



Filologia del testo inglese medievale

CdL in Lingue e Letterature Europee e Americane

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Beowulf

London, British Library, MS Cotton Vitellius A.xv, fols. 132r-209v

Nowell codex: *Life of Saint Christopher, The Wonders of the East, Alexander's Letter to Aristotle* (prose); *Beowulf, Judith* (verse)

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All texts deal with the concept of **monstrous**

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- Presence of the Christian element

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The poem: 3182 alliterative lines divided into 48 *fitts* (= stanzas)

The plot:

Beowulf, a Geatish prince, answers the desperate call of Hrothgar, king of the Danes, whose feast-hall (Heorot) is haunted by the monster Grendel. Beowulf fights with Grendel and kills him. Grendel's mother takes her revenge and raids Heorot. Beowulf chases her and kills her. Great joy follows in Heorot. Fifty years later, an old Beowulf, now king of the Swedish, has to fight a dragon awakened by a greedy servant. The king kills the dragon but is killed in turn. Beowulf is mourned.