

Thesis Advisor's Report

Thesis Title: *Wyrd bið ful aræd*: The Morality of Fate and Predestination in Old English Poetry.

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It has been my great pleasure to teach this student, from her first exploration of Old English vocabulary and grammar, to see her develop her understanding of this early medieval literature into this thesis.

In this thesis, Jana exceeded my expectations by exploring the philosophical and theological concepts of fate and predestination in the works of St Augustine in a way which is relevant to the literature under discussion, showing the concept of *judicium Dei* in action in a poem like Beowulf.

The central argument of the thesis would not be out of place in a graduate literature symposium. The thesis is relatively well structured. If there is a flaw in the articulation of the methodology, I must confess that this may be due to my lack of guidance on this issue rather than any shortcoming of the student. Jana certainly relied upon a wealth of secondary literature in her thorough examination of fate and predestination in the selected Old English poems.

Regarding popular religion, I would have preferred to see a little more recent secondary literature than Jolly (1996), though fully investigating these would possibly have been beyond the scope of an undergraduate thesis.

The thesis is written in engaging and fluent English, clearly articulating complex philosophical implications of a body of literature which can appear intimidating in its opacity. Although it was necessary to rely on translations of these texts, I feel that the thesis demonstrates an excellent understanding of the cultural and theological context of Old English literature. I recommend the thesis for defense and my suggested grade is 1.

In Prague, 3 September 2024

Conan Doyle, PhD.