

Anglo saxon - short essay

Literature, British Literature



In the Anglo-Saxon period, grim tales were told of life ruled by fate. It was a time when people converted into Christianity. Christianity taught them that human beings and their choices of good and evil were at the center of creation. Around the time Christianity was converting, Beowulf was told. Beowulf contains the journey of the Anglo-Saxon period. Beowulf exemplifies the traits of the perfect hero. The poem explores his heroism in two separate phases, youth and age, and through three separate and increasingly difficult conflicts with Grendel, Grendel's mother, and the dragon. Although we can view these three encounters as expressions of the heroic code, there is perhaps a clearer division between Beowulf's youthful heroism as an unfettered warrior and his mature heroism as a reliable king. These two phases of his life, separated by fifty years, correspond to two different models of virtue, and much of the moral reflection in the story centers on differentiating these two models and on showing how Beowulf makes the transition from one to the other. Beowulf will soon meet Grendel and when he does, he will be prepared. Beowulf shows bravery when he fought Grendel with his bare hands. Beowulf wants to end "the grief, the sorrow, and the suffering" of the helpless people of Denmark. Beowulf will bring peace to Denmark. His defeat of Grendel and Grendel's mother validates his reputation for bravery and establishes him fully as a hero. In first part of the poem, Beowulf matures little, as he possesses heroic qualities in abundance from the start. The battle between Beowulf and Grendel is brutal. Beowulf performs good deeds by using no weapons against Grendel. Grendel "mankind's enemy", eventually gets killed by Beowulf. The Danes celebrate Beowulf's victory. They were relieve when Grendel, "the shadow of death"

was killed. Beowulf, " who is all man on earth" was the strongest. " And if your enemy should end my life" symbolizes the bravery, heroic, and strong leader. He showed why he is responsible and an ethical leader. A true hero does not fear death or, but instead risks all that he is for what he believes to be right, moral, and just. Beowulf is an epic and tells the story of a legendary hero, conquering all obstacles as if he was immortal. Up until the end of Beowulf's life he was constantly looking to be the hero. However, his humanity is exposed by his death. Heroes all share the characteristic of their willingness to die in their effort to accomplish their heroic act, thus making the act in itself heroic. Throughout the epic, Beowulf in many ways exhibited all the qualities and characteristics needed to be a true hero.