TOEBI *Newsletter*

2024 Volume XXXX

What better way to begin the new year than with updates and reflections from members of the TOEBI community? We're pleased to introduce our first newsletter as editors, and we're also incredibly grateful to our wonderful contributors for sharing insights from teaching, conferences, and even their own creative projects, in these pages.

Our feature articles include a fascinating piece by Dr Emma Nuding about the possibilities of incorporating place-based learning into Old English teaching. The article sees Emma reflecting on a field trip out into the Yorkshire fens with some first-year undergraduates and their first impressions of St Guthlac's Old English Prose *Life*. By popular demand Simon Heller shares some of his favourite *Beowulf* adaptations with us, and writes about using these in the classroom. Those of you who missed Laura Varnam's wonderful reading of her *Beowulf*-inspired poems at the TOEBI conference may be especially interested in her article, '(Re)Voicing Grendel's Mother', written exclusively for the newsletter. TOEBI's outgoing ECR representative, Francisco Rozano-García, has been doing incredibly valuable work, exploring how we might

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build and rebuild networks for postgraduate and early career scholars in the field of Early Medieval Studies. In this issue we're proud to publish a report on the results of a survey conducted in 2023. Francisco also offers a reflection on a roundtable organised for IMC Leeds 2023 and shares details of a second instalment scheduled for this year's Medieval Congress.

We also have book reviews of some recent publications – thanks to this issue's reviewers James Paz, Simon Thomson, Claire Poynton-Smith, and William Brockbank for giving these new books their time.

We would encourage all our members to keep an eye out for details of the TOEBI conference, which will be hosted by Lindy Brady and Rebecca Stephenson at Edge Hill University. The conference will take place on Saturday 7th September and this year's theme will be Borders and Boundaries. A CFP will be circulated very soon!

<div align="right">

Francesca Brooks
University of York

Abigail Williams
University of Nottingham

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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). If you are a graduate student or early career researcher, please do consider applying for a grant in 2024, whether to attend a TOEBI meeting or another conference. And if you're a supervisor, do remind your students to put in an application. Below, some recent recipients of TOEBI support present reports on their activities.

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Catrin Haberfield
Stanford University

Thanks to a grant from TOEBI, I was able to attend both ISSEME and IMC Leeds in person. This was particularly meaningful for me as ISSEME was hosted by the University of Manchester – the institution from which I received my MA in Medieval and Early Modern Studies, but which I had never visited as I completed the entire degree remotely due to COVID! It was wonderful to be able to meet my instructors in person and to visit the city itself.

At ISSEME, I presented a paper titled 'Superimposing landscapes: negotiating national identity through mist in the *Mabinogion*'. In this, I argued that the unique deployment of mist in Welsh romances – used to vertically superimpose the supernatural on top of the known landscape – reflects a contemporary concern with navigating Welsh identity in the face of Norman invasions. I am now finalising this research as a journal article.

At IMC Leeds, I was a participant in two roundtables: 'Podcasts, blogs, and video essays: digital medieval studies for the masses?' and 'Something old, something new: digital visions of early English'. Both roundtables produced fascinating and productive conversations, but also kick-started relationships with other medieval digital humanists.

I am extremely grateful to TOEBI for enabling me to attend these conferences. Not only have they developed my professional skills and allowed me to workshop my research, but they were also thoroughly enjoyable experiences!

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Jasmine Jones

University of Oxford

Receiving a bursary from TOEBI enabled me to attend the stimulating conference on the theme of 'Adaptation' which took place in Birmingham on 9th September 2023. This was an invaluable experience for me to present some of my doctoral research on Old English biblical epic poetry. I argued for how the vernacular adaptation of the Bible in the poem *Exodus* provides evidence for monastic *ruminatio*, and how this same deep application of the mind in rumination through the slow chewing-over of literature should be imitated in our own close-reading engagement with texts as twenty-first-century teachers. I promoted the pedagogical application of this immersive 'monastic methodology'. It was rewarding to receive many questions relating to my paper, especially to see the enthusiasm with which my ideas were received, which included one suggestion of simulating the medieval monastery in the

classroom by chanting psalms and lingering attentively over passages of Old English with a contemplative interior disposition rather than rushing through them.

It was also illuminating to hear a diverse range of other papers relating to the theme of 'Adaptation', particularly the work of Jill Hamilton Clements on close-reading practice in the classroom with reference to the early medieval English riddle tradition. Her focus on cultivating an intricate appreciation of the minute meanings of words resonated with my own work. I also received refreshing insights into innovative ways of engaging students in medieval literature through interdisciplinary approaches such as textiles, as demonstrated by Rebecca Stephenson, and creative writing, as suggested by Laura Varnam. I was also fascinated by the knowledge shared by Neville Mogford on the relationship of Old English to the National Curriculum, and this question of the relationship of medieval literature to education in schools is one which I would like to consider further.

Overall, the conference was an important opportunity to consider the practical, contemporary application of Old English academic research, and I thoroughly enjoyed the pedagogical emphasis of the conference which presented a new way of thinking about my doctoral work. It will be of immense assistance as I undertake my own teaching responsibilities within a university context.

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Robyn McAuliffe
University College Cork

'Female Trauma and Generative Power in the Old English *Apollonius of Tyre* and the Old Norse *Völundarkviða*'.

I am very grateful to have been awarded a TOEBI Conference Bursary as it allowed me to present at the 33rd International Conference of The Spanish Society for Medieval English Language and Literature (SELIM) which was held at University of Murcia (September 2023). I contributed to a panel dedicated to Old English Language and Culture alongside Claire Poynton-Smith (TCD) and Dr Alice Jorgensen (TCD).

Drawing on the first chapter of my PhD thesis which analyses the construction of gendered trauma in the Latin *Historia Apollonii Regis Tyri* and the Old English *Apollonius of Tyre*, I expanded on my chapter in the conference paper and interrogated the expression of female trauma in one further source, the Old Norse Eddic poem *Völundarkviða*. My paper analysed the impact of sexual violence on the female characters in the related literary traditions, specifically the ways in which the Old English and Old Norse texts foreground expressions of female trauma.

The Old English medieval romance *Apollonius of Tyre* opens with the violent rape of a daughter by her father, the despotic king Antiochus. Although the critic Elizabeth Archibald argues in her seminal work *Incest and the Medieval Imagination* that instances of incest constitute "minor episodes" in medieval romance, what follows in the aftermath of the assault is a striking expression of female trauma unparalleled in the Old English tradition with the incestuous assault having a major impact on the subsequent narrative (146). Parallels can be drawn with the Old Norse poem *Volundarkviða* which once more foregrounds the female response to trauma. Volund, an acclaimed blacksmith, retaliating against the forced labour and metalworking exacted by King Nidud, plies the king's daughter Bodvild with alcohol, rapes and impregnates her. The poem ends with the young woman articulating her confusion and impotence in the wake of the attack.

In conjunction with this emphasis on female speech acts, my paper interrogated the replacement of reproductive power with that of the creative process in the Old English *Apollonius of Tyre*. The eponymous hero Apollonius, tasked with solving a riddle set forth by the tyrannical king in order to win the daughter's hand in marriage, correctly solves the riddle (the solution to which reveals the king's incestuous union with his daughter) and is thus sentenced to death and forced to flee the city of Antioch. I suggested within my paper that the despotic King Antiochus' reproductive power is ultimately denied him as a result of his incestuous relationship and that his construction of riddle serves as a manifestation of his illicit union with his daughter and as an act of creation. This he uses to fulfil his yearning for public knowledge of his sexual relationship and to supplant the reproductive potential of such a union. To illustrate this, I juxtaposed the romance with *Volundarkviða*, which emphasises Volund's work as a blacksmith. The idea of creation is carried through in Volund's sexual assault and impregnation of Bodvild, which serves as a reclamation of generative power.

Presenting alongside Claire Poynton-Smith and Dr Alice Jorgensen, both affiliated with Trinity College Dublin, was a pleasure and a privilege, and attending SELIM has ironically afforded me the opportunity to connect with other medievalists in Ireland (outside of UCC). It was a diverse and dynamic conference with a jam-packed schedule and it was incredibly heartening to see such different theoretical and linguistic approaches being applied to Old English texts.

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Feature Articles

Place-Based Old English: Teaching Guthlac in the Yorkshire Fens

Emma Nuding

Last Summer Term, while teaching on a literature course called 'Modern Places, Medieval Pasts' at the University of York, I decided to hold a pedagogical experiment.[1] It was an experiment that aimed to make Old English studies more inclusive (as well as environmentally-aware) by connecting learning activities to students' material realities. I asked: what would happen if the principles of 'Place-based education' (PBE), a technique usually associated with the primary school classroom, was applied to a university one? Could such an approach help students experience greater affinity with texts from the Old English corpus? Could the more general benefits associated with PBE, such as students gaining a greater sense of attachment for the material environment in which they are studying, be of value to early medieval educators?

PBE may or may not be a familiar approach to TOEBI members: it has been defined as 'anytime, anywhere learning that leverages the power of place to personalize

learning'.[2] The benefits are multiple: PBE encourages interdisciplinary thinking through linking texts with material realities and social histories; PBE is learner-centred, taking the environment within which (or near to which) students are learning as its starting point; in PBE, learners are active observers of environments not passive receivers of information about them; PBE is also multisensory, allowing students to connect with landscapes (both material and textual) as embodied humans rather than disembodied brains. These aspects of PBE give it the potential to inculcate in students what has been called 'place identity': 'an emotional attachment or psychological investment with a setting that results from numerous visits to that setting'.[3] Such an attachment to a place can open up the possibility of environmental stewardship relating to that place, and to others like it.

My PBE experiment paired classroom sessions focused on fenland texts with a field trip to a fenland site near to York's campus, known as Heslington Tilmire. The Tilmire, part of what has been called 'The Yorkshire Fens', is now a Site of Special Scientific Interest, protected for its wading-bird populations and fenland flora.[4] It is also an area of rich medieval history, likely a common area for summer pasture, turbary, reed collecting and wildfowling: its name reveals the pre-modern traces of coppiced *hæsel* (OE) trees, and of boggy *mire* (ON/ME).[5] The texts we read against the Tilmire were St Guthlac's Old English prose *Life,* and Daisy's Johnson's *Fen* (2016).[6] Both of these texts, in their own ways, are concerned with silted-up waterways, boggy pools and

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[2] Tom Vander Ark, Emily Liebtag, and Nate Mcclennen, *The Power of Place: Authentic Learning through Place-Based Education* (Alexandria: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2020), p. 2.

[3] J. J. Vaske and K. C Kobrin, 'Place Attachment and Environmentally responsible behaviour', *Journal of Environment Education,* 32, 16-21.

[4] Ian Rotherham, *Yorkshire's Forgotten Fenlands* (Barnsley: Wharncliffe Books, 2010), pp. 69-77. 'Heslington Tillmre SSSI', *Natural England* <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=S1006072&SiteName=Heslington&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=&SeaArea=&IFCAArea=> [accessed 21 August 2023].

[5] Nottingham's *Key to English Place Names,* 'Heslington'. *MED,* 'mire'.

[6] Daisy Johnson, *Fen* (London: Vintage, 2016); Charles Wycliffe Goodwin, ed. and trans., *The Anglo-Saxon Version of the Life of St. Guthlac, Hermit of Crowland* (London: Smith, 1848).

spiritual quagmire, and therefore I positioned them as part of a subgenre I call 'fenland place writing'. Here I was following a recent definition of 'place-writing' as writing in which 'place transcends the status of mere setting to play an […] agential role in the unfolding of narratives', writing which is often produced through an embodied 'walking-through-place'.[7] As the students walked from York's campus to the Tilmire on the field trip, I encouraged them to see themselves as experimenting with the method of fenland place writers. While walking, students were asked to complete an observation task, which then fed into a creative-writing task. To read fenland place-writing, they had to first be fenland place-writers.

Thoughtful student engagement with both the field trip and the follow-up creative writing task suggests it was an engaging experience which enabled them to think more deeply about the relationship between literature and place, and about the medieval and the modern. For the summative assessment on the wider module, students could choose any content of the four-week module to focus on: several of the groups decided to focus on the fenland readings despite the fact that they were the set texts for the last week on the course, and thus rarely the one students pick for the assessment. One of

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[7] David Cooper and Rachel Lichtenstein, 'What Is Place Writing?', *Manchester Metropolitan University: Centre for Place Writing*, 2020 <https://www.mmu.ac.uk/media/mmuacuk/content/documents/english/What-is-Place-Writing-June-2020.pdf>, pp. 2-3.

these groups chose to conduct a close analysis of the Old English text rather than the translation – no mean feat for first-year students with no training in Old English, apart from a whistle-stop ten-minute 'Intro to OE' in my lecture. It's likely that something of the embodied experience in the Tilmire fired them up for engaging directly with the Old English texture of Guthlac's fens.

There were some issues with the field trip however which echo the wider issues of using PBE.[8] For one, walking to a site like the Tilmire presented significant accessibility concerns, possibly limiting the inclusivity of the exercise. PBE also presents the challenge of how to link the local to the global: how do the Yorkshire fens relate to premodern landscapes beyond the British Isles? This is an especially pressing point if we aspire to teach a 'Global Middle Ages'.[9] The experience also made me reflect on issues of equity: some HE institutions are in greater proximity to spaces of cultural or ecological importance than others. There are also particular issues when linking PBE to the study of premodern texts: there was the challenge of the 'gap' between the fenland environment at the Tilmire and the fenland environment in the texts, both geographical and chronological. We were in the Yorkshire fens not the Cambridgeshire-Lincolnshire ones of Johnson and Guthlac, and we were also seeing the landscape after the industrial drainage programs of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, not in their pre-modern boggy glory. However, if these 'gaps' are not shied away from, but incorporated into the teaching content, I'd suggest they need not be a barrier to students' affective connections with landscapes outside of as well as inside of texts. Just because a literary landscape isn't reducible to a material one, doesn't mean the material one has nothing to offer readers.

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[8] See Vander Ark *et al,* pp. 4, 104.
[9] See *Teaching the Global Midde Ages,* ed. Geraldine Heng (New York: Modern Language Association, 2022).

Overall, this experience suggests that PBE is a promising addition to the Old English teacher's toolkit. It seems particularly relevant when courses are already concerned with the analysis of texts in which place 'transcends mere setting'. It can offer students (and teachers) an engaging 'way in' to Old English texts and reminds us that early medieval environments (or something affectively touching them) can be experienced through the body, as well as through the mind.

(Re)voicing Grendel's Mother: TOEBI Poetry Reading
Laura Varnam

Grendles modor hleoðrode / (Grendel's mother sounded off...)

I was delighted to read a selection of my Grendel's Mother poems at this year's TOEBI conference at the University of Birmingham. The poems and performance form part of a larger project inspired by the women of *Beowulf*, a selection of which was published in *postmedieval* last year.[1] The project begins with my rewriting of *Beowulf*'s opening lines as a provocation to reimagine the listening community and the stories that we have, and have not, heard time and again.

Hwæt

Indeed.

We have heard of the Danes.
We never stop hearing about them.
Those death-and-glory Danes.
Them, their demons, and their glory-
days. Me, I'd prefer a little variation.

If you'd like to
listen

this is our sisters' side of the story.

The Bosworth-Toller dictionary defines *hwæt* (adj, int, pronoun) as 'why, what! ah!' and in my project I am always looking to excavate the 'why' behind the 'what', the motivation behind the content and style. My poem 'Grendel's Mother addresses the Author', for example, begins:

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[1] Laura Varnam, 'Poems for the Women of *Beowulf*: A "Contemporary Medieval" Project', *postmedieval,* 13 (2022), 105-21.

> For all your bluster, warrior-poet,
> Your puffed-up preening,
> Your sword-swagger and shield-shuffling,
> You still won't look at me.

This responds to the introduction of Grendel's Mother in the original poem (from line 1255) when it seems to me that the poet is unable (or unwilling) to maintain his focus on her and instead begins to recap the history of Cain and Grendel instead. Paul Acker persuasively argues that 'Grendel and his mother are not introduced into the narrative so much as they suddenly materialize within it' and to me, at this moment, the poet has been caught on the back foot by that materialization.[2] He can't quite look her straight in the eyes.

Reading *Beowulf* from Grendel's Mother's perspective has raised questions concerning the *Beowulf*-poet's knowledge of and attitude to her narrative. The original poem is fascinated by the *cup* and *uncup* (the known and unknown, or strange) and where the poet declares that 'no hie fæder cunnon' (they know of no father, 1355) for Grendel, this inspired me to consider what Grendel's Mother's experience of her son's conception might have been and how female knowledge might illuminate that gap. In another of my poems, when the *Beowulf*-poet goes to town on the description of Grendel bleeding out in the mere, leaving the waters 'gemenged / haton heolfre' (mingled with hot blood, 848-9), I wonder how Grendel's Mother might have felt about the desecration of her home with the blood of her only child.

My poetry is also inspired by particular narrative moments that we see only briefly in the original poem. When Hrothgar tells Beowulf that there are 'twegen / micle mearcstapan moras healden' (two mighty border-stalkers who hold the moors, 1348), I imagine how Grendel's Mother might have felt accompanying her son who makes increasingly murderous visits to Heorot. And as Beowulf approaches the mere to kill her, I enable Grendel's Mother to call out angrily, provoking and inciting her foe. Allowing Grendel's Mother a voice at this moment offers us a new perspective on the narrative.

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[2] Paul Acker, 'Horror and the Maternal in *Beowulf*', *PMLA,* 121 (2006), 702-16 (p. 704).

In my collection I'm also on the lookout for connections between the poem's female characters and my poem 'An Æfter Anum' was inspired by the 'feminist middle' chapter in Gale Owen-Crocker's *Four Funerals in Beowulf*.[3] In my poem I suggest that while Grendel's Mother might be isolated from the other queens in the poem, she shares in their experiences of grief. The title of my poem comes from the Father's Lament passage of *Beowulf* (2461), and W. E. Leonard's translation,"the lone one for the lost one', which I felt perfectly reflected Grendel's Mother's situation too.

An Æfter Anum

For E.C.

When they tell me that grief's
too cruel a companion, I scoff.
She's the only company I've got.

World is too wide and wheretofore
without you in it. It gapes.
There's no out-walking it.

From seabed to seashore,
earth's belly to mountain top,
there is too, too much of me.

Grief taps my scapula
with calloused hand,
and tips her crown.

Take this cup,
        my shoulder-companion,
                it's yours to bear.

In the original poem, Beowulf promises Hrothgar that Grendel's Mother will find no protection 'on foldan fæþm ne on fyrgenholt, / ne on gyfenes grund' [in the earth's

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[3] Gale Owen-Crocker, *The Four Funerals in Beowulf* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009).

bosom, the mountain wood, nor the sea's ground] and here I wanted to reframe that imagery to think about the inescapable nature of Grendel's Mother's grief. In my poem, the cup-bearing queen becomes grief herself and although she doesn't know it in the original, Grendel's Mother joins an emotional community of mourning women.

In Rita Felski's *The Limits of Critique* she argues that 'works of art do not only subvert but also convert; they do not only inform but also transform – a transformation that is not just a matter of intellectual readjustment but one of affective realignment as well (a shift of mood, a sharpened sensation, an unexpected surge of affinity or disorientation' (17).[4] I find myself transformed as a reader and a writer by over twenty years of working with *Beowulf* and I hope that in my poetry I am able to move readers to a new and unexpected feeling for the poem too.

'An *Æfter Anum*' was first published in *Banshee Lit*, 14 (autumn/winter 2022) and 'Grendel's Mother addresses the Author' in *postmedieval*. A collection of Laura's Grendel's Mother poems is forthcoming in *Primers Volume Seven* from Nine Arches Press in August 2024

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[4] Rita Felski, *The Limits of Critique* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2015), p. 17.

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/

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(Re)Building Networks for Postgraduate, Early Career, and Independent Scholars in Early Medieval English Studies – A Roundtable
## Online Questionnaire Responses

Francisco J. Rozano-García

Number of participants: 31

Please note that in some cases "other" answers are equivalent to one of the options provided (e.g., "I don't know" for "maybe;" "yes + explanation" for "yes"), so percentages are sometimes in need of adjustment. Where this happens, a short commentary has been included.
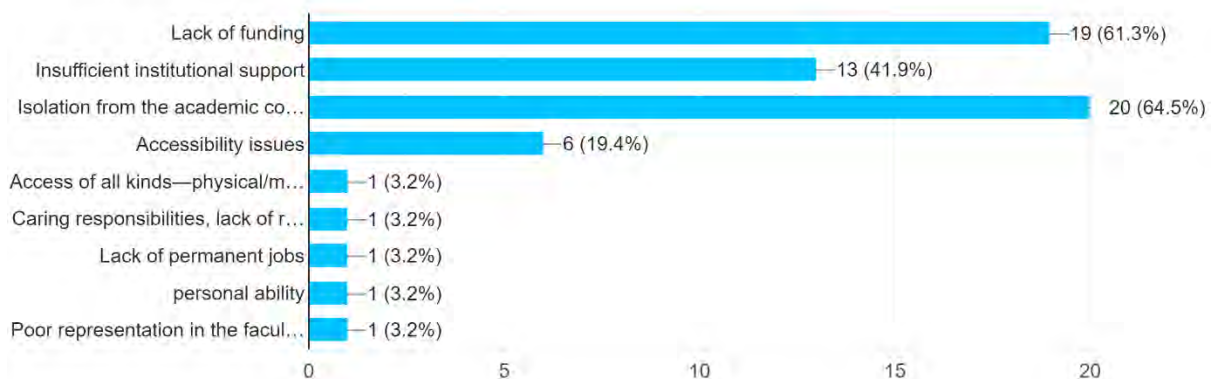
Q1 – Please select the option/s that best describes your current situation:
31 responses
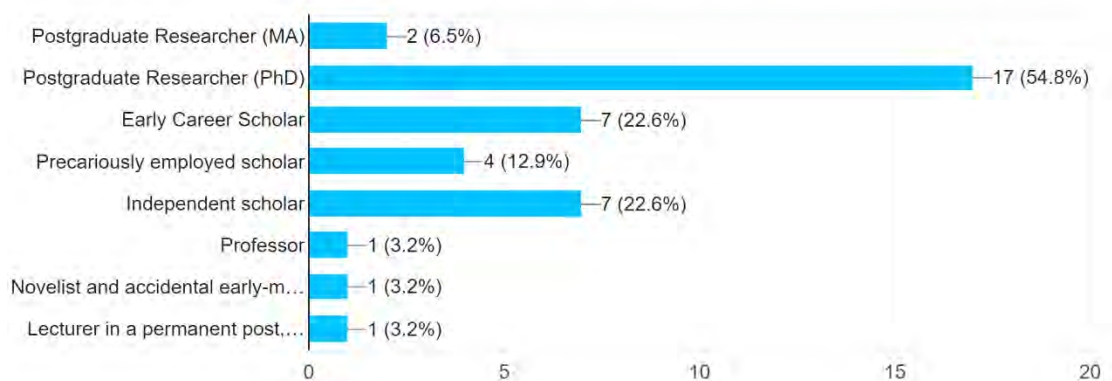
Q2 – What are the main obstacles you have encountered in your academic activity?
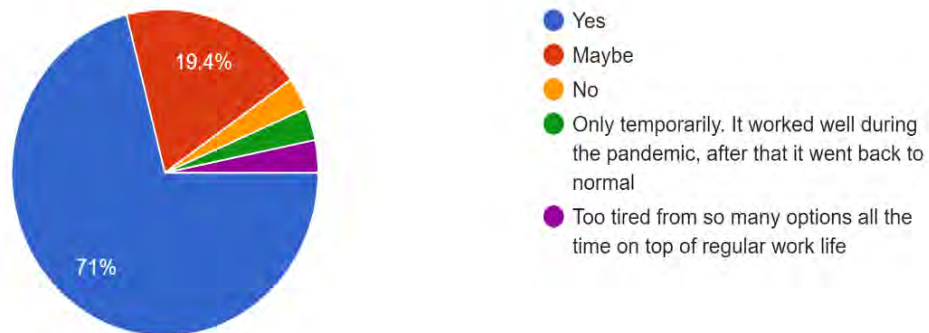31 responses

"Other" answers extended:

· "Caring responsibilities, lack of research time, crushing sense of inadequacy

· "Poor representation in the faculty (I.e. both teachers and peer students being predominantly white) could sometimes make it (psychologically) harder for POC students such as myself to engage in in-person activities and networking opportunities that are beneficial for our future with ease. Every time I enter a room in an academic setting, the first thing I notice is how many POC are in that space, which, in the UK could often be none, and I become extra nervous about that fact, i.e. that I am the only (or one of the) only person of colour. And if I were to have one bad experience (e.g. getting mistaken for a worker, having to confront micro aggressions), I would probably need to miss a couple of similar events afterwards just to get myself back into the mindset where I'm comfortable engaging in these activities again. So some general awareness that this is happening (POC students having to navigate these tricky terrains unbeknownst to everybody else in that room) would be nice!!"

Q3 – Did the recent proliferation of online/hybrid events enable you to participate more actively in academic activities such as conferences, workshops, or similar events?
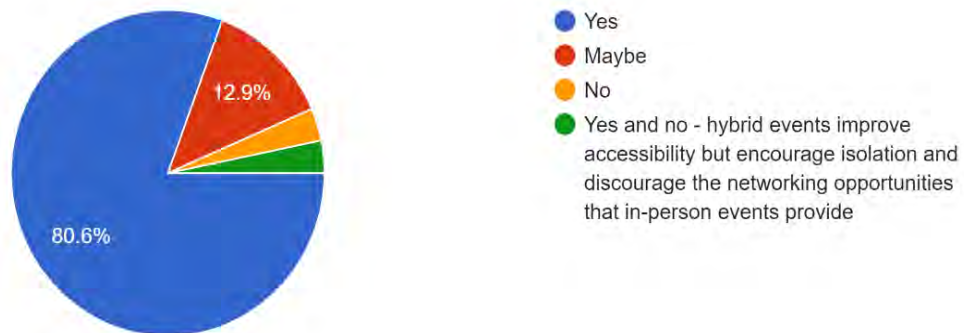31 responses

- Yes
- Maybe
- No
- Only temporarily. It worked well during the pandemic, after that it went back to normal
- Too tired from so many options all the time on top of regular work life

Yes – 25; Maybe – 4; No – 1; Other – 1

Q4 – Do you think keeping hybrid format would benefit networking and accessibility for scholars in precarious positions?

31 responses

- Yes
- Maybe
- No
- Yes and no - hybrid events improve accessibility but encourage isolation and discourage the networking opportunities that in-person events provide

No – 18; Maybe – 9; Yes – 3; Other – 1
Please note "I don't know" is equivalent to "Maybe" here.

Q6 – How else do you believe academic organisations could support scholars in precarious situations? – Most relevant answers

· Inclusion in research networks

· Dedicated space for emerging voices in publications (e.g., journals)

· Access to databases and resources by invitation (marginal institutional affiliation)

· More and better funding opportunities for conference participation

· Access to training and resources for job seeking/applications (e.g., CV, interview, cover letter)

· Increased visibility and validation of PGR/ECR/Independent work

· Exchange and sharing of resources, esp. with limited institutional accessibility

· Online specialist interest groups to connect with scholars working on similar areas

· Greater representation in committees, active involvement in decision-making

· Hybrid format conferences and events to improve accessibility

Q7 – What are your main sources of contact with the broader academic community?
31 responses
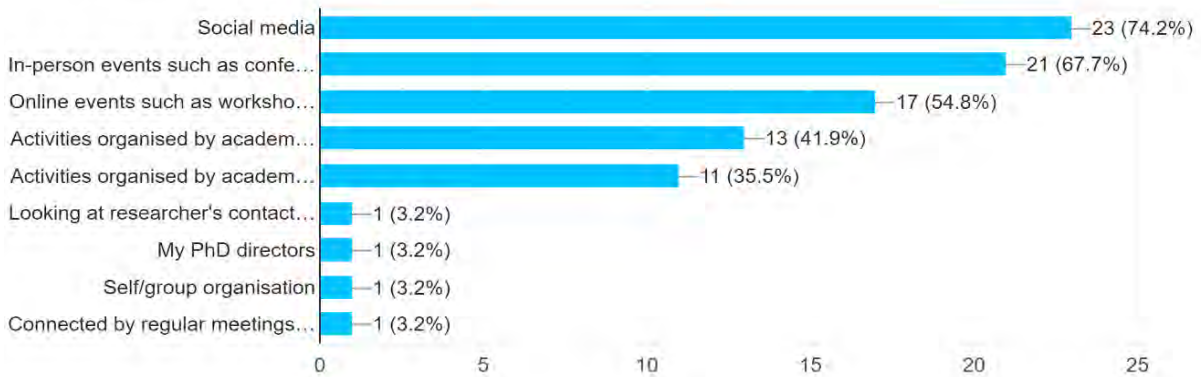
· "Activities organised by academic institutions" – 13 (41.9%)
· "Activities organised by academic organisations" – 11 (35.5%)

Q8 – Do you think your current status limits or negatively affects your participation in academic activities and your involvement with the community?
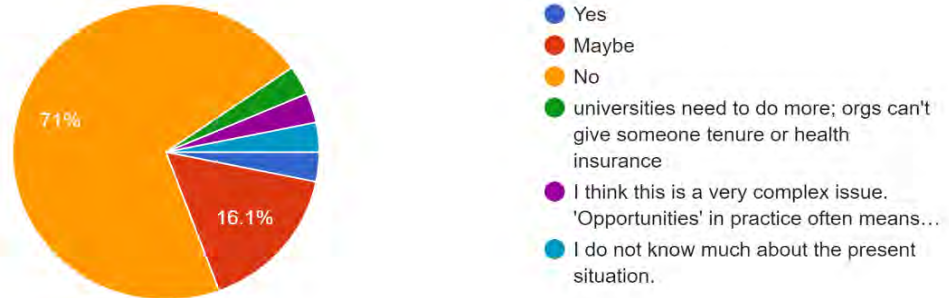31 responses
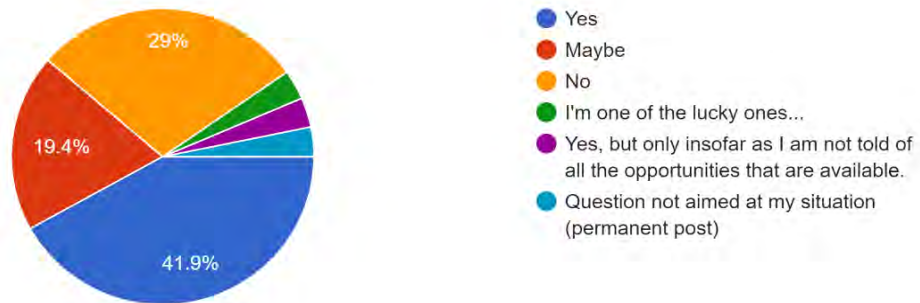
Yes – 13; No – 9; Maybe – 6; Other – 3
Please note two "other" answers (green and light blue) are equivalent to "No;"
whereas one "other" answer (purple) is equivalent to "Yes."

Q9 – Do you think enough action is taken by academic institutions and organisations to provide opportunities for scholars in precarious positions?
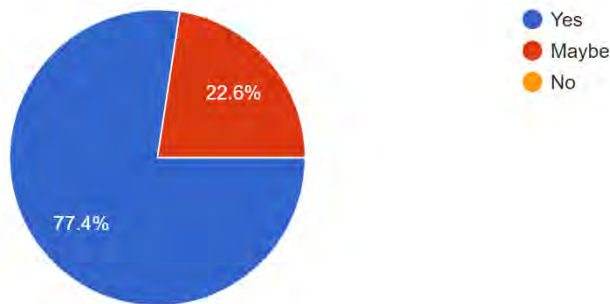
31 responses

- Yes
- Maybe
- No
- universities need to do more; orgs can't give someone tenure or health insurance
- I think this is a very complex issue. 'Opportunities' in practice often means…
- I do not know much about the present situation.

Purple "other" answer extended: I think this is a very complex issue. 'Opportunities' in practice often means 'exploitative hourly paid positions'. The issue of academic employment is also one of government funding and policy. I think it is important universities advocate strongly for a move away from casual labour and have a principled policy to minimize it, but in the short term this can look like a reduction of opportunities.

Q10 – Do you believe that more consistent and active involvement from established scholars could help to raise the profile of initiatives led by scholars in precarious positions?
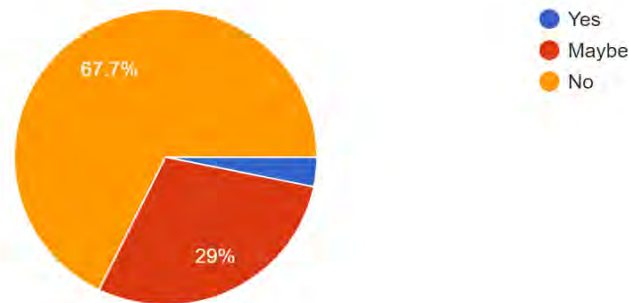
31 responses

- Yes
- Maybe
- No

Yes – 24; Maybe – 7

Q11 – Do you think scholars in precarious position receive enough recognition and support from the broader academic community (e.g., academic orgs, ...nces, funding schemes, research projects, etc.)?

31 responses

- Yes
- Maybe
- No

Q11 – Do you think scholars in precarious position receive enough recognition and support from the broader academic community (e.g., academic orgs, ...nces, funding schemes, research projects, etc.)?

31 responses

- Yes
- Maybe
- No
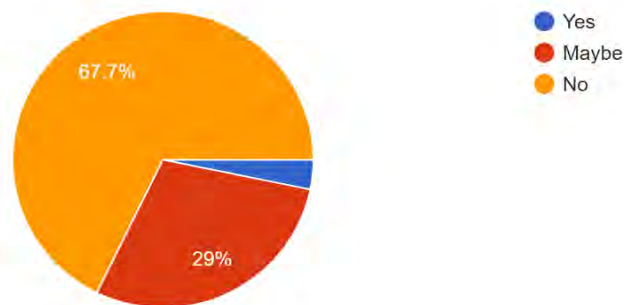
Q12 – Would you find the creation of online social events useful to introduce yourself and make contact with other scholars in an informal environment?

31 responses

- Yes
- Maybe
- No
- Question not aimed at someone in my situation (permanent post)
- I do not know well.
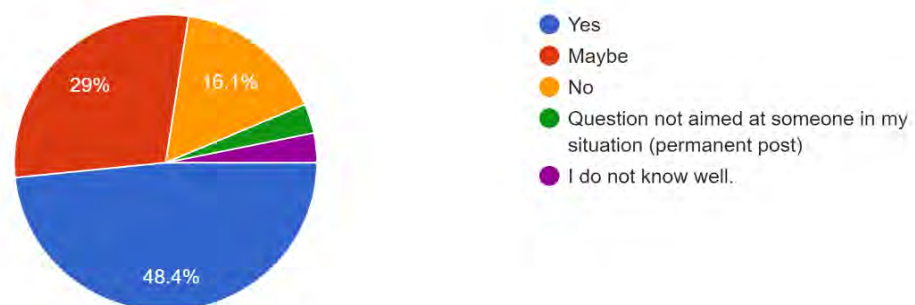
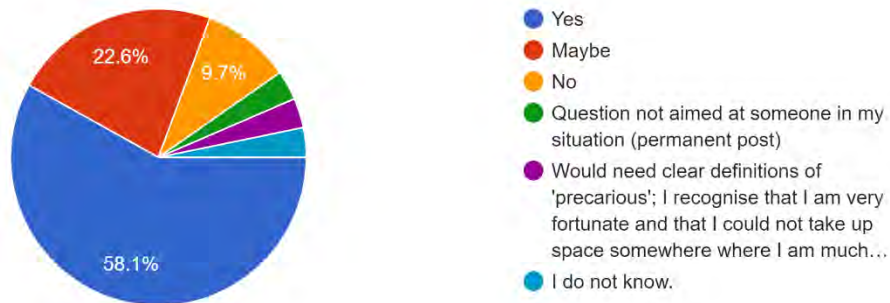Q13 – Would you find the creation of an online organisation run by and for scholars in precarious situations useful to connect with colleagues in si...ange information/resources and find peer support?
31 responses

- Yes
- Maybe
- No
- Question not aimed at someone in my situation (permanent post)
- Would need clear definitions of 'precarious'; I recognise that I am very fortunate and that I could not take up space somewhere where I am much...
- I do not know.

Yes – 18; Maybe – 7; No – 3; Other – 3
Please note one "other" answer (light blue) is equivalent to "maybe."

Complete purple "other" answer: "Would need clear definitions of 'precarious'; I recognise that I am very fortunate and that I could not take up space somewhere where I am much more fortunate that others. Clear boundaries and definitions would be needed."

Q14 – Are there any further comments, recommendations, or issues you would like to see raised in the upcoming Leeds IMC roundtable on "(Re)Building Networks for Postgraduate, Early Career, and Independent Scholars in Early Medieval English Studies"? – Most relevant answers

· "I would love to see a way to present an attitude of radical hospitality to all of us who are serious about Early Medieval Studies, no matter our age, situation, background and culture. Set the default to, Welcome! As opposed to, And who are you again?"

· "It is often difficult at the moment to build contacts, and even more difficult to keep them. What can be done to promote long lasting networks between interdisciplinary scholars of all levels?"

· "Joint publication and collaborative research would help raise the profile and visibility of junior scholars"

· "Please discuss scholarly attrition that results from the current academic job market. How are ac orgs working to enable career attritted folks to remain in scholarly community? It's really hard to do ac work around a day job. My understanding is that

many independent scholars are still on the academic job market. I'm not—and it's difficult to stay in community when the discussion of independent scholars is mostly about people who are cobbling together odd jobs while still trying for ac jobs."

· "Any solution that does not fundamentally engage with the working conditions of precarious scholars will simply not address the issues that such scholars are facing today."

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Roundtable report: '(Re)Building Networks for Postgraduate, Early Career, and Independent Scholars in Early Medieval English Studies,' IMC Leeds 2024

'Let's walk around the room, introduce ourselves, and welcome everyone to join this conversation.' With this invitation to practice 'radical hospitality,' as one of the answers to the online questionnaire suggested, Prof. Catherine Clarke opened this roundtable session on '(Re)Building Networks for Postgraduate, Early Career, and Independent Scholars in Early Medieval English Studies,' sponsored by TOEBI. After Prof. Clarke's opening address, one more invitation was shared, on behalf of Dr Eleni Ponirakis, to seek action from academic institutions to grant honorary affiliations to PhD graduates and independent scholars in the hope of facilitating access to research resources, after the model offered by the University of Nottingham. This was agreed to be a possibility worth exploring, particularly as it would not result in added cost to academic institutions, but the need for a joint effort from organisations and institutions to provide support to scholars facing precarity must be addressed first.

What 'precarity' means in the context of academic practice was precisely the focus of much of the ensuing discussion. To what extent are terms such as 'early career' or 'precariously employed' useful when describing and

addressing issues of precarity and marginalisation in the field? Are scholars working in small departments or in isolation from the medievalist community in a less precarious position than other colleagues? Several points were raised in this regard, which emphasised the blurriness of these concepts and how they contribute to shape a 'hierarchy of precarity' that sets scholars facing similar issues in competition among themselves instead of working together towards a common aim. Nonetheless, while it would be useful to revisit these labels and their negative impact, it was agreed by all participants that some distinction must exist that ensures representation of emerging and marginalised voices in organisation committees, conferences, and research activities, and which recognises their contribution to the field in a way that is significant, fair, and inclusive.

In relation to inclusivity and shared spaces, the limited engagement from established scholars in the conversation was noted and attributed to a willingness to respect spaces dedicated to Postgraduate and Early Career activities—however, limited engagement often results in limited visibility and impact, for which reason it would be desirable to see emerging initiatives such as this roundtable session as an invitation to share a common space across all academic strata, and as an opportunity to work jointly towards the betterment of the field regardless of individual interests and backgrounds.

This discussion generated further questions around issues of precarity and self-definition, particularly around the concept of 'professional academia' itself: is being an academic the same as working in academia? Are the lack of institutional affiliation and limited access to resources increasingly heavy burdens on scholars working from the margins of academia? And, perhaps more importantly, is turning the field of Early Medieval English Studies into a

welcoming, shared space for all scholars regardless of their personal and academic backgrounds really an act of 'radical hospitality,' or should we be seeing this as a warranted standard of professional kindness to be upheld and secured for current and future generations of scholars?

'Crisis as Opportunity: Radical Hospitality and Shared Spaces in Early Medieval English Studies,' IMC Leeds 2024 Session

Session Number: 415, scheduled for Monday, 1 July 2024: 19:00-20:00

Participants: Michael Bintley (University of Southampton), Francesca Brooks (University of York), Donna Beth Ellard (University of Denver), Eleni Ponirakis (University of Nottingham), Francisco J. Rozano-García (University College Cork) and Tom Revell (University of Oxford)

With these important questions in mind, a follow-up roundtable session will be held at IMC Leeds 2024 under TOEBI's sponsorship. Details for this session are as follows:

This roundtable session builds on a previous conversation around "(Re)Building Networks for Postgraduate, Early Career, and Independent Scholars in Early Medieval English Studies," held at IMC Leeds 2023. While this discussion addressed matters of inclusivity, representation, self-definition, and solidarity across academic strata, institutions, and organisations, two central concepts stood out as the most significant in the endeavour to support current and future colleagues in the field, as well as to ensure the continuity of Early Medieval English Studies. These concepts are those of "radical hospitality" and "shared spaces."

By further exploring these two central ideas, this roundtable seeks to keep building towards an open conversation around questions such as, "How can we work to address the various scenarios of precarity that affect our field?", "How can we foster an academic culture where ideas, experiences, spaces, and resources can be shared by all regardless of institutional limitations?," or "Is being an academic the same as being in academia?"

This session is open to *all* scholars working in the field of Early Medieval English Studies or adjacent disciplines, regardless of individual research interests, career stage, or professional status. Both emerging and established voices are invited and very much encouraged to participate.

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Beowulf Adaptations in the Classroom

Simon Heller

This September, I presented a paper as part of TOEBI's Annual Meeting, which turned out to be a fascinating event, full of captivating people and ideas. My attendance was only made possible by a bursary granted by TOEBI, and I would like to thank the committee once more for their generosity.

This year's meeting was structured around the theme of adaptation, and my paper aimed to provide a few examples of how adaptation studies could be used in a classroom setting when approaching a foundational text like the Old English *Beowulf*. I argued that drawing on adaptation theory and bringing certain adaptations into discussions of *Beowulf* can generate valuable dialogue, offering the opportunity to reflect on certain

aspects, themes, or passages of the source text by examining how they are treated in adaptations. I started with a general overview of adaptation studies, outlining the evolution from a paradigm revolving around fidelity to the widespread adoption of a dialogical model emphasising adaptation as a process, a view which owed much to theories of intertextuality. In doing so, I hoped to convey that mentioning *Beowulf* adaptations solely as part of a qualitative discourse ignores many of the opportunities which they can otherwise allow.

To illustrate that point, I demonstrated the way in which adaptations echo certain aspects of the poem, thereby opening avenues for fruitful discussion of the primary text and of relevant secondary materials. An excerpt from Nicole Markotić's *After Beowulf* (2022) underlined how adapters can successfully mirror and engage with some of the Old English poem's more grammatically thorny and confusing

passages. John Gardner's *Grendel* (1971) was then used as an example of how adaptations of *Beowulf* can both recall and exemplify the adaptative process at play in the Old English poem itself, but also engage with the source text in radical ways. Moreover, the intrinsic tendency for adaptations to expand on their source texts can further contribute to their usefulness, as their focus on the 'gaps' can be a helpful way to ponder the contents of the story being adapted, about what is expounded and what is not. Examples included William Hamilton Canaway's unfurling of the fifty-year interlude separating the second and third part of the poem in his novel *The Ring-Givers* (1958), as well as a discussion of the many ways in which Grendel's fatherlessness has been reimagined in adaptations like Graham Baker's 1999 film, Robert Zemeckis' 2007 film, and Susan Signe Morrison's novel *Grendel's Mother: The Saga of the Wyrd-Wife* (2014).

This paper attempted to show how considering adaptation as an integral aspect of the reception of a poem like *Beowulf* can open possibilities for analysis and discussion, but also how the methodology and concepts of adaptation studies can in turn be used to illuminate some of the poem's specific aspects, encourage close reading, transversal thinking, and productive comparative approaches. I also aimed to illustrate the breadth and diversity of *Beowulf* adaptations. In my paper, I mentioned or referenced fifteen different ones, and over the course of the day, I was asked a few times about some of them. I will therefore use this report as an opportunity to expand on that list (I would point towards the excellent *Beowulf's Afterlives Bibliographic Database* for a more exhaustive one), in the hopes that some of these adaptations might find their ways into more classrooms.

For adaptations dealing with the voices of the Grendelkin, see of course John Gardner's *Grendel* (1971), but also Ralph Bourne's *Grendel's Mother* (2009), Susan Signe Morrison's *Grendel's Mother: The Saga of the Wyrd-Wife* (2014), Diana Stout's *Grendel's Mother* (2016), Susan Thornton's *Sister of Grendel* (2016), and Maria Dahvana Headley's *The Mere Wife* (2018). If many adapters have dealt with gender issues by exploring the perspective of Grendel's mother, many have also expanded on the women of *Beowulf*. In addition to the poetry by Laura Varnam, see also Ashley Crownover's *Wealtheow: Her Telling of Beowulf* (2008), Donnita L. Rogers' *Women of Beowulf* trilogy (2013-2015), Edward L. Risden's "Freawaru's Lament" in *Alfgar's Stories from Beowulf* (2022), and Jennifer Bohnhoff's *The Last Song of the Swan* (2022). Gender bent versions of Beowulf could also find their place here, such as the ones found in April Genevieve Tucholke's *The Boneless Mercies* (2018) and the graphic novel *Grendel, Kentucky* (2021)

by Jeff McComsey and Tommy Lee Edwards.

Some adapters choose to focus on the stories happening in the margins of the poem. E.L. Risden's short stories in *Alfgar's Stories from Beowulf* (2022) mentioned earlier is an example, as would be the exploration of Unferth's character in Philip Guimond's *The Unferth Accident* (2013), or of Wiglaf and his family in Christopher L. Webber's *The Beowulf Trilogy* (2022). Some, however, are more conventional in their retelling of the story of *Beowulf*, such as novelisations like Parke Godwin's *The Tower of Beowulf* (1995) and R. Scott Johns' *The Saga of Beowulf* (2008), or verse adaptations like Nicole Markotić's *After Beowulf* (2022). Authors of historical fiction might decide to expand on certain areas of the source text, such as W. H. Canaway's aforementioned *The Ring-Givers* (1958), or choose to retell the events of the story through the perspective of a third party, like Michael Crichton's *Eaters of*

the Dead (1976) and Frank Schaefer's *Whose Song is Sung* (1996).

The temporalities of the source text might also be reframed, as is the case in the futuristic science-fiction novel *The Legacy of Heorot* (1987) by Larry Niven, Jerry Pournelle, and Steven Barnes. Adapters might also emphasise the contemporary nature of their retellings by setting their reimagined stories in the present. Maria Dahvana Headley's *The Mere Wife* (2018) mentioned above is a good example of a modern take on *Beowulf*, as are Hal Hartley's film *No Such Thing* (2001), the graphic novel *The Beast of Wolfe's Bay* (2013) by Erik Evensen, or some of the literary works of Neil Gaiman, whose work on the script of Robert Zemeckis' 2007 film *Beowulf* was predated by his short story *Bay Wolf* (1998) and was contemporaneous with his novella *The Monarch of the Glen* (2006), a Beowulfian tie-in to his 2004 novel *American Gods.*

And this only scratches the surface.

Book *Reviews*

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.

Theoretically informed studies of the material world in early medieval English literature
and culture have thrived in recent years. To date, these studies have tended to focus on
Beowulf and on the riddles and poems of the Exeter and Vercelli Books as well as on
artefacts such as the Franks Casket and monuments such as the Ruthwell Cross. Amy
Faulkner's monograph, *Wealth and the Material World in the Old English Alfredian Corpus*,
advances this area of research by examining in detail the prose translations traditionally
attributed to King Alfred. As such, Faulkner expands the corpus of primary sources
that can benefit from new materialist approaches to Old English literature. Her
monograph also deepens our understanding of how early medieval writers thought
about materiality in their own literary and cultural contexts.

Faulkner's key observation is that, while the Alfredian translators often condemn and
urge detachment from the material world, material things nonetheless surface in their
translations time and time again. To better comprehend this phenomenon, Faulkner
turns to both the Augustinian principles of 'use' and 'enjoyment' and to contemporary
'thing theory'. These modern and premodern theoretical frameworks are placed into
productive conversation to show that wealth in Alfredian literature is not simply a tool
to be used or a treasure to be enjoyed in excess. Rather, wealth is conceived as a current
that flows horizontally as an exchange of gifts between humans and vertically between

earth and heaven. In Alfredian literature, wealth has the transformative power to bridge the gap between the material world imagined in heroic poetry and the Christian renunciation of material treasures.

This elegant, convincing thesis illuminates not only Alfredian prose translations but also new materialist approaches to Old English literature more broadly. Observations drawn from thing theory – originally rooted in Heideggerian philosophy and first applied to modernist and postmodern literature – here find surprising yet compelling parallels in Augustinian and, over the course of the book, Alfredian philosophy and theology. Accordingly, Faulkner's monograph should be heralded as an important theoretical intervention as well as a significant study of the Alfredian corpus.

The five main chapters of the monograph cover: the prefaces of the Alfredian corpus; the Old English *Pastoral Care*; the Old English *Boethius*; the Old English *Soliloquies*; and, finally, the Old English *Prose Psalms*. Chapter one demonstrates that the prefaces draw attention to the materiality of the text and occupy positions in between enjoyment and use, means and end. This sets up chapter two, which argues that the *Pastoral Care* understands wealth as a current running from earth to heaven. The third chapter nuances the commonly held assumption that the *Boethius* is more accepting of material goods than its source texts by arguing that, while wealth is said to be false and fleeting by the translator, it still plays a significant role in the transformation from ignorance to understanding. Chapter four contends that, in the *Soliloquies*, material wealth is not presented as an impediment to the pursuit of wisdom but as part of an ideal earthly life that enables the pursuit of wisdom in this world. The fifth and final chapter draws out some comparisons between the *Pastoral Care* and the *Prose Psalms*, showing that the latter likewise conceive of wealth as a current that flows from earth to heaven and that they highlight almsgiving as a process that can transform perishable, material wealth into heavenly riches. In addition to Alfredian translations, Faulkner looks at some of the

artefacts associated with these texts – most notably the famous Alfred Jewel. Faulkner is an excellent reader of artefacts as well as texts and, in chapter one, carries out a careful, intricate analysis of the Alfred Jewel's iconography, elucidating the ways in which this iconography interacts with the materials – such as rock crystal – from which the Jewel is made. In keeping with her textual analyses, Faulkner contends that rock crystal, as transparent matter that can hint at the immaterial, helps the Alfred Jewel to act as a bridge between earthly ignorance and spiritual revelation.

Although the main focus of the monograph is Alfredian prose, Faulkner includes some comparative readings of the treatment of wealth in Old English poetry, resulting in some striking insights. For example, Faulkner identifies a similar view found in both the *Boethius* and *Beowulf* that the possession of wealth is transitory but notes that, for the *Boethius*, it is treasure that is transitory, while in *Beowulf*, it is man who is (p. 105). Another insight arises from a passage in which the translator of the *Boethius* questions why men marvel at inanimate things that do not have reason. This leads Faulkner to remark that 'the translator did not see the agency and vibrancy of material things in the same way as the poets of the Exeter Book riddles' (p. 96). This laconic statement is one instance where I would have liked Faulkner to have pursued the larger implications for thing theory a little further. This was a chance to really reflect upon an example of an ideological process that draws a dividing line between human and nonhuman, animate and inanimate, rational and irrational, beings and to consider how different literary forms or genres contribute to this process. Is the vibrant agency of things harder to discern in philosophical prose than it is in the lyric poetry of the riddles? Why might this be the case? Sustained engagement with thing theory falls away somewhat in the central chapters, but there were one or two aspects of the theoretical framework that needed developing through the course of the monograph. The fit between the Augustinian principles of 'use' and 'enjoyment' and the conceptual distinction between 'objects' and 'things' drawn from thing theory is not always a straightforward one.

Sometimes, Faulkner conflates 'enjoyment' with 'thingness' too readily and fails to challenge the anthropocentric perspectives of her medieval sources. The human enjoyment of treasure for its own sake is rather different from the enigmatic, excessive thing-power displayed by an object that suddenly disrupts its encoded social values or eludes our ways of knowing. The latter has the power to decentre human perspectives whereas the former seems to privilege the human experience of nonhuman things. Returning to the Heideggerian concepts of ready-to-hand and present-at-hand and asking how these align with, or diverge from, the Augustinian principles of use and enjoyment might have been one way of probing these theoretical categories and their heritages. A stated aim of – and one generally achieved by – the monograph is to complicate the use/enjoyment and object/thing binaries. But I do wonder whether object/thing is actually a binary in the same way that use/enjoyment is a binary. I would posit that the binary opposite of the nonhuman object is the human subject. Thingness amounts to the latency and excess of the object while 'the thing seems to name the object just as it is even as it names some thing else'.[1]

All the same, Faulkner deserves credit for not simply applying thing theory in a unidirectional way. Instead, she draws upon her medieval texts to speak back to contemporary theory. One especially brilliant example is how Faulkner's analysis of the *Dream of the Rood* allows her to rethink Bill Brown's famous comment that we look through objects whereas a 'thing' can hardly function as a window.[2] Faulkner observes that, in the *Dream of the Rood*, the dreamer does not really look through the cross to understand its significance; rather, the materiality of the cross is thoroughly implicated in the sign that it points towards and thus the dreamer looks not so much through a window as through stained glass (p. 49). This is situated beautifully within the larger

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[1] Bill Brown, 'Thing Theory', *Critical Inquiry*, 28.1 (2001), 1-22, at p. 5.
[2] Ibid., p. 4.

argument that earthly, material things and heavenly signs are not binary opposites but part of the same 'current' of matter and meaning.

Overall, this is an excellent and original monograph that manages to combine theoretical sophistication with deep, detailed and patient scholarship. It opens up new ways of reading the Old English Alfredian corpus and brings that corpus into a lively, ongoing conversation about medieval materialisms. While this book contains plenty of perceptive analysis of the material world in Old English poetry, from *Beowulf* to the *Dream of the Rood*, it also shines a much-needed light on the often-contrasting views that Alfredian prose translators held about materiality and its relationship with the spiritual world. Faulkner's thoughtful monograph therefore provides its readers with a renewed, enriched understanding of Old English things and theories of things.
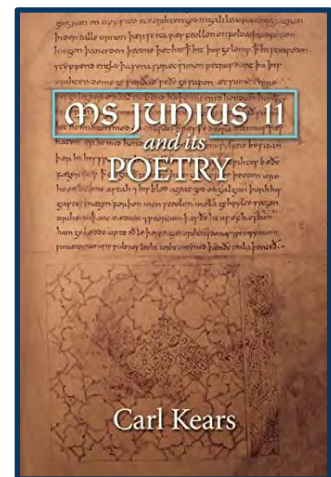
James Paz
University of Manchester

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MS Junius 11 and its Poetry
Carl Kears. York Manuscript and Early Print Studies 6. Boydell & Brewer, 2023. 238 pages. Hardcover, £75.00 (ISBN 9781914049132). Ebook 24.99 (ISBN 9781800109186 (pdf) 9781800109193 (epub))

Carl Kears' stimulating monograph on the poetry of Junius 11 is a very welcome addition to the increasing bibliography on Old English biblical poetry. It serves, in fact, as a neat counterpart to Janet Schrunk

Eriksen's book on the same set of texts.[1] Kears persuasively takes Lucifer's Fall as a controlling image for the tenth-century book's Christian metahistory, and shows how the problems it foregrounds twist and repeat as a reader follows successive instances of lord-follower relationships. In the process, Kears presents insightful and nuanced readings, often focusing on a single word such as *gif* (pp. 88–89 and 93–94), *forlætan* (pp. 74–75), and *bot* (pp. 109–12). These are a joy and I found myself engaging more closely with many passages of poetry as a result. The bibliography is excellent, and the use of legal codes and the language they use is immensely effective throughout.

At times, Kears demonstrates so powerfully how interwoven the thinking between law codes and poetic texts is that I would have liked some bolder suggestions about influence. Where it is discussed, it is assumed to go from legal texts to poems and not the other way around, which I found a little disappointing. It is surely vastly unlikely that Ælfred of Wessex's (d. 899) legal framework influenced the poet of *Exodus* (p. 111).[2] But why not posit influence going the other way? We know so little about how vernacular poetry was used and experienced that opening a discussion about the possibility of *Exodus* being a cultural shaping force would be valuable.

Throughout, Kears argues persuasively and elegantly for the 'complex togetherness and interconnectedness' of the manuscript's texts (p. 12), and it is therefore a slight surprise to find that each of the five main chapters treats a single text. Although there are numerous back-references and the monograph certainly feels more like a single exploration than Eriksen's set of studies, they function more as standalone units than demonstrations that Junius 11 treats set themes in the way that, say, Amity Reading's

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[1] *Reading Old English Biblical Poetry: The Book and the Poem in Junius 11* (London: University of Toronto Press, 2021).

[2] Kears suggests that there is no certainty about the relative dates of composition of the poem and "Alfred's law book" (p. 111) but I do not know of any study that suggests *Exodus* being composed later than 800: although most note the impossibility of certainty, Peter Lucas, Robert Fulk, Daniel Anlezark, and Leonard Neidorf all incline towards placing the poem at least a century before Ælfred.

analysis of the Vercelli Book does.[3] It is even more surprising that what we call *Genesis A* and *Genesis B* are separated out and treated as equivalent texts, when the scribe does not seem to present them as distinct in any way. With the older poem dwarfing the insertion at 2320 lines to its 616, the reading experience of the two (even if treated as distinct texts) is simply not the same. There is probably no ideal way of handling the complexity of this in a way that can make sense to all readers (cf. p. 203 here), but I would have welcomed a more experimental, more densely interwoven discussion, perhaps with chapters that each seek to follow a specific train of thought or mode of approaching the different texts; many very interesting common ideas are identified. For instance, given how tightly bound they are with the framing of images in the first movement of the manuscript, I found Kears' observations on architecture and architectural imagery (in *Genesis A* at e.g. pp. 43 and 57; *Genesis B* at e.g. p. 65 and 79; and *Daniel* at e.g. p. 161) thought-provoking. While some of these do refer back to other instances of the same idea, others do not, and the shape of the monograph means that its implications cannot be fully unpacked, instead circling back to the (not unproductive) idea of *ræd*.

On the other hand, the structure does allow sustained engagement with each text and, given Kears' sensitivity to the poetry, this always pays off. It is especially on show in the final substantive chapter, on *Christ and Satan*, which is a sparkling analysis of cyclical movement in the codex's final poem. I found its interest in "multitemporality" (p. 179), especially as shown in the fallen angels' "self-perpetuating nostalgia" (p. 180), and the poem's anxiety about escaping from the trap of fallen, circular time (pp. 194–95) especially rich. This last builds into a thoughtful, sensitive reflection on the palaeographically and narratively strange ending to *Christ and Satan*, which suggests elegantly that the poem and manuscript ultimately end "without an ending at all" (p.

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[3] *Reading the Anglo-Saxon Self Through the Vercelli Book* (New York: Peter Lang, 2018).

195). Like Jill Fitzgerald's sophisticated work on the poem, Kears shows what a generative text it can be.[4] His cover image, an unfinished foliate pattern from page 225 of the manuscript, is deployed wonderfully as a representation of the "circling, tessellating" nature of the poem and its unfinished, disintegrating form (pp. 175–77). These moments (also at e.g. pp. 102; p. 126 n. 60; p. 136), where the physical form of Junius 11 or its process of production are used to tease out the tone or conception of the texts or to frame how they function as a collective unit, are significant achievements that showcase the potential for studies of literature within a material context. Here and elsewhere, some theorisation might have enabled arguments to go further. Network theory, thing theory, and philosophy of time all clearly hover behind the ideas under discussion: explicitly using their terminologies could have brought together some of these threads from disparate parts of the book more powerfully.

Across the study Kears seeks to understand what the manuscript and its texts meant to different readers and at different moments in its past. This is a laudable ambition, but in practice I found it confusing. Like so many Old English artefacts, it is a complicated entity holding different times together in suspension in its current material form. In this instance, the first three (*Genesis*, *Exodus*, *Daniel*) were certainly part of an original conception with the last (*Christ and Satan*) likely produced separately and later, and later still added on to the extant codex. The poems are generally agreed to be of quite different dates, and were almost certainly brought together specifically for this unusual incarnation (including the splicing of our "Genesis B" into our "Genesis A" to supply narrative material lost from the older, longer poem). As the spectacular image scheme is incomplete, it may well be the case that the codex was regarded as unfinished and became a display object rather than a reading copy. However, its use and circulation is unknown until the modern period and the addition of *Christ and Satan* suggests that at

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[4] *Rebel Angels: Space and Sovereignty in Anglo-Saxon England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019).

least someone in the early medieval period did not find that the incomplete image scheme rendered the volume useless.

There is not much consistency, though, in which historical moment Kears is reading Junius 11. Sometimes manuscript readings are preferred (as at e.g. p. 123 n. 55 on *Exodus*) and other places prefer editorial emendations or reaching for putative original forms (as at e.g. p. 144 n. 15 on *Daniel*). There are times when the codex is productively read in the context of Eadgar's reign (as at e.g. pp. 61–64, on *Genesis A*), when it may well have been produced. *Genesis B*, though, is most often read in the context of the reign of Ælfred of Wessex (d. 899), which is probably roughly when it was translated from an Old Saxon original (see here e.g. p. 73). There is nothing problematic at all (to my eyes) in reading the poem in the context of its probable production or in the context of its probable copying – but they are not the same readings, and the specific interest of this book is explicitly to focus on the texts as they appear in combination here. Where this happens, it can be brilliant: Kears' reconstruction of the later corrector's readings are wonderful where they occur (at, for instance, pp. 124–25 and p. 163 n. 2). But the inconsistency is frustrating, and makes the book sometimes feel more disjointed than its lines of discussion in fact are.

This monograph is a work of literary analysis, not of book history, but I did find it similarly disappointing that engagement with the intentionality of the project/s is limited and inconsistent. The finding here (as at e.g. p. 101) seems to be that the bringing together of the texts in this form was a boldly innovative, powerfully successful act of creative reframing, with old texts being made new by placing them in networked dialogue with one another in order to comment on contemporary concerns. It would have made sense to explicitly present that argument and then to explore the meanings

made as at least partly intended by the compiling team, or indeed as constructed by the initial act of compilation and then refracted by the addition of the final poem.

Indeed, the framing of the book, from the title on, aspires to study the compilation of poetry in its material and temporal contexts. It would have been clearer to frame it as an analysis of *ræd* and *unræd* in these texts, or as a study of the rebel angels in the poems of Junius 11. On both of these points, it delivers wonderfully. As an example, two thirds of the manuscript is taken up with the text of *Genesis A*, covering the Scriptural text of Genesis 1–22 (roughly the same section personally translated by Ælfric of Eynsham), and adds in an account of the rebellion in heaven. Kears (very sensibly) does not attempt to engage with the whole of this massive narrative (in which obedience becomes a much more dominant theme than advice), instead focusing on what he calls its prologue – roughly the first hundred lines – with comments on events elsewhere in the text where relevant. Again, this narrowing seems to me to be a good decision: it enables brilliant close readings of, for instance, a reader's need to turn the page to find whence Lucifer is consigned after his failed rebellion and the sense of rupture produced thereby (p. 49). The approach is very successful, but the framing does not celebrate it and instead implies coverage of the whole of the manuscript and its texts' key collective concerns. This is of course a minor quibble, which does not detract from the quality of the analyses and the value of its discussions.

The book has been extremely carefully produced; I noticed only one proofing error (a missing article on p. 70). This attention to detail shows, too, in the effective integration of the eleven images with accompanying text. And the breadth and sensitivity of Kears' engagement with Junius 11 is joyfully shown in a final Afterword which uses meticulous documentary and material analysis to explore Franciscus Junius' seventeenth-century engagement with the manuscript's poems. Almost the final footnote of the discussion

(p. 201 n. 5) is a delightful observation of how Junius' reading of lines 1 and 25 of *Genesis A* has influenced Kears' own. This is a fitting celebration of the networks of meaning making that he traces, of the productive and impressive attention this monograph pays to detail, and the considerable pleasure it affords a reader.
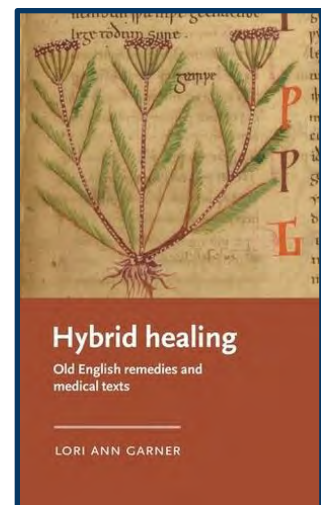
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Hybrid Healing: Old English Remedies and Medical Texts

Lori Ann Garner. Manchester University Press, 2022. 344 pages. Hardcover, £85
ISBN: 978-1-5261-5849-9

Lori Ann Garner's *Hybrid Healing* presents a multidisciplinary and idiosyncratic exploration of the Old English medical corpus, consisting of a series of case studies of selected medical texts, informed by various fields such as oral literary studies, archaeology, folkloristics, and disability studies. Garner's examination of the probable orality of certain medical remedies draws on the work of the book's dedicatee, John Miles Foley; indeed, Foley's work evidently underpins much of Garner's 'hybrid' approach to this corpus of Old English writing. *Hybrid Healing* takes a special interest in what Garner considers the metaphorical potential of the originally biological concept of hybridity as applied to literary studies, and in what this notion might reveal about 'overlooked modes of difference' (p. 4), especially when considering the interface between orality and literacy. Embracing variation within the medical corpus is one of

the book's strengths, and Garner formulates a number of interesting questions which open up new and intriguing avenues of exploration for a body of writing which has at times been left at the peripheries of Old English scholarship. What this line of enquiry might entail is set out clearly and comprehensively in the second of the book's two introductory chapters on the concept of hybridity in both biology and literary studies. Here, Garner rightly acknowledges the risk of anachronism in applying a term not attested in English until the early seventeenth century (in the case of the word 'hybrid') to Old English texts and early medieval notions of medicine, in which there is no evidence for the existence of such a concept. However, Garner contends that, nevertheless, 'hybridity remains a useful analytical construct, not in spite of, but because of the term's inherent contradictions, its intrinsic tensions, and even its semantic messiness' (p. 23).

The remedies and other texts examined in each of the six substantive chapters of this study are, chiefly, *Metrical Charm* 11 (*Ic me on þisse gyrde beluce* is Garner's preferred title), *Metrical Charm* 4 (*Wið færstice*), selected entries from the Harley 585 text of the *Old English Herbarium* (henceforth *OEH*), the entry for *mandragora* ('mandrake') in the Harley 6258B text of the *OEH*, Bald's *Leechbook* I.3 (on afflictions of the ears), and *Riddle* 5 (or *Anhaga* in Garner's title). Whilst it is true that the *Metrical Charms* have historically received a great deal of scholarly attention, often divorced from these texts' manuscript contexts, Garner's consideration of manuscript context and engagement with less widely studied medical texts—especially the Harley 585 and 6258B versions of the *OEH*—is refreshing. Garner views these texts as being hybrid on the grounds of their apparent hybridity of genre, tradition, rhetoric, and transmission, and rather than turning away from the difficulties that such heterogeneity might pose, she embraces it, arguing that 'the healing power of individual remedies ultimately derives from the unique convergences of widely disparate traditions and influences, a dynamic and unpredictable

process wherein multiple influences are continually joined and rejoined' (p. 10). However, Garner notes that the choice of texts analysed in *Hybrid Healing* is a 'carefully selected' one (p. 9), and it would have been helpful here to set out explicitly what the criteria were for this selection of material: why privilege certain texts within the medical corpus over others? This is a question which is not adequately addressed, and indeed, in Chapter 6, Garner concedes that 'most of the remedies treated thus far as "hybrid" are exceptional within the corpus of Old English healing' (p. 206). One might also contest the extent to which these texts evince notions of hybridity any more than any other text or remedy in the medical corpus, and it is worth noting that there is relatively little discussion of the known Latin sources for some of these texts or the many Latin texts actually found in the *Lacnunga*, which is anything but a 'distinctly vernacular compilation' (p. 130).

However, one of the most vexing aspects of *Hybrid Healing*, to this reviewer's mind, is the author's apparently low regard for classical textual criticism, an attitude which has profound theoretical consequences for the recovery—and interpretation—of the text. If this review seems overly concerned with questions of textual criticism, there is a good reason for this. Many of Garner's interpretations of the medical texts selected for her study engage directly with textual cruces and editorial decisions pertinent to the study of Old English medical literature (as acknowledged at pp. 9, 12, 49, *et passim.*), and Garner in fact provides 'edition[s]' (p. 82) of four of the six main texts analysed in the book. Although Garner never explicitly formulates her own editorial temperament, it becomes abundantly manifest as one reads *Hybrid Healing*. For instance, in her engagement with what Brian Stoss called the 'hybridity cycle', endemic to both biology and culture, Garner argues that we must avoid the 'dangerous trap of attributing qualities of purity to parent forms', including in the case of 'impossible and deeply problematic quests for "ur"-texts' (pp. 30–32, at 31). This assertion appears

simultaneously to dismiss and to misrepresent the central endeavour of classical textual criticism, namely the recovery of the archetype (not the *Urtext*), which few critics today would seriously label as 'pure'. Juxtaposing genuinely problematic, even dangerous, notions of biological purity with a reliable, empirical scholarly method is itself 'problematic'.

A couple of examples should suffice here to illustrate the sorts of editorial issues encountered in *Hybrid Healing*. In Chapter 2, Garner offers what is at times a considered and stimulating reading of the text conventionally known as *Metrical Charm* 11 and the entry for yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) found in the *OEH*, focusing on the metaphorical language of battle in these texts' instructions for healing. For instance, Garner highlights the *Herbarium*'s engagement with classical mythology in this entry, which notes that yarrow was used by Achilles to heal those wounded in battle, information possibly acquired from Pliny's *Naturalis Historia*. The potentially mnemonic effect of the mythological associations of yarrow, the interaction here between classical learning and folk medicine, and the plant's associations with battle neatly demonstrate the hybridity of Old English medical writing in action. However, in the included edition and translation of *Metrical Charm* 11, this chapter is less convincing. Garner follows the transcription of Karen Jolly (without justifying this choice of base text) and the punctuation of the text printed by Godfrid Storms, 'whose edition is much more faithful to the manuscript than Dobbie's more widely accepted ASPR rendering' (p. 82). Behind this statement lies the implicit assertion that the manuscript must necessarily offer better readings than any editor might be capable of producing, a tacit rejection of reasoned scholarly interventions in the surviving text. Although it is of course possible to emend a text too liberally on too conjectural a basis, it is also not clear here what Garner's own editorial rationale is, accepting as she does certain emendations whilst

rejecting others wholesale, and even, in a couple of instances, silently omitting text found in the manuscript.

Similarly in Chapter 3, Garner asserts that 'assumptions of scribal error have led to editing and translation choices that are arguably unnecessary' (p. 104), without arguing why they might be unnecessary. Yet, in her text of *Metrical Charm* 4, Garner unquestioningly emends MS *lyte* (understandably) to *lytel*, *fled* to *fleo*, and *flañ* to *flane* (but *flañ* ought rightly to be expanded to *flanne*, which would give an incorrect form; masc. sg. acc. *flan* would suffice, and indeed is required by the metre, here). Furthermore, in support of her lineation of the poem (…*sloh seax / lytel iserna*…)—which would produce metrically irregular lines in a poem which is until this point metrically fairly regular— Garner draws attention in Figure 3.1 to the relevant part of Harley 585, folio 175v, commenting 'there is no indication [in the manuscript] of omitted material between *lytel* and *iserna*'. Indeed, it is rather the point that scribal omission leaves no trace in a manuscript, and it is entirely plausible—I would argue probable—that a metrically stressed word, beginning with *w-* and producing a metrical lift, was omitted here at some point in the history of the text's (written) transmission.

On the one hand, Garner's engagement with editorial cruces is to be welcomed, yet on the other, the influence of scribes in the transmission of these texts seems to be given rather short shrift. The book is also, at times, quick to dismiss a mode of scholarship— namely, textual criticism—to which Garner appears to attach little value. Nevertheless, many readers will no doubt be unperturbed by such matters. However, by the book's conclusion, one might wonder whether adopting a hybrid approach to the Old English medical corpus can shed new light on this important form of learning in Anglo-Saxon England. Garner claims that she has 'for the most part, resisted the impulse to draw broad overarching conclusions based on the small selection of remedies treated in these

chapters' (p. 281). And yet it is not uncommon in *Hybrid Healing* to find overarching conclusions reached on the basis of granular examinations of just a few of some of the more idiosyncratic, if tantalising, texts found in the medical corpus. Whilst the heterogeneity found in Old English medical writings should certainly not be ignored, I wonder whether Garner's approach overstates the case for hybridity in a tradition which, for all its apparent vernacular idiosyncrasies, remains heavily indebted to classical mediterranean learning (as the example of *Achillea millefolium* attests). Ultimately, though, it is on its own terms that *Hybrid Healing* fails to convince this reviewer: the very nebulousness of the notion of 'hybridity', the amorphousness of the book's employment of the term, and the many contradictions that arise from 'hybrid' thinking ensure that the central argument of *Hybrid Healing* remains, unfortunately, obscured from view.

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Perceptions of Medieval Manuscripts: The Phenomenal Book.
Elaine Treharne. Oxford University Press, 2021. Online ISBN: 9780191926471. Print ISBN: 9780192843814.

This is fundamentally a study focused on reconsidering the manuscript as a possession, 'whole object', and 'shapeshifting' thing (trans)formed by those who create and interact with it. It presents a persuasive and detailed set of arguments about
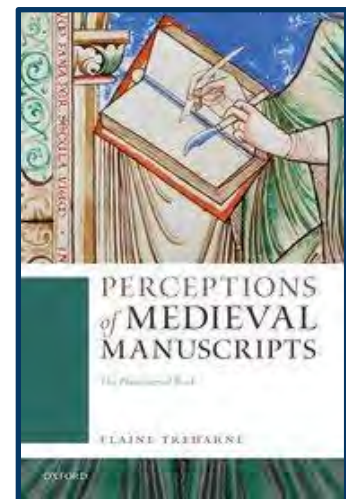
medieval manuscript production and reception. The book ranges across manuscript production and reception between the sixth and fifteenth centuries, alongside considerations of the present day. It is well-structured and easy to navigate; divided into ten chapters, including the introduction and conclusion, each chapter addresses different elements of a book or manuscript's lifecycle. It contains twenty-four colour illustrations of manuscript folios, used judiciously to illustrate key ideas.

The acknowledgments offer a moving nod to the circumstances surrounding its composition during the COVID-19 pandemic. Treharne notes the cognitive dissonance of 'writing books on medieval manuscripts' amidst the global struggles of the pandemic and reflects on the idea that we turn to art and nourishment of the spirit in crises. In the initial chapter/introduction, Treharne indicates her focus on how books are experienced and structured, how they function as witnesses to the past, and the affective power they have on 'human senses'. She outlines the value of exploring the interactions between manuscript and 'reader-user': those who 'disrupted the book, damaged it, enhanced it, expanded it'. She argues that these interactions reveal the significance of the manuscript in earlier cultures, a fact that is at risk of becoming invisible to us in our 'print-saturated' world. Treharne advocates for more attention to be paid to books as 'things' and 'objects' (terms she interchanges) and to perceptions and sensory experiences of the medieval manuscript as a 'decidedly sensual and phenomenal object'. The reviewer would like to briefly note the irony of working from an electronic copy provided by OUP on VitalSource Bookshelf.

In arguing that sensory engagement is fundamental to working with medieval manuscripts and books, Treharne evokes images of examining, touching, lifting, and placing manuscripts – something she acknowledges is not widely accessible. She warns us of the danger of digital facsimiles and alternatives in obscuring the medieval

manuscript's 'particular features of sensuality, phenomenalism, and thus wholeness' and notes how an appreciation of the sensual 'bookness' of such texts could inspire scholars in developing new digital interfaces that might aspire to capture more of their physicality, openly calling for online repository images to be thus contextualised.

Treharne also maps the difference between historical and modern reactions to blankness in books: where modern society condemns writing on/in a book as vandalism, the 'viewer-reader-annotator' through history seems to have read blankness as an invitation for 'conversation' and intervention (in forms such as annotating, signing, illustrating). We are encouraged to examine the entire book without overlooking space left 'vacant' or peripheral/invisible elements. Across the initial chapter, Treharne establishes a framework that justifies examining the invisible contexts of the book as a whole, experiential, sensory object. Unlocking and detailing different methods of evaluating historical interactions with the book/manuscript and prompting us to consider 'invisible aspects', Treharne successfully presents an enticing new approach to the manuscript as 'entire object' that avoids the obfuscations inherent in traditional scholarship.

The book proceeds through focused close readings linked to different concerns that all reinforce the need to consider 'the wholeness of the manuscript'. Chapter Two provides detail about the physical process of medieval MS production and presents an edition of Riddle 26 with notes/commentary. Persuasive and diligent analysis explores the 'highly sensual' imagery and devices of the riddle, which Treharne compares to the sensory environment of manuscript production. This chapter also provides a lexical and semantic examination of select Early English vocabulary used for 'the make-up of the book'. Chapter Three focuses on scribes and their apparatus, explored especially through Riddle 51 and what it can reveal about the 'skill, focus, and physical exertion required to write proficiently.' It analyses images of scribes and their tools, elucidating

them with context about scriptoria and later 'writing-shops', technical explanations, and examples of the potential effects of the *mise-en-page* on the senses and imagination of the reader. Interpreting the evidence as suggesting that scribes conceived of their own work as 'reverent' and focusing on their 'kinaesthetic engagement' with tools and book, Treharne depicts them as putting energy into the creation of meaning. The latter part of this chapter vividly discusses palaeography and 'critical gazing', integrated into a discussion of the 'idiosyncratic script' and self-aware second person pronouns of the Tremulous Hand of Worcester.

Chapter Four discusses the 'book as archive' and potential uses and audiences for the medieval book, advocating passionately for the consideration of manuscripts as 'peopled' (crafted, read, and inscribed by careful individuals). Treharne sets out to consider the book as 'eloquent relic' in this chapter and evaluates how readers, writers, and owners 'participate' in the manifold functions of the book. The perception of the book as information repository 'probably or potentially permanent' is explored as one factor behind manuscript additions, while we are prompted to consider its role as intercessor to 'heavenly' as well as earthly audiences. Chapter Five turns to examining 'presences' in the book and how we can analyse the practice of adding names to manuscripts, prompting us to consider the 'erased, the overwritten' and cautioning against dismissive attitudes to notes and marginalia as 'doodles or scribbles'. In this chapter Treharne argues for more attention to be paid to inscriptions and marginalia as meaningful and deliberate action. Arguing that medieval reader-viewers might see the emptiness of spaces in manuscripts/books as 'inviting', she explores the idea that blank spaces 'become generative places for dialogue, exchange, and comment' – perhaps even 'public spaces' – in a way that is at odds with how we perceive untouchable marginal space in books today. This chapter strongly advocates for including marginal material

to better understand medieval interactions with, and perceptions and audiences of – including 'unanticipated' ones – the 'multifunctional' book.

Chapter Six delves deeper into the invisible aspects of the book, considering the potential of writing as 'holy and salvific act' in varied contexts and genres. Treharne argues that books did not need to be extravagant to be understood as inherently authoritative or possessive of 'invisible divine force' and highlights the 'flexible' and 'dynamic' form of manuscripts in their different life stages. Exploring the practice of name entry as a process of connecting histories and the value of annotations and glosses, Treharne convincingly argues for the (re)consideration of marginal spaces inhabiting books as 'sites of interaction and contention' that show the importance of 'writ[ing] ourselves into the book'. Chapter Seven deals with representations of books and other art and how examining depictions of the medieval book can illuminate its functionality. It provides contextualised examinations of images from manuscripts, arguing that they consistently demonstrate a focus on conveying sanctity and wholeness. This chapter also focuses on the book's 'hapticity' or 'touchability' (including its heft and weight) as part of what is discussed elsewhere as the sensual and kinaesthetic elements of the book as phenomenological object. Treharne argues that in images depicting the touching of books there is an 'affective outcome', since viewers are invited to imagine the sensations.

The transition to Chapter Eight is marked by Treharne's warning that it 'will take us from the sublime to the contemporary with a painful reminder of how much there is still to be lost of early book culture'. It is indeed an emotive chapter that addresses the dispersal, fragmentation, and deliberate division of manuscripts at the hands of private collectors and 'unscrupulous commercial traders'. Treharne provides a productive overview of the book trade and its history, including antiquarian activities she labels as ranging from 'vandalistic to fetishistic', and exemplifies how we can investigate

manuscript provenance. This chapter includes scorching condemnations of the destruction and dismemberment of books, and the lack of repercussions for those who do this.

One of the fundamental arguments of chapter and monograph is that 'writing is not the most important component of the miniature manuscript; its thing-ness in relation to its human user is'. Chapter Nine focuses on the digital book: Treharne argues that books viewed online or in exhibition cases lose their haptic potential and become a 'new object' that has perhaps been fragmented or flattened; she warns of the seductive potential of (undeniably useful and accessible) digital technology which can impede our understanding of the codex as 'whole living object'. The chapter then moves to an overview of 'restorative scholarship' and its potential. Treharne advocates strongly for manuscripts to be 'displayed and discussed responsibly, fully, and with intelligible and engaging accompanying interpretative material' to avoid any manipulation or misleading of the reader. She considers what gets blurred by current ways of representing manuscripts online: how can we depict the 'fleshy, tactile, extensive thing' in digital repositories? How can we convey issues of 'scale, heft, and space' on these platforms? The chapter ends with an impassioned call to scholars in the field to band together and share their skills in order to work towards finding answers to such questions.

The final chapter of the book calls for the reader to 'relearn' how we look at the handwritten book and rethink our approach, shifting to viewing it as a 'whole, depthful object'. Through a purposeful rumination on the ways books and manuscripts are 'fragmented and disrupted' in myriad environments – editorial, codicological, digital, physical – Treharne revives and re-emphasises the key themes her chapters have exposed. By paying sustained and close attention to the transformation of texts via expansions, adaptations, and reorganisations, Treharne draws our attention to the

autonomous existence of the book as artefact and evokes horror when condemning the 'deliberate dismemberment and mutilation' of manuscripts.

This monograph is a necessarily selective study, and its focus on different aspects of the physicality and experience of the book is vivid, lively, and aptly exemplified in each phase. Chapters Two and Three could potentially act as excellent initial reading for taught modules on manuscript studies or palaeography due to their detailed explanations of scribal practice, conventions, and useful specialist terms. This is a timely, thought-provoking book and its years in the making are evident in diligent research, and the depth and maturity of ideas and analysis of the book as phenomenon, object, and experience. It is elegantly written with infectious enthusiasm, especially in the introductory and concluding segments which are highly reflective. The book's bibliography is thorough and accessible, even offering the reader tips on navigating issues of discoverability when searching repository websites for shelfmarks.

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Recent Publications

Below is a by no means exhaustive list of some recent titles in Old English and Early Medieval Studies. If you're interested in reviewing one of these books for future editions of the TOEBI newsletter, or there is a book not included on this list that you would like to review, please get in touch with the newsletter editors.

Anthem Press

Bernard J. Muir, *The Cædmon Manuscript: The Beginnings of English Religious Poetry, I* (2023)

ARC Humanities Press

Rachel A. Burns and Rafael J. Pascal, *Tradition and Innovation in Old English Metre* (2023)

Matthew D. Coker, *Supernatural Speakers in Old English Verse Poetic and Spiritual Power in Early Medieval Society* (2023)

Boydell and Brewer

Alice Jorgensen, *Emotional Practice in Old English Literature* (forthcoming, 2024)

Rebecca Brackman, *Old English Scholarship in the Seventeenth Century: Medievalism and National Crisis* (2023)

Rachel A. Fletcher, Thijs Porck, and Oliver M. Traxel, *Old English Medievalism: Reception and Recreation in the 20th and 21st Centuries* (2022)

Andrew Rabin and Anya Adair, eds., *Law, Literature, and Social Regulation in Early Medieval England* (2023)

Brepols

Stephanie Clark, Janet Ericksen, Shannon Godlove, eds., *Sources of Knowledge in Old English and Anglo-Latin Literature: Studies in Honour of Charles D. Wright* (2023)

Annina Seiler, Chiara Benati, Sara M. Pons-Sanz, *Medieval Glossaries from North-Western Europe: Tradition and Innovation* (2023)

Stephen Pelle, ed., *New Latin Contexts for Old English Homilies: Editions and Studies of Ten Sources and Analogues* (2024)

Cambridge University Press

Lindy Brady, *Multilingualism in Early Medieval Britain* (2023)

Nicole Guenther Discenza and Heide Estes, *Writing the World in Early Medieval England* (2023)

Mark Faulkner, *A New Literary History of the Long Twelfth Century: Language and Literature Between Old and Middle English* (2022)

Jennifer A. Lorden, *Forms of Devotion in Early English Poetry: The Poetics of Feeling* (2023)

Harriet Soper, *The Life Course in Old English Poetry* (2023)

Medieval Institute Publications

Rebecca Hardie, *Æthelflæd, Lady of the Mercians, and Women in Tenth-Century England* (2023)

Eleni Ponirakis, *Thought and Action in Old English Poetry and Prose* (2024)

Oxford University Press

Nelson Goering, *Prosody in Medieval English and Norse* (2023)

University of Toronto Press

Jennifer Neville, *Truth Is Trickiest: The Case for Ambiguity in the Exeter Book Riddles* (forthcoming, 2024)

Mo Pareles, *Nothing Pure: Jewish Law, Christian Supersession, and Bible Translation in Old English* (2024)

Jonathan Wilcox, *Humour in Old English Literature: Communities of Laughter in Early Medieval England* (2024)

TOEBI *Information*

Teachers of Old English in Britain and Ireland (TOEBI) aims to promote and support the teaching of Old English in British and Irish universities, and to raise the profile of the Old English language, Old English literature, and early medieval England in the public eye.

Membership

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.

Meeting

The next TOEBI meeting will take place in September 2024 at Edge Hill University. The theme will be 'Borders and Boundaries'. The Call for Papers will go out shortly.

Conference Awards

TOEBI regularly awards bursaries to help postgraduate students attend conferences. Applications are welcome from both current

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postgraduates and those who have recently completed doctorates but do not yet have an academic post. The application form can be downloaded from the website (www.toebi.org.uk/grants-for-graduates) and should be submitted to Dr Daria Izdebska (izdebsd@hope.ac.uk).

Spread the Word

We hope you have enjoyed this issue of the TOEBI Newsletter and urge you to share it with colleagues and students who may be interested. We particularly encourage you to introduce TOEBI to your postgraduate students and to internationally based colleagues. Students can join for £5 a year and, as members, they will be able to apply for funding towards conference expenses, get experience writing and publishing book reviews, and enjoy discounts on select academic publications. They need not be teachers to join!

Contact the editors

The editors of the TOEBI newsletter are keen to receive submissions based on your projects, outreach and classroom plans, as well as reports on creative work. To contact the editors about a review, a submission, or anything else, please write to the following address: francesca.brooks@york.ac.uk and abigaillwilliams23@outlook.com.