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**While Crowding Memories Came: Edwin Morgan, Old English and Nostalgia<sup>1</sup>**

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Morgan's career as a poet began with Old English;<sup>2</sup> the first books of poetry he completed were *Beowulf: A Verse Translation*, and the volume *Dies Irae*, a collection including translations of several other Old English poems, and which was also intended to appear the same year (1952), but whose publisher folded before it came out.<sup>3</sup> Although Old English allusions and influences can be found liberally throughout Morgan's subsequent writing career,<sup>4</sup> it was only towards the end of his life that his poetic engagement with Old English approached the same intensity it possessed at the beginning. Certain passages and motifs from Old English poetry were obviously lodged deep in Morgan's memory and resurfaced in his late poems. As key examples of these Old English intertexts are themselves to do with memory, loss and nostalgia, the return, or *nostos*, that Morgan performed in this manner over the long arc of his career seems deliberate and self-conscious. This article aims to trace that arc, and to identify some of the meanings invested in that late reprise of Old English, after first investigating in more detail than has previously been the case what Morgan's archives tell us about his early study and knowledge of Old English.

Old English served two important needs for Morgan in his early career. Firstly, it enabled him to come to terms with his traumatic experiences of the Second World War, serving as a member of the Royal Army Medical Corps in Egypt and the Middle East. Unlike several other soldier poets of the same campaign, Morgan found the war totally debilitating in terms of poetic productivity.<sup>5</sup> This state of affairs is corroborated by McGonigal, who notes that only one poem in Morgan's compilation of early typescripts held in Glasgow University Library Special Collections, is dated with war-time composition: 'A Warning of Waters and Evening', dated October-November 1943.<sup>6</sup> Morgan's translation of Old English, and of *Beowulf* in particular, a project begun in the immediate post-war period and continuing through the late 1940s,<sup>7</sup> was the poet's way of breaking this creative

deadlock, and of finding a way to approach his experience of combat in verse. When Carcanet republished Morgan's *Beowulf* in 2002, the older poet was more explicit about this relationship between translating *Beowulf* and the war than his youthful self had been. In its preface he wrote:

The translation, which was begun shortly after I came out of the army at the end of the Second World War, was in a sense my unwritten war poem, and I would not want to alter the expression I gave to its themes of conflict and danger, voyaging and displacement, loyalty and loss.<sup>8</sup>

Old English, then, brought the poet back into voice, allowing him to strain to unbind himself, to sweat to speak, as the corresponding stanza of Morgan's autobiographical poem 'Epilogue: Seven Decades', has it.<sup>9</sup> This difficulty in unbinding speech, and the tension between making poetry and keeping silence, is itself an Old English *topos*, and one expressed with the same word, *bindan*, in *The Wanderer*, lines 12-14 of which Morgan would much later quote, untranslated, in one of his last poems, on the very subject of guarding enough isolation to be able to make poems for a public.<sup>10</sup>

'Epilogue' also reveals the other, more surprising need that Old English fulfilled for Morgan: 'At thirty I thought life had passed me by, / translated *Beowulf* for want of love.'<sup>11</sup> *Beowulf* was a palliative against the loneliness of having to live a secret life as a gay man in Glasgow in the late 1940s. This connection, improbable as it might sound on the face of it, was rendered more explicable by comments Morgan later made in interview with Jim McGonigal while discussing homosociality, ancient Greek, and Japanese Samurai poetry:

The idea of a band of fairly close-knit persons – maybe that's why I like *Beowulf* so much – appealed to me, although I'm not myself a great joiner of anything. I'm not much part of a band – except in the army, when I had to be. So it's an ambiguous notion. But I liked that idea of either a band of soldiers or explorers.<sup>12</sup>

What Morgan describes here as an attraction of Old English poetry, is the group of retainers who form bonds of mutual loyalty around a lord or a king, and which was known as the *duguð* in Old English.<sup>13</sup> A little later in the same interview, when discussing Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Morgan

makes the same concatenation of male-male intimacy, the culture of the *duguð*, and the modern military:

It's a sort of ladder from homosexual, homoerotic and homosocial (is it homosexual or is it not?) down to homosocial, which is just boys together or men together, in an army or in a band or whatever. I suppose the *Beowulf* society would be regarded by her [Kosofsky Sedgwick] as homosocial. There are overtones of something, perhaps, but you're not quite sure.<sup>14</sup>

That receptivity to 'overtones' of something bordering on homoeroticism in Old English poetry, and their subsequent amplification into explicitness, is something that resurfaces in Morgan's use of *The Wanderer* in his late poetry, as this essay will go on to argue. What the published conversation with McGonigal clearly emphasises, is what 'Epilogue' more obliquely insinuates: that from the start Morgan intimately associated *Beowulf* both with his experiences as a soldier and his experiences as a gay man. His translation was a way of dealing both with sexual inhibitions and with the inhibitions the war placed on him as a writer. This, then, is what Old English meant to Morgan as a young poet: an antidote to unhappiness in two important spheres of his early personal experience as an adult; and the strong affection and loyalty he felt towards his instructor in its language and literature, the dedicatee of his *Beowulf* translation, Ritchie Girvan.<sup>15</sup>

The footprint of Morgan's instruction in Old English is found primarily in two separate archives of Morgan's books and papers: The Mitchell Library in Glasgow holds most of his personal library, including many books annotated by Morgan, as well as an assortment of some private papers; the bulk of his notebooks, papers and correspondence are held in the Department of Special Collections in Glasgow University Library. To gain a full appreciation of Morgan's studies of Old English, one must shuttle between these two archives, piecing together (sometimes quite literally, as will be demonstrated in the case of Morgan's scrapbook cut-ups) the relationship between his textbooks, his study notes, and his verse drafts. What strikes one upon carrying out such research, is how astonishingly committed to the study of Old English language and literature Morgan was. When one bears in mind that Morgan's extensive notes were made not in the pursuit of postgraduate study, but by an undergraduate with no

intention of specialising in the field of Anglo-Saxon studies, the effect is not only shocking, but also humbling.

Morgan began his English degree at Glasgow in 1937, but was called up for wartime service in 1940, when he had completed just one term of his Junior Honours (third) year of his four-year course. He resumed his studies in 1946 and took his final exams at the end of Senior Honours in 1947. Morgan's Eclipse 'Reporters Note Book', containing notes from an 'ANGLOSAXON READER', was almost certainly in use before Morgan's studies were interrupted by the war.<sup>16</sup> Its title refers to Henry Sweet's *Anglo-Saxon Reader in Prose and Verse*, a standard textbook at the time, and which Morgan studied in its ninth edition. His copy of Sweet's *Reader* in the Mitchell library is inscribed on the inside cover 'EDWIN G. MORGAN 1939',<sup>17</sup> indicating that he was probably using Sweet in his second year, or perhaps the first term of his Junior Honours year, before signing up for the RAMC. Sweet's *Reader* consists of two parts, an initial grammar, and then the reader proper: extracts from a variety of prose passages and poems. Morgan underlined many passages in the first, grammatical section, but this part of his Sweet is not as heavily annotated as another textbook in his library, Albert Cook's *First Book in Old English*, an introductory text more suitable for beginners than Sweet. Morgan went through his copy of Cook, marking up the language section with underlining, numbering, and the occasional gloss for meaning or grammatical organisation (Morgan often adds Roman numerals in the margin for verb classes, for example).<sup>18</sup> The second half of Morgan's copy, the reader, is without annotation. Evidently then, Girvan taught Morgan the basics of Old English grammar using Cook, perhaps as early as 1937, but certainly no later than 1939, before graduating the class to Sweet to practice reading and translation. It was probably also around this period that Morgan acquired a copy of the third, revised edition of Clark Hall's dictionary of Old-Modern English.<sup>19</sup>

Whether Girvan required it or not, once Morgan got to Sweet's *Reader* he made a study of it that is anything but elementary. An introductory course to Old English might typically select a few prose passages from Sweet, in order to get the students' translation skills working – perhaps passages from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, or the Old English Bede – before cherry-picking several highlights from the orchard of Old English. Yet in Morgan's copy of Sweet every single one of the texts is extensively

annotated and has clearly been studied in great detail with the exception of just three, and these are all texts placed in the appendix to the *Reader* in order to give an idea of the variety of ‘dialect texts’ that survive: *North-umbrian Texts*, and *Kentish Charters B and C (Mercian Hymns*, also from the dialect appendix, however, is very heavily marked up by Morgan). The order in which Morgan studied these texts was not the order in which Sweet prints them, and can be deduced from the aforementioned Eclipse notebook.<sup>20</sup>

Most of the pencil annotations in Morgan’s copy of Sweet are lexical glosses, elucidating the meaning of words or phrases, but some include suggestions for the interpretation of notorious textual cruces, or refer to the work of scholars. These annotations are supplemented by even more detailed notes from Sweet, which Morgan made in the Eclipse notebook. Many of these consist of items of vocabulary encountered in Sweet’s texts, which Morgan capitalizes, underlines, and then glosses. In effect it is a customized word list. But the nature of the glosses makes it clear that Morgan, even near the beginning of his studies, was not content merely with learning the meaning of words. He also includes detailed notes on usage, phonology, dialect, and any relevant grammatical points related to the word under consideration. A few examples from the fourth folio of the notebook will indicate the attention to detail with which Morgan applied himself to learning Old English:

MICEL, YFEL: Syncope in obliq[ue] cases regular in MICEL & frequent in YFEL in spite of short stem: MICLES, YFLES

WINTER: Masc (like FELD) in sg, neut (usually) in pl – N. A. Pl WINTRU, WINTER

TRYMMAN, PREMMAN [sic] generally in LWS transferred to sec wk class in -IAN, b[u]t occasionally we find them treated like long-stem vbs (orig): TRYMDE – GETRYMMED

The first entry tells us that Morgan did not just want to learn that *micel* means ‘much, a lot’, or that *yfel* means ‘evil’, but that when they are in the genitive singular, they do not normally exhibit the form \**miceles* and \**yfeles*, which are the ‘regular’ forms one might expect, but that they usually lose

their middle syllable in such circumstances. Likewise, Morgan is interested in the fact that the masculine nouns for ‘winter’ and for ‘field’ typically change gender when they are in the plural (adding a ‘-u’ ending, instead of the strong masculine ‘-as’ ending). The third entry shows Morgan determined to memorise a certain group of verbs that in Late West Saxon dialect (LWS) get treated as second class weak verbs, whose infinitives end in ‘-ian’, instead of the ‘-an’ that all other verb classes’ infinitives end in, but that even then their past tenses will sometimes revert to ‘-de’, instead of the ‘-ode’ that is typically displayed by ‘real’ second class weak verbs. The point to re-emphasise here is that Morgan, although only an undergraduate beginner, involved himself not only in the basic grammatical rules that govern how most sentences work in Old English, but with every oddity, exception, and special case.

Morgan certainly progressed from Sweet’s *Reader* (which contains but one extract from *Beowulf*) to studying the whole of *Beowulf*, although whether he began this task before or after the war is hard to ascertain. His library contains several editions and translations of that poem, including a copy of W. J. Sedgefield’s 1935 edition, although this is largely unmarked, and therefore not his main study text, despite its recent date of publication.<sup>21</sup> For that Morgan used Frederick Klaeber’s third edition of *Beowulf*, the standard scholarly edition for several decades.<sup>22</sup> Like his copy of Sweet, Morgan’s Klaeber is heavily annotated throughout in pencil, and supplemented by numerous *Beowulf*-related newspaper cuttings slid under the front cover. His annotations occur throughout the text of the poem, but also in the edition’s apparatus, the introduction and the endnotes. They include scholars’ suggestions for interpreting textual cruces, scansion patterns for certain verses which Morgan finds metrically interesting, notes on dialectal variants in form, and comments on style and identification of rhetorical devices (e.g. ‘litotes’ is written in the margin next to line 109, describing the little joy that Cain received from his killing of Abel). Morgan notes analogous uses of words and phrases in other Old English poems (e.g. he refers the *Beowulf*-poet’s use of *astab* at line 1118b to that of *The Dream of the Rood*-poet at line 103), and he jots down other literary parallels that occur to him in the margins of his text (e.g. by lines 86-9, which describe Grendel, Morgan makes comparison with the motive of Milton’s Satan). His notes often express compressed nuggets of literary criticism: a schematic note at the top of the page, above line 98, diagrammatically maps the

poem's 'faint suggestion' that Hrothgar corresponds to God, Heorot to Paradise, *ða drihtguman* to Adam and Eve, Grendel to Satan and Beowulf to 'Xt as Redeemer'.<sup>23</sup> Throughout, Morgan's notes include publication details (usually title, date and volume of journal) of the research he summarizes. Morgan was fully immersed in the *Beowulf* scholarship of his day. Not only this; the *Beowulf*-related correspondence, cuttings, and papers that are stuffed under the swollen front cover of his student Klaeber tell the story of his ongoing relationship with the poem into the twenty-first century. Twenty newspaper reviews alone of *Beowulf* related publications dating from 1960 to 2000 were stored in this way by Morgan.<sup>24</sup>

Two 'notebooks on English Language' in the Glasgow University archives, and which can be dated to his post-war studies, show Morgan extending his detailed enquiries both into advanced language study and into contemporary literary criticism of *Beowulf*.<sup>25</sup> One contains notes on 'Anglo-saxon [sic] Phonology' (written on its inside cover) and is dated '1945-46 Jun Hons English / 1946-47 Sen Hons English'. A home-made table of contents (Morgan habitually added page numbers to most of his notebooks) records that pages 1-38 deal with 'Phonology'; and pages 39-53 with 'Dialects' (first Northumbrian and then Mercian). Under 'Phonology' Morgan has drawn up the very detailed rules that govern sound changes in Proto-Germanic, including palatisation, breaking, i-mutation, syncope and acope, illustrating each one with multiple examples. The 'Dialects' section consists of detailed notes on the linguistic features of a variety of texts thought not to be written in Late West Saxon.

In the second of these 'English language' notebooks Morgan recorded a summary of all his secondary reading in Old English and the jotter contains as much material on literary scholarship and criticism as it does on philology. Although undated, an entry early in the notebook to Dickins and Ross' 1944 edition of *The Dream of the Rood* (pp.7-9) confirms that these notes were likely to have begun after the war and are probably simultaneous with his phonology and dialect researches. The notebook demonstrates Morgan's extremely wide reading in and on Old English literature, from publications as early as Francis Gummere's 1892 work *Germanic Origins: A Study in Primitive Culture* (p.41) and as late as Dorothy Whitelock's *The Audience of Beowulf* (pp.57-8). We glimpse the young undergraduate reading prose texts (Wulfstan's famous *Sermo lupi ad anglos* in Dorothy Whitelock's 1939 edition, pp.3-4) as well as poetry, and he was particularly interested, as one

might expect, in Old English prosody, taking extensive notes on ‘Old English Metric’ from ‘RG’ (Ritchie Girvan’s lectures, pp.16-23), and on John C. Pope’s *The Rhythm of Beowulf* (and its subsequent review by Girvan in *Review of English Studies*, pp.34-9). These are illustrated with numerous examples of scansion patterns and musical notation symbols. Several works on heroic warrior culture of early medieval northern Europe might have informed Morgan about the homosocial culture of the *duguð* that he was later to express such an affinity and desire for in his interview with McGonigal: ‘M. G. Clarke: Sidelights on Teutonic History During the Migration Period (1911)’ (pp.39-40); ‘Olrik: The Heroic Legends of Denmark 1919 (tr.)’ (pp.40-1); ‘H. M. Chadwick: The Origin of the English Nation (1907)’ (pp.42-5); ‘HM Chadwick: Heroic Age (1912)’ (pp.45-8). The notebook is in use as late as the early 1950s, and was undoubtedly a repository for his researches into earlier translations of *Beowulf* during the time he was working on his own version. Notes on translations by C. S. Moncrieff in 1921 (p.45), C. W. Kennedy in 1940 (p.49), William Morris and Alfred Wyatt in 1895 (pp.51-2), Gavin Bone in 1945 (pp.53-5), Leonard Strong in 1925 (p.55) as well as from Chauncey Tinker’s 1903 survey of Wackerbarth, Lumsden, Garnett and Earle in *The Translation of Beowulf* (pp.50-1) excerpt many quotations (occasionally underlined, or punctuated by disbelieving exclamation marks) and compile lists of archaic vocabulary. Much of this note-taking would later be quoted verbatim in the critical survey of translations that forms Morgan’s first introductory essay to his own version, ‘The Translator’s Task in *Beowulf*’.<sup>26</sup>

More notes on Old English are recorded among the quotations copied into the first two ‘commonplace books’, which Morgan titled ‘Gnotelbrik’.<sup>27</sup> ‘Gnotelbrik 1’, for instance, contains detailed notes from ‘Syntax & Style in Old English – by S. O. Andrews (Cambridge UP 1940)’, illustrating common word orders in Old English with many examples, especially from *Beowulf* (pp.37-41). Later there are notes on the early Germanic runic alphabets known as the *futhark*, taken from ‘Bruce Dickins: Runic and Heroic Poems 1915’ (pp.62-5). These include the entirety of *The Anglo-Saxon Runic Poem* (which would later serve as a model for ‘Nineteen Kinds of Barley’ and ‘A Trace of Wings’),<sup>28</sup> copied out in stanzas. In ‘Gnotelbrik 2’ are notes from ‘J P Oakden Alliterative Poetry in Middle English (MUP 1930)’, which include treatment of ‘The Grave’, the late Old English/Early

Middle English poem which Morgan translated as the concluding poem to conclude the sequence *Dies Irae*,<sup>29</sup> as well as extensive notes on the development of English metre from Old English into Middle (pp.91-4).

Several of the earlier translations dealt with in the second 'English Language Notebook' detailed above are also found among Morgan's personal library in the Mitchell collection. Wackerbarth's 'boisterous' translation, maligned in Morgan's prefatory essay as 'a double parody, first of *Beowulf* and then of the ballad', is marked in the margins at key points of interest to Morgan.<sup>30</sup> Similarly, in his copy of Mary Waterhouse's *Beowulf in Modern English*, Morgan has marked in the margins the two passages he will quote from and argue against in his introduction.<sup>31</sup> Morgan's copy of Gavin Bone's interlace-rhymed translation, which does not fare as badly as some others in the prefatory essay, is, on the other hand, unmarked.<sup>32</sup> It is striking how many of Morgan's bugbears are prefigured in Bone's own introductory essay. In particular several of the translators whom Morgan attacks are singled out by Bone for exactly the same failings: Strong and Leonard for their use of rattlingly long, garrulous couplets; Scott-Moncrieff for an impenetrably strange and barbarous imitation of alliterative metre; the general impropriety of blank verse as a medium for translating Old English.<sup>33</sup> There is a real and previously unacknowledged debt that Morgan's pugnacious essay 'The Task of the Translator' owes to Bone's own preface; many of the arguments are themselves translated and extended by Morgan. Bone is also represented in Morgan's library by his anthology of shorter poems in translation, the introduction to which emphasises the presentist meaning of much Old English poetry during the Second World War:

Mr Desmond MacCarthy has said that he draws strengths of heart as he sits in a shelter with bombs falling round by reading of the utter heroism in Icelandic Sagas. These people will go on fighting when there is not the smallest possibility of victory. The corresponding Anglo-Saxon Saga is the famous annal in the Chronicle, of Cynewulf and Cyneheard. 'And they were fighting until they all lay dead except for one British hostage and he was very badly wounded.' Or the famous speech of Byrhtwold in the *Battle of Maldon*, where the old man exhorts his company to hold fast in the losing battle:

The will shall be harder, the courage shall be keener  
Spirit shall grow great, as our strength falls away.<sup>34</sup>

Bone's interest in Old English seems to have anticipated Morgan's, and served as a model for him. For, as we have previously seen, Morgan's appropriation of Old English poetry shares this presentist affinity, with the corpus acquiring a special layer of meaning in the light of his war experiences.

Other important aids to learning among Morgan's personal library include grammars by Sievers and Wright, both annotated by Morgan, and several scholarly editions of Old English poems other than those he translated. In fact his library is almost exhaustive in this respect. Even relatively little read poems, such as the *Christ* trilogy from *The Exeter Book*, are represented in Morgan's library in the appropriate scholarly editions of his day.<sup>35</sup> Morgan also owned the full set of Krapp and Dobbie's six volume edition of *The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records*. For much of the second half of the twentieth-century this remained the standard authoritative edition of most Old English poetry with the exception of *Beowulf*; it is far from being a student edition.<sup>36</sup> Indeed, it would be hard to imagine any undergraduate reading of Old English poetry as deep as Morgan's; his self-application to *Beowulf* would even put many PhD students to shame. It is also evident that no poet-translator of *Beowulf* has ever had such a profound and detailed knowledge of the poem, or such a secure linguistic grasp of its workings.<sup>37</sup>

Nevertheless, Morgan's use of this extraordinary breadth of scholarship is not at all pious or dry. Morgan performed Old English orally at beatnik-inspired readings,<sup>38</sup> as well as visually on the pages of his famous scrapbooks, now kept in Glasgow University Library Special Collections. In fact the dual nature of his performance of Old English in this respect is entirely in keeping with the catholicity of his avant-garde tastes and practices, being both a sound poet and a concrete poet. Morgan would literally cut-and-paste (as well as sometimes copy in ink) lines from a wide variety of Old English texts into his art-montage scrapbooks, assembling a bewildering array of images and verbal fragments from a large number of languages into a series of found poems of almost epic proportions.

To take but the first of these scrapbooks, MS Morgan 917/1 alone contains, by my reckoning, twenty-eight extracts from Old English texts (some of which are not set horizontally, but are rotated through degrees in either direction, so that they must be read either 'up' or 'down' the page). Sixteen of these are cut-outs from a printed edition, and in all cases can be traced back to the copy of Sweet held in the Mitchell library, the corresponding pages of which are often like lacework decorations after the work of

Morgan's scissors. I write 'often' because in some cases Morgan has astonishingly repaired his holed Sweet by cutting out missing lines, sections, or even pages from another (now lost) 'spare' text he must have had, and gluing them back into the copy he originally cannibalised for the scrapbooks.<sup>39</sup> Thus his own copy of Sweet became a kind of Franken-text of two books glued together. One wonders why he did not simply keep the second copy intact. My own hunch is that Morgan was loathe to give up use of the student text which he had so heavily annotated and glossed that it had either become indispensable to his work methods, or had perhaps become so imbued with affectionate memories of Girvan that he decided to repair it back into a usable shape rather than switch to a newly acquired, 'clean' copy. The Old English extracts that have been copied into the first scrapbook by hand (rather than cut and pasted) are almost always (with *The Dream of the Rood* being a notable exception) quotations from *Beowulf*, or other texts not represented in Sweet's *Reader*, such as *Andreas*.

Close attention to the composition of each scrapbook opening, and of the use of Old English in each one, would certainly repay analysis. Space prevents this here at any length, but consideration of one such instance will indicate the artistry of Morgan's scrapbook engagement with Old English. The 'Animals in Art' opening of pp.227-8, for instance, sees lines 53-9 of *The Phoenix*, rotated left through ninety degrees used in the top right hand corner of the recto.<sup>40</sup> The passage relates how in the paradisaical land of the phoenix there is no suffering, pain, death or disease, poverty or harsh weather. The deployment of a poem about the phoenix clearly complements other depictions of mythical animals on the page, including several of dragons, and is a counterpoint to several of the other components of the pages, most notably the quotation from *Doctor Faustus*, in the exact same position of *The Phoenix* fragment, but on the opposite verso, and in which Mephistopheles laments the loss of such a place of everlasting bliss as *The Phoenix* fragment describes. Morgan may have worked hard at Old English, but as the scrapbooks show he also put his Old English to play for him.

Playfulness is one of the chief qualities of the Old English riddles, and it is no surprise therefore, that Morgan was drawn to translate several of them early in his career. Later he would pose his own 'New English Riddles',<sup>41</sup> and as his life was nearing its end he returned to their witty restlessness to translate at least two more.<sup>42</sup> Morgan cut Riddle 57 out of his copy of Sweet (where it was titled 'Riddle G'), to paste into his scrapbook.<sup>43</sup> Two



other riddles Morgan translated for *Dies Irae* were also in his copy of Sweet (his 'Swan', Sweet's 'Riddle A', and his 'Bookworm', Sweet's 'Riddle F'). One (Morgan's 'Storm') was not. But even in the case of riddles that were available to him in Sweet's *Reader*, Morgan seems to have worked from other texts.

Like Auden, who used it when composing *The Orators*,<sup>44</sup> Morgan owned a copy of Gordon's anthology of translations, *Anglo-Saxon Poetry*. Only Gordon's selection of *Exeter Book* riddles is much marked by Morgan, who pencilled in the numbering of the standard editorial scheme next to Gordon's titles. Although Gordon, unlike Sweet, includes all four riddles that Morgan translated for *Dies Irae* ('Storm', or Riddle 3; 'Swan', or Riddle 7; 'Bookworm', or Riddle 47; 'Swallows' or Riddle 57),<sup>45</sup> it seems likely that Morgan relied on Gordon only in his translation the 'Swan' riddle, for both share certain word choices, not all of which are the inevitable result of

the source text vocabulary (e.g. ‘silent/silence’, ‘garment’, ‘trappings/armour-trappings’, ‘adornments’, ‘melody/melodiously’, ‘flood’).

More heavily annotated, however, is Morgan’s copy of Sedgefield’s *An Anglo-Saxon Verse-Book*; several of the titles on the contents page are underlined, as if for study, and he had read the appendix on Anglo-Saxon versification closely enough to query in pencil a number of the examples given of Sievers’ five metrical types, and to suggest alternative scansion, especially of types C and D.<sup>46</sup> Judging from the annotations he made both to the text and to its endnotes, Morgan used Sedgefield’s edition of Riddle 3 (which merges modern editors’ Riddle 2 and 3) to produce the translation which he called ‘Storm’.<sup>47</sup> Morgan was interested in the rhetorical effect of the repetition of *hwilum* (‘sometimes’, ‘at times’) in the Old English poem, and underlined and numbered each instance of it in Sedgefield’s text (lines 1, 32, 51, 83a, 83b, 84b and 85b; for modern line numbers of Riddle 3 deduct 15 from Sedgefield’s). Although Sedgefield presents the poem as a continuous verse block, Morgan decided that the repetition of *hwilum* was an example of deliberate anaphora to indicate structural organisation in the Old English, and he uses the first three occurrences of *hwilum* to divide his translation into verse paragraphs beginning ‘Sometimes’. A fourth paragraph was first identified by Morgan’s underlining and numbering of *þonne*, ‘then’, at line 78b of Sedgefield, but by the time he finished his translation he had decided to start his last section at line 74 of the original (in a sentence also adverbially marked by *þonne*). Morgan translates the denser passage of *hwilum*-repetition in lines 83-5 with the word ‘now’, emphasizing a sense of urgency in keeping with the original. Elsewhere Morgan’s pencil notes query manuscript readings Sedgefield has made, suggesting, for example, *wudu* (‘wood’, or figuratively ‘ship’) in place of Sedgefield’s *wada* (‘waters’) in line 39 (modern line 24). To Sedgefield’s note that ‘the MS. reading *wudu* is clearly wrong’, Morgan has pencilled in the margin an exasperated ‘clearly right! Where is yr ear?’ Morgan indeed translates this as ‘ship’ in his riddle. Morgan’s reading is now, in fact, the preferred one. Morgan’s many questionings and emendations of Sedgefield show him to be an engaged and thoughtful translator of Old English, getting directly involved with textual cruces (and imagining some where they do not exist), rather than working mainly from existing translations and cribs.

If Morgan’s total undergraduate immersion in the complexities of Old English grammar is surprising, no less so is his dedication to keep up with

developments in *Beowulf* scholarship throughout his life; he collected a vast number of special books long after his formal studies of Old English were complete. Some of these were bought and used even into the 1990s, almost concurrent with the work he must have begun on the sequence *Love and a Life*, first published in 2003 as a Mariscat volume, and which deploys Old English in several poems.<sup>48</sup> Suffice it to say the collection of Old English materials held in the Mitchell Library is not that of a poetry reader who has a passing interest in medieval verse. It would be quite unremarkable if Morgan had been a professional scholar of Old English, teaching the subject year in and year out at Glasgow University. But Morgan was not. Like the notes taken in his undergraduate jotters, Morgan's library of Old English shows a commitment to the subject that, for a non-specialist reader, bordered on the obsessive.

Some of the loose leaf papers the elderly Morgan hoarded inside the cover of his student, third-edition of Klaeber, tell a story of disappointment, however. Among them is a postcard of Ian Hamilton Finlay's *Et in Arcadia Ego* from 'Bob' [Cummings], asking Morgan if he would like to review Seamus Heaney's translation of *Beowulf* for the journal *Translation and Literature*. A photocopy of Morgan's reply, dated 6 October 1999, in which he declines the invitation to review, states that he is 'feeling bad and sad and (in the American sense) mad about BEOWULF', on account of the University of California's decision to withdraw his own translation from their list, despite having sold 60,000 copies of it. Morgan surmises that the decision is based on the commercial competition of a rival translation by a Nobel prize-winner commissioned for the Norton Anthology of English Literature and 'set for virtually every introductory course in English on the North American continent' (quoting from Shippey's *TLS* review preserved in the same sheaf of papers). In a cod-Anglo-Saxon alliterative verse pair, Morgan ruefully notes that

BEOWULF has become big business.

He consoles himself with the knowledge that Carcanet will republish his translation, and that its publisher, Michael Schmidt, had apparently written to him that 'Your BEOWULF is so much better than the new Heaney one'. Nevertheless Morgan admits that he is not impartial enough to take on the job of reviewing Heaney's version in good faith.

Carcanet did republish Morgan's translation, exactly fifty years after it (his first book publication) had come out. In *Beowulf* fifty years (*hund missera*, line 1769, 'a hundred seasons', where a season is either winter or summer) is the length of time that Hrothgar says he has reigned over the Danes before Beowulf arrives. It is the period of time it takes for a king to go from the glorious exploits of his youth to the infirmity of old age, to a time when he can no longer defend his home without external help. Beowulf too, rules over his people, the Geats, for exactly this period of time (*fiftig wintra*, line 2209, 'fifty winters') until the dragon attacks and, in his vulnerable old age, he too, like Hrothgar before him, is unable to protect his people with absolute success. This, then, is the significance of the anniversary republication of the second edition of *Beowulf* for an aged Morgan who had become, like Hrothgar, no longer powerful enough to hold his court. Not long after the Carcanet republication, Morgan's *duguð* of James McGonigal and Hamish Whyte would help him move from his home with dignity.

During 2002 Morgan was also at work on the heavily Old English-allusive *Love and a Life*. One of these allusions, not previously noted, occurs in 'Freeze-Frame'. The preceding poem, 'Those and These' had opened the sequence with description of the many faces of his past lovers, friends and passing acquaintances, 'crowding round' him. In 'Freeze-Frame' they continue to press in on the poet's memory 'in clouds in streets in trees / Often and often, or in dreams'.<sup>49</sup> This in itself is not sufficiently direct to invoke *The Wanderer*, a poem in which former companions crowd in on the lonely speaker as he dreams (lines 34-44). But Morgan's poem goes on to quote a voice that punctuates their prodding and probing:

"When my head was on your knees  
And your hand was on my head, did you think time would seize  
Head, hand, all, lock all away where there is not ring of keys?"

This confirms an intertextual reference to *The Wanderer*, in which the exiled speaker remembers laying his head on his lost lord's knees (*þinceð him on mode þæt his mondrybten | clyppe ond cysse, ond on cneo lecge | honda ond beafod*, 'it seems in his imagination that he embraces and kisses his lord and lays his hands and head on his knee', lines 41-3a). The image, in both the Old English poem and in Morgan's, is of loss, isolation, remembering and

nostalgia, with, to the modern reader, a hint of homoerotic possibility (as Auden exploited in his poem ‘The Wanderer’).<sup>50</sup> Remembering lost companions from his youth, Morgan remembers a poem studied in his youth – a poem about remembering the lost companions of youth.

Elsewhere in the sequence, we see the old Morgan deliberately align himself with the aged Hrothgar. When Beowulf returns from Heorot to Geatland, he relates to his own king, Hygelac, the adventures that took place while he was in Hrothgar’s court. One of the details that Beowulf adds to his account for Hygelac is a portrait of Hrothgar as a poet, composing poetry from past reminiscences. In Morgan’s translation:

The old Scylding, time-schooled, told over the past  
Now the hero of battles awoke the harp’s sweetness,  
Plucked the happy strings; now sang a poem  
Heartbreaking and true; and the great-spirited king  
Recited after tradition a narrative of marvels;  
And then again the warrior in chains of old age  
Would begin to bewail his youth and his war-strength –  
His breast was vexed within him, while the crowding  
Memories came to him from so many winters.<sup>51</sup>

It is from this passage that Morgan quotes the untranslated Old English in ‘The Last Dragon’, where he struggles to recall his own ‘narrative of marvels’ against the threatening dragon of oblivion:

Is it the mists of autumn? My mind’s dislodged, far back, far off, in  
turmoil, a memory trail  
To the grizzled warrior in Heorot hall whose heart *inne weoll*  
*Thonne be wintrum frod worn gemunde* and told his ancient tale.  
I too am old in winters and stories and may I never fail  
To guard my word-hoard before the dragon with his flailing tail  
Sweeps everything away  
Leaves nothing to say  
Either in turmoil or in peace, and neither poetry nor song nor all their  
longing can avail.<sup>52</sup>

As Old English was once the lifeline that allowed him to produce verse at

all, overcoming his war-induced writer's block, so, fifty years later, remembering Old English becomes the palliative to encroaching memory loss, and the lifeline that enables him to keep writing in spite of that. Moreover, although in *Beowulf* there is a constant anxiety expressed about worldly achievements slipping from memory, the preventative against this is poetry, and despite the poem's fears about human transience, its own survival is the strongest rebuttal of those fears. This too is the case with Morgan's 'The Last Dragon', which defeats the same anxiety even as (and because) it expresses it.

We see then, in the fifty-year return to Old English, both in his original poetry and his translations, Morgan cycling back to the beginning of his career, according to a time span which he would have well understood as a measure of his rise from youthful promise to waning age. *Beowulf* mirrors its eponymous hero with Hrothgar, using the fortunes of one king to reflect those of another, and Morgan deliberately mirrors both against himself.

But this is not where Morgan's affair with Old English ended. He later renewed contact with the Old English riddles, after a commission for Norton's *The Word Exchange*, an anthology of Old English poetry translated by over seventy poets. The riddles are poems that burst over with wonder and enthusiasm for the multiplicity of the natural and domestic worlds, as well as for the possibilities of language, and Morgan responded to them in kind. Riddle 38 is commonly accepted as referring to a bullock,<sup>53</sup> which suckles on the four springs (*feower wellan*, line 3) of its mother's udders in youth, breaks up downs (*duna briceð*, line 6) if he thrives (yoked in the plough) but binds the living (*bindeð cwice*, line 7) if he falls apart (into leather straps). Morgan, with great acuity, seized on a possibility for double entendre implicit in the opening line of the Old English (although there nothing more than a hint) and amplified it with relish. The word *wibt* in Old English normally means 'creature', 'thing' and this riddle's opening gambit *Ic þa wibt geseah* ('I saw a creature') is a common, formulaic way to begin a riddle in Old English. However, Morgan must have remembered that occasionally in *The Exeter Book* riddles this somewhat ambiguous 'thing' is seen in contexts that look decidedly phallic; in Riddle 25, for instance, the mysterious speaking object declares that it is a wonderful *wibt* that stands tall, rooted from its hairy bed and that its red head is often grasped hard by a common woman, wetting her eye. Riddle 25's *wibt* is, of course, an onion, but Morgan transferred its teasing ambiguity onto the *wibt* of riddle 38 (where it is also a thing *waepnedcynnes*, or 'of weapon-kin')

and transformed the bullock into the kind of figure he might have admired voyeuristically in the bars and cinemas of the Glasgow of his youth: 'I watched this big well-hung laddie'. The move is an innovation on this particular riddle, but entirely in character with the way the riddles operate as a group in *The Exeter Book*. Likewise Morgan's concluding couplet, 'For both use and joy / Meet in this boy', has no precedent in the original poem, but its exuberance catches the spirit of the riddles, even as it emphasises the queering of its subject. One is reminded by this act of translation that Morgan's early relationship with Old English was characterised partly by a want for male-male love.

The second riddle that Morgan was commissioned to translate for *The Word Exchange*, Riddle 66, also finds last place in his last book publication, *Dream and Other Nightmares*.<sup>54</sup> This is appropriate in a number of ways, for it not only refers to creation (so Morgan's end is translated into the beginning of everything), but, as Morgan no doubt knew, it was itself a translation of a Latin riddle (so the last poem of one of the twentieth-century's great translators is a translation of a translation). Moreover, Aldhelm, to whom the Latin 'original' is credited, strategically placed his *Creatura* riddle at the end of *Aenigmata Aldhelmi*. It is a poem then that, despite being about origins, has a history of use as a conclusion. The Old English riddle is of the *Ic eom . . .* genre (most Old English riddles divide into a third-person narrated 'I saw a thing . . .' category, such as the one we have previously considered, or into a first-person 'I am a . . .' category). Characteristically, Morgan ignored the opening first-person declaration of the poem's subject (*Ic eom mare þonne þes middangeard*, 'I am greater than this middle earth'),<sup>55</sup> instead turning it into an anticipatory adverbial phrase of direction, with a cosmological scope much broader than the original ('Up beyond the universe and back'), before then going on to introduce first-person pronouns in declarative verbal phrases thirteen times in his translation (three of which are 'I am's), whereas the original uses only five more first-person verbs, three of which suppress the pronoun. Morgan's poem becomes characteristically dynamic and urgent, a creation poem of verbs, of acting, and of proud self-declaration. It is a long way from the sweating and straining to unbind and speak with which 'Epilogue' describes his painful coming into voice. It is the fulfilment of his earliest experiments with Old English, and an apt summation of the vast scope of his creativity. It is a fitting conclusion:

Up beyond the universe and back  
 Down to the tiniest chigger in the finger  
 I outstrip the moon in brightness,  
 I outrun midsummer suns.  
 I embrace the seas and other waters,  
 I am fresh and green as the fields I form.  
 I walk under hell, I fly over the heavens.  
 I am the land, I am the ocean.  
 I claim this honour, I claim its worth.  
 I am what I claim. So, what is my name?

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## Notes

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- 1 The title quotes Morgan's rendering of line 2114b of *Beowulf*, *worn gemunde* (literally 'he [the aged Hrothgar] remembered many things'), also quoted in the original in 'The Last Dragon'. R. D. Fulk, Robert E. Bjork and John D. Niles (eds), *Klaeber's Beowulf*, 4th edn. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), p.72. Edwin Morgan, trans., *Beowulf: A Verse Translation into Modern English* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1952), p.58. Edwin Morgan, *Love and a Life: 50 Poems* (Glasgow: Mariscat, 2003), p.32; reproduced in Edwin Morgan, *A Book of Lives* (Manchester: Carcanet, 2007), p.93. I would like to thank the Royal Society of Edinburgh, for the award of a small grant to allow me to study Morgan's archives in the Special Collections Department of Glasgow University Library and the Mitchell Library, Glasgow. An early version of this article was presented at the Scottish Poetry Library as the inaugural Edwin Morgan Lecture, 25 April 2012. I would also like to thank Robyn Marsack, Graham Caie, Sarah Hepworth, James McGonigal and Hamish Whyte for help and advice.
- 2 Chris Jones, *Strange Likeness* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp.127-8.
- 3 Robert Crawford and Hamish Whyte (eds), *About Edwin Morgan* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1990), p.143; James, McGonigal, *Beyond the Last Dragon: A Life of Edwin Morgan* (Dingwall: Sandstone, 2010), p.117. *Dies Irae* was eventually published in Edwin Morgan, *Collected Poems* (Manchester: Carcanet, 1990), pp.21-40. It includes translations of the Old English poems *The Ruin*, *The Seafarer*, *The Wanderer*, and four riddles from *The Exeter Book*, which Morgan titles 'Swallows', 'Swan', 'Book-worm' and 'Storm'. (These are usually numbered 57, 7, 47 and 3, respectively: Bernard J. Muir (ed.), *The Exeter Anthology of Old English Poetry*, rev. 2nd edn., 2 vols (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000), pp.325, 291, 320, and 286-9.
- 4 For which, see Jones, *Strange Likeness*, pp.152-81 and "'Where now the harp?': Listening for the Sounds of Old English Verse from *Beowulf* to the Twentieth Century', *Oral Tradition*, 24 (2009): 485-502.
- 5 See 'Your jack London bit', interview with William Barr, January 1982, in Edwin Morgan, *Nothing Not Giving Messages: Reflections on Work and Life*, ed., Hamish Whyte (Edinburgh: Polygon, 1990), p.98.

- 6 Poembook 1936-61 in Glasgow, University Library Special Collections, MS Morgan, 4848/102, later published in Morgan, *Collected Poems*, pp.26-7. McGonigal, *Beyond the Last Dragon*, p.75.
- 7 McGonigal, *Beyond the Last Dragon*, p.85.
- 8 Edwin Morgan, trans., *Beowulf*, 2nd edn. (Manchester: Carcanet, 2002), p.ix.
- 9 Morgan, *Collected Poems*, p.594.
- 10 'Poetry', in Edwin Morgan, *Dreams and Other Nightmares: New and Uncollected Poems 1954-2009* (Edinburgh: Mariscat, 2010), p.28; Muir (ed.), *Exeter Anthology*, p.215.
- 11 Morgan, *Collected Poems*, p.594.
- 12 Edwin Morgan in Conversation with James McGonigal', in James McGonigal and Kirsten Stirling (eds), *Ethically Speaking: Voice and Values in Modern Scottish Writing* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2006), p.147.
- 13 Morgan used the word 'duguth' in 'Lamps': Edwin Morgan, *Sweeping out the Dark* (Manchester: Carcanet, 1994), p.92.
- 14 McGonigal, *Ethically Speaking*, p.150.
- 15 For the influence of Girvan on Morgan's translation, see Chris Jones, 'Edwin Morgan in Conversation', *PNReview*, 31/2 (2004), p.47, and *Strange Likeness*, pp.124, 140 n. 43, 144, 162-3.
- 16 Glasgow, University Library Special Collections, MS Morgan, B/1/2.
- 17 Henry Sweet (ed.), *An Anglo-Saxon Reader in Prose and Verse*, 9th edn., rev. by C. T. Onions (Oxford: Clarendon, 1933). Glasgow, Mitchell Library, EM/SWE.
- 18 Albert S. Cook, *A First Book in Old English: Grammar, Reader, Notes and Vocabulary*, 3rd edn. (London: Ginn, 1921), pp.5-99. Glasgow, Mitchell Library, EM/COO.
- 19 John R. Clark Hall, *A Concise Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*, 3rd rev. edn. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1931). Glasgow, Mitchell Library, EM/HAL.
- 20 The first text Morgan studied was Sweet's fourth extract, concerning Ohthere and Wulfstan's journey from 'The Old English Orosius'. He worked non-chronologically through the extracts, although broadly moving from prose to verse texts.
- 21 W. J. Sedgefield, ed., *Beowulf*, 3rd rev. edn. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1935). Glasgow, Mitchell Library, EM/BEO.
- 22 Fr. Klaeber, ed., *Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg*, 3rd edn. (Boston: D. C. Heath, 1936). Glasgow, Mitchell Library, EM/BEO.
- 23 Klaeber, *Beowulf*, p.5. Glasgow, Mitchell Library, EM/BEO.
- 24 Klaeber, ed., *Beowulf*. Glasgow, Mitchell Library, EM/BEO. This continuing interest in the subject, long after his undergraduate studies were over, can also be traced in the various *Beowulf*-related correspondence with publishers, scholars, broadcasters and reviewers continuing into the 1980s and contained in Glasgow, University Library Special Collections, MS Morgan, E/3/2-7.
- 25 Glasgow, University Library Special Collections, MS Morgan, B/1/2.
- 26 Morgan, trans., *Beowulf*, pp.v-xxv.
- 27 Glasgow, University Library Special Collections, MS Morgan, Acc 4580/Box 42.
- 28 Morgan, *Collected Poems*, pp.518-19.
- 29 *Ibid.*, pp.39-40.
- 30 A. Diedrich Wackerbarth, trans., *Beowulf: An Anglo-Saxon Poem* (London: William Pickering, 1849). Glasgow, Mitchell Library, EM/BEO.
- 31 Mary E. Waterhouse, *Beowulf in Modern English: A Translation in Blank Verse* (Cambridge: Bowes and Bowes, 1949), pp.ix & xiv. Glasgow, Mitchell Library, EM/BEO; Morgan, trans., *Beowulf*, pp.x & xii.

- 32 Gavin Bone, trans., *Beowulf in Modern Verse with an Essay and Pictures* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1945). Glasgow, Mitchell Library, EM/BEO.
- 33 Bone, trans., *Beowulf*, pp.6-9. Compare Morgan, trans., *Beowulf*, pp.viii-xx.
- 34 Gavin Bone, *Anglo-Saxon Poetry: An Essay with Specimen Translations in Verse* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1943), pp.21-2. Glasgow, Mitchell Library, EM/BON.
- 35 Albert S. Cook (ed.), *The Christ of Cynewulf* (Boston: Ginn, 1900). Glasgow, Mitchell Library, EM/CYN.
- 36 George Philip Krapp and Elliott Van Kirk Dobbie (eds), *The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records*, 6 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931-54). Glasgow, Mitchell Library, EM/JUN, EM/VER, EM/EXE, EM/BEO, EM/PAR, EM/DOB.
- 37 In writing 'poet-translator' I exclude Michael Alexander from this generalisation, whose intimacy with the poem is comparable to Morgan's.
- 38 See Jones, 'Edwin Morgan in Conversation', 47-51. Morgan's marked up performance copy was the English, Hand and Flower Press edition of his translation. Glasgow, Mitchell Library, EM/BEO.
- 39 Sweet, ed., *Anglo-Saxon Reader*, 9th edn.. Glasgow, Mitchell Library, EM/SWE, pp.91-2, 94-5, 110, 149, 161-2 & 169-70.
- 40 Glasgow, University Library Special Collections, MS Morgan 917/1, p.228.
- 41 Morgan, *Collected Poems*, p.127.
- 42 Riddle 38 and Riddle 66 (Muir, ed., *Exeter Anthology*, pp.311 & 361-2 which were commissioned for Greg Delanty and Michael Matto (eds), *The Word Exchange: Anglo-Saxon Poems in Translation* (New York: Norton, 2011), pp.277 & 449. Riddle 66 was also published in Morgan, *Dreams and Other Nightmares*, p.61.
- 43 Glasgow, University Library Special Collections, MS Morgan 917/1, p.233.
- 44 Chris Jones, "'One can emend a mutilated text": Auden's *The Orators* and the Old English *Exeter Book*', *TEXT*, 19 (2002): 261-75.
- 45 R. K. Gordon, trans., *Anglo-Saxon Poetry* (London: J. M. Dent, 1926), pp.290-305. Glasgow, Mitchell Library, EM/GOR.
- 46 W. J. Sedgefield (ed.), *An Anglo-Saxon Verse-Book* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1922), pp.vii-viii & 127-8. Glasgow, Mitchell Library, EM/SED.
- 47 *Ibid.*, pp.113-15 & 188-9. Morgan, *Collected Poems*, pp.38-9.
- 48 E.g. Katherine O'Brien O'Keeffe, *Visible Song: Transitional Literacy in Old English Verse*, Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England, 4 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp.4-6, 18, 22, 55, 57, 76, 84-5, 95 & 187. Glasgow, Mitchell Library, EM/OKO and H. Momma, *The Composition of Old English Poetry*, Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England, 20 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p.194. Glasgow, Mitchell Library, EM/MOM. Both of these are marked around passages concerned with prosody, performance and the textuality of Old English poetry.
- 49 Morgan, *Love and a Life*, p.7. Also reproduced in *A Book of Lives*, p.82. Other poems which allude to Old English in *A Book of Lives* are 'The Sputnik's Tale' (p.40), in which the man-made satellite refers to itself as 'Widsith', the name of a legendary Old English poet, meaning 'Far-traveller'; and 'The Welcome' (pp.67-8), which coins the kennings 'word-enroller' and 'rhythm-giver' for the poet, and bids its readers to 'unlock / Your word-hoards', alluding again to *Widsith* (line 1), Muir (ed.), *Exeter Anthology*, pp.238-43.
- 50 Jones, *Strange Likeness*, pp.89-97.
- 51 Lines 2106-14, Morgan, trans., *Beowulf*, pp.57-8.
- 52 Morgan, *Love and a Life*, p.32, reproduced in *Book of Lives*, p.93.

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- 53 Muir, ed., *Exeter Anthology*, p.311.  
54 Morgan, *Dreams and Other Nightmares*, p.61.  
55 Muir (ed.), *Exeter Anthology*, pp.361-2.

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Edwin George Morgan was a Scottish poet and translator who was associated with the Scottish Renaissance. He is widely recognised as one of the foremost Scottish poets of the 20th century. In 1999, Morgan was made the first Glasgow Poet Laureate. In 2004, he was named as the first Scottish national poet: The Scots Makar. Life and Career. Morgan was born in Glasgow and grew up in Rutherglen. His parents were Presbyterian. As a child he was not surrounded by books, nor did he have any literary acquaintances.