

## Week 1 Seminar

1. Download Peter Baker's Magic Sheet from <http://faculty.virginia.edu/OldEnglish/courses/handouts/magic.pdf>.
2. If you've learned Old Icelandic with me this will look seriously familiar; likewise if you've learned languages like Latin there will be little here to scare you; for many of you, though, this will just look like a painting by Piet Mondrian. I'd like to be confident that we're all singing off the same sheet (ha ha), so I'd appreciate it if everyone would attend the youtube tour of the Magic Sheet linked from [http://www.alarichall.org.uk/teaching/oe\\_texts.php](http://www.alarichall.org.uk/teaching/oe_texts.php). Thanks!
3. I'm keen that people should meet Old English pretty early on, so download the text of *Beowulf*, lines 210-28, from [http://www.alarichall.org.uk/teaching/oe\\_texts.php](http://www.alarichall.org.uk/teaching/oe_texts.php) (one or two of you have already seen this--hope you don't mind), and listen to the sound file there if you think it'll be helpful.

Do your best to translate it into modern English. This is not because I'm expecting you just to arrive on this course knowing Old English, but just to give us a basis of experience from which to work in class: don't worry if you

get stuck somewhere, that's okay, just move on to the next bit. I've deliberately chosen this passage because it's mostly pretty intuitive for modern English speakers, so don't stress heavily over it.

*This translation may not be submitted for assessment.*

4. The background and interests of people on this module are pretty diverse, and the wider reading I set is intended to accommodate that. But for the first class, I'd appreciate it if everyone could read Patrick Wormald, 'Anglo-Saxon Society and its Literature', in *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature*, ed. by Malcolm Godden and Michael Lapidge (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), available online via <http://lib.leeds.ac.uk/record=b2897902> and under 'learning resources' in the VLE, and, if you can access it, any one other chapter of the book that you think will be interesting! The content of Wormald's chapter will be familiar to some of you and new to others, but again I'd just like to know we all have some common ground.

## Week 2 seminar

Do your best to translate the following (*The Dream of the Rood* lines 39-50) into good, modern English. NB I've glossed 39-56 below, but you only need to actually do 39-50.

The difficulty of this piece picks up from last week in three ways:

- the grammar is trickier
- the glossary doesn't include words on the Magic Sheet (mainly pronouns and the verb 'to be')
- words are given in the glossary in their dictionary forms: nominative singular for nouns and adjectives, infinitive for verbs. This is helpful

in the long run but may be a bit surprising at first.

You'll get stuck on some bits: it's important to learn to put these to one side and move on. Sleeping on a problem often really helps. You can refer to other translations if that's helpful, but make sure that the translation you submit to Alaric is entirely in your own words; if you do refer to translations while working on the piece, list them in a bibliographical note at the end. The aim of your translation is to show, as clearly as possible, your understanding of the original, not to produce a piece with literary merit!

*This translation may not be submitted for assessment.*

40	<p>Ongyrede hine þá geong hæleð, (þæt wæs God ælmihtig),                  strang ond stíðmód. Gestáh hé on gealgan héanne,                  módig on manigra gesyhðe, þá hé wolde mancyn lýsan.                  Bifode ic þá mé se beorn ymbclypte. Ne dorste ic hwæðre búgan tó eorðan,</p>	<p><i>on-gyrwan</i> wk 'strip'; <i>hine</i> a Magic Sheet word, but here meaning 'himself'; <i>þá</i> 'then/when'; <i>geong</i> 'young'; <i>hæleþ</i> m 'man, warrior'; <i>God</i> m. 'God'; <i>ælmihtig</i> 'all-powerful'; <i>strang</i> 'strong'; <i>stíþ-mód</i> 'stern-hearted'; <i>ge-stígan</i> str 'mount, ascend'; <i>gealga</i> m 'gallows'; <i>héah</i> 'high'; <i>módig</i> 'brave'; <i>manig</i> 'many'; <i>ge-syhþ</i> f 'sight'; <i>þá</i> 'then/when'; <i>willan</i> irregular 'want'; <i>man-cyn</i> n. 'humankind'; <i>lýsan</i> wk 'release'; <i>bifian</i> wk 'shake'; <i>beorn</i> m 'man'; <i>ymb-clyppan</i> wk 'embrace'; <i>ne</i> negative particle, 'not'; <i>durran</i> irregular 'dare'; <i>hwæðre</i> 'however'; <i>búgan</i> str 'bend</p>
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<p>45</p> <p>50</p> <p>55</p>	<p>feallan tó foldan scéatum, ac ic sceolde fæste standan.</p> <p>Ród wæs ic áræred. Áhóf ic rícne cyning,</p> <p>heofona hláford, hylðan mé ne dorste.</p> <p>Purhðrifan hí mé mid deorcan næglum. On mé syndon þá dolg gesíene,</p> <p>opene inwidhlemmas. Ne dorste ic hira áenigum sceððan.</p> <p>Bysmeredon hie unc bûtú ætgædere. Eall ic wæs mid blóde bestémed,</p> <p>begoten of þæs guman sídan, siððan hé hæfde his gást onsended.</p> <p>Feala ic on þám beorge gebiden hæbbe</p> <p>wráðra wyrða. Geseah ic weruda god</p> <p>pearle þenian. bystro hæfdon</p> <p>bewrigen mid wolcnum wealdendes hræw,</p> <p>scírne scíman, sceadu forð éode,</p> <p>wann under wolcnum. Wéop eal gesceaft,</p> <p>cwíðdon cyninges fyll. Críst wæs on róde.</p>	<p>(down)'; tó 'to'; eorðe f 'earth'; feallan str 'fall'; folde f. 'ground'; scéat m 'surface'; ac 'but'; sculan irregular 'have to'; fæste 'firmly'; standan str 'stand';</p> <p>ród f 'cross'; á-ræran wk 'raise up'; á-hebban str 'raise up'; rice 'powerful'; cyning m 'king';</p> <p>heofon m 'heaven, sky'; hláford m 'lord'; hylðan wk 'bend'; mé a Magic Sheet word, but here meaning 'myself';</p> <p>purh-ðrifan str 'drive through, pierce' (here purhðrifan is for purhðrifon); hí = hie; mid 'with'; deorc 'dark' (here deorcan is for deorcum); nægl m 'nail'; syndon = sindon; dolg n 'wound, scar'; ge-sýne 'visible'; open 'open, clear'; inwid-hlemm m 'malicious wound'; áenig 'any'; sceððan str 'injure, harm' (with dative); bysmerian wk 'insult'; bûtú 'both'; æt-gædere 'together'; eall 'all'; blód n 'blood'; be-stéman wk 'make wet'; be-géotan str 'pour over'; of 'off, from'; guma m 'man'; síde f 'side'; siððan 'after'; habban wk 'have'; gást m 'spirit'; on-sendan wk 'send forth'; feala 'a lot, many' (= genitive plural); beorg m 'hill'; ge-bíðan str 'experience, endure'; wráp 'cruel'; wyrð f 'fate'; ge-séon str 'see'; werod n. 'army, warband';</p> <p>pearle 'cruelly, violently'; þenian wk 'stretch out'; bystro f 'darkness' (fpr bystru nominative plural);</p> <p>be-wréon str 'cover'; wolcen n 'cloud'; wealdend m 'ruler'; hræw n 'corpse'; scír 'bright'; scíma m 'light, radiance'; sceadu f 'shadow'; forþ 'forth'; éode 3<sup>rd</sup> singular past of gán irregular verb 'go';</p> <p>wann 'dark, pale'; under 'under'; wépan str 'weep'; ge-sceaft f 'creation';</p> <p>cwíðan wk 'mourn'; fyll m 'fall'; Críst m 'Christ'; ród f 'cross'</p>
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## Week 2 Workshop: The Dream of the Rood

In this workshop we will discuss different ways of studying *The Dream of the Rood*—you have the opportunity in your preparation to take linguistic, literary, and/or historical approaches to the poem, and I hope that all of these perspectives can be explored during the workshop. A *rood*, by the way, is a crucifix.

*The Dream of the Rood* survives in one Anglo-Saxon (probably Kentish) manuscript from the later tenth century, discovered and preserved in Vercelli in Italy (and so known as the Vercelli Book). How the manuscript got there is anyone's guess, but the leading guess is that, since Vercelli was on the pilgrim route to Rome, an Anglo-Saxon pilgrim brought it there and pegged out.

However, a few lines of poetry which must have some connection with those in DrR also survive from the opposite end of Anglo-Saxon England and

from about the eighth century: carved, in runes, on the enormous stone cross at Ruthwell in Dumfriesshire, now in south-west Scotland. The cross has been much damaged in its history, so the text now has some gaps, which can only be partially filled by reference to earlier transcriptions and to the Vercelli Book.

Precisely how these two texts are connected is a source of much debate, but they give us a chance to think about poetry, language, and Anglo-Saxon culture from a wide range of geographical and chronological perspectives.

### Primary reading

By the way, the Wikipedia page on this poem is pretty shaky, if anyone has an hour or two on their hands...

- Translate the passage from *The Dream of the Rood* set for this week's language homework (lines 39-50) below.
- Read the whole of *The Dream of the Rood* in translation; I recommend that in Elaine Traherne (ed.), *Old and Middle English: An*

*Anthology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), available at <http://www.apocalyptic-theories.com/literature/dor/medora1.html>.

- Read the following translation of the (fragmentary) runic Ruthwell Cross inscription.

Vercelli Book text (for comparison)	Ruthwell Cross text (ed. Swanton p. 94)	Translation
<p>Ongyrede hine þá geong hæleð, (þæt wæs God ælmihtig), strang ond stiðmód; gestáh hé on gealgan héanne, módig on manigra gesyhðe, þá he wolde mancyn lýsan. Bifode ic þá mé se beorn ymbeclypte; ne dorste ic hwæðre búgan tó eorðan feallan tó foldan scéatum. Ac ic sceolde fæste standan. Ród wæs ic áræred. Áhóf ic rícne Cuning, heofona Hláfard; hylðan mé ne dorste. [39-45] *** Bysmeredon hie unc bútu ætgædere. Eall ic wæs mid blóde bestémed, begoten of þæs guman síðan, sippan hé hæfde his gást onsended. [48-49] *** [...] Críst wæs on róde. Hwæðere þær fuse feorran cwóman tó þám æðelinge. Ic þæt eall behéold. Sáre ic wæs mid [sorgum] gedréfed, hnág ic hwæðre þám secgum tó handa, éaðmód elne mycle. Genámon hie þær ælmihtigne God, áhófon hine of þám hefian wíte. Forléton mé þá hilderincas standan stéame bedrifenne; eall ic waes mid strælum forwundod. Álédon hie ðær limwérigne, gestódon him æt his líces héafdum; behéoldon hie þær heofenes Dryhten, ond hé hine þær hwíle reste [56b-64]</p>	<p>I [+ Ond]geredæ hinæ God almehttig þá hé walde on galgu gistéga, [m]odig f[lore allæ] men. [B]úg[a ic ni dorstæ . . . . .] II [Áhóf] ic riicnæ Kyniŋc, Heafunæs Hláfard, hælda ic ne dorstæ. Bismærædu unket men bá ætgad[re]; ic [wæs] miþ blóðæ [b]istémi[d], Bi[goten of . . . . .] III [+]Kríst wæs on ródi. Hweþræ þér fúsæ fearran kwómu æþpilæ til ánum. Ic þæt al bih[eald] Sá[ræ] ic wæs mi[b] sorgum gidræ[fi]d, h[n]ág [ic . . . . .] IV miþ strælum giwundad. Álegdun hie hinæ limwærigæ, gistóddun him [ . . . . ] lícaes [hea]f[du]m; [bi]hea[l]du[n] hi[æ] þé[r . . . . .] . .]</p>	<p>+ Almighty God unclothed himself When he wanted to step up on the gallows, brave before all people. I didn't dare to bend...  I lifted the powerful King, Heaven's Lord. I didn't dare bend down. People mocked us both together; I was stained with blood, sprung from...  Christ was on the cross. But zealous [people] came there from afar, noble, to the single [person]. I saw it all. I was bitterly oppressed with grief, I bent down...  Wounded with arrows. They laid him down, limb-weary, they stood by him... by the corpse's head; there they saw...</p>

What does the poem present as being the strong points of Christianity? How is Christ portrayed in the poem? What roles does the cross have for the narrator? What does the poem gain or lose from being about a vision about a talking cross?

### Secondary reading

Pick at least one of the following readings in preparation for the workshop, and take notes on the questions set. In all cases, you may find you need to look up some technical terms. These articles can all be found under 'learning resources' in the VLE.

- **Ó Carragáin 1981 ('How did the Vercelli Collector Interpret *The Dream of the Rood*?')**: medieval scholars seldom wrote literary criticism, or book reviews; but they did make anthologies.

One way to access their understandings of their texts is to see how they group them when compiling manuscripts. What does Ó Carragáin see, contextually, as the main themes of *The Dream of the Rood*? How well does this contextual reading fit with your reading of the poem itself?

- **Scragg 1973 ('The Compilation of the Vercelli Book')**: why is the provenance of the Vercelli book not immediately obvious?

(Answers to this may be more implicit than explicit in Scragg's article.) What kinds of linguistic evidence does Scragg use to investigate the origins of the Vercelli Book? How far did the scribe alter his exemplars, and what does this tell us about attitudes to spelling and the written language?

- **Swanton 1987 (*The Dream of the Rood*):** there must be some fairly direct relationship between the Ruthwell Cross inscription and the Vercelli Book *Dream of the Rood*, but what? An oral connection? The manuscript version an expanded version of the inscription? The

inscription a shortened version of the manuscript version? Something else?

- **Wood 2003 ('Ruthwell: Contextual Searches')**: in what political and cultural circumstances was the Ruthwell Cross raised? What significance might its combination of English and Latin inscriptions have had for its intended audience? What are the sociolinguistic implications of the fact that it may have been raised in a region where many people spoke Brittonic?

### Week 3 seminar

Soon I'll be getting you to learn chunks of Magic Sheet; meanwhile, don't forget to consult it! Don't forget to move on if you get stuck either. The main difference between this week and last week is that there are a lot of compound nouns; I've made a point of glossing these in a very literal way, to give you a clear understanding of the literal meaning of the Old English. But it's okay to experiment with slightly less literal and more idiomatic renderings in Modern English. See how you go!

5	<p>Mæg ic be mé sylfum sóðgied wrecan,  sīþas secgan, hú ic geswincdagum  earfoðhwíle oft þrówade,  bitre bréostceare gebiden hæbbe,  gecunnad in céole cearselda fela,  atol ýþa gewealc. Þær mec oft bigeat  nearo nihtwaco æt nacan stefnan,  þonne hé be clifum cnossað. Calde geþrunge  wæron míne fét, forste gebunden,</p>	<p><i>magan</i> irregular verb 'be able to' (here present tense); <i>be</i> 'about'; <i>sylf</i> '(my/your/him/her)self'; <i>sóð-gied</i> n 'truth-song'; <i>wrecan</i> str 'recount';  <i>sīþ</i> m 'journey'; <i>secgan</i> wk 'say, tell'; <i>hú</i> 'how'; <i>geswinc-dæg</i> m 'toil-day';  <i>earfoð-hwíl</i> f 'hardship-time'; <i>oft</i> 'often'; <i>þrówian</i> wk 'suffer, endure';  <i>biter</i> 'bitter, harsh'; <i>bréost-cearu</i> f 'breast-sorrow'; <i>ge-bídan</i> str 'experience, suffer' (+ genitive);  <i>habban</i> wk 'have';  <i>cunnian</i> wk 'try, put to the test, experience'; <i>in</i> 'in, on'; <i>céol</i> m 'keel, ship'; <i>cear-seld</i> n 'sorrow-seat';  <i>fela</i> indeclinable 'many' (+ genitive);  <i>atol</i> 'terrible'; <i>ýþ</i> f 'wave'; <i>ge-wealc</i> n 'surge'; <i>þær</i> 'there/where'; <i>oft</i> 'often'; <i>be-gietan</i> str 'seize, assail';  <i>nearo</i> 'narrow, oppressive'; <i>niht-waco</i> f 'night-watch'; <i>æt</i> 'at'; <i>naca</i> m 'boat'; <i>stefna</i> m 'prow';  <i>þonne</i> 'then/when; than'; <i>clif</i> n 'rock, cliff'; <i>cnossian</i> wk '?toss, pitch; strike' (only attested here); <i>cald</i> n 'cold'; <i>þringan</i> str 'throng, press, squeeze';  <i>fót</i> m 'foot'; <i>forst</i> m 'frost'; <i>bindan</i> str 'bind';</p>
10	<p>caldum clommum, þær þá ceare seofedun  hát ymb heortan; hungor innan slát  merewérges mód. Þæt se mon ne wát  þe him on foldan fægrost limpeð,</p>	<p><i>clomm</i> m 'fetter'; <i>seofedun</i> = <i>seofedon</i> from <i>seofian</i> wk 'sigh';  <i>hát</i> 'hot'; <i>ymb</i> 'around' (+ accusative); <i>heorte</i> n 'heart'; <i>hungor</i> m 'hunger'; <i>innan</i> 'inside, within, from within'; <i>slítan</i> str 'tear';  <i>mere-wérig</i> 'sea-weary'; <i>mód</i> n 'heart, mind'; <i>mon</i> m 'person'; <i>witan</i> irregular 'know' (here present tense);  line 13 is really hard: 'for whom it turns out most happily on earth' (<i>þe</i> indeclinable 'who, which'; <i>folde</i> f 'earth'; <i>fæger</i> 'beautiful'; <i>limpan</i> str 'befall' (here impersonal));</p>

15	<p>hú ic earmcearig íscealdne sǣ  winter wunade wræccan lástum,  winemægum bidroren,  bihongen hrimgicelum; hægl scúrum fleag.  Þær ic ne gehýrde bútan hlimman sǣ,  íscaldne wæg. Hwílum ylfete song</p>	<p><i>hú</i> 'how; <i>earm-cearig</i> 'wretched-miserable'; <i>ís-ceald</i> 'ice-cold'; <i>sǣ</i> m 'sea';  <i>winter</i> m 'winter'; <i>wunian</i> wk 'inhabit'; <i>wræcca</i> m 'exile'; <i>lást</i> m 'track, path';  <i>wine-mæg</i> m 'friend-kinsman'; <i>bi-dréosan</i> str 'deprive' (+ dative);  <i>bi-hón</i> str 'hang (things) around'; <i>hrím-gicel</i> m 'frost-icicle'; <i>hægl</i> m 'hail'; <i>scúr</i> m 'shower'; <i>fléogan</i>  str 'fly';  <i>ge-hýran</i> wk 'hear'; <i>bútan</i> 'except'; <i>hlimman</i> str 'roar';  <i>wæg</i> m 'wave'; <i>hwílum</i> 'sometimes'; <i>ylfetu</i> f 'swan'; <i>song</i> m 'song';</p>
20	<p>dyde ic mé tó gomene, ganetes hléopor  ond huilpan swég fore hleahtor wera,  mǣw singende fore medodrince.</p>	<p><i>dón</i> wk 'do'; <i>tó</i> 'as, to, by way of'; <i>gomen</i> n 'entertainment'; <i>ganet</i> m 'gannet'; <i>hléoðor</i> n 'sound, cry';  <i>ond</i> 'and'; <i>huilpe</i> f 'curlew'; <i>swég</i> m 'sound, voice, music'; <i>fore</i> 'for'; <i>hleahtor</i> m 'laughter'; <i>wer</i> m  'man';  <i>mǣw</i> m 'seagull'; <i>singan</i> str 'sing'; <i>medo-drinc</i> m 'mead-drink'</p>

## Week 4 seminar

1. Learn by heart, for instant recitation in class, the strong nouns and the demonstrative pronoun meaning 'that, these' on the Magic Sheet. NB that doing a little a lot works better than doing a lot a little.
2. Translate lines 1–13 and 36–43 of *Deor*, below. Some bits are hard! One of the interesting things about this poem, is that some of the problems which it gives rise to are genuine problems, that professional Old Anglicists are also puzzled about. If you get stuck on something, it's okay to move on and come back to it later/in class.
3. You might want to try finding out what else we know about the people mentioned in the poem. A bit of Googling will get you a long way, as will reading the Old Norse poem *Völundarkviða* (the song of Völundr, available in any translation of the Poetic Edda, including Dronke 1997 on the VLE, but that file is vast so beware!). Lang 1976 and McKinnell 2001, on the VLE, are also useful on understanding the relationship between these texts.

5	<p>Wélund him be wurman wræces cunnade,  ánhýdig eorl earfoþa dréag,  hæfde him tó gesiþþe sorge and longað,  wintercealde wræce. Wéan oft onfond  siþþan hine Níðhád on néde legde,  swoncre seonobende on sýllan monn.  þæs oferéode, þisses swá mæg.</p>	<p><i>Wélund</i> m personal name; <i>him</i> apparently here a reflexive pronoun referring back to Wélund 'for himself, for his part'; <i>be</i> 'among'; <i>wurman</i> for <i>wurmum</i>, from <i>wurm</i> m 'snake, worm, dragon'; <i>wræc</i> n 'misery, ostracism, exile'; <i>cunnian</i> wk 'experience' (+ genitive); <i>án-hýdig</i> 'single-minded; bold'; <i>eorl</i> m 'man'; <i>earfoþe</i> n 'hardship'; <i>dréogan</i> str 'suffer, endure' (+ genitive); <i>habban</i> wk 'have'; <i>tó</i> 'as, for, to'; <i>ge-siþ</i> m 'companion'; <i>sorg</i> f 'misery'; <i>longað</i> m 'yearning';  <i>winter-ceald</i> 'winter-cold'; <i>wracu</i> f 'suffering, misery'; <i>wéa</i> m 'woe'; <i>on-findan</i> str 'find out, experience';  <i>siððan</i> 'after'; <i>Níðhád</i> m personal name; <i>néd</i> f 'constraint, necessity, need'; <i>lecgan</i> wk 'lay';  <i>swoncor</i> 'supple'; <i>seono-bend</i> f 'sinew-bond; fetter'; <i>sél</i> 'good, noble'; <i>monn</i> m 'person';  <i>ofer-gán</i> irregular verb 'pass over' (impersonal verb); <i>swá</i> 'so, thus, as'; <i>magan</i> irregular verb 'be able to' (impersonal verb) [no-one's really sure what this line means—see what you make of it!]</p>
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10	<p>Beadohilde ne wæs hyre bróþra déaþ  on sefan swá sár swá hyre sylfre þing,  þæt héo gearolíce ongietan hæfde  þæt héo éacen wæs. Æfre ne meahte  þríste geþencan hú ymb þæt sceolde.  Þæs oferéode, þisses swá mæg.</p>	<p><i>Beadohild</i> f personal name; <i>ne</i> 'not'; <i>hyre</i> = <i>hire</i>; <i>bróðor</i> m 'brother'; <i>déaþ</i> m 'death';  <i>sefa</i> m 'mind, heart'; <i>swá ... swá</i> 'as ... as; so ... as'; <i>ár</i> 'painful'; <i>sylf</i> 'self' (here <i>hyre sylfre</i> means  'her own'); <i>þing</i> n 'matter, issue';</p> <p><i>gearolíce</i> 'clearly'; <i>on-gietan</i> for <i>on-gieten</i>, from <i>ongietan</i> str 'know, perceive';</p> <p><i>éacen</i> 'pregnant'; <i>æfre</i> 'ever'; <i>meahte</i> from <i>magan</i>;  <i>þríste</i> 'confidently, boldly'; <i>ge-þencan</i> 'think, plan'; <i>hú</i> 'how'; <i>ymb</i> 'about' (+ accusative); <i>sculan</i>  irregular verb 'to have to' (with the expected infinitive omitted: you'll just have to make one up!);</p> <p>you don't need to translate this bit! It describes more people who (it appears) had a rubbish time;  but perhaps also that there's comfort to be had from God.</p>
15	<p>We þæt Mæðhilde monge gefrugnon  wurdon grundléase Géates fríge,  þæt hí séo sorglufu slæp ealle binom.  Þæs oferéode, þisses swá mæg.</p>	
20	<p>Ðéodric áhte þrítig wintra  Mæringa burg; þæt wæs monegum cúþ.  Þæs oferéode, þisses swá mæg.</p>	
25	<p>Wé geáscodan Eormanríces  wylfenne geþóht. Áhte wíde folc  Gotena ríces; þæt wæs grim cyning.  Sæt secg monig sorgum gebunden,  wéan on wénan, wýscte geneahhe  þæt þæs cyneríces ofercumen wære.  Þæs oferéode, þisses swá mæg.</p>	
30	<p>Siteð sorgcearig, sælum bidæled,  on sefan sweorceð, sylfum þinceð  þæt sý endeléas earfoða dæl.  Mæg þonne geþencan þæt geond þás woruld  wítig Dryhten wendeþ geneahhe,  eorle monegum áre gescéawað,  wíslicne blæd, sumum wéana dæl.</p>	<p><i>bí</i> = <i>be</i> here 'about'; <i>secgan</i> wk 'say'; <i>willan</i> wk 'want';</p>
35	<p>Þæt ic bí mé sylfum secgan wille,  þæt ic hwíle wæs Heodeninga scop,</p>	<p><i>hwíl</i> f 'time, while, period'; <i>Heodeningas</i> m pl ethnonym; <i>scop</i> m 'poet';  <i>dryhten</i> m 'lord'; <i>dýre</i> 'dear'; <i>Déor</i> m personal name; <i>noma</i> m 'name';</p>

40	<p>dryhtne dýre. Mé wæs Déor noma.  Áhte ic fela wintra folgað tilne,  holdne hláford, op þæt Heorrenda nú,  léoðcræftig monn, londryht gepáh  þæt mé eorla hléo ær gesealde.  þæs oferéode, þisses swá mæg.</p>	<p><i>ágan</i> irregular verb 'own, have'; <i>fela</i>, indeclinable, 'many' (+ genitive); <i>winter</i> m 'winter'; <i>folgaþ</i> m 'retinue, following'; <i>til</i> 'good';  <i>hold</i> 'faithful'; <i>hláford</i> m 'lord'; <i>op þæt</i> 'until'; <i>Heorrenda</i> m personal name; <i>nú</i> 'now';</p> <p><i>léoð-cræftig</i> 'song-clever, song-powerful'; <i>long-ryht</i> n 'land-entitlement'; <i>ge-þicgan</i> str 'receive, accept';  <i>hléo</i> m 'protector'; <i>ær</i> 'previously, before'; <i>ge-sellan</i> wk 'give'.</p>
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### Week 4 Workshop: twentieth-century alliterative poetry

The last sputterings of alliterative poetry, in the style descended from Old English poetry, died out in the sixteenth century. But there was a small but noteworthy alliterative revival among modernist poets of the twentieth century, as poets experimented with new metrical forms (or none at all), with new tones and themes, and responded to the appearance of the first English degrees at universities, which at the time involved studying a huge amount of medieval stuff. Looking at this material early on the course opens up ways to think about how the study of Old English in early twentieth-century universities shaped the modernist tradition, and the modernist alliterative poets hopefully provide ways to help us understand how Old English poetry worked.

#### Essential reading and thinking

- Go to the information on Old English metre at <http://www.alarichall.org.uk/teaching/alliteration/OE> and find out how classical Old English metre works.
- In the pdf in the VLE called 'C20 poetry.pdf', read the poems *The Seafarer* and *Canto I* (Ezra Pound, 1885–1972), *In days of yore out of deep ocean* (J. R. R. Tolkien, 1892–1973), *The Haw Lantern*, *A Ship of Death*, *A Postcard from Iceland* and *The Riddle* (Seamus Heaney, 1939–); and in the pdf in the VLE called 'Auden Age of Anxiety.pdf', read up to page 19 of this long poem by W. H. Auden (1907–1973).
- How far does each of these poets seem to be influenced by Old English poetic metre? And how does this formal influence from Old English relate to the subject matter of their work?

#### And then do at least one of...

- Read the rest of Auden's poem. What effect do his switches in metrical form have (how, for example, does the radio announcement on pp. 17–18 differ from what's gone before); how far does the syntax and turn-taking of the conversations he portrays fit neatly into metrical units and how far does it stray across them? Is his experiment with Old English metrical form a success?
- Read Lass 1992 and use it as food for thought to consider: how does the metrical phenomenon of resolution relate to the 'conspiracy' of sound-changes presented? How long is resolution likely to have seemed natural to Anglo-Saxons rather than a special poetic device? And how would both resolution and this 'conspiracy' relate to the difference on the Magic Sheet between *scipu* ('ships', strong neuter nominative/accusative plural) and *þing* ('things', also a strong neuter nominative/accusative plural), *scinu* ('shin') and *glóf* ('glove', strong feminine nominative singulars), and *tilu* and *gód* (both meaning 'good') among the strong adjectives? You may not be able to answer all these confidently (indeed, Alaric isn't), but hopefully you'll make some progress :-)
- Compare the passage of *The Seafarer* which you're reading in Old English with Pound's translation of the same part. How closely does he stick to the original, in terms of metre and/or grammar and/or content? Why do you think he made the changes he did? NB that the edition(s) Pound used may have involved different editorial punctuation from the one you're using.
- Can we detect any Anglo-Saxon echoes in Heaney's work, and if so, what kinds? How similar are his approaches to those of earlier modernist poets? See for further help here Conor McCarthy, *Seamus Heaney and Medieval Poetry* (Cambridge: Brewer, 2008).

- Write your own poem, in modern English but in alliterative metre. Possible themes might be: praise of someone praiseworthy or dissing of someone dissworthy; an account of an Old English class given in suitably heroic style; a football commentary; a lament for the fact that all earthly things perish and fade. You'll probably find you can't follow all the rules of Old English poetry—where do things get creaky?

### Other handy reading:

Alexander, Michael, *Medievalism. The Middle Ages in Modern England* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007)

Jones, Chris, *Strange Likeness: The Use of Old English in Twentieth-Century Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006)

Phelpstead, Carl, 'Auden and the Inklings: An Alliterative Revival', *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 103.4 (October 2004), 433–57, available online via <http://lib.leeds.ac.uk/record=b1626174~S4> (and on the VLE).

## Week 5 seminar

For the seminar:

1. Learn by heart, for instant recitation in class, the adjectives.

2. Translate this passage of *Genesis B*. I've chosen it because it overlaps with the surviving portion of the Old Saxon text from which it's copied, which can you can see at <http://www.evellum.com/index.html?junius/osgenesis.html> or <http://www.archive.org/details/latergenisisando00caeduoft>, pp. 24–25. We'll come back to this, amongst other things, in the languagetastic workshop in Week 10.

	Ádam gemælde and tó Euan spræc: "Hwæt, þú Eue, hæfst yfele gemearcod uncer sylfra síð. Gesyhst þú nú þá sweartan helle grædige and gifre. Nú þú hie grimman meahht 5 heonane gehýran. Nis heofonríce gelíc þám líge, ac þis is landa betst, þæt wit þurh uncres héarran þanc habban móston, þær þú þám ne híerde þe unc þisne hearm geræd, þæt wit waldendes word forbræcon, 10 heofoncýninges. Nú wit hréowige magon sorgian for þis síðe. Forþon hé unc self bebéad þæt wit unc wíte warian sceolden,	<i>ge-mælan</i> wk 'speak'; <i>sprecan</i> str 'speak'; <i>hwæt</i> lit. 'what' but here 'wow, blimey'; <i>habban</i> wk 'have'; <i>yfele</i> 'badly'; <i>ge-mercian</i> wk 'mark out, determine, establish'; <i>síp</i> m 'journey, course, life'; <i>ge-séon</i> str 'see'; <i>nú</i> 'now'; <i>sweart</i> 'black'; <i>hell</i> f 'Hell'; <i>grædig</i> 'greedy, voracious'; <i>gifre</i> 'greedy, voracious'; <i>grim</i> 'fierce'; <i>magan</i> irregular verb 'be able to, can'; <i>heonan(e)</i> 'hence, from here'; <i>ge-hýran</i> wk 'hear'; <i>nis</i> = <i>ne</i> + <i>is</i> ; <i>heofon-ríce</i> m 'heaven-kingdom'; <i>ge-líc</i> 'alike, similar'; <i>líg</i> m 'flame'; <i>land</i> n 'land'; <i>betst</i> 'best'; <i>þurh</i> 'through, by means of'; <i>héarra</i> m 'lord'; <i>þanc</i> n 'thought, intention, plan'; <i>mótan</i> irregular verb 'be allowed, be able, may'; <i>þær</i> here 'if' (usually 'there, where'); <i>híerde</i> = <i>hýrde</i> from <i>hýran</i> wk 'listen to, obey'; <i>þe</i> indeclinable relative particle 'who, which'; <i>ge-ræd</i> a past tense form of <i>ge-rædan</i> str 'advise, suggest'; <i>waldend</i> m 'ruler'; <i>word</i> n 'word'; <i>for-brecan</i> str 'totally break, totally disobey'; <i>heofon-cýning</i> m 'heaven-king'; <i>hréowig</i> 'regretful, distressed'; <i>sorgian</i> wk 'feel sorry'; <i>for þon</i> 'therefore, because of that'; <i>self</i> 'self'; <i>be-béodan</i> 'command'; <i>wíte</i> n 'punishment'; <i>warian</i> wk 'beware, guard against'; <i>sculon</i> irregular verb 'have to, must'; <i>hearm</i> m 'grief'; <i>mæst</i> 'greatest, most'; <i>slít</i> contracted form of <i>slíteþ</i> from <i>slítan</i> str 'torment';
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	<p>hearma máestne. Nu slít me hunger and þurst bitre on bréostum, þæs wit bégra áer wáeron orsorge on ealle tíð.</p>	<p><i>hunger</i> m 'hunger'; <i>þurst</i> m 'thirst'; <i>biter</i> 'harsh, painful'; <i>bréost</i> n 'breast, heart'; <i>bégen</i> 'both'; <i>áer</i> 'before'; <i>or-sorg</i> 'free of sorrow'; <i>eall</i> 'all'; <i>tíð</i> f 'time' (here an adverbial phrase 'all the time');</p>
15	<p>Hú sculon wit nú libban oððe on þys lande wesana, gif her wind cymð, westan oððe éastan, súðan oððe norðan? Gesweorc up færeð, cymeð hægles scúr hefone getenge, færeð forst on gemang, se byð fyrnum ceald.</p>	<p><i>hú</i> 'how'; <i>libban</i> wk 'live'; <i>þys</i> = <i>þis</i>; <i>gif</i> 'if'; <i>her</i> 'here'; <i>wind</i> m 'wind'; <i>cuman</i> str 'come'; <i>westan</i> etc 'from the west, etc.'; <i>ge-sweorc</i> n 'darkness'; <i>faran</i> str 'move, go'; <i>hægel</i> m 'hail'; <i>scúr</i> m 'shower'; <i>hefon</i> = <i>heofon</i> m 'heaven, the sky'; <i>ge-tenge</i> 'touching, close to'; <i>forst</i> m 'frost'; <i>on ge-mang</i> 'at the same time'; <i>fyrnum</i> 'very'; <i>ceald</i> 'cold'.</p>

## Week 6 seminar

1. Learn by heart, for instant recitation in class, the personal pronouns. Wikiid!

2. Translate this passage of *The Battle of Brunanburh*. In 934, the West Saxons under the rulership of King Æthelstan, grandson of Alfred the Great, defeated a coalition of many of their neighbours (including Welsh, Scottish/Irish and Scandinavian people). The event gets written up in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, a more or less year-by-year account of events in various parts of England at the time, in verse form, in a poem known as *The Battle of Brunanburh*.

*NB not all words here are glossed: they will be found in a list of words most needful for all men to know (from the back of George Jack's student edition of 'Beowulf'), distributed via the VLE.*

5	<p>Æðelstān cyning, eorla drihten, beorna bēahgifa, and his brōðor ēac, Ēadmund æðeling, ealdorlangne tīr geslōgon æt sæcce sweorda ecgum ymbe Brunanburh. Bordweall clufon, hēowon heaðolinda hamora lāfum eaforan Ēadweardes; swā him geæðele wæs fram cnēomāgum, ðæt hī æt campe oft wið lāðra gehwæne land ealgodon, hord and hāmas. Hettend crungon, Scotta lēoda and scipflotan fæge fēollon. Feld dunnode secga swāte, sibban sunne up on morgentīd, mære tungol, glād ofer grundas, Godes candel beorht, ēces Drihtnes, oð sīo æðele gesceaft sāh tō setle. Ðær læg secg monig</p>	<p><i>Æðelstān</i> m personal name; <i>eorl</i> m 'warrior'; <i>drihten</i> m 'lord'; <i>beorn</i> m 'man'; <i>bēah-gifa</i> m 'ring-giver'; <i>ēac</i> 'also'; <i>Ēadmund</i> m personal name; <i>æðeling</i> m 'prince'; <i>ealdor-lang</i> 'lifelong'; <i>tīr</i> m 'glory'; <i>ge-slēan</i> str 'achieve by fighting, win'; <i>sæcc</i> f 'battle'; <i>ecg</i> f 'edge'; <i>ymbe</i> 'around'; <i>Brunanburh</i> f place-name; <i>bord-weall</i> m 'shield-wall'; <i>clēofan</i> str 'cleave'; <i>hēawan</i> str 'hew'; <i>heaðo-lind</i> f 'battle-shield'; <i>hamora lāf</i> f 'the remnant of hammers, i.e. sword'; <i>eafora</i> m 'son'; <i>Ēadweard</i> m personal name; <i>ge-æðele</i> 'habitual, instinctive'; <i>cnēomæg</i> m 'ancestor'; <i>camp</i> m 'battle'; <i>lāð</i> hostile; <i>ge-hwā</i> 'each'; <i>ealgian</i> wk 'protect'; <i>hettend</i> m 'enemy' (singular noun with plural sense); <i>cringan</i> str 'die'; <i>Scottas</i> m pl 'Scots'; <i>lēoda</i> f pl 'people'; <i>scip-flota</i> m 'seaman'; <i>fæge</i> 'fated to die'; <i>feallan</i> str 'fall'; <i>feld</i> m 'field'; <i>dunnian</i> wk 'grow dark'; <i>secg</i> m 'man'; <i>swāt</i> m 'blood'; NB <i>sunne up</i> does NOT mean 'sun-up, sunrise'! What does it mean? <i>morgen-tīd</i> f acc 'morning'; <i>mære</i> 'glorious'; <i>tungol</i> m 'star', heavenly body; <i>glīdan</i> str 'glide'; <i>grund</i> m 'ground'; <i>candel</i> f 'candle'; <i>beorht</i> 'bright'; <i>ēce</i> 'eternal'; <i>drihten</i> m 'lord'; <i>oð</i> = <i>oðbæt</i>; <i>æðele</i> 'noble'; <i>gesceaft</i> f 'creation'; <i>sīgan</i> str 'sink'; <i>setl</i> n 'sunset'; <i>licgan</i> dtr 'lie'; <i>secg</i> m 'man';</p>
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gārum āgēted, guma Norðerna  
ofer scyld scoten, swylce Scyttisc ēac,  
20 wērig, wīges sǣd.

gār m 'spear'; āgītan wk 'destroy'; guma m 'man'; Norðerne m pl 'Northerners'; scyld m 'shield'; scēotan  
str 'shoot'; swylce 'likewise'; Scyttisc 'Scottish'; ēac 'also';  
wērig 'weary'; wīg n 'war'; sǣd 'sated, full' (+ genitive 'sated by..., full of...').

## Week 6 workshop: heroes and villains

### Essential reading and thinking

- Read all of *Deor*, in translation (for example at <http://www.heorot.dk/deor.html>) or using the glossary at [http://www.alarichall.org.uk/teaching/oe\\_texts.php](http://www.alarichall.org.uk/teaching/oe_texts.php). You may also want to listen to the sound file of R. D. Fulk reading it out at <http://www.wvnorton.com/college/english/nael/noa/audio.htm>. There's a lot of badly-pronounced Old English out there, but Fulk is impeccable.
- Read *Genesis B* (in the VLE as Bradley 1982, pp. 19–35). This survives in a long poem based on the Book of Genesis. Most of the poem, known as *Genesis A*, was originally composed in Old English; but near the beginning there's a chunk describing the fall of the angels and the fall of man. This is clearly an interpolation, and so is known as *Genesis B*. Eduard Sievers inferred in the nineteenth century that it must have been translated from Old Saxon (a West Germanic dialect closely related to Old English, whose speakers were converted to Christianity partly by Anglo-Saxons), and sure enough, a year after his death, a copy of the Old Saxon text turned up in a library in the Vatican. You'll have a chance to read some of this in the original later in the module.
- Read the account of the Franks Casket at [http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight\\_objects/pe\\_mla/t/the\\_franks\\_casket.aspx](http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/pe_mla/t/the_franks_casket.aspx) and look at the pictures!
- You might also want to think about this week's seminar reading, *The Battle of Brunanburh*, in this connection.

Thinking across these texts, along with *The Dream of the Rood* and *Wulf and Eadwacer*, consider what made a hero and what made a villain in Old English literature. And how do women fit into the societies portrayed by these texts?

### And then do at least one of...

- How similar to you seems the portrayal of Satan in *Genesis A* to his portrayal in Book I of *Paradise Lost*? See what you think of Lever 1949 in the VLE.
- Who is this Welund guy? Read the Old Norse poem *Völundarkviða* (the song of Völundr, available in any translation of the Poetic Edda, including Dronke 1997 on the VLE) and McKinnell 2001 in the VLE.
- What stories does the Franks Casket allude to, and why does it include that particular selection? Read Leslie Webster, 'The Iconographic Programme of the Franks Casket', in *Northumbria's Golden Age*, ed. By Jane Hawkes and Susan Mills (Stroud: Sutton, 1999), pp. (not on the VLE but in the Brotherton via <http://lib.leeds.ac.uk/record=b1929550> and the short loan section of the Edward Boyle via <http://lib.leeds.ac.uk/record=b2667113>).
- What are all these allusions in *Deor* about? Frank 1991, in the VLE, gives a stimulating angle on this question.

## Week 8 seminar

1. Revise all those bits of the Magic Sheet you've been learning. And be prepared to say something intelligent about the form of the adjective *réotugu* in this week's text!

2. Translate *Wulf and Eadwacer*. So called by editors, this is one of the most intriguing (and obscure) of our Old English poems; it's also the first Old English poem that you'll read in its entirety. Woo! Again, it's okay to find this hard! Remember, as a rule of thumb, to look for a verb; check its number; and look for

things that could be a nominative in that number. That's a good starting point; if there's no candidate for a nominative, the verb may be impersonal. Anyway, this text is probably the weirdest things get on this module: after this, most of the big weirdnesses of Old English have been encountered!

<p>5</p> <p>10</p> <p>15</p>	<p>Lēodum is mīnum swylce him mon lāc gife;  willað h̄ h̄ne āpecgan gif h̄ on pr̄eat cymeð.  Ungelīc is ūs.</p> <p>Wulf is on īege, ic on ōperre.</p> <p>Fæst is þæt ēglond, fenne biworpen.  Sindon wælrēowe weras þær on īge;  willað h̄ h̄ne āpecgan gif h̄ on pr̄eat cymeð.  Ungelīce is ūs.</p> <p>Wulfes ic mīnes wīdlāstum wēnum hogode,  þonne hit wæs rēnig weder ond ic rēotugu sæt,  þonne mec se beaducāfa bōgum bilegde,  wæs mē wyn tō þon, wæs mē hwæpre ēac lāð.</p> <p>Wulf, mīn Wulf! Wēna mē þīne  sēoce gedydon, þīne seldcymas,</p> <p>murnende mōd, nales metelīste.</p> <p>Geh̄yrest þū, Ēadwacer? Uncerne eargne hwelp  bireð wulf tō wuda.</p> <p>þæt mon ēaþe tōslīteð þætte nāfre gesomnad  wæs:  uncer giedd geador.</p>	<p><i>lēode</i> f pl 'people'; <i>swylce</i> 'as if'; <i>mon</i> m 'person (here 'someone')'; <i>lāc</i> n 'gift, sacrifice, booty'; <i>gīfan</i> str 'give';  <i>wīllan</i> wk 'want'; <i>h̄y</i> = <i>hīe</i>; <i>ā-pecgan</i> wk (we have almost no idea what this means; people usually guess 'kill'); <i>gif</i> 'if'; <i>pr̄eat</i> m 'army, band'; <i>cuman</i> str 'come';  <i>un-ge-līc</i> 'different';</p> <p><i>Wulf</i> m personal name (or common noun, 'wolf'); <i>īeg</i> f 'island'; <i>ōper</i> '(an)other';</p> <p><i>fæst</i> 'secure'; <i>ég-lond</i> n 'island'; <i>fenn</i> m 'fen, marsh'; <i>bi-weorpan</i> str 'surround';</p> <p><i>wæl-rēow</i> 'slaughter-cruel'; <i>wer</i> m 'man'; <i>þær</i> 'there, where';</p> <p><i>un-ge-līce</i> why not <i>ungelīc</i> again? Conceivably an error for <i>ungelic</i>, or maybe an adverbial form, 'differently';  <i>wīd-lāst</i> m 'long path'; <i>wén</i> f 'hope, expectation'; <i>hogian</i> wk 'consider, ponder' + dative;</p> <p><i>þonne</i> 'then/when'; <i>rēnig</i> 'rainy'; <i>weder</i> n 'weather'; <i>rēotig</i> 'wailing, weeping, lamenting'; <i>sittan</i> str 'sit';  <i>beadu-cáf</i> 'battle-quick, -strong, -bold'; <i>bóg</i> m 'arm, bough'; <i>bi-lecgan</i> wk 'surround, assail';  <i>wyn</i> f 'joy'; <i>hwæðre</i> 'however'; <i>ēac</i> 'also'; <i>láp</i> 'hateful';</p> <p><i>wén</i> f + genitive 'hope of..., expectation of...'; <i>mé</i> dative but here best translated 'my';</p> <p><i>séoc</i> 'ill, sick'; <i>ge-dón</i> irregular verb 'make, do'; <i>seld-cyme</i> str 'rare visit';</p> <p><i>murnan</i> str 'fret, worry'; <i>mód</i> n 'mind, heart'; <i>nales</i> 'not (at all, in the least)'; <i>mete-líst</i> f 'food-lack';  <i>ge-hýran</i> wk 'hear, listen'; <i>Ēad-wacer</i> m personal name (or compound noun, 'happiness-watchful, wealth-watchful'); <i>uncerne</i> = <i>uncer</i> + adjectival ending; <i>earg</i> 'vile, cowardly'; <i>hwelp</i> m 'whelp, cub'; <i>ge-beran</i> str 'bear, carry'; <i>wulf</i> m 'wolf' (or personal name, Wulf); <i>tó</i> 'to'; <i>wudu</i> f 'forest, wood';  <i>éaðe</i> 'easily'; <i>tó-slítan</i> 'destroy'; <i>þætte</i> = <i>þæt þe</i> '(that) which'; <i>nāfre</i> = <i>ne áfre</i> 'never'; <i>ge-somnian</i> wk 'unite, join together';  <i>giedd</i> n 'song, poem, tale'; <i>geador</i> 'together'</p>
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## Week 8 workshop: Old English to Middle English

*Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, lines 811ff.

'Gode sir,' quop Gawan, 'woldez þou go myn ernde  
To þe he3 lorde of þis hous, herber to craue?'  
'3e, Peter,' quop þe porter, 'and purely I trowee  
þat 3e be, wy3e, welcum to won quyle yow lykez.'  
þen 3ede þe wy3e 3erne and com a3ayn swyþe,  
And folke frely hym wyth, to fonge þe kny3t.  
þay let down þe grete dra3t and derely out 3eden,  
And kneled down on her knes vpon þe colde erþe  
To welcum þis ilk wy3 as worpy hom þo3t;  
þay 3olden hym þe brode 3ate, 3arked vp wyde,  
And he hem raysed rekenly, and rod ouer þe brygge.  
Sere seggez hym sesed by sadel, quel he ly3t,  
And syþen stabeled his stede stif men inno3e.  
Kny3tez and swyerez comen down þenne  
For to bryng þis buurne wyth blys into halle;  
Quen he hef vp his helme, þer hized innoghe  
For to hent hit at his honde, þe hende to seruen;  
His bronde and his blasoun boþe þay token.  
þen haylsed he ful hendly þo hæpelez vchone,  
And mony proud mon þer presed þat prynce to honour.  
Alle hasped in his he3 wede to halle þay hym wonnen,  
þer fayre fyre vpon flet fersly brenned.  
þenne þe lorde of þe lede loutez fro his chambre  
For to mete wyth menske þe mon on þe flor;  
He sayde, '3e ar welcum to welde as yow lykez  
þat here is; al is yowre awen, to haue at yowre wyllle  
and welde.'  
'Graunt mercy,' quop Gawayn,  
'þer Kryst hit yow for3elde.'  
As frekez þat semed fayn  
Ayþer oþer in armez con felde.

### 6. Metre

How similar is this passage to Old English metrically? (Tolkien and Gordon's account of metre is dated but not bad; you might also find the Middle English material at <http://www.alarichall.org.uk/teaching/alliteration/index.php> useful.)

### 7. Overall, how similar is the language of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* to Modern English?

### 1. Translate the passage

You'll probably need the glossary provided on the VLE as Tolkien-Gordon 1967. While doing so, look out for the following linguistic details, and/or hunt them down afterwards with the help of the linguistic appendix in the same file.

### 2. Words

- Look out for loan-words. How many? From what sources? How well do they fit into the phonological patterns of Old English, and into the metre?
- Does the poem use compound nouns and apposition like Old English poetry?
- How many synonyms for *man* are there? Any comparisons in Old English verse?

### 3. Content

- How similar or different to Old English verse is the handling of dialogue?
- How about narratorial point-of-view: whose eyes do we see through? How similar is this to Old English verse? (It might be helpful to think how you'd film it.)
- Is there a similar ratio of nouns to verbs? If not, what's changed and what are its effects?

### 4. Morphology

- What's happened to Old English strong neuter masculine, feminine and neuter noun plurals? What's happened to Old English weak noun plurals?
- What's happened to the verb endings?

### 5. Phonology

- How many different unstressed vowels are there in Old English, and how many in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*?
- As Tolkien and Gordon show, the scribe of our single manuscript of the poem is all over the shop regarding -e: it had presumably been lost from his dialect. However, we expect Middle English alliterative lines to end in the pattern 'stressed + unstressed'. If we translated each line-final word back into Old English, would this be so? And what would it mean if it is?

## Other things you might try for the workshop

- For a sense of where Old English was coming from morphologically, to put alongside your knowledge of where it was going to, try
  - (the quick route) glancing at Alaric's Old Norse Magic Sheet <http://www.alarichall.org.uk/teaching/Alaric%27s%20magic%20sheet.pdf>: Old Norse, though later than Old English, is a more conservative variety of Germanic. Does Norse have more endings than OE or less? Any other patterns?
  - (the slow route) have a read of the fine Wikipedia entry [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Proto-Germanic\\_grammar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Proto-Germanic_grammar).
- For a sense of early Middle English, intermediate between OE and the late Middle English of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, have a look at *Ancrene Wisse* ('Guide for female hermits'): *Ancrene Wisse*, ed. by Robert Hasenfratz (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2000), <http://www.lib.rochester.edu/camelot/teams/awintro.htm> has useful notes in its introduction, and links to an edition of the text. Try asking the same morphological and phonological questions of this text as I asked of *Sir Gawain* above.
- Alaric's favourite article on why language changes is currently Gary Lupyan and Rick Dale, 'Language Structure is Partly Determined by Social Structure', *PLoS ONE*, 5.1 (January 2010), [doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0008559](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0008559); similar ideas are packaged more accessibly by Peter Trudgill, 'Contact and Sociolinguistic Typology', in *The Handbook of Language Contact*, ed. by Raymond Hickey (Oxford: Blackwell, 2010), pp. 299–319. In what ways would the development of Old English to Middle English fit the patterns these authors describe? Or do they fit at all?
- For more on the development of alliterative metre in Middle English, try dipping into Thomas Cable, *The English Alliterative Tradition* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991), or *Approaches to the Metres of Alliterative Verse*, edited by Judith Jefferson and Ad Putter, Leeds Texts and Monographs, 17 (Leeds: Leeds Studies in English, 2009), particularly the introduction.

## Week 9 seminar

All the texts we've looked at so far on the module are poetic. There are a few reasons for this. Old English prose and poetry behave very differently syntactically, and so I figure we only have time to learn one variety in a semester. Old English poetry tends to be more culturally distinctive than the prose (which tends to fit more closely into mainstream medieval European subject matter), and the role of noun-endings is more prominent, making it a better vehical for teaching this aspect of the language.

However, I wanted to make sure that you get a chance to see some Old English prose too, so here's the opening of the famous sermon preached by Wulfstan, the Archbishop of York, at the height of Danish pressure on the English state, in 1014. (Although Wulfstan is extremely rude about the Danes in this sermon, when in 1015 King Sveinn of Denmark finally took England, succeeded by his son Knútr, Wulfstan actually emerged as one of Knútr's leading civil servants in England—interesting situation!)

5	<p>Sermo Lupi ad Anglos, quando Dani maxime persecuti sunt eos quod fuit anno millesimo XIII ab incarnatione domini nostri Iesu Christi: ~ ~ ~          Léofan men gecnawað þæt sóð is: ðeos worold is on ofste &amp; hit néalæcð þám ende. &amp; þý hit is on worolde á swá leng swá wyrse, &amp; swá hit sceal nýde for folces synnan fram dæge tó dæge, ær antecristes tócyeme, yfelian</p>	<p>Sermon of Lupus to the English, when the Danes persecuted them most, which happened in the year one thousand and fourteen from the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ: ~ ~ ~  <i>léof</i> 'beloved'; <i>man</i> m 'person'; <i>ge-cnáwan</i> str 'know'; <i>sóþ</i> 'true'; <i>worold</i> f 'world'; <i>ofost</i> f 'haste'; <i>néah-læcan</i> wk 'approach, near' (+ dative); <i>end</i> m 'end'; <i>þý</i> here 'therefore'; <i>á</i> 'always'; <i>swá leng swá wyrse</i> 'the longer the worse'; <i>swá</i> 'so, as, thus'; <i>leng</i> comparative of <i>lange</i> 'for a long time'; <i>wyrse</i> comparative of <i>yfle</i> 'badly'; <i>sceal</i> from <i>sculan</i> 'must, have to'; <i>nýde</i> 'necessarily'; <i>folc</i> n 'people'; <i>synne</i> f 'sin'; <i>fram</i> 'from'; <i>dæg</i> m 'day'; <i>ær</i> 'before'; <i>antecrist</i> Latin noun 'the Anti-Christ'; <i>tó-cyeme</i> m</p>
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10	swýþe. & húru hit wyrð þænne egeslic & grimlic wíde on worolde. Understandað éac georne þæt déofol pás péode nú fela géara dwelode tó swýþe, & þæt lýtle getréowþa wæran mid mannum, þéah hý wel spræcan. & unrihta tó fela rícsode on lande, & næs á fela manna þe sméade ymbe	'arrival'; <i>yfelian</i> wk 'grow bad'; <i>húru</i> 'indeed'; <i>weorðan</i> str 'become'; <i>þænne</i> 'then'; <i>egeslic</i> 'terrible'; <i>grimlic</i> 'fearsome'; <i>wíde</i> 'widely'; <i>under-standan</i> str 'understand'; <i>georne</i> 'eagerly, seriously, intently'; <i>déofol</i> m 'devil'; <i>þéod</i> f 'people'; <i>fela</i> 'many' (+ genitive); <i>géar</i> n 'year'; <i>dwelian</i> wk 'mislead, lead astray'; <i>tó</i> here 'too'; <i>swýðe</i> 'much'; <i>lýtel</i> 'little, small'; <i>ge-tréowþ</i> f 'loyalty, honour'; <i>mid</i> 'among, with'; <i>þéah</i> 'though'; <i>spræcan</i> for <i>spræcon</i> from <i>sprecan</i> str 'speak'; <i>un-riht</i> n 'injustice'; <i>rícsian</i> wk 'rule, dominate'; <i>land</i> n 'land'; <i>næs</i> = <i>ne wæs</i> ; <i>þe</i> relative particle 'who, which'; <i>sméagan</i> wk 'ponder'; <i>ymbe</i> 'about'; <i>bót</i> f 'remedy'; <i>gæg-hwám-lic</i> 'on a daily basis'; <i>ícan</i> wk 'add, increase'; <i>yfel</i> n 'evil, harm, bad thing'; <i>æfter</i> 'after'; <i>óðer</i> 'other'; <i>ræran</i> wk 'rise, rear'; <i>un-lagu</i> f 'illegal thing, crime'; <i>manig</i> 'many'; <i>ealles</i> adverbial genitive 'entirely'; <i>gynd</i> 'throughout'; <i>forþám</i> 'therefore'; <i>habban</i> wk 'have'; <i>byrst</i> m 'loss, injury'; <i>bysmer</i> m 'disgrace, insult'; <i>ænig</i> 'any'; <i>ge-bídan</i> str 'experience'; <i>scylan</i> = <i>scylon</i> from <i>sculan</i> ; <i>þonne</i> 'then'; <i>mótan</i> irregular verb 'must'; <i>þæs</i> here 'regarding that'; <i>God</i> m personal name; <i>earnian</i> wk 'earn, deserve'; <i>bet</i> comparative of <i>wel</i> 'well'; <i>þysan</i> = <i>þissum</i> ; <i>dydan</i> = <i>dydon</i> from <i>dón</i> wk 'do'; <i>miclan</i> = <i>miclum</i> from <i>micel</i> 'great'; <i>earnungan</i> = <i>earnungum</i> from <i>earnung</i> f 'merit, reward, deserts'; <i>ge-earnedan</i> = <i>ge-earnedan</i> from <i>ge-earnian</i> = <i>earnian</i> ; <i>ymðu</i> f 'misery'; <i>on-sittan</i> str 'oppress, assail'; <i>ge-ræcan</i> wk 'reach, obtain'; <i>heonan-forþ</i> 'henceforth'; <i>górdian</i> wk 'improve'
15	þá bóte swá georne swá man scolde, ac dæghwámlíce man íhte yfel æfter óðrum, & unriht rærde & unlaga manege ealles tó wíde gynd ealle pás péode. & wé éac forþám habbað fela byrsta & bysmara gebiden, & gif wé ænige bóte gebídan scylan þonne móte wé þæs tó Gode ernian bet þonne wé ær þysan dydan. Forþám mid miclan earnungan wé geearnedan	
20	þá yrmða þe ús onsittað & mid swýþe micelan earnungan wé þá bóte mótan æt Gode geræcan, gif hit sceal heonanforð gódiende weorðan.	
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## Week 10 seminar

Request slot: name an Old English text that you want to do!

## Week 10 workshop: variation in and around Old English

So, now that you're up and running with reading Old English, we're going to think a bit about Old English language—though the tasks below include a couple which are quite literary in their focus, if that's your thing. Please read the first chapter of Robinson 1992, on the VLE, to get tuned in to the general background, and methods of linguistic study for this period, and then do at least one of the following:

- **Old English and Old Saxon.** Compare the passage of *Genesis B* you've read (or a few lines of it) with the Old Saxon one, which you can see at <http://www.evellum.com/index.html?junius/osgenesis.html> or <http://www.archive.org/details/latergenesisando00caeduoft>, pp. 24–25. How often has the Anglo-Saxon poet been able to translate cognate for cognate and how often has he had to insert entirely different words? Are there any regular phonetic correspondences between Old English and Old Saxon? You may benefit in studying this from looking at Robinson 1992, pp. 249–50 and 256–59, There's more detail again on Old Saxon in ch. 5.
- **A North-Sea linguistic zone?** Go to the Corpus of Old English via <http://lib.leeds.ac.uk/record=b2006805>; choose a simple search. You're going to search in part of the Lindisfarne Gospel glosses, one of our only Northumbrian Old English texts. Type C20.2 (the code for the Lindisfarne glosses on the epistle of Jerome to Damasus) into the box beside 'Cameron number', and:

- Search for the second person pronoun *ðú/pú* (by typing Du or Tu) and look at the endings of the second-person verbs near it. What is the Northumbrian second-person singular verb ending? How does this differ from the West Saxon on the Magic Sheet?
- You can find sentences with the third person present plural form of the verb *to be* by searching for the Latin equivalent, *sunt*. Try to pick out what the Northumbrian form of this verb is (you don't need to know Latin to do this!). How does it differ from the West Saxon on the Magic Sheet?
- Now type C8.1.3 into the Cameron number box (this is another part of the Lindisfarne glosses) and search for the weak masculine noun *noma* ('name'). Are all the examples nominative singular (as we'd expect from the Magic Sheet)? If not, do you have a rough idea of what number and case they might be? What sound-change could explain these forms?
- You can find some infinitives by searching for the auxiliary verb *mæg* (by typing *mAg*) and seeing what infinitives it goes with. How does their form vary from the form of infinitives on the Magic Sheet?
- Download Alaric's Magic Sheet of Old Norse Inflexions (<http://www.alarichall.org.uk/teaching/Alaric%27s%20magic%20sheet.pdf>). Are the Northumbrian forms you found more similar to Old Norse or to West Saxon (as on the Magic Sheet)?
- If you're taken by this dialect, see for an earlier variety of Northumbrian, written in runes, the Ruthwell Cross and Franks Casket inscriptions. And a good article to read on this theme (albeit spectacularly little-referenced) is Paul Bibire's article in *The North Sea World in the Middle Ages: Studies in the Cultural History of North-Western Europe*, ed. by Thomas R. Litzka and Lorna E. M. Walker (Four Courts Press: Dublin, 2001).
- **Variation in the *Sermo Lupi*.** Go to the electronic edition of the *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos* (created as an undergraduate dissertation, by the way) at <http://english3.fsu.edu/~wulfstan/>. In the 'compare any two versions' section (<http://english3.fsu.edu/~wulfstan/compare.html>), compare the 'critical text' (the one you've translated, which is a construct of modern scholars) with any or all of the other manuscript versions. What bits do different scribes choose to leave out or add in? Which kinds of attitudes to authorship must they have had? Can you see any evidence for sound-changes (such as the unrounding of /y(:)/ to /i(:)/ or scribal confusion over where to use <æ>), and is it possible to relate this to the dates and places of composition of the manuscripts? If you get really into investigating what's afoot linguistically here, check out the grammars by Hogg or Campbell, or the textbook by Lass, listed in the module guidance document.
- **Poetic language.** Almost all our manuscripts are written in West Saxon, and this, broadly, includes all our verse manuscripts. But the verse texts have some distinctive features. NB while doing this exercise that the *Dictionary of Old English Corpus* contains around 2,700,000 words of prose and 300,000 words of verse. Go to the *Corpus of Old English* via <http://lib.leeds.ac.uk/record=b2006805>; choose a simple search. Use the 'restrict by class' menu to choose between searches of the verse material and the prose material.
  - Search for *waldend* and *wealdend* 'ruler'. Which form is more popular in verse and which in prose? Is the word itself more popular in verse or in prose? This search can be repeated for words with similar phonetic contexts, such as *ald~eald* 'old'.
  - You're aware from the Magic Sheet that the accusative singular personal pronouns *mec* and *þec/ðec* were, in Old English, competing with forms derived from the dative, *mé* and *þé/ðé*. How frequent are *mec* and *þec/ðec* in verse relative to prose? (You have to type *þec/ðec* as *Tec/Dec*).
  - How common are the words *méce* (sword), *sweord* (sword), *naca* (ship), *scip* (ship), *sefa* (soul), *sawul* (soul), *æ* (law), *laga* (law).
  - Looking at the *Sermo Lupi* now, how common is apposition in Wulfstan's prose? How common is alliteration, and how is it used? How often does he use datives without prepositions?
  - A key work on this area is one of my favourite ever books, R. D. Fulk's *A History of Old English Meter* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992). Don't try to read it from cover to cover though!

## Week 11 seminar

*Beowulf!* This time the beginning, line 1–31. The text is on the VLE, in PDF format, from George Jack’s student edition. If you want to develop your Old English further, this is a good text to use.

*NB not all words here are glossed: they will be found in a list of words most needful for all men to know (from the back of George Jack’s student edition of ‘Beowulf’), distributed via the VLE.*

## I enjoyed learning Old English; how can I do more?

Unfortunately we don’t have other Old English option modules. But here are some suggestions:

1. Study some cognate languages. Old Icelandic is an obvious example (which I would say because I teach it...), but other Germanic languages (like German, Dutch, Swedish, Danish and Norwegian) will all help you in reading Old English, and in keeping relevant things in your head.
2. Read Old English! George Jack, *Beowulf: A Student Edition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994) has a groovy marginal glossary to facilitate your reading; a wide range of marginally glossed texts is provided by Richard Marsden, *The Cambridge Old English Reader* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
3. Make a reading group! It looks like some of the alumni of this module will be starting a reading group, where you’ll meet up regularly and read some Old English together. Wikiid :-) Email me for more details.
4. Keep an eye on the [Institute for Medieval Studies](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/jms/about/events.html) events list: <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/jms/about/events.html>. There are quite often papers relating to Anglo-Saxon things.
5. Have a go at these other charms: I glossed them for use a couple of years ago but have since changed the syllabus.

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| <p>Se wífman, se hire cild áfédan ne mæg, gange tó gewitenes mannes<br/>birgenne and stæppe þonne þríwa ofer pá byrgenne and cweþe<br/>þonne þríwa þás word:<br/>         5        þis mé tó bóte    þære lápan lætbyrde,<br/>                  þis mé tó bóte    þære swæran swærbyrde,<br/>                  þis mé tó bóte    þære láðan lambyrde.</p> <p>And þonne þæt wíf séo mid bearne and héo tó hyre hláforde on reste<br/>gá, þonne cweþe héo:<br/>         10        Up ic gonge,    ofer þé stæppe<br/>                  mid cwican cilde,    nalæs mid cwellendum,<br/>                  mid fulborenum,    nalæs mid fægan.</p> <p>And þonne séo módor geféle þæt þæt bearn sí cwic, gá þonne tó<br/>cyrican, and þonne héo tóforan þán wéofode cume, cweþe þonne:<br/>                  Críste, ic sæde,    þis gecýped!</p> <p>15 Se wífmon, se hyre bearn áfédan ne mæge, genime héo sylf hyre<br/>ágenes cildes gebyrgenne dáel, wry æfter þonne on blace wulle and<br/>becicge tó cépemannum and cweþe þonne:</p> | <p><i>wífman</i> m ‘woman’; <i>cild</i> n ‘baby’; <i>á-fédan</i> wk ‘feed, nourish’; <i>gangan</i> irregular verb ‘go, walk’; <i>ge-wítan</i> str ‘depart, die’; <i>mann</i> m ‘person’; <i>byrgen</i> f ‘burial’; <i>stæppan</i> str ‘step’; <i>þríwa</i> ‘thrice’; <i>cweðan</i> str ‘speak’; <i>bót</i> f ‘remedy’; <i>láp</i> ‘hateful, hostile, evil’; <i>læt-byrd</i> f ‘late birth’; <i>swær</i> ‘heavy, sad, oppressive’; <i>swær-byrd</i> f ‘heavy birth’; <i>lambyrd</i> f. ‘lame birth’;</p> <p><i>wíf</i> f ‘woman’; <i>seo</i> here = <i>sie</i>; <i>bearn</i> n ‘child’; <i>hláford</i> m ‘husband’; <i>rest</i> f ‘rest’; <i>gá</i> here 3<sup>rd</sup> singular present subjunctive of <i>gán</i> irregular verb ‘go, walk’; <i>gonge</i> = <i>gange</i>;</p> <p><i>cwic</i> ‘alive, living’; <i>?cwélan</i> str ‘die’; <i>?cwellan</i> wk ‘kill’; <i>ful-beran</i> str ‘bear fully, give birth completely’; <i>fæge</i> ‘doomed’; <i>ge-félan</i> wk ‘feel’; <i>sí</i> = <i>sie</i>;</p> <p><i>cyrice</i> f ‘church’; <i>tó-foran</i> ‘to in front of’; <i>þán</i> = <i>þám</i>; <i>wéofod</i> m/n ‘altar’; <i>sæde</i> = <i>sægde</i> from <i>secgan</i> wk ‘say’; <i>cýðan</i> wk ‘make known’;</p> <p><i>ge-niman</i> str ‘take, seize, get’;</p> <p><i>ágen</i> ‘own’; <i>ge-byrgen</i> f ‘burial, grave’; <i>dáel</i> m ‘part’; <i>wréon</i> str ‘cover’; <i>blac</i> ‘black’; <i>wull</i> f ‘wool’; <i>be-bycgan</i> wk ‘sell, trade’; <i>cépeman</i> m ‘merchant’;</p> |
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Ic hit bebiċge, gé hit bebiċgan,  
 þás sweartan wulle and þysse sorge corn.  
 20 se wífman, se ne mæge bearn áfédan, nime þonne ánes bléos cú  
 meoluc on hyre handæ and gesúpe þonne mid hyre múþe and gange  
 þonne tó yrnendum wætere and spiwe þær  
 in þá meolc and hlade þonne mid þære ylcan hand þæs wæteres  
 múð fulne and forswelge. Cwepe þonne þás word:  
 25 Gehwér férde ic mé þone mæran maga þihtan,  
 mid þysse mæran mete þihtan;  
 þonne ic mé wille habban and hám gán.  
 þonne héo tó þán bróce gá, þonne ne beséo héo, nó ne eft  
 30 þonne héo þanan gá, and þonne gá héo in óþer hús óþer héo  
 út oféode and þær gebyrge métes.

*be-bicgan* here for *be-byccgen*;  
*sweart* 'black'; *sorg* f 'sorrow, grief, trouble'; *corn* n 'seed';  
*bléo* n. 'colour'; *cú* f 'cow' (this word often doesn't change form, except for the genitive  
 plural *cúa*); *meolc* f 'milk'; *handæ* for *hande* or *handa*, from *hand* f 'hand'; *ge-súpan* str  
 'drink, sip'; *múþ* m 'mouth'; *yrnan* str 'move rapidly'; *spiwan* str 'spit out, vomit';  
*hladan* str 'draw (a liquid), ladle'; *ylc* 'same';  
*ful* 'full'; *for-swelgan* str 'swallow completely';  
*ge-hwær* 'everywhere'; *féran* wk 'go, travel' (sometimes with reflexive); ?*mære* 'noble,  
 famous, glorious'; ?*maga* m 'stomach'; ?*maga* 'strong'; ?*mága* m 'son'; *þihtan* no-one  
 knows...; *mete* m 'food'; *hám* 'home(wards)';  
*bróc* m 'brook'; *be-séon* str 'look around'; *nó* 'nor'; *eft* 'back';  
*þanan* 'thence, from there'; *óðer ... óðer* here 'other... than...';  
*of-éode* 3<sup>rd</sup> singular past of irregular verb *of-gán* 'go out'; *ge-byrgan* wk 'bury' (+  
 genitive)