1: The migration of the Anglo-Saxon people into England (and bits of Wales and Scotland - 'England' at this point is a relatively vague term). Let's look at who was producing Old English texts, where they came from, and why that matters when we read these writings. How does migration history change language? Later we'll look at the influences of these cultures upon literature from this period, but for now it's important to understand the origins of social orders and religious context.

Excavation at Sutton Hoo, an Anglo Saxon burial ground and key resource of information about Anglo Saxon culture in England et al. See https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/sutton-hoo/features/a-brief-introduction-to-sutton-hoo-, and there's some good stuff on Wikipedia.

MIGRATION HISTORY

- The story goes that after the collapse of the Roman empire, the Romano-Brits asked for help fighting the (Scottish) Picts, and asked the Saxon mercenaries for help. Once they'd defeated the Picts (or in some versions, teamed up with them for better pay?), they turned around and defeated the Romano-Brits.

However, the more realistic version is:

- The departure of Roman forces (410) left Britain open to extensive raiding and the eventual conquest from Angles, Saxons, and Jutes in the 5th and 6th centuries, which pushed natives North-West
- The Anglo-Saxons converted to Christianity around the mid 7th century, under the influence of continental (so, European) missionaries
    - Eventually all of England and Wales becomes Xtian. But more on that later
- In the late 8th century (around 790s), Viking raids began
    - By the late 9th century (around 871), they control the whole NE half of England
- Around 878, Alfred the Great defeats the Vikings @ Edington, and they broker a rough peace. The country basically splits into 4:

    - And Alfreds descendants begin a process of reconquering Viking land, and developing a constitutional government
- In the late 10th century, Vikings start raiding again
    - Britain is now under the rule of Aethelred the Unready - so called because he was ‘unready’ for the Danish Viking conquests
    - A fun OE fact (and evidence of why the language is important and beneficial to study!), in OE, ‘*unræd’* translates to ‘ill advised’, so his nickname now has a double meaning.
        - (actually, it’s a triple meaning, because ‘Aethelred’ means ‘well advised’. It would be like nicknaming someone ‘Honor the Dishonorable’. Old English writers LOVED puns)
- After 30 years of raiding, war, and conquest, we get the Danish King Cnut of England, and his descendants rule until 1042 when English nobility elects Edward the Confessor
    - Edward bungles his succession and dies

    - We get the battle of hastings, the Norman conquests, and now we're into the period of Middle English
- Middle English develops because the Norman ruling elite are speaking French, but the peasant classes are still speaking English - although this language morphs under the influence of their new leaders.

<u>CULTURAL HISTORY! (per my history + english friend, Ruth)</u>

Christianity

- Anglo saxons received Xtianity from Rome, c.597, and it took a while to spread, but by the 8th century it really dominated
    - So you can assume stuff written in this period (the earliest written word is about 650, we think?) was written with a Christian influence
    - Writing came to England from Latinate Christianity, and only monks were trained to read and write
    - This means that even entirely secular poems (like Deor, or Widsith) are being written by a devoted Christian
        - These texts would have come from the oral tradition (which I'll touch on in a second!)
- Latinate Christianity was the origin, but it wasn't the only kind practised
    - There were lots of local influences but sources were reluctant to acknowledge them because they had less prestige than rome - however they were no less fundamental
        - Like, the art in the Lindisfarne gospels, or the warrior like descriptions of Christ in the 'dream of the rood' poem
- Just because Christianity was dominant, doesn't mean Anglo Saxon heroic culture was replaced overnight
    - Germanic heroic heritage was fundamental up until the conquests - see the Battle of Maldon poem

Heroism and the Hall

- Really the heroic hall was a 4th and 5th Century institution
- Ancient halls were the centre of civilisation
    - They would be ruled by a lord, who would have men loyal to him, and they would go out and conquer other halls
    - As a reward, the lords would share out their money to these men. In poetry you see references to 'gift halls' and 'gift lords' and sometimes even 'gold thrones', the chair from which the lords would dispense the conquered gold.
        - You can see lots of reminiscing about this in 'the Wanderer'
    - These halls would have had storytellers and lots of oral poetry; there's some evidence to suggest that these storytellers would travel? But this looks to be the origins of the 'pagan' poetry we read. Similar works can be found in old high German, which is a close cousin of Old English, and some Old Norse, from the

Danes later on. This is a period of lots of travel (often invasive!) and cultural exchange (or, theft!)

- So, the poetry harking back to this is really referring to ancestral traditions, which aren't necessarily the contemporary
    - But as you can see in Beowulf and at Sutton Hoo, the mechanics of this society remained important

2. Old English manuscripts and the circulation of literature. Understanding Old English manuscript/edition history is a big part of understanding how these texts were written. Although today we understand texts to be written and produced by a single author (perhaps with some input from an editor), before being marketed and sold. This is not the case for Old English texts! We're going to take the narrative poem 'The Dream of the Rood' as a case study, and then go on to discuss the surviving manuscripts

The Ruthwell Cross, in its custom built apse at Ruthwell parish. The website has some extra info on the cross that you can check out here: https://www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk/ruthwell/ruthwellcross/index.html

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THE DREAM OF THE ROOD

The Poem!

- DOTR basically retells the Easter story
- It's an interesting poem because there are 3 speakers, and they're sort of Russian Dolls
    - The poem begins with a speaker who wishes to tell us of a dream
    - In the dream, the cross which kills Christ laments and retells the story of his death
    - And in this story, we hear from Christ himself

Where can I find it?

- The Vercelli Book
- Ruthwell Cross
- Brussels Cross
- Palm Sunday homily

This frequency of appearance strongly indicates that this poem was popular: it was told a lot. *(Of course, so much Old English writing was lost to fires and raids that we can only see a small portion of it, and we broadly assume that the sample we have is representative.)*

The Ruthwell Cross

- Part of DOTR is inscribed on the ruthwell cross
    - Not just any part, but part where the Rood itself is speaking
    - This indicates that the person inscribing (or the person selecting the inscription) could read and also understood the text allegorically)
- We think the cross was used to proselytise: so, to convert and preach xtianity to the masses
    - The original cross was broken into pieces and has since been reconstructed. We can also use facsimiles (basically replicas?) to understand what the cross would have looked like and how it might have been used
    - The facsimiles help us understand how hard it is to read, which means that it's unlikely people were reading from it directly
    - There are also images and runes inscribed! We'll talk about runes next week

The Vercelli Manuscript

- This Book (or manuscript, or codex… more on that in a moment) is a collection of homilies, some of which date back to the 6th century
    - Homilies are, in this context, usually short poems which summarise or characterise a piece of scripture. We can think of them generally as forms of religious writing (and often, poetry)
- We're pretty sure the Vercelli book was from a private collection
    - It has a plain binding and pretty sparse ornamentation
    - So called because it was discovered in Vercelli, it looks like this book was written up and then taken to Vercilli for use in private prayer on some kind of pilgrimage or other educational journey to the Anglo Saxon Schola in Italy, a place were anglo-saxons journeyed to and stayed at for religious purposes.
- The version of DOTR in the Vercilli book/manuscript is viewed as the 'most complete' version, or often treated as the de facto version
    - It's really key to bear in mind it would not have been the definitive edition, but 1 version, likely selected either by a wealthy benefactor or monk, and copied out by a scribe, who may or may not have been able to read or understand the text

- The Vercelli book was made around the 10th century, much later than the Ruthwell cross, which is 8th C.
- They're also written in different dialects. The Ruthwell Cross is Northumbrian, and we *think* the Vercelli Book was written somewhere around Canterbury, which would make it Wessexian.
    - This doesn't substantially change the vocabulary, but it does change the spellings of things
    - It's worth thinking about these texts as, if not living things, then distinctly mutable, collectively owned things

MANUSCRIPTS

There are 4 surviving codexes of Old English:

- The Vercelli Book (homiletic poetry)
- The Junius manuscript (4 long religious poems, Genesis, Exodus, Daniel, Christ & Satan)
- Exeter Book (book of riddles)
- Beowulf manuscript (beast fables)

The fact that these books are organised is really significant, and tells us about the way they were being used - like the collection of homilies in the Vercelli book which bolsters our notions of its use for private religious study.

NB: The British Museum recently exhibited all four manuscripts as part of a once-in-a-lifetime exhibit. You can get more info here:
https://blogs.bl.uk/digitisedmanuscripts/2018/10/anglo-saxon-kingdoms-a-once-in-a-generation-exhibition.html

COMPOSITION/AUTHORSHIP

These manuscripts can inform us of the ways these texts were composed

- We don't tend to describe old english poetry as having been written, because we consider the earliest texts to be transcribed from the oral tradition, and it's thought that most of the texts we read would have been composed orally at least partially
- We tend to refer to this as the oral tradition
    - NB: 'oral' refers to things which are spoken, and 'aural' refers to things which are heard

Because of this, we don't really think about 'authors' -- we don't really know the process through which these texts were created

- That being said, we know of writers like the Venerable Bede (he has a good wikipedia page), who was a historian alive around the 8th century. His writing is usually (if not always?) in Latin; most famously the Ecclesiastical History of the English People

- Although literature in this period isn't generally attributed to individuals, there are a couple of instances in which an individual called 'Cynewulf' leaves his name in his works, with a runic signature/riddle
    - But! We don't know who Cynewulf is
    - I've put an appendix to this document with one of the runic riddle signatures and a full translation if you're interested! See **Appendix one**

3. The mechanics and structure of Old English poetry and prose. Taking Beowulf as a case study, let's investigate the nuts and bolts of how Old English literature works. Old English poetry works on a completely different rulebook to modern English, in terms of how it's written, and laid out, and read.

This website archives the handwritings of scribes from the Middle English period, which is later than the Beowulf period but runs on the same principles! You can check it out here: https://www.medievalscribes.com/

Overview:

- Beowulf was written by two scribes
  - Scribe A did lines 1-1939
  - Scribe B did lines 1939-3182
  - We know this from snazzy handwriting analysis
  - A uses a more modern hand than B
    - In isolation we probably would have dated B to be before A?
    - But some of A's mistakes are corrected by B
    - Kiernon uses this to suggest that B was a more experienced/senior scribe
      - Which could also explain the old fashioned handwriting
  - There are indicators that Beowulf was originally written in a range of different dialects
  - The scribes made a lot of copying errors:
    - Translitteratio or metacharakterismos
    - When the scribe confuses individual letters/forms
    - Dittography
      - "The copying of two letters or forms for one"
      - The word '*hilde'* is repeated at the bottom of 151r and the top of 151v
    - Metathesis

        - The transposition of letters or forms, basically mixing letters up
            - St preters instead of st peter's
    - Haplography
        - Copying one letter/form for two
    - Homeoteleuton
        - "Eye skip" with repeated elements
            - Often in or at the end of words
    - The poet is careful to indicate who is giving a speech
    - And only muddles it on four occasions
- The poem isn't reproduced in lots of places, unlike DOTR, *but* we see fragments of it in the 'Letter of Alexander to Aristotle'
    - Both of these texts use the word *þeodcyning*
        - We'll talk about alphabet and vocab in a moment
- All modern editions of Beowulf have undergone editing (as have all modern editions of old english)
    - As well as the edits to the alphabet, there's questions of punctuation, spacing: the way we read now is completely different.
    - I'll put a side-by-side of 'The Wanderer' at the end
    - That leaves me to the other thing to talk about, which is poetic metre and line spacing

ALPHABET

- Old English was written with the same latin alphabet we use today, but with some modifications for additional sounds
- These letters are:
    - Ash æ (pronounced like the 'a' in 'cat')
    - Thorn þ (capital: Þ)
    - Eth ð (capital: Ð)
    - And then we have some extra details, like the 'wynn' letter used for 'w' (which looks like this: ƿ
- This is a good way of thinking about Old English honestly, that it took pre-existing traditions, and shared and modified them to suit the needs of language/culture/communication

VOCABULARY

- Old English uses a lot of compound words, and is notable for its use of kennings
    - Kennings are compound words which pun or allegorise what they describe
    - Eg: Grendel is described as 'hall-watcher', 'corpse-maker', 'shadow-stalker', 'hall-brute'
    - Other examples of (frankly more exciting) kennings are:
        - Bone-house (banhus) : human body
        - Wave-floater (wægflota) : ship
        - Whale-road (hwælweg) : sea/ocean

- The point of these words is to create complexity, which is one of the linguistic objectives of poetry from this period
    - Some kennings appear only once across the extant corpus of old english
    - We call these words hapax legomena (which is the plural of hapax legomenon)
    - Remember we only have a tiny bit of old english texts that survived raids/fires/destruction

METRE:

- Old english poetry isn't really fussed by rhyming
- Through a lot of analysis, we're pretty sure that Old English is structured according to metre and stresses
    - We think of poems as being split into lines and half lines
    - Each half line will conform to a metrical type, with two stressed syllables and two unstressed syllables
    - The two half lines will be connected through alliteration
- Metrical analysis is a huge part of the literary analysis we perform
    - We look at the popularity of the metrical type used, the variety of types being employed, places where the types are disregarded (*hypermetric lines*)
    - We also analyse where the rules of alliteration are followed, where alliteration is continued across multiple lines, and where the alliteration is excessive (and breaks the rules)
    - However, original manuscripts give no indication of the metrical types and alliterative structure; this is a modern imposition, just like the inclusion of punctuation.
- If you're interested in this, here is a really good link to read further into metres and alliteration:
    - http://people.uleth.ca/~daniel.odonnell/Tutorials/old-english-metre-a-brief-guide
    - But this is only meant to be a lightweight taster guide so I thought we'd keep it brief!
    - I've also included a copy of a manuscript page, then a printed edition, then a translation to compare different editorial styles and rules. See **Appendix two!**

4. Early Middle English. Let's take a broad look at the shift in language and culture coming into the Norman Period. We'll look at generic changes, religious intention, and the difference between the prose text 'Ancrene Wisse' and the poetic 'Sir Gawain' (which has recently been made into a film?!)

There are loads of links in this section to academic resources, so this is a link to a 'Green Knight' movie press release:
https://hnentertainment.co/arthurian-fantasy-film-the-green-knight-set-to-debut-at-the-sxsw-film-festival-this-month/

Remember, Middle English is marked by the Norman conquests and some significant language shifts as the ruling classes introduced Old French into the language.

OVERVIEW:

- Shift from feudal loyalty to courtly love in Christian writing
- Genre of romance
- End rhyme and alliteration

SIR GAWAIN AND THE GREEN KNIGHT (*Sir Gawayn and þe Grene Kny3t*)

- Plot summary
    - One of the most famous Arthurian stories, in which Sir Gawain is basically tested for his prowess: he goes to fight the green knight not because he has to, but

because of a promise he makes, and the content of the fight is really in the preemptive game Gawain ends up playing with the knight's wife

- Why is this different to beowulf? Both are knights/soldiers, confronted by a monster, who they seek out to the monster in its own environment after an initial battle
    - Well, Beowulf is all about heroism: being the strongest and most impressive warrior
    - Gawain is all about proving his worth and his *chivalry*: basically his status as a member of extremely elite society
- Gawain is good to talk about because it isn't a completely new story: it takes lots of older aspects of folk stories, like the beheading game Bertnoth plays, but it recontextualises them
- Romance
    - Romance in this context doesn't mean the courtship/wooing of a woman by a man.
    - Chivalric romance takes knightly characters and sends them on quests to prove their worth
- Language
    - Gawain is written in verse: this is a good opportunity to think on the linguistic shift we get see in this period
    - Old English verse doesn't rhyme; its emphasis is on metre which is complimented by an alliterative method that's governed by quite strict rules
    - Middle English verse, as seen here, is highly alliterative, and employs end rhyme and end rhyming schemes
    - There are still half-lines with caesuras to separate them, like we discussed last week, but now the careful application of rules (as ever, to varying degrees) really governs the ends of each line

ANCRENE WISSE (Ancrene Riwle -> Anchoress Rule)

- The Ancrene Wisse was an anonymous manual, written for Anchoresses somewhere around the 13th century
    - An anchoress was a female religious hermit: she would lock herself away from the whole world to devote herself entirely to God. Julian of Norwich is a high profile example of an anchorite
- There are 8 parts to the Ancrene Wisse, governing both the 'exterior' and 'interior' lives of an Anchoress: from how they live to how they should think
    - The ancrene wisse is written in prose, and was written for a private audience, so we don't get the same look at ornate language, but a very functional comparison to earlier writing and language differences: you'd need a glossary and some grammar tables to translate old english, but you can more or less read through the Ancrene wisse with a short vocab list and by sounding words out/squinting really hard
- The part that's really popular/fun is chapter 7, which tells the anchoresses what role love should take in their life

    - The Ancrene Wisse employs the metaphor of the ‘Christ-knight’, where Jesus takes the role of a chivalric knight, trying to win the favours of the woman he is wooing (i.e., all of mankind?!)
    - There’s lots here about sort of misogyny, and symbolisms of femininity, and the madonna/whore paradox, but the overriding importance of this is the shift from presenting Christ as a heroic figure to a chivalric one, and what that means for his conduct
    - The emphasis goes from how strong and superior he is, to how noble and deserving he is, and there’s also some work on the passions of christ and the ‘he suffered for us’ narrative, more or less working as a guilt trip here

Middle English is a really complex genre, with much more to it than just ‘heroism became chivalry’, and ‘metre became end rhyme’, but it’s difficult to dive into without opening a huge can of worms. If you want places to look further, check out these different aspects that I couldn’t explain well or in good detail

- The loathly lady trope
    - https://www.shmoop.com/study-guides/literature/the-wife-of-baths-tale/the-loathly-lady-the-hag (a good overview in the context of the canterbury tales)
    - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Wedding_of_Sir_Gawain_and_Dame_Ragnelle (a different example of a loathly lady, plus an arthurian legend!)
    - https://dc.ewu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1122&context=theses (an academic paper on loathly ladies)
- Beast/fable poetry
    - I’ll put an appendix to the Oxford Reference entry underneath for this, because it needs a login that you won’t have and it’s a much better overview than I could give you. See **Appendix three**
    - https://www.academia.edu/2625880/Talking_animals_medieval_Latin_beast_poetry_750-1150 (there’s a whole book on beast fable you could dip into here)
- Lyric poetry
    - https://chaucer.fas.harvard.edu/lyric-poetry (harvard have a really nice, succinct wiki on lyric poetry and what it’s about)
    - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_English_Lyric (wikipedia gives you a fairly reliable, longer run at this from a more historical angle)
    - http://www.luminarium.org/medlit/lyrics.htm (and here you have a digital anthology of poetry)
- Arthurian legend
    - https://www.britannica.com/topic/Arthurian-legend (this gives a nice overview of how arthurian legend worked)
    - The main thing to know with arthurian poetry is that it was written by lots of people, and to get around the mechanics of this, the poems/stories all tend to end by ‘resetting’ to their original environment, killing off any new characters and re-establishing the status quo

- There's a big anthology of this kind of poetry here: http://www.zendonaldson.com/twilight/camelot/poetry/alpha_index.htm

APPENDIX ONE

Fates of the apostles - signature translation
https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/poems/54752/runic-signature-for-cynewulfs-fates-of-the-apostles

ᚳ - C - TORCH
ᚣ - Y - THE BOW
ᚾ - N - NEED
ᛖ - E - THE HORSE
ᚹ - W - JOY
ᚢ - U - BISON
ᛚ - L - WATERS
ᚠ - F - WEALTH

Nu ic þonne bidde / beorn se ðe lufige
Now I then bid / the man that loves
Now then I ask the one who loves

þysses giddes / begang þæt he geomrum me
This poem / extent that he sorrowful me
the course of this poem that … for sorrowful me

þone halgan / heap helpe bidde,
the one / holy help asks
[he] ask the holy band for help

friðes ond fultomes. / Hu, ic freonda beþearf
Peace and help / Indeed, I friend need
for protection and support. How, I shall need friends

liðra on lade, / þonne ic sceal langne ham,
Gracious on the journey / Then I shall long home
on the journey, when the far home

eardwic uncuð, / ana gesecan,
Miserable strange / alone seek
unknown dwelling, I must seek alone

lætan me on laste lic, / eorðan dæl,
allow/consider me on last body / earth portion
and leave behind me the body – the portion of earth,

wælreaf wunigean / weormum to hroðre.
Death-clothes? remain / worms to benefit
the slaughter-spoil – to remain as a benefit to worms

Her mæg findan / foreþances gleaw,
Here may find / forethought wise
Here may one wise of forethought

se ðe hine lysteð / leoðgiddunga
he who pleases / poem-song
who takes pleasure in verse

hwa þas fitte fegde. / ᚠ þær on ende standeþ
Who this song composed. / F there on end stands
find who composed this song. (F) (wealth) stands at the end

eorlas þæs on eorðan brucaþ. / Ne moton hie awa ætsomne,
Men this on earth enjoy. May not they always together
men enjoy this on earth. They may not always be together,

woruldwunigende; / ᚹ sceal gedreosan,
Earth-dwellers. Joy must perish
earth-dwellers. (W) (joy) must perish,

ᚢ on eðle, / æfter tohreosan
Bison on the land / after battle-decay?
(U) (bison) on the earth afterward must decay,

læne lices frætewa, / efne swa ᛚ toglideð.
Temporary body adornments / just as L vanishes
the fleeting adornment of the body, just as (L) (the sea) vanishes.

Þonne ᚳ ond ᛉ / cræftes neosað
Then C and Y / of skills seek out
Then (C) (torch) and (Y) (bow) make use of skill

nihtes nearowe, / on him .N. ligeð,
In night's confinement / in him N lies
in him (N) (necessity) lies,

cyninges þeodom
The king's nation
the thralldom of the King.

Elene signature translation

Ic þæs wuldres treowes
Not once but often

oft, nales æne, hæfde ingemynd
Often, not once, have in mind
have I remembered that Tree of Glory

ær ic þæt wundor onwrigen hæfde
Before I that wonder had uncovered
before I uncovered

ymb þone beorhtan beam, swa ic on bocum fand,
About that bright beam, which I in books found
the miracle of the bright cross, as I found it in books

wyrda gangum, on gewritum cyðan
Fate flows, in writing reveal
in the course of events, known in writings

be ðam sigebeacne. A wæs secg oð ðæt
About that glory-beam. Man was before that
about that Beacon of Victory. Until then man was always

cnyssed cearwelmum, ᚳ drusende,
Crushed by a surge of sorrow, C
tossed about by the surge of grief, a sinking torch (C)

þeah he in medohealle maðmas þege,
Nevertheless he in meadhall treasure received
even though he received treasures in the mead-hall,

æplede gold. ᚴ gnornode
Appled gold. (Y) The bow grieved
appled gold. The bow (Y) grieved

ᚾ gefera, nearusorge dreah,
(N) needful companion, endure sorrow-confinement
for his needful (N) companion, enduring its close affliction

enge rune, þær him ᛗ fore
Something (narrow?) rune, there his horse (E) before him
a narrow secret, where before him his horse (E)

milpaðas mæt, modig þrægde
Paths meet, the proud ran
measured the mile-paths—the proud ran

wirum gewlenced. ᚹ is geswiðrad,
Wires adorned(?). Joy (W) is vanished
adorned with wires. Joy (W) is diminished,

gomen æfter gearum, geogoð is gecyrred,
Pleasure after year, youth is turned back
delight after the years—youth is transformed,

ald onmedla. ᚢ wæs geara
Old pride/arrogance. Youth (U) was formerly
the olden pomp. The radiance of youth was formerly ours (U).

geogoðhades glæm. Nu synt geardagas
Radiance of youth. Now be former days
Now are the year-days departed forth

æfter fyrstmearce forð gewitene,
After time-mark / forth depart
after the appointed time, life-joys departed,

lifwynne geliden, swa ᛚ toglideð,
Life-joys travel, as (L) waters vanished
just as the waters (L) have fled,

flodas gefysde. ᚠ æghwam bið
Floods drive away. Wealth is but
loods driven onwards. Wealth (F) is but for all

læne under lyfte; landes frætwe
Loaned under the sky; lands treasure
under the breeze, the ornaments of this land are

gewitaþ under wolcnum winde geliccost,
Depart under the sky very-like(?) wind
departed under the heavens very much like the wind,

þonne he for hæleðum hlud astigeð,
Then he for warriors loud arise
when it rises loudly before men

wæðeð be wolcnum, wedende færeð
Walks by the sky, raging in travel
when it stalks along the clouds, raging as it goes

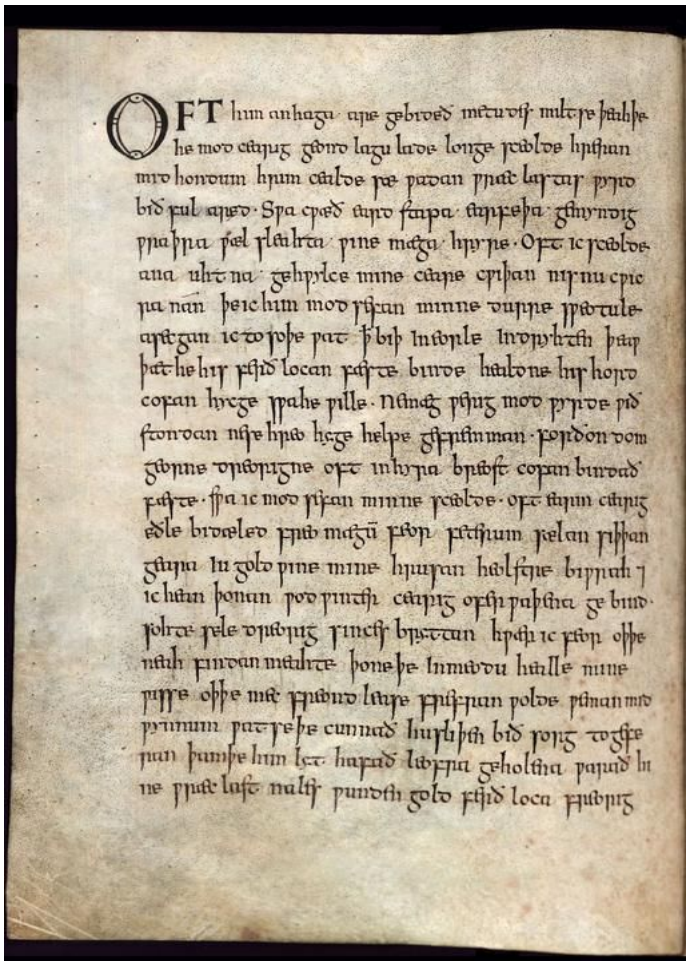
ond eft semninga swige gewyrðeð,
And again/after suddenly silent
and suddenly—silence, closely constrained

in nedcleofan nearwe geheaðrod,
In prison/chamber confinement battle-rod
in its prison again,

þream forþrycced.
Lol no idea sorry future sooze
by threats trodden under foot.

Not once but often have I remembered that Tree of Glory
before I uncovered the miracle of the bright cross,
as I found it in books, in the course of events, known in writings
about that Beacon of Victory. Until then man was always
tossed about by the surge of grief, a sinking torch (C)
even though he received treasures in the mead-hall, appled gold.
The bow (Y) grieved for his needful (N) companion,
enduring its close affliction, a narrow secret,
where before him his horse (E) measured the mile-paths—
the proud ran adorned with wires.
Joy (W) is diminished, delight after the years—youth is transformed,
the olden pomp. The radiance of youth was formerly ours (U).
Now are the year-days departed forth, after the appointed time,
life-joys departed, just as the waters (L) have fled,
floods driven onwards. Wealth (F) is but loaned for all
under the breeze, the ornaments of this land are
departed under the heavens very much like the wind,
when it rises loudly before men, when it stalks along the clouds,
raging as it goes and suddenly—silence, closely constrained
in its prison again, by threats trodden under foot. (1251b-76)

APPENDIX TWO



Oft him anhaga are gebideð,

metudes miltse, þeah þe he modcearig

geond lagulade longe sceolde

4 hreran mid hondum hrimcealde sæ

wadan wræclastas. Wyrd bið ful aræd!

Swa cwæð eardstapa, earfeþa gemyndig,

wraþra wælsleahta, winemæga hryre:

Oft ic sceolde ana uhtna gehwylce
mine ceare cwiþan. Nis nu cwicra nan
þe ic him modsefan minne durre
sweotule asecgan. Ic to soþe wat
þæt biþ in eorle indryhten þeaw,
þæt he his ferðlocan fæste binde,
healde his hordcofan, hycge swa he wille.
Ne mæg werig mod wyrde wiðstondan,
ne se hreo hyge helpe gefremman.
Forðon domgeorne dreorigne oft
in hyra breostcofan bindað fæste;
swa ic modsefan minne sceolde,
oft earmcearig, eðle bidæled,
freomægum feor feterum sælan,
siþþan geara iu goldwine minne
hrusan heolstre biwrah, ond ic hean þonan
wod wintercearig ofer waþema gebind,
sohte seledreorig sinces bryttan,
hwær ic feor oþþe neah findan meahte
þone þe in meoduhealle mine wisse,
oþþe mec freondleasne frefran wolde,
wenian mid wynnum. Wat se þe cunnað
hu sliþen bið sorg to geferan
þam þe him lyt hafað leofra geholena:
warað hine wræclast, nales wunden gold,

ferðloca freorig,

“Often the lone-dweller awaits his own favor,

the Measurer’s mercy, though he must,

mind-caring, throughout the ocean’s way

stir the rime-chilled sea with his hands

for a long while, tread the tracks of exile—

the way of the world is ever an open book.” (1-5)

So spoke the earth-stepper, mindful of miseries,

slaughter of the wrathful, crumbling of kinsmen: (6-7)

“Often alone, every daybreak, I must

bewail my cares. There is now no one living

to whom I dare articulate my mind’s grasp.

I know as truth that it is a noble custom

for a man to enchain his spirit’s close,

to hold his hoarded coffer, think what he will. (8-14)

“Nor can the weary mind withstand these outcomes,

nor can a troubled heart effect itself help.

Therefore those eager for glory will often

secure a sorrowing mind in their breast-coffer —

just as I must fasten in fetters my heart’s ken,

often wretched, deprived of my homeland,

far from freeborn kindred, since years ago

I gathered my gold-friend in earthen gloom,

and went forth from there abjected,

winter-anxious over the binding of waves,

hall-wretched, seeking a dispenser of treasure,

where I, far or near, could find him who

in the mead-hall might know of my kind,

or who wishes to comfort a friendless me,

accustomed as he is to joys. (15-29a)

“The experienced one knows how cruel

sorrow is as companion,

he who has few adored protectors—

the paths of the exile claim him,

not wound gold at all—

APPENDIX THREE

The medieval tradition of the beast fable has its roots in classical antiquity, and since the time of Herodotus at least (*Histories* 2/134), it has been associated with the name of Aesop, although no fables written by him survive. Beast epic, in contrast, is a purely medieval creation, originating in the 11th–12th centuries.

The two *genres differ in form and mood. Whereas a beast fable is characteristically brief and simple in style, a beast epic is long and rhetorically elaborate; the fable is preceded or followed by a serious moral, based on the behaviour of the *animals in the narrative, while in the beast epic moral reflections are voiced by the animals themselves, and are the subject of comedy. Both genres can be given topical significance: fables were often used to make a point about a particular historical situation, while satire plays a large part in the medieval Latin beast *epic.

1. Beast fable

The oldest surviving fable collection is by the Latin author Phaedrus (first half of the 1st century ad). The collection by the Greek author Babrius, which has some indirect links with the medieval tradition, is assigned to various dates but none earlier than the late 1st century. The collection of 42 Latin fables by Avianus (*c*.400), which largely derives from Babrius, was widely used as a school text throughout the MA. The difficult verse form used by Phaedrus (iambic senarii) was less suitable for Latin beginners than the elegiacs of Avianus; probably for this reason Phaedrus' fables were recast into prose, in a collection known as the *Romulus vulgaris*, supposedly translated from Aesop's Greek by one 'Romulus'. Its date is uncertain, but the oldest surviving MS is from the 9th century. The *didactic function of beast fables led to further revisions and adaptations, such as the fables of *Adhemar of Chabannes. Probably in the late 12th century, the Romulan fables were turned into elegiac verse, and this version outdid all others in popularity for the rest of the MA. The elegiac *Romulus* (ascribed by Hervieux, on quite inadequate grounds, to a

certain ‘Walter the Englishman’) survives in nearly 200 MSS, and from the 13th to the 15th centuries this is what any educated person is most likely to have thought of as ‘Aesop’.

At about the same time there appeared the earliest vernacular fable collection, written in Anglo-Norman, by *Marie de France. Its principal source is the *Romulus Nilantii*, but it also draws on the *Romulus vulgaris*, beast epic, eastern tales, and (perhaps) *folklore. Marie’s collection was itself turned back into Latin (the so-called *Romulus* ‘LBG’), and served as a source for the Hebrew *Fox Fables* by Berechiah ha-Nakdan. Other medieval French fable collections (*Isopets*) were based on the elegiac *Romulus*, the *Novus Aesopus* of *Alexander Neckam, or Avianus (*Avionnet*). The Romulan tradition also stimulated fable collections in German (for example, Gerhard von *Minden’s ‘Wolfenbüttel Aesop’ and Ulrich *Boner’s *Edelstein*, the ‘Magdeburg Aesop’) and in Italian.

2. Kalila and Dimna

One of the most unusual Latin fable collections is the *Novus Aesopus* written by an Italian named Baldo (*c.*1200). Despite its title, this is not an Aesopic collection, but a verse rendering of some of the moralizing animal stories found in the vast oriental tale collection that exists in many languages and is known variously as *Kalila and Dimna*, the *Panchatantra*, or *The Fables of Bidpai*. This work has a complex narrative structure, with stories embedded within other stories, and it also anthropomorphizes the animals more fully than Aesopic fables do; Baldo adapted the stories to the Aesopic model by splitting them into individual units and providing each with a separate moral. The Hebrew version of *Kalila and Dimna* was translated into Latin by John of Capua as the *Directorium humanae vitae* (*c.*1270); a later version (*c.*1313) by Raymond of *Béziers is a plagiarization of John’s work.

3. Beast epic

The earliest representative of beast epic is the **Ecbasis captivi* (11th century), written in Latin hexameters. It is the story of a calf (representative of the monk-author), who runs away from home, falls into the hands of a wolf, and is eventually rescued by the rest of the herd, under the leadership of the fox.

Inset into this narrative is the tale of the ‘sick lion’, which tells how the fox convinced the lion that he could be cured only by being wrapped in the skin of a newly flayed wolf. This story also forms the core of the *_Ysengrimus_* (1148–50), a full-scale epic of over 6,500 Latin elegiacs, which is the first work to name the wolf and fox ‘Ysengrimus’ and ‘Reinardus’, respectively, and to structure its narrative on the basis of their repeated attempts to outwit each other. The ‘sick lion’ story is found as an anonymous independent poem, datable to the *Carolingian period (‘Aegrum fama fuit’), but its ultimate origins are obscure. Similarly, the cock-and-fox story (ultimately to become *Chaucer’s ‘Nun’s Priest’s Tale’) does not appear in Phaedrus, but it has a precursor in *Alcuin’s *De gallo*, and also appears as a long independent poem probably composed in the 11th century (*Gallus et vulpes*), before forming an episode of *Ysengrimus*. Other episodes of *Ysengrimus* are reworkings of Aesopic fable; the motif of the fox’s ‘sham death’ is borrowed from the *bestiary. Another Latin beast epic, the *Speculum stultorum* (1180×90) of *Nigel Longchamp, breaks away from the fox-and-wolf model; it relates the adventures of the ass ‘Burnellus’ in search of a longer tail.

The *Ysengrimus* heralded an explosion of vernacular beast epics, beginning in the late 12th century with the earliest branches (II–Va) of the **Roman de Renart*, closely followed by the MHG *Reinhart Fuchs*. Over the next 300 years, Reynardian poems proliferated: in Flemish, *Van den Vos Reinaerde* and its later adaptation, *Reinaerts Historie*; in French, Jacquemart Gielée’s *Renart le Nouvel*, the *Couronnement de Renart*, and *Renart le Contrefait*; in Franco-Italian, *Rainaldo e Lesengrino*; and, in Low German, *Reinke de Vos*.

4. Sermons and later developments

Meanwhile, the role of fables was extended through their use as *sermon *exempla. In the early 13th century, the English cleric Odo of Cheriton compiled a fable collection for use in *preaching (translated into French, and also into Spanish as the *Libro de los gatos*). Odo’s collection included material from the bestiary and from the Reynardian tradition. The *Fables* of the 15th-century Scots writer Robert *Henryson similarly mixed Reynardian and Aesopic material.

With the age of *print, both beast fable and beast epic took on a new lease of life. In 1476/7 (Ulm edition) there appeared the huge collection of Latin fables (with German translations) assembled by Heinrich Steinhöwel, which included a *Life of Aesop*, the *Romulus vulgaris*, the elegiac *Romulus*, seventeen fables of uncertain source (the *extravagantes antiquae*), another seventeen translated from Greek, and selections of fables from Avianus, from the *Disciplina clericalis* of *Petrus Alfonsi, and from the *Facetiae* of Poggio *Bracciolini. Julien Macho's French translation of Steinhöwel's work was the source of *Caxton's *Aesop*, printed in 1484. Already in 1481, Caxton had published *The History of Reynard the Fox*, his translation of the prose version of *Reinaerts Historie* printed by Gerard Leeu in 1479.