بَيُوُلْف

Just don't take any course where they make you read Beowulf.

فقط لا تأخذي أي مقرر حيث يجعلونك تقرئين بيوولف _____

http://www.arabdict.com/en/english-arabic/Beowulf

ביוולף

ביוולף (2007) - Beowulf - וואלה! סרטים
movies.walla.co.il/movie/3407/ביוולף ▼ Translate this page
הבמאי רוברט זמקיס מציג עיבוד בתלת מימד של האפוס ההיסטורי "ביוולף". סאגת ההרפתקאות
העתיקה אשר מגוללת את קורותיו של הלוחם האמיץ ביוולף, מגיעה אל המסך בעזרת ...

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בספריות הגדולות ברחבי הארץ.

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בכל בתי הקולנוע בארץ כולל מועדי הקרנה. באתר ביקורות והמלצות אובייקטיביות ובלתי ...

دانلود Beowulf - انیمیشن بئوولف (دوبله فارسی) - پی سی دانلود

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۲۰۰۷ آمریکا که به شیوهٔ Motion Capture ساخته، فیلمی خیال‌پردازی است محصول بئوولف - Dec 2, 2014

شده‌است. کارگردان اثر رابرت زمه‌کیس است و هنرپیشگانی ...

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installed and a browser with JavaScript support.

بئوولف (فیلم ۲۰۰۷) - ویکی‌پدیا، دانشنامهٔ آزاد

fa.wikipedia.org/.../فیلم)_بئوولف... ▾ Translate this page Persian Wikipedia ▾

بئوولف (به انگلیسی: Beowulf)، فیلمی خیال‌پردازی است محصول ۲۰۰۷ آمریکا که به شیوهٔ Motion Capture

ساخته شده‌است. کارگردان اثر رابرت زمه‌کیس است و ...

بئوولف

बियोवुल्फ़ Biyōvulfa

बियोवुल्फ़   بیوولف

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बियोवुल्फ़   ਬਯੇਵ੍ਲਢ

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ਬਯੇਵੁਲਢ ਫ਼ਰਿਸ਼ਤਾ   بیوولِف فرشتہ

[Beowulf] 📘

Old English beo wulf, literally "bee-wolf," "a wolf to bees;" a kenning for "bear." See [bee] (n.) + [wolf] (n.).

বেউলফ

English	Bengali
Beowulf	বেউলফ

Μπέογουλφ

Μπέογουλφ (έπος) - Βικιπαίδεια

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Το **Μπέογουλφ** (**Beowulf** ή Bēopulf) είναι ένα παραδοσιακό ηρωικό επικό ποίημα γραμμένο σε Παλαιο-αγγλικό παρηχητικό στίχο. Έχει 3182 στίχους και αποτελεί ...

Το παρελθόν κι οι ρίζες του έπους - Το χειρόγραφο Μπέογουλφ

BEOWULF - Star.gr

www.star.gr/tv/el/Pages/Movie.aspx?artId...**beowulf** ▾ Translate this page

Beowulf. Περιπέτεια ηρωικής φαντασίας, αμερικανικής παραγωγής 2007 ... Η είδηση αυτή φτάνει στ' αυτιά του **Μπέογουλφ**, πολεμιστή από τον Βορρά, που ...

[PDF] ΤΟ ΤΡΙΣΔΙΑΣΤΑΤΟ ΗΡΩΙΚΟ ΕΠΟΣ ΤΟΥ BEOWULF

www.elkosmos.gr/index.php?...**beowulf**... ▾ Translate this page

Jan 27, 2009 - Ένα από τα μεγαλύτερα έπη όλων των εποχών, το **Μπέογουλφ**, μεταφέρεται φέτος σε τρισδιάστατη εικόνα από τον σκηνοθέτη Ρόμπερτ Ζεμέκις ...

ベオウルフの天使

【DMC3】RGボス戦集・M4＋ベオウルフ（再UP版）ニココメ ...

nicoco.net/sm2748952 ▾ Translate this page

Mar 22, 2008 - ... JLlu-oZvCr8j7l4bYBxscUMi_4g, リベリオンで十分. 17, 05.29, JLlu-oZvCr8j7l4bYBxscUMi_4g, **ベオウルフの天使**化防いだ！18, 02.21, SQPGeqc6QE22Lf6ZKopec25b8AA, おー. 19, 03.29, SQPGeqc6QE22Lf6ZKopec25b8AA ...

http://nicoco.net/sm2748952

Beowulf

This article is about the epic poem. For the character, see Beowulf (hero). For other uses, see Beowulf (disambiguation).

Beowulf (/ˈbeɪ.əwʊlf/; in Old English [ˈbeːo̯ˌwulf]) is an Old English epic poem consisting of 3182 alliterative long lines. It is possibly the oldest surviving long poem in Old English and is commonly cited as one of the most important works of Old English literature.[1] It was written in England some time between the 8th[2][3] and the early 11th century.[4] The author was an anonymous Anglo-Saxon poet, referred to by scholars as the "*Beowulf* poet".[5]

The poem is set in Scandinavia. Beowulf, a hero of the Geats, comes to the aid of Hroðgar, the king of the Danes, whose mead hall in Heorot has been under attack by a monster known as Grendel. After Beowulf slays him, Grendel's mother attacks the hall and is then also defeated. Victorious, Beowulf goes home to Geatland (Götaland in modern Sweden) and later becomes king of the Geats. After a period of fifty years has passed, Beowulf defeats a dragon, but is fatally wounded in the battle. After his death, his attendants bury him in a tumulus, a burial mound, in Geatland.

The full poem survives in the manuscript known as the Nowell Codex, located in the British Library. It has no title in the original manuscript, but has become known by the name of the story's protagonist.[6] In 1731, the manuscript was badly damaged by a fire that swept through Ashburnham House in London that had a collection of medieval manuscripts assembled by Sir Robert Bruce Cotton. The poem was not studied until the end of the 18th century, and not published in its entirety until Johan Bülow funded the 1815 Latin translation, prepared by the Icelandic-Danish scholar Grímur Jónsson Thorkelin.[7] After a heated debate with Thorkelin, Bülow offered to support a new translation into Danish by N. F. S. Grundtvig. The result, Bjovulfs Drape (1820), was the first modern language translation of *Beowulf*.

1 Historical background

The events described in the poem take place in the late 5th century, after the Angles and Saxons had begun their migration to England, and before the beginning of the 7th century, a time when the Anglo-Saxon people were either newly arrived or still in close contact with their Germanic

Approximate central regions of tribes mentioned in Beowulf*, with the location of the* Angles *in* Angeln*. See* Scandza *for details of Scandinavia's political fragmentation in the 6th century.*

kinsmen in Northern Germany and Scandinavia and possibly England. The poem may have been brought to England by people of Geatish origins.[8] It has been suggested that *Beowulf* was first composed in the 7th century at Rendlesham in East Anglia, as the Sutton Hoo ship-burial also shows close connections with Scandinavia, and also that the East Anglian royal dynasty, the Wuffings, may have been descendants of Geatish Wulfings.[9][10] Others have associated this poem with the court of King Alfred, or with the court of King Cnut.[11]


Ohthere's mound

The poem deals with legends, was composed for enter-

tainment, and does not separate between fictional elements and real historic events, such as the raid by King Hygelac into Frisia. Scholars generally agree that many of the personalities of *Beowulf* also appear in Scandinavian sources (specific works designated in the following section).[12] This does not only concern people (e.g., Healfdene, Hroðgar, Halga, Hroðulf, Eadgils and Ohthere), but also clans (e.g., Scyldings, Scylfings and Wulfings) and some of the events (e.g., the Battle on the Ice of Lake Vänern). The dating of the events in the poem has been confirmed by archaeological excavations of the barrows indicated by Snorri Sturluson and by Swedish tradition as the graves of Ohthere (dated to c. 530) and his son Eadgils (dated to c. 575) in Uppland, Sweden.[13][14][15]

In Denmark, recent archaeological excavations at Lejre, where Scandinavian tradition located the seat of the Scyldings, i.e., Heorot, have revealed that a hall was built in the mid-6th century, exactly the time period of *Beowulf*.[16] Three halls, each about 50 metres (164 feet) long, were found during the excavation.[16]
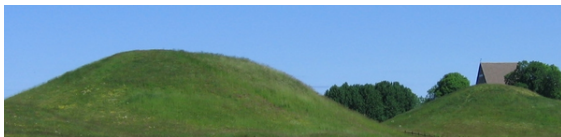
Finds from Eadgils' mound, left, excavated in 1874 at Uppsala, Sweden, support Beowulf *and the sagas. Ongenþeow's barrow, right, has not been excavated.[13][14]*

The majority view appears to be that people such as King Hroðgar and the Scyldings in *Beowulf* are based on real historical people from 6th-century Scandinavia.[17] Like the *Finnesburg Fragment* and several shorter surviving poems, *Beowulf* has consequently been used as a source of information about Scandinavian personalities such as Eadgils and Hygelac, and about continental Germanic personalities such as Offa, king of the continental Angles.

19th-century archeological evidence may confirm elements of the *Beowulf* story. Eadgils was buried at Uppsala, according to Snorri Sturluson. When Eadgils' mound (to the left in the photo) was excavated in 1874, the finds supported *Beowulf* and the sagas. They showed that a powerful man was buried in a large barrow, c 575, on a bear skin with two dogs and rich grave offerings. These remains include a Frankish sword adorned with gold and garnets and a tafl game with Roman pawns of ivory. He was dressed in a costly suit made of Frankish cloth with golden threads, and he wore a belt with a costly buckle. There were four cameos from the Middle East which were probably part of a casket. This would have been a burial fitting a king who was famous for his wealth in Old Norse sources. Ongenþeow's barrow (to the right in the photo) has not been excavated.[13][14]

2   Summary

The main protagonist Beowulf, a hero of the Geats, comes to the aid of Hrothgar, the king of the Danes, whose great hall, Heorot, is plagued by the monster Grendel. Beowulf kills Grendel with his bare hands and Grendel's mother with a sword of a giant that he found in her lair.

Later in his life, Beowulf is himself king of the Geats, and finds his realm terrorised by a dragon whose treasure had been stolen from his hoard in a burial mound. He attacks the dragon with the help of his *thegns* or servants, but they do not succeed. Beowulf decides to follow the dragon into its lair, at Earnanæs, but only his young Swedish relative Wiglaf, whose name means "remnant of valor",[lower-alpha 1] dares join him. Beowulf finally slays the dragon, but is mortally wounded. He is buried in a tumulus or burial mound, by the sea.

Beowulf is considered an epic poem in that the main character is a hero who travels great distances to prove his strength at impossible odds against supernatural demons and beasts. The poem also begins in medias res ("into the middle of affairs") or simply, "in the middle of things", which is a characteristic of the epics of antiquity. Although the poem begins with Beowulf's arrival, Grendel's attacks have been an ongoing event. An elaborate history of characters and their lineages is spoken of, as well as their interactions with each other, debts owed and repaid, and deeds of valor. The warriors form a kind of brotherhood called a "comitatus", which seems to have formed an ethical basis for all words, deeds, and actions.

2.1   First battle: Grendel

Beowulf begins with the story of King Hrothgar, who constructed the great hall Heorot for his people. In it he, his wife Wealhtheow, and his warriors spend their time singing and celebrating. Grendel, a troll-like monster descended from the biblical Cain, is pained by the noise, attacks the hall, and kills and devours many of Hrothgar's warriors while they sleep. Hrothgar and his people, helpless against Grendel, abandon Heorot.

Beowulf, a young warrior from Geatland, hears of Hrothgar's troubles and with his king's permission leaves his homeland to help Hroðgar.

Beowulf and his men spend the night in Heorot. Beowulf refuses to use any weapon because he holds himself to be the equal of Grendel.[20] During the battle, Beowulf has been feigning sleep and leaps up to clench Grendel's hand.[21] The two battle until it seems as though the hall might collapse.[22] Beowulf's retainers draw their swords and rush to his aid, but their blades cannot pierce Grendel's skin.[23] Finally, Beowulf tears Grendel's arm from his body at the shoulder and Grendel runs to his home in the marshes and slowly dies.[24]

2.2 Second battle: Grendel's Mother

The next night, after celebrating Grendel's defeat, Hrothgar and his men sleep in Heorot. Grendel's mother, angered by the punishment of her son, appears and attacks the hall. She kills Hrothgar's most trusted warrior, Æschere, in revenge for Grendel's defeat.

Hrothgar, Beowulf and their men track Grendel's mother to her lair under a lake. Beowulf prepares himself for battle. He is presented with a sword, Hrunting, by Unferth, a warrior who had doubted him and wishes to make amends. After stipulating a number of conditions to Hrothgar in case of his death (including the taking in of his kinsmen and the inheritance by Unferth of Beowulf's estate), Beowulf dives into the lake. He is swiftly detected and attacked by Grendel's mother. However, she is unable to harm Beowulf through his armor and drags him to the bottom of the lake. In a cavern containing Grendel's body and the remains of men that the two have killed, Grendel's mother and Beowulf engage in fierce combat.

At first, Grendel's mother appears to prevail. Beowulf, finding that Hrunting cannot harm his foe, discards it in fury. Beowulf is again saved from his opponent's attack by his armour. Beowulf grabs a magical sword from Grendel's mother's treasure and with it beheads her. Traveling further into the lair, Beowulf discovers Grendel's dying body and severs its head. The blade of the magic sword melts like ice when it touches Grendel's toxic blood, until only the hilt is left. Beowulf carries this hilt and the head of Grendel out of the cavern and presents them to Hrothgar upon his return to Heorot. Beowulf then returns to the surface and to his men at the "ninth hour" (about 3 pm).[25] He returns to Heorot, where Hrothgar gives Beowulf many gifts, including (possibly) the sword Nægling, his family's heirloom. The hilt prompts a long reflection by the king, sometimes referred to as "Hrothgar's sermon", in which he urges Beowulf to be wary of pride and to reward his thanes.[26]

2.3 Third battle: The Dragon

Main article: The Dragon (Beowulf)

Beowulf returns home and eventually becomes king of his own people. One day, fifty years after Beowulf's battle with Grendel's mother, a slave steals a golden cup from the lair of an unnamed dragon at Earnaness. When the dragon sees that the cup has been stolen, it leaves its cave in a rage, burning everything in sight. Beowulf and his warriors come to fight the dragon, but Beowulf tells his men that he will fight the dragon alone and that they should wait on the barrow. Beowulf descends to do battle with the dragon but finds himself outmatched. His men, upon seeing this display and fearing for their lives, creep back into the woods. One of his men, however, Siglaf, who finds great distress in seeing Beowulf's plight, comes

to Beowulf's aid. The two slay the dragon, but Beowulf is mortally wounded. After Beowulf's death, he is ritually burned on a great pyre in Geatland while his people wail and mourn him. After, a barrow, visible from the sea, is built on his remains (*Beowulf* lines 2712–3182).[27]

3 Authorship and date

Beowulf was written in England, but is set in Scandinavia; its dating has attracted considerable scholarly attention. The poem has been dated to between the 8th and the early 11th centuries, with some recent scholarship offering what one reviewer called "a cohesive and compelling case for Beowulf's early composition."[28][29] Although its author is unknown, its themes and subject matter are rooted in the Old English poetic tradition.

Opinion differs as to whether the composition of the poem is contemporary with its transcription, or whether the poem was composed at an earlier time (possibly as one of the Bear's Son Tales) and orally transmitted for many years, and then transcribed at a later date. Lord[30] felt strongly the manuscript represents the transcription of a performance, though likely taken at more than one sitting. Kiernan argues on the basis of evidence from paleography and codicology that the poem is contemporary with the manuscript.[31] Kiernan's reasoning has in part to do with the political context of the poem: most scholars have held that the poem was composed in the 8th century, on the assumption that a poem eliciting sympathy for the Danes could not have been composed by Anglo-Saxons during the Viking Age of the 9th and 10th centuries.[31] The poem begins with a tribute to the royal line of Danish kings, but is written in the dominant literary dialect of Anglo-Saxon England, which for some scholars points to the 11th century reign of Cnut (the Danish king whose empire included all of these areas, and whose primary place of residence was in England) as the most likely time of the poem's creation.

The view of J. R. R. Tolkien was that the poem retains too genuine a memory of Anglo-Saxon paganism to have been composed more than a few generations after the completion of the Christianisation of England around AD 700.[2] Tolkien's conviction that the poem dates to the 8th century is defended by Tom Shippey.[32]

The claim to an 11th-century date is due to scholars who argue that, rather than the transcription of a tale from the oral tradition by an earlier literate monk, *Beowulf* reflects an original interpretation of the story by the manuscript's two scribes.[2][33] However, some scholars argue that linguistic, paleographical, and onomastic considerations align to support a date of composition in the first half of the eighth century;[29][34][35][36] in particular, the poem's regular observation of etymological length distinctions (Kaluza's law) has been thought to suggest a date of composition in the first half of the eighth

century.[37][38] However, scholars disagree about whether the metrical phenomena described by Kaluza's law reflect an early date of composition or correspond to a longer prehistory of the Beowulf meter;[39] B.R. Hutcheson, for instance, does not believe Kaluza's Law can be used to date the poem, while opining that "the weight of all the evidence Fulk presents in his book[lower-alpha 2] tells strongly in favor of an eighth-century date."[40]

4   Manuscript

Main article: Nowell Codex

Beowulf survives in a single manuscript dated on
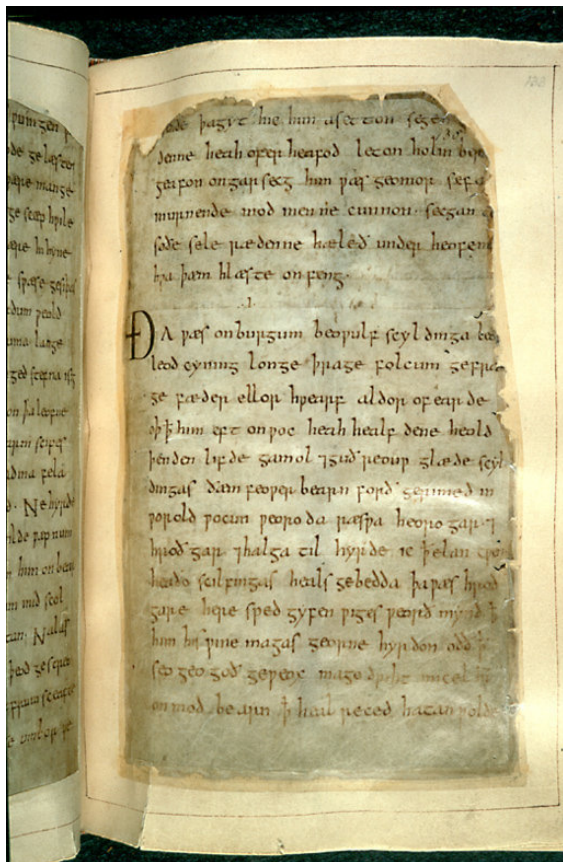
Remounted page, British Library *Cotton Vitellius A.XV*

paleographical grounds to the late 10th or early 11th century. The manuscript measures 245 × 185 mm.[41]

4.1   Provenance

The earliest known owner of the *Beowulf* manuscript, the 16th-century scholar Laurence Nowell, lends his name to the manuscript (Nowell Codex), though its official designation is "British Library, Cotton Vitellius A.XV" because it was one of Sir Robert Bruce Cotton's holdings in the Cotton library in the middle of the 17th century. Many private antiquarians and book collectors, such as

Sir Robert Cotton, used their own library classification systems. "Cotton Vitellius A.XV" translates as: the 15th book from the left on shelf A (the top shelf) of the bookcase with the bust of Roman Emperor Vitellius standing on top of it, in Cotton's collection. Kevin Kiernan argues that Nowell most likely acquired it through William Cecil, 1st Baron Burghley, in 1563, when Nowell entered Cecil's household as a tutor to his ward, Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford.[11]

It suffered damage in the Cotton Library fire at Ashburnham House in 1731. Since then, parts of the manuscript have crumbled along with many of the letters. Rebinding efforts, though saving the manuscript from much degeneration, have nonetheless covered up other letters of the poem, causing further loss. Kevin Kiernan, in preparing his electronic edition of the manuscript, used fibre-optic backlighting and ultraviolet lighting to reveal letters in the manuscript lost from binding, erasure, or ink blotting.[42]

The poem is known only from this single manuscript, which is estimated to date from close to AD 1000. Kiernan has argued from an examination of the manuscript that it was the author's own working copy. He dated the work to the reign of Cnut the Great[11] (1016–35). The poem appears in what is today called the *Beowulf* manuscript or Nowell Codex (British Library MS Cotton Vitellius A.xv), along with other works. The earliest extant reference to the first foliation of the Nowell Codex was made sometime between 1628 and 1650 by Franciscus Junius (the younger).[11] The ownership of the codex before Nowell remains a mystery.[11]

The Reverend Thomas Smith (1638–1710) and Humfrey Wanley (1672–1726) both catalogued the Cotton library (in which the Nowell Codex was held). Smith's catalogue appeared in 1696, and Wanley's in 1705.[43] The *Beowulf* manuscript itself is identified by name for the first time in an exchange of letters in 1700 between George Hickes, Wanley's assistant, and Wanley. In the letter to Wanley, Hickes responds to an apparent charge against Smith, made by Wanley, that Smith had failed to mention the *Beowulf* script when cataloguing Cotton MS. Vitellius A. XV. Hickes replies to Wanley "I can find nothing yet of Beowulph."[44] Kiernan theorised that Smith failed to mention the *Beowulf* manuscript because of his reliance on previous catalogues or because either he had no idea how to describe it or because it was temporarily out of the codex.[45]

4.2   Writing

The *Beowulf* manuscript was transcribed from an original by two scribes, one of whom wrote the first 1939 lines and a second who wrote the remainder, with a difference in handwriting noticeable after line 1939.[11] The script of the second scribe is archaic.[11] While both scribes appear to proofread their work, there are nev-

ertheless many errors.[46] The second scribe slaved over the poem for many years "with great reverence and care to restoration".[11] The work of the second scribe bears a striking resemblance to the work of the first scribe of the Blickling homilies, and so much so that it is believed they derive from the same scriptorium.[11] From knowledge of books held in the library at Malmesbury Abbey and available as source works, and from the identification of certain words particular to the local dialect found in the text, the transcription may have been made there.[47] However, for at least a century, some scholars have maintained that the description of Grendel's lake in *Beowulf* was borrowed from St. Paul's vision of Hell in Homily 16 of the Blickling homilies.[11] Most intriguing in the many versions of the *Beowulf* MS is the transcription of alliterative verse. From the first scribe's edits, emenders such as Klaeber were forced to alter words for the sake of the poem.

4.3   Transcriptions

Icelandic scholar Grímur Jónsson Thorkelin made the first transcriptions of the manuscript in 1786 and published the results in 1815, working as part of a Danish government historical research commission. He made one himself, and had another done by a professional copyist who knew no Anglo-Saxon. Since that time, however, the manuscript has crumbled further, making these transcripts a prized witness to the text. While the recovery of at least 2000 letters can be attributed to them, their accuracy has been called into question,[lower-alpha 3] and the extent to which the manuscript was actually more readable in Thorkelin's time is uncertain.

4.4   Translations

In 1805, the historian Sharon Turner translated selected verses into modern English.[49] This was followed in 1814 by John Josias Conybeare who published an edition "in English paraphrase and Latin verse translation."[49] In 1815, Grímur Jónsson Thorkelin published the first complete edition in Latin.[49] N. F. S. Grundtvig reviewed this edition in 1815 and created the first complete verse translation in Danish in 1820.[49] In 1837, J. M. Kemble created an important literal translation in English.[49] In 1895, William Morris & A. J. Wyatt published the ninth English translation.[49] In 1909, Francis Barton Gummere's full translation in "English imitative meter" was published,[49] and was used as the text of Gareth Hinds's graphic novel based on *Beowulf* in 2007.

During the early 20th century, Frederick Klaeber's *Beowulf and The Fight at Finnsburg*[50] (which included the poem in Old English, an extensive glossary of Old English terms, and general background information) became the "central source used by graduate students for the study of the poem and by scholars and teachers as the basis of

their translations."[51]

A great number of translations are available, in poetry and prose. Andy Orchard, in *A Critical Companion to Beowulf*, lists 33 "representative" translations in his bibliography,[52] and it has been translated into at least 23 other languages.[53]

Of particular importance is Seamus Heaney's 1999 translation of the poem (referred to by Howell Chickering and many others as "Heaneywulf"[54]) which is included in *The Norton Anthology of English Literature* since the seventh edition, ensuring "a dominant position of Beowulf in the college classroom".[55] Translating *Beowulf* is one of the subjects of the 2012 publication *Beowulf at Kalamazoo*, containing a section with 10 essays on translation, and a section with 22 reviews of Heaney's translation (some of which compare Heaney's with that by Anglo-Saxon scholar Roy Liuzza).[56] R. D. Fulk, of Indiana University, published the first facing-page edition and translation of the entire manuscript in the Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library series in 2010.[57]

J. R. R. Tolkien's long-awaited translation (edited by his son Christopher) was published in 2014 (*Beowulf: A Translation and Commentary*).[58][59]

4.5   Debate over oral tradition

The question of whether *Beowulf* was passed down through oral tradition prior to its present manuscript form has been the subject of much debate, and involves more than the mere matter of how it was composed. Rather, given the implications of the theory of oral-formulaic composition and oral tradition, the question concerns how the poem is to be understood, and what sorts of interpretations are legitimate.

Scholarly discussion about *Beowulf* in the context of the oral tradition was extremely active throughout the 1960s and 1970s. The debate might be framed starkly as follows: on the one hand, we can hypothesise a poem put together from various tales concerning the hero (the Grendel episode, the Grendel's mother story, and the firedrake narrative). These fragments would be held for many years in tradition, and learned by apprenticeship from one generation of illiterate poets to the next. The poem is composed orally and extemporaneously, and the archive of tradition on which it draws is oral, pagan, Germanic, heroic, and tribal. On the other hand, one might posit a poem which is composed by a literate scribe, who acquired literacy by way of learning Latin (and absorbing Latinate culture and ways of thinking), probably a monk and therefore profoundly Christian in outlook. On this view, the pagan references would be a sort of decorative archaising.[60][61] There is a third view that sees merit in both arguments above and attempts to bridge them, and so cannot be articulated as starkly as they can; it sees more than one Christianity and more than one attitude towards paganism at work in the poem, separated from

each other by hundreds of years; it sees the poem as originally the product of a literate Christian author with one foot in the pagan world and one in the Christian, himself a convert perhaps or one whose forbears had been pagan, a poet who was conversant in both oral and literary milieus and was capable of a masterful "repurposing" of poetry from the oral tradition; this early Christian poet saw virtue manifest in a willingness to sacrifice oneself in a devotion to justice and in an attempt to aid and protect those in need of help and greater safety; good pagan men had trodden that noble path and so this poet presents pagan culture with equanimity and respect; yet overlaid upon this early Christian poet's composition are verses from a much later reformist "fire-and-brimstone" Christian poet who vilifies pagan practice as dark and sinful and who adds satanic aspects to its monsters.

However, scholars such as DK Crowne have proposed the idea that the poem was passed down from reciter to reciter under the theory of oral-formulaic composition, which hypothesises that epic poems were (at least to some extent) improvised by whoever was reciting them. In his landmark work, *The Singer of Tales*, Albert Lord refers to the work of Francis P. Magoun and others, saying "the documentation is complete, thorough, and accurate. This exhaustive analysis is in itself sufficient to prove that Beowulf was composed orally."[62]

Examination of *Beowulf* and other Anglo-Saxon poetry for evidence of oral-formulaic composition has met with mixed response. While "themes" (inherited narrative subunits for representing familiar classes of event, such as the "arming the hero",[63] or the particularly well-studied "hero on the beach" theme[64]) do exist across Anglo-Saxon and other Germanic works, some scholars conclude that Anglo-Saxon poetry is a mix of oral-formulaic and literate patterns, arguing that the poems both were composed on a word-by-word basis and followed larger formulae and patterns.[65]

Larry Benson argued that the interpretation of *Beowulf* as an entirely formulaic work diminishes the ability of the reader to analyze the poem in a unified manner, and with due attention to the poet's creativity. Instead, he proposed that other pieces of Germanic literature contain "kernels of tradition" from which *Beowulf* borrows and expands upon.[66][67] A few years later, Ann Watts published a book in which she argued against the imperfect application of traditional, Homeric, oral-formulaic theory to Anglo-Saxon poetry. She also argued that the two traditions are not comparable and should not be regarded as such.[67][68] Thomas Gardner agreed with Watts, in a paper published four years later which argued that the *Beowulf* text is of too varied a nature to be completely constructed from formulae and themes.[67][69]

John Miles Foley held, specifically with reference to the *Beowulf* debate,[70] that while comparative work was both necessary and valid, it must be conducted with a view to the particularities of a given tradition; Foley argued with a view to developments of oral traditional theory that do not assume, or depend upon, finally unverifiable assumptions about composition, and that discard the oral/literate dichotomy focused on composition in favor of a more fluid continuum of traditionality and textuality.[71][72][73][63]

Finally, in the view of Ursula Schaefer, the question of whether the poem was "oral" or "literate" becomes something of a red herring.[74] In this model, the poem is created, and is interpretable, within both noetic horizons. Schaefer's concept of "vocality" offers neither a compromise nor a synthesis of the views which see the poem as on the one hand Germanic, pagan, and oral and on the other Latin-derived, Christian, and literate, but, as stated by Monika Otter: "... a 'tertium quid', a modality that participates in both oral and literate culture yet also has a logic and aesthetic of its own."[75]

5   Sources and analogues

Neither identified sources nor analogues for *Beowulf* can be definitively proven, but many conjectures have been made. These are important in helping historians understand the *Beowulf* manuscript, as possible source-texts or influences would suggest time-frames of composition, geographic boundaries within which it could be composed, or range (both spatial and temporal) of influence (i.e. when it was "popular" and where its "popularity" took it). There are five main categories in which potential sources and/or analogues are included: Scandinavian parallels, classical sources, Irish sources and analogues, ecclesiastical sources, and echoes in other Old English texts.[76]

Early studies into Scandinavian sources and analogues proposed that *Beowulf* was a translation of an original Scandinavian work, but this idea has been discarded. In 1878, Guðbrandur Vigfússon made the connection between *Beowulf* and the *Grettis saga*. This is currently one of the few Scandinavian analogues to receive a general consensus of potential connection.[76] Tales concerning the Skjöldungs, possibly originating as early as the 6th century were later used as a narrative basis in such texts as *Gesta Danorum* by Saxo Grammaticus and *Hrólfs saga kraka*. Some scholars see *Beowulf* as a product of these early tales along with *Gesta Danorum* and *Hrólfs saga kraka*, and some early scholars of the poem proposed that the latter saga and *Beowulf* share a common legendary ancestry, *Beowulf* 's Hrothulf being identified with Hrólf Kraki ancestry. Paul Beekman Taylor argued that the *Ynglingasaga* was proof that the *Beowulf* poet was likewise working from Germanic tradition.[76]

Friedrich Panzer attempted to contextualise *Beowulf* and other Scandinavian works, including *Grettis saga*, under the international folktale type 301B, or "The Bear's Son" tale. However, although this folkloristic approach was

seen as a step in the right direction, "The Bear's Son" tale was seen as too universal. In a term coined by Peter Jørgensen (the "two-troll tradition"), a more concise frame of reference was found. The "two-troll tradition" refers to "a Norse 'ecotype' in which a hero enters a cave and kills two giants, usually of different sexes." Both *Grettis saga* and *Beowulf* fit this folktale type.[76]

Scholars who favored Irish parallels directly spoke out against pro-Scandinavian theories, citing them as unjustified. Wilhelm Grimm is noted to be the first person to link *Beowulf* with Irish folklore. Max Deutschbein, however, the first person to present the argument in academic form. He suggested the Irish *Feast of Bricriu* as a source for *Beowulf*—a theory that was soon denied by Oscar Olson. Swedish folklorist Carl Wilhelm Von Sydow argued against both Scandinavian translation and source material due to his theory that *Beowulf* is fundamentally Christian and written at a time when any Norse tale would have most likely been pagan.[76]

In the late 1920s, Heinzer Dehmer suggested *Beowulf* as contextually based in the folktale type "The Hand and the Child," due to the motif of the "monstrous arm"— a motif that distances *Grettis saga* and *Beowulf* and further aligns *Beowulf* with Irish parallelism. James Carney and Martin Puhvel also agree with this "Hand and the Child" contextualisation. Carney also ties *Beowulf* to Irish literature through the *Táin Bó Fráech* story. Puhvel supported the "Hand and the Child" theory through such motifs as "the more powerful giant mother, the mysterious light in the cave, the melting of the sword in blood, the phenomenon of battle rage, swimming prowess, combat with water monsters, underwater adventures, and the bear-hug style of wrestling."[76]

Attempts to find classical or Late Latin influence or analogue in *Beowulf* are almost exclusively linked with Homer's *Odyssey* or Virgil's *Aeneid*. In 1926, Albert S. Cook suggested a Homeric connection due to equivalent formulas, metonymies, and analogous voyages.[77] James A. Work's essay "Odyssean Influence on the *Beowulf*" also supported the Homeric influence. He stated that encounter between Beowulf and Unferth was parallel to the encounter between Odysseus and Euryalus in Books 7–8 of the *Odyssey* even to the point of them both giving the hero the same gift of a sword upon being proven wrong in their initial assessment of the hero's prowess. This theory of Homer's influence on *Beowulf* remained very prevalent in the 1920s, but started to die out in the following decade when a handful of critics stated that the two works were merely "comparative literature"[76] although Greek was known in contemporary England. Bede states that Theodore, a Greek, was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury in 668, and he taught Greek. Several English scholars and churchmen are described by Bede as being fluent in Greek due to being taught by him; Bede claims to be fluent in Greek himself.[78]

Friedrich Klaeber somewhat led the attempt to connect *Beowulf* and Virgil near the start of the 20th century, claiming that the very act of writing a secular epic in a Germanic world is contingent on Virgil. Virgil was seen as the pinnacle of Latin literature, and Latin was the dominant literary language of England at the time, therefore making Virgilian influence highly likely.[79] Similarly, in 1971, Alistair Campbell stated that the apologue technique used in *Beowulf* is so infrequent in the epic tradition aside from when Virgil uses it that the poet who composed *Beowulf* could not have written the poem in such a manner without first coming across Virgil's writings.[76]

Whether seen as a pagan work with "Christian colouring" added by scribes or as a "Christian historical novel, with selected bits of paganism deliberately laid on as 'local colour'," as Margaret E. Goldsmith did in 'The Christian Theme of *Beowulf*,'"[80] it cannot be denied that Biblical parallels occur in the text. *Beowulf* channels *Genesis*, *Exodus*, and *Daniel*[76] in its inclusion of references to God's creation of the universe, the story of Cain, Noah and the flood, devils or the Devil, Hell, and the Last Judgment.[80]

5.1 Dialect

The poem mixes the West Saxon and Anglian dialects of Old English, though it predominantly uses West Saxon, as do other Old English poems copied at the time.

There is a wide array of linguistic forms in the *Beowulf* manuscript. It is this fact that leads some scholars to believe that *Beowulf* has endured a long and complicated transmission through all the main dialect areas.[11] The poem retains a complicated mix of the following dialectical forms: Mercian, Northumbrian, Early West Saxon, Kentish and Late West Saxon.[11] Kiernan argues that it is virtually impossible that there could have been a process of transmission which could have sustained the complicated mix of forms from dialect to dialect, from generation to generation, and from scribe to scribe.[11]

Kiernan's argument against an early dating based on a mixture of forms is long and involved, but he concludes that the mixture of forms points to a comparatively straightforward history of the written text as:

> ...an 11th-century MS; an 11th-century Mercian poet using an archaic poetic dialect; and 11th-century standard literary dialect that contained early and late, cross-dialectical forms, and admitted spelling variations; and (perhaps) two 11th-century scribes following slightly different spelling practices.[11]

According to this view, *Beowulf* can largely be seen to be the product of antiquarian interests and that it tells readers more about "an 11th-century Anglo-Saxon's notions about Denmark, and its pre-history, than it does about the

age of Bede and a 7th- or 8th-century Anglo-Saxon's notions about his ancestors' homeland."[11] There are in *Beowulf* rather more than thirty-one hundred distinct words, and almost thirteen hundred occur exclusively, or almost exclusively, in this poem and in the other poetical texts. Considerably more than one-third of the total vocabulary is alien from ordinary prose use. There are in round numbers three hundred and sixty uncompounded verbs in *Beowulf*, and forty of them are poetical words in the sense that they are unrecorded or rare in the existing prose writings. One hundred and fifty more occur with the prefix *ge-* (reckoning a few found only in the past-participle), but of these one hundred occur also as simple verbs, and the prefix is employed to render a shade of meaning which was perfectly known and thoroughly familiar except in the latest Anglo-Saxon period. The nouns number sixteen hundred. Seven hundred of them, including those formed with prefixes, of which fifty (or considerably more than half) have *ge-*, are simple nouns. at the highest reckoning not more than one-fourth is absent in prose. That this is due in some degree to accident is clear from the character of the words, and from the fact that several reappear and are common after the Norman Conquest.[81]

6   Form and metre

An Old English poem such as *Beowulf* is very different from modern poetry. Anglo-Saxon poets typically used alliterative verse, a form of verse in which the first half of the line (the a-verse) is linked to the second half (the b-verse) through similarity in initial sound. In addition, the two halves are divided by a caesura: "Oft **Sc**yld **Sc**efing \\ **sc**eaþena þreatum" (l. 4). This verse form maps stressed and unstressed syllables onto abstract entities known as metrical positions. There is no fixed number of beats per line: the first one cited has three (Oft SCYLD SCEFING, with ictus on the suffix -ING) whereas the second has two (SCEAþena ÞREATum).

The poet has a choice of epithets or formulae to use in order to fulfill the alliteration. When speaking or reading Old English poetry, it is important to remember for alliterative purposes that many of the letters are not pronounced the same way as they are in modern English. The letter "h", for example, is always pronounced (Hroðgar: HROTH-gar), and the digraph "cg" is pronounced like "dj", as in the word "edge". Both f and s vary in pronunciation depending on their phonetic environment. Between vowels or voiced consonants, they are voiced, sounding like modern v and z, respectively. Otherwise they are unvoiced, like modern f in "fat" and s in "sat". Some letters which are no longer found in modern English, such as thorn, þ, and eth, ð – representing both pronunciations of modern English "th", as in "thing" and "this" – are used extensively both in the original manuscript and in modern English editions. The voicing of these characters echoes that of f and s. Both are voiced (as in "this") between

other voiced sounds: oðer, laþleas, suþern. Otherwise they are unvoiced (as in "thing"): þunor, suð, soþfæst.

Kennings are also a significant technique in *Beowulf*. They are evocative poetic descriptions of everyday things, often created to fill the alliterative requirements of the metre. For example, a poet might call the sea the "swan-road" or the "whale-road"; a king might be called a "ring-giver." There are many kennings in *Beowulf*, and the device is typical of much of classic poetry in Old English, which is heavily formulaic. The poem also makes extensive use of elided metaphors.[82]

J. R. R. Tolkien argued that the poem is an elegy.[2]

7   Interpretation and criticism

The history of modern *Beowulf* criticism is often said to begin with J. R. R. Tolkien,[83] author and Merton professor of Anglo-Saxon at Oxford University, who in his 1936 lecture to the British Academy criticised his contemporaries' excessive interest in its historical implications.[84] He noted in *Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics* that as a result the poem's literary value had been largely overlooked and argued that the poem "is in fact so interesting as poetry, in places poetry so powerful, that this quite overshadows the historical content..."[2]

In historical terms, the poem's characters would have been Norse pagans (the historical events of the poem took place before the Christianisation of Scandinavia), yet the poem was recorded by Christian Anglo-Saxons who had largely converted from their native Anglo-Saxon paganism around the 7th century – both Anglo-Saxon paganism and Norse paganism share a common origin as both are forms of Germanic paganism. *Beowulf* thus depicts a Germanic warrior society, in which the relationship between the lord of the region and those who served under him was of paramount importance.[85]

Stanley B. Greenfield has suggested that references to the human body throughout *Beowulf* emphasise the relative position of thanes to their lord. He argues that the term "shoulder-companion" could refer to both a physical arm as well as a thane (Aeschere) who was very valuable to his lord (Hrothgar). With Aeschere's death, Hrothgar turns to Beowulf as his new "arm."[86] In addition, Greenfield argues the foot is used for the opposite effect, only appearing four times in the poem. It is used in conjunction with Unferth (a man described by Beowulf as weak, traitorous, and cowardly). Greenfield notes that Unferth is described as "at the king's feet" (line 499). Unferth is also a member of the foot troops, who, throughout the story, do nothing and "generally serve as backdrops for more heroic action."[87]

At the same time, Richard North argues that the *Beowulf* poet interpreted "Danish myths in Christian form" (as the poem would have served as a form of entertainment for a Christian audience), and states: "As yet we are no closer

to finding out why the first audience of *Beowulf* liked to hear stories about people routinely classified as damned. This question is pressing, given... that Anglo-Saxons saw the Danes as 'heathens' rather than as foreigners."[88] Grendel's mother and Grendel are described as descendants of Cain, a fact which some scholars link to the Cain tradition.[89]

Other scholars disagree, however, as to the meaning and nature of the poem: is it a Christian work set in a Germanic pagan context? The question suggests that the conversion from the Germanic pagan beliefs to Christian ones was a very slow and gradual process over several centuries, and it remains unclear the ultimate nature of the poem's message in respect to religious belief at the time it was written. Robert F. Yeager notes the facts that form the basis for these questions:

> That the scribes of Cotton Vitellius A.XV were Christian is beyond doubt; and it is equally certain that Beowulf was composed in a Christianised England, since conversion took place in the sixth and seventh centuries. Yet the only Biblical references in Beowulf are to the Old Testament, and Christ is never mentioned. The poem is set in pagan times, and none of the characters is demonstrably Christian. In fact, when we are told what anyone in the poem believes, we learn that they are pagans. Beowulf's own beliefs are not expressed explicitly. He offers eloquent prayers to a higher power, addressing himself to the "Father Almighty" or the "Wielder of All." Were those the prayers of a pagan who used phrases the Christians subsequently appropriated? Or, did the poem's author intend to see Beowulf as a Christian Ur-hero, symbolically refulgent with Christian virtues?[90]

E. Talbot Donaldson claimed that it was probably composed more than twelve hundred years ago during the first half of the eighth century. Donaldson also believes the writer to be a native of what was then West Mercia, located in the Western Midlands of England. However, the late tenth-century manuscript "which alone preserves the poem" originated in the kingdom of the West Saxons – as it is more commonly known.[91] Donaldson wrote that "the poet who put the materials into their present form was a Christian and ... poem reflects a Christian tradition".[91]

8 Artistic adaptations

Main article: List of artistic depictions of Beowulf

9 See also

- List of Beowulf characters
- On Translating Beowulf

10 References

10.1 Notes

[1] "wíg" means "fight, battle, war, conflict"[18] and "láf" means "remnant, left-over"[19]

[2] That is, R.D. Fulk's 1992 *A History of Old English Meter*.

[3] For instance, by Chauncey Brewster Tinker in *The Translations of Beowulf*,[48] a comprehensive survey of 19th-century translations and editions of *Beowulf*.

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[6] Robinson 2001: 'Like most Old English poems, Beowulf has no title in the unique manuscript in which it survives (British Library, Cotton Vitellius A.xv, which was copied round the year 1000 AD), but modern scholars agree in naming it after the hero whose life is its subject'.

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[21] *Beowulf*, 757-765

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[24] 808-823

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- Quotations related to Beowulf at Wikiquote

- Full digital facsimile of the manuscript on the British Library's Digitised Manuscripts website

- Beowulf manuscript in The British Library's Online Gallery, with short summary and podcast

- Annotated List of Beowulf Translations: The List — Arizonal Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies

- online text (digitised from Elliott van Kirk Dobbie (ed.), *Beowulf and Judith*, Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records, 4 (New York, 1953))

- Beowulf introduction Article introducing various translations and adaptations of Beowulf

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