The Making of England

The very first collection of essays written about the role of trees in early medieval England, bringing together established specialists and new voices to present an interdisciplinary insight into the complex relationship between the early English and their woodlands.

Aethelstan

Ornus rewrites the history of the world from a Christian perspective, which became one of the most widely-read accounts of world history through late antiquity and the Middle Ages and an important influence on much later writing of history. Sometime in the late ninth or early tenth century an Anglo-Saxon scholar embarked on his own translation and adaptation of Ornus's History. This Old English version survives only in two manuscripts of the tenth and eleventh century.:

Europe and the Anglo-Saxons

Literary scholars have traditionally understood landscapes, whether natural or manmade, as metaphors for humanity instead of concrete settings for people's actions. This book accepts the natural world as such by investigating how Anglo-Saxons interacted with and conceived of their lived environments. Examining Old English poems, such as Beowulf and Judith, as well as descriptions of natural events from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and other documentary texts, Heide Estes shows that Anglo-Saxon ideologies that view nature as diametrically opposed to humans, and the natural world as designed for human use, have become deeply embedded in our cultural heritage, language, and more.

Old English History of the World

Presents the Anglo-Saxon period of English history from the fifth century up to the late eleventh century, covering such events as the spread of Christianity, the invasions of the Vikings, the composition of Beowulf, and the Battle of Hastings.

The Anglo-Saxon Tradition

In this book, Scarfe Beckett is concerned with representations of the Islamic world prevalent in Anglo-Saxon England. Using a wide variety of literary, historical and archaeological evidence, she argues that the first perceptions of Arabs, Ismaelites and Saracens which derived from Christian exegesis conditioned western expressions of hostility and superiority towards peoples of the Islamic world, and that these received ideas prevailed even as material contacts increased between England and Muslim territory. Medieval texts invariably represented Muslim Arabs as Saracens and Ismaelites (or Hagarines), described by Jerome as biblical enemies of the Christian world three centuries before Muhammad's lifetime. Two early ideas in particular - that Saracens worshipped Venus and dissembled - continued into the early modern period. This finding has interesting implications for earlier theses by Edward Said and Norman Daniel concerning the history of English perceptions of Islam.

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle

This is the first new introduction to Anglo-Saxon art in twenty-five years and the first book to take account of the 2009 discovery of the Staffordshire Hoard—the largest cache of Anglo-Saxon gold and silver metalwork yet found. Written by one of the leading scholars in the field and illustrated with many of the most impressive artifacts, it will be the authoritative book on the subject for years to come. The Anglo-Saxon period in England, roughly A.D. 400-1100, was a time of extraordinary and profound cultural transformation, culminating in a dramatic shift from a barbarian society to a recognizably medieval civilization. Settled by northern European tribal groupings of pagan and Ilertic warriors and farmers in the fifth century, England had by the eleventh century acquired all the trappings of medieval statehood—a developed urban network and complex economy, a carefully regulated coinage, flourishing centers of religion and learning, a vigorous literary tradition, and a remarkable and highly influential artistic heritage that had significant impact for beyond England itself. This book traces the changing nature of that art, the different roles it played in culture, and the various ways it both reflected and influenced the context in which it was created. From its first manifestations in the metalwork and ceramics of the early settlers, Anglo-Saxon art displays certain inherent and highly distinctive stylistic and iconographic features. Despite the many new influences that were regularly absorbed and adapted by Anglo-Saxon artists and craftsmen, these characteristics continued to resonate through the centuries in the great manuscripts, ivories, metalwork, and sculpture of this inventive and creative culture. Anglo-Saxon Art—which features 156 color and black-and-white illustrations—is arranged thematically while following a broadly chronological sequence. An introduction highlights the character of Anglo-Saxon art, its leitmotifs, and its underlying continuities. Leslie Webster places this art firmly in its wider cultural and political context while also examining the significant conceptual relationship between the visual and literary art of the period.

The Anglo-Saxon World

This illustrated book introduces serious students of Anglo-Saxon culture to selected aspects of the realities of Anglo-Saxon life through reference to artefacts and textual sources. Everyday practices and processes are investigated, such as the exploitation of animals for clothing, meat, cheese and parchment; ships for travel, trade and transport; manufacturing processes of metalwork; textiles for dress and furnishing and the practicalities of living with illness or disability. Articles collected in this volume illuminate how an understanding of the material culture of the daily Anglo-Saxon world can inform reading and scholarship in Anglo-Saxon studies. Scholarly and practical material presented in one another, making the book accessible to any reader seriously interested in England in the early Middle Ages.

Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts

The first continuous national history of any western people in their own language, The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle traces the history of early England from the migration of the Saxon war-lords, through Roman Britain, the onslaught of the Vikings, the Norman Conquest and on through to the reign of Stephen (1135-54). The text survives, in whole or in part, in eight separate manuscripts, each reflecting the concerns of the regions and institutions in which they were maintained. These texts have a similar core, but each has considerable local variations and its own intricate textual history. Michael J. Swanton's translation of these histories is the most reliable and up-to-date available. Heide Estes has added notes to the translation that place these annals in the context of current knowledge. Fully indexed and complemented by maps and genealogical tables, this edition allows ready access to one of the prime sources of English national culture. The introduction provides all the information a first-time reader could need, cutting an easy route through often complicated matters. Also includes nine maps.

Anglo-Saxon Literary Landscapes

This latest title in the highly successful Ancient Textiles series is the first substantial monograph-length historiography of early medieval embroideries and their context within the British Isles. The book brings together and analyses for the first time all 43 embroideries believed to have been made in the British Isles and Ireland in the early medieval period. New research carried out on these embroideries that are accessible today, involving the collection of technical data, stitch analysis, observations of condition and wear-marks and microscopic photography supplements a survey of existing published and archival sources. The research has been used to write, for the first time, the 'story' of embroidery, including what we can learn of its producers, their techniques, and the material functions and metaphorical meanings of embroidery within early medieval Anglo-Saxon society. The author presents embroideries as evidence for the evolution of embroidery production in Anglo-Saxon society, from a community-based activity based on the extended family, to organized workshops in urban settings employing standardized skill levels and as evidence of changing material use: from small amounts of fibers used locally for specific projects to large batches brought in from a distance and stored until needed. She demonstrate that embroideries were not simply used decoratively but to incorporate and enact different meanings within different parts of society; for example, the newly arrived Germanic settlers of the fifth century used embroidery to maintain links with their homelands and to create tribal ties and obligations. As such, the results inform discussion of embroidery contexts, use and deposition, and the significance and form of material culture within society as well as an evaluation of the status of embroiderers within early medieval society. The results
contribute significantly to our understanding of production systems in Anglo-Saxon England and Ireland.

Building Anglo-Saxon England

The first book to gather the fragmentary sources on this dynamic 7th century warrior king, who expanded his territory with war craft and politics in a time of great upheaval. The tale is told within the context of Anglo Saxon culture: food, costume, law, housing, finance, slavery and the competing Pagan & Christian religions.

The Anglo-Saxon Age

Beowulf, The Battle of Maldon, The Dream of the Roed, The Wanderer, and The Seafarer are among the greatest surviving Anglo-Saxon poems. They, and many other treasures, are included in The Anglo-Saxon World: chronicles, laws and letters, charters and charms, and above all superb poems. Herein a word picture of a people who came to these islands as pagans and yet within two hundred years had become Christians, to such effect that England was the centre of missionary endeavour and, for a time, the heart of European civilization. Kevin Crossley-Holland places poems and prose in context with his skilful interpretation of the Anglo-Saxon world; his translations have been widely acclaimed, and of Beowulf the poet Charles Causley has written, 'the poem has at last found its translator'.

The Medieval World of Nature

Anglo-Saxons valued education yet understood how precarious it could be. The church was alternately bolstered and undermined by fear, desire, and memory. They praised their teachers in official writing, but composed and translated scenes of instruction that revealed the emotional and cognitive complexity of learning. Irina Dumitrescu explores how early medieval writers used fictional representations of education to explore the relationship between teacher and student. These texts hint at the challenges of teaching and learning: curiosity, pride, forgetfulness, insatiability, and despair. Still, these difficulties are understood to be part of the dynamic process of pedagogy, not simply a sign of its failure. The book demonstrates the enduring concern of Anglo-Saxon authors with learning throughout Old English and Latin poems, hagiographies, histories, and schoolbooks.

Trees and Timber in the Anglo-Saxon World

The discovery of the Staffordshire Hoard in 2009 has captured the imagination and stimulated renewed interest in the history and culture of the Anglo-Saxons. This volume's examination of the impact of water features on the environment of the Anglo-Saxon world fosters an understanding, in the end, not only of the archaeological and material aspects of water in the Anglo-Saxon world, but also of the role of water in the social and cultural structures. Similar lines of enquiry in the volume's chapters shed insight on water imagery in Old English poems, northumbriasisms, and schoolsbooks.

The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature

Cross and Cruciform in the Anglo-Saxon World: Studies to Honor the Memory of Timothy Reuter is edited by Sarah Larratt Koefer, Karen Louise Jolly, and Catherine E. Karkov. This third and final volume of an ambitious research initiative began in 1999 concerned with the image of the cross, shows how its very material form cuts across both the history of the society and the boundaries of academic disciplines—history, archaeology, art history, literature, philosophy, and religion—providing vital insights into how symbols function within society. The flexibility, portability, and adaptability of the Anglo-Saxon understanding of the cross suggest that, in pre-Conquest England at least, a cross was a powerful tool of persuasion, and an image and symbol whose meaning continued to evolve and develop in both secular and religious contexts. These studies consider the role of the cross in the early medieval period, with a particular focus on the Anglo-Saxon period, and explore the ways in which the cross was used in various contexts, from religious to secular. The contributors to this volume explore a range of topics, including the use of the cross in the early medieval period, the role of the cross in the formation of identity, and the use of the cross in the creation of narrative and visual art.

The Experience of Education in Anglo-Saxon Literature

Several of the lectures examine the history, language, and societal adaptations of the Anglo-Saxons.

Anglo-Saxon Art

Similar in theme and method to the first and second volumes, Building Anglo-Saxon England, third volume of the series Daily Living in the Anglo-Saxon World, illuminates how an understanding of the impact of water features on the daily lives of the people and the environment of the Anglo-Saxon world can inform reading and scholarship of the period in significant ways. In discussing fishing, for example, we learn in what ways fish and fishing might have impacted the life of the average person who lived near fishing waters in Anglo-Saxon England. How fishing affected that person's diet, livelihood, and religious obligations, as well as how fish and fishing waters influenced social and cultural structures. Similar lines of enquiry in the volume's chapters shed insight on water imagery in Old English poetry, on place names that delineate types of watery bodies across the Anglo-Saxon landscape, and on human interactions (poetic and otherwise) with fens and other wetlands, sacred wells and springs, landing spaces, bridges, canals, watermills, and river settlements, as well as a variety of other waterscapes. The volume's examination of the impact of water features on the daily lives of the people and the environment of the Anglo-Saxon world fosters an understanding, in the end, not only of the archaeological and material circumstances of water and its uses, but also the imaginative waterscapes found in the textual records of the Anglo-Saxons.
The Lost Art of the Anglo-Saxon World

This edition of Michael Wood's groundbreaking first book explores the fascinating and mysterious centuries between the fall of the Roman Empire in 410 and the Norman Conquest of 1066. In Search of the Dark Ages vividly conjures up some of the most famous names in British history, such as Offa of Mercia, Alfred the Great, Athelstan, and William the Conqueror, whose victory at Hastings in 1066 marked the end of Anglo-Saxon England. Reflecting recent historical, textual and archaeological research, this revised edition of Michael Wood's classic book overturns preconceptions of the Dark Ages as a shadowy and brutal era, showing them to be a richly exciting and formative period in the history of Britain. "With In Search of the Dark Ages, Michael Wood wrote the book for history on TV." The Times

This richly illustrated new book presents Anglo-Saxon England as the home of a highly sophisticated artistic and political culture, deeply connected with its continental neighbours. Leading specialists in early medieval history, literature and culture engage with the unique, original evidence from which we can piece together the story of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, examining outstanding and beautiful objects such as highpoints from the Staffordshire hoard and the Sutton Hoo burial. At the heart of the book is the British Library's outstanding collection of Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, the richest source of evidence about Old English language and literature, including Beowulf and other poetry, the Lindisfarne Gospels, the earliest intact European book, and historical manuscripts such as Bede's Ecclesiastical History and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. These national treasures are discussed alongside other, internationally important literary and historical manuscripts held in major collections in Britain and Europe. This book, and the exhibition it accompanies, chart a fascinating and dynamic period in early medieval history, and will bring to life our understanding of these formative centuries.

The Oxford Handbook of Anglo-Saxon Archaeology

First published in 1939, The Anglo-Saxon Tradition puts forward Catlin's view on the power of the Anglo-Saxon Tradition as respect for personality, liberty, experiment, tolerance, accommodation, democracy, federalism, moralism, and public spirit, and emphasises its role in standing against contemporary totalitarian ideologies. The volume outlines Catlin's plan for the confederation of Anglo-Saxons in relation to what he presents as the central issue for civilisation: the conflict between the ideal of Dominion over Man, and the ideal of Power over Things. The Anglo-Saxon Tradition will appeal to those with an interest in the history of philosophy and the history of political thought.

Nonhuman Voices in Anglo-Saxon Literature and Material Culture

Archaeologies and histories of the fens of eastern England, continue to suggest, explicitly or by implication, that the early medieval fenland was dominated by the activities of north-west European colonists in a largely empty landscape. Using existing and new evidence and arguments, this new interdisciplinary history of the Anglo-Saxon fenland offers another interpretation. The fen islands and the silt fens show a degree of occupation unexpected a few decades ago. Dense Romano-British settlement appears to have been followed by consistent early medieval occupation on every island in the peat fens and across the silt fens, despite the impact of climatic change. The inhabitants of the region were organised within territorial groups in a complicated, almost certainly dynamic, hierarchy of subordinate and dominant polities, principalities and kingdoms. Their prosperous livelihoods were based on careful collective control, exploitation and management of the vast natural water-meadows on which their herds of cattle grazed. This was a society whose origins could be found in prehistoric Britain, and which had evolved through the period of Roman control and into the post-imperial decades and centuries that followed. The rich and complex history of the development of the region shows, it is argued, a traditional social order evolving, adapting and innovating in response to changing times.

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Humour in Anglo-Saxon Literature

Essays lay the groundwork for a theory of humour in Old English literature.

The Anglo-Saxon Age: A Very Short Introduction

During the tenth century England began to emerge as a distinct country with an identity that was both part of yet separate from 'Christendom'. The reigns of Athelstan, Edgar and Ethelred witnessed the emergence of many key institutions: the formation of towns on modern street plans; an efficient administration; and a serviceable system of tax. Mark Atherton here shows how the stories, legends, biographies and chronicles of Anglo-Saxon England reflected both this exciting time of innovation as well as the myriad lives, loves and hates of the people who wrote them. He demonstrates, too, that this was a nation coming of age, ahead of its time in its use not of the Book Latin used elsewhere in Europe, but of a narrative Old English prose devised for law and practical governance of the nation-state,
for prayer and preaching, and above all for exploring a rich and daring new literature. This prose was unique, but until now it has been neglected for the poetry. Bringing a volatile age to vivid and muscular life, Atherton argues that it was the vernacular of Alfred the Great, as much as Viking war, that truly forged the nation.

Cross and Cruciform in the Anglo-Saxon World

First published as part of the best-selling The Oxford Illustrated History of Britain, John Blair's Very Short Introduction to the Anglo-Saxon Age covers the emergence of the earliest English settlements to the Norman victory in 1066. This book is a brief introduction to the political, social, religious, and cultural history of Anglo-Saxon England. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

The Literature of the Anglo-Saxons

A radical rethinking of the Anglo-Saxon world that draws on the latest archaeological discoveries This beautifully illustrated book draws on the latest archaeological discoveries to present a radical reappraisal of the Anglo-Saxon built environment and its inhabitants. John Blair, one of the world's leading experts on this transformative era in England's early history, explains the origins of towns, manor houses, and castles in a completely new way, and sheds new light on the important functions of buildings and settlements in shaping people's lives during the age of the Venerable Bede and King Alfred. Building Anglo-Saxon England demonstrates how hundreds of recent excavations enable us to grasp for the first time how regionally diverse the built environment of the Anglo-Saxons truly was. Blair identifies a zone of eastern England with access to the North Sea whose economy, prosperity, and timber buildings had more in common with the Low Countries and Scandinavia than the rest of England. The origins of villages and their field systems emerge with a new clarity, as does the royal administrative organization of the kingdom of Mercia, which dominated central England for two centuries. Featuring a wealth of color illustrations throughout, Building Anglo-Saxon England explores how the natural landscape was modified to accommodate human activity, and how many settlements--secular and religious--were laid out with geometrical precision by specialist surveyors. The book also shows how the Anglo-Saxon love of elegant and intricate decoration is reflected in the construction of the living environment, which in some ways was more sophisticated than it would become after the Norman Conquest.

The Norman Conquest

A sweeping and original history of the Anglo-Saxons by national bestselling author Marc Morris. Sixteen hundred years ago Britain left the Roman Empire and swiftly fell into ruin. Grand cities and luxurious villas were deserted and left to crumble, and civil society collapsed into chaos. Into this violent and unstable world came foreign invaders from across the sea, and established themselves as its new masters. The Anglo-Saxons traces the turbulent history of these people across the next six centuries. It explains how their earliest rulers fought relentlessly against each other for glory and supremacy, and then were almost destroyed by the onslaught of the vikings. It explores how they abandoned their old gods for Christianity, established hundreds of churches and created dazzlingly intricate works of art. It charts the revival of towns and trade, and the origins of a familiar landscape of shires, boroughs and bishoprics. It is a tale of famous figures like King Offa, Alfred the Great and Edward the Confessor, but also features a host of lesser known characters - ambitious queens, revolutionary saints, intolerant monks and grasping nobles. Through their remarkable careers we see how a new society, a new culture and a single unified nation came into being. Drawing on a vast range of original evidence - chronicles, letters, archaeology and artefacts - renowned historian Marc Morris illuminates a period of history that is only dimly understood, separates the truth from the legend, and tells the extraordinary story of how the foundations of England were laid.

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