

ROUTLEDGE STUDIES IN MEDIEVAL RELIGION AND CULTURE

The Barbarian North in Medieval Imagination

Ethnicity, Legend, and Literature

Robert W. Rix



The Barbarian North in the Medieval Imagination

This book examines the sustained interest in legends of the pagan and peripheral North, tracing and analyzing the use of an ‘out-of-Scandinavia’ legend (Scandinavia as an ancestral homeland) in a wide range of medieval texts from all over Europe, with a focus on the Anglo-Saxon tradition. The pagan North was an imaginative region, which attracted a number of conflicting interpretations. To Christian Europe, the pagan North was an abject Other, but it also symbolized a place from which ancestral strength and energy was derived. Robert W. Rix maps how these discourses informed ‘national’ legends of ancestral origins, showing how an ‘out-of-Scandinavia’ legend can be found in works by several familiar writers, including Jordanes, Bede, ‘Fredegar’, Paul the Deacon, Freculph, and Æthelweard. The book investigates how legends of northern warriors were first created in classical texts and since re-calibrated to fit different medieval understandings of identity and ethnicity. Among other things, the ‘out-of-Scandinavia’ tale was exploited to promote a legacy of ‘barbarian’ vigour that could withstand the negative cultural effects of Roman civilization. This volume employs a variety of perspectives cutting across the disciplines of poetry, history, rhetoric, linguistics, and archaeology. After years of intense critical interest in medieval attitudes towards the classical world, Africa, and the East, this first book-length study of ‘the North’ will inspire new debates and re-positionings in medieval studies.

Robert W. Rix is Associate Professor in the Department of English, Germanic and Romance Studies at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark. He is the author of the book, *William Blake and the Cultures of Radical Christianity* (2007), and is chief editor of *Romantik – Journal for the Study of Romanticisms*. In recent years, Rix has written a number of articles on the use of Norse mythology in British fiction, and he has published an anthology on Norse tradition in English poetry.

Routledge Studies in Medieval Religion and Culture

Edited by George Ferzoco, University of Bristol
Carolyn Muessig, University of Bristol

- 1 **Gender and Holiness**
Men, Women and Saints in Late
Medieval Europe
*Edited by Samantha J. E. Riches
and Sarah Salih*
- 2 **The Invention of Saintliness**
*Edited by Anneke
B. Mulder-Bakker*
- 3 **Tolkien the Medievalist**
Edited by Jane Chance
- 4 **Julian of Norwich**
Visionary or Mystic?
Kevin J. McGill
- 5 **Disability in Medieval Europe**
Thinking About Physical
Impairment in the High Middle
Ages, c.1100–c.1400
Irina Metzler
- 6 **Envisaging Heaven in the
Middle Ages**
*Edited by Carolyn Muessig and
Ad Putter*
- 7 **Misconceptions about the
Middle Ages**
*Edited by Stephen J. Harris and
Bryon L. Grigsby*
- 8 **Medieval Monstrosity and the
Female Body**
Sarah Alison Miller
- 9 **Representations of Eve in
Antiquity and the English
Middle Ages**
John Flood
- 10 **Crying in the Middle Ages:
Tears of History**
Edited by Elina Gertsman
- 11 **The Barbarian North in the
Medieval Imagination**
Ethnicity, Legend, and
Literature
Robert W. Rix

The Barbarian North in the Medieval Imagination

Ethnicity, Legend, and Literature

Robert W. Rix

First published 2015
by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

and by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an Informa business

© 2015 Taylor & Francis

The right of Robert W. Rix to be identified as author of this work has been asserted by him in accordance with sections 77 and 78 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Trademark notice: Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Rix, Robert, 1970-
The Barbarian North in Medieval Imagination : Ethnicity, Legend, and Literature /
Robert Rix.

pages cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

1. Literature, Medieval—History and criticism. 2. Scandinavia—In literature.
3. Europe, Northern—In literature. 4. Legends—Europe, Northern—History and criticism. I. Title.

PN671.R59 2014

809'.02—dc23

201402427

ISBN: 978-1-138-82086-9 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-315-74362-2 (ebk)

Typeset in Sabon
by codeMantra

Contents

<i>Abbreviations</i>	vii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	ix
Introduction	1
1 Ethnogenesis and the ‘Out-of-Scandinavia’ Legend	12
2 The Goths and the Legend of <i>Scandza</i>	28
3 Ethnic History and the Origin of Nations	50
4 Ancestral Rhetoric in Bede’s <i>Ecclesiastical History of the English People</i>	80
5 Northumbrian Angels in Rome: Religion, Race and Politics in the Anecdote of St. Gregory	116
6 Scandinavian Ancestors in Anglo-Saxon Texts	152
7 Danes and <i>Geatas</i> : Heroes of the Legendary North	181
<i>Index</i>	211

This page intentionally left blank

Abbreviations and Editions

- Get.* *The Gothic History of Jordanes*, trans. Charles Christopher Mierow. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1915.
- HE* *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. and trans. Bertrand Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors. Oxford: Clarendon, 1979.
- MGH* *Monumenta Germaniae historica*.
- PL* *Patrologia Latina Database*, a complete electronic version of the first edition of Jacques-Paul Migne's *Patrologia Latina*. 1844–1855 and 1862–1865.

All quotations from the Old English text of *Beowulf* are from *Klaeber's Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg*, ed. R. D. Fulk, R. E. Bjork, and J. D. Niles, 4th edition. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008.

Throughout this book, translations from Latin and Old English are my own, unless otherwise attributed. References to primary texts are given both by section number and, when applicable, page number (indicated by 'p.').

This page intentionally left blank

Acknowledgements

I want to thank Robert Rintoull for proofreading the manuscript and Jørgen Wildt Hansen for linguistic advice. But special thanks must go to Mary-Ann McKerchar for her tireless efforts reading and commenting on the manuscript. I have benefitted from the response given by one of the anonymous reviewers, who provided me with some excellent ideas to help focus the work. The abovementioned have helped iron out a number of flaws, and any remaining mistakes are entirely my own. Lastly, but by no means least, I want to thank my wife Line and my son David for support and forbearance over the years. The book is dedicated to Birthe Olsen (1942–2012), whom we lost too early.

Chapter Five has previously been published, in a slightly different form, in *Journal of Medieval History*, 38.1 (2012): 257–277. The material is reprinted by permission of the publisher, Taylor & Francis Group.

This page intentionally left blank

Introduction

Out of the North shall evil break forth.
(Jeremiah 1:14)

In the Middle Ages, Scandinavia received its fair amount of bad press. For example, following the Viking raid on the monastery at Lindisfarne in 793, the Northumbrian monk Alcuin quoted the above biblical verse as a commentary on the event. Jeremiah's statement relates to the destruction of Judah and Jerusalem at the hands of the Chaldeans, which God had let the prophet see. According to biblical geography, the dominion of the invading Chaldeans was to the north. During the ninth century, when Vikings raided Frankish territories, this biblical text became the verse most often cited and allegorized when commenting on Scandinavian marauders.¹ Yet, at the same time, there is the example of the Frankish poet Ermold the Black, who tried to flatter Louis the Pious by writing praise that eulogized the Franks as a people sprung from the stock of swift-footed Danish warriors.² The North was evidently a contested and conflicted symbolic space.

The idea for writing the present book gestated from puzzlement over the contradictory ways in which the North and its people were represented. The original intention was to focus only on Anglo-Saxon texts, because the cultural conundrum that the North represented warrants particular attention in this tradition. In a number of clerical texts, for example, the Northmen (as they came to be known) were portrayed as looters of property, destroyers of human life, and enemies of Christian civilization. 'Dane' became a byword for heathen, pirate, or devil. In the late ninth century, King Alfred instigated a translation programme of significant Latin works into Old English. In the foreword to the translation of Pope Gregory's *Regula pastoralis* (commonly known in English as *Pastoral Care*), he explains that this was meant as an offensive to counter the Danes' destruction of books at church institutions in England.³ But, ironically, the Danes and other Scandinavian peoples were also the subject of admiring attention in the poem *Beowulf*, presumably recorded by learned monks in a monastery at a time when the Viking raids were not yet over. We may consider the first lines of the poem: *Hwæt! We Gardena in geardagum,/ þeodcýninga, þrym gefrunon,/ hu ða æþelingas ellen fremedon* (ll. 1–3), or in modern English translation: 'Listen! We have heard of the glory in bygone days/ of the folk-kings of the

2 Introduction

spear-Danes,/ how those noble lords did lofty deeds'.⁴ By using the inclusive second-person voice, the poet shares with the audience a tradition in which the Danes of old were known as heroic figures. So, the legend of a heroic Scandinavia seems to have been well known? As my research got underway, it became clear that the Anglo-Saxons were not alone in allowing a stock of warriors from the North to play a prominent role in national imagination; it can be found throughout Europe.

In the wider European context of legend, the North attracted a staple of interconnected ideas about barbarians which will be identified and analysed. To take pride in one's barbarian identity was frequently linked with the notion of having descended from a Northern race. When 'barbarian' is used in this book, it is not in a pejorative sense, but as a convenient critical term consecrated by familiarity, indicating those nations living outside the pale of the Roman Empire, civilization and Christendom. A key element for medieval historians tracing the barbarian roots of their nation is what I identify as the 'out-of-Scandinavia' legend. This legend functioned as a *topos* in a number of texts from the Middle Ages. It is the first time this is mapped in a book-length study.

Another term used in this book is 'the North'. Despite the fuzziness inherent in this phrase, it is preferable to more contemporary terms such as 'Nordic' or 'Scandinavian'. Not only would these definitions be anachronistic, but one would also run the danger of superimposing modern conceptions onto mental maps of the Middle Ages, where they have no justification. When 'the North' is invoked as a term in this book, it relates to an amalgam of more or less coherent ideas in classical and medieval literature. As may already be clear from the above, the noun is capitalized throughout in order to indicate a partly imaginative concept. The North became as much a construct of ingrained perception and stereotypes as 'Orientalism' was for nineteenth-century perceptions of the East.⁵ But the concept of Northern heritage is an entirely different phenomenon which demands careful analysis within its own sociocultural contexts. Christopher B. Krebs has suggested that this is a set of discourses that we may call 'borealism'.⁶ It is the purpose of this study to map the use of the North as a concept, imagined *locus*, and discourse.

An idea of northern lands also existed as an entity of topographical understanding. To pave the way for the discussions to follow, this introduction will provide a survey of what the North meant in terms of geography and ethno-geography.

'THE NORTH' IN CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL GEOGRAPHY

To the classical world, there were two geographical areas that qualified as 'the North'. One was northern Europe, including Scandinavia, which went under the name of *Germania*. The other was Scythia, a vast area extending north

from the mouth of the Danube River on the Black Sea. This was a Central Eurasian area with no definite borders. In ancient Greece, all people to the north were invariably called ‘Scythians’, as Strabo notes in his *Geographia*.⁷ Many of the preconceived ideas associated with Scythians were later transferred to northerners of *Germania*, as this part of Europe began to impinge on Roman consciousness. This created much confusion between Scythia and Scandinavia, which was inherited as geographical misconceptions well into the late Middle Ages.⁸ For example (c. 1072), a prominent intellectual such as Adam of Bremen could talk about the Baltic coast, including Norway, as Scythia.⁹ This confusion had a direct impact on some of the texts that will be examined below.

In Roman geography, several names were used for the North: *aquilo*, *septentrio* and *arcticus*. But also more specific terms were deployed. This book is interested primarily in ideas about the peoples of *Germania*. The name *Germania* was a blanket term that embraced all the regions north of Gaul. In Tacitus’ treatise *De origine et situ Germanorum* (c. AD 98; Concerning the Origin and Situation of the Germans), the term is used to cover all of northern Europe up to Lapland.¹⁰ Tacitus’ work is a prime example of how geographical concepts and early ethnography were often connected. It helped to establish the notion that a ‘Germanic’ race existed – they may be divided into a number of tribal affiliations, but they also shared common characteristics in terms of physical traits, ideas of government, and religion.

Tacitus does not distinguish Scandinavia as a separate entity with its own peculiar population, but such notion did exist, reaching back to Greek geography. A place referred to as *Scatinavia* is first mentioned by Pliny the Elder in his *Natural History* (late AD 70s). This is the ‘most famous’ (*clarissima*) island ‘of a magnitude as yet unascertained’, located in the ‘Codanian Bay’ (the Baltic).¹¹ Pliny also mentions the name *Scandiae* (a plural designation) in relation to islands that are within the reach of Britain (4.16). Possibly, Pliny took this second name form from another source, failing to realize that the two forms referred to one and the same place. A century later, the Greek geographer Ptolemy uses the name Scandinavia to refer to islands east of the Cimbrian peninsula (Jutland), i.e. presumably the now Danish islands of Funen, Sealand, Samsø, etc., in the southwestern Baltic Sea.¹²

After Ptolemy, no other geographer makes mention of an island group; instead, various cognates of the name *Scandinavia* are applied to a single island. The most famous of such references is the name *Scandza* found in Jordanes’ history of the Gothic people, from the mid-sixth century. The name refers to a *vagina nationum* (womb/sheath) from which fierce warriors sprung and subsequently peopled Europe.¹³ The idea of a mysterious northern island continued as a common reference throughout the Middle Ages.

Taking its cue from Jordanes, the idea of a northern region beyond and separate from *Germania* is repeated in the anonymous Ravenna *Cosmography* (probably compiled in stages between the sixth and the early eighth century). Here, the world is divided into 24 segments, with 12 for the northern and

4 Introduction

southern halves respectively. Each segment is equated with *horae diei* (hours of the day), under which are listed various peoples and their characteristics. This text separates the *patria Germanorum* from the *patria Northomanorum*, which the author places in the fourth hour of midnight.¹⁴

A Scandinavian island was often spoken of as located in the ‘Ocean Sea’, a conception based on the idea that the three parts of the world (Africa, Europe, and Asia) were encircled by a huge river-ocean.¹⁵ References to this ocean in the North became an idiomatic expression for ‘the end of the world’. Even as late as the early eleventh century, Dudo of Saint-Quentin begins his *Libri III de moribus et actis primorum Normanniae ducum* (Three Books on the Ways and Deeds of the First Dukes of Normandy) by speaking of the earth’s land mass as ‘hedged round on all sides by the endless girdle of the Ocean’.¹⁶ It is here that Scandinavia is placed, the original home of the Norman ancestors.

A form of the name *Scandinavia*, known already to the Greeks, appears to have a Germanic etymology. With some uncertainty, the term seems to point towards a compound of **skap-* meaning ‘danger’ (cf. Mod.E. *scathing*, Germ. *Schaden*) and *aujō* meaning ‘island’, so that it makes up the sense: ‘dangerous island’. It has been suggested that the name refers to the dangerous waters near Scandinavian coastal rocks (ON *sker*), or otherwise to perilous sand-reefs.¹⁷ In the anonymous seventh-century text *Origo gentis Langobardorum* (The Origin of the Langobards), this is indeed how the word is explained: ‘There is an island that is called *Scadanan*, which is interpreted as “destruction”’.¹⁸

There seems to have been a rival notion of ‘Scandinavia’ that did not associate this place name with an island, but conceived of it as a part of the continent. The *Codex Gothanum*, a text written at the monastery at Fulda in the first decade of the ninth century, provides a tale of how the *Winnili* (later renamed as Langobards/Lombards) come from ‘the extreme border of Gaul’ (*ab extremis galliae fnibus*) to go into *Scatenaug*, which is said to be ‘on the shore of the Elbe River’.¹⁹ This must refer to the peninsula of Jutland (now part of Denmark and northern Germany), because the Elbe empties into the North Sea at the bottom of this neck of land. Similarly, in the Ravenna *Cosmography*, the Elbe (*Albis*) is also assumed to function as the border to the land of the Northmen, which we are told was anciently called *Dania*.²⁰ This approximately equates the sense of the southern limits of Scandinavia accepted today. However, when surveying the references to the North in the Middle Ages, it is important not to assume that any given place name, such as *Germania* or Scandinavia, meant the same across centuries or even between texts relatively close to one another in time. When examining medieval conceptions of ‘the North’, geographical features cannot stand alone; shifting currents of political, cultural, and religious factors also influenced the perceptions of what constituted ‘the North’.

Scandinavia remained the last bastion of pagan beliefs, as the religion of the Cross had won the rest of Europe. As Anglo-Saxon and Frankish missionaries successfully pushed the line of converted peoples further northwards

during the eighth and ninth centuries, they also gradually reconfigured the perception of the boundaries of the North (i.e. Otherness). However, throughout much of the Middle Ages, the northernmost part of the Elbe was where the border of the Holy Roman Empire ended and the pagan North began.

For the ninth century, there is evidence from Frankish chronicles that the boundary was more specifically the River Eider, which runs east of the Elbe. In an entry for the year 811, the royal Frankish annals make note of the peace negotiations between King Hemming of the Danes (*Danorum regem*) and Charlemagne on this river. In the entry for 813, we are even told that the Eider constitutes 'the border to the Northmen'. But this border sometimes also expanded southward, presumably as a result of Danish military success.²¹

That fact that the North began at the bottom of Jutland is corroborated by the accounts of the two seamen who came to King Alfred's court, perhaps in the 790s. Accounts of their sea travels in Scandinavia are inserted into the Old English translation of Paulus Orosius' *Seven Books of History against the Pagans*, completed under the patronage of King Alfred. Orosius' original book began with a long introductory section on the geography of the world, but his section on northern Europe is deficient and confused. At King Alfred's court, it was probably felt that Orosius' account was in need of improvement. This took the form of an interpolation describing Scandinavia through interviews with the two travellers. One was Ohthere, a Norwegian trader (who must have called himself *Ottar*), and Wulfstan, whose name may point to a man of English descent. Ohthere went the longest distance, rounding the north of the Scandinavian peninsula and then subsequently exploring the White Sea. Both accounts name the trading settlement Haithabu, on the River Eider, as the southern terminus for their journeys.²² This seems to indicate a conceptual understanding that the North ended there.

In the Alfredian text, the traveller Ohthere implies that the Danes held dominion over a long stretch of the Swedish west coast. Furthermore, the royal Frankish annals tell us that the early ninth-century Danish king Godfred was in possession of *Westerfolda* (Vestfold), west of Oslofjord.²³ This testifies to the fact that, by the ninth century, the Danes had expanded their dominions to rule a host of other peoples. Because of the ethnic mix this created, outside writers felt compelled to refer to people of these regions as 'Northmen'. For example, in Ermold the Black's celebratory verses, written for King Harald Klak's christening in 826, it is noted that 'Dane' is an 'old' name for the people of the North (still in use), but that they are now called *Nortmanni* ('Northmen') with a Frankish name.²⁴ The anonymous Ravenna *Cosmography* concurs, informing us that what is now the land of the Northmen was once called *Dania*.²⁵

The North that is invoked in most of the texts in this study belongs to a legendary past. Hence, the ancient Northerners, who are the focus of attention, were not the same as the Vikings who ravaged Europe between the

6 Introduction

eighth and the eleventh centuries. The men spoken of in legend as brave warrior forefathers belonged to a heroic age, not unlike the one defined in Hesiod's *Work and Days* as the fourth age of man. This was an age definitively over and therefore possible to compare with the men of the present age. Thus, the Old North referred to in origin legends and heroic tales was a canvas on which images and various cultural assumptions could be projected.

ORGANIZATION OF THE CHAPTERS

A word or two should be said about the structure of the book and the content of the chapters. I begin with a survey of the broader European perceptions of the North in classical and medieval texts, after which I will increasingly home in on a number of Anglo-Saxon discourses. Each chapter is meant to stand on its own, but with the intention that there is continuity between them and that each investigation enriches what precedes or follows.

The first chapter introduces a discussion which the book will pursue throughout. This concerns the on-going debate over the use and function of ethnic legends. Here, the 'out-of-Scandinavia' tale cannot be understood in isolation. The chapter will establish a taxonomy elucidating the different political, cultural, and intellectual implications involved in adopting legends of Trojan, biblical, or Scandinavian ancestry.

The second chapter trains the critical lens on Jordanes' sixth-century history of the Goths' ancient emigration from a homeland in *Scandza*. This is the earliest surviving record of an 'out-of-Scandinavia' legend. Central to the examination of Jordanes' text is how the author creates authority. This is not a question of whether or not his 'out-of-Scandinavia' legend is true; rather, it is the aim to locate, describe, and analyse the archive of cultural precepts that were available to him when making these claims. The main part of the chapter will consider the rhetorical makeup of Jordanes' text and contextualize his references to *Scandza* within the specific political setting at the time of its composition. In this respect, I will argue – contrary to a number of previous studies – that a positive sense of barbarian ancestry can be found in Jordanes' origin legend. Through this critical endeavour, it is the intention to open up his account of the ancient northern homeland to new interpretation.

Chapter Three expands the scope of the previous chapter to provide a comprehensive analysis of the 'out-of-Scandinavia' legend, as it was negotiated in a number of European manuscripts. Such comprehensive comparative reading has not previously been attempted. My argument is that the legend of Northern ancestry was not ancient oral patrimony, but primarily a tradition that came into being through a series of literary borrowings. For historians who took on the mantle of establishing their people's ethnicity as an ontological category, Jordanes' tale became a means of legitimization.

Among the manifestations of 'out-of-Scandinavia' legends discussed are histories of the Langobards, Burgundians, Franks, Saxons, Normans, and Swabians. One of the ideas emerging from synoptic analysis is that the descent from the North was seen as having supplied European bloodlines with a vigour that could withstand the negative effects of (Roman) civilization, which was threatening to sap the energy of the race. By collecting the various uses of the 'out-of-Scandinavia' tales, a number of common functions and purposes are identified in relation to cultural, political, and not least, religious discourses.

Central to any work on early medieval England is Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. Chapter Four offers an incisive close reading of Bede's use of ancestral rhetoric, bringing his reliance on classical ethnography and literary discourses into new focus. The central part of the chapter is a detailed rhetorical analysis of Bede's famous account of the three invading tribes. The chapter seeks to establish a better understanding of how Bede understood the two most northerly groups he mentions: the Angles and the Jutes. What does Bede tell us about the geography of their homelands? What sources and information were available to him, and what preconceptions of cultural stereotypes is he expanding upon?

Chapter Five continues the discussion of Bede's text, examining the legend of Pope Gregory's encounter with Anglian boys (*Angli*) in a Roman market, which is included in Book 2. The legend takes the form of an anecdote dramatizing Gregory's decision to launch a Christian mission to Britain. It is a legend that plays on the racial characteristics of a pagan race that had relocated from the continental north to Britain. It emphasizes the idea of the pagan Northumbrians as belonging to a Germanic race elected for salvation. In significant ways, this separates the *Angli* in Northumbria from other peoples in Britain, not least the Celtic Britons. It is examined how a number of traditional racial qualities associated with the Germanic North underpins the legend. A new perspective is also opened up by re-inserting the legend into the Northumbrian debates of the late seventh and early eighth centuries. By comparing internal evidence with external contexts, the chapter establishes that the anecdote represents an attempt to revise the history of the conversion in Northumbria. This revision is intrinsically connected with a number of overlapping discourses: the salvation of a people from the pagan North, the stigma of the belated Northumbrian acceptance of Roman orthodoxy, the threat of the Celtic churches, monastic competition for primacy, and possibly dynastic rifts.

Chapter Six maps the use of references to Northern ancestry in Anglo-Saxon genealogies. The chapter opens with a discussion of the inclusion of Woden (a pagan god), who is said to be the forefather of Anglo-Saxon kings. The chapter investigates the suggestion that Woden symbolized an origin in 'the North' when mentioned in Anglo-Saxon texts. The chapter then turns to the English ancestor Scyld, who appears in royal genealogies (but whose name is best known as the founder of the Danish line of kings in *Beowulf*).

8 Introduction

The appearance of this figure in both Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian traditions lead us to consider the dissemination of legendary material around the North Sea littoral. The chapter will reveal that medieval historians of Scandinavia, when constructing legends of their national past, had recourse to material ultimately deriving from Anglo-Saxon sources. The chapter will also demonstrate how ancestral legends were perennially recalibrated to fit new cultural conditions.

The final chapter discusses Scandinavian heroic legend in Anglo-Saxon texts. The first part of this chapter will reconsider some of the critical assumptions about the composition of *Beowulf* and its recording in manuscript. The central question here is whether it was possible to conceive and transmit a poem on 'heroic Danes' during three centuries of Viking raids. The second part of the chapter is a revisionary look at the *Geatas*, the ethnic group to which the hero Beowulf belongs. Focus will be on the appearance of this same ethnonym in the Old English translation of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. The indication is here that this name was enmeshed in a number of imaginative, literary, and legendary frameworks. These are all frameworks that return us to themes taken up in the preceding chapters, whereby the study comes full circle.

NOTES

1. Simon Coupland, 'The Rod of God's Wrath or the People of God's Wrath? The Carolingians' Theology of the Viking Invasions', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 42 (1991): 538. For citations of Jeremiah and other biblical passages, see, for example Abbo of Fleury, *Passio sancti Eadmundi*, in *Three Lives of English Saints*, ed. M. Winterbottom, Toronto Medieval Latin Texts, vol. 1 (Toronto: Published for the Centre for Medieval Studies by the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1972), 71–2; Folcuinus of Losses, *Gesta abbatum Loniensium*, MGH SS 4, ed. G. H. Pertz (Hannover, 1841), p. 61; and Siegebert of Gembloux, *Chronica*, MGH SS 6, ed. G. H. Pertz (Hannover, 1895), p. 302.
2. Ermold the Black, *In honorem Hludovici pii*, 4.99, MGH *Poetae Latini aevi Carolini* 2, ed. Ernst Dümmler (Berlin, 1884), p. 61. Ermold's reference is further discussed in Chapter Six.
3. For King Alfred's foreword, see *King Alfred's West-Saxon Version of Gregory's Pastoral Care*, ed. Henry Sweet (London: N. Trübner, 1871), 1–9.
4. *Beowulf: A New Verse Translation*, trans. R. M. Liuzza (Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview Press, 2000), 53.
5. Edward W. Said, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978).
6. For the broad concept of northern *Germania* and Scandinavia as the North, see Christopher B. Krebs, 'Borealism: Caesar, Seneca, Tacitus, and the Roman Discourse about the Germanic North', in *Cultural Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean*, ed. Erich S. Gruen (Los Angeles, CA: Getty Research Institute, 2011), 202–21.

7. Paul T. Keyser, 'Greek Geography of the Western Barbarians', in *The Barbarians of Ancient Europe: Realities and Interactions*, ed. Larissa Bonfante (Cambridge; New York: CUP, 2011), 37–70.
8. David Fraesdorff, *Der barbarische Norden: Vorstellungen und Fremdbeurteilungen bei Rimbert, Thietmar von Merseburg, Adam von Bremen und Helmold von Bosa* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2005), 47.
9. Lars Gahrn, "'Svitjod det Store" och Skytien – ett exempel på norrön tolkning av latinske områdenamn', *Scandia – Tidsskrift för historisk forskning* (2008), <<http://www.sciecom.org/ojs/index.php/scandia/article/view/1435/122>>. For other examples, see Anthony D. Faulkes, 'Descent from the Gods', *Mediaeval Scandinavia* 11 (1978–1979): 115–16. A most helpful resource on the terminological confusion is Lars Hemmingsen, 'Middelaldergeografien og Historia Norvegie', in *Olavslegenden og den latinske historieskrivning i 1100-tallets Norge*, ed. Inger Ekrem, et al. (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum, 2000), 26–53.
10. Tacitus, *De origine et situ Germanorum liber*, cc. 45–6, ed. Alf Önnérfors (Stuttgart: B.G. Teubner, 1983), pp. 30–32.
11. Pliny, *Naturalis historiae libri XXXVII*, 4.13, ed. L. Jan and K. Mayhoff, vol. 1 (Monachii: Lipsiae: Saur, 2002), p. 345. Later in the text (8.15), vol. 2, p. 91, the name appears as *Scadinavia*.
12. Claudius Ptolemy, *The Geography of Ptolemy*, 2.10, trans. and ed. Edward Luther Stevenson (New York: Dover Publications, 1991), p. 65. See also Ludvig Rübkeil, 'Scandinavia in the Light of Ancient Tradition', in *The Nordic Languages: An International Handbook of the History of the North Germanic Languages*, vol. 1, eds. Oskar Bandle, Lennart Elmevik, and Gun Widmark (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2002), 1:594–604.
13. Jordanes, *Romana et Getica*, 4.25, MGH AA 5.1, ed. T. Mommsen (Berlin: Weidmann, 1882), p. 60.
14. *Ravennatis anonymi cosmographia et guidonis geographica*, 1.11, ed. Joseph Schnetz (Stuttgart: B. G. Teubner, 1990), p. 10: *Quarta ut hora noctis Northomanorum est patria*
15. James S. Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton UP, 1992), 12–17.
16. Dudo of Saint-Quentin, *De moribus et actis primorum Normanniae ducum*, PL. 141, col. 0619A: ... *oceanii limbo undique secus circumseptam*.
17. Eva Nyman argues for this etymology in her article 'Skandinavien – Bezug und Bedeutung', in *Beiträge zur Namenforschung*, ed. Rolf Bergman, vol. 42 (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2007), 453–65. The same interpretation is supported by Thomas Birkmann in 'A survey of Ancient Nordic Sources', in *Nordic Languages*, eds. O. Bandle, et al., 1:620.
18. *Origo gentis Langobardorum*, c. 1, ed. Georg Waitz, MGH SRL (Hannover, 1878), p. 2: *Est insula qui dicitur Scadanan, quod interpretatur excidia, in partibus aquilonis, ubi multae gentes habitant*. Other versions of this manuscript have *Scadan* and *Scandanan* for Scandinavia.
19. *Historia Langobardorum codicis Gothani*, c. 1, ed. Georg Waitz, MGH SRL (Hannover, 1878), p. 8: *langobardi exierunt, sic scatenauge albiae fluvii ripa primis novam habitationem posuerunt*.
20. *Ravennatis anonymi cosmographia*, 1.11, p. 10: *Quarta ut hora noctis Northomanorum est patria, quae et Dania ab antiquis dicitur ejus ad frontem Alpes vel patria Albis*.

10 Introduction

21. *Annales regni Francorum*, MGH SRG 6, ed. F. Kurze (Hannover, 1895), *sub anno* 808, 811, 828; *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG 7, ed. F. Kurze (Hannover, 1891), *sub anno* 857 and 873.
22. Original text and translation into modern English in *Ohthere's Voyages: A Late 9th-Century Account of Voyages along the Coasts of Norway and Denmark and Its Cultural Context*, ed. Janet Bately and Anton Englert (Roskilde: Viking Ship Museum Roskilde, 2007), pp. 40–59.
23. *Ibid.*, *sub anno* 813, p. 138.
24. Ermold the Black, *In honorem Hludovici pii*, 4.99, p. 61: *Hic populi porro veteri cognomine Deni/ Ante vocabantur, et vocitantur adhuc./ Nort quoque Francisco dicuntur nomine Manni.*
25. *Ravennatis anonymi cosmographia*, 1.11, p. 10.

REFERENCES

Primary Sources

- Abbo of Fleury. *Passio sancti Eadmundi*. In *Three Lives of English Saints*. Toronto Medieval Latin Texts, vol. 1, ed. M. Winterbottom, 64–87. Toronto: Published for the Centre for Medieval Studies by the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1972.
- Alfred (King). Foreword. In *King Alfred's West-Saxon Version of Gregory's Pastoral Care*, ed. Henry Sweet, 1–9. London: N. Trübner, 1871.
- Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG 7, ed. F. Kurze. Hannover, 1891.
- Annales regni Francorum*, MGH SRG 6, ed. F. Kurze. Hannover, 1895.
- Beowulf: A New Verse Translation*, trans. R. M. Liuzza. Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview Press, 2000.
- Dudo of Saint-Quentin. *De moribus et actis primorum Normanniae ducum*, PL 141.
- Ermold the Black. In *honorem Hludovici pii*, ed. Ernst Dümmler, MGH *Poetae Latini aevi Carolini* 2. Berlin, 1884.
- Folcuinus of Losses, *Gesta abbatum lobbiensium*, ed. G. H. Pertz, MGH SS 4. Hannover, 1841.
- Historia Langobardorum codicis Gothani*, ed. Georg Waitz, MGH SSR. Hannover, 1878.
- Jordanes. *Romana et Getica*, 4.25, MGH AA 5.1, ed. T. Mommsen. Berlin: Weidmann, 1882.
- Origo gentis Langobardorum*, ed. Georg Waitz, MGH SRL. Hannover, 1878.
- Ohthere's Voyages: A Late 9th-Century Account of Voyages along the Coasts of Norway and Denmark and Its Cultural Context*, ed. Janet Bately and Anton Englert, 40–59. Roskilde: Viking Ship Museum Roskilde, 2007.
- Pliny. *Naturalis historiae libri XXXVII*, ed. L. Jan and K. Mayhoff. Monachii; Lipsiae: Saur, 1996–2002, 6 vols.
- Ptolemy, Claudius. *The Geography of Ptolemy*, trans. and ed. Edward Luther Stevenson. [1932] repr. New York: Dover Publications, 1991.
- Ravennatis anonymi cosmographia et guidonis geographica*, ed. Joseph Schnetz, in *Itineraria Romana*, vol. 2. Stuttgart: B. G. Teubneri, 1990.
- Siegebert of Gembloux, *Chronica*, MGH SS 6, ed. G. H. Pertz. Hannover, 1895.
- Tacitus, *De origine et situ Germanorum liber*, ed. Alf Önnersfors. Stuttgart: B. G. Teubner, 1983.

Secondary Sources

- Birkmann, Thomas. 'A survey of Ancient Nordic Sources', in *The Nordic Languages: An International Handbook of the History of the North Germanic Languages*, vol. 1, eds. Oskar Bandle, Lennart Elmevik, and Gun Widmark, 619–25. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2002.
- Coupland, Simon. 'The Rod of God's Wrath or the People of God's Wrath? The Carolingians' Theology of the Viking Invasions', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 42 (1991): 535–54.
- Faulkes, Anthony D. 'Descent from the Gods', *Mediaeval Scandinavia* 11 (1978–1979): 92–125.
- Fraesdorff, David. *Der barbarische Norden: Vorstellungen und Fremdeitskategorien bei Rimbart, Thietmar von Merseburg, Adam von Bremen und Helmold von Bosa*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2005.
- Gahrn, Lars. "'Svitjod det Store" och Skytien – ett exempel på norrön tolkning av latinske områdenamn', *Scandia – Tidsskrift för historisk forskning* (2008), <<http://www.sciecom.org/ojs/index.php/scandia/article/view/1435/122>>. Accessed 20 May 2014.
- Grundtvig, N. F. S. 'Fortale og Indledning', in *Beowulfes Beorh, eller, Bjovulfs-Drapen, paa Grund-sproget*, xv–lvii. Copenhagen: Carl Schönbergs Forlag, 1861.
- Hemmingsen, Lars. 'Middelaldergeografien og Historia Norwegie', in *Olavslegenden og den latinske historieskrivning i 1100-tallets Norge*, ed. Inger Ekrem, et al., 26–53, Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum, 2000.
- Keyser, Paul T. 'Greek Geography of the Western Barbarians', in *The Barbarians of Ancient Europe: Realities and Interactions*, ed. Larissa Bonfante, 37–70. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Krebs, Christopher B. 'Borealism: Caesar, Seneca, Tacitus, and the Roman Discourse about the Germanic North', in *Cultural Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean*, ed. Erich S. Gruen, 202–21. Los Angeles, CA: Getty Research Institute, 2011.
- Nyman, Eva. 'Skandinavien – Bezug und Bedeutung', in *Beiträge zur Namenforschung*, ed. Rolf Bergman, vol. 42, 453–65. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2007.
- Romm, James S. *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992.
- Rübekeil, Ludvig. 'Scandinavia in the Light of Ancient Tradition', in *The Nordic Languages: An International Handbook of the History of the North Germanic Languages*, vol. 1, eds. Oskar Bandle, Lennart Elmevik, and Gun Widmark, 594–604. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2002.
- Said, Edward W. *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978.

1 Ethnogenesis and the 'Out-of-Scandinavia' Legend

This first chapter will discuss some key terms, categories, and critical traditions that are pivotal for the analyses of origin legends. It is divided into three sections. First, it is necessary to address the question of ethnogenesis, i.e. how ethnic groups emerged as self-conscious communities in post-Roman Europe and the development of a nomenclature concerning ethnicity. The second section will establish a simplified taxonomy of origin legends available to medieval historians and discuss the architecture of ethnogenetic legend. The third section will attend to one dimension of the 'out-of-Scandinavia' legend – whether it formed part of a long-standing vernacular tradition, or it was a bookish trope hatched by antiquarians to shore up a history for barbarian peoples that could match that of the Romans and Greeks. In this study, the latter solution is the conclusion that is reached on the basis of the analyses that I will present. However, it is first necessary to consider the possible cross-fertilization between learned and vernacular traditions that may also have taken place as a parallel development.

CONCEPTUALIZING ETHNICITY AND DESCENT

When examining legends of origin and descent, we inevitably touch upon what we recognize as notions of ethnicity – perhaps conditioned by the works of Gregor Mendel or even the Human Genome Project. However, using the term 'ethnic' to discuss phenomena in the Middle Ages presents obvious difficulties, because we are applying a modern idea to medieval thought.¹ Furthermore, the segregation, apartheid and ethnic cleansing we are familiar with from modern history may lead us to overemphasize the prevalence and importance of ethnicity in medieval settings. Identity was dependent on many factors, and ethnicity was only one among several relationships to which a medieval person would attach significance. Patrick J. Geary and Susan Reynolds both argue that medieval identities were adaptable, dependent on the social situation, and found different formulations in relation to kinship, the household, towards lords, when joining armies, and in relation to how they were represented by others within and outside a given group.²

Nonetheless, several medieval texts do refer to the notion of a 'people' as a genetically connected community – essentially, a large family. Many medieval historians were undoubtedly familiar with the description provided by Isidore of Seville in *Etymologies* (7th cent.), which was one of the most widely read texts of the Middle Ages. Isidore explains that a *gens* is constituted by generations of families, derived from begetting (*gignere*) and procreating (*progenerare*).³ Nineteenth-century scholarship on Germanic peoples often paid lip service to such essentialist ideas and, well into the twentieth century, it was widely held that Germanic Europe was stratified into more or less biologically fixed ethnic groups. Today, mainstream ethnology eschews notions of ethnicity based on biology. Ethnicity is now seen as a process of creating 'imagined communities' within a group and establishing boundary relationship with other peoples outside of the group. Ethnogenesis has been scrutinized in a number of recent studies, resulting in a new emphasis on the fundamentally unstable and fluid nature of ethnicity.⁴

With this recognition in mind, there is reason to take an interest in how a 'people' was defined by medieval scholars. Several definitions were available.⁵ Isidore of Seville also provides another authoritative definition on ethnicity – this time in relation to commenting on the link between past and present of nations. He states that *gens est multitudo ab uno principio orta sive ab alia natione secundum propriam collectionem distincta* (a people is a multitude stemming from one origin or distinguished from another people by its proper ties).⁶ Isidore's definition can be interpreted to mean that the coherence of a *gens* depended on: (1) members of the group that shared a past, reaching back to a singular beginning; or (2) that a clear demarcated group relationship existed in the present, which set a given people apart from other groups. If we isolate what Isidore says in terms of a people's history, this is clearly a 'primordialist' position, which relies on the notion that a nation has a singular (ethnic) origin.⁷ In this understanding, the origin of a people is almost invariably an event placed in the very distant past, far beyond the reach of living memory. For this reason, primordialist thinking marks out a discursive position that often involves a constructed scenario of legendary ancestors.

For another example of medieval definitions, we may take the oft-quoted passage provided by the Benedictine canonist Regino of Prüm (d. 915). He defined a *nation* by means of four criteria: *diversae nationes populorum inter se discrepant genere moribus lingua legibus* (various nations differ among themselves as to their descent, customs, language, and laws).⁸ Each of the criteria was further believed to be indigenous, i.e. inherently rooted in the nation.⁹ Three of Regino's parameters – customs, language, and laws – have the status of observable facts. However, descent, beyond three generations or so, must necessarily to some degree be imagined and, when descent was defined through an origin tale about ancestors in the distant past, imagination was surely at play.

What these legends tell us about a self-conscious group, whose name and ethnic characteristics existed as a well-defined national identity at an early stage in history, seems unlikely to reflect a historical reality. In the parts of the continent that were under Roman control (or felt Rome's influence strongly), the amalgamation of various minor tribes into larger conglomerations often took place as a negotiation between Roman perception and indigenous processes. Classification of barbarian peoples into ethnic groups was an integral part of Roman imperialism; barbarians would find themselves slotted into categories that made sense from the perspective of Roman surveyors.¹⁰ This is despite the fact that Roman authors often used a language and an ethnographic apparatus of categorization probably at a considerable distance from the barbarians' own original and much more nuanced perceptions.¹¹ Furthermore, we know from decades of postcolonial criticism that an imperialist culture often imposes its categorization upon a colonized culture or those less developed peoples with which it comes into contact.

The collapse of the Western Roman Empire during the fourth and fifth centuries did not leave Western Europe a neatly organized and stratified ethnic atlas. In post-Roman Europe, with its kaleidoscopic mix of peoples, histories of origins were therefore a means to refit what in reality were amorphous and obscure origins into a definite form. In fact, medieval communities attached status and political value in having a time-honoured history. For example, when Scottish noblemen gathered in Arbroath in 1320 to protest to the Pope about the threat of an English invasion, they produced the argument that invasion should not be allowed because of the antiquity of the Scottish people: *Scimus, Sanctissime Pater et Domine, et ex antiquorum gestis et libris Colligimus ...* (We know, Holy Father and Lord, and we learn from the Deeds and books of the ancients ...).¹² As is evident in the reference made to books in this example, manuscripts of national history had become a prestigious commodity by which one could 'prove' the worth of one's nation.

Beginning in the early sixth century, we see the emergence of histories dedicated to barbarian peoples. One of the first examples of this was the 12-volume history of the Goths (now lost) by the Roman statesman and writer, Cassiodorus. He was commissioned to write this work in the 520s or early 530s, while serving at the court of Theodoric the Great, king of the Ostrogoths. One may therefore say that the barbarians began recording their own history by means of Roman skill. But Theodoric was clearly a skilled propagandist who determined the aim and direction of the writing he authorized. As a young man, he was held as a royal captive in Constantinople under Emperor Leo, where he may have received some education. Cassiodorus' history is lost, and we have only the Romanized Goth Jordanes' summary of the text. Thus, barbarian history writing begins as a confluence of classical and native perspectives.

What did these national histories contain? They were often outlines of the 'deeds' (*gesta*) of a people from their historical beginnings. If a people

possessed admirable traits in the past, one could use this to rank one's nation in relation to other peoples in the present, and even transfer the deeds to a vector of the future. The inventory typically included accounts of past relations with other peoples, wars and victories, the conversion to Christianity, models for proper kingship, and quite frequently, a description of a homeland from which the people had once migrated.¹³ The legend of a people's earliest but formative grounding served an important politico-cultural function, providing the nation with a set of notions defining their innate and native qualities. It was against this early background that a nation's later progress and potential future could be mapped.

In post-Roman Europe, the legends of origin also counteracted the centrifugal forces among barbarian nations, which were increasingly becoming large and diverse conglomerations. The vast areas over which a Theodoric, a Charlemagne, or a King Alfred came to rule would inevitably contain unwieldy groups with a checkered history of older tribal affiliations. Ethnic histories attempted to straighten out past variety and disparity into a linear tale. For this reason, tales of a people's origin – the *origines gentium* – often began with a narrative detailing the exploits of a small group of ancestors (Isidore's 'one origin'). Among the benefits of such legend was that it could do service as a focus point for wide and diverse nations, perhaps alleviating the threat of embittered local patriotism. In this way, the legends of origin can be seen as a reflection of the interminable struggle to find usable roots. As the prominent theorist of 'places' Marc Augé has pointed out that foundation narratives, which locate a place of origin, were necessary for those attenuated by migration or coming about through a merger with new populations.¹⁴ The places of origin were often fictional or placed in the distant past; their real importance was fundamentally social.

THE TALES OF LEGENDARY ORIGINS

A survey of origin legends available from the time of late Antiquity and throughout the medieval period makes it possible to establish a simplified taxonomy. The three major types in this taxonomy were not discrete categories; in fact, they were sometimes combined to create hybrid narratives. This process began early, but the most excessive efforts at combining various strands appear in the post-medieval period and therefore lie outside the scope of this study.

(1) The first type is perhaps the best known of medieval origin legends: the tracing of roots back to the mythical Trojans. In medieval Europe, this model was attractive to barbarian historians because it was based on classical precedent. The most famous example of its use in Antiquity is in the *Aeneid* (1st cent. BC). Virgil describes the travels of Aeneas from the sack of Troy to the establishment of a new home in Italy, where his descendants would eventually build the city of Rome. This legend of a founding hero

from Troy was an attempt to tie Roman origins to the world of ancient (Greek) history. In Virgil's version, however, we see a clear insistence on Roman difference from the cultural authority of Greece (i.e. through claiming descent from its enemies).¹⁵

In the early seventh-century *Chronicle of Fredegar*, the Trojan exile legend was adopted for the benefit of the Franks. According to this text, the Franks had migrated from Troy under the leadership of King Frigas, the brother of Aeneas. Over time, Frankish historians accepted the Trojan foundation story as their preferred archetype of ancestral history.¹⁶ The reason for the popularity of this legend was probably that it distinguished the Franks from other upstart barbarian nations: the Franks had sprung from the same noble seed as the Romans. This association of grandeur and past empire was a strategic tool for the early Merovingian dynasty, which had ambitions to become the most prominent power in Europe, while at the same time wanting to excel in the learning and scholarship that was the legacy of Rome.¹⁷ This was closely related to the idea of a *translatio imperii*, the fall of one great empire and the rise of another.¹⁸

Geoffrey of Monmouth later applied the Trojan myth to the Cambro-British inhabitants of the British Isles. His *Historia Regum Britannie* (History of the Kings of Britain), which was completed in 1136, popularized the notion that Brutus, the great-grandson of Aeneas, settled in Britain, which he named after himself. At the time Geoffrey was writing, Britain was only a minor power in Europe, but one that wanted to assert itself. Thus, forging a link with the classical world was used to confer status on a nation becoming conscious about securing a place for itself in world history.¹⁹

In the early thirteenth century, another such attempt was made in connection with an even more peripheral people. In the Icelandic historian Snorri Sturluson's *Prose Edda*, a claim is made that a chieftain named Óðinn, along with his followers, had migrated from Troy to settle in the cold North.²⁰ This myth has a strained relationship with classical legend, however, because this migration allegedly took place long after Troy had fallen (if one were to compare Snorri's account with Virgil or other writers in the tradition), but chronology may have been inconsequential.²¹ In Snorri's slightly later *Heimskringla* (The Circle of the Earth), the place from where Óðinn and his followers migrated is not referred to as Troy, but simply as the 'middle of the earth', i.e. the region where Europe meets Asia on the traditional medieval *mappa mundi*.²² The main purpose is here to link the geographically remote region of Iceland to the hub of ancient culture.

(2) The second type of origin legend focuses on tracing ancestry to biblical figures. This genealogical link can ultimately be traced back to the first-century Jewish historian Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews*. This is a work in which Josephus represents the three sons of Noah as the progenitors of the world's modern races. Japheth is named as the forefather of the Europeans, Shem of the Asians, and Ham of the Africans. This ethnic speculation is taken further by Isidore of Seville, who notes that Japheth's race settled Europe

usque ad Oceanum Britannicum (all the way to the Britannic Ocean).²³ Britain was the most northerly outpost the Romans had conquered, so here Isidore is employing a stock phrase that means 'to the extreme corner of the world'. In the late tenth century, the prolific English writer Ælfric of Eynsham capitalized on such commentary by carving out a special place for the people of northern Europe. He tells us that 'from Japheth, the younger, who was blessed by Noah, came the northern people beside the North Sea'.²⁴

Earlier, in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (whose archetype was compiled in the late ninth century), the West Saxon kings are connected in a direct line to biblical patriarchs. This is in the entry for the year 855, where the West Saxon line is supplied with an ancestor named Sceþ, who is allegedly an apocryphal fourth son of Noah.²⁵ A similar example of a peripheral people claiming a close relationship to biblical forefathers is found in the Irish text, *Lebor Gabála Éirenn* (The Book of Invasions), compiled and edited in the eleventh century. This is an attempt to provide the Irish with a written history comparable to that of the Israelites in the Old Testament. It takes up the Genesis account of Magog (the son of Japheth), making him an ancestor of the Irish, through the figure of Partholón, the leader of the original settlers of Ireland after the Flood.²⁶

(3) The third type of legend focuses on barbarian ancestors in the North. This is a story of how warrior elites had erupted from their homeland to conquer and settle much of the European continent in ancient times. The archetype of this is found in the sixth-century historian Jordanes' account of the Goths, and it became part of the medieval discursive archive. Insofar as one can identify a common thread running through the various versions of claiming Northern ancestry, it is alterity. Rather than lingering in the shadow of classical legend or biblical history, the notion of Northern origins introduced a paradigm of assertive difference. The North bespoke a past that was decidedly savage and pagan, while also celebrating an idea of barbarian warriors – hardened by a cold climate – who had an inherent disposition for fearlessness. The robust warrior fortitude was the most important ethnic quality these ancient Northerners were believed to have passed on to their descendents.

The symbolic properties of the 'out-of-Scandinavia' legend are to a large extent determined by its opposition to the other legends (not unlike Claude Lévi-Strauss' structuralist idea of an interlocking 'anthropology of symbols'). In other words, the reference to an origin in the North is best understood in a differential way, offering an alternative to especially the Trojan origin tale, which signalled a tie to a defunct classical world. Most potently, I will argue, the Northern origin tale provided a way out of civilization's pre-programmed course towards ruination and decline.

The threat of enervation, corruption, and softness is a recognizable trope which can be traced back to classical literature. Here, the fear of falling victim to dangerous torpor and lethargy was pervasive. The best known examples are Hesiod's definition of the decay during the 'Iron Age' of civilization and

Strabo's indictment of Greek luxury and pleasure, which he (pertinent to discussion here) juxtaposes to the modest lives of the northern Scythians at the edge of the world.²⁷ It was believed that urbane societies which had attained the luxury of peace were particularly threatened with decay. The barbarians, on the other hand, were often seen as resilient to indolence and lethargy due to their constant predilection for war.²⁸ There was also the concept of vigorous and uncorrupted Northern barbarians – not touched by the infectious ills of over-civilized living – as 'noble savages' (a term coined in the eighteenth century, but an idea with roots in Antiquity).²⁹

It is my argument that connecting oneself to Northern barbarians was a means of flagging up one's (ethnic) immunity to luxury and emasculating softness – the ills believed to encroach on peoples who had adopted civilized living. The legend of the old North celebrated the primordialness of the simple warrior as the antithesis of Mediterranean torpor. Some medieval historians may have included the legend to deliberately disconnect their own national history from the curse of decay that had brought down the empires of the classical world. In some versions of the 'out-of-Scandinavia' legend, the North (conceived as the birthplace of the Germanic nations) also emphasized the idea of indomitable independence. Since Scandinavia had never been conquered by the Roman Empire, the 'out-of-Scandinavia' legend could be pressed into the service of counteracting the sense of having been under Roman enslavement. In this way, Northern heritage played the role of a jewel resplendent (however crude) set against the dark memory of Rome's imperial hold on Europe.

The appeal that this had continued to reverberate long after the end of the Middle Ages. One very clear example of this is found in the eighteenth-century English poet and antiquarian Thomas Gray's unfinished poem 'The Alliance of Education and Government'. In his attempt at writing an epic world history, Gray alludes to an 'out-of-Scandinavia' legend when speaking of how 'blue-eyed myriads from the Baltic coast' overran the 'prostate South' in ancient times. Paradoxically, this attack of barbarian and uncivilized warriors from the North proved beneficial to the health and progress of Europe, as Gray specifies in a draft note:

Those invasions of effeminate Southern nations by the warlike Northern people, seem (in spite of all the terror, mischief, and ignorance which they brought with them) to be necessary evils; in order to revive the spirit of mankind, softened and broken by the arts of commerce, to restore them to their native liberty and equality, and to give them again the power of supporting danger and hardship; so a comet, with all the horrors that attend it as it passes through our system, brings a supply of warmth and light to the sun, and of moisture to the air.³⁰

The similarity of Gray's idea with what we can find in medieval texts is perhaps not surprising, because the opposition he sets up between North vs. South is based on a traditional schema utilized by classical and medieval

scholars. This was the concept of 'climatic ethnography', which postulated symmetries between geography and the disposition of men – a link that will be discussed at greater length in the next chapter.

Gray seems to have believed in the historical truth of an outpouring of warriors from the North, as did many scholars well into the twentieth century. Whereas origin tales pointing to mythical Troy or biblical ancestors are genealogically unbelievable, claims of belonging to barbarian tribes emigrating from the North are not beyond the pale of plausibility. In fact, this claim dovetails the historical phenomenon referred to as the Migration Period (*Völkerwanderung*), a concept that denotes the series of large-scale resettlements across the European continent (c. AD 400–800). However, as this study will make clear, the 'out-of-Scandinavia' legends available to us are fundamentally formed and shaped by scholarly and monastic milieus as much as the Trojan and biblical ancestry legends. This acknowledges the point Ernst Robert Curtius makes in his seminal study *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (1948): Greek and Latin authors pervasively influenced the Middle Ages in significant ways.³¹ Even if the tale of an origin in the North is often presented as if it had a long pedigree in oral tradition, the conception of 'the North' is sifted through a learned Latin tradition and aided by references to books of classical learning. The North is represented through an amalgam of cultural precepts and ethnographic prejudices derived from classical writing.

TIME-HONOURED TRADITION OR SCHOLARLY CONSTRUCTION?

When dealing with legends of origin, which purportedly are traditions that communities have carried with them for centuries, we only have the final form these legends take in the written text. The manuscript should not be seen as a barrier beyond which one always has to press in order to make sense of ancestral legends. What is most important is often why the writer of a manuscript chose to include one particular legend rather than another. This can be a matter closely connected to social and political contexts at the time of writing. However, because such texts establish their authority on the claim that they have access to a tradition, the basis of this authority also needs to be scrutinized, as it says much about what general trends were established over time. In other words, the understanding of the end product is enriched by making sense of the sources utilized to create its authority. This is not primarily a question of assessing the authenticity of the claims (were the Goths, Burgundians, or English really of northern extraction?), but to describe and analyze the archive that was available to the writer of a manuscript.

In a discussion of medieval origin tales, the question of how they relate to vernacular culture vs. learned tradition cannot be ignored. It is a question that has generated prolonged critical debate, for which reason a brief foray into the spectrum of opinions will be made here.

Nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholars assumed that origin tales were simply written recordings of material broadly shared and disseminated in the nation at large – not at all dissimilar to the folklore tales that were discovered and documented intensely through field and archival research at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In fact, origin legends are discussed in this way in Jacob Grimm's *Deutsche Mythologie* (1835). However, beliefs that origin legends were simply folkloristic tales, ungoverned by central or unifying forces, had run its course by the 1960s. Older ideas were replaced by the theory of *Traditionsskerne* (nucleus of tradition). This was not solely the invention of the German scholar Reinhard Wenskus – as is sometimes assumed – but certainly, he gave the theory its most coherent and systematic formulation.³² Wenskus provided a solution that could explain the function and survival of origin legends throughout centuries. He saw medieval European peoples as heterogeneous units whose center was always a ruling elite. The term *Traditionsskerne* defines the core of tradition (including the origin legend), which Wenskus believed was maintained by a small group of aristocratic nobility. This tradition imparted a sense of community to those population groups who came to follow the elite over time. Among later prominent historians associated with Wenskus' elite-focussed version of ethnogenesis are Walther Pohl and Herwig Wolfram. The latter develops his ideas of *Traditionsskerne* specifically in relation to Jordanes' *Getica*, which contains the earliest example of an 'out-of-Scandinavia' legend.³³

Although these critics break with many previous presumptions of how ethnic unity was maintained, they did not abandon the idea that ethnic identity was upheld over centuries – now only conferring the overseeing of legends that confirmed this to small aristocratic families. For this, Wenskus and the school of *Traditionsskerne* have come under fire, most articulately in the writings of Walter Goffart, Alexander Callander Murray, Andrew Gillett, and Michael Kulikowski.³⁴ Goffart, for example, claims that memory of ancestors' heroic feats is limited to three generations. According to this logic, legends of what happened in the ancient past must be an invention of the post-Roman era: it is not the voice of an elite keeping tradition alive, but a scholarly fantasy that anachronistically backdates an idea of a unified people.

In a response to the critics of the *Traditionsskerne* theory, Walter Pohl has objected that its opponents attack an older version of the model and do not take into account its post-Wenskus sophistication. Pohl explains that the idea of an ethnic community should not necessarily be viewed as an archaic tradition, passed down through generations. Rather, custodians of history made use of what could be found – myth, symbols, Roman ethnography, and biblical history – to delineate their ancestry.³⁵

The present study acknowledges that elites had a vested interest in promoting a retrospective history. In this respect, we should not ignore the fact that national history was often written by scholars who found themselves embroiled in various power structures, at royal courts or in monastic houses

(which were often sponsored by secular rulers). However, medieval tales of the ethnic past, as they have come down to us in manuscripts, need not be seen to sum up already negotiated knowledge (it is imitative). One gains a significant vantage point by examining the manuscripts as active agents in the negotiation of defining the nation at the time of writing (it is processual). Therefore, we should allow for the possibility that manuscript historians invented a legend of origins that had never been part of oral tradition. The rubrics 'it is said', 'tradition has it', or other such expressions would perhaps have been introduced in order to construct counterfeit authority for an ancestral legend that was seen to be 'of the people' rather than revealing itself as serving top-down interests.

But were there no oral legends at all? We know from numerous anthropological studies that origin legends and tales of past heroic deeds were common to peoples all over the world. Medieval manuscripts detailing the histories of barbarian peoples were not just textualizations of already fixed canons of tradition. Rather, they must be understood as antiquarian efforts, aiming at synthesizing diffuse information from various registers, including a mix of both native lore and classical formulas. In this way, national histories become alloys of different traditions merged without clear lines of demarcation between the sources used. In some cases, it is clear that legends are imported from written sources (as I argue is the case for the 'out-of-Scandinavia' tale), but such material is then grafted onto elements of genuine native origin. The result is that the national histories appear as if they present a continuous vernacular tradition. It shows us that history writing was a process of appropriating and combining, in which the historian, like a bricoleur, would draw on various traditions available to create a coherent narrative.³⁶ As Umberto Eco formulates it: '[t]he Middle Ages preserved in its way the heritage of the past but not through hibernation, rather through a constant retranslation and reuse; it was an immense work of bricolage ...'.³⁷

When manuscripts that claim the legends they re-convey were part of a tradition, it may in some cases reflect a degree of truth. At least, it is sensible not to straitjacket references to 'oral legends' in manuscript into a one-size-fits-all explanatory model. We should be wary of discriminating too categorically between oral tradition and written manuscript. It is not impossible that oral informants may have carried a legend forward which was sourced from written texts. Such interface between texts and oral performance is what Katherine O'Brien O'Keefe defines as 'residual orality': 'a state after the introduction of writing in a culture which nonetheless exhibits many features characteristic of "pure" orality'.³⁸ Other literary historians have drawn attention to a development that oralizes textual tradition, as when written versions of folksongs and ballads become the subject of new oral performance.³⁹ Research into the transmission of New Testament material has provided evidence that transmission can take place as a mixture of oral and written discourse. This phenomenon did

22 *Ethnogenesis and the 'Out-of-Scandinavia' Legend*

not follow the logic of 'first-oral-then-written'; it was a process involving dynamic feedback between the two mediums. Written texts 'entered regularly into the oral currencies of the communities, being supplemented with information from other sources, eventually to be textualized in yet other kinds of written stories'.⁴⁰ In societies still fundamentally reliant on oral discourse as the primary channel of communication, histories were precisely written to encourage retellings, and often to secure that particular legends were canonized.⁴¹

In relation to the origin legends discussed in the following chapters, they could have begun life in writing, then processed as oral performance, before entering into writing again. We cannot rule out the possibility that written sources sparked oral retellings. Nonetheless, analysis can only proceed from attention to the sources available to us: the manuscripts. In this study, it is the appearance of the legend in manuscript and how it creates meaning *in situ* that will be the focus. The reference to Northern ancestors was not just automatically repeated; it would not have been allowed into writing if it did not benefit those who wrote (or sponsored the writing of) the manuscripts. Therefore, the 'out-of-Scandinavia' legend was also a discontinuous trope, recalibrated within each new work and played in different ways. Each appearance of the legend is best understood in relation to the specific politico-cultural context in which it is used. However, we are at times hampered in such analysis, because the provenance of some manuscripts is in doubt, and others provide no dedication, prologue, or even title. In such cases, we may only extrapolate meaning based on the manuscript's internal evidence of structure and ideology. In the chapters to follow, I will chart the terrain of European texts, which refer to Scandinavia as an ancient homeland.

NOTES

1. Charles Bowlus, 'Ethnogenesis: The Tyranny of a Concept', in *On Barbarian Identity: Critical Approaches to Ethnicity in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. A. Gillett (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002), 241–56.
2. Patrick J. Geary, 'Ethnic Identity as a Situational Construct in the Early Middle Ages', *Mitteilungen der anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien* 113 (1983): 15–26; Susan Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities in Western Europe, 900–1300*, 2nd edition (Oxford: OUP, 1997).
3. Isidore, *Etymologiarium sive Originum libri XX*, 9.2.1, PL 82, col. 0328b: *Gens autem appellata propter generationes familiarum, id est, a gignendo, sicut natio a nascendo*.
4. For an overview and references, see Ildar H. Garipzanow, Patrick J. Geary and Przemysław Urbanczyk, 'Introduction: *Gentes*, Gentile Identity, and State Formation in Early Medieval Europe', in *Franks, Northmen, and Slavs: Identities and State Formation in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. I. Garipzanov,

- P. Geary and P. Urbanczyk (Turnhout: Brepolis, 2008), 1–14; John Moreland, 'Ethnicity, Power and the English', *Social Identity in Early Medieval Britain*, ed. W. O. Frazer and Andrew Tyrrell (London and New York: Leicester University Press, 2000), 23–52; Dick Harrison, 'Dark Age Migration and Subjective Ethnicity: The Example of the Lombards', *Scandia: Tidskrift för historisk forskning* 1.57 (1991): 19–37.
5. For a general consideration of medieval definitions and their contexts, see Hans-Werner Goetz, 'Gens, Terminology and Perception of the "Germanic" Peoples from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages', in *Construction of Communities in the Early Middle Ages: Texts, Resources and Artefacts*, ed. Richard Corradini, Max Diesenberger and Helmut Reimitz (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 39–64; and Stephen J. Harris, *Race and Ethnicity in Anglo-Saxon Literature* (London: Routledge, 2003), 60.
6. Isidore, *Etymologiarium sive originum libri XX*, 9.2.1, PL 82, col.0328b.
7. For a definition of the 'primordialist' position, see Sandra Fullerton Joireman, *Nationalism and Political Identity* (London: Continuum, 2003), 28–30.
8. Regino of Prüm, *Reginonis abbatis Prumiensis Chronicon cum continuatione Treverensi*, 'Prefatio', ed. F. Kurze, MGH SRG (Hannover, 1890), xx.
9. A culture's most distinctive customs could, of course, be recent inventions. The now classic study of this is *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. E. J. Hobsbawm and T. O. Ranger (Cambridge; New York: CUP, 1983).
10. See Hans J. Hummer, 'The Fluidity of Barbarian Identity: The Ethnogenesis of Alemanni and Suebi, AD 200–500', *Early Medieval Europe* 7.1 (1998): 1–27.
11. For a consideration of this problem, see Michael Richter, 'Latein – ein Schlüssel zur Welt des Frühmittelalters?', *Mittelalterliches Jahrbuch* 28 (1993): 15–26.
12. Latin text in *Declaration of Arbroath 1320*, ed. James Fergusson (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 1970), 4.
13. For the stock features in these histories, see Alheydis Plassmann, *Origogentis. Identitäts- und Legitimitätsstiftung in früh- und hochmittelalterlichen Herkunftserzählungen* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2006).
14. Marc Augé, *Non-Places: An Introduction to Supermodernity*, 2nd edition. (London: Verso, 2008), 36–59.
15. The legend of Rome as created from the ashes of Troy predated Virgil and had previously been used politically to reflect the relationship between an older, superior Greek culture and the new, emergent power of Rome. For the early beginnings and later developments of Rome's Trojan legend, see T. J. Cornell, *The Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars (c. 1000–264 BC)* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 63–8.
16. John Michael Wallace-Hadrill, *The Long-Haired Kings* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 80–82. For speculations on the creation of the Frankish Trojan legend, see Magali Coumert, *Origines des peuples: les recits du Haut Moyen Age occidental 550–850* (Paris: Institut d'Etudes Augustiniennes, 2007), 279–86.
17. See Ian Wood, 'Defining the Franks: Frankish Origins in Early Medieval Historiography' (1995), repr. in *From Roman Provinces to Medieval Kingdoms*, ed. Thomas F. X. Noble (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 110–19.

24 *Ethnogenesis and the 'Out-of-Scandinavia' Legend*

18. For a concise analysis of this notion in a Frankish context, see Randall Lesaffer, *European Legal History: A Cultural and Political Perspective* (Cambridge: CUP, 2009), 145–9.
19. See editorial comments in *The Historia Regum Britannie of Geoffrey of Monmouth I: Bern, Burgerbibliothek, MS 568*, ed. Neil Wright (Cambridge: Boydell and Brewer, 1985), xvi–xix.
20. *Prologus*, cc. 3–5, in *Edda Snorra Sturlusonar – udgivet efter håndskrifterne af Kommissionen for det Arnamagnæanske Legat*, ed. Finnur Jónsson (Copenhagen: Nordisk Forlag, 1931), 5–7.
21. Specifically on Snorri's relationship to the classical tradition, see Bruce Lincoln, 'The Center of the World and the Origin of Life', *History of Religions* 40.4 (2001): 323–4.
22. Snorri Sturluson, *Ynglingasaga*, cc. 1–5, in *Heimskringla*, ed. Bjarni Adalbjarnarson (Reykjavik: Hid islenzka fómritafelag, 2002), 1–15.
23. Isidore, *Etymologiarium*, 9.2.37, PL 82, col. 0331B.
24. *The Old English Version of the Heptateuch, Ælfric's Treatise on the Old and New Testament and His Preface to Genesis*, ed. Samuel J. Crawford (London: OUP, 1969), 27: *of Iaphet, þam ginstan, þe wæs gebletsod þurh Noe, com þæt norðerne mennisc be þære Norðsæ*
25. According to Thomas D. Hill, 'The Myth of the Ark-Born Son of Noe and the West-Saxon Royal Genealogical Tables', *Harvard Theological Review* 80.3 (1987): 379–83, the idea of a fourth son of Noah may derive from Jewish and Christian apocryphal literature. See also Daniel Anlezark, 'Sceaf, Japheth and the Origins of the Anglo-Saxons', *Anglo-Saxon England* 31 (2002): 13–46.
26. See Joseph Lennon, *Irish Orientalism: A Literary and Intellectual History* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse UP, 2008), 30–31.
27. For the classical tradition, see Rhiannon Evans, *Utopia Antiqua: Readings of the Golden Age and Decline at Rome* (London; New York: Routledge, 2008), esp. 111–13. Specifically on Strabo and the idealization of the Northern races, see James S. Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton UP, 1992), 46–7.
28. Evans, *Utopia Antiqua*, 154–63.
29. George Boas, *Primitivism and Related Ideas in the Middle Ages* (1935; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1997), 129–53.
30. Thomas Gray, *Gray's English Poems: Original and Translated from the Norse and the Welsh*, ed. D. C. Tovey (Cambridge: CUP, 1898), 29.
31. Ernst Robert Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (orig. vers. 1948), trans. Willard R. Trask (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979), 70.
32. Reinhard Wenskus' foundational work is *Stammesbildung und Verfassung. Das Werden der frühmittelalterlichen gentes* (Köln u. Graz: Böhlau Verlag, 1961).
33. Among Herwig Wolfram's prodigious publications on the subject, a key formulation can be found in 'Origo et religio: Ethnic Traditions and Literature in Early Medieval Texts', *Early Medieval Europe* 3 (1994): 19–38.
34. See Florin Curta, 'Some Remarks on Ethnicity in Medieval Archaeology', *Early Medieval Europe* 15.2 (2007): 159–62; and Andrew Gillet, 'Ethnogenesis: A Contested Model of Early Medieval Europe', *History Compass* 4.2 (2006): 241–60.
35. Walter Pohl, 'Ethnicity, Theory, and Tradition: A Response', in *On Barbarian Identity: Critical Approaches to Ethnicity in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Andrew Gillet (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002), 223.

- 36 'Bricoleur' is a term first introduced by Claude Lévi-Strauss in *The Savage Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), 21: in relation to mythical thought as an intellectual form of *bricolage*, i.e. the improvisation upon existing elements, borrowing from previous traditions to create a new narrative.
37. Umberto Eco, from the essay 'Living in the New Middle Ages', in *Travels in Hyperreality: Essays* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1986), 84.
38. Katherine O'Brien O'Keefe, *Visible Song. Transitional Literacy in Old English Verse* (Cambridge: CUP, 1990), x.
39. See Franz H. Bäuml, 'Verschriftlichte Mündlichkeit und vermündlichte Schriftlichkeit: Begriffsprüfungen an den Fällen *Heliand* und *Liber Evangeliorum*', in *Schriftlichkeit im frühen Mittelalter*, ed. U. Schaefer (Tübingen: Narr, 1993), 254–66; and the essays in *(Re)oralisierung*, ed. T. Hildegaard (Tübingen: Narr, 1996).
40. Samuel Byrskog, *Story as History – History as Story: The Gospel Tradition in the Context of Ancient Oral Tradition* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 142. For a discussion of 're-oralization', see also Margaret Mills, 'Domains of Folkloristic Concern: Interpretation of Scriptures', in *Text and Tradition: The Hebrew Bible and Folklore*, ed. Susan Niditch (Atlanta, GA: Scholars' Press, 1990), 231–41.
41. Anthropologists concerned with field work refer to 'feedback' from written works into oral traditions; see David P. Henige, *Oral Historiography* (London: Longman, 1982), 81–5.

REFERENCES

Primary Sources

- Ælfric. *The Old English Version of the Heptateuch, Ælfric's Treatise on the Old and New Testament and His Preface to Genesis*, ed. Samuel J. Crawford. London: Oxford University Press, 1969.
- Declaration of Arbroath 1320*, ed. James Fergusson. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1970.
- Isidore of Seville. *Etymologiarium sive originum libri XX*, PL 82.
- Regino of Prüm. *Reginonis abbatis Prumiensis Chronicon cum continuatione Treverensi*, ed. F. Kurze, MGH SRG. Hannover, 1890.
- Snorri Sturluson. *Heimskringla*, ed. Bjarni Adalbjarnarson. Reykjavik: Hid islenzka fómritafelag, 2002.
- . *Edda Snorra Sturlusonar – udgivet efter håndskrifterne af Kommissionen for det Arnemagnæanske Legat*, ed. Finnur Jónsson. Copenhagen: Nordisk Forlag, 1931.

Secondary Sources

- Anlezark, Daniel. 'Sceaf, Japheth and the Origins of the Anglo-Saxons', *Anglo-Saxon England* 31 (2002): 13–46.
- Augé, Marc. *Non-Places: An Introduction to Supermodernity*, 2nd edn. London: Verso, 2008.

26 *Ethnogenesis and the 'Out-of-Scandinavia' Legend*

- Bäumli, Franz H. 'Verschriftlichte Mündlichkeit und vermündlichte Schriftlichkeit: Begriffsprüfungen an den Fällen *Heliand* und *Liber Evangeliorum*', in *Schriftlichkeit im frühen Mittelalter*, ed. U. Schaefer, 254–66. Tübingen: Narr, 1993.
- Boas, George. *Primitivism and Related Ideas in the Middle Ages*. [1935] Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997.
- Bowlus, Charles. 'Ethnogenesis: The Tyranny of a Concept', in *On Barbarian Identity: Critical Approaches to Ethnicity in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. A. Gillett, 241–56. Turnhout, Bel.: Brepols, 2002.
- Byrskog, Samuel. *Story as History – History as Story: The Gospel Tradition in the Context of Ancient Oral Tradition*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000.
- Cornell, T. J. *The Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars (c. 1000–264 BC)*. London and New York: Routledge, 1995.
- Coumert, Magali. *Origines des peuples: les recits du Haut Moyen Age occidental 550–850*. Paris: Institut d'Etudes Augustiniennes, 2007.
- Curta, Florin. 'Some Remarks on Ethnicity in Medieval Archaeology', *Early Medieval Europe* 15.2 (2007): 159–62.
- Curtius, Ernst Robert. *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. Willard R. Trask. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979.
- Eco, Umberto. 'Living in the New Middle Ages', in *Travels in Hyperreality: Essays*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1986.
- Evans, Rhiannon. *Utopia Antiqua: Readings of the Golden Age and Decline at Rome*. London; New York: Routledge, 2008.
- Garipzanow, I. H., Patrick J. Geary and Przemyslaw Urbanczyk. 'Introduction: Gentes, Gentile Identity, and State Formation in Early Medieval Europe', in *Franks, Northmen, and Slavs: Identities and State Formation in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. I. H. Garipzanov, P. Geary, and P. Urbanczyk, 1–14. Turnhout: Brepols, 2008.
- Geary, Patrick J. 'Ethnic Identity as a Situational Construct in the Early Middle Ages', *Mitteilungen der anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien* 113 (1983): 15–26.
- Gillet, Andrew. 'Ethnogenesis: A Contested Model of Early Medieval Europe', *History Compass* 4.2 (2006): 241–60.
- Goetz, Hans-Werner. 'Gens, Terminology and Perception of the "Germanic" Peoples from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages', in *Construction of Communities in the Early Middle Ages: Texts, Resources and Artefacts*, ed. R. Corradini, M. Diesenberger and H. Reimitz, 39–64. Leiden: Brill, 2003.
- Gray, Thomas. *Gray's English Poems: Original and Translated from the Norse and the Welsh*, ed. D. C. Tovey. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1898.
- Harris, Stephen J. *Race and Ethnicity in Anglo-Saxon Literature*. London: Routledge, 2003.
- Harrison, Dick. 'Dark Age Migration and Subjective Ethnicity: The Example of the Lombards', *Scandia: Tidskrift för historisk forskning* 1.57 (1991): 19–37.
- Henige, David P. *Oral Historiography*. London: Longman, 1982.
- Hildegard, T., ed. *(Re)oralisierung*. Tübingen: Narr, 1996.
- Hill, Thomas D. 'The Myth of the Ark-Born Son of Noe and the West-Saxon Royal Genealogical Tables', *Harvard Theological Review* 80.3 (1987): 379–83.
- Hobsbawm, E. J., and T. O. Ranger, eds. *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

- Hummer, Hans J. 'The Fluidity of Barbarian Identity: The Ethnogenesis of Alemanni and Suebi, AD 200–500', *Early Medieval Europe* 7.1 (1998): 1–27.
- Joireman, Sandra Fullerton. *Nationalism and Political Identity*. London: Continuum, 2003.
- Lennon, Joseph. *Irish Orientalism: A Literary and Intellectual History*. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2008.
- Lesaffer, Randall. *European Legal History: A Cultural and Political Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- Lévi-Strauss, Claude. *The Savage Mind*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962.
- Lincoln, Bruce. 'The Center of the World and the Origin of Life', *History of Religions* 40.4 (2001): 311–26.
- Moreland, John. 'Ethnicity, Power and the English', *Social Identity in Early Medieval Britain*, ed. W. O. Frazer and Andrew Tyrrell, 23–52. London and New York: Leicester University Press, 2000.
- Mills, Margaret. 'Domains of Folkloristic Concern: Interpretation of Scriptures', in *Text and Tradition: The Hebrew Bible and Folklore*, ed. Susan Niditch. 231–41. Atlanta, GA: Scholars' Press, 1990.
- O'Brien O'Keefe, Katherine. *Visible Song. Transitional Literacy in Old English Verse*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Plassmann, Alheydis. *Origo gentis. Identitäts- und Legitimitätsstiftung in früh- und hochmittelalterlichen Herkunftserzählungen*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2006.
- Pohl, Walter. 'Ethnicity, Theory, and Tradition: A Response', in *On Barbarian Identity: Critical Approaches to Ethnicity in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Andrew Gillet. 221–39. Turnhout: Brepols, 2002.
- Reynolds, Susan. *Kingdoms and Communities in Western Europe, 900–1300*, 2nd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Richter, Michael. 'Latein – ein Schlüssel zur Welt des Frühmittelalters?', *Mittelalterliches Jahrbuch* 28 (1993): 15–26.
- Romm, James S. *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992), 46–7.
- Wallace-Hadrill, John Michael. *The Long-Haired Kings*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982.
- Wenskus, Reinhard. *Stammesbildung und Verfassung. Das Werden der frühmittelalterlichen gentes*. Köln u. Graz: Böhlau Verlag, 1961.
- Wolfram, Herwig. 'Origo et religio: Ethnic Traditions and Literature in Early Medieval Texts', *Early Medieval Europe* 3 (1994): 19–38.
- Wood, Ian. 'Defining the Franks: Frankish Origins in Early Medieval Historiography' (1995), repr. in *From Roman Provinces to Medieval Kingdoms*, ed. Thomas F. X. Noble, 110–19. London and New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Wright, Neil, ed. 'Editor's Preface', *The Historia Regum Britannie of Geoffrey of Monmouth I: Bern, Burgerbibliothek, MS 568*. Cambridge: Boydell and Brewer, 1985.

2 The Goths and the Legend of *Scandza*

This chapter examines the oldest surviving text which makes use of the ‘out-of-Scandinavia’ legend: Jordanes’ *De origine actibusque Getarum* (The Origin and Deeds of the Getae), usually referred to simply as *Getica*. The manuscript was written in sixth-century Byzantium. The text reflects on the fact that Goths had entered Northern Italy and established their sovereignty over people formerly ruled by the Romans. But *Getica* was written only shortly after the Goths were defeated and forced to submit to Roman rule. In this respect, it is a culturally and politically complex text. I contend that the reference to the North in Jordanes’ text must be understood as intrinsically related to the context in which it was written. The aim will therefore be to uncover the textual strategies Jordanes employs to encode the legend of Gothic origins with culture-political significances.

JORDANES’ GOTHIC HISTORY

Jordanes was a bureaucrat working in Constantinople. At the time he completed *Getica* in AD 551 or 552, the Romans had reconquered Italy from the Ostrogoths (the eastern branch of the Goths) no more than a decade before. The result was that Gothic royalty, the Amali, was subjugated under Roman rule. It is therefore important when Jordanes tells us in the conclusion of *Getica* that he was himself of Gothic descent. He also informs us that he had been *notarius*, or secretary, to Gunthigis Baza, a military commander of the Amali (*Get.* 262 and 316).¹ Nonetheless, Jordanes says that he was ‘converted’ to the Roman Church (presumably from the Arian creed adopted by the Goths). Alongside his overt praise of the Roman emperor in the text, he appears thoroughly Romanized.²

Getica was primarily meant to be a summary of Cassidorus’ more extensive history *Libri XII De rebus gestis Gothorum* (Twelve Books on the Deeds of the Gothic People). Cassidorus was a Roman statesman and writer who worked as *magister officiorum* at Ostrogothic King Theodoric’s court. The Gothic history was commissioned by Theodoric and written at his court at Ravenna in the 520s or 530s. The reason for wanting to commit Gothic history to writing seems to be that an official account of ancient and heroic

deeds was needed – legends that could make the Goths compete with the Romans (especially, as Theodoric had come to rule over vast areas with a population previously under Roman rule). A Roman statesman writing a history of non-Roman people therefore stands at a significant juncture between classical culture and the medieval interest in mapping the history of barbarian peoples.

Towards the end of *Getica*, Jordanes says that the Goths migrated from their original northern homeland 2,030 years before the downfall of the Gothic empire (*Get.* 313). As the Ostrogoths yielded to Roman rule in 540, it means that the early Goths would have embarked on their journey out of the distant northern homeland in 1490 BC. This makes the Gothic people practically as old as the Jews in the Old Testament. The claim to ancientness is predicated upon the notion that a long history and distinguished genealogy ennobled a nation.

Furthermore, Jordanes presents the Goths as an ancient nation of illustrious warriors who had migrated over vast distances before settling in Italy. For instance, we learn that the Goths had encountered the Egyptian Sesostrius (*Get.* 6), had been in a ‘famous war’ with Agamemnon (*Get.* 20), are ancestors of the Parthians (*Get.* 48), engaged in warfare against Persians (*Get.* 61–64), sacked Troy (*Get.* 59–60), became allies of Philip of Macedonia (*Get.* 65), and resisted Julius Caesar’s attempt to conquer them (*Get.* 68). The Goths’ heroic feats are legion in Jordanes’ text. As will be made clear, the claim that the Goths had their origin in the cold North (which may or may not have been part of Cassidorus’ history) shores up the claim to ancient warrior strength. But before we examine the associations connected to the North, it is useful to briefly summarize the account Jordanes gives of the Goths’ earliest migrations, and the critical debate it has engendered.

Jordanes tells us that the Goths’ original homeland in ancient times was ‘a great island named *Scandza*’. This island was placed in the ‘Northern Ocean’, which had the shape of a leaf (i.e. long, not round) (*Get.* 9–16). The name *Scandza* refers to what we today know as Scandinavia or the Nordic countries, although the information that it was a singular island is geographically incorrect. After leaving *Scandza*, the Goths resettled in ‘the land of Scythia near Lake Maeotis [the Sea of Azov]’; their second home was in ‘Moesia, Thrace and Dacia’, which were Roman provincial terms for south-east Europe; and their third ‘above the Sea of Pontus’ (*Get.* 28), i.e. the Black Sea. Through this chronology of migration, the Goths are gradually moved from their legendary Northern homeland towards Northwest of Italy, where they found themselves at the time Jordanes wrote his text. In this way, the text maps the Goths’ migration by a series of shifting place names. However, the shift from legend to verifiable history remains unmarked.

Down to the late nineteenth century, Jordanes’ history of Scandinavian origins was accepted as historical truth, which it still is in some modern books.³ But evidence is lacking. For example, the attempt to link

Gothic language to Old Norse, such as Ernst Schwarz reconstruction of a Gotho-Norse prototype in the early 1950s, finds no followers today.⁴ Nonetheless, even in more recent times, Jordanes' claims have been the object of serious scholarship. Some researchers still point to a correspondence between archaeological finds at the Danish island of Funen and the Black Sea region.⁵ But most archaeologists have abandoned the search for elusive Gothic-Scandinavian links. Instead, a Gothic connection with the Wielbark culture (emerging during the first century AD in what is now an area covered by Poland, eastern Germany, and the Baltic states) has been discussed as the origin of the Goths.⁶

If no solid evidence of a Gothic connection to Scandinavia can be had, there is equally little encouragement to be found in what can be dug up from within Jordanes' text itself. If we look at the account of heroic events, there is little to recommend that Jordanes' account records vernacular Gothic tradition. References to Egyptian adventures, Troy and Agamemnon, and claims that the Goths had intermarried with the legendary Amazons (*Get.* 49–50; 56–57) are tales unlikely to have been propounded as oral stories among a Germanic people; they are almost certainly plundered from classical legends. Similarly, Jordanes' section on the Goths in *Scandza* draws significantly on classical precepts, as we shall see. What is now to be examined are the sources for the legend of *Scandza*.

SOURCES FOR THE LEGEND OF SCANDZA

Reinhard Wenskus reasoned that Jordanes' tale of *Scandza* must be based on a high degree of historical truth. This was because a link to Scandinavia was atypical for the time, and that no convincing reason for why a Christianized writer would claim this pagan outpost as a homeland could be found.⁷ There is reason to contest this. I believe one can find a definite culture-political logic underpinning the choice of *Scandza* as the Goths' ancient *Urheimat*. But before we can take up this discussion, we must first examine whether or not it is possible say anything about the origin of the legend from internal textual evidence.

It is important to note that much of the specific information given about the *Scandza* relies on geographical learning and perceptions found in texts from Antiquity.⁸ The idea of Scandinavia as a large, singular island was, as we saw in the introduction, a common assumption of the classical world. One clear indication of this is the reference to Thule, with which Jordanes introduces his section on the northern hemisphere. Thule, he explicitly points out, is mentioned by Roman poet Virgil (*Get.* 9). This was a northern location described in classical writing. At various times, it functioned as a name for the Shetland Islands, Iceland or, more diffusely, as a non-locatable place in what was imagined as a large Northern Ocean at the end of the world.⁹ However, it is clearly Jordanes' intention to provide for his readers enough

geographical and ethnographical information to validate *Scandza* as a *real* place. Thus, he follows the reference to Thule with a lengthy description of Britain, taken from a number of named classical authors (*Get.* 10–15). This provides geographical reference to an adjacent location known to the Romans through their four-hundred-year occupation of the island. For the specific geography of *Scandza*, Jordanes draws on the second-century Greek geographer Ptolemy (whom he quotes, *Get.* 16–19). The geographical descriptions appear not to have been present to the same extent in Cassiodorus' work. At least, Jordanes says in the preface that the choice to add information obtained from classical writers is his own choice (*Get.* 3).

Despite the heavy reliance on classical learning, there are elements in the story of *Scandza* that seem to have passed through oral culture – specifically, the tale of the Goths leaving *Scandza* in three ships under the leadership of King Berig (*Get.* 24). The motif of a journey over water is paralleled by other Germanic legends, as we shall later see. This may therefore derive from a deep layer of Germanic lore. Since Jordanes claims to be ethnically Goth and that he had been secretary to an Ostrogothic military leader, it lends credence to the fact that he is likely to have known some genuine oral material. He tells us that this is how he retrieved part of the Goths' history: 'for so the story is generally told in their [the Goths'] early songs, in almost historic fashion' (*Get.* 26). But can the highly learned account of *Scandza* really be traced back to oral tradition? Oral material practically always went through a transformational process when committed to writing. As Patrick Geary formulates it in another connection, there are many situations in which:

[o]ne moves from vernacular to Latin and from one social register (peasant, lay aristocratic) to another (cleric). Thus, we are never studying orality per se or indeed simple *Verschriftung* when we find bits of material brought from one register to the other. Rather, we are dealing with *Verschriftlichung*, the conceptual transformation of the oral record.¹⁰

In Jordanes' case, it could have meant that information from an oral legend of migration was explicated and given learned substance through recourse to an arsenal of geographical knowledge provided by classical scholarship. The pattern is one we recognize from other domains where oral and written sources contribute to the same tradition: the kudos of Latin scholarship was needed to reinforce what may once have been a vernacular lore. In this connection, it is worth noting that Jordanes explicitly states that he credits what he has *read* more than what he has *heard* (*Get.* 38; my emphasis). This is an avowal of the predilection for written sources as more dependable than what came through word of mouth. Behind the equation of books with 'truth' lies the clerical view of the scripture as authoritative, an epistemology which retained its force also when other cases of transmission were assessed.

However, when Jordanes places so much emphasis on manuscript sources, it is very likely that he felt legitimized to include the long excursus on *Scandza* because this place was, in fact, mentioned in a written text of Gothic history. Archaeologist Lotte Hedeager attributes the legend of Northern origins to the mysterious Ablabius, chronicler of the Goths (*descriptor Gothorum*), whom Jordanes mentions as one of the authors on which he relies.¹¹ Nothing of his work has survived. However, there is no compelling reason to assume that Ablabius included an account of *Scandza* in his writing because Jordanes only refers to him in connection with the time after the settlement in Scythia. That Ablabius should have composed a Gothic history with a broad remit is contradicted by the fact that Ablabius' authority in *Getica* is limited to a later period. He seems to have picked up on Gothic history after the time of early migration.¹² If we are to locate a precursor text containing a reference to *Scandza*, it would be Cassidorus' history. At least, it would seem strange that Jordanes would dedicate such considerable space to describing *Scandza*, were it not mentioned (if only in passing) in Cassidorus' written account, which he claims to summarize. In any event, it is unlikely that Jordanes would directly contradict anything in Cassidorus' larger work without making a note about it.

If we can trace the existence of the *Scandza* legend back to the court of Theodoric, it would fit into a situation where a Gothic king wanted to emphasize his difference from the neighbouring Romans, whose former areas of northern Italy he had conquered. Each side observed their own laws, and intermarriage between Roman and Goth was forbidden. The tracing of Gothic origins to the North further gave the Goths a legend of origin connecting them with a place that was seen as a breeding ground of fierce warriors and successful attackers of Rome. In fact, the classical world had been obsessed with another people of Scandinavia who had allegedly migrated through Europe to bring the Romans to their knees. This was the tribe of the *Cimbri*. Together with the Teutons, the *Cimbri* had defeated Roman armies twice, in 113 BC and 105 BC, before they were finally beaten in 101 BC at the Battle of Vercellae in northern Italy (the same area the Goths would later conquer in the fifth century). Because of their fierceness and superior warrior skills, the expression *terror cimbricus* became proverbial.

Geographical sources seem to place the *Cimbri*'s original homeland in *Chersonesus Cimbrica*, i.e. the classical term for the peninsula of Jutland, which is now part of Denmark. For instance, Ptolemy says that the *Cimbri* are the northernmost of the continental tribes he will discuss, while Strabo testifies that the *Cimbri* inhabited a northern peninsula in the first century BC, and Plutarch described them among the Germanic peoples who lived all the way up to the Northern Ocean.¹³ In the first century AD, Tacitus also places them near the ocean and calls them 'a small nation at present, but great in renown'.¹⁴ Tacitus refers to the *Cimbri* as an awe-inspiring northern 'other', who were intensely legendized in Roman political discourse. Rhetorically, the memory of the *Cimbri* was invoked in the same way as Pearl Harbor in Cold

War discussion of the American defence budget.¹⁵ The story of the incredibly forceful *Cimbri* (which the historian Strabo advises one should not entirely believe), which had induced a state of panic among the Romans, may have functioned as an underlying analogy when constructing a history of the Goths. Because the Goths achieved similar victories over the Romans, it would make sense to trace their barbarian power to an origin in the North.

Jordanes does not mention the *Cimbri* in his account of the North. Perhaps this is because their origin was specifically said to be the *Chersonesus Cimbrica*, a location that was not compatible with the idea of the island of *Scandza*. But among the island tribes that Jordanes names, we find peoples that appear elsewhere in Byzantine and Mediterranean manuscripts, such as the Finns, the Lapps, the Swedes, the Danes, and the Heruls. Especially, the Danes and Heruls had a reputation as awe-inspiring warriors. Jordanes certainly attempted to aggrandize the ancient Goths by linking them to such famous warrior races known from classical literature. Most prominent, however, is the *Getae*, who were spoken of as erstwhile attackers of Rome.¹⁶ These *Getae* were believed to inhabit areas around the Danube. Here, Jordanes utilizes a general confusion about the Goths' ancestral history in Latin writing. Jordanes refers to the Spanish priest Paulus Orosius' fifth-century *Seven Books of History against the Pagans* as an authority for the connection between *Getae* and *Gothi* (*Get.* 58).¹⁷ But, already in the fourth century, Julian the Apostate had made the connection, in which he was followed by Jerome, writing c. 390.¹⁸ Although Augustine, in *De civitate Dei* (City of God), written 413–427, explicitly denied the equation of Goths and *Getae*, the identification became commonplace.¹⁹

Jordanes' reason for emphasizing the Goths' descent from the *Getae*, and borrowing the legends of their exploits for the Gothic people, was the high reputation they held in classical manuscripts. For example, the *Getae* were described in Strabo's *Geography* (early 1st cent. AD) as fierce and brave, particularly in connection with the war against Alexander the Great.²⁰ Herodotus in his *The Histories* (5th cent. BC), also speaks of the *Getae* as 'the most courageous and upright Thracian tribe', the only people daring to offer resistance against the Persians under Darius the Great.²¹ Thus, the *Getae* achieved a reputation as a half-mythical race with superhuman strength, whose renown in warfare was sometimes explained as a result of their descent from Mars, the Amazons, and Bellona.²² Jordanes' reliance on reference to the *Getae* (as emphasized in the title of his text) speaks to the fact that Gothic history was reconstructed by fixing on links found in classical tradition.

The quasi-similarity of names seems also to function as a means to link the ancient Goths to *Scandza*. Jordanes mentions the tribes of the *Gautigot[i]* (*Get.* 22) and the *Ostrogoth[i]* (*Get.* 23) as inhabitants there. Possibly, this represents an attempt to claim a relationship between the Goths and the Scandinavian tribe known as *Gautar*, which were said to inhabit the North in several classical sources of geography.²³

JORDANES AND THE CLASSICAL CONCEPT OF THE NORTH

If Jordanes can be seen to ransack classical sources for his description of *Scandza* and its peoples, he also adopts a classical *Weltanschauung* on the North. It is this aspect of the text that I will examine in the following. Classical geography may best be seen as ideological. The world and the people outside of Greece and Rome were often described for the purpose of cultural criticism. The barbarian periphery was contrasted with the achievements of classical civilization; barbarian lands were the primitive and monstrous 'other' against which the centre could highlight its own positive qualities. But descriptions of primitive barbarians could also serve as a foil for an examination looking inwards: barbarians were believed to uphold certain values that were instructive for advanced civilizations.²⁴ The best-known example of this is Tacitus' *Germania*, in which virtues of barbarians are listed with the purpose of criticizing Roman shortcomings.²⁵

I will argue that Jordanes' description of the peoples inhabiting *Scandza* harbours elements of a similar strategy. In order to make this argument, one need first accept that Jordanes has something positive to say about the inhabitants of *Scandza*. This is not a view shared by everyone. For example, Walter Goffart, who has provided one of the most influential critical assessments of the *Scandza* legend, sees Jordanes' description of *Scandza* as condemnatory. This negative view of *Scandza* fits in with his theory of *Getica* as a work that is in reality Roman propaganda, written for Emperor Justinian by a court protagonist.²⁶ Certainly, the primitiveness and backwardness of *Scandza*, as Jordanes describes it, cannot be doubted. But, contrary to Goffart, I hold that Jordanes also stresses the strength and endurance of the inhabitants as positive values. The peoples of *Scandza* are portrayed as hardy and industrious barbarians who prosper in the face of their constant struggle with nature. They live on a large island with large forests, vast lakes, and large animals. That they cope in this strange, oversized and violent world is a claim to magnitude of spirit. For example, when Jordanes tells us that the inhabitants of the 'exceeding great cold' cannot farm the land (*Get.* 19), it is clearly a mark of the inhabitants' backwardness, because agriculture was seen as the root of civilization. Nonetheless, the peoples of *Scandza* manage to establish some sort of noble life against all odds. They construct dwellings hewn out of rocks like they were castles (*quasi castellis*), domesticating splendid horses and wearing beautiful furs. Although the inhabitants of *Scandza* live in poverty, Jordanes does not forget to tell us that they are most richly clothed – having acquired the art of tanning skin (*Get.* 19–24). Jordanes seems to imply that the ingenuity used in conquering raw nature ennoble the northerners. By implication, this resourcefulness is encoded in the Gothic bloodline.

Scandza is certainly no nostalgic vision of a lost Eden; nonetheless, it shares one structural characteristic with the utopian fantasy, as the theorist

of utopias Louis Marin defines it: the fictional place function as an 'argumentative or rhetorical figure designed to undermine continuously the very place from which [the vision of] it emerges'.²⁷ In the particular case of *Scandza*, it can be seen as a contrast to the devastating effects of luxury that loomed large in the imagination of the classical world. More specifically, I will argue that Jordanes' description of the inhabitants of *Scandza* is related to A. O. Lovejoy and George Boas' discussion of a fashion for 'hard primitivism' in classical literature.²⁸ In numerous works, Scythian and Germanic tribes (both umbrella terms for peoples inhabiting unspecified Northern locations) were seen as tough and steeled by their life in harsh climates. Deprivation of the sun made them strong. Furthermore, their primitive living in the frozen North made them free from the treacherous luxury and corruption which comes with refined civilization. This connects with the idea of the 'noble savage' living far away from the hub of civilization, which was well known in classical writing. It was a *topos* invoked to censure the moral decay observed at the centre.²⁹ Jordanes' description of the tough life in *Scandza*, where inhabitants know not the trappings of luxury, gains significance when decoded on the backdrop of such descriptions. Jordanes later recounts how Theodoric left Constantinople, where he resided on the invitation of Emperor Zeno. Here, he enjoyed 'every comfort in the city' and 'the advantages of the Roman Empire in luxurious ease', but 'he chose rather to seek a living by his own exertions, after the manner customary to his race', while his tribe lived in want (*Get.* 290). This may be poised to communicate a similar ideology.³⁰

A direct connection to the genre of 'hard primitivism' is Jordanes' attempt to link the rough climate to the breed of fierce warriors produced under such circumstances. The most notable characteristic of the men of *Scandza* is that they are proficient in the art of war and have superior bodies. For instance, Jordanes refers to the *Gautigot*[i], which is 'a race of men bold and quick to fight' (*Get.* 22), and a little later he tells us that *Scandza* is inhabited by tribes surpassing other nations in both bodily size and spirit (*Get.* 23). Such images of fierce northern warriors were commonplace in classical ethnographical writing, and can be found in the writings of Tacitus, Caesar, Josephus, Isidore, and others.³¹ Since Jordanes cites information from the first-century Roman geographer Pomponius Mela (*Get.* 16), it is pertinent to mention an example from his writing here. Pomponius writes that the people who live in cold climates are as extraordinary in courage as in physique, and that their spirit is strengthened by exposure to the cold, as they exercise their minds by waging war and their bodies by hard work.³² Jordanes emphasizes roughly the same features.

Another clear example of this discourse is the pseudo-Aristotelian *Problemata*, a much-used text in Antiquity and throughout the Middle Ages. It is here explained to the reader that there is an inverse relationship between internal and external nature, i.e. cold temperatures breed hot blood. The inhabitants of cold regions are internally hot, as it is their nature to recoil

from the coldness of the region in which they live. The implication of this is that no great thinkers could be produced in the North. However, the inhabitants there are 'courageous and sanguine', as opposed to the 'cowardly' people living in warm regions.³³

That climate produces varying degrees of physical and mental aptitude was a widespread epistemology reaching back to Herodotus' *The Histories* (5th century BC). There is, for example, the myth of the Amazons, a female warrior people whom Herodotus places in the outer reaches of Scythia (i.e. they are an emphatically northern race).³⁴ Interestingly, Jordanes claims that the Goths intermarried with the Amazons during their long migration towards Italy (*Get.* 42–56). This must be seen to bolster the warrior aptitude of the Goths in its mythic dimension.

Writers of Antiquity had originally defined the Scythian as the stereotype of the large-bodied and fearless Northerner.³⁵ But this ethnographic concept was later transferred to the inhabitants of *Germania*, as the Romans began to take interest in this part of Europe. One may turn to Isidore of Seville for a summary of how the *Germani* were codified in classical texts: they are said to take their behaviour from the severity of the climate, which makes them 'fiercely courageous and ever indomitable'. Isidore also engages in etymological speculation: the 'Germanic (*Germanicus*) nations are so called because they are immense (*immanis*) in body, and they are savage tribes hardened by very severe cold'.³⁶ Writers of the Middle Ages would use this paradigm to speak positively about their barbarian ancestors. The Northumbrian monk Alcuin, for example, refers to his 'Saxon' ancestors as an 'ancient race' of the 'outlying realms' who have a 'splendid physique' and are 'powerful in war'. Thus, Alcuin associates the Saxons with the name of 'rock' due to their toughness (*duritiam propter dicti cognomine saxi*). However, this is falsely linking the Germanic root *sax* (short sword) in their name with the Latin *saxum* (rock).³⁷

Classical writers invariably stereotyped Northerner races as having an aptitude for war.³⁸ Jordanes is evidently working with such classical notions. Thus, he speaks of the Goths as 'fast' and 'swift' in his story of the three Gothic ships departing from *Scandza*. Significantly, the slowest of the ships is lost. Those on board who are left behind were the ancestors of the *Gepidae*, a 'gratuitous name of reproach', which Jordanes analyses as etymologically connected with the term for 'sluggish' (*gepanta*): they are 'slow of thought and too sluggish for quick movement of their bodies' (*Get.* 95). The loss of a ship becomes a gain for the Goths, because the genetic pool is thereby purified. In fact, sluggish, sloth and similar descriptions are used as terms of opprobrium in a number of medieval texts alluding to cowardice and lack of military valour.³⁹ Swiftness, on the other hand, is traditionally defined as an important military advantage. In Homer's *The Iliad*, for example, we find a vocabulary of speed epithets for warriors, including the several references to 'swift-footed Achilles'.⁴⁰ According to the paradigm of environmental determinism, Northern warriors possessed swiftiness as a standard attribute.

But not everything in Jordanes' account of the Northern ancestors immediately seems to lend itself to positive interpretation. For example, he refers to the Scandinavians as fighting 'with the fury of wild beasts' (*pugnabant beluina saevitia*) (*Get.* 24). The epithet *ferus* (fierce, wild) was a commonplace designation for the *Germani* and is connected with a sense of abhorrence in the writings of Horace, Ovid, Manilius, and Lucan.⁴¹ Jordanes' specific example may point to the totemic belief popular among Germanic tribes that warriors could transform themselves into a state of rage akin to the predatory animal, popularly a wolf or bear. Nonetheless, in Germanic tradition, 'wolfish' warrior skills were seen as having a distinct advantage in war (cf. the usual appellation *-wulf* in heroic names of the Germanic tradition). In fact, the benefit of warrior rage was also recognized in the poetry of Homer. Achilles' captains, for example, are described in such wolfish terms.⁴² Looking generally at Jordanes' description of the pagan warriors throughout, it is cleverly phrased; it shows a Christian writer's detachment from the barbarians' uncontrolled wildness, while preserving the sense of awe and admiration for the ancestors' success in war.

What is of great importance for the following analyses in the present study is the fact that Jordanes not only describes the North as the homeland of the Goths, but also claims that it was the ancient hearth for much of barbarian Europe. Famously, he refers to *Scandza* as 'a hive of tribes or certainly a womb of nations' (*Get.* 25). This is Charles Mierow's authoritative translation of the Latin sentence: *officina gentium aut certe velut vagina nationum*. This translation and modern criticism in general fail to notice the military metaphor inherent in Jordanes' phrase: 'vagina' can also be translated as 'scabbard' or 'sheath of peoples'. Hence, the migration from *Scandza* is compared with the drawing of a weapon (as metaphor for conquering European lands). This translation is perfectly in line with Jordanes' immediately preceding paragraphs, which concerns the many warrior tribes that inhabited *Scandza*. It also makes sense within the larger structure of *Getica*, which consistently associates Gothic progress with conquests of new lands.

The interpretation of Jordanes' phrases as martial metaphors seems to have been common in the Middle Ages. For example, Dudo of Saint-Quentin begins his history of the Normans (early 11th century) by copying Jordanes. Dudo here refers to the Normans as originating from a 'savage and barbarian people, which are said to have come in different ways from the island of [S]canza, surrounded by the Ocean, like a swarm of bees from a hive, or like a sword (*gladius*) from a scabbard (*vagina*), as it is said barbarians leap forward'.⁴³ To Roman readers of *Getica*, the comparison of the Goths to a sharp weapon would fit in with regular attempts at categorizing barbarian peoples in accordance with the weapons they used. Associations such as Dacian javelins, Frankish axes, Hunnic bows, etc., were commonly applied in Roman texts.⁴⁴ Reading *vagina nationum* as 'sheath of peoples' also coheres with Jordanes' earlier metaphor of migration: people burst 'like a swarm of bees from the midst of this island [Scandza] and came into the land

of Europe' (*quia gens, cujus originem flagitas, ab hujus insulae gremio velut examen apium erumpens in terram Europae advenit*) (*Get.* 9). The metaphor of the bees implies the march of fierce armies ready for conquest. The metaphor of the swarming bees also has classical roots. It is used about the colonization of foreign land in Greek writing (Plato's *Laws* 708b, 740e, and Thucydides' *Histories* 1.15.1).⁴⁵ Jordanes seems to use such classical tropes to further an idea of Germanic barbarians having established themselves by conquests in land areas whose extension could rival the Roman Empire, only predating it by more than a millennium.

To sum up, Jordanes' legend of the people of *Scandza* exploits the discourse of 'environmental determinism'. It is on this background that the tale of Goths' origin helps to authorize the history of their many conquests, which Jordanes tracks throughout *Getica*. The North with its warrior heritage constitutes an ethnic space from which the reader must make sense of the Goths and their history. Even though the Goths were said to have left this region at an early stage, we are to understand that they still carry the hardness of the Northern warrior within their bones. In this way, *Scandza* is a paradoxical, contradictory space – simultaneously far and near, absent and present, closed and open, disowned and yet indelible. This has a significant advantage: it allows Jordanes to claim the existence of a deep-rooted vigour, strength and moral purity connected with the North, while the temporal and geographical distance places the pagan and uncivilized at a safe remove.

ROME, GOTHs, AND THE NORTH

Jordanes was keenly aware that he had written positively about the Goths – the erstwhile enemies of Rome. Thus, he points out that it is at the hands of the Romans (for whom Jordanes is writing) that the 'most valiant race [the Goths], which had long held sway, was at last overcome' (*Get.* 313). It is important to understand Jordanes' text within the Roman context of its composition. This dimension will now be discussed.

As a Gothic author in Roman Byzantium, Jordanes is anxious about how his audience will judge the veracity of his work. He feels obliged to state that he has not given in to the temptation to add anything beyond what he has 'read or learned by inquiry' (*Get.* 316). With this avowal, Jordanes wants to remove doubts about Gothic partiality by placing himself in the role of a scholarly historian. *Getica* concludes with an important and perhaps necessary clarification: the whole exposition is not so much meant to praise the Goths as to honour their conquerors, the Romans. Jordanes manifestly ends his text by praising Emperor Justinian as 'a more valiant leader' than the former Ostrogothic princes, in order to make sure no misconceptions about the work could be entertained (*Get.* 316). The chronicle of the Goths' long history and their military successes was in no way to be mistaken as an argument for a reintroduction of Gothic independence in northern Italy.

To contextualize the status of barbarians and the use of an 'out-of-Scandinavia' legend history in a sixth-century Roman text, we may usefully turn to Procopius' *The Gothic Wars* (part of *History of the Wars*). A comparison of the Scandinavian legend in *Getica* with this text is a missed opportunity in critical writing. Procopius completed his work c. 551 or 552 (with additions 554–557), which makes it practically contemporaneous with *Getica*. Procopius also speaks of how wild Northern warriors were brought under Roman command. His account is worth examining to bring out similarities, but also contrasts, to Jordanes' history.

Procopius of Caesarea was a Byzantine scholar deeply involved with the Roman administration and military elite. He accompanied the Roman general Belisarius, who headed Emperor Justinian I's campaign to reconquer the Mediterranean territory of the former Western Roman Empire. On several occasions in *The Gothic Wars*, Procopius mentions the Heruls (*Heruli* – also known as *Eruli*, *Eruloi*, and variant forms in other sources). This was a barbarian tribe that had come under Byzantine command, serving in Belisarius' armies. In Procopius' text, the Heruls are connected with Scandinavia.⁴⁶ Jordanes corroborates this connection by also placing them among the 30 nations he mentions as inhabiting *Scandza* (*Get.* 23).

Like the Goths, the Heruls had also been a threat to the Romans. Sources tell us that the Heruls had participated in the third-century invasions of Roman territory from somewhere in the Black Sea region, particularly in the expedition of AD 268–270 through the Dardanelles.⁴⁷ The Heruls established a kingdom in southern Slovakia at the rivers of Morava and Theiss, but this was destroyed by the Lombards in the early sixth century. After their defeat, Procopius tells us, one group of Heruls went all the way up to the land of the Danes (*Danuoï*), who let the Heruls pass without confrontation. Subsequently, the Heruls reached Thule, which Procopius describes as a large island in the Ocean (like in Jordanes' account of *Scandza*). There they settled beside the *Gautoi* (perhaps the people in southern Sweden known as *Gautar*). Procopius further tells us that the group of Heruls that did not leave for Thule moved south of the Danube into the territory of the Roman Empire. During a period of crisis, this southbound group lost their king, and a diplomatic delegation was dispatched to search for a member of the royal family among the northbound group in Thule. The expedition was successful, and Datius, a royal son, returned accompanied by 200 youths.

The reference to the Heruls in Procopius' history occasions a long digression on peoples living in the pagan North (6.15). Much of what Procopius has to say consists of stock descriptions traditionally used about people living in cold climates.⁴⁸ He also details their worship of demons and their human sacrifices – an element we observed was notably absent from Jordanes' account of the pagan North. We are therefore not surprised that he associates the Heruls, as a people of the North, with warrior strength. For instance, we are told that the Heruls fight bravely without protective armour except a shield and a thick jacket, or sometimes went to battle without a

shield (2.25), and he does not waver in calling them the fiercest and most superior of the barbarians (6.14).

What function does this emphasis on their warrior skills serve within the larger architecture of *The Gothic Wars*? Procopius shows the reader how the Byzantines had converted a belligerent Northern people to Christianity and since made them their allies, thereby highlighting the success and efficacy of imperial policy. To this end, the Herulian connection with Scandinavia would have been particularly opportune. By stressing the Northern connection to the extent that Procopius does, the Roman feat of bringing such a wild and pagan people under control is made to seem even more exceptional.

Well aware that his text would be read in imperial circles, Procopius is also extraordinarily reverent of the Goths (although he does not mention any connection to the North), who acted as protectors of the Byzantium. He presents the Ostrogothic ruler Theodoric's reign as a Golden Age and claims that he had possessed the qualities of one born to be an emperor. Significantly, he claims that Theodoric had mastered both the justice needed for a good ruler (a Roman concept) and martial prowess (which barbarians possessed in excess); in fact, he had 'attained the highest possible degree of wisdom and manliness' [ξυνέσεως τε καὶ ἀνδρίας].⁴⁹

Having established that we find a positive reception of the Goths in the writings of a prominent Byzantine writer, we may now return to Jordanes' text. Like the Heruls, the Goths were also subdued. Many warriors who had served in the Gothic army joined Justinian in his fight against barbarians and became Romanized. So did those Goths who could offer their intellectual service to the Empire (of which Jordanes was one).⁵⁰ Jordanes' account of Gothic defeat serves a purpose that is in some respects similar to that of Procopius' story of the Heruls: Justinian's rule over a former super-fierce enemy with a Northern heritage is eulogized as a crowning achievement. The reference to the Goths' Northern ancestry may also have a symbolic meaning. Andrew Merrills points out that Jordanes' reference to the Gothic homeland in the North gave Emperor Justinian a metaphorical claim to extend his dominion almost indefinitely.⁵¹ One could support Merrills' interpretation by pointing to Virgil's celebration of Rome as an 'empire without end' (*imperium sine fine*) or the late convention of referring to the ruling Roman emperor as the 'conqueror of all barbarians' (*victor omnium barbarorum*).⁵² That Justinian now ruled over the Goths may have helped to substantiate such inflated rhetoric, if one stresses (as does Merrills) the imperial context of Jordanes' text.

However, Jordanes writes with a foot in both camps: he is in service of Byzantine Rome, but a Goth. Rather than merely celebrating the Romans' conquest of the Goths, he stresses the mutual benefit for both sides. For instance, *Getica* concludes with a telling reference to Vitiges, King of the Ostrogoths from 536 to 540, and his wife Matasuntha (the granddaughter of Theodoric). Both were taken as captives to Constantinople, and when

Vitiges (whom Jordanes says became 'bound by ties of affection to the Emperor') died, Matasuntha married Germanus Justinus, a nephew of Justinian, and gave him a son. Jordanes praises this as 'a union of the race of the Anicii with the stock of the Amali' which 'gives hopeful promise ... to both peoples' (*Get.* 313–14). On several occasions, Jordanes returns to the notion that both Goths and Romans gain from their alliance. For instance, he notes that Theodosius was a good emperor for seeking peace and respecting the Goths, while Emperor Valens was shamed for offending the Goths, and the Goths were wrong to disrespect the Romans on several occasions (*Get.* 40 and 146).

Written in a Byzantine-Roman context, there is no doubt that *Getica* is suffused with imperial ideology, but there is a genuine pride in the Goths' long history of conquests and warrior success. I will argue that allusions to ideas of 'hard primitivism' in the early sections of the work is meant to show that the Romans would benefit as well as become invigorated from the alliance with the Goths. Jordanes urges that the attacks of other barbarians must be stopped. If not, the remaining eastern part of the Roman Empire was to crumble. He articulates a feeling that was growing in Constantinople that the Roman army, particularly its generals, had not dealt sufficiently with the barbarians.⁵³ Speaking from the perspective of the Byzantine Empire, Jordanes writes that it is 'our own sins' that enable the Antae and Slavs to make further inroads (*Get.* 119), and 'the penalty for our sins' that the Bulgars have risen to such prominence (*Get.* 37). It is 'the cowardice of emperors and the treachery of generals' (*Get.* 172) that has compromised Rome's safety. Thus, there is a critique of Roman softness in handling imperial policy; Jordanes' hope is for a more aggressive attitude towards the barbarians.

It is certainly possible to read the *Scandza* legend as signalling a positive difference from the cultural anxiety of luxury, effeminacy, and enervation that had long dogged Roman imagination. Since the time when Rome came at the mercy of barbarian invaders, numerous Roman writers had pointed to the unfortunate effeminacy of Rome as a cause of its military failures. The fourth-century Roman historian Ammianus Marcellinus, for example, recognized that the *vita militaris* of the Romans was weakened and the Empire was best served if barbarians enlisted in the Roman army. The fifth-century Gallo-Roman poet and bishop Sidonius Appolinaris would use the martial manliness of northern tribes as comparisons when praising the prowess of emperor Atavivus.⁵⁴ Christian writers expanded on the theme of Roman inferiority to primitive barbarism. For example, Salvian, a fifth-century priest of Marseilles, wrote that the barbarians were manly, whereas the Romans were said to shamefully consider effeminate behaviour to be a virtue.⁵⁵ This idea of manliness was important to the de-militarized upper-class Romans, who were increasingly using Gothic soldiers to defend themselves against barbarian attacks, and can be found in much Byzantine writing.⁵⁶

Jordanes never reaches the sceptical pitch of Tacitus and some other Roman writers, who describe the virtues of barbarians with the explicit purpose of criticizing Roman ways.⁵⁷ But the pride in deriving from a primitive and uncorrupted barbarian stock should not be ignored. There is certainly no room for effeminate luxury in *Scandza*, and there is a reason why the manliest of all women, the Amazons, are highlighted as suitable partners for the migrating Goths.

Perhaps closest to Jordanes' stance is the panegyric (c. 507) of Ennodius of Pavia to the Ostrogothic King Theodoric. Ennodius, a Gallo-Roman noble, had early argued for the peaceful settlement between Romans and Goths by emphasizing that the Goths already had the *civilitas* of the Romans. Ennodius states that the Goths were modest at home, but bellicose when in war, and that they had the prudence of Romans and the courage of the *gentes*; in essence, they were models to be imitated because they 'reinvigorated the effeminate toga' of the Romans.⁵⁸ Jordanes, writing after Gothic independence had come to an end, seems also to view Gothic blood as having an invigorating effect on Roman valour. The claim to Northern origins signals a difference from the enervated Roman bodies criticized in many texts. Thus, the assertion of Gothic strength is presented as a positive addition to Roman power and the Emperor's military might.

Patrick Amory has provided a thorough analysis of the ideology promoted by Theodoric. The gist of this was that the Goths had 'an inborn vocation for fighting', yet they would 'obey Roman law' and therefore 'lose any of the pejorative connotations of barbarians, such as immoderation and lawlessness'.⁵⁹ The Goths were represented as a *gens* or *nation* of barbarian virtues, but also a people who now possessed the *Romanorum prudentia*, the wisdom of their Romans co-habitants in Italy. This makes them a superior people. If Theodoric was the author of this ideology, it is one that is expressed through the letters of his *amanuensis* Cassidorus. Jordanes appears to borrow a phrase from Cassidorus, when he attributes to Theodoric's heir, Eutharic, '*prudentia et virtus*' (*Get.* 298), wisdom and valour. This combination became the tenet of Ostrogothic ethnographic ideology.⁶⁰

Jordanes hints at the benefits of uniting Gothic energy with Roman discipline in his digression on Maximus I, Roman Emperor from 235 to 238, who was of Gothic stock. As a barbarian youth, he impressed Emperor Severus with his eight-foot stature and his ability to defeat all men sent against him in wrestling matches. Maximus asks to receive Roman instruction and wants to become a faithful servant to Roman emperors. Eventually, he is crowned emperor. Jordanes tells us that this anecdote is included in order to show that the race of the Goths could in fact attain to the very highest station in the Roman Empire (*ad regni Romani fastigium usque venisse*) (*Get.* 83–8). Jordanes seems to use this story to honour the Goths, but perhaps also to support the notion that Gothic strength is best administered within the framework of Roman order.

As an epilogue, it should be added that the alliance of the victorious Romans and the Romanized Goths, which Jordanes extols, did not last long against the barbarians. The Byzantine Empire was unable to withstand the invasion of the Langobards in 568, which resulted in the loss of significant parts of the Italian peninsula. Ironically, the Langobards were another people associated with an 'out-of-Scandinavia' legend. It is this and a number of other such legends of Northern origins that will be discussed in the next chapter.

NOTES

1. The standard edition used is *Romana et Getica*, ed. Theodor Mommsen, *MGH AA* 5.1 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1882). However, to facilitate a more fluent reading below, quotations are from the English translation by Charles Christopher Mierow, *The Gothic History of Jordanes* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1915). References are marked in parenthesis as (*Get.*), followed by Mierow's section numbers.
2. Walter Goffart discusses Jordanes' ambiguous origins in *The Narrators of Barbarian History: Jordanes, Gregory of Tours, Bede, and Paul the Deacon* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1988), 42–7.
3. For one example, see Peter A. Gabriel, *The Great Armies of Antiquity* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2002), 272.
4. Ernst Schwartz, *Goten, Nordgermanen, Angelsachsen. Studien zur Ausgliederung der germanische Sprachen* (Bern: A. Francke, 1951). For a discussion of this and the critique of such methods, see Pierguiseppe Scardigli, 'Nordic-Gothic Linguistic Relations', in *Nordic Languages*, ed. O. Bandle, et al., 1:553–8.
5. For a discussion and references, see Tineke Looijenga, *Texts and Contexts of the Oldest Runic Inscriptions* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 45–6.
6. Whether these links are indeed ethnic or can be attributed to trade connections remains a contentious issue. For discussion, see Peter Heather, *The Goths* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 18–26; and the debate between Herwig Wolfram and Walter Goffart outlined in the first three essays of *From Roman Provinces to Medieval Kingdoms*, ed. Thomas F. X. Noble (London: Routledge, 2006). See also Ingemar Nordgren, *The Well Spring of the Goths: About the Gothic Peoples in the Nordic Countries and on the Continent* (New York: iUniverse, 2004), 171–8; and Anders Kaliff, *Gothic Connections: Contacts between Eastern Scandinavia and the Southern Baltic Coast 1000 BC – 500 AD* (Uppsala: Department of Archaeology and Ancient History, Uppsala University, 2001).
7. Reinhard Wenskus, *Stammesbildung und Verfassung. Das Werden der frühmittelalterlichen gentes* (Köln u. Graz: Böhlau Verlag, 1961), 464.
8. For discussion, see Goffart, *Narrators*, 89, and his more recent study 'Jordanes' *Getica* and the Disputed Authenticity of Gothic Origins from Scandinavia', *Speculum* 80 (2005): 379–98. For a summary of Jordanes' general reliance on Biblical and Greek texts, as well as classical history and geography, see Andrew H. Merrills, *History and Geography in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: CUP, 2005), 111.
9. Ludwig Rübkeil, 'Scandinavia', in *Nordic Languages*, ed. O. Bandle, L. Elmevik, and G. Widmark. *The Nordic Languages: An International Handbook of the*

44 *The Goths and the Legend of Scandza*

- History of the North Germanic Languages* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2002), 1:599.
10. Patrick Geary, 'Oblivion between Orality and Textuality in the Tenth Century', in *Medieval Concepts of the Past: Ritual, Memory, Historiography*, ed. Gerd Althoff, Johannes Fried, and Patrick J. Geary (Cambridge: CUP; Washington: German Historical Institute, 2002), 115.
 11. Lotte Hedeager, 'Scandinavia', in *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, ed. Paul Fouracre, vol. 1 (Cambridge: CUP, 2005), 502. We know nothing about this figure apart from Jordanes' references to him (*Get.* 28, 82, 116, 151).
 12. For a discussion of Ablabius, see Merrills, *History*, 156.
 13. *The Geography of Ptolemy*, 2.11.7, trans. and ed. Edward Luther Stevenson (1932; repr. New York: Dover Publications, 1991), p. 67; Strabo, *Geography*, 7.2.1–4, Loeb Classical Library, vol. 3, trans. and ed. Horace W. Jones (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1924); Plutarch, *Life of Marius*, ed. and trans. Bernadotte Perrin, vol. 9 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967), 292–4.
 14. Tacitus, *De origine et situ Germanorum liber*, 37.1, ed. Alf Önnarfors (Stuttgart: B. G. Teubner, 1983), p. 24: *parva nunc civitas, sed Gloria ingens*.
 15. This analogy and a discussion of the rhetoric and symbolic function of the *Cimbri* in Roman writing can be found in Thomas S. Burns, *Rome and the Barbarians: 100 B.C. – A.D. 400* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 65–87.
 16. See, for example, Lucan, *The Civil War, Books I – X*, 2.1, trans. J. D. Duff (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962), p. 59.
 17. Paulus Orosius speaks of the 'Getae, who are at present called the Goths'; see *Adversus paganos historiarum libri septem*, 1.16, PL 31, col. 728A: *Getae illi, qui et nunc Gothi*.
 18. For the identification of Goths with Getae in classical sources, see Arne Søby Christensen, *Cassiodorus, Jordanes and the History of the Goths* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2002), 233–4; and Stephen J. Harris, *Race and Ethnicity in Anglo-Saxon Literature* (New York and London: Routledge, 2003), 83–6.
 19. Augustine, *The City of God against the Pagans*, 20.11, trans. R. W. Dyson (Cambridge: CUP, 1998), p. 993.
 20. Strabo, *Geography*, 7.3.8, 3:201–2.
 21. Herodotus, *The Histories*, 4.93, trans. Robin Waterfield (Oxford: OUP, 1998), p. 266.
 22. Jane Acomb Leake, *The Geats of Beowulf: A Study in the Geographical Mythology of the Middle Ages* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1967), 13–23.
 23. Jordanes could have read about a northern tribe called the *Gutae* in Ptolemy's *Geography*, 2.10, ed. Edward Luther Stevenson (New York: Dover, 1991), p. 65. For a discussion of the *Gautar* in classical sources, see Rübekil, 'Scandinavia', 603–4.
 24. For an introduction to the history of geography as a literary genre, see Romm, *Edges*, 1–8.
 25. For a discussion of this rhetorical strategy, see Eric Adler, *Valorizing the Barbarians: Enemy Speeches in Roman Historiography* (Austin, Tex.: University of Texas Press, 2011).
 26. Goffart, *Narrators*, 91.

27. Louis Marin, *Utopics: The Semiological Play of Textual Spaces*, trans. Robert A. Vollrath (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International, 1984), 115.
28. A. O. Lovejoy and George Boas, *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity* ([1935] Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1997). For overtures towards defining the perceptual framework in relation to Gothic tradition, see Patrick Amory, *People and Identity in Ostrogothic Italy, 489–554* (Cambridge: CUP, 1997), 37.
29. Romm, *Edges*, 45–6, 76–7.
30. In addition to this, the lack of luxury may also be seen to supplement the discourses of asceticism, which were integral to the Gothic version of Christianity (Arianism). Jordanes would have been in direct contact with an idealistic view on acetic living – if not actively propagandizing it – when serving as secretary to Gunthigis Baza. On Jordanes' erstwhile link to Arianism, see Brian Croke, 'Cassiodorus and the *Getica* of Jordanes', *Classical Philology* 82 (1987): 125. On the link between Arianism and asceticism, see Susanna Elm, *Virgins of God: The Making of Asceticism in Late Antiquity* (Oxford and New York: OUP, 1994), 367–9.
31. See the commentary section in Cornelius Tacitus, *Germania*, ed. J. B. Rives (Oxford: OUP, 1999), p. 129.
32. Pomponius Mela, *De Chorographia libri tres*, 3.3, trans. C. P. Fradin, vol. 3 (Paris: Brissot-Thivars, 1827), p. 49: *Qui habitant immanes sunt animis atque corporibus, et ad insitam feritatem vaste utraque exercent, bellando animos, corpora adsuetudine laborum maxime frigoris.*
33. The text has traditionally been attributed to Aristotle, but this is doubtful. However, it is included in the *Works of Aristotle*, trans. E. S. Forster, vol. 7 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1937), 909a. For a general survey of climatic theory connected with the North and South; see the first chapter in Mary Floyd-Wilson, *English Ethnicity and Race in Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge: CUP, 2003), 23–47.
34. Herodotus, *Histories*, 4.110, p. 271.
35. Stephen Horgan, *Nature and Culture in Western Discourses* (London: Routledge, 1988), 50–5.
36. Isidore, *Etymologium*, 10.2.97.
37. Alcuin, *Versus de patribus et sanctis Euboricensis ecclesiae*, ll. 45–7, Latin text and English translation in *The Bishops, Kings and Saints of York*, ed. Peter Goodman (Oxford Clarendon Press, 1982), pp. 6–8: *Est antiqua, potens bellis et corpore praestans/ Gemaniae populus gens inter et extera regna,/ duritiam propter dicti cognomine saxi.*
38. Christine Trzaska-Richter, *Furor teutonicus, das römische Germanenbild in Politik und Propaganda von den Anfängen bis zum 2. Jahrhundert n. Chr.* (Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 1991).
39. Richard Abels, 'Cowardice and Duty in Anglo-Saxon England', *The Journal of Medieval Military History*, ed. Clifford J. Rogers, Kelly DeVries and John France (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006), 29–49.
40. For an analysis of this vocabulary, see Roger Dunkle, 'Swift-Footed Achilles', *The Classical World* 90.4 (1997): 227–34.
41. 'Commentary', in Cornelius Tacitus, *Germania*, ed. J. Rives, 38.
42. See Michael P. Speidel, *Ancient Germanic Warriors: Warrior Styles from Trajan's Column to Icelandic Sagas* (London: Routledge, 2004), 9–40; for Homer, see 13.
43. Dudo, *De moribus et actis primorum Normanniae ducum*, c. 1, PL. cols. 619B–C: *commorantur ferae gentes et barbarae, quae ex Canza* [mishearing of Scanza

under dictation] *insula Oceano hinc inde circumsepta, velut examen apum ex canistro, seu gladius e vagina, diversitate multimoda dicuntur prosiluisse consuetudine barbarica.*

44. For this tradition, see Walther Pohl, 'Telling the Difference: Signs of Ethnic Identity' (1998), repr. in *From Roman Provinces to Medieval Kingdoms*, 127–35; Patrick J. Geary, *The Myth of Nations: The Medieval Origins of Europe* (Princeton: N.J.: Princeton UP, 2003), 75.
45. For these references, see A. J. Graham, 'The Colonial Expansion of Greece, in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. 3, part 3, ed. J. Boardman and N. G. L. Hammond (Cambridge: CUP, 1982), 157.
46. Procopius' account of the Heruls, which is summarized below, can be found in Procopius Caesariensis, *History of the Wars: Gothic Wars Books V and VI*, 6.14, trans. H. B. Dewing (1919; repr. New York: Cosimo, 2007), p. 415.
47. Peter Heather, 'Heruli', in *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, ed. Simon Hornblower and Anthony Spawforth (Oxford: OUP, 2009).
48. For general observations on Procopius' use of such historiographical commonplaces, see Averil Cameron, *Procopius and the Sixth Century* (London: Duckworth, 1985), 220–21.
49. Procopius, *History of the Wars*, 5.12, p. 11.
50. Patrick Amory, *People and Identity in Ostrogothic Italy: 489–554* (Cambridge: CUP, 1997), 146 and 303.
51. Merrills, *History*, 162–7.
52. Walter Goffart, *Narrators*, 84; and Virgil, *Aeneid* 1.278–9, quoted in Natalia Lozovsky, 'Geography and Ethnography in Medieval Europe: Classical Traditions and Contemporary Concerns', in *Geography and Ethnography: Perceptions of the World in Pre-Modern Societies*, ed. Kurt A. Raaflaub and Richard J. A. Talbert (Chichester: John Wiley and Sons, 2010), 311–29.
53. Croke, 'Cassiodorus', 126.
54. For these, other references and general discussion, see Mathew Kuefler, *The Manly Eunuch: Masculinity, Gender Ambiguity, and Christian Ideology in Late Antiquity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 46–9.
55. 'On the Governance of God', in *The Writings of Salvian, the Presbyter*, trans. Jeremy F. O'Sullivan, vol. 3 (New York: Catholic University of America Press, 1947), 219 and 307.
56. This is examined with the focus on the gendered rhetoric of 'manliness' in Michael Edward Stewart's 'The Soldier's Life: Martial Virtues and Hegemonic Masculinity in the Early Byzantine Empire', Ph.D. thesis, School of History, Philosophy, Religion, and Classics, The University of Queensland.
57. For a recent discussion of this rhetorical strategy, see Eric Adler, *Valorizing the Barbarians: Enemy Speeches in Roman Historiography* (Austin, Tex.: University of Texas Press, 2011).
58. Ennodius, *Magni Felicis Ennodi Opera*, ed. F. Vogel, MGH AA 7 (Berlin, 1885), *Variae* 3.23.3: *Qui sic semper fuerunt in laudum medio constituti, ut et Romanorum prudentiam caperent et virtutem gentium possiderent*; 3.24.4: *imitamini certe Gothos nostros, qui foris proelia, intus norunt exercere modestiam*; 8.10.1: *auctus est enim pacis genius de ferri radiantis ornatu nec discincta iacet toga iam procintualis effecta.*
59. Amory, *People and Identity*, 51.
60. *Ibid.*, 58.

REFERENCES

Primary Sources

- Alcuin, *Versus de patribus et sanctis Euboricensis ecclesiae*, in *The Bishops, Kings and Saints of York*, ed. Peter Goodman. Oxford Clarendon Press, 1982.
- Augustine. *The City of God against the Pagans*, trans. R. W. Dyson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Dudo of Saint-Quentin, *De moribus et actis primorum Normanniae ducum*, PL 141.
- Ennodius, *Magni Felicis Ennodi Opera*, ed. F. Vogel, MGH AA 7 (Berlin, 1885). Goodman. Oxford Clarendon Press, 1982.
- Herodotus. *The Histories*, trans. Robin Waterfield. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Isidore of Seville. *Etymologiarium sive originum libri XX*, PL 82.
- Jordanes. *Romana et Getica*, ed. T. Mommsen, MGH AA 5.1. Berlin: 1882.
- . *The Gothic History of Jordanes*, trans. Charles Christopher Mierow. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1915.
- Lucan, *The Civil War, Books I–X* [Latin and English texts], trans. J. D. Duff. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962.
- Orosius, Paulus. *Adversus paganos historiarum libri septem*, PL 31.
- Plutarch. *Life of Marius*, ed. and trans. Bernadotte Perrin, vol. 9. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1967.
- Procopius Caesariensis, *History of the Wars: Gothic Wars Books V and VI*, trans. H. B. Dewing [1919] New York: Cossimo, 2007.
- Ptolemy, Claudius. *The Geography of Ptolemy*, trans. and ed. Edward Luther Stevenson. [1932] New York: Dover Publications, 1991.
- Salvian, *The Writings of Salvian, the Presbyter*, trans. Jeremy F. O'Sullivan, vol. 3. New York: Catholic University of America Press, 1947.
- Strabo. *The Geography of Strabo*, Loeb Classical Library, vol. 3, trans. and ed. Horace W. Jones. Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1924.
- Tacitus, *Germania*, ed. J. B. Rives. Oxford: Clarendon, 1999.
- . *De origine et situ Germanorum liber*, ed. Alf Önnersfors. Stuttgart: B. G. Teubner, 1983.

Secondary Sources

- Abels, Richard. 'Cowardice and Duty in Anglo-Saxon England', *The Journal of Medieval Military History*, ed. Clifford J. Rogers, Kelly DeVries, and John France, 29–49. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006.
- Adler, Eric. *Valorizing the Barbarians: Enemy Speeches in Roman Historiography*. Austin, Tex.: University of Texas Press, 2011.
- Amory, Patrick. *People and Identity in Ostrogothic Italy: 489–554*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Aristotle. *Works of Aristotle*, trans. E. S. Forster, vol. 7. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1937.
- Burns, Thomas S. *Rome and the Barbarians: 100 B.C.–A.D. 400*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003.
- Cameron, Averil. *Procopius and the Sixth Century*. London: Duckworth, 1985.
- Christensen, Arne Søby. *Cassiodorus, Jordanes and the History of the Goths*. Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum, 2002.
- Croke, Brian. 'Cassiodorus and the *Getica* of Jordanes', *Classical Philology* 82.2 (1987): 117–34.

- Dunkle, Roger. 'Swift-Footed Achilles', *The Classical World* 90.4 (1997): 227–34.
- Elm, Susanna. *Virgins of God: The Making of Asceticism in Late Antiquity*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- Floyd-Wilson, Mary. *English Ethnicity and Race in Early Modern Drama*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Gabriel, Peter A. *The Great Armies of Antiquity*. Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2002.
- Geary, Patrick J. *The Myth of Nations: The Medieval Origins of Europe*. Princeton: N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003.
- . 'Oblivion between Orality and Textuality in the Tenth Century', in *Medieval Concepts of the Past: Ritual, Memory, Historiography*, ed. Gerd Althoff, Johannes Fried, and Patrick J. Geary, 111–22. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Washington: German Historical Institute, 2002.
- Goffart, Walter. 'Jordanes' *Getica* and the Disputed Authenticity of Gothic Origins from Scandinavia', *Speculum* 80 (2005): 379–98.
- . *The Narrators of Barbarian History: Jordanes, Gregory of Tours, Bede, and Paul the Deacon*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1988.
- Graham, A. J. 'The Colonial Expansion of Greece, in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. 3, part 3, ed. J. Boardman and N. G. L. Hammond, 83–162. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982.
- Harris, Stephen J. *Race and Ethnicity in Anglo-Saxon Literature*. London: Routledge, 2003.
- Heather, Peter. 'Heruli', in *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, ed. Simon Hornblower and Anthony Spawforth. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Heather, Peter. *The Goths*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2006.
- Hedeager, Lotte. 'Scandinavia', in *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, ed. Paul Fouracre, vol. 1, 496–523. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Horigan, Stephen. *Nature and Culture in Western Discourses*. London: Routledge, 1988.
- Kaliff, Anders. *Gothic Connections: Contacts between Eastern Scandinavia and the Southern Baltic Coast 1000 BC – 500 AD*. Uppsala: Department of Archaeology and Ancient History, Uppsala University, 2001.
- Kuefler, Mathew. *The Manly Eunuch: Masculinity, Gender Ambiguity, and Christian Ideology in Late Antiquity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001.
- Leake, Jane Acomb. *The Geats of Beowulf: A Study in the Geographical Mythology of the Middle Ages*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1967.
- Looijenga, Tineke. *Texts and Contexts of the Oldest Runic Inscriptions*. Leiden: Brill, 2003.
- Lovejoy, A. O. and George Boas. *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity*. [1935] Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1997.
- Lozovsky, Natalia. 'Geography and Ethnography in Medieval Europe: Classical Traditions and Contemporary Concerns', in *Geography and Ethnography: Perceptions of the World in Pre-Modern Societies*, ed. Kurt A. Raaflaub and Richard J. A. Talbert, 311–29. Chichester: John Wiley and Sons, 2010.
- Marin, Louis. *Utopics: The Semiological Play of Textual Spaces*, trans. Robert A. Vollrath. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International, 1984.
- Mela, Pomponius. *De Chorographia libri tres*, trans. C. P. Fradin, vol. 3. Paris: Brissot-Thivars, 1827.
- Merrills, Andrew H. *History and Geography in Late Antiquity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

- Noble, Thomas F. X., ed., *From Roman Provinces to Medieval Kingdoms*. London and New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Nordgren, Ingemar. *The Well Spring of the Goths: About the Gothic Peoples in the Nordic Countries and on the Continent*. New York: iUniverse, 2004.
- Pohl, Walter. 'Telling the Difference: Signs of Ethnic Identity' (1998), repr. in *From Roman Provinces to Medieval Kingdoms*, ed. Thomas F. X. Noble, 120–67. London and New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Romm, James S. *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992.
- Rübekeil, Ludwig. 'Scandinavia', in *The Nordic Languages: An International Handbook of the History of the North Germanic Languages*, ed. O. Bandle, L. Elmevik, and G. Widmark. 2 vols. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2002.
- Scardigli, Pierguiseppe. 'Nordic-Gothic Linguistic Relations', in *The Nordic Languages: An International Handbook of the History of the North Germanic Languages*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2002.
- Schwartz, Ernst. *Goten, Nordgermanen, Angelsachsen. Studien zur Ausgliederung der germanische Sprachen*. Bern: A. Francke, 1951.
- Speidel, Michael P. *Ancient Germanic Warriors: Warrior Styles from Trajan's Column to Icelandic Sagas* (London: Routledge, 2004), 9–40.
- Stewart, Michael Edward. 'The Soldier's Life: Martial Virtues and Hegemonic Masculinity in the Early Byzantine Empire', Ph.D. thesis, School of History, Philosophy, Religion, and Classics, The University of Queensland.
- Trzaska-Richter, Christine. *Furor teutonicus, das römische Germanenbild in Politik und Propaganda von den Anfängen bis zum 2. Jahrhundert n. Chr.* Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 1991.
- Wenskus, Reinhard. *Stammesbildung und Verfassung. Das Werden der frühmittelalterlichen gentes*. Köln u. Graz: Böhlau Verlag, 1961.

3 Ethnic History and the Origins of Nations

This chapter will expand the discussion of Jordanes' 'out-of-Scandinavia' legend by examining its use in a number of continental manuscripts relating to the Langobards (Lombards), Burgundians, Franks, Saxons, Normans, and Swabians. For medieval historians who took on the mantle of establishing a barbarian people's ethnicity as an ontological category, Scandinavia became an accepted place to which the origin of people could be legitimately traced. Thus, tracing the legend of Scandinavian origin is the mapping of a literary *topos*. As will be discussed, the tale of origins in Jordanes' *Getica* appears to have been an inspiration for this – either directly or indirectly. The chapter will first briefly outline some significant themes in histories containing the 'out-of-Scandinavia' legend, after which each 'nation' will be discussed individually.

NORTHERN ORIGINS

Tracing a barbarian people to an origin in the North was more than just a question of dispassionately choosing a usable tale about a dead past. When narrating legends of origins, historians provide 'intentional data', that is to say a series of pre-programmed associations, subtexts, and meaning, as we have already seen. Reference to the pagan North was also coded in this way.¹ This was not a static set of ideas; rather, the idea of Northern origins was perennially recalibrated to fit new cultural contexts, as I shall emphasize in the following. Nonetheless, at the risk of oversimplification, it is possible to sum up three thematic domains, discernible in the medieval manuscripts to be examined.

- 1 *Barbarian Primordialism*. One significant motivation behind the national tale (*origenes gentium*) was to recuperate 'national' history for the benefit of present glory. The tale of a distant homeland in the North, from whence strong warriors migrated to take possession of continental Europe, communicated a certain affective dynamic. In medieval historiography, Scandinavian origins would symbolize the indelible ethnographic encoding of warrior virtues as a backdrop for the assimilation

of Christianity and civilized classical learning. In the previous chapter, the classical idea of 'hard primitivism' was discussed. Throughout the medieval period, this intellectual ideal subsisted as a salutary contrast to the luxury and softness that was seen to encroach on barbarian peoples, who attained to increasingly advanced social forms and modes of living. We can observe how the legend of the ancient North became a way to make 'ethnic capital' out of the base currency of Germanic barbarianism. In some manuscript, an underlying association of the North with purity, primordial strength, and the vigorous body is suggested. This cluster of ideas has affinities with what was later to be known as *Nordicism*, which was to have a long trajectory (including an extreme and perverted implementation within Nazi racist ideology).

- 2 *Anti-Roman*. Overlapping with the idea of Northern origins as 'ethnic capital', an anti-Roman strain is found in some manuscripts. The reference to a people's origin in a semi-mythical, ancient Scandinavia served the function of matching the long pedigree of Roman origins. As the change from a sub-Roman to a post-Roman mentality took effect in Europe, the North gained significance as an oppositional category. Since Scandinavia was never subdued by the Roman Empire, an origin in these parts may also have designated a spirit of independence. This was partly traditional. Aristotle, for example, sees Northern races as inherently spirited and unshackled (although notes their deficiency in political organization).² But, most clearly, an anti-Roman strain was connected with an emerging historical consciousness of one's own national importance. This was conditioned in part by a conviction that the barbarians represented 'new blood', destined to take over the rule of the West after the collapse of the Roman Empire. In this respect, the legendizing of the Goths as Rome's most feared opponents (aided by reading in Jordanes' history) made the 'out-of-Scandinavia' legend grow in importance.
- 3 *Christianity*. Writers of national histories were primarily men of the church. Ancestral discourse was not alien to Christian ways of thinking, since the Bible showed them that noble genealogies were of great importance. Clerics also acknowledged that heroic tales were worth preserving. It is because of clerical interest in *Hildebrandslied*, *Muspilli*, and *Beowulf* that these texts have survived. Nonetheless, the paganism of the barbarian ancestors remained an ideological obstacle. It is therefore important to note that the 'out-of-Scandinavia' legend could be embedded within a larger narrative economy, a *Heilsgeschichte* of how a nation redeems itself from paganism and accepts Christianity. But, I will contend, the pagan past and Christian present should not be seen as antithetical. Some manuscripts can be interpreted to suggest that barbarian power could be harnessed into Christian potency: fierce barbarians are transformed into fervid Christians. In such cases, the barbarian qualities of strength, purity and uprightness associated with the North were an advantage for a converted people.

Because the North was a prism of both positive and negative subtexts in the Middle Ages, one set of assumptions may be accentuated in some texts and played down in others. The various themes were also sometimes allowed to coexist and compete with one another within the framework of a singular text. The themes should be seen to define general positions, not a rigid checklist. In the following, the focus will be on specific case studies of how medieval manuscripts incorporate an 'out-of-Scandinavia' legend or in other ways point to a homeland in the North.

The Saxons

I will begin with the most problematic case to assess: the Saxons. What was known as Saxony in the Middle Ages (not to be confused with the area called Saxony today) was located in the northwest corner of modern Germany and roughly corresponds to Lower Saxony and Westphalia and the western part of Saxony-Anhalt. A number of references and allusions in classical and medieval texts place the origin of the Saxons in either southern Scandinavia or a Northern homeland. The first writer who seems to mention the Saxons is Ptolemy in his *Geography* (c. AD 150). This text provides the Saxons with a northern habitat in 'the palisades of the Cimbrian peninsula', as well as three North Sea islands 'near the mouth of the Elbe'.³ Cimbria is the traditional name for Jutland, so Ptolemy's account indicates that these Saxons dwelt in the area roughly corresponding to modern-day Holstein, from which several (now Danish) islands in the Baltic would be within close reach. However, it cannot be ascertained that the people Ptolemy refers to were actually 'Saxons'. The extant manuscripts of *Geography* display variant readings, and it has been suggested that later scribes may have replaced a name known to classical geography with a similar one familiar to the Middle Ages, thus introducing anachronism.⁴ For instance, some copies have *Axones*, which may be a misspelling of the tribe that Tacitus calls *Aviones* in his *Germania* (ch. 40). We know Saxons have been introduced into works where they do not belong, as when medieval scribes replaced the Roman poet Lucan's reference to the *Suessones* (a tribe in Gaul) with *Saxones* because the first name did not make sense to them.⁵ The difficulty of assessing sources is further compounded by the fact that the name 'Saxons' is loosely applied in older sources, often with the connotation of 'pirate' – for instance, when describing attacks on the coast of Gaul and Britain. The ethnonym can be found with this application in the works of Amminianus Marcellinus, Pacatus, Claudius Claudianus, and Gildas, among others.⁶ It is not easy to determine whether or not it is always a reference to the same people in these and other sources.

However, Ptolemy's account of 'Saxons' was responsible for establishing the Saxons as a people with a Northern heritage. For example, the sixteenth-century English antiquarian William Camden wrote of his Anglo-Saxon ancestors: 'when the Saxons began first to be of any name in the world, they

had their abode in ... Denmarke'.⁷ In *Origines Britannicae* (1685), Edward Stillingfleet even proposes that the Saxons had come from Sweden – an idea first introduced a few years earlier by the Swedish antiquarian and nationalist Olof Rudbeck. Stillingfleet accepted Rudbeck's identification of several place-names in Sweden containing a *sax*-element.⁸

A medieval text which mentions the Saxons (with no ambiguity) and connects them to a northern geography is the *Cosmography*, purportedly the work of a traveller named Aethicus Ister. In one of the book's many travel descriptions, Aethicus arrives at:

[the] northern peoples and their islands. The Gryphon-Folk [dwell] by the closest part of Ocean, from where according to report, the Saxon race went out, and by the ferocity of [their] battles arrived in Germany.⁹

The most recent editor of Aethicus' text suggests that the reference to being 'closest' to the Northern Ocean could point towards the tip of Jutland.¹⁰ In any event, the account gives the Saxons a distinctively Northern (Scandinavian) origin. The passage further lists some standard characteristics of a Northern habitat (influenced by classical texts). For example, we hear of the production of amber and the abundance of cattle (since agriculture is climatically difficult). But this mixes with more fantastical ideas of the North, such as the reference to bird-lion gryphons in the quotation above.

Did the Saxon have an origin tale of Northern ancestors? In order to assess the information conveyed in the *Cosmography*, it is necessary make a few notes on the provenance of the text. The date of composition is unknown, but it has been suggested that the author's knowledge of Greek (unusual in early medieval Europe) may point to a connection with the Canterbury school of Archbishop Theodore in the late seventh century.¹¹ In fact, the disdain for all things not Greek may in fact be a satire on Theodore and his emphasis on the Greek language as necessary for the highest learning. Aethicus' travels around the world gives him occasion to pass severe judgment on the peoples he encounters, while he gives preferential treatment to the noble Greeks – an attitude that appears tongue-in-cheek. If this is indeed a take on the snobbery of Canterbury Grecophilia, we should not expect that the preconceived and affected traveller would have anything good to say about the barbarian Saxons. Connecting the Saxons with the primitive northern outpost could simply be a slur on their alleged backwardness and belligerence.

However, it is not impossible that the author used a migration legend for the Saxons that was circulating at the time. A Scandinavian origin for the Saxons was certainly suggested in *Res gestae Saxonicae* (The Deeds of the Saxons), completed in 968 by the Saxon chronicler Widukind of Corvey. Only the first 14 chapters of Book 1 are concerned with Saxon ethnogenesis. Widukind is unresolved as to the origins of the Saxons: they either descended

from Alexander the Great's Macedonians or from the Danes/Northmen. He decides to leave the question open, he informs us, because ancient Saxon history is lost in the mists of time and no final solution can be reached.¹² The same reluctance to commit to one or the other legend of origins is found in the twelfth-century text *De origine Saxonum* (The Origin of the Saxons), which is derivative of Widukind's history.¹³

We may understand why Northern heritage was an acceptable alternative to that of tracing one's roots to Alexander's army by looking at the context within which Widukind was writing. The writing of *Res gestae Saxonicae* has been linked to the ideology of *translatio imperii*. The history of the Saxon people was compiled after the time Saxony had become part of the Holy Roman Empire of German Nations. Widukind wrote extensively about the shift of power that this entailed: Saxonia had gone from being a slave to becoming a mistress of many nations.¹⁴ As the Germanic peoples had attained a new legitimacy, a new genealogical legend was necessitated.¹⁵ If Widukind's ideological ambition is clear, we still need to ask from which sources the idea of Northern origins derived. Widukind's text begins with reference to orally-transmitted histories of the Saxons (*res gestas litteris*) (1.1). There are events in Saxon history that may have encouraged the development of Northern legends among the pagan Saxons. The warlord Widukind (after whom the scholar Widukind was named) sought refuge with the Danish King Siegfried in 777 and 782, when threatened by the Franks.¹⁶ To seal the alliance, Widukind married Siegfried's daughter, Geva. This event may have inspired the production of legends about a common origin of the two peoples.

However, the two alternatives for Saxon origins that Widukind mentions may have come into competition simply as two rival versions of scholarly antiquarianism. The monastery at Corvey, in Westphalia, was originally a Carolingian foundation. Widukind was therefore well-versed with Frankish scholarship, which promoted a Scandinavian origin for all Germanic peoples, as we have seen above. Furthermore, Widukind shows awareness of other national historians, in particular Bede (1.8), Paul the Deacon (1.14), and Jordanes (1.18). All three historians provided him with tales pointing to the North as a legitimate place from which strong warrior peoples had sprung. Most importantly, he quotes Jordanes on the Goths sallying forth from a Northern island to conquer European lands. Jordanes' tale became a boilerplate from which new national histories of Germanic peoples could be created.

The Langobards

As we will see, Jordanes' text may already have been known when national history was written for the people who are today often referred to as Lombards, but known in the Middle Ages as *Langobardi*, or *Longobardi*. The etymology of their name (long-beards) is the object of punning in several sources.

The Langobards made themselves conspicuous in the latter part of the sixth century, when they entered northern Italy from the province of Pannonia, conquering former Roman areas. After a long series of religious and ethnic confrontations, they partially converted to Christianity during the seventh century.

The origins of the Langobards are obscure. They are mentioned in the first century as a people inhabiting a region around the Elbe. This is the location given by Vellius Paterculus, a first-hand observer who had served for eight years (from AD 4) with Emperor Tiberius in his northern campaign between the Rhine and the Elbe.¹⁷ A similar location of Langobards is indicated by both the Greek geographer Strabo and the Roman historian Tacitus.¹⁸ But since the name was likely used as an epithet rather than a substantive ethnonym (i.e. there may have been more groups whose preference for facial hair compelled observers to describe them as 'long beards'), we cannot be certain that commentators are describing the same group.¹⁹

There are no historical records placing the Langobards as far north as Scandinavia. Nonetheless, a legend of their Scandinavian origin is found in the *Chronicle of Fredegar*, a Frankish text written c. 660.²⁰ The *Chronicle* has a political focus, detailing events of Frankish Gaul from 584 to around 641 (with reference to events as late as 658), including information on Franco-Langobardic contacts. It is a text often mentioned as an early example giving the Franks a Trojan origin, but it also recounts a legend of the Langobards deriving from Scandinavia.

In the *Chronicle*, a place called *Scathanavia* is described as a land area located somewhat imprecisely between the Danube and the 'Ocean Sea' (i.e. the border of water believed to encircle the world).²¹ The area referred to corresponds roughly to what in other sources is called *Germania*. Thus, it uses the term as a pseudonym for 'barbarians', that is, those peoples north (and outside) of Frankish control and Christianity. The *Chronicle* can be seen as an attempt to understand nations in relation to their ethnic origins. The Franks are the leading people, having derived from Troy through the escape of Priam, who became the first Frankish king. The Wends, who had emerged as a threat on the eastern border of the Franks, are said to be the offspring of Hunnish warriors wintering with Slavic women.²² 'Fredegar' likewise speaks of the Langobards in terms of their capabilities as pagan warriors, so associating them with the name of Scandinavia may be a way to explain how they came to be such a formidable threat. It is hard to say if the Fredegar chronicler(s) knew of a Langobardian 'out-of-Scandinavia' legend. Perhaps the Langobards were connected with other pagan (bearded?) warriors from the North, such as the Danish raiders who impinged on Frankish territories.²³ But the reference to the name *Scathanavia* as a place of origin strongly suggests that the attempt was to link them with a legend of a warrior North, as it was given in Jordanes' history.²⁴

A text intrinsically bound up with the circulation of Langobardic law is the seventh-century text known as *Origo gentis Langobardorum* (The

Origin of the Lombards), probably the creation of the intellectual group in the royal Langobardic court. The text is known from three manuscripts (the earliest of which is a ninth-century recension). It begins with a clear reference to the Langobards' original homeland, this time described as a northern island (*insula*). In the various manuscript recensions of the *Origo gentis Langobardorum*, the northern island is called *Scadan*, *Scandanan* or *Scadanan*. But in each case, it is mentioned that this name 'is interpreted as "destruction" [*excidia*], in the regions of the north, where many people dwell'.²⁵ This etymological commentary is likely a nautical reference to dangerous shores, as mentioned in the 'Introduction' to the present study. The information that the island was inhabited by many peoples seems to come close to a similar formulation in *Getica*.²⁶ This indicates that the *Origo* is either drawing directly on Jordanes or from a common source.

The *Origo* culls elements from both learned and native registers and seeks to harmonize them. The reference to Scandinavia known from classical tradition is followed by what appears to be a genuine remnant of pre-Christian tradition. This takes the form of an aetiological tale of how the Langobards received their name. A short reference to this story is also given in the (presumably earlier) Fredegar text. In the longer version of the *Origo*, we are told that a tribe called the *Winnili* duped their god, called Godan, into bestowing upon them divine favour on the battlefield. Godan had first wanted to support the rival Vandals, but the *Winnili* women had, with the help of Godan's wife Frea, disguised themselves with beards. This made Godan refer to them as *Langobardi* ('long-beards'). Since this was one of Godan's bynames, the god was obliged to support the *Winnili* in battle. As a result, they were both victorious and received a new name.

This aetiology has the marks of a genuine native legend, which has parallels in narratives intended to explain proper names found in many cultures.²⁷ The remarkable difference from the tale offered in the Fredegar text is that the enemy is now not the Huns, but the Vandals. These were a people whom Jordanes mentions as archenemies of the Goths at the beginning of his migration narrative (*Get.* 25). Perhaps the revisions of the story in the *Origo* may be an attempt to make early history compatible with the idea of the Langobards as a Northern people.

Much of the information given in the *Origo* is rehashed in Paul the Deacon's *Historia Longobardorum* (written 780s–790s). This text was very popular in the Middle Ages with over 100 surviving manuscript copies and a number of continuations. It is an interesting text also for another reason: Paul appears to have been born into a noble Langobardic family and probably educated at the court of the Langobardic King Ratchis in Pavia, which would have put him into direct contact with Langobardic oral tradition.²⁸ Thus, he would be expected to know a native Langobardic legend of Scandinavian ancestry, if such a one existed. But although he faithfully repeats the story, he adds nothing new to it.

For the origin of the *Winnili*, Paul names *Scadinavia*. The location of the island is explained through reference to the geography of Pliny's *Natural History*.²⁹ This reference helps to explain Paul's orthography of the name, which is similar to that which appears in some manuscript recensions of Pliny's text.³⁰ This may not be the only written sources Paul relies on for a supposedly 'native' legend. When he mentions several tribes that migrated from the North (*Wandalique*, *Rugi*, *Heruli*), he may be drawing on Jordanes' *Getica*, which has a similar list. This assumption is corroborated by the fact that Paul says that the Goths were the most notable (*Gothi siquidem*) among these tribes (1.1). Paul's decision to relate the origin of the Langobards to the Goths could be a means of bathing in the reflected glory of this people. The Goths had achieved a reputation as a heroic race (not least on account of Jordanes' history). By insisting on the same Northern origin for the Langobards and the Goths, Paul is invoking the deterministic notion that certain geographies perpetually produce peoples with the same characteristics.³¹

Paul's history is meant to entertain. He therefore spices it up with information on the northern neighbours, the *Scritobini* (the Lapps) and their strange primitive life in a place where the sun shines at night in the summertime (1.5). This is not native legend, but stock information that can be found in Jordanes' history (*Get.* 21) and Procopius' *Gothic War* (2.15). Paul mixes such learned ethnographical references with elements he picks up from the *Origo gentis Langobardorum*. In this earlier text, the *Winnili* are said to be ruled by Gambara. She has two sons, Ybor and Agio. Paul focuses on these brothers (now called Ibor and Aio), who became leaders when the Langobards decided to leave Scandinavia. Paul unfolds the tale of the two brothers and the migration in Book 1, chapter 7. The *topos* of two brothers leading a people across the water to a new homeland can be identified as one of the stock elements of Germanic legend, as will be discussed in Chapter Four of the present study.

What is most notable about Paul's treatment of the 'out-of-Scandinavia' legend is the extent to which he couches it in classical rhetoric of climatic ethnography. In particular, Paul promotes the virtues of the Langobards as a Northern race with a long excursus on the theory that humans thrive in cold climates. The North is 'much more healthful to the bodies of men', and it enables people to reproduce at a greater rate. As a contrast, we find those born under 'the heat of the sun' whose habitat is awash with disease and generally 'less fitted for the bringing up of the human race' (1.1). Paul further expands the procreation metaphor by adding that 'great multitudes of peoples spring up in the north', so that 'the whole is, not improperly, called by the general name of *Germania*'.³² The etymological pun here pivots on the Latin verb *germinare* (to germinate), a link Paul would have found in Isidore's *Etymologies*.³³ This notion is connected with classical ideas that cold climates promote reproductive powers. The reason frequently given for why warriors would set forth to conquer foreign land was overpopulation

in the homeland. Jordanes may reflect this trope in *Getica*, when he refers to the Goths as endowed with splendidly reproductive bodies. For instance, we are told that the number of the Goths would increase greatly (*Get.* 25) after they had left Scandinavia, for which reason they had to break up again and go 'in search of suitable homes and pleasant place' (*Get.* 27). This idea had repercussions many centuries to come. The idea of the North as a 'storehouse of European nations' was taken up in the first German global geography, Sebastian Münster's *Cosmographiae Universalis* (1544). It would appear again in Robert Molesworth's *An Account of Denmark* (1694), in which he refers to Denmark as part of the 'Northern hive' insofar as it was 'extremely populous, the Women being exceedingly fruitful, which is sufficiently proved by the vast Swarms that in former Ages, from these Northern parts, over-ran all of Europe'.³⁴

Paul presents an image of ancient Scandinavia as a place associated with antediluvian, strong, and healthy bodies. But Paul also concedes that this potency had unfortunate consequences. When Scandinavia could no longer feed its inhabitants, the fierce and barbarian nations (*feroces et barbarae nationes*) left the island to conquer new land. This led to a series of invasions afflicting Europe as well as parts of Asia in ancient times (1.1). Despite the negative consequences of overpopulation, Paul continues to expand on Northern vitality. Since the migration heroes Ibor and Aio are the founders of the Langobards, they are a synecdoche for all their descendants: they were 'in the bloom of youthful vigour and more eminent than the rest'.³⁵ Paul does not forget to tell us that the present populous nation of the Langobards had developed from only a slender number of migrants.³⁶

One may be surprised at how Paul, a Benedictine monk, allows himself to speculate so intensely on reproduction, especially considering his otherwise negative attitude towards sex in *Historia Longobardorum*.³⁷ However, within the framework of an origin tale, prodigious breeding was not incompatible with a Christian perspective. According to Genesis, fecundity was seen as a blessing, since God wanted man to be fruitful and multiply. Furthermore, early medieval Christian writers would sometimes allow themselves to suggest a magical connection between a good ruler and the fertility of his land. For example, Alcuin, another leading light of eighth-century Christianity, associated the Northumbrian King Æthelred's goodness with the pleasant climate and fertility of his dominion, as well as the health of his people.³⁸

Paul's history extols the *gens Langobardorum* and their splendid victories. Although he is not uncritically positive towards all the Langobardic kings (as in the discussions of the usurper Grimoald I [4.51 and 5.1–4]), Paul leaves us in no doubt about the outstanding civic virtues of King Liutprand. Paul's attempt to commend the Langobardic barbarian past also finds expression in his negative observations on Greek culture. In Book 5, we hear how an imperial Byzantine army under General Saburrus is sent against the Langobards. In this connection, Paul praises the Langobards as

strong, patriotic, and by nature, unspoiled people, whereas the Byzantines (called 'Greeks') are portrayed as driven by avarice and an insatiable lust for power. In battle, one of the Langobardic troops spikes an enemy soldier and holds him above his head. This display of strength makes the cowardly Byzantines take flight.³⁹ According to Robert Hanning, this is a symbolic scene underpinned by the notion that the ancient world no longer holds the right to rule the West; the Germanic races will deservedly ascend to take over this role.⁴⁰

If Paul could allow himself such assertions on behalf of the Germanic peoples as a whole, it was not so that his history should be read as a paean to the Langobards as a political power. Paul was probably writing at a time when the Langobards had come under suzerainty of the Franks (since 774), and Charlemagne had taken the title 'King of the Langobards'. In fact, as Rosamund McKitterick has argued, his text could have been written for the Carolingian court in Italy, if not the main court in Francia (where he spent the years between 782 and 787), and perhaps even at the request of Charlemagne, who asked him to write so many other texts.⁴¹ In a parallel to Jordanes' situation, Paul was writing both for a defeated people and their new rulers. We should therefore probably see Paul's account as promoting an image of the Langobards that would show them as exceptionally worthy subjects in the Frankish empire.

Perhaps it is partly for this reason that Paul shows little patience with the pagan legend of the *Winnili* hoodwinking Godan. He calls it a 'silly story' (*ridicula fibula*) of a bygone age (*antiquitas*).⁴² Perhaps Paul felt obliged to include this story because it was established as canonical. But his explicit rejection of it is also meant to signal that the Langobards had definitively abandoned their pagan roots, although the state of Christian conversion would still have been fragile at the time Paul was writing. Striking a delicate balance, Paul sees the Langobards' barbaric roots in Scandinavia as key to their militaristic successes throughout history, and yet it is their acceptance of the Christian church which makes them truly great as a people. For those pagans that were left behind in the North, Paul leaves a hope, however. This is the myth of seven sleepers, who were supposedly residing in a cave at the farthest boundary of *Germania*. The sleepers are proto-Christians from a time immemorial, who may one day wake and save the Northern nations by missioning among them (1.4).

Although Paul never addresses the Langobardic conversion as a separate theme, the migration of the Langobards from the North into the land of Italy is clearly a journey out of paganism towards true faith and salvation. The North represents the extreme pole of barbarianism against which the Langobards can measure their progress and achievement. In this connection, Herwig Wolfram has suggested that Paul constructs an analogy between the Langobards and the migrating Jews of the Bible. He sees the description in Book 2 of the Langobardic King Alboin climbing a mountain to look into Italy before entering as an allusion to the image of Moses looking into the Promised Land.⁴³

If we follow this trace, a providential understanding of the Langobardic migration is clearly articulated in the short text known as *Historia Langobardorum codicis Gothani* (first decade of 9th cent.), connected with the monastery of Fulda. The author is anonymous, but the reference to 'our ancient parents' tells us that he was a Langobard. The text relates events from the origins of the Langobards, ending with praise of Pippin, who was appointed king of the Langobards (781–810) by his father Charlemagne. The author also offers support of the Frankish campaigns in Italy and Corsica, which indicates that he probably had close links to the Frankish court.

In this text, the Langobards are in dire need of salvation because they are said to be descended from serpents.⁴⁴ Furthermore, the Langobardic migration is emphatically 'not by necessity, nor hardness of heart, nor oppression of the poor from famine' (the usual reasons given for breaking up from an original homeland), but a promise originating in a prophecy. The prophetess Gambara admonishes the *Winnili* to migrate. After the migration, they attain the salvation of baptism and the sign of the holy trinity in the land of Italy, which is said to flow with milk and honey.⁴⁵ This story of a prophecy may have been known to Paul the Deacon, who hints at the fact that other reasons than overpopulation were given for the migration out-of-Scandinavia, although he does not reveal what they are.⁴⁶ But more so than in Paul's text, the *codicis Gothani* represents Scandinavia as the unregenerate state of the Langobards. The denouement of their story is conversion, which the author suggests is due to Carolingian rule in Italy; it is with Franks that the Langobards find peace and prosperity (ch. 9).

The prophecy is not the only piece of new information supplied in the *codicis Gothani*. The author also backdates the origin of the Langobards to a time before they dwelled in Scandinavia (*Scatenauga*). The original homeland of the *Winnili* is now said to be near the river *Vindilicus* (unidentified), 'on the extreme border of Gaul'. Only subsequently did the *Winnili* migrate up to Scandinavia, from where they then migrated back south to the land of the Saxons.⁴⁷ Is this the trace of an alternative native tradition? Probably not. Peter Heather proposes that the deviation from previous Langobardic histories is the result of a writer trying to square the 'out-of-Scandinavia' tale with what was known about the Langobards from Tacitus, who placed the *Langobardi* in Gaul.⁴⁸ If this is the case, we have a development of the legend based on a scholarly attempt at aligning written sources. Given the clear Frankish perspective in the *codicis Gothani*, I will suggest that a political motive may underpin this revision. In this respect, the manuscript's final pro-Carolingian sections and its connection with the Benedictine monastery at Fulda (an institution used as a base from which missionaries would accompany Frankish armies into Saxony) should not be ignored. At the time the manuscript was composed (first decade of 9th cent.), Gaul had for a long time been Frankish heartland. Hence, a legend that the origin of the Langobards was in Gaul could have strengthened Frankish political claims over

the Langobards. That is to say, Frankish rule could be made to seem more like a natural course of events if Langobards had indeed once emerged from the soil that belonged to the Franks. Politically motivated or not, the *codis Gothani* shows us that origin legends were not sacred, unalterable histories of the past, but tales subject to revision.

The Burgundians

Political motivation and ethnogenetic legend certainly mix in Burgundian legend, which is now to be discussed. The Burgundians are an example of a Germanic people whose history was intrinsically connected with Roman imperialism. In the early fourth century, Paulus Orosius gives some attention to the Burgundians in his *Seven Books of History against the Pagans* (early 5th cent.). According to this account, the Burgundians consisted of 80,000 people who came to the Rhine area as a new enemy with a new name.⁴⁹ From other sources, we know that the Burgundians set up a kingdom around Worms under the authority of Rome, but that they were later given land around Geneva and Lyon. They fought in alliance with the Romans in the fourth and fifth centuries and later came to be dominated by the Franks in the second part of the sixth century.

Pliny the Elder's first-century geography is the earliest source mentioning a people named Burgundians. Pliny places this people among the Vandals in the Oder-Vistula area.⁵⁰ No mention of the Burgundians migrating from Scandinavia is made in this or any other early accounts. On the contrary, in *Rerum gestarum libri* (The Chronicles of Events) (second half of 4th cent.), the Roman historian Ammianus Marcellinus reports that the Burgundians were not only allies of the Romans, but that they were also ethnically derived from the Romans.⁵¹ This is probably best seen as propaganda. The Burgundians were more or less forced into an alliance with Rome, and – from a Roman point of view – it may have been politically expedient to claim the existence of a blood bond. As Ian Wood has suggested, the claim may also have been advantageous when persuading the Burgundians to join the Romans in an alliance against the Alemanni.⁵²

The earliest reference to the Burgundians' connections to Scandinavia is found in the eighth-century hagiography *Passio sancti Sigismundi*, a text connected with the cult devoted to the Burgundian King Sigismund, who was captured by the Franks and killed in 523:

At the time of Emperor Tiberius, who ruled Gaul in the West along with the other regions, a people departed from an island called *Scandavia*, girded by the ocean sea; they were called *Scanadavii* from the name of the region. After they had passed through other sovereignties and regions with their wives and children, they reached the Rhine. By the order of Emperor Tiberius, they were confined there and forced, for a period of many years, to garrison fortresses [*burgi*] beyond the

Rhine. As a result, they were called *Burgundofarones* and still bear the name of Burgundians to this day.⁵³

Another eighth-century text, known as *Chronicon universale usque ad annum 741*, copies this tale of Scandinavian origins from the *Passio sancti Sigismundi* – although with some linguistic variation in the place names.⁵⁴ The etymology offered in these accounts relies on older texts, such as Orosius' history of the pagans, which tells of a migrating people (no mention of Scandinavia) who were subdued by the emperors Tiberius and Druso (1st cent.) and received the name of Burgundians from being settled in *burgs* (castles). This pun can be traced back to Isidore's *Etymologies*.⁵⁵

Some indication exists that the legend of the Burgundians as a Scandinavian people was known already at King Alfred's court in late ninth-century England. In the travel account describing a sea-journey through the Baltic, inserted into the Old English translation of Orosius' history, we find a reference to the island of Bornholm in the Baltic (now part of Denmark) as *Burgenda land*.⁵⁶ This means 'the land of the Burgundians' (OE *Burgende*). That this legend was transmitted through Frankish texts is not impossible, since Carolingian influence was great in ninth-century England. The name of the island is rendered in Old Icelandic sagas as *Burgundarholmr* (*holm*, 'island'), which seems to have the same meaning.⁵⁷ However, the etymology of the name for the island is uncertain, and a connection between tribal and place names is perhaps only a linguistic coincidence.

I am not the first to suggest that the legend of the Burgundians' Scandinavian origins was a bookish loan imitated from Jordanes' *Getica*.⁵⁸ If we assume this is the case, it is pertinent to ask what compelled the introduction of this *topos* in relation to the Burgundians. One reason could be that Jordanes mentions an alliance between Burgundians and Visigoths in the fifth century (*Get.* 231–4) and a royal intermarriage between the two peoples in the early sixth century (*Get.* 297). Some attention should perhaps also be given to a sixth-century history from Gaul, which purports that the Burgundian King Gundioc (5th cent.) descended from the famous Visigothic King Athanaric (late 4th cent.).⁵⁹

However, in terms of defining a relationship to Rome, Burgundian history differs markedly from Jordanes' text and its concluding praise of Emperor Justinian I. A certain antagonism can be seen in *Passio sancti Sigismundi*, which, we must remember, is a nationalist hagiography. Walter Goffart sees the migration tale in this text as an expression of the need for peoples entering Roman territories to define themselves as coming from distant shores. The assertion that the Burgundians were a migratory people (despite the fact that they may have been settled in the vicinity of these territories for centuries) may have served as a marker of vitality in contrast to the sedentary Roman state.⁶⁰

The statement in *Passio sancti Sigismundi* that the Burgundians' original name was *Scanadavii* imitates Langobardic history, in which there is a similar

tale of the nation once being called by another name. But here the reference to Scandinavia may signal symbolic resistance to Roman domination. The text begins on a triumphant note: a band of Burgundians, ruled by the native King Gundioc, invaded Gaul and cut down the Romans and subdued the few that survived.⁶¹ Symbolically, Scandinavia is the most radical contrast to Rome – both in terms of geographical and ethnographic distance – and could therefore carry anti-Roman connotations.

The anti-Roman stance may be traced back to the late sixth and seventh centuries. Archaeologist Lotte Hedeager suggests that there was an ‘ideological polarizing of Germanic peoples between those who identified themselves with the Frankish empire and those who regarded the origins of their nations lying in Scandinavia’.⁶² In support of this argument, she points to the fact that core areas of Merovingian Gaul are characterized by finds of metal objects that are influenced by Roman and Christian stylistic paradigms, whereas ‘barbarian’ art with mythical animal decoration is only found in the fringe areas the Frankish empire. This includes Burgundy, where the elites may have used ornamental art to express opposition against the centre. Karen Høilund Nielsen backs up this theory with even more concrete analysis of the dissemination of so-called Style II animal art. Metal objects with this pattern are common to southern Scandinavia. Thus, she suggests that the clusters of finds with this stylistic pattern in areas inhabited by Langobards, Burgundians, and Saxons could have signalled a Scandinavian origin for the dynasties there. Nielsen sees this in relation to the tension between Latinized and more ‘barbarian’ factions in these areas. In her view, the use of the animal decorations therefore offers a visible resistance to Frankish, modernizing forces – and there may even be a direct correlation between the areas of these finds and the peoples to whom ‘out-of-Scandinavia’ legends were attributed.⁶³

However, one should advise caution when making such correlations. For those elite warriors who sported Style II designs in Gaul, it may simply have been an assertion of warrior manliness.⁶⁴ Furthermore, evidence that this assertion went along with a notion of Scandinavian origin is too patchy. There are, for instance, no such legends associated either with the Austrasians or with the Alamanni, where Style II objects have been found. Furthermore, Gothic Italy, which has the most vocal claim to Scandinavian ancestry, has no occurrences of Style II. What can be ascertained, however, is that Jordanes’ text came to serve as a template for the descriptions of Germanic nations who showed no fear of the Romans, yet were able to assimilate their learning and civilizing virtues. The way in which political capital could be spun from Jordanes’ text in this way can be observed even in the centre of Frankish power, as we shall now see.

The Franks

Barbarian assertiveness vis-à-vis the defunct Roman Empire is clearly observable in Frankish texts. This may in part be the reason why we also

find a flirtation with an 'out-of-Scandinavia' legend here. If we begin with the anti-Roman theme, this is something intrinsically bound up with the notion of *translatio imperii*, i.e. the belief that the Franks were destined to rival the erstwhile Roman Empire. This ideological determinism culminated with Charlemagne's coronation as Emperor on Christmas Day 800.⁶⁵ An anti-Roman strain is palpable in *Liber Historiae Francorum* written around 727 by an anonymous Neustrian Frank. In 53 chapters, the text details battles and rebellions against the Romans, including an account of the fifth-century King Chlodio's triumphant crossing of the Rhine, killing multitudes of Romans and forcing the remainder to take flight (ch. 5).⁶⁶ Another example is found in the body of Frankish laws, *Lex Salica*. The prologue (included only in the D-text) speaks of having 'in war struck the harshness of the Roman yoke off their [the Franks'] neck ...'.⁶⁷ There is little doubt that this is a prologue composed by the chaplains of King Pippin in the eighth century. It shows the growing ambition to create a Frankish empire that had escaped the shackles of Rome by erecting a new Christian rule in Europe.

Interestingly, the Carolingians' assertion of their new superiority as a rising European power included reverence for the Goths. Agnellus, the bishop and historian of Ravenna, relates that Charlemagne, around the time when he received the title of Holy Roman Emperor, took from his town a statue of the Gothic hero Theoderic and removed it to his court at Aachen.⁶⁸ This appears to have signified the inheritance of a Gothic *imperium*, since the Franks had created an empire stretching from the old Visigothic Barcelona and Ostrogothic Italy in the south up to the frontiers of the Danes in the north.⁶⁹

However, there was more to this invocation of Gothic symbols than simple geographical survey. In intellectual circles, the respect for the Goths had long been on the rise. Between the late fourth and the sixth century, authors such as Augustine, Sidonius Apollinaris, Hydratius, Ennodius, and others spoke of these barbarians in favourable terms.⁷⁰ But above all, the Goths had made their mark in history as the most successful barbarian enemies of Rome. Although Jordanes extols the Roman's ability to subjugate the Goths in *Getica*, he leaves the reader in no doubt that the Goths were a formidable warrior people. For later ages, it was possible to read Jordanes' text as a testimony to assertion of barbarian pride, glossing over his pro-Roman stance.

The so-called Carolingian Renaissance was the attempt to renovate education, scholarship and the Church to rival that of erstwhile Rome. In connection with this, we see an increased interest in Gothic tradition, ancestry, and legend in Carolingian texts between 800 and 860.⁷¹ Jordanes' *Getica* was known to Frankish scholars, as catalogues of library holdings prove.⁷² Freculph, Bishop of Lisieux, for instance, was familiar with Jordanes' text, quoting it in his *Chronicorum tomi duo*, written c. 830, alongside many other works available from the Palace library. After relating the standard

myth of the Franks' lineage back to Troy, Freculph proceeds with an alternative proposal: 'other men insist that they [the Franks] had their origins on the isle of *Scandza*, the womb/sheath of nations, from which the Goths and the other Germanic nations went forth, as the form of their speech indicates'.⁷³

The Franks were a 'new' people, an amalgamation of different tribes that had settled north and east of the lower Rhine.⁷⁴ The Trojan origin legend connected Franks with the Romans and gave them a long pseudo-historical pedigree. However, with the strengthening of *translatio imperii* ideology, a replacement for the Roman-based origin myth of Troy was apparently sought. Undoubtedly, it was in part through the aggrandisement of Gothic history in Frankish circles that the 'out-of-Scandinavia' legend was deemed a legitimate alternative in this respect.

The connection of the Frankish language to that of the Goths and Scandinavians, which Freculph identifies, was part of an emergent scholarly interest in the category of the 'Germanic' as a common denominator for barbarian ethnic identity.⁷⁵ In a short ecclesiastical history composed in the early 840s, the Frankish monk Walahfrid noted that the Goths 'spoke our – that is, the Germanic – language' (*nostrum, id est Theotiscum, sermonem*), while the Frankish theologian Rabanus Maurus, a friend of Freculph, proposed that the *Marcomanni* (a Germanic people north of the Danube in the regions of modern northern Austria/Czech Republic) should really be called Northmen (*Nordmannos*) since they spoke a Germanic language.⁷⁶ It appears that scholarly (not only political) logic now dictated that peoples speaking a Germanic tongue descended from the North. Jordanes' assertion that many peoples of Europe were of Scandinavian extraction was undoubtedly a key text for this interpretation. The notion of a Germanic unity was also heard in England. The tenth-century ealdorman Æthelweard wrote his Latin version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* on the request of his relative, Mathilda, who was abbess of Essen. Like Æthelweard, Mathilda was also related to the West Saxon kings (this was through Eadgyth, the granddaughter of King Alfred, who had married Emperor Otto I). In the prologue to his work, Æthelweard sets out to trace their common family roots, stressing the importance of remembering 'the arrival of our ancestors in Britain from *Germania*'.⁷⁷ This statement shows us that the category of 'Germanic' had become entrenched in scholarly discourses. For this reason, we find an extended account of the English people's continental origins, which exceeds that which was available in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*.

Normans

From the Franks and the Holy Roman Empire, we move northwards on the continent to the Normans. The wavering between classical legacy and Scandinavian origins introduced into Frankish history is resolved in texts dealing with Norman history. This is not through making a choice between them,

but by fusing them into one. The earliest example of this is found in Dudo of Saint-Quentin's *Libri III de moribus et actis primorum Normanniae ducum* (Three Books on the Ways and Deeds of the First Norman Dukes), probably written in the first decades of the eleventh century. Dudo was not himself Norman but started out as a canon of Saint-Quentin, Picardy. However, when Dudo was dispatched to Rouen in 986 to petition on behalf of the count of Vermandois for Norman military assistance, he began to frequent the court of Richard I, Duke of Normandy. Richard I employed Dudo to write the history of the Norman dukes.

Dudo adapts Jordanes' 'out-of-Scandinavia' legend for the Normans. He even quotes Jordanes' metaphor of Northern warriors as a swarm of bees. Dudo explains that the Norman dukes were derived from Danish warlords, and that the Danes were inhabitants of *Scanza*. However, his further attempts to fit in Jordanes' account with framework of classical geography leads to much confusion. Among other things, Dudo locates *Scanza* in the 'Scythian Sea'. This and other geographical incongruities abound in Dudo's opening chapter. More than any other text, Dudo's book clearly reveals itself as an antiquarian exercise in forging a usable origin legend.

Seizing on a false etymology, Dudo proceeds to connect the Danes with the Dacians, a people seen as identical with the *Getae* (whom Jordanes would claim were proto-Goths) in classical texts.⁷⁸ This is because the *Getae* inhabited the area of Dacia, north of the Black Sea. Dudo makes the Dacians interchangeable with the Danes by employing the terms *Daci* and *Dani* as synonyms throughout his work.⁷⁹ Furthermore, Dudo's unwarranted connections also lead to a confounding of *Dani* (Danes) with *Danai*, which is a poetic name for Greeks. This is a manoeuvre that allows him to include the hero Antenor as a Norman ancestor. Antenor was the protagonist in Virgil's *Aeneid* (in fact a Trojan rather than a Greek hero) who escaped as Troy was being pillaged.⁸⁰ For Dudo, the Danes, the *Danai* and the Dacians were one and the same people through migration. In this way, the Normans had their share both in the best of barbarian and classical origin legends.

Dudo's synthesizing account was probably partly responsible for later confusion in several sources. The confounding of the names for Danes and Dacians became widespread. The Vatican, for example, began to use *Dacia* as an administrative name for Denmark.⁸¹ Subsequently, the names were used by Danish historians themselves. In the first history of the Danes by a named author, Sven Aggesen's *Brevis historia regum Dacie* (Short History of the Danish Kings) (late 12th cent.), *Dacia* is used as the primary ethnonational term for the Danes, as it is already apparent from the title.⁸² In the Danish history *Annales Ryenses* (c. 1289), Denmark is spoken about as *regnum quod nunc Dani uel Dacia dicitur* (the kingdom, which is now called *Dani* or *Dacia*). And the author is unresolved as to whether the Danes came from the land of the Goths (who were believed to derive from the *Getae*) or whether they were from the stock of the *Danaian* (the Greeks).⁸³

Dudo's work has been seen as – in essence – a romance with many set pieces of heroic history. One such saga-like hero is the Danish warlord Rollo (the grandfather of Dudo's patron, Richard I), who receives much praise as the progenitor of the Norman ducal family. It has been argued that Dudo emphasizes the Danish heritage of Norman dukes because it enables him to contrast Scandinavian strength with the weakness of Frankish rulers at the time, as well as stress the distinctiveness of the Norman dukedom from the Frankish kingdom in the south.⁸⁴ However, even when the focus is on Danish origins, a classical tune may be playing in the background, as Eleanor Searle has argued. The entire story of Rollo, who leaves Denmark to establish a new home in Normandy, may be patterned after the journey of Aeneas, the progenitor of the Romans.⁸⁵

Another important text on Norman ancestral history was written by the Norman monk William of Jumièges. His *Gesta Normannorum ducum* (Deeds of the Norman Dukes) was dedicated to the Norman ruler William (the Conqueror) after he had ascended to the English throne in 1066. Much of the origin narrative in William's text is taken from Dudo, but he adds a number of expansions to it. Upon the migration from *Scanza*, William introduces a settlement in *Dacia*, or *Danamarca*. This stopover in Denmark was necessary to make the tale fit factual history, which linked Norman dukes to the Danes. He begins by tracing the origins of the Goths to Magog, son of Japheth, and grandson of Noah. This he is able to do by having recourse to Jerome and Isidore of Seville, who had both made the connection between the Goths and the biblical names of Gog and Magog (perceived as names for nations). The joining of the Goths to these names was solely based on the similarity of the last syllable. Since the Goths had spectacularly defeated the Romans, Gog and Magog had become the personification of enemy peoples. This is borne out at the beginning of Isidore's *History of the Goths, Vandals and Suevi*.⁸⁶ However, in the post-Roman world, it was possible to use this connection positively – to bring barbarian history into contact with the biblical narrative.

William praises the early (Danish) dukes for setting up their own kings in Normandy by 'shaking their shoulders of the yoke of Roman savagery'.⁸⁷ The indication is that without this resistance to Roman misuses, the rise of the Normans as a people of true faith and virtue could not have taken place.⁸⁸ To some extent, we sense that the purity of the barbarians is a necessity for building a new world order surpassing the now defunct Roman Empire. William goes on to mention how the Goths were 'valiant in warfare' and took Amazons for wives, but he also details how they 'showed more wisdom than well-nigh all other barbarians and virtually equaled the Greeks'.⁸⁹ This statement adds an idea of cultural repute to the standard notion of Northern military notoriety.

In sum, Dudo and William wrote about a 'new' people whose legacy had to be defined. Both historians were keenly aware that Germanic origins were – almost as a generic convention – to be located in an ancient Northern

homeland. For this reason, they both superimpose Jordanes' Gothic legend onto the history of the Normans. Another text that can be mentioned in this connection is Amatus of Montecassino's *L'Ystoire de li Normant* (late 11th cent.). Here, the convention of migration from a Northern island is combined with a dubious etymology that links the *Normanni* to the completely fictional island of *Nora*.⁹⁰

If barbarian heroic legacy is something to be emphasized, both Dudo's and William's works anxiously try to balance this with a stern stance against pre-Christian practices. The notion of the northern body as excessively virile, which is a positive component of ethnic history in other sources, is here concretely re-interpreted to indicate pagan practices. Both Dudo and William explicitly link the motif of overpopulation with polygamy. Perhaps importantly, this sin is ascribed to a time after the proto-Normans left Scandinavia, thereby preserving some of the purity of the legendary homeland. The attempt to interpret the migration as a journey towards faith and salvation is conspicuous. The strong Christian focus was possibly a defensive measure. At least at the time Dudo was writing, the conversion of the Normans was young and therefore fragile. The Normans were still regularly referred to as ungodly 'pirates' by contemporary writers, so there was likely a need for dissociating the Normans from their recent past.⁹¹ In both Dudo's and William's histories, the Normans only come into existence as a *people* after their founding figure, Rollo, converted to Christianity. The Normans' self-proclaimed military superiority over their neighbours found a parallel in their religious devotion; or, as Nick Webber explains, 'religion was simply something else to do well'.⁹² In the texts of Norman history, we see how a strong warrior body stands as the most suited to carry the responsibility of religious devotion.

Swabians, Swedes, and Slavs

A national story of a migration from the North towards redemption is also written about in a short, anonymous text called *De origo gentis Swevorum* (The Origin of the Swabians), from the mid-thirteenth century. The Swabians (also known as *Suebi*) were a people settled in south-east Germany on the Elbe. This text recounts the story of a famine imposed upon the Swabians in an unspecified Northern homeland. This is presented as a divine punishment for practising heathen rituals of sacrifice. It was thus decided that the Swabians should procure ships and seek new homes beyond the seas. A storm carried them to the land of the Danes, at the port of Schleswig (*in portu Danorum in loco Sleswic nominato quo*). Their ships were destroyed there, so they had to proceed over land, arriving at the Elbe, which they crossed and by whose shores they finally settled.⁹³ The physical migration is matched by a simultaneous spiritual journey toward the adoption of Christianity. As in the Norman texts, this late origin tale appears to adopt the Northern homeland as conventional furniture belonging to the

origines gentium genre. The national history of the Swabians is also derivative in other areas, borrowing elements from Widukind of Corvey, Rudolf of Fulda's *Translatio Sancti Alexandri*, the *Annales Quedlinburgenses*, and Paul the Deacon. The main purpose of this text is to give the small Swabian community in the region of Nordschwabengau, Saxony, a long history that equals that ascribed to other peoples.

It is clear that the later medieval histories become more conspicuously dependent on earlier examples of national history. In the Swedish vernacular *Prosaiska krönikan* (Prose Chronicle), probably written at the behest of King Karl Knutsson (d. 1470), the anonymous author seeks to establish Sweden as first among competing Scandinavian nations. To this end, Swedish history is not only linked to the Old Testament, reference is also made to the Goths emigrating from Sweden, which is an interpretation based on information from Jordanes' *Getica*.⁹⁴ A journey from the North is taken up again by the Benedictine monk Mavro Orbini in his *Il regno de Gli Slavi* (1601). The Slavs are here said to be migrants from Scandinavia.⁹⁵ These late texts help to substantiate the argument that a migration from a Northern homeland became a standard model for tracing the origin of non-Roman peoples.

NOTES

1. Were the study to extend the analytical span beyond the Middle Ages, it would be clear that the North has continued to be associated with certain stereotypes. For examples of essay collections that have explored this, see *Norden und Nördlichkeit: Darstellungen vom Eigenen und Fremden*, ed. Dennis Hormuth and Maïke Schmidt (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2010); and *Images of the North: Histories – Identities – Ideas*, ed. Sverrir Jakobsson (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2009).
2. Aristotle, *The Politics*, 7.6.1, ed. and trans. H. Rackham, Loeb Classical Library (London: Heinemann, 1932), 564–7.
3. Ptolemy, *The Geography of Ptolemy*, 2.10, trans. and ed. E. L. Stevenson (New York: Dover, 1991), p. 63.
4. Matthias Springer, 'Location in Space and Time', *The Continental Saxons from the Migration Period to the Tenth Century: An Ethnographic Perspective*, ed. Donald Howard Green and Frank Siegmund (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2003), 14.
5. Lucan's work in question is *De bello civili* (AD 60s). For the manuscript manipulations, see Springer, 'Location in Space and Time', 14.
6. For discussion, see Springer, 'Location in Space and Time', 16.
7. William Camden, *Britain, or a Chorographicall Description of the Most Flourishing Kingdomes, England, Scotland, and Ireland, and the Ilands adjoining*, trans. Philemon Holland ([1st edn. 1586] London: G. Bishop and J. Norton, 1610), 141. See also Richard Verstegan, *A Restitution of Decayed Intelligence in Antiquities Concerning the Most Noble and Renowned English Nation* (Antwerp: R. Bruney, 1605), 9–10; and Daniel Langhorne, *Elenchus*

- antiquitatum Albionensium, Britannorum, Scotorum, Danorum, Anglosaxonum andc* (London: B. Took, 1673), 323; and *Appendix ad Elenchum, antiquitatum Albionensium res Saxonum and Suevorum vetustissimas* (London: B. Took, 1674), 39–40.
8. Edward Stillingfleet, *Origines Britannicae, or, The Antiquities of the British Churches with a Preface Concerning Some Pretended Antiquities Relating to Britain* (London: H. Mortlock, 1685), 313.
 9. *The Cosmography of Aethicus Ister: Edition, Translation and Commentary*, ed. and trans. Michael Herren (Brepols, 2011), p. 31. The original text (§31), which is also included in Herren's edition has: *Gentes et insolas septentrionales ... Griphas gentes proximam oceani partem, unde ait uetusta fama processisse Saxonum sobolem et ad Germaniam proeliorum feritate peraccessisse*.
 10. *Ibid.* 84, note 280.
 11. The date of the text is uncertain, but it must postdate Isidore of Seville (d. 636) since it quotes him extensively. The earliest extant MS copy from England of this work was produced in tenth-century Canterbury; see Michael W. Herren, 'The Cosmography of Aethicus Ister: Speculations about its Date, Provenance, and Audience', in *Nova de Veteribus*, ed. A. Bihrer and E. Stein (Munich: K. G. Sauer, 2004), 79–102.
 12. Widukind, *Rerum gestarum Saxonicarum libri tres*, 1.2, ed. Paul Hirsch, MGH SRG (Hannover: Impensis Bibliopolii Hahniani, 1935), p. 4: *Nam super hac re varia opinio est, aliis arbitrantibus de Danis Northmannisque originem duxisse Saxones, aliis autem aestimantibus, ut ipse adolscntulus audiui quondam predicantem, de Graecis, quia ipsi dicerent Saxones reliquias fuisse Macedonici exercitus, qui secutus Magnum Alexandrum....*
 13. This text is printed in Hilkert Weddige, *Heldensage und Stamesage. Iring und der Untergang des Thüringerreiches in Historiographie und heroischer Dichtung* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1989), 168.
 14. Widukind, *Rerum gestarum Saxonicarum*, 1.34: *Saxonia ex serva facta est libera et ex tributaria multarum gentium domina*, p. 48.
 15. See Uta Goerlitz, *Literarische Konstruktion (vor-)nationaler Identität seit dem Annolied: Analysen und Interpretationen zur deutschen Literatur des Mittelalters (11.-16. Jahrhundert)* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), 175.
 16. *Annales regni Francorum, s.a 777 and 782*, MGH SRG 6 (Hannover, 1895), pp. 48 and 61.
 17. Karen Høiland Nielsen, 'Animal Style – A Symbolism of Might and Myth. Salin's Style II in a European Context', *Acta Archaeologica* 69 (1998): 38.
 18. *The Geography of Strabo*, 7.1.3, trans. and ed. H. L. Jones (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1924). Cornelius Tacitus, *De origine et situ Germanorum liber*, 40.1, ed. Alf Önnersfors (Stuttgart: B.G. Teubner, 1983), p. 26.
 19. For the ubiquity of Germanic barbarians and their use of long hair in Tacitus, Gregory of Tours and others, see Walther Pohl, 'Telling the Difference: Signs of Ethnic Identity', repr. in *From Roman Provinces to Medieval Kingdoms*, ed. Thomas F. X. Noble (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 49–50.
 20. The name 'Fredegar' is a later addition. It has long been claimed the text was written by two or three chroniclers, but a return to a single author theory is also asserted. See Roger Collins, *Die Fredegar-Chroniken* (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 2007), esp. 8–25 for a survey of the scholarship on this problem.

21. Fredegar, *Chronicarum libri IV*, 3.65, ed. B. Krusch, MGH SRM 2 (Hannover, 1888), p. 110: *Langobardorum gens ... exientes de Scathanavia, que est inter Danuvium et mare Ocianum*.
22. Fredegar, *Chronicarum*, 4.48, pp. 144–5.
23. See *Liber Historiae Francorum*, ed. B. Krusch, MGH SRM 2 (Hannover, 1888), p. 274. This text was written 726/727 and has a reference to a Danish invasion led by Danish Chochilaico into a territory near the Franks in the first decades of the sixth century.
24. Fredegar displays some knowledge of Gothic history. See *Chronicarum*, 2.57, p. 78.
25. *Origo gentis Langobardorum*, cap. 1, ed. Georg Waitz, MGH SRL (Hannover, 1878), p. 2: *Est insula qui dicitur Scadanian, quod interpretatur excidia, in partibus aquilonis, ubi multae gentes habitant*. The English translation used is included as an appendix in Paul the Deacon, *History of the Lombards*, trans. William Dudley Foulke, ed. Edward Peters (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1974), 315–21.
26. Jordanes, *Romana et Getica*, 3.19, ed. T. Mommsen, MGH AA (Berlin: Weidmann, 1882), p. 158: *licet multae et diversae maneant nationes*.
27. One should not jump to conclusions, of course. For a discussion, Karl Reichl has shown in ‘Plotting the Map of Medieval Oral Literature’, in *Medieval Oral Literature*, ed. K. Reichl (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012), 16–17, products of learned literary culture may deliberately set out to copy native oral works in terms of stylistic traits.
28. For an analysis of Paul’s life and motives for writing, see Donald A. Bullough, *Carolingian Renewal: Sources and Heritage* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1991), 97–122; and Joaquín Martínez Pizarro, ‘Ethnic and National History ca. 500–1000’, in *Historiography in the Middle Ages*, ed. Deborah Mauskopf Deliyannis (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 70–73.
29. Paul the Deacon, *Historia Langobardorum*, 1.1–1.2, ed. L. Bethman and G. Waitz, MGH SRL (Hannover, 1878), p. 48.
30. For a discussion of the form *Scadinavia/Scatinavia* and the later metathesis of these forms to *Scandinavia* in recensions of the manuscripts, see Knut Helle, ‘Introduction’, *The Cambridge History of Scandinavia: Prehistory to 1520*, ed. Knut Helle (Cambridge: CUP, 2003), 1–2.
31. For a general discussion of this idea, see Amory, *People and Identity in Ostrogothic Italy: 489–554* (Cambridge: CUP, 1997), 20.
32. Paul, *Historia*, 1.1, p. 48: *Unde fit, ut tantae populorum multitudines arctoo sub axe oriantur ... generali tamen vocabulo Germania vocitetur*.
33. Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiarium sive originum libri XX*, 14.4.4, PL 82, col.0504B: *Unde et propter fecunditatem gignendorum populorum Germania dicta est*.
34. Robert Molesworth, *An Account of Denmark: As It Was in the Year 1692* (London: Timothy Goodwin, 1694), 81.
35. Paul, *Historia*, 1.3, p. 49: *iuvenili aetate floridi et ceteris praestantiores*.
36. *Ibid.* 1.7, p. 52: *sed numero perexigui*.
37. Ross Balzaretti, ‘Sexuality in Late Lombard Italy, c. 700–c. 800 AD’, in *Medieval Sexuality: A casebook*, ed. April Harper and Caroline Proctor (New York; London: Routledge, 2008), 7–31.

72 *Ethnic History and the Origins of Nations*

38. This was in a letter from 793; quoted in Francis Oakley, *Kingship: The Politics of Enchantment* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 93.
39. Paul, *Historia*, 5.10, p. 149.
40. Robert W. Hanning, *The Vision of History in Early Britain: From Gildas to Geoffrey of Monmouth* (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1966), 97–8.
41. Rosamund McKitterick, 'Paul the Deacon and the Franks', *Early Medieval Europe* 8.3 (1999): 319–339. For contrary indications that it was not written for a Frankish audience, see Magali Coumert, *Origines des peuples: Les récits du Haut Moyen Age occidental (550–850)* (Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 2007), 219; cf. 251–61 for a fuller discussion of Paul's text.
42. Paul the Deacon, *Historia*, 1.8, p. 58.
43. *Ibid.* 2.8, p. 90. See Herwig Wolfram, *The Roman Empire and Its Germanic Peoples*, trans. Thomas Dunlap (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 286.
44. *Historia Langobardorum codicis Gothani*, c. 1, ed. Georg Waitz, MGH SRL (Hannover, 1878), p. 7: *deinter serpentibus parentes eorum tantes*.
45. *Ibid.*, c. 1, p. 7: *In terra Italiae adventantes, fluentem lac et mel, et quod amplius est, salutem invenerunt baptismatis, et vestigia sanctae Trinitatis recipientes, inter numerum bonorum effecti sunt*.
46. Paul, *Historia*, 1.1, p. 48.
47. *Historia Langobardum codicis Gothani*, c. 2, p. 8.
48. Peter Heather, *The Goths* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 29.
49. Paulus Orosius, *Adversus paganos historiarum libri septem*, 7.32, PL 31, col.1144A: *novorum hostium novum nomen*.
50. Pliny, *Naturalis historiae*, 4.13.99, ed. L. Jan and K. Mayhoff, vol. 1 (Monachii; Lipsiae: Saur, 2002), pp. 346–7.
51. Walter Pohl, 'Conceptions of Ethnicity in Early Medieval Studies', *Debating the Middle Ages: Issues and Readings*, ed. Barbara H. Rosenwein and Lester K. Little (Oxford and Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1998), 18.
52. Ian Wood, 'Misremembering the Burgundians', *Die Suche nach den Urprüngen*, ed. W. Pohl (Vienna; Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2004), 144. See also his 'Ethnicity and the Ethnogenesis of the Burgundians', in *Typen der Ethnogenese unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Bayern*, ed. H. Wolfram and W. Pohl, vol. 1 (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1990), 57–8.
53. *Passio s. Sigismundi regis*, c. 1, ed. Bruno Krusch, MGH SRM. 2 (Hannover, 1888), p. 333: *Tempore Tyberii senioris augusti, qui sic; ut reliquas regiones, ita Gallias, Ausoniam regebat, egressa est gens de insula, quam mare Oceanum cingit, cuius vocabulum est Scanadavia, qui ex vocabulo quoque regionis Scanadavii nuncupati sunt. Cumque alia regna vel regiones cum mulieribus et prolis suis penetrassent et ad Renum fluvium pervenissent, ibi a iussione Tyberii imperatoris detenti, burgus ultra Renum fluvium per multorum annorum spacia custodire coacti sunt, unde et Burgundofarones nuncupati sunt et usque hodie Burgundiones vocantur*. English translation is based on Walter Goffart, *Rome's Fall and After* (London: Hambledon, 1989), 114.
54. *Chronicon universale – 741*, cap. 1, ed. Georg. Waitz, MGH SS 13 (Hannover, 1881), p. 4: *Burgundiones tempore Tyberii augusti egressi sunt de insola maris cuius vocabulo est Scatanavia, que ex vocabulo regionis Scatoarii nuncupata est*.

55. Isidore, *Etymologiarium*, 9.2.99, col.0338A.
56. *Ohthere's Voyages: A Late 9th-Century Account of Voyages along the Coasts of Norway and Denmark and Its Cultural Context*, ed. Janet Bately and Anton Englert, (Roskilde: Viking Ship Museum Roskilde, 2007), 48.
57. See Günter Neumann, 'Burgunden. §2', *Reallexikon der germanischen Altertumskunde*, ed. Johannes Hoops, vol. 4 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1981), 230.
58. Wood, 'Ethnicity', 57.
59. For this text, see Wolfram, *Roman Empire*, 250–51.
60. Goffart, *Rome's Fall*, 114–16.
61. *Passio*, c. 1, p. 333.
62. Lotte Hedeager, 'Kingdoms, Ethnicity and Material Culture: Denmark in a European Perspective', in *The Age of Sutton Hoo*, ed. M. O. H. Carter (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1992), 288.
63. Nielsen, Karen Høilund. 'Animal Style – A Symbolism of Might and Myth. Salin's Style II in a European Context', *Acta Archaeologica* 69 (1998): 37–40.
64. See Guy Halsall's analysis in, *Cemeteries and Society in Merovingian Gaul* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 380.
65. For extensive treatment of this idea and its ideology, see Randall Lesaffer, *European Legal History: A Cultural and Political Perspective* (Cambridge: CUP, 2009), 143–9.
66. Richard A. Gerberding deals with this aspect in *The Rise of the Carolingians and the Liber historiae Francorum* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), 15–18.
67. Quoted in Patrick Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century*, vol. 1, *Legislation and Its Limits* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 41; Latin text in *Pactus legis Salicae, Einführung und 80 Titel-Text*, ed. K. A. Eckhart (Göttingen: Musterschmidt, 1954), 243.
68. Andreas Agnellus, *Liber Pontificalis Ecclesiae Ravennatis*, c. 94, ed. O. Holder-Egger, MGH SRL (Hannover 1878), p. 338.
69. Matthew Innes, 'Teutons or Trojans? The Carolingians and the Germanic Past', in *The Uses of the Past in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Y. Hen and M. Innes (Cambridge: CUP, 2000), 227–49.
70. Suzanne Teillet, *Des Goths à la nation gothique: Les origines de l'idée de nation en Occident du V^e au VII^e siècle* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1984), 113–60.
71. Roberta Frank, 'Germanic Legend in Old English Literature', in *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature*, ed. Malcolm Godden and Michael Lapidge (Cambridge: CUP, 1991), 94.
72. Rosamond McKitterick, *The Carolingians and the Written Word* (Cambridge: CUP, 1989), 174, 177, and 189.
73. Freculph Lexovensis, *Cronicorum*, 2.17, PL 106, col. 0967C–D: *Alii vero affirmant eos de Scanza insula, quae vagina gentium est, exordium habuisse, de qua Gothi et caeterae nationes Theotiscaae exierunt: quod et idioma linguae eorum testatur. Est enim in eadem insula regio, quae, ut ferunt, adhuc Francia nuncupatur.*
74. The term 'Franks' appears in Roman sources in the late third century as a general name for various peoples in this area; see Alexander Callander Murray, 'Reinhard Wenskus on "Ethnogenesis", Ethnicity, and the Origin of the Franks', in *On Barbarian Identity: Critical Approaches to Ethnicity in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Andrew Gillet (Turnhout, Bel.: Brepols, 2002), 39–68,

- at 60; see also Peter Lasko, *The Kingdom of the Franks: North-West Europe* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971), 14.
75. See Innes, 'Teutons or Trojans?'.
 76. Walahfrid Strabo, *Libellus de exordiis et incrementis quarundam in observationibus ecclesiasticis rerum: A Translation and Liturgical Commentary*, ed. and trans. Alice L. Harting-Correa (Leiden; Kinderhook, NY: Brill, 1995). 72; Rabanus Maurus, *De inventione linguarum*, PL 112, col. 1582: *Litteras quippe quibus utuntur Marcomanni, quos nos Nordmannos vocamus, infrascriptas habemus; a quibus originem qui Theodiscam loquuntur linguam trahunt* (The letters used by the Marcomanni – we call them Nordmannos – have been written from below; from them [the Nordmannos] those people descend who speak Germanic).
 77. *The Chronicle of Æthelweard*, 'Prologus', ed. Alistair Campbell (London: Nelson, 1962), p. 1: *Aduentu parentum a Germania in Britanniam*. Æthelweard extends his narrative to the year 975, which indicates its approximate time of completion.
 78. *Getae* and *Dacians* were commutable (or confused) terms used by Greek writers and Latin poets, such as Hadrian, Virgil, Lucian, Horace, and Juvenal. See R. A. Crossland, 'Linguistic Problems of the Balkan Area in the Late Prehistoric and Early Classical Period', in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. 3, Part 1, ed. John Boardman (Cambridge: CUP, 1982), 834–49.
 79. See, for example, Dudo, *De moribus et actis primorum Normanniaiae ducum*, c. 2, PL 141, col. 0639D: *Ipsi vero responderunt: 'Dani sumus, Dacia advecti huc'* ['And they replied: We are Danes, and we have sailed from Dacia']. For a discussion of the confusion, see Nick Webber, *The Evolution of Norman Identity, 911–1154* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2005), 27–8.
 80. Dudo, *De moribus et actis*, c. 1, col. 0621C: *Igitur Daci nuncupantur a suis Danaï, vel Dani, glorianturque se ex Antenore progenitos; qui quae Trojae fuerunt depopulatis, mediis elapsus Achivis, Illyricos fines penetravit cum suis*. Robert Wace in his verse chronicle, *Roman de Rou* (12th c.), informs the reader that a nation, led by *Dana(u)s*, fled the fires of Troy and settled in Denmark; see *The History of the Norman People: Wace's Roman de Rou*, trans. Glyn Sheridan Burgess and Elisabeth M. C. Van Houts (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2004), 124–5.
 81. Lars Hemmingsen, 'Middelaldergeografien og Historia Norwegie', in *Olavslegenden og den latinske historieskrivning i 1100-tallets Norge*, ed. Inger Ekrem et al. (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum, 2000), 48.
 82. Sven Aagensen's history is printed in *Scriptores Minores Historiæ Danicæ*, ed. M. CL. Gertz, vol. 1 (Kristiana: G. E. C. Gad, 1917–1918), 94–143.
 83. *Annales Ryenses*, in *Annales Danici medii ævi* (Copenhagen: Selskabet for Udgivelse af Kilder til Dansk Historie, 1920), 62.
 84. For a discussion of various theories of what motivated the commissioning of Dudo's work, see Webber, *Evolution*, 35.
 85. Eleanor Searle, 'Fact and Pattern in Heroic History: Dudo of Saint-Quentin', *Viator* 15 (1984): 75–86.
 86. See E. J. van Donzel and Andrea B. Schmidt, *Gog and Magog in Early Eastern Christian and Islamic Sources: Sallam's Quest for Alexander's Wall* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2010), 13–15.
 87. *The Gesta Normannorum Ducum of William of Jumièges, Orderic Vitalis, and Robert of Torigni: Introduction and Books I–IV*, 1.1, ed. and trans. Elisabeth M. C. Van Houts, vol. 1 (Oxford: OUP, 1992), p. 9.

88. See Matthew Gabriele, *An Empire of Memory: The Legend of Charlemagne, the Franks, and Jerusalem before the First Crusade* (Oxford: OUP, 2011), 137.
89. *Gesta Normannorum Ducum*, 1.3, pp. 14–15. William adapts information taken from *Getica* 9, 15–41, and 47–55.
90. Amatus of Montecassino's text is found in *L'Ystoire de li Normant: et la Chronique de Robert Viscart*, 1.1, ed. Jules Renouard (Paris, 1835), p. 9.
91. Lars Boje Mortensen, 'Stylistic Choice in a Reborn Genre: The National Histories of Widukind of Corvey and Dudo of St. Quentin', in *Dudone di San Quintin*, ed. Paolo Gatti and Antonella Degl'Innocenti (Trento: Dipartimento di scienze filologiche e storiche, 1995), 91.
92. Webber, *Evolution*, 138.
93. *De origo gentis Swevorum*, c. 5, ed. Paul Hirsch, MGH SRG (Hannover, 1935), 156.
94. *Prosaiska krönikan*, in *Småstycken på fornsvenska*, ed. (Stockholm, 1868–81), 219–20.
95. John V. A. Fine, *When Ethnicity Did Not Matter in the Balkans: A Study of Identity in Pre-Nationalist Croatia, Dalmatia, and Slavonia in the Medieval and Early-Modern Periods* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Univ. of Michigan Press, 2006).

REFERENCES

Primary Sources

- Æthelweard. *The Chronicle of Æthelweard*, ed. Alistair Campbell. London: Nelson, 1962.
- [Aethicus Ister]. *The Cosmography of Aethicus Ister: Edition, Translation and Commentary*, ed. and trans. Michael Herren. Brepols Publishers, 2011.
- Aggesen, Sven. *Brevis historia regum Dacie*. In *Scriptores Minores Historiæ Danicæ*, ed. M. C. Gertz, vol. 1, 94–143. Copenhagen: G. E. C. Gad, 1917–1918.
- Agnellus, Andreas. *Liber Pontificalis Ecclesiae Ravennatis*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, MGH SRL. Hannover, 1878.
- Amatus of Montecassino. *L'Ystoire de li Normant: et la Chronique de Robert Viscart*, ed. Jules Renouard. Paris, 1835.
- Annales regni Francorum*, ed. F. Kurze, MGH SRG 6. Hannover, 1895.
- Annales Ryenses*, in *Annales Danici medii ævi*. Copenhagen: Selskabet for Udgivelse af Kilder til Dansk Historie, 1920.
- Aristotle. *Works of Aristotle*, trans. E. S. Forster, vol. 7. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1937.
- Chronicon universale* – 741, ed. G. Waitz, MGH SS 13. Hannover, 1881.
- Dudo of Saint-Quentin. *De moribus et actis primorum Normanniaiae ducum*, PL 141.
- Freculph Lexovensius. *Cronicorum*, PL 106.
- [Fredegar]. *Chronicarum libri IV cum continuationibus*, ed. B. Krusch, MGH SRM 2. Hannover, 1888.
- Historia Langobardorum codicis Gothani*, ed. Georg Waitz, MGH SSR. Hannover, 1878.
- Isidore of Seville. *Etymologiarium sive originum libri XX*, PL 82.
- Jordanes. *Romana et Getica*, ed. T. Mommsen, MGH AA 5.1. Berlin: 1882.
- Liber Historiae Francorum*, ed. B. Krusch, MGH SRM. Hannover, 1888.

Maurus, Rabanus. *De inventione linguarum*, PL 112.

Ohthere's Voyages: A Late 9th-Century Account of Voyages along the Coasts of Norway and Denmark and Its Cultural Context, ed. Janet Bately and Anton Englert, 40–59. Roskilde: Viking Ship Museum Roskilde, 2007.

De origine Saxonum, in Hilkert Weddige, *Heldensage und Stamesage. Iring und der Untergang des Thüringerreiches in Historiographie und heroischer Dichtung*, 177–83. Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1989.

Origo gentis Langobardorum, ed. Georg Waitz, MGH SRL. Hannover, 1878.

Orosius, Paulus. *Adversus paganos historiarum libri septem*, PL 31.

Pactus legis Salicae, Einführung und 80 Titel-Text, ed. K. A. Eckhart. Göttingen: Musterschmidt, 1954.

Passio s. Sigismundi regis, ed. Bruno Krusch, MGH SRM 2. Hannover, 1888.

Paul the Deacon. *Historia Langobardorum*, ed. L. Bethman and G. Waitz. MGH SRL. Hannover, 1878.

———. *History of the Lombards*, trans. William Dudley Foulke, ed. Edward Peters. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1974.

Pliny. *Naturalis historiae libri XXXVII*, ed. L. Jan and K. Mayhoff. Monachii; Lipsiae: Saur, 1996–2002, 6 vols.

Prosaiska krönikan, in *Småstycken på fornsvenska*, ed. G. E. Klemming. Stockholm, 1868–1881.

Ptolemy, Claudius. *The Geography of Ptolemy*, trans. and ed. Edward Luther Stevenson. [1932] New York: Dover Publications, 1991.

Strabo. *The Geography of Strabo*, Loeb Classical Library, vol. 3, trans. and ed. H. L. Jones. Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1924.

Strabo, Walahfrid. *Libellus de exordiis et incrementis quarundam in observationibus ecclesiasticis rerum: A Translation and Liturgical Commentary*, ed. and trans. Alice L. Harting-Correa. Leiden; Kinderhook, NY: Brill, 1995.

De origo gentis Svevorum, ed. Paul Hirsch, MGH SRG. Hannover, 1935.

Tacitus, *De origine et situ Germanorum liber*, 2.1, ed. Alf Önnersfors. Stuttgart: B.G. Teubner, 1983.

Wace, Robert. *The History of the Norman People: Wace's Roman de Rou*, trans. Glyn S. Burgess. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2004.

Widukind. *Rerum gestarum Saxoniarum libri tres*, ed. Paul Hirsch, MGH SRG. Hannover: Impensis Bibliopolii Hahniani, 1935.

William of Jumièges, *The Gesta Normannorum Ducum of William of Jumièges, Orderic Vitalis, and Robert of Torigni: Introduction and Books I–IV*, ed. and trans. Elisabeth M. C. Van Houts, vol. 1. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.

Secondary Sources

Amory, Patrick. *People and Identity in Ostrogothic Italy: 489–554*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Balzaretti, Ross. 'Sexuality in Late Lombard Italy, c. 700–c. 800 AD', in *Medieval Sexuality: A Casebook*, ed. April Harper and Caroline Proctor, 7–31. New York; London: Routledge, 2008.

Bullough, Donald A. *Carolingian Renewal: Sources and Heritage*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991.

———. 'What has Ingeld to do with Lindisfarne', *Anglo-Saxon England* 22 (1993): 93–122.

- Camden, William. *Britain, or a Chorographically Description of the Most Flourishing Kingdomes, England, Scotland, and Ireland, and the Ilands adioyning*, trans. Philemon Holland. London: G. Bishop and J. Norton, 1610.
- Collins, Roger. *Die Fredegar-Chroniken*. Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 2007.
- Coumert, Magali. *Origines des peuples: Les recits du Haut Moyen Age occidental 550–850*. Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 2007.
- Crossland, R.A. 'Linguistic Problems of the Balkan Area in the Late Prehistoric and Early Classical Period', in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. 3, part 1, ed. John Boardman, 834–49. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982.
- Donzel, E. J. van, and Andrea B. Schmidt. *Gog and Magog in Early Eastern Christian and Islamic Sources: Sallam's Quest for Alexander's Wall*. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2010.
- Fine, John V. A. *When Ethnicity Did Not Matter in the Balkans: A Study of Identity in Pre-Nationalist Croatia, Dalmatia, and Slavonia in the Medieval and Early-Modern Periods*. Ann Arbor, Mich.: Univ. of Michigan Press, 2006.
- Frank, Roberta. 'Germanic Legend in Old English Literature', in *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature*, ed. Malcolm Godden and Michael Lapidge, 88–106. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Gabriele, Matthew. *An Empire of Memory: The Legend of Charlemagne, the Franks, and Jerusalem before the First Crusade*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Gerberding, Richard A. *The Rise of the Carolingians and the Liber historiae Francorum*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987.
- Goerlitz, Uta. *Literarische Konstruktion (vor-)nationaler Identität seit dem Anno-lie: Analysen und Interpretationen zur deutschen Literatur des Mittelalters (11.-16. Jahrhundert)*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007.
- Goffart, Walter. *Rome's Fall and After*. London: Hambledon Press, 1989.
- Halsall, Guy. *Cemeteries and Society in Merovingian Gaul*. Leiden: Brill, 2010.
- Hanning, Robert W. *The Vision of History in Early Britain: From Gildas to Geoffrey of Monmouth*. New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1966.
- Heather, Peter. *The Goths*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2006.
- Hedeager, Lotte. 'Kingdoms, Ethnicity and Material Culture: Denmark in a European Perspective', in *The Age of Sutton Hoo*, ed. M. O. H. Carter, 279–300. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1992.
- Helle, Knut. 'Introduction', *The Cambridge History of Scandinavia: Prehistory to 1520*, ed. Knut Helle, 279–300. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Hemmingsen, Lars. 'Middelaldergeografien og Historia Norwegie', in *Olavslegenden og den latinske historieskrivning i 1100-tallets Norge*, ed. Inger Ekrem, et al., 26–53. Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum, 2000.
- Herren, Michael W. 'The Cosmography of Aethicus Ister: Speculations about its Date, Provenance, and Audience', in *Nova de Veteribus*, ed. A. Bihrer and E. Stein, 79–102. Munich: K. G. Sauer, 2004.
- Hormuth, Dennis and Maike Schmidt, ed. *Norden und Nördlichkeit: Darstellungen vom Eigenen und Fremden*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2010.
- Innes, Matthew. 'Teutons or Trojans? The Carolingians and the Germanic Past', in *The Uses of the Past in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Y. Hen and M. Innes, 227–49. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Jakobsson, Sverrir, ed. *Images of the North: Histories – Identities – Ideas*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2009.
- Langhorne, Daniel. *Appendix ad Elenchum, antiquitatum Albionensium res Saxo-num and Suevorum vetustissimas*. London: B. Took, 1674.

- . *Elenchus antiquitatum Albionensium, Britannorum, Scotorum, Danorum, Anglosaxonum andc.* London: B. Took, 1673.
- Lasko, Peter. *The Kingdom of the Franks: North-West Europe*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971.
- Lesaffer, Randall. *European Legal History: A Cultural and Political Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- McKitterick, Rosamund. 'Paul the Deacon and the Franks', *Early Medieval Europe* 8.3 (1999): 319–339.
- . *The Carolingians and the Written Word*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- Molesworth, Robert. *An Account of Denmark: As It Was in the Year 1692*. London: Timothy Goodwin, 1694.
- Mortensen, Lars Boje. 'Stylistic Choice in a Reborn Genre: The National Histories of Widukind of Corvey and Dudo of St. Quentin', in *Dudone di San Quintin*, ed. Paolo Gatti and Antonella Degl'Innocenti. 77–102. Trento: Dipartimento di scienze filologiche e storiche, 1995.
- Murray, Alexander Callander. 'Reinhard Wenskus on "Ethnogenesis", Ethnicity, and the Origin of the Franks', in *On Barbarian Identity: Critical Approaches to Ethnicity in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Andrew Gillet. 39–68. Turnhout: Brepols, 2002.
- Neumann, Günter. 'Burgunden. §2', *Reallexikon der germanischen Altertumskunde*, ed. Johannes Hoops, vol. 4, 230–31. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1981.
- Nielsen, Karen Høilund. 'Animal Style – A Symbolism of Might and Myth. Salin's Style II in a European Context', *Acta Archaeologica* 69 (1998): 1–52.
- Oakley, Francis. *Kingship: The Politics of Enchantment*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2006.
- Pizarro, Joaquín Martínez. 'Ethnic and National History ca. 500–1000', in *Historiography in the Middle Ages*, ed. Deborah Mauskopf Deliyannis. 43–87. Leiden: Brill, 2003.
- Pohl, Walter. 'Telling the Difference: Signs of Ethnic Identity', repr. in *From Roman Provinces to Medieval Kingdoms*, ed. F. X. Noble, 120–67. London and New York: Routledge, 2006.
- . 'Conceptions of Ethnicity in Early Medieval Studies', *Debating the Middle Ages: Issues and Readings*, ed. Barbara H. Rosenwein and Lester K. Little, 13–24. Oxford; Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1998.
- Reichl, Karl. 'Plotting the Map of Medieval Oral Literature', in *Medieval Oral Literature*, ed. K. Reichl. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012.
- Searle, Eleanor. 'Fact and Pattern in Heroic History: Dudo of Saint-Quentin'. *Viator* 15 (1984): 75–86.
- Springer, Matthias. 'Location in Space and Time', in *The Continental Saxons from the Migration Period to the Tenth Century: An Ethnographic Perspective*, ed. Donald Howard Green and Frank Siegmund. 1–21. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2003.
- Stillingfleet, Edward. *Origines Britannicae, or, The Antiquities of the British Churches with a Preface Concerning Some Pretended Antiquities Relating to Britain*. London: H. Mortlock, 1685.
- Teillet, Suzanne. *Des Goths à la nation gothique: Les origins de l'idée de nation en Occident du V^e au VII^e siècle*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1984.
- Verstegan, Richard. *A Restitution of Decayed Intelligence in Antiquities Concerning the Most Noble and Renowned English Nation*. Antwerp: R. Bruney, 1605.

- Webber, Nick. *The Evolution of Norman Identity, 911–1154*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005.
- Wolfram, Herwig. *The Roman Empire and Its Germanic Peoples*, trans. Thomas Dunlap. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997.
- Wood, Ian. 'Misremembering the Burgundians', in *Die Suche nach den Urprüngen*, ed. W. Pohl, 139–48. Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2004.
- . 'Ethnicity and the Ethnogenesis of the Burgundians', in *Typen der Ethnogenese unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Bayern*, ed. H. Wolfram and W. Pohl, vol. 1. 53–69. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1990.
- Wormald, Patrick. *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century*, vol. 1, Legislation and Its Limits. Oxford: Blackwell, 1999.

4 Ancestral Rhetoric in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*

Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (*Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*), completed in 731, is central to any critical work on early medieval England.¹ Bede was a Northumbrian monk of the abbey of Jarrow, near today's Newcastle-upon-Tyne. His text is concerned with the history of the Church, a genre established by Eusebius of Caesarea in the early fourth century (Bede makes the generic connections clear through quotations from Eusebius' work). Thus, it differs from other national histories we have dealt with so far by focusing more explicitly on the conversion of a people to Christianity. Consequently, information about the pagan ancestors on the continent is neither deemed important nor particularly well developed in Bede's work. Nonetheless, his account on these matters has become authoritative, especially the reference to 'the three tribes' (the Angles, Saxons and Jutes), which is now standard in both popular and critical writing.

Having already dealt with the Saxons, the focus in this chapter will be on the Angles and Jutes. What emerges in Bede's text, I will argue, is an idea of southern Scandinavia as a homeland – or, to put it in terms Bede would have recognized, a northern fringe of *Germania*. In the early eighth century (and a long time afterwards), this region remained pagan and a *terra incognita* to Bede and the rest of the Christian world of learning. The fact that Germanic ancestors had come from this area of the continent was part of Anglo-Saxon cultural memory. But fault lines between what is history and what is legend are often smoothed over in Bede's account. It is the aim of this chapter to investigate how Bede mixes *topoi* and classical rhetoric with elements of new geographical and historical information. My purpose is neither to verify Bede's migration account nor burst his historical balloons; rather, the aim is to identify the body of knowledge available to him and to locate the possible channels of information he relied upon. If we are to understand the legend of 'the three tribes', it is necessary to view this on the backdrop of the larger architecture of ancestral rhetoric employed in the *Ecclesiastical History*. This is where the chapter will begin.

BRITAIN AND THE PAGAN NORTH

Bede was weaned on Latin texts imported into Anglo-Saxon England. The many manuscripts available or copied in English monasteries indicate

that learning was in the process of decentralization, and the knowledge of southern and middle Europe, which we have dealt with in the previous chapters, was reaching England. The staggering number of references in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* is testimony to this.² The twin monasteries of Monkwearmouth-Jarrow, to which Bede was connected, produced the beautiful work known as Codex Amiatinus, the earliest surviving manuscript of the complete Vulgate Bible (from the turn of the eighth century). The splendid artwork and scribal tradition in this book show that connection to Rome and Frankish Gaul was much more direct than elsewhere in England at this time.³ Like other historians who wrote of the Germanic past, Bede's conception of pagan history was conditioned by classical geography, as well as its ethnographic prejudice handed down from Latin scholarship. An example of this reliance on classical texts is Bede's direct verbal borrowing from Book 4 of Pliny's *Natural History*, in which the coast of continental Europe is the perspective from which the location of the British Isles is described (*HE* 1.1). Thus, in a sense, Bede's history of the English people begins within the pages of classical books. When we are to assess the native legend and history he includes, we should not forget that a classical perspective is part of his framework.

In Book 1, Bede gives an account of the invasion of Britain that took place in the mid-fifth century. He relates how three Germanic tribes (*tribus Germaniae populis*) crossed the water to invade the shores of Britain (*HE* 1.15). Bede's reference to 'Germanic' here is not to be understood in the purely objective sense in which the term is used today. It carried with it a number of ethnic preconceptions, among which were ideas of warrior fierceness. In fact, the connotations connected with *Germania* were similar to those associated with the Scandinavian North. For outside observers, everything north of Frankish Christianity was a continuum of Northern peoples, who could be discussed through a set of discourses inherited from classical models. As regards geographical terminology, Bede makes no distinction between Scandinavia and *Germania*. For instance, he includes the Danes in *Germania* (*HE* 5.9), although they were regarded as a decidedly Scandinavian race in Jordanes' *Getica* and most other texts. 'Germanic' is a term that applies to ancestor tribes of the past, of course, but its use also serves as a significant marker for the conception of centre and periphery. Christianity becomes a unifying ideal that links the English with Rome, whereas *Germania* becomes that which is not yet converted.

Bede knew that the Germanic-speaking population in Britain had come from the continent. But he does not trace the ethnic origin of the English back to a singular ethnic group, as is the case in the other origin tales discussed so far. Instead, he names three major tribes as the first conquerors-cum-settlers: the Angles, the Saxons, and the Jutes. The exact places of habitation of these tribes are disputed. But from Bede's early eighth-century perspective, these were 'Northern' peoples insofar as they inhabited (what was still) the pagan parts of *Germania*. In addition to this, Bede would probably have known

that the Angles and the Jutes lived north of the lower Elbe, which marked the border to the 'North' in both the Ravenna *Cosmography* and in Frankish annals.

Bede's account of the ancestors' homeland is not a legend of a faraway island as in Jordanes' reference to *Scandza*. But Bede does in fact include another migration tale in his *Ecclesiastical History* that hints at a mythical Northern location. This is in relation to the Picts, a people that had settled in the area of Britain that is now Scotland. Bede gives the following account: 'it is related that the Pictish race from Scythia sailed out into the ocean in a few warships and were carried by the wind beyond the furthest bounds of Britain, reaching Ireland and landing on the northern shores' (*HE* 1.1).⁴ He further recounts that the people who lived in Ireland (the *Scotti*) refused the Picts a grant of land, but advised them to go to Britain, where the Picts would finally settle. Bede seems to have relied on a good source here, since specification of naval routes is not found in any of the other origin legends to which he refers.⁵

Classical geographers had used Scythia as a name for a vast and unspecified area stretching roughly from the Black Sea to what was imagined to be a large ocean in the north. In Bede's account, however, this geographical term seems to be a misnomer. Based on the information he gives, the Pictish boats drifted past the extremities of the British Isles (probably the Hebrides) to land on the 'northern' side of Ireland. This could suggest that Bede may have meant a northern place that corresponds to Scandinavia. The name Scythia is certainly confounded with Thule in Bede's *Regum librum XXX quaestiones* (Thirty Questions on the Book of Kings), in which he also refers to the sun shining at night: 'those who live in the island of Thule, beyond Britain, or the outmost regions of Scythia ... see it happen'.⁶ Bede was not the only one to confuse these two northern regions. In the anonymous Ravenna *Cosmography*, for example, there is a reference to a grand, ancient Scythian island (*magna insula Antiqua Scithia*) called *Scanza*, where once both Goths and Danes lived. This is clearly a garbled reference to Jordanes' *Getica*, since Scandinavia and Scythia are kept clearly distinct in Jordanes' text.⁷

THE THREE TRIBES

For the Anglo-Saxons, Bede provides another story of a migration from the North. This story and its background sources are now to be examined. The account of the Germanic forefathers conquering Britain is historical and would have been part of Anglo-Saxon cultural memory. But Bede's concepts of the North are filtered through a perceptual framework borrowed from classical tradition. In other words, what is genuine history is made to fit a template of migration accounts analogous to those legendary accounts of specious historicity already traced in the present study. We therefore arrive at what Ruth Morse has dubbed the 'rhetorically manipulated reference',

the placing of historical references within well-rehearsed frameworks for presenting the past.⁸ This is a strategy typical of medieval histories and one also discernible, I argue, in Bede's work.

Much of Bede's legendary material pertaining to the barbarian invasion can be traced to an identifiable written source: Gildas' *De excidio et conquestu Britanniae* (Concerning the Ruin and Conquest of Britain), written at a time between the late fifth and the early sixth century.⁹ Gildas, of whom we only know that he was a British cleric, describes the invasion in chapters 21 to 24. Evidently, Gildas must have had access to Anglo-Saxon informants, since he gives an account of a prophecy among the invaders: they would occupy Britain for 300 years (ch. 23). A significant detail, which he mentions in the same chapter, is that the invaders travelled over water in three ships. This leads us to speculate if the story of the three ships was part of the invasion legend developing only some 50 years or so after the first Germanic invasion on British shores.

Bede repeats the reference to 'three ships' (*HE* 1.15), but (naturally) leaves out the Anglo-Saxon prophecy of their only limited time of occupation. Most importantly, new and more detailed information on the ethnicity of the incoming tribes is added:

At that time [AD 449] the race of Angles or Saxons invited by Vortigern, came to Britain in three warships ... They came from three very powerful Germanic tribes, the Saxons, Angles, and Jutes. The people of Kent and the inhabitants of the Isle of Wight are of Jutish origin and also those opposite the Isle of Wight, that part of the kingdom of Wessex which is still to this day called the nation of the Jutes. From the Saxon country, that is, the province which is now called Old Saxony, came the East Saxons, the South Saxons, and the West Saxons. Besides this, from the country of the Angles, that is the land between the kingdom of the Jutes and the Saxons, which is called *Angulus*, came the East Angles, the Middle Angles, the Mercians, and all of the Northumbrian race (that is those people who dwell north of the river Humber) as well as the other Anglian tribes. *Angulus* is said to have remained deserted from that day to this.¹⁰

The status and content of this passage has been much debated. I am not the first to note that this origin/invasion tale is not well integrated within the narrative logic of Bede's text. Structurally, it is an awkward deviation from Gildas' account, which Bede otherwise follows. We may briefly sketch what is at stake. At the end of ch. 14, Bede pays faithful attention to Gildas' description of how the barbarian invaders first arrived by invitation as mercenaries, only later to become invaders. In ch. 15, however, he starts over again, oddly referring a second time to the invitation. Then, in the last section of ch. 15, Bede again returns to information taken from Gildas' text. Perhaps, after Bede had finished the main historical narrative, he realized

that an 'origin tale' for the *gentis Anglorum* was needed to complete this early part of the work – if for no other reason than to parallel the one he relates about the Picts.

To some extent, the information in this seemingly interpolated passage can be squared with Gildas' account. In ch. 43 of *De excidio*, Gildas names the homeland from which the invasion forces set out as *Germania*. In ch. 23, he furthermore refers to the invaders as a fierce and uncivilized race which goes by the name of 'Saxons' (*ut ferocissimi illi nefandi nominis Saxones*). But apparent concordance with Bede's 'Saxons' is here deceptive. Gildas' term is a generalizing one, used as in other accounts by other British (as well as Irish and Frankish) writers as an umbrella term for Germanic peoples, often when they acted in the capacity of pirates.¹¹ Bede identifies the Saxons as a specific ethnic group to be distinguished from Angles and Jutes.

Adjustment of Gildas' text, which Bede apparently took as an authoritative account of the Anglo-Saxon invasion, is to be expected. Bede's is an excellent example of how early historians could adapt older sources to make them serve the ideology of new power structures. Gildas had written *De excidio* as an attack on his fellow Britons for being 'ignorant of the ways of war' (ch. 2), for acting 'unwarlike' towards the Romans (ch. 5), and for offering 'their backs, instead of shields to the pursuers' and for greeting them with 'their necks' rather than with 'the sword' (ch. 6). Gildas refers to the lack of martial courage among his compatriots to explain that God has decided to punish them by sending in hordes of raiding barbarians from the continent.¹² Bede picks up on these accusations to set off Germanic warrior prowess from British slackness (*segnitia Brettonum*). If Bede is naturally sceptical of his ancestors' paganism, he represents their military muscle in a positive light: they came from the 'most powerful' Germanic tribes and 'made an invincible army' (*inuincibilem fecit exercitum*) (*HE* 1.15).

However, in an ecclesiastical history, the raw martial power of the Germanic invaders is not left to stand on its own. In the course of his history, Bede legitimizes the invasion of Britain through establishing the new inhabitants as a 'chosen people', destined to become better Christians than those they defeated. For instance, Bede tells us that the Roman missionary Saint Augustine urged a contingent of British bishops to mission among the heathen conquerors. Their refusal makes Bede comment that 'God in his Goodness did not reject the people whom he foreknew, but He had appointed much worthier heralds of the truth [the Romans] to bring this people to the faith' (*HE* 1.22).¹³ In this way, British failings are not only martial, but also moral. As a direct consequence of their refusal to fulfill God's plans for his chosen people, Bede cites the Battle of Chester, at which the pagan King Æthelfrith of Northumbria killed many British clergy (*HE* 2.2). The ideology that emerges from Bede's text is thus one that justifies the attack on the Britons as the rod of God's punishment.

The inclusion of this interpretation of historical events shows us that a Christian England was very much in the process of 'legendizing' the *gentis Anglorum* as a people that came into existence as chosen by divine providence. Such exegetical endeavours mix with the use of presumably deeper layers of Germanic origin legends in Bede's history. If we return to the 'three ships' (which are mentioned by both Gildas and Bede), we find intriguing analogies to this legend in other sources. For example, the proto-Goths in Jordanes' migration tale were fierce warriors 'carried only in three ships' from the bosom of *Scandza* (*Get.* 94) to take possession of foreign lands. Gildas, whose text most likely antedates Jordanes' *Getica*, seems to have relied on Anglo-Saxon legend for his three ships. This theory is corroborated by the fact that he uses the Germanic plural *cyulis* about the vessels in order to stress the distinction between *their* language (i.e. the foreign idiom of the barbarians) and *ours* (i.e. Latin, the *lingua franca* of the Christian Celto-British elite). The imagery of the three ships may therefore be a *topos* deriving from oral Germanic legend.

However, the way in which Bede transforms the information of three ships to a legend of three original *tribes* brings it into contact with classical tradition. For instance, the idea of the three original peoples appears as a mytheme in Hellenic genealogy. The eponymous Hellen gives birth to three brothers, who in turn give rise to three linguistic groups of the archaic age: the Dorians, the Ionians and the Aeolians.¹⁴ This structure may have influenced Tacitus' perception of the *Germani*, whom he divides into three main groups: the Ingaevones, the Herminones, and the Istaevones, all of whom were said to have descended from three sons of the god Mannus.¹⁵ Finally, a version specifically connected with travelling over water is found in relation to Noah's three sons – Ham, Shem, and Japhet (see Genesis 10) – who classical tradition has as the progenitors of the southern, middle and northern peoples of the world, respectively. This account of world genealogy can be traced back to the first century Jewish-Roman historian Flavius Josephus. This was a strategy much copied in later works, such as that of Jerome and Isidore of Seville, which made it available to a wider medieval audience. There is probably no direct link to these ideas in Bede's account of the English emerging as an amalgamation of three original tribes, but it is suggestive that some sort of analogy with these narratives was intended – either by Bede or in the Anglo-Saxon sources he used.

Evidently, Bede's account simplifies historical events by matching up the three ships mentioned by Gildas with three tribes from the Germanic North. Nonetheless, he justifies this legend by insisting that this tripartite ethnic division was upheld in later settlement patterns. With some degree of detail, Bede specifies the areas of Britain in which the Angles, Saxons and Jutes would respectively establish new kingdoms (*HE* 1.15). Critics have suggested that this part of Bede's narrative should be read as a back-projection: the details he knew about the establishment of Germanic kingdoms in Britain made him reduce this to a tale of three homogeneous ethnicities.¹⁶ However,

it cannot be an anachronism created on the basis of Bede's own experience in the eighth century, since the Jutes had clearly been disempowered as a political force and were only a fading memory by this time.

From other sources, we know that Bede's account undoubtedly masks a much more complex history of invasion and settlement. Smaller groupings, such as the *Unecungaga*, *Herefinna*, *Noxgaga*, etc., seem to have held some organizational and administrative control over areas of Britain. At least the status of such groups was significant enough to be measured in terms of hides, as is the case in the manuscripts containing the Tribal Hidage (possibly a tribute-taker's survey made for the Mercian court between the seventh and the ninth century).¹⁷

The Inhabitants of Jutland

In Chapter Three of this study, we saw how the Saxons were connected with legends of a Northern habitat. But Bede does not trace back any of the Germanic tribes further than their habitat at the time of their leaving for Britain in the mid-fifth century. When Bede discusses the 'old Saxons' (*antiqui Saxones*), the branch of Saxons who remained on the continent, he places them near the Rhine (*HE* 5.9–11). But we are not told if and what Saxon origin legends may have been prevalent in Britain. Since the continental texts that mention the Saxons in connection with Northern origin legends have already been discussed, I will here concentrate on the Angles and the Jutes.

It is my argument that Bede sees these two tribes as erstwhile inhabitants of Jutland, the northernmost peninsula that projects out into the Baltic towards the rest of Scandinavia (now divided between modern Denmark and Germany). Presumably already at the time Bede was writing, this was an area which had been claimed by the Danes. Based on both written and material evidence, Ulf Näsman has argued that Danes won hegemony in Jutland and the adjacent islands in the sixth century, and that they became the most powerful kingdom of south Scandinavia in the Merovingian period.¹⁸ But Bede refers to Angles and Jutes in a historical sense, looking back to a time before Danish ascendancy.

In Tacitus' *Germania* (late 1st cent.), peoples named the *Eudoses* and the *Anglii* are mentioned among *nationes* who worship the goddess Nerthus. Their habitats are said to stretch to the remotest part of *Germania* (*in secretiora Germaniae porrigitur*), but nothing more specific is indicated.¹⁹ Bede probably did not know Tacitus' text, but the location of these ethnic groups in the north of the continent may have been recorded in other sources. Bede would have been able to read about this northern part of the continent against classical sources. Pliny, whose geographical passages Bede quotes elsewhere in the *Ecclesiastical History*, describes a promontory called the *Cimbrorum promunturium* (Jutland), leading into a gulf named Codanus (the Baltic Sea).²⁰ This is part of Pliny's obscure and confused account of the

Scandinavian North. He also says that Jutland was placed in the 'Northern Sea', as the Romans had discovered when they investigated this northern part of *Germania* on the order of Augustus. However, it opened up to 'the vast ocean', which they did not map but which was rumoured to stretch all the way to the 'Scythian coast'.²¹ For Bede and others who read Pliny's geographical descriptions, this part of the world clearly belonged to a distinctly northern periphery.

If we assume Bede meant that the homelands of the Angles and the Jutes were located in Jutland, it is strange that he does not call upon the authority of Pliny on this occasion, which he does elsewhere. However, Bede seems to rely on native sources of information in 1.15 of his work. Furthermore, he would not have had much use in referring to the Roman geographer here, since Pliny mentions neither Angles nor Jutes. In the following, it is the purpose to examine what sources Bede may then have had available to him concerning the Angles and the Jutes.

The Angles

In terms of ethnic rhetoric in the *Ecclesiastical History*, the Angles are Bede's closest ancestors, since he points to his native Northumbria as being settled by this people (*HE* 1.15). Bede invests a more specific nationalism in the legend of *Angulus*. While he refers to the continental homes of the Jutes and the Saxons as *provincias*, the land of the Angles is called *patria*, a fatherland.²² This indicates that Bede is recounting the story of migration from an Anglian point of view.

The tales of origin, as we have seen, often attest to a small, original and identifiable core of forefathers that had set out on a journey to conquer new lands. In Germanic legend, there is either a tendency towards recording migration history as *rex et gens sua*, i.e. making a royal lineage representative of the larger group they ruled, or it is a delegation that is sent out, while others remain in the homeland. But in relation to the Angles, Bede implies a more inclusive concept. We must understand his statement that the Angles had left their country of origin 'deserted until this day' to mean that the Angles undertook a full-scale migration, relocating together as a nation – almost in a biblical sense. Indeed, some critics have wanted to see Bede's representation of departure from the continent and finding a new home in England as directly predicated on a reading of Exodus.²³ But we do not find themes related to enslavement, wandering in the wilderness or other elements which would need to be there in order to compel us to interpret Bede's account as a direct analogy to the Old Testament.

Instead of tracing such analogies, it is useful to investigate the geographical information Bede would have had at his disposal when referring to the homeland of the Angles. Bede informs us that his ancestors inhabited an area on the continent that lay between the lands of the Jutes and the Saxons.

This homeland is called *Angulus*, but no further geographical markers are provided. Although Bede is generally well disposed when it comes to interpreting English place names for Latin readers, he does not supply a translation of *Angulus*. Nonetheless, the name does give us some topographical clues as to the location Bede has in mind. The Latin may literally mean 'corner'. Traditionally, and probably correctly, this has been seen to refer to the place known today as Angeln in eastern Schleswig, at the bottom of the Jutland peninsula. This is a small inlet between the Schlei inlet and the Flensburg Fjord.²⁴

It is possible that Bede's information has roots in oral tradition. A geographical location such as *Angulus* could even have been taken from oral poetry. Classical tradition provides many such examples. Homer is particularly rich. A passage of significance is the so-called 'Catalogue of Ships' in the *Iliad* (2.493–877), where Homer lists the Achaean forces waging war on Troy by their regional origins. This includes information on their main cities and various toponyms connected with their native lands.²⁵ Bede's list of the three invading ships and their warriors' homelands should be seen as a distant cousin of this. It may, in fact, have had a life in Anglo-Saxon oral tradition. The Old English poem *Widsith* (date uncertain), is one example of how a poet would systematically conceptualize an idea of European nations in the form of a long list. To give an example of how legendary and topographical information is combined, lines 35–44 refer to the young Anglian King Offa who fixed the boundary between his own people and the Myrgingas at *Fifeldor*, which is a name for the Eider.²⁶ This river separates the Jutland peninsula to the south from the rest of the continent. As was discussed in the Introduction to this study, Frankish chronicles of the ninth century give evidence that this river functioned as the southern boundary of the Danes.

If we read Bede's migration legend against *Widsith*, the poem shows us that the Angles were seen to come from an area adjacent to the Danes (who took early possession of Jutland). The wide-travelled speaker of *Widsith* refers to the Angles and Danes within the same verse line: 'Offa ruled the Angles, Alewih ruled the Danes' (*Offa weold Ongle, Alewih Denum*) (l. 35). The *Widsith* poet proceeds to pour praise on these two kings at some length (ll. 36–44). Alewih (a name not attested elsewhere) is said to be the bravest among men (*manna modgast ealra*). Nonetheless, he is surpassed in courage by Offa. This ruler is undoubtedly the continental King Offa referred to as an ancestor of the Mercian royal line in the Anglian collection of genealogies.²⁷ Thus, we have an indication that Bede's conception of the continental Angles was derived in part from heroic legends circulating in England.

A text that needs to be included in a discussion of Anglian legend is the *Historia Brittonum*, usually assigned to the 830s. It is generally recognized that this work was written by a Briton (previously ascribed to a monk named Nennius) who relied on Anglo-Saxon sources.²⁸ Ch. 37 contains a detailed account of Hengist, whom Bede also names as the leader of the first invasion

force. In the British text, Hengist is said to hold conference with counselors who had come with him from *insula Oghgul* (MS A).²⁹ This appears to be a misspelling of the Old English name *Ongel* – perhaps through Old Welsh, which records the word *Eingyll* for the English.³⁰ In another manuscript recension, we find the corrected form *Angul*.³¹ What also requires comment is the fact that Hengist's homeland is referred to as an *insula*. It may be an offhand reference to the many islands in the Baltic Sea, which Pliny and other classical writers had described. But, probably, the author had no definite ideas of the topography of this area. *Insula* may therefore resonate with the sense that the Angles were from some distant northern island.

It is certainly interesting that Hengist's homeland was given legendary colouring by later scribes. In one manuscript of *Historia Brittonum*, it is to *Scythiam* (i.e. Scythia) that Hengist sends back messengers to procure new vessels in support of the invasion.³² This probably derives from a scribal error, since the phrase *Tithicam Vallem* is found in other manuscripts. This phrase is taken from ch. 19 of Gildas' *De excidio*, where the name is used in reference to people coming from across the sea as a poetic circumlocution for 'sea-valley'.³³ However, by replacing the place name so it contains a reference to Scythia means that the Germanic invaders are now connected to a name used in classical tradition for 'the North'. If this is demonstrably a corruption, the reworking should not be dismissed as just 'a mistake'. Any manuscript variant is important for the perceptions and precepts that it reveals, as Bernard Cerquiglini reminds us.³⁴ The English were seen as Northern intruders, with all the conceptual baggage that such an idea carried with it.

To shift the focus of the examination from legendary to historical texts, I will now look more closely at what Bede's reference to *Angulus*, the homeland of the Angles, communicated to readers. All available evidence is later than the *Ecclesiastical History*, for which reason we should take into account that they form part of the reception history of Bede's text. A concrete match between Bede's *Angulus* and Angeln in Jutland is found in the late ninth-century Old English translation of Paulus Orosius' *Seven Books of History against the Pagans*. The interpolated section in King Alfred's Orosius is a multi-voiced text. In addition to the interviews with two travellers, Ohthere and Wulfstan, the editor makes his voice heard through interspersed comments which help to clarify place names.³⁵ This is seen in relation to Ohthere's account of travelling south from *Sciringsheal* (probably present-day Kaupang, near the Oslo Fjord) and past Danish lands:

And From *Sciringes heal* he [Ohthere] said that he sailed in five days, to the *port* which is called 'at the Heaths' [Haithabu], which stands between Wends and Saxons and *Angol* and is subject to the Danes. When he sailed toward that place from *Sciringes heal*, then Denmark was on his port side and the open sea on his starboard side for three days. And then, for two days before he came to the Heaths [Haithabu], Gotland and *Sillende* and many islands were on

his starboard side – in those lands the English lived, before they came into this country – and for two days the islands that are subject to Denmark were on his port side.³⁶

It is generally agreed that *Sillende* is the name for the southern part of Jutland, while *Gotland* is the name for the northern part.³⁷ (The similar name *Simlendi* can be found in Frankish sources, where southern Jutland is clearly meant.)³⁸ According to the historian Ildar Garipzanov, the name *Sillende* corroborates Bede's account of depopulation. The first syllable of the place name may be derived from the Old Norse *si-*, which corresponds to the Old English prefix *sin-*, denoting magnitude, as in 'large extensive' land.³⁹ For Angeln as an uninhabited land, other evidence needs to be considered. The Schleswig-Holstein area saw the establishment of the important trading station Haithabu, which flourished from the ninth to the eleventh century, located at the head of the narrow, navigable Schlei inlet, only a few kilometres from the river Eider. The Danes seem to have placed this town strategically to allow for trade with Frisian and Frankish areas. We may deduce from the etymology of the place name that the trading station was established in a previously sparsely populated area: the first element of the name is related to the Old Norse *heiðr* (heathland). This would fit in well with Bede's account that *Angulus* was deserted after the emigration of the Angles.

This is not everything. The tenth-century ealdorman Æthelweard is further witness to the fact that medieval commentators readily interpreted Bede's *Angulus* as a location at the bottom of Jutland. He informs us that the town known by the Danes as *Haithaby* and by the Saxons as Schleswig was the main seat in 'the old land of the Angles', located between the regions of the Saxons and the Jutes.⁴⁰

Angeln appears to have been an empty land at the time Bede was writing. That an emigration from Angeln took place is to some extent corroborated by the cessation of archaeological finds in the Schleswig-Holstein area. Some 41 settlements and 54 cemeteries dated to the late Roman Iron Age (c. AD 170–350) have been identified in eastern Schleswig, while only eight settlements and 22 cemeteries dating from the middle of the fourth century to the sixth century have been found.⁴¹ This could point to a dramatic depopulation. However, this could also be explained in other ways than by means of a migration to Britain. It could be a result of over-cultivation of the soil, climatic change, or threat from piracy leading to relocation away from coastal areas.⁴² However, the lack of finds could also simply be a case of archaeological invisibility. Other regions have been thought uninhabited at certain periods until a major find turns up and fundamentally changes previous theories and knowledge.

For the information of the empty land, which forms the basis of the Anglian migration tale, Bede may have received information from travelling traders. Angeln was the borderland between areas inhabited by the Frisians and the Danes of Jutland. Frisians were active merchants, and Anglo-Saxon

trade with the coastal region of Frisia appears to have been longstanding and fairly extensive. For instance, Bede mentions a Frisian slave merchant in London (*HE* 4.22), but there were also more peaceful Frisian trade connections, some of which had Northumbria as a centre. A passage in Alfrid's *Life of St Liudgar* (9th cent.) indicates that a Frisian trading community was settled in York in the late eighth century.⁴³ It is possible that stories of a vast area at the bottom of the Jutland peninsula where no trade could take place encouraged speculations that this particular stretch of land had been abandoned due to a full-scale migration of the Angles – thereby helping the creation of legend.

There is another important legend connected to the *Angli*, which Bede includes in Book 2 of the *Ecclesiastical History*. This concerns the pagan boys from the kingdom of Deira, whom St. Gregory viewed in Rome, after which he allegedly decided to send a Christian mission to Britain. This is a legend which had a particular political resonance in Anglo-Saxon England. The insular contexts of the *Angli* as a people elected for salvation will be dealt with in Chapter Five.

Jutes

Bede is alone in mentioning the Jutes as settlers in Britain, which makes them the most mysterious of the three invading peoples. Bede points to Kent as their main habitat. His further reference to a monument erected in the eastern part of this kingdom in honour of the early invasion hero Horsa (*HE* 1.15) indicates a Kentish source for Bede's information. Indeed, Bede tells us that his 'principal authority and aid in the work was the learned and revered Abbot Albinus, who was educated in the church at Canterbury' (*HE* 'Preface'). Albinus, who died in 732, was a contemporary of Bede.⁴⁴ An intermediary for Albinus' information was Nothelm, a priest of London, who served as Albinus' research assistant and who – both in written form and by his visit to Jarrow – gave Bede all that he deemed 'worthy of memory that had been done in the province of Kent and adjacent parts by the disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory, as he had learned the same either from written records or the traditions of his predecessors' (*HE* 'Preface').⁴⁵

If Bede locates the Angles in *Angulus*, he neglects to provide a place name for the homeland of the Jutes. He refers to this people 3 x *Iotarum* (*HE* 1.15) and 2 x *Iutorum* (*HE* 4.14). Bede's name forms can be identified as a reference to the inhabitants of Jutland. Bede tells us that the Angles inhabited an area between the Jutes and the Saxons, so the Jutes were probably the northernmost race. Extrapolating from Bede's forms, the Latin nominative plural must have been **Iutae* / **Iotae* or **Ioti* / **Iuti*. In a scribal addition to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (under the year 449, in MS A and E), the phrase *Iutna cyn* is used for the Jutes as an ethnic group, alongside the forms *Iotum* and *Iutum*.⁴⁶ Looking at both legendary and legal texts from medieval Denmark, in which the Latin form *Iuti* for Jutes and *Iutia*, *Iutland*,

or *Iutlandia* for Jutland are attested, lend credence to the assumption that Bede's ethnonym indeed refers to the inhabitants of Jutland.⁴⁷

What evidence do we have of the continental Jutes before Bede? A number of classical writers seem to know them, insofar as we allow for considerable linguistic variations within the references to them. We find a people called the *Sedusii*, one of the Germanic tribes fighting under Ariovistus in Caesar's *The Gallic War* (1.51.2), written around the middle of the first century BC, whose name is imaginably a corruption, where the initial 's' has been seen as a scribal error.⁴⁸ In Tacitus' *Germania* (end of 1st cent.) a people of the North named the *Eudoses* are mentioned. Here, both the *Eudoses* and the *Anglii* are among nations who worshipped the goddess Nerthus (ch. 40).⁴⁹ In the early fifth century, Orosius names the *Eduses* as a people of note (6.7.6). However, to assume that it is possible to trace a singular ethnic group across centuries through such sources is not a method that is recommended. It makes more sense to look for the name in post-Roman writing. In a letter dated 534 from Theudebert I, King of Franks, to emperor Justinian with the purpose of informing him of the peoples who looked to him as overlord, Theudebert mentions the *Saxones Eucii*.⁵⁰ It is likely that a Latin *et* has been elided, so the sentence should read 'Saxons and Jutes'. If the reference is to people on the continent, it cannot be the same northern people that Bede believed he was writing about, since the passage speaks of the area known as Pannonia, which was bounded north and east by the Danube. It is not impossible, however, that the *Eucii* were a branch of migrating Jutes, who did not settle in England but elsewhere on the Continent, joining in some kind of federation with the Saxons. When Bede was writing in the early eighth century, the continental Jutes were becoming a political anachronism. There are no records of them acting independently in military campaigns or diplomatic negotiations after the time Bede claims some of them settled in southern England. Continental records mention only *gens Danorum* in relation to an increasingly powerful enemy on their northern border.⁵¹

Some critics have persistently denied the Jutes a Scandinavian origin. In this endeavour, much emphasis has been placed on Procopius, who wrote about Britain in *History of the Wars* (mid-6th cent.). Procopius says *Brittia* was inhabited by three peoples: Britons (*Britones*), Angles (*Angiloi*) and Frisians (*Phrissones*).⁵² In this account, the Frisians (who inhabited parts of modern Netherlands, Germany and south-west Jutland) seem to replace the Jutes as settlers in early Britain. But one should treat Procopius' information with some reservation, not least because he confuses the British Isles with Brittany or Scandinavia.⁵³ Nonetheless, some historians have insisted on using Procopius' garbled account to claim that the Jutes were in fact a Frisian group.⁵⁴ Frisia had the shortest sea route to Britain, and many of the invaders may have made a stopover there for some time. It appears that the medieval term 'Frisian' was an example of an ethnonym that could serve two functions, either as the name of a specific ethnic group, or as a reference

to any people who happened to reside in the Frisian coastal area.⁵⁵ It may be the latter function into which the term is pressed in Procopius' text, but he may also have had some information about a Frisian colony in Britain. But the fact that Bede refers to a Frisian (*Freso*) slave trader in London (for 679) indicates that Frisians and Jutes were not interchangeable in his vocabulary.

It is a problem, however, that there is no substantial textual evidence for the existence of Jutish kingdoms in Britain. But Bede's Jutes (*Iutae/Iuti*) are perhaps mentioned as a people of the North in a text by the Merovingian court poet Venantius Fortunatus. In a panegyric (from c. 580) to King Chilperic, Fortunatus speaks of the *Euthio* who would tremble when faced with the might of the Frankish ruler: ... *tremunt, Danus, Euthio, Saxo, Britannus*.⁵⁶ To understand the rhetorical function of this statement, we may compare it to the claim, made earlier in the poem, that the rays of the king's fame spread throughout the East, the South, the West, and the North. The intention in relation to the ethnic names mentioned here (Danes, Jutes[?], Saxons and Britons) is to indicate that warrior tribes in the northernmost outskirts of the known world – Scandinavia and Britain – fear Chilperic's superior military power. However, it is difficult to gauge if the *Euthio* was supposed to reside in Scandinavia or Britain.

Since Bede is the only early writer who mentions the Jutes as settlers in Britain, a number of critics have attempted to prove this as an invention of his own imagination. In recent years, Harald Kleinschmidt has been one of the most outspoken critics in this camp. He maintains that a 'massive exodus' of the Jutes would have registered in English place-names to a much higher extent than seems to be the case.⁵⁷ That Jutes had little trace on place names is a fact to which Bede actually pays attention. He singles out the Hampshire region as the only place in which the Jutes were still remembered. The region was still known as *Iutarum natio* (nation of Jutes), he notes, but clearly only as a name that was obsolete.

Hampshire and the Isle of Wight had been taken by the tribe of the *Geuissae* during a campaign of 685–7. It was probably interesting to the *Geuissae* for defensive reasons, and would allow them to establish a bulwark against Mercian expansion in the upper Thames area. The consequence was that the area lost its ethnic uniqueness. From this time, the *Geuissae* now became their old (*antiquitus*) name (*HE* 3.7), and Bede subsequently only talks about them as 'West Saxons'.⁵⁸ The expansion, which meant taking over new regional areas, and thereby incorporating other tribal groups, apparently led to a reconceptualization of ethnic identity.

What we can find in terms of references to the Jutes in former English place names are preserved in the West Saxon dialect. For example, the eleventh-century *Worcester Chronicle* (often attributed to Florence of Worcester) has a reference to the New Forest as *Ytene*; while Bishopstoke on the River Itchen, a few miles outside Winchester, was formerly known as *Ytingstoc* ('settlement of the Jutes'); and a valley near East Meon bore the name *Ytededen* ('valley of the Jutes') from a lost hamlet. Barbara Yorke

reasons that these place names were presumably formed by the neighbouring Saxons rather than the Jutes themselves and help to delineate the western and northern boundaries of Jutish jurisdiction in Hampshire.⁵⁹

A question of particular interest in this respect is whether or not there was the Kentish dialect, which reflected the language spoken in Jutland. An obstacle preventing us from answering this question is that the Kentish dialect is only sparsely attested. The evidence are some eighth- and ninth-century charters and three witnesses from the tenth century: the *Kentish Hymn*, the *Kentish Psalm*, and the interlinear glosses to the *Kentish Proverbs* (which have all been transmitted together in one manuscript: BL Cotton Vespasian D.vi). None of these constitute a clear-cut and independent Kentish dialect (if such ever existed). Nonetheless, the linguist Elmar Seebold has claimed to be able to trace Scandinavian linguistic elements in the dialect of Winchester (which he takes to be within the perimeters of Jutish Hampshire) and Kent. Seebold lists regional forms peculiar to these two areas, some of which allegedly show a 'marked affinity with Old Norse', thereby corroborating Bede's geography of the Jutes as a northern tribe on the continent.⁶⁰ Nonetheless, the interlinear glosses to the *Kentish Proverbs* show a large influx of West Saxon forms, while the Kentish charters show influence from Mercian. Seebold explains this as the existence of Mercian/Kentish and West-Saxon/Kentish dialects – showing the influence of the two much larger neighbouring powers – which were competing with 'pure Kentish'.⁶¹ However, Seebold's conclusions can be challenged – not only because the material he collects for comparison is limited, but also because other claims of orthographic and dialectal features influenced by other continental groups can equally be made.⁶² In any case, it has long been established that Old English dialects, as these have come down to us from manuscript sources, were primarily spoken concurrently with the consolidation of various Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. That is to say, dialectal variations were fostered through social, economic, and cultural developments occurring *after* England was settled.⁶³

But dialect is not our only means of assessing connections. If we look at archaeological evidence from Kent, the main location of Jutes according to Bede, Jutish links for the period between the late fifth- and early sixth-century are in evidence. J. N. L. Myres, for example, has shown that pottery finds from Kentish digs have close parallels with archaeological sites in Jutland.⁶⁴ E. T. Leeds has pointed to a correspondence of female brooches in Kent with finds from southern Scandinavia, particularly Jutland.⁶⁵ Furthermore, a number of archaeological studies have revealed a clear connection between Kentish graves and those of southern Scandinavia.⁶⁶ But graves in Kent include significant numbers of Frankish objects, which makes it difficult to argue for a pure 'Jutish' identity. The people of Kent were apparently strongly influenced in their attire by the rising empire of the Franks on the other side of the Channel.⁶⁷ Bede's statement that a Jutish settlement was also established in the Isle of Wight is corroborated by the find of Kentish-type elite burials in Wight.⁶⁸

For the most revealing connections between Kent and Jutland, we turn to finds of bracteates (i.e. metal pendants, often gold-foiled) decorated with Animal Style I designs. Of particular interest are the D-design bracteates, which depict a mythical griffin-creature with a large head and beak, ribbon-shaped body and legs entwined with one another. This was jewelry for women of the elite. The distribution of D-bracteates outside of England concentrates on Jutland and northwest Germany with some additional examples from a few other places in Europe. Egil Bakka has argued that all D-bracteates in England were derived from three closely related Scandinavian prototypes.⁶⁹ It is significant that eastern Kent has the highest density of bracteate finds with 29 (i.e. 28 D-bracteates and one B-bracteate) outside of southern Scandinavia. Two D-bracteates are also known from the Isle of Wight both with similarities to the finds in Kent.⁷⁰ Again, this indicates that there seems to be some verity to Bede's linking of the dynasties in these places.

In terms of archaeological semiotics, the bracteates represent what has been called the 'historical metaphor', i.e. objects inscribed with various signs to be used actively in strategies of social organization. The objects and decorations are 'historical' insofar as they may often refer to the believed origins, importance, and destiny of their owners.⁷¹ The D-bracteates were worn visibly on the body and could have served as a marker of ethnic identity for settlers in Britain, perhaps pointing to an origin in Jutland and the religious beliefs held in the homeland. Since the bracteates were worn exclusively by females, archaeologist Birgit Arhenius argues that examples found in Kent are bridal gifts accompanying Scandinavian wives.⁷² It is possible to imagine that importing brides from the homeland was one way in which a Jutish identity was upheld in early England. However, since no die matches between English and Scandinavian bracteate designs have been found, it is likely that a local production of bracteates was set up in England. Andrew Richardson has surveyed evidence to suggest that there were probably 'Jutish' craftsmen in Kent to satisfy the need for Jutish artefacts.⁷³

Bracteates cannot, however, be used to say anything about the ethnicity of the Kentish population at large, since gold-foil pendants were precious items that can only have been utilized as badges of identity by a comparatively small elite.⁷⁴ It is most likely, I will suggest, that the Jutes in Bede's text were not the result of a mass exodus, but a small elite group, remembered for the power they held in early England. How this power may have been constituted can only be tentatively extrapolated from the relatively scant information available.

In his account of the Germanic invasion, Bede is more specific about the settlement of the Jutes than of the Saxons or Angles. The fact that they settled in coastal areas is perhaps significant. The Jutish dominions in Kent, the Isle of Wight, and Hampshire would have meant an advantage (perhaps a near monopoly) in terms of controlling trade routes in the English Channel and the Solent.⁷⁵ The large number of Frankish artefacts

in sixth-century Kentish graves shows that the Jutish rulers had substantial connections across the Channel to Francia. In the 1960s, Vera Evison once argued for a direct Frankish invasion of England, but this idea is now largely rejected.⁷⁶ Not least the lack of Frankish earrings and other typical dress items make this supposition untenable. In Kentish graves, what we do have in terms of Frankish jewelry is found alongside dress not typical of Franks (primarily Scandinavian items), indicating that the Frankish jewelry came to Kent through trade connections rather than direct migration.⁷⁷ Nonetheless, Martin Welch has suggested that a Frankish-Kentish monopoly over the cross-Channel trade may have resulted in Kent, the smaller of the two powers, accepting Frankish overlordship.⁷⁸

There are several indications that the Franks may have exerted some sort of political control over Jutish Kent during the sixth century. Procopius provides one such indication. His writing suggests that the Merovingians made claims to overlordship in southern England in the 550s by dispatching an embassy to Constantinople to declare that the Franks ruled over *Brittia*. Similarly, Pope Gregory the Great seems to have thought that Frankish rulers Theudebert I and Theuderic I exercised some authority in Britain.⁷⁹ Other suggestions of Frankish overlordship can be found, but in each case it is possible to meet indications of direct Frankish control with counterevidence.⁸⁰

From the archaeological evidence, it is safe to say, however, that Kent did have a close association with the Franks across the Channel. This meant that Jutish Kent became the most socially progressive kingdom in Anglo-Saxon England during the first part of the sixth century. The Frankish connection could have offered rulers of Kent a superior system of government. Kent was the first kingdom to accept Christianity and to commit a law code to writing, probably both inspired by Frankish example.⁸¹

A Frankish link may also be reflected in the change of royal naming practice in Kent. The father of Æthelberht was called Eormenric, which was a very unusual name in Anglo-Saxon England, but combinations with Eormen- were common among Frankish royals.⁸² If this is anything to go by, increased Frankish influence may have begun in the reign of King Octa, Eormenric's father (who named him). This would take us into the first decades of the sixth century.⁸³ When examining the contents of Kentish graves, there is a marked weakening of influence from southern Scandinavia in the second quarter of the sixth century, i.e. at the conclusion of what E. T. Leeds called the 'Jutish phase'.⁸⁴ Thus, Jutish hegemony may have come to an end already after a generation or so.

We should also take into account the marriage of Bertha, the Merovingian daughter of Charibert, the Frankish king of Paris, to Æthelberht, the king of Kent. This marriage took place between c. 577 and 581. The importance which the Franks attached to this marriage should not be overstated, however, since Bertha was not a very important royal, but a fatherless princess whose mother left property to the churches at Tours and Le Mans. Despite Bertha's minor role in the Merovingian hierarchy, her dispatch as

a bride to Kent was probably intended to reinforce Frankish support and secure friendly relations between King Chilperic's court at Soissons and royalty at Canterbury.⁸⁵ For Frankish rulers, the model of marrying Christian Frankish princesses to heathen kings was not an unknown strategy in securing political influence. Further records of marriages of Frankish women into Kentish families (beginning with Æthelberht's son, Eadbald) show that such alliances were upheld and strengthened during the seventh century.

In summary, the Jutes may have been remembered because they were an elite of magnates with close connections to the Franks, establishing an early trade emporium in Anglo-Saxon England. Their numbers may have been few, and the areas from which they managed their trade were likely peopled by a variety of other ethnicities. At the time Bede wrote, the populations in Kent and the Isle of Wight had clearly assumed an insular identity, and he refers to the inhabitants of these regions by names that relate to their place of settlement: *Cantuari* and *Uictuarii* (*HE* 1.15).

In terms of the Kentish line of kings, Bede records their names (from Hengist) back to the time when they were still on the continent (*HE* 1.15). They are Uictgils, Uitta and Uecta, which are names all related to the Latin name for the Isle of Wight, *Uecta/Uectis* (with a corresponding Old English form *Uiht*). That a Jutish dynasty, arriving in the fifth century, would have given their name to this island is an exercise in pseudo-etymology, since the island was already named Vectis by the Romans.⁸⁶ At some point in time, this line of kings was constructed, presumably by Kentish elites, to claim possession of the Isle of Wight. Names of the past kings or conquerors were probably constructed for the purpose of justifying territorial claims.⁸⁷ It is an example of what Bernd Schneidmüller has described as the creation of a historical *mise en scène* aimed at the present in accordance with the desirable interpretations of this same present.⁸⁸

This is not the only example of forefathers being named after a place in order to claim possession of it. In the West-Saxon text known as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, for the year 501, we learn that Port and his two sons Bieda and Mægla came to Britain 'at a place called *Portesmuþa* [Portsmouth]'. The place name Portsmouth is derived from the Latin *portus* (harbour) and the Old English word for mouth, i.e. it means 'the mouth [as connected with water] of the harbour'. Hence, it is a genealogical legend constructed upon a glaringly false etymology. Portsmouth is located in the area of Hampshire which belonged to the Jutes, but was taken over by the West Saxons. In this way, we can see how genealogical legend was used politically in the struggle to legitimize the possession of land.

ANCESTRAL RHETORIC

When Christianity was firmly established in Anglo-Saxon England, churchmen began to look to the continent with an ambition to convert the people

of the North.⁸⁹ Among the English missionaries who went to the continent were Willibrord, Willehad, Lebuin, Liudger, and the two Ewalds. In Book 5 of *Ecclesiastical History*, Bede takes an interest in the English missions abroad, and his primary example of English missionaries is the Wessex apostle Boniface, who undertook journeys to propagate Christianity in Frisia and *Germania*. In a letter from c. 738, he writes that the heathen Saxons had expressed the sentiment: 'We are of one blood and bone with you'.⁹⁰ This could signal that some affiliation was still felt between the 'old' Saxons on the continent and 'new' Saxons in Britain, but, more likely, it was a reaction solicited by Boniface, who wanted to appeal to English sponsors for the gifts of books, vestments, and relics to help the missionary work.

Bede also points to a kinship with other continental peoples. This is when he discussed Ecgbert, an English Abbot of the monastery of Rathmelsigi in Ireland, who planned to undertake a mission to the north of the continent. According to Bede, Ecgbert knew:

... that there were many peoples in Germany from whom the Angles and the Saxons [*Angli uel Saxones*], who now live in Britain, derive their origin; hence even to this day they are, by a corruption, called *Garmani* by their neighbours the Britons. Now these people are the Frisian, Rugians, Danes, Huns, Old Saxons, and Boruthware (Bructeri); there are also many other nations in the same land who are still practising heathen rites to whom this soldier of Christ proposed to go. ... (*HE* 5.9)⁹¹

In the remainder of the chapter, it is the purpose to close-read the ethnic rhetoric in this passage.

The passage is often read as an account of the ethnic mix of peoples that amalgamated to become the *gentis Anglorum*. But if this is the case, how does it square with the information that only three Germanic tribes came over, which Bede provides at *HE* 1.15? We will begin by questioning the Latin phrase *Angli uel Saxones*. The *uel* is often synonymous with another Latin connector: *et* ('and'). This is how Colgrave and Mynors choose to translate it in their authoritative edition of Bede's text, as we see above. However, it can also function as a disjunctive particle (like *aut*), which would give it the sense of 'or'. Hence, Bede is not referring to two specific tribal ethnicities, Angles and Saxons, as he does in *HE* 1.15. Rather, he is using the terms in their general sense. Especially in the early parts of Bede's text, *Saxones* can refer to the English when they were still pagan, as the term does for both Gildas and continental writers.⁹² Bede also extends *Angli* to mean 'English', i.e. a new Christianized people in Britain. Thus, the phrase *Anglorum uel Saxonum* may therefore be translated to mean: 'the English, who were previously called Saxons'.⁹³ This would explain why the Jutes are featured in this constellation: 'Jutes' never doubled as a generalized term for the Germanic peoples in Britain.

In addition to this, we need to consider Michael Benskin's linguistic point about the phrase *a quibus*, which appears in the first line of the passage we are examining. Against Colgrave and Mynor's translation ('from whom'), Benskin argues that it is unlikely to have introduced a restrictive relative clause; thus, it may therefore be better translated as 'from among whom'.⁹⁴ This clearly alters the meaning, so that we need not see the English as made up of the specific tribes listed in the passage. Rather, the English is to be seen as a people deriving from the general stock of Germanic tribes – the nations on the list being examples of such tribes.

Ecgbert is unlikely to have intended to visit every nation that Bede mentions here. Thus, we should see naming of specific tribes as serving a particular rhetorical purpose. Walther Pohl has noted that Bede's list calls up images that were emotionally charged, evoking an atmosphere of rough-and-tumble barbarian peoples.⁹⁵ In fact, listings of fierce barbarians were common in medieval writing, and Bede seems to borrow from this type of writing. In fact, an analogy to Bede's passage can be found in *Cosmography* of Aethicus Ister. In this text, deprecatory remarks are made about more or less all non-Greek (i.e. uncivilized) peoples whom the speaker meets on his journeys through *Germania*:

Vafri, Friconti, Murrini, Alapes, Turks, Alani, Meotae, Huns, Frisians, Danes, *Vinnosi*, Riphaens, and Olches, whom the people in those parts call the *Orci*, very filthy peoples leading the most foul life – worse than all the kingdoms of the world – without a god, or law, or rituals. Moreover all the districts of those lands are called *Germania*, because the peoples are immense in body and are monstrous races, hardened by the most savage folkways; moreover they are indomitable, bearing the cold and hardship better than [all] other peoples.⁹⁶

The idea of *Germania* as a place for bodies of huge proportions with the ability to withstand the cold is borrowed from Isidore's *Etymologies* 9.2.97, while the text invokes the classical prejudice of the inhabitants there as horrible in manners and religion. Among the list of peoples, there are clearly fictive nations. Michael Herren, the most recent editor of the *Cosmography*, interprets *Vafros* as related to the Latin *vafer* ('a sly person'), the *Vinnosos* may be 'wine-bibbers', *Alapes* possibly 'ear-boxers', and *Olches/Orci* perhaps referring to the Old Irish word for 'pig'.⁹⁷ Interestingly, this list concurs with some of the non-fictional names in Bede's passage (Huns, Frisians, and Danes).

If we look more closely at the tribes Bede includes, we may discern a tendency to seize upon ethnic groups that were popularly associated with belligerence, barbarism and all manner of un-Christian behaviour. Thus, we are best to understand this as a list that emphasizes the heroism of Ecgbert, whom Bede calls a 'soldier of Christ' (i.e. the common metaphor of *miles Christi*), in wanting to undertake this mission to pagan *Germania*.⁹⁸

Painting a frightful picture of the regions to be converted to Christianity was one way of eulogizing the bravery and dedication of the missionaries. The same tendency is reflected in later accounts, such as in *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum* by Adam of Bremen. This eleventh-century text celebrates the achievements of the Archbishops of the Hamburg-Bremen diocese, who had been actively converting pagan peoples of the north. This contains much information on the early church in the north, but spiced with tales of monstrous races along 'the shores of the Baltic Sea', such as Amazons, who become pregnant from passing them and give birth to Cynocephali, men who have 'their heads in their chests'.⁹⁹

But missionary work certainly involved real risks. For instance, Bede describes how two English priests, both named Hewald, were killed by the Old Saxons, one of them tortured and his limbs torn apart before being thrown into the Rhine (*HE* 5.10). The *Bructeri* seem to have inhabited an area between the Lippe and Elms rivers in what is now north-western Germany. Apparently, they were known as a tribe who staunchly opposed the Roman Empire early in the first century.¹⁰⁰ According to one poem, the Frisians also seem to have gained a reputation as pirates in the mid-seventh century.¹⁰¹ At least the Frisians managed to resist Frankish attempts at dominating the Rhine until Charles Martel led a naval expedition against them in 734.¹⁰²

A name notoriously associated with pagan terror is that of the Huns. Their origins in Asia (and the fact that their empire had fallen long before Bede began to write) make it unlikely that they were candidates for inclusion among the peoples of *Germania*. Yet, they are also mentioned as inhabiting *Germania* in Aetheticus' text. Both these accounts may therefore refer to those Germanic peoples who had at one time accepted Hunnic rule or joined forces with them as tributary tribes. Among these were the Rugians, a Germanic tribe in Pomerania, who were allies of Attila until his death in 453, after which they rebelled.¹⁰³

Finally, we come to the Danes, certainly a name that invoked fear in Frankish. Gregory of Tours (d. 594), for example, gives an account of how the Danish king Chlochilaicus undertook a failed raid on the Frisian coast c. early 520s.¹⁰⁴ An attack on the Franks by this Danish king is also described in ch. 19 of *Liber Historiae Francorum* (The Book of the History of the Franks), written about the same time as Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*. In the English monk Alcuin's *vita* of Willibrord, we read that this Northumbrian undertook a mission to preach among the Danes around the year 710. He visited the Danish king Ongendus in the early 700s, and tried to convert him. However, the attempt failed, as Ongendus was a 'man more savage than any wild beast and harder than stone'.¹⁰⁵

Structurally, it makes sense that the text ends with the English themselves (as God's chosen people) becoming missionaries. The idea that these missions went out to the most barbaric of races lends honour and pride to the missionaries Bede and others wrote hagiographies about. The interest in

missions to the northern periphery of *Germania* may also reverberate with a reminiscence of Acts 1.8, in which Jesus tells his disciples that they should teach the gospel to the far ends of the earth (*usque ad ultimum terrae*), a passage on which Bede picks up in one of his other books.¹⁰⁶ The story of missions to the pagan northerners is a fitting conclusion to Bede's history, which has traced how the English, themselves warlike peoples from the North, had been transformed into a holy nation through the influence of the Roman Church. At the time Bede was writing, they now establish themselves as a centre from which the glory of Christianity will radiate.

NOTES

1. Latin text and English translation are from *Bede's Ecclesiastical History*, ed. Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), if not otherwise indicated. Henceforth, references to this text are marked as *HE* in brackets.
2. See Michael Lapidge's attempt in *Anglo-Saxon Library* (New York; Oxford: OUP, 2006) at reconstructing inventories of Latin manuscripts in Britain showing the scale of these imports. For a list of books used by Bede, see appendix, 191–228.
3. Raphael Loewe, 'The Medieval History of the Latin Vulgate', in *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, ed. Peter Runham Ackroyd and G. W. H. Lampe, vol. 3 (repr. Cambridge: CUP 1993), 117–19 and 130.
4. ... *contigit gentem Pictorum de Scythia, ut perhibent, longis nauibus non multis Oceanum ingressam, circumagente flatu uentorum, extra fines omnes Britanniae Hiberniam peruenisse, eiusque septentrionales oras intrasse.*
5. The fifteenth-century *Scotichronicon* not only quotes extensively from Bede but also traces the Pictish homeland to the coast of the Baltic; see Paul Dunbavin, *Picts and Ancient Britons: An Exploration of Pictish Origins* (Nottingham: Third Millennium Publishing, 1998), 2. See also G. Mac Eoin, 'On the Irish Legend of Origin of the Picts', *Studia Hibernica* 4 (1964), 138–54. Most historians believe that they were a Celtic-speaking group. But throughout history, several attempts have been made at tracing the Picts to an origin in Scandinavia, most fervidly by the eighteenth-century antiquarian and anti-Celtic racist John Pinkerton; see *A Dissertation on the Origin of the Scythians or Goths*, appended with separate pagination to vol. 2 of *An Enquiry into the History of Scotland Preceding the Reign of Malcolm III* (London: George Nicol, 1789).
6. *Regum librum XXX quaestiones*, ed. D. Hurst, in *Bedae Venerabilis opera. Pars II, opera exegetica*, vol. 2 (Turnolti: Typographi Brepols Editores Pontificii, 1969), 317: *hoc qui in insula Thule quae ultra Britanniam est uel in ultimis Scytharum finibus degunt ... fieri uident.*
7. *Ravennatis anonymi cosmographia et guidonis geographica*, 1.12, ed. Joseph Schnetz, in *Itineraria Romana*, vol. 2 (Stuttgartiae: B. G. Teubneri, 1990), p. 11.
8. Ruth Morse, *Truth and Convention in the Middle Ages: Rhetoric, Representation and Reality* (Cambridge: CUP, 1991), 95.
9. Full text manuscripts survive from the tenth century or later. For original text and English translation, see *Gildas: The Ruin of Britain, and Other Works*,

- ed. and trans. Michael Winterbottom (London: Phillimore, 1978). Henceforth, references are to this edition cited by chapter number. The dating of *De excidio et conquestu Britanniae* is disputed. Gildas informs us in chapter 26 that he was born in the year of the siege of 'Mons Badonicus', 43 years and one month before the time he wrote the text at hand. There is no consensus on the date of this siege, which has been placed between the mid-fifth century to the first decades of the sixth century; see Patrick Sims-Williams, 'Gildas and the Anglo-Saxons', *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* 8 (1983): 3–5.
10. *Tunc Anglorum siue Saxonum gens, inuitata a rege praefato, Britanniam tribus longis naubus aduehitur ... Aduenerant autem de tribus Germaniae populis fortioribus, id est Saxonibus, Anglis, Iutis. De Iutarum origine sunt Cantuarii et Uictuarii, hoc est ea gens, quae Uectam tenet insulam, et ea, quae usque hodie in provincia Occidentali Saxonum Iutarum natio nominatur, posita contra ipsam insulam Uectam. De Saxonibus, id est ea regione, quae nunc Antiquorum Saxonum cognominatur, uenere Orientales Saxones, Meridiani Saxones, Occidui Saxones. Porro de Anglis, hoc est de illa patria, quae Angulus dicitur, et ab eo tempore usque hodie manere desertus inter prouincias Iutarum et Saxonum perhibetur, Orientales Angli, Mediterranei Angli, Merci, tota Nordanhymbrorum progenies, id est illarum gentium, quae ad Boream Humbri fluminis inhabitant, ceterique Anglorum populi sunt orti.*
 11. See Susan Reynolds, 'What Do We Mean by "Anglo-Saxon" and "Anglo-Saxons"?', *The Journal of British Studies* 24.4 (1985): 402.
 12. For the theme of military failings in Gildas' text, see N. J. Higham, *King Arthur: Myth-Making and History* (London: Routledge, 2002), 47.
 13. *Sed non tamen diuina pietas plebem suam, quam praesciuit, deseruit, quin multo digniores genti memoratae praecones veritatis, per quos crederet, destinavit.*
 14. Matthew Clark, *Exploring Greek Myth* (Chichester, West Sussex; Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 85.
 15. Tacitus, *De origine et situ Germanorum liber*, 2.2, ed. Alf Önnersfors (Stuttgart: B.G. Teubner, 1983), p. 2.
 16. See Matthew Innes, *Introduction to Early Medieval Western Europe, 300–900* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), 347.
 17. See David Dumville, 'The Tribal Hidage: An Introduction to Its Texts and Their History', in *Origins of Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms*, ed. Susan Bassett (Leicester: Leicester UP, 1989), 225–30.
 18. Ulf Näsman, 'The Ethnogenesis of the Danes and the Making of a Danish Kingdom', in *The Making of Kingdoms*, ed. Tania Dickinson and David Griffiths (Oxford: Oxford University Committee for Archaeology, 1999), 1–10, and 'The Justinianic Era of South Scandinavia: An Archaeological View', in *The Sixth Century: Production, Distribution and Demand*, ed. R. Hodges and W. Bowden (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 256–78.
 19. Tacitus, *De origine et situ Germanorum liber*, cc. 40–41, pp. 26–7.
 20. Pliny, *Naturalis historiae libri XXXVII*, 4.96, ed. Karl Mayhoff, vol. 1 (Lipsiae: B. G. Teubner, 1996), p. 345: *inmanem ad Cimbrorum usque promunturium efficit sinum, qui Codanus vocatur.*
 21. Ibid., 2.67, p. 101: *Septentrionalis Oceanus maiore ex parte navigatus est auspiciis diui Augusti Germaniam classe circumvecta ad circumvecta ad Cimbrorum promunturium et inde immenso mari prospecto aut fama cognito Scythicam ad plagam.*

22. For a discussion of the medieval meaning of *patria*, see Ernst Kantorowicz, 'Pro patria mori in Medieval Political Thought', in *Selected Studies* (Locust Valley: Augustin, 1965), 308–24.
23. Jennifer Neville, *Representations of the Natural World in Old English Poetry* (Cambridge: CUP, 1999), 167; Anthony D. Smith, *Chosen Peoples: Sacred Sources of National Identity* (Oxford: OUP, 2003), 145; for a counter-argument, see Andrew H. Merrills, *History and Geography in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: CUP, 2005), 294.
24. The name *Angeln* may also be related to the Old Norse adjective **ongr*, which means 'narrow', perhaps referring to a narrow fjord inlet. Again, the Schleswig area is a possibility. A thorough analysis combining etymology and geography is offered by Kristian Hald in 'Stednavne i Angel', in *Sydslesvig*, vol. 2 (Copenhagen: Reitzels Forlag, 1945), 70–84.
25. For a discussion of this passage, and geography in Homer, see Daniela Duck, *Geography in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge; New York: CUP, 2012), 20–2.
26. For the name *Fifeldor* as a cognate of the River Eider, see *Widsith*, ed. Kemp Malone (Copenhagen: Rosenkilde and Bagger, 1962), 204 note.
27. See also the reference to Offa in *Beowulf*, ll. 1949ff. The praises sung to the continental Offa may symbolically eulogize the later king, who ruled the Anglian kingdom of Mercia between 757 and 796. The two namesakes were also explicitly linked in *Vitae Duorum Offarum* (Lives of Two Offas), a work by an anonymous monk of St. Albans, probably written in the early thirteenth century.
28. For a discussion of the use of sources and legends in this text, see Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England I, c. 550–c. 1307* (1974; repr. London: Routledge: 1998), 6–7.
29. Nennius, *British History and The Welsh Annals*, ed. and trans. John Morris [Latin texts and English translations] (London: Phillimore, 1980), 69.
30. Sharon Turner, *History of the Anglo-Saxons* (London: T. Cadell, et al., 1799), 186–87.
31. Nennius, *British History*, 69. Around 1215, the statesman and writer Gervase of Tilbury, *Otia imperialia: Recreation for an Emperor*, 2.17, ed. and trans. S. E. Banks and J. W. Binns (Oxford: OUP, 2002), p. 418, cf. 2.10 (p. 306), wrote that the English came from *Engla insula*. This is most likely an interpretation of the passage from *Historia Brittonum*, since Gervase alludes to this work elsewhere in his text.
32. *Historia Brittonum, Chronica minora*, MGH AA 13, c. 37, ed. T. Mommsen (Berlin, 1898), 177: *Miserunt legatos; qui transfretantes scythiam*.
33. *Tithica* presumably refers to Tethys, a titanic sea goddess in Greek mythology; see *Medieval Latin Word-List from British and Irish Sources*, prepared by J. H. Baxter, C. Johnson and P. Abrahams, rev. ed. (Oxford: OUP, 1947), 431.
34. Bernard Cerquiglini, *Éloge de la variante: Histoire critique de la philologie* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1989).
35. For a discussion of the many voices in the text, see Irmeli Valtonen, *The North in The Old English Orosius: A Geographical Narrative in Context* (Helsinki: Société Néophilologique, 2008), 268–77.
36. *Ohthere's Voyages*, ed. Janet Bately and Anton Englert (Roskilde: Viking Ship Museum Roskilde, 2007), 47: *⁊ of Sciringes heale he cwæð þæt he seglode on fif dagan to þæm porte þe mon hæf æt Hæþum, se stendþ betuþ Winedum ⁊*

Seaxum 7 Angle on hyrð in on Dene. Ða he þiderweard seglode fram Sciringes heale, þa wæs him on þæt bæcbord Denamearc 7 on þæt steorbord Gotland 7 Sillende 7 iglanda fela – on þæm landum eardodon Engle, ær hi hider on land coman – 7 hym wæs ða tveogen dagas on ðæt bæcbord þa igland þe in Denemearce hyrað. For identifications of the place names, see *ibid.* 53 and 56.

37. See further Chapter Seven in the present study.
38. See *Annales regni Francorum*, MGH SRG 6, *sub anno* 815, p. 142. See also *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*, entry on *sin-*. But for a reading of *Sillende* as the island of Sealand, see John D. Niles, *Old English Heroic Poems and the Social Life of Texts* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 140.
39. For a thorough discussion and analysis of this etymology, see Ildar Garipzanov, 'Frontier Identities: Carolingian Frontier and the gens Danorum', in *Franks, Northmen, and Slavs: Identities and State Formation in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. Ildar H. Garipzanov, Patrick J. Geary, and Przemysław Urbanczyk (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), 129–30. Cf. Matthew Townend, *Language and History in Viking Age England: Linguistic Relations between Speakers of Old Norse and Old English* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002), 105.
40. *Æthelweard, Chronicle*, 1.4, ed. A. Campbell (London: Nelson, 1962), p. 9: *Anglia vetus sita est inter Saxones et Giotos, habens oppidum capitale quod sermone Saxonico Slesuuic nuncpatur, secundum vero Danos, Haithaby.* The two names are perhaps two different places. While the settlement today referred to as Haithabu is on the south side of the Schlei inlet, another settlement came about, at the same time, on the north side, now known as the town of Schleswig. This is presumably first mentioned (under the alternative name *Sliesthorp* [*thorp* = 'hamlet on the river Sli/Schlei'] in the royal Frankish chronicles of Einhard for the year 804; see *Annales regni Francorum*, p. 118. The closeness of these two settlements may have been the cause of some confusion among commentators.
41. Karl-Heinz Willroth, 'Zur Besiedlungsgeschichte des östlichen Schleswig im ersten nachchristlichen Jahrtausend', in *Niende tverfaglige Vikingesymposium Kiels Universitet*, ed. Dietrich Meier (Aarhus: Hikuin, 1990), 7–15; and Michael Müller-Wille, Walter Dorfler, Dietrich Meier and Helmut Kroll, 'The Transformation of Rural Society, Economy and Landscape during the First Millennium AD: Archaeological and Palaeobotanical Contributions from Northern Germany and Southern Scandinavia', in *Geografiska Annaler* 70.1 (1988): 53–68.
42. Helena Hamerow, *Early Medieval Settlements: The Archaeology of Rural Communities in Northwest Europe, 400–900* (Oxford: OUP, 2002), 110. For a summary of studies that document a decrease in settlements in Angeln, see Stefan Burmeister, 'Archaeology and Migration: Approaches to an Archaeological Proof of Migration', in *Current Anthropology* 41.4 (2000): esp. 550–51. See also Michael Gebühr, 'Angulus desertus?', in *Studien zur Sachsenforschung* 11 (1998): 43–85.
43. Altfrið, *Vita S. Liudgeri*, c. 11. MGH SS 2, ed. G. H. Pertz (Hannover, 1829), p. 407.
44. Albinus was educated by the Archbishop Theodore of Tarsus (602–690), a monk appointed by Pope Vitalian in 668. Theodore is one of Bede's heroes, whom he praises as a re-organizer of the Church (see *HE* 4.5, 4.17 and 4.21).
45. For the evidence of the existence of early written annals of Kentish and West Saxon history, see James Ingram, 'Introduction', in *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (El Paso: Norte Press, 2005), 13–16.

46. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition*, vol. 3, MS A, ed. Janet Bately (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1986), 17. The addition is late (presumably early 12th cent.). For information on the so-called 'hand 8' interpolater, see 'Introduction', xl.
47. As part of a legendary narrative, *Iuti* appears in *Annales Ryenses* (early 13th cent.), c. 3, in *Annales Danici Medii Aevi*, ed. Ellen Jørgensen (Copenhagen: C. E. C. Gad, 1920), p. 62; *Diplomatarium Danicum* 4:6 (1396–1398), ed. Aage Andersen (Copenhagen: C. A. Reitzels Forlag, 1998), pp. 11, 45, 303, 344, 370, 376, and 380. In Old Danish, the earliest records of Jutes name this people as *Iutæ(r)*, see *Ordbog over det Danske Sprog*, vol. 9 (Copenhagen: Nordisk Forlag, 1927), p. 932. For the etymology of the ethnonym, see G. Neumann 'Jüten', in RGA, 2nd edn, vol. 16 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2000), 93.
48. This and the following references can be found in J. B. Rives' commentary to Tacitus's *Germania* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 291.
49. For possible evidence of this cult, the two wagons found in a bog in Dejbjerg in Jutland (1st cent.) may recall the cultic cart described by Tacitus. See John McKinnell, *Meeting the Other in Norse Myth and Legend* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2005), 52.
50. Quoted in H. Munro Chadwick, *The Origin of the English Nation* (Cambridge: CUP, 1924), 92.
51. See Garipzanov, 'Frontier Identities', 121–5; and Inge Skovgaard-Petersen, 'The Making of the Danish Kingdoms', in *The Cambridge History of Scandinavia*, vol. 1, ed. Knut Helle (Cambridge: CUP, 2003), 168–83.
52. Procopius, *History of the Wars*, Greek and English texts, trans. H. B. Dewing (London: Loeb Classical Library, 1914–1940), 8.20.4–8.
53. For a discussion of Procopius' confusion, see E. A. Thompson, 'Procopius on Brittia and Britannia', *The Classical Quarterly*, n.s. 30.2 (1980): 498–507. When Procopius is definitely writing about Britain, it is in mythical terms as a place inhabited by the souls of the dead and that only serpents could live north of Hadrian's Wall.
54. For one example of this tendency, see George Caspar Homas, *Certainties and Doubts: Collected Papers, 1962–1985* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1987), 151.
55. For the elasticity of the ethnonym, see Jos. Bazelmans, 'The Early-Medieval Use of Ethnic Names from Classical Antiquity: The Case of the Frisians', in *Ethnic Constructs in Antiquity: The Role of Power and Tradition*, ed. Ton Derks (Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP, 2008), 321–37.
56. Fortunatus, *Carmina*, 9.1.73, *MGH Auct. ant.* 4.1. ed. F. Leo (Berlin, 1881), p. 203.
57. Harald Kleinschmidt, 'Bede and the Jutes: A Critique of Historiography', *North-Western European Language Evolution* 24 (1994): 24.
58. The first to make this observation was H.E. Walker in 'Bede and the *Gewissae*: The Political Evolution of the Heptarchy and Its Nomenclature', *Cambridge Historical Journal* 12 (1956): 174–86.
59. Barbara Yorke, *Wessex in the Early Middle Ages* (London: Leicester UP, 1995), 39; Cf. Chadwick, *Origin*, 4. Kleinschmidt, 'Bede and Jutes', 39 n 54, mentions other old place names outside of Hampshire that may be of interest. These are *Etingesheles*, presumably in Wiltshire, and *Yttinges blawe*, presumably in Berkshire.

60. Elmar Seebold, 'Kentish – and Old English Texts from Kent', in *Words, Texts and Manuscripts: Studies in Anglo-Saxon Culture Presented to Helmut Gneuss*, ed. Michael Korhammer (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1992), 409–34.
61. Elmar Seebold, 'Was ist jütisch? Was ist kentisch?', in *Britain 400–600: Language and History*, ed. Alfred Bammesberger and Alfred Wollman (Heidelberg: Winter, 1990), 335–52.
62. For a criticism of Seebold's collection of empirical evidence, see Peter Kitson, 'The Nature of Old English Dialect Distributions, Mainly as Considered in Charter Boundaries', *Medieval Dialectology*, ed. Jacek Fisiak (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1995), 118. For a suggestion that a Frisian influence is notable, see Graeme Trousdale, 'The Social Context of Kentish Raising: Issues in Old English Sociolinguistics', *International Journal of English Studies* 5.1 (2005): 59–76; and for a suggestion of a Frankish influence, see Fran Colman, 'Kentish Old English /: Orthographic "Archaism" or Evidence of Kentish Phonology?', *English Language and Linguistics* 8 (2004): 171–205.
63. The classic study is David DeCamp, 'The Genesis of the Old English Dialects: A New Hypothesis', *Language* 34.2 (1958), 232–44. For a recent update on the questions of Old English dialects, with some correctives of DeCamp's way of dividing them, see Richard Hogg, 'Old English Dialectology', in *The Handbook of the History of English*, ed. Ans van Kemenade and Bettelou Los. Blackwell Reference Online (2008). Accessed 16 June 2014.
64. J. N. L. Myres, *The English Settlements* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 49, 64–9, 95–7.
65. E. T. Leeds, 'Notes on Jutish Art in Kent between 450 and 575', in *Medieval Archaeology* 1 (1957): 5–26.
66. For discussions of archaeological sites in Kent and an assessment of the evidence of a Jutish identity, see Barbara Yorke, *The Conversion of Britain: Religion, Politics and Society in Britain C.600–800* (Harlow: Pearson/ Longman, 2006), 58; David Alban Hinton, *Gold and Gilt, Pots and Pins: Possessions and People in Medieval Britain* (Oxford: OUP, 2005), 26–8; Morten Axboe, *Die Goldbrakteaten der Völkerwanderungszeit: Herstellungs-probleme und Chronologie* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004), esp. 188–201, 224–8; Seiichi Suzuki, *Anglo-Saxon Button Brooches: Typology, Genealogy, Chronology* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2008), 102–41. Birte Bruggmann, 'The Role of Continental Artefact-Types in Sixth-Century Kent', in *The Pace of Change: Studies in Early-Medieval Chronology*, ed. John Hines, et al. (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1999), 37–51; Bruce Mitchell, *An Invitation to Old English and Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), 1 66–8; Barbara Yorke, *Wessex*, 36–7; John Hines, *Clasps: Hektespenner, Agraffen: Anglo-Scandinavian Clasps of Classes A-C of the Third to Sixth Centuries AD. Typology, Diffusion and Function* (Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1993); Sonia Chadwick Hawkes, 'Anglo-Saxon Kent c. 425–725', in *Archaeology in Kent to AD 1500*, ed. Peter Leach (London: Council for British Archaeology Research Report, 1982), 64–78.
67. Pernille Kruse, 'Jutes in Kent? On the Jutish Nature of Kent, Southern Hampshire and the Isle of Wight', *Probleme der Küstenforschung im Südlichen Nordseegebiet* 31(2007): 243–376.
68. C. J. Arnold, *Anglo Saxon Cemeteries of the Isle of Wight* (London: British Museum Publications, 1982), esp. 50–72, 102–9; Gale R. Owen-Crocker, *Dress in Anglo-Saxon England*, rev. ed. (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2004), 90–103.

- See also Katherina Ulmscheider, 'Archaeology, History and the Isle of Wight in the Middle Saxon Period', *Medieval Archaeology* 43 (1999): 19–44.
69. Egil Bakka, 'Scandinavian-Type Gold Bracteates in Kentish and Continental Grave Finds', in *Angles, Saxons and Jutes: Essays Presented to J. N. L. Myres*, ed. V. I. Evison (Oxford: Clarendon, 1981), 11–35. Cf. Charlotte Behr, 'New Bracteate Finds from Early Anglo-Saxon England', *Medieval Archaeology* 54 (2010): 34–88.
 70. Behr, 'New Bracteate Finds', 74.
 71. Robert W. Preucel, *Archaeological Semiotics* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2006), 143.
 72. Birgit Arhenius, 'Women and Gold: On the Role of Women in the Time of the Great Migration and Their Relationship to the Production and Distribution of Ornaments', in *Produksjon og Samfunn: Om erverv, spesialisering og bosetting i Norden i 1. årtusen e. Kr.*, ed. Heid Gjostein Resi (Oslo: Universitetet i Oslo, 1995), 85–96.
 73. Andrew Richardson, *Anglo-Saxon Cemeteries of Kent*, vol. 1 (Oxford: John and Erica Hodges, 2005), 251. For similar arguments, see also Kruse, 'Jutes in Kent?', 354.
 74. Richardson, *Anglo-Saxon Cemeteries of Kent*, 250.
 75. Barbara Yorke, 'Anglo-Saxon Gentes and Regna', in *Renga and Gentes: The Relationship between Late Antique and Early Medieval Peoples and Kingdoms in the Transformation of the Roman World*, ed. Hans-Werner Goetz, Jörg Jarnut and Walter Pohl (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2002), 403.
 76. Vera I. Evison, *The Fifth-Century Invasions South of the Thames* (London: Athlone Press, 1965).
 77. Birte Bruggmann, 'Britons, Angles, Saxons, Jutes, and Franks', *The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery on Mill Hill, Deal, Kent*, ed. K. Parfitt and B. Bruggmann (London: Society for Medieval Archaeology, 1997), 110–18; Nicholas Higham, *Rome, Britain and the Anglo-Saxons* (London: Seaby, 1992), 179. See also S. Marzinzik, 'The Earliest Anglo-Saxons? The Burial Site at Ringlemere Farm, East Kent, and Early Cross-Channel Migration', in *Studies in Early Anglo-Saxon Art and Archaeology: Papers in Honour of Martin G. Welch*, ed. S. Brookes, S. Harrington, and A. Reynolds (Oxford: Oxbow 2011), 55–61.
 78. Martin Welch, 'Contacts across the Channel between the Fifth and Seventh Centuries: A Review of the Archaeological Evidence', *Studien zur Sachsenforschung* 7 (1991): 267.
 79. For a discussion of the indications of Frankish overlordship in Kent, see Ian Wood, *The Merovingian North Sea* (Alingsås: Viktoria bokförlag, 1983), 12–14; and his later *The Merovingian Kingdoms 450–751* (London: Longman, 1994), 176. See also Joanna Story, *Carolingian Connections: Anglo-Saxon England and Carolingian Francia, c. 750–870* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 19–54; D. P. Kirby, *Earliest English Kings* (London: Routledge, 2000), 27; Paul Fouracre, 'The Franks', in *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Michael Lapidge, et al. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 193–4.
 80. For a detailed refutation of Frankish overlordship in England, see Roger Collins and Judith McClure, 'Rome, Canterbury, and Wearmouth-Jarrow: Three Viewpoints on Augustine's Mission', in *Cross, Crescent and Conversion: Studies on Medieval Spain and Christendom in Memory of Richard Fletcher*, ed. Simon Barton and Peter Linehan (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 32–6.

81. J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, *Early Germanic Kingship in England and on the Continent* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 32–44, notes that at least 19 of Æthelberht's 90 chapters have parallels in the Lex Salica.
82. Story, *Carolingian Connections*, 30.
83. See Nicholas Brooks, *Anglo-Saxon Myths: State and Church, 400–1066* (London: Hambledon, 2000), 46–7, who suggests that Frankish influence on Kent began in the second quarter of the sixth century.
84. E. T. Leeds, *Early Anglo-Saxon Art: Being the Rhind Lectures Delivered in Edinburgh, 1935* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1970), 41–51.
85. See N. J. Higham, *The Convert Kings: Power and Religious Affiliation in Early Anglo-Saxon England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 70–71.
86. See, for example, *Ravennatis anonymi Cosmographia* 5.30, p. 105; Cf. Ptolemy, *Geography*, 2.3, ed. Edward Luther Stevenson (New York: Dover, 1991), 51.
87. For a general discussion of this phenomenon, see Thomas A. Bredehoft, *Textual Histories: Readings in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 14–38.
88. Bernd Schneidmüller, 'Constructing the Past by Means of the Present: Historiographical Foundations of Medieval Institutions, Dynasties, Peoples, and Communities', in *Medieval Concepts of the Past: Ritual, Memory, Historiography*, ed. Gerd Althoff, Johannes Fried, and Patrick J. Geary (Cambridge: CUP, 2002), 167–192.
89. For a summary of English missions on the Continent, see Carole M. Cusack, *Conversion among the Germanic Peoples* (London: Cassell, 1998), 119–34.
90. Boniface, *Epistolae*, MGH, *Epist. selectae* 1, ed. M. Tangl (Berlin, 1916), p. 75: *De uno sanguine et de una osse sumus*.
91. *Quarum in Germania plurimas nouerat esse nationes, a quibus Angli uel Saxones, qui nunc Britanniam incolunt, genus et originem duxisse noscuntur; unde hactenus a uicina gente Brettonum corrupte Garmani nuncupantur. Sunt autem Fresones, Rugini, Danai, Hunni, Antiqui Saxones, Boructuari. Sunt alii per plures hisdem in partibus populi paganis adhuc ritibus seruientes, ad quos uenire praefatus Christi miles. ...*
92. For the distribution of references to Saxones and Angli used in the general sense to mean 'English' in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, see Merrills, *History*, 301–2.
93. Translating *uel* as 'or' makes more sense, not least since it then correlates with the earlier usage in *HE* 1.15, where Bede writes of the *Anglorum siue Saxonum gens* [nom. sing.]. The use of the singular when two items are separated by 'or' is a legitimate construction in Latin.
94. Michael Benskin, 'Bede's Frisians and the *Adventus Saxonum*', *NOWELE* 41 (2002): 91–7.
95. See Walter Pohl, 'Ethnic Names and Identities in the British Isles: A Comparative Perspective', in *The Anglo-Saxons: From the Migration Period to the Eighth Century: An Ethnographic Perspective*, ed. John Hines (Woodbridge: Suffolk, 1997), 15.
96. *The Cosmography of Aethicus Ister: Edition, Translation and Commentary*, c. 29, ed. and trans. Michael Herren (Brepols Publishers, 2011), pp. 28–9: *Sic et Vafros, Fricontas, Murrinos, Alapes, Turchus, Alanus, Meotas, Chugnos, Frigis, Danus, Vinnosus, Rifeos, Olches, quos vulgus Orcus in illis regionibus appellat, gentes spurcissimas hac uita immundissima, degentes ultra omnia regna*

terrarum, sine deo, sine lege vel caerimonias. Nam et illarum regionum pagi omnes Germania est appellata, eo quod sint immania corpora inmanesque nationes, seuissimis moribus duratae; adeo indomiti, frigore et rigore ferentes ultra omnes gentes.

97. Ibid., notes on 82–3.
98. For the changing ethos of warrior mentality to the 'soldier of Christ' metaphor in Anglo-Saxon writing, see John Edward Damon, *Soldier Saints and Holy Warriors: Warfare and Sanctity in the Literature of Early England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003). Damon treats Bede's attitude to war at length (35–55), concluding that he justified divinely granted victory that served the spread of Christianity, but abhorred pagan or un-Christian warfare.
99. Adam von Bremen, *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, 4.19–21, MGH SRG, ed. Bernhard Schmeidler, 3rd edn. (Hannover, 1917), pp. 246–52.
100. For many of the references in classical sources to the *Bructeri* harassing the Romans, see J. B. Rives' commentary in Tacitus, *Germania* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1999), 255–6. Bede mentions that this people were subdued by the Old Saxons in the early 690s (*HE* 5.11).
101. The poem is *Versus de Asia et de universi mundi rota*, l. 69, quoted in John Haywood, *Dark Age Naval Power: A Reassessment of Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Seafaring Activity* (London: Routledge: 1991), 183–4 note 55.
102. Ibid., 87–9.
103. Peter Heather, *The Goths* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 109–29.
104. Gregory of Tours, *Opera libri historiarum* X, 3.3, ed. B. Krusch and W. Levison, MGH SRM 1.1 (Hannover, 1937–1951), p. 99.
105. See Alcuin, *Willibrord – Apostel der Frisen: Seine Vita nach Alkuin und Thiofrid, Lateinisch-Deutsch*, c. 9, ed. H-J. Reischmann (Sigmaringendorf: Glock und Lutz, 1989), 60.
106. Bede, *De temporum ratione*, 1.64, *PL*. 90, col. 0518A.

REFERENCES

Primary Sources

- Adam von Bremen. *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, ed. Bernard Schmeidler, MGH SRG, 3rd edn. Hannover, 1917.
- [Aethicus Ister]. *The Cosmography of Aethicus Ister: Edition, Translation and Commentary*, ed. and trans. Michael Herren. Brepols Publishers, 2011.
- Alcuin. *Willibrord – Apostel der Frisen: Seine Vita nach Alkuin und Thiofrid, Lateinisch-Deutsch*, ed. H-J. Reischmann. Sigmaringendorf: Glock und Lutz, 1989.
- Altfred. *Vita S. Liudgeri*, ed. G. H. Pertz, MGH SS 2. Hannover, 1829.
- The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition*, vol. 3, MS A, ed. Janet Bately. Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1986.
- An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary, Based on the Manuscript Collections of Joseph Bosworth*, ed. and enlarged by T. Northcote Toller. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973.
- Annales regni Francorum* 6, ed. F. Kurze, MGH SRG 6. Hannover, 1895.
- Annales Ryenses, in Annales Danici Medii Aevi*, ed. Ellen Jørgensen. Copenhagen: C. E. C. Gad, 1920.
- Æthelweard. *The Chronicle of Æthelweard*, ed. Alistair Campbell. London: Nelson, 1962.

Bede. *De temporum ratione*, PL 90.

———. *Bede's Ecclesiastical History*, ed. Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972.

———. *Regum librum XXX quaestiones*, ed. D. Hurst. In *Beda's Venerabilis opera. Pars II, opera exegetica*, vol. 2. Turnolti: Typographi Brepols Editores Pontificii, 1969.

Boniface. *Epistolae*, ed. M. Tangl, *MGH Epist. selectae* 1. Berlin, 1916.

Diplomatarium Danicum (1396–1398), ed. Aage Andersen. Copenhagen: C. A. Reitzels Forlag, 1998.

Fortunatus. *Carmina*, ed. F. Leo, *MGH Auct. ant.* Berlin, 1881.

Gervase of Tilbury, *Otia imperialia: Recreation for an Emperor*, ed. and trans. S. E. Banks and J. W. Binns. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Gildas. *The Ruin of Britain, and Other Works*, ed. and trans. Michael Winterbottom. London: Phillimore, 1978.

Gregory of Tours, *Opera libri historiarum* X, 3.3, ed. B. Krusch and W. Levison, *MGH SRM* 1.1. Hannover, 1937–1951.

The Lives of Two Offas: Vitae Offarum Duorum, trans. and ed. Michael Swanton. Crediton: Medieval Press, 2010.

Nennius, *British History and The Welsh Annals*, ed. and trans. John Morris. London: Phillimore, 1980.

———. *Historia Brittonum cum additamentis Nennii*, ed. T. Mommsen, *MGH Chronica minora saec. IV. V. VI. VII.* 3. Berlin, 1888.

Ordbog over det Danske Sprog, vol. 9. Copenhagen: Nordisk Forlag, 1927.

Pliny. *Naturalis historiae libri XXXVII*, ed. L. Jan and K. Mayhoff. Monachii; Lipsiae: Saur, 1996–2002, 6 vols.

Procopius Caesariensis. *History of the Wars*, Greek and English texts, trans. H. B. Dewing. London: Loeb Classical Library, 1914–1940.

Ptolemy, Claudius. *The Geography of Ptolemy*, trans. and ed. Edward Luther Stevenson. [1932] repr. New York: Dover Publications, 1991.

Ravennatis anonymi cosmographia et guidonis geographica, ed. Joseph Schnetz, in *Itineraria Romana*, vol. 2. Stuttgartiae: B. G. Teubneri, 1990.

Tacitus, *Germania*, ed. J. B. Rives. Oxford: Clarendon, 1999.

———. *De origine et situ Germanorum liber*, ed. Alf Önnersfors. Stuttgart: B. G. Teubner, 1983.

Widsith, ed. Kemp Malone. Copenhagen: Rosenkilde and Bagger, 1962.

Secondary Sources

Arhenius, Birgit. 'Women and Gold: On the Role of Women in the Time of the Great Migration and Their Relationship to the Production and Distribution of Ornaments', in *Produksjon og Samfunn: Om erverv, spesialisering og bosetning i Norden i 1. årtusen e. Kr.*, ed. Heid Gjostein Resi, 85–96. Oslo: Universitetet i Oslo, 1995.

Arnold, C. J. *Anglo Saxon Cemeteries of the Isle of Wight*. London: British Museum Publications, 1982.

Axboe, Morten. *Die Goldbrakteatender Völkerwanderungszeit: Herstellungsprobleme und Chronologie*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004.

Bakka, Egil. 'Scandinavian-Type Gold Bracteates in Kentish and Continental Grave Finds', in *Angles, Saxons and Jutes: Essays Presented to J. N. L. Myres*, ed. V. I. Evison, 11–35. Oxford: Clarendon, 1981.

- Baxter, J. H., C. Johnson, and P. Abrahams. *Medieval Latin Word-List from British and Irish Sources*, rev. ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1947.
- Bazelmans, Jos. 'The Early-Medieval Use of Ethnic Names from Classical Antiquity: The Case of the Frisians', in *Ethnic Constructs in Antiquity: The Role of Power and Tradition*, ed. Ton Derks, 321–37. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008.
- Behr, Charlotte. 'New Bracteate Finds from Early Anglo-Saxon England', *Medieval Archaeology* 54 (2010): 34–88.
- Benskin, Michael. 'Bede's Frisians and the *Adventus Saxonum*', *NOWELE* 41 (2002): 91–7.
- Bredehoft, Thomas A. *Textual Histories: Readings in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001.
- Brooks, Nicholas. 'English Identity from Bede to the Millennium', *The Haskins Society Journal* 14 (2003): 33–51.
- . *Anglo-Saxon Myths: State and Church, 400–1066*. London: Hambledon, 2000.
- . *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury*. Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1984.
- Brugmann, Birte. 'The Role of Continental Artefact-Types in Sixth-Century Kent', in *The Pace of Change: Studies in Early-Medieval Chronology*, ed. John Hines et al., 37–51. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1999.
- . 'Britons, Angles, Saxons, Jutes, and Franks', *The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery on Mill Hill, Deal, Kent*, ed. K. Parfitt and B. Brugmann, 110–18. London: Society for Medieval Archaeology, 1997.
- Burmeister, Stefan. 'Archaeology and Migration: Approaches to an Archaeological Proof of Migration', *Current Anthropology* 41.4 (2000): 539–67.
- Cerquiglini, Bernard. *Éloge de la variante: Histoire critique de la philologie*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1989.
- Chadwick, Hector Munro. *The Origin of the English Nation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1924.
- Clark, Matthew. *Exploring Greek Myth*. Chichester, West Sussex; Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.
- Collins, Roger and Judith McClure. 'Rome, Canterbury, and Wearmouth-Jarrow: Three Viewpoints on Augustine's Mission', in *Cross, Crescent and Conversion: Studies on Medieval Spain and Christendom in Memory of Richard Fletcher*, ed. Simon Barton and Peter Linehan, 17–42. Leiden: Brill, 2008.
- Colman, Fran. 'Kentish Old English /: Orthographic "Archaism" or Evidence of Kentish Phonology?', *English Language and Linguistics* 8 (2004): 171–205.
- Cusack, Carole M. *Conversion among the Germanic Peoples*. London: Cassell, 1998.
- Dailey, E. T. A. 'The *Vita Gregorii* and Ethnogenesis in Anglo-Saxon Britain', *Northern History* 47.2 (2010): 195–207.
- Damon, John Edward. *Soldier Saints and Holy Warriors: Warfare and Sanctity in the Literature of Early England*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003.
- DeCamp, David. 'The Genesis of the Old English Dialects: A New Hypothesis', *Language* 34.2 (1958), 232–44.
- Duck, Daniela. *Geography in Classical Antiquity*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- Dumville, David. 'The Tribal Hidage: An Introduction to Its Texts and Their History', in *Origins of Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms*, ed. Susan Bassett, 225–30. Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1989.

- Dunbavin, Paul. *Picts and Ancient Britons: An Exploration of Pictish Origins*. Nottingham: Third Millennium Publishing, 1998.
- Eoin, G. Mac. 'On the Irish Legend of Origin of the Picts,' in *Studia Hibernica* 4 (1964): 138–54.
- Evison, Vera I. *The Fifth-Century Invasions South of the Thames*. London: Athlone Press, 1965.
- Fouracre, Paul. 'The Franks', in *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Michael Lapidge, et al. Oxford: Blackwell, 1999.
- Garipzanow, Ildar H. 'Frontier Identities: Carolingian Frontier and the gens Danorum', in *Franks, Northmen, and Slavs: Identities and State Formation in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. I. H. Garipzanov, P. J. Geary, and P. Urbańczyk, 113–42. Turnhout: Brepols, 2008.
- Gebühr, Michael. 'Angulus desertus?', *Studien zur Sachsenforschung* 11 (1998): 43–85.
- Gransden, Antonia. *Historical Writing in England I, c. 550–c. 1307*. [1974] London: Routledge: 1998.
- Hald, Kristian. 'Stednavne i Angel', in *Sydslesvig*, vol. 2. Copenhagen: Reitzels Forlag, 1945.
- Hamerow, Helena. *Early Medieval Settlements: The Archaeology of Rural Communities in Northwest Europe, 400–900*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Harris, Stephen J. 'Bede, Social Practice, and the Problem with Foreigners', in *Social Practice in the Middle Ages*, ed. Thomas H. Bestul and Thomas N. Hall, 97–110. Chicago: Illinois Medieval Association, 1997.
- Hawkes, Sonia Chadwick. 'Anglo-Saxon Kent c. 425–725', in *Archaeology in Kent to AD 1500*, ed. Peter Leach, 64–78. London: Council for British Archaeology Research Report, 1982.
- Haywood, John. *Dark Age Naval Power: A Reassessment of Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Seafaring Activity*. London: Routledge: 1991.
- Heather, Peter. *The Goths*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2006.
- Higham, N. J. *King Arthur: Myth-Making and History*. London: Routledge, 2002.
- . *The Convert Kings: Power and Religious Affiliation in Early Anglo-Saxon England*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997.
- . *Rome, Britain and the Anglo-Saxons*. London: Seaby, 1992.
- Hines, John. *Clasps: Hektespenner, Agraffen: Anglo-Scandinavian Clasps of Classes A-C of the Third to Sixth Centuries AD. Typology, Diffusion and Function*. Stockholm: Almquist and Wiksell, 1993.
- Hinton, David Alban. *Gold and Gilt, Pots and Pins: Possessions and People in Medieval Britain*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Hogg, Richard. 'Old English Dialectology', in *The Handbook of the History of English*, ed. Ans van Kemenade and Bettelou Los. Blackwell Reference Online (2008). Accessed 16 June 2014.
- Homas, George Caspar. *Certainties and Doubts: Collected Papers, 1962–1985*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1987.
- Ingram, James. 'Introduction' [1823], in *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, ed. and trans. James Ingram. El Paso: Norte Press, 2005.
- Innes, Matthew. *Introduction to Early Medieval Western Europe, 300–900*. London and New York: Routledge, 2007.
- Kantorowicz, Ernst. 'Pro patria mori in Medieval Political Thought', in *Selected Studies*, 308–24. Locust Valley: Augustin, 1965.
- Kirby, D. P. *Earliest English Kings*. London: Routledge, 2000.

- Peter Kitson, 'The Nature of Old English Dialect Distributions, Mainly as Considered in Charter Boundaries', *Medieval Dialectology*, ed. Jacek Fisiak, 43–136. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1995.
- Kleinschmidt, Harald. 'Bede and the Jutes: A Critique of Historiography', *North-Western European Language Evolution* 24 (1994): 21–46.
- Kruse, Pernille. 'Jutes in Kent? On the Jutish Nature of Kent, Southern Hampshire and the Isle of Wight', *Probleme der Küstenforschung im Südlichen Nordseegebiet* 31(2007): 243–376.
- Lapidge, Michael. *The Anglo-Saxon Library*. New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Leeds, E. T. *Early Anglo-Saxon Art: Being the Rhind Lectures Delivered in Edinburgh, 1935*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1970.
- . 'Notes on Jutish Art in Kent between 450 and 575', *Medieval Archaeology* 1 (1957): 5–26.
- Loewe, Raphael. 'The Medieval History of the Latin Vulgate', in *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, ed. Peter Runham Ackroyd and G. W. H. Lampe, vol. 3. 102–54. Repr. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Marzinzik, S. 'The Earliest Anglo-Saxons? The Burial Site at Ringlemere Farm, East Kent, and Early Cross-Channel Migration', in *Studies in Early Anglo-Saxon Art and Archaeology: Papers in Honour of Martin G. Welch*, ed. S. Brookes, S. Harrington, and A. Reynolds, 55–61. Oxford: Oxbow 2011.
- McKinnell, John. *Meeting the Other in Norse Myth and Legend*. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2005.
- Merrills, Andrew H. *History and Geography in Late Antiquity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Mitchell, Bruce. *An Invitation to Old English and Anglo-Saxon England*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1995.
- Morse, Ruth. *Truth and Convention in the Middle Ages: Rhetoric, Representation and Reality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Müller-Wille, Michael, Walter Dorfler, Dietrich Meier and Helmut Kroll. 'The Transformation of Rural Society, Economy and Landscape during the First Millennium AD: Archaeological and Palaeobotanical Contributions from Northern Germany and Southern Scandinavia', in *Geografiska Annaler* 70.1 (1988): 53–68.
- Myres, J. N. L., *The English Settlements*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989.
- Näsmann, Ulf. 'The Ethnogenesis of the Danes and the Making of a Danish Kingdom', in *The Making of Kingdoms*, ed. Tania Dickinson and David Griffiths. 1–10. Oxford: Oxford University Committee for Archaeology, 1999.
- . 'The Justinianic Era of South Scandinavia: An Archaeological View', in *The Sixth Century: Production, Distribution and Demand*, ed. R. Hodges and W. Bowden. 1–10, Leiden: Brill, 1998.
- Neville, Jennifer. *Representations of the Natural World in Old English Poetry*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Neumann, G. 'Jüten'. *Reallexikon der germanischen Altertumskunde*, ed. Johannes Hoops, 2nd edn., vol. 16. 92–100. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2000.
- Niles, John D. *Old English Heroic Poems and the Social Life of Texts*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2007.
- Ohthere's Voyages: A Late 9th-Century Account of Voyages along the Coasts of Norway and Denmark and Its Cultural Context*, ed. Janet Bately and Anton Englert, 40–59. Roskilde: Viking Ship Museum Roskilde, 2007.

- Owen-Crocker, Gale R. *Dress in Anglo-Saxon England*, rev. ed. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2004.
- Pinkerton, John. A Dissertation on the Origin of the Scythians or Goths, in *An Enquiry into the History of Scotland Preceding the Reign of Malcolm III*, vol. 2. London: George Nicol, 1789.
- Pohl, Walter. 'Ethnic Names and Identities in the British Isles: A Comparative Perspective', in *The Anglo-Saxons: From the Migration Period to the Eight Century: An Ethnographic Perspective*, ed. John Hines. 7–31. Woodbridge: Suffolk, 1997.
- Preucel, Robert W. *Archaeological Semiotics*. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2006.
- Reynolds, Susan. 'What Do We Mean by "Anglo-Saxon" and "Anglo-Saxons"?' *The Journal of British Studies* 24.4 (1985), 395–414.
- Richardson, Andrew. *Anglo-Saxon Cemeteries of Kent*, vol. 1. Oxford: John and Erica Hodges, 2005.
- Schneidmüller, Bernd. 'Constructing the Past by Means of the Present: Historiographical Foundations of Medieval Institutions, Dynasties, Peoples, and Communities', in *Medieval Concepts of the Past: Ritual, Memory, Historiography*, ed. Gerd Althoff, Johannes Fried, and Patrick J. Geary. 167–192. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Seebold, Elmar. 'Kentish – and Old English Texts from Kent', in *Words, Texts and Manuscripts: Studies in Anglo-Saxon Culture Presented to Helmut Gneuss*, ed. Michael Korhammer, 409–34. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1992.
- . 'Was ist jütisch? Was ist kentisch?', in *Britain 400–600: Language and History*, ed. Alfred Bammesberger and Alfred Wollman, 335–52. Heidelberg: Winter, 1990.
- Sims-Williams, Patrick. 'Gildas and the Anglo-Saxons', *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* 8 (1983): 1–30.
- Skovgaard-Petersen, Inge. 'The Making of the Danish Kingdoms', in *The Cambridge History of Scandinavia*, vol. 1, ed. Knut Helle, 168–83. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Smith, Anthony D. *Chosen Peoples: Sacred Sources of National Identity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Story, Joanna. *Carolingian Connections: Anglo-Saxon England and Carolingian Francia, c. 750–870*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003.
- Suzuki, Seiichi. *Anglo-Saxon Button Brooches: Typology, Genealogy, Chronology*. Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2008.
- Thompson, E. A. 'Procopius on Brittia and Britannia', *The Classical Quarterly*, n.s. 30.2 (1980): 498–507.
- Townend, Matthew. *Language and History in Viking Age England: Linguistic Relations between Speakers of Old Norse and Old English*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2002.
- Trousedale, Graeme. 'The Social Context of Kentish Raising: Issues in Old English Sociolinguistics', *International Journal of English Studies* 5.1 (2005): 59–76.
- Turner, Sharon. *History of the Anglo-Saxons*. London: T. Cadell, et al., 1799.
- Ulmschneider, Katherina. 'Archaeology, History and the Isle of Wight in the Middle Saxon Period', *Medieval Archaeology* 43 (1999): 19–44.
- Valtonen, Irmeli. *The North in the Old English Orosius: A Geographical Narrative in Context*. Helsinki: Société Néophilologique, 2008.

- Walker, H. E. 'Bede and the *Gewissae*: The Political Evolution of the Heptarchy and Its Nomenclature', *Cambridge Historical Journal* 12 (1956): 174–86.
- Wallace-Hadrill, John Michael. *Early Germanic Kingship in England and on the Continent*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971.
- Welch, Martin. 'Contacts across the Channel between the Fifth and Seventh Centuries: A Review of the Archaeological Evidence', in *Studien zur Sachsenforschung* 7 (1991): 261–9.
- Willroth, Karl-Heinz. 'Zur Besiedlungsgeschichte des östlichen Schleswig im ersten nachchristlichen Jahrtausend', in *Niende tværfaglige Vikingesymposium Kiels Universitet*, ed. Dietrich Meier. 7–15. Aarhus: Hikuin, 1990.
- Wormald, Patrick. 'Bede, the Bretwaldas and the Origins of the *gens Anglorum*', in *Ideal and Reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society*, ed. P. Wormald, 99–129. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983.
- Yorke, Barbara. *The Conversion of Britain: Religion, Politics and Society in Britain C.600–800*. Harlow: Pearson/ Longman, 2006.
- . 'Anglo-Saxon *Gentes* and *Regna*', in *Regna and Gentes: The Relationship between Late Antique and Early Medieval Peoples and Kingdoms in the Transformation of the Roman World*, ed. Hans-Werner Goetz, Jörg Jarnut and Walter Pohl. 380–407. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2002.
- . *Wessex in the Early Middle Ages*. London: Leicester University Press, 1995.
- Wood, Ian. *The Merovingian Kingdoms 450–751*. London: Longman, 1994.
- . *The Merovingian North Sea*. Alingsås: Viktoria bokförlag, 1983.

5 Northumbrian Angels in Rome

Religion, Race and Politics in the Anecdote of St. Gregory

This chapter examines one of the most memorable anecdotes to come out of the Middle Ages: the legend of Gregory I's encounter with Anglian boys from Britain. The legend takes the form of an anecdote which dramatizes Gregory's decision to launch a mission to Britain. Allegedly, Gregory, who was later pope (590–604), lent spiritual meaning to the incident and to the barbarian boys he observed. Their name, *Angli*, sounded similar to 'angels', and their white skin and pleasing exterior made them appear angelic. The boys' beauty was more than skin deep, however. Gregory realized that they were divine signs sent to him: the pagans of Britain had been chosen for salvation. What we get is therefore an anecdote that mixes idea of racial origins and spiritual ideas in interesting ways.

The story is repeated in many places: the source text for these retellings is Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* (hereafter *Ecclesiastical History*), completed in 731. There is an earlier version in the *Vita S. Gregorii* (hereafter *Vita*), the life of Pope Gregory I, written some time between 704 and 713–714.¹ Internal evidence tells us that the *Vita* was composed in the monastery at *Streoneshealh*, the historical name for the coastal town of Whitby (although a monastery at Strensall, further inland, has also been suggested).²

The legend's origin is unknown, so any attempt at understanding its meaning must rely on the references in the texts and also on the context in which it has survived. Since the two earliest surviving versions derive from Northumbria, the legend is re-inserted into the late seventh- and early eighth-century religious, political and ethnic issues in this region. As critical departures, it is argued that the anecdote was created in England (rather than Rome), that it was used to reinforce specific discourses designed to earn religious capital for the church in Northumbria, and also that it must be directly related to competition between monasteries in the region. A number of core elements can be identified – most clearly the idea that the Angles were a Northern pagan people who were predestined for salvation. We also find a version of the salvation narrative mentioned in previous chapters: the pagan past of the North is emphasized in order to make the conversion to Christianity stand out with more clarity and grandeur. But the story cannot be read in isolation. Its meaning is activated differently within the two texts. It is my contention that the legend is given a pointed political meaning in the

Vita, but repurposed to new ends in Bede's history. Since we are here able to trace the origins of the manuscripts, it is also possible to reason on how such ethnic origin stories were utilized within social contexts.

SOURCES, ORIGINS, AND ADAPTATIONS

The legend in the *Vita* appears as follows:

So we must not pass over in silence how, through the Spirit of God and with the incomparable discernment of his inward eye, he foresaw and made provision for our conversion to God. There is a story told by the faithful that, before he became pope, there came to Rome certain people of our nation, fair-skinned and light-haired. When he heard of their arrival he was eager to see them; being prompted by a fortunate intuition, being puzzled by their new and unusual appearance, and, above all, being inspired by God, he received them and asked what race they belonged to. (Now some say they were beautiful boys, while others say that they were curly-haired, handsome youths.) They answered, 'The people we belong to are called Angles.' 'Angels of God', he replied. Then he asked further, 'What is the name of the king of that people?' They said, 'Ælli', whereupon he said, 'Alleluia, God's praise must be heard there.' Then he asked the name of their own tribe, to which they answered 'Deire', and he replied, 'They shall flee from the wrath of God to the faith'. (*Vita* 9)³

The second appearance of the legend is given the following formulation in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*:

We must not fail to relate the story about St. Gregory which has come down to us as a tradition of our forefathers. It explains the reason why he showed such earnest solicitude for the salvation of our race. It is said that one day, soon after some merchants had arrived in Rome, a quantity of merchandise was exposed for sale in the market place. Crowds came to buy and Gregory too amongst them. As well as other merchandise he saw some boys put up for sale, with fair complexions, handsome faces, and lovely hair. On seeing them he asked, so it is said, from what region or land they had been brought. He was told that they came from the island of Britain, whose inhabitants were like that in appearance. He asked them again whether those islanders were Christians or still entangled in the errors of heathenism. He was told that they were heathen. Then with a deep-drawn sigh he said, 'Alas that the author of darkness should have men so bright of face in his grip, and that minds devoid of inward grace should bear so graceful an outward form.' Again he asked the name of the race. He was told

that they were called *Angli*. 'Good', he said, 'they have the face of angels, and such men should be fellow-heirs of the angels in heaven.' 'What is the name', he asked, 'of the kingdom from which they have been brought?' He was told that the men of the kingdom were called *Deiri*. 'Deiri', he replied, 'De ira! Good! Snatched from the wrath of Christ and called to his mercy. And what is the name of the king of that land?' He was told that it was *Ælle*; and playing on the name, he said, 'Alleluia! The praise of God the Creator must be sung in those parts'. (*HE* 2.1)⁴

The legend belongs with reverential literature about Gregory produced in Anglo-Saxon England. It was Theodore of Tarsus, archbishop of Canterbury (669–90), who was especially responsible for promoting Gregory's veneration. Subsequently, altars were established in Gregory's honour not only at Canterbury, but also in the north of England, at Whitby and York.⁵ We know that some relics of Gregory were sent from Rome in the late 660s to King Oswiu of Northumbria in order to promote the memory of the pope in England.⁶

The legend hinges on Gregory applying exegetical insights to interpret the youths' unusual looks and the pagan names associated with them. This is evident in the Whitby version, where 'the incomparable discernment' of Gregory's 'inward eye' (*Vita* 9) is praised. The legend eulogizes Gregory's ability to read the pagan youths as divine signs. It is by the strength of his interpretation that Gregory realizes that he must launch a mission to Britain. This might be seen as a celebration of Gregory's reputation as an exegete; in fact, the pattern of 'exterior words' leading to interior insight was a recognizable *leitmotif* in his exegetical practice.⁷ The Whitby version explicitly casts the youths as signs revealing God's providential design. In the *Vita*, we are told that Gregory asks for the boys to be brought before him, since he was 'prompted by a fortunate intuition' and 'inspired by God'. Later, in chapter 13, the Whitby writer sets out to prove that the names revealed at the interview do indeed contain divine meanings by performing a detailed exegesis of the punning wordplay.

To understand the function of this legend, we must first understand its form. Anecdotes were commonplace in writing medieval history.⁸ They often functioned as stories that retrospectively, and often imaginatively, explained the origin of an observable fact. The anecdote of the Roman market provides an etiology for the establishment of the Anglo-Roman Church. Bede interjects the phrases *dicunt quia* ('they say that') and *ut aiunt* ('as is said that') to make clear that the story is not on a par with the information he takes directly from Gregory's writings and letters reproduced elsewhere in *Ecclesiastical History*. However, it does not follow that Bede thereby doubts the validity of the story. It only means that he realizes it is of a different order to the other information about Gregory that he had at his disposal. Like the miracles associated with saints (which Bede also reports), the story has a spiritual significance whose veracity is not questioned.

We may therefore begin our examination of the legend by probing its relationship to verifiable history. In 596, Gregory dispatched the monk Augustine with 40 missionaries, all hailing from Gregory's monastery on the Cælian Hill at Rome, to evangelize the pagans in Britain. The following year, the missionaries arrived in Kent, where King Æthelberht gave them his protection. But the assertion that the mission to Britain sprung from an encounter with *Angli* in Rome is suspicious. As long ago as 1835, Henry Soames observed that the legend pretends that 'political motives' for Gregory's enterprise were ignored by 'those who deeply venerated the see of Rome'.⁹ Neither the Whitby writer nor Bede leaves any room for considering the mission as a result of the opening offered to Gregory by the marriage of King Æthelberht of Kent (d. 616) to a Christian princess from Francia; but we should not expect a legend of Gregory in the hagiographical mode to take the form of critical history.

In a letter of July 598 from Gregory to Candidus, the presbyter in Gaul, the pope describes how he has sent missionaries to the *gens Anglorum* and already baptized more than 10,000 of this people *in mundi angulo posita* ('in a corner of the world').¹⁰ If this is a pun, it is Gregory's only ascertainable verbal play on the *Angli*. There are no angels here, but the sense of a people whose name reflects their location on the periphery of the known world.

By stressing Britain as geographically marginal, Gregory pointed to the phenomenal reach of Rome's new Christian empire. That a far northern corner of the known world was now converted to the one true Church reverberates with the biblical significance of Jesus' injunction to preach the gospel to the ends of the earth. The northern people who had migrated to Britain continued to exist in a northern corner of the known world. The tenth-century chronicler Widukind of Corvey gives the name of the Anglo-Saxons a geographical qualification, referring to Britain as in the remote corner (*angulus*) of the ocean.¹¹ It was not until the early eleventh century that the two senses – *angeli* (angels) and *angulus* (corner of the world) – were pulled together by the chronicler Thietmar of Merseburg.¹²

However, the legend has more narrow application than the general sense of English. It makes the claim that the northern kingdom of Deira was a particular focus for Gregory in launching a mission to Britain.¹³ This does not appear to stand up to scrutiny. In a letter from c. 601 to Augustine, Pope Gregory writes that he intends York to be a second bishopric along with the one he hoped would be established at London.¹⁴ Although York was the capital of Deira, Gregory nowhere expresses any particular affection for the Deiran people, nor does he mention their name in any of his letters. York seems to be mentioned entirely out of a desire to base the Christian mission at locations that had been important during the Roman occupation of Britain.¹⁵

If Gregory really nurtured a zeal for converting the subjects of King Ælle in Deira and believed this to be a mission that was pointed out to him by

God, one would presume that a delegation would have been sent to this northern part of Britain soon after the Roman missionaries had arrived. This did not happen. Ælle died in 588 (according to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*) without accepting the Christian faith. But Ælle's son Edwin was baptized, as were his chief men, on 12 April 627 (*HE* 2.14) – that is, more than 30 years after the Gregorian mission landed in Kent. The Roman Bishop Paulinus of York, who performed the baptism, may have evangelised Edwin since 625, but Paulinus only arrived in Britain in 604 as part of the second group of missionaries to be sent to Britain. He spent several years in Kent with no apparent interest in the northern kingdoms, only travelling to Northumbria when he was chosen as escort to Edwin's bride, Æthelburg, the sister of Eadbald of Kent.

It is the main argument of this chapter that this Northumbrian 'spin' on historical facts is of central importance to understanding the origin and meaning of the anecdote. Both Michael Richter and Alan Thacker have argued that the anecdote, in its main essentials, came from Rome and perhaps from Gregory himself, with Archbishop Theodore of Canterbury as a candidate for bringing it to England.¹⁶ However, the story is not recorded in any official papal documents, and, if it came from Gregory himself, one might expect that it would also have appeared in early texts from Canterbury or other strongholds of the Roman mission. Even if we were to believe that a legend of an encounter was circulated in Rome, it is unlikely that – at best – it would have been more than a skeleton of the story that made it to England. For Gregory's Roman compatriots, the Old English names would be little more than foreign noise, names that may well be willingly misconstrued at first hearing but not easily remembered nor repeated, as the political references were unfamiliar. Germanic words are cited in Latin texts, often those with an ethnographical purpose, but the wordplay in the versions that have survived only makes any real sense for speakers of Old English who were also familiar with Latin.

The *Vita*, which contains the earliest extant version of the legend, makes clear that it was a tradition told by the faithful (*igitur narratio fidelum*) (*Vita* 9). The anonymous author also indicates that more than one version of the legend circulated (perhaps orally): 'some say they were beautiful boys, while others say that they were curly-haired youths'. There is not only a possible discrepancy between the sources used for the Whitby writer's version, but the *Vita* also differs in some respects from that presented in Bede's text, most notably in making the youths slaves rather than freemen. There was evidently an attempt to work the idea of ethnic origins in several ways. The notion of beauty and youthful strength is a notion that we have seen in other versions of origin legends, most notably Paul the Deacon's story of Ybor and Agio in *Historia Longobardorum*. In Langobardic texts, we generally see a focus on election – the idea of a pagan people picked out for salvation – as discussed in Chapter Three of the present study.

Bede also gives the impression that the anecdote was widely known, but he says nothing about its origin, or his own source for it. The differences may partly come from variations in a tradition that was current in Northumbria; but, as we will see, the legend is used to slightly different ends in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* and the *Vita*. Since the Whitby text is the only other earlier version of the story, and all later redactions appear to rely on Bede, it is hard to ascertain the extent to which Bede's differences are additions of his own. Discussion continues over whether Bede knew the Whitby text.¹⁷ In both texts, the episode is introduced in a conspicuously similar manner. Bede and the anonymous writer begin with the statement that they cannot let this story pass 'in silence'. This similarity may mean little, however, since Bede uses variations on this formulation as a stock phrase throughout the *Ecclesiastical History*.¹⁸ Other elements of this text suggest that Bede was not aware of the Whitby text. For example, the *Vita* records how the remains of King Edwin (d. 633), ruler of both the kingdoms of Deira and Bernicia, were translated to the monastery at Whitby from Hatfield Chase, where he had been killed half a century earlier (*Vita* 18–19). Bede does not mention any such translation; he only notes that Edwin was buried there (*HE* 3.24). However, that Bede should not have known another Northumbrian text, written shortly before his own, with the same purpose of praising Gregory and the Roman mission in Northumbria, is hardly plausible. Monastic competition may be a factor: Bede may have avoided drawing on the *Vita* as a reference for the Gregorian mission because, as we shall see, the *Vita* claimed a privileged status for the monastery at Whitby in regard to Edwin's heritage and thereby also the Roman mission – both of which the text directly relates to the legend of the *Angli* in Rome. In one passage (*HE* 2.20), Bede notes that King Edwin's head was carried to York and placed in the church of St. Peter the Apostle, indicating that York also had a claim to be a centre for reverence of Edwin.¹⁹

The Anecdote as Origin Legend

On the most basic level, the anecdote is a story concerned with the foundation of the Anglo-Roman Church in Britain; but, to my knowledge, it has not been noted how the anecdote shares certain general characteristics with vernacular Anglo-Saxon legends of origin. The following examines how the legend of Gregory and the *Angli* is employed in the *Vita* and the *Ecclesiastical History* in a way specifically concerned with the making of the *gens Anglorum* in Britain and, more specifically, a people faithful to Roman orthodoxy in Northumbria.

The first chapter of Book 2 of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* begins with a long biography of Gregory in a Roman context. The scene in the marketplace is the concluding episode, marking the transition to the history of the Gregorian mission in Anglo-Saxon Britain. This roughly parallels the structure of Book 1. Here, Bede begins with an account of Rome's

imperial interest in Britain. As discussed in the last chapter, the transition to Anglo-Saxon history is marked here by the introduction of an origin legend in ch. 15, which details the coming of the three invading tribes from *Germania*. The pagan tribe known as the *Angli* is traced to a continental homeland named *Angulus*, thereby giving a secular geographical explanation for the name. The anecdote in Book 2 narrates how Gregory gave the *Angli* a new Christian meaning. Bede uses it as a foundation story for the *gens Anglorum* under the auspices of the Roman Church. If the origin legend in Book 1 is concerned with the conquest of land in Britain, the anecdote in Book 2 is focused on the conquest and salvation of souls. The attainment of a new kingdom is made explicit in the legal metaphor that the *Angli* are the rightful 'fellow-heirs' (*coheredes*) to God's kingdom. This brings to mind Romans 8:17, where the term is also used. The Epistle to the Romans was composed by the Apostle Paul specifically to give an account of the early conversion to Christianity in Rome. The idea that the *Angli* could parallel or emulate the conversion of the once gentile Romans had great typological significance for adherents of the Roman Church in Britain.

In the vernacular origin legends, founding figures are given names that serve as an etiology for various names by means of linguistic back-formation. In the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, for example, the hero Cerdic is related to the place called *Cerdicesora* (Cerdic's Shore) (preface and *sub anno* 495).²⁰ For the year 501, we learn that the warrior-hero Port came to Britain 'at a place called *Portesmūpa*' (Portsmouth), although the place-name is derived from the Latin *portus* (harbour) and the Old English for mouth, i.e. 'the mouth of the harbour'. A similar pattern of etymology is found in relation to the name Wihtgar, which is suspiciously appropriate for someone who takes possession of the Isle of Wight (*Wiht ealand*) (*sub anno* 534). In the anecdote about the boys, the name of the *Angli* can in much the same way be seen to 'explain' why Gregory preferred to use the word when writing about the Germanic-speaking people in Britain. The anecdote may rely on the example of Gregory, who, in his extant 29 letters, refers to the mission among the pagans in Britain, using *Angli* in reference to the expansive sense of 'English'.²¹

The *Angli/Angeli* pun associates the ethnonym with the quality of 'elect-ness'. The idea that the name of a people reflected their characteristics was a familiar theme in medieval writing. The unsurpassed authority for the meaning of ethnic nomenclature was Isidore of Seville's *Etymology* (early seventh century). The Saxons are implicitly connected with the Latin for 'rock', as a sign of their toughness (9.2.100), and the Britons are 'brute' (*bruti*), lacking civilization (9.2.102). Here, the ethnic stereotyping is clear. Barbarians are associated with a wildness of spirit, as in the case of the Franks (9.2.101), whose name Isidore notes some have traced back to *feritas* (ferocity). For another people of Britain, the Picts, Isidore relates their name to their painted bodies (19.23.7); the *Scotti* are named likewise, when one uses the meaning in their own language (9.2.103). Somewhat in contrast to

this are the Gauls, whose ethnic name is connected with their 'white bodies' (*Galli a candore corporis nuncupati sunt*). Isidore tells us that this is because the *Galli* derive their name from the Greek word for milk (9.2.104).²²

The legend of the *Angli* in the marketplace takes up a similar speculation on the meaning of an ethnonym. What sets the *Angli* apart from other barbarians is also their northern whiteness, but this time it is related to the spiritual nourishment they will receive from heaven. The fact that Isidore does not mention the name *Angli* made it possible to attribute holy meaning to this term. Thus, an etymological (and spiritual) space was left open for the *Angli* to become fellow-heirs with God's angels, traditionally described as white.

In the Whitby text, the anecdote displays the lineaments of vernacular origin legends insofar as it is implied the youths interviewed by Gregory will be the first to be converted among their race. If it can further be assumed that they will return to help the mission among their kin, these *Angli* echo the function of 'founding figures' in vernacular legend, as the spearheads of a new people. If we extend this to the *Ecclesiastical History*, Bede's specification that the boys are two in number (rather than the Whitby writer's indeterminate group of *Angli*) is concordant with legends in which two founding figures, often represented as brothers or otherwise related, appear to have been almost a requirement, as in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which includes the legends of Hengist and Horsa (*sub anno* 449), whom Bede also mentions (*HE* 1.15), as well as Cynric and Cerdic (*sub anno* 495), Bieda and Mægla (*sub anno* 501), and Stuf and Wihtgar (*sub anno* 514).²³

The fact that Bede identifies the youths as forced labourers or slaves to be sold in the market makes them less likely candidates for the status of founding figures. Nonetheless, the practice of training pagan slaves to become missionaries may have provided inspiration for the version found in Bede's text.²⁴ In a letter of September 595, Gregory orders the priest Candidus, who was setting out for Gaul, to buy in the slave-markets English boys (*pueros Anglos*) aged 17 or 18, so that they could be trained in monasteries. This was presumably with a view to sending them to Britain to help the mission there.²⁵ This letter may not have been known in Anglo-Saxon Britain, but the practice of ransoming slaves to use them as missionaries was a familiar one. For instance, Bede notes that St. Aidan bought slaves for this purpose (*HE* 3.5). It has not been appreciated the extent to which the slave theme lends itself to a figurative reading in this respect. In the lead-up to the passage on Gregory in the marketplace, Bede quotes Gregory from *Moralia* on how the pope stopped the 'barbarous motions' (*barbaros motus*) of the Germanic pagans in Britain, so what 'earthly princes could not subdue with the sword' are now 'repressed with a simple word from the lips of priests' (*HE* 2.1). This is a gloss on the entire narrative arc presented in the *Ecclesiastical History*. Like the boys in the marketplace, the Germanic tribes start out as subjected to heathen rulers. However, the Roman mission to England (which we are to understand began to germinate in Gregory's mind with this

encounter) will in time replace pagan rapaciousness with the benign enslavement to the fear of God. The indication is here that a people's enslavement to heathen lords is an undesirable state of social affairs, whereas being a slave to God (and by implication the Church) is a beneficial state.

It is notable that Bede provides no origin legends for how Northumbria was taken from the British, as he does for Kent (*HE* 1.15). It is not known to what extent Northumbrian origin legends circulated, but David Rollason has pointed to the information given in the Cambro-Latin *Historia Brittonum* (the earliest manuscript of which was produced c. 830) of Octha and Ebissa, two sons of Hengist, and their military campaigns in the north, as potentially a reflection of such a legend.²⁶ This legend may have developed after Bede wrote, or he may have chosen to omit this or other tales in order to give the story of Northumbria primarily in Christian terms.²⁷ In other words, Bede presents the beginning of Northumbria as taking place in Rome.

Similarly, the Whitby writer is keen to give the impression that the Gregorian mission hinged on the conversion of King Edwin, who is described as the foremost of kings 'from the time when the English first came to this island' (*a tempore quo gens Angulorum hanc ingreditur insulam*) (*Vita* 12). In fact, Edwin's role in introducing the Roman mission to his northern kingdoms of Deira and Bernicia, both of which he ruled, takes up nearly a quarter of the *Vita*. Even if *Angli/Anguli* is used in an inclusive fashion in this text for 'the English', there is a clear northern patriotism to be traced in the representation of the Gregorian mission and its aims. As Ian Wood points out, it is remarkable that the Whitby text speaks of Edwin and the northern mission extensively while only giving the mission in Kent cursory attention – no more than two sentences.²⁸ In this way, the anecdote manipulates a 'backdating' of a Northumbrian link with Rome and thereby alleviates the embarrassing fact that many religious communities in the region were late-comers to the Roman tradition. As is well known, the Northumbrian King Oswiu only decided at the Synod of Whitby in 664 that religious practice in his kingdom should follow the Roman customs for celebrating Easter and tonsure. Up until then, Irish practices had been the main impulse. This was because the Roman mission in Northumbria had fallen into disarray after Edwin's death in 633. Edwin was followed by apostate kings, leaving Paulinus to flee back to Kent (*HE* 2.20). Subsequently, missionary efforts in the north were largely left to Irish missionaries. Among the best known of these was Aidan of Lindisfarne (d. 651). When the Northumbrian noble, Wilfrid (d. 709), obtained the see of York in c. 669, he found the stone buildings of the Roman church there in bad repair.²⁹

The way in which the legend manipulates an original connection between the Roman mission and Deiran youths is particularly pertinent to the Whitby writer, whose monastery had followed the practices of Iona rather than Rome until the synod of 664. The legend also had significance for another Romanist writer: Bede, who adapted the anecdote to underpin a

special status for Northumbria in the history of the Anglo-Roman Church. As in the *Vita*, Bede's emphasis on the Northumbrian conversion takes up an unwarranted amount of space, at least if one expects the *Ecclesiastical History* to be a history of the conversion of the English people at large.

In 1.15, Bede connects the name of *Angli* to the northern part of *Germania* named *Angulus*, as we saw in the previous chapter. The use of this specific location points to the fact that there was an interest in origins. Reference in legendary accounts from the area on the continent where the Angles were supposed to have lived is found in the Old English poem *Widsith* (ll. 35–44), which tells of King Offa, ruler of the Angles (*Ongle*). The story concerns his heroic efforts as a young boy, when he won his kingdom by the use of his sword in combat. This was how he fixed the boundary between his own people and the Myrgingas at the River Fifeldor (the Eider).³⁰ Against such tales of the pagan Angles in their erstwhile northern setting, the story of Gregory in the market is a reinterpretation of the Angles as a people of salvation.

To understand Bede's idea of his nation's *Christian* ethnogenesis, it is important to note that he is among the first writers to use the term *gentis Anglorum* (the English) about all the Germanic-speaking inhabitants of Britain.³¹ Why the Latin term *Angli* came to dominate over *Saxones* in its modern broad meaning of 'English' has not been settled beyond dispute. *Saxones* was used as an umbrella term in continental sources for the Germanic speakers in Britain, as well as by the Celtic peoples in the island. However, *Angli* came to be preferred over *Saxones* among ecclesiastical writers in England. This usage was propagated within the discourse of the Roman Church. Pope Gregory, in his extant letters referring to the mission to Britain, uses the term to refer generally to the Germanic inhabitants there.³² Gregory had received several reports from his missionary Augustine, who was under Æthelberht's protection, and would have known how the king wanted to be addressed. Since Æthelberht held overlordship over a significant part of southern Britain, the term for *Angli* may have been used in the sense of *English*.³³ Thus, the widespread use of *Angli* in the broad sense of 'English' seems to have originated within church circles.

The sense of the English as a newly-formed Christian people, unified and saved under the auspices of Roman doctrines, would certainly have been expedient for a politically ambitious Anglo-Roman church, whose power would be extended by forging uniformity among church practices.³⁴ It was certainly an idea nurtured by Theodore (668–90) and Beorhwald (692–731), successive archbishops of Canterbury, who believed in the idea of a single *ecclesia* with an archbishopric for the whole of Britain.³⁵ The meaning of *Angli* as 'a northern tribe saved by the Roman Church' was clearly promoted by the religious communities in Northumbria that read and revered Gregory's writing. In both the *Vita* and Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, we find some of the earliest uses of *Angli* to denote the 'English' in general. Bede abandons reference to *Saxones*, which he employed for the incoming heathen invaders

in Book 1, to use *Angli* to describe their descendants who benefited from the Christian mission. In the Whitby text, the broader sense of *Angli* is explicitly connected with a theology of salvation. Ch. 6 looks forward to the Day of Judgement when Gregory will bring his people (*gens Anglorum*) to the Lord (*Vita* 82–3). *Angli* as a collective term was also employed by Bede in the *Ecclesiastical History*, when giving an account of the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes invading Britain in the mid-fifth century. At this point, Bede puts the cart before the horse in referring to the *adventus Anglorum in Brittaniam* (*HE* 15). This is at best proleptic, assuming a future development into a unified Christian nation. Here, ecclesiastical history is marshalled into national myth: the Germanic colonizers from the north of *Germania* abandon their tribal affiliations and realize their destiny as one nation through the Gregorian mission. ‘English’ is Bede’s indicator of their passage into a new *people* which can now be named.

The legend serves the function of explaining how an older tribal definition, *Angli*, was superseded by a new sense of the term, to indicate those who were saved in the name of the Roman Church and its doctrines. Although no extra syllable was added to *Angli*, the legend of Gregory redirecting the meaning of the ethnonym to *angeli* may find a parallel in Genesis 17, where Abram is renamed as Abraham (and his wife Sarai as Sarah), when entering into a covenant with God. Bede had dealt with this at length in his commentary on Genesis. He noted that Abraham was the new name required for a unifier of Jewish tribes, because it meant ‘father of multitudes’, with the meaning of ‘nations’, rather than Abram, which only meant ‘distinguished father’.³⁶ Bede’s *Ecclesiastical History* is similarly an account of how various Germanic tribes in Britain became united under the aegis of Roman papacy. The parallel Bede draws (*HE* 1.1) between the five languages spoken in Britain (English, British, Pictish, the language of the *Scotti* and Latin) and ‘the divine law written in five books’ indicates that his *Ecclesiastical History* (also in five books) is concerned with the establishment of a unified set of laws and observances for the people in the island – as with the Pentateuch, with its focus on the Jewish nation to the death of Moses, their religious lawgiver.

From the outset, the Whitby text announces its interest in how identity is defined, or redefined, by true faith. At the very beginning of the first chapter, Gregory was said to be ‘Roman by nationality’ and thus ‘noble in the eyes of the law’, but that he was ‘nobler still in heart in the sight of God because of his religious life’ (*Fuit igitur iste natione Romanus ... nobilis secundum legem sed nobilior corde coram Deo in religione*) (*Vita* 1). Roman citizenship was a well-defined category with clear rights and privileges. Barbarian identities were more fluid. The statement, which uses the commonplace of worldly dominion set against divine law, looks forward to the process of change that the Whitby writer recounts in the text. The people may still call themselves *Angli* in recollection of their tribal origins, but the Gregorian mission has transformed them into a new people. They are now defined

by the religious life they lead as an entirely different nation, united not by worldly leaders (such as Ælle), but by the Church.

Redefining the Germanic inhabitants of Britain as *gens Anglorum*, as a single people adherent to a single church, was part of a protracted process. This can be seen in forms used for this neologism. Like Gregory, Bede persistently uses the form *Angli*. But in the biography of Gregory included in *Liber pontificalis* (written in Rome, probably shortly after his death), the mission to Britain is described as sent *ad gentem Angulorum ut eos converteret ad dominum Iesum Christum*.³⁷ The variant forms from *Anguli* are repeated in the manuscript of Whitby text, where the scribe refers to English kings as *rex Angulorum* and the people as *gens Angulorum*.³⁸ The *u* in this variation was expunged by a later corrector, who apparently wanted to correct it to the form that had become customary.³⁹ Nonetheless, the original author of the manuscript is likely to have referred to *Angli* not *Anguli*, since it is stated in ch. 13 that the addition (not substitution) of an *e* would make the name sound like ‘angels’ (*ergo nomen Angulorum, si una e littera addetur, angelorum sonat*). The lack of consistency in scribal practices shows us that this was a new term in the process of construction within church circles.

Nicholas Howe reminds us that Bede and Anglo-Saxons considered Rome their capital, spiritually and religiously.⁴⁰ But regional centres could exist on the basis of their links to Rome. The see of Canterbury, which received Archbishop Theodore, was supreme in this respect. It was probably a strategic choice that led Bede to place the legend at the beginning of Book 2, as it allowed him to introduce a Northumbrian-Roman link as part of a providential design, before the account of the Gregorian mission in Kent and southern England was completed in ch. 8 of this Book. This Northumbrian bias is now to be explored further.

Political Contexts: Whitby and Northumbria

An exploration of the legend’s earliest forms is hampered by the fact that we cannot trace its roots further back than the *Vita*, but the way in which the legend is incorporated in this text provides ample ground for examining the political resonance of its rhetoric. Whitby Abbey was not only a monastery established in erstwhile Deira, but it was also ruled by descendants of Deiran royalty. The references to regional and political names in the legend have been written off as ‘principally used to facilitate’ the wordplay.⁴¹ In contrast to this, I will suggest that the legend served a trenchant political purpose. This purpose is related to Abbess Ælflæd, the great-granddaughter of Ælle, who was the abbess in charge at Whitby when the *Vita* appears to have been written.

Whitby Abbey was governed by women with royal affiliations. Hild (d. 680) was the daughter of Hereric, nephew of King Edwin (the son of Ælle). She was baptized alongside the rest of Edwin’s court in 627 and she was later installed as abbess at Whitby at the behest of the Bernician King Oswiu, to

whom she was also related. Oswiu had replaced the native line as sole ruler of Deira and Bernicia. Hild was succeeded by a closer relative of the Deiran line, Edwin's daughter Eanflæd, who had retired there after the death of King Oswiu, whom she had married. After Hild's death in 680, Eanflæd shared the responsibilities of running Whitby Abbey with her daughter, Ælfflæd, who was to have sole charge of Whitby as abbess when Eanflæd died in 704.

While the *Vita* is about the life of Gregory, it also stresses the role of King Edwin in the conversion of the *Angli*. The writer refers to 'our Gregory' and 'our holy teacher' (*Vita* 5, 6), speaking for all the English kingdoms converted by the Roman mission. But in ch. 12, the Deiran King Edwin is described as 'the son of Ælle', at which point the author makes sure to add that he was the king 'mentioned earlier in connection with that prophetic Alleluia of divine praise' in the episode of Gregory and the *Angli*. The Whitby writer further highlights this connection by pointing out that Gregory's prophecy was made while Edwin was 'in the loins of his father Ælli' (*in lumbis ... patris sui Ælli*) (*Vita* 14). Hence, we are encouraged to see custodianship of the Gregorian mission as carried in the royal blood of Ælle's descendants. This surely has political resonance in relation to Ælfflæd, the maternal granddaughter of Edwin, who probably oversaw the composition of the *Vita*. The attempt to link Edwin's legacy with that of Gregory was further materially substantiated at Whitby some time after 680, when Ælfflæd recovered the headless body of her grandfather at the site of his final battle at Hatfield Chase, bringing it back to the abbey as a relic to be revered. Here, it was given a final resting place east of the altar dedicated to Gregory (*Vita* 19).⁴²

In assessing these moves to make Whitby a place of commemoration for the legacy of the Roman mission, we cannot avoid seeing the legend as involved, in some way, with the struggle over the right to represent the conversion of Northumbria. As Walter Goffart has proposed (and others have since qualified), this struggle took place in the surge of hagiographical writing produced there.⁴³ That the hagiographical texts were part of a rivalry between monastic communities in the region has been generally accepted, although specific points of his argument are questioned. In relation to the *Vita*, Goffart believes that its writer deliberately set out to promote the Gregorian mission as if it were the only one that had influenced the kingdom, in order to counter the memory of Bishop Wilfrid.⁴⁴ Wilfrid was the main revivalist of Roman tradition in Northumbria, but a controversial figure, who found himself both relieved of his see and exiled from Northumbria on several occasions. However, Goffart's suggestion that the *Vita* is an anti-Wilfridian text seems unlikely. Eanflæd, the Deiran princess who became abbess of Whitby in 680, had been a supporter of Bishop Wilfrid from the beginning of his career, while her daughter Ælfflæd was later crucial in restoring the exiled bishop to power in Northumbria.⁴⁵

The reverence given to the Deiran Edwin in the *Vita* and at Whitby Abbey was not entirely uncontroversial. Even if Northumbria was united

under a single king, tension between former Deiran and Bernician monasteries appears to have persisted into the early eighth century.⁴⁶ The legend of Gregory and the Deiran subjects of Ælle in Rome would have helped promote the case for Whitby as a leading monastery in Northumbria. This is especially true if we consider the fact that the freemen who travelled to Rome in the Whitby version must be assumed to have had the means to do so. Therefore, it must be implied that they were part of the Deiran elite and perhaps that they were Ælle's kinsmen.

Although regional divisions still ran deep in the late seventh century, there was also a clear endeavour to reconcile Bernician and Deiran sides in a new, united Northumbria. Whitby became a centre of this reconciliation insofar as it was probably established by the Bernician King Oswiu as a place where Bernician and Deiran influences would come together. He appointed Hild, his cousin on the maternal side, as abbess. Oswiu's marriage to Eanflæd, daughter of Edwin, strengthened his claim to Deira. Oswiu himself was buried at Whitby (*HE* 3.24), and Eanflæd came here after his death, c. 674. Whitby was chosen as the location for the Northumbrian synod of 664, where Oswiu would decide against Hild – who (like himself) had followed Celtic church observances – and rule in favour of Roman practices, which were those of his wife Eanflæd. Hence, the monastery became a symbol of a united Northumbria. So it functioned during Hild's time as abbess. This may have changed when Eanflæd and Æfflæd, the direct descendants of the Deiran line, took over.

Hild was loyal to the Bernician dynasty that had taken control of Northumbria. This is evident in the support she received from King Oswiu, given her responsibility for his daughter, and the political control she exerted over the Northumbrian churches (i.e. several monks from Whitby were appointed as bishops).⁴⁷ This is important when assessing the Whitby text, which was written after her death, at the time Ælfflæd had taken over as abbess. Historians have noted that Ælfflæd appears to have downplayed the monastery's previous Bernician connections.⁴⁸ In ch. 18, the Whitby writer twice mentions that Eanflæd is the daughter of King Edwin; on the second occasion, Ælfflæd is added to the genealogy. Ælfflæd's acquisition of Edwin's body, which is dealt with in chapters 18 and 19, may have been intended to rework the monastery as a monument to the Deiran line.⁴⁹ Her political involvement beyond churchly matters may be the reason why Bede treats her as proud and worldly (while not entirely abandoning praise of her in his *Life of Cuthbert*).⁵⁰

In ch. 12, Edwin is praised as 'a man of this race of ours which is called the Humbrians' (*post hunc in gente nostra, que dicitur Humbrensium*). The definition of Edwin's people as *Humbrenses* ('people from around the River Humber') seems intended to resist their integration with Bernicia in the north. The use of *Hymbri* or (*H*)*umbrenses* probably referred exclusively to the people of Deira.⁵¹ Furthermore, the writer expressly refers to the *Deiri* as belonging to a *tribus* (a division of people, often hereditary), adding that

they were *de nostra natione* (*Vita* 9). Thus, the author considers the boys as ethnically Deiran and implies that this ethnicity was also valid for his/her own identity as a resident at Whitby.⁵²

The anecdote is a glance back into the past, but such statements may have been intended to resist the creation of an inclusive Northumbrian identity. Bede was a supporter of this unification and says no more than necessary about the distinct traditions and rivalries between the two formerly independent kingdoms.⁵³ Bede seems to have felt uneasy about using such ethnic nomenclature and speaks about the boys as belonging simply to the *provincia* of the *Deiri* (*HE* 2.1). That is, instead of employing an ethnonym, he uses an administrative term that was more securely lodged in the past.⁵⁴

However, Bede also appears to have capitalized on the anecdote in order to further the reputation of his own monastic institution. In his *History of the Abbots* (c. 716), he writes about Bishop Benedict, the founder of the monasteries of Wearmouth and Jarrow, noting that he was descended from a noble Anglian lineage and that the dignity of mind made him worthy to be exalted to the company of angels (*Nobili quidem stirpe gentis Anglorum progenitus, sed non minori nobilitate mentis ad promerenda semper angelorum consortia suspensus*).⁵⁵ This echoes the phrase in the anecdote, and the emphasis on heritage may intimate that we should see the Northumbrian-born Benedict as descended from the first *Angli* converts, whom Gregory had given the same rights to heaven as God's angels.

A search in the Brepols *Latin Texts Database – Series A* shows that the conjunction of *Angli* and *angeli* appears in another Northumbrian text, the anonymous *Life of Ceolfrid*, which was more or less contemporaneous with Bede's *History of the Abbots*. Ceolfrid's last journey towards Rome describes him as leaving the English people (*Anglorum gens*), his kindred, to devote himself to the contemplation of the angels in heaven (*sibi peregrinari in terris quo liberior purior que animo ad contemplanda angelorum consortia redderetur in celis*).⁵⁶ The figure of speech, that holy men will join the heavenly angels after death, is common in ecclesiastical writing, but the willingness to juxtapose the adjectives 'English' and 'angelic' in various connections may indicate the vibrancy of the wordplay in Northumbria.

Religious Contexts: Election and Ethnicity

In the Whitby text, ch. 12, Eanflæd and Ælflæd are both praised as descendants of Edwin and devout women, but the author omits any mention of Hild, who had supported the Irish side in the debates over church practices. The omission is notable because Hild had played a prominent role in the Northumbrian church in general and at Whitby specifically. This may reflect a deliberate strategy not to let Whitby's former allegiance to Celtic practices fracture the image that it was custodian of the Roman mission in Northumbria. As Donald Bullough has observed, the *Vita* glosses over, if not censors, the memory of the Irish church and its influence on Northumbrian religious

life.⁵⁷ If we take the legend's claim of a providential link between Rome and the northern *Angli* to its logical conclusion, the negative implication is that it neglects the competing Celtic influences that were clearly also important in Northumbria. In fact, the number of Northumbrian texts that deals with the history of conversion are best seen as anti-Celtic spin-doctoring – portraying continental Germanic heritage as superior to Celtic natives. The early eighth-century *Vita Wilfrithi*, for example, speaks of the elimination of Celtic 'weeds' in Northumbria.⁵⁸ After all, it was Bishop Wilfrid who stigmatized Irish practices in Northumbria, especially focusing on the dating of Easter as 'erroneous' for its incompatibility with Roman custom.⁵⁹ In the chronicle that forms part of *The Reckoning of Time* (725), Bede pointed to the importance of Edwin in converting Northumbria, while ignoring the Irish mission.⁶⁰ However, in the *Ecclesiastical History*, acknowledgement of the Irish as the important evangelists of Northumbria, particularly of Bernicia, can be found.⁶¹ Northumbrian history was subject to construction and re-construction in the early eighth century.

Celtic Christianity competed with Roman tradition in Northumbria and the kingdom contained a large British population.⁶² British Christianity worked in concord with Irish influences and carried some weight in seventh-century Northumbria. This was probably why Chad of Mercia was appointed to the bishopric of York in 665, the year after the Synod of Whitby, despite the fact that he deviated from Roman practices in vital ways.⁶³ There is contemporary evidence that religious communities in Northumbria continued to be drawn to Iona even after the synod.⁶⁴ Irish influence only ceased to be a threat from 716, when Iona adopted the Roman calculation of Easter. Thus, at least at the time when the *Vita* was written, the legend of the Roman mission as a divinely ordained instrument to bring the English to the true faith was still politically expedient.

Doris Edel argues that Bede's extensive narrative of Edwin's conversion to Roman Christianity, replete with transcripts of papal letters (*HE* 2.10, 11, 17, and 18), could also reflect an attempt to persuade Northumbrians who were still inclined towards Celtic practices of the holiness of Roman orthodoxy.⁶⁵ In any case, it needs to be considered that Bede found the anecdote valuable in response to British proclamations of being God's chosen people. There are no Brittonic tracts contemporary with Bede that state this claim, although the British churches seem to have remained an intellectual and ideological force as the Anglo-Saxons advanced. This finds expression in some recensions of *Historia Brittonum* (later than Bede's text, but building on earlier traditions), in which genealogies connect the Britons to Noah and thereby make them a people of the Bible.⁶⁶ Bede knew that English claims to divine election had already been challenged by the British cleric Gildas, whose text Bede followed closely in Book 1 of the *Ecclesiastical History*. However, Bede turns against the Briton Gildas' lamentations over their forsaking the Christian faith, so that the English (or, perhaps, more specifically, the *Angli*) are represented not only as God's tools of retribution but also as his chosen people.

Throughout the *Ecclesiastical History*, Bede writes acrimoniously about the Britons and their church practices.⁶⁷ In this respect, we may look at how the legend of Gregory and the *Angli* is incorporated in the *Ecclesiastical History* at a structurally significant juncture. Book 1 ends with Chapter 34, in which the historical events related to Northumbria are dealt with for the first time. Bede recounts how King Æthelfrith ruled the Northumbrians and ‘ravaged the Britons’ more extensively than any other king of the *Angli*, as well as beating back the Scots in a decisive battle of 603. For his achievements, Bede aligns the early Northumbrian king with the biblical King Saul (with the caveat that he was pagan).

Bede then begins Book 2 at 604 with a long commemoration of Gregory, who died in this year. This concludes with the legend of Gregory in the marketplace, which highlights the close relationship between the Northumbrian *Angli* and the Roman Church. The anecdote is immediately followed by an account of how the Romans helped the English against the British wickedness (*HE* 2.2). We are told how the Roman missionary Augustine, around 602–604, urges a gathering of British bishops to preach the word of God to ‘the English people’ (*gens Anglorum*). But due to doctrinal differences, these bishops refuse to evangelize the Germanic pagans in unison with the Roman missionaries. In response, Augustine delivers a prophecy that the British churches would incur divine wrath.⁶⁸ The ‘meanwhile’ (*interea*), which introduces this chapter, refers to 605, the year of Gregory’s death; but the story is thematically connected to the preceding legend of Gregory and the youths in the market, which allegedly took place in the last decade of the sixth century. The English and British are opposed throughout Bede’s text, and Bede seems to have found encouragement in the anecdote’s infusion of ethnic terms with religious meaning, which is now to be examined.⁶⁹

I will argue that the focus on the Angles as white-skinned with fair hair points to a racial understanding of this tribe as a northern Germanic people – contrasting with the dark-haired Celtic population. For this reason, I find it hard to agree with the strand in the interpretation of the anecdote’s focus on physical features, which reads Gregory’s gaze as guided by a sexual desire and a subsidiary lust for colonization.⁷⁰ There is, however, little to commend, neither as a *queer reading* nor an understanding of it as an expression of Rome’s colonial designs on Britain. Both are at odds with the religious understanding of *election* and *salvation* that motivates the passage. Furthermore, Anglo-Saxon clergy would have known Gregory’s fierce attacks on sexual iniquity in connection with the several discussions of the burning of Sodom in his writing.⁷¹ This homosexual interpretation of the passage also fails to take into account the extent to which origin legends often focus on the exceptional qualities of a nation’s forefathers in terms of their physical strength, fertility, or toughness – as it has been discussed in Chapter Three of the present study. However, the legend of the *Angli* in the Roman market tweaks the racial qualities towards the model of salvation narrative, which

we see in several national histories. The racial qualities of the forefathers are here interpreted within a Christian framework.

The legend of Gregory and the *Angli* has been examined before from the perspective of ethnicity, but there are references, especially from other passages in Bede's writings, that have not previously received critical commentary in this context. Bede describes the boys' *lucidi vultus*, which is not necessarily 'handsome' (as the Colgrave and Mynors translation have it) but, literally, 'bright faces', or better, in the translation of the poet John Milton, 'honest countenances'.⁷² What is at stake here is a connection between exterior appearance and inner sanctity. This feature is found in much hagiographical literature: appearance is often used to highlight the radiance of inner spirit.⁷³ In Bede's *Life of Cuthbert*, for example, the Northumbrian monk is said to radiate a light from his angelic countenance (*vultus angelici lumen*).⁷⁴

Elsewhere in Bede's writing, colour and ethnicity are interpreted symbolically as a sign of those marked out for salvation. For instance, he associates the blackness of the Ethiopians (or Kushites) of the Bible with spiritual darkness: the Ethiopians came from a 'nation of infidels labouring in blindness' (*de obscuro perfidorum populo*).⁷⁵ Here Bede is following conventions of patristic exegesis. In a more partisan manner, he took an interest in the anecdote's representation of the whiteness of the *Angli* as a divine signature of their election. If we turn to the Whitby text, the youths are described as *quidam de nostra natione forma et crinibus candidati albis*, which may be translated as 'some of our nation who were white of body and have blonde hair'. The two lexical forms used for 'white', *candidus* and *albus*, have spiritual connotations. This can be seen from looking at the religious writings in which the Whitby writer, Bede, and their clerical audiences were steeped. *Albus* was a term connected with the angelic host. In Gregory's Ascension Day homily, for example, the issue of why angels are dressed in white at Christ's Ascension (Acts 1:9–10) is discussed at length. Gregory offers the explanation that white symbolizes joy and solemnity of mind (*in albis autem vestibus gaudium et solemnitas mentis ostenditur*).⁷⁶ The Whitby text draws on this symbolism in the reference to the legend that Paulinus, the missionary to the Northumbrians, was observed journeying to heaven at his death in the form of a beautiful white (*albus*) bird, like a swan (*Vita* 17).

Candidus means 'bright or dazzling white'. It was a word employed to indicate sanctity in the Vulgate Bible, as well as exegetical literature.⁷⁷ The significance of *candidus* is further indicated by the fact that it was a common Roman cognomen, adopted by medieval churchmen. An example of this is Pope Gregory's own rector (administrator of the papal properties) in Gaul. Sparkling white is how the marble of the temple built for the faithful must be, Bede remarks in his exegesis of Genesis.⁷⁸ In his commentary on the Revelation of St. John, Bede writes about the divine significance of the adjectives, *candidus* and *albus*. In reference to Revelation 1:14, which is a passage dealing with the vision of Christ (His head and his hairs were white

[*candidus*] like wool, as white [*albus*] as snow), Bede explains: ‘antiquity and eternity of majesty are represented by whiteness on the head ... as hairs ... because the sheep ... are white, like wool, and because of the innumerable multitude of the white-robed and the elect, who come forth from heaven, are glistening like snow’.⁷⁹ Conceptually close to the metaphors used in the market scene, Bede also refers to the sparkling white gem that makes its appearance in Revelation 2:17 as symbolic of ‘a body which is now made white by baptism’.⁸⁰ In the *Ecclesiastical History* (5.7), he also provides an example of how *candidus* is used in a similar sense in his account of Cædwalla, king of the West Saxons, who had gone to Rome to be baptised. This commitment to the Christian faith compels Bede’s note: ‘white he shall walk in union with Christ’s sheep’ (*candidus inter oves Christi sociabilis ibit*).

The radiant whiteness inherent in the Latin term *candidus* also has parallels in Old English poetry, where whiteness is privileged over blackness, and both terms carried social symbolism.⁸¹ Much may be gained from looking at the vernacular tradition of religious verse in Anglo-Saxon England. In *Genesis B*, Eve is *fægrost* (fair) and *wlitegost* (brightly white), while Satan boasts of his angelic body as *hwit* and *hiowbeorht* (brightly white and shining).⁸² *Hwit* is also the colour given to the blessed in the poet Cynewulf’s *Crist*.⁸³ In the Anglo-Saxon writer Ælfric’s homily to Gregory’s Feast Day (late tenth century), the boys’ whiteness is seen as a renunciation of the Devil: *Wa la wa þæt swa fægeres hiwes men sindon ðam sweartan deofle underðeodde* (Wellaway that men of so fair colour should the swart devil underserve).⁸⁴ As it is clear from this rephrasing of the words in Bede’s version, the religious symbolism of whiteness does not annul its significance as a physical marker of race. Similarly, in the early thirteenth century, the poet Layamon introduced a superlative perspective, when he renders Gregory’s words: ‘Of all the peoples who live on earth, you English are assuredly the most like angels; your race is the fairest of all men alive’.⁸⁵

The reason for the collocation of racial and religious terms resides in the fact that *candidus*, used religiously for ‘saved’/‘baptized’, also doubled as a descriptive term for the peoples of *Germania*, when mentioned in Roman texts. Germanic ‘whiteness’ was often contrasted with the black Ethiopians – symbolically representing the two extremes of the known world. Thus, the Ethiopian is contrasted with *Germaniae candidi* in the writing of Julius Firmicus Maternus; Pliny also has unnamed northerners with *candida atque glacialis cutis* (white and frosty skins); and Vitruvius refers to the *candidae colores* of other unnamed northerners.⁸⁶

In this connection, it is interesting to look at Bede’s expression *capillorum ... forma egregia*. This refers not only to ‘lovely hair’, as it is rendered in Colgrave and Mynors’ translation, but rather indicates hair that is exceptional. Presumably, it is the fairness of their hair which is notable.⁸⁷ At least, the Whitby text explains that the two boys were *forma et crinus candidate albis* (‘fair-skinned and light-haired’). It was a convention among Roman writers – known to the Anglo-Saxons from imported manuscripts – that Germanic

people had golden or fair hair (*flavus*).⁸⁸ For instance, the Byzantine scholar Procopius, in his sixth-century *History of the Wars*, describes the Gothic nations in terms not very different from the characteristics emphasized in the anecdote; these northern tribes have 'white bodies and fair hair' and are 'tall and handsome to look upon'.⁸⁹ The 'curly-haired' youths of the Whitby text may owe something to Isidore's categorization of the Germans as having hair of this nature.⁹⁰ In the Middle Ages, the hairstyle of Germanic peoples was one significant way of recognizing their ethnicity and tribal association, and therefore a feature often commented upon.⁹¹ The Romans used to refer to the Gallic provinces that Julius Caesar subdued as *Gallia comata* (longhaired Gallia). In the laws of King Æthelbert of Kent (late sixth–early seventh century), hair was a marker of status. Its seizure would be compensated by 50 *sceattas*.⁹² Even as late as in the ninth-century laws of King Alfred, the cutting of hair was seen as an insult.⁹³

The standard nomenclature used for northern 'fairness' and 'whiteness' in classical texts inspired elements of the legend about the Germanic boys attracting attention in a Roman marketplace. The anecdote certainly made religious capital of this attribute as well. The question remains whether the 'whiteness' of the ethnic *Angli* can really be seen to denigrate darker-complexioned Britons. Classical writers spoke of Celtic tribes as 'fair', but Anglo-Saxon perception may have been different. In Old English literary texts, we find that *hwitloccedu* ('white-haired') is used as a sign of high status, while (in the Riddles) *wonfeax* (dark-haired), *sweart* (dark, swarthy) and *saloneb* (dark-nosed) are terms employed to describe Britons.⁹⁴ Colour-coding as a marker of ethnicity is complicated by the fact that blackness is used as socially symbolic for an enslaved people. If there is an implicit contrast, it points to cultural and religious difference rather than anything that is exactly 'ethnic'. Blackness as a symbol of otherness and faithlessness is habitually employed in the early-medieval period.⁹⁵

At the same time, the fair-complexioned heritage of the Germanic *Angli* fits exegetical schemes of colour symbolism. Bede proffers the legend as verification that the English were chosen as recipients of true faith, which he unequivocally equates with Roman orthodoxy. As argued above, the legend as set out in the *Ecclesiastical History* works against the ethnically distinct Britons. One must concur with Foley and Higham, who concluded that Bede's stereotyping must be seen as ethnic denigration of the British. However, Bede commends some British Christians as saints to be imitated; that he speaks triumphantly about the re-conversion of the Picts and the Irish to Roman orthodoxy further holds out a promise for the salvation of the Britons. After all, Bede admits that Britons could convert to the true ways of the Church, by depicting them in terms of Jews who come late to the faith.⁹⁶

It must be noted that Bede never colour-codes his antagonism towards the Britons. In general, he appears not to have supported a notion that the

connection between ethnicity and salvation was immutably fixed. We see this most clearly in his discussion of rewards at the Last Judgement:

... the good will be rewarded with what is good and the evil in accordance with the confession of their evil deeds, just as it may immediately and without difficulty be determined which colour is right for a black Ethiopian and a white Saxon, even if they are given the same colour. But it is different for the pictorial arts, where the picture that promises to represent truly is accused of utter, shameless lying, unless each individual is depicted with his own colour and appearance.⁹⁷

As this shows, neither skin colour nor ethnicity was apparently the basis for constructing theological arguments.

A NORTHERN PEOPLE SAVED BY FAITH

In this chapter, I have attempted to explore some of the complexities of the legend of Gregory and the *Angli*. We can see this as an ‘origin legend’ that imagines the moment when the Roman mission to Britain was conceived. It is a rhetorical construction that mixes notions of ethnicity with carefully studied religious symbolism. The crux of the argument presented above is that this legend formed a part of cultural and religious propaganda. The legend must have taken form not in Rome, but in Northumbria, where the agonizing memory of late acceptance of Roman tradition was to be suppressed. The anecdote of the northern boys helped to backdate the special connection with Rome.

Both the Whitby author and Bede insist that the story was generally known, but the meaning invested in the legend varies in the *Vita* and the *Ecclesiastical History*: these texts have come from two different contexts, each with their own ideological ends. The legend had a special function for the writer of the *Vita*, since references to Deira and King Ælle linked the Roman mission concretely with Abbess Ælfflæd and Whitby, heirs to the Deiran dynastic line. This was a bid for Whitby’s status as a place where the banner of the Roman mission was flown. Writing decades later at the monastic foundation of Jarrow, Bede’s adaptation of the legend is divested of any concrete attempt at utilizing it closely within a familial context. Rather, he broadens the meaning by highlighting it as a case for the supremacy of the Romanized *Angli* against the wayward Christian practices of the Britons, an important theme that runs throughout his *Ecclesiastical History*. Other early adaptations from this time – could they be found – may have repurposed the anecdote in yet further ways.

Concerning the tense relationship between the Celtic population and the Germanic invaders, who had settled in Britain, one of Bede’s comments

requires critical attention. In the context of discussing the English missions that went out to the pagan north of *Germania*, he lists various continental tribes from which the English 'are known to have derived their race and origin'. These are primarily warrior races (Danes, Huns, Old Saxons), as was commented upon in the previous chapter. Due to this origin, Bede tells us, the English 'are still corruptly called "Garmans" by the neighbouring nation of the Britons' (*HE* 5.9).⁹⁸ Bede would have known that the regular Latin form of the ethnonym is *Germani* (as it appears in the writings of Caesar, Cicero, and others), and he himself uses this standard in his writing. *Garmani* has an orthography that corresponds with a development of *er > ar* in Vulgar Latin. This sound change is attested in Welsh loanwords, for which reason it has been suggested that Bede's *Garmani* may refer to a Vulgar Latin form, which was preserved in post-Roman Britain but lost elsewhere.⁹⁹ But is it only because of an un-shifted vowel that Bede says it is 'corrupt'? The term *Germani* was often associated with Gaul or the Franks in the centuries before Bede was writing.¹⁰⁰ Thus, Bede could mean that the English were not a branch of the Franks. However, it is more likely, I will contend, that *Garmani* relates to stereotypical conceptions of peoples from *Germania* as inherently warlike and violent.¹⁰¹ The early Roman geographer Pomponius Mela, for instance, says that the peoples of *Germania* wage war with their neighbours and provoke martial conflict for sheer pleasure rather than for the pleasure of ruling.¹⁰² Likewise, Seneca, in his treatise *De Ira* (On Anger), talks about the *Germani* as an irascible people 'prone to anger' (*prona in iram sunt*) (2.15), and in *Quaestiones naturales*, he calls them 'eager for war' (*Germanos, avidam belli gentem*) (6.7).¹⁰³

The apparently Cambro-Latin morphology of *Garmani* in Bede's text may offer support for this interpretation. In regard to the possible etymology for 'Germanic', the *OED* refers to the Celtic *gair* (neighbour), or *gairm* (battle-cry). In support of the second possibility, the etymologist Eric Partridge further suggests a relation to the Celtic **gar* (to shout), making it a description of Germanic tribes as 'the Noisy Men'.¹⁰⁴ Perhaps shouting could have been a reference to their intimidation tactics when facing an enemy at war? The fourth-century historian, Ammianus Marcellinus, for example, describes how an army of *Germani* 'raised as great a trumpeting call (*gestu terrentes barritum*) as possible: this shout, rising from a spare rumble and gradually growing to a din'.¹⁰⁵

Whatever Bede's ear may have caught, which is obscure to us today, he may have understood this British term *Garmani* to imply that the English were 'war-men'.¹⁰⁶ To declare this sense as 'corrupt' makes immediate sense in the context of Bede's claim in Book 5 that the English had put their war-like behaviour behind them when they accepted Christianity. At the very end of the *Historia ecclesiastica*, Bede gives an account of how the Christianized Northumbrians put aside their weapons in order to dedicate themselves and their children to monastic vows rather than study the practice of war (*bellicis exercere*) (*HE* 5.23). This is a fitting conclusion to

Bede's history, which has traced how warlike peoples from the North were transformed into a holy nation through the influence of the Roman Church. The tribal definition of *Angli* – a northern race – provides a focus for this, which has a function beyond the obvious opportunities for punning. The narrative arc that Bede presents recalls the structural economy of 'national histories' discussed in Chapter Three of the present book; it has elements of a *Heilsgeschichte*, through which the nation redeems itself from paganism and accepts Christianity.

NOTES

1. For dating and background information on the manuscript and its author, see 'Introduction', in *The Earliest Life of Gregory the Great by an Anonymous Monk of Whitby*, ed. and trans. Bertram Colgrave (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 45–54. Michael Lapidge, 'The Anglo-Latin Background', in *A New Critical History of Old English Literature*, ed. S. B. Greenfield and D. G. Calder (New York: New York UP, 1986), 15, places composition at an earlier date between 680 and 704. The *Vita* mentions both Eanflæd and her daughter Ælflæd, who co-ruled the monastery after c. 680, with Ælflæd taking over as sole abbess from 704.
2. For a discussion of the meaning and geography of the name, *Streoneshalh*, see P. S. Barnwell, L. A. S. Butler, and C. J. Dunn, 'The Confusion of Conversion: *Streanæshalch*, Strensall and Whitby and the Northumbrian Church', in *The Cross Goes North: Processes of Conversion in Northern Europe, A.D. 300–1300*, ed. Martin Carver (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2003), 311–26.
3. *Earliest Life of Gregory the Great*, 90–1 [hereafter *Vita*]: *Quod omnino non est tegendum silentio, quam spiritaliter ad Deum quomodoque cordis incomparabili speculo oculorum norstam providendo propagavit ad Deum conversionem. Est igitur narratio fidelium, ante predictum eius pontificatum, Roman venisse, quidam de nostra natione forma et crinibus candidati albis. Quos cum audisset venisse, iam dilexit vidisse eosque alme mentis intuitu sibi adscitos, recenti specie inconsueta suspensus et, quod maximum est, Deo intus admonente, cuius gentis fuissent inquisivit. Quos quidam pulchros fuisse pueros dicunt et quidam vero crispas iuvenis et decoros. Cumque responderent, 'Anguli dicuntur, illi de quibus sumus', ille dixit, 'Angeli Dei'. Deinde dixit: 'Rex gentis illius quomodo nominatur?' Et dixerunt 'Aelli'. Et ille ait, 'Alleluia. Laus enim Dei esse debet illic'. Tribus quoque illius nomen de qua erant proprie requisivit. Et dixerunt, 'Deire'. Et ille dixit, 'De ira Dei confugientes ad fidem'.*
4. *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969) [hereafter *HE*]: *Nec silentio praetereunda opinio, quae de beato Gregorio traditione maiorum ad nos usque perlata est, qua videlicet ex causa admonitus tam sedulam erga salutem nostrae gentis curam gesserit. Dicunt quia die quadam, cum advenientibus nuper mercatoribus multa venalia in forum fuissent conlata, multi ad emendum confluiscent, et ipsum Gregorium inter alios advenisse, ac vidisse inter alia pueros venales / positos candidi corporis ac venusti vultus, capillorum quoque forma egregia. Quos cum aspiceret, interrogavit, ut aiunt, de qua regione vel terra essent adlati; dictumque est quia de Brittania insula, cuius incolae talis essent*

aspectus. Rursus interrogavit utrum idem insulani Christiani, an paganis adhuc erroribus essent implicati. Dictum est quod essent pagani. At ille, intimo ex corde longa trahens suspiria, 'Heu, pro dolor!' inquit, 'quod tam lucidi vultus homines tenebrarum auctor possidet, tantaque gratia frontispicii mentem ab interna gratia vacuam gestat!' Rursus ergo interrogavit, quod esset vocabulum gentis illius. Responsum est quod Angli vocarentur. At ille: 'Bene' inquit; 'nam et angelicam habent faciem, et tales angelorum in caelis decet esse coheredes. Quod habet nomen ipsa provincia, de qua isti sunt adlati?' Responsum est quia Deiri vocarentur idem provinciales. At ille 'Bene' inquit 'Deiri, de ira eruti et ad misericordiam Christi vocati. Rex provinciae illius quomodo appellatur?' Responsum est quod Aelle diceretur. At ille adludens ad nomen ait: 'Alleluia, laudem Dei creatoris illis in partibus oportet cantari'.

5. On the cult of Gregory, see 'Introduction', in *Earliest Life of Gregory*, 19, 44.
6. For the cultivation of a memory of Gregory in England, see Constant J. Mews, 'Gregory the Great, the Rule of Benedict and Roman Liturgy: The Evolution of a Legend', *Journal of Medieval History* 37 (2011): 132–4. In fact, he seems not to have enjoyed any special status in Rome; see Alan Thacker, 'Memorializing Gregory the Great: the Origin and Transmission of a Papal Cult in the Seventh and Early Eighth Century', *Early Medieval Europe* 7.1 (1998): 60.
7. See Stephan C. Kessler, 'Gregory the Great: A Figure of Tradition and Transition in Church Exegesis', in *Hebrew Bible, Old Testament: The History of Its Interpretation*. Vol. 1, Part 2, *From the Beginnings to the Middle Ages (Until 1300)*, ed. Magne Sæbø (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2000), 135–47.
8. It is a convention that goes back to Herodotus' *Histories* (440 BC), which include a number of legendary preambles, whose main function is to outline the themes taken up in the historical material. For this and the inclusion of legendary material in European medieval works, see Ruth Morse, *Truth and Convention in the Middle Ages: Rhetoric, Representation, and Reality* (Cambridge: CUP, 1991), 92–3.
9. Henry Soames, *The Anglo-Saxon Church: Its History, Revenues, and General Character* (London: John W. Parker, 1835), 31.
10. Gregory the Great, *Registrum epistularum: Libri VIII–XIV, Appendix*, lib. 8 epist. 29. ed. Dag Norberg, *Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina* [hereafter CCSL], vol. 140A (Turnhout: Brepols, 1982).
11. Widukind, *Rerum gestarum Saxoniarum libri tres*, 1.8, ed. Paul Hirsch, MGH SRG (Hannover: Impensis Bibliopolii Hahniani, 1935), pp. 419–20: *quia illa insula in angulo quodam maris sita est, Anglisaxonibus usque hodie vocitantur*.
12. *Die Chronik des Bischofs Thietmar von Merseburg and ihre Korveier Überarbeitung*, 8.36, ed. R. Holtzman, MGH SRG 9 (Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandel, 1955), p. 442, speaks of the English as angel-faced people positioned in a corner of the world: *Audiui sepius numero Anglos, ab angelica facie, id est pulchra, sive quod angulo istius terrae siti sunt*. For a discussion of Thietmar's statement, see Fabienne Michelet, *Creation, Migration, and Conquest: Imaginary Geography and Sense of Space in Old English Literature* (Oxford: OUP, 2006), 22.
13. There is some debate over the exact borders of Deira, but it is usually seen to have stretched from the Humber to the Tees. To the south of the Tees was the kingdom of Bernicia. During the seventh century, Deira was united with

- Bernicia to form what became Northumbria. See the discussion of geography in David Rollason, *Northumbria, 500–1100: Creation and Destruction of a Kingdom* (Cambridge: CUP, 2003), 20–54.
14. This is reproduced in *HE* 1.29. The original texts of Gregory's letter to Augustine can be found in Gregory, *Registrum epistularum*, lib. 11, epist. 39.
 15. J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People: A Historical Commentary* (Oxford: OUP, 1988), 44.
 16. Michael Richter, 'Bede's Angli: Angles or English?', *Peritita* 3 (1984): 104; Thacker, 'Memorializing', 77.
 17. The question of a relationship between the two versions was discussed early by T. Leo Almond, in 'The Whitby Life of St. Gregory', *Downside Review* 23 (1904): 15–29. For some of the contributions to the debate, 'Introduction', in *Earliest Life of Gregory*, 133–6, denies any relationship, whereas the opposite opinion is held by Richter in 'Bede's Angli', 101–2, and by Walter Goffart, *The Narrators of Barbarian History (A.D. 550–800): Jordanes, Gregory of Tours, Bede, and Paul the Deacon* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), 264–5. For a comparison between Bede and the Whitby text, see Nora K. Chadwick, 'The Conversion of Northumbria: A Comparison of Sources', in *Celt and Saxon: Studies in the Early British Border*, ed. K. Jackson, rev. edn. (Cambridge: CUP, 1964), 138–66.
 18. See, for example, *HE* 3.11, 4.16, 4.22, 4.32, and 5.6.
 19. For this possible rivalry, see C. Daniel, 'York and the Whitby Author's Anonymous Life of Gregory the Great', *Northern History* 29 (1993): 197–9.
 20. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition*, Vol. 3, MS A, ed. Janet Bately (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1986), pp. 1 and 19. Almost all historians follow Eliert Ekwall's *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place Names*, 4th edn. (Oxford: OUP, 1960), 95, in explaining *Cerdicesora* as an early name for Charford, Hampshire.
 21. Richter, 'Bede's Angli', 105. It was also the term most often used in papal sources, in letters to both Anglo-Saxon and Frankish recipients; for a recent discussion and references, see Joanna Story, 'Charlemagne and the Anglo-Saxons', in *Charlemagne: Empire and Society*, ed. J. Story (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), 197–8.
 22. Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiarum siue Originum libri XX*, PL 82, cols. 0338A–C and 0689A. Generally on Germanic tribal names, see Herwig Wolfram, *The Roman Empire and Its Germanic Peoples*, trans. T. Dunlap (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 33.
 23. *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, MS A, pp. 17, 19, and 20.
 24. For this suggestion, see R. A. Markus, *Gregory the Great and His World* (Cambridge: CUP, 1997), 178.
 25. Gregory the Great, *Registrum epistularum: libri I–VII*, lib. 6, epist. 10, ed. Dag Norberg, CCSL, vol. 140 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1982).
 26. Rollason, *Northumbria*, 105–6.
 27. For this point and Bede's writing on Northumbria, see Georges Tugène, *L'idée de la nation anglaise dans l'Histoire ecclésiastique de Bède le Vénérable* (Strasbourg: Presses Universitaires de Strasbourg, 2001), 93–7.
 28. Ian Wood, 'The Mission of Augustine in Canterbury to the English', *Speculum* 69 (1994): 2.
 29. See T. M. Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland* (Cambridge: CUP, 2000), 308–25.

30. For the name *Fifeldor* as the River Eider, see *Widsith: A Study in Old English Heroic Legend*, ed. Raymond Wilson Chambers (1912; repr. Cambridge: CUP, 2010), 204 note.
31. Nicholas Brooks, 'English Identity from Bede to the Millennium', *The Haskins Society Journal* 14 (2003): 36–7; and *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury* (Leicester: Leicester UP, 1984), 76 and 78. For a similar interpretation of the use of the term in earlier Northumbrian text *Vita Gregorii*, see E. T. A. Dailey in 'The *Vita Gregorii* and Ethnogenesis in Anglo-Saxon Britain', *North-ern History* 47.2 (2010): 198–9. For empirical evidence that Bede introduces a general sense of 'English' in *HE*, see Patrick Wormald, 'Engla Lond: The Making of an Allegiance', *Journal of Historical Sociology* 7.1 (1994): 12–13. This is generally accepted, but Stephen J. Harris, in 'Bede, Social Practice, and the Problem with Foreigners', *Social Practice in the Middle Ages*, ed. Thomas H. Bestul and Thomas N. Hall (Chicago: Illinois Medieval Association, 1997), 97–110, speaks against the consensus, arguing that Bede uses *Anglorum* to refer primarily to 'Angles', i.e. as opposed to the Saxons, Jutes or other ethnicities in Britain. As a counter to this argument, see Steven Fanning, 'Bede, Imperium, and the Bretwaldas', *Speculum* 66.1 (1991): 1–26, at 21. This includes a list of the limited number of textual passages in which Bede may restrict the use of *Anglorum* to a regional (primarily Northumbrian) meaning.
32. Gregory's correspondence reveals numerous cases of such usage. The most extensive collection of the letters can be found in *Gregorii I papae registrum epistolarum*, MGH Epist. 1–2, ed. P. Ewald and L. M. Hartmann (Berlin: Weidmann, 1887–1899).
33. Patrick Wormald, 'Bede, the Bretwaldas, and the Origin of the *gens Anglorum*', in *Ideal and Reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society: Studies Presented to J. M. Wallace Hadrill*, ed. P. Wormald (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), 99–129.
34. For a discussion of the role played by Canterbury in establishing a sense of Englishness, see *ibid.*
35. Bede states that Theodore was the first archbishop whom the whole *ecclesia Anglorum* obeyed (*HE* 4.2).
36. Bede, *Opera*. Part 2: 1, *Opera exegetica: Libri quattuor in principium Genesis usque ad nativitatem Isaac et eiectionem Ishmahelis adnotationum*, 4.17, ed. C. W. Jones. CCSL. Vol. 118A (Turnhout: Brepols, 1967): *sciendum autem quod Abram 'pater excelsu', Abraham vero 'pater multarum' dicitur, ut subintellegatur 'gentium'*.
37. C. Vogel, ed., *Le liber pontificalis: texte, introduction et commentaire*, Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, 2nd series, 2nd edn. (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1955), 312.
38. There is an exception in c. 6, where (as quoted above) the manuscript has *Anglorum*. A reduced-syllable form appears in the compound *Uuestanglorum* (*Vita* 16) in reference to Rædwald, King of the East Angles, and *Sunderanglorum* (*Vita* 18) in reference to the Angles south of the Humber.
39. See 'Introduction', in *Earliest Life of Gregory*, 68–9.
40. Nicholas Howe, 'Rome: Capital of Anglo-Saxon England', in *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 34.1 (2004): 147–72.
41. For the depoliticized reading of the puns, see Dailey, '*Vita Gregorii*', 199.
42. For discussions of the Gregory cult and Whitby, see C. E. Karkov, 'Whitby, Jarrow and the Commemoration of Death in Northumbria', in *Northumbria's Golden*

- Age, ed. J. Hawkes and S. Mills (Stroud: Sutton, 1999), 129; and Kate Rambridge, 'Doctor noster sanctus: the Northumbrians and Pope Gregory', in *Rome and the North: The Early Reception of Gregory the Great in Germanic Europe*, ed. R. H. Bremner, C. Dekker and D. F. Johnson (Parsi: Peeters, 2001), 1–26.
43. See Goffart, *Narrators of Barbarian History*, 307–24, and idem. 'L'Histoire ecclésiastique et l'engagement politique de Bède', in *Bède le Vénérable entre tradition et postérité. Colloque organisé à Villeneuve d'Ascq et Amiens par le CRHEN-O, Université de Lille 3, et Textes, Images et Spiritualité (Université de Picardie – Jules Verne) du 3 au 6 juillet 2002*, ed. S. Lebecq, M. Perrin, and O. Szerwiniack (Villeneuve d'Ascq: Université Charles-de-Gaulle, Lille III, 2005), 149–58. In relation to Bede's involvement in the dispute, Goffart's views are forcefully opposed by Nicholas J. Higham in (*Re-*)*reading Bede: The Ecclesiastical History in Context* (London: Routledge, 2006), 63–9. On monastic competition, see V. Gunn, *Bede's Historia: Genre, Rhetoric and the Construction of the Anglo-Saxon Church History* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2009), 69–93. For an examination of monastic competition in Northumbria, see also David Rollason, 'Hagiography and Politics in Early Northumbria', in *Holy Men and Holy Women: Old English Prose Saints' Lives and Their Contexts*, ed. P. E. Szarmach (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1996), 95–114.
 44. Goffart, *Narrators of Barbarian History*, 267.
 45. Barbara Yorke, *Nunneries and the Anglo-Saxon Royal Houses* (London: Continuum, 2003), 147; and Higham, (*Re-*)*Reading Bede*, 160.
 46. Ian Wood, 'Monasteries and the Geography of Power in the Age of Bede', *Northern History* 45, no. 1 (2008): 14–15.
 47. Nancy Bauer, 'Abbess Hilda of Whitby: All Britain was Lit by Her Splendor', in *Medieval Women Monastics: Wisdom's Wellsprings*, ed. M. Schmitt and L. Kulzer (Collegeville, MI: Liturgical Press, 1996), 13–32.
 48. See Rollason, 'Hagiography and Politics', 106–7; and Wood, 'Monasteries and the Geography of Power', 23.
 49. Karkov, 'Whitby', 132–5. An even more radical solution is offered by Barnwell, Butler, and Dunn, 'Confusion and Conversion', 324, where it is suggested that Eanflæd and Ælflæd may have relocated to another monastery to break all associations with Hild.
 50. See Karkov, 'Whitby', 130–3.
 51. See Michael Lapidge, 'The School of Theodore and Hadrian', *Anglo-Saxon England* 15 (1986): 45–72 (48). See also Rollason, *Northumbria*, 107.
 52. H. S. Brechter's proposal in *Die Quellen zur Angelsachsenmission Gregors des Grossen: eine historiographische Studie* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1941), 118–38, that the legend originated in Whitby may deserve a second hearing on account of the intricate ways in which the anonymous writer of the *Vita* is able to use the legend – its regional, political and dynastic references – to connect it to Whitby's legacy.
 53. Wallace-Hadrill, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History*, xxxvi.
 54. Throughout *HE*, Bede employs dynastic or regional-political terms when discussing Bernicia and Deira. He refers only once (*HE* 3.2) to 'the people of Bernicia' in a way that may possibly be interpreted as ethnic, when giving an account of the Christian mission among them: *nullum altare in tota Berniciorum gente erectum est*.
 55. Bede, *Historiam ecclesiasticam gentis Anglorum; Historiam abbatum; Epistolam ad Ecgbertum, una cum Historia abbatum auctore anonymo*, c. 1., ed.

- C. Plummer (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1896), p. 364: *Vita beatorum abbatum Benedicti, Ceolfridi, Eosterwini, Sigfridi et Hwaetberti*.
56. Ibid., c. 37, p. 402: *Vita santissimi Ceolfridi abbatis*.
57. For the *Vita* as an anti-Irish treatise, see Donald Bullough, 'Hagiography as Patriotism: Alcuin's "York Poem" and the Early Northumbrian *Vitae sanctorum*', in *Hagiographie, cultures, et sociétés. IVe–XIIe siècles*, ed. Évelyne Patlagean and Pierre Riché (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1981), 342.
58. Eddius Stephanus, *The Life of Bishop Wilfrid*, c. 47, ed. and trans. Bertram Colgrave (Cambridge: CUP, 1985), pp. 98–9.
59. Ibid. c. 16, p. 35.
60. Higham, (Re-)reading Bede, 115–27.
61. Clare Stancliffe, 'British and Irish Contexts', in *The Cambridge Companion to Bede*, ed. Scott DeGregorio (Cambridge: CUP, 2010), 71.
62. Barbara Yorke, *The Conversion of Britain: Religion, Politics and Society in Britain c. 600–800* (Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2006), 131–2, 155; and, more extensively, Rollason, *Northumbria*, 57–109.
63. See Stancliffe, 'British and Irish Contexts', 75.
64. For the persistence of Irish influence in Northumbria, see Eddius Stephanus, *Life of Bishop Wilfrid*, c. 12, pp. 24–6 and c. 14, pp. 30–31.
65. Doris Edel, *The Celtic West and Europe: Studies in Celtic Literature and the Early Irish Church* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2001), 144.
66. For discussion and references, see Robert W. Hanning, *The Vision of History in Early Britain: From Gildas to Geoffrey of Monmouth* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966), 94, 105–6.
67. W. Trent Foley and Nicholas J. Higham, 'Bede on the Britons', in *Early Medieval Europe* 17.2 (2009): 154–85.
68. This story illustrates Bede's earlier comment that 'God in his goodness did not reject the people whom he foreknew, but he had appointed much worthier heralds of the truth [the Romans] to bring this people to the faith' (*HE* 1.22).
69. The most thorough treatment of these aspects can be found in Stephen J. Harris, 'Bede and Gregory's Allusive Angles', *Criticism* 44. 3 (2002): 271–89; and idem, *Race and Ethnicity in Anglo-Saxon Literature* (London and New York, Routledge, 2003), 45–83. To these texts, I am indebted.
70. See Alan Frantzen, 'Bede and Bawdy Bale: Gregory the Great, Angels, and the "Angli"', in *Anglo-Saxonism and the Construction of Social Identity*, ed. A. Frantzen and J. D. Niles (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1997), 30–2. The starting point for this perspective was John Boswell, *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality: Gay People in Western Europe from the Beginning of the Christian Era to the Beginning of the Fourteenth Century* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1980), 143–4. The colonial reading is brought out by Uppbänder Mehan, who speaks of 'Gregory's desiring gaze' in "Nation" and the Gaze of the Other in Eighth-Century Northumbria', *Comparative Literature* 53.1 (2001): 1–26.
71. For examples of Gregory's writing with these implications, see Michael Carden, *Sodomy: A History of a Christian Biblical Myth* (London: Equinox, 2004), 127–8.
72. John Milton, *The History of Britain that Part Especially Now Call'd England, From the First Traditional Beginning, Continu'd to the Norman Conquest*, 2nd edn. (London: J. M. for Mark Pardoe, 1678), 161. A criticism of the English translation on this particular point can also be found in Harris, *Race and Ethnicity*, 48.

73. For this connection, see Hugh Magennis, 'Gender and Heroism in the Old English Judith', in *Writing Gender and Genre in Medieval Literature: Approaches to Old and Middle English Texts*, ed. E. M. Treharne (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2002), 13.
74. *Vita sancti Cuthberti*, c. 9, *Two Lives of Saint Cuthbert*, ed. Bertram Colgrave (Cambridge: CUP, 1940), p. 186.
75. Bede, *Libri quattuor in principium Genesis*, 3.10.
76. Gregory the Great, *Homiliae in evangelia*, ed. R. Étaix. CCSL, vol. 141 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999), 252: hom. 29, par. 9. In his discussion, Gregory understands the two figures dressed in white (*duo viri in albis vestibus*) – perhaps erroneously – to be angels.
77. See, for instance, the discussion of literary symbolism of whiteness, translucency and related notions among medieval exegetes in Dominic Janes, *God and Gold in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: CUP, 1998), 63–84; see also Harris, 'Bede and Gregory's Allusive Angles', 274–5.
78. Bede, *Libri quattuor in principium Genesis*, 3.11: *Candidi constat esse coloris*.
79. Bede, *Opera*. Part 2, *Opera exegetica*, 5. *Expositio Apocalypseos*, 1.3, ed. R. Gryson. CCSL, vol. 121A (Turnhout: Brepols, 2001), 245: *Antiquitas et immortalitas maiestatis in capite candor ostenditur, cui praecipui quique velut capilli adhaerentes, propter oves ad dexteram futuros, instar lanae, et propter dealbatorum innumerabilem turbam et electorum e coelo datorum, instar nivis effulgent*.
80. Vulgate: *Et dabo illi calculum candidum*. Bede, *Expositio Apocalypseos*, 1.4, p. 259: *Id est, corpus nunc baptismo candidatum, tunc incorruptionis gloria refulgens*. See also Janes, *God and Gold*, 72.
81. See Earl R. Anderson, *Folk-Taxonomies in Early English* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2003), esp. 142.
82. *Genesis B*, ll. 265, 457, and 627, in *The Saxon Genesis: An Edition of the West Saxon Genesis B and the Old Saxon Vatican Genesis*, ed. A. N. Doane (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991).
83. *þæt þær in hwitum brægum gewerede / englas ne oðeowdun* (they may know bright joys in blessedness among the angels) (ll. 447–8), quoted in William E. Mead, 'Color in Old English Poetry', *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 14 (1899): 179.
84. *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: Introduction, Commentary and Glossary*, ed. M. Godden, Early English Text Society, Supplementary Series 18 (Oxford: OUP, 2000), 74: 9.65–6. For a discussion of Ælfric's version of Bede's anecdote, see Kathy Lavezzo, *Angels on the Edge of the World: Geography, Literature, and English Community, 1000–1534* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), 27–45.
85. *Layamon's Brut, or Chronicle of Britain: A Poetical Semi-Saxon Paraphrase of the Brut of Wace of Layamon* (London: Society of Antiquaries, 1847), 181–2: *Iwisze beo[ð] Ænglisc. englen ilicchest / of alle þan folke; þa wunied uppen uolde / eouwer cun is fegerest of alle quike monnen*. The link between Englishness and beauty is also stressed in a late thirteenth-century collection of versified lives of the saints: *The South English Legendary, Edited from Corpus Christi College Cambridge MS 145 and British Museum MS Harley 2277 with Variants from Bodley MS Ashmole 43 and British Museum MS Cotton Julius D. IX*, vol. 1, ed. C. D'Evelyn and A. J. Mill, Early English Text Society, Original Series 235 (London: OUP, 1956), 81–4.
86. Frank M. Snowden, Jr., *Blacks in Antiquity. Ethiopians in the Greco-Roman Experience* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1970), 174–5 and 262.

87. Harris, *Race and Ethnicity*, 49.
88. Just as often Germanic hair was said to be red, a characteristic that Roman writers also noted for the Celts. See Walter Pohl, 'Telling the Difference: Signs of Ethnic Identity', repr. in *From Roman Provinces to Medieval Kingdoms*, ed. F. X. Noble, 120–67. London and New York: Routledge, 2006.
89. Procopius Caesariensis, *De Bello Vandalico*, 1.2, ed. G. Dindorfii, *Corpus scriptorum historiae Byzantinae* 18 (Bonn: E. Weber, 1833), p. 313: *omnibus candida, flava caesaries, corpus procerum, facies liberalis*.
90. Isidore, *Etymologiarum*, 19.23.6, col. 0689A: *ut videmus cirros Germanorum*.
91. Philip Shaw, 'Hair and Heathens: Picturing Pagans and the Carolingian Connection in the Exeter Book and Beowulf-Manuscript', *Texts and Identities in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. by Richard Corradini, Rob Meens, Christina Pössel and Philip Shaw, *Forschungen zur Geschichte des Mittelalters*, 12 (Vienna: Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2006), 345–57.
92. The Old English text of the laws of Æthelbert can be found on pp. 3–8 in *Gesetze der Angelsachsen*, ed. and trans. F. Lieberman, vol. 1 (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1903), §33.
93. Laws of Alfred in *Gesetze*, pp. 26–88, §35. See further Nicholas Higham, *An English Empire: Bede and the Early Anglo-Saxon Kings* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1995), 236.
94. For a discussion of race in the Riddles, see Anderson, *Folk-Taxonomies*, 142; John W. Tanke, 'Wonfeax Wale: Ideology and Figuration in the Sexual Riddles of the Exeter Book', in *Class and Gender in Early English Literature: Intersection*, ed. B. J. Harwood and G. R. Overing (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 24–6; and David A. E. Pelteret, *Slavery in Early Mediaeval England from the Reign of Alfred until the Twelfth Century* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1995), 52.
95. This interpretation is found numerous times in the ideas and images discussed in David Bindman and Henry Louis Gates, Jr.'s collection, *The Image of the Black in Western Art*, Vol. 2, Parts 1 and 2, new edn. (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010).
96. Foley and Higham, 'Bede on the Britons', 169–72.
97. Bede, *Opera*, Part 2. *Opera exegetica*, 2. In *primam partem Samuhelis libri III*, 2.10: ... *tamen in praemiorum receptione boni nisi bona nec mali nisi sola quae gessere se cum sua mala referunt, quo modo unis licet iisdemque coloribus scripti niger Aethiops, et Saxo candidus, cuius sit quisque coloris indigena possunt facile statim et sine ulla controversia discerni, at aliter in pictura, ubi nisi sui quisque coloris sicut et habitus deformetur mendacii prorsus impudentis tabula quae imaginem promisit, arguitur*.
98. *Quarum in Germania plurimas nouerat esse nationes, a quibus Angli uel Saxones, qui nunc Britanniam incolunt, genus et originem duxisse noscuntur; unde hactenus a uicina gente Brettonum corrupte Garmani nuncupantur*.
99. Kenneth H. Jackson, *Language and History in Early Britain* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 1953), 281. See also Alaric Hall, 'Interlinguistic Communication in Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*', in *Interfaces between Language and Culture in Medieval England: A Festschrift for Matti Kilpio*, ed. Alaric Hall, et al. (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2010), 55–62.
100. See Pohl, 'Telling the Difference', 125.
101. For examples, see Benjamin Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity* (Princeton N.J.: Princeton UP, 2004), 427–39.

102. Pomponius Mela, *Pomponius Mela's Description of the World*, 3.27, trans. F. E. Romer (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), p. 109.
103. Quoted in Isaac, *Invention of Racism*, 431.
104. Eric Partridge, *Origins: Etymological Dictionary of Modern English*, 4th edn. (London: Routledge, 1977).
105. Quoted in Michael P. Speidel, *Ancient Germanic Warriors: Warrior Styles from Trajan's Column to Icelandic Sagas* (London: Routledge, 2004), 225 note.
106. Bede's knowledge of Celtic is not known, but he traces the root meaning of Celtic names elsewhere in the *Historia*. For instance, Bede recounts how the *Scotti* area of *Dalreudini* comes from 'Dal, in their language signifying a part' (*HE* 1.1). In fact, it means 'valley' or 'meadow', so Bede is possibly confusing it with OE *dæl*, which means 'part'. For this confusion, see note in *HE* on pp. 18–19. For another of Bede's etymologies on Celtic names, see *HE* 1.12.

REFERENCES

Primary Sources

- The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition*, Vol. 3, MS A, ed. Janet. Bately. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1986.
- Ælfric. *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: Introduction, Commentary and Glossary*, ed. M. Godden, Early English Text Society, Supplementary Series 18. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Bede. *Opera*. Part 2, *Opera exegetica*, 5. *Expositio Apocalypseos*, ed. R. Gryson. *Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina*, vol. 121A. Turnhout: Brepols, 2001.
- . *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969. Abbreviated *HE*.
- . *Opera*. Part 2:1, *Opera exegetica: Libri quattuor in principium Genesis usque ad nativitatem Isaac et eiectionem Ishmahelis adnotationum*, ed. C. W. Jones. *Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina*, vol. 118A. Turnhout: Brepols, 1967.
- . *Vita sancti Cuthberti*, c. 9, in *Two Lives of Saint Cuthbert*, Bertram Colgrave, 241–308. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940.
- . *Historiam ecclesiasticam gentis Anglorum; Historiam abbatum; Epistolam ad Ecgerbertum, una cum Historia abbatum auctore anonymo*, ed. C. Plummer. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1896.
- Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina* (abbreviated CCSL). <<http://www.corpuschristianorum.org/series/ccsl.html>>
- The Earliest Life of Gregory the Great by an Anonymous Monk of Whitby*, ed. and trans. Bertram Colgrave. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985. Abbreviated *Vita*.
- Genesis B., in *The Saxon Genesis: An Edition of the West Saxon Genesis B and the Old Saxon Vatican Genesis*, ed. A. N. Doane. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991.
- Gesetze der Angelsachsen*, ed. and trans. F. Lieberman, vol. 1. Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1903.
- Gregory the Great, *Homiliae in evangelia*, ed. R. Étaix. *Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina*, vol. 141 Turnhout: Brepols, 1999.
- Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiarum siue Originum libri XX*, PL 82.

- Registrum epistularum: Libri VIII–XIV, Appendix*, ed. Dag Norberg, *Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina*, vol. 140. Turnhout: Brepols, 1982.
- . *Registrum epistularum: libri I–VII*, ed. Dag Norberg, *Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina*, vol. 140. Turnhout: Brepols, 1982.
- . *Gregorii I papae registrum epistularum*, *MGH Epist.* 1–2, ed. P. Ewald and L. M. Hartmann. Berlin: Weidmann, 1887–1899.
- Layamon's Brut, or Chronicle of Britain: A Poetical Semi-Saxon Paraphrase of the Brut of Wace of Layamon*. London: Society of Antiquaries, 1847.
- Le liber pontificalis: texte, introduction et commentaire*, ed. C. Vogel. Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, 2nd series, 2nd edn. Paris: E. de Boccard, 1955.
- Mela, Pomponius. *Pomponius Mela's Description of the World*, trans. F. E. Romer. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997.
- PL – *Patrologia Latina Database*, a complete electronic version of the first edition of Jacques-Paul Migne's *Patrologia Latina*. 1844–1855 and 1862–1865.
- Procopius, *De Bello Vandalico*, ed. G. Dindorfii, *Corpus scriptorum historiae Byzantinae* 18. Bonn: E. Weber, 1833.
- The South English Legendary: Edited from Corpus Christi College Cambridge MS 145 and British Museum MS Harley 2277 with Variants from Bodley MS Ashmole 43 and British Museum MS Cotton Julius D. IX*, vol. 1, ed. C. D'Evelyn and A. J. Mill, Early English Text Society, Original Series 235. London: Oxford University Press, 1956.
- Stephanus, Eddius. *The Life of Bishop Wilfrid*, ed. and trans. Bertram Colgrave. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.
- Thietmar. *Die Chronik des Bischofs Thietmar von Merseburg and ihre Korveier Überarbeitung*, *MGH SRG* 9. Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandel, 1935.
- Thietmar of Merseburg, *Die Chronik des Bischofs Thietmar von Merseburg and ihre Korveier Überarbeitung*, ed. R. Holtzman, *MGH SRG* 9. Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandel, 1955.
- Widsith: A Study in Old English Heroic Legend*, ed. Raymond Wilson Chambers. [1912] repr. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Widukind, *Rerum gestarum Saxoniarum libri tres*, ed. Paul Hirsch, *MGH SRG*. Hannover: Impensis Bibliopolii Hahniani, 1935.

Secondary Sources

- Almond, T. Leo. 'The Whitby Life of St. Gregory', *Downside Review* 23 (1904): 15–29.
- Anderson, Earl R. *Folk-Taxonomies in Early English*. Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2003.
- Barnwell, P. S., L. A. S. Butler, and C. J. Dunn. 'The Confusion of Conversion: *Strenaschalch*, Strensall and Whitby and the Northumbrian Church', in *The Cross Goes North: Processes of Conversion in Northern Europe, A.D. 300–1300*, ed. Martin Carver, 311–26. Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2003.
- Bauer, Nancy. 'Abbess Hilda of Whitby: All Britain Was Lit by Her Splendor', in *Medieval Women Monastics: Wisdom's Wellsprings*, ed. M. Schmitt and L. Kulzer, 13–32. Collegeville, MI: Liturgical Press, 1996.
- Bindman, David, and Henry Louis Gates, Jr., eds. *The Image of the Black in Western Art*, Vol. 2, Part 1. *From the Early Christian Era to the 'Age of Discovery': From the Demonic Threat to the Incarnation of Sainthood*, new edn. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010.

- Boswell, John. *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality: Gay People in Western Europe from the Beginning of the Christian Era to the Beginning of the Fourteenth Century*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1980.
- Brechter, H. S. *Die Quellen zur Angelsachsenmission Gregors des Grossen: eine historiographische Studie*. Münster: Aschendorff, 1941.
- Brooks, Nicholas. 'English Identity from Bede to the Millennium', *The Haskins Society Journal* 14 (2003): 33–51.
- . *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury*. Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1984.
- Bullough, Donald. 'Hagiography as Patriotism: Alcuin's "York Poem" and the Early Northumbrian *Vitae sanctorum*', in *Hagiographie, cultures, et sociétés. IVe–XIIIe siècles*, ed. Évelyne Patlagean and Pierre Riché, 339–59. Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1981.
- Carden, Michael. *Sodomy: A History of a Christian Biblical Myth*. London: Equinox, 2004.
- Chadwick, Nora K. 'The Conversion of Northumbria: a Comparison of Sources', in *Celt and Saxon: Studies in the Early British Border*, ed. K. Jackson, rev. edn. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964.
- Charles-Edwards, T. M. *Early Christian Ireland*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Dailey, E. T. A. 'The *Vita Gregorii* and Ethnogenesis in Anglo-Saxon Britain', *Northern History* 47.2 (2010): 195–207.
- Daniel, C. 'York and the Whitby Author's Anonymous *Life of Gregory the Great*', *Northern History* 29 (1993): 197–9.
- Edel, Doris. *The Celtic West and Europe: Studies in Celtic Literature and the Early Irish Church*. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2001.
- Ekwall, Eliert, ed. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place Names*, 4th edn. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960.
- Fanning, Steven. 'Bede, Imperium, and the Bretwaldas', *Speculum* 66.1 (1991): 1–26.
- Foley, W. Trent and Nicholas J. Higham, 'Bede on the Britons', in *Early Medieval Europe* 17.2 (2009): 154–85.
- Frantzen, Alan. 'Bede and Bawdy Bale: Gregory the Great, Angels, and the "Angli"' in *Anglo-Saxonism and the Construction of Social Identity*, ed. A. Frantzen and J. D. Niles, 17–39. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1997.
- Goffart, Walter. 'L'Histoire ecclésiastique et l'engagement politique de Bède', in *Bède le Vénérable entre tradition et postérité. Colloque organisé à Villeneuve d'Ascq et Amiens par le CRHEN-O, Université de Lille 3, et Textes, Images et Spiritualité (Université de Picardie – Jules Verne) du 3 au 6 juillet 2002*, ed. S. Lebecq, M. Perrin, and O. Szerwiniack, 149–58. Villeneuve d'Ascq: Université Charles-de-Gaulle, Lille III, 2005.
- . *The Narrators of Barbarian History (A.D. 550–800): Jordanes, Gregory of Tours, Bede, and Paul the Deacon*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988.
- Gunn, V. *Bede's Historiae: Genre, Rhetoric and the Construction of the Anglo-Saxon Church History*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2009.
- Hald, Kristian. 'Stednavne i Angel', in *Sydslesvig*, vol. 2, 70–84. Copenhagen: Reitzels Forlag, 1945.
- Hall, Alaric. 'Interlinguistic Communication in Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*', in *Interfaces between Language and Culture in Medieval England*:

- A Festschrift for Matti Kilpio*, ed. Alaric Hall, et al., 55–62 Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2010.
- Hanning, Robert W. *The Vision of History in Early Britain: From Gildas to Geoffrey of Monmouth*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1966.
- Harris, Stephen J. *Race and Ethnicity in Anglo-Saxon Literature*. London and New York, Routledge, 2003.
- . ‘Bede and Gregory’s Allusive Angles’, *Criticism* 44.3 (2002): 271–89.
- Higham, Nicholas J. *(Re-)reading Bede: The Ecclesiastical History in Context*. London: Routledge, 2006.
- . *An English Empire: Bede and the Early Anglo-Saxon Kings*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995.
- Howe, Nicholas. ‘Rome: Capital of Anglo-Saxon England’, *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 34.1 (2004): 147–72.
- Isaac, Benjamin, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2004.
- Jackson, Kenneth H. *Language and History in Early Britain*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1953.
- Karkov, C. E. ‘Whitby, Jarrow and the Commemoration of Death in Northumbria’, in *Northumbria’s Golden Age*, ed. J. Hawkes and S. Mills, 125–35. Stroud: Sutton, 1999.
- Kessler, Stephan C. ‘Gregory the Great: A Figure of Tradition and Transition in Church Exegesis’, in *Hebrew Bible, Old Testament: the History of Its Interpretation*. Vol. 1, Part 2, *From the Beginnings to the Middle Ages (Until 1300)*, ed. Magne Sæbø, 135–47. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2000.
- Janes, Dominic. *God and Gold in Late Antiquity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Lapidge, Michael. ‘The Anglo-Latin Background’, in *A New Critical History of Old English Literature*, ed. S. B. Greenfield and D. G. Calder, 5–37. New York: New York University Press, 1986.
- . ‘The School of Theodore and Hadrian’, *Anglo-Saxon England* 15 (1986): 45–72.
- Lavezzo, Kathy. *Angels on the Edge of the World: Geography, Literature, and English Community, 1000–1534*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006.
- Magennis, Hugh. ‘Gender and Heroism in the Old English Judith’, in *Writing Gender and Genre in Medieval Literature: Approaches to Old and Middle English Texts*, ed. E. M. Treharne, 5–18. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2002.
- Markus, R. A. *Gregory the Great and His World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Mead, William E. ‘Color in Old English Poetry’, in *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 14 (1899): 169–206.
- Mehan, Uppbänder and David Townsend. ‘“Nation” and the Gaze of the Other in Eighth-Century Northumbria’, *Comparative Literature* 53.1 (2001): 1–26.
- Mews, Constant J. ‘Gregory the Great, the Rule of Benedict and Roman Liturgy: the Evolution of a Legend’, *Journal of Medieval History* 37 (2011): 125–44.
- Michelet, Fabienne. *Creation, Migration, and Conquest: Imaginary Geography and Sense of Space in Old English Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Milton, John. *The History of Britain that Part Especially Now Call’d England, From the First Traditional Beginning, Continu’d to the Norman Conquest*, 2nd edn. London: J. M. for Mark Pardoe, 1678.

- Morse, Ruth. *Truth and Convention in the Middle Ages: Rhetoric, Representation, and Reality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Partridge, Eric. *Origins: Etymological Dictionary of Modern English*, 4th edn. London: Routledge, 1977.
- Pelteret, David A. E. *Slavery in Early Mediaeval England from the Reign of Alfred until the Twelfth Century*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1995.
- Pohl, Walter. 'Telling the Difference: Signs of Ethnic Identity', repr. in *From Roman Provinces to Medieval Kingdoms*, ed. F. X. Noble, 120–67. London and New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Rambridge, Kate. 'Doctor noster sanctus: the Northumbrians and Pope Gregory', in *Rome and the North: the Early Reception of Gregory the Great in Germanic Europe*, ed. R. H. Bremmer, C. Dekker and D. F. Johnson, 1–26. Paris: Peeters, 2001.
- Richter, Michael. 'Bede's Angli: Angles or English?', *Peritita* 3 (1984): 99–114.
- Rollason, David. *Northumbria, 500–1100: Creation and Destruction of a Kingdom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- . 'Hagiography and Politics in Early Northumbria', in *Holy Men and Holy Women: Old English Prose Saints' Lives and Their Contexts*, ed. P. E. Szarmach, 95–114. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1996.
- Shaw, Philip. 'Hair and Heathens: Picturing Pagans and the Carolingian Connection in the Exeter Book and Beowulf-Manuscript', in *Texts and Identities in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. by Richard Corradini, Rob Meens, Christina Pössel, and Philip Shaw, Forschungen zur Geschichte des Mittelalters, 12, 345–57. Vienna: Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2006.
- Soames, Henry. *The Anglo-Saxon Church: Its History, Revenues, and General Character*. London: John W. Parker, 1835.
- Speidel, Michael P. *Ancient Germanic Warriors: Warrior Styles from Trajan's Column to Icelandic Sagas*. London: Routledge, 2004.
- Snowden, Frank M., Jr. *Blacks in Antiquity: Ethiopians in the Greco-Roman Experience*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1970.
- Stancilffe, Clare. 'British and Irish Contexts', in *The Cambridge Companion to Bede*, ed. Scott DeGregorio, 69–83. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Stephen J. Harris, in 'Bede, Social Practice, and the Problem with Foreigners', in *Social Practice in the Middle Ages*, ed. Thomas H. Bestul and Thomas N. Hall, 97–110. Chicago: Illinois Medieval Association, 1997.
- Story, Joanna. 'Charlemagne and the Anglo-Saxons', in *Charlemagne: Empire and Society*, ed. J. Story, 195–210. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005.
- Tanke, John W. 'Wonfeax Wale: Ideology and Figuration in the Sexual Riddles of the Exeter Book', in *Class and Gender in Early English Literature: Intersection*, ed. B. J. Harwood and G. R. Overing, 21–42. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994.
- Thacker, Alan. 'Memorializing Gregory the Great: The Origin and Transmission of a Papal Cult in the Seventh and Early Eighth Century', *Early Medieval Europe* 7.1 (1998): 59–84.
- Tugène, Georges. *L'idée de la nation anglaise dans L'Histoire ecclésiastique de Bède le Vénérable*. Strasbourg: Presses Universitaires de Strasbourg, 2001.
- Wallace-Hadrill, J. M. *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People: A Historical Commentary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988.
- Wolfram, Herwig. *The Roman Empire and Its Germanic Peoples*, trans. T. Dunlap. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997.

- Wood, Ian. 'Monasteries and the Geography of Power in the Age of Bede', *Northern History* 45, no. 1 (2008): 11–25.
- . 'The Mission of Augustine in Canterbury to the English', *Speculum* 69 (1994): 1–17.
- Wormald, Patrick. 'Engla Lond: The Making of an Allegiance', in *Journal of Historical Sociology* 7.1 (1994): 1–24.
- . 'Bede, the Bretwaldas and the Origins of the *gens Anglorum*', in *Ideal and Reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society: Studies Presented to J. M. Wallace Hadrill*, ed. P. Wormald, 99–129. Oxford: Blackwell, 1983.
- Yorke, Barbara. *The Conversion of Britain: Religion, Politics and Society in Britain c. 600–800*. Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2006.
- . *Nunneries and the Anglo-Saxon Royal Houses*. London: Continuum, 2003.

6 Scandinavian Ancestors in Anglo-Saxon Texts

In the Middle Ages, lists of genealogies were for the elite and these texts survived only for royals, bishops, and other important members of society. One of the primary objectives of the genealogical list was to confer authority upon the present office holder by connecting him with a long line of illustrious ancestors. The Anglo-Saxon regal list (*stirps regia*) was also a way of establishing a people's communality insofar as a roster of royal forefathers was meant to represent the history of the people they governed.¹ In this way, the regal list was also an ethnic legend in an abridged format, as lists could include references to ancestors in far-off places.

Genealogical listing was a mode of symbolic self-representation liable to adjustment. Bede was aware that lines of descent – even those relating to kings of historical time – could be manipulated. For instance, in Book 1, ch. 3, he recounts how the regal list of the Northumbrian kings deliberately omitted the names of apostate kings – the two pagan rulers, Osric and Eanfrid – who ruled between Edwin and Oswald. The years for the reign of Northumbrian kings were then officially incorporated into that of Oswald's rule. Bede notes that this was in order to present a descent of only worthy Christian ancestors.²

Manipulation of regnal lists not only involved erasures but also additions. In Bede's text (*HE* 2.5), the historical King Æthelberht (c. 560–616) is connected with a number of legendary ancestors, the terminal figure of which is Woden. We are told that this pagan god was the founding figure for Anglo-Saxon royal houses in the eighth century. But if we examine West Saxon genealogy (recorded in the late ninth century), several ancestors beyond Woden were since included. Genealogy is now traced in a direct line back through Noah to Adam, the first man. In this way, West Saxon descent now encompassed historical kings, legendary figures, Germanic deities, and biblical patriarchs.³ The Anglo-Saxon elite saw themselves as part of world history: they were a people elected by God, who had once been heroic warriors.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine whether claims to Scandinavian ancestry helped to legitimize English kingship and provide it with a charisma suitable for militant rulers. The chapter falls into three sections. The first section is an investigation of Bede's report in *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* of how eighth-century kingdoms traced their royal

lineage back to Woden. Prior to the introduction of Christianity, Woden – a name cognate of the warrior deity Óðinn in Norse mythological texts – had been worshipped as a god in England. But how are we to understand the inclusion of this (northern) pagan god in royal genealogies? Much has been said about the inclusion of Celtic names in the West Saxon royal genealogy (perhaps pointing to ethnic mixing on the elite level), but the extent to which an idea of Scandinavian heritage is found in these texts is yet to receive focused attention. In the second section, attention turns to the figures Scef and Scyld, who were incontrovertibly seen as ‘Scandinavian’ ancestors, included in West Saxon royal genealogy. The last section of the chapter addresses the relationship between English tradition and Nordic sources. It is the argument here that some of the ‘native’ ancestral figures that appear in Nordic tradition were, in fact, loans from Anglo-Saxon tradition.

WODEN AND SCANDINAVIAN ORIGINS?

Bede’s statement that ‘the royal families of many [English] kingdoms claimed their descent’ from the stock of Woden (*HE* 1.15) is confirmed by lists included in the Cambro-Latin *Historia Brittonum* (first compiled c. 820). This work draws on Anglo-Saxon material, which has its origin in the eighth century. This is a series of four manuscripts with pedigrees for royal houses of various English kingdoms. All of these royal houses have Woden as their ancestor.

The lineage going back to a god chimes with some of the earliest textual information we have of Germanic pagan culture. At the end of the 1st century AD, the Roman historian Tacitus recounts how Germanic tribes traced their progenitor as ‘born by a god’, which was either the deity Manu or Tuisto.⁴ We know that Woden was worshipped in pagan England.⁵ Thus, it has been assumed that the inclusion of Woden in royal genealogies was residual from pagan times.⁶ But the question is how Bede or other Christian writers actually viewed the inclusion of Woden in royal genealogies. They certainly must have ascribed his inclusion to euhemerism, i.e. Woden was a hero so powerful that he had been mistaken for a god in more primitive times. However, as Molly Miller cogently argues, Bede saw himself as a historian of the successful conversion to Christianity in England; he would therefore not have mentioned that Anglo-Saxon kings still traced their descent from a pagan god unless he knew it to be propaganda. We may therefore also surmise that Woden’s inclusion in royal genealogy was understood symbolically, perhaps as a marker of warrior blood. Perhaps, the mention of Woden stressed legacies of military strength, in the same way as ‘lion’ would later be used as an appellation to define England’s medieval warrior rulers with a reputation for bravery (such as Richard I, ‘the Lionheart’).

In his tenth-century chronicle, the Anglo-Saxon ealdorman Æthelweard discusses Woden as an ancestor of the West Saxon kings. He claims

that Woden was, in fact, a historical king whom the 'northern peoples [*aquilonales*] ... worship as a god even to the present day, that is the Danes [*Dani*], the Northmen [*Northmanni*], and the Swedes [*Suevi*]'.⁷ Only a little later in the text, Æthelweard emphasizes that English kings were of northern extraction, when he notes that sixth-century King Ida and his Northumbrian family 'derive the beginning of their royalty and nobility from Woden'.⁸ I will suggest that the underlying argument here is two-fold. Æthelweard recognizes that English kings traced their ancestry to eminent warrior kings of the North. Therefore, the English could match the contemporary raiders that arrived from Scandinavia. At the same time, Æthelweard is jeering at the Scandinavians who worshipped an Anglo-Saxon ancestor as a god.

Following on from this, I will suggest that Woden may in fact have been adopted into genealogical lists *after* the Anglo-Saxons had converted to Christianity. For comparative evidence, the medievalist Karl Hauck has documented how royal descent was traced to pagan gods long after the conversion to Christianity among a number of Germanic nations.⁹ For England, there is further evidence that divine or semi-divine ancestors were added very late in Anglo-Saxon manuscript tradition. One example of this is the figure Geat. In the Anglian Collection, the terminal ancestor for the Kentish line is Woden. However, in the later *Historia Brittonum*, another five generations are added beyond Woden to the Kentish list of kings. The list now terminates with Geat, 'who was, as they say, the son of a god [*filius ... dei*]'. The text (which is an outside view on Anglo-Saxon tradition) proceeds to condemn the pagan Anglo-Saxons, who had been blinded by some demon (*demone caecati*) and therefore worshipped this figure.¹⁰ But the extension back to Geat is registered for the first time in the eighth-century Anglian Collection and was most certainly an addition belonging to a time after the conversion to Christianity. This shows us that it was possible to continue to use Germanic mythology for symbolic purposes.

The question I will focus on here is whether or not Woden carried a sense of geographical and/or ethnic origin in post-conversion times, and if his status as an ancestor was connected with an 'out-of-Scandinavia' legend. In this respect, we may look at the Anglian Collection, which lists royal pedigrees for the houses of Deira, Bernica, East Anglia, Kent, and Lindsey. Three of the manuscripts also contain lists for Northumbrian and Mercian royals, as well as a West Saxon line of ancestors. All of the royal houses have Woden as their ancestor. The royal lines listed in the manuscripts of the collection are primarily those that were descendants of the Anglians, according to Bede's history.

David Dumville offers cogent reasons for arguing that the archetype of the Anglian Collection was probably composed in the second half of the eighth century, most likely in Northumbria, and that a political purpose lies behind it. When Northumbrian kings gained suzerainty over new areas of England, a recalibrated chart of royal genealogies could have been required to show that new, dependent kingdoms had a common origin. Certainly,

to record the past in such a systematic and exhaustive manner is a way of communicating a power to organize, which only a superior king could command.¹¹ In terms of Weberian *Idealtypen*, Woden now comes to represent a *paradigmatic identity* (a culture hero for a larger community). This can also be seen in terms of what Paul Ricoeur calls 'symbolic action', which is intended to create an 'integrative structure for a group'. Ricoeur relates how the celebration of symbolic origins can become 'a device for the system of power to preserve its power', making it 'a defensive and protective act on the part of the rulers'.¹²

There could be some significance to the fact that primarily Anglian houses included Woden. In comparison, we know that the East Saxons listed Seaxnet as their founding figure. This is a name cognate of the pagan god Saxnot, who was idolized by the continental Saxons.¹³ Saxnot appears in a passage from the ninth-century baptismal formula 'Abrenunciatio and Credo'.¹⁴ Thus, Woden appears to have been a badge of Anglian rather than a Saxon identity. But at some point, the West Saxons pulled in Woden as their ancestor (and perhaps this is why they could be included in the Anglian Collection). As already noted, royal lists were subject to manipulation when political advantages could be achieved, so the adoption could have happened during the seventh century, when the West Saxon kings sought alliances with Anglian kingdoms against colonialist Mercia. Alternatively, it could have occurred a little later when Wessex (possibly) accepted Mercian overrule.

As discussed in previous chapters, the Angles (Bede's *Angli*) were believed to derive from the northern parts of Europe. Indeed, some sort of contact with the Scandinavian *Kulturkreis* was upheld for a long time after arrival in Britain. Anglian kingdoms show many links to Scandinavia, as evidenced by finds of various dress items. The most extensive study of this contact is provided by archaeologist John Hines, who has examined a number of dress accessories (clasps, square-headed brooches, bracteates, scutiform pendants, cruciform brooches, equal-armed brooches, and annular brooches) as evidence of Anglian links with Scandinavia in the pre-Viking period. Hines suggests that a migration from Scandinavia into Anglian England took place, especially from areas around Kattegat in the southern Baltic (present-day Denmark), as well as from western Norway.¹⁵ Recent developments in archaeological studies tend to place more emphasis on trade than migration when assessing the 'ethnicity' of finds (a possibility for which Hines also allows). But no matter whether one or the other explanation is more valid, the fact that Anglian England upheld associations with Scandinavia is relevant when considering the inclusion of Woden in Anglian genealogies.

However, Scandinavian fashion was increasingly stigmatized when Viking hostilities began. While Alcuin was in employment as an advisor to Charlemagne in Francia, he stayed for some time in Northumbria during 790. After the Viking sack of Lindisfarne in 793, he wrote to the Northumbrian King Æthelred to complain about the conspicuous imitation of the pagans in

his kingdom: 'Consider the dress, the way of wearing the hair ... Look at your trimming of beard and hair, in which you have wished to resemble the pagans. Are you not menaced by terror of them whose fashion you wished to follow?'¹⁶ Since there were no Scandinavian settlements in Northumbria at this time, we must presume that such fashion was known through trade and long-standing cultural links. Evidently, Alcuin points to a connection between fashion and cultural allegiance, which is pertinent to an assessment of Anglian England.

Although Woden had been worshipped in England and other places on the European continent, there is evidence that Christian commentators of the Middle Ages came to associate Woden specifically with Scandinavia, where he continued to be worshipped until late in the period. The texts discussed in relation to the Langobardic tradition in Chapter Three suggest that the link to Woden was utilized to signal ethnic belonging. The seventh-century 'Fredegar' *Chronicle*, for example, mentions that the Langobards were followers of the god they called Wodano; this is information provided alongside the reference to their origin in Scandinavia.¹⁷ It is reasonable to assume that the author intends the two pieces of information to support each other. In Paul the Deacon's history of the Langobards, there is an unmistakable attempt to create coherence between the story of the Langobards' 'out-of-Scandinavia' legend and their pagan worship of Wotan.¹⁸ Paul informs us that Wotan was worshipped by all the Germanic peoples (*ab universis Germaniae gentibus ut deus adoratur*) (1.9). Logically, this statement, which is in the present tense, cannot refer to all 'Germanic people', as Paul was writing at the end of the eighth century. Certainly, he knew that Wotan was not worshipped in areas under the control of the expanding Christian Frankish empire, which he served for several years. It must therefore be intended to point specifically to the northernmost and pagan people inhabiting *Scandinavia* (1.7). Paul could have obtained knowledge of the religion practised in Scandinavia from records of the Frankish mission to the northern parts of the continent. For example, the monk Willibrord's mission to the Frisian and Danes at the turn of the eighth century was supported by the Austrasian Frankish King Pepin II.

In England, knowledge about Scandinavian paganism had a more direct route of transmission through contact with both raiders and peaceful settlers from the late eighth century onwards. The Anglo-Saxon ealdorman, Æthelweard, who was mentioned above, draws heavily on this knowledge. When tracing West Saxon royal genealogy in his chronicle, he seems to emphasize that the strength of the royal ancestors was so great that they were worshipped as gods by the backward Scandinavians. This is how one may interpret Æthelweard's 'scandinavianization' of Woden's name, so it appears both as Vuothen (1.4) and Wothen (2.2) – thereby replacing the Old English medial *d* with a *th*. This is likely an attempt at appropriating the name to the Old Norse form 'Óðinn'.¹⁹ Æthelweard also manipulates other names in Anglo-Saxon royal lines to resemble Scandinavian name forms. In the West Saxon genealogy, Woden's son Bældæg (as he is named in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*) is

replaced with the name Balder, i.e. the Norse god, Baldr (3.4). In reference to the Kentish royal genealogy, Wecta, another of Woden's sons, is called Vuithar (1.4), and the name Withar (2.2) is presumably an attempt to approach the name of an Anglo-Saxon ancestor to the Norse god Viðarr.²⁰ The 'scandinavianization' of genealogy shows us that Æthelweard highlighted Woden and his descendants as specifically *northern* kings of the Anglo-Saxon past. The Old English and Norse forms of Woden's sons are not exact cognates, for which reason Æthelweard's linking of English kings and Scandinavian deities is a speculative reconfiguration that evokes these kings as so powerful that they were considered to be gods by unenlightened pagans.

As a chief god who had many sons, Woden was an obvious choice to use as a founding father figure. But let us briefly focus on his cognate, Óðinn, as he is mentioned in the prologue to the Icelandic historian Snorri Sturluson's early thirteenth-century *Prose Edda*. The treatment Óðinn is given here is important because it is an elaborate post-conversion endeavour to use this figure in relation to royal genealogy. It is simultaneously the construction of an origin legend. Snorri deliberately concocts a fallacious etymology. Óðinn was chief among the Norse gods, the *æsir* (singular *áss*, god), which Snorri interprets as *Ásiamanna*, i.e. men of Asia. These men had their homeland in Troy.²¹ As Óðinn, a powerful (human) chieftain, migrated northwards towards Scandinavia with his retinue, he set his sons to rule in Westphalia (Germany), Francia, Jutland, Norway, and England. Óðinn himself settled in Sweden at Sigtuna, near present-day Stockholm. Snorri uses Óðinn as a culture bearer, someone from whom a family of Germanic nations can trace their institutions and language. For instance, Snorri recounts how Óðinn set up a code of law and set 12 rulers to administer the laws of the land (medieval Scandinavian juries had 12 members). But most important is the Germanic language, which he brought with him. Snorri writes:

Over Saxland and all over the northern half of the world they spread out until their tongue, even the speech of the men of Asia, was the native tongue over all these lands. Therefore men think that they can perceive, from their forefathers' names which are written down, that those names belonged to this tongue, and that the Æsir brought the tongue hither into the northern region, into Norway and into Sweden, into Denmark and into Saxland. But in England there are ancient lists of land-names and place-names which may show that these names came from another tongue [i.e. Celtic] than this.²²

By associating Óðinn with the East, which was traditionally considered the birthplace of literature, Snorri is able to explain the spectacular flourish of skaldic poetry in the North, which he collects in the *Prose Edda*.²³ But what is specifically interesting here is that Snorri tells us that his information on England was derived from English texts. The text of geographical names which he mentions sounds most of all like the Domesday Book. But he seems also to have had access to Anglo-Saxon regnal lists of genealogy. Among the sons

of Óðinn, Snorri mentions Skjöldr, a figure who appears in Anglo-Saxon lists of royal ancestors as Scyld. It is the legends surrounding this figure which are now to be considered.

THE LEGEND OF SCYLD SCEFING

References to Scyld (and his ghost-twin Scef) in English sources are perplexing. Therefore, it is useful to show their genealogical position in various sources to be discussed below. The following table provides a schematic overview of the relationship in descending order:

Table 6.1 Genealogies from Scef to Geat in Anglo-Saxon Sources

<i>Beowulf</i>	<i>Asser Vita Alfredi</i>	<i>Anglo-Saxon Chronicle Cotton MS. Tiberius A vi/Cotton MS. Tiberius B i</i>	<i>Æthelweard, Chronicon</i>	<i>William of Malmesbury, Gesta regum Anglorum</i>
Scef (?)	Seth Beduwig Huala Hathra Hermod	Sceaf Bedwig Hwala Haðra Itermon Heremod	Scef	Strephius Bedwegius Gwala Hadra Stermonius Heremodius Sceaf
Scyld	Sceldwa	Sceldwea/Scyldwa	Scyld	Sceldius
Beo	Beauu	Beaw	Beo	Beowius
Tetuaa	Caetuaa	Tætwa	Tetuaa	Tetius
Geat	Geata	Geat/Geata	Geat	Getius

To begin with the text of *Beowulf* – the prologue to this poem recounts the story of a good and glorious king named Scyld arriving as a foundling in a boat to the shores of the Danes (ll. 1–11). Subsequently, Scyld becomes the first in the Danish line of legendary kings known as *Scyldingas*. In *Beowulf*, Scyld is described as a warrior king who makes other peoples submit to his rule. His son, also called Beowulf, will also make a name for himself as a warrior whose fame resounds throughout *scedeland* (l. 19), a wider northern area (perhaps Scandinavia?). Scyld serves the same function as Woden: he is the founding king for a long line of warrior-kings. The royal line of *Scyldingas* is still in power at the time the poem takes place.

In relation to English genealogy, Scyld is also an interesting figure, since cognates of his name appear as an ancestor of the West Saxon kings. In the

Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (in the entry for the year 855), we find reference to Sceldwea (MS A)/Scyldwa (MS B), separated by ten generations from Woden.²⁴ But what information can we extract about the legend of Scyld? Some historians have taken the existence of place names in England, such as Scyldes Treow and Scildes Well, as proof that Scyld was a semi-divine hero popularly celebrated in England.²⁵ However, these names may just as well refer to Woden (known to have been worshipped in pagan England), since he was sometimes given the appellation of a shield-god.²⁶ Nonetheless, the connection to pagan religion may still be relevant. It is worth noting that the name of this ancient king in *Beowulf* is given as Scyld Scefing (l. 4). The meaning of the second constituent could be a patronym, since genealogical connections are usually marked by an *-ing* suffix. This indicates that Scyld was fathered by a figure named Scef. But in the legend to which *Beowulf* refers, the name is more likely to have the literal meaning, 'son of the sheaf' (OE *sceáf*), which may indicate that this figure was connected with a vegetation myth.²⁷ In William of Malmesbury's *Gesta regum Anglorum* (Deeds of the English Kings) (c. 1125), the foundling Scef is said to have arrived in a boat decked with a sheaf of corn at his head.²⁸ A connection between warrior kings and fertility deities is often observed (for example, in relation to the Arthurian legends). In turn, this is closely related to the overlapping warrior and fertility functions in Indo-European mythology.²⁹ But the central question for the present study is how Scyld was linked to the North in Anglo-Saxon legend.

'Scyld' is a name cognate of the Old Norse *skjöldr*, and means 'shield'. Thus, when applied to a king, this name takes the meaning of 'protector'. This is indeed how the Danish historian Sven Aggesen explains it in his history of the Danes (12th cent.). Aggesen makes Skjold the first king of the Danes and says that his name refers to his ability to 'shield' Denmark from the enemies beyond its borders.³⁰ In *Beowulf*, Scyld is the progenitor of the line of the Danish *Scyldingas* – an appellation used for Danish kings no less than 35 times in the poem. But this usage seems to be confined to the Anglo-Saxon poem. When the cognate *skjöldungr* is used in Norse skaldic poetry of the tenth and eleventh centuries, it refers to kings in general, not just the Danes. For example, in the mid-twelfth century, the poet Einarr Skúlason calls both God and the Greek emperor *yfir-skjöldungr* (head-protectors).³¹ That the term is not recognized as a term for a house of Danish kings in early Scandinavian texts suggests that the Scyldings were not a historical line of kings, but a fiction developed in Anglo-Saxon legend.

However, before reaching any conclusions, one historical text must be considered. This is the short *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*, based mainly on the charters and records given to the Northumbrian Church of St. Cuthbert. The text is often dated to the late tenth century, but may not in fact have been written before the eleventh.³² The author refers to the Viking invaders, Ívarr the Boneless and his brother Hálfdanr (who descended upon York in 867), as *Scaldingi*, a plural mentioned three times in the text.³³ Critics have

discussed this as reflecting a form of *skealdur* (<*skeldur), i.e. 'shield'.³⁴ However, on none of the three occasions does the term name a dynastic house, as it does in *Beowulf*; instead, it is a general reference to Danish invaders. Every time *scaldingi* is used in the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*, it is in connection with the slaughter of the English. So it seems more probable that it is a term of opprobrium. *Scaldingi* could come from the Old Norse or Old Low Franconian **skalda*, which is a vessel propelled by a punting pole.³⁵ Naming invaders after their characteristic vessels of war is known from other sources. For example, for the year 896, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* refers to *æsc* about the vessel used by the raiding Viking armies.³⁶ This has the meaning of 'warship' and is a borrowing from the Old Norse *askr* (ash, small barge) in reference to the ships made of, or containing, ash wood. In England, it was used to describe Scandinavian ships in much the same way as 'U-boat' was used to describe an enemy vessel and 'submarine' to describe friendly boats during both World Wars of the twentieth century. Subsequently, in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* entry for the year 917, we find the name, *æscmanna*, in reference to Viking invaders. Similarly, in the second half of the eleventh century, Adam of Bremen refers to Scandinavian Vikings as *ascomanni* (ash-men).³⁷

In summary, the most reasonable conclusion to be made about the legend of Scyld and his line of royal Scyldings is that it was an Anglo-Saxon invention. Since Scyld, who is said to have resided in Scandinavia, is figured as an ancestor of Anglo-Saxon royalty, it begs the question if there is a moment in English history, when it would have been opportune to forge such a link.

The Inclusion of Scyld as an English Ancestor

The earliest datable source that links the Scandinavian Scyld to English royal genealogy is the A-manuscript of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which is from the early 790s. Kenneth Sisam, Craig R. Davis, A. L. Meaney, and Roberta Frank have all produced versions of the argument that a legend of common Danish and English ancestry was introduced as propaganda for the peace settlement between King Alfred and the Viking leader Guthrum.³⁸ This was a legal settlement agreed upon after the Guthrum had suffered defeat at the Battle of Edington in 878. In five sections, the treaty outlines the boundaries between the two leaders' respective dominions and the ways in which their relationship was to be regulated.³⁹ If the military momentum lay temporarily with Alfred, the treaty was, if anything, an acknowledgement of the Vikings existing as a permanent feature of English politics. The Vikings had to gain something, if they were to accept a peace treaty. The strategy was to transform the erstwhile raiders into territorial rulers. This offered Alfred the opportunity to embed the raiders in an existing power structure, rather than trying to do business with a number of renegade bands.⁴⁰ The culmination of the contact was Guthrum's baptism in 878, at King Alfred's royal estate of Wedmore, near Athelney. The baptism was a moment when former

enemies came together and honoured each other, enjoying a period of feasting and lavish gift-giving. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* tells us that King Alfred acted as godfather for Guthrum and 30 of his chief men, and that Guthrum stayed with Alfred for 12 days. This conversion served to make the truce legally binding, since contracts could not be sworn unless the two parties were of the same religion. Hence, the significance of the baptism was as much political as religious.

Even if it was primarily political savvy that led Alfred to make Guthrum's rule in the east of England official, it seems to have been done with the hope of mutual reverence. Contrary to what might have been expected, the language of the pro-Alfredian *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* does not seek to denigrate Guthrum and the Danes, when speaking of the baptism. In the biographer Asser's account of the events, we are even told that Alfred became Guthrum's spiritual foster-father: *in filium adoptionis sibi suscipiens* (receiving him as his son by adoption). Alfred bestowed upon Guthrum the baptismal name of Æthelstan, which happened to be the name of Alfred's eldest brother (who had died c. 850), perhaps indicating the familial bonds that this gesture would create.

After Guthrum, a new Viking leader, Hastein, appeared as an attacker on English coasts, which is recorded in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* for the years 892 and 893. We know that Alfred came to terms with him; and Hastein's two sons were christened, with Alfred and Ealdorman Æthelred of the Mercians as their respective godfathers. Hastein gave Alfred oaths, and Alfred made Hastein generous gifts of money.⁴¹ It is perfectly possible that such splicing of genealogical lines would have been initiated as a consequence of bringing the Danes into King Alfred's *familia*.

To understand how such symbolic ethno-politics could work, we may turn to poetry composed at the Carolingian court. Francia also faced serious trouble from Viking raiders. The Frankish response was similar to that of the Anglo-Saxon kings. In fact, there are a number of documented cases in which Danish Viking leaders were christened by Frankish kings in the ninth century. Benefices in the form of Frisian land were issued as an effective policy for containing the threat from the North.⁴² Of interest to the present discussion are verses composed on the occasion of the Danish King Harald Klak's baptism in 826, at Louis the Pious's court at Mainz. The background was that Harald had fled from Denmark, as his rival to the throne, Horik I, ousted him. Louis the Pious offered Harald a dukedom in Frisia. Harald agreed, and his family and the Danes with him were baptized in Ingelheim am Rhein. The Frankish poet Ermold the Black, celebrated the baptism over 350 hexameter lines, entitled 'In Honour of Louis the Pious'.

In this poem, Ermold clearly attempts to eulogize Frankish superiority, commending Louis' Christianity, claiming the Danes to have been misled by Satan, and thereby symbolically making Louis their deliverer from damnation.⁴³ The Danes are paid a backhanded compliment: they are 'quick, agile and too passionate for weapons' (*veloces, agiles, armigerique nimis*).⁴⁴ These

are all qualities borrowed from classical literature. We are to understand that some of these warrior traits were also shared by the Franks. In the following lines, Ermold makes the assertion that Danes and Franks were ethnically connected. The Danes have a fair complexion and a noble stature, and 'the Frankish people are sprung from them, so the legend relates' (*pulcher adest facie, vultuque statuque decorus / Unde genus Francis adfore fama refert*).⁴⁵ It is important that Ermold wrote his poem as an outsider who tried to ingratiate himself with Louis and thereby end his exile from court.⁴⁶ Thus, he must have known that his statement about the Franks deriving from the Danes was in line with official ideology. The fact that Ermold ethnically connected the Danes and Franks in a poem composed for the baptism raises the stakes for a splicing of genealogies in connection with a celebration of peace between Danish and English armies in Anglo-Saxon texts.

That English poetic praise of Scandinavians was imaginable during the Viking Age comes within the scope of reason as soon as we realize that connections between Scandinavians and English noble families were sometimes close. For example, we may turn to the court of King Æthelstan, who ruled the West Saxons and Mercians from 924/925 to 939. Æthelstan had a half-sister married to the Norwegian warrior Egil Skallagrímsson, who appears as the protagonist in *Egils saga Skalla-Grímssonar* (perhaps written by Snorri Sturluson c. 1230). The saga tells us that the Norwegian King Hákon Haraldsson (d. 960/961) had been Æthelstan's foster son, for which reason he was nicknamed *Aðalsteinsfóstri*. We also hear of how Egil and his brother fight on behalf of Æthelstan against Olaf 'King of Scots'; Egil leads an English division, and his brother leads a contingent of Norwegians.⁴⁷ Egil was both a warrior and an accomplished skald, and he is said to have composed a long praise poem (*drápa*) to Æthelstan after the battle, of which extracts are given in chapter 55 of the saga. That a Norwegian wrote a praise poem for an English king about his victory over a ruler with Norwegian ancestry shows us that political and ethnic affiliations were in a state of flux.

Roberta Frank has argued that by acquiring a Scandinavian ancestor named Scyld, King Alfred strengthened his position in the Danelaw, among Danish immigrants.⁴⁸ But, this hypothesis requires qualification, since persuasive propaganda aimed at ninth-century Danes in England would only be effective if they knew King Scyld from their own legends. As we have seen, there is no positive evidence for this. So, if the joining of Danish and English royal lines signposted consanguinity, it may primarily have been a political move with a domestic orientation. It could have worked to justify Alfred's policy of incorporating the Danes in his *familia*. We know from Asser's *vita* of King Alfred that there were Danes among the king's multi-national group of attendants and advisors. Asser's attitude towards them cannot be mistaken. He refers to them using a term of opprobrium: *pagani* (heathens) (c. 76). The same term is even confusingly used about those Danes associated with the monasteries that Alfred founded (c. 94). Asser's persistent use

of such hostile terminology shows us that a construction of genealogical connections could have been necessary to legitimize Alfred's policy of conciliation with Viking leaders. Thus, it is worth a suggestion that we should see the inclusion of Scyld in West Saxon genealogy as propaganda aimed at those Anglo-Saxon noblemen whose approval Alfred solicited for his appeasement policy.

Towards Jordanes

The legend of Scyld Scefing, as he is named in the prologue to *Beowulf*, must have been known to the early West Saxon chroniclers of the ninth century. We can see this because the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* includes both Scyld and a figure named Scaef in the royal genealogy.⁴⁹ The chroniclers evidently understood the term *Scefing* as patronymic rather than meaning 'of the sheaf' (which is the rival interpretation most likely found in the prologue to *Beowulf*). Thus, they divided them into two separate figures, five generations apart.

Interestingly, the names interpolated between them (Heremod, Itermon Haðra, Hwala, Bedwig) look like Scandinavian names. A Heremod is mentioned in a short account of his exile in *Beowulf*, where he appears to have been a Danish king (l. 291). Itermon and Haðra are not known from other sources. But Hwala may be the same king who is mentioned in the poem *Widsith* (l. 14), as an illustrious ruler (with no determinable ethnicity). Finally, concerning Bedwig, Erik Björkman suggested a long time ago that the *d* in the name is a scribal mistake for *o*, making it another Scandinavian-sounding name.⁵⁰ This guess is to some extent justified by the fact that the name appears as *Beowi* in the D-text of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. It is possible, as Michael Lapidge suggests, that ninth-century chroniclers plundered Anglo-Saxon verse legends about the Old North when searching for ancestors to include in the Scandinavian branch of the genealogy.⁵¹

There is the addition of a legend linking Scaef to biblical narratives in the B- and C-texts of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* – thereby making this figure a link between the northern ancestors and biblical genealogy. The addition comes in the form of a scribal Latin gloss: *id est filius Noe, se wæs geboren on þære earce Noes* (MS C) (he is the son of Noah, he was born in Noah's ark). As the son of Noah, Scef appears in an ancestral position otherwise traditionally assigned to only three sons – Ham, Shem and Japhet – who were known as the founders of the postdiluvian human races. Assigning ethnicity to the peoples of the world in accordance with their postulated descent from these sons of Noah was a theory expounded by the first-century scholar Josephus and then transmitted in Isidore of Seville's *Etymologies*, which made it available to Anglo-Saxon chroniclers. But the idea of Noah having a fourth son was clearly unorthodox. It probably had the function of establishing a special claim for the North-Germanic nations. Japhet was traditionally seen to have been responsible for peopling Europe, but the need to locate a figure

who one could claim as the progenitor of the North (distinct from the 'old' Europe of Rome or Greece) seems to have been felt.

A patriotic urge to highlight a specific Northern history is reflected in the work of the English abbot Ælfric of Eynsham (c. 955–c. 1010), who wrote extensive commentaries on the Old Testament. In his writing, the orthodox format of three sons is preserved, but Japheth is enlisted as an ancestor with particular relevance for peoples of the North Sea littoral:

From Ham, Noah's son, came the Canaanites, and from Japheth, the younger, who was blessed by Noah, came the northern people beside the north sea, for the three parts [of the world] are divided in them [sons of Noah], Asia in the eastern kingdom for the eldest son, Africa in the southern part to Ham's kin, and Europe in the north for Japheth's offspring.⁵²

In fact, the desire for locating a specific figure who could be the progenitor of the northern Europeans was still to be seen in the fifteenth-century scroll held in Magdalen College, Oxford, which gives the descent from Adam to Henry VI. This manuscript presents Scyld (corrupted through a Latinized form of Sceldwa as 'Steldius') as the first inhabitant of *Germania*: ... *iste Steldius primus inhabitator Germanie fuit*.⁵³ The indication here is that all previous ancestors up until him could be tracked in biblical texts.

It is misguided to believe that a full understanding of the series of texts that mention Scyld/Scef will emerge from piecing together the totality of references to them. The fact we need to face is that no uniform, continuous tradition can be discovered. Instead, the trajectory of legends surrounding these ancestral figures was capricious – with misunderstanding and shifting ideological motives being the primary motors of development. Historians of the Middle Ages would set out to understand the truncated information they had available by painstakingly embedding it in paradigms conditioned by scholarly knowledge. As Stephen G. Nichols comments on the general transmission of medieval manuscript legends, the 'improvements' of later writers often imply 'a sense of superior judgment or understanding' against the source text.⁵⁴

An example of how this legend is developed in later works is found in Æthelweard's tenth-century *Chronicle*. Æthelweard includes a brief story of how Scef arrived in a boat to a place named *Scani*, surrounded by weapons.⁵⁵ Scef is well received among the people there and grows up to become their king. This story corresponds to the initial episode in *Beowulf* (ll. 8–11), except that in the poem, it is Scyld who arrives as an orphaned child in a boat. Since he includes a version of West Saxon royal genealogy terminating with Scef, it is perhaps natural that he introduced a 'correction', so that this was now the name of the founder king. What is interesting to our study is the reference to *Scani*, which has no precedent in other sources. This may be a product of his own speculation. To my knowledge, this place name has

univocally been explained as a reference to Skaane in southern Sweden.⁵⁶ John Mitchell Kemble even made the scoop of finding a Scandinavian manuscript with the inscription *Skiold Skanunga godh* (Scyld, god of the men of Skaane).⁵⁷ However, as T. A. Shippey and Andreas Haarder point out, this was a spurious and late addition to *Óláfs saga helga*, which was not part of the original tradition.⁵⁸ The problem is that Skaane (Lat. *Scania*) and Scandinavia share the same etymology. Æthelweard calls *Scani* 'an island in the ocean' (*in insula oceani*). Plausibly, this could refer to Skaane insofar as this place is called by the Old English name *Sconeg* in Ohthere's account of the Baltic. But if this is what Æthelweard has in mind, it is strange that he maintains *Scani* with a clearly Latinate morphology when he elsewhere remodels names in the West Saxon genealogy to resemble Norse name forms.⁵⁹ Furthermore, his emphasis on *Scani* being 'in the Ocean' seems part of a deliberate strategy to make it identical to Jordanes' idea of *Scandza* – an island placed in the aquatic boundary believed to gird the northern hemisphere. Æthelweard was clearly familiar with classical manuscripts and their terminology, since his text is replete with a heavy number of Latin and Greek words that are rare and must have reached him through intensive manuscript study.⁶⁰

An interesting detail in Æthelweard's work is the description of Scef arriving in his waterborne crib surrounded by arms. This brings the story into line with Jordanes' reference to the North as a cradle from which fierce warriors had sprung to conquer most of Europe (*Get.* 116). Æthelweard later tells us that Scef's descendants, the *Angli* (the Angles), gave their name to *Anglia* (England), which they invaded under their leaders Hengist and Horsa. In England, they increased their number, so that they finally obliterated all memory of the original name of the land.⁶¹ This description finds a parallel in Jordanes' *Getica*, where we hear how the Goths (under the guidance of their rulers) disembarked from their ships in a place which they subsequently named *Gothiscandza*. By taking control over this place, they drove the original inhabitants to flight, while their own number increased greatly (*Get.* 25–6). Whether this analogy is by design or coincidence is moot. But for later readers who were familiar with Jordanes, Æthelweard's reference to *Scani* would certainly invite them to make a link to Jordanes.

A century and a half later, in *Gesta regum Anglorum*, William of Malmesbury gives the following description of Scef:

This Scef, they say, landed on an island in Germany called Scandza mentioned by Jordanes the historian of the Goths, as a small child in a ship without a crew, sleeping with a sheaf of wheat laid by his head, and hence was called Sheaf. The men of that country welcomed him as something miraculous and brought him up carefully, and on reaching manhood he ruled a town then called *Slaswic*, now Hedeby. The name of the region is Old Anglia, and it was from there that the Angles came to Britain; it lies between the Saxons and the Goths [Jutes].⁶²

In William's text, we see an attempt to bring Æthelweard's history of the Angles (whose home was Hedeby/Haithaby [1.4]) into line with Jordanes' legend of the North as the cradle of the European peoples.

William seems to get lost in this mixing and matching of various sources. So, in his immediately following continuation of West Saxon genealogy, the role of Scaef is doubled. He now includes him again with the name Strephius, as if this is an entirely different figure. In part, the re-naming could be due to a misreading of manuscript hand *t* for *c*, but the inability to recognize Scaef as both the Ark-born son of Noah (*filius Noë in arca natus*) and the foundling arriving in a boat in Scandinavia shows how legendary material was continually in a state of transition.

NORTHERN ANCESTORS IN SCANDINAVIAN TRADITION

The remainder of the chapter will extend the discussion of Scyld to Scandinavian texts. I will argue that medieval Scandinavian sources reveal that the legend of Scyld did not come from Scandinavia, but was an English invention. The late conversion to Christianity in Scandinavian countries meant that the study and writing of national histories in manuscripts came late. Thus, antiquarians of Scandinavian history were consigned to scour foreign sources for information about their own national past.

The extent to which the legends of Scandinavia in Anglo-Saxon texts were of Scandinavian provenance has been a hotly debated subject for many years, most pointedly in relation to the discussion of the possible use of Scandinavian source material in *Beowulf*. When the Danish polymath, N. F. S. Grundtvig published a Danish translation of *Beowulf* in 1820 (the first complete verse translation of the poem into a modern language), the subtitle stated that this was a version of the poem in the 'original language', i.e. it was mistakenly presumed that the Old English manuscript was a translation.⁶³ Since then, a number of more legitimate claims to discovering analogues between Scandinavian material and the poem have been brought forward.⁶⁴

In regard to Scyld, R. D. Fulk has suggested that a parallel of the foundling story can be found in the Icelandic *Edda*.⁶⁵ Certainly, this is intriguing, but the idea of a significant leader arriving over water as a young child in a basket or another vessel is a stock motif of folktales around the world, the best known example of which is the biblical story of Moses. Hence, no trace of a direct influence can be established. In any case, no cognate of the name Scyld is found in this or similar Scandinavian folklore tales. This leads us towards the conclusion that the legend of old Scandinavia was of English origin. Some affirmation of this may be found in Æthelweard's Latin chronicle, where the names of Scyld, Scef (his father), and Beo (his son) are all West Saxon forms. This is significant because Æthelweard otherwise carefully approximates the names of Scandinavian ancestors to Norse forms, as

discussed above.⁶⁶ Hence, we have no indication that Æthelweard had found any Scandinavian parallels to these kings, whereas he managed to compare the Norse pantheon of Gods with figures from West Saxon genealogy.

The oldest surviving Danish text to name Skjold (cognate of Scyld) as an early national king is that of Sven Aggesen in *Brevis Historia Regum Dacie* (Short History of the Kings of Denmark), a work covering Danish history from around 300 to 1185 and finished not long after the last event that it describes. Interestingly, Aggesen gives the impression that legends of Scylding kings were not current in Denmark, but borrowed from Icelandic sources. He says that Skjold was 'the first after whom kings were called Skjoldunger in the poetry of the Icelanders'.⁶⁷ Thus, according to Aggesen, it is to the Icelandic tradition that we must turn to trace the name back to its earliest occurrence in Scandinavian tradition.

In the body of skaldic poetry, no reference to a legendary king named Skjold can be found. But a legendary King Skjöld is found in the prologue to the Icelandic *Langfeðgatal* (Roll of Kings) as part a royal genealogy. This text is usually dated to the 1120s, although its material may be older. It is believed that this roll of kings influenced the *Skjöldunga saga* (presumably c. 1180–1230), which is a history of the Danish kings. The original vellum has been lost, but an account of it survives in a later Latin paraphrase by the Icelandic scholar Arngrímur Jónsson. In the summary that Jónsson provides, Skjöld was mentioned as the first king of the line.⁶⁸

Both these accounts are late and may be the result of Anglo-Saxon influence. We know that England was the most important missionary centre and source of transmission for Christianity to Norway and Iceland. Undoubtedly, a number of Anglo-Saxon ideas and manuscripts travelled the same way. It was largely the Norwegian King Olaf Tryggvason, who (forcibly) led his people into Christianity, after he was himself converted in England during 994 or 995. In Iceland, the conversion took place through the exertion of political pressure. The Anglo-Saxon influence continued after Olaf's death in 1000.⁶⁹

We have clear evidence of borrowing from Anglo-Saxon examples in the work of Snorri Sturluson. In the prologue to the *Prose Edda*, he tells us that a figure named Skiold became ruler of *Iotland* (Jutland) and that he was the ancestor of the famous *Skioldungar* line of Danish kings.⁷⁰ Snorri undoubtedly took this information from both earlier Icelandic sources and Anglo-Saxon material. In fact, just as the Anglo-Saxon Æthelweard had earlier tried to relate English genealogies to Norse mythological names, Snorri employs a reverse strategy of linking Norse mythology to Anglo-Saxon genealogy. For instance, Skiold is said to be the son of Voden, to which Snorri adds that this figure is called 'Oþin' by Icelanders. The v-form of the name Snorri mentions shows us that he is probably referring to the Anglo-Saxon form of the name 'Woden'.

This Voden made one of his sons, Veggdeg, ruler in East Saxony. Among Veggdeg's descendants, we find the name, Heingeaz, which is undoubtedly meant to create a link to Hengist, the founding figure of English invasion

legend, connected to Kentish genealogy. Another of Voden's sons is Beldeg, whom Snorri says was known in the North as Balldr (i.e. Óðinn's son in Norse mythology). He is said to have ruled in Westphalia. The son, named Sigi, became the forefather of the Franks. If we compare Snorri's account to the much earlier Anglian Collection of royal genealogies, we find clear parallels. The Anglian Collection has Sigga, Swæbdæg and Beldeg in the line of Northumbrian kings descended from Woden, and a king named Bældæg features in the West Saxon line).⁷¹ Wægdæg and Hengest are sons descended from Woden in the Kentish line. This testifies to the fact that manuscripts of Anglo-Saxon genealogies were available in Iceland.

Indeed, a manuscript found in the library of the seventh-century Danish antiquary, Peder Resen, provides proof that this was the case.⁷² Although this particular manuscript is dated later than Snorri's *Prose Edda*, it is an example of an Icelandic transcript of Anglo-Saxon kings such as Snorri would have used. On the first page, there is a list containing eleven of Woden's ancestors, beginning with 'Sescef' down to the historical kings of Wessex, Kent, and Deira. The name 'Sescef' is clearly a corruption of Scef, who was described as the son of Noah in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. But the Icelandic scribe probably misread the first demonstrative as part of the proper noun: *Se Scef wæs Nóes sunu* (This Scef was son of Noah).⁷³ Thus, we can conclude that the genealogical tradition in Iceland was lifted from imported manuscripts of Anglo-Saxon provenance.

The genre of origin tales that came into its own in Scandinavia during the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries lifted material from sundry available manuscript sources to construct a coherent national narrative. An example is the Danish author of the *Annales Ryensis* (c. 1289), who is unresolved as to whether the Danes came from 'the land of the Goths and travelled to the land which is now called Denmark' or they were Greeks.⁷⁴ The first option points towards Jordanes, whereas the second connects up with the claim made in Wace's Norman verse chronicle, *Roman de Rou* (c. 1160s), which tells us that the Norman ancestors fled the fires of Troy, and, led by their ruler *Dana(u)s*, settled in Denmark (ll. 157–70).⁷⁵

Most prominent among Danish attempts to configure a history for Denmark on the basis of other national histories is Saxo Grammaticus' Latin chronicle *Gesta Danorum* (Deeds of the Danes), written in the first years of the thirteenth century.⁷⁶ In this text, we see several interesting uses of legends connected with previous 'out-of-Scandinavia' legends. Saxo takes up the figure of Skyoldus (Scyld), whom he describes as a model king (1.1.1–3), but he is not listed as the first of Danish kings. For this figure, Saxo may have had help from Icelandic sources, but it is also likely that he had access to (or knowledge of) the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which would have informed him that Scyldwa was an English forefather.⁷⁷ This is suggested by the fact that Saxo links Danish and English origins. He refers to 'the founders of our race' (the Danes) as Dan and Angul. Dan becomes the first king of Denmark, whereas Angul decides to migrate and becomes the founding father of the English (1.1).

We may look a little closer at these two figures in Saxo's text. Bede, we remember, used *Angulus* as the geographical place-name from which his own people, the Angles, had come. But he makes no reference to any founding figure called Angul. Saxo knew Bede's work, resolutely praising the English monk as an eminent church historian (1.2), and decided to create (in parallel to the Dania-from-Dan construction) the figure Angul as a back-formation from Bede's place-name for Angeln. Saxo may have felt entitled to claim this area of lower Jutland as part of Denmark, since it had been under Danish rule since the early Viking period. By establishing the English as expatriate Danes, Saxo endeavoured to glorify Danish legacy.

The name Dan is clearly a back-formation of Denmark (Lat. *Dania*, Mod. Dan. *Danmark*). Here, a link is forged between personal name and place name, a common strategy in medieval historical texts. In Danish texts, a story of how Dan lent his name to the land of the Danes is first introduced in *Chronicon Lethrense* (c. 1170), the oldest surviving Danish record of legendary kings. This work makes no mention of a figure named Skyoldus. It is therefore likely that Saxo pulled in Skyoldus for his line of kings from either Aggesen's history or from foreign texts. Confronted with two rival traditions, either of which offered a candidate for the first and most noble Danish king, Saxo chose to amalgamate the two, making Skyoldus secondary to Dan.

In his history, Saxo draws on a number of written sources, of which only a few of them can be identified with certainty. Among those texts he mentions explicitly are 'national' histories which resemble his own endeavours: Paul the Deacon's history of the Langobards and Dudo's account of the origins of the Normans. In both these texts, ancestry is traced back to powerful heroes of ancient Scandinavia. This gives Saxo occasion to co-opt part of the history they recount. Saxo's history is characterized by the fundamental belief that the greatness of a people must be assessed in proportion to the number of significant branches of kings and heroes it could place on its family tree. For the Danish historian, this motivated a liberal reconfiguration of legendary material which rejigged legends from other traditions, placing them in the service of Danish history.

In Book 8, Saxo refers to the Langobardic migration out of Scandinavia, which he found in Paul the Deacon's text. But Saxo is renegotiating Paul's tale of a homeland in *Scadinavia*, so it now becomes a migration out of Denmark, and Saxo's version of Langobardic history is embellished in several places to make it fit into the framework of Danish history. For example, we are told that the journey takes place when the Danes were ruled by a king named Snio (unknown to Paul). A terrible famine descended upon them, and the wise woman, Gambaruc, advised that a section of the people should leave, led by her sons Aggo and Ebbo. This is a transformation of the names Ibor and Agio from Paul's text, so that they may plausibly represent Danish vernacular names (Mod. Dan. Ebbe and Aage). We are not told from where in Denmark the future Langobards set out, but Saxo describes their subsequent route: first they travelled to Blekinge (southern Sweden), then to the Swedish island of

Gotland, where they changed their name at the behest of the goddess Frig and became Langobards. After many adventures, the Langobards finally established themselves as lords in Italy (8.13). What later happened is of no interest to Saxo, since this tribe can no longer count as Danish.

As mentioned, Saxo also makes use of Dudo's Norman history. Dudo had traced the Danes (ancestors of the Normans) back in time to the *Danai* (the poetic name for the Greeks used by both Homer and Virgil). Dudo does this in order to capitalize on what falsely appears to be an etymological connection between *Danai* and *Dani* (Danes). Saxo picks up on this theory in his text. After mentioning Dan and Angul, he notes: 'Yet, Dudo, the historian of Normandy, considers that the Danes are sprung and named from the Danai' (1.1). I concur with Lars Boje Mortensen that Saxo probably wanted to deny the validity of Dudo's account, because the overall drift in Saxo's use of older histories is to claim the Danes as the originators of other peoples.⁷⁸ Saxo appropriates the *topos* of the North as a 'womb of nations' to aggrandize Danish history.

Saxo gave impulse to a trend that was picked up by a number of Scandinavian historians in the following centuries. The culmination of this long trajectory was the Swedish antiquarian Olof Rudbeck's *Atland eller Manheim* (published 1679–1702), in which Jordanes, the *Edda*, Tacitus, Plato, and numerous origins are used creatively in a grandiose attempt to prove that Sweden was the lost Atlantis ruled by the Swedish King Atle. As Rudbeck asserted on the title page, it was from this ancient homeland 'the most prominent imperial and royal families governing the whole world' came, and from which poured forth 'the Scythians, Barbarians, Aesir, Giants, Goths, Phrygians, Trojans, Amazons, Thracians, Libyans, Mauer, Tussar, Gauls, Cimbrians, Cimmerians, Saxons, Germans, Swedes, Langobards, Vandals, Heruli, Gepar, Angles, Picts, and Sea Warriors, and many others ...'.⁷⁹

NOTES

1. Hermann Moisl, 'Anglo-Saxon Royal Genealogies and Germanic Oral Tradition', in *Journal of Medieval History* 7.3 (1981): 218.
2. *Bede's Ecclesiastical History*, ed. Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972). Henceforth, abbreviated *HE*.
3. The two seminal studies are Kenneth Sisam, 'Anglo-Saxon Royal Genealogies', in *Proceedings of the British Academy* 39 (1953), 287–348; and David Dumville, 'Kingship, Genealogies and Regnal Lists', in *Early Medieval Kingship*, ed. P. H. Sawyer and I. N. Wood (Leeds: University of Leeds, 1977), 72–104.
4. Tacitus, *De origine et situ Germanorum liber*, 2.2, ed. Alf Önnersfors (Stuttgart: B.G. Teubner, 1983), p. 2.
5. For a discussion of Woden worship in England, see A. L. Meaney, 'Woden in England: A Reconsideration of the Evidence', *Folklore* 77. 2 (1966): 105–15.

6. For this argument, see, for example, Charlotte Behr 'The Origins of Kingship in Early Medieval Kent', *Early Medieval Europe* 9.1 (2000), 29; and Dumville, 'Kingship', 79.
7. *The Chronicle of Æthelweard Chronicle*, 1.4, ed. Alistair Campbell (London: Nelson, 1962), p. 9.
8. *Ibid.*, 1.5, p. 12.
9. Karl Hauck, 'Lebensnormen und Kultmythen in germanischen Stammes- und Herrschergenealogien', in *Saeculum* 6 (1955): 186–223.
10. *Historia Brittonum*, c. 20, ed. David Dumville (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1985), pp. 82–3.
11. David Dumville, 'The Anglian Collection of Royal Genealogies and Regnal Lists', *Anglo-Saxon England* 5 (1976): 23–50, assigns the original collection to the reign of the Northumbrian Alhred, who ruled from 765 to 774, or to the first reign of his successor, Æthelred, who ruled from 774 to 779.
12. Paul Ricoeur, *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia*, trans. George H. Taylor (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 261.
13. See Craig R. Davis, 'Cultural Assimilation in the Anglo-Saxon Royal Genealogies', in *Anglo-Saxon England* 21 (1992): 26.
14. See *Old-Saxon Texts*, ed. J. H. Gallée (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1894), 248.
15. Hines, John. *The Scandinavian Character of Anglian England in the Pre-Viking Period*. Oxford: B.A.R., 1984. 35–109; and 'The Scandinavian Character of Anglian England: An Update', in *The Age of Sutton Hoo: The Seventh Century in North-Western Europe*, ed. M. O. H. Carver (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1992), 315–29.
16. Alcuin's letter is translated in *English Historical Documents 500–1042*, ed. Dorothy Whitelock, 2nd edn. (London: Eyre Methuen, 1979), 843.
17. *Chronicarum libri IV cum continuationibus*, 3.65, MGH SRG ed. B. Krusch (Hanover, 1888), p. 110.
18. Paul maintains that the god of the pagan Langobards was in fact 'Wotan', but that they added a letter to his name and called him 'Godan'; see *Historia Langobardorum* 1.9, MGH SRL, ed. G. Waitz (Hannover, 1878), pp. 52–3: *Wotan sane, quem adiecta littera Godan dixerunt*.
19. The fact that the names of the genealogy appear in two variants in the same manuscript is hard to explain. We have no means of assessing these spellings against other MS versions, since the *Chronicle* survives only in a single manuscript, largely destroyed in the Cottonian fire of 1731 (but printed by Henry Savile in 1596). The text we now have is poorly transmitted and often corrupt.
20. For this suggestion, see Campbell's 'Introduction', in Æthelweard, *Chronicle*, xx.
21. *Prologus*, cc. 3–5, in *Edda Snorra Sturlusonar – udgivet efter håndskrifterne af Kommissionen for det Arnamagnæanske Legat*, ed. Finnur Jónsson (Copenhagen: Nordisk Forlag, 1931), pp. 5–7.
22. 'Prologus', c. 5, *Edda*, p. 7: ... *at umb Saxland ok allt þáþan um norðrhalfur dreifbist svá, at þeira tunga, Ásiamanna, var eigin tunga um avl þessi land, ok þat þíkkiast menn skynia mega af því, at rituð eru langfeðgan navfn þeira, at þau navfn hafa fylgt þessi tungu ok þeir æsir hafa haft tunguna norðr hingat í heim, í Nóreg ok í Svíþjóð, í Danmörk ok í Saxland, ok í Englandi eru forn landsheiti e(ða) staða heiti, þau er skilia má, at af anari tungu eru gefin en þessi*.

- The English translation is from *The Prose Edda*, trans. Arthur Gilchrist Brodeur (New York: American-Scandinavian Foundation, 1967), 9.
23. For bibliography and references on this connection, see Robert W. Rix, 'Oriental Odin: Tracing the East in Northern Culture and Literature', *History of European Ideas* 36.2 (2010): 47–60.
 24. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, ed. Tony Jebson, <http://asc.jebbo.co.uk/>. Last modified 6 Aug. 2007. All subsequent references are to this edition, which contains original texts of all extant manuscripts.
 25. See Hector Munro Chadwick, *The Origin of the English Nation* (Cambridge: CUP, 1924), 274 note; and R. W. Chambers, *Beowulf: An Introduction to the Study of the Poem with a Discussion of the Stories of Offa and Finn* (Cambridge: CUP, 1959), 9.
 26. John Mitchell Kemble, *The Saxons in England: A History of the English Commonwealth* (London: Longman, et al., 1849), 52.
 27. For this reading, see M. G. Clarke, *Sidelights on Teutonic History during the Migration Period, Being Studies from Beowulf and Other Old English Poems* (Cambridge: CUP, 1911), 127–8. For further elaboration of this theory, see Ruth Johnston Staver's discussion in *A Companion to Beowulf* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2005), 152. For a link of the myth to Scandinavian and Finnish material, see Clive Tolley, 'Beowulf's Scyld Scefing Episode: Some Norse and Finnish Analogies', in *Nordic Yearbook of Folklore* 52 (1996): 7–48. Relevant Anglo-Saxon texts and their analogues can be found in Alexander M. Bruce, *Scyld and Scef: Expanding the Analogues* (New York and London: Routledge, 2002).
 28. William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum: The History of the English Kings*, 2.116, ed. and trans. R. A. B. Mynors, et al., vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), pp. 176–7.
 29. For the connections between kings and fertility of the land in Germanic myth and legend, see Mindy MacLeod and Bernard Mees, *Runic Amulets and Magic Objects* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2006), 105–8. For the various functions of Indo-European gods, see Georges Dumézil, *Gods of the Ancient Northmen*, ed. Einar Haugen (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 66–79.
 30. Sven Aggesen, *Brevis historia regum Dacie*, c. 1, in *Scriptores minores historiae Danicae*, ed. M. Cl. Gertz, vol. 1 (Copenhagen: C. E. C. Gad, 1917), p. 97: *Et ut eius alludamus vocabulo, idcirco tali functus est nomine, quia universos regni terminos regie defensionis patrocínio affatim egregie tuebatur*,
 31. Roberta Frank, 'Skaldic Verse and the Date of Beowulf', in *The Dating of Beowulf*, ed. Colin Chase, rev. ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 126.
 32. See introduction to *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto: A History of Saint Cuthbert and a Record of his Patrimony*, ed. Ted Johnson South (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2002).
 33. *Ibid.* cap. 7, 11, 12; pp. 49 and 51.
 34. Richard North, *The Origins of Beowulf: From Vergil to Wiglaf* (Oxford: OUP, 2007), 37, note 6; Frank, 'Skaldic', 127; Alan Binns, 'The York Viking Kingdom: Relations between Old English and Old Norse Culture', in *The Fourth Viking Congress*, ed. Alan Small (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1965), 184.
 35. Erik Björkman, 'Two Derivations', in *Saga Book of the Viking Club* 7 (1912) 132–40.
 36. *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, ed. T. Jebson.

37. See Adam von Bremen, *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, ed. B. Schmeidler, MGH SRG, 3rd edn. (Hannover-Leipzig, 1917), e.g. pp. 29, 30 and 74.
38. Sisam, 'Anglo-Saxon Royal Genealogies': 332; Craig R. Davis, 'An Ethnic Dating of *Beowulf*', in *Anglo-Saxon England* 35 (2006):116–17; A. L. Meaney, 'Scyld Scefing and the Dating of *Beowulf* – Again', in *Textual and Material Culture in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. D. Scragg (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2003), 23–73; and Roberta Frank, 'Skaldic Verse and the Date of *Beowulf*', in *Dating of Beowulf*, 129. Alexander Callander Murray, 'Beowulf, The Danish Invasion, and Royal Genealogy', in *Dating Beowulf*, ed. Colin Chase (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 106, takes the peace negotiations between Alfred and Guthrum as the origin of the Scyld genealogy. However, he sets the date for the composition of *Beowulf* later than Alfred's reign – at a time when the Vikings were no longer a threat and peace had been settled. Murray surmises that six of the local earls who met with King Æthelstan for a *witenagemot* (assembly of important noblemen in England to advise the king) at Colchester 931 may have been Danes and a possibly receptive audience to a poem on Danish affairs. John D. Niles, in *Old English Heroic Poems and the Social Life of Texts* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 49, believes the poem was composed in a similar Anglo-Danish setting in the early or middle years of the tenth century, but not earlier.
39. Paul Kershaw, 'The Alfred-Guthrum Treaty: Scripting Accommodation and Interaction in Viking Age England', in *Cultures in Contact: Scandinavian Settlement in England in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries*, ed. D. M. Hadley and J. D. Richards (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 72–7.
40. See the recent discussion in Ryan Lavelle, *Alfred's Wars: Sources and Interpretations of Anglo-Saxon Warfare in the Viking Age* (Cambridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2010), 325–8.
41. Janet L. Nelson, 'Presidential Address: England and the Continent in the Ninth Century: The Vikings and Others', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society: Sixth Series*, ed. J. L. Nelson (Cambridge: CUP, 2004), 24–5.
42. Simon Coupland, 'From Poachers to Gamekeepers: Scandinavian Warlords and Carolingian Kings', in *Early Medieval Europe* 7.1 (1998): 85–114.
43. Ermold the Black, *In honorem Hludovici pii*, 4.99, MGH *Poetae Latini aevi Carolini* 2, ed. Ernst Dümmler (Berlin, 1884), p. 61.
44. *Ibid.* 4.14, p. 59.
45. *Ibid.* IV.17–18 p. 59.
46. For the background, see Shane Bobrycki, 'Nigellus, Ausulus: Self-Promotion, Self-suppression and Carolingian Ideology in the Poetry of Ermold', in *Ego Trouble: Authors and Their Identities in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. R. Corradini et al. (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2010), 161–73.
47. *Egils saga Skalla-Grímssonar*, ed. Sigurður Nordal (1933; Reykjavík: Hið Íslenska Fornritafélag, 1955). For a discussion, see Alistair Campbell, *Skaldic Verse and Anglo-Saxon History* (London: H. K. Lewis, 1971), 5–7.
48. Frank, 'Skaldic Verse', 129.
49. It has been the subject of some debate whether the *Chronicle* inspired the *Beowulf* poet, or the other way around. For the argument that the *Beowulf* passage on Scyld inspired the chroniclers, see Meaney, 'Scyld Scefing'; for the

- reverse argument, see Richard North, *Heathen Gods in Old English Literature* (Cambridge: CUP, 1997), 188–92, and Tolley, ‘Beowulf’s Scyld Scefing Episode’.
50. Erik Björkman, ‘Bedwig in den westsächsischen Genealogien’, in *Anglia, Beiblatt* 30 (1919), 23.
 51. This theory has been put forward by Michael Lapidge in ‘Beowulf, Aldhelm, the *Liber Monstrorum* and Wessex’, *Studi Medievali*, 3rd series, 23.1 (1982): 187.
 52. *The Old English Version of the Heptateuch, Ælfric’s Treatise on the Old and New Testament and His Preface to Genesis*, ed. Samuel J. Crawford (London: OUP, 1969), 27: *Of Cham, Noes suna, com þæt Chananeisce folc, 7 of Iaphet, þam ginstan, þe wæs gebletsod þurh Noe, com þæt norðerne mennisc be þære Norðsæ, for þan þe ðri dælas sind gedælede þurh hig, Asia on eastrice þam yldstan suna, Affrica on suððæle þæs Chames cynne, 7 Europa on norððæle Iaphetes ofspringe.*
 53. Quoted by J. E. T. Brown in *The Scroll Considerans (Magdalen MS 248): Giving the Descent from Adam to Henry VI* (Oxford: Magdalen College 1999), 10.
 54. Stephen G. Nichols, ‘Philology in a Manuscript Culture’, *Speculum* 65.1 (1990): 8.
 55. Æthelweard, *Chronicle*, 3.4, p. 33: *ipse Scef cum uno dromone aduectus est in insula oceani que dicitur Scani, armis circumdatus.*
 56. The modern English translation in Campbell’s edition is ‘Skaney’; see Æthelweard, *Chronicle*, p. 33. For similar interpretations, see also Meaney, ‘Scyld Scefing’, 29; and R. W. Chambers, *Beowulf*, 70.
 57. John Mitchell Kemble, ‘Postscript’, in *A Translation of the Anglo-Saxon Poem of Beowulf*, vol. 2 (London: Pickering, 1837), vi.
 58. T. A. Shippey and Andreas Haarder, ‘Editorial Preface’, in *Beowulf: The Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge, 1998), 25.
 59. Compare the reference to Skaane as *Sconaowe* in the Latin *Annales Regni Francorum, sub anno 811*, ed. F. Kurze, MGH SRG 6 (Hannover, 1895).
 60. For these vocabularies, see ‘Introduction’, in Æthelweard, *Chronicle*, xlv–xlvii.
 61. Æthelweard, *Chronicle*, 1.4, p. 9: *In tanta ergo fuisse perhibetur supra dictarum illa aduectio crescens, et mimium, ut et incolaurm paulatim et habitationis nomem aboleuissit.*
 62. William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum: The History of the English Kings* (2.116), pp. 176–7: *Sceaf. Iste, ut ferunt, in quondam insulam Germaniæ Scandzæ, de qua Iordanes, historiographus Gothorum, loquitur, appulsus nauis sine remige puerulus, posito ad caput frumenti manipulo dormiens ideoque Sceaf nuncupatus, ab hominibus regions illius pro miraculo exceptus et sedulo nutritus, adulta ætate ragnauit in oppido quod tunc Slaswic, nunc uero Haithebi appellatur. Est autem region illa Anglia Vetus dicta, unde Angli uenerunt in Britanniam, inter Saxones et Gothos constituta.*
 63. N. F. S. Grundtvig, *Beowulfes Beorb, eller, Bjovulfs-Drapen, paa Grund-sproget* (Copenhagen: K. Schönmén, 1861); for specific references to Norse analogies in the poem, see ‘Fortale og Inledning’, xxxii–xxxiii.
 64. For general overviews, see Andy Orchard, *Pride and Prodigies: Studies in the Monsters of the Beowulf Manuscript* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 140–68; Theodore M. Andersson, ‘Sources and Analogies’, in *Beowulf Handbook*, ed. Robert E. Bjork and John D. Niles (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 125–48; and *Beowulf and Its Analogues*, ed. and trans. G. N. Garmonsway and Jacqueline Simpson (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1968). For some of the most important interventions in the discussion, see

- J. R. R. Tolkien, 'Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 22 (1936): 245–95; Ursula Dronke, 'Beowulf and Ragnarok', in *Saga Book of the Viking Society*, 17.4 (1969): 302–25; Paul Beekman Taylor, 'Heorot, Earth and Asgard: Christian Poetry and Pagan Myth', in *Tennessee Studies in Literature* 9 (1966): 119–29; Sylvia Huntley Horowitz, 'The Ravens in Beowulf', in *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 80 (1981): 502–11; Helen Damiko, *Beowulf's Wealthweow and the Valkyrie Tradition* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984). For scepticism regarding long-held claims of links between the Anglo-Saxon poem and Norse legend, see Magnús Fjalldal, *The Long Arm of Coincidence: The Frustrated Connection between Beowulf and Grettis saga* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1998).
65. R. D. Fulk, 'An Eddic Analogue to the Scyld Scefing Story', in *The Review of English Studies*, n.s., 40.159 (1989): 313–22.
66. See also Campbell's 'Introduction' in Æthelweard, *Chronicle*, xx.
67. ... *a quo primum modibus Hislandensibus skioldunger sunt reges nuncupati*, in Aggesen, *Brevis regum Dacie*, 95. For an English translation, see *The Works of Sven Aggesen: Twelfth-Century Danish Historian*, trans. Eric Christiansen (London: Viking Society for Northern Research, 1992), 49.
68. See A. M. Bruce, 'Skjöldunga Saga', in RGA, vol. 29, 5–7. For the original text and English translation of the relevant pages in these works, see Klaeber's *Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg*, ed. John D. Niles, R. D. Fulk, and Robert E. Bjork, 4th edn. (University of Toronto Press, 2008), 301 and 304.
69. Leslie Abrams, 'The Anglo-Saxons and the Christianization of Scandinavia', in *Anglo-Saxon England* 24 (1995): 213–49; Sverre Bagge, 'Christianization and State Formation in Early Medieval Norway', in *Scandinavian Journal of History* 30.2 (2005): 107–134. For the argument that the influence of the Anglo-Saxon Church has been exaggerated in earlier historical works, see Marit Myking, 'Vart Norge kristna fra England? Ein gjennomgang av norsk forskning med utgangspunkt i Absalon Tarangers avhandling' in *Den angelsaksiske kirke indflytelse paa den norske* (1890) (Oslo: Centre for Viking and Medieval Studies, 2001).
70. Prologus, c. 4, in *Edda Snorra Sturlusonar – udgivet efter håndskrifterne af Kommissionen for det Arnemagnæanske Legat*, ed. Finnur Jónsson (Copenhagen: Nordisk Forlag, 1931), p. 6. All subsequent references are to this edition.
71. Dumville, 'The Anglian Collection'.
72. Anthony Faulkes, 'The Genealogies and Regnal Lists in a Manuscript in Resen's Library', in *Sjötíu ritgerðir helgaðar Jakobi Benediktssyni 20. júlí 1977*, ed. Jakob Benediktsson; Einar G. Pétursson; Jónas Kristjánsson (Reykjavik: Stofnun Árna Magnússona, 1977), 177–90.
73. Faulkes, 'Genealogies', 180. An almost identical version is found in MS Textus Roffensis II. For a general analysis of Anglo-Saxon England represented in Icelandic manuscripts, see Magnús Fjalldal, *Anglo-Saxon England in Icelandic Medieval Texts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005).
74. *Rydårbogen*, MS K4, available at *Studér middelalder på nettet*, <http://studer-middelalder.dk>, p.1r (210): *gothlandh oc intil thæt landh thær nw hedær danmark*. Subsequent Danish texts which build on Saxo also include Ermanaric as a Danish king; see Caroline Brady, *The Legends of Ermanaric* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1943), 128.
75. Robert Wace, *Roman de Rou et des ducs de Normandie*, vol. 1. ed. Frédéric Pluquet (Paris: E. Frère, 1827), 8–9; *The History of the Norman People: Wace's Roman de Rou*, trans. Glyn S. Burgess (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2004), 124–5.

76. Saxo Grammaticus, *Gesta Danorum*, ed. J. Olrik and H. Ræder (1931). Digitized by the Danish Royal Library: <http://www2.kb.dk/elib/lit/dan/saxo/lat/or.dsr/index.htm>. All subsequent references are to this edition.
77. For the suggestion that Saxo had access to *the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, see Saxo Grammaticus, *The History of the Danes*, Books I–IX, ed. H. E. Davidson, trans. P. Fisher, 2 vols (Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer, 1996), 2:74, 153, 156 and 174.
78. Lars Boje Mortensen, ‘Saxo Grammaticus’ View of the Origin of the Danes and His Historiographical Models’, *Cahiers de l’Institute de Moyen-Âge Grec et Latin* 55 (1987): 170–72.
79. Olof Rudbeck, *Atland eller Mannheim ... Atlantica* (Uppsala: Heinrich Curio, 1677), title page in Swedish and Latin.

REFERENCES

Primary Sources

- Adam of Bremen. *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, ed. Bernard Schmeidler, MGH SRG, 3rd edn. Hannover, 1917.
- Alcuin. Letter of 793, in *English Historical Documents 500–1042*, ed. Dorothy Whitelock, 2nd edn., 843. London: Eyre Methuen, 1979.
- Aggesen, Sven. *Brevis historia regum Dacie*, in *Scriptores Minores Historiae Danice*, ed. M. C. Gertz, vol. 1, 94–143. Copenhagen: G. E. C. Gad, 1917–1918.
- . *The Works of Sven Aggesen: Twelfth-Century Danish Historian*, trans. Eric Christiansen, 48–74. London: Viking Society for Northern Research, 1992.
- The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, ed. Tony Jebson, <http://asc.jebbo.co.uk/>. Last modified 6 Aug. 2007.
- Ælfric. *The Old English Version of the Heptateuch: Ælfric’s Treatise on the Old and New Testament and His Preface to Genesis*, ed. Samuel J. Crawford. London: Oxford University Press, 1969.
- Annales regni Francorum*, ed. F. Kurze, MGH SRG 6. Hannover, 1895.
- Æthelweard. *The Chronicle of Æthelweard*, ed. Alistair Campbell. London: Nelson, 1962.
- Bede. *Bede’s Ecclesiastical History*, ed. Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972.
- Bruce, Alexander M., ed. *Scyld and Scef: Expanding the Analogues*. New York and London: Routledge, 2002.
- Chronicarum libri IV cum continuationibus*, ed. B. Krusch, MGH SRM 2. Hanover, 1888.
- Egils saga Skalla-Grímssonar*, ed. Sigurður Nordal. [1933] Reykjavík: Hið Íslenska Fornritafélag, 1955.
- Ermold the Black. *In honorem Hludovici pii*, ed. Ernst Dümmler, MGH *Poetae Latini aevi Carolini* 2. Berlin, 1884.
- Historia Brittonum*, ed. David Dumville. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1985.
- Historia de Sancto Cuthberto: A History of Saint Cuthbert and a Record of his Patrimony*, ed. Ted Johnson South. Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2002.
- Klaeber’s Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg*, ed. John D. Niles, R. D. Fulk, and Robert E. Bjork, 4th edn. University of Toronto Press, 2008.

Old-Saxon Texts, ed. J. H. Gallée. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1894.

Paul the Deacon. *Historia Langobardorum*, ed. L. Bethman and G. Waitz. MGH SRL. Hannover, 1878.

Tacitus. *De origine et situ Germanorum liber*, ed. Alf Önnersfors. Stuttgart: B. G. Teubner, 1983.

Rydårbogen, MS K4, available at *Studér middelalder på nettet*, <http://studermiddelalder.dk>.

Saxo Grammaticus. *Gesta Danorum*, ed. J. Olrik and H. Ræder (1931). Digitized by the Danish Royal Library: <http://www2.kb.dk/elib/lit/dan/saxo/lat/or.dsr/index.htm>.

———. *The History of the Danes*, Books I–IX, ed. H. E. Davidson, trans. P. Fisher, 2 vols. Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer, 1996.

Snorri Sturluson, *Edda Snorra Sturlusonar – udgivet efter håndskrifterne af Kommissionen for det Arnamagnæanske Legat*, ed. Finnur Jónsson. Copenhagen: Nordisk Forlag, 1931.

———. *The Prose Edda*, trans. Arthur Gilchrist Brodeur. New York: American-Scandinavian Foundation, 1967.

Wace, *The History of the Norman People: Wace's Roman de Rou*, trans. Glyn S. Burgess. Woodbridge: Boydell, 2004.

Wace, Robert. *Roman de Rou et des ducs de Normandie*, vol. 1. ed. Frédéric Pluquet. Paris: E. Frère, 1827.

William of Malmesbury. *Gesta regum Anglorum: The History of the English Kings*, ed. and trans. R. A. B. Mynors et al., vol. 1. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998.

Secondary Sources

Andersson, Theodore M. 'Sources and Analogies', in *Beowulf Handbook*, ed. Robert E. Bjork and John D. Niles, 125–48. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997.

Bagge, Sverre. 'Christianization and State Formation in Early Medieval Norway', in *Scandinavian Journal of History* 30.2 (2005): 107–134.

Behr, Charlotte. 'The Origins of Kingship in Early Medieval Kent', *Early Medieval Europe* 9.1 (2000): 25–52.

Beowulf and its Analogues, ed. and trans. G. N. Garmonsway and Jacqueline Simpson. London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1968.

Binns, Alan. 'The York Viking Kingdom: Relations between Old English and Old Norse Culture', in *The Fourth Viking Congress*, ed. Alan Small, 179–90. Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1965.

Björkman, Erik. 'Bedwig in den westsächsischen Genealogien', in *Anglia, Beiblatt* 30 (1919): 6–24.

———. 'Two Derivations', in *Saga Book of the Viking Club* 7 (1912): 132–40.

Bobrycki, Shane. 'Nigellus, Ausulus: Self-Promotion, Self-suppression and Carolingian Ideology in the Poetry of Ermold', in *Ego Trouble: Authors and Their Identities in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. R. Corradini, et al., 161–73. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2010.

Brady, Caroline. *The Legends of Ermanaric*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1943.

Brown, J. E. T. *The Scroll Considerans (Magdalen MS 248): Giving the Descent from Adam to Henry VI*. Oxford: Magdalen College, 1999.

Bruce, A. M. 'Skjöldunga Saga', in *Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde*, ed. H. Beck, D. Geuenic, and H. Steur, 2nd edn, 29: 5–7. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2005.

- Campbell, Alistair. *Skaldic Verse and Anglo-Saxon History*. London: H. K. Lewis, 1971.
- Chadwick, Hector Munro. *The Origin of the English Nation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1924.
- Chambers, R. W. *Beowulf: An Introduction to the Study of the Poem with a Discussion of the Stories of Offa and Finn*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959.
- Clarke, M. G. *Sidelights on Teutonic History during the Migration Period, Being Studies from Beowulf and Other Old English Poems*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1911.
- Coupland, Simon. 'From Poachers to Gamekeepers: Scandinavian Warlords and Carolingian Kings', in *Early Medieval Europe* 7.1 (1998): 85–114.
- Damiko, Helen. *Beowulf's Wealthew and the Valkyrie Tradition*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984.
- Davis, Craig R. 'An Ethnic Dating of *Beowulf*', in *Anglo-Saxon England* 35 (2006): 111–29.
- . 'Cultural Assimilation in the Anglo-Saxon Royal Genealogies', in *Anglo-Saxon England* 21 (1992): 23–36.
- Dronke, Ursula. '*Beowulf* and *Ragnarok*', in *Saga Book of the Viking Society*, 17.4 (1969): 302–25.
- Dumézil, Georges. *Gods of the Ancient Northmen*, ed. Einar Haugen. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974.
- Dumville, David. 'Kingship, Genealogies and Regnal Lists', in *Early Medieval Kingship*, ed. P. H. Sawyer and I. N. Wood, 72–104. Leeds: University of Leeds, 1977.
- . 'The Anglian Collection of Royal Genealogies and Regnal Lists', *Anglo-Saxon England* 5 (1976): 23–50.
- Faulkes, Anthony. 'The Genealogies and Regnal Lists in a Manuscript in Resen's Library', in *Sjötíu ritgerðir helgaðar Jakobi Benediktssyni 20. júlí 1977*, ed. Jakob Benediktsson, Einar G. Pétursson, Jónas Kristjánsson. 177–90. Reykjavík: Stofnun Árna Magnússona, 1977.
- Fjalldal, Magnús. *Anglo-Saxon England in Icelandic Medieval Texts*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005.
- . *The Long Arm of Coincidence: The Frustrated Connection between Beowulf and Grettis saga*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998.
- Fulk, R. D. 'An Eddic Analogue to the Scyld Scefing Story', in *The Review of English Studies*, n.s., 40.159 (1989): 313–22.
- Frank, Roberta. 'Skaldic Verse and the Date of *Beowulf*', in *The Dating of Beowulf*, ed. Colin Chase, rev. ed., 123–39. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997.
- . 'The Anglian Collection of Royal Genealogies and Regnal Lists', *Anglo-Saxon England* 5 (1976): 23–50.
- Grundtvig, N. F. S. 'Fortale og Indledning', in *Beowulfes Beorh, eller, Bjovulfs-Drapen, paa Grund-sproget*, xv–lvii. Copenhagen: Carl Schönbergs Forlag, 1861.
- Hines, John. *The Scandinavian Character of Anglian England in the Pre-Viking Period*. Oxford: B.A.R., 1984.
- . 'The Scandinavian Character of Anglian England: An Update', in *The Age of Sutton Hoo: The Seventh Century in North-Western Europe*, ed. M. O. H. Carver, 315–29. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1992.
- . *The Scandinavian Character of Anglian England in the Pre-Viking Period*. Oxford: B.A.R., 1984.

- Hauck, Karl. 'Lebensnormen und Kultmythen in germanischen Stammes- und Herrschergenealogien', in *Saeculum* 6 (1955): 186–223.
- Horowitz, Sylvia Huntley. 'The Ravens in Beowulf', in *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 80 (1981): 502–11.
- Kemble, John Mitchell. *The Saxons in England: A History of the English Commonwealth*. London: Longman, et al., 1849.
- . 'Postscript', *A Translation of the Anglo-Saxon Poem of Beowulf*, 2 vols. London: Pickering, 1837.
- Kershaw, Paul. 'The Alfred-Guthrum Treaty: Scripting Accommodation and Interaction in Viking Age England' in *Cultures in Contact: Scandinavian Settlement in England in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries*, ed. D. M. Hadley and J. D. Richards, 43–64. Turnhout: Brepols, 2000.
- Lapidge, Michael. 'Beowulf, Aldhelm, the *Liber Monstrorum* and Wessex', *Studi Medievali*, 3rd series, 23.1 (1982): 151–91.
- Lavelle, Ryan. *Alfred's Wars: Sources and Interpretations of Anglo-Saxon Warfare in the Viking Age*. Cambridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2010.
- Abrams, Leslie. 'The Anglo-Saxons and the Christianization of Scandinavia', in *Anglo-Saxon England* 24 (1995): 213–49.
- Meaney, Audrey. L. 'Scyld Scefing and the Dating of Beowulf – Again' [rev. vers.], in *Textual and Material Culture in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Donald Scragg, 23–74. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2003.
- . 'Woden in England: A Reconsideration of the Evidence', *Folklore* 77. 2 (1966): 105–15.
- MacLeod, Mindy and Bernard Mees. *Runic Amulets and Magic Objects*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006.
- Moisl, Hermann. 'Anglo-Saxon Royal Genealogies and Germanic Oral Tradition', *Journal of Medieval History* 7.3 (1981): 215–48.
- Mortensen, Lars Boje, 'Saxo Grammaticus' View of the Origin of the Danes and His Historiographical Models', *Cahiers de l'Institut de Moyen-Âge Grec et Latin* 55 (1987): 169–83.
- Murray, Alexander Callander. 'Beowulf, The Danish Invasion, and Royal Genealogy', in *Dating Beowulf*, ed. Colin Chase, 101–11. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997.
- Myking, Marit. 'Vart Norge kristna fra England? Ein gjennomgang av norsk forskning med utgangspunkt i Absalon Tarangers avhandling', in *Den angelsaksiske kirke indflytelse paa den norske* (1890). Oslo: Centre for Viking and Medieval Studies, 2001.
- Nelson, Janet L. 'Presidential Address: England and the Continent in the Ninth Century: The Vikings and Others', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society: Sixth Series*, ed. J. L. Nelson. 1–28. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Nichols, Stephen G. 'Philology in a Manuscript Culture', *Speculum* 65.1 (1990): 1–10.
- Niles, John D. *Old English Heroic Poems and the Social Life of Texts*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2007.
- North, Richard. *The Origins of Beowulf: From Vergil to Wiglaf*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.
- . *Heathen Gods in Old English Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

- Orchard, Andy. *Pride and Prodigies: Studies in the Monsters of the Beowulf-Manuscript*, rev. ed. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003.
- Ricoeur, Paul. *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia*, trans. George H. Taylor. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986.
- Rix, Robert W. 'Oriental Odin: Tracing the East in Northern Culture and Literature', *History of European Ideas* 36.2 (2010): 47–60.
- Rudbeck, Olof. *Atland eller Mannheim ...* Uppsala: Heinrich Curio, 1677.
- Sisam, Kenneth. 'Anglo-Saxon Royal Genealogies', in *Proceedings of the British Academy* 39 (1953).
- Shippey, T. A. and Haarder, Andreas. 'Editorial Preface', in *Beowulf: The Critical Heritage*. London: Routledge, 1998.
- Staver, Ruth Johnston. *A Companion to Beowulf*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2005.
- Taylor, Paul Beekman. 'Heorot, Earth and Asgard: Christian Poetry and Pagan Myth', in *Tennessee Studies in Literature* 9 (1966): 119–29.
- Tolkien, J. R. R. 'Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 22 (1936): 245–95.
- Tolley, Clive. 'Beowulf's Scyld Scefing Episode: Some Norse and Finnish Analogies', in *Nordic Yearbook of Folklore* 52 (1996): 7–48.

7 Danes and *Geatas*: Heroes of the Legendary North

Beowulf is a poem of 3,182 alliterative lines set in the Scandinavian North, at a time before the ancestors of the Anglo-Saxons migrated to Britain. That such a tale of Scandinavian heroism existed has long made critics wonder, since it was presumably composed and written down when England saw incursions of Scandinavian raiders. Thus, as Frederick Klaeber, editor of *Beowulf*, wrote a long time ago: ‘the very remarkable interest taken in matters Scandinavian’ calls for ‘an adequate explanation’.¹ In this chapter, I do not pretend to offer the final word on this matter. But, I propose to reconsider whether it would be possible to conceive of and preserve a poem about heroic Danes during the period of the Viking attacks. This discussion constitutes the subject matter in the first part of this chapter. The second part will train the critical lens on a significant ethnonym that can be found in *Beowulf*: *Geatas*. This is the name of the hero’s people. However, my focus will be on the appearance of the same name in another text: the Old English version of Bede’s *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (hereafter *OE Bede*). It is significant that *Geatas* is here used as a name for an ancestral English nation, namely the Jutes (one of the three tribes from which Bede says the English derived). That the *OE Bede* can be dated with some certainty to the late ninth century makes it possible to contextualize it in relation to a series of contemporaneous texts. On the basis of this, I argue that Bede’s Jutes were refitted as Goths coming out of Scandinavia.

HEROIC POETRY AND THE NORTHERN PAST

The discussion will begin with *Beowulf* and the problems we encounter when trying to understand the *raison d’être* behind this poem. The main stumbling block in any investigation of the historical meaning of *Beowulf* is the lack of consensus regarding its date of composition. Various scenarios have been suggested: it may have been compiled from oral tales of ancient pedigree; it may have existed as a manuscript poem copied any number of times over the course of several centuries; or the extant manuscript may have been a working-copy, making its composition more or less simultaneous with its recording. In terms of the written poem, a maximalist estimation confines

the range of possible dates to the 300-year period between the Cædmonian revolution of the late seventh century (a time associated with the *Verschriftlichung*, i.e. textualization, of legendary material) and the *terminus ad quem* of composition, which is the recording of it in the sole surviving manuscript, Cotton Vitellius A. xv, around the year 1000 (with critical opinion divided on the range of possible dates on either side of this year).

However, dating the manuscript around 1000 is particularly problematic, because it takes us into the reign of Æthelred II, who ruled (with a short interruption) between 978 and 1016. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (MS C) recounts how Æthelred issued orders that 'all Danes among the English' (*ealle þa Deniscan men þe on Angelcynne wæron*) should be slain on St. Brice's day, 13 November 1002.² Recent critical accounts have seriously questioned the magnitude of this event. It is highly unlikely that *all* Danes were meant. Certainly, within the area of the Danelaw, such a command would have been impossible to carry out. Insofar as carnage ensued, it was most probably limited and directed at Danes who had recently settled in England and with the social standing to threaten Æthelred's power base. Whereas the command was previously interpreted as a sign of the English people's inveterate racist hatred against the Danes, it is now more sensibly seen as a desperate political move directed at Danish nobility by a king who was known as 'the Unready'.³

That ethnic antagonism was at best fleeting is testified to by the fact that Æthelred himself was willing to grant the Danish chieftain Pallig large properties and a title in Devonshire in return for his loyalty. Furthermore, Æthelred negotiated a treaty (c. 994) with the Norwegian Viking Olaf, who had previously pillaged England and taken tribute from the English. To seal the treaty, Æthelred sponsored his baptism with generous gifts. Æthelred's intention was probably to secure the support of Olaf's army. This he later managed to do with the Viking leader, Thorkell, who fought on the English side in 1013 against the invasion of Sweyn Forkbeard and his son Cnut.⁴ This goes to show that Danes and English were not inveterately divided and that allegiances were dependent on political opportunism.

Following on from this, we may ask if there was a social situation which could have motivated the composition of *Beowulf*, a poem concerned with heroic Danes and other Scandinavians. It is useful to briefly revisit the attempts to contextualize the poet's use of Scandinavian heroic legend. Attempts to connect the poem to a Danish audience were made in 1917, when Levin Schücking proposed that the poem could have been composed in the late ninth to early tenth century at a Danish court in England. He surmised that a Mercian poet (the poem contains many Mercian linguistic features) received patronage for this composition so that it could be used for the instruction of a Danish nobleman's children.⁵ This argument would require that the areas of Danish settlement to which Schücking points (Leicester, Lincoln, Nottingham, Stamford, and Derby) were Christianized, as the *Beowulf*-poet clearly was. In more recent years, Patricia Poussa has

made similar assumptions about the audience, only specifying that composition must be associated with the Christianized inhabitants of the Danelaw.⁶ Kevin Kiernan believes composition of the poem took place close to the recording of it in manuscript. He assigns the motivation for writing it to the reign of King Cnut (1016–1035). Cnut was a Christian king under whom England went through a relatively peaceful period. He held overlordship over both England and Denmark, and in this way ‘brought together Danish and Anglo-Saxon culture in the way no petty king of the Danelaw ever could have done’.⁷ This certainly makes for a fertile socio-political framework in which one could imagine a poem such as *Beowulf* being composed, but Kiernan’s dating of the poem to the early eleventh century has not won general acceptance.

But if the poem did not have a Danish sponsor, could an Anglo-Saxon poet have expected to find a receptive audience? In the early 1950s, Dorothy Whitelock asserted that no Christian Anglo-Saxon poet would think of producing a poem that praised the Danes during the time when the Vikings were wreaking havoc in England.⁸ In effect, this meant that composition could be no later than the early ninth century, when Danish raids began to gather force. Whitelock’s idea of anti-Danish attitudes has been both defended and challenged. For example, Richard North remarks that praising the Danes as *an wig* (ready for war) (l. 1247) would not have gone down well during the period when the east of England came under attack and church life was greatly disrupted.⁹ But, as Nicholas Jacobs points out, through much of the tenth century, until the resumption of raids in the 980s, Danes were becoming integrated as a legitimate part of society, and resentment was neither permanent nor resolute.¹⁰ Similarly, Raymond Page has confronted the opinion that the composition of *Beowulf* can only be placed before the Viking period, calling attention to the fact that there were long periods of non-belligerent contact.¹¹ Finally, recalling the discussion in the previous chapter, the reference to Scyld in the prologue to *Beowulf* may have been introduced in the late ninth century in connection with the peace treaty between King Alfred and the Viking leader Guthrum.

In addition to this, a number of historians have seen the bad press that ‘the Danes’ received as a false picture created by panic-stricken ecclesiastical writers, whose moveable wealth in churches and monasteries were specifically targeted by the invaders. The main source for the Viking attacks is the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which can best be described as ‘spin’. It was a political text that sought to represent the enemy in ways that are intended to manipulate opinion in favour of West Saxon loyalty. A significant way in which English identity is constructed is in contrast with the ‘other’ – a role filled by the Danes throughout much of the text. The attacking parties are often left depersonalized simply as *hæðenan* (heathens), *Dene* (Danes), who arrive by the *sciphlæstas* (shiploads). Gradually, they simply assume the name *se here* (the army), which makes a constant out of what was in effect a number of diverse attacks by different war bands.

Thus, the demonization of Scandinavians that clerical writers promoted may not unconditionally be used to delineate a general response to the Scandinavians. For men of the church, allegiances seem not always to be determined by racial concerns, either. Bishop Wulfstan of York, for instance, had a long career as a prominent statesman, responsible for the drafting of English law codes relating to both secular and ecclesiastical affairs. He served under the Anglo-Saxon Æthelred II. But when the Danish Cnut took the English throne in 1016, Wulfstan became the primary drafter of Cnut's laws and was a respected man at the court of this Christian king from the North.

With the huge influx of Danes and other Northerners in Britain, ethnic notions were in a process of transmutation. Generally, intermarriage and social mixing made the maintenance of completely separate Danish identity impossible over time.¹² At least, the heavy influence of Scandinavian on the Old English language shows that the interaction and integration between the two population groups was intensive.¹³ Danish ethnicity may have existed as part of one's identity, but not one that was flagged at all times. Matthew Innes gives an example of how a family in a Bluntisham (Huntingdonshire) dispute invoked their Danish ancestry to lay claim to land.¹⁴ So Scandinavian identity may have existed as a definition that could be revived opportunely. An example of how Danes of second and third generation could become fully integrated in society can be seen by directing our attention to a family that came over with the invasion army of 865 under Ubbe and Ivarr. The most famous of these was Oda, Archbishop of Canterbury (940–58). Oda's father seems to have been a Dane settling in East Anglia, where Oda is known to have held lands. His early life is described by Byrhtferth of Ramsey in *Vita sancti Oswaldi* (c. 1000). Here, it is related that Oda attended church services and was educated by the Anglo-Saxon nobleman, Æthelhelm.¹⁵ Among Oda's kinsmen in the next generation were two archbishops of York, Oscytel (c. 958–71) and Oswald (972–995), the subject of the Byrhtferth's *Vita*. Another relative was Thurcytel, Abbot of Bedford (and perhaps of Crowland). Even if Viking marauders were Danes, they often consisted of dispossessed men or individuals banished from Denmark.¹⁶ So it is probably reductive to assume that Vikings were seen as representative of 'Danishness' in an easy and straightforward manner. The marauding bands themselves would not distinguish between Englishmen and Scandinavian settlers, but harassed either in equal measure. In fact, Viking bands often recruited in the lands they raided, as in the case of King Alfred's nephew Æthelwold, who, in 899, went over to the Viking army in Northumbria and was accepted by them as king.

Most importantly, the Danes of *Beowulf* were part of poetic legend. They existed in a legendary age of heroes, which was unequivocally placed in the past. An idea of an expansive North, where the Danes held dominion, is perhaps recognized in the reference to *scedeland* in line 19, which is varied as *scedenig* in line 1686. In both cases, this geographical name is used to denote a vast area, the wide culture zone throughout which legendary

Danish heroes and kings could achieve fame. This indicates that some idea of a legendary *Scandza* was worked into the poem. Precisely what the *Scederoot* refers to is moot. N. F. S. Grundtvig suggested that it referred to 'the mother sheath' (Dan. *skede*; OE *sceáþ*) of the Germanic peoples, that is to say, a concept akin to the idea of a *vagina gentium*, which is what Jordanes calls *Scandza*. Alternatively, Grundtvig suggests that it was related to the German *scheiden* (to separate), indicating a land that divides the Baltic from the North Sea, which would be what we today recognize as Scandinavia.¹⁷ Neither of these etymological theories has won general acceptance. But it seems that, despite peculiar morphology, the name may be borrowed from the classical geographic name for 'Scandinavia'.

If we look at the two references in *Beowulf* on the background of classical geography, we detect a discrepancy, which suggests that the notion of Scandinavia is rather loose and perhaps functions more as a trope for a vast northern land than as a geographical denomination. The first occurrence of the name in line 19, *Scedelandum*, appears in dative plural form, thereby indicating a number of islands. This was how the name *Scandiae* was used by Pliny and Ptolemy. The second occurrence in line 1686, *Scedenigge*, is in the dative singular. This form has the terminal constituent *-ig*, which is a cognate of *ey* (island), which is preserved in present-day names such as Jersey and Anglesey. This may not indicate a large, singular island, since *-ig* could mean 'a low stretch of land surrounded by water'.¹⁸ For instance, we have the Old Norse name *Skaney* for Skaane, the southern peninsula stretch of Sweden, which was adopted into Old English as *Sconeg* at the Alfredian court.¹⁹ There is also another fact that warns against interpreting *-ig* as necessarily meaning 'island' in a strict geographical sense. Leonid S. Chekin explains, 'the word *insula* itself, when applied to the description of the north, did not mean ... just a tract of land surrounded by water, but also carried a strong connotation of remoteness and barbarity ... it was perhaps this connotation that sometimes determined the choice of the word 'insula' for the remote non-insular lands'.²⁰ So perhaps the Anglo-Saxon poet is not using the terms as much as geographical denominations, but culturally, to mean 'throughout the expanse of the North'.

In connection with *Scedenig*, the *Beowulf*-poet additionally tells us that this area is *saem tweonum* (between two seas). The precise meaning of this phrase is uncertain. When it occurs in the text (ll. 858, 1297, 1686, and 1956), it indicates a region throughout which kings or heroes would be famed. It is easy to conclude that it means 'the land between the North Sea and the Baltic', that is to say, Scandinavia. But it has been proposed that it was perhaps a stock phrase meaning 'throughout the earth' or 'throughout a large expanse', as when the phrase is used in Ælfric's *De temporibus anni* or the poem *Exodus* – neither of which refers to the North.²¹ When the hero, Beowulf, is carried on *Finna land* (l. 580) as part of a monstrous swimming contest, this may be a specific reference to the land of the *Finnas* (the Sami people?), also mentioned in the Old English translation of Orosius.²² But,

again, it may function as a euphemism for a far distant land – i.e. ‘the end of the world’.

The *Beowulf*-poet seems to have a very vague idea of the Scandinavia in which the action of the poem takes place. It is an unspecific Northern region which is presented distant in time and space; it is an epic space as much as Troy of Greek legend. As much as the monstrous sea-hags and dragons, the inhabitants who peopled this North were figures of legends. It was possible to hold the old Scandinavian heroes in high regard while depreciating their low and lawless present-day descendants. Without claiming any deep resemblance, we may see a similarly divided position in references to the Jews. As the Old English poem *Judith* (a text bound with *Beowulf* in MS Cotton Vitellius A. xv), shows, it was possible to extract heroic stories about the Jews from the Old Testament, without the interference of anti-Semitic biases found in the works of Cynewulf, Ælfric, and other prominent Anglo-Saxon writers.²³ Heroic and religious mindsets were two separate paradigms, and Old Danes and present-day Vikings were probably seen to be as different as Hebrew and Jew. In modern Danish, the difference between the legendary ancestors and present Danes is even upheld through the use of different ethnonyms: ancient ‘Danere’ (from ON pl. *Danir*) vs. modern ‘Danskere’. In the following, references to legends of ancient Danes will be examined.

Beowulf and the Legendary Danes

When *Beowulf* begins, the narrative voice specifies that it takes place in *geardagum* (in days of yore). This corresponds to the phrase with the same meaning, *on fyrndagum*, found in the opening lines of both *Andreas* and *Vainglory*. This is a way of putting the narrated events of the poem into the remote past, what Stanley B. Greenfield describes as a ‘historicizing or distancing’ of the events from the poem’s own and its immediate audience.²⁴ Comparable phrasings can be found elsewhere, such as in the Old Germanic *Hidesbrandslied*, which has *Ik gihorta dat seggen* (I heard say truly), and in the Middle High German *Nibelungslied*, which has *Uns ist in alten mæren wunders vil geseit* (We have been told many wondrous event in old tales ...).²⁵ This is akin to what Mikhail Bakhtin has defined as the epic time of heroes – an ‘absolute past’ of valorized ‘bests’, clearly and categorically separated from the present.²⁶ The *Beowulf*-poet stresses this distance throughout the poem through formulas such as *ne gegyrde ic* (‘I never heard’, ll. 38, 1842), *secan hyrde* (‘heard tell’, ll. 273, 882, 875, 1346), *hyrde ic* (‘I heard’, ll. 62, 2163, 2172), and several similar phrases.²⁷

In fact, the poetic voice speaking in the very first line of the poem firmly places the Danes of the poem in the legendary or fictional past: *Hwæt! We Gardena in geardagum þeodcyninga brym gefrunon hu ða æþelingas ellen fremedon* – or, in modern English translation: ‘Listen! We have heard of the glory in bygone days/ of the folk-kings of the spear-Danes,/ how those noble lords did lofty deeds’.²⁸ The imperative *Hwæt* is a deixical pointer making

clear that the ideals embodied in this tale have relevance for the present listener/reader addressed. *Beowulf* can therefore, in some sense, be seen as a sort of 'wisdom literature', designed to stimulate the imagination and invite reflection on heroism, and potentially direct the will towards similar valour.

There are indications that the ancient Danes had a reputation as skilled warriors in legendary accounts. The anonymous Ravenna cosmographer, for example, refers to the work of three 'Gothic philosophers', who had written about the peoples of the world, among which the Danes were to be counted as 'men more swift than all other nations'. After this information, a snippet of a poem is quoted, which tells us that praise for the Parthians and the Goths was well deserved, but – to complete a eulogy of strong barbarian warriors – one must ask: 'O where is the Dane?'.²⁹ The Danes were also represented as the tribes inhabiting *Scandza* in Jordanes' history of the Goths (*Get.* 23).

Beowulf is a compendium of legendary Scandinavian tales, including several involving the Danes that appear to have been in circulation. If we take seriously the first lines of *Beowulf*, it indicates the existence of a long tradition of Danish legends. Can we accept this as an indication that the pagan North was a regular subject of heroic tales, and that the Danes were figures associated with heroism and nobility? The *liederteori* (i.e. the theory that the poem was composite of a number of older oral lays) popular in earlier *Beowulf* studies has now been abandoned, but the possibility that the poet drew on vernacular heroic stories is still an object of study.³⁰

It is useful to look more closely at a few examples of intertextual references. The most concrete evidence that legends about the Danes and other Northerners existed outside of the *Beowulf*-poem is the 50-line poem known as the Finnsburgh fragment. This fragmentary manuscript was found in Lambeth Place, London, in the late seventeenth century. The dating of this manuscript on palaeographic principles is now impossible, since the original was lost in the fire. No ethnic names are mentioned in the surviving fragment. But the lines describe a battle in which Hnæf, known as a prince connected with the Danes in *Beowulf* (ll. 2 and 40), is attacked. The fragment corresponds to the episode of *Beowulf* in which the scop at Hrothgar's court tells of Hnæf's visit to the Frisian prince Finn (ll. 1068–1158). It is therefore reasonable to assume that this was a separate legend about Frisian treachery and a victorious band of Danes and half-Danes. This indicates that some of the elements incorporated into *Beowulf* were known independently of this poem.

The scop who sings *ealldgesegena* (old stories) (l. 869) about Beowulf also sings of Heremod and Sigemund, who are known from Norse tradition. The latter is referred to as *wreccena wide maerost/ ofer werþeode* (the most widely-famed adventurer of all nations) (ll. 898–9). In lines 2025–69, there is a reference to the character Ingeld and his marriage to a Danish princess. Ingeld's tribal affiliation is here the *Heaðobeardan*, a people not known from historical sources.³¹ The marriage is a measure set in motion to settle

a feud with the Danish royal house, but the plan misfires and a war ensues. A letter from 797 by the renowned scholar Alcuin, provides a clue to the spread of this tale. The relevant passage is:

Let the word of God be heard at the episcopal dinner table. There it is fitting for a reader to be heard, not from a harpist [*non citharistam*]: sermons of the Fathers, not the songs of pagans. What has Ingeld to do with Christ [*Quid Hinieldus cum Christo*]? The house is narrow: it will not be able to hold them both. The Heavenly King will have no communion with so-called kings who are pagan and damned ...³²

Alcuin's letter is most often quoted to illustrate the apparent hostility to pagan legend in Anglo-Saxon religious circles. Alcuin's letter comes after the first Viking raids in Britain had taken place, so his diatribe against the tale of Ingeld was undoubtedly coloured by these recent developments. However, it has been suggested that it may be the ethics of the particular version told at Bishop Unwona's table that provoked Alcuin's disgust, not an all-out dismissal of pagan tales.³³ The fact that the tale was used as entertainment in a monastic setting in Leicester gives us reason to believe that it was also heard elsewhere in Anglo-Saxon England.

The skeleton of the tale, which we can make out from Alcuin's report, is known from both English and Scandinavian examples. But, as the versions differ in several details, we cannot use them to deduce the exact content of the Ingeld story told at Unwona's court. For example, references to Ingeld appear in Books 2, 6, and 7 of the Danish historian Saxo's *Gesta Danorum* (early 13th cent.). In one place, Ingeld is a Dane and the ensuing war is one against the Saxons (a threat to the Danes at the time Saxo was writing). This shows the malleability of Germanic myth to make it accord with political opportunism and the position of the narrator. In another of Saxo's references, the Ingeld story becomes simply a Danish family feud with no outside involvement. Variations of the story are also found in the Icelandic works, *Skjöldunga saga*, *Bjarkarímur*, and *Hrólfs Saga Kraka*. Whether the version of the story that was heard by Alcuin at the end of the eighth century had Ingeld as a Heathobard, a Dane, or perhaps an Angle is impossible to say. But from a synoptic view of all the extant versions, it is most likely that the story involved the Danes in one way or another.³⁴

There are several other circumstantial pieces of evidence that point to the popularity of legends about the Danes. One such is found in the poem *Widsith*, in which the Danish King Alewih is eulogized as the bravest among men (*manna modgast ealra*) in line 36.³⁵ This seems to refer to a legend of a renowned king. The allusions to his battle with the Anglian King Offa (ll. 35–44) indicate that this was a legendary narrative available to the audience at the time.

We may further gauge the importance attached to Northern legends through the story of Weland the Smith. His tale was popular in England

and is referred to in the Old English poems *Deor* (l. 1) and *Waldere* (I, l. 2 and II, l. 9). The legend is also depicted on the Northumbrian Franks Casket (first part of 8th cent.).³⁶ But longer narrative sequences about Weland are primarily known from Scandinavian manuscript sources, in which his name is attested as *Völundr/Velentr*. In Norse versions, the location of the Weland story is always Scandinavia. In *Piðrekssaga* (13th cent.), for example, Weland's captor, King Nithung, rules over a district called *Thyland* (Thy) in Jutland; and in *Völundarkviða*, one of the mythological poems of the *Poetic Edda*, Nithung is king of *Näriki* (Närke), a location in the middle of Sweden.³⁷ In *Beowulf*, the protagonist is provided with amour described as *Welandes geweorc* (Weland's work) (l. 455), which indicates that he was also assigned a Scandinavian identity in England.

Weland is also mentioned in King Alfred's translation of Boethius' *Consolatio Philosophiae*. Here, the translator addresses the theme of transience with the questions: 'Where are now the bones of the wise Weland, the goldsmith who once was famous? I spoke of the bones of the wise Weland because the talent that Christ grants to any earthdweller cannot fail him'.³⁸ The reference to Weland replaces the Latin phrase, *ubi nunc sunt ossa Fabricii*. Boethius' original reference was to Gaius Fabricius Luscinius, a Roman general and consul in the third century BC, who was considered a model of incorruptible Roman virtue. In the Alfredian translation, Weland is similarly conceived as exemplary, representing an ideal that is no longer followed. The translator added a number of mythological references to the text that were not in the original (Orpheus, Ulysses, Hercules, and the Titans), but the fact that Weland is the only non-classical figure seems significant for understanding his prominence in Anglo-Saxon tradition. In the introduction to the translation, King Alfred presents his programme for vernacularizing important Latin works. This was to counteract the destruction of books in churches and monasteries throughout England at the hands of Scandinavian invaders. Nonetheless, using Weland as a benchmark of integrity in the self-same book shows that respect for Scandinavian legend continued unabated.

Beowulf appears to be as much a conscious, antiquarian attempt to shore up the virtues of vernacular heroes as the Alfredian reference here. It contains a number of references to famous swords and names known from Germanic legend. Such intertextuality is not unusual – but the *Beowulf*-poet seems deliberately to represent King Hrothgar's mead hall as an arena not only for the fight with Grendel, but also for the narration of legendary stories: Beowulf recounts some of his own past glories, Hrothgar recalls a feud involving Beowulf's father, there is the account of Beowulf's swimming match against Breca, the scop sings of the fight in Frisia, and etc. The *Beowulf* poem is a show of poetic craftsmanship – an exercise in reviving not only the legends, but also the skill, of the old scop. A related impulse can be found in Snorri Sturluson's early thirteenth-century *Prose Edda*, which is a recording of a vanishing vernacular literary tradition, a scholarly effort at salvaging the tradition of pagan composition with much respect for the stylistic and

compositional accomplishment of skaldic art. But – importantly – it is also a re-mythologization of the old northern tales within a Christian framework. With reference to Pierre Bourdieu's notion of *cultural capital*, Kevin J. Wanner has argued that Snorri wanted to assert Icelandic superiority in matters of literary achievement against the Norwegian kings with whom he interacted as a politician.³⁹ It is possible that *Beowulf* served a similar aim for the patron who sponsored its composition, or for the clerical scribes who wrote it down – perhaps, as part of the ongoing competition among monasteries or the dynastic houses that supported them.

THE GEATAS: THE PROBLEM OF A NAME

Having dealt with the Danes, it is now time to turn to another name from Anglo-Saxon legend: the *Geatas*. In the manuscript of the *Beowulf*-poem, this is the ethnonym used for the protagonist's people. Today, the critical consensus is that this name represents the *Gautar* (Mod. Swedish *Götar*), a medieval people who inhabited the area of Götaland in Sweden. Hence, on reconstructed maps of the poem's northern hemisphere, the *Geatas* are invariably placed in the south-western region of Sweden. Examples can be found in authoritative editions and introductions to the poem.⁴⁰ The primary reason why critics have pulled the *Gautar* into the poem is that the Old English (henceforth OE) plural *Geatas*, corresponds phonetically to Old Norse (henceforth ON) *Gautar*. This is valid insofar as what we know of regular sound change.⁴¹ But, the assumption that the name *Geatas* is a cognate of *Gautar* produced by sound change can be challenged on several counts. In order to reflect regular sound change, the name would need to have entered into English at an early stage.⁴² In the following, it is my contention that a direct link between the name *Geatas* and a specific, geographically locatable tribe is problematic. I aim to show that the morphology of this name was a product of misperception, manipulation, and mythmaking.

However, in the following, *Beowulf* will not be the focus. Instead, attention will be directed at the occurrence of the same name in OE *Bede*, where it replaces the Latin **Iutae*/**Iuti* (Jutes). This text can with some certainty be dated to the late ninth century. Prevailing opinion holds that the book was part of King Alfred's 'vernacularizing' programme. At least, it appears to have had the backing of a patron with leverage to distribute copies of it to various scriptoria.⁴³ The relatively secure dating of this text has one distinct advantage over the more 'slippery' *Beowulf* poem: it is possible to piece together a picture of contemporary or near-contemporary intertexts.

Philological Considerations

The OE *Bede* is one of the manuscripts which may have been sponsored by King Alfred as part of his national-revivalist project of translating important

Latin texts into the vernacular. Bede's Latin is translated into the Mercian dialect.⁴⁴ In the translated version of 1.15, we find the following: *Comon hi of þrim folcum ðam strangestan Germanie, þæt of Seaxum 7 of Angle 7 of Geatum. Of Geata fruman syndon Cantware ond Wihtsætan* (They came from the strongest tribes of *Germania*, of Saxons, Angles and the Jutes. Of Jutish origin came the people of Kent and the Wight-settlers).⁴⁵ This is the most significant evidence that aligns *Geatas* (the nominative form of above denominations) with Bede's Jutes. The argument I want to make is that there is a philological rationality behind transforming the Latin name for Jutes (**Iutae*) into *Geatas*, since the two were not as far apart as they may appear to the modern eye.

When a g-spelling was used before front vowels, it was pronounced as the palatal sound /j/ (as in the Mod.E. 'yes'). In transcriptions of Old English texts, a dotted ġ is often used to denote this sound. This gives us a pronunciation of *Ġeatas* that can be transcribed /jæa:tas/. Thus, there is a similarity of sound between the first letter in *Geatas* and Bede's original Latin **Iutae* /ju:taI/.⁴⁶ A number of Old English texts show us that initial <ea->, <eo-> and <iu-> became identical in sound to initial ġea – and ġeo- (i.e. a soft /j/ sound), and both <geo> and <iu> spellings were sometimes found, often within the same manuscript.⁴⁷ It should also be noted that the Old English translation of Orosius' *History against the Pagans* (completed under the patronage of King Alfred) renders the Latin name of the Numidian King 'Iugurtha' into the OE form 'Geoweortþa'.⁴⁸ In the same way, the seventh-century bishop of the Mercians, whom Bede refers to as 'Iarumanno' (*HE* 4.3), appears as 'Gearumon' in the *OE Bede*.⁴⁹

Certainly, the OE <g>-forms may be produced from Norse names that would have a /j/ sound. For this, we may again turn to the Alfredian translation of Orosius' *History*, which interpolates interviews with two travellers. In connection with Ohthere's journey through the southern parts of the Baltic, the name *Gotland* (occurring twice) is used as a reference to the northern part of Jutland.⁵⁰ The scribe probably wanted to represent the attested ON forms *Jótland*/*Jótlandi*/*Jótlands* in this way, since OE orthography had no special symbol for the semivowel /j/.⁵¹ An attempt at rendering a Norse name form is also found in Æthelweard's tenth-century Latin chronicle. Using information taken from Bede, the invading Jutes are here called *Gioti* and their dominion in Hampshire is *Giota land* (I. 3–4).⁵² Probably, Æthelweard's name form is a reflection of ON *Jóta*, where an <i> has been introduced to indicate the palatal quality of the initial consonant, as was common scribal practice.⁵³

Having established that *Geatas* in *OE Bede* is not a far cry from Bede's **Iutae*, can we then write off this form as a simple aberration? What is proposed in this chapter is rather that *Geatas* had desirable connotations which the translator wanted to invoke, and that it was a deliberate morphing of the name. In the following, I will argue that the irregular modulation was intentional, guided by a desire to provide the Anglo-Saxons with a noble

ancestral history, connecting with the Gothic race of *Getae*, which was increasingly legendized as an *Urvolk* that peopled Europe through migration and conquest.

The *OE Bede* contains two variant forms for the people Bede calls **Iutae*. In 1.15, which is the legendary account of the first Germanic ships invading Britain, we find *Geatas*. But in 4.14, we are told that the Hampshire area in which the Jutes settled had been known as *Eota land*. This is the Anglian name form used in four manuscript recensions (Bodleian, Cotton, Corpus Oxf., and Camb. Univ. MSS), and probably correspond to what the Mercian translator originally wrote. In the last of the total of five recensions, which is a Late West Saxon version from the eleventh century (Corpus, Camb. MS.), the form *Ytena land* appears. As we saw in Chapter Four, the area of Hampshire in question was usurped by the West Saxons, and place names with the root *Yte-* from this area are recorded in several English sources.

In the Old English translation of section 1.15, we are told that the *Geatas* settled in Kent and the Isle of Wight – but the information that they also came to Hampshire is not translated. This ellipsis could be a coincidence, since the *OE Bede* is a much abbreviated version of the original. But it is more likely that the translator found it awkward to also call the Hampshire settlers *Geatas*, when *Eotas* or *Yte* were the vernacular terms used about the settlers there. Discrepancy between the name forms *Geatas* and *Eotas*, was avoided in the translation of section 4.14, since the reference to the Jutes here concerns only Hampshire matters.⁵⁴ But why do we find two different forms in the *OE Bede*, when they had only one name in Bede's original Latin? The answer may be unexceptionally simple. The account of the invasion coming from across the sea is evidently treated as a legendary narrative, identifying the ancestors of the English. When compared with the royal genealogies we find elsewhere in Anglo-Saxon literature (tracing ancestry back to Woden, Noah, and the biblical fathers), it need not come as a surprise that another attempt at finding a noble ancestor race is made here.

Geatas in Legend

But with whom are the Jutes then associated? The *OE Bede* may register the influence of Jordanes' history of the Goths, which would motivate a use of the name *Geatas* as a form alluding to the *Getae* (regularly seen as a precursor tribe to the Goths). This was also a noun pronounced with a soft /j/ sound. Admittedly, finding an allusion to the *Getae*/Goths in the *OE Bede* will remain a matter of interpretation. To assess the validity of such an allusion, we may rely on R. D. Fulk's methodological principle of establishing the most probable interpretation in settling difficult and controversial matters of Old English philology. Fulk's principle requires that 'statistical' evidence in favour of one interpretation is presented. That is to say, out of the sometimes meagre body of material available, enough qualitative data must be harnessed to demonstrate the 'explanatory efficiency'

of a given explanation, thereby simultaneously showing the 'inefficiency or improbability' of competing explanations.⁵⁵

To begin the exploration of the Jutes-as-Goths hypothesis, we may briefly turn to Jane Acomb Leake's somewhat neglected study from 1967, which addresses the semantic potentialities of the name, *Geatas* (with specific reference to *Beowulf*).

Leake argues that the *Geatas* were named after the *Getae*, originally a people of ancient Dacia, west of the Black Sea. The *Getae* had achieved a reputation as a half-mythical race with superhuman strength, whose renown in warfare was sometimes explained as a result of their descent from Mars, Amazons, Bellona, and other strong warriors.⁵⁶ According to Leake, the *Geatas* in *Beowulf* do not therefore represent a 'historical' Germanic people, but a supra-national race of brave warriors that lived in the legends of Latin manuscripts.

Leake's argument has not won general acceptance, but it has attracted a few recent supporters.⁵⁷ An objection to Leake's theory turns on the questionable linguistic validity of her argument. OE *Gēatas* (with a long diphthong) is not a cognate of the Latin *Gētae* (which has a short root vowel). But this objection is probably invalid when considering how medieval scholars liberally forged etymological connections based on often dubious linguistic resemblance. A reading of Isidore's hugely influential *Etymologies* will reveal this – for example, when Isidore relates the *Getuli* to the *Getae* (9.2.118) because of the resemblance in name, or his claim that the Goths descended from the biblical Magog 'because of the similarity of the last syllable' (9.2.89).⁵⁸

The focus in this chapter is on the OE *Bede*, and the oldest manuscript version of this text shows that the translator vernacularizes Latin names for ethnic groups. That is to say, their Latin forms are retained, but declined in accordance with the principles of Old English (Mercian) grammar. For example, *Romani* falls into an i-stem class, and *Huni* is treated as a u-stem noun.⁵⁹ It is therefore possible that *Geatas* is also a hybrid form that treats a Latin noun as an Old English form. Through a linguistic sleight of hand, the (G)*eotas* from Jutland become akin to the *Getae* associated with Gothic legend.

If we consider the evidence, we may first look at the wider culture-political context. The reign of King Alfred, when the OE *Bede* was most probably composed, was characterized by an eagerness for constructing past ethnic connections for the English. It was during this time when especially genealogy was stretched to include legendary and biblical ancestors. As Craig Davis observes, other texts from the late ninth century provide a surge of imaginative reconstruction of ancestral legend unparalleled both before and after this time.⁶⁰ The OE *Bede* may be seen to participate in this reinvention of the past – in which case, the translator would probably have tweaked the name form **Eotas* to make it *Geatas* in order to shore up ideas of noble ancestry.

It would not be entirely unexpected if a willing attempt to create a link between English history and the Goths was on the agenda in England in the

late ninth century. The interest in a past Gothic *imperium* had grown during the ninth century, first surfacing in Frankish, then subsequently in English writing.⁶¹ Both reverence paid to the Goths and a desire to link them to Anglo-Saxon ancestors are found in the poem *Widsith*, which John Niles interprets as a story of an Anglian princess marrying King Ermanric: 'to raise the status of the Angles by marrying them into the Goths'.⁶² M. R. Godden shows that the Goths' sack of Rome in 410 was linked to the end of Roman rule in Britain in a number of Anglo-Saxon texts. When the Goths took Rome, they (symbolically) paved the way for a *translatio imperii*, and – by analogy – also Anglo-Saxon hegemony in former Roman Britain.⁶³ Perhaps most importantly, a juxtaposition of the Gothic raid of Rome and Roman retreat from Britain is found in Bede (*HE* 1.11). To claim that a Gothic-related tribe should also have help to defeat the Romanized Britons may have been a suggestive influence for the translator of *OE Bede*. In relation to this translation, Godden notes that the symbolism of the Goths' attack on Rome is further accentuated through omission: 'The departure of Roman troops from Britain is thus never mentioned, and the Gothic success becomes the only possible explanation for the cessation of Roman rule in Britain'.⁶⁴ In summary, the beginning of Anglo-Saxon Britain seems to have been tied in with the ascendancy of the Goths in the understanding of the time. Thus, an incentive to relate the Anglo-Saxon ancestors to the Gothic warriors was perhaps irresistible.

One place where this comes close to the surface is in the OE translation of Orosius. The Latin original is one of many classical texts that explicitly claim the *Getae* later became the Goths.⁶⁵ The translation contains an interesting divergence from the original; the translator introduces a statement which is not in the original: *ða Gotan coman of þæm hwatestan monnum Germania* (the Goths came from the bravest men of Germania), and were known *for hiera cræftum 7 for hiera hwætscipe* (for their strengths and for their bravery).⁶⁶ In the Latin original, the Goths are firmly placed in south-eastern Europe, a region separate from *Germania*. But the translator's phrasing appears to parallel – if not actually replicate – Bede's statement that the invading Angles, Saxons, and Jutes came from the strongest of peoples in *Germania*.⁶⁷ The idea of the *Getae*/Goths deriving from the pagan North of the continent seems to show influence from the iconic legend of migration from the North in Jordanes' history of the Goths. After all, Jordanes traces the proto-Gothic *Getae* to *Scandza*, conceptualized as a huge island in the 'Germanic Sea' (*Germanicum mare*) (*Get.* 18).

However, to suggest that Jordanes is the origin of this idea can be challenged on the grounds that no copy of Jordanes' text is known from Anglo-Saxon libraries.⁶⁸ However, Frankish scholars knew Jordanes' text well. As we saw in Chapter Two, Freculph, the Bishop of Lisieux, provided an alternative to the standard myth of the Franks' lineage from Troy in his *Historiae* (c. 830). He allows for the possibility that the Franks had their origins on the isle of *Scandza*, the womb/sheath of nations, 'from which the

Goths and the other Germanic nations went forth'.⁶⁹ It is important to note that Jordanes' Gothic legend is here recalibrated to serve as an origin legend for all Germanic nations. Since Alfred's court was palpably influenced by Carolingian Francia, striving to emulate its intellectual achievements, a transfer of such ideas is highly possible.⁷⁰ The scholar Alcuin (who travelled between England and Charlemagne's court), indicates in a letter from 801 that he was partly acquainted with the contents of Jordanes' work.⁷¹ Alcuin could have been one of the conduits for Frankish learning into England and perhaps also for Jordanes' migration legend. Another channel could have been Asser, Alfred's court biographer. In his *vita* of Alfred, Asser uses several words peculiar to Frankish Latin sources, which has led to speculation that he was either educated in Francia, or he could have learned his trade from Frankish scholars associated with Alfred's court, such as Grimbald, the Benedictine monk from Saint-Omer.⁷²

An attempt to directly connect Anglo-Saxon kings and the Goths is found in the opening chapter of Asser's *vita*. Alfred's maternal genealogy is here traced to Oslac (his grandfather), who is said to have come from the Isle of Wight, one of the places where the Jutes settled, according to Bede. Oslac is described as *Gothus erat natione; ortus enim erat de Gothis et Jutis*.⁷³ In Simon Keynes and Michael Lapidge's modern English version, this line is translated: 'Oslac was a Goth by nation, descended from the Goths and Jutes, particularly from the seed of Stuf and Wihtgar'.⁷⁴ However, this translation introduces a redundancy into Asser's statement: to be a Goth, one must derive from a Goth. So, to make sense of the statement, we need to analyze its constituents individually.

Gothus is an adjective that means 'Gothic' and was pronounced with a velar (hard) /g/. The intention is clear: Asser claims for Alfred a familial connection to the noble Goths of legend. To back up this statement, Asser sees a connection with the adjective *Gothis*. He knew that Jutland was spelled *Gotland* (in OE Orosius); thus, he adopts the spelling *Gothis* as a cognate of the ON *Jóti* [Jute]. The pronunciation would be with a palatal g, since that would make it phonologically similar to the Latin *Iutis*, the term Bede used for the Jutes. Asser either perceives *Gothis* and *Jutis* as synonyms or sees them as two closely related peoples. On the backdrop of this alleged connection between Jutes and Goths, as well as (possibly) direct or indirect knowledge of Jordanes' Gothic migration legend, the translator of Bede's ecclesiastical history would have felt justified in aligning the Jutes with the Goths. With his strange vernacularizing form, *Geatas*, the translator of the OE *Bede* seems to indicate that the *Getae* had sprung from the land of the Jutes (OE *Eotas*).

The attempt to use classical sources to illuminate contemporary events and the nations involved led to much confusion. In the beginning of the Latin version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, the tenth-century ealdorman Æthelweard writes about the northern invaders infesting English shores: the *Dani*, *Northmanni*, and *Suevi* (1.4). *Suevi* must mean 'Swedes' (who were

also known as *Sueones* in Latin). But this rather unusual name form is connected with a quote from the Roman poet Lucan's first-century poem, *Pharsalia*, on how a river *fundit ab extreme flauos aquiline Suevos* (pours forth the fair-haired *Suevi* from the North).⁷⁵ The river alluded to in the poem is the Elbe, and the context for the passage is how barbarians warring with Rome (*Dacus*, *Massagetae*, *Getae*, and *Suebi*) found strength in their cruel gods of war to rush forth. But, Æthelweard's reading is false, as Lucan is not referring to the Swedes but to the *Suebi*, a more southerly Germanic tribe. It is likely that Æthelweard was confused about the identity of the *Suebi* by Isidore of Seville, who quotes this very line from Lucan, after remarking that the *Suevi* (i.e. a misnaming of the *Suebi*) were a segment of the Germanic nations *in fine septentrionis* (on the northern frontier) (9.2.98).⁷⁶ But the frontier to the pagan North had moved considerably since Lucan's time and was now drawn at the entry to the land of the Danes.

Jutes, Geatas, and Goths

That *Geatas* was chosen as a name in order to link English ancestors with Goths is, in my assessment, the most probable explanation for the anomalous form in the *OE Bede*. This grafts an 'out-of-Scandinavia' tale notion onto English legend. However, an explicit reference to Jordanes' *Getica* cannot be found until the early twelfth century. In William of Malmesbury's *Gesta rerum Anglorum*, Bede's Jutes are named *Gothos*, followed by an explicit reference to the legend of the Goths in Jordanes writing. William proceeds to place the Anglo-Saxon ancestor Scyld in *Slaswic/Haithebi*, which are two names for the well-known trading station in Jutland.⁷⁷ It is evident that William amalgamated Jordanes' origin tale of the Goths with Anglo-Saxon ancestral history.

As an addendum to the discussion of perceiving and misperceiving name forms, it should be mentioned that the impulse to connect Goths, *Getae*, and Jutes was repeated in several antiquarian works. The Danish historian Saxo reworks the fourth-century Ostrogothic King Ermaneric (who is also known from Anglo-Saxon legend) as a Danish king in Book 8 of *Gesta Danorum*. *Iarmericus*, as Saxo calls him, is given a recognizable Viking career of adventures at sea against foes that were considered to be the traditional enemies of the Danes.⁷⁸ Probably, the use of the name *Dacia* (originally, an area of classical geography north of the Black Sea), to replace *Dania* (Denmark) was at this time so well established that Saxo felt entitled to include legends of the Goths' adventures in his history of the Danes. The link between the Dacians and the Goths can be found in Isidore's *Etymologies*, in which we are told that the 'Dacians were the offspring of the Goths, and they think they are called Daci ... because they were created from the family of Goths'. To which a statement of their northern heritage is added: 'about them someone says [i.e. Paul in Acts 17]: "You will go far up to the northern Dacians"' (9.2.90).⁷⁹ Saxo undoubtedly finds authorization for his

linking of the Danes and the Dacians in Dudo's history of the Normans (to which he also refers) since Dudo uses the terms *Daci* and *Dani* interchangeably throughout his work.⁸⁰

The confusion of such renaming of the Jutes as ethnical Goths is also found in Icelandic writing of the thirteenth century. Jutland is described here as formerly called by another name. In Snorri Sturluson's 'Prologue' to the *Prose Edda*, we hear that Óðinn and his men arrive in a land 'that now is called Jutland, but once was called *Reiðgotaland*'.⁸¹ However, the same place is used to refer to the territories of the Ostrogoths in southeastern Europe in *Hervarar saga* (13th cent.) and other Icelandic texts.⁸² Snorri appears to have been familiar with texts that used <Gotland> or a similar form about what he knew as *Iotland*.

In later historical writing of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the confusion between the peoples of Roman geography and Scandinavia proliferated. One example is provided by the Italian scholar Polydore Virgil, who became court historian to Henry VIII. In *Anglicae historiae libri XXVI* (Twenty-six Books of English History) (1534–1555), he notes that the Danes who had ruled in Britain named their country either *Dacia*, or *Denmarcke*, but that this people was first 'called Gothes, yet, bie reason that of owlde historiens they weare som time called Getes, sometime Danes'.⁸³ William Lambarde, in *A Perambulation of Kent* (1576), identifies *Iutes* with the synonyms, *Gutes* and *Gottes*.⁸⁴ Another example is William Camden's famous *Britannia* (1586; Eng. trans. 1610), in which the Jutes are fully synonymized with the names, '*Gutes, Getes, or Gothes*'.⁸⁵ In the first Old English dictionary, *Dictionarium Saxonico-Latino-Anglicum* (1649), William Somner lists under *Geatar* the simple line of identification: *Jutae, Getae, and Gothes*.⁸⁶ A further contribution to the confusion was provided by the Cambridge linguist Robert Sheringham in *De Anglorum gentis origine* (The Origin of the English People), published in 1670. Sheringham sees the ethnic names *Jutes, Getae, and Goths* as synonymous.⁸⁷ The antiquarian Aylett Sammes similarly identified *Jutes, Getes, and Goths* as variant names of the same people.⁸⁸ Eighteenth-century scholarly editions of Bede's texts continued to identify the Jutes with the Goths.⁸⁹ But what are we to make of the appearance of the *Geatas* in *Beowulf*? The present discussion would seem incomplete without at least grappling with the use of the name in this poem.

The *Geatas* seem unknown in other Anglo-Saxon legendary connections. Although they are mentioned as a tribe in *Widsith* (l. 58), where they are placed between Swedes and South-Danes, no heroes' names or events are otherwise attributed to this name in legendary sources. That the *Geatas* were Jutes (i.e. they lived north of the South-Danes in what Ohthere called *Gotland*) is a theory supported by a number of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century critics. As early as 1839, the German historian, Heinrich Leo, made this claim.⁹⁰ However, his findings were attacked already the following year by Ernst Moritz Ludwig Ettmüller, who cast his vote for the *Geatas* as identical with the *Gautar*.⁹¹ In 1884, the Swedish historian,

Pontus Fahlbeck, put forward the Jute-thesis again, this time with more momentum.⁹² In turn, Fahlbeck's article was also attacked, and a number of scholars took up the debate with much fervour. In a 1959 review of the debate, Raymond W. Chambers practically put the Jute-thesis to bed. His attempts at finding alternative explanations in favour of the *Gautar* were, however, often laboured and relied on special pleading.⁹³ Nonetheless, his admirable rigorousness gave the intervention an air of definitiveness. As the critical tide was turning against single-tracked interest in the ethnic dimension of *Beowulf*, no serious contender picked up the gauntlet at this time. It was not until 1986 that the Swedish scholar Lars Gahrn provided an updated review of the Jutes vs. *Gautar* debate. As his investigation was carried out under the heading 'the early history of Sweden', sympathy for the *Gautar*-theory was a foregone conclusion.⁹⁴ Only in recent years has John D. Niles vocally objected to the identification of *Geatas* with *Gautar*.⁹⁵

If we look at the geographical information given in the poem, the *Geatas* must seek the Swedes *ofer sæ* (across the sea) (l. 2374), *ofer sæ side* (across the wide sea) (l. 2394), *ofer wid wæter* (across the wide waters) (l. 2473), and *ofer heafo* (across the sea) (l. 2477). The Jute-theorists made the claim that this meant that the *Geatas* could not inhabit the same landmass as the Swedes, but had to undertake a journey over the Sund from Sweden to Jutland. Chambers claims to overthrow this deduction with the argument that the water boundary alluded to the great lakes in southern Sweden.⁹⁶ Arguably, this is an imaginable way to stretch the term *sæ*, but it is special pleading.

The problem is that both camps base their arguments on a modern sense of geographical mapping, of which the poet was either unaware or seems to ignore. The references to water are more sensibly explained as coordinates on a fictive and poetical mind-map which prescribed that all Scandinavians were seafaring peoples. As Ermold the Black says in his poem to Louis the Pious (on the occasion of Harald Klak's baptism), the Danes were a people who sought food by their sails and dwelled on the sea.⁹⁷ The *Geatas* are depicted as living near the coast, but this is most likely dictated by narrative requirements, such as the need for pushing the dragon over the sea-cliff in the final showdown (l. 3131–3), or that Beowulf's burial-mound should be a spectacular monument visible to passing seafarers (ll. 2802–8, cf. 3156–62).

As with the other tribal names in the poem, the *Geatas* played the part of creating a believable ethnological image of the continent centuries ago. In this respect, Walter Goffart has convincingly argued that the poet had scoured continental manuscripts when digging up the obscure ethnonyms, *Hetware* and *Hugas*.⁹⁸ The existence of the same name in OE *Bede* and *Beowulf* (in both texts referring to a Northern people) would be a strange coincidence. One must therefore assume that one of the texts learned from the other, or they both relied on a common precursor text. However, it is important to note that there are no explicit links made between the *Geatas* and Goths in *Beowulf*.

Presumably, the *Beowulf*-poet chose the name, *Geatas* (like other names in the poem), for its poetic ambience, not its historicity. *Geatas* was a name that signalled a northern heroic people, which was part of the stock from which the English understood themselves to be descended. It is a name perhaps best seen in terms of what Claude Levi-Strauss has called a 'floating signifier', representing 'an undetermined quantity of signification, in itself void of meaning and thus apt to receive any meaning'.⁹⁹ If we compare this with the hero, Beowulf, it has been suggested that the name was chosen as a generic 'northern' name that could be applied to a hero. There is another Danish hero called 'Beowulf' in the poem (l. 18), just as there is a hero called 'Hengest' (first occurrence at l. 1083), which is a name also known from Bede's account of the Jutish invasion of Kent (*HE* 1.15). The hero, Beowulf, may be an amalgam of several heroes known from legendary narratives, perhaps each participating in one of the three battles, which the poem rewrites. To the poet, the *Geatas* were perhaps likewise a poetic licence, a name taken up to find a focus for a compendium of legendary tales about the heroic North.

NOTES

1. Frederick Klaeber, 'Introduction', *Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg*, ed. Frederick Klaeber, 3rd edn, with 1st and 2nd supplements (Boston: D. C. Heath, 1950), cxxii.
2. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, ed. Tony Jebson, <http://asc.jebbo.co.uk/>. Last modified 6 Aug. 2007.
3. See the discussion in Les Scales, 'Bread Cheese and Genocide: Imagining the Destruction of Peoples in Medieval Western Europe', in *History* 92 (2007): 287; and Ann Williams, *Æthelred the Unready: The Ill-Counselled King* (London and New York: Hambledon Press, 2003), 52–4.
4. For a discussion of Æthelred's tactics, see Richard Abels, 'Paying the Danegeld: Anglo-Saxon Peacemaking with Vikings', in *War and Peace in Ancient and Medieval History*, ed. Philip De Souza and John France (Cambridge: CUP, 2008), 190–91.
5. Levin Schücking, 'Wann Entstand der *Beowulf*? Glossen, Zweifel und Fragen', in *Beitr. zur Gesch. der deutschen Spr. und Lit.* 42 (1917): 407.
6. Patricia Poussa, 'The Date of Beowulf Reconsidered: The Tenth Century?', in *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 82 (1981): 276–88. For another sympathizer with a Scandinavian connection, see Norman F. Blake, 'The Dating of Old English Poetry', in *An English Miscellany Presented to W. S. Mackie*, ed. B. S. Lee (Cape Town and New York: OUP, 1977), 14–27.
7. Kevin Kiernan, 'The Eleventh-Century Origin of *Beowulf* and the *Beowulf* Manuscript', in *The Dating of Beowulf*, ed. Colin Chase (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), 22.
8. Dorothy Whitelock, *The Audience of Beowulf* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), 25–6.

9. Richard North in *The Origins of Beowulf: From Vergil to Wiglaf* (Oxford: OUP, 2007), 25, proposes that the poem is datable to 826–7, written by Abbot Eanmund of Breedon on the Hill, and composed for Wiglaf, an ealdorman of the northern Midlands, to help him win the throne of Mercia.
10. Nicholas Jacobs, 'Anglo-Danish Relations, Poetic Archaism, and the Date of *Beowulf*', in *Poetica* 8 (1977): 24.
11. R. I. Page, 'The Audience of *Beowulf* and the Vikings', in *The Dating of Beowulf*, ed. Colin Chase, 2nd edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 113–22.
12. For a summary of the integration argument, see Dawn Hadley, "'Cockle amongst the Wheat": The Scandinavian Settlement of England', in *Social Identity in Early Medieval Britain*, ed. W. O. Frazer and Andrew Tyrrell (London and New York: Leicester University Press, 2000), 111–35.
13. For a concise assessment of the linguistic influence, see Barbara A. Fennell, *A History of English: A Sociolinguistic Approach* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 90–93.
14. Matthew Innes, 'Danelaw Identities: Ethnicity, Regionalism and Political Allegiance', in *Cultures and Contact: Scandinavian Settlement in England in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries*, ed. D. M. Hadley and J. D. Richards (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 83–5.
15. [Byrhtferth of Ramsey], *Vita sancti Oswaldi auctore anonymo*, in *The Historians of the Church of York and Its Archbishops*, ed. James Raine, vol. 1 (London: Longman, 1879), 401–8.
16. Gwyn Jones, *A History of the Vikings*, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 198–9.
17. Grundtvig, *Beowulfes Beorh*, 206.
18. For this sense and the survival of the component in modern-day place names where it does not indicate islands proper, see Ove Jørgensen, *Alfred den Store, Danmarks Geografi* (Odense: Odense Universitetsforlag, 1985), 116–17.
19. *Ohthere's Voyages: A Late 9th-Century Account of Voyages along the Coasts of Norway and Denmark and Its Cultural Context*, ed. Janet Bately and Anton Englert (Roskilde: Viking Ship Museum Roskilde, 2007), 48.
20. Leonid S. Chekin, 'Mappae Mundi and Scandinavia', in *Scandinavian Studies* 65.4 (1993): 493.
21. For a discussion and bibliography related to the interpretation of this phrase, see Alfred Hiatt, 'Beowulf off the Map', in *Anglo-Saxon England* 38 (2009), 22–3.
22. *Ohthere's Voyages*, 43. For a discussion of the interpretative possibilities, see Hiatt, 'Beowulf', 26.
23. See Judith N. Garder, *Old English Poetry in Medieval Christian Perspective: A Doctrinal Approach* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1991), 160.
24. Stanley B. Greenfield, *Hero and Exile: The Art of Old English Poetry*, ed. G.H. Brown (London; Ronceverte, W.Va.: Hambledon, 1989), 45. See also W. Parks, 'The Traditional Narrator and the "I Heard" Formulas in Old English Poetry', in *Anglo-Saxon Poetry* 16 (1987): 45–66.
25. Quoted in Karl Reichl, *Singing the Past: Turkic and Medieval Heroic Poetry* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2000), 151–2.
26. Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. Michael Holquist and Caryl Emerson (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982), 13.
27. For a full list, see Andy Orchard, *A Critical Companion to Beowulf* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2003), 99.

28. *Beowulf: A New Verse Translation*, trans. R. M. Liuzza (Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview Press, 2000), 53.
29. *Ravennatis anonymi cosmographia et guidonis geographica*, 4.13, ed. Joseph Schnetz (Stuttgart: B. G. Teubneri, 1990), p.53: ... *litus Oceani est patria quae dicitur Dania. quae patria ut ait supra scriptus Aitanaridus et Eldevaldus et Marcomirus Gothorum philosophi super omnes nationes velocissimos profert homines, et hoc affati sunt in sua problemata: Laudabatur Parsus Marco dum non venerat Gothus. Sed o ubi est Danus?* For information and context on the three geographers, see Franz Staab, 'Ostrogothic Geographers at the Court of Theodoric the Great: A Study of Some Sources of the Anonymous Cosmographer of Ravenna', in *Viator* 7 (1976): 27–58.
30. See, for example, Alistair Campbell, 'The Use in *Beowulf* of Earlier Heroic Verse', in *England before the Conquest: Studies in Primary Sources Presented to Dorothy Whitelock*, ed. Peter Clemoes and Kathleen Hughes (Cambridge: CUP, 2010), 283–92.
31. The Heathobards appear again in *Widsith* (ll. 45–9), in which the narrative concentrates on how the Danes *Hroþwulf* and *Hroðgar* defeat Ingeld.
32. Translation adapted from North, *Origins*, 132–3. The recipient of the letter, 'Speratus', has convincingly been identified as Bishop Unwona of Leicester, who held office under King Offa of Mercia. See Donald. A. Bullough, 'What has Ingeld to do with Lindisfarne', in *Anglo-Saxon England* 22 (1993): 93–122.
33. For this suggestion, see Mary Garrison, 'Quid Hinieldus cum Christo', in *Latin Learning and English Lore: Studies in Anglo-Saxon Literature for Michael Lapidge*, vol. 1, ed. Katherine O'Brien, et al. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 237–259.
34. For references and discussion, see North, *Origins*, 123.
35. *Widsith: A Study in Old English Heroic Legend*, ed. Raymond Wilson Chambers (1912; Cambridge: CUP, 2010), 203.
36. Weland was a master-smith who was imprisoned and hamstrung by King Nithung, but managed to escape on wings he had constructed. See James Bradley, 'Sorcerer or Symbol?: Weland the Smith in Anglo-Saxon Sculpture and Verse', in *Pacific Coast Philology* 25.1/2 (1990): 39–48.
37. *Tvær kviður fornar: Völundarkviða og Atlakviða, með skýringum*, ed. Jón Helgason (Reykjavík: Heimskringla, 1962), 60.
38. *Hwær sin nu þæs wisan Welandes ban, þæs goldsmiðes, þe wæs geo mærost? Forþy ic cwæð þæs wisan Welandes ban, for þy ic cwæð þæs wisan Welandes ban forðy ængum ne mæg eor ðbuendra se cræt losian þe him Crist onlænð*, in *King Alfred's Old English Version of Boethius De Consolotatione philosophiae*, ed. Walter John Sedgefield (1899; repr. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1968), 48.
39. Kevin J. Wanner, *Snorri Sturluson and the Edda: The Conversion of Cultural Capital in Medieval Scandinavia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008).
40. For instance, *Klaeber's Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg*, ed. R. D. Fulk, R. E. Bjork, and J. D. Niles, 4th edn. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008); Andy Orchard, *A Critical Companion to Beowulf* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2003); and *Beowulf: A Verse Translation*, ed. Michael Alexander, rev. edition (London: Penguin, 2003).
41. 'Introduction', *Klaeber's Beowulf*, p. lxxv.

42. See Alistair Campbell, *Old English Grammar* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), §120, on the change from Primitive Germanic <au> to OE <ēa>, with the corresponding ON form <ö>.
43. See 'Introduction' to *Alfred the Great: Asser's 'Life of King Alfred' and Other Contemporary Sources*, ed. Simon Keynes and Michael Lapidge (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1983), 33. However, Sharon M. Rowley has raised a challenge to OE *Bede* as an Alfredian text in *The Old English Version of Bede's Historia ecclesiastica* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2011), 36–56.
44. On the manuscript and dialect, see Gregory Waite, *Old English Prose Translation of King Alfred's Reign* (Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer 2000), 44; and Raymond J. S. Grant, *The B Text of the Old English Bede: A Linguistic Commentary* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1989), 3.
45. *The Old English Version of Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, 1.12, ed. Thomas Miller, vol. 1 (London: Pub. for the Early English Text Society by N. Trübner and Co., 1890), p. 52.
46. For a thorough examination of the various sounds that OE <g> could represent, see Donka Minkova, *Alliteration and Sound Change in Early English* (Cambridge: CUP, 2003), pp. 113–20.
47. Richard M. Hogg, *A Grammar of Old English*, vol. 1, *Phonology* (London: Blackwell, 1992), §§5.60–62. Campbell, *Old English Grammar*, §303.
48. Hogg, *Grammar*, §5.60, note 3.
49. OE *Bede*, 258.
50. *Ohthere's Voyages*, ed. Janet Bately and Anton Englert (Roskilde: Viking Ship Museum Roskilde, 2007), 47. For identifications of the place names, see 53 and 56.
51. For a discussion of the language in Ohthere's account, see Matthew Townend in *Language and History in Viking Age England: Linguistic Relations between Speakers of Old Norse and Old English* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002), 98–103; Christine E. Fell, 'Some Questions of Language', in *Two Voyagers at the Court of King Alfred* (York: William Sessions, 1984), 56–63. Furthermore, there is evidence from Middle English that Old Norse *jó* and *jú* in initial position were widely adopted into English as *g*; see B. Sandahl, 'On Old Norse *jó* and *jú* in English', in *Studia Neophilologica* 2.36 (1964): 267–8.
52. *The Chronicle of Aethelweard*, ed. Alistair Campbell (London: Nelson, 1962), 8.
53. Hogg, *Grammar*, §5.50. For extended discussion, see Jeremy J. Smith, *Old English: A Linguistic Introduction* (Cambridge: CUP, 2009), 55–7.
54. The reconfiguration of the name *Yte* as *Geatas* created confusion. Thus, in the Anglo-Saxon poem *Widsith*, we find this as two separate peoples, appearing as two West Saxon dative plurals: *Ytum* (l. 27) and *Geatum* (l. 59). In the dizzying array of peoples listed in *Widsith* (including historical kings that are known to have lived centuries apart), such inconsistencies are to be expected.
55. R. D. Fulk, 'On Argumentation in Old English Philology, with Particular Reference to the Editing and Dating of *Beowulf*', in *Anglo-Saxon England* 32 (2003): 3.
56. Jane Acomb Leake, *The Geats of Beowulf: A Study in the Geographical Mythology of the Middle Ages* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1967).
57. See, for example, Stephen J. Harris, *Race and Ethnicity in Anglo-Saxon Literature* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 85; and John D. Niles, *Old English Heroic Poems and the Social Life of Texts* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 44.

58. Isidore, *Etymologiarium libri XX*, PL 82, cols. 0339D and 0337A; English translation from *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, ed. and trans. Stephen J. Barney, W. J. Lewis, J. A. Beach, and Oliver Berghof (Cambridge: CUP, 2006), 197.
59. For this and comparisons with similar strategies in the West Saxon B-text, see Grant, *B Text of the Old English Bede*, 430–31.
60. Craig R. Davis, 'An Ethnic Dating of *Beowulf*', in *Anglo-Saxon England* 35 (2006): 129.
61. Davis, 'Ethnic Dating', 122; Harris, *Race*, 131; Matthew Innes, 'Teutons or Trojans? The Carolingians and the Germanic Past', in *The Uses of the Past in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Y. Hen and M. Innes (Cambridge: CUP, 2000), 227–49; Roberta Frank, 'Germanic Legend in Old English Literature', in *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature*, ed. Malcolm Godden and Michael Lapidge (Cambridge: CUP, 1991), 94.
62. Niles, *Old English Heroic Poems*, 92.
63. M. R. Godden, 'The Anglo-Saxons and the Goths: Rewriting the Sack of Rome', in *Anglo-Saxon England* 31(2002): 47–68.
64. *Ibid.*, 56.
65. Paulus Orosius, *Adversus paganos historiarum libri septem*, 1.68.16, PL 31, col.0728A: *Getae illi qui et nunc Gothi*. This particular comment is not included in the much abbreviated OE version. The alleged connection between the *Getae* and Goths can also be found in several other classical sources; see Arne Soby Christensen, *Cassiodorus, Jordanes and the History of the Goths: Studies in a Migration Myth* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2002), esp. pp. 51 and 230–49.
66. *The Old English Orosius*, 1.10, ed. Janet Bately (Oxford: Early English Text Society, 1980).
67. *HE* 1.15: ... *autem de tribus Germaniae populis fortioribus*; or, in the Old English translation: *of þrim folcum ðam strangestan Germanie*.
68. It is not mentioned among the books known to the Anglo-Saxons in Michael Lapidge, *The Anglo-Saxon Library* (Oxford: Oxford University Library, 2006).
69. Freculph, *Chronicorum*, 2.17, PL 106, cols. 0967C–D.
70. For the general influence of Francia and the transfer of knowledge, see Joanna Story, *Carolingian Connections: Anglo-Saxon England and Carolingian Francia, c. 750–870* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003).
71. Alcuin, *Epistolae*, ed. E. Dümmmler, *MGH, Epist.* 4 (Berlin, 1895), pp. 364–5. Alcuin does not tell us where (England or Francia) he had seen Jordanes' work.
72. *Alfred the Great: Asser's 'Life of King Alfred' and Other Contemporary Sources*, trans. and ed. Simon Keynes and Michael Lapidge (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983), 48–58, 93–96; See also discussion in Alfred P. Smyth, *King Alfred the Great* (Oxford: OUP, 1995), pp. 278–9.
73. Latin text in *Asser's Life of King Alfred*, 1.2, ed. William Henry Stevenson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), p. 4.
74. *Alfred the Great*, ed. S. Keynes and M. Lapidge, 229–30.
75. *Chronicle*, ed. Campbell, 9: *Fundit ab extreme flauos aquiline Suevos*.
76. Lucan, *The Civil War, Books I–X* (2.1.51), trans. J. D. Duff (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962), p. 59; Isidore, *Etymologiarium*, PL 82, cols. col.0338A.

77. William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum*, 2.116, ed. R. A. B. Mynors, completed by Rodney M. Thomson and Michael Winterbottom, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), p. 176.
78. For a discussion of the Ermanric legends in Danish history writing, see Niels Lukman, *Ermanaric hos Jordanes og Saxo* (Copenhagen: Poul Branners Forlag, 1949).
79. Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiarium sive originum libri XX*, PL 82, cols. 0337A-B: *Daci autem Getarum suboles fuerunt, et dictos putant Dacos ... quia de Gothorum stirpe creati sunt. De quibus ille: Ibis Arctos procul, usque Dacos.*
80. See for example, Dudo of Saint-Quentin, *De moribus et actis primorum Normanniaiae ducum*, 2.13: *Ipsi vero responderunt: 'Dani sumus, Dacia advecti huc'*, PL. 141, col. 0639D (And they replied: 'We are Danes, and we have sailed from Dacia'). For a discussion of the confusion between Dacia and Dania, see Nick Webber, *The Evolution of Norman Identity, 911–1154* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2005), 27–8.
81. *Edda Snorra Sturlusonar – udgivet efter håndskrifterne af Kommissionen for det Arnamagnæanske Legat*, ed. Finnur Jónsson. (Copenhagen: Nordisk Forlag, 1931), 6: *þat heitir nu Iotland, er þa var kallat Reiðgotaland.*
82. Other texts, such as *The Book of Skálholt* and *Hauksbók*, suggest a location in East Prussia or Poland; see discussion in Pamela Gradon, 'Constantine and the Barbarians: A Note on the Old English "Elene"', in *Modern Language Review* 42.2 (1947), esp. 168–72.
83. Polydore Vergil, *English History, from an Early Translation Preserved Among the MSS. of the Old Royal Library in the British Museum*, ed. Henry Ellis (London: Camden Society, 1846), 194–6.
84. William Lambarde, *A Perambulation of Kent Conteyning the Description, Historie, and Customes of that Shyre* (London: R. Newberie, 1576), 2.
85. William Camden, *Britain, or A Chorographically Description of the Most flourishing Kingdomes, England, Scotland, and Ireland, and the Islands adioyning*, trans. Philemon Holland (London: G. Bishop and J. Norton, 1610), 130.
86. For these references and a general discussion of the mistaken correlation of terms in antiquarian works, see Samuel Klier, *The Goths in England: A Study in Seventh and Eighteenth Century Thought* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1952), 110–12.
87. Robert Sheringham, *De Anglorum gentis origine disceptatio* (Cantabrigiae: Edvardi Story, 1670). Bede is discussed on 25; a number of allegedly etymological variations on the Jutes-Goths continuum are listed on 36–7. In pages 143–53, the Jutes and their Gothic connections are discussed at length.
88. Aylett Sammes, *Britannia antiqua illustrata: Or, the Antiquities of Ancient Britain* (London: Thomas Roycroft, 1676), 420–2.
89. See, for example, commentary by John Stevens in *The Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation, translated into English from Dr. Smith's Edition ... Also Explanatory Notes* (London: J. Batley and T. Meighan, 1723), note on page 46.
90. Heinrich Leo, *Bëowulf, das älteste deutsche Heldengedicht, im angelsächsischer Mundart erhaltene* (Halle: E. Anton, 1839).
91. Ludwig Ettmüller, *Beowulf. Heldengedicht des achten Jahrhunderts* (Zürich: Meyer and Zeller, 1840).

92. Pontus Fahlbeck, 'Beovulfsqvädet såsom källe för nordisk fornhistoria', in *Antiquarisk Tidskrift för Sverige* 2.8 (1884).
93. R. W. Chambers, *Beowulf: An Introduction to the Study of the Poem, with a Discussion of the Stories of Offa and Finn* (Cambridge: CUP, 1959), 333.
94. Lars Gahrn, 'The Geatas of Beowulf', in *Scandinavian Journal of History* 11.2 (1986): 95–113.
95. Niles, *Old English Heroic Poems*, 133–6.
96. Chambers, *Introduction*, pp. 342–3.
97. Ermold the Black, *In honorem Hludovici pii*, 4.16, MGH *Poetae Latini aevi Carolini* 2, ed. Ernst Dümmler (Berlin, 1884), p. 59: *Lintre dapes quaerit, inco-litatque mare*.
98. Walter Goffart, 'Hetware and Hugas: Datable Anachronisms in *Beowulf*', in *The Dating of Beowulf*, ed. C. Chase (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), 83–100.
99. Quoted in Jeffrey Mehlman, 'The "Floating Signifier": From Lévi-Strauss to Lacan', *Yale French Studies* 48 (1972): 23.

REFERENCES

Primary Sources

- Alcuin. *Epistolae*, ed. E. Dümmler, MGH *Epist.* 4. Berlin, 1805.
- Asser's *Life of King Alfred*, 1.2, ed. William Henry Stevenson. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959.
- Æthelweard, *The Chronicle of Æthelweard*, ed. Alistair Campbell. London: Nelson, 1962.
- The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, ed. Tony Jebson, <http://asc.jebbo.co.uk/>. Last modified 6 Aug. 2007.
- Bede. *The Old English Version of Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. Thomas Miller, vol. 1. London: Pub. for the Early English Text Society by N. Trübner and Co., 1890.
- Beowulf: A New Verse Translation*, trans. R. M. Liuzza. Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview Press, 2000.
- [Byrhtferth of Ramsey], *Vita sancti Oswaldi auctore anonymo*, in *The Historians of the Church of York and Its Archbishops*, ed. James Raine, vol. 1, 399–475. London: Longman, 1879.
- Dudo of Saint-Quentin. *De moribus et actis primorum Normanniaiae ducum*, PL 141.
- Ermold the Black. *In honorem Hludovici pii*, ed. Ernst Dümmler, MGH *Poetae Latini aevi Carolini* 2. Berlin, 1884.
- Freculph. *Cronicorum*, PL 106.
- Isidore of Seville. *Etymologiarium sive originum libri XX*, PL 82.
- . *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, ed. and trans. Stephen J. Barney, W. J. Lewis, J. A. Beach, and Oliver Berghof. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- King Alfred's Old English Version of Boethius De Consolatione philosophiae*, ed. Walter John Sedgefield. [1899] Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1968.
- Lucan, *The Civil War, Books I—X* [Latin and Eng.], trans. J. D. Duff. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962.

- Ohthere's Voyages: A Late 9th-Century Account of Voyages along the Coasts of Norway and Denmark and Its Cultural Context*, ed. Janet Bately and Anton Englert, 40–59. Roskilde: Viking Ship Museum Roskilde, 2007.
- Orosius, Paulus. *Adversus paganos historiarum libri septem*, PL 31.
- . *The Old English Orosius*, ed. Janet Bately. Oxford: Early English Text Society, 1980.
- Ravennatis anonymi cosmographia et guidonis geographica*, ed. Joseph Schnetz, in *Itineraria Romana*, vol. 2. Stuttgart: B. G. Teubneri, 1990.
- Snorri Sturluson, *Edda Snorra Sturlusonar – udgivet efter håndskrifterne af Kommissionen for det Arnamagnæanske Legat*, ed. Finnur Jónsson. Copenhagen: Nordisk Forlag, 1931.
- Tvæð kviður fornar: Völundarkviða og Atlakviða, með skýringum*, ed. Jón Helgason. Reykjavík: Heimskringla, 1962.
- Widsith: A Study in Old English Heroic Legend*, ed. Raymond Wilson Chambers. [1912] Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum*, 2.116, ed. R. A. B. Mynors, completed by Rodney M. Thomson and Michael Winterbottom. Vol. 1. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998.

Secondary Sources

- Abels, Richard. 'Paying the Danegeld: Anglo-Saxon Peacemaking with Vikings', in *War and Peace in Ancient and Medieval History*, ed. Philip De Souza and John France, 173–92. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Alexander, Michael, ed. *Beowulf: A Verse Translation*, rev. edition. London: Penguin, 2003.
- Bakhtin, Mikhail. *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. Michael Holquist and Caryl Emerson. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982.
- Blake, Norman F. 'The Dating of Old English Poetry', in *An English Miscellany Presented to W. S. Mackie*, ed. B. S. Lee, 14–27. Cape Town and New York: Oxford University Press, 1977.
- Bradley, James. 'Sorcerer or Symbol?: Weland the Smith in Anglo-Saxon Sculpture and Verse', in *Pacific Coast Philology* 25.1/2 (1990): 39–48.
- Bullough, Donald A. 'What has Ingeld to do with Lindisfarne', in *Anglo-Saxon England* 22 (1993): 93–122.
- Camden, William. *Britain, or a Chorographical Description of the Most Flourishing Kingdoms, England, Scotland, and Ireland, and the Ilands adioyning*, trans. Philemon Holland. London: G. Bishop and J. Norton, 1610.
- Campbell, Alistair. 'The Use in Beowulf of Earlier Heroic Verse', in *England before the Conquest: Studies in Primary Sources Presented to Dorothy Whitelock*, ed. Peter Clemoes and Kathleen Hughes, 283–92. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- . *Old English Grammar*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959.
- Chambers, R. W. *Beowulf: An Introduction to the Study of the Poem, with a Discussion of the Stories of Offa and Finn*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959.
- Chekin, Leonid S. 'Mappae Mundi and Scandinavia', in *Scandinavian Studies* 65.4 (1993): 487–520.
- Christensen, Arne Søby. *Cassiodorus, Jordanes and the History of the Goths: Studies in a Migration Myth*. Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum, 2002.

- Davis, Craig R. 'An Ethnic Dating of *Beowulf*', in *Anglo-Saxon England* 35 (2006): 111–29.
- Ettmüller, Ludwig. *Beowulf. Heldengedicht des achten Jahrhunderts*. Zürich: Meyer and Zeller, 1840.
- Fahlbeck, Pontus. 'Beovulfsqvädet såsom källe för nordisk fornhistoria', in *Antiquarisk Tidskrift för Sverige* 2.8 (1884).
- Fell, Christine E. 'Some Questions of Language', in *Two Voyagers at the Court of King Alfred*, 56–63. York: William Sessions, 1984.
- Fennell, Barbara A. *A History of English: A Sociolinguistic Approach*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2001.
- Frank, Roberta. 'Germanic Legend in Old English Literature', in *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature*, ed. Malcolm Godden and Michael Lapidge, 88–106. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Fulk, R. D. 'On Argumentation in Old English Philology, with Particular Reference to the Editing and Dating of *Beowulf*', in *Anglo-Saxon England* 32 (2003): 1–26.
- Gahrn, Lars. 'The Geatas of *Beowulf*', *Scandinavian Journal of History* 11.2 (1986): 95–113.
- Garder, Judith N. *Old English Poetry in Medieval Christian Perspective: A Doctrinal Approach*. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1991.
- Garrison, Mary. 'Quid Hinieldus cum Christo', in *Latin Learning and English Lore: Studies in Anglo-Saxon Literature for Michael Lapidge*, vol. 1, ed. Katherine O'Brien, et al., 237–259. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005.
- Godden, M. R. 'The Anglo-Saxons and the Goths: Rewriting the Sack of Rome', in *Anglo-Saxon England* 31(2002): 47–68.
- Goffart, Walter. 'Hetware and Hugas: Datable Anachronisms in *Beowulf*', in *The Dating of Beowulf*, ed. Colin Chase, 83–100. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981.
- Gradon, Pamela. 'Constantine and the Barbarians: A Note on the Old English "Elene"', *Modern Language Review* 42.2 (1947): 161–72.
- Grant, Raymond J. S., ed. *The B Text of the Old English Bede: A Linguistic Commentary*. Amsterdam; Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 1989.
- Greenfield, Stanley B. *Hero and Exile: The Art of Old English Poetry*, ed. G.H. Brown. London; Ronceverte, W.Va.: Hambledon, 1989.
- Grundtvig, N. F. S. 'Fortale og Indledning', in *Beowulfes Beorh, eller, Bjovulfs-Drapen, paa Grund-sproget*, xv–lvii. Copenhagen: Carl Schönbergs Forlag, 1861.
- Hadley, Dawn. "'Cockle amongst the Wheat": The Scandinavian Settlement of England', in *Social Identity in Early Medieval Britain*, ed. W. O. Frazer and Andrew Tyrrell, 111–35. London and New York: Leicester University Press, 2000.
- Harris, Stephen J. *Race and Ethnicity in Anglo-Saxon Literature*. New York: Routledge, 2003.
- . 'The Alfredian World History and Anglo-Saxon Identity', *Journal of Germanic and English Philology* 100 (2001): 482–510.
- Hemmingsen, Lars. 'Middelaldergeografien og *Historia Norwegie*', in *Olavslegenden og den latinske historieskrivning i 1100-tallets Norge*, ed. Inger Ekrem, et al., 26–53. Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum, 2000.
- Hiatt, Alfred. 'Beowulf off the Map', in *Anglo-Saxon England* 38 (2009): 11–40.
- Hogg, Richard M. *A Grammar of Old English*, vol. 1, *Phonology*. London: Blackwell, 1992.

- Innes, Matthew. 'Teutons or Trojans? The Carolingians and the Germanic Past', in *The Uses of the Past in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Y. Hen and M. Innes, 227–49. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- . 'Danelaw Identities: Ethnicity, Regionalism and Political Allegiance', in *Cultures and Contact: Scandinavian Settlement in England in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries*, ed. D. M. Hadley and J. D. Richards, 65–68. Turnhout: Brepols, 2000.
- Jacobs, Nicholas. 'Anglo-Danish Relations, Poetic Archaism, and the Date of *Beowulf*', in *Poetica* 8 (1977): 23–43.
- Jones, Gwyn. *A History of the Vikings*, 2nd edn. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Jørgensen, Ove. *Alfred den Store, Danmarks Geografi*. Odense: Odense Universitetsforlag, 1985.
- Keynes, Simon and Michael Lapidge, eds. 'Introduction', in *Alfred the Great: Asser's 'Life of King Alfred' and Other Contemporary Sources*, 9–47. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983.
- Kiernan, Kevin. 'The Eleventh-Century Origin of *Beowulf* and the *Beowulf* Manuscript', in *The Dating of Beowulf*, ed. Colin Chase, 9–21. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981.
- Klaeber, Frederick. *Klaeber's Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg*, ed. R. D. Fulk, R. E. Bjork, and J. D. Niles, 4th edn. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008.
- . 'Introduction', in *Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg*, ed. F. Klaeber, 3rd edn., with 1st and 2nd supplements. Boston: D. C. Heath, 1950, cxxii.
- Kliger, Samuel. *The Goths in England: A Study in Seventh and Eighteenth Century Thought*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1952.
- Lapidge, Michael. *The Anglo-Saxon Library*. New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Lambarde, William. *A Perambulation of Kent Containing the Description, Hystorie, and Customes of that Shyre*. London: R. Newberie, 1576.
- Leake, Jane Acomb. *The Geats of Beowulf: A Study in the Geographical Mythology of the Middle Ages*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1967.
- Leo, Heinrich. *Bëowulf, das älteste deutsche Heldengedicht, im angelsächsischer Mundart erhaltene*. Halle: E. Anton, 1839.
- Lukman, Niels. *Ermanaric hos Jordanes og Saxo*. Copenhagen: Poul Branners Forlag, 1949.
- Mehlman, Jeffrey. 'The "Floating Signifier": From Lévi-Strauss to Lacan', *Yale French Studies* 48 (1972): 10–37.
- Minkova, Donka. *Alliteration and Sound Change in Early English*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Niles, John D. *Old English Heroic Poems and the Social Life of Texts*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2007.
- North, Richard. *The Origins of Beowulf: From Vergil to Wiglaf*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.
- Orchard, Andy. *A Critical Companion to Beowulf*. Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2003.
- Page, R. I. 'The Audience of *Beowulf* and the Vikings', in *The Dating of Beowulf*, ed. Colin Chase, 2nd edn., 113–22. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997.
- Parks, W. 'The Traditional Narrator and the "I Heard" Formulas in Old English Poetry', in *Anglo-Saxon Poetry* 16 (1987): 45–66.
- Poussa, Patricia. 'The Date of *Beowulf* Reconsidered: The Tenth Century?', in *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 82 (1981): 276–88.

- Reichl, Karl. *Singing the Past: Turkic and Medieval Heroic Poetry*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000.
- Rowley, Sharon M. *The Old English Version of Bede's Historia ecclesiastica*. Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2011.
- Sammes, Aylett. *Britannia antiqua illustrata: Or, the Antiquities of Ancient Britain*. London: Thomas Roycroft, 1676.
- Sandahl, B. 'On Old Norse *jó* and *jú* in English', in *Studia Neophilologica* 2.36 (1964): 166–76.
- Scales, Les. 'Bread Cheese and Genocide: Imagining the Destruction of Peoples in Medieval Western Europe', in *History* 92 (2007): 284–300.
- Sheringham, Robert. *De Anglorum gentis origine disceptatio*. Cambridge: Edvardi Story, 1670.
- Schücking, Levin. 'Wann Entstand der *Beowulf*? Glossen, Zweifel und Fragen', in *Beitr. zur Gesch. der deutschen Spr. und Lit.* 42 (1917): 347–410.
- Smith, Jeremy J. *Old English: A Linguistic Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- Smyth, Alfred P. *King Alfred the Great*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Staab, Franz. 'Ostrogothic Geographers at the Court of Theodoric the Great: A Study of Some Sources of the Anonymous Cosmographer of Ravenna', in *Viator* 7 (1976): 27–58.
- Stevens, John. Commentary, *The Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation, translated into English from Dr. Smith's Edition ... Also Explanatory Notes*. London: J. Batley and T. Meighan, 1723.
- Story, Joanna. *Carolingian Connections: Anglo-Saxon England and Carolingian Francia, c. 750–870*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003.
- Townend, Matthew. *Language and History in Viking Age England, Linguistic Relations between Speakers of Old Norse and Old English*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2002.
- Vergil, Polydore. *English History, from an Early Translation Preserved Among the MSS. of the Old Royal Library in the British Museum*, ed. Henry Ellis. London: Camden Society, 1846.
- Waite, Gregory. *Old English Prose Translation of King Alfred's Reign*. Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer 2000.
- Wanner, Kevin J. *Snorri Sturluson and the Edda: The Conversion of Cultural Capital in Medieval Scandinavia*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008.
- Webber, Nick. *The Evolution of Norman Identity, 911–1154*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005.
- Whitelock, Dorothy. *The Audience of Beowulf*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951.
- Williams, Ann. *Æthelred the Unready: The Ill-Counselled King*. London and New York: Hambledon Press, 2003.

This page intentionally left blank

Index

- Ablabius 31
 Albinus, Abbott 91
 Adam of Bremen 3, 100, 160
 Æthelbert, King of Kent 135
 Æthelred II 182, 184
 Æthelweard 65, 90, 153–4, 156–7, 158, 164, 165–7, 191, 195–6
 Aethicus Ister 53, 99–100
 Agnellus 64
 Aggesen, Sven 66, 159, 167, 169
 Alcuin 1, 36, 58, 100, 155–6, 188, 195
 Alfric of Eynsham 17, 164
 Alfred, King 1, 5, 15, 62, 160–1, 184, 190, 191, 193, 195; *see also* Vikings – baptisms
 Ælle, King 118–20, 127–30, 136
 Amatus of Montecassino 68
 Amazons 30, 33, 36, 42, 67, 100, 170, 193
 Animal art 63, 95
 Angles 7, 80, 81–7, 92, 121, 155; home of 87–91, 95, 98, 116, 117, 119, 122, 125–6, 132, 165–6, 169, 170, 188, 191, 194; as a term for ‘English’ 122, 124, 125–7, 136; archaeology 90, 155; *see also* Bede’s Anecdote of the *Angli* in Rome
 Anglian Collection 88, 154–5, 168
Anglo-Saxon Chronicle 17, 65, 91, 97, 122, 123, 158, 159, 160, 161, 163, 182
Annales Ryenses 66, 189
 Arianism 45
 Aristotle 51
 Asser 158, 161, 162, 195
 Augustine, Saint 33, 64, 84, 119, 125, 132
 Baltic Sea 3, 18, 30, 52, 62, 86, 89, 100, 155, 165, 185, 191
 Beards, *see* hair (of the barbarians).
 Bede 7, 8, 54, 152, 191, 199; ancestral rhetoric 97–101; anecdote of the *Angli* in Rome 116–38; Britain and legend 80–2; English translation of 98–99, 133; legend of the three tribes 82–97; Old English version of *Historia ecclesiastica* 181, 190–4, 196
Beowulf 1, 7–8, 51, 158, 159, 163, 164, 166, 181–7, 189–90, 193, 197–9; and legends of the North 186–7
 Bernicia, kingdom of 121, 124, 127–29, 130
 Blackness (metaphor) 135–6
 Black Sea 3, 29, 30, 39, 66, 82, 193, 196
 Boniface 98
 Borealism 2
 Bornholm 62
Bricolage 21, 25
 Britons (Celtic people) 7, 17, 84–5, 92, 93, 98, 122, 131–2, 135–6, 131, 136–7, 157, 194
 Brothers, legends of 57, 120, 123
 Bructeri 100
 Burgundians 1, 19, 50; northern origins of 61–3
 Cassiodorus 14, 28, 42
 Charlemagne 5, 15, 59, 60, 64, 155, 195
Chronicon universale usque ad annum 741 62
Cimbri 31
 Climate 17, 35–6, 39, 57–8
Codex Gothanum 4
 Curtius, Ernst Robert 19
 Danes 1, 2, 5, 8, 33, 39, 54, 55, 64, 66, 67, 81, 82, 86, 88–90, 92, 99, 100, 137, 154, 159, 161–2, 168, 196, 197; as legendary heroes 188–90

- Danube River 3, 33, 39, 55, 65, 92
 Deira, kingdom of 91, 119, 121, 124, 127–30, 136, 154, 168
 Denmark 4, 32, 53, 58, 62, 66, 67, 68, 86, 89–90, 91–2, 155, 159, 161, 167–9, 183–4, 196
 Dudo of St. Quentin 4, 37, 66–8, 169, 170, 197
- Ecgbert 98
 Edwin, King 120–1, 128–31, 152
 Elbe River 4, 5, 52, 68, 196
 Eider River 88, 90, 125; as a border 5
 Ennodius of Pavia 42
 Ermold the Black 1, 5, 161–2
 Ethnogenesis 12–15, 53, 125; in Northumbria 130–6
 Eusebius of Caesarea 80
- Ferocity (as a barbarian characteristic) 32, 53, 123, 137–8
 Finland/Finns 33, 185; *see also* Lapps
 Fortunatus, Venantius 41, 93
 Franks 1, 4, 7, 16, 37, 50, 54, 55, 59, 60–1, 73, 94, 96–7, 100, 122, 137, 168, 194; northern origins of 63–5; dealings with the Danes 161–2
 Freculph 64–5, 194
 ‘Fredegar’, chronicles of 55, 156
 Frisia and Frisians 90–1, 92–3, 98–9, 100, 156, 161, 187
- Gaul 3, 4, 52, 55, 60–3, 81, 119, 123, 133, 137, 170
 Gautar 33, 39, 190, 197–8
 Geatas philological considerations 190–2; in legend 192–6; connection with Jutes 197–9
 Geoffrey of Monmouth 16
 Gepidae 36
 Genealogy 85, 152–3; *see also* Odin and Scyld/Scef
 Genesis, use of 17, 58, 59, 85, 126, 133, 134; *see also* Noah
 Germania 2, 3, 4, 36, 55, 57, 59, 65, 80–1, 98, 100–101, 137, 164, 191, 194
 Getae 33, 66, 193, 194, 196, 197
 Gildas 52, 83–5, 89, 98, 102, 131
 Godan (pagan god) 56, 59
 Goffart, Walter 20, 34, 128, 198
 Goths 6, 14, 17, 28–43, 54, 57–8, 64, 67, 82, 85, 165, 168, 170, 192–3, 195, 197–8; archaeology 30; *see also* Jordanes
- Gotland 89, 191, 195, 197
 Gray, Thomas 18
 Gregory I, Pope 1, 6, 7, 96, 116–38; *see also* Vita S. Gregorii and Bede – anecdote of the Angli in Rome
 Gregory of Tours 100
 Grimm, Jacob 19
 Guthrum 160–1
- Hair (of the barbarians) 54–6, 132–5, 156, 196
 Harald Klak 5, 161, 198; *see also* Vikings – christening
 Haithaby 5, 89–90, 104, 166
 Hard primitivism 34–5, 41, 51; *see also* primordialism
 Heilsgeschichte 51, 59, 84, 87, 100, 122, 136–8
 Hengist/Hengest 88–9, 97, 123–4, 165, 167–8, 199
 Herodotus 36
 Heruls 33, 39–40, 57
 Hesiod 6, 17
 Hild, Abbess 127–8, 130
 Historia Brittonum 88–9, 124, 131, 153, 154
 Historia de Sancto Cuthberto 159–60
 Historia Langobardorum codicis Gothani 60
 Homer 36, 37, 88
 Huns 37, 55, 56, 98, 99, 100, 137, 193
- Idealtypen 154
 Ingeld 188
 Isle of Wight 83, 93–5, 97, 122, 191, 192, 195
 Isidore of Seville 35, 36, 57, 62, 67, 122–3, 163; definitions of ethnicity 13, 15, 16–17
- Japhet 16–17, 67, 85, 163–4
 Jeremiah 1
 Jordanes 3, 6, 54, 55, 57, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 68, 69, 81, 82, 85, 165–6, 168, 170, 185, 187, 192, 194–5, 196; life 28, 31, 59; sources used 30–3; classical notions of the North 34–8; context of Getica 38–43; *see also* Goths
 Josephus 16
 Justinian, Emperor 34, 38, 40
 Jutes 7, 80–7, 90, 98, 126, 165, 167, 181, 190–3, 194, 195; in sources Bede knew 91–7; connection with Geatas 196–9

- Jutland 3, 4, 32, 33, 52, 88, 89–90, 155, 189, 191; abandoned land 90–1; the inhabitants of 86–7
- Kent, kingdom of 83, 91, 94–7, 119–20, 124, 127, 135, 154, 168, 191, 192, 199
- Langobards (Lombards) 4, 43, 54–61, 63, 156, 169, 170
- Lapps 33, 57
- Legends of origin, taxonomy of 15–19
- Lebor Gabála Éirenn* 17
- Lex Salica* 164
- Liber Historiae Francorum* 64
- Louis the Pious 1, 161, 198
- Lucan 44, 52, 196
- Marcellinus, Ammianus 61
- Mela, Pomponius 35, 137
- Migration Period, concept of 19
- Nerthus (pagan god) 86
- Noah 16, 17, 67, 85, 131, 152, 163–4, 166, 168, 192
- Normans 4, 37, 168; northern origins of 66–8
- Northumbria 116, 120, 121, 124–5, 127–30, 131, 152, 154–5, 159–60; *see also* Bernicia, York and Whitby
- Norway 3, 5, 155, 157, 167
- Odin/Óðinn 7, 16, 167, 197; associated with Scandinavia 152–8
- Ohthere 5, 89, 165, 191, 197
- Orality vs. written tradition 21–22, 31
- Origin legends 15–19; *see also* entries for individual ethnonyms
- Origo gentis Langobadorum* 4, 55–6, 57
- Orosius, Paulus 5, 33, 61, 89, 191 (*see also* Ohthere).
- Passio sancti Sigismundi* 61
- Paul the Deacon 54, 56–61, 120, 156, 169
- Picts 82, 84, 126, 155, 170
- Pliny, the Elder 3, 57, 81, 86–7
- Plutarch 32
- Pohl, Walter 20, 99
- Portsmouth 97
- Primordialism 13, 18, 50; *see also* hard primitivism
- Procopius 39–40, 57, 92–3, 96, 135
- Ptolemy 3, 31, 32, 52
- Ravenna *Cosmography* 3–4, 5, 82, 187
- Regino of Prum 13
- Roman Empire 2, 14, 17, 31, 34, 35, 38–42, 55, 63–4, 67, 84, 97, 100; anti-Roman ideology 38, 51, 63, 65; classification 14
- Roman mission 84, 120–21, 123–4, 128, 132, 136; *see also* Augustine and Gregory I
- Rudbeck, Olof 52, 170
- Sagas (Icelandic) 62, 162, 165, 167, 188, 189, 197
- Saxnot (pagan god) 155
- Saxo Grammaticus 168–70
- Saxons 36, 60, 80–3, 85, 97–8, 100, 122, 125, 126, 134, 136, 137, 170, 188, 191, 194; northern origins of 52–4; home of 86, 87, 89, 90, 91, 92, 95; as a term for 'English' 98, 125; *see also* West Saxons
- Scandinavia (as a place of origin) 3, 30, 34, 37, 56, 60, 61, 66, 80–2, 92, 154–6, 165, 169, 185, 194; as a geographical concept 2–6, 29, 31, 185
- Schleswig 68, 88, 90
- Scotti 82, 122, 126
- Scyld/Scef 7, 17, 153, 158–60; as an English ancestors 160–3; later development of legend 163–6; in Scandinavian tradition 163–70
- Scyldingas* 158–60, 167
- Scythia and Scythians 2, 3, 29, 35, 36, 66, 81–2, 87, 89
- Seneca, Lucius Annaeus 137
- Skaane (*Sconeg*) 165
- Skjoldungar* *see* *Scyldingas*
- Slavs 69
- Snorri Sturluson 16, 157–8, 167–6, 169, 190, 197
- Strabo 3, 33, 55
- Swabians 68
- Sweden 5, 39, 53, 69, 157, 165, 169, 170, 185, 190, 198
- Swedes 33, 69, 154
- Swiftess 1, 36, 161, 187
- Tacitus 3, 32, 42, 52, 55, 85, 92, 153
- Textualization 31, 182
- Teutons 31, 34
- Theodore, Archbishop 53, 118, 120, 125, 127
- Theodoric 14, 28, 29, 35, 40, 42

- Thule 30, 39, 82
- Thucydides 38
- Traditionskerne* 20
- Tribal Hidage 86
- Troy (legend of) 6, 16, 23, 29, 30, 55, 66, 168
- Vagina nationum* 3, 37–8; *see also* Scandinavia
- Vandals 56, 57, 120
- Vikings 1, 5, 155, 159, 169, 181–4, 183, 186, 188, 196; christenings of 5, 160–3
- Virgil, 15, 16, 30, 40, 66, 170
- Vita S. Gregorii* 116–38
- Weapons (associated with the barbarians) 36–7, 131, 164
- Welund 189
- Wenskus, Richard 20, 30
- West Saxons 17, 65, 83, 93–4, 97, 152–3, 154–6, 158, 162–3, 164–7, 168, 183, 192
- Whitby 116–18, 124, 127–30
- Whiteness (metaphor) 133–6
- Widsith* 88, 125, 163, 188, 194
- Widukind of Corvey 53, 69
- William of Jumieges 67
- William of Malmesbury 158, 159, 165, 196
- Winnili* 4, 56–7, 59, 60
- Woden/Wotan, *see* Odin
- Wolfram, Herwig 20, 59
- Wulfstan 5
- York 118, 119, 124, 194