THE NORTHMEN'S BEAST:

THE GREAT BEAST MOTIF AND ITS USE IN 11TH-CENTURY ENGLAND[1]

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[1] This is an image of the replica of the Jelling Stone in London, UK. Author's own photograph.

SUMMARY

This thesis examines the use of the Great Beast motif, used widely in Scandinavian from the late 10th century onwards, in 11th-century England. Particularly, it investigates the use of this motif and its connection to Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity. It considers three objects which display this motif as case studies. These objects were created during the 11th century, and two of them were likely made during the reign of Canute the Great, a Danish prince who ruled England for nearly 20 years.

This thesis generates a criteria for the motif after a close study of the motif's depictions in Scandinavia. Incorporating primary sources such as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, monastic letters, archeological evidence as well as an analysis of academic literature, it demonstrates that rather than referring to a simple hybridity, Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity was multifaceted and complex. This thesis argues that the use of the Great Beast motif on these selected objects reflect different aspects of this identity.

Keywords: Viking art, Great Beast, Anglo-Scandinavian, 11th century, England, cultural identity.

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INTRODUCTION[2]

The Vikings and many aspects of their Scandinavian-based culture, such as literature, religion, art and even personal appearance have been a topic of interest both within academic circles and in today's popular culture. Most recently, the popular television shows *Vikings* (History Channel 2013-2020) and *The Last Kingdom* (BBC/Netflix 2015-2022), and video games such as *Assassin's Creed Valhalla* (Ubisoft, 2020) incorporate these aspects and provide the public with an image of the Vikings, which creates an impression of their cultural identity.[3] While these fictionalized portrayals are not always historically accurate, they try to show how the Vikings identified themselves and how they could be recognized by the modern viewer. These programs also show the interactions the Vikings had with the Anglo-Saxons in England and the results of these interactions which, of course, are often overly violent and dramatic. Fictionalized portrayals aside, tens of thousands of Scandinavians had settled during the late 9th and into the 10th centuries in the eastern half of Britain, an area known as the Danelaw.[4] By the second decade of the 11th century, the Danish prince Canute had become King of England, which brought another wave of Scandinavian immigration to England.[5] Throughout these

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[2] While writing this introduction, the Royal Mail in the UK issued a set of stamps on which some of the surviving British Viking material culture can be found. Two of the stamps feature the Pitney Brooch and a hogback sculpture, which are uniquely Anglo-Scandinavian objects. Olivia Christie, "Impact of Vikings in Britain Examined in New Set of Royal Mail Stamps," Mail Online, February 15, 2024, https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-13085445/Vikings-Britain-new-stamps-issued-Royal-Mail.html.

[3] *The Last Kingdom* television series is based on the book series by Bernard Cornwall, which is sometimes referred to as *The Saxon Stories*.

[4] Jane Kershaw, and Ellen C. Røyrvik. "The 'People of the British Isles' Project and Viking Settlement in England." Antiquity 90, no. 354 (2016):, 1672-73, https://doi.org/10.15184/aqy.2016.193.

[5] Old Norse: Knútr; Old English: Cnut. Liberty has been taken here, as do some scholarly sources, to spell his name in a way more in line with Modern English spellings.

centuries, by way of various interactions between the setters and the Anglo-Saxons already living there, a multifaceted Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity of the population emerged. At the same time, the use of a popular Scandinavian motif, the "Great Beast," (hereafter, "Beast") began to appear, and its connections to this emerging identity is hitherto unknown.

Academic Relevance

Little in-depth research has been conducted on the Beast motif beyond its origins and its use in Scandinavia, though research on these topics is also not very substantial. What's more, many Viking art scholars are hesitant to label to this ambiguous quadruped as the "Great Beast." Thomas Kendrick was one of the first to name the motif in 1949. Decades later, James Graham-Campbell also distinguished the motif as the "Great Beast," though scholars such as David Wilson and Ole Klindt-Jensen and Signe Horn Fuglesang simply referred to the motif as a "quadruped" in the decades in between Kendrick and Graham-Campbell. Furthermore, its use in England has gone academically unnoticed until now. "Anglo-Scandinavian" remains a narrow but growing topic. Though it is a concept often expanded by archeology and linguistic research, scholars such as Gabor Thomas, Jane Kershaw and Julian Richards have written about the intersection between Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity and artistic production.[6] However, after a thorough search through relevant academic literature, research conducted on specific motifs, whether Viking or Anglo-Saxon, and their connections to an Anglo-Scandinavian cultural

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[6] Gabor Thomas, "Anglo-Scandinavian Metalwork from the Danelaw: Exploring Social and Cultural Interaction," in *Cultures in Contact: Scandinavian Settlement in England in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries*, ed. Dawn Hadley and Julian D. Richards (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 237–55, 10.1484/M.SEM-EB.6.09070802050003050009070805. Jane Kershaw, *Viking Identities: Scandinavian Jewellery in England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013). Julian D. Richards, "Anglo-Scandinavian Identity," in *The Oxford Handbook of Anglo-Saxon Archaeology*, ed. Helena Hamerow, David A. Hinton, and Sally Crawford (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 46–61.

identity has yet to be undertaken. First seen on Harald Bluetooth's Jelling Stone, which dates to the 10th century, the Beast motif was widely used during the Viking Age in Scandinavia since then.[7] It eventually migrated with the Scandinavians to England, where its stylized depictions can be found on three objects discussed in this thesis: the St. Paul's runestone (Museum of London) and the Pitney and the Sutton Brooches (both British Museum). This motif, which was significant and meaningful enough to engrave in one of the most important stoneworks of the Viking Age and travel with the Viking diaspora, must have also played a role in the cultural identity of those living in England.

Research Questions and Objectives

This study aims to examine the use of the Beast motif and how it can be used to understand Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity in 11th-century England. Further questions are needed to provide a more well-rounded answer to this research question. What is "Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity," and how did factors such as religion, personal appearance, and linguistics contribute to the creation of this cultural identity? What was the role, if any, of King Canute in the popularization and spread of this motif? How can the use of different mediums for the depiction of the Beast be explained? Iconography and iconology will be used to analyze the pieces that depict the Beast. A variety of primary sources from the Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Scandinavian periods, as well as relevant academic literature, will be closely read and analyzed in order to understand the cultural milieu of England in the 11th century. As a result of these analyses, this research will show how the Beast was used in a variety of ways and mediums to

[7] A replica of this stone can be found in the Domplein.

reflect a different aspect of Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity expressed through each of the three pieces.

Chapter Overview

Chapter 1 will review the relevant literature on the topic of Anglo-Scandinavian identity based on archeological, linguistic, and cultural evidence. The arguments presented in this part of the review refer to the degree of Scandinavian assimilation into Anglo-Saxon society and culture. The common themes include a lack of consensus and the pluralization of Anglo-Scandinavian identity. This chapter will also review the art historical literature on the Beast motif, its origins, and its use in Scandinavia. Some of the arguments include where it may have possibly originated, what kind of animal the Beast is exactly, and other relevant debates.

Chapter 2 will discuss the history and use of the Beast in Scandinavia to introduce the reader to its origins. In this chapter, criteria and stylistic elements of what the "Great Beast" is and what it is not—in other words, how it is distinguished from other zoomorphic depictions—will be determined by iconographic analysis. This detailed study will also examine and compare the motif as depicted in various Scandinavian styles, as well as how it can be used to create the criteria.

Chapter 3 will focus on Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity. This chapter will define the term "Anglo-Scandinavian" and examine the factors that influenced the creation of this multifaceted identity. These factors—religion, linguistics (particularly place and personal names), and appearance—will be explored using primary sources like the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and monastic letters and through archeological research analysis. A theoretical

framework, namely that Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity is multifaceted, will emerge from a combination of different theories about each of these factors. The theories that make up this framework will be applied to the artistic pieces chosen for this thesis in Chapter 5, as they will directly answer the research question.

Chapter 4 will explore King Canute (r. 1016-35), a Danish prince who became the king of England, and his role in the potential popularization and spread of this motif. Eventually, Canute also became the king of Denmark, Norway, and parts of Sweden while ruling England, and therefore it is worthwhile to examine whether or not (and if so, how) his political ascendency to these thrones impacted the use of the Beast motif in England. Canute's laws, letters, and court poetry will be analyzed in order to come to the conclusions reached in this chapter.

The fifth chapter will present the main arguments for this thesis. It will contain an iconographical and iconological analysis of the three pieces selected for the present research. The main research question of this thesis will be answered using Erwin Panofsky's three levels of analysis for each piece. This analysis will determine with certainty the Beast motif on each piece using the criteria created in Chapter 2. They will then be analyzed based on the conclusions drawn in Chapter 3, while considering the broader cultural context of the pieces which incorporate the motif. This chapter will also discuss the factors that contributed to the use of different materials to depict this motif. The motif first appears in stone, both in its Scandinavian homeland and in the earliest piece selected for this research. It eventually ends up in metalwork, particularly brooches. Examining the shift in materials used to depict the Beast is critical because it sheds light on the differences in meaning between uses in stone and metalwork, as well as the transformation from an immovable object to a portable, wearable one.

The conclusion of the thesis will clearly state the answer to the main research question. It will summarize the findings from each chapter and include critical reflections on the methodology used throughout this thesis. After providing recommendations for future research, the conclusion will end with an explanation of its contributions and relevance to the academic community.

Definitions of Terms

It is crucial to define the terms used in this thesis before proceeding. Misunderstandings and misconceptions of the Vikings are often prevalent due to their popularity today, and those outside Viking studies may have different ideas of this complex people group, their culture, and their activities than those who actively and regularly engage in the research. Misinformation spreads more quickly than can be remedied by a time-consuming academic investigation, particularly when it comes to the Vikings; therefore, it is appropriate to take some time to define the terms that will be used in this research.

The most obvious place to begin is with the term "Viking" itself. In this thesis, the term "Viking" will explicitly describe the bands of raiders from Scandinavia. This is directly related to the Old Norse origins of this word: *víking* and *víkingr* meant "a pirate raid" and "a person who was a pirate/raider," respectfully.[8] These Vikings violently pillaged all over Europe during the 8th through 11th centuries, often called the "Viking Age." In England, the Vikings were responsible for activities such as the raid on the Lindisfarne Monastery in 793. This event, together with the Battle of Stamford Bridge in 1066, traditionally mark the beginning and ending

[8] James Graham-Campbell, *The Viking World* (London: Frances Lincoln Publishers Ltd., 1980), 10.

dates of the Viking Age. In the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, the Old English word for Viking, only used a handful of times, is *wicing,* explicitly used for small pillaging groups.[9] Therefore, it is reasonable to limit the term "Viking" to this definition.

"Viking art" is used by the academic art historical community to describe decorative art —or objects which were meant to be used but also display aesthetic designs—made by Scandinavians during the Viking Age. This type of art is the opposite of fine art or "art for art's sake." Decorative art generally includes but is not limited to caskets, jewelry, and personal items such as combs, textiles and even weapons like knives, axes and swords. The corpus of Viking art is mostly comprised of objects made from metal and stone, as these materials withstood the elements of time much better than organic materials such as wood and textiles, though the wooden Oseberg Ship is one remarkable exception. While "Early Medieval pan-Scandinavian art" may be a more inclusive and perhaps a slightly more accurate term, "Viking art" has been used since the field of study's inception in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This is because it was not just the raiding and pillaging Vikings who made such objects, though it was through Viking activity that "Viking art" was certainly spread. Scandinavian craftsmen and smiths were the real "artists" behind these decorative objects, regardless of their overseas activities. Through the Viking Age and during settlement periods after times of raiding and pillaging, Scandinavian settlers (from modern-day Norway, Denmark, and Sweden) surely included those who could execute these designs, as will be demonstrated in this thesis. Similarly, Viking activity also imported artistic features from continental Europe. One example can be seen in the acanthus

[9] Richards, "Anglo-Scandinavian Identity," 47.

motif and other vegetal decorative patterns of the Ringerike style, which was influenced either by the Anglo-Saxon Winchester style or the German Ottonian style, or both.[10]

As mentioned above, "Scandinavian" will specifically refer to the settlers, traders, craftsmen and smiths from modern-day Norway, Denmark and Sweden. However, lands to the west of Scandinavia were mostly settled by those from Denmark and Norway; the Danelaw was mostly settled by those from Denmark, and Norwegians settled in other areas of the British Isles and beyond.[11] When Canute came to the English throne in 1016, a new wave of pan-Scandinavian immigration occurred. It is crucial to keep in mind, however, that Scandinavians were not composed of a singular people group during the early medieval period. One of the most important Viking Age discoveries was the 1904 unearthing of the Oseberg Ship Burial in Norway. Later technology allowed for the analysis of the DNA of the female bodies inside the tomb. While the results of the older of the two women's DNA was inconclusive, the younger's DNA concluded that she likely came from the area around modern-day Iran.[12] This landmark result suggested that those associated with the Vikings were not purely Scandinavian in origin, but that they were composed of mixed people groups. Another study also suggests that Pictish populations from northern Scotland integrated into Scandinavian Viking groups during the Viking Age.[13]

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[10] Signe Horn Fuglesang, *Some Aspects of the Ringerike Style* (Odense University Press, 1980), 19.

[11] These areas include Ireland, Scotland, the Isle of Man, the Shetlands, the Hebrides, the Orkneys and Iceland. "North Atlantic" genes were also present in some of these areas. Ashot Margaryan et al., "Population Genomics of the Viking World," *Nature* 585, no. 7825 (September 16, 2020): 394, https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-020-2688-8.

[12] Per Holck, "The Oseberg Ship Burial, Norway: New Thoughts on the Skeletons from the Grave Mound," *European Journal of Archaeology* 9, no. 2-3 (2006): 185–210, https://doi.org/10.1177/1461957107086123.

[13] Ashot Margaryan et al., "Population Genomics," 392-93.

The "Danelaw" was an area of eastern England that was created in the late 9th century by a treaty between King Alfred the Great and King Guthrum of East Anglia, of Viking origins.[14] The treaty states that the boundary was to be "up the Thames, and then up the Lea, and along the Lea to its source, then in a straight line to Bedford, then up the Ouse to the Watling Street."[15] The lands to the east of this boundary were Danish lands, while those to the west and north were English lands (figure 1), though Anglo-Saxons also lived in the lands which became the Danelaw.[16] The term was first used in the early 11th century by Archbishop Wulfstan II of York.[17] The Danelaw was absorbed into a united English kingdom by the time Canute took the throne in 1016.[18]

"Anglo-Saxon" refers to to the people who were part of the many Anglo-Saxon kingdoms during the height of Viking activity in the late 9th century in Britain. By the 10th century, however, the idea of a united "England" began to take shape, and by Canute's reign, this idea had solidified.[19] Thus, for the purposes of this paper, "Anglo-Saxon" will be specifically used to refer to the people and "England" will be used to describe the land or kingdom.

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[14] Alfred was King of the West Saxons from 871, then king of the Anglo-Saxons from c. 886 until his death in 899. Whitelock Dorothy, ed., *English Historical Documents C. 500-1042*, vol. 1 (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1955), 178, 183, 189 (For Alfred's death, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* is one year ahead of the actual date.) Guthrum's reign dates from c. 879 to his death in 890. Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia, "Guthrum," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, March 11, 2024, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Guthrum.

[15] Whitelock, ed., *English Historical Documents*, 380.

[16] "Grimston-" or sometimes "Teton-hybrid" place names are present within the former Danelaw boundaries, which suggests that people of both linguistic (Old English and Old Norse) groups lived there. Matthew Townend, "Viking Age England as a Bilingual Society," in *Cultures in Contact: Scandinavian Settlement in England in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries*, ed. Dawn Hadley and Julian D. Richards (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 99, https://doi-org.proxy.library.uu.nl/10.1484/M.SEM-EB.3.1262. For more on this discussion, see Chapter 3.

[17] The Old English term that Wulfstan used was "*Dena lagu*" meaning "the law of the Danes." It is commonly translated as "Danelaw" by modern scholars. Dawn Hadley, *The Vikings in England: Settlement, Society and Culture* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2006), 69.

[18] Whitelock, ed., *English Historical Documents*, 51.

[19] Canute's use of the term "king of all England" in his letter of 1027 and in his laws from 1020-23 demonstrate this. Ibid., 416, 419.

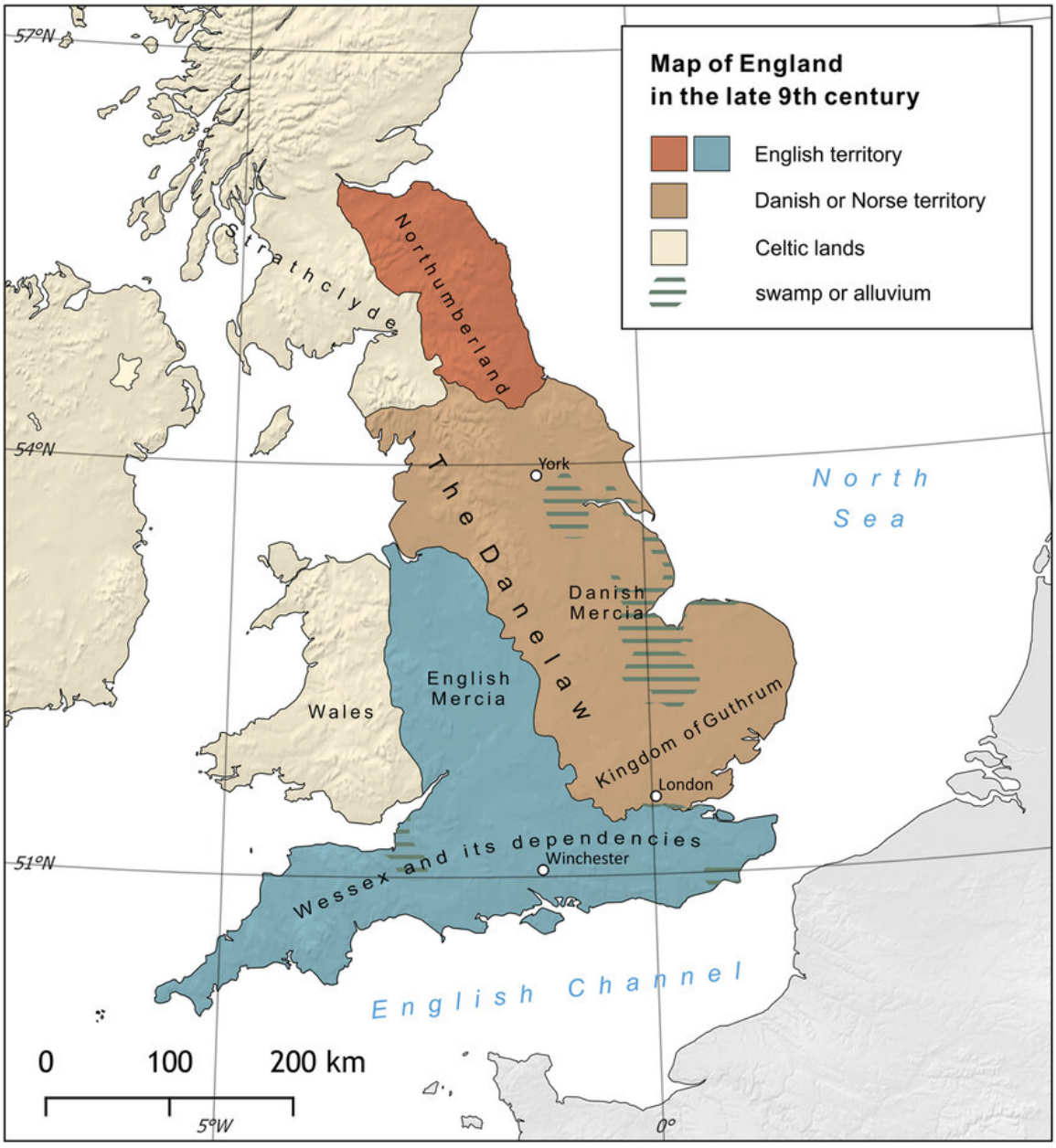
"Anglo-Scandinavian" is the preferred term for this thesis to describe the multifaceted nature of Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian art and cultural identity. This is because, as will be demonstrated, the origins and use of the Beast motif can be found throughout Scandinavia, although it is first seen in Jelling, Denmark, with the erection of the greater Jelling Stone by Harald Bluetooth sometime between 965 and 985.[20] Furthermore, the specific identities of the makers of the St. Paul's runestone and the Pitney and Sutton brooches are largely unknown. While the Runestone demonstrates reasonable links to a Swedish stonemason, it cannot be determined with absolute certainty, and the brooches point to work done by English craftsmen. For reasons that will be come more clear in Chapter 3, Anglo-Scandinavian identity was mostly limited to the Danelaw before the conquest of Canute, though after this time and for the purposes of this thesis, the term Anglo-Scandinavian applies to the period of his reign from 1016-35.

Different fields, such as archeology, art history, and linguistics, use these terms and their definitions, which are also based on scientific studies and primary source documents. These definitions were created by synthesizing the relevant literature for this thesis, and this literature will now be reviewed.

[20] David M. Wilson and Ole Klindt-Jensen, *Viking Art* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1966), 120.

FIGURES

Figure 1: A map of Britain showing the Danelaw and Anglo-Saxon territories, c. late 9th century.[21]



[21] Terttu Nevalainen et al., "History of English as Punctuated Equilibria? A Meta-Analysis of the Rate of Linguistic Change in Middle English," Journal of Historical Sociolinguistics 6, no. 2 (October 1, 2020), https://doi.org/10.1515/jhsl-2019-0008

CHAPTER 1: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will first explore the academic research and opinions of scholars regarding Anglo-Scandinavian identity in order to provide a broad overview of this expanding topic, showing that there is an opportunity for more academic contributions. It will then review the scholarly work and opinions on Viking art and the Great Beast, with the aim of identifying the gaps in academic attention to this motif. Additionally, this review of the most relevant literature, presented here, has two overarching cultural themes. The first is that there is no academic consensus either on the extent of Scandinavian assimilation into English society, nor on how and where it happened. The second theme is that the term Anglo-Scandinavian is pluralistic; there is no one way to describe this cultural identity. Art historically speaking, the origins of the Great Beast remain unclear, and most scholars shy away from calling the motif "the Great Beast," instead preferring ambiguous terms like "quadruped." This literature review will situate this thesis within academic relevance.

Academic Opinions on Anglo-Scandinavian Identity

Not much literature has been written on the topic of Anglo-Scandinavian identity, but a thorough start has begun on this narrow subject, mainly archeological and linguistic studies. While Thomas' historical focus in 2000 was between the 9th and 10th centuries in England, he wrote that Anglo-Scandinavian metalwork, among all other archeological evidence, has the most potential to further understanding of Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian relations, despite being

among the least publicized.[22] He argued that research on Anglo-Scandinavian metalwork, mostly ornamental such as dress-accessories and jewelry, may particularly reveal "the nature and process of cultural assimilation between the Scandinavian immigrants and local British populations."[23] By evaluating Anglo-Scandinavian strap ends and disk brooches specifically, Thomas concluded that the Scandinavian settlers soon ditched their dress accessories in favor of local ones in order to assimilate into the Anglo-Saxon culture.[24] This resulted in a quick cultural integration, and the most recognizable elements of dress traditions reached a type of "unity and cultural likeness" between the Scandinavian settlers and the Anglo-Saxons.[25] Thomas' work is already two decades old, and more novel ideas on the relationship between jewelry and identity have formed.

Like Thomas, Kershaw's historical scope in 2013 was the 9th and 10th centuries. Writing about Scandinavian jewelry found in England, she focused on both Scandinavian and Anglo-Scandinavian brooches and pendants. Unlike Thomas, however, after her analysis of the archeological evidence, she concluded that it was the Anglo-Saxon women (as well as those of Scandinavian descent) who changed their appearance to mach the new and popular Scandinavian styles by producing brooches in the Anglo-Scandinavian style.[26] Kershaw emphasized that this did not take place in all of England, but rather just within the Danelaw during the 9th and 10th centuries.[27] Yet while she proposed that the appropriation of Scandinavian styles was for social

[22] Thomas, "Anglo-Scandinavian Metalwork," 237.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Ibid., 252.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Kershaw, *Viking Identities*, 216.

[27] Ibid., 243.

or political gain, which may be a more likely scenario outside of her historic scope, she supported this statement by pointing out that the dense (and early) Scandinavian settlement of East Anglia may have been a center for Scandinavian cultural influence.[28] Her novel ideas have contributed to part of the theoretical framework applied in this thesis, which is that one aspect or meaning of Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity is Anglo-Saxons appropriating Scandinavian appearances, particularly for social and political gain.[29]

In regards to this thesis, the main concern about these two above sources is whether or not these research conclusions still apply to the (first half of the) 11th century, which is the historical focus of this present research. The historical record demonstrates that no major changes took place between the end of the 10th and beginning of the 11th centuries until the political and social instability caused by Æthelred the Unread (r. 978-1013) and his conflicts with the Danes, the subsequent invasion of Sweyn Forkbeard, his conquest of England, and the reign of his son Canute.[30] It is reasonable to assume that Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity, which began in the earlier centuries, strengthened even more especially after the shift from Anglo-Saxon to Scandinavian leadership.

Richards' historical focus in 2011 on Anglo-Scandinavian identity included the 11th century as well as the previous two centuries. Before focusing on a variety of elements of Scandinavian assimilation into Anglo-Saxon England such as documentary sources, place-names

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[28] Ibid., 248.

[29] More on this discussion can be found in Chapter 3.

[30] In 1002, Æthelred gave the command to slay "all the Danish men who were in England…on St. Brice's Day," that is, November 13. Whitelock, ed., *English Historical Documents*, 217. It is more likely that he was targeting those populations which had mixed Danish and English ancestry, from which he perceived an imminent threat, than the latest wave of Scandinavian settlers. Richards, "Anglo-Scandinavian Identity," 48.

and linguistic evidence, settlement archeology, costume and dress accessories, burial practices and identity of the dead, he reminded the reader that the Scandinavians in England were of mixed identity.[31] They had arrived there from other places, such as Continental Europe or the regions around the Irish Sea where they had already assimilated, making it easier to assimilate with the Anglo-Saxons.[32] After analyzing each element in depth, Richards concluded that Anglo-Scandinavian identity did not come out of a mere amalgamation of Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian cultures. To sum up, Richards wrote that "there was no single hybrid Anglo-Scandinavian identity," and that "the label Anglo-Scandinavian disguises a host of interactions played out within every household and market at the local level," and that local appropriation seemed to be the guiding principle for the Scandinavian settlers which contributed to this identity.[33] While Richards has made his own contributions to the field of Viking studies, he cited many sources from leading scholars on each topic here, many of which were published in works which he edited. Richard's chapter on Anglo-Scandinavian identity is therefore useful as a source for initial familiarity on this topic.

It is clear that there are conflicting academic opinions on the topic of assimilation. While Kershaw argued that the Anglo-Saxons, specifically women, assimilated to Scandinavian trends and thus produced an Anglo-Scandinavian style (one aspect of cultural identity), both Thomas and Richards are of the opinion that it was the Scandinavians who assimilated into the "indigenous" Anglo-Saxon culture. Though both Thomas and Kershaw analyzed brooches and came to different conclusions, Richards briefly but thoroughly discussed different aspects of

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[31] Richards, "Anglo-Scandinavian Identity," 48.

[32] Ibid., 48-49.

[33] Ibid., 49, 58.

culture as an archeologist. Judith Jesch took a different approach and came up with a different conclusion, namely that the Scandinavians of the 11th century didn't fully assimilate, at least not culturally.[34] Though Jesch doesn't explicitly mention identity here, she provided the ideas necessary for the theoretical framework applied in this thesis. By examining 11th-century sculpture, Wulfstan's law codes, and court poetry created during Canute's reign, she argued that the Scandinavians who came to England particularly during this time still held on to their "pagan" cultural heritage. She called this 'cultural paganism' and defined it as "an acceptance of certain aspects of the heathen past in a society that is otherwise officially Christian, in particular an acceptance of references to pre-Christian beliefs and myths in certain cultural and social contexts."[35] She provided many examples, but those which stood out were the *Knútsdrápa*, a court poem composed in Old Norse for an English performance, the St. Paul's runestone, and 11th-century laws which were written by Wulfstan both before and during Canute's reign. Her concept of 'cultural paganism' developed here led to the idea of "Anglicized Scandinavians" as one aspect of Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity.[36]

Matthew Townend's work also does not seem to support full assimilation of the Scandinavians into Anglo-Saxon society, at least from a linguistic perspective. He theorized that England was a bilingual society, but not one created by bilingual individuals.[37] Citing law codes, place names and personal names as evidence of his theory, Townend seemed to allude to a sense

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[34] Judith Jesch, "Scandinavians and 'Cultural Paganism' in Late Anglo-Saxon England," in *The Christian Tradition in Anglo-Saxon England: Approaches to Current Scholarship and Teaching*, ed. Paul Cavill (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2004).

[35] Ibid., 57.

[36] More on this discussion can be found in Chapter 3.

[37] Matthew Townend, "Viking Age England as a Bilingual Society," in *Cultures in Contact: Scandinavian Settlement in England in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries*, ed. Dawn Hadley and Julian D. Richards (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 89–105, https://doi-org.proxy.library.uu.nl/10.1484/M.SEM-EB.3.1262, 89-90.

of hybridity, especially in the use of names, both place and personal. This idea of hybridity as one aspect of Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity, part of the theoretical framework applied in this thesis, was influenced by Townend's writings.[38] While his work cited here is also more than two decades old, it has not (yet) been outright refuted within the academic community.

The sources presented here are merely the tip of the Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity iceberg, but they demonstrate that in the larger corpus of the research of the field there is no overarching consensus on how Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity came about. Thus, this present research hopes to add to the academic discussion through art historical analysis. While the research above seems to lean more heavily towards metalwork, jewelry and the like, sculpture too reflected the emerging Anglo-Scandinavian identity, particularly a familial one.[39] Two examples of Anglo-Scandinavian sculpture are the Gosforth Cross (figure 2) and the "hogback" sculptures (figure 3), both of which can be found at St. Mary's church in Gosforth, Cumbria, though other examples of the latter can be found elsewhere.[40] While the Cross will be discussed further in Chapter 3, the purpose of highlighting these sculptures is to point out that sculpture, like jewelry, can be used to understand Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity.

Academic Opinions on Viking Art and the Great Beast

This brief discussion of the research above on 9th and 10th century Anglo-Scandinavian objects and artwork establishes that there was already a firm tradition of uniqueness before the

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[38] More on this discussion can be found in Chapter 3.

[39] Hadley, *The Vikings in England*, 260-61. This will become more clear in the discussion of the runestone at St. Paul′s. For that discussion, see Chapter 5.

[40] Such as other places in England (around York and the northeast), Scotland, Ireland, and Wales.

11th century in England and provides a foundation from which to build upon this thesis. The Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian peoples had been influencing, living, and working together to one extent or another since the 9th and 10th centuries, albeit slowly at first. But by the time Canute took the throne in the 11th century, these well-established artistic, economic, and cultural connections grew stronger, and the Great Beast motif was imported directly from Scandinavia.

This thesis will attempt to understand how the Great Beast motif was used to understand this identity on both jewelry and sculpture, but before doing so, it is critical to review of the art historical literature on the motif. It will soon become clear that there is not a consensus regarding the distinction and terminological use of Beast motif. Scholars like Kendrick and Graham-Campbell, as well as non-academics like Jonas Lau Markussen, used the term "Great Beast" in order to distinguish the motif from other zoomorphic depictions. However, scholars such as Wilson and Klindt-Jensen and Fuglesang did not make such a distinction. They hardly used the term "Great Beast," and simply identified the Great Beast as just another animal, although they were not certain which animal it represents. Additionally, the sources produced by all of the individuals mentioned here recognize the "gripping-beast" as its own distinct motif, so it seems unreasonable that some of these scholars did not do the same with the Great Beast.[41]

There has been much academic development of Viking art styles since the time of Kendrick's English-centered book in 1949. He wrote that the Jellinge style had two main expressions distinguished by animal-design types, one of which he referred to as "Great Beast

[41] The "gripping-beast" motif was another "beast" motif that had been popular in the earlier styles of Viking Art. This style originated in Scandinavia and came out of one of the last Germanic art styles, Style E, through to the Viking Borre style (c. 850- c. 950). Jonas Lau Markussen, *The Anatomy of Viking Art: A Quick Guide to the Styles of Norse Animal Ornament* (Jonas Lau Markussen, 2019).

Jellinge."[42] While this term is no longer used, Kendrick acknowledged that Scandinavian archeologists call it the Mammen style, which is still the preferred term today.[43] He believed that this motif type was based on the Anglian Great Beast from a 9th-century cross shaft at St. Alkmund's in Derby (figure 4).[44] He considered the Great Beast (hereafter "Beast") on the Jelling Stone to be a lion.[45] On the Jelling Stone, Kendrick also noticed the leaf-like ornamentation which come out from the Beast's tail, crest and its foliate tongue.[46] He wrote that the origins of these "pre-Ringerike" foliate designs "come from our [i.e., English] Winchester art in which a prodigal display of flourishing acanthus-scrolls is one of the principal decorative features."[47] While Kendrick described the Ringerike style as "restless and stormily disordered" and "strained and agitated," he recognized the Urnes style as having "exuberant richness and billowing curves."[48] When looking at the Urnes Beast, he saw the curved forms and the open and bold interlace, specifically in the "Lion-Serpent combat" motif, as "a separate mesh of interlace representing the enveloping coils of the snake."[49] Kendrick noted the lightness of the Urnes style compared to the wild Ringerike. When analyzing the "quadruped" on the bottom left of the north

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[42] Kendrick, *Late Saxon*, 87. A brief note on the differences in spelling of this word. "Jelling" refers to the town in Denmark in which the Jelling Stone can be seen. "Jellinge" refers to the artistic style which flourished between c. 900-c. 975. (Graham-Campbell, *Viking Art*, 14.) Some older sources will not make this distinction. See for example Wilson and Klindt-Jensen, *Viking Art*, 121.

[43] Ibid., 89. Though, Haakon Shetelig suggested in 1920 that the Jellinge style ought to be seen as being comprised of two different groups, an earlier and later group. (Graham-Campbell, *Viking Art*, 81.) The "Great Beast Jellinge" style to which Kendrick referred would be in the later group.

[44] Kendrick, *Late Saxon*, 88.

[45] Ibid., 89.

[46] Ibid., 98.

[47] Ibid., 98-99.

[48] Ibid., 110-111.

[49] Ibid. 110.

portal of the Urnes church, he wrote that it did not have origins in Irish, Hiberno-Saxon or Jellinge ribbon-animals, but agreed with the Scandinavian archeologists that it was "the Great Beast himself," yet attributes its origins to the ones that "the Danes had first see on the English crosses," specifically the one from St. Alkmund's mentioned above.[50]

Like Kendrick, Wilson and Klindt-Jensen identified the Beast on the Jelling Stone as a lion in 1966. They were very impressed by the execution of the Beast, especially compared to the depiction of Christ on one of the other sides of the Jelling Stone.[51] They also agreed with Kendrick's assertion that the ornamental details of the Beast belonged to the Jellinge style, while also pointing out the European influence seen in the vegetal tendrils interlacing throughout the composition, though the stone in its entirety belongs to the Mammen style.[52] Wilson and Klindt-Jensen were keen to point out that the lion motif had 'continental' European origins as well, though they admitted that its origins are far from unanimous agreement.[53] The European lion motif, however, can hardly be recognized in this "Scandinavianized animal" on the Jelling Stone; rather, it became entirely Viking.[54] They come to the conclusion that this "lion" is truly a native

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[50] Ibid., 112.

[51] They commented, "The animal has an almost heraldic attitude…and the artist has brilliantly conveyed…the impression of the beast's strength. The lion and snake scene is a magnificent piece of work, executed by a master craftsman who was completely at home with this motif…" Wilson and Klindt-Jensen, *Viking Art*, 120.

[52] They mention Carolingian, Ottonian or Anglo-Saxon influence, while Kendrick was fully confident the designs come from England. Ibid., 121. Kendrick, *Late Saxon*, 98-99.

[53] Wilson and Klindt-Jensen, *Viking Art*, 121.

[54] Ibid.

Scandinavian motif.[55] When discussing the origins of the Ringerike style Beast came from the Mammen style, they admitted the lion motif is sometimes called the "Great Beast."[56]

Furthermore, they were quick to point out the stylized features of the Beast in the Urnes style, but hesitant to label it as such. For example, they referred to the Beast on the Urnes stave church north portal as "a standing quadruped," though they recognized that the combat version of the animal-snake motif is connected to that seen on the Jelling Stone in the Mammen style.[57] It is unclear as to why they do not refer to this consistent animal motif as the "Great Beast," when they can obviously trace it through each consecutive style of late Viking art. While they acknowledged that it is only occasionally called the "Great Beast," they did not elaborate on this, refer to any sources which use this term, nor describe a criteria which could be used to distinguish the Beast from other similar animal motifs, such as the quadruped they described in the Urnes style. It seems ironic that, in a source which seemingly distanced itself from the term, an early Ringerike/late Mammen depiction of the Great Beast is on the front cover of their book.[58]

In one of the most respected books on Viking art, published in 1980, Fuglesang focused on a number of features of the Ringerike style. She was thoroughly convinced that the Beast motif is a depiction of a lion due to its proportions and its body parts, though she admitted that

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[55] Ibid.

[56] Ibid., 134-36.

[57] Ibid., 147.

[58] The image is taken from one of the runestones at Stora Ek in Sweden. The depiction is certainly of the Beast, having all of the characteristics of the Ringerike style Beast outlined in the criteria above. Department of Scandinavian Languages, Uppsala University, "Vg 4," Scandinavian Rune-text Database, 2020, https://app.raa.se/open/runor/inscription?id=ae01ccc9-5412-4fc8-a1f2-8284ae737e10, figure 5.

the species of the quadruped of late Viking art is unclear.[59] She then discussed several versions of the motif in which the "lion" appears such as the combat motif and large and small lions motif; both of these motifs are most relevant for this present research. Fuglesang acknowledged that the combat motif appeared first on the Jelling Stone, and that its appearance with the Crucifixion motif on the other side of the Stone adds credibility to the explanation of the lion-and-snake combat as symbolic, such as the Biblical triumph of the lion over the serpent.[60] She mentioned the "great beast" combat motif in two examples: one on the Källunge vane and the other on the Urnes stave church portal, but that definite interpretations of these depictions are uncertain.[61]

The origins of the combat motif are also vague, but an iconographical analysis of it has not yet been fully completed.[62] Though it doesn't appear that side A of the Heggen vane and St. Paul's runestone depict the exact same motif, Fuglesang explained that it had more to do with "the tendency to ornamental repetition of motifs in the Ringerike style."[63] She then discussed the theory that the quadruped of late Viking art styles in Scandinavia was derived from the Anglian beast, as Kendrick mentioned above. Fuglesang argued that while there are parallels between the animals, the Scandinavian animals are usually identifiable as lions, whereas the Anglian beast is an unidentifiable animal.[64] She also asserted that the similar features of both the Mammen style and Anglian beast may have been used more generally throughout Europe.[65] She agreed with

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[59] Fuglesang, *Some Aspects*, 92.

[60] Ibid. 93. The Lion of Judah represents Christ, who overcomes the serpent (i.e. Satan) in Revelation 20:2.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Ibid., 94-95. Kendrick was not the one who first proposed this theory, and Fuglesang credited it to a certain "J. Brøndsted."

[65] Ibid., 95

Wilson's statement that the "lion motif" came out of an indigenous Scandinavian stylization tradition of mammals.[66]

In summary, Fuglesang suggested that this motif was most likely introduced (or re-introduced) "as an innovation of the Mammen phase," although no immediate European source has been found.[67] As for the highly-stylized Urnes-style animal, she indicated that it was probably the Mammen and Ringerike animal that was its ultimate source, though she remained steadfast that the earlier two styles portray a lion and that the Urnes style animal was too ambiguous to define with certainty.[68] Indeed, Fuglesang was quite stubborn in her assertion that the Beast motif is in fact a lion. Although she does allow for some openness as to the interpretation of the representation of the animal, she does not use the term "Great Beast," as Kendrick did. Even as she noted that the animal was likely a consistent representation from the Mammen to Urnes styles, she was more confident in her lion assertion than ascribing the term "Great Beast" to the motif.

Graham-Campbell's *Viking Art* is an easy-to-read, yet comprehensive survey on all aspects of Viking art. First published in 2013, then reprinted in 2021, Graham-Campbell was not shy about labeling this motif as the "Great Beast," seemingly in a category all its own. He confirmed that the Beast was used as a key motif which developed from the Mammen style through the successive Ringerike and Urnes styles, and provided visual examples of the Beast from each style (see figure 6).[69] In his discussion on the Beast from the Jelling Stone, he

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[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Graham-Campbell, *Viking Art*, 38.

admitted that the depiction is “lion-like,” though it is a ‘“lion' reimagined,” echoing Wilson and Klindt-Jensen.[70] The innovative Beast motif had been well-established by the development of the Ringerike style, then redesigned by the time the Urnes style became popular.[71] Graham-Campbell seemed positively certain that the Beast was an ambiguous animal and should be categorized as such. He acknowledged that while the motif developed stylistically over time, it was continuously used, and therefore recognizable when traced back to its origins on the Jelling Stone. He wrote about the strong influence that Bluetooth’s Stone, and the Beast thereupon, had on other sculptors, since it was continuously copied (*sans* Christ).[72]

Although Markussen is not an academic, nor an art historian, nor an archeologist, his self-published e-book on the Viking art styles contains a thoroughly researched analysis of animal motifs. He broke down the major components of each Viking art style, from the mid-8th century Broa style to the Urnes style. He also related the major events of the historical background of each style and synthesized its academic commentary. Like Graham-Campbell, he recognized that the Beast motif was an innovation of the Mammen style, writing, “The Great Beast is Born.”[73] He characterized the motif as “the most influential and widely used motif throughout the rest of the Viking Age.”[74] He did not limit the Beast to a specific species of animal, but admitted that it was only evocative of a lion, or possibly even a wolf, but that it was certainly an ambiguous “mammalian carnivore.”[75] Markussen pointed out that the popularity of

[70] Ibid., 97.

[71] Ibid., 109-111, 128.

[72] Ibid., 97. See also Graham-Campbell, *The Viking World*, 147.

[73] Markussen, *The Anatomy of Viking Art*, 54.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Ibid., 54, 51.

the Beast motif rose with many variations appearing on runestones erected at the time of the Ringerike style.[76] By the time of the development of the Urnes style, he observed that the Beast motif was used "almost exclusively," and "typically executed in a very similar and extremely formalized manner."[77] Additionally, the openwork brooches made during this period commonly use the Beast motif.[78]

As will be more elaborately discussed in a later chapter, the movement of the Beast from stone to metalwork, from immovable to portable, from monument to personal belonging is intriguing, and also happened in England during the Anglo-Scandinavian period with the same motif. It is remarkable that Markussen, a graphic designer with a background in architecture, who simply created this "guide" in order to gain for himself a better understanding of Viking art, truly seemed to grasp what other scholars such as Fuglesang and Wilson and Klindt-Jensen could not: the Beast is a unique motif in Viking art, in its own category, and not simply an artistic interpretation of a known creature.[79] While Markussen, like all the scholars before him, acknowledged the influences from Europe on the development of the Beast motif, he never conceded in his belief that it was a unrecognizable species.[80]

The literature review on the Beast motif clearly reveals two conclusions that are particularly pertinent to this current study. The first is that there is no consensus regarding the species of the Beast. While some scholars are brazen in their identification and naming of the

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[76] Ibid., 64.

[77] Ibid., 71.

[78] Ibid., 74.

[79] Ibid., 4.

[80] Ibid., 54.

Beast, the others are much more hesitant. The second is that more research is needed when it comes to understanding this motif. Based on these themes, it can be concluded that much more research is required to understand both Anglo-Scandinavian (cultural) identity and the Beast motif. Chapter 3 of this thesis will delve deeper into the concept of a pluralistic or multifaceted Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity. Art historians have not conducted rigorous research on the Beast motif specifically, but rather integrated existing knowledge of it into the literature on Viking art styles. While the origins of the Beast motif remain unclear, Fuglesang was able to see the academic gap in a full iconographical study of the motif, which thesis aims to begin to fill. Initially, however, it is crucial to understand the Beast's origins and use in Scandinavia.

FIGURES

Figure 2: The Gosforth Cross. c. Second quarter of the 10th century. St. Mary's Church, Gosforth, Cumbria, UK. 4.42 m.[81]

[81] Doug Sim, *Gosforth Cross*, 2011, Wikimedia Commons, 2011, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/e0/Gosforth_cross.jpg. Richard N. Bailey, "Scandinavian Myth on Viking-Period Stone Sculpture in England," in *Old Norse Myths, Literature and Society: Proceedings of the 11th International Saga Conference 2-7 July 2000, University of Sydney*, ed. Geraldine Barns and Margaret Clunies Ross (Sydney, Australia: Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Sydney, 2000), 19.

Figure 3: Hogback sculptures. c. Mid-10th century. St. Mary's Church, Gosforth, Cumbria, UK.

Length: c. 1.68 m.[82]

[82] Doug Sim, *Two Hogsback Tomb Markers Now in Gosforth Parish Church, Cumbria*, 2011, Wikimedia Commons, 2011, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/65/Gosforth_hogsback_tombs.jpg. Richard N. Bailey, *Viking Age Sculpture in Northern England* (London: Collins), 88.

Figure 4: St. Alkmund's cross shaft. 9th century. Derby Museum and Art Gallery, Derby, UK.

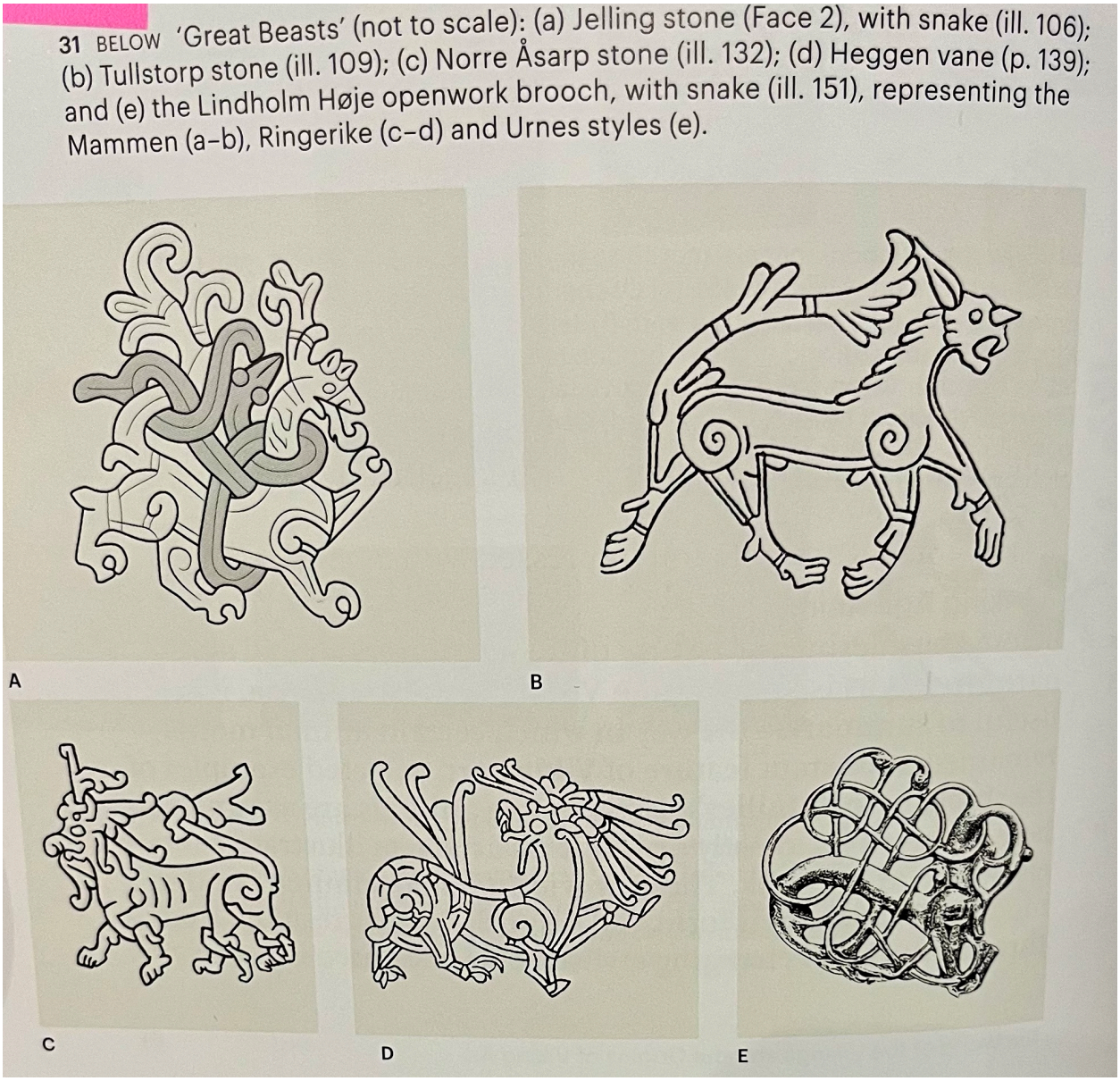
Original height: c. 4 m.[83]

[83] Andy Mabbett, *The St. Alkmund's Cross Shaft, at Derby Museum and Art Gallery*, 2011, Wikimedia Commons, 2011, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/0a/St_Alkmunds_cross_shaft_Derby.jpg.

Figure 5: Vg 4 runestone. c. 980-1015. Stora Ek, Sweden.[84]

[84] Department of Scandinavian Languages, Uppsala University, "Vg 4," Scandinavian Runic-text Database, 2020, http://kulturarvsdata.se/uu/srdb/0dc3a4da-bc1b-49ac-807f-65e1b2e52581.

Figure 6: Great Beasts.[85]



[85] Graham-Campbell, *Viking Art*, 38.

CHAPTER 2: THE GREAT BEAST IN SCANDINAVIA

> *Haraldr konungr bað gera kuml þessi ept Gorm, fǫður sinn, ok ept Þyrvé, móður sína, sá Haraldr er sér vann Danmǫrk alla ok Norveg ok dani gerði kristna.*
>
> King Harald ordered these monuments to be made in memory of Gorm, his father, and in memory of Thyre, his mother; that Harald who won for himself all Denmark and Norway and made the Danes Christians.[86]

These are the inscriptions which accompany the Great Beast's arrival into the world. Found on Harald Bluetooth's "Jelling Stone" in Jelling, Denmark, the inscription's reference to the subjugation of Norway appears just below the image of the Beast.[87] It is portrayed in what is known as the "combat" version of the motif, entangled with a snake (figure 7). The Beast is depicted here in the Mammen style, which flourished from the 960s to c. 1000-25.[88] This chapter endeavors to discover the Beast in its Scandinavian homeland. The various styles in which the Beast is depicted and comparisons of the Beast in these styles will be discussed. Additionally, a criteria will be established in order to identify the Beast. The Scandinavians made zoomorphic designs for centuries before the use of the Beast, but it is this latter motif which gains popularity

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[86] Runic inscription DR 42 in the 2020 edition of the Scandinavian Runic-text Database, Department of Scandinavian Languages, Uppsala University. http://kulturarvsdata.se/uu/srdb/0d45c79a-c0d6-4937-9663-f044b31fcc65. The runic inscription here has been translated into Old (West) Norse by the source. In the Modern English translation, the names of the individuals mentioned have been modernized.

[87] Graham-Campbell, *Viking Art*, 94.

[88] Ibid., 14.

and repeated use in Scandinavia, and later in England. Before discussing how to identify the Beast, a brief yet thorough introduction of relevant Viking art styles is in order.

Mammen, Ringerike, and Urnes Styles

As previously mentioned, the Beast first appears in the Mammen style of the late 10th and early 11th centuries. This style was closely linked to and overlaps in use with the Jellinge style. In fact, Kendrick in 1949 does not recognize the Beast on the Jelling Stone in the Mammen style.[89] Thus, the scholarship had since developed and separation of these styles came about 1966 by Wilson and Klindt-Jensen.[90] Scholars agree that this style is both a link between the previous Jellinge and later Ringerike styles, but bears the qualities of its own unique style that inaugurates those of "late Viking art."[91] The name of this style is derived from a splendid axe head known as the Mammen Axe (figure 8), found in Mammen, Denmark. This axe was no simple killing-tool. The inlay of silver and gold on the decoration and groove respectively and its excavation from a wealthy man's grave indicate that the axe was used as a symbol of rank, either military or royal.[92] The Axe's designs, which both characterize the Mammen style and preview the upcoming Ringerike style, display long and lose tendrils with loosely scrolled terminals, some of

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[89] Kendrick referred to the Beast's stylistic depiction on the Jelling Stone as "Jellinge." He noted that the final phase of the "Great Beast style" peaked around the year 1000, and it is this that he specifically called the Mammen style. Kendrick, *Late Saxon*, 98.

[90] Graham-Campbell, *Viking Art*, 81. Wilson and Klindt-Jensen, *Viking Art*, 133.

[91] Ibid., and ibid. Fuglesang, *Some Aspects*, 14-19.

[92] Graham-Campbell, *Viking Art*, 98-99.

which end in spirals.[93] Pellets fill the bodies of the tendrils and sometimes the zoomorphic motifs, such as the bird on one face of the Axe (figure 9).[94]

The Ringerike style is a more evolved and influenced version of the Mammen style, although it has its unique, Scandinavian qualities. In this style, used between c. 1000-1075, the Beast motif rises in popularity, both in Scandinavia and abroad.[95] The Ringerike name comes from a geographical area of sandstone beds where a cluster of memorial stones display the distinctive ornament, just outside of Oslo, Norway.[96] A bit further away, in Vang, Oppland, Norway, a runestone there displays the exemplary and "classic" phase of the Ringerike style (figure 10).[97] On this stone, plant-like tendrils replace the long and loose tendrils of the previous style; they have become thinner and shorter. The tendrils here also cluster together and fan outwards. The ends of these tendrils are more tightly scrolled. Throughout the whole of the design, the intertwining tendrils resemble those of plant motifs, thought to be a feature influenced by Anglo-Saxon and/or Ottonian decorations.[98] To prevent this style, which is distinctively characterized by great bunches of tendrils pointing out in every direction, from becoming too messy and wild, a sense of balance and symmetry is introduced, as seen on the Vang Stone. This also may be an influence from the more controlled decorative styles of the Ottonians and Anglo-Saxons. Lastly, the Vang Stone presents another depiction of the Beast. More reminiscent of the Mammen style than the "classic" phase of the Ringerike style seen in its

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[93] Markussen, *The Anatomy of Viking Art*, 46.

[94] Ibid.

[95] Graham-Campbell, *Viking Art*, 14.

[96] Ibid., 112.

[97] Ibid., 113.

[98] Markussen, *The Anatomy of Viking Art*, 64.

decorative tendrils just below it, the Beast here can be identified with the same features mentioned above: a double-contoured body, spiral hip joints, a head in profile with a circular eye. The sense of slightly wild axiality established in the Ringerike style is tamed into elegance and grace in the Urnes style.

Viking art concludes with the Urnes style. This style is named after the famous stave church, which dates from 1069 and 1070 in Urnes, Norway which depicts the style at its height.[99] However, the Urnes style was used from c. 1050-c. 1125.[100] The church has since been renovated, but some of the original Viking-Age decorations remain, including its most well known north portal (figure 11).[101] The Urnes style is quite unique compared to the other Late Viking artistic styles; it appears to have rejected external European influences and returned to its Scandinavian animal-style foundations, while still remaining connected to the previous two styles.[102] Ironically, this return to earlier, Viking zoomorphic origins seemed to have broad appeal at the time. Elements of the Urnes style can be found from Swedish runestones to pieces of English and Irish metalwork.[103] Kendrick goes so far as to argue that the Urnes style was even accepted as a Christian style in the British Isles, since it is found on ecclesiastical objects, partially due to the increasing Christianization of Scandinavia and its people during this

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[99] Graham-Campbell, *Viking Art*., 131.

[100] Ibid., 14.

[101] Wilson and Klindt-Jensen, *Viking Art*, 147.

[102] Graham-Campbell, *Viking Art*, 111.

[103] For this reason, the Urnes style is sometimes referred to as the "Runestone style." Especially in Sweden, the Ringerike style can also fall under this general heading. Wilson and Klindt-Jensen, *Viking Art*, 149. Examples which immediately come to mind are the Bishop's Crozier found in Durham Cathedral in England, and the Clonmacnoise Crozier from County Offaly, Ireland. Graham-Campbell, *Viking Art*, 142-143.

period.[104] As the Urnes style began to fade in the first quarter of the 12th century, certain aspects of it were embraced by the subsequent, pan-European Romanesque style.[105]

The north portal of the stave church at Urnes show the typical characteristics found in the Urnes style, defined by its highly-stylized depictions. No effort is made at (semi-)naturalism; the proportions are over-elongated and it is difficult to establish which animal the Beast could possibly represent. The ends of tendrils are still tightly scrolled, as seen in the Ringerike style, but the tendrils usually do not have offshoots here.[106] The Beast motif again plays an important role in the Urnes style. Seen at the bottom left of the portal, the Beast can be identified by the eye of its in-profile head which has now become almond-shaped, the tendrils around the mouth and nose, as well as the spiral hip joints. These features have all been seen before at some point in the Beast of the Mammen and Ringerike styles. The most popular depiction of the Beast in the Urnes style by far is the combat version of the motif, as seen on the north portal. Here, a thin, ribbon-like snake coils around the Beast, usually biting the Beast's neck. The snake can be identified both by its slender body and by its head, which is usually depicted not in profile like the Beast's, but as if the viewer were looking down at it from above. Compared to the combat version of the Ringerike and Mammen styles, the Urnes style creates an elegant and graceful flow through the use of figure-eight loops and asymmetrical balance.

Comparisons and Criteria

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[104] Kendrick, *Late Saxon*, 126-127. Other examples of the Urnes style are found in other areas of Scandinavia in church settings. Besides the Urnes stave church, there is a wooden fragment from the original wall of the Hørning stave church from 1060-70 in Denmark. Graham-Campbell, *Viking Art*, 128.

[105] Graham-Campbell, *Viking Art*, 111-112.

[106] Markussen, *The Anatomy of Viking Art*, 66.

The elements of late Viking art styles have now been described. What do the different stylistic depictions of the Beast have in common? And how can these commonalities be used to create a criteria in order to recognize the Beast? Besides Bluetooth's Jelling Stone, another depiction of the Beast in the Mammen style is found on the Cammin Casket. This piece, which was sadly destroyed in World War II, has been replicated from casts and photographs (figure 12).[107] The Beast shown here bears many similar traits to the Beast of Bluetooth's Jelling Stone. The outlines of their bodies are double contoured. Both Beasts have spiral hip joints and their heads with round eyes are depicted in profile. They also have claw-like feet, though the claws are different; the Casket Beast's are more naturalistic, while the Jelling Stone Beast's resemble pincers. Additionally, they are both surrounded by ribbon-like features, although the Jelling Stone Beast is clearly entangled with a double-stranded ribbon snake, while the Casket Beast's surroundings are purely decorative. These features of the Beast in the Mammen style, specifically the head in profile and the spiral hip joints, will be retained in both the later Ringerike and Urnes styles, and thus already help establish a criteria for the Beast.

In other works made in the Ringerike style, the Beast takes on more of its typical characteristics. Two astonishingly similar wind vanes have also survived: the Heggen vane from Norway and the Söderala vane from Sweden (figures 13 and 14, respectively).[108] The features of Beast here are shown on both vanes: its spiral hip joints, its head is in profile, its body is double-contoured, and it has semi-naturalistic claws.[109] These depictions of the Beast show the "classic" Ringerike style elements. For instance, the shape of the Beast's eye is now more almond-shaped

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[107] Graham-Campbell, *Viking Art*, 107.

[108] Ibid., 118.

[109] The "beast" on the Källunge vane, which Fuglesang called the "great beast," is lacking the spiral hip joints.

and lappets hang down from its mouth. They are also surrounded by the characteristic Ringerike tendrils, and other European stylistic elements can be detected, such as the vegetal-like tendrils within each of the frames of the Beast. These vanes are significant to this thesis as they show that the Beast motif has spread outside of Denmark and can be found in other places in Scandinavia, Additionally, each vane is topped with almost identical three-dimensional Beast figures.

On the Jutland peninsula, a typical depiction of the Urnes Beast in combat motif was found at the Viking site at Lindholm Høje. This openwork brooch (figure 15) depicts the Beast's body entangled in a multi-looped composition. The Beast's hind legs and ribbon snake, which wraps around the Beast's front leg and hindquarters, create the figure-eight loops.[110] The Urnes-style Beast's features are all present: head in profile, snout lappet, and spiral-shaped joint.[111] The elongated almond-shaped eye seems to have been worn down over time, and is thus not clearly visible. Not only is this brooch an example of the uniformity of the Urnes style, it is also an example of how widely used it was, both geographically and contextually. In Iceland, another similar brooch was found (figure 16), and an excavation in Lund, Sweden revealed a jeweler's workshop in which bronze variations of the Lindholm Høje brooch were found, dated to the early 12th century.[112] As these late Viking art styles were used in a variety of locations and contexts, so too was the use of the Beast motif. Thus, the use of this motif, at least in Scandinavia, suggests that it had an increasingly important meaning and appeal throughout time and space during the late Viking Age, a time when cultural-religious identities were shifting.

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[110] Ibid., 127.

[111] Another interesting development of the Beast depicted in openwork brooches is its coiled tendrils for feet. This feature will also be seen later in the Pitney Brooch.

[112] Graham-Campbell*, The Viking World*, 151.

This examination of the depictions of the Beast from the Mammen to Urnes styles—from c. 960-c.1125—has provided enough examples to create a criteria for the Beast when compared to other zoomorphic depictions, particularly ambiguous quadrupeds. The most basic criteria gathered from the examples above are head in profile and spiral hip joint. While there is no agreement about what animal the Beast actually represents, it is clear that this basic criteria can be used to distinguish the "Great Beast" from other zoomorphic depictions. For example, on the stone from Alstad, Norway, there are depictions of many animals with spiral hip joints and heads in profile (figure 17). Yet, from the context, these animals are likely part of the Sigurd Saga, a popular sculptural subject in the Viking Age.[113] Another example is found on Hunnestad stone 3 in Sweden (figure 18). The same features appear on this "beast" as have been outlined above. It even has (semi-)naturalistic claws. The Runer website ran by the University of Copenhagen sheds light onto this depiction: "It has generally been claimed that the figure riding a four-footed animal is the *gygen* [i.e. giantess] Hyrrokkin riding a wolf with a viper as its tail. According to Snorre's Edda, she was called to help at Balder's pyre, when the ship of death could not be moved from its place."[114] Therefore, the Beast is not connected to any story of Norse mythology. Additionally, the Beast is hardly ever depicted with people in the same space, but most popularly, especially in the 11th century, the snake in the combat version of the motif.[115] It is also clear that the Beast is largely ambiguous. There are usually no defining features of any

[113] Wilson and Klindt-Jensen, *Viking Art*, 130.

[114] University of Copenhagen, "Genstand | Runer.ku.dk," runer.ku.dk, accessed June 14, 2024, https://runer.ku.dk/q.php?p=runer/genstande/genstand/280.

[115] At the Jelling Stone, Christ is portrayed on another face of the rock.

particular animal that can be found on the Beast. Although some scholars claimed that the Beast is a lion, this claim is not supported by unanimous agreement in the literature.

Thus, what can be said for certain about the features of the Great Beast motif is that it is an ambiguous animal, depicted alone except in the combat version, with a head in profile and spiral hip joints, sometimes accompanied by semi-naturalistic claws or feet. Another attribute that may provide a clue as to if the depicted animal is the Beast or not is an upward-pointing tail. The Beast is depicted with this feature in the Mammen and early Ringerike styles. However, in later Ringerike and Urnes styles, the tail of the Beast tucks under its hind legs and behind the body before pointing upwards.[116] The upward-pointing tail is also therefore useful in determining to which style the Beast belongs, whether or not the tail points out and up (as in earlier styles) or under and up (as in later styles) A final feature is the sort of crest which adorns the top of the Beast's head. In nearly all of the depictions of the Beast, especially the Ringerike ones, the Beast is portrayed with a plume-like crest, sometimes nearly indistinguishable from its ears, sprouting from its head.

It is crucial to remember that the Beast motif "can only be understood against the background of indigenous [i.e. Scandinavian] art."[117] While it is clear from the literature that the scholarship does not agree on the species of animal which the Beast depicts, there is a general agreement as to the meaning behind the motif, although no one is exactly sure. Since Bluetooth was a king, the overall message of the Jelling Stone, and the Beast motif on it, is a royal one. The fact that the stone was commissioned by a king made it wonderful to others, thus the Beast motif

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[116] This can be observed in figure 6.

[117] Wilson and Klindt-Jensen, *Viking Art*, 121.

spread throughout Scandinavia.[118] Throughout other places in Christian Europe, the lion was symbolic. But whether or not the lion—if of course the Beast is a lion—held meaning for late Viking Age Scandinavians is another question.[119] Graham-Campbell suggested that the Beast's meaning on the Jelling Stone could be either military or religious, which is not unfounded.[120] The portion of runic text beneath the Beast's depiction reads in Modern English "and Norway," referring to Bluetooth's winning for himself "all" of that country and Denmark. It could also have religious meaning due to its juxtaposition to the Crucifixion motif on the Jelling Stone and the theory that the Beast had a (Christian) European prototype. The meaning of the Beast could therefore be religious (i.e. Christian), royal, or military, or none or a bit of all three. While the actual meaning of the Beast motif is outside the scope of this thesis, what is important to understand here is that Beast on the Jelling Stone spread wildly throughout Scandinavia, perhaps used in order to appear to be of a higher social rank and closer to the king who set this motif into motion. As Graham-Campbell put it, "Where royalty leads, noblemen follow suit."[121] This echos its use in England as will become apparent in Chapter 5.

The continuous copying of the Beast throughout Scandinavia without the Crucifixion motif which is also seen on the Jelling Stone says much about the religious-cultural identity of the Scandinavians in the late 10th century. While Bluetooth claimed that he had "made the Danes Christian," evidence from this present study seems to indicate the opposite. The Crucifixion

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[118] Graham-Campbell, *The Viking World*, 147.

[119] Fuglesang, *Some Aspects*, 93.

[120] Graham-Campbell, *Viking Art*, 94.

[121] Graham-Campbell, *The Viking World*, 147.

motif, foreign to Scandinavians especially at that time, was not circulated.[122] At best, a simple cross is included on some runestones, but the Beast is more apt to appear. A full examination of Scandinavian cultural identity from the late 10th to early 11th centuries is outside the scope of this thesis, but it is interesting to note that Scandinavians in their homeland used the Beast motif more often, especially during the earlier range of the aforementioned dates, than the Crucifixion motif.

Conclusion

In summary, the Beast motif, first introduced into Scandinavia on Harald Bluetooth's Jelling Stone, portrays an ambiguous animal. There is no unanimous decision in the literature regarding the type of species depicted, and there are no telltale characteristics of the Beast motif that point to a specific animal. A criteria was created from observations made by scholars and the author of this thesis, which will be used in Chapter 5 and will also contribute to further studies on the Beast motif in the future. First used almost exclusively on stone, it became an increasingly popular motif in metalwork, specifically brooches. The use of the Beast motif in late Viking art styles from the late 10th century to well into the 12th century demonstrates the motif's appeal for generations. Additionally, its use throughout the Viking diaspora shows that it was an attractive motif for people in different regions, including England.

[122] Markussen, *The Anatomy of Viking Art*, 54.

FIGURES

Figure 7: The Great Beast, Jelling Stone. c. 970-86. Jelling, Denmark.[123]

Figure 8: Mammen Axe. c. 960-70. National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen.[124]

[123] Anon, Jelling Stones, *Harald Bluetooth's Stone: Side B*, 2004, Wikimedia Commons, 2004, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/74/Jelling_gr_Stein_2.JPG.

[124] National Museum of Denmark, *The Patterned Axe from Mammen*, National Museum of Denmark, accessed June 21, 2024, https://en.natmus.dk/typo3temp/assets/images/csm_Oekse_credit_natmus_NMID_3b_7bb174386d_a974ff965f.jpg.

Figure 9: Mammen Axe, bird detail.[125]

[125] Archeurope Educational Resources, *Mammen 1*, Viking Archaeology, accessed June 21, 2024, http://viking.archeurope.com/@images/Art/Mammen%201.jpg.

Figure 10: Vang runestone. c. First half of the 11th century. Vang, Oppland, Norway. H: 2.15 m.[126]

[126] John Erling Blad, *The Image Stone Outside Vang Church*, 2005, Wikimedia Commons, 2005, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/2a/Vangsteinen.JPG. Graham-Campbell, *Viking Art*, 113.

Figure 11: North portal, Urnes Stave Church. c. 1070. Urnes, Sogn, Norway.[127]

[127] Nina Aldin Thune, Urnes Stave Church Portal, 2023, Wikimedia Commons, 2023, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/9d/Urnesportalen.jpg. Graham-Campbell, *Viking Art*, 131.

Figure 12: Cammin Casket, replica. Kamien Pomorski, Poland. L: 63 cm. (Photo of original, destroyed in the Second World War.)[128]

Figure 13: Heggen weather vane. c. 1000-75. Heggen church, Vidersund, Norway. Museum of Cultural History, University of Oslo. Gilded bronze.[129]

[128] Graham-Campbell, *Viking Art*, 107.

[129] Universitetets Oldsaksamling, *Heggen Weather Vane*, 2022, Gelmir, https://gelmir.com/compendium_item/heggen-weather-vane/?v=d3dcf429c679.

Figure 14: Söderala weather vane. c. 1000-75. Söderala church, Söderala, Hälsingland, Sweden. Statens Historkia Museum, Stockholm. Gilded bronze.[130]

Figure 15: Lindholm Høje brooch. c. 1050. Lindholm Høje, Jylland, Denmark. National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen. Silver.[131]

[130] Historiska museet, *Söderala Weather Vane*, 2022, Gelmir, https://gelmir.com/compendium_item/soderala-weather-vane/?v=d3dcf429c679.

[131] National Museum of Denmark, *Lindholm Høje Openwork Brooch*, 2023, Gelmir, https://gelmir.com/compendium_item/lindholm-hoje-openwork-brooch/?v=d3dcf429c679.

Figure 16: Tröllaskógur Brooch. c. First half of the 12th century. Tröllaskógur, Iceland. National Museum of Iceland, Reykjavík. Silver, w: 4.6 cm.[132]

Figure 17: Alstad runestone. c. 1010-40. Alstad, Toten, Oppland, Norway. Kulturhistorisk Museum, Oslo. Sandstone, H: 2.7 m, W: 0.52 m, Thickness: 0.13 m.[133]

[132] Graham-Campbell, *Viking Art* (2013 edition), 134-35.

[133] Jonas Lau Markussen, *The Alstad Stone, N 61 and N 62*, 2022, Illustration, Jonas Lau Markussen, https://jonaslaumarkussen.com/illustration/the-alstad-stone/.

Figure 18: Sk 56: Hunnestad stone 3. 970-1020. Lund University's Historical Museum, Lund, Sweden. Stone, H: 179 cm, W: 106 cm, Thickness: 46 cm.[134]

[134] University of Copenhagen, "Genstand | Runer.ku.dk," runer.ku.dk, accessed 14 June, 2024, https://runer.ku.dk/q.php?p=runer/genstande/genstand/280.

Chapter 3: Cultural Identity in Viking Age England

What is "Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity?" Before the examination of the Great Beast motif and its use in 11th-century England, Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity must be discussed. Upon deeper reflection, the term "Anglo-Scandinavian" begins to become rather ambiguous.[135] Does "Anglo" modify "Scandinavian," or vice versa, or does the hyphenation suggest a "part Anglo-Saxon, part Scandinavian" hybridization? Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity, as this chapter will show, can be interpreted in (at least) three ways. In light of the research conducted in this chapter, Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity can be understood as multifaceted, a theoretical framework which will be used to understand the three works chosen for this present study.

First, it could be understood to mean "Anglicized Scandinavians." This includes the Scandinavians of the Danelaw, particularly the settlers of the 9th and 10th centuries and their 11th-century descendants. This is also comprised of the new influx of Scandinavian settlers who came to England during the 11th century under Canute's reign and integrated with those who had already settled. Canute himself could be considered part of this group, and after understanding "Anglicized Scandinavians" in this chapter, the reasons for assigning him to this group will become more clear in the next chapter. "Anglicized Scandinavians" became Christians like their Anglo-Saxon neighbors, but as Jesch proposed, they continued to express their "cultural paganism," meaning that they accepted and employed some aspects of their past pagan culture

[135] See also Leslie Abrams, "Diaspora and Identity in the Viking Age," in *Early Medieval Europe*, 2012, 20(1), 37.

despite being part of a wider Christian society.[136] A material example of this is the Gosforth Cross, which depicts both Christian and Norse pagan motifs but has been accepted in academic discussions as part of a Christian context.[137]

Second, it could also be understood to mean Anglo-Saxons who adopted Scandinavian appearances. Rather than the Scandinavians adapting themselves to the Anglo-Saxon culture, the Anglo-Saxons appropriated Scandinavian appearances, especially in the Danelaw. Kershaw argued, against the conclusions of Thomas and Richards, that it was the Anglo-Saxon women (and those of Scandinavian descent) who adopted the dress customs and brooch styles of Scandinavian women settlers.[138] Thijs Porck also pointed out that, based on source evidence, the adoption of Scandinavian appearances by Christian Anglo-Saxon men was outrageous enough for monks to spill a bit of ink.[139] Third, Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity could be understood to mean a hybridization of Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian culture. Matthew Townend argued that English society at large in Viking Age England was bilingual, linguistically part Anglo-Saxon, part Scandinavian, though evidence of hybridity can be found.[140] While there are other aspects of cultural identity, religion, language, and appearance (e.g., hairstyles, clothing and jewelry) have been selected to be discussed here for the sake of brevity. This chapter aims to submit these aspects as examples of the multifaceted Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity.

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[136] Jesch, "Scandinavians and 'Cultural Paganism'," 57.

[137] Hadley, *The Vikings in England*, 215.

[138] Kershaw, *Viking Identities*, 216.

[139] Thijs Porck, "Anglo-Saxons Putting on Viking (H)Airs," April 17, 2017, https://thijsporck.com/2017/04/17/cultural-blending/.

[140] Townend, "Viking Age England as a Bilingual Society," 89-105.

It is crucial to remember that the Vikings of the late 8th century and the later 9th- and 10th-century Scandinavian settlers did not have a common national or ethnic identity.[141] Furthermore, "their sense of ethnic or cultural identity may have been modified" by their time spent elsewhere, mainly 'continental' Europe and western Britain, including Ireland.[142] However, despite their lack of common identity, once they came to England, they developed a more unified one.[143] Therefore, in this chapter the term "Scandinavian(s)" will be employed.

Religion

The introduction of Christianity to the Scandinavians had different effects depending on their location. In Viking Age England, Scandinavian settlers became more anglicized and differed in cultural expression than their homeland counterparts. But the answers to how, when, and where the Scandinavians in England adopted the Christian faith are based on very little evidence and are highly debatable.[144] Lesley Abrams succinctly summarized what is known undoubtedly amongst scholars: "The [Viking] armies arrived in England as pagans; they settled and became Christian."[145] Abrams suggested that although the first period of Scandinavian settlement around the late 9th century "marked the beginning and defined the nature of the

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[141] Hadley, *The Vikings in England*, 83.

[142] Ibid., 83-84.

[143] Matthew Innes, "Danelaw Identities: Ethnicity, Regionalism, and Political Allegiance," in *Cultures in Contact: Scandinavian Settlement in England in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries*, ed. Dawn M. Hadley and Julian D. Richards (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 84.

[144] Lesley Abrams, "The Conversion of the Danelaw," in *Vikings and the Danelaw: Select Papers from the Proceedings of the Thirteenth Viking Congress, Nottingham and York, 21-30 August 1997*, ed. James Graham-Campbell et al. (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2001), 31.

[145] Ibid. Abrams distinguishes between "conversion," or acceptance of baptism and initial participation within the life of the Church, and "Christianization," or the process by which Christian ideology and customs entered into the converted society. Her definitions of the words are meant here.

integration of Scandinavians into Anglo-Saxon England," it wasn't until the settlers' lands were overcome by English rule that many of them were incorporated into "the Christian fold," probably in the 950s.[146] Abrams also theorized that the destruction of ecclesiastical centers during the Viking incursions may have hindered "rapid" conversion efforts, and that it was a relationship to the (reestablished) Church within the Danelaw, brought about by the English authority, which may have helped these efforts.[147]

These efforts, however, were possibly hindered by the "cultural paganism" of the Scandinavians, or their acceptance of certain aspects of their heathen past, although they were part of a larger, officially Christian society. They did this by making allusions to pre-Christian beliefs and myths which can be seen in surviving literary and artistic contexts.[148] While the examples of "cultural paganism" Jesch provided (such as the poetry of Canute's court and the erection of the St. Paul's runestone) will be discussed in the following chapters, there is evidence, which can be seen in the Gosforth Cross for example, that "cultural paganism" could be applied to Scandinavians around the time of the Cross' erection in the first half of the 10th century. Although Jesch explained that sculptures like the Cross are relevant to the context of her theory, she did not include them due to issues of dating.[149] However, in the wider discussion of Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity in light of Jesch's "cultural paganism" theory, it is necessary to include the Cross here.[150]

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[146] This likely occurred with the expulsion and subsequent death of Erik Bloodaxe from the Scandinavian stronghold of Jórvík (modern-day York), who may have been a convert to Christianity himself. Ibid., 39-40.

[147] Ibid.

[148] Jesch, "Scandinavians and 'Cultural Paganism'," 58.

[149] Ibid., 67.

[150] See figure 2.

Anglo-Scandinavian stone sculptures, which began to flourish at this time, shed light on the Christianization of the Scandinavians and their cultural identity. The Gosforth Cross was created not only to explore the parallels and contrasts drawn between the Christian and Scandinavian pagan religions.[151] It also may have had didactic purposes such as "assisting the conversion and acculturation process" of the Scandinavians.[152] Furthermore, the Cross is thought to have been a monument dedicated to the commemoration of past gods and to contemplation of the "new" God (Christ) for the Scandinavians.[153] At the same time, it reflected both the reluctance of the settlers and their cultural paganism in the depictions of Loki, Fenrir, and other mythological motifs of Ragnarök.[154] As these mythological motifs cover three-quarters of the four-sided cross, it is possible, even likely, that the Scandinavians in England turned away from their traditional gods with a measure of reluctance.[155] This Scandinavian regretfulness was typically seen in the first half of the 10th century especially by those in Christian areas throughout Viking Age Europe.[156] The Cross and other similar sculptures in England, despite their undoubtedly Scandinavian motifs, patterns and mythological subjects, have been accepted

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[151] Bailey, *Viking Age Sculpture*, 129.

[152] Hadley, *The Vikings in England*, 219.

[153] See Bailey, "Scandinavian Myth on Viking-Period Stone Sculpture in England," in *Old Norse Myths, Literature and Society: Proceedings of the 11th International Saga Conference 2-7 July 2000, University of Sydney*, ed. Geraldine Barns and Margaret Clunies Ross (Sydney, Australia: Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Sydney, 2000), 22, and Lilla Kopár, *Gods and Settlers : The Iconography of Norse Mythology in Anglo-Scandinavian Sculpture* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012), 155.

[154] Jesch, "Scandinavians and 'Cultural Paganism'," 60-61. The Gosforth Cross is not the only example of this, as Jesch pointed out that Scandinavians made quite a habit of using legendary and mythological motifs in other Christian contexts in other locations throughout the British Isles.

[155] Graham-Campbell corroborated this: "A Viking poet somewhat sadly renounces the heathen gods in his verse. He confesses that he cannot entirely hate them, 'though Christ I serve now.'" Although he did not cite the source of this poem, he continued to say that this reluctant attitude was the same in those who commissioned "several crosses…of Viking date with characteristic Viking ornamentation" elsewhere in England. Graham-Campbell, *The Viking World*, 186-87.

[156] Elena Melnikova, "How Christian Were Viking Christians?," *Ruthenica Suppl*, no. 4 (2011), 102.

in the scholarship as belonging to a Christian context.[157] Thus the Cross was undoubtedly an expression of the Scandinavians' cultural identity at the time. Though the use of pagan motifs supports the theory of "cultural paganism," the depictions of Christian ones on the same sculpture suggests that there was already a sincere enough interest in the faith to depict it on stone.

The patron of the Cross may have had a different status than the intended viewers.[158] Richard Bailey suggested that many different scenarios could have been possible for sculptural commissions, one of which was that a sculptor worked only on the commission of a wealthy patron. Given that Gosforth was not part of a large metropolitan city (like York, for example) where workshops were available, and that there is not a variation in style or quality in the surrounding area, this is a likely context for this case.[159] Furthermore, this shows that rather than the sculptor who chose the themes for the cross, it was the patron.[160]

The Cross is just one example which shows that since settling in England, the Scandinavians were steeped in a wider Christian society, one which they would eventually accept, although they still clung to their "cultural paganism." Eventually, they let go of their former religious practices and embraced Christ (to some extent), and thus began to establish a Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity as "Anglicized Scandinavians." Anglo-Saxon men and women adopted the Scandinavians' attire, jewelry, and hairstyles, creating another facet of Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity.

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[157] Hadley, *The Vikings in England*, 215.

[158] Thank you to Dr. Meuwese for bringing up this point.

[159] Bailey, *Viking Age Sculpture,* 254-55.

[160] Ibid., 255.

Appearances

Both documentary and archeological evidence show that there was a desire among Anglo-Saxon men to appropriate Scandinavian fashions. Surviving written sources in the form of letters encouraged the recipients to discontinue their seemingly 'pagan' outward appearances. One of the earliest letters in which this can be found is in Alcuin's letter to Æthelred, King of Northumbria and "his chief men," dated to 793, the infamous year in which the Vikings sacked the Lindisfarne Monastery (off the coast of Northumbria). Among other things, Alcuin pleaded with the recipients to:

> "*Consider the dress, the way of wearing the hair*, the luxurious habits of the princes and people. 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?"[161]

To Alcuin, the 'pagan' appearance of the Northumbrians did not seem appropriate for Christian men. Thijs Porck suggested that they had already started copying the appearances of the Vikings, since those "pagans" to which Alcuin referred in his letter are those responsible for the sacking of the monastery not long before he wrote it.[162] This would have been scandalous to Alcuin, whose fellow monks had been either slaughtered on the island or enslaved by its Viking raiders.

However, these 'pagan' fashions seemingly continued throughout the centuries, and in all likelihood popularized by the Scandinavians as they grew in numbers in England. Much later, in

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[161] Whitelock, ed., *English Historical Documents*, 776. Emphasis added.

[162] Porck, "Anglo-Saxons."

the (possibly late) 10th century, another letter chided its recipient who had adopted ‘pagan' styles. Whitelock wrote in 1955 that the recipient was unknown and that the author was anonymous.[163] However, it has since been discovered that it was written by Ælfric of Eynsham to a certain Brother Edward.[164] In this section of his letter, Ælfric complained that Edward and his fellow monks had adopted some unseemly practices, such as Scandinavian appearances in place of their Anglo-Saxon ones:

> “…you do wrong in *abandoning the English practices* which your fathers followed, and in *loving the practices of heathen men* who begrudge you life, and in doing so show by such evil habits that you despise your race and your ancestors, since in insult to them *you dress in Danish fashion with bared necks and blinded eyes*. I will say no more about that *shameful mode of dress* except what books tell us, that he will be accursed who *follows heathen practices in his life* and in doing so dishonours his own race.”[165]

These letters do not give specific details of which fashions or practices the Anglo-Saxon men appropriated from the Scandinavians.[166] However, Porck wrote that, according to a 13th-century chronicler, they did so in order to appear attractive to women.[167] This reasoning, although written more than 100 years after the end of the Anglo-Saxon period, may have some

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[163] Whitelock, ed., *English Historical Documents*, 825.

[164] Porck, “Anglo-Saxons.”

[165] Whitelock, ed., *English Historical Documents*, 825. Emphasis added.

[166] An example of the “bared necks and blinded eyes” could possibly be the same hairstyles seen on the Normans (descendants of Scandinavians in Normandy, France) of the Bayeux Tapestry. Porck, “Anglo-Saxons.”

[167] Ibid.

credibility, as Scandinavian men often took Anglo-Saxon women as wives.[168] Evidently, Anglo-Saxon men had some competition in the appearance department.[169]

Likewise, Anglo-Saxon women, and perhaps those of Scandinavian descent, adopted Scandinavian appearances according to Jane Kershaw. Even though her work focused on Scandinavian and Anglo-Scandinavian jewelry from the Danelaw in the 9th and 10th centuries, her research is foundational to this thesis. During this time, Anglo-Saxon women fastened and wore brooches onto their clothing differently than Scandinavian women.[170] But with the influx of popular Scandinavian styles into the market that came with the settlers, Anglo-Saxon women wanted brooches which appeared Scandinavian in their shapes and styles but were able to be fastened in a way familiar to them; the types of brooches which had these and other distinguishing features are known as Anglo-Scandinavian.[171] From this, as well as other evidence including the metals from which the brooches were made, Kershaw drew some fascinating, and perhaps controversial conclusions, as they go against many of the established theories or popular ideas regarding Scandinavian settlement in the Danelaw and the Anglo-Saxon reconquest of that

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[168] Benjamin W. IV Fortson, "Germanic," in *Indo-European Language and Culture* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 372-73.

[169] That is, assuming the women's opinion counted for anything in the matter of marriage. It is also possible that perhaps Anglo-Saxon suitors appropriated Scandinavian appearances in order to look like the Scandinavian elites, and therefore more attractive to the families of the women whom they considered marrying, especially considering the fact that marriage was one avenue through which to secure position and authority in England. Thus, the Anglo-Saxon men may not have been competing for the women, per se, but rather for the advantages that came with such marriages. Hadley, *The Vikings in England*, 260. Thanks to Dr. Martine Meuwese for her observations regarding this matter.

[170] Typical Scandinavian women's costume at this time included a pair of oval-shaped brooches, with one brooch attached to the front of each strap of the dress. These brooches could not be adapted to Anglo-Saxon dress. After the women's arrival in England, these brooches were replaced by one trefoil-shaped brooch which held the shawl in place. Richards, "Anglo-Scandinavian Identity," 54. Low numbers of oval-shaped brooches from archeological discoveries, some from female burials, in England suggest that these double oval brooch styles were put aside by early Scandinavian settlers, which agrees with Richards' findings above. Kershaw, *Viking Identities,* 225-26. Anglo-Saxon women's costume, by contrast, wore just one brooch type, the flat-disc brooch. Ibid., 228.

[171] Kershaw, *Viking Identities*, 229.

area. Kershaw deduced that, based on the evidence of Anglo-Scandinavian brooches, cultural influence seemed to be "one-directional, with Anglo-Saxons receiving Scandinavian influence," but there is not much evidence for the reverse process.[172] As mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, scholars have largely believed that it was the Scandinavians who were influenced by Anglo-Saxon styles and then assimilated. Kershaw also concluded that the brooches do not support the idea of mutual cultural assimilation in the Danelaw, but rather that they "signal local attempts at 'keeping up with the Scandinavians.'"[173] Apparently, a stylish group of Scandinavian elites were present in the Danelaw during this time, and the sizable immigrant population popularized "elite fashions."[174]

Beyond appearing attractive or stylish, why did the Anglo-Saxons, men and women, want to adopt Scandinavian styles? Kershaw proposed that it was likely beneficial for social or political gain to appear "Scandinavian" in the Danelaw.[175] She suggested that scholars "refocus attention on East Anglia as a region of core Scandinavian settlement and culture in the Danelaw."[176] For the Scandinavians in England in the late 9th and 10th centuries, Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity meant that they outwardly accepted Christianity to some extent

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[172] Ibid., 236.

[173] Ibid. Interestingly, Sarah Croix and Nelleke IJssennagger-van der Pluijm have pointed out that a number of portable objects of material culture (i.e. disk brooches) have been found in the Frisian area which "are clearly related to Anglo-Scandinavian material." Beginning to appear in the late 9th century, the same time that the Scandinavians begin to settle in England, these finds have parallels in both southern Scandinavia and the eastern Danelaw area. While they disagree with Kershaw regarding the extent of their use in terms of social mobility, they do agree that these brooches "may carry cultural meaning linked to identity." Sarah Croix and Nelleke IJssennagger-van der Pluijm, "Cultures without Borders? Approaching the Cultural Continuum in the Danish–Frisian Coastal Areas in the Early Viking Age," *Scandinavian Journal of History* 46, no. 3 (November 20, 2019): 304–27, https://doi.org/10.1080/03468755.2019.1687332, 312-13.

[174] Kershaw, *Viking Identities*, 248.

[175] Ibid.

[176] Ibid.

while keeping their cultural paganism alive. But for the Anglo-Saxons during this time, especially those in the Danelaw, Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity meant appropriating Scandinavian aesthetic appearances in order to promote themselves in different ways. For the wider English society, comprised of both Anglo-Saxons and Scandinavians, Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity meant being part of a bilingual society.

Linguistics: Personal and Place-Names

Though it is far more than can be discussed here, much research has been conducted regarding the linguistic impact of the Scandinavians on the English language. Words of Old Norse origin entered into the English language between the Old and Middle English periods.[177] Some of the most used every-day words such as *egg*, *birth*, and *sky*, and the pronouns *they/them/their* are all derived from Old Norse.[178] An example resulting from intermarriage between Scandinavian men and Anglo-Saxon women is the etymologies of the words *husband* and *wife*; the former is from Old Norse, while the latter is from Old English.[179] This section will focus on how personal and place-names of Viking Age England demonstrate Anglo-Scandinavian hybridity.

Matthew Townend presented Viking Age England as a bilingual society, suggesting that while it was not comprised of bilingual individuals (although bilingual individuals must have certainly existed), it predominantly consisted of monolingual speakers of Old Norse and Old English, which means that these languages must have been, to some extent, mutually

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[177] Hadley, *The Vikings in England*, 92.

[178] Etymologies found in the *New Oxford American Dictionary* (Second Edition), retrieved March 27, 2024.

[179] Fortson, IV, "Germanic," 372.

intelligible.[180] He also pointed out that Old English sources (and therefore their writers) were aware of the linguistic differences of place-names, strengthening his argument for England as a bilingual society.[181] In the society of Viking Age England, Old English and Old Norse seemed to enjoy similar status but, while the dispersion of Norse-derived loanwords are readily found beyond areas of Scandinavian settlement by the Middle English period, this is not true of place-names.[182] Scandinavian place-names in England were strongly connected to areas where Old Norse was spoken, and therefore areas of Scandinavian settlements.[183] However, some sites in England display hybridity in their place-names; such Scandinavian place-name elements were blended with Old English ones (i.e. ending in "-ton") and are referred to as Grimston Hybrids (see figure 19).[184]

After over a century of interaction, including intermarriage, "it is difficult to see Danish identity in the tenth century as a simple acknowledgment of Scandinavian ancestry" by their successive generations.[185] Throughout the generations, and as more Scandinavians began to accept Christianity, there are records of bishops with Scandinavian personal names.[186] Within the

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[180] Townend, "Viking Age England," 90.

[181] One example comes from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* in which a place which the Old English speakers called "Northworthy," but the Old Norse speakers (in this case, the Danes) called it "Derby." Ibid., 93-94. See also Whitelock, ed., *English Historical Documents*, 177, n. 10.

[182] Ibid., 98.

[183] Ibid.

[184] Hadley, "'Cockle amongst the Wheat': The Scandinavian Settlement of England," in *Social Identities in Early Medieval Britain*, ed. William O. Frazer and Andrew Tyrell (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2000), 128.

[185] Innes, "Danelaw Identities," 78.

[186] One example is Oscetel, Archbishop of York (not surprisingly), who died in 971. Whitelock, ed., *English Historical Documents*, 207. Ilse Lehiste noted that the name had an Old West Norse etymology, and explained that he was "probably a descendent of earlier settlers." Ilse Lehiste, "Names of Scandinavians in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle," *PMLA/Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 73, no. 1 (March 1958): 16, https://doi.org/10.2307/460271.

Danelaw, a great deal of the Scandinavian names are quite dissimilar from those personal names found in their ancestral lands. While this may also suggest Anglicization, "new names were created out of the individual elements of compound names within Anglo-Scandinavian households," which more strongly favors hybridity.[187] The significance of Scandinavian names lies within the number of different names which have been found throughout various sources.[188] However, the use of Scandinavian personal names as evidence of Scandinavian descent (as well as the conclusions drawn from this) must be checked against the knowledge that towards the end of the Viking Age in England, the same family may have both Old English and Scandinavian names.[189] There could have been many reasons why the Anglo-Saxons adopted the names of the settlers, or vice versa. Some of these reasons may have included aligning their families, or rather their children who bore these names, with the political alliances of their new rulers, as well as social and professional loyalties.[190]

An example of a mixed-named family is the 11th-century Anglo-Scandinavian Godwin family, from which the last Anglo-Saxon king, Harold, emerged.[191] His mother was a noblewoman of Danish descent, and gave birth to Harold during the time of Canute's reign.[192] In

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[187] Hadley, *The Vikings in England*, 119.

[188] Townend, "Viking Age England," 98.

[189] Hadley, "The Scandinavian Settlement," 127.

[190] Ibid., 127-28.

[191] King Harold reigned from January 6 to October 14, 1066. Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia, "Harold II," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, May 29, 2024, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Harold-II.

[192] Harold was born c. 1020. Ibid. Gytha Thorkelsdóttir's brother was the husband of one of Canute's sisters. Robert Higham, "The Godwins, Towns and St Olaf Churches: Comital Investment in the Mid-11th Century," in *The Land of the English Kiln: Studies in Wessex and Anglo-Saxon England in Honour of Professor Barbara Yorke*, ed. Alexander James Langlands and Ryan Lavelle (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 510.

fact, the Godwin family's first four sons had Scandinavian names.[193] Likewise, Tofi the Proud, a Dane who served Canute, called his son Æthelstan, a thoroughly Anglo-Saxon name.[194] When these, or other similar names, were recorded after c. 1040, "they could refer to Englishmen, just as native ones may denote men of Scandinavia or mixed descent."[195]

Old English (and Latin) won out in the surviving written record, though this does not indicate that Old Norse was not used in writing in Viking Age England, nor does it indicate that a Scandinavian community stopped speaking Old Norse.[196] This will be demonstrated in the next chapter when discussing Canute and his court, and in Chapter 5 when examining the St. Paul's runestone. There were Old Norse-speaking communities throughout in the 11th century, and possibly even into the twelfth.[197] The discussion of linguistics here demonstrates that beyond being a bilingual society, 11th-century England was an Anglo-Scandinavian one. The Grimston Hybrids particularly show that linguistics and place-names contributed to Anglo-Scandinavian hybridity in the wider cultural identity. Additionally, the use of both Old English and Old Norse names throughout England, sometimes within the same family, demonstrates the hybrid nature of Anglo-Scandinavian identity which was initiated by Canute's reign, and fully blossomed during the period of Danish kingship.

Conclusion

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[193] M. K. Lawson, *Cnut: The Danes in England in the Early Eleventh Century* (New York: Longman Publishing Group, 1993) 167.

[194] Ibid.

[195] Ibid.

[196] Richards, "Anglo-Scandinavian Identity," 49.

[197] Ibid., and Townend, "Viking Age England," 95.

Julian Richards wrote that "Anglo-Scandinavian" was a more appropriate term for settlements in the Danelaw, as it implies "the invention of a new identity arising from cultures in contact."[198] Dawn Hadley described that, rather than disappearing, Scandinavians throughout 10th-century England "forged a relationship with native culture and society which, in turn, adopted much from the new arrivals," succinctly summarizing much of what has been discussed here: the anglicization of the settlers and appropriation of (some of) their ways by the settled.[199] This chapter has demonstrated that Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity came about through various ways of contact between Scandinavians and Anglo-Saxons in aspects of religion, appearance, and language. This chapter has also showed that Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity is multifaceted. Anglicized Scandinavians, Anglo-Saxons appropriating Scandinavian appearances, and hybrid families and place-names all contributed to a unique, albeit short-lived, cultural identity. This unique theoretical framework, a multifaceted identity with (at least) three components, created here from the theories of other scholars will be the lens through which the artistic pieces selected for this research will be viewed. This theoretical framework will directly answer the research question: how the use of the Great Beast motif can be used to *understand* Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity. As these various facets of "Anglo-Scandinavian-ism" began to develop in the late 9th and 10th centuries, they were well-established by the time Canute came to the English throne in 1016. Canute inherited a kingdom in which its subjects had developed a cultural identity reflective of its people, but Canute made the kingdom itself Anglo-Scandinavian by uniting England and his domains in Scandinavia under one crown. This in turn

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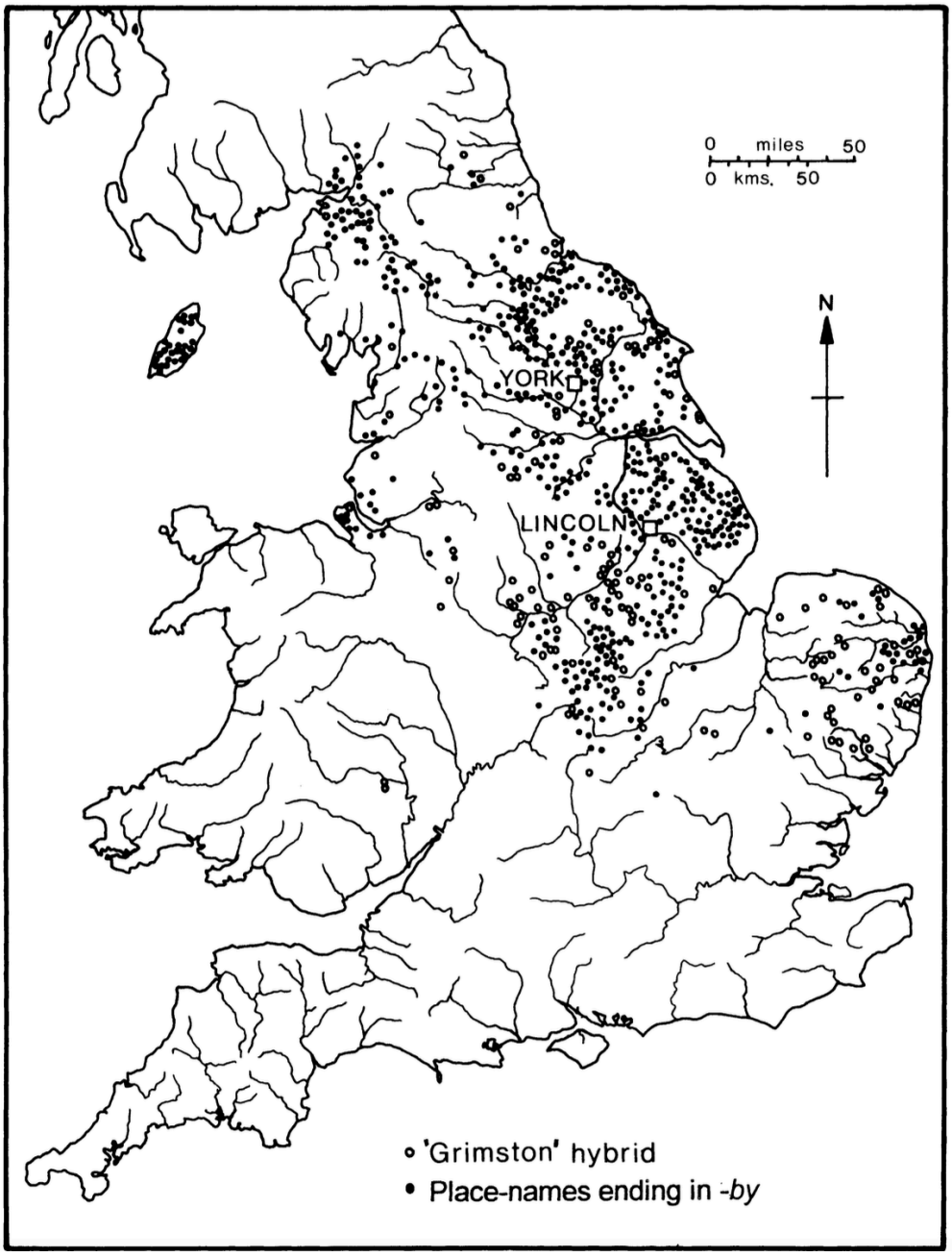
[198] Richards, "Identifying Anglo-Scandinavian Settlements," in *Cultures in Contact: Scandinavian Settlement in England in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries*, ed. Dawn M. Hadley and Julian D. Richards (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 303.

[199] Ibid., 127.

brought an influx of new immigrants from across his “North Sea Empire” as well as the Great Beast motif.

FIGURES

Figure 19: Distribution of Scandinavian place-names in England.[200]



[200] Townend, *Viking Age England*, 97 (after Richards, 1991, 34).

Chapter 4: Canute, His Reign, and His Influence in England

Before discussing the use of the Great Beast motif in England, this chapter will explore this crucial (sub-)question: what was Canute's role, if any, in the popularization and spread of this motif? In Scandinavia, the use of the Great Beast motif exploded in popularity through the spread of the Ringerike and Urnes styles, which developed in the 11th century. In England, these styles also became popular due to the Danish royal dynasty, which began with Canute's reign in 1016 and ended with that of his son in 1042. Although the Great Beast does not appear to be directly associated with him, Canute was indirectly involved in the Great Beast's use in 11th-century England. Canute's preference for Scandinavian 'cultural paganism' affected those within his court as well as those outside of it who produced Anglo-Scandinavian artistic expressions. His influence on a new wave of Scandinavian immigration, which included craftsmen familiar with the latest Viking art styles, also brought the Great Beast to England, since it is a motif not seen before his reign. Additionally, these stonemasons and metalworkers brought with them the proper Scandinavian execution techniques. However, the motif might be more directly connected to Cantue's followers or other members of the elite class.

Biographical Background

Little facts are known of Canute's early life. He was born sometime around 995 to Sweyn Forkbeard and his wife, a Polish princess according to *The Chronicle of Thietmar of*

Merseburg.[201] Grandson of Harald Bluetooth, he came from the royal line which both unified and christianized Denmark, according to the Jelling Stone. Canute is first mentioned in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* in the entry for the year 1013, at the beginning of Sweyn's conquest of England: "When [Sweyn] perceived that all the people had submitted to him, he gave orders that his army should be provisioned and provided with horses, and then he afterwards turned southward with his full forces and left the ships and the hostages in charge of his son [Canute]."[202] Æthelred the Unready fled England for the safety of Normandy by the end of 1013, leaving Sweyn to assume power in England until he died in early February 1014.[203] All of the aforementioned fleet chose Canute as king, but the English decided to recall Æthelred from Normandy, who defeated Canute in Lindsey.[204] Canute then returned to Denmark, assembled a large fleet, and the following year he launched another invasion, this time into Wessex, which submitted to him.[205] With some West Saxon defectors, Canute turned northward into Mercia "[during] the Christmas season, and ravaged and burnt, and killed all they came across."[206] Æthelred's son, the ætheling Edmund Ironside, tried to assemble an army to stop Canute, but the men essentially refused to assemble.[207] After advancing more deeply into the north, as far as Northumbria, Canute turned with his fleet southwards towards London.[208] Before the ships

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[201] Whitelock, ed., *English Historical Documents*, 319.

[202] Ibid., 223.

[203] Ibid., 223-24.

[204] Ibid., 224.

[205] Ibid., 224-25.

[206] Ibid., 225.

[207] Ibid.

[208] Ibid., 225-26. At this point in the entry for the year 1016, the *Chronicle* refers to him as "King Cnut."

arrived, however, Æthelred died and Edmund became king.[209] Fighting between Canute's and Edmund's armies ensued, which climaxed at the Battle of Ashingdon on October 18, 1016 and "there [Canute] had the victory and won for himself all the English people."[210] Edmund and Canute agreed to divide England along the Thames, with Canute in control of Mercia.[211] Only weeks later Edmund died, and Canute became king of the whole country; his coronation took place in London early in the following year.[212] Canute eventually also became the King of Denmark (1018-35) and of Norway (1028-34),[213] which created the personal union that is sometimes called the "North Sea Empire" (figure 20).

Canute as an Anglicized Scandinavian

Considering the discussion of the previous chapter, Canute's cultural identity most closely aligns with "Anglicized Scandinavian." Although it was likely that Canute had been baptized before assuming the English crown, he nonetheless practiced 'cultural paganism' in his court; Jesch claimed that he "not only allowed but even encouraged…'cultural paganism,' the use of heathen motifs and vocabulary in certain literary and artistic contexts."[214] For example, poetry composed and performed at his court, perhaps in Winchester, demonstrates the use of pagan imagery.[215] The *Knútsdrápa,* a poem in Old Norse which was evidently composed for

[209] Ibid., 226.

[210] Ibid., 227.

[211] Ibid. Whitelock noted that chronicle "D" reads "the north part [above the Thames]."

[212] Alison Weir, *Britain's Royal Families: The Complete Genealogy* (London: Pimlico, 2002), 30. Weir noted that there is no contemporary evidence which supports this.

[213] Higham, "The Godwins, Towns and St. Olaf Churches," 510.

[214] Jesch, "Scandinavians and 'Cultural Paganism'," 58.

[215] Ibid.

performance in an English milieu according to Jesch, contains many references to Norse mythology and uses kennings.[216] The poem simultaneously reminds the audience, which was probably Canute's Danish followers in England, of the king's Scandinavian cultural heritage and "the Christian and royal context in which [Canute] must be viewed as king of England."[217] Likewise, the St. Paul's runestone is just one artistic example of flourishing Anglicized Scandinavian cultural expressions, especially by that of Canute's followers.[218] While the discussion of this sculpture will be examined more fully in the following chapter, for now it is acceptable to say that the runestone can be seen as Canute's encouragement of 'cultural paganism' in an artistic context. Lawson also pointed out that even though Canute became extraordinarily pious (at least in his outward actions), he still "retained some of the values and attitudes of a pagan past."[219] Like Jesch, he cited poetic and artistic evidence of the pagan attitudes and values of Canute and his court.[220]

In spite of Canute's preference for Old Norse poetry in his inner court, he was externally viewed as a Christian king who upheld many of the laws of his Anglo-Saxon predecessors. He modeled many of his laws on those of King Edgar (r. 959-975).[221] In the Preface to Canute's Laws from 1018, the councilors decreed that "the Danes and the English" who "put an end to all their former strife" by the might of Canute and his aforementioned councilors, were to "honour

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[216] Ibid., 58-59. Kennings are the distinctive compound expressions plentiful in Old Norse (and Old English) poetry which contain metaphoric meanings. Definition found in the *New Oxford American Dictionary* (Second Edition), retrieved June 18, 2024

[217] Ibid., 60.

[218] Ibid.

[219] Lawson, *Cnut*, 130.

[220] Ibid.

[221] Ibid., 61.

one God and steadfastly hold one Christian faith, and would love King Cnut…and *zealously observe Edgar's laws.*"[222] Canute's laws also had many details similar to those of Æthelred; these commonalities can almost certainly be attributed to Archbishop Wulfstan of York.[223] While this responsibility undoubtedly goes to Wulfstan and may have little to do with Canute's personal investment in creating his laws, it does show that Canute welcomed the archbishop's work.[224] Canute's Letter to the English People (1019-20) contains some of Wulfstan's influence, mainly his phraseology, but it also made Canute out to be a "gracious lord and faithful observer of God's rights and just secular law."[225] This was important to Canute, since "law-giving was an important part of Christian kingship, and…he was certainly concerned to appear the Christian king."[226]

Though he was a ruler of Danish origins who allowed and encouraged 'cultural paganism' during his reign, Canute rose to the religious expectations of an English king, as thoroughly Christian as his predecessors, though his bigamy and occasionally ruthless actions were at odds with teachings of the Church.[227] Having been baptized at some point before he took the throne,[228] Canute's desire to be seen as the protective Christian king of England can be found

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[222] Whitelock, ed., *English Historical Documents*, 414. Emphasis added. (CCC, Cambridge MS 201).

[223] Katherine Holman, *The Northern Conquest: Vikings in Britain and Ireland* (Luton: Andrews UK Ltd., 2007), 179. See also Lawson, *Cnut*, 61-3.

[224] Lawson, *Cnut*, 63.

[225] Whitelock, ed., *English Historical Documents*, 414-15. (York Gospels, York Minster Ms. Add. 1)

[226] Lawson, *Cnut*, 63.

[227] Ibid., 131-32. Canute was married to two women at the same time. His first wife was Ælfgifu of Northampton, from whom his son and successor Harold Harefoot (r. 1035-40) came. His second wife was Emma of Normandy, the widow of Æthelred, from whom came Harthacnut (r. 1040-42). Ælfgifu was regent of Norway from 1030-35, and Emma was his foremost queen in English matters, as her portrait with Canute in the *Liber Vitae* and the manuscript *Encomium Emmae Reginae* demonstrate. Ibid., 113-14. Weir, *Britain's Royal Families*, 30-31.

[228] Lawson, *Cnut*, 129. Jesch, "Scandinavians and 'Cultural Paganism'," 58.

in his letter of 1027, addressed to "the whole race of the English."[229] It states, "I have recently been to Rome, to pray for the remission of my sins and for the safety of the kingdoms and of the peoples which are subjected to my rule."[230] Thanking Almighty God for his opportunity to "worship and adore" in and around Rome, Canute spoke to the Pope on behalf of his subjects "whether English or Danes," that they should "be granted more equitable law and greater security on their way to Rome, and that they should not be hindered by so many barriers on the way and so oppressed by unjust tolls."[231] He also interceded for his archbishops to pay less "to receive the *pallium*."[232] The letter mentioned his attendance at the imperial coronation of Conrad II, also in Rome.[233] At this coronation were many important and influential rulers from around Europe; for Canute to be one of its invited guests was a great honor and showed that he was considered to be their equals.[234] There are two cultural depictions of Canute as a pious Christian king. One is a contemporary portrait of Canute and his wife Emma which survives in the *Liber Vitae* (Stowe MS 944, f. 6r), which shows angels crowning the pair while they dedicate a cross to the New Minster church (figure 21).[235] The other is found in a skaldic poem, the *Tøgdrápa*, which summarizes Canute's journey to Rome and describes him as "dear to the emperor, friend

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[229] Whitelock, ed., *English Historical Documents*, 416.

[230] His journey was corroborated by the entry in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (C)*. Ibid., 231, 416-17. In the introductory paragraph, the letter claims that Canute was "king of All England, and of Denmark, and of the Norwegians, and part of the Swedes," thus he truly had an Anglo-Scandinavian empire.

[231] Ibid., 417.

[232] Ibid.

[233] Ibid. Conrad was the Holy Roman Emperor from 1027 until his death in Utrecht in 1039. Canute's daughter by Emma married Conrad's son and successor Henry the year after the coronation. Peter Munz, "Conrad II," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, May 31, 2024, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Conrad-II.

[234] Whitelock, ed., *English Historical Documents*, 417.

[235] Leslie Webster, *Anglo-Saxon Art* (London: The British Museum Press, 2012), 220.

of Peter, [who] reaped a portion of Rome's glory."[236] From the cultural perspectives of both the English and the Scandinavians in the forms of manuscript illustration and skaldic poetry respectively, Canute seems to have been successfully perceived by his subjects as a Christian king.

Canute, therefore, was truly an Anglicized Scandinavian. He kept Scandinavian 'cultural paganism' alive within his court and encouraged it amongst his followers. These followers, and/or their followers, seemed to perpetuate Scandinavian styles, artistic or otherwise, making them popular because of their status as elites. Simultaneously, perhaps as a result of his kingly expectations and responsibilities, Canute endeavored to project an English, and consequently Christian, image similar to that of his predecessors. Canute's position as king was used to indirectly influence the encouragement of 'cultural paganism' in England among both Scandinavians and Anglo-Saxons.

Influence

Canute's North Sea Empire created ideal conditions for the movement of people, ideas and fashions between Scandinavia and England during his reign, an exchange that went both ways.[237] This has been alluded to in the previous chapter, but will be more fully examined here. Jesch theorized that during Canute's reign, "'cultural paganism' seems to have been an imported phenomenon, designed to appease or please the followers of the conqueror, a nod to their cultural, if not their religious heritage."[238] Additionally, more Anglo-Scandinavian activity

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[236] Whitelock, ed., *English Historical Documents,* 310.

[237] Higham, "The Godwins, Towns and St. Olaf Churches," 510. Webster, *Anglo-Saxon Art*, 221.

[238] Ibid., 61.

flourished in the south of England, including London, rather than remaining within the confines of the Danelaw boundary.[239] This may be because in 1017 according to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Canute reorganized England into larger administrative departments, which resembled the earlier Anglo-Saxon kingdoms of East Anglia, Mercia, Northumbria, and Wessex.[240] Remaking them into earldoms, he placed one of his men as earls in each of the areas, but he kept Wessex for himself.[241] This may account for the flourishing of Anglo-Scandinavian activity in the south at this time, when it had been previously restricted to the Danelaw.

Canute's ascension to the English throne brought new waves of Scandinavian immigrants to England who may or may not have been fully converted to Christianity.[242] The 'cultural paganism' of these 11th-century immigrants may have been more vibrant to them than to the previous generations of earlier settlers, who were by now likely fully Christianized. In other words, though they may have been somewhat converted to Christianity, they were perhaps more familiar with Scandinavian artistic and poetic cultural expressions than the Scandinavian immigrants of the late 9th and 10th centuries. The immigrants who arrived during Canute's reign may have also been able to provide a specific set of skills in metalwork or stonemasonry for example for the pre-existing and incoming Scandinavian populations. This does not dismiss the likelihood that craftsmen came to England in the first wave of settlement: Kershaw discussed at length the differences in execution of designs, motifs, and attachment settings in 9th and 10th century Scandinavian, Anglo-Saxon, and Anglo-Scandinavian brooches by the respective

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[239] Jesch, "Scandinavians and 'Cultural Paganism'," 60, 62-63.

[240] Whitelock, ed., *English Historical Documents*, 227.

[241] The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* records "East Anglia for Thorkel, Mercia for Eadric, and Northumbria for Eric." Ibid.

[242] Jesch, "Scandinavians and 'Cultural Paganism'," 57.

craftsmen.[243] This also does not dismiss the possibility that Anglo-Saxon craftsmen copied designs and motifs from Scandinavian exemplars; they likely tried their best, but this will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter. The point here is that it is conceivable, even likely, that the new generation of immigrant craftsmen from Scandinavia may have had a better understanding of the Ringerike and Urnes styles, which both developed in the 11th century, and how to execute them. For example, the stonemason used to create the runestone at St. Paul's had not only spent some time in England, as he was familiar with Anglo-Saxon gravestone designs, but was also completely at home with the execution of the fashionable Ringerike style on stone, which suggests he must have been Scandinavian.[244] The use of runes and therefore language was also familiar to him, which further supports this theory.[245] Fuglesang suggested that when taken together, the Ringerike style seen on the runestone from London, the Ringerike elements in the Winchcombe Psalter, and the unusual Ringerike designs found on some English metalwork point to Scandinavian-trained artisans who worked in southern England.[246]

Lastly, Canute and the effects of his reign may have had an influence on the settlers themselves and their expressions of Anglo-Scandinavian. Richards noted that in the late 9th and 10th centuries, or the "first phase" of Scandinavian immigration to England, assimilation was often reached through intermarriage and Anglo-Scandinavian identity was created by females.[247] As mentioned in the previous chapter, Scandinavian men more often married Anglo-Saxon

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[243] Kershaw, *Viking Identities*, 224, 229, 231-32, 234, 245.

[244] Holman, *The Northern Conquest*, 194.

[245] Ibid.

[246] Fuglesang, *Some Aspects*, 77-78.

[247] Richards, "Anglo-Scandinavian Identity," 55.

women, rather than the opposite scenario, and thus the women adopted Scandinavian cultural aspects, such as appearances.[248] However, during Canute's reign in the 11th century and the creation of his "North Sea Empire," Anglo-Scandinavian lordship and identity was primarily displayed by males.[249] This may have been expressed through the Anglicized Scandinavian aspect of cultural identity; as Canute himself demonstrated, so his retainers may have followed suit. Hadley added that Canute's conquest was not able to regenerate a sense of Scandinavian unity amongst the earlier generations of settlers living in the south and in East Anglia.[250] In other words, those earlier Scandinavian settlers in those regions did not feel akin to those who came from Scandinavia during Canute's reign. Perhaps this disunity contributed to the plurality of Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity.

'Cultural Paganism' and Anglo-Scandinavian Art

Canute's influence on the artistic aspect of 'cultural paganism' during his reign was indirect. Wilson and Klindt-Jensen pointed out that England was only a portion of Canute's Anglo-Scandinavian empire, and that it was "in one sense a Viking country and produced—alongside its naive styles—a typically Viking art."[251] Lawson agreed, writing, "In England itself the Danish conquest naturally increased the impact of Scandinavian culture."[252] The Vikings had

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[248] An example of this is even found Cantue's life though his first marriage to the Anglo-Saxon Ælgifu, who eventually ruled in Norway on Canute's behalf. He also later took the Anglo-Saxon queen Emma as his second wife (although she was from Normandy), though of course it is unknown how either Ælgifu or Emma altered their appearances as the wives of Canute.

[249] Ibid.

[250] Hadley, *The Vikings in England*, 130.

[251] Wilson and Klindt-Jensen, *Viking Art*, 141.

[252] Lawson, *Cnut*, 213.

brought their artistic styles from Scandinavia with them since their arrival in England in the late 9th century, but during the Danish reign, the Ringerike and Urnes styles became increasingly popular.[253] Perhaps due to Canute's direct presence, the Ringerike style is well represented in south-east England, including London, whereas other earlier (Anglo-)Scandinavian sculpture had been more popular in the north.[254] It is not known if Canute or those of his court ever commissioned artwork expressed in stone or metalwork or any other mediums, like his grandfather did of the Jelling Stone, but other Scandinavians certainly did.[255] Fuglesang remarked that "a number of finds (particularly those from London) indicate that the Danes, Norwegians, and Swedes who served or traded under Cnut were patrons of workshops producing Ringerike ornament."[256] While the St. Paul's runestone is one example of stone sculpture commissioned by Anglicized Scandinavians, others include metalwork, stone fragments, and a bone pin.[257] Lawson and others point to a stone fragment, dating to Canute's reign, which depicts the Sigmund saga from Old Minster in Winchester (figure 22).[258] It may have been part of a larger narrative freeze displayed near the royal tombs in the church, and it's purpose was to celebrate the shared traditions of Danish and English royal families.[259] It is also possible that

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[253] Graham-Campbell, *Viking Art*, 111.

[254] Holman, *The Northern Conquest*, 193. E.g., Cumbria and York, in the northwest and northeast respectively.

[255] Fuglesang*, Some Aspects*, 78.

[256] Fuglesang, "The Relationship between Scandinavian and English Art from the Late Eight to the Mid-Twelfth Century," in *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Culture*, ed. Paul E. Szarmach and Virginia Darrow Oggins (Kal: Medieval Institute Publications, Western Michigan University, 1986), 227.

[257] Holman, *The Northern Conquest*, 193-94.

[258] Lawson, *Cnut*, 213. Jesch, "Scandinavians and 'Cultural Paganism'," 60. Bailey, *Viking Age Sculpture*, 123. Lawson and Jesch referred to this stone as the "Sigmund" stone while Bailey called it the "Sigurd" stone. The stone itself refers to the story of Sigurd the Dragon-Slayer, son of Sigmund, thus both names are used. Furthermore, it depicts a legendary, rather than mythological, subject. Jesch, "Scandinavians and 'Cultural Paganism'," 60-61.

[259] Bailey, *Viking Age Sculpture*, 123.

Canute's promotion of 'cultural paganism' found its way, surprisingly, into manuscripts, such as the Winchcombe Psalter (figure 23), and other English manuscripts contain hints of Scandinavian influence, although to a little and debatable extent.[260] Therefore, Canute's influence may have manifested in the rise of Anglo-Scandinavian art specifically, though this included a variety of (surviving) mediums. Furthermore, Canute's influence on Anglo-Scandinavian art seems to have been limited to East Anglia and southern England, as there is a lack of finds in the general north which depict the Ringerike and Urnes styles.[261] This evidence indicates that the scale Canute's influence, or rather that of his followers, on art and culture was mostly regional.[262] This claim is supported by the objects selected for this thesis: they all depict either the Ringerike or (English) Urnes styles, to one extent or another, and they were all found in the former region of East Anglia or in southern England.

Conclusion

According to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Canute died in 1035 in Shaftesbury.[263] Lawson commented extensively on the achievements of Canute's reign.[264] Canute assumed a complicated political situation in England, but he made the best use of his time as its king. Solving a number of the kingdom's problems (at least temporarily), Canute also took many of the opportunities presented to him. Eventually, he secured a firm hold on England and establish his Danish

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[260] Lawson, *Cnut*, 213-14.

[261] Hadley, *The Vikings in England*, 130.

[262] Ibid.

[263] Whitelock, ed., *Historical English Documents*, 232.

[264] Lawson, *Cnut,* 115.

dynasty, short-lived though it was, as his rivals for the throne never attempted his (or his sons') overthrow.[265] Like the powerful Anglo-Saxon kings that came before him, the Scots and the Welsh may have recognized Canute as overlord. Outside of England, he surpassed his father's achievements in Scandinavia, and his continental reputation was also remarkable. He was the first English king in over a century, and the first ever Danish king, to be part of the extended imperial family through his marriage to Emma of Normandy. His relationships to other leaders in Europe was greeted with equal respect and diplomacy, and he made at least one trip to Rome. Canute's "North Sea Empire," did not last beyond his death, and his Danish dynasty in England reverted back to the Wessex one after the death of his last successively ruling son, only seven years after his own.[266] It is striking that only two kings of Viking Age England were ever awarded the epithet "the Great": Alfred of Wessex and Canute the Dane. Ironically, Alfred spent much, if not all, of his reign repelling the likes of Canute's Danish ancestors, and despite his efforts, Canute, the other "Great," took his throne only a little over a century later.

Today, historians sometimes see Canute the Great "as Anglo-Saxon as his subjects," which many of his actions during his reign demonstrated.[267] While outwardly this may have been true, his cultural affinity for and influence on Scandinavian 'cultural paganism' in England was considerable, as evidenced by the surviving examples of Old Norse poetry and the Ringerike style displayed in various mediums which correspond to the years of his reign (and those of his sons). His indirect influence on art in England, especially the southern part and around London,

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[265] Ibid. Emma's sons by the preceding king Æethered, Edward and Alfred lived in exile during the Danish rule of England. Edward succeeded Canute's last son as king of England and became known as "Edward the Confessor" (r. 1042-1066).

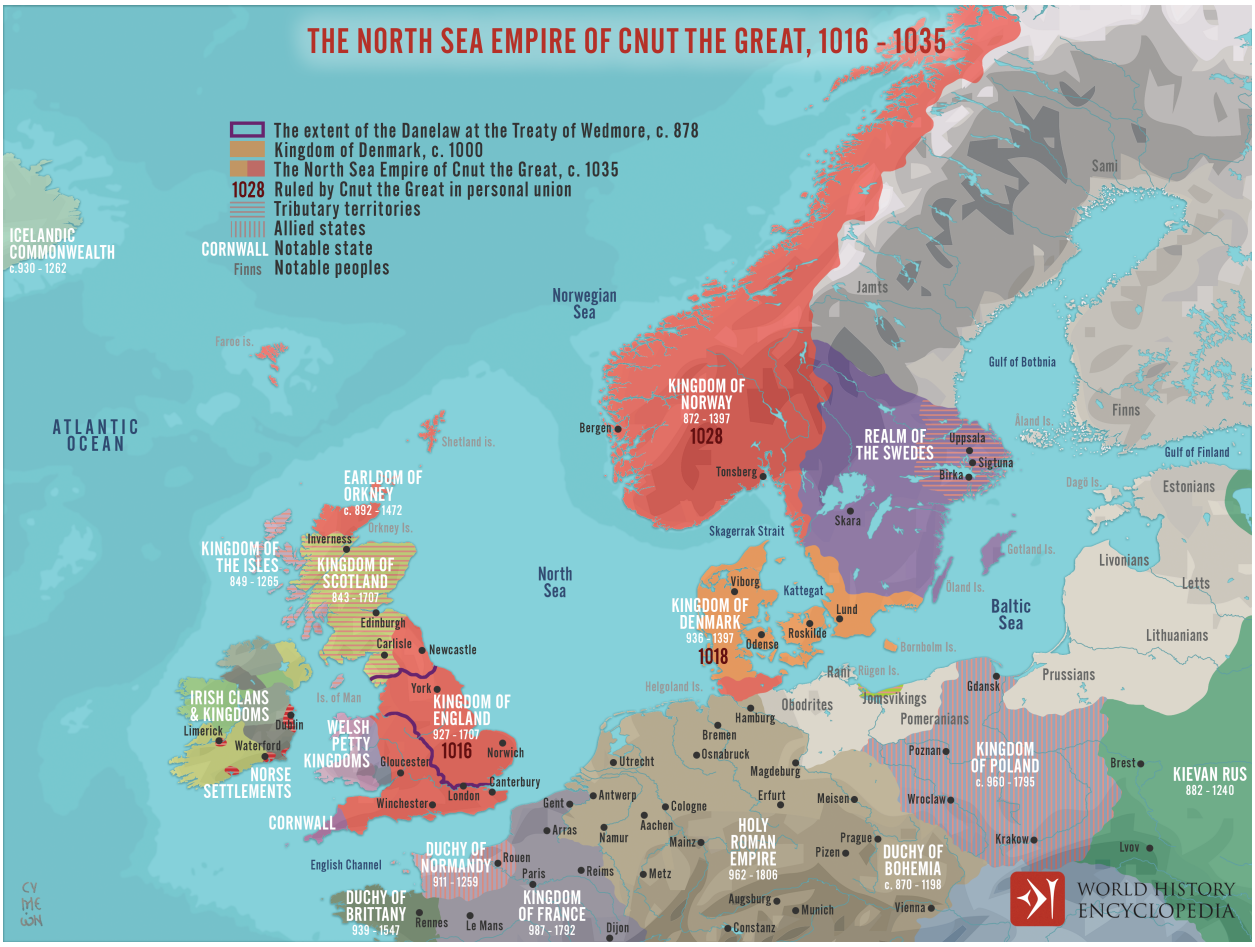
[266] Ibid.

[267] Webster, *Anglo-Saxon Art*, 220.

cannot be understated. His reign indirectly imported the Ringerike style from Scandinavia, which became popular and fashionable with the Scandinavian elite so much so that, like appearance discussed in the previous chapter, it was popularized by the non-elites.[268] Nearly every academic source consulted for this thesis not only dated the erection of St. Paul's runestone to Canute's reign, but also associated it with those who may have been members of the Scandinavian elite or his followers. As seen on the Runestone, the popularity of the Ringerike style brought the use and subsequent spread of the Great Beast motif. While the use of Great Beast's within the English cultural context will be the subject of the following chapter, suffice it to say that it was because of Canute's ascension to the English throne that the Great Beast came to England, though nothing in this discussion has alluded to a connection between the Great Beast motif and Canute directly with any degree certainty. Both his encouragement of 'cultural paganism' and the influx of Scandinavian craftsmen during his reign contributed to the use of the Great Beast in England.

[268] Holman, *The Northern Conquest*, 193. See also Kershaw, *Viking Identities*, 248.

Figure 20: Canute's North Sea Empire, 1016-35.[269]



[269] Simeon Netchev, *The North Sea Empire of Cnut the Great, 1016-1035*, 2023, World History Encyclopedia, 2023, https://www.worldhistory.org/uploads/images/17441.png?v=1696240206.

Figure 21: Canute and Emma. *Liber Vitae* (also known as *New Minster Register*), MS Stowe 944, folio 6r. 1031. British Library, London, UK.[270]

[270] British Library, Stowe MS 944, F. 6, 2011, Medieval Manuscripts Blog, 2011, https://blogs.bl.uk/digitisedmanuscripts/2011/06/the-new-minster-liber-vitae.html. Kendrick, *Late Saxon*, plate XVIII.

Figure 22: The Sigmund Stone, Winchester Cathedral, Winchester, UK.[271]

[271] Babel Stone, *The Sigmund Stone on Display at Winchester Cathedral*, 2022, Wikimedia Commons, 2022, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/16/Winchester_Cathedral_Sigmund_Stone.jpg.

Figure 23: Animal initial, detail. Winchcombe Psalter, MS Ff.1.23, folio 37v. Cambridge University Library. Cambridge, UK.[272]

[272] University of Cambridge, *Page: 37v*, 2022, University of Cambridge Digital Library, 2022, https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-FF-00001-00023/76.

CHAPTER 5: THE GREAT BEAST IN ENGLAND

In order to provide context for the main question, an exploration and establishment of criteria for the Beast in Scandinavia first needed to be examined. Additionally, understanding the plurality of Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity in the 11th century, as well as the factors that contributed to these different facets, including the role of King Canute, provides an understanding of the wider cultural milieu into which the Beast enters. At this point, the thesis' main question can be answered. "How can the use of the Viking 'Great Beast' motif be used to understand Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity in 11th-century England?" The focus of this final chapter will be on the iconographical and iconological case studies of the three selected works for this thesis: the runestone from St. Paul's in London, the Sutton Brooch (also called the Ædwen Brooch), and the Pitney Brooch. Erwin Panofsky's three levels of iconographic/ iconological analysis will be used to identify the Great Beast motif in these English works. Once the Beast has been identified by iconographical analysis, an iconological analysis will be made in order to explain how and why the motif was chosen in Viking Age England during the 11th century. A closer look at the cultural context and meaning of the motif will allow for an examination of its use in Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity. Then, by comparing these distinct depictions of the Beast motif and the various aspects of Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity that they reflect, the similarities and differences between the depictions of the Beast will become clearer: in stone as a memorial and in metalwork brooches as badges, both of which reflect identity but in different ways.

English "Beasts"

Before the introduction of the Scandinavian Great Beast into England around the time of Canute's reign, there were other similar depictions of beasts that date to earlier periods. The purpose of discussing these beasts is to draw a sharper distinction between them and the Scandinavian Great Beast, the latter of which came through Viking interaction and habitation in England. Using the criteria established in Chapter 2, these early beasts will be compared to the Scandinavian ones, demonstrating that they do not share the same characteristics as the Great Beast.

The first example is a very small Late Saxon copper alloy disk brooch on which an ambiguous quadruped is semi-naturally depicted (figure 24).[273] Each of the legs has claws or toes, and the animal's head is depicted in profile, and is turned backwards towards its upturned tail. Set within a circular frame of twenty-eight pellets, the animal's eye and hip joints have been marked by a ring-and-dot. No other figures, human or animal, are depicted with this beast. These all meet the Great Beast criteria, except for the eyes and hip joints, where ring-and-dot was used instead of the almond-shaped eyes and spiral hip joints. This is therefore not the Viking Great Beast. There are a few interesting details to note, however, regarding this brooch that are pertinent to this discussion. The brooch has been dated to between 900 and 1065, though the Portable Antiquities Scheme website states that "backward-turning animal brooches date to the late Saxon period, probably from the early 10th [century] onwards. The type is characteristic of East Anglia."[274] It was found in what is today known as Suffolk county, which was the area of

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[273] The British Museum, "Record ID: NMS-F14788 - EARLY MEDIEVAL Brooch," The Portable Antiquities Scheme, 2015, https://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/710022.

[274] Ibid.

East Anglia during this period and a massive part of Danelaw territory during the Viking Age. Kershaw noted that "East Anglia had its own, native backwards-biting beast motif (Smedley and Owles 1965). Perhaps the popularity of the Jellinge[-style] beast within England reflected the local inhabitants' familiarity with, and predisposition towards, motifs of this type."[275]

Another beastly example is the ambiguous animal portrayed on the cross shaft from St. Alkmund's Church, Derby.[276] This quadruped is also semi-naturalistic, with its crested head in profile and clawed feet. The animal has a double-stranded ribbon tongue sticks out of its mouth, wraps around its neck, loops through its tail, and plays with the animal's front right leg, which is raised up to meet it. The tail, after looping through the tongue, is also a double-stranded ribbon, but splits and curves outward underneath the animal. The looping and double-stranded ribbons, as well as its outstretched, tendril-like tongue, are reminiscent of the Great Beast depicted in the Mammen style on the Jelling Stone. However, this cross shaft beast lacks the spiral hip joints needed to meet the criteria which all Scandinavian Great Beasts have. This beast is also not depicted alone, for the legs of another unidentified animal have been sculpted above it within the same frame. Kendrick theorized that the Great Beast is original to the Anglo-Saxons, citing this example on the cross shaft which he dated to the 9th century, and that the Scandinavian Great Beast is "based on the Anglian theme."[277] Scandinavians were present in Derby, and therefore it is possible that they had seen this beast on the cross shaft. According to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, the town had been part of the Danelaw until the Lady Æthelflæd captured it in July

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[275] Kershaw, *Viking Identities*, 224.

[276] See figure 4.

[277] Kendrick, *Late Saxon*, 88.

917 and annexed it to the Kingdom of Mercia.[278] In Æthelwulf's version of the *Chronicle*, he wrote that a certain ealderman was buried in a place which the Old English speakers called "Northworthy," but the Old Norse speakers (in this case, the Danes) called it "Derby."[279] Whether or not this cross shaft beast was in the minds of the Scandinavians who saw it in Derby and became the precursor to the Scandinavian one is a matter of debate which is beyond the scope of this paper, but suffice it to say that the similarities between the two motifs are striking.

Though many similarities exist between these two pre-existing English beasts and the Scandinavian Great Beast motifs, they are not the same. However, it may be that the English beast motifs may have been familiar enough to the existing population of Anglo-Saxons and Scandinavians in England that by the time the Great Beast arrived, the latter easily gained acceptance and even popularity due to the reign of Canute and the rise of Scandinavian elites in Anglo-Scandinavian visual-material culture.[280] While these English beast motifs are not equivalent to the Scandinavian Great Beast, they perhaps paved the way for the acceptance of the Scandinavian Great Beast in England, and the three works selected for this study will now be examined.

St. Paul's Runestone

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[278] Whitelock, *English Historical Documents*, 196. The Lady Æthelflæd was the daughter of Alfred the Great. She married Lord Æthelred of Mercia, who died in 911. She became Lady of Mercia the following year. With her brother King Edward the Elder, she fought back against the Vikings to win over their territory until her death in 918. Ibid., 183, note 3, 193, 198.

[279] Ibid., 177, note 10.

[280] Kendrick, *Late Saxon*, 93-97.

The online Scandinavian runestone database site Runor labels this runestone as “English Runic inscription E 2” (hereafter “Runestone,” figure 25).[281] It was found in the churchyard at St. Paul’s Cathedral in London in the mid-19th century.[282] The Runestone is now part of the permanent collection of the Museum of London.[283] While the museum website dates the object to the early 11th century, a more specific date for the Runestone is during the reign of Canute.[284] Made from limestone,[285] it is a rectangular-cut slab with the motif depicted horizontally on the front face of the stone and a runic inscription along its left vertical side (figure 26). Although the Runestone is partially damaged and cracked in multiple places and the runic inscription has been abruptly cut-off, it contains traces of white, blue-black and red paints,[286] and an illustration of what the Runestone may have originally looked like has been made (figure 27). The sculptor of the Runestone also framed the decorative motif with a simple border with two lobes in each top corner.

The motif on the stone is a quadruped and another smaller animal, likely a snake due to its lack of legs and partially coiled body, both carved in low-relief. The quadruped's legs, attached to its body by spiral hip joints, tangle with the snake's tail. The animal's legs and tail emit curved claws and many tendrils emanate from the legs and tail of the animal. The animal's head is in profile, with an almond-shaped eye. It has angular teeth and a tendril tongue that sticks

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[281] Department of Scandinavian Languages, Uppsala University, “Runic Inscription E 2,” Scandinavian Runic-text Database, 2020, https://app.raa.se/open/runor/inscription?id=dedc302e-1d7c-4d74-b863-dd44aa66dcff.

[282] Holman, *The Northern Conquest*, 194.

[283] Museum of London, “Ringerike Style Gravestone,” collections.museumoflondon.org.uk, accessed May 22, 2024, https://collections.museumoflondon.org.uk/online/object/35563.html.

[284] Kendrick, *Late Saxon*, 99. Webster, *Anglo-Saxon Art*, 222. Bailey, *Viking Age Sculpture*, 26.

[285] Probably from Combe Down Oolite from near Bath. Museum of London, “Ringerike Style Gravestone.”

[286] Graham-Campbell, *Viking Art*, 123.

out of its mouth. Atop its head is a double-tendril crest; the head is turned backwards towards the animal's tail, which also fans out into many tendrils and is pointed upwards. The animals intertwine in many of these tightly curled tendrils, especially around their legs and tails. Despite the stylistic elements of the depiction, the animals are portrayed semi-naturalistically, although there is no clear indication as to which animal the quadruped is. It can be concluded for certain that it is a carnivorous mammal. According to the criteria established in Chapter 2, the iconographic analysis above shows that this quadruped is the Great Beast, and with the addition of the snake entangled around its legs; this is the combat version of the motif.

The sculptor of the Runestone clearly executed the design in the "classic" or mature phase of the Scandinavian Ringerike style.[287] The extended, tightly-curled tendrils, which creates a somewhat chaotic liveliness, and of course the use of the Beast-in-combat motif itself all confirm this. What's more, the artist of the Runestone may have been Swedish. Wilson and Klindt-Jensen pointed out that the rectangular-cut "background of the design is extremely reminiscent of the similar technique which occurs particularly on the Gotlandic stone from Grötlingbo."[288] Additionally, they theorized that the runic inscription on the side of the stone is not typical of Danish but rather Swedish types.[289] Bailey also remarked that Swedish runestones dating from the 10th and 11th centuries were colored with black, blue, red, and white paints, which are the same colors used on the St. Paul's Runestone.[290] He even went so far as to propose

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[287] Fuglesang, *Some Aspects*, 189.

[288] Wilson and Klindt-Jensen, *Viking Art*, 135.

[289] Ibid.

[290] Bailey, *Viking Age Sculpture*, 26.

that the Runestone was seemingly a memorial to a Swedish follower of Canute.[291] Fuglesang as well detected the Swedish influence on the Runestone. She wrote that "both the low rectangular shape and the animal motif deviate from most of the end slabs preserved in mainland Sweden," specifically that the basic stone type could be related to the Gotlandic tomb monuments (figure 28).[292] There is certainly a connection between these Gotlandic stones and the Runestone. It is unlikely that it is the same artist who created them, but it is reasonable to suggest that Canute's ascension to the English throne allowed this artist to bring his Swedish training to London. This Runestone seems to have been made to be a tombstone or grave marker, as it was thought to be part of a larger grave monument.[293] A human skeleton was found just north of the Runestone when it was discovered.[294]

The Beast on this Runestone has both similarities and differences to its original depiction on the Jelling Stone. Whether or not the sculptor knew of the Beast from the Jelling Stone or other runestones is, of course, impossible to determine, but either the patrons or the sculptor must have been familiar with this motif's presence on stone in Scandinavia. An expert has skillfully crafted the motif, demonstrating a true understanding of its use and execution on the Runestone. Even inconspicuous details such as the use of the frame, simple though it is, the use of runes, and the outstretched tongue of the Beast are more commonalities it shares with the Jelling Stone Beast. Both stones depict the beasts in different styles, reflecting different stylistic trends at the time of their creation, and both also underwent painting after the sculpting process was complete.

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[291] Ibid.

[292] Fuglesang, *Some Aspects*, 59.

[293] Holman, *The Northern Conquest,* 194.

[294] Fuglesang, *Some Aspects*, 189.

On both stones, the Beast is the emphasis of the motif, both in size and color. Despite stylistic developments over time, the Runestone Beast and the Jelling Stone Beast share more similarities than differences, demonstrating the artist's understanding of the motif and his ability to execute it. It is clear that the Jelling Stone Beast was the direct inspiration for the Runestone Beast.

The artist seems to have made the Runestone on behalf of Gina and Toki, who bear Scandinavian names, as the runic inscription only says, "Gina and Toki had this stone laid."[295] Bailey and Webster agreed that they were possibly followers of Canute, or perhaps the person for whom the Runestone was made.[296] Holman made an interesting point by suggesting that the one who was buried must have been someone of high status, as Æthelred the Unready, Canute's predecessor, was also buried in the same graveyard.[297] Webster likewise remarked that they were probably well-to-do Scandinavians.[298] The Museum of London's website suggested that Gina and Toki were mother and son, and that the person they buried and for whom they commissioned the stone was the husband of Gina and father of Toki, and that his name was most likely listed elsewhere on the tomb.[299] Furthermore, stone grave monuments, like the Runestone, may have been used as status markers for the entire family.[300] Therefore, in this case this may have been the reason for the inclusion of the names of Gina and Toki on the runestone, especially considering that they were likely part of an elite class. Additionally, early medieval aristocratic women played a role in both honoring and conserving dynastic memory, which has been attested

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[295] Holman, *The Northern Conquest*, 194.

[296] Bailey, *Viking Age Sculpture*, 26. Webster, *Anglo-Saxon Art*, 222.

[297] Holman, *The Northern Conquest*, 194.

[298] Webster, *Anglo-Saxon Art*, 222.

[299] Museum of London, "Ringerike Style Gravestone." See also Hadley, *The Vikings in England*, 260.

[300] Hadley, *The Vikings in England*, 260.

to historically, and this included the "transmission of cultural and artistic traditions through their marriages into new families."[301]

Taking the idea of preserving ancestral memory to its logical conclusion, the use of the Beast motif in the Runestone reflects the idea of permanence. The grave monument as a whole would have been a permanent memorial, similar to the purpose of runestones in Scandinavia. Like the Jelling Stone, it names the patrons and as mentioned above would have also named the name of the person in whose memory it was made. Ironically though, Gina and Toki are the only names remembered today. Additionally, the stone is immovable which adds to the idea of permanence. By their portrayal on stone, use of the Beast here as well as in Jelling are connected to permanence and memorial. It seems that, in contrast with the use of the Beast on brooches as will be examined below, the Anglicized Scandinavians did not need to use the motif in order to show their "Scandinavian-ness," but rather it was used to mark the Scandinavian identity of those who had passed on, as well as that of the family. The placement of the Runestone in perhaps one of the most prominent churchyards in the kingdom at the time would also have been both a very obvious and public statement, which would "convey a distinctive political and cultural message through [its] form and decoration."[302]

This depiction of the Great Beast was made for and by people who were Anglicized Scandinavians and it represents their cultural identity. The Runestone is strongly connected to other Scandinavian runestones such as the Gotlandic stones and the Jelling Stone. Jesch also came to the same conclusions regarding the Runestone. She too pointed out that the use of runes,

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[301] Ibid.

[302] Ibid., 264.

language and the "classic" Ringerike decoration are "entirely Scandinavian" and that the Runestone as a whole contains a "whiff of paganism…consciously executed in a Scandinavian idiom."[303] Yet it was found in the churchyard of London's cathedral, and despite its connections to other Scandinavian stones discussed above, this Runestone is "by no means a typical Scandinavian rune stone."[304] Though the Runestone was part of a larger grave monument, its creation in England for an English burial as Holman also noted.[305] This demonstrates that it has been Anglicized, and therefore Christianized.[306] This Runestone is therefore an example of cultural paganism, allowed and encouraged by Canute according to Jesch. The use of the Beat motif here points to the Anglicized Scandinavian cultural identity of its maker and patrons.

The Sutton Brooch

The Runestone depicts the Beast motif strongly and is clearly attached to the Anglicized Scandinavian identity of its maker and patrons. In contrast, the Sutton Brooch, sometimes called the Ædwen Brooch, is more difficult to understand (figure 29). The British Museum, which owns the brooch, date it to the early 11th century and describes it as a silver circular brooch which is decorated with zoomorphic and foliate designs. The design on the brooch, the style of which is a poor attempt at Ringerike, is made up of four circles, which are double-contoured and intersecting. Within each circle, a diamond-shaped panel contains an animal motif with some foliate or other designs. The four corners of each panel are linked by bosses, though one is now

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[303] Jesch, "Scandinavians and 'Cultural Paganism'," 60.

[304] Ibid.

[305] Holman, *The Northern Conquest*, 194.

[306] Jesch, "Scandinavians and 'Cultural Paganism'," 60.

missing.[307] While two of the animals within the panels are clearly snakes, the other two animals are unidentified quadrupeds with puzzling features. On the back side of the brooch, there is an Old English inscription and two etched *triquetrae* (figure 30). There is also seven indiscernible, pseudo-runic characters. However, by looking at this brooch through the lens of Anglo-Saxon appropriation of Scandinavian appearance, it may clarify the mystifying aspects of this object.

One of the diamond-shaped panels contains an ambiguous quadruped alone with its head upwards towards the sky (figure 31). Its face is in profile, its eye is almond-shaped and it has a fierce expression on its face, reminiscent of the fierce expression of the Beast on the Runestone. The tail of this quadruped is tucked between its hind legs, which are clawed. The animal's body and neck are decorated with wavy lines. An interwoven cross motif rests below the animal, and a vegetal design is to its left. Though this animal meets some aspects of the Beast criteria, it cannot be determined for certain that this is the Beast. The quadruped in the second panel is also ambiguous though it has some features of the beast on the cross shaft from St. Alkmund's and the Great Beast. This second beast (figure 32) has the same wavy lines on its neck and body as the first beast, though its head is turned backwards towards its tail like the Beast on the Runestone. The beast here doesn't exactly have a mouth, but a rather long, drooping snout and either a crest or curled ears rest on its head, which is in profile and an amygdaloid eye. This beast has spiraled hip joints and clawed feet, one of which is lifted upwards, like the beast on the cross shaft. A floral design sprouts out from the lefthand corner of the panel towards the animal. This animal, more so than the other, meets the established criteria for the Great Beast. The inferior quality of the engraving and draughtsmanship demonstrates a poor understanding of the Great Beast motif,

[307] The British Museum, "Disc Brooch | the Ædwin Brooch," The British Museum, accessed May 24, 2024, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/H_1951-1011-1.

and points to a craftsman who did not know how to execute the motif well.[308] Graham-Campbell referred to them as "rudimentary 'Great Beasts'," for that is certainly what they are.[309] Fuglesang noted, "In one of the animals the outlines of the neck continue and form a tapering head with a multi-lobate snout. For this head shape compare *e.g.* Söderala [and] St. Paul's."[310] (See figures 14 and 27, respectively.) She suggested that the markings on the snout of this Beast were supposed to be an attempt at the multi-lobate snout as seen on the two other depictions of the Great Beast. However, since the craftsmen did not understand this detail of the motif, the markings on the snout of the Beast on the Sutton Brooch is a poor attempt at the characteristic mouth lappets. Additionally, the explicit use of the vegetal motifs, the bosses on the brooch, as well as the overall layout of the brooch suggest that the craftsman of this brooch was not familiar with Scandinavian artistic features, but rather more comfortable with Anglo-Saxon ones, and combined some of each of the features of both here.[311] Thus, the brooch seems to have been made both by and for an Anglo-Saxon.

The patron of this brooch is unknown, though the inscription on the back reveals the name of the brooch's owner. The inscription on the back of the brooch reads thus: ÆDVÞEN ME AG AGE HYO DRIHTEN / DRIHTEN HINE AÞERIE ÐE ME HIRE ÆTFERIE / BVTON HYO ME SELLE HIRE AGENES ÞILLES.[312] Unlike the Scandinavian names Gina and Toki, Ædwen is Anglo-Saxon. It is unclear if Ædwen is the patron of the brooch or if the brooch was

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[308] Fuglesang, *Some Aspects*, 168. Webster, *Anglo-Saxon Art*, 223. Wilson and Klindt-Jensen, *Viking Art*, 142.

[309] Graham-Campbell, *Viking Art*, 125.

[310] Fuglesang, *Some Aspects*, 168.

[311] Webster, *Anglo-Saxon Art*, 223-24.

[312] The modern English translation of the inscription: "Ædwen owns me, may the Lord own her. May the Lord curse him who takes me from her, unless she gives me of her own free will." The British Museum, "Disc Brooch | the Ædwin Brooch."

made for and given to her, though Webster suggested the latter.[313] Ædwen likely had some social standing, as the use of silver suggests, and based on the exploration of the motivations of Anglo-Saxons who appropriated Scandinavian fashions in Chapter 3, perhaps wanted to appear to be of a higher social rank.

The silver disc brooch would have been costly; either Ædwen herself or the patron who gave it to her had wealth and therefore power. Compared to the Pitney Brooch, which will be discussed below, it is quite large and reflective; it was meant to be seen.[314] Considering these features of the brooch, it seems likely to have been worn in a way which signaled power, not unlike a badge or medal. As it would have been easily seen from a distance, the message this brooch sent would have been one of authority, a message that may have also strengthened by the Ringerike designs when seen up close. From a range of distances, seeing this brooch would have reminded its viewer to give respect to its wearer. Whether dealing with *ceorlas* from a distance or *eorlas* up close and personal, Ædwen must have been a woman in a position with a considerable amount of power.[315]

Many features of this brooch lead to the conclusion that, except for the Ringerike elements of its design and the use of the Great Beast motif, this brooch is Anglo-Saxon. Those features include the Old English inscription and the owner's name on its backside, the use of native Anglo-Saxon elements throughout the rest of brooch's design (i.e. the floral motifs), as

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[313] Webster, *Anglo-Saxon Art*, 224.

[314] The brooch's diameter varies, measuring between 14.9 and 16.4 centimeters. The British Museum, "Disc Brooch | the Ædwin Brooch." Helpfully, a short video has been created which demonstrates how the Sutton Brooch was likely worn (figure 33). The video also mentioned that it may have been created during Canute's reign. HistoryNeedsYou, "Ædwen's Brooch - Anglo-Saxon Silver with a Curse!," YouTube, June 27, 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xx4PwcjTBPc.

[315] I.e. peasants and earls/jarls, respectively.

well as the brooch type.[316] Additionally, the low quality execution of the design and the Beast motif itself suggest that the craftsman was also Anglo-Saxon, but perhaps belonged to a 'bilingual' English workshop, executing both Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon designs.[317] Created to be seen from any distance, the brooch is a symbol of Ædwen's authority. In conclusion, the use of the Great Beast motif on this brooch can be used to understand the cultural identity of its owner: though she was an Anglo-Saxon, she appropriated Scandinavian style, possibly in order to gain more (perceived) status and/or authority. The brooch is portable, and though it may or may not have been buried in the general area in which it was made, it was found in Sutton, Isle of Ely, Cambridgeshire in the late 17th century as part of a horde which had been buried with coins from William the Conquerer (r. 1066-87).[318] Cambridgeshire was part of the area of the Danelaw, and it could be that Ædwen used the Ringerike style and the Beast motif in order to appear more favorable to the neighboring, elite Scandinavians. The Ringerike style and the Beast motif with it was adopted in England for use on both stone and metalwork, as evidenced by the St. Paul's Runestone and the Sutton Brooch.[319] Though the Urnes style developed its own English variation, the use of the Great Beast remained the main motif.

The Pitney Brooch

The Sutton Brooch and the Pitney Brooch, the final piece chosen for this thesis (figure 34), have little in common save for the use of the Great Beast motif, being costly disk brooches,

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316 Fuglesang, *Some Aspects*, 51.

317 Ibid.

318 Graham-Campbell, *Viking Art,* 125. Wilson and Klindt-Jensen, *Viking Art*, 142.

319 Fuglesang, *Some Aspects*, 51.

and belonging to the British Museum's permanent collection. The Pitney Brooch is as small and finely crafted as the Sutton Brooch is large and poorly crafted. Discovered in the churchyard in the 1870s in Pitney, Somerset, the gold-gilded copper alloy brooch dates to the late 11th century.[320] However, there is a a bit of debate as to its dating. Olwyn Owen posited that the brooch represents "the last flowering of the Urnes style in England, well into the twelfth century."[321] Webster dated the brooch "to the late eleventh, if not early twelfth century."[322] Kendrick, after taking into consideration other similar pieces as evidence, concluded that the English Urnes style was "a by no means negligible factor in the art of [England] round about the year 1100."[323] This date is far beyond the Scandinavian rule of England, and even well after the Norman Conquest of 1066. This shows that this style, which came out of the Scandinavian original, and the Beast motif were well embedded by the late Viking Age in England and used in post-Viking Age English culture. In the late 11th century, the distinctions between Anglo-Saxons and Scandinavians had been dissolving for some time: Scandinavian names recorded after c. 1040 may denote Anglo-Saxons, just as English names could refer to Scandinavians or those of mixed ancestry.[324] Presumably, the bearers of at least some of these names, whether of Old English or Old Norse origins, came from blended Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian families, as the example of the Godwin family from Chapter 3 illustrates. In contrast to Norman cultural identity,

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[320] The British Museum, "Disc Brooch | Pitney Brooch," The British Museum, accessed May 30, 2024, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/H_1979-1101-1. Graham-Campbell, *Viking Art*, 141.

[321] Olwyn Owen, "The Strange Beast That Is the English Urnes Style," in *Vikings and the Danelaw: Selected Papers from the Proceedings of the Thirteenth Viking Congress, Nottingham and York, 21-30 August 1997*, ed. James Graham-Campbell et al. (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2016), 217.

[322] Webster, *Anglo-Saxon Art*, 226.

[323] Kendrick, *Late Saxon*, 118.

[324] Lawson, *Cnut*, 167.

a hybrid Anglo-Scandinavian one established decades earlier persisted beyond the Conquest;[325] it is unlikely that it suddenly disappeared in the years just after 1066. Additionally, various elements of the (English) Urnes style were briefly adopted into Romanesque art, having been brought to England by the Normans.[326] Having likely been produced in the years of fading Anglo-Scandinavian influence, the Pitney Brooch represents this hybridity in its use of the English Urnes style, which included the Beast motif, and various Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon decorative details.

At first glance, the Pitney Brooch may appear rather disorienting for the first-time viewer, or someone not accustomed to the (English) Urnes style. Additionally, there are often different views from which the Pitney Brooch is presented.[327] Using the view of the brooch in figure 34 and imagining the design as a clock face, the head of the main beast is shown at three o'clock. Its head starts with a curved, upward pointed snout, with a lappet hanging down; the shape is reminiscent of a reversed "S" from the tip of the snout to end of the lappet. Next, the enlarged

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[325] Rebecca M. West, "The Idea of Anglo-Scandinavian England: 'Vikings' in Medieval English Memory" (PhD Dissertation, 2020), https://curate.nd.edu/articles/thesis/The_Idea_of_Anglo-Scandinavian_England_Vikings_in_Medieval_English_Memory/24739368, 50, 115-16.

[326] Kendrick, *Late Saxon*, 127. However, Graham-Campbell suggested that these elements were rather copied from pieces like the Pitney Brooch, and that the Urnes style did not have a long-term impact on Anglo-Norman art. Graham-Campbell, *Viking Art*, 142.

[327] Various sources will have various images of the brooch in which the design is presented at a different angle. For example, on display at the British Museum, the brooch is turned 90 degrees counterclockwise compared to how it is pictured on the website and used for figure 11. In a personal communication, Dr. Sue Brunning, curator of the European Early Medieval & Sutton Hoo Collections at the British Museum, theorized that the brooch was worn in the orientation pictured in figure 35 due to the remains of its lug. While this would have been the easiest way to fasten the brooch for the wearer, Dr. Brunning explained that in theory, however, the brooch "could have been worn in any orientation according to the preference of the wearer." Since very little of the original pin mechanism survives, absolute certainties regarding the fastening of the brooch, and therefore how the motif would have usually been seen on the wearer, are not known. Sue Brunning to Christine Turnea, "Pitney Brooch Question," Email, June 19, 2024. Yet the orientation suggested by Dr. Brunning, the face of the Beast looks up at the wearer, and if he/she looks down at the brooch, he/she meets the Beast's gaze. Perhaps the Beast reminds the wearer of his/her origins in a Norman-dominated society?

almond-shaped eye appears on a rather bulbous, in-profile head.[328] A small crest or perhaps a tiny earbud appears just behind the eye at the back of the head. Upon the animal's neck is a pointed snake's head with two beady eyes shown from above. The snake's head clasps the animal's neck. Following the beading on the main animal's body as it curves around to one of its spiraled hip joints, at twelve o'clock, a three-toed foot rests just to the left of the joint. The tail of the animal points upwards at twelve o'clock, and its body continues to curve downwards in a clockwise direction. At about nine o'clock, the beaded body curves inwards, past the snake's head, underneath its own body to the second spiral hip joint. From this, a short leg extends underneath its body at six o'clock and splits into two long, curved toes: the first ends in a curled tendril at about four o'clock, while the other toe moves backwards, underneath the spiral joint from which it emanated and underneath the animal's body, twisting backwards and down again at nine o'clock, and splitting into two lobed tendrils at about seven o'clock. The snake's body meanwhile flows mostly counterclockwise. Its ribbon body emanates from its head straight upwards towards twelve o'clock, underneath the main animal's body and tail. It continues to curve counterclockwise grazing the animal's toed foot where at about nine o'clock turns inwards, running above the main animal's beaded body then below it, where it emerges again at about one o'clock. Twisting back again towards twelve o'clock, the snake's body breaks off slightly into a tendril, and twice again at the end of its tail at about two o'clock. This entire design is contained by a scalloped border, two of which are missing at about eleven and twelve o'clock.

From this basic iconographic analysis, it can be determined that the brooch depicts the Great Beast in combat with a snake, as the main animal meets all the criteria in order to be

[328] The enlarged and rather bulbous eye and head are typical of English Urnes and not usually seen in Scandinavian Urnes. Owen, "The Strange Beast," 216.

identified as the Beast. As seen here on this brooch, the treatment of the Beast had undergone a transformation from semi-naturalistic in the Mammen and Ringerike styles to highly stylized in the Urnes style. Not only would it be impossible for such an animal to bend and twist its body in such a way as depicted on the brooch, but its head, eye, and some of its toes are presented in an unnaturally elongated fashion. The execution of the Beast-in-combat motif here must have been done by an expert, someone intensely familiar with the details of such designs. Unlike the Sutton Brooch, which was clearly done by a craftsman not very familiar with the Beast or the Ringerike style, the understanding of the motif on the Pitney Brooch is clear. What the Sutton Brooch lacks in grace and beauty is captured here in this brooch despite its small size.[329] Not only did the craftsman reproduce these typical aspects of the Urnes style, the entire layout of the motif has a sense of movement different from the chaotic liveliness of the Ringerike, asymmetrical balance and weight.

While the brooch displays many aspects of the Scandinavian Urnes style, it also features Anglo-Saxon artistic elements. The beading along the Beast's body, its double-lobed split toe (suspiciously vegetal in its portrayal), and the scalloped border are both derived from English art.[330] Its form as a disk brooch is also Anglo-Saxon, which as Kershaw pointed out reflects the wearer's familiarity with wearing these types of brooches.[331] Yet the motif's composition is "purely Urnes."[332] The result of Anglo-Saxon influence on a Scandinavian motif and openwork

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[329] The diameter measures 39 mm. The British Museum, "Disc Brooch | Pitney Brooch."

[330] The British Museum, "The Pitney Brooch," Google Arts & Culture, accessed May 31, 2024, https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/the-pitney-brooch/dgGoTIlZ3VKkbQ?hl=en. Wilson and Klindt-Jensen, *Viking Art*, 154.

[331] Kershaw, *Viking Identities*, 233, 247. Kershaw's work suggests that Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian women only wore the types of brooches most familiar to them, especially in their attachment settings.

[332] Wilson and Klindt-Jensen, *Viking Art*, 154.

execution is an example of Anglo-Scandinavian synthesis found on the brooch. This synthesis creates a hybridity which is not found in either the Runestone or the Sutton Brooch. Thus the Pitney Brooch must be in a category of its own, which perhaps reflects its owner's cultural identity.

Unlike both the Runestone and the Sutton Brooch, the Pitney Brooch is completely anonymous. There is no name associated with this brooch, neither a patron nor an owner. This makes it more difficult to determine its wearer's cultural identity. Interestingly, however, Richards observed that in the 10th and 11th centuries, a display of Urnes and Ringerike styles on dress accessories such as brooches is usually connected to male lordship.[333] What can be said for certain though is that the patron, and therefore possibly its owner and wearer, was wealthy. The brooch is gilded in gold not only on the front side but on the backside as well. To have enough money to bathe in gold the side which no one would have ever seen indicates that whoever paid for the brooch was wealthy indeed. Furthermore, the skill needed to craft this brooch would have also been costly. The use of gold and the need for expertise indicates that its wearer was not only rich but important. Like the Sutton Brooch, the Pitney Brooch would have been worn as a symbol of prestige, and would have been seen from afar.[334] However, while the Sutton Brooch is large and therefore more noticeable from a distance, which may reflect Ædwen's authority (and her desire to have more of it), the size of the Pitney Brooch may be due to its owner's status as a

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[333] Richards, "Anglo-Scandinavian Identity," 55. He emphasized that this was especially true of horse fittings. Conversely, women's dress accessories from the 9th and 10th centuries tend to display the Borre and Jellinge styles.

[334] Surprisingly, after almost one thousand years, the brooch is quite shiny on display in the British Museum. Though of course this is due to expert treatment over time by restoration experts, it nonetheless sparkles as if it were much younger than its actual age.

non-Norman, and therefore with considerably less authority, if any, than his or her overlords.[335] Its size allows for easy portability. The brooch, and everything it represented (including the Beast motif), would have moved with its owner wherever he or she went. Created for more than mobility, this brooch was also created with permanence in mind. Made from copper alloy (i.e. bronze and brass), the gold gilding was not only used as a display of wealth, but perhaps also used to prevent the brooch from turning green over time.[336] This may be an indication of the brooch's intended permanence; such an object of beauty and worth would be a poor investment if it was not made for resilience. The brooch's patron perhaps considered how this brooch, and maybe even his or her cultural identity, fading with the incoming waves of Norman settlement, could stand the tests of time.

If there is an underwhelming lack of archeological evidence for the presence of Scandinavians in Viking Age England, there is even less so for anything that may be labeled as "Anglo-Scandinavian."[337] Yet despite the unforgiving passage of time, this small but stunning brooch has survived to the present day. The use of the Great Beast motif on the Pitney Brooch in its unique English Urnes style reflects the hybrid Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity of its wearer. Its type as an Anglo-Saxon disk brooch, as well as its various other English features, demonstrates that the wearer was probably most familiar with wearing such brooches. While this may show that the wearer was an Anglo-Saxon in dress, the brooch itself is "more closely related

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[335] The Normans built castles in Somerset after the Conquest in the 11th and 12th centuries, perhaps around the same time as the Pitney Brooch's creation. Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia, "Somerset," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, June 17, 2024, https://www.britannica.com/place/Somerset-county-England. Norman castles were built to maintain their power over their newly-won territories and to subjugate the existing populations.

[336] In the places where the scallops are missing around the border, there is a bit of green patina that can be detected.

[337] Richards, "Anglo-Scandinavian Identity,"46.

to the Scandinavian style than most English material."[338] The brooch truly reflects a balance and understanding of both Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian features, synthesizing them into a hybridity rarely seen. Therefore, it seems unlikely that the wearer was someone like Ædwen who yearned for more respect in the eyes of the Scandinavian elites. Nor was the wearer of the Pitney Brooch an Anglicized Scandinavian; there is too much familiarity with Englishness in the brooch.[339] It therefore likely reflects the individual's personal tastes for both Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon artistic features, while the long-standing of the use of the Beast motif seen since the late-10th century may represent a desire to cling to Scandinavian heritage here. This individual may have been exposed to these different features throughout the course of his or her lifetime, which may suggest that he or she was part of an environment which upheld both Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian styles.

Both the Runestone and the Sutton Brooch, which embody these two different aspects of Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identities, do not display "innovation in Anglo-Scandinavian products" quite like the Pitney Brooch does.[340] It is more difficult to determine the cultural identity of the brooch's owner without a name; both the Runestone and the Sutton Brooch both contained names which helped to determine the cultural identities of those who patronized them. But keeping in mind that both Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian names were sometimes used within the same families by the mid-11th century, the owner of the Pitney Brooch may have had

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[338] Owen, "The Strange Beast," 217.

[339] Furthermore, Scandinavians were no longer quite the elites they once were after the death of Canute′s last son in 1042, and much less so after the Norman Conquest. Thus, the creation of the Pitney Brooch in the late 11th century (at the earliest) is well beyond the distinct cultural identities of Anglicized Scandinavians and Anglo-Saxons who appropriated Scandinavian styles.

[340] Kershaw, *Viking Identities*, 233.

a name of either origin, or perhaps had ancestors from both ends of the North Sea Empire. Knowing or not knowing the name of its owner doesn't change the conclusion of the analysis here; it would be the same since the brooch speaks for itself. The Pitney Brooch is the embodiment of the latest and final facet of Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity: hybridity.[341]

Conclusion

Each of these three case studies—the St. Paul's runestone, the Sutton Brooch, and the Pitney Brooch—reflects one different aspect of Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity. Iconographical analysis determined that each of these pieces uses the Beast motif, while iconological analysis revealed their creation process, motivation, and context. The use of the Beast on the Runestone shows how Anglicized Scandinavians brought not only the motif but also the Ringerike style and the craftsmanship directly from Scandinavia and placed it within an English graveyard in an English-style burial. For the Anglo-Saxon Ædwen, the Beast motif on her brooch was appropriated from the Scandinavians in order to appear more similar to their elites, perhaps in order to gain their favor. Lastly, the Pitney Brooch uses the Beast motif within a balanced hybridity of Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon artistic features, which likely reflects the tastes of the individual for whom it was made, an individual who may have "had a foot" in both the Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian worlds in a plurality of circumstances. This final chapter has thus answered the main research question of this thesis by examining the use of the Beast motif

[341] Whether or not this hybridity was a more widespread reaction against the Norman invaders (i.e., involving the entirety of England) is unknown, but the regionalism suggested by the evidence discussed in this thesis suggests that hybridity may have only been limited to certain areas of England, perhaps the south.

in order to understand the various aspects of Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity in 11th-century England.

The use of the Great Beast was not limited to these three objects, nor to southern England or East Anglia, although those seem to be the predominate locations for the motif's use. Other metalwork pieces and brooches, such as those found in Hertfordshire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Essex, Warwickshire, and Suffolk, depict the Beast.[342] There is also a rudimentary version of the Pitney Brooch from Wisbech, Cambridgeshire (figure 36).[343] In sculpture, the Beast can be found in a carved architectural fragment from a church in Coventry in the middle of England (figure 37).[344] Though dating is difficult, the use of the Beast motif gradually disappeared at some point in the 12th century.[345] The Normans introduced the continental Romanesque style to England, which eventually overtook the existing Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Scandinavian styles, particularly in sculpture rather than in metalwork.[346] However, the Normans seemed to have reused the existing English Urnes stye, and by extension, the Beast motif.[347] For example, a carved capital from the Norwich Cathedral, made from stone sourced from Caen, Normandy and dated to c.1120-30, depicts a surprisingly similar motif as the one found on the Pitney Brooch (figure

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[342] Owen, "The Strange Beast," 214.

[343] Graham-Campbell, *Viking Art*, 141.

[344] Owen, "The Strange Beast," 218. This fragment unfortunately has lost the much of the legs and all of the toes of the Beast, but it has all of the "top" features from the hip joints up. On the following page, Owen described this animal as a "quadruped with a profile head," which, seems to be the ambiguous scholarly "code word" for the Great Beast. There is another beast similar to this one on a stone slab depicting the Resurrection of Christ from Jevington, Sussex, though it is difficult to determine whether or not it is an Urnes-style ribbon animal or the Great Beast.

[345] Ibid., 220. Owen theorized that the use of the English Urnes style, and in this case the use of the Beast motif, was roughly contemporary to its Scandinavian counterparts.

[346] Ibid., 219.

[347] Ibid.

38).[348] Due to its battle against time, it is difficult to determine whether or not the main beast in the motif is in fact the Great Beast, but it does have similar features to the Beast on the brooch.[349] On the capital, the main beast's body is dotted and it intertwines with a ribbon-like creature, perhaps a snake. Their bodies make similar flowing curves and the vegetal terminals and curling tendrils are also reminiscent of those found on the Pitney Brooch. However, rather than any endurance of the Beast motif—and by extension the Urnes style—in England after the Conquest, this capital suggests that reproductions made from pieces such as the Pitney Brooch occurred.[350] Another example of the accidental transmission of the Great Beast through copying can be found in MS Royal 1.E.VI on folio 30v (figure 39).[351] Here, the English "artist" in the late 11th century must have found his "muse" in a piece of contemporary metalwork, such as an openwork animal brooch in the Urnes-style, and most likely copied this Beast right off the piece in front of him when he added this graffito to the portrait of St. Mark the Evangelist.[352] However, it is unknown whether this graffito was made before or after the Norman Conquest.[353]

Today, the Beast has experienced a wave of resurgence in the United Kingdom. The Wisbesch Brooch has recently been recreated using a (nearly) authentic historical process (figure

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[348] Graham-Campbell, *Viking Art*, 142.

[349] The head of the beast has unfortunately been lost, but it seems to be depicted in profile. It is also very difficult to tell if the animal has spiral hip joints, as that particular area of the beast has been worn down.

[350] Ibid.

[351] The irony of this sketch is that though this manuscript page was destroyed in the late 8th century, probably by Viking incursions, the 11th-century restored folio has again been "ruined" by a Viking motif. Michelle Brown, Art of the Islands: Celtic, Pictish, Anglo-Saxon and Viking Visual Culture, C.450-1050 (Oxford: Bodleian Library, University Of Oxford, 2016), 196-98.

[352] Owen, "The Strange Beast," 208-9.

[353] The cyberattack on the British Library's website has rendered further retrieval of information on the manuscript impossible for the moment.

40).[354] The Pitney Brooch has been featured as part of a stamp set which was issued in February of this year (figure 41). Highland Park, a Scottish whisky distillery, features the Beast-and-snake combat motif on all their bottles and packaging boxes (figure 42). It may be that the popularity of the books, television shows and video games, as well as the increase in academic discourse with the public on the Vikings and their activity in England, have awakened the Great Beast from its long slumber, and its use today may reflect a contemporary understanding of Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity.

[354] Maria Holzleitner, "Blog | Museum's Urnes Style Brooch Recreated by Maria Holzleitner," Wisbech and Fenland Museum, May 16, 2023, https://wisbechmuseum.org.uk/blog/post?s=2023-05-16-museums-urnes-style-brooch-recreated-by-maria-holzleitner.

FIGURES

Figure 24: Late Saxon disk brooch. c. 900-1065. Suffolk, UK. Copper alloy, D: 28mm.[355]

Figure 25: Runic Inscription E 2. c. First quarter of the 11th century. St. Paul's churchyard, London, UK. Museum of London, UK. Limestone, H 472 mm; W 567 mm; D 102 mm; WT 50000 g (overall).[356]

[355] The British Museum, "Record ID: NMS-F14788 - EARLY MEDIEVAL Brooch."

[356] Museum of London, "Ringerike Style Gravestone."

Figure 26: St. Paul's runestone, illustration including a detail of runic inscription.[357]

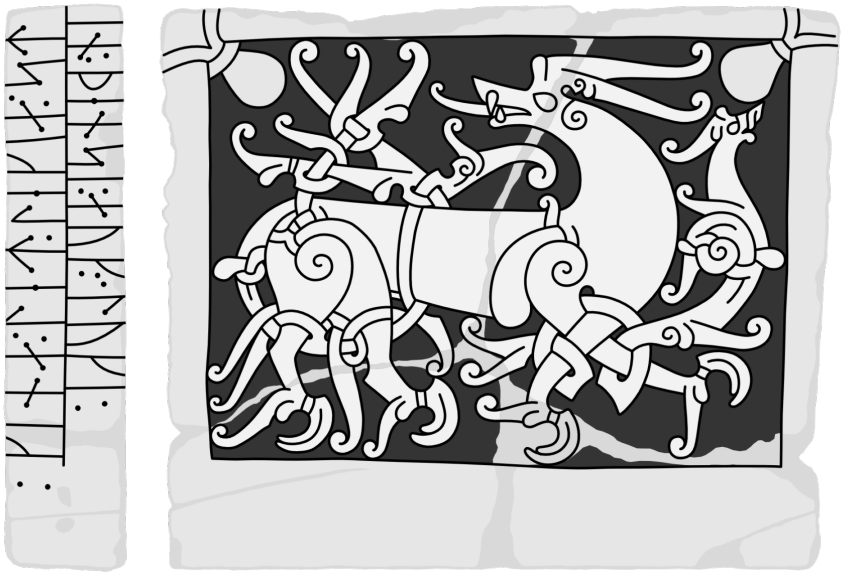


Figure 27: St. Paul's runestone, recreated illustration.[358]

[357] Jonas Lau Markussen, *Runestone E 2,* 2023, Jonas Lau Markussen, 2023, https://jonaslaumarkussen.com/illustration/runestone-e-2/.

[358] Stefan Bollmann, *Tombstone of St. Paul, in London, in United Kingdom. Redrawing with Presumed Original Color Scheme*, 2007, Wikimedia Commons, 2007, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/be/St-paul.gif.

Figure 28: Gotlandic runestone. c. 800-1100. Sanda churchyard, Gotland, Sweden. Statens Historiska Museer, Stockholm. Limestone.[359]

Figure 29: The Sutton (*Æ*dwen) Brooch. Early 11th century. Sutton, Isle of Ely, Cambridgeshire, UK. The British Museum, London, UK. Silver disk brooch, D 14.9-16.4 cm.[360]

[359] Statens Historiska Museer, Picture Stone, Tombstone, 1995, Statens Historiska Museer, 1995, https://samlingar.shm.se/object/0EE82D5D-5FAE-4060-83C2-86D2DBFD409C.

[360] The British Museum, "Disc Brooch | the *Æ*dwin Brooch."

Figure 30: The Sutton Brooch, backside.

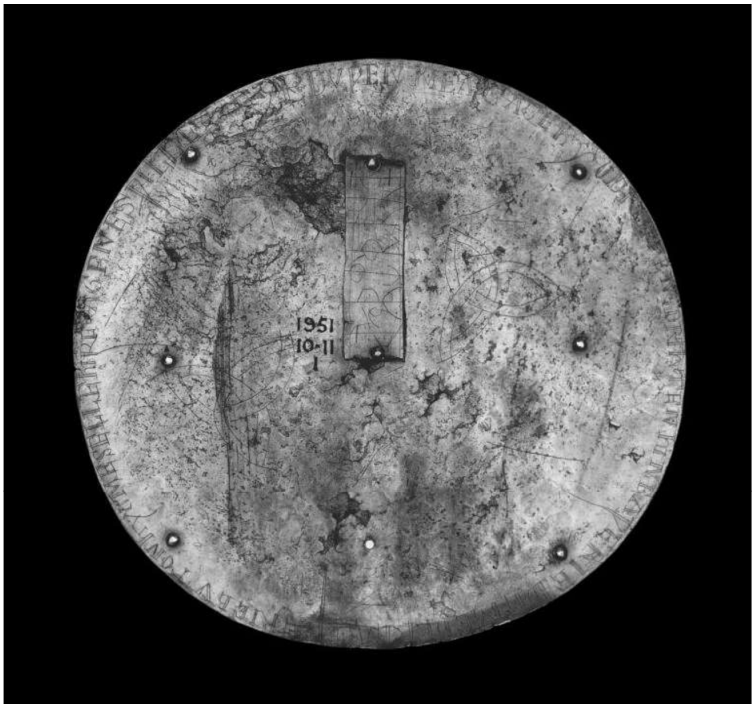


Figure 31: The Sutton Brooch, quadruped, detail.

Figure 32: The Sutton Brooch, Great Beast, detail.

Figure 33: Screenshot.[361]

[361] HistoryNeedsYou. "Ædwen's Brooch - Anglo-Saxon Silver with a Curse!"

Figure 34: The Pitney Brooch. Late 11th century. Pitney, Somerset, UK. The British Museum, London, UK. Gold-gilded copper alloy disk brooch, diameter: 39 millimeters, height: 5 millimeters, weight: 15 grams.[362]

Figure 35: Possible orientation of the Pitney Brooch as worn in the 11th century (L), backside of the brooch, with remains of lug (R).[363]

[362] The British Museum, "Disc Brooch | Pitney Brooch," The British Museum, accessed May 30, 2024, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/H_1979-1101-1.

[363] Sue Brunning, "Pitney Brooch Question."

Figure 36: The Wisbech Brooch. 11th century. Wisbech and Fenland Museum. Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, UK. D 42mm.[364]

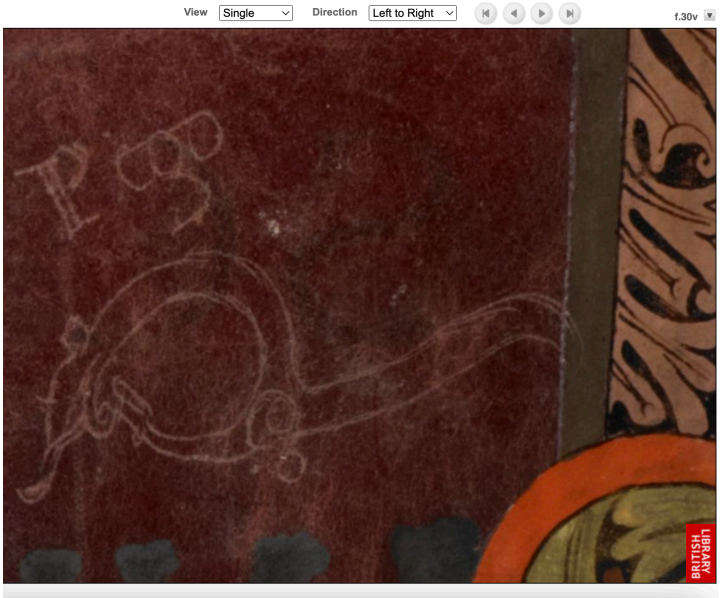
Figure 37: Carved fragment. Late 11th century? St. Mary's, Coventry, UK. Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, Coventry, UK. c. 230 x 190 mm.[365]

[364] Holzleitner, "Blog | Museum's Urnes Style Brooch Recreated."

[365] Owen, "The Strange Beast," 218.

Figure 38: Norwich capital. c. 1130. Norwich Cathedral, Norwich Cathedral Museum, Norwich, UK. 250 x 185 mm.[366]

Figure 39: St. Mark the Evangelist, graffiti detail, MS Royal 1.E.VI, folio 30v. Manuscript: 9th century, Folio: 11th century. British Library, London, UK.[367]



[366] Roland B Harris, "RECONSTRUCTING the ROMANESQUE CLOISTER of NORWICH CATHEDRAL," *The Antiquaries Journal* 99 (September 2019): 149, https://doi.org/10.1017/s0003581519000118. Owen, "The Strange Beast," 217

[367] Due to the cyberattack on the British Library's website, it is impossible to retrieve a link to this image. However, this footnote has been generated in its place: Christine Turnea, *Royal MS 1.E.IV, Graffiti Detail*, 2023, Author's Screenshot, 2023.

Figure 40: Maria Holzleitner. *Wisbech Brooch (replica)*. 2023. Cast bronze.[368]

[368] Holzleitner, "Blog | Museum's Urnes Style Brooch Recreated."

Figure 41: Pitney Brooch Stamp. Issued February 2024 by Royal Mail, UK.[369]

Figure 42: Highland Park Scotch Whisky. Highland Park Distillery, Kirkwall, Orkney Islands, Scotland.[370]

[369] Christie, "Impact of Vikings in Britain Examined."

[370] Highland Park Whisky, *12 Year Old, Highland Park Whisky*, accessed June 21, 2024, https://www.highlandparkwhisky.com/en/single-malt-whisky/12-year-old.

CONCLUSION

By analyzing the use of the Great Beast motif in three different objects, this thesis demonstrates one way in which Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity in 11th-century England can be understood. In this attempt, aspects of culture such as religion, language, and appearance were deeply explored in order to understand their impacts on Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity, and it was concluded that diverse facets make up this cultural identity: Anglicized Scandinavians, Anglo-Saxon appropriation of Scandinavian styles, and Anglo-Scandinavian hybridity. In addition, Canute's role in the use of the Great Beast motif was investigated by analyzing his laws, his court poetry, and the records of his actions in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* from the years of his reign. Three objects depicting the Great Beast motif were chosen as case studies. Their various sizes, materials, and functions were examined to understand the relationship between the motif, the mediums, and cultural identity. Based on iconographic and iconological analysis, it can be concluded that the Great Beast motif was used in a variety of ways and mediums to reflect different aspects of Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity expressed through each piece. The use of the Great Beast motif in 11th-century England shows that Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity was complex and multifaceted.

Reflection

Chapter 1 reviewed the scholarly literature on the topics of Anglo-Scandinavian identity as well as the Beast motif. This literature review demonstrated that while research on Anglo-

Scandinavian topics has been slowly expanding, there has been no rigorous study on the Beast motif. Thus, a gap in academic knowledge and an opportunity to expand Anglo-Scandinavian research were found.

The second chapter introduced the Great Beast motif, its origins and its use in Scandinavia. An iconographic analysis of various depictions of the Beast generated a criterion for the motif. This set of criteria consisted of specific features that were consistent in the Beast motif throughout Scandinavia. Starting with the Jelling Stone, depictions of other zoomorphic motifs were compared and contrasted, and these results provided a set of criteria for the Great Beast. In this case, the best course of action was to create criteria based on iconographic analysis. The similarities and differences became apparent after looking at different zoological depictions. Additionally, once the Beast was able to be positively determined, it was easier to track the Beast's stylistic changes from its first appearance on the Jelling Stone in the Mammen style to one of its final appearances on the Norwegian stave church in the Urnes style. One could say that although these two quadrupeds are depicted very differently on a stylistic level, using the criteria showed that they are both the Great Beast because they have the same characteristics. The criteria carefully helped to find the expected results, in this case the Great Beast motif, very well.

The third chapter explored Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity and the factors that impacted it, and the chapter created a unique theoretical framework to understand this remarkable cultural identity. By limiting these factors to religion, appearance and language, it became apparent that the term "Anglo-Scandinavian" was multifaceted, and that those who may have been able to claim this cultural identity could have been from a wide range of backgrounds. Judith Jesch's theory of cultural paganism led to the idea of Anglicized Scandinavians, defined as

those who came from Scandinavia and kept their pagan literary (i.e., poetic) and artistic traditions alive while living in England; this may have been only one claim of Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity. Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity may have also been claimed by Anglo-Saxons who appropriated Scandinavian appearances. Primary sources, in the form of monastic letters, criticized men who adopted Scandinavian-style haircuts and clothing. Archeological evidence brought to light by Jane Kershaw also showed that Anglo-Saxon women were wearing brooches which bore Scandinavian styles. Finally, those who were part-Anglo-Saxon and part-Scandinavian may have claimed an Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity. Although this particular facet was perhaps more rare, linguistic evidence demonstrated that the names of both people and places in Viking Age England were sometimes mixed. By looking at these three factors, keeping in mind that these were not the only factors, three different meanings of Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity emerged.

While limiting the factors to three kept the research to a reasonable amount, they were also narrowed down to match the number of artistic pieces studied for this thesis. Connecting each piece to a facet of Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity was the most difficult process of writing this chapter, since there were also other factors that could have been considered (e.g. DNA evidence and isotopic analysis). Additionally, the hypothesis held at the beginning stages of research on Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity, which was that it was only a hybrid composed of Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian aspects, was mostly overturned. It was decided that only those factors that revealed three different aspects of Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity were to be included in the chapter, as each piece revealed three different aspects of this identity. This was not an attempt to "make the pieces fit," but rather to "connect the dots." For example, St. Paul's

runestone contained many Scandinavian elements that most closely resembled those found on Scandinavian prototypes, which contained the Beast motif, even though it was made for a Christian burial. This suggested an Anglicized Scandinavian cultural identity. Using Judith Jesch's theory of cultural paganism, religion's impact on this aspect of cultural identity also revealed that the Scandinavians who migrated to England may have become Anglicized (e.g. by accepting Christianity) but they kept their 'pagan' cultural traditions alive. The "dots" were thus connected between religion and the Runestone. Secondly, the Sutton Brooch displayed an influence of Ringerike-style elements but it lacked an understanding of their use, including the Beast motif. Since a brooch is something that is worn, and Jane Kershaw's findings demonstrated that brooches in Scandinavian styles appealed to Anglo-Saxon women (but not their attachment settings), the connection was made between the Sutton Brooch and the appropriation of Scandinavian styles, in this case by an Anglo-Saxon woman. This strengthened the connection between appearances and the Sutton Brooch. Lastly, the Pitney Brooch was the true hybrid of the three pieces selected, carefully balancing Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian artistic elements with a clear understanding of both. Knowing that Grimston hybrids existed as well as discovering mixtures within families in later Viking Age England, the dots connected between linguistics and this piece.

Chapter 4 explored Canute, the first and longest-reigning Scandinavian king of England, and his role in the use of the Great Beast motif. It showed that Canute's role was indirect, though important. Again applying Jesch's theory, Canute's cultural identity as an Anglicized Scandinavian meant that he adopted the necessary roles as an English king, such as patronizing churches and upholding many of the English laws of his predecessors. At the same time, he

continued his cultural paganism by supporting the skalds who performed Scandinavian-style poetry for his court, which set a precedent for continuing cultural paganism among his followers. His reign in England also caused a new wave of Scandinavian immigration and settlement. Among these settlers must have been craftsmen who were able to execute the "fashionable" Ringerike style, which became popular in England during Canute's reign. It may have been one of these craftsmen-settlers, intimately familiar with the Beast motif in the Ringerike style, who created the runestone at St. Paul's. It was important to briefly examine Canute's influence on cultural identity in Anglo-Scandinavian England during his reign in the 11th century. It goes without saying that rulers are always influential, however well or poorly they reign, but the phenomenon of a Scandinavian on the English throne, especially after centuries of Anglo-Saxons fighting back the Vikings, was worthy of consideration during this unique period of English history. Canute's contributions to the Anglicized Scandinavian aspect were indirect, but he perhaps inspired those around him (and those who wished to be) to continue their cultural paganism through literary and artistic means.

The fifth and final chapter synthesized the discoveries about Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity while examining the use of the Great Beast motif in three artistic pieces. As explained above, this chapter was able to successfully connect the uses of the motif to the three aspects of cultural identity. Using Erwin Panofsky's three levels of iconographic/iconological analysis, the chapter positively identified the motif in each piece and explained how the uses of the motif added another dimension of understanding to the three aspects of cultural identity explored in Chapter 2: how this identity was expressed through art. Panofsky's three levels of analysis were the right approach to answering the research question. The first stage of analysis, discovering

what the piece represents at the simplest level, must be completed in order to determine whether the quadruped depicted may in fact be the Beast motif. The second level utilized the criteria established in the first chapter to positively identify the image and, in the context of this thesis, the Beast motif. For example, the Sutton Brooch depicts two quadrupeds, identified in the first level of analysis. Using the criteria in the second step, it was determined that only one of those beasts is the Great Beast motif. The third level of analysis is iconological, which considers the wider cultural context of the motif and the piece on which it is displayed. This third level of analysis most directly answers the research question for this thesis, but completing the first two levels of iconographic analysis was required before reaching this level. Overall, the results of this thesis matched the expectations held before beginning the research. While it was unknown how deep the research would go before starting, it was surprising how well connected the three facets of Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity were to the pieces chosen. The research not only deepened the understanding of Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity, but it also showed the versatility of the Beast motif in its different expressions of this identity.

Future Recommendations

This thesis persuasively demonstrates the relationship between Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity and the Beast motif, as well as the motif's use to express this identity. But it also raises questions regarding some unexpected insights that arose during the research process. The degree of similarity between the Runestone and the Gotlandic stones, as well as the connection to a Swedish stonemason, were among the most striking discoveries. Questions exploring the extent of the connections between Anglo-Scandinavian sculptures and Scandinavian runestones and

stonemasons could be a worthwhile research pursuit. Additionally, the likelihood that the Pitney Brooch was made after the Norman Conquest rather than before it was also fascinating in its implications. The relationships and interactions between Anglo-Scandinavians and the Normans after the Conquest, and whether or not that impacted identity or artistic expression, could also be further explored. Moreover, the feminine use of the Beast motif in 11th-century England is also extremely interesting. Although the wearer of the Pitney Brooch is unknown, both the Sutton Brooch and the Runestone have strong connections to women. Researching the connections between women and the use of the Great Beast motif, both in England and in Scandinavia, could also produce intriguing results. Lastly, the theme of "elites" continued throughout the course of this research. This thesis showed that elites, both Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon, used the Beast motif, but it raises the question of the extent of their wealth, power, and influence in 11th-century England. It would be interesting to find out more about the elite class and any changes to that class during political shifts, such as the shift from Anglo-Saxon to Danish leadership, during this time.

The relationship between the use of the Beast motif and its potential meaning requires further research. While this thesis did not explicitly address what meaning, if any, the Beast motif may have had to those who used it, it is recommended that future studies address this issue: what could the Great Beast have symbolized? Reflecting on the research presented in this thesis, the Beast motif was used in a Christian setting (e.g. the Jelling Stone and St. Paul's runestone) or by presumable Christians, though the degree to which these users (especially the Scandinavians) embraced the Christian faith is debatable. The Beast motif generally needs to be further studied, but especially in regards to its origins and what it may have symbolized, since the scholarship is

inconclusive on these two points. Moreover, the motif may have symbolized different ideas depending on the context of its use. To Anglo-Saxons or in an English setting, it may have meant something different than to those in Scandinavia. Clearly, more research is needed in order to discover what meaning, if any, the motif may have had. Furthermore, more research is needed to determine how widespread the use of the Beast motif was in England and throughout the British Isles.[371] A complete survey of the Beast's appearance in different mediums in England would greatly contribute to further study of the motif.

Other facets of identity may come to light in future studies which have a different focus, such as a literary or poetic one. Here, Jesch's theory of cultural paganism may also be applied as it was in this art historical thesis, and it may produce other aspects of Anglo-Scandinavian cultural identity. Another focus of future study may also be bio-archeological (i.e. using DNA and isotopic analysis), and what connections there might have been to an Anglo-Scandinavian identity. Studies using DNA have been undertaken and responded to in academic circles, but as technology continues to develop, new questions will arise.[372]

Contributions

In 2006, Hadley wrote, "It is to be hoped that future study of Anglo-Scandinavian interaction will not loose sight of the need to be sensitive to the multiplicity of identities that the

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[371] The Beast motif has been found in Ireland on Urnes-style objects of metalwork such as The Cross of Cong. Although the use of the Beast motif in Ireland is beyond the scope of this thesis, it would be fascinating to conduct similar research on that topic.

[372] Ashot Margaryan et al., "Population Genomics of the Viking World," *Nature* 585, no. 7825 (September 16, 2020): 390–96, https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-020-2688-8. C.f. Jane Kershaw, and Ellen C. Røyrvik. "The 'People of the British Isles' Project and Viking Settlement in England." *Antiquity* 90, no. 354 (2016):, 1672-73, https://doi.org/10.15184/aqy.2016.193.

settlers and the local populations possessed."[373] This thesis has addressed this "multiplicity of identities" of both the Anglo-Saxons and the Scandinavians in 11th-century England. It has contributed three facets of this cultural identity which perhaps had been implied by existing literature but not yet fully explored. More importantly, this thesis has provided an in-depth exploration of the use of the Great Beast motif. As shown in Chapter 1, scholars hardly name the motif, let alone dwell on its use. The focus of its use in England, rather than in Scandinavia, has also brought new ideas to the existing body of scholarship in the areas of Viking studies and early medieval art history. Interest in Anglo-Scandinavian relations, in both today's popular culture and in academia, has grown since Hadley's words written almost twenty years ago. This thesis provides new insights and generates additional questions for both academics and pop-culture Viking enthusiasts with the hope that future studies and technological developments will continue to expand this fascinating motif and the emerging topic of all things Anglo-Scandinavian.

[373] Hadley, *The Vikings in England*, 279.

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