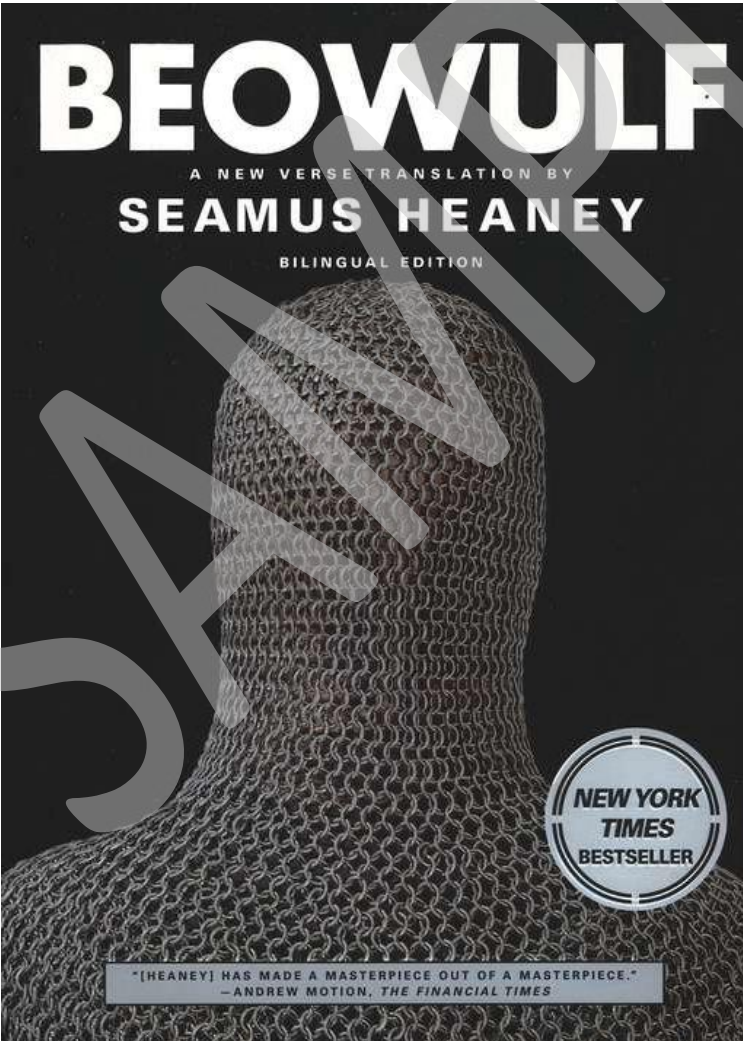


Beowulf

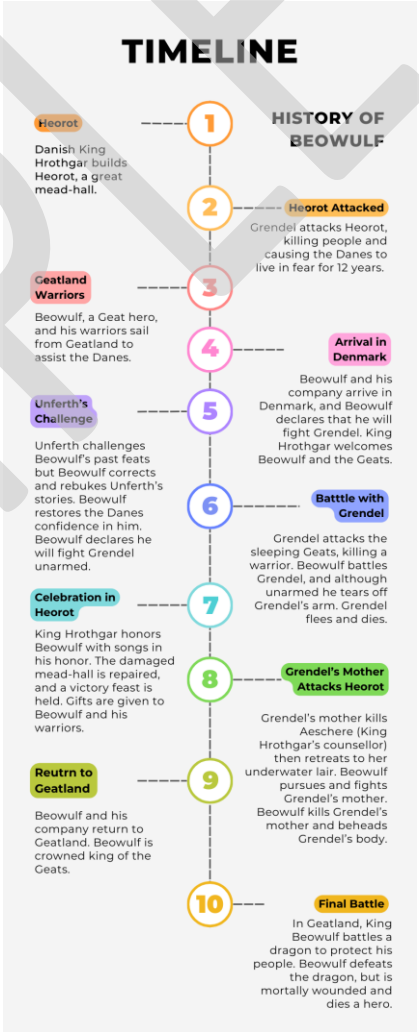
Translated by Seamus Heaney

J. Embree
LIT-399, Annotated Visualization
24 February 2026



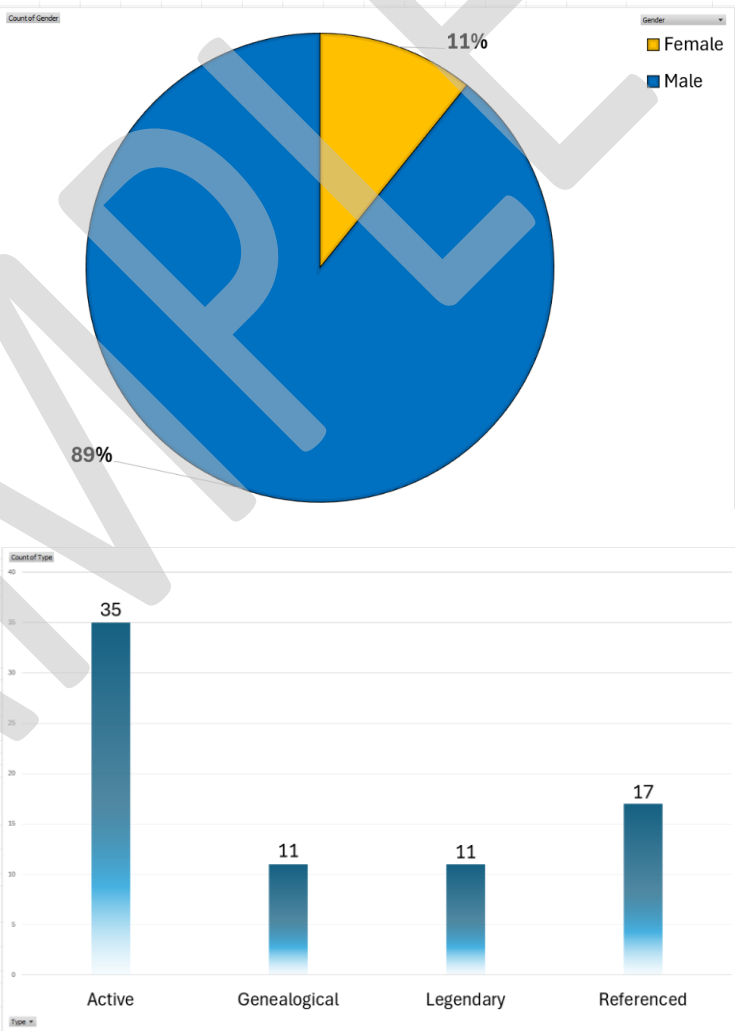
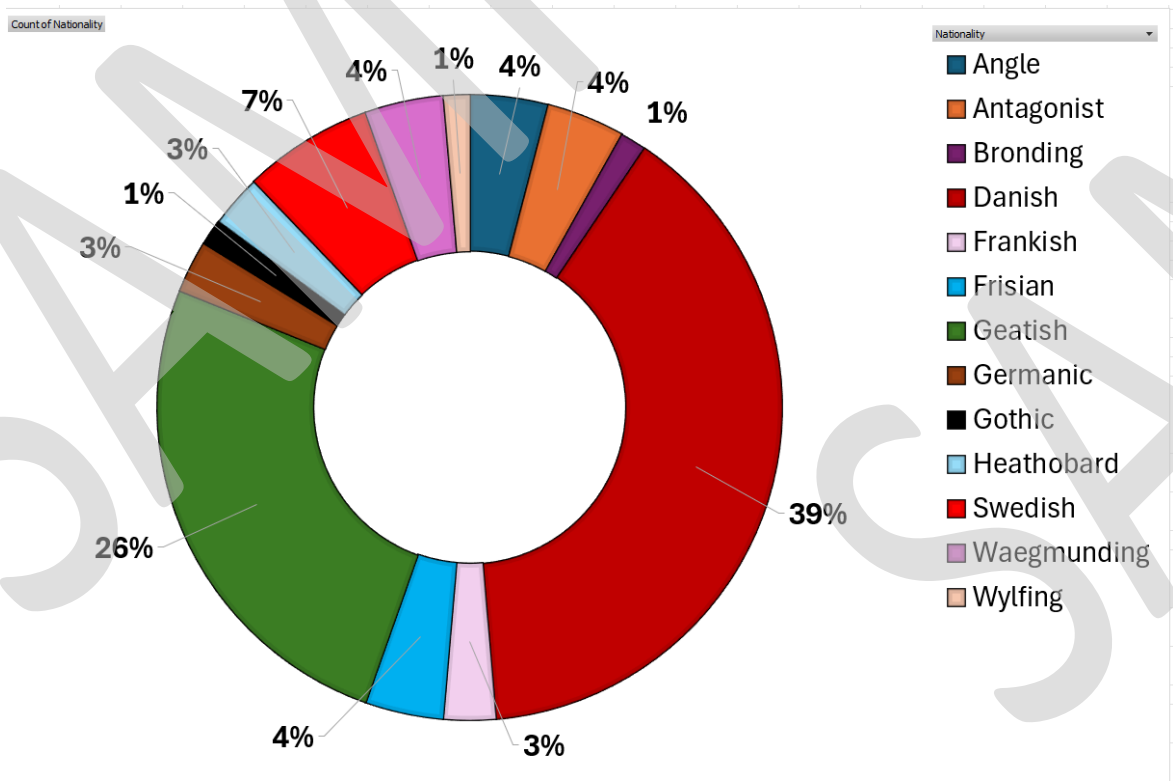
Beowulf Timeline

Seamus Heaney’s translation of *Beowulf* (left) was used to create a timeline of the poem (right). The timeline briefly covers the story in ten points, from Heorot’s founding, to the attacks of Grendel, through Beowulf’s arrival, Grendel’s mother, Beowulf’s victories, return to Geatland, and his last battle.



Beowulf Graphs

The Heaney translation of *Beowulf* was used to create a gender graph (top right), character type graph (lower right), and character nationality graph (below). The data from the book was entered into an Excel file to create these graphs. The gender graph shows the percentage of male (89%) to female (11%) characters. The character type graph shows the number of active characters, genealogical characters, legendary characters, and referenced characters in the story. The character nationality graph shows the percentages of where the characters originate from in the story. Note: “Antagonist” is used for Grendel, Grendel’s mother, and the dragon.



Swedish Archeological Swords

Vlasatý’s article offers examples of archeological swords found in Sweden. Most of the remains are of sword hilts, pommels, cross-guards, blades, or blade fragments. Images of ancient swords convey conflict, battle, struggle, and heroic labor. In stories such as Beowulf, swords are almost a side character – they have names, are used in metaphors, and are seen as a symbol of strength. Before Beowulf fights Grendel, he removes his sword and armor as a sign of his total trust in God’s protection and his own strength.



Sword from Lake Trummen. Taken from Digitalt Museum 2022.



Pommel cap from Skärlev and comparison with the sword from Siguldas.
Salin 1935: Fig. 260; Atgäzis 2019: 10, att. tab.



Beowulf’s Travel to Heorot

Gräslund’s (122) exploration of *Beowulf* offers a new perspective on the traditional interpretation. He suggests that *Beowulf* was written originally near the story’s location, in Scandinavia around the sixth century. *The Nordic Beowulf* includes several figures, such as a map of Beowulf’s travels from Geatland to Heorot.



Figure 2. On his voyage from Gotland (1) to Heorot, Beowulf probably followed the south coast of Scania straight towards the Stevns peninsula in Zealand (2) before turning south towards Præstø Fjord and landing close to Broskov (3). Map by Daniel Löwenborg.

King's Hall of Lejre Lands of Legends

Visit Denmark details a reconstruction of a Viking longhouse, or “King’s Hall”, located at the Lejre Land of Legends museum about 45 minutes from Copenhagen (“Denmark’s Largest Reconstructed”). The hall’s design is based on archeological findings and authentic architectural designs were used to build this 61-m long and 10-m high hall. These images help readers imagine the appearance of Heorot as described in *Beowulf*.



photo: Lejre Land of Legends

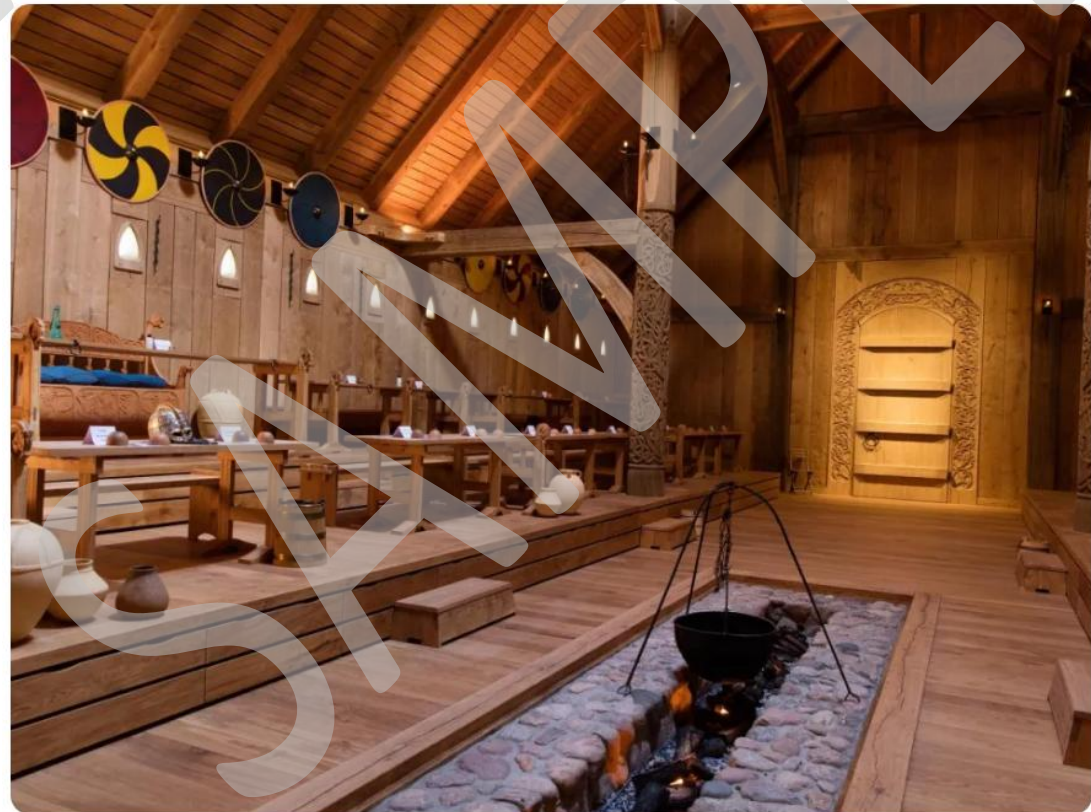


photo: Ole Malling/Lejre Land of Legends

Sutton Hoo, Anglo-Saxon Burial Site

Blakemore's article details the Sutton Hoo cache, a ship burial site that offers a glimpse into burial customs around the time of *Beowulf*. Discovered in 1939, the site included an 80' long Anglo-Saxon ship and 263 objects, including the helmet in the photo. The article discusses how the Sutton Hoo artifacts influenced historians and that *Beowulf*'s description of medieval society might be closer to reality than previously thought. The helmet offers a symbol of the warrior ethos and stoicism.



This extraordinary helmet was buried with its Anglo-Saxon owner, an elite warrior or possibly even a king, at Sutton Hoo in the early 600s A.D.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY BRITISH MUSEUM

Burial Mounds in Sweden

Banyasz details three royal burial mounds in Sweden that hold the remains of monarchs that reigned during the time portrayed in *Beowulf*. One mound held the remains of a woman and a boy, while another mound held a man who is supposed to have been a warrior. The third mound has yet to be completely excavated. At the end of the poem, *Beowulf* is buried in a similarly described mound in Geatland (now modern Sweden).

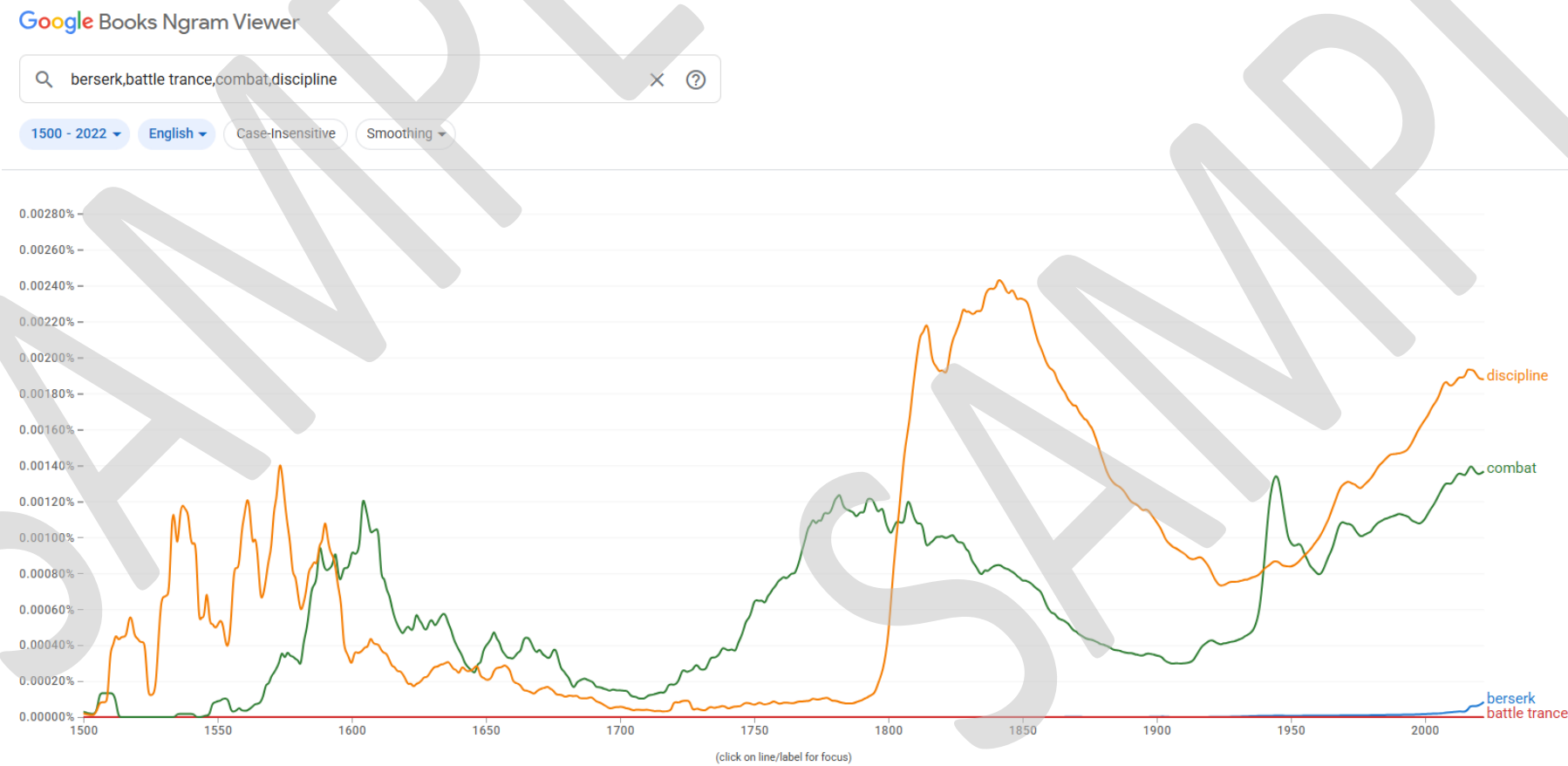


Royal mounds, Gamla Uppsala

(Courtesy Robert Matton AB/Alamy Stock Photo)

Berserk Ngram Graph

Google Books Ngram Viewer was used to create a comparison of the words “berserk”, “battle trance”, “combat”, and “discipline”. The graph only allows a time set back to the year 1500, so the range was set from 1500 to 2022. This graph offers insight into how often these words have appeared in recorded books over the past 500 years. Even though this timeframe does not overlap with the times of *Beowulf*, it remains valuable information for examining language patterns and conducting word analysis.



Works Cited

Banyasz, Malin Grunberg. "Gamla Uppsala, Uppsala, Sweden". *Archaeology Magazine*, July/August 2017. <https://archaeology.org/issues/july-august-2017/off-the-grid/trenches-sweden-gamla-uppsala/>

Blakemore, Erin. "Why this famed Anglo-Saxon ship burial was likely the last of its kind." *National Geographic*, 29 Jan. 2021. <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/article/famed-anglo-saxon-ship-burial-sutton-hoo-last-kind>

Google. Google Books Ngram Viewer, https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=Berserk%2Cbattle+trance%2C+combat%2C+discipline&year_start=1500&year_end=2022&corpus=en&smoothing=3 Accessed 1 Feb. 2026.

Gräslund, Bo. *The Nordic Beowulf*. ARC Humanities Press, 2022. *EBSCOhost*, <https://research.ebsco.com/linkprocessor/plink?id=bc9b467e-2750-31dc-be0e-b3db4f851c3d>

Heaney, Seamus. *Beowulf: Bilingual Edition*. W. W. Norton & Company, 2000.

Vlasatý, Tomáš. "Supplement to Androschuk's sword catalog of Viking Age Sweden". *Reenactment and Science Project Forløg*, 19, Apr. 2022. <https://sagy.vikingove.cz/en/supplement-to-androschuks-sword-catalog-of-viking-age-sweden/>

Visit Denmark. "Denmark's Largest Reconstructed Viking Longhouse Opens." *VisitDenmark*, 15 June 2020, <https://www.visitdenmark.com/press/latest-news/denmarks-largest-viking-longhouse-opens>