TOEBI *Newsletter*

2022 Volume XXXIX

Contents

Another year has rolled around quickly and the TOEBI community has been as busy as ever! This year's newsletter showcases a selection of the new work and initiatives that members have undertaken in 2022. This includes a pleasing mix of the in-person and the digital, showing both the desire to return to 'live' practice after the global pandemic, as well as a pragmatic and effective retention of accessible, inclusive online meetings.

Our feature articles include invitations to get 'out there' with our study. Jennifer Neville and Megan Cavell report on their 'Riddlequest' project (p. 22), created in collaboration with National Trust: Sutton Hoo. 'Riddlequest' immerses members of the public in the language, literature and culture of Early Medieval England through an escape-room-inspired game. 'A Trip to the Battle Site at Maldon' (p. 23) gives one class' account of their visit to East Anglia, to test their question of 'whether the Viking messenger could be heard by Byrhtnoth's men' in *The Battle of Maldon*.

In the digital realm, we would like to celebrate the development of TOEBI workshops (see p. 26), which began this summer with sessions on manuscripts and

corpus linguistics, and have continued this autumn with a special session (in collaboration with The Spanish Society for Medieval English Language and Literature and Disinventing Old English) and a December session on digital resources. The series presents excellent opportunities for scholars to share and expand their expertise, and enhances TOEBI's commitment to support the teaching of Old English.

Looking ahead to next year, we are excited to bring the TOEBI spirit to Birmingham for the 2023 conference—keep an eye out for further announcements. We would also like to thank outgoing committee members for their work and to welcome the new. Dr Margaret Tedford is retiring from her position as Webmaster, and to this post we welcome Dr Patricia O'Connor (Newcastle University) who will be starting in January; we also welcome to the committee Claire Poynton-Smith (TCD) and Robyn McAuliffe (UCC), who are taking over from Abigail Williams as Postgraduate Representatives. This is also our last newsletter as Editors, and we would like to take a moment to thank everyone for their generous contributions over the last three years. Working closely with our community and sharing your successes has been a wonderful experience, and we wish the best of luck to the incoming editor, Dr Fran Brooks (York), and one more editor yet to be confirmed.

Rachel Burns
University of Oxford

Niamh Kehoe
Heinrich-Heine-Universitat Düsseldorf

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Conference award reports

TOEBI invites applications from members who are graduate students or recent PhDs without a full-time post to support conference attendance (in-person or online). Below, some recent recipients of TOEBI support present reports on their activities.

I am thrilled to have been offered a grant from TOEBI, which aided my participation in the 2022 conference entitled 'Transitions', held at the University of Bristol. This formed part of an on-going series of postgraduate conferences, funded by the Centre for Medieval studies. The conference itself was broad in scope, with papers from all walks of medievalism, and in addition, offered the chance to meet other postgraduate students at various stages in their academic career. As my first ever conference paper, this was a perfect debut for my research, which has not only been greatly improved by the sessions I attended, but also by the comments and feedback received from other delegates.

In a nutshell, the conference endeavoured to promote how principles of transition can be observed in the manifold institutions, organisations and cultures that operated in medieval Britain and Europe. My Old English contribution to this theme, entitled 'Wyrd-Cræft: Unearthing Ecological Activity in *The Ruin*' offered an in-depth analysis of the poem's crumbling architecture, which lies between states of construction and deconstruction. These transitional states were observed as an expression of the non-human ecological forces that form part of the poem's theme of ruination, and moreover, as natural forces that continue to shape and redefine (not just destroy!) the human-built landscape long after we are gone.

As part of the environmental dynamics panel, my paper was read amongst other contributions that explored the medieval through the lens of ecology and environment.

Of the many other sessions that took place over the two days, my panel formed part of a collective whole that was ambitious in its breadth. For instance, some panels focused on language change and cultural impact, while others anchored towards political power and transformation, as well as Islamic identity and formation. As a result of this, a poignant message emerged: nothing is ever stable. Indeed, as showcased at Bristol, this is true of the medieval, which experienced just as much transition over the centuries, both macro and micro, as we do in our ever-evolving modern world.

Joseph Burton
University of Manchester

A TOEBI grant enabled me to attend the International Medieval Congress at the University of Leeds in July and to present my paper, 'Across the Border: Anti-Nationalism and Radical Early Medieval Translation in Contemporary Poetry'. Drawing on two chapters from my recently completed practice-based PhD at Royal Holloway University of London, *Ancient Tongues: Radical Encounters with the Early Medieval in Late Modernist and Experimental Poetry*, my paper foregrounded translation and political response in the work of poets Caroline Bergvall and Anthony (Vahni) Capildeo. Drawing on a close reading of one of Bergvall's source texts, the Old Norse Eddic poem *Hávamál*, I asked how an early medieval ethics of responsibility to strangers might speak to the contemporary politics of migrant refugees in the UK state. I then engaged with contemporary debate around the racism, xenophobia and nationalism that are deeply embedded in academic study and popular reception of early medieval culture in the UK and USA. Drawing on recent critical theory by Dr Mary Rambaran-Olm and Dr Jonathan Hsy, I explored how Capildeo responds to the Old English poem 'Wulf and Eadwacer' as a text of 'islandedness', using the dynamics

of border crossing and navigation across geographical, cultural and temporal divides to create interrogative, pluralist work. It was a real joy to present this work as part of 'Beyond Medievalism: New to Old across Place, Bodies and Language', a panel organised by my colleagues and friends Dr Francesca Brooks (University of York) and Dr Carl Kears (King's College London) with whom I've been lucky to collaborate during the writing of my thesis. This innovative and energizing panel explored modern and contemporary engagements with medieval texts and their rich, often turbulent reception histories, through discussions of the poet Bill Griffiths' Old English *Maldon* translations on the canals of East Anglia (Carl Kears); the queer medievalisms of artist Derek Jarman and writer Robert Glück (Emily Harless); John Clare's Saint Guthlac (Emma Nuding); and Welsh feminist medievalisms in Lynette Roberts and Brenda Chamberlain (Francesca Brooks). As in past years, the IMC created a vibrant space for sharing ideas, and I left Leeds with a new set of critical coordinates – and many wonderful new comrades – to carry into future research.

Rowan Evans

Royal Holloway, University of London

The funding I received from TOEBI allowed me to attend the 2022 Leeds International Medieval Congress, where – along with Dr Mike Bintley and Dr Anke Bernau – I participated in a session titled 'Imagining the Edge: Negotiating Ecofacts and Fictions of the Middle Ages'. We devised the session collaboratively, bringing together Anke's work on late medieval hedgerows and mine and Mike's work on Old English boundary clauses. Focusing on the material and conceptual boundaries that cleave human and nonhuman, here and there, 'us' and 'them', our papers explored the ecologies of responsibility and care that are created and negotiated in medieval texts.

The session, which was chaired by Dr Kate Franklin, attracted a large cross-disciplinary audience and generated a lively Q&A. Old English boundary clauses have only recently begun to attract the attention of literary scholars, so I was delighted that my paper seemed to spark people's interest in how these strange texts were composed, performed, and understood.

I was especially grateful for the opportunity to attend the IMC as I have spent most of my PhD in isolation, both during lockdown and, since returning to campus, as the only occupant of a previously busy graduate workspace. It was from this empty office that I presented at the virtual 2021 IMC – a detached and somewhat deflating experience. Attending the 2022 IMC in person, as well as the process of developing the session with Anke and Mike, gave me a welcome reminder of the value of conferences as a vehicle for collaborative research.

Abi Bleach

School of Arts Languages & Cultures University of Manchester

The Evolving Language of Lechery: Developing Lustful Language in Vernacular Saints' Lives

I am very grateful to be a recipient of this TOEBI grant, which allowed me to attend the 2022 International Medieval Congress. After two virtual IMCs, I was delighted when my supervisor encouraged me to propose a session, and I drew up a call for papers and found a moderator for the chosen title of 'Operating at the intersection: digital and computational approaches to the large-scale analysis of medieval texts'. Ultimately, we were able to coordinate two truly international panels, and I presented

my paper at one and moderated the other (which included great papers from my supervisor Mark Faulkner, Svetlana Yatsyk, and Estellee Guéville). The moderator for my session was Tom Revell, a brilliant PhD researcher at the University of Oxford who I had first met and discovered common research interests with via the IMC in 2021.

It was my privilege to present alongside Marie Vaňková, an independent scholar, and Ondřej Tichý, the director of the Institute of English Language and Didactics at Univerzita Karlova. The 'Operating at the intersection' sessions focused on how recent technological leaps have enabled previously inconceivable approaches to medieval texts, and particularly how straddling the disciplinary boundaries between corpus linguistics, computational analysis, and traditional literary study provides us with new perspectives. Each of the papers succeeded in highlighting the productivity of adopting an interdisciplinary approach to analysis, whether we use it to dig deeper into individual collections of texts, analyse chronological and geographical patterns, or problematise traditional classifications.

In my own paper I wanted to illustrate, through one example, the potential of a blended corpus linguistics and close-reading approach since it allows us to not only evaluate how individual words are used to express themes, but spot meaningful patterns across texts and develop a deeper understanding of the metaphorical strands a lexical field encompasses.

My paper, 'The Evolving Language of Lechery', drew on my PhD research into the language of lust in vernacular saints' lives between c.950 and c.1250. As a jumping-off point, I explained my choice of lemmata, use of digital resources, and choice of focal period (between those phases we traditionally demarcate as Old and Middle English).

The digital tools used for the paper included thesauruses, dictionaries, and the interactive Mapping Metaphor tool (which accompanies the Historical Thesaurus). I elaborated on my use of the corpus linguistics program AntConc and calculation of Regular Expression (RegEx) search strings that covered spelling variation for the 300 year span of my selected lemmata and enabled me to search corpora for these lust words.

To summarise: lustful language appears at moments in these texts where resolve or restraint is tested (often by a devil or demon), where certain figures are depicted as wretched or shameful, or where the text moralises and advises its listener or reader to defend their body. We also see collocative patterns with lexical fields of filth, wretchedness and fire, and patterns of connotation, imagery, and metaphor which add conceptual dimensions of shame/disgrace, neglect, and weakness/frivolity. These patterns also allowed examination of instances where lust had a tangible form: that of aggressor/attacker (e.g. demon, military force) or landscape (e.g. lake/swamp of sin).

I used the -lust- (lust) word family to model my blended quantitative and qualitative approach, enumerating hits and noting their frequency in the Old English lives of *Mary of Egypt* and *Vitae Patrum* (life of Malchus) and Early Middle English *Passiun of Seinte Margarete*. I then discussed the occurrences of lust clustered around concerns about sexual desire as something (a) potentially threatening, destructive (with specific fire/burning images), (b) transient/temporary, (c) wicked/sinful, (d) wasteful/neglectful (particularly in the dung language in, for example, the lives of *Eugenia* and *Seinte Margarete*). I also noted the collocative pattern of lust with "fleshly" adjectives (*lichamlic/lichamlich*, *flæslic/fleshlich*).

I used excerpts from Ælfrician material to further illuminate these ideas, followed by a close-reading of further specific examples: for example the language of degradation and burning in Mary of Egypt (324–330) and in the *Passiun of Seinte Margarete* (v.12). I used these to (re)consider and test if the saints' lives evidenced the diachronic developments suggested by the Mapping Metaphor resources concerning metaphorical links between licentiousness and ill-health, smell, destruction and dirtiness in Old English, and dirtiness, animals, and heat in Early Middle English. Perhaps unsurprisingly, these differences were not as marked in the texts under discussion, where language of the heat and burning of lust, its foulness, and its destructive potential is evidenced in lives either side of the perceived language rupture.

The 2022 International Medieval Congress was my first chance to give a paper in person, and one I am hugely grateful for. I had not anticipated the amount of, and value of, organic conversation stemming from the paper. Furthermore, remote conferences and presentations were a lifeline during the first two (isolated) years of my PhD, but this year's IMC really helped me feel a sense of belonging to the medievalist community that I had not experienced before.

Claire Poynton-Smith
Trinity College Dublin

I am very grateful for the grant support I received from TOEBI, which allowed me to attend the 2022 *International Medieval Congress*, where I delivered a paper on "Old English Biblical Poetry and the Boundaries of Genre" as part of a session on Old English Biblical Poetry organised by Emma Knowles and Daniel Anlezark.

My paper interrogated the use and scope of the term "biblical" in relation to the classification and study of Old English poetry, as its application is almost exclusively limited to *Judith* and the poems contained in the Junius 11 MS. Instead, I suggested that the term should not be used for the sole purpose of establishing textual taxonomies, but to describe how Old English poetry engages with biblical material on a social level; namely, through the shared knowledge and currency of biblical texts, themes, and motifs as part of their broad and sustained circulation in the early medieval period, which allowed them to infiltrate and influence vernacular poetic composition. To illustrate this, I examined how the language of lament that permeates the Psalms might have influenced the poetic diction of *The Seafarer* or *The Wife's Lament*, while *The Ruin* echoes the imagery and phraseology of biblical laments for ruined temples and cities. The ensuing discussion revolved around the implications that rethinking genre categories and their effect on the perceived canon of Old English poetry might have when incorporated into teaching strategies.

Beyond the strictly professional and academic, the atmosphere of IMC 2022 was one of collegiality and enthusiasm. The chance to regain contact with colleagues and meet old and new friends in person for the first time since early 2020 offered an opportunity to resume important conversations and invited all participants to look forward as we (re)build networks and create new and exciting opportunities. Thanks to the support I received from TOEBI, I was able to become an active part in these conversations and very much look forward to seeing some of them come to fruition at next year's conference.

Francisco J. Rozano-García
National University of Ireland Galway

Reports from TOEBI 2021

Continuing recent tradition, we have included below summaries of several papers of the 2021 TOEBI Conference, for the interest of those who were unable to attend. Many thanks to the contributors for taking time to write these reports.

The Editors.

Making Sense of Feelings: Affective Criticism and the Boundaries of Empathy in "Wulf and Eadwacer"

In the Old English poem *Wulf and Eadwacer*, the vocabulary of emotion works on a structurally associative basis to create a disjointed narrative of distress and isolation that cannot be read within a clear line of logical or chronological progression. The sole unifying element in the text is the repeated line 'Ungelic[e] is us' ('We are different' / 'It is different with us'), where each occurrence introduces a turning point within the speaker's cyclical disruption and reintegration of thought.

The challenging allusiveness of the poem has inspired countless interpretations based on extra-textually constructed dramatic frameworks, all of which rely on generic preconceptions and empathic engagement with reimagined narratives to impose rational order on the poem's emotional turmoil. However, this interpretive process transcends the limits of the text-world of the poem and becomes an exercise in affective criticism that privileges reader response and the modern affective bias over textual evidence.

This paper argued that lack of contextual information or a linear narrative in *Wulf and Eadwacer* should

not be seen a an obstacle to its interpretation or as a defect in textual transmission, but as an invitation to engage with the poem at a deeper structural level as a projection of the speakers' mental and emotional processes. In this way, it is possible to produce a satisfactory reading of the poem while respecting its textual integrity.

Francisco J. Rozano-García
National University of Ireland Galway

Dr Alice Jorgensen presented under the title 'Laughter and Mourning in *The Battle of Maldon*'. She argued that the notorious crux of Byrhtnoth's *ofermod* and his exultant laughter shortly before death are both ambivalent moments that shift meaning in response to an audience's emotions and desires. She went on to read the last stand of Byrhtnoth's loyal thanes as a scene in which sorrow is effortfully converted into action.

Report from the TOEBI Roundtable: Precarity and Inclusivity

During the TOEBI Annual Conference in November 2021, Dr. Francisco Rozano-García and I ran a roundtable session to discuss issues of precarity and inclusivity in medieval academia faced by postgraduates and early career researchers. This is a delicate subject for many in academia, but it was one that many researchers and students struggle with, often alone. It was a subject flagged up as an important matter on the TOEBI PGR and ECR survey sent out at the beginning of the autumn term in 2021. We set up this session to provide attendees with a moment to discuss their experiences and reflect upon how TOEBI can face these difficulties in the future.

I have always found TOEBI to be a kind and supportive group for everyone whether you are a new student of Old English or a seasoned lecturer. It was this strong sense of community which made this session rewarding. Our speakers (Kelli Conley, Dr Margaret Tedford, and Dr Neville

Mogford) offered their personal experiences, and the conference attendees provided an encouraging and open atmosphere to discuss some of the more 'risky' aspects of research in our field. These included issues of lack of positions and experience, uncertain contracts, discrimination, lack of support and workloads. It was an emotional but constructive time to consider how we as a research community, inside or outside of a Higher Education environment, can help each other past the issues of job security and lack of inclusivity, and to offer support for our colleagues and fellow researchers.

We hope to continue to work with our peers to create more spaces and opportunities for postgraduates and ECRs of TOEBI in the form of an online platform, mentoring, workshops, chat spaces, and more. A direct result of this session is the creation of the TOEBI Workshop Series (see further p. 26).

Abigail Williams
University of Nottingham

MedievalWiki at TOEBI 2021

Fran Allfrey and Beth Whalley

Twelve brave would-be Wikidata editors joined us (Beth and Fran, with our MedievalWiki hats on) on Zoom first thing in the morning at TOEBI 2021. This two-hour workshop was the first TOEBI Wikithon, and we focussed the session on Wikidata.

We'll give some of the headline figures, then outline the aims of MedievalWiki, what Wikidata is and why scholars might want to edit. We'll then revisit the outcomes and discussions from the workshop, with suggestions of how TOEBI members may wish to explore the Wiki-verse further in teaching and research.

The edit-a-thon

12 Editors
Made 333 edits
On 35 different Wikidata items (of which, 29 were brand new items)
30 references added to items
Between November 2021 and April 2022, items edited by workshop participants have been viewed 1.37k times.

MedievalWiki

MedievalWiki is a collective of editors dedicated to improving the Wiki family of sites. We (Beth, Fran, and Lucy Moore) have run several events where we train colleagues on how to edit Wikipedia and Wikidata. You can read more about our past workshops on our blog https://medievalwomenwiki.wordpress.com/.

MedievalWiki aims to increase citations to work by Black medievalists and medievalists of colour, women, non-binary, and queer scholars, to add references to critical race, feminist, and queer theory-informed medieval scholarship, and to create or improve related biographical pages. Anyone can edit under the banner of MedievalWiki if your aims align.

We have a Dashboard which records all logged edits within a certain time period—here's our stats from the events we have run under the medievalwiki umbrella so far. Don't underestimate impact!

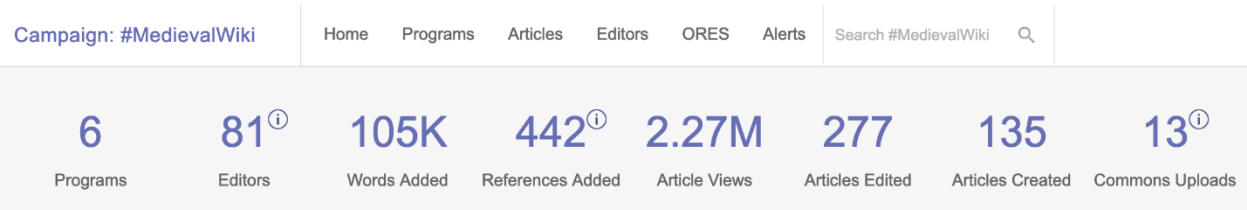


Image 1: The MedievalWiki dashboard

What is Wikidata?

In short, Wikidata aims to document and connect every person, place, object, and concept in human history: to structure the sum of all human knowledge. Wikidata is a free, multilingual, structured knowledge base that can be read and edited by humans and machines.

As with all Wiki projects, thousands of real people—volunteers—make Wikidata happen, working together to improve individual items and the structures that organise them. YOU can join in—there's no need to ask permission!

Because Wikidata is machine-readable, it has some 'codes' to get used to. Every item on Wikidata is known by a unique identifier called a Q number. Different variations of a name can then be 'attached' to the same Q number, so that you know it's the same thing, in different languages/variations. For instance, Hild of Whitby's Q number is Q257500, and within this item 'Hild', 'Hilda', 'Saint Hilda', 'Hilda of Whitby', are all recorded as variant names. This means that if you search any of those names, the same Q number item will appear.

Databases such as Wikidata are the backbone of the internet. Digital assistants (Siri, Alexa, Google) can pull information from Wikidata and present it to their users. A lot of companies developing AI use Wikidata as part of their knowledge base. If you type into Google 'when was Hild of Whitby born', Wikidata is feeding into generating the results. Because Wikidata is open and accessible, it can make data from libraries and other institutions more accessible too. Over 700 databases are linking their items to

Wikidata items though 'identifiers' (for instance, VIAF numbers, accession numbers, or ORCID IDs). Just as you can think of Wikipedia as an encyclopedia of encyclopedias, you can think of Wikidata as a database of databases.

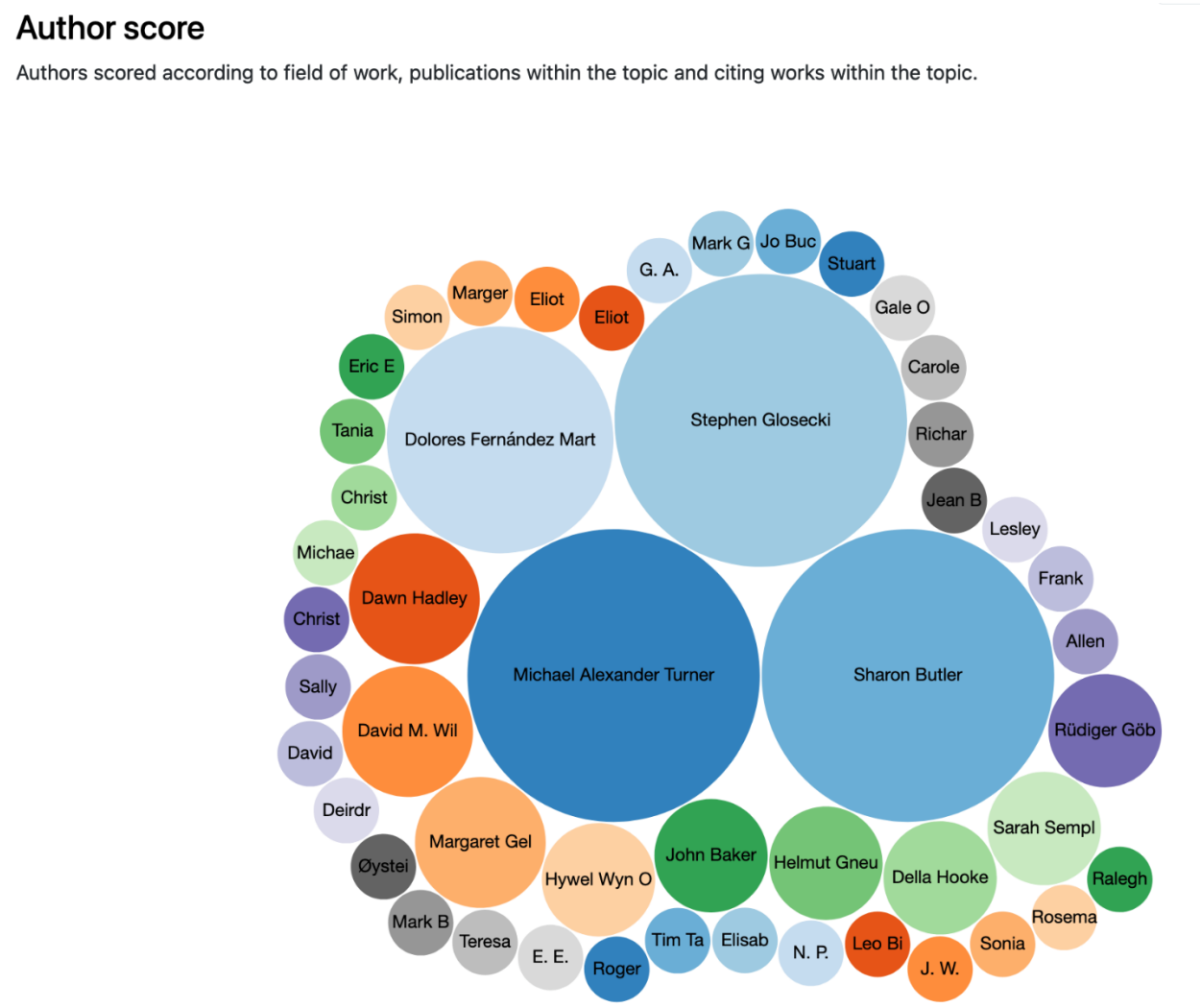
The possibilities of open structured data are huge. It's being increasingly used by galleries, libraries, museums, and researchers, as it makes collections more accessible, and makes connections between collections and items more visible. One project that we love which combines opportunities for student learning, research, and enriching, sharing, manipulating and visualising a dataset is the Scottish Witches at the University of Edinburgh. You can read more about it at http://witches.is.ed.ac.uk/

Why edit Wikidata?

If you've used or edited Wikipedia before you may know that there are 'notability' criteria for articles, which often works to the exclusion of marginalised scholars and topics, as it reinforces canonical, patriarchal, 'Western' criteria for notability. Wikidata has 'notability' criteria too, but they are a lot less restrictive. If 1) the item (a person, a work, or a concept) exists, 2) it can be linked to other items and 3) you have sources proving their existence, then it's probably fair game. Although Wikidata is more inclusive than Wikipedia in some ways, its content still often reflects the same biases as Wikipedia (as biases are reproduced by whomever is doing the editing). This means that women and people of colour, and their work, tend to be under-represented. So, if we have a person—a scholar—who we can prove exists with reference to works they have produced, or if we have the work of a scholar—no matter how early career—that has been published in a reputable location, the person and their work ARE notable enough for Wikidata. By editing marginalised or radical scholars and their work into Wikidata, we raise their profile—they are more likely to turn up in online searches.

Wikidata can also be a great way to build an academic profile using other tools which present that data in accessible ways. For instance, the website 'Scholia' can generate an academic profile using Wikidata—especially useful for early career or precarious academics or anyone who has changed institutions (how often do 'legacy' profiles remain on old university websites, or just get lost?). Scholia also has tools for visualising links between people and topics, although the visualisation is only as rich as the data it has to hand. Just look at the names associated with 'Old English'

according to Scholia (Image 2). This is why it is so important to add missing voices and their work to Wikidata. Remember that Wikidata is driving Google searches: ensuring that scholars and their publications are 'attached' to key subjects in Wikidata will mean that these people and their work are more likely to show up when students, journalists, or other researchers are looking up a given topic.



[Image 2: Authors associated with "Old English" Q42365 https://scholia.toolforge.org/topic/Q42365]

The TOEBI Wikidata Workshop

It was fabulous to have such a range of experts participate in the workshop, with Old English and Old Norse, emotions, hagiography, riddles, the natural world, gender, manuscripts, medievalism and archaeology all represented in the room. Of the twelve participants, three folks had edited Wikipedia before (with two editing in a classroom assignment context as a student and teacher), and everyone was new to Wikidata.

Among other items, participants added data for: Sister Marie Michelle Walsh and her works; Elisabeth Okasha and her works; Megan Cavell and her works; Ann Knock; Diane Watt; Chiara Giancoli; Jane Roberts; and Clare Lees. Participants were interested to find that, sometimes, a book or article already had a Wikidata item, but its author did not. When editing Wikidata, it is important to think of the webs of people, works, and concepts: each respective item needs to be created in Wikidata before it can be connected. This could prove to be a great prompt for classroom activities: students can research articles and writers, and compile lists of 'information to add' to then direct future editing activity.

We had some great (and extremely 'down the rabbit hole'!) discussions about how we can or should structure knowledge, which could be useful starting points for teaching. For instance, take *Beowulf*. Wikidata accommodates several items, with their corresponding different Q numbers, with the name 'Beowulf'. We have Q48328, Beowulf, 'the Old English epic poem' which has a value of as 'found in' Q1227468, The Nowell Codex. We also have Q1281177, Beowulf, who is an instance of Q21070568, 'A human who may be fictional', and who is 'present in' Q48328, 'Beowulf the Old English epic poem'. We might argue whether this Q21070568 Beowulf 'human who may be fictional' should also be associated with the variety of other 'Beowulf' items—such as the Zemeckis film (Q644933), the Heaney translation (Q85746648) or the 'Beowulf and Grendel' film (Q818604). How far are these stories all about the same 'human who may be fictional'? And does Wikidata need a 'Ur-Beowulf' item, for the presumed lost older poem? These kinds of questions might help students to consider how editions, translations, and adaptations produce new Beowulfs, and to think through how we organise knowledge.

We also discussed how ability to add aliases to items is useful for ensuring that scholars who have worked under different names are linked to just one item. For

instance, Eileen A. Fradenburg Joy, Eileen Joy, and Eileen A. F. Joy are collected at item Q109454152. However, there are instances where you should exercise discretion when adding information to a Wikidata item. When assigning values to an item for a person, we don't need to provide the database with exhaustive information. As a minimum, an item for a person needs the value 'instance of: human'. If editing an item for a scholar, focus on information relevant to their scholarship. Of course, sometimes identity markers will be intrinsic to someone's scholarship—in which case they themselves will have written about it and so this can be added to Wikidata. But Wikidata should not be a place to 'out' people. If you know (or, equally, if you are not sure about) a scholar's trans or non-binary status, race, sexual orientation, or a dead name, and they haven't mentioned this in their scholarship, you should avoid adding it as a Wikidata value or alias. TOEBI workshop participants wondered whether trans folks should have new items for different names. I had to look this up post-workshop, and found that—at present—Wikidata is structured such that trans writers, writers with pseudonyms, or writers who have otherwise changed the names that they publish with, have one item, with all names collected in their aliases. You—or your students—may have different opinions about this: and this is where diverse voices are needed to help shape Wikidata policy, which is, as with all things Wiki, something that anyone can get involved with, but where marginalised voices should be most amplified.

An argument for including gender and race information on Wikidata is that this is needed to be able to evaluate Wikidata, and this data can fuel future work. For example, projects such as 'Women in Red' use Wikidata to generate lists of women who have Wikidata items, but don't have Wikipedia pages. These lists function as prompts for volunteers to draft pages: so, if a woman scholar has a Wikidata item, but their gender value is left empty, they would not appear on this list.

By the close of the workshop, many participants had items that they wanted to keep adding values to, or link up with other items. This is very much in the spirit of Wikidata! As with all Wiki projects, it's an ongoing, collaborative work in progress. If you don't have time to add lots of information in one go, adding small details is perfectly acceptable. Perhaps another editor will see what you've done and be inspired to add another snippet of info. If you're editing and get an error that you can't fathom, you should feel happy enough to leave it there and hope that a friendly editor

might fix it for you in the future (or you can come back to it at a later date!). This also makes Wikidata great for class assignments: your students cannot break Wiki projects (although you might have to prepare them to have particularly rogue contributions edited or queried by other Wikipedians).

Thank you to all the TOEBI MedievalWiki workshop participants. Your questions had us thinking hard and helped us learn so much about the possibilities and limitations of Wikidata. And massive thanks to Frances McCormack for welcoming us into the morning timeslot!

Are you a current or future MedievalWiki editor?

We'd love to know if anyone has used Wikipedia or Wikidata in their teaching or research. We're also very happy to collaborate and run sessions for your students or colleagues!

Follow us on Twitter @MedievalWiki

Sign up the MedievalWiki mailing list (very infrequent emails—notifications of events): http://eepurl.com/hMR92r

Find our slides used during the workshop here: https://tinyurl.com/TOEBIwikidata

Did you know?

The TOEBI website keeps a curated collection of links to resources for teaching (and studying) Old English, including:

online courses/exercises

online dictionaries

digital editions of OE texts

digitized manuscripts

databases in OE studies

blogs

videos

Junicode font

learned societies

and more: http://www.toebi.org.uk/resources/

Special Offer

TOEBI members enjoy a special 35% discount on all Boydell & Brewer titles. Find them online at www.boydellandbrewer.com. Use offer code BB434 during checkout. (Standard P&P will apply) For queries, email marketing@boydell.co.uk.

Riddlequest: a collaboration with the National Trust

We are thrilled to announce our collaboration with National Trust: Sutton Hoo and escape game designer Sacha Coward. The result is Riddlequest, Sutton Hoo's exciting new escape game experience. Inspired by video gaming, escape games are collaborative, in-person activities that involve solving puzzles and cracking codes within a set amount of time, in order to beat the organisers and escape the room, site or general threat of peril. With themes like 'haunted house' and 'science lab', escape games are designed according to an internal logic that governs everything from setting and decoration to the clues.

Tapping into the increasing popularity of these activities, we have co-designed an escape game at Sutton Hoo that will introduce early medieval languages, literature and cultural history to participants in ways that are collaborative, exciting and memorable. Your quest is to return an object, formerly belonging to King Rædelwulf, to its rightful place and escape a terrifying curse. There are challenges to complete along the way, including solving real early medieval riddles to unlock the secrets of the past. You have 1 hour!

Booking details can be found on the National Trust website (recommended for ages 10+): https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/events/38c29ddf-7f72-4284-a017-5c1c10e69107/pages/details

This experience was developed as part of the Arts and Humanities Research Council-funded project 'Group Identity and the Early Medieval Riddle Tradition'. You can read more about it on *The Riddle Ages* website: https://theriddleages.com/

Riddlequest launch
(Image: O&R Photography/National Trust)

Megan Cavell
University of Birmingham
Jennifer Neville
Royal Holloway, University of London

A Trip to the Battle Site at Maldon

The *Battle of Maldon*, taught as part of the 2021–22 Old English 2 module within University College London, was an enjoyable read with much to consider in terms of who triumphed over whom. One niggling question that lingered, however, was whether the Viking messenger could be heard by Byrhtnoth's men, across the causeway, from Northey Island to the mainland. Our class's interest developed from the suggestion that we should visit Maldon where we could find out for ourselves. In March 2022, we embarked on our quest. Aside from our specific curiosity, we also felt that we may come to understand the events of the battle better by visiting where it took place. The poet wished to favour the bravery of Byrhtnoth and his men, offsetting the courageous and loyal against the Viking 'wælwulfas' as well as the cowardly deserters.

Before we could visit, the National Trust had to be contacted. They gave permission for the class to visit the

Island, and after much planning, a tedious train journey, bus diversions and a fair walk, our little troop managed to reach the place set down in

history through wordcraft. It was a sunny day and the beasts of battle had apparently not gotten the memo to gather once again at the site. But we were there, the young thanes following the powerful 'drihtena' of the universities: Professor Richard North (UCL), Dr Eleni Ponirakis (UCL) and Professor Paul Cavill (Nottingham). Our class first paid homage to the Byrhtnoth statue that watches over the estuary. One must wonder if building a statue as such commemorates the man himself or his supposedly excessive 'ofermod.' Close by the statue stood tourist shacks and an information kiosk. This sense of commerce, though not exactly what Byhrnoth's men would have seen in their time, was characteristic of the trade the area would have known. Northey was a short walk away, and the path was

curved around the estuary. The wind picked up slightly and we were anxious that our voices might be carried away when we made our demands. We pondered a few questions along the way: would the messenger and Byrhtnoth have understood one another? Were they speaking the same language? Did cognates assist in any of this? We came to the conclusion, with help from the teaching members of our troop, that even if either side were using their own native languages, there was probably some common

understanding given the close proximity the two sides lived in throughout the age of invasion and pillaging.

Expecting a coast guard as vigilant as the one in *Beowulf*, we were surprised to find no one from the National Trust to challenge those who made their way across. Some of our stragglers had yet to catch up, so we sent three bright young thanes from class across to the island. They jogged over, looking mightily small in the distance: perhaps another reason Byrhtnoth was so confident in his army, which he would come to learn was a fatal mistake. When our trio reached the island, they let out a battle cry, and we yelled confirmation that we could hear them. With a textbook in hand, one bold Viking pretender projected their voice loud enough for us, Byrhtnoth's men, to hear their demands:

Mē sendon tō þē sǣmen snelle,
hēton ðē secgan þæt þū mōst sendan raðe
bēagas wið gebeorge and eōw betere is
þæt gē þisne gārrǣs mid gafole forgyldon
þon wē swā hearde hilde dǣlon…

The wind wasn't quite strong enough to steal their joined voice away, though perhaps one Viking alone would have had difficulty. Passing dog walkers noticed us and looked vaguely unsettled. Perhaps they understood the gravity of the situation. Once the demands were made, Richard took on the role of the hero and responded with Byrhtnoth's response. He answered the trio with proud refutations, and everyone cheered when he had done. Rather than have the Viking trio invade where we were standing, we instead decided to cross the causeway ourselves and investigate Northey Island. Eleni had kindly

brought along some mead and some shot glasses, and we all had a drink in honour of the history the place had witnessed. While we stood congratulating ourselves on finishing our investigation into the acoustics of the setting, toasting again with another round of mead, Richard read some flyting in Old Norse, translating it for those of us who did not understand the language. Afterwards, we all made camp on the grass and partook of various battle rations, namely sandwiches and biscuits. Northey Island proved a lush area full of green growth and some trees around the perimeter held back the wind. Once we had had our snacks, we journeyed on. Soon we came to a pebbly beach, and without a word to each other, all started looking for old relics in the shape of fossils and peculiar rocks. Half a ceramic bottle of R White's Lemonade was discovered, most likely from the 1800s. We also came upon a bench and, there being mead remaining, the pun demanded fealty—we rested the bottle on the seating and created a real life 'medubenc'. We made another toast before making our retreat, having satisfied our curiosity as to the events of the poem.

For an event so far in the past, we more than often rely on biased accounts presented by those wishing to commemorate various people for various things. The *Battle of Maldon* is such a work, but even then, our class wished to find out more, and visiting the site helped us to satisfy some of our more technical curiosities as to the 'factual' nature of the poem, as daring as using this word may seem. More than anything, it was a brilliant way for our small group to celebrate our own experience as students of medieval literature in 2022, and will long remain in our memories, even if we decide not to record the event through poetry ourselves.

Text of the poem taken from:
Marsden, Richard. *The Cambridge Old English Reader,* 2nd ed. (Cambridge: CUP, 2021). Print.

Raven McGovern
University College London

Introducing: TOEBI Workshop Series

We have been working on a series of workshops and seminars in order to provide a space for researchers to collaborate, showcase, and discuss different areas of early medieval research. One of the topics, which the roundtable highlighted (see p. 12), was the lack of opportunities for researchers to talk to each other about their subjects and methods for overcoming problems in their projects. In our individual research areas, there is not always an easy way to find information about different ways to investigate sources and new resources. These workshops offer a chance to explore areas such as manuscript studies, corpus linguistics, archaeology, place names, and many more.

Our first workshop for the Summer Series went ahead this month with Prof. Elaine Treharne who gave a 2-hour session on Old English manuscripts and scribes. This was an informal but informative discussion, which covered various aspects of working with manuscripts, including scribal hands, cataloguing, and descriptions. The second session in July focused on corpus linguistics and databases with Dr. Daria Izdebska. This was a practical opportunity to become familiar with the digitial side of Old English research. For more details about the series, please visit our Eventbrite page (https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/toebi-teachers-of-old-english-in-britain-and-ireland-47475789383). Alternatively, please contact myself at abigail.williams@nottingham.ac.uk, or Francisco at francisco.rozano-garcia@nuigalway.ie.

Abigail Williams
University of Nottingham

Book *Reviews*

Textual Identities in Early Medieval England: Essays in Honour of Katherine O'Brien O'Keeffe.

Jacqueline Fay, Rebecca Stephenson and Renée E. Trilling (eds). Anglo-Saxon Studies 42. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2022. vii + 325 pp., 18 black and white illustrations. Hardcover £70. ISBN 978-1-84384-5624-6.

This collection of essays honours Katherine O'Brien O'Keeffe not only in the number, range and quality of the essays, but more particularly in the focus on O'Brien O'Keeffe's interests. The blurb on the back cover claims the articles 'all question received wisdom and challenge critical consensus on key issues of humanistic inquiry', but the book is more interesting and more enlightening than this might suggest: it is not particularly reactionary and in some ways not especially novel in its approach. This is partly because the fundamental work of challenging critical consensus was done by O'Brien O'Keeffe (and others of her time), and the present essays develop and expand into the intellectual space that she first broke open to cultivation. The distinguishing feature of the collection for me was a welcome warmth, a sense of pleasure in the material studied, and a habitual generosity, which all reflect O'Brien O'Keeffe's approach to the subject and her attitude to students and colleagues. Almost at random, one could pick out Nicole Guenther Discenza's treatment of 'wonder' in the Old English Boethius, Jennifer Lorden's focus on 'desire' in the Alfredian *Pastoral Care*, and Emily Thornbury's attention to the law 'pleasing' people, among others: these essays find delight (indeed, consensus) where things might have been seen as fairly dreary hitherto.

Following the introduction by the editors, there are eleven essays divided into three parts: 'Affect and embodied cognition in medieval didactic texts'; 'Sovereignty, power, and English textual identities'; and 'Acts of public record in making and sustaining communities'. Then there is a detailed appreciation of O'Brien O'Keeffe's scholarly work, a list of her published books and articles, indexes and a *tabula gratulatoria*. The general index, though relatively brief, is especially valuable in a book such as this. The introduction

broadly indicates the rationale for the division of the essays into sections, and the topics covered. O'Brien O'Keeffe's main interests are represented throughout: textual interpretation; manuscript studies; early medieval to early modern history; the law; body, soul and mind; theology and hagiography.

An interesting and engaging feature of several of the essays is the way in which a focus on one aspect of a topic leads to detailed discussion of an adjacent or more general one. Striking examples of this are Leslie Lockett's essay on the use of Prudentius texts in Old English leading to probing questions about concepts of, and interactions between, the mind, the brain and the soul; Timothy Graham's analysis of Abraham Wheelock's 1643 edition of Bede's *Historia* and how it is deployed by an Anglican clergyman to heal the theological breaches in the early modern English church; Miranda Wilcox's discussion of St Rumwold which elucidates how infant baptism was understood to function in a spiritual and social context in early medieval England; and Jonathan Davis-Secord's work on 'women on display' in Ælfric's hagiography considering medieval theories of vision.

Benjamin Salzman's well-illustrated chapter on 'Adam and Eve's hands and eyes' deals with gesture principally in the Junius 11 manuscript. There are some intriguing observations here, notably the way the illustrations pick up ideas from the text, for example the shape of the fruit offered to Adam by Eve being like an eye, and the linguistic and visual pun on *æppel* in *Genesis B* 637a as 'apple' and 'pupil of the eye'. Stacey Klein has a very thorough discussion of bird imagery in her treatment of the fall of the tree-climber in *The Fortunes of Men*, raising questions about the ontological boundaries between birds and humans. I was not wholly convinced that the ideas applied as well to the hanged man, said to be in 'ghastly imitation of bird flight', or the supposed parallels here with Odin, or indeed the idea that the *sum sceal* listing phrase in the poem represents 'human birdsong'. But the point that humans can be observed to adopt animal characteristics and participate with them in 'the fundamental rhythms of nature' is well made.

Jacob Hobson's chapter, 'Conflict, consent, and English identity during Godwin's exile', subtly traces how Edward the Confessor, Godwin, and the English body politic resolved or at least managed tensions between English and Norman influences in the

mid-eleventh-century royal court. Scott Smith's chapter on the 'Peterborough interpolations' is a very thorough source and rhetorical study of the additions to the C Text of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. Texts, many originally from charters, are manipulated into chronicle and narrative modes, and contextualised in relation to Peterborough's sense of its history and its need for validation of its foundational documents after the fire in the early twelfth century.

The presentation of this collection is a credit to both authors and editors. A typo appears on page 269: the *Beowulf* manuscript is Cotton Nero A. xv not A. x. A translation perhaps misses some subtleties in the Old English. On page 64, *The Wanderer* 14, *hycge swa he wille*, is translated 'think what he may' in a discussion of feelings, and is said to relate to 'the trope of suppressing emotion'. But the point that is being made, that feelings in some way 'involved ... an act of will', would perhaps be better illustrated by the more accurate translation of the poetic phrase 'let him think as he wishes'. The phrase here seems to distinguish between the *process* of thinking and feeling, the one involuntary, the other an act of the will. And in this sense it is a counterpoint to, and not the same as, Beowulf's injunction to Hrothgar not to mourn, which distinguishes between feeling and action, both voluntary, but in Hrothgar's case, not equally achievable. The *Beowulf* lines are also inaccurately translated in footnote 29.

These are fine essays which celebrate a fine scholar. The conclusion to the volume summarises the work nicely: 'In the chapters of this volume can be seen the diversity and brilliance of Katherine's legacy; it is a truly fitting tribute to her as a scholar and a mentor.' So it is.

Paul Cavill
University of Nottingham

Medieval Manuscripts in the Digital Age. Benjamin Albritton, Georgia Henley, and Elaine Treharne (eds). Digital Research in the Arts and Humanities, London: Routledge, 2021. 250 pages, 22 black and white illustrations. E-Book £36.99. ISBN: 978-1-003-00344-1.

Medieval Manuscripts in the Digital Age is dedicated to Parker Library on the Web 2.0 or Parker 2.0 (https://parker.stanford.edu/parker/), an open access digital repository designed to support the study of the

manuscripts in the Parker Library at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge (CCCC). At its core, *Medieval Manuscripts in the Digital Age* is deeply concerned with access. An awareness of inequitable access to technology, and to the internet specifically, extends throughout the volume. In section one of the Introduction, "I: Investigating digital archives", Elaine Treharne addresses the digital divide within the scholarly community stating, "we are conscious that not every reader can reliably access Parker on the Web, or the Internet more broadly" (2). Similarly, in section two of the Introduction, "II: Parker on the Web", Benjamin Albritton clarifies the importance of the International Image Interoperability Framework (IIIF), the standard for best practice in sharing image-based content online, and its potential for revolutionising manuscript studies in an accessible manner for the uninitiated reader: "it makes each manuscript a portable digital object, one that can be displayed, analysed, enhanced, and annotated in any compatible environment" (Albritton 11). The remediation of the medieval manuscript into a digital object is an important and recurring concept throughout the entire volume, with each chapter applauding the advantages and critiquing the challenges of studying the medieval manuscripts of the Parker Library "from a distance" via a digital environment (2).

Medieval Manuscripts in the Digital Age is a welcome and significant contribution to scholarship in terms of both its scope and its subject matter. The various methodological approaches employed throughout this volume are neatly arranged into five parts, each with four accessible and absorbing chapters that cogently combine thought-provoking theoretical reflections with detailed case studies, but the individual chapters can only be summarised briefly in this review due to the number of contributions in this volume. The first part of the volume, "Part 1: Theory and practice", provides the theoretical foundation which underpins and informs each subsequent study. Astrid Smith's chapter, "What it is to be a digitization specialist: Chasing medieval materials in a sea of pixels", provides a fitting beginning to the entire volume by offering readers an invaluable insight into the different stages of the digitisation process, while Keri Thomas's chapter, "From the divine to the digital: Digitization as resurrection and reconstruction", contemplates the digitisation process as a continuation of the devotional experience that characterised the

creation of the physical manuscript book (31). In "A note on technology and functionality in digital manuscript studies", Abigail Robertson informs readers of the inherent hierarchy underpinning the key terminology for referring to the manuscript in digital format and Andrew Prescott's chapter, "Ways of seeing manuscripts: Exploring Parker 2.0", discusses the importance of digital imaging technology for democratising access to medieval manuscripts. Collectively, the initial chapters of this volume enlighten readers about the crucial first steps in making medieval manuscripts available online and the chief considerations for appraising medieval manuscripts in a digital format.

"Part 2: Materialities" focuses on the functionality of Parker 2.0 and the capacity of the digital object to facilitate codicological and palaeographical research. Orietta Da Rold's chapter, "A note on Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 210", highlights how the image viewing software of Parker 2.0, Mirador, can facilitate the comparative analysis of the codicological and palaeographical differences between manuscripts and emphasises the importance of fully exploiting the resource's underlying data to facilitate quantitative analysis of the Parker Library's collection. In "Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 367 Part II: A study in (digital) codicology" Peter Stokes presents an excellent example of how integrating interactive visualisation software tools such as VisColl (https://viscoll.org/) with Parker 2.0 can represent challenging codicological structures more effectively. Anya Adair's chapter, "Pocket change: Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 383 and the value of the virtual object", addresses the limitations of the digital object in conveying the weight and scale of the manuscript online, and stresses the importance of the consulting the manuscript dimension information on Parker 2.0. The "Materialities" section of the volume closes with Siân Echard's chapter, "Rolling with it: Navigating absence in the digital realm", which explores how the image comparison functionality of Parker 2.0 can aid researchers in determining which scenes from Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* might have filled the vacant spaces in CCCC MS 61's incomplete programme of decoration. Given its shared consideration of codicological concerns and careful attention to both the benefits and limitations of the digital object, "Part 2: Materialities" will surely serve specialists and students well.

Moving away from the material attributes of medieval manuscripts, "Part 3: Translation and Transmission" engages experts and equip novices on the merits of Parker 2.0's multi-manuscript comparison functionality for textual scholarship. In "'Glocal' matters: The Gospels of St Augustine as a codex in translation" Mateusz Fafinski imparts a helpful explanation of the term translation and ruminates on the global and local contexts of CCCC MSS 41 and 286. Equally extolling Parker 2.0 in his chapter, "Encyclopaedic notes in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 320", John J. Gallagher emphasises how the image comparison functionality of Parker 2.0 expediates the editorial process by enabling editors to consult various textual witnesses simultaneously with extraordinary ease. David F. Johnson promotes the incorporation of other interoperable resources such as DigiPal (https://www.digipal.eu/), a digital resource for the study of medieval handwriting, to combine palaeographical comparison with the multi-manuscript viewing capacity of Parker 2.0 in "Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 322: Tradition and transmission". The importance of the digital object for aiding close analysis of textual additions is reinforced in Sharon M. Rowley's chapter, "Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 41 and 286: Digitization as translation" which reconsiders the early eleventh century manuscript witness of the Old English Bede and affirms the usefulness of its remarkable range of marginal texts. The four complementary and cohesive chapters of "Part 3" afford readers an excellent understanding of digitisation as translation and provide a helpful introductory resource for those approaching digital humanities for the first time.

Maintaining its critical focus on digitisation as translation, the fourth part of this volume, "Of Multimedia and Multilingual", encourages readers to examine manuscripts holistically using Parker 2.0. A. Joseph McMullen invites readers to read the text of Matthew Paris' *Chronica majora* alongside its prefatory materials using Mirador's multi-window manuscript viewing possibilities in "Fragmentation and wholeness in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 16". Lindy Brady immerses readers in an engrossing discussion of the form and function of medieval glossaries in "Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 144 and 402: Mercian intellectual culture in pre-Conquest England (and beyond)" which explores the Carolingian

connection to Mercian literary culture in the early ninth century. Elizabeth Boyle provides an updated description of CCCC MS 153 and enlightens readers on reading practice in early medieval Wales through an insightful investigation of the glosses to Martianus Capella's *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii* (The Wedding of Philology and Mercury) in "Philologia and philology: Allegory, multilingualism and the Corpus Martianus Capella". Carla Maria Thomas introduces readers to the concept of remediation, and its relevance for medieval manuscript studies, and presents a compelling case for considering the latter translations of the *Ancrene Wisse* as remediations of the original vernacular English text in "Remediation and multilingualism in Corpus Christi College, 402". With its thorough treatment of texts, "Part 4" is truly a treat for textual scholars but is equally certain to be of use and appeal to those interested in the new innovative means of reading, viewing, and interpreting manuscripts that Parker 2.0 affords.

Finally, "Part 5: Forms of reading" concludes the volume with four fascinating chapters that encapsulate both the early medieval experience of reading manuscripts in material form and the modern experience of reading manuscripts in digital format in exquisite detail. Erica Weaver's case study of CCCC MS 422 in "Living with books in early medieval England: Solomon and Saturn, bibliophilia, and the globalist Red Book of Darley", is a delightful discussion of book culture and the relationship between text and image throughout the manuscript. In "Severed heads and sutured skins", Catherine E. Karkov highlights the significant role of Parker 2.0 in enabling scholars to provide image annotations for future scholarship through an exploration of the violence inherent in the illustrations of the Dover Bible, Volume II (CCCC MS 4) and throughout Prudentius' *Psychomachia* and *Peristephanon*, and Orosius' *Seven Books of History against the Pagans* in CCCC MS 23. Alexandra Bolintineanu draws pertinent parallels between Ælfric's account and exegesis of the miracle of the loaves and the fishes in CCCC MS 162, the description of the purging of Philology in *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii* in CCCC MS 153, and the Parker Library's online platform in "Books consumed, books multiplied: Martianus Capella, Ælfric's Homilies, and the International Image Interoperability Framework". The concluding chapter of this volume, "Making a home for manuscripts on the Internet", Michelle

R. Warren's critical appraisal of the Parker Library's original and current digital repository emphasises the importance of the interface in welcoming and guiding readers in their exploration of a digital resource and is essential reading for all readers that interact with or are involved in the creation of digital projects.

The ambition to represent both the well-known and lesser-known manuscripts of the Parker Library's collection in this volume is especially commendable. Although, as is clearly stated in the Introduction, CCCC MS 41: The Old English Bede, CCCC MS 153: The Corpus Martianus Capella, CCCC MS 286: The Gospels of St Augustine, and CCCC MS 402: The *Ancrene Wisse* are the subject of more than one chapter and consequently receive more scholarly attention. Nevertheless, the editors excel in ensuring that each contribution is complementary and avoids unnecessary repetition. There is one small yet salient point of repetition worth highlighting in this review: the accidental appearance of a facsimile image of CCCC MS 402, f. 1r instead of CCCC MS 153 f. 79r. The facsimile image of CCCC MS 402, f. 1r appears first erroneously placed in Elizabeth Boyle's chapter on CCCC MS 153 on page 160 as Figure 16.1, which ought to feature an image of CCCC MS 153 f. 79r, and then rightfully, in its correct position on page 168 as Figure 17.1 in Carla Maria Thomas' chapter on CCCC MS 402. Aside from this slight slip, the volume is carefully organised with the remaining supporting figures and tables all excellently presented.

The comprehensive contributions in this volume provide students, early career researchers, and established scholars with proper instruction for studying medieval manuscripts in a digital context and prompt profound questions about the digital medium that are more pertinent now in light of the pandemic. Overall, *Medieval Manuscripts in the Digital Age* is a rigorously researched and valuable volume that is deserving of a long-lasting place in every researcher's collection.

Patricia O Connor
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A Conspectus of Scribal Hands Writing English, 700-1100. **Donald Scragg. Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2021. 126 pp. Hardcover £80.00 (ISBN 9781843846178). Ebook £24.99 (ISBN 9781800103948).**

Donald Scragg's *A Conspectus of Scribal Hands Writing English, 700-1100* provides a welcome update to his earlier volume of the same title spanning the years 960–1100. Indeed, the expansion of scope in this valuable reference tool is arguably the work's great strength: reviewers of its predecessor pointed out some of the inevitable shortcomings in that volume engendered by taking the year 960 as its starting point. As Scragg notes in the Preface to this new volume, expanding the scope by over a quarter of a millennium of writing in English 'allow[ed] for the inclusion of around 300 new entries' (p. ix). These new entries have been inserted into the same sequence of hands as listed in the earlier *Conspectus* by using decimal points, e.g. the first hand now listed in the updated *Conspectus* is 0.5 Angers, Bibliothèque Municipale 477, preserving the existing order of hands for ease of reference. As in the earlier *Conspectus*, where uncertainty exists in the identification of a similar but possibly distinct hand in a manuscript, it is listed by the same hand number, followed by a lower-case letter, e.g. hands 69.1, 69.1a, and 69.1b, which were (or was) responsible for folios 1–16r of the A text of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 173, fols 1–56.

Like its predecessor, the book under review is presented in a landscape format on A4 paper, allowing for the twelve columns of the 102-page conspectus to fit comfortably on one page. These columns contain the following details: the *Conspectus* hand number; the library and shelf-mark of the relevant manuscript(s); the equivalent entry numbers from Gneuss and Lapidge's 2014 *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts*, Ker's 1957 *Catalogue*, and, where relevant, Sawyer's 1968 *Anglo-Saxon Charters* and Pelteret's 1990 *Catalogue*; the hand number, where provided, in Ker; the manuscript folios containing the hand in question; the date of the hand recorded, usually following Ker's dating; postulated location(s) of the manuscript, though Scragg notes the inherent difficulty in locating the place of origin for manuscripts containing Old English (pp. xi–xii); references to existing print facsimiles; a brief outline of the manuscript contents; and additional brief notes deemed worthy of

inclusion. The specific details of what information each column contains are set out clearly and concisely in the 'Procedures and Conventions' on pp. xi–xii.

This reference tool will inevitably be the first port of call for anyone wishing to know whether a scribe may have written in any other surviving manuscripts—for instance, the scribe Coleman (entry no. 87) who, a reader of the *Conspectus* will learn, appears to have written in five manuscripts, surviving in seven codices as they are bound today. However, despite the evident utility of the *Conspectus*, a number of shortcomings identified by reviewers of the earlier volume have unfortunately been carried over into the present work. Although the *Conspectus* is specifically a record of 'scribal hands writing English', it would nevertheless have been helpful to note whether any of these scribes are also known or suspected to have written Latin. For this information, researchers will need access to the other standard reference works. Where the earlier *Conspectus* included five plates—a paucity of illustrations rued in Richard Gameson's 2013 review—the current volume includes none. Perhaps in the wake of the proliferation of digitised manuscripts freely available online in recent years, plates were deemed redundant in the updated *Conspectus*; however, plates reproducing illustrative examples of scribal hands would surely have been of use to some readers. It is also possible, of course, that the publisher simply considered plates to be an unnecessary expense. Indeed, a cost-related criticism for D. S. Brewer would be that affixing the front and back end-leaves to the first and final pages of the book proper was a poor—and, given the subject of the work, somewhat ironic—binding choice, especially for a landscape-format book in which extra strain is placed towards the book's spine. After less than a day's rather gentle use, the title page and final page of the index had already torn away from the adjacent inner pages in my review copy.

Where at least one critic of the earlier *Conspectus* lamented the lack of a bibliography, this is not a desideratum found wanting by this reviewer: the only works systematically referred to in the *Conspectus* are volumes from the Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts in Microfiche Facsimile and the Early English Manuscripts in Facsimile series, which are cited by the acronyms ASMMF and EEMF and the relevant volume number. Any other references, given in author-date format, are

included in the list of abbreviations. Nonetheless, Daniel O'Donnell's complaint (2015, 296) that 'it can be difficult to assess the reliability of the identifications provided' in the absence of references to secondary literature still stands. Likewise, O'Donnell's objection to the 'limited' indexes may equally be said to apply to the present *Conspectus*; however, Scragg acknowledges that the Subject Index, which is based on the contents column of the conspectus, 'is limited, and should be seen as a supplement to the full indexes' to Ker 1957 and Gneuss and Lapidge 2014 (p. 108). The only obvious, if arbitrarily chosen, example omitted from the index that I could find was *Christ and Satan*, though anyone looking up *Christ and Satan* in the index will almost certainly know the shelf-mark of the sole manuscript in which it survives.

Finally, although the present reviewer would generally agree with O'Donnell's assessment that 'print is not the best format for this material' since '[t]he *Conspectus* is, in essence, a database about scribal identity' (2015, 296), this would be an unfair criticism to level at an entirely serviceable, and indeed highly commendable, print reference work. The burden to transform and expand the *Conspectus* into a fully searchable database with rearrangeable entries containing sample images of scribal stints, and so on, rests on the shoulders of current and future generations of scholars who work on manuscripts containing Old English—and Latin—writing. This comprehensive, if concise, reference work bears witness to the considerable extent of writing in English, and of literacy in general, in the four centuries that elapsed between c. 700 and c. 1100. It is surely, then, a timely reminder to scholars in the field that there remains much exciting work to be done in critically assessing both this tremendous body of writing and the extensive network of monasteries and other centres which produced it.

William Brockbank
University of Bern

Restoring Creation: The Natural World in the Anglo-Saxon Saints' Lives of Cuthbert and Guthlac.

Britton Elliott Brooks. Nature and Environment in the Middle Ages 3. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2019. 323 pp. Hardcover £70.00 (ISBN 9781843845300). Ebook £24.99 (ISBN 9781787445604).

Britton Elliott Brooks' monograph offers skilled and stimulating close readings of four Anglo-Latin and two Old English hagiographies: the Anonymous *Life of Cuthbert*; Bede's *Metrical* and *Prose Lives of Cuthbert*; Felix's *Life of Guthlac*; the *Old English Prose Life of Guthlac*; and the poem *Guthlac A*. Apart from the two vernacular texts (which are treated together), each text receives its own detailed chapter, working through close readings set inside structural discussions. This is, then, an important set of studies on each text in its own right, and in particular on the work and approaches of Bede and Felix. The chronological structure means that influences can also be traced as part of each study, and the chapters are collectively framed by the thesis that these texts demonstrate the belief that right living can restore Creation to its prelapsarian state; that, in particular, one human can bring themselves into the relationship with the natural world that God originally intended. As the third publication in D. S. Brewer's series on Nature and Environment in the Natural World, it sustains a conversation with Corinne Dale's monograph in the same series on *The Natural World in the Exeter Book Riddles* as well as contributing to the growing ecocritical turn in early medieval studies more widely.

The thoughtful analyses of each chapter are particularly refreshing and significant given that Latin hagiography rarely receives such focused attention: this is perhaps most enjoyable on Bede's *Metrical Life of Cuthbert*, including a delightfully detailed discussion of how Bede constructs a parallel with Augustine's commentary on Psalms, with his Cuthbert unconsciously echoing its language (pp. 79–81). Some of the close readings work through comparison with related or source texts, and these often result in the clearest findings. For instance, the comparison of Felix's episode with a pillar of fire illuminating Guthlac's home with the probable source in Adomnán's *Vita Columbae* shows that having the fire emanate from Guthlac himself is an innovation, elevating him and making his home into a heavenly space (pp. 223–26). This single

moment goes to the heart of the Mercian construction of inhabited space and humanity is understood to function in the context of the wider natural world. Likewise, the steady sequence of studies of versions of Cuthbert's story means that Brooks can show how Bede's prose *Life* moves away from a focus on obedience and Creation to a new "dominant narrative of Cuthbert as developing monk-pastor." (p. 139) At times, details of evidence mount up into compellingly strong points, such as showing how the Anonymous *Life of Cuthbert* repeatedly demonstrates "the structured, hierarchical obedience of everything in relation to that which is above them" (p. 47). In other places, the discussion of how a text works is a pure pleasure in its own right, as with the demonstration of how Felix's language "pulls the reader forward" (pp. 175–77, quotation at p. 176). At times, though, the level of detail is overwhelming, and perhaps less would have been more. For instance, the observation that outside of the *Old English Prose Guthlac*, *sweart*, *dim*, and *peostru* only otherwise occur together in *Genesis B*'s strange description of the Tree of Knowledge (ll. 477–79a) is an excellent one (p. 254), but more time should have been spent unpacking this and less on establishing the negative implications of *peostru* (pp. 250–52).

As these examples perhaps show, Brooks' ability to delve into the linguistic nuts and bolts of how a text works and some aspects of the contemporary textual tradition is impressive, and at times exhilarating. The discussion here moves comfortably between commentary tradition and scriptural text, dipping into boundary clauses, the Benedictine Rule, hagiographical tradition, and formal analysis of rhetoric, while always being tied tightly to language and how it is being used. This makes it a productive (if challenging) model for students to read, as well as offering a vast range of details and ideas for researchers into specific texts and ideas. Within such a dense set of discussions, it is both admirable and useful to provide a wealth of internal references (balanced by a relatively abbreviated index). The criticisms that follow, then, should be read in the light of the work that has gone into this book: it is always possible to do more.

A repeated finding here is that individual obedience and submission are key to achieving a shift in how humanity and the natural world relate to one another. This is useful, as far as

it goes, but perhaps more attention could have been paid to what communities of readers and individual followers did with these texts, with more focus than the productive discussion in the Afterword which reflects briefly on a range of later texts and traditions. It would help to make it clearer whether the finding that there is a consistent thread of engagement with Creation and the place of humans within it is a modern discovery of authorial design; or an idea that was actively applied in pursuing a monastic existence, in particular in Crowland and Lindisfarne, in terms of both devotion and communal living. The wider questions of the longevity of the restoration, or followers' responsibility to maintain the hard-won new relationship are not addressed. Did, for instance, the early communities of Guthlac and of Cuthbert show any special interest in how they managed their land or attribute any significance to the role played by birds or water in their communal lives? Although the discussions go deep into how each text works internally, its consideration of what the texts do (or might have done) externally is much shallower.

It is also the case that the book as a whole is not well-served by the rigidity of its framing. The closeness of the readings brings out rich and productive ideas about how the hagiographies function and the ideas and influences at play, and at times it feels reductive or even misguided to pull everything back to the same point about the restoration of Creation. The importance of personal progression and of obedience and—by extension—hierarchical and rule-based communal living are, for instance, repeatedly emphasized, but not granted space in introductory or concluding comments. Other ways of reading the natural world, such as the ambivalence of the sea or the relative complexity of birdlife, are noted only in passing rather than being worked into a richer and more subtle consideration of how the non-human world is constructed in these texts. At times it seems as though almost anything can be bent into the Scriptural account of Eden, and arguments justifying this can be overworked and brittle. As a single instance, Bede's use of *fons* is read as a signal that Cuthbert's spring is Edenic, because the same word is used of the rivers in Paradise by Jerome (pp. 112–13). But *fons* occurs (by my count) 25 times in the Vulgate, perhaps most obviously in John 3.14 where Christ says that he will give to whoever believes in him "fons aquae salientis in vitam aeternam" ('a fountain of water springing up into life everlasting'). This

is surely a more immediate presence in the reading Christian's mind than Eden's waterways, but the analysis here mentions only the occurrence in Genesis, as if any reader would associate this specific noun with that narrative. In this context, it is surprising that more use is not made of Bede's commentary on Genesis: his explication of the human need to build at its outset would have been more useful to Cuthbert's process of construction than the curse that Adam must dig (at p. 45), and setting the study of Bede's hagiography in the context of his commentary work would, I think, have been very productive.

Likewise, the considerable insight that this book brings to ways of reading hagiography and an early medieval concern with the natural world would have been better served by a thematic rather than a text-based structure. Even inside each chapter, while the approach of working through each text from start to end enables assessment of the idea of spiritual progression, it also results in very dense readings, making it difficult to grasp and digest ideas and approaches. The chapters more or less stand alone and some are denser than others, making them significant individual works useful for scholars exploring those texts, but weakening the unity and readability of the whole. This is not always the case: chapter 4 (on Felix's *Life of Guthlac*) is wonderfully readable, showing not only the ideas exhibited elsewhere but also Felix's skill and considering audience response.

This range of criticisms should not be read as devaluing the scholarly achievement of this book. In each textual discussion, it demonstrates a breadth of research and a depth of perception that produces not only useful findings but is stimulating for further work. Many elements—especially the close readings of Felix's *Guthlac*—are models of their kind, demonstrating subtle understanding of the cumulate effects of minor details. This is a valuable contribution to understanding English hagiography—especially in Latin—and how it functioned to shape understanding of how to live a holy life and manage perception of what it meant to be a human living as part of the natural world in early medieval England.

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Manuscripts in the Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms: Cultures and connections. **Claire Breay and Joanna Story (eds). Four Courts Press, 2021. 256pp. Colour illustrations. Large format. Hardcover €58.50 (ISBN 9781846828669).**

When first encountering *Manuscripts in the Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms*, one is confronted by a well-presented and solid book, weighty and oversized. On the frontispiece, the reader will find an illumination taken from the *Benedictional of St. Athelwold*, which showcases a scribe complete with the tools of his trade, richly adorned and framed by a gilt halo, preparing us for our journey through the abundance, though often fragmented, lives of Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, exploring their origins, quirks, influences and lacunas.
The fourteen richly researched essays in this book can be viewed as an extension of the British Library's Anglo-Saxon manuscript and material culture exhibition entitled 'Anglo-Saxon kingdoms: Art, Word, War' (October 2018- February 2019). As detailed in the preface, all of the contributions printed in this volume have their roots in a conference held at the British Library in December 2018, under the rubric of 'Manuscripts in the Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms'. Fortunately, I was able to explore the library's exhibition, which boasted a more-than-impressive collection of famous and not-so-famous artefacts hailing from Anglo-Saxon England. By uniting much of the country's early medieval past under one roof, the exhibition expressed the role of manuscripts in the shaping of unified England, a time when petty kingdoms were mutable, yet played a crucial role in shaping the English literary and ethnographical landscape; as well as influencing, and being influenced by, their European neighbours. These ideas are explored in greater detail in the essays, with contributions from various locations such as Germany, Ireland, Spain and across the pond in the United States. In my view, this international inclusion compliments the continental relations early medieval English culture explored, and the ideologies that arose from those communications. These notions are present in each essay, which helps bind them as an expression of interrelation between early medieval texts (as well as the scholarship presented in this volume) and not just examples of isolated insular scribal achievement.

Before delving into the scholarly content of the volume, a summary of

the book's physical characteristics and layout should help the reader in piecing together a more coherent programme. One striking feature of this volume is the quality of the figures, which remains a consistent trope throughout the book, occupying high quality gloss paper akin to the text. Upon opening the book, one is faced with a stunning and crisp image of one of the famous 'carpet pages' from the *Lindisfarne Gospels*, being one of the best-known insular manuscripts possibly illuminated by early Christian monastics arriving from liminal settings such as Iona. This pictorial placement cleverly re-locates the reader to one of the earliest moments of Christian manuscript art in England's history. This was a time of religious conversion, aiding in the development and recording of language, image and emerging English and religious identities.

As made known in the preface, many of the manuscripts included in the 'Anglo-Saxon kingdoms: Art, Word, War' exhibition were digitised as part of an initiative involving innovative technologies that have since provoked fresh and exciting ways of reading these literary relics. Before we get to this in more detail, the reader will find the usual acknowledgements, list of illustrations, contributors and abbreviations, all of which are helpful to those already deep in manuscript lore, and wish to further their studies with a recent collection of early medieval manuscript essays. However, for those, like myself, who walk on the border of manuscript geography, I can surmise with confidence that many of these diverse essays are accessible to the budding manuscript novice, and indeed a wider audience beyond academic circles. There is a note at the end of the preface expressing concerns over the contentious use of 'Anglo-Saxon', and the editors provide a justification for its continued presence in the book.

Our opening act is 'The Original Lindisfarne Gospels' by Irish scholar Dáibhí Ó Cróinín. In this paper, the reader is introduced to some of the first instances of insular manuscript production in England, and as such, it makes for an appropriate beginning for those unfamiliar with Anglo-Saxon scribal heritage. Ó Cróinín sets the scene by arguing that the rather unimaginatively named DCL, MS A II is a potential progenitor for the *Lindisfarne Gospels*, and pays particular attention to its orthographical idiosyncrasies as well as viewing the fusion of Latin and Irish in the text as

harmonious; rather than confusion on behalf of the scribe, whom Ó Cróinín identifies as Irish. This is a deviation from the famous manuscript scholar E. A. Lowe's conclusions, who favoured a Northumbrian scribe. Ó Cróinín introduces us to older scholarly arguments that concern early medieval manuscripts, while demonstrating that these are not necessarily stable. Through a coherent methodology, which operates by way of 'orthography, textual affiliation, script and decoration' (p. 1) Ó Cróinín turns perceived scribal 'error' into a cultural stamp, representative of the pre-existing scribal practice in Ireland that from the offset acted as exemplars for early English manuscripts such as the famous *Lindisfarne Gospels*.

That Ó Cróinín places us within the genesis of manuscript culture in England is expanded in the following essay by Richard Gameson, who discusses writing at Wearmouth Jarrow, a renowned centre of learning founded by Benedict Biscop in the seventh century. Gameson's essay situates us in an established English scribal centre, commenting on its ability to produce ambitious texts such as the *Codex Amiatinus*, and its 'progressive attitudes towards the accessibility of literature which could not be said for many places in the west' (p. 28). Gameson's main concern lies with the styles of writing found in the earliest books produced at Wearmouth Jarrow. His meticulous attention to subtle variations in the adaption of uncial script at Wearmouth Jarrow, which plucks notes of Irish and Roman influence, is impressive, and illustrates the adaptability of confident scribes able to shift between modes of language, style, and lexical forms, casting early medieval scribes in an experimental light.

Lawrence Nees departs from these introductory themes, taking us further afield into Europe by exploring 'The European Context of Manuscript Illumination in the Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms, 600-900'. Nees' ambitious task, which covers centuries of illuminative history, in my view, is communicated rather disjointedly at times. Nees is able to captivate the reader by entangling them in the crossfire of creative exchange, which may or may not have been transacted through monastic and non-monastic illuminators coming from Frankish kingdoms to England. Nees goes on to explain that these are 'often treated separately, and focus on the individuals who made the books and their possible interactions' (p. 45). However, what

starts with a tantalising iconographical discussion of a rare depiction of Christ wearing a Royal Crown in the *Benedictional of St. Athelwold*, quickly jumps to the appearances of merfolk which confronts the reader suddenly rather than blending more successfully with the previous discussion. That said, all of the manuscripts investigated in this essay make for an interesting read, and showcase the diversity of iconographical choices illuminators were experimenting with.

As well as the lively discussions of scribal practice, some of the essays in this book explore those medieval readers who engaged with the texts. David F. Johnson's contribution focuses on the 'Transmission and reception of Alfredian Apocrypha'. In this essay, Johnson investigates a manuscript not included in the British Library's exhibition, and instead focuses on twelfth century reception of Anglo-Saxon texts, specifically the fragmentary Old English *Orosius*. Johnson's point of entry is lexical glossing, which in his view is 'an indication of a deeper engagement with the text, [and] a more intense rumination on [its] contents' (p.101). By reminding us that medieval punctuation is an understudied phenomenon, and by pairing this with a new online application which collects irregular data of this kind, we are brought into a present moment with the person interacting with these texts, which were already a century or more old when they were encountering them. Resultantly, Johnson's essay expresses the import of technological innovation for the progression of manuscript studies, especially areas that have not been given full scholarly attention, perhaps due to previous limitations of digital technologies.

Collectively, these essays paint a vivid and coherent picture on an otherwise fragmentary canvas. The first half of the book places the reader within those earlier experimental moments of manuscript production in England. This was influenced by work from Ireland and the Continent, which aided in the emergence of an active, and at times unique, English scribal style identifiable in Europe either through the importation of English books or the traces of English influence evident in European manuscripts. The second half of the volume brings us closer to the readers who engaged with the texts, sometimes carrying them as portable objects as discussed by Francesca Tinti in 'Anglo-Saxon Travellers and Their Books', as well as those who vocalised script in religious spaces, as explored in

Teresa Webber's contribution, 'The Lector and Lectio in Anglo-Saxon England'. The book provides a fresh and detailed account of the development of Anglo-Saxon England as told by its literary survivors, and is edited very capably by Claire Breay and Joanna Story into a rich textual narrative.

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Daniel C. Remein. Manchester University Press, 2022. 328 pages. Hardcover, 85, ISBN: 9781526150585.

Hybrid Healing: Old English Remedies and Medical Texts.

Lori Ann Garner. Manchester University Press, 2022. 344 pages. Hardcover, 85, ISBN: 9781526158499.

Ideas of the World in Early Medieval English Literature.

Mark Atherton, Kazutomo Karasawa , Francis Leneghan. Eds. Brepols, 2022. 442 pages. Hardover, €115.00 (excl. VAT), ISBN: 9782503599571.

Law, Literature, and Social Regulation in Early Medieval England.

Andrew Rabin and Anya Adair. Eds. Boydell & Brewer, forthcoming 2023. 310 pages. Hardcover, £70, ISBN: 9781783277605.

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Carl Kears. Boydell & Brewer, forthcoming 2023. 238 pages [11 b/w illus.]. Hardcover, £65, ISBN: 9781914049132.

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Rachel A. Burns and Rafael J. Pascual. Eds. Arc Humanities Press, 2022. 296 pages. Hardcover, £100, ISBN: 9781641894586 [available Open Access as an e-book].

Wealth and the Material World in the Old English Alfredian Corpus.

Amy Faulkner. Boydell & Brewer, 2023. 222 pages [4 b/w illus.]. Hardcover, 65, ISBN: 9781783277599.

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Elizabeth Marshall. Boydell & Brewer, 2022. 270 pages. Hardcover, 60, ISBN: 9781843846406

TOEBI *Information*

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TOEBI welcomes new members. You do not have to be currently employed in teaching Old English to become a member. If you have any questions regarding membership, please contact Dr Neville Mogford (nmogford@hotmail.com) or consult the website, www.toebi.org.uk/joinus.

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