016b. Linguistic Multiforms in Kalevalaic Epic: Toward a Typology. *RMN Newsletter* 11: 61–98. Accessed 15 July 2022. https://www2.helsinki.fi/sites/default/files/atoms/files/rmn_11_2015-2016.pdf

Frog 2016c. Metrical Entanglement and *dróttkvætt* Composition – A Pilot Study on Battle-Kennings. In *Approaches to Nordic and Germanic Poetry*. Kristján Árnason, Stephen Carey, Tonya Kim Dewey, Haukur Þorgeirsson, Ragnar Ingi Aðalsteinsson & Þórhallur Eyþórsson (eds.). Reykjavík: University of Iceland Press, 149–229.

Frog 2019a. The Finnic Tetrameter – A Creolization of Poetic Form? *Studia Metrica et Poetica* 6(1): 20–78. https://doi.org/10.12697/smp.2019.6.1.02

Frog 2019b. Poetic Principles on a Hierarchy of Scope: Isolated Metrical Entanglement. *NordMetrik News* 3: 9–20.

Frog 2021. Metrical Entanglement: The Interface of Language and Metre. In

Versification: Metrics in Practice. Frog, Satu Grünthal, Kati Kallio & Jarkko Niemi (eds.). Helsinki: SKS, 249–293. https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.12

Frog & Eila Stepanova 2011. Alliteration in (Balto-)Finnic Languages. In *Alliteration and Culture*. Jonathan Roper (ed.). Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 195–218.

Fulk, R. D. 1992. *A History of Old English Meter*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Fulk, R. D., Robert E. Bjork & John D. Niles (eds.) 2008. *Klaeber's Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg*. 4th edition. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Gering, Hugo 1927. *Kommentar zu den Liedern der Edda, I: Götterlieder*. B. Sijmons (ed.). Halle (Salle): Weisenhaus.

Gunnell, Terry 2013. *Vǫluspá* in Performance. In *The Nordic Apocalypse: Approaches to Vǫluspá and Nordic Days of Judgement*. Terry Gunnell & Annette Lassen (eds.). Turnout: Brepols, 63–77.

Gurevič, Elena A. 1986. The Formulaic Pair in Eddic Poetry. In *Structure and Meaning in Old Norse Literature: New Approaches to Textual Analysis and Literary Criticism*. John Lindow, Lars Lönnroth & Gerd Wolfgang Weber (eds.). Odense: Odense University Press, 32–55.

Harris, Joseph 1985. Eddic Poetry. In *Old Norse-Icelandic Literature: A Critical Guide*. Carol J. Clover & John Lindow (eds.). London: Cornell University Press, 68–156.

Harvilahti, Lauri 2015. Register in Oral Traditional Phraseology. In *Registers of Communication*. Asif Agha & Frog (eds.). Helsinki: SKS, 307–321. https://doi.org/10.21435/sflin.18

Hollmérus, Ragnar 1936. *Studier över allitterationen i* Eddan. Helsinki: Svenska litteratursällskapet i Finland.

Jackson, Elizabeth 1995. The Art of the List-Maker and the *Grímnismál* Catalogue of the Homes of the Gods: A Reply to Jan de Vries. *Arkiv för nordisk filologi* 110: 5–39.

Kallio, Kati, Tuomas M. S. Lehtonen, Senni Timonen, Irma-Riitta Järvinen & Ilkka Leskelä 2017. *Laulut ja kirjoitukset: Suullinen ja kirjallinen kulttuuri uuden ajan alun Suomessa*. Helsinki: SKS. https://doi.org/10.21435/skst.1427

Kellogg, Robert 1988. *A Concordance to Eddic Poetry*. Woodbridge: Colleagues Press.

Kendall, Calvin 1991. *The Metrical Grammar of* Beowulf. Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England 5. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Krikmann, Arvo 2015. On the Vowel Euphony in Finnic Alliterative Folksongs. *FF Network* 46: 12–17.

Kristján Árnason 1991. *The Rhythms of* dróttkvætt *and Other Old Icelandic Metres*. Reykjavík: University of Iceland, Institute of Linguistics.

Kristján Árnason 2006. The Rise of the Quatrain in Germanic: Musicality in Word Based Rhythm in Eddic Meters. In *Formal Approaches to Poetry: Recent Developments*. B. Elan Dresher & Nila Friedberg (eds.). Phonology and Phonetics 11. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 151–169.

Kuusi, Matti 1949. *Sampo-eepos: Typologinen analyysi*. Helsinki: Suomalais-Ugrilainen Seura.

Kuusi, Matti 1953. Kalevalaisen runon alkusointuisuudesta. *Virittäjä* 57: 198–207.

Kuusi, Matti 1994. The Sampo: Farewell Lecture at the University of Helsinki. In Matti Kuusi, *Mind and Form in Folklore: Selected Articles*. Helsinki: SKS, 53–65.

Leino, Pentti. 1986. *Language and Metre: Metrics and the Metrical System of Finnish*. Studia Fennica 31. Helsinki: SKS.

Lord, Albert Bates 1995. *The Singer Resumes the Tale*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Naumann, Hans-Peter 2018. *Metrische Runeninschriften in Skandinavien*. Tübingen: Narr Francke Attempto.

Nielsen, Michael Lerche, Marie Stocklund & Klaus Düwel 2001. Neue Runenfunde aus Schleswig und Starigard/Oldenburg. In *Von Thorsberg nach Schleswig: Sprache und Schriftlichkeit eines Grenzgebietes im Wandel eines Jahrtausends*. Klaus Düwel, Edith Marold & Christiane Zimmerman (eds.). Berlin: de Gruyter, 201–280.

Ready, Jonathan L. 2019. *Orality, Textuality, and the Homeric Epics: An Interdisciplinary Study of Oral Texts, Dictated Texts, and Wild Texts*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Reichl, Karl 1985. Oral Tradition and Performance of the Uzbek and Karakalpak Epic Singers. In *Fragen der mongolischen Heldendichtung*, III. Walther Heissig (ed.). Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 613–643.

Reichl, Karl 2022. Formulas in Oral Epics: The Dynamics of Metre, Memory and Meaning. In *Weathered Words: Formulaic Language and Verbal Art*. Frog & William Lamb (eds.). Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Saarinen, Jukka 2017. 'Said a Word, Uttered Thus': Structures and Functions of Parallelism in Arhippa Perttunen's Poems. *Oral Tradition* 31(2): 407–424. Accessed 15 July 2022. https://journal.oraltradition.org/wp-content/uploads/files/articles/31ii/10_31.2.pdf

Saarinen, Jukka 2018. *Runolaulun poetiikka: Säe, syntaksi ja parallelismi Arhippa Perttusen runoissa*. Helsinki: Helsingin yliopisto. http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-951-51-3919-1

von See, Klaus, Beatrice La Farge & Katja Schulz 2019. *Kommentar zu den Liedern der Edda I: Götterlieder*. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag C. Winter.

Siikala, Anna-Leena 1990 [1984]. *Interpreting Oral Narrative*. Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica.

Sievers, Eduard 1893. *Altgermanische Metrik*. Sammlung kurzer Grammatiken germanischer Dialekte Erzänzungsreihe 2. Halle: Niemeyer.

Sijmons, B., & H. Gering 1906. *Die Lieder der Edda I: Text*. Halle: Waisenhauses.

Tarkka, Lotte 2013. *Songs of the Border People: Genre, Reflexivity, and Performance in Karelian Oral Poetry*. Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica.

de Vries, Jan 1928. Over de Datieering der Þrymskviða. *Tijdschrift voor nederlandsche Taal- en Letterkunde* 47: 251–322.

Zacher, Samantha 2002. Cynewulf at the Interface of Literacy and Orality: The Evidence of the Puns in *Elene*. *Oral Tradition* 17(2): 346–387.