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<div align="center">Anglo-Saxon Values in *Beowulf*</div>

Beowulf is a significant piece of art that reflects the spirit of the old days. It is an epic poem of Old English literature, telling about the heroic feats of the protagonist. Beowulf was a great hero, monster slayer, and savior for many people. His existence as a historical person has not been confirmed. However, owing to this poem, it is possible to make assumptions about the traditions, customs, culture and values of the Anglo-Saxons. Among others, loyalty, fairness, courage as well as honor should be highlighted as main values.

In those ancient times, loyalty was one of those qualities that were highly praised. The hero of the poem personified an example to follow and by his behavior showed that he was ready for any deeds for the sake of his people, his lord as well as his land. Afore the impending battle Beowulf proclaims that they were the Geat people who "owe allegiance to Lord Hygelac", proving that loyalty and dedication lead him to his feats (*Beowulf* 262-263). This is the value that an ideal person should have in the culture of the Anglo-Saxons. Indeed, the lack of loyalty among the people led to fragmentation, internal conflicts, and, as a result, the weakening of external borders.

However, besides loyalty, bravery was an important value for Anglo-Saxons. The fight between good and evil is one of the most popular topics in literature, known for a long time (Toker 107) Though, it is worth noting that in this poem, the concepts of good and evil can be concentrated in the same character (Swank 265). Fights with monsters in the poem are an allegory for regularly occurring conflicts with ill-wishers. However, for any fight, one

must have considerable courage, and Beowulf is the standard of how brave a person should be. He expresses courage in each of his actions. Throughout the poem actions he has no fear, and nothing can stop him. In addition, one should not forget about honor and dignity. In the battle with Grendel, Beowulf throws away weapons and armor, as the morality of the time said that dishonest killing is not satisfying (*Beowulf* 681-684). Ultimately, the honor of the warrior led to decision to claim the royal throne and subsequently became king (Neidorf 537). In any case, the courage and honor of the people determined how successful their society would be.

The poem is not an optimistic work and is riddled with ambiguity, sadness and drama. Life at that time was not easy, and happy endings did not happen often. For Germanic legends, it was characteristically that in the end, the tragedy happened to both positive and negative characters. At that time, people perceived the death of the hero differently, in a sense this was an expected outcome. Death always walked alongside, and to die after a fight with the enemy was a kind of honor.

Beowulf is a kind of encyclopedia of the Anglo-Saxon world. Through the prism of the poem, the ideal of a person of that time is seen. The poem shows what qualities he should have as well as the most significant values of that time. All characters demonstrate certain sides: some show negative ones, while others reveal the values of the people of the time. Eventually, the moral ideal of the Anglo-Saxons is a devoted, loyal, brave and fearless hero.

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