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“The Franks Casket and the Appositive Style”



In his seminal book, *Beowulf and the Appositive Style*, Fred C. Robinson presented the complex structure of the epic as a creative application, on a large scale, of the principle underlying the Old English poetic technique of variation. Since then, the semantically open juxtaposition of contrastive, parallel or subtly modified statements has been traced and explored in a number of Old English texts; the principle has been even presented as fundamental for Old English poetry in general, stemming, as has been argued, from its oral roots. The appositional style has thus been amply discussed in verbal art; I propose to look at a specific Anglo-Saxon artefact, the famous Franks casket, through a similar prism and discuss the way it juxtaposes apparently disparate scenes from Christian, Roman and Germanic history / legend.