

ANGLO-SAXON WILLS
AND THE INHERITANCE OF TRADITION
IN THE ENGLISH BENEDICTINE REFORM¹

In his will, which dates from between 931 and 939, near the end of the reign of King Æthelstan, a certain Wulfgar writes that he wishes to divide some of the lands he holds, with one part going “þam godes þeowum for mine sawle 7 for mines fæder 7 for mines ieldran fæder” (Kemble 1838-49: 175-76).² Expressions of such concern are rare in the corpus of wills from before Wulfgar’s time; they are also rare in the eleventh century.³ But between 925 and 992, ten of the twenty-four extant wills (42 %) mention ancestors and their souls.⁴ Æthelstan’s coronation was held in 925; Oswald

¹ My thanks to Allen J. Frantzen, Joyce Hill, Mercedes Salvador and especially Greg Rose for generous assistance and encouragement.

² S 1533. “...for the servants of God for my soul and that of my father and those of my elder fathers [ancestors]” (Kemble 1839-49: 175-76). In order to avoid the confusion that plagues many other studies of the wills, in the text I will use the name of the primary testator while in footnotes I will cite the edition from which I draw the Old English text, and I will also give the appropriate number (preceded by a capital S) from Sawyer 1968. Unless otherwise noted, translations are my own. I give a complete list of the Anglo-Saxon wills arranged in order of their probable dates of composition in Appendix I. For the date of Wulfgar’s will see Sawyer (1968: 429).

³ Among the wills dating from the ninth and early tenth centuries, only those of Dunn (S 1514), which dates from 855, and King Alfred (S 1507; 873-888) mention ancestors’ souls (though see below for a discussion of these wills). While the number of extant wills from 992-1066 is comparable to the number of wills from 925-992, only four of these twenty-seven wills (14.81%) mention ancestors’ souls: Wulfric, 1000-1002; Athelstan Ætheling, 1014 (S 1503); Leofgifu, 1035-1044 (S 1521); and Ketel, 1052-1066 (S 1519) (though see below for a discussion of Wulfric’s will).

⁴ Wills mentioning ancestors’ souls from between 925 and 992 are: Wulfgar, 931-939 (S 1533); Theodred, 942-951 (S 1526); Ælfgar, 946-951 (S 1483); Æthelric, (S 1501); Æthelflæd, 962-991 (S 1494); Ælfgifu, 966-975 (S 1484); Ælfheah, 968-971 (S 1485); Brihtric and Ælfswith, 973-987 (S 1511); Æthelgifu, 980-990 (S 1497); Wulfwaru, 984-1016 (S 1538).

of Worcester died in 992. These two dates mark the beginning and the end of the Anglo-Saxon Benedictine Reform of the tenth century.¹ As Figure 1 illustrates, the dates of wills that express concern for ancestors' souls correspond closely with these dates, and this co-incidence is not a mere artifact of interval selection.² It is no surprise that Æthelwold, Dunstan and Oswald were concerned about the relationship of their political, cultural and

¹ The basic history of the Benedictine reform is outlined in Stenton (1950: 428-54); see also Knowles (1950: 16-82). It is traditional to date the Reform as beginning between 939 and 946, when Dunstan became abbot of Glastonbury, and ending with the death of Oswald in 992 (Knowles 1950: 31, 70). But more recent scholarship has placed the beginning of the intellectual and cultural renaissance in the court of Æthelstan (Keynes 1985; Gretsch 1991: 1-5, 426-27 and *passim*). See also Yorke 1988; Brooks & Cubbitt 1996; Ramsay et al. 1992; Parsons 1975. The introduction and notes to Lapidge & Winterbottom 1991 are also exceptionally useful. Although the reform continued to influence subsequent culture through the efforts of the second generation of reformers (most famously Ælfric of Eynsham and Archbishop Wulfstan), the expansion of the reform and the great influx of new converts to the monastic life can be said to have effectively ended with the death of Oswald.

² Because we do not have single-year dates for a majority of the Anglo-Saxon wills it is impossible to construct a true stack histogram to represent them. Figure 1 represents the number of wills plotted against time, giving each will as a range of potential dates. It is important when reading the graph to remember that each box, no matter how large, only represents one will, and that each will was in fact written during only one year in the range of dates represented by the box. The will of Æthelgifu (S 1497), which is discussed below, is only listed once although it exists in multiple manuscripts with somewhat different contents. Figures 2 and 3 are stack histograms, but they are constructed at the expense of the full range of possible dates for each will, since each will is plotted as a member of a decade-long set. Figure 2a illustrates the distribution of wills in time if the earliest possible date for each will is chosen. Figure 3a shows the distribution if the midpoint of each possible range of dates is selected. Neither method can be entirely accurate, since the true date of one will might be close to the midpoint while another might be close to the lower bound (I have omitted including an upper-bound histogram, since the data are skewed by the presence of the "right wall" of the Conquest, which tends to cause a clustering near 1066 that is probably not reflective of the data). Both figures illustrate, as does figure 1, the tight clustering of wills mentioning ancestors' souls in the 925-992 interval; this cluster is even more evident if the wills are plotted on a logarithmic scale, a method which eliminates some potential "noise" from the data. It is interesting that the absence in the 950's of wills mentioning ancestors' souls coincides with the reigns of Eadred and Eadwig, one king who, while he supported the reform, was weak and often ill (see below) and the other actively hostile to Dunstan and, presumably, the reform. Unfortunately there is not enough data to do more than merely note the interesting coincidence.

religious project to the past, but the influence of reform ideals upon the wider, secular culture has not been previously documented.¹

In the following pages I will argue that this striking cluster of wills mentioning ancestors' souls and the co-incidence of the cluster, in both time and geographic distribution, with the tenth-century Benedictine Reform provides evidence that the reform influenced the beliefs and practices of secular Anglo-Saxons. The specific language of the wills in question (even when that language is standard diplomatic), in addition, perhaps, to the propensity of female testators to refer more frequently to their ancestors, shows that ideologies important to reformed monasteries had been adopted by secular individuals as part of a grassroots pietistic movement which deeply valued the practice of donating property to obtain monastic devotions aimed at the remediation of ancestors' souls. As a result of this penetration of reform ideologies into secular culture, individual Anglo-Saxons saw themselves being in direct contact with their predecessors through their intercession via masses, psalms and prayers purchased through their gifts to the monasteries. The evidence of the wills thus helps to explain the power of the idea (and ideal) of the past in Anglo-Saxon England, for that past was not only remembered, but actually re-animated through the active purchase of grace for departed ancestors, a purchase facilitated by the wills which document it.

ANGLO-SAXON WILLS AS EVIDENCE

Depending upon which scholar is counting, there are between fifty-five and sixty-two wills extant from Anglo-Saxon England.² This corpus of

¹ The current scholarly consensus seems to be that the Benedictine reformers saw themselves as restoring monasticism to its proper practice and rightful place of influence in a united English kingdom. They believed their monastic practice (influenced as it was by continental reform) was a restoration of unique and ancient English traditions arising originally from Augustine's mission and linked to the work of the great English scholars Bede and Aldhelm (Gretsch 1999: 1-5, 426-27 and *passim*).

² Sheehan (1963: 21, n.11) and Sawyer (1968: 414-31) both enumerate fifty-nine documents in their lists of wills. Other recent scholars to examine the wills, Brenda Danet and Bryna Bogoch (1992), claim a corpus of sixty-two. Because Danet & Bogoch do not list Sawyer numbers or make citations of all the specific documents

vernacular wills has no parallel on the continent in the early medieval period and shows that the Anglo-Saxon fondness for using the vernacular was not limited to literature. The oldest will we possess, that of Æthelnoth, the reeve at Eastry, Kent, and his wife Gænberg dates from the beginning of the ninth century (Robertson 1956: 4-7).¹ The latest vernacular will, that of Ulf and Madselin, dates from between 1066 and 1068 (Whitelock 1930: 94-97).² Nearly all the wills are found as later (thirteenth- and fourteenth-century) copies by monastic scribes of earlier (and now lost) documents: only fifteen wills are preserved in contemporary form, and these are also nearly all of monastic provenance (Whitelock 1930: xli).³ The absence from cartularies of wills dating from before the ninth century provides at least some evidence that the custom of writing wills was not adopted by the Anglo-Saxons until around 800.⁴

they consider, I have been unable to reconstruct with certainty their corpus. Kathryn Lowe's unpublished 1990 Cambridge Ph.D. dissertation enumerates a corpus of sixty-two wills. Lowe's corpus is substantially the same as the one I use, which is drawn from the *Electronic Sawyer*, ed. S. E. Kelly, available on the world wide web at:

<http://www.trin.cam.ac.uk/users/sdk13/chartwww/eSawyer.99/eSawyer2.html>.

Note however that Old English transcripts of two wills which were in 1990 known only as Latin translations (S1517 and 1532) have been identified by Keynes 1993a. The only significant difference between my corpus and Kelly's is my reduction of some multiple-copy wills to one data point for statistical purposes. See Appendix 1. The majority of the wills were first printed by Kemble (1839-48). Benjamin Thorpe (1865) published some additions to Kemble although, according to Whitelock (1930: xlii), he included "several documents which are technically not wills." E. Edwards (1866) published an additional four wills, and W. de Gray Birch (1885-93) printed several wills in his collection of charters. A.S. Napier and W.H. Stevenson (1895) edited two more, and F.E. Harmer (1914) edited and translated twelve of the earliest wills. In 1930, Dorothy Whitelock published the texts and translations of thirty-nine wills. After Whitelock's edition a few additional wills were edited by A.J. Robertson (1956) and Whitelock herself edited a second (and longer) manuscript of the *Will of Æthelgifu* for the Roxburghe Club in 1968.

¹ 805-832 (S 1500). Tacitus is generally unreliable for matters Anglo-Saxon, and in any event Tacitus wrote eight hundred years before the bulk of the evidence I discuss came into existence. Nevertheless, and for what it may be worth, he does note in chapter 20 of *Germania* that, among the Germans, "heredes tamen successoresque sui cuique liberi, et nullum testamentum" ("nevertheless each person's own children are his heirs and successors, and there is no testament").

² S 1532.

³ Lowe (1990: 12-24) identifies twenty-three wills as pre-conquest.

⁴ Contrast the sudden appearance of wills in the documentary record with the "almost continuous" series of royal charters "joining the seventh-century kingdom of Kent

Written wills could only be produced by literate individuals with access to writing materials and almost certainly operating in some institutional context. Such a context could be found in two institutions in the Anglo-Saxon period—monastic scriptoria or the royal writing office.¹ It does not seem possible, however, at this stage of our knowledge, to prove that the wills were produced by the royal writing office.² George Brown suggests

to the England of William the Conqueror” (Stenton 1959: 2). It seems reasonable to assume that if wills had been in use pre-800 they would appear as copies in cartularies. The *Codex Wintoniensis* (London, British Library, Add. 15350), the cartulary for the Old Minster, Winchester, contains documents dating to 680 (S 1428a), but includes no wills from before the ninth century. In addition, while there are many forgeries in the *Codex Wintoniensis*, there are not even any forged wills dating from before 800, strongly suggesting that Anglo-Saxon forgers did not believe that wills dating from before the ninth century would be accepted as genuine and thus supporting the idea that the custom of will writing arises after 800. The extant pre-900 single-sheet wills are all from Kent and all from the archive of Christ Church, Canterbury (S 1482, S 1500, S 1508, and S1510). Of the three remaining pre-900 wills extant only in copies, two are from Kent (S 1508, from Christ Church, Canterbury and S 1514 from Rochester). The will of King Alfred is an exception, coming from Wessex and found in the archive of the New Minster, but this royal will cannot be taken as typical, and clearly the distribution of documents supports the idea that the wills are a Kentish custom that only spread to the rest of England (and only that south of the Humber) as a result of the Benedictine Reform.

¹ Although the existence of the royal writing office was once controversial—M. T. Clanchy (1979: 17), for example, saw the production of texts as purely monastic—it is now firmly established. W. H. Stevenson first proposed the existence of a royal writing office, but his 1898 *Sandars Lectures in Bibliography* were never published (they are available on the world wide web, courtesy of Simon Keynes, at <http://www.trin.ac.uk/users/sdk13/chartwww/STEVEN%7E1/STEVIN.THTM>). Richard Drögereit (1935) was the first scholar to publish an argument for the existence of a secretariat attached to the royal court during the years 931-963, and he identified the work of royal scribes from the reigns of Æthelstan, Edmund, Eadred and Edgar. T.A.M. Bishop (1971) noted an additional royal scribe active in 956-57, during the reign of Eadwig. Simon Keynes (1980: 17-55) demonstrated that the royal secretariat endured throughout the reign of Æthelred. Eric John (1982: 167) acknowledged that while the evidence is complicated and unclear, he was willing to accept a chancery as possible. More recently, David Dumville (1993: 1-7) argues for the presence of a chancery and views such an office as intimately connected with the monasteries.

² Most wills are found as later copies in monastic cartularies. For example, the *Codex Wintoniensis* dates from 1130-1150 and the Sacrist's Register of Bury St. Edmunds (Cambridge, University Library, Ff. 2. 33) dates from the late thirteenth to early fourteenth century (Davis 1958: 16, 120). Because so many wills are later copies, we cannot identify the scribes of the original documents. There are a number of single-sheet wills for which scribes have been identified. For example, the scribe of the main text of S 1482 also wrote S 153, S 188, S 1268, and S 1436; the scribe of

that “spurred on by the ecclesiastical reform, other non-monastic centers, such as cathedrals with secular canons, produced texts both in Latin and Old English” (1995: 121). But these scribes were the exception rather than the rule and there is no specific evidence that they were associated with the wills. As far as our limited evidence can demonstrate, therefore, the wills should be seen as being in the main the products of monastic scriptoria, which were, Seth Lerer argues, the only institutions “that could foster a culture of textuality” in Anglo-Saxon England (1991: 8).

Upon the fortunes of the monastery, therefore, depended the fortunes of the wills, a link borne out by the distribution of Anglo-Saxon testaments, which is “most uneven as to time and place” (Sheehan 1963: 23). Nearly all the wills come from between the middle of the tenth century and the Conquest, and nearly all owe their preservation to their containing bequests to the abbeys of Abingdon, Bury St. Edmunds, Christ Church, Canterbury and Winchester.¹ Whitelock argues that written wills were more common than the existing manuscript distribution would indicate: “that great numbers of wills from Anglo-Saxon times have perished is shown not only by fairly frequent references in Anglo-Saxon documents from the ninth century onwards to wills no longer extant, but also by the distribution of those wills which have survived” (Whitelock 1930: xli). The sample of extant wills, then, may be skewed by a bias towards the preservation of wills that record gifts to monastic foundations: it is at least theoretically possible that some or many Anglo-Saxons made wills did not name monastic foundations at all, and for this reason these wills were not preserved. But this caveat aside, it seems not unreasonable to use the existing corpus to attempt to determine patterns of inheritance in both time and space.

the main text of S 1486 also wrote S 1494; the scribe of S 1500 also wrote S 41; the scribe of S 1533 also wrote the guild regulations in Bern, Burgerbibliothek 671, 76v; the scribe of S 1536 also wrote S 906.

So while it is possible that some wills were written by royal writing office scribes, confirmation or refutation of this position is not yet possible. Dumville (1992: 79-81) argues that Wulfgar’s will (S 1533) was likely written at the *witenagemot* “when scribal facilities and sufficient witnesses would have been available,” and that the will, written by Æthelstan’s chancery scribes, was likely written on the royal estate at Bedwyn.

¹ The geographic distribution of the bequests listed in the wills is discussed further below and illustrated in figures 4-6.

The precise legal status of the Anglo-Saxon will has been the matter of some debate, and resolution is beyond the scope of this essay.¹ The most substantial argument turns on the dispositive status of the will.² A writ “is purely evidentiary... its publication does not appear to represent the act of conveyance itself. A dispositive counterpart is required” which is supplied by a diploma (Keynes 1980: 141-42). The will, in contrast, has both elements of dispositive and evidentiary power. While it was not a substitute for the diploma or landbook, a written will could be used in litigation as evidence for an actual change of ownership (Sheehan 1963: 4-16). Diplomas and writs were issued by the court, but each will was created by an individual or married couple. Thus, while their implementation often required the permission of the king, wills do record in some measure the desires of individual Anglo-Saxons.

The degree to which we can use wills to identify individual desires depends upon how much freedom individuals had when creating a will. All of the wills exhibit four general characteristics: they attempt to influence the behavior of living people after the death of the testator; they attempt to provide for contingencies foreseen by the testator, including such events as the birth of a child or the death of an executor; they arrange, through the institution of alms of one sort or another, to provide for the soul of the testator; and finally, wills attempt to prevent the alteration of the document in which they are recorded.

Within this framework, the wills also tend to follow some formulaic conventions. A. Campbell asserted that the wills are structured by “an Old English legal jargon, which in view of the universal use of Latin for other documents, must have evolved for the purpose of making wills” (1938: 133-

¹ See Hazeltine (1930: i-xxi). Hazeltine’s remarks as to the evidentiary status of wills are quoted or paraphrased without dissent in a number of influential general studies (Greenfield & Calder 1986: 114; Stock 1983: 48-49).

² Sheehan’s project is to show through the history of the will the influence of Christianity in the development of English civilization. He thus complicates the strictly legal history given by Hazeltine, showing the connections between wills, alms and notions of the afterlife (Sheehan 1963: 17). Sheehan also explains the relationship between wills and other sorts of gifts (28-30), making important distinctions between *post-obit* gifts (any transaction in which the transfer did not take place until the testator’s death even though the gift may have been arranged long before), and gifts made *verba novissima*, that is, on the death-bed (31).

52). But the situation is actually somewhat more complicated. Campbell's often-quoted assertion that the scribes of the wills "provided a framework" ends up begging the question of whether or not scribes put into standardized phrasing the desires of testators or worked to structure and limit what and how a testator could bequeath.¹

Other cultural conventions may also have influenced the language of the wills. Sheehan suggests that a will needed to be able to "be capable of defending the gift" against the opposition of family members, should they dispute the will (1963: 24). The ability of a document to "defend," albeit in the hands of specific interested parties, suggests first of all that wills are not only evidentiary, and second, that the style of wills may have invested the documents with what Danet and Bogoch call "performative power." That is, the specific phrases used in the wills, as well as the inclusion of "speech acts" such as curses may be linked to collocations that were powerful in the spoken culture of Anglo-Saxon England. The extra-textual power of these phrases may have increased the chances of a given testator's wishes being followed (Danet & Bogoch 1992: 110-12).

In any event, there are both near-universal elements and significant regional and temporal patterns in will diplomatic. For example, the prefatory clause of wills shows a range of variation with a distinctively regional character. There are four main forms of the prefatory clause:²

Type 1: *ic/N kithe ... an/unnen.*

Type 2: *This/Her is ...cwide.*

Type 3: *Her/ic swutelath on thisse ge/write ... an ... aihte.*

Type 4: *ic an ... aefter minne daege* (this type amounts to no prefatory clause, since it is the first dispositive clause of the will).

¹ The question of how much the use of a linguistic formula limits the freedom of a person using it is fraught with literary-theoretical difficulties. Nevertheless it seems reasonable to suppose that there is some significant difference between a cultural practice in which a testator tells a scribe what he or she wants to bequeath, the scribe then converting these wishes into formulaic prose, versus a situation in which the scribe, as representative of the monastery, tells the testator what is appropriate for him or her to donate and to whom the donation should be made.

² For a discussion of one form of prefatory clause, see Withers (1999: 119-22) and Lowe 1991.

If we compare the distribution of these clauses by archive, we see:

Bury St. Edmunds:

Type 1: 6 (33.33%)

Type 2: 4 (22.22%)

Type 3: 7 (38.89%)

Type 4: 0

Other: 1 (5.56%)

Christ Church, Canterbury:

Type 1: 5 (71.43%)

Type 2: 2 (28.57%)

Type 3: 0

Type 4: 0

Other: 0

Old Minster, Winchester:

Type 1: 1 (12.50%)

Type 2: 0

Type 3: 5 (62.50%)

Type 4: 1 (12.50%)

Other: 1 (12.50%)

New Minster, Winchester:

Type 1: 1 (14.385%)

Type 2: 3 (42.66%)

Type 3: 0

Type 4: 2 (28.57%)

Other: 1 (14.385%)

St. Albans:

Type 1: 2 (50.00%)

Type 2: 0

Type 3: 1 (25.00%)

Type 4: 1 (25.00%)

Other: 0

All others:

Type 1: 2 (12.50%)

Type 2: 3 (18.75%)

Type 3: 6 (37.50%)
Type 4: 2 (12.50%)
Other: 3 (18.75%)

These differences are not merely an artifact of a particular chartulary style, since they exist in both original single sheets and chartulary copies and across archives. There are similar patterns in the term used for soul (“gast” is used interchangeably with “sawel” in 9th-century wills, but never in the later wills), dispositive verbs, presence or absence of symbolic or verbal invocation, presence or absence of anathema, sanction or blessing, and ratio of third person to first person in diplomatic. It is thus to some degree possible to distinguish by analysis of diplomatic between what elements of the will are required legal framework and what represent the choices of individual bequestors.

Mention of remediation of ancestors’ souls appears to be a variable that is individual to each bequestor. Wills mentioning ancestors’ souls occur in the majority of archives but do not predominate in any of them, either in single-sheet wills or in cartularies.¹ This distribution, coupled with the distribution in time discussed above, strongly supports the idea that the use of remediation diplomatic was an individual choice, perhaps influenced by the urging of a monastic scribe, but nevertheless a choice that an individual was free to make or not make. It is therefore reasonable to conclude that, despite all the difficulties created by an impoverished documentary record, wills can be used evidence for the desires of Anglo-Saxon testators, though they are also likely to represent to some degree the desires and cultural imperatives of the institutions by whose hands they were created and preserved: Anglo-Saxon monasteries from the ninth century to the Conquest.

THE DESIRES OF TESTATORS AND CORRELATION WITH THE REFORM YEARS

¹ Wills mentioning ancestors’ souls are found in the archives of Christ Church, Canterbury (2); Bury St. Edmunds (7); Winchester, Old Minster (3); Winchester, New Minster (1); Rochester (2); Ramsey (1); Bath (1); St. Albans (1).

The reasons why Anglo-Saxons would choose to *write* wills (as opposed to simply bequeathing in the kind of oral ceremonies that Danet and Bogoch, Hazeltine, Whitelock and Sheehan propose) are straightforward.¹ Written wills are more difficult to modify than remembered oral promises, and documents can last longer than memories. In fact the wills indicate that testators intended their wills to last for all eternity. Many include curses that assume the permanence of the document.² For example, Wulfgyth writes in her will:

and se þe mine quyde beryaui þe ic nu biqueþen habbe a godes
ywithnesse beriaued he worþe þises erthliche meryþes and
ashireyi hine se almiyti dryten þe alle shepþe shop and ywroyte
uram alre haleylene ymenesse on domesday. and sy he bytæt
Satane þane deule and alle his awaryede yueren into helle Grunde
and þer aquelmi and godes withsaken bute ysweke and mine
irfinume neuer ne aswenche (Whitelock 1930: 86).³

This curse operates until the end of time, indicating that the testator desires to gain a form of eternal power—the ability to influence the fates of others and to constrain their behavior from beyond the grave. It is hard to imagine such trans-temporal power being exercised without the help of the technology of writing.⁴

¹ Seth Lerer argues that Anglo-Saxons were aware of “textual power: the control that writings exercise over their readers and their world” (1991: 62). Harnessing textual power for wills and other purposes would be a logical consequence of its recognition.

² Danet & Bogoch (1992: 109-15) cite twenty-five curses in their corpus of sixty-two wills.

³ S 1535. “And he who takes away from my will which I have now declared in the witness of God, may he be riven of all happiness on earth, and may the Almighty Lord who created and wrought all creatures exclude him on judgment day from the fellowship of all the saints, and may he be given to the Satan the devil and all his accursed heirs and there suffer with those God has forsaken without end, and never trouble my inheritors.”

⁴ It is important to remember, however, that not only does a document need to be preserved for long periods of time in order to project trans-temporal power, but someone must be able to *read* the document and must decide to *obey* it. Both of these requirements are more difficult to ensure than much previous scholarship has assumed, and while Anglo-Saxon testators could not foresee the Conquest and the changes in their language, they must have been aware, as we are today, that quite often the wishes of the deceased are not followed.

If an individual's identity is in part constituted by his or her ability to influence other individuals, then the post-mortem influence enabled by written wills is a means of perpetuating individual identity after death. Such perpetuation of identity through wills can be seen today in purely secular contexts, and suggests that perpetuation of identity may be a basic human desire. In the Anglo-Saxon period the perpetuation of identity after death was inextricably bound up with Christian conceptions of the afterlife. Thus, as Sheehan argues, the use of wills was inextricably linked with the church.¹

The church enabled the post-mortem perpetuation of identity by preserving the memory of individuals, by helping to enforce the execution of their desires, and by saying masses to aid their souls.² The preservation of the memory of benefactors, particularly in continental monasteries, has been exhaustively documented.³ We know that such preservation was important to Anglo-Saxons as well as to individuals on the continent because the practice of recording benefactors' names in a *Liber Vitae* was widespread

¹ Sheehan's argument that "in many ways the history of the will in England is a supreme example of the part played by Christianity in the growth of western civilization" is perhaps overstated, but his emphasis of the ecclesiastical context of Anglo-Saxon wills is a helpful counterbalance to an otherwise strictly legalistic approach to wills as an example of the evolution of a legal procedure (1963: 3 and *passim*). For an example of analysis focused almost exclusively on legal matters see Hazeltine (1930: vii-xv).

² The church could aid in the execution of a will if, for example, both a monastic foundation and an individual were named as beneficiaries. To preserve its own interest in any given will, a monastic foundation might very well insist that the entire will be carried out, thus thwarting family members or other interested parties opposed to the testator's desires for his or her land or goods.

³ Patrick Geary notes that "in the ninth through eleventh centuries [monastic] cartularies protected not simply property rights both vis-a-vis tenant and royal authorities, but they also protected the memory of benefactors ... " (1994: 86). Barbara H. Rosenwein (1982: 32-50) has shown that bequests to reformed monasteries were a way for individuals in unstable times to associate themselves with stable and reliable communities. She also argues (1989: 141-43) that transfers of property between monasteries and secular communities were ways for individuals and communities to become "neighbors" of St. Peter. Megan McLaughlin argues that such bequests were not merely for the purpose of "acquiring more and more prayer" for the testators but were instead ways for individuals and families to form close ties with the monastic community: "the point of all these lists [of the names of benefactors], then, was not simply to preserve the names of certain individuals; it was, rather, to record them *among* other names" (1994: 101).

throughout Anglo-Saxon England.¹ Preservation of a name in a *Liber Vitae* clearly did work, as Rosenwein, McLaughlin and Geary have all shown, to create a community that included both monks and lay donors bound together by strong social and religious ties. But at least as important as the social ties that bound monks and laypersons together was the ability of the church to provide for the souls of the dead.

The idea of almsgiving providing remediation for the souls of the departed has a firm biblical basis in Acts 20:35 and II Corinthians 9:5-14. That Anglo-Saxons believed that the saying of prayers, the chanting of psalms and the commemoration of individuals in masses would aid the souls of the departed in the afterlife is obvious from simple inspection of the corpus of wills, the majority of which state that donations to a church or monastic foundation are given “for mine soule” (Whitelock 1930: 34-37).² Wills throughout the period also request intercession for a handful of individuals either close to the testator or politically powerful: a spouse, king or lord. Such donations are a structured and institutionally assisted form of almsgiving; the giving itself is beneficial for the soul, and a gift to a church foundation makes the alms even more valuable.³

That Anglo-Saxons would also want to provide for the souls of their loved ones seems a reasonable and common desire, and the ability of

¹ For Anglo-Saxon *libri vitae* see Gerchow 1988. The Durham *Liber Vitae* (most of which dates from the ninth century and was written in Lindisfarne) was printed in facsimile by the Surtees Society (Surtees 1923). More recently, Simon Keynes has edited *The Liber Vitae of the New Minster and Hyde Abbey Winchester* (Keynes 1996).

² “For my soul.” The specific quotation is from the will of Æthelflæd (S 1494), but the phrase or some variant with the same meaning is ubiquitous.

³ There were many gifts that were in a sense given to no one, and these gifts should be viewed as pure alms. For example, as David Pelteret (1995: 110-25) notes, many testaments manumit slaves after the death of the testator. While contemporary readers may see post-mortem manumission as a rather cynical act (the testator enjoyed the value of the slaves’ labor during his life; when he was dead and no longer needed the labor, his soul benefited from the manumission), it does indicate the value Anglo-Saxons placed on almsgiving without a *quid pro quo* from any specific institution; there is no hint that the freed slaves are supposed to pray for the souls of their owner; the freeing itself is enough. The freeing of slaves as a means of remediation for a departed soul has a biblical basis in Jeremiah 34:8-22, and a foundation in Æthelstan’s laws, Ordinances I and I.1 (Liebermann 1898-1916: I.148).

monasteries to provide for the souls of the dead even as they provided for at least some of the spiritual needs of the living creates a continuum of monastic and lay memory, and a “corporate memory of a religious community” (Keynes 1996: 50). New entries in a *Liber Vitae* are part of an ongoing book, a tradition of names and remembrances. Yet until the middle of the tenth century (with only one clear and one ambiguous exception) Anglo-Saxon testators, while relying upon future generations to perpetuate their own memories, only looked forward; they did not *in their wills* look back to their predecessors.

Before the Benedictine reform only two wills, those of Dunn and that of King Alfred, mention ancestors.¹ Dunn’s will, which dates from 855 and comes from Kent, approximates the standard diplomatic of the mention of ancestors. Dunn grants a title deed to his wife for her lifetime. Upon her death she is to “geselle hit on ðæs halgan apostoles naman sce Andreas ðam hirede ‘in’ mid unnan Godes ȝ his hal’l’gena for unc buta ȝ eall uncre eldran” (Whitelock 1930: 14-16).² Notice that while Dunn does not specifically mention the souls of his ancestors, the care of their souls and memory is implicit in the grant to the foundation.

No other ninth-century will mentions ancestors in general and only one, that of King Alfred, mentions specific ancestral individuals. But we cannot take this will as typical. When Alfred first mentions his ancestors he does not take into account their souls, but is rather concerned to justify his ownership of his inheritance. He writes: “Ic Ælfred cingc ... smeade ymbe minre sawle þearfe ȝ ymbe min yrfe þæt me God ȝ *mine ylðran forgeafon* ȝ ymbe þæt yrfe þæt Aðulf cingc min fæder us þrim gebroþrum becwæð” (Harmer 1914: 15-19, 49-53, my emphasis).³ Alfred may have had very good reasons well beyond those of simple piety for mentioning the ancestors from whom his power and wealth came from. Youngest of five brothers, Alfred was not—despite the chronicler’s suggestion, repeated by Asser, that

¹ S 1514 and S 1507.

² “Give it to the brotherhood in the name of the holy apostle St. Andrew with the permission of God and his saints for both of us and all our ancestors.”

³ “I, King Alfred, have thought about the needs of my soul and about my inheritance which God *and my ancestors* gave to me, and about that inheritance that my father King Æthelwulf bequeathed to us three brothers.” See also Keynes & Lapidge (1983: 171-78 and 313-26).

he was anointed by the Pope as such—expected to become king, and he faced political opposition at home in addition to his struggles with Vikings (Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 69, 72-75). Alfred may have wanted to remind readers (and hearers at any oral ceremony) of his legitimate claim to the throne. Alfred also does not mention his ancestors' souls, the standard formula for the post-reform wills that do place themselves within a tradition of inheritances, though he does specifically mention one ancestor, his father. Alfred wishes two hundred pounds for both his soul and his father's to be distributed among priests, poor servants of God, the distressed poor, and the church in which Alfred's body will be buried.

Alfred's will foreshadows the more elaborated interest in ancestors' souls found in the wills of the 930's through the end of the tenth century, and expansion of Alfred's practice is consistent with the Benedictine reformers' predilection for building upon and developing Alfredian institutions and customs.¹ The next will to mention ancestors' souls is that of Wulfgar, noted above, who in his will (composed 931-939) bequeaths his land for his, his father's and his ancestors' souls (Kemble 1838-49: 175-76).² Wulfgar's interest in the souls of his ancestors marks the beginning of the cluster of wills with a similar focus. That this first will to mention ancestors' souls dates from the reign of Æthelstan is also consistent with recent scholarship that puts the foundations of the Benedictine reform in Æthelstan's court.³

The next mention of ancestors and their souls appears in the will of Theodred, Bishop of London, who between 942 and 951 bequeaths property "for mine soule 7 for min louerde þat ic vnder bigeat and for min Eldrene" (Whitelock 1930: 2-5).⁴ Both Wulfgar's and Theodred's wills, however, are

¹ See below, and also, for example, Gretsch (1999: 341-47 and 426-27). Dumville also argues that the Alfredian program of cultural and religious revival was planned to "mature in the time of later generations" (1992: 2).

² S 1533. "For my soul and for [that] of my father and for [those of] my older fathers," my translation. That Wulfgar's will is genuine is not in dispute. See Dumville: "the will, on a small and separate sheet, was folded with the diploma; it has since been joined to it" (1992: 78 n106). See also Keynes (1980: 14-19).

³ The case for Æthelstan's court as an incubator of the later reform movement is made by Gretsch (1999: 332-83). See also Lapidge (1993a: 18-24); Keynes 1985 and Dumville (1992: 204-05).

⁴ "For my soul and for my lord under whom I acquired it [the property] and for my ancestors."

written before the real rise in power and influence of the Benedictine Reform, and it is after their wills that the corpus begins to be filled with mentions of ancestors.

Ælfgar's is the first will from this tight cluster of wills mentioning ancestors' souls. Some time between 946 and 951 (i.e., after Dunstan became abbot of Glastonbury), Ælfgar bequeathed estates in Suffolk and Essex to the monastic community which eventually became Bury St. Edmunds; to the community at Stoke (probably Stoke-by-Nayland, Suffolk); to St. Mary's, Barking; to Christ Church, Canterbury; and to St. Paul's, London. Ælfgar instructs his daughter Æthelflæd that he wishes her to grant an estate to a "halegan stowe" of her choice "for yre aldre soule" (Whitelock 1930: 6-9).¹ If Æthelflæd has no children then she is to grant an additional estate to Stoke "for yre aldre soule," and she is in addition to do "so wel heo best may into Stoke for mine soule and for ure aldre" (Whitelock 1930: 6-9).² Ælfgar also grants an estate to his son (?) Ælfwold, provided that he pay a food-rent every year to the community at St. Paul's "for vre aldre soule" (Whitelock 1930: 6-9).³ The wills of Ælfgar's two daughters, Æthelflæd and Ælfflæd, indicate, as Lowe has argued, that "Ælfgar's wishes seem to have been upheld" although each daughter had some latitude in the timing of her donations (1990: 188-96).⁴

There is no reason to explicate each and every will that mentions ancestors' souls; the pattern is clear in both Figure 1 and in the list of wills given in Appendix 1. The wills from the height of the tenth-century reform period which mention ancestors' souls are, in chronological order: Wulfgar, Theodred, Ælfgar, Æthelric, Æthelflæd, Ælfgifu, Ælfheah, Brihtric and Ælfswith, Æthelgifu, Wulfwaru and Æðelstan Mannesson.⁵ This corpus is constructed by including all the wills which mention ancestors' souls (either using familiar diplomatic terms like "eafora" for ancestors or by mentioning

¹ S 1483. "A holy place" "for our ancestors' souls."

² "For our ancestors' souls;" "do good the best she may unto Stoke for my soul and our ancestors'."

³ "For our ancestors' souls,"

⁴ S 1494 and S 1486.

⁵ S 1533, 1526, 1483, 1501, 1484, 1485, 1511, 1497, 1538, 1503a.

specific individuals) extant from the reform period bounded by the coronation of Æthelstan and the death of Oswald (925-992).¹

Only four wills after 992 mention ancestors' souls, those of Wulfric, Æthelstan Ætheling, Leofgifu and Ketel. But I believe that at least one of these (Wulfric, which dates from between 1002 and 1004) should in fact be considered part of the reform-era group. The main body of the will of Wulfric mentions ancestors' souls, and the will also includes a coda in which the voice of the document switches from the first person to the third person and states:²

Dis is seo freolsboc to þam mynstre æt Byrtune þe Æþelred cyning
[æf]re ecelice gefreode. gode to lofe. 7 eallon his halgan to
weorþunge. Swa swa Wulfric his geedstaðelode. for hine sylfne.
[7 fo]r his yldrena sawla. 7 hit mid munecon gesette. fi þær æfre
inne þæs hades menn under heora abbude. gode þeowian. æfter
[san]ctus Benedictus tæcincge. Sic fiat (Whitelock 1930: 48-51).³

This contextualization given by the coda clearly links the gift to the re-establishment of Burton, which was a result of the monastic expansion brought about by the reform.

The will of Ælfflæd, the daughter of Ælfgar, which, like the will of Wulfric, dates from between 1002 and 1004 is a more complicated case. The

¹ I have used the expanded version of the will of Æthelgifu (S 1497) found in the twentieth century in Gloucestershire (Whitelock 1968). This expanded version includes language about the remediation of souls. For a discussion of the textual problems of the various versions of the will of Æthelgifu, see Pelteret (1995: 112-19, 330-34). See also Keynes (1993a: 268) and (1993b: 305). Although the will of Sifflæd exists in two versions (S 1525a and S 1525), I have only used it for one data point, since S 1525 appears to be a clarification of 1525a, and thus seems to represent the desires of only one testator, Sifflæd (remediation language is absent from both versions).

² S 1536. The switch from first- to third-person cannot be in itself taken to indicate a switch from the desires of a testator to the framework provided by a scribe (or by tradition). The wills are approximately evenly divided between first- and third-person testaments, and this division does not seem to track very closely the temporal or geographic affiliation of the will.

³ "This is the charter-book for the monastery at Burton which King Æthelred freed for ever, for the praise of God and the honor of all his saints. Just as Wulfric re-established it for himself and for the souls of his ancestors, and settled monks in it so that there ever after men of that order under their abbot would serve god in that place after the teachings of St. Benedict. So may this be."

will almost certainly relies upon the textual precedent of Ælfgar's will and in any event is written by the same scribe as Ælfflæd's sister Æthelflæd's will (which dates from between 962 and 991).¹ But while Ælfflæd mentions ancestors in her will a total of eight times, she never explicitly mentions their souls. Instead she repeats several times that the estates in question have come from her ancestors. She also donates land to Stoke, where, she notes, the bodies of her ancestors lie buried, and we could take this to mean that she is concerned for their souls. But given the scribal and textual connections between Ælfflæd's will and both Ælfgar's and Æthelflæd's as well as the ambiguity of her invocation of ancestors, it seems safest to include Ælfflæd's will among the eleventh-century wills that do not mention ancestor's souls.

Even if Wulfric's and Ælfflæd's wills are not included in the reform-era group, there is still a robust statistically significant difference between the probability that a will from the reform era will mention ancestors' souls and the probability that a later will will do so (see Table 1a): 41.67% percent of the wills dating from the reform period mention ancestors' souls, while a mere 14.81% percent of the wills in the eleventh century do so.² If Wulfric's will is shifted to the reform period the percentages change to 44.00% for the reform-era corpus and 11.54% for the post-reform corpus with a probability of 99% that the data are significant (see Table 1b).³ The sample size of wills from the period before the reform, a mere eight wills, is too small to use the χ^2 test for statistical significance, but Fisher's Exact Test indicates that there is only a 76% probability that the differences between the two eras are artifacts of imperfect data.⁴ In summary, then, statistical analysis supports the observation that wills in the reform period are far more likely to mention ancestors' souls than are wills in other periods.

¹ Ælfflæd's will is S 1486, Ælfgar's is S 1483, and Æthelflæd's S 1494.

² Statistical analysis using the χ^2 test shows that there is only a 5% chance that these results arise from random fluctuations in the data; in other words, the results are 95% likely to be reflections of actual differences ($\chi^2 = 4.600$ with 2 degrees of freedom).

³ If Wulfric's will is shifted, $\chi^2 = 6.744$ with 2 degrees of freedom.

⁴ And see above for an examination of how the two wills in this period which do mention ancestors' souls (Dunn and King Alfred, S 1514 and 1507) are different from the wills of the reform period.

The temporal distribution of wills that mention ancestors' souls is thus not inconsistent with the hypothesis that the tenth-century Benedictine Reform influenced testators' desires. The geographic distribution of wills provides even more evidence for seeing the hands of Æthelwold and Dunstan at work (at least indirectly) in these wills. Figures 4-6 illustrate the geographic distribution of the ecclesiastical beneficiaries of English wills.¹ Several trends are immediately obvious: None of the extant vernacular wills lists any donations to monasteries or cathedrals north of the Humber. The pre-reform wills donate exclusively to foundations in the south east.² After the coronation of Æthelstan, gifts spread to houses in Wessex and East Anglia, and once the reform gets underway, the geographic range of gifts to ecclesiastical foundations spreads both north and west. The beneficiaries of wills that mention ancestors' souls are reform-founding or reformed houses, including Glastonbury, Romsey, Malmesbury, Bath and Ely, and the spread of these gifts tracks the spread of the reform relatively closely.³ The distribution of the few post-992 wills that mention ancestors' souls also suggests that the memory of the reform remained strongest in Winchester,

¹ These maps come with several caveats. First, as is evident from simple inspection, the biases of the cartularies in which the wills are preserved are particularly evident in the geographic distribution of testaments. Bury St. Edmunds, Canterbury and Winchester are almost certainly over-represented (or rather, other houses are probably under-represented). Also, because so many wills are not dateable to a single year there is significant flexibility in the chronological arrangement of bequests. I have therefore provided maps based on the mid-point of the date range for any given will (i.e., a will which we know dates from between 1002 and 1004 is plotted at 1003). This distribution of wills is perhaps easier to understand when viewed in color, so I have created graphics that can be viewed over the internet at <http://acunix.wheatonma.edu/mdrout/wills.html>.

² The pattern of donations can be used to provide evidence as to the reputations of various ecclesiastical foundations, since donors often gave estates spread throughout England to monasteries that were likewise widely scattered. Wulfric (S 1536), for instance, bequeaths "more than seventy estates spread over eleven counties" (Sheehan 1963: 99); Ælfgar's will (S 1483) gives gifts to St. Edmunds, Bedericesworth; the community at Stoke (probably Stoke-by Nyland, Suffolk); St. Marys, Barking; Christ Church, Canterbury; and St. Paul's, London (Sawyer 1968: 414-15).

³ Again, the lack of single-year dates for many wills makes this correspondence somewhat difficult to prove. But clearly as the reform progresses wills mentioning ancestors' souls begin to give gifts to houses further afield from Winchester, Canterbury and London.

Canterbury and London as well as at foundations created by the reformers such as Ely and Bury St. Edmunds.

The combined evidence of both the geographic and the temporal distributions of wills that mention ancestors' souls supports the hypothesis that these wills were influenced by the cultural work of the reform. The use of the wills to locate testators as part of a continuum or tradition, by mentioning ancestors' souls along with the souls of testators, also fits well with the intellectual concerns of the Benedictine reformers.

WILLS AND THE CONCERNS OF THE BENEDICTINE REFORM

The wills mentioning ancestors' souls are linked in time and in geographic distribution with the Benedictine Reform. They are also linked with the reform movement in their mode of operation and the concerns they evince. Most importantly, wills written during the reform period not only draw on the power of writing to make permanent the desires of testators, but they also assume that the permanence of the document will be guaranteed by monastic permanence.

After the disasters of the ninth century, but before the height of the reform, it is difficult to identify any one institution that individual Anglo-Saxons would have agreed was permanent. Political collapse and Viking raids had led to the demise of monasticism. Secular institutions relied upon the familiar father-to-son transmission of name, power and property, but the persistence of any one lineage was no sure thing.¹ Reformed monks were representatives of a different sort of continuity, one that could be counted on to persist in a way that earlier monasteries had not.

¹ Father to son genealogy is a commonplace in Anglo-Saxon culture and most famously evident in *Beowulf*, where "beorn Ecgþeowes" (the son of Ecgþeow) is Beowulf's most common epithet. Such genealogy can also be found in the West Saxon regnal lists and genealogies and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (the Cynewulf and Cyneheard entry for 757, with its concluding list giving the genealogy of Offa in terms of a series of "son of" formulations is simply the most famous example). For succession being far from simple and familial power being far from permanent, see Dumville 1979 and 1977; see also Sisam 1953 and Davis 1992.

King Eadred's will, written between 951 and 955, provides for numerous contingencies; among others, if beneficiaries should die with or without children or if Abbot Dunstan should die before receiving his two hundred pounds.¹ In addition, Eadred arranges a secular, legal penalty: those failing to carry out his wishes will lose their estates, which will "þonne gane þæt land in þær min lic rest" (Harmer 1914: 34-35).² By naming the monastery as beneficiary, Eadred is linking the post-mortem enforcement of his will not to his successor, or his family, but to the institution of the monastery.

Eadred seems to put some faith in the capability of the monasteries to endure, and his will is thus evidence for the mindset of a secular individual at the beginning of the reform. Recall that Eadred became king upon the death of his brother Edmund in 946, when the rebuilding of English monasticism can hardly have progressed so far that the decay of monastic power in the ninth century would have been completely forgotten (Stenton 1950: 355-59). But Eadred almost certainly grew up in the court of Æthelstan, the source of many of the reformers' beliefs and ideas. Moreover, Dunstan was Eadred's treasurer, the holder of the king's royal *haligdom*. Eadred actively assisted the reformers and was certainly well aware of the current and immediate past circumstances of English monasticism.³ The king must have known that there existed on the continent monastic houses that had endured for several centuries. His ill health (attested by the *Vita S Dunstani*, William of Malmesbury and John of Worcester, as well as by the fact that Eadred often did not attend the *witan*) is likely to have encouraged the king to think of his posterity and the care of his soul (Stubbs 1874 [1965]: 31). Thus Eadred, who did not have sons to whom he could bequeath his kingdom, entrusted the monasteries with the perpetuation of his memory and social influence.⁴

¹ S 1515.

² "Then go to that land [i.e., the monastic foundation] in which my body will rest."

³ Eadred was quite sympathetic to the early reform movement and gave Dunstan and Æthelwold the estates of a deserted monastery at Abingdon (John 1966: 181).

⁴ I have not counted Eadred's will among those that mention ancestors' souls because the mention of an ancestor, Eadred's mother, is written in such a way that seems to indicate that she is alive and that Eadred thinks he will pre-decease her; Eadred directly gives her various estates and booklands.

But while Eadred was a supporter of the reform, the reform itself had not yet succeeded to the point where he would entrust only the monastery to preserve his memory. Thus he hedges his bets, hoping that either the monastery or the secular social structure will preserve his memory and care for his soul. Eadred also provides for elaborate contingencies, giving back-up plans in the event that any of his various beneficiaries dies. In other words, he is not content to assume that monastic succession will ensure the continuity and memory of the institution of the monastery. Instead he relies upon a succession of individuals, whom he names.

Wills and their links to monasteries provide continuity for the preservation of memory different from the father-to-son transmission of property that seems to have been the folk custom in Anglo-Saxon England. The practice of keeping a necrology (to which is linked the eternal prayers called for by the wills) extends the respect for the seniority of monks back into time and preserves an order or ranking past the deaths of individual monks.¹ This sort of preserved cultural memory—aided as it is by the technology of writing—is significantly different from that promoted through father-to-son transmission. It is therefore of more than passing interest that while sixteen wills in the corpus mention ancestors' souls, only two testators identify themselves as "the son of": Leofwine, who notes that he is "wulfstanes sunu," and Thurstan, "Wine sune" (Napier & Stevenson 1894: 22).² Thus testators rarely label themselves as "son of" or "daughter of" even as they acknowledge their participation in a continuum of ancestors.¹

¹ For Anglo-Saxon necrologies, see Gerchow 1988. *Ælfwine's Prayerbook*, which dates from between 1023-1031, contains both a necrologic list and calendar (Günzel 1993). For the date of *Ælfwine's Prayerbook* see Keynes (1996: 111). The *Regularis Concordia* commands that a letter in a certain form shall be sent to neighboring monasteries informing them of the death of a monk. The other monasteries are to sing various psalms and prayers for the deceased "et nomen eius notetur in anniuersariis" ("and his name is to be set among the anniversaries"), suggesting that records of the deaths of brothers were preserved (Symons 1953: 67).

² S1522 and S 1531. Leofwine's 998 will comes just after the brief era that Keynes calls Æthelred's "period of youthful indiscretions," 984-993, in which the king greatly reduced the power and freedom of the monasteries (Keynes 1980: 176-86). Perhaps this "anti-monastic reaction," which D.J.V. Fisher (1950-52) finds also in the brief reign of Æthelred's predecessor, Edward the Martyr, suggested to Leofwine that genealogical methods for the perpetuation of inheritance provided a useful hedge against the vicissitudes of monastic fortune. Thurstan son of Wine,

Providing additional support for the idea that the wills worked to replace father-to-son continuities with a different continuum is the evidence of the wills written by women. Of the fifteen wills that mention ancestors' souls, four—Æthelflæd, Ælfheah, Æthelgifu and Leofgifu—are by women.² Wills by women thus account for 25 percent of the testaments that mention ancestors' souls even though women only account for 18.64 percent of the wills in the corpus (see Table 2a).³ Women also continue to mention ancestors into the post-reform period in disproportionate numbers; two of the four wills by women which mention ancestors' souls, those of Ælfþlæd and

whose will dates from 1043-45, had significant contacts in the Danelaw: he notes a "felageschipe" with one "Vlfketel," and his will is witnessed by several other individuals with Danish names (Whitelock 1930: 80-82). Thus Thurstan may have been influenced by an Anglo-Danish practice of recognizing continuity not in ancestors who, while unnamed, were accessed through monastic prayers, but by the simple continuity of fathers to sons. I recognize that there are elements of special pleading in this portion of the argument. However, it does seem unusual that in the entire corpus of wills only these two individuals identify themselves as "son of." Such appellations were commonplace in other Anglo-Saxon contexts, most famously in *Beowulf*. Stephen O. Glosecki (2000) argues that the presence of nephews as heirs in various wills indicates "traces" of an avuncular line of inheritance that he believes to have been the folkright in early Germanic Europe. I would point out that there are interesting links between wills naming nephews as benefactors and the Danelaw.

¹ The disinclination to use "son of" formulae may be another example of links between reformed monastic ideology and the wills. Under the Benedictine *Rule*, a monk's father and mother are not supposed to be particularly important to him once he had entered the monastery. Chapter 54 of the *Rule*, for example, forbids a monk to receive any gifts or letters whatsoever, whether from his parents or anyone else. The monk is supposed to give his obedience and allegiance to the abbot and the senior monks who have come before him into the order, rather than to his biological family. The *Rule* twice mentions the duty of monks to reverence their seniors and love their juniors, first in the list of the instruments of good works that makes up chapter four (canons 68 and 69), and again in chapter sixty-three (16, 69) (Hanslik 1977).

² S 1494, 1484, 1485, 1497, 1521.

³ Christine Fell (1984: 95) claims that one quarter of the surviving wills are by women. But one can only reach this figure if wills from couples are counted as wills by women. There are a total of eleven wills by women: S 1513, 1539, 1525 and 1525a (taken as one will, see above n. 42 for explanation), 1484, 1497, 1538, 1486, 1495, 1520, 1521, 1535. There are an additional five wills by couples: S 1500, 1511, 1493, 1532, 1529. If wills by couples are taken as equivalent to wills by women, the percentages given above are somewhat different; the proportion of wills by women and couples which mention ancestors' souls is 45.45%. See table 2b in the appendix for a presentation of the data. Fisher's Exact Test shows that there is only a 21% chance that these results are artifacts of random fluctuations in the data.

Leofgifu, are written after 992.¹ The propensity of women to mention their ancestors' souls offers the intriguing possibility that women could, via written wills, find ways to participate in traditions of continuity from which the older, secular traditional practice of recognizing and naming father-to-son relationships (like those in the royal genealogies) had excluded them.²

Furthermore, the ways that women construct their wills and refer to their ancestors suggests that female testators were attempting to mobilize cultural power in somewhat different ways than their male counterparts. *Ælflæd* (already discussed above) describes her donations thus: "þonne synd þis þa land þæ minæ ylðran þærto bæcwædon ofær minre swystor dæg. 7 ofær minne" (Whitelock 1930: 38).³ In fact, *Ælflæd* mentions her ancestors ("ylðran") eight times in her will, and she distinguishes them from her father, whom she names specifically as granting lands in Totham (Whitelock 1930: 38). *Ælflæd* also attempts to mobilize the living to enforce the desires of the dead, calling upon ealdorman *Æthelmær* to be her friend and protector and "efter minum dege gefelste fi min cwide 7 mira ylðran standan mote" (Whitelock 1930: 38-41).⁴ It seems that *Ælflæd* is working to justify her decisions based upon her participation in a continuum of ancestors, hoping thus to ensure the support of her will.

Women are also more likely to invoke powerful patrons by name. For example, in the middle of her will *Æthelflæd* mentions kings Edmund and Edgar as well as Ealdorman Brihtnoth (Whitelock 1930: 35-37). *Ælfgifu* asks Bishop *Æthelwold* to always intercede for her and for her mother (Whitelock 1930: 20-23).⁵ These two phenomena, mentioning ancestors and invoking living men as supporters, suggest that women were (as we would expect) less able to participate in the father-to-son continuity and thus relied

¹ S 1486 and 1521.

² Obviously "ancestors" can include mothers and grandmothers as well as male relatives. For traditions of female "matrilineal genealogy" and "maternal genealogy" in early English monasticism see Dockray-Miller (2000: 1-76).

³ "Then these are the lands which my ancestors bequeathed to it [the community at Stoke] after my sister's days and after mine."

⁴ S 1486. "And after the end of my days will help to ensure that my will and the wills of my ancestors may stand."

⁵ S 1484.

upon other means—offered by the tradition of reform-era wills—to improve the chances of their wills being followed.

Regardless of gender, the majority of testators who refer to their ancestors seemed to believe in the efficacy of the monastery to save the souls of these individuals even when they were not explicitly named. In their attempts to make connections to “yldran,” testators linked themselves with traditions or continuities of identity that were to some degree an invention of the monastic reformers. Every individual is of course descended from innumerable ancestors, but no one (except perhaps those kings, including King Alfred, whose genealogies, are constructed as reaching back to Germanic gods and biblical figures) can pretend to know who all of them are.¹ By suggesting to testators that monks could pray for generic ancestors rather than specific individuals, the monastery invents a continuity of tradition that does not need to be substantiated by fallible human memory but is rather imminent in the mention of generic ancestors in a written document.²

Of course, as part of the church, monasteries were party to the mechanisms by which individuals could achieve eternal life regardless of whether or not they were remembered by their descendants. But in the wake of the Benedictine reform, monasteries position themselves as a significant link between the present and the past and thus, in the minds of testators, between the present testator and his or her future descendants. Reformed monasteries could offer to testators the ability to aid their ancestors years after the testators had left the earth. By extension they offered the capability of providing for the souls of the living long after their deaths. In both cases the continuities and traditions so important to individual identity in the Anglo-Saxon period were accessed through the textual culture of the

¹ For Alfred’s genealogy see Stevenson (1959: 2-4). Note that Alfred’s list of ancestors, and other similar lists in other contexts, preserve the names of only the direct male (putative) ancestors.

² An interest in ancestors’ souls can be substantiated in a pre-Christian, Germanic context. The early eighth century king Radbod of Frisia was about to convert to Christianity when he paused on his way to the baptismal font and asked St. Wulfram if he (Radbod) would see his pagan ancestors in heaven. Wulfram replied: *certum est dampnationis suscepisse sententiam* (“it is certain that they have received the sentence of damnation”). Radbod, needless to say, withdrew from the font and did not convert to Christianity (Krusch & Levison 1810: 668).

monastery, and the document of the will provides a physical record of the intended provision by the living of the spiritual welfare of the dead.¹

CONCLUSIONS: TRADITION AND THE REFORM

A complete rehearsal of the evidence for the place of tradition in the cultural work of the Benedictine reform is beyond the scope of this article, but it is useful to connect an analysis of the wills with the larger picture of the development of tenth-century culture. Gretsch's *The Intellectual Foundations of the English Benedictine Reform* synthesizes the scholarship that has gone into establishing the "pivotal role" of the vernacular in the Benedictine reformers' programme as well as their "fervent enthusiasm" for the hermeneutic style in Latin (Gretsch 1999: 4-5 and *passim*).² Gretsch shows that Æthelwold and Dunstan were especially concerned to link their cultural work to not only the current 'state-of-the-art' practices of continental Benedictine monasticism but also to the tradition of unique English practices of hermeneutic Latin (deriving from Aldhelm) and vernacular translation (deriving from Alfred).

Concern with maintaining traditional English customs and linking them with present practice is evident throughout the document mostly clearly identified with Æthelwold and the reform, the monastic consuetudinary *Regularis Concordia* (Symons 1953: 2-8).³ In the prologue to the *Concordia* Æthelwold writes that the synod composed the document after being moved by the advice of King Edgar to develop one set of monastic customs for England: "Sanctique patroni nostri Gregorii documenta, quibus beatum Augustinum monere studuit ut non solum Romanae uerum etiam Galliarum honestos ecclesiarum usus <in> rudi Anglorum ecclesia decorando

¹ Of course the textual culture of the monastery was not the *only* way that continuities and traditions were accessed. But the monopoly the monastery held on the production and, more importantly, the preservation of textualized memory must have made the institution very important to Anglo-Saxons who wanted to preserve their memories for long periods of time.

² For the "hermeneutic style" see Lapidge 1993b.

³ For the reasons to prefer this edition to the 1984 edition by Symons and T. Spath see Kornexl (1993: clxvi). See also Symons 1975.

constituerit recolentes” (Symons 1953: 2-3).¹ Monastic customs are to be gathered “colligentes, uti apes fauum nectaris diuersis pratorum floribus in uno alueario” from the continent (Ghent and Fleury, in particular), but the resulting creation is considered to be a part of the English tradition established by Augustine’s mission from Gregory the Great (Symons 1953: 2-3).² The *Concordia* also takes great care to cite particular liturgical customs as English and traditional (“usu patrem”).³

Just one example of this concern for tradition and English practice spreading from monastic law and custom into literary culture can be found in the hexameters of the verse prologue to the “Breviloquium de omnibus sanctis” (Lapidge & Winterbottom 1991: xviii-xix).⁴ These hexameters in hermeneutic Latin are part of an acrostic poem for the name “VVLFFSTANVS” (Wulfstan). Lines 17-18 read: “Versibus ecce cano, scriptis que tradita legi / Et Dominum in sanctis, uersibus ecce cano” (Lapidge & Winterbottom 1991: xviii-xix).⁵ The poet sees fit to mention that the things he is writing about are “things handed down in writing.” His poem not only celebrates such things, but he, by repeating them in the hermeneutic style makes himself a participant in a tradition.⁶ Gretsch (1999: 425-27 and

¹ “And recalling the letters of our patron St. Gregory by which he strove to instruct the blessed Augustine so that he might establish, by adorning, the noble customs not only of the Roman, but also of the Gallic churches, in the rude church of the English.”

² “Just as bees collect the honeycomb of nectar from diverse flowers of the meadow into one hive.”

³ Paragraph 32, sentences 6-9 says that ringing bells at Nocturns and Vespers is “sicut in usum huisu patriae;” prayers for the Royal House (8, 1) and the use of chasubles in Lent and on Quarter Tense days (34, 29) are said to come from “usu patrem” (Symons 1953: 29-30 and 31-33).

⁴ “Short poem about all Saints.”

⁵ “I sing in verses thing which I have read handed down in writing, and these verses I sing the Lord present in his saints,” trans. Lapidge and Winterbottom 1991.

⁶ Note that this is in some ways, to use the Eric Hobsbawm’s terms, an “invented tradition” since there had not been a continuous practice of writing in the hermeneutic style from the school of Theodore and Hadrian to the Benedictine reform; the reformers were re-animating a moribund practice; see Hobsbawm and Ranger (1981: 1-14). For the school of Theodore and Hadrian and the discontinuities between their hermeneutic practice and later development of the hermeneutic style during the reform see Lapidge 1996. See also Gretsch (1999: 332-83). My use of Hobsbawm’s terminology is not meant to suggest that I subscribe to his vaguely conspiratorial views of invented tradition as a means of oppression. I would suggest that the essays collected by Hobsbawm and Ranger

passim) has established that the reformers were concerned to create and develop a tradition in both Latin and in Old English glossing contexts (including the Royal Psalter and the glosses to Aldhelm's *de Virginitate*). But this self-conscious creation of a literate tradition linking the glorious Anglo-Saxon past with the tenth century has not yet been proven to have spread to vernacular materials, with the possible exception of the document traditionally referred to as *Edgar's Establishment of the Monasteries*.

This text, composed in Old English by Æthelwold as a preface to his translation of the *Benedictine Rule*, illustrates the ties between the reform project and the Anglo-Saxon past.¹ *EEM* connects Bede with the reform project through a deliberate echo of his *Ecclesiastical History*'s discussion of Gregory the Great's mission to England and emphasizes the importance of the *Rule* of St. Benedict and the value of translation into the vernacular (Lapidge 1988: 102-103). More importantly for the purposes of this study, *EEM* makes a clear connection between participation in traditions of the past (Gregory's Mission, Bede's *Historia*) and a continuing practice into the future: "Forþi, þonne, ic mid ealre estfulness mine æftergengan bidde 7 þurh Drihtnes naman halsige, þæt hy þyses halgan regules bigenc a þurh Cristes gife geycen 7 godiende to fulfremedum edne gebrencgen" (Whitelock et al. 1981: 152).²

By creating a will that looked back to a testator's ancestors and simultaneously placed an obligation upon a monastic house to commemorate the testator eternally in the future, a testator could interpolate him- or herself into a continuum, a tradition of names and memories perpetuated across

illustrate how very difficult it is to separate an "invented" tradition from some other (presumably 'not-invented') kind.

¹ The document is printed and translated in Whitelock et al. (1981: 142-54). For Æthelwold's authorship see Whitelock (1970: 125-36). Gretsch argues that *EEM* was originally used as the preface to Æthelwold's translation of the *Benedictine Rule* and notes that *EEM* is "a piece of original Old English prose, not a translation" (1999: 122-24 and 230-33). Note that the appearance of links to traditions of English monasticism in this document tells us little about the penetration of these ideas into the secular culture, since Æthelwold was both the prime mover of the reform and the author of *EEM*.

² "Therefore, then, I pray that my successors with all devotion and pray in the Lord's name, that they ever increase the observance of this holy rule through the grace of Christ and may, improving it, bring it to its full perfection" (Whitelock et al. 1981: 152).

generational boundaries. The testator who mentions his ancestors may therefore be seen as doing explicitly what Æthelwold and other tenth-century practitioners of the hermeneutic style in Latin are doing implicitly by imitating Aldhelm or continuing the educational and cultural programs of Alfred and Æthelstan's court. The co-incidence of concern for ancestors' souls with the reform years, the geographic links between donations and the progress of the reform, and with the reformers' clear efforts to emphasize the traditionality of their practice, all combine, it seems to me, to support the hypothesis that we see in the wills of the tenth century an expression of the revolution brought about by the Benedictine Reform. The wills show that the cultural concerns of highly literate, superbly educated monks had spread into the wider secular culture.¹

By the mentioning their ancestors' souls in their wills, individual Anglo-Saxons were actively intervening with God on behalf of those individuals, named or unnamed. They were thus not only remembering the past, but actively participating in it, building a trans-temporal community of believers that was linked by memory, written record and cultural practice the same way that Æthelwold, Dunstan and the other intellectual leaders of the reform had linked themselves, through study and imitation, with Aldhelm and Bede. This interpretation of the wills suggests that in the tenth century, monastic concerns and ideologies had so penetrated Anglo-Saxon culture that even secular Anglo-Saxons were, to a great degree, seeing themselves through monastic eyes and creating a culture that reflected that vision.

Michael D. C. Drout

Wheaton College, Norton, MA

¹ Benjamin Withers discusses "the legally binding formulas of the Anglo-Saxon wills" and their connection to architecture—an inscription in the Anglo-Saxon church at Breamore in Hampshire—and the rubrics of the Old English prose *Genesis*. He sees the rubrics' use of will language as stressing "the text's accurate and valid presentation of past events" and suggest that in eleventh-century England "the interests of ecclesiastical and secular society were closely intertwined." While Withers' analysis focuses on later texts, he is noting a very similar process to the one I discuss above: elite monastic, ecclesiastical concerns are spilling over into the wider culture (Withers 1999: 136, 135, and 139).

Figure 1

Figure 2a

Figure 2b

Figure 3a

Figure 3b

MAPS:

The maps illustrate the geographic spread of bequests to monasteries and cathedrals (bequests to abbots are credited to their monasteries). Squares ■ indicate bequests that do not mention ancestors' souls; triangles ▲ indicate bequests that mention ancestors' souls. Numbers refer to the list of wills in Appendix 1.

Bequests were assigned to an interval based on the earliest possible date for each will. The difference between this method of plotting and a mid-point based method (i.e., plotting the will based on the midpoint of the range of possible dates) was trivial. If a midpoint plotting system were used, there would be no change in Figure 4, and three wills, numbers 27, 28 and 30 would be shifted from Figure 5 to Figure 6.

Figure 4 (map 1)

Figure 5 (map 2)

Figure 6 (map 3)

TABLE 1A: COMPARISON BY PERIOD: NUMBERS OF WILLS MENTIONING ANCESTORS' SOULS

Years	Mention Ancestors' Souls	Do Not Mention Ancestors' Souls	Totals	% Mentioning Ancestors' Souls
805-924	2	6	8	25.00
925-992	10	14	24	41.67
993-1066	4	23	27	14.81
Totals	16	43	59	27.12

Fisher's Exact Test for 805-924 versus 925-992: $p = .24$

Probability that data are significant: 76%

χ^2 for 925-992 versus 993-1066: 4.600 with 2 degrees of freedom

Probability that data are significant: 95%

TABLE 1B: COMPARISON BY PERIOD: NUMBERS OF WILLS MENTIONING ANCESTORS' SOULS (IF WULFRIC'S WILL (S 1536) IS COUNTED AS BEING IN THE 925-992 INTERVAL)

Years	Mention Ancestors' Souls	Do Not Mention Ancestors' Souls	Totals	% Mentioning Ancestors' Souls
805-924	2	6	8	25.00
925-992	11	14	25	44.00
993-1066	3	23	27	11.54
Totals	16	43	59	27.12

Fisher's Exact Test for 805-924 versus 925-992: $p = .22$

Probability that data are significant: 78%

χ^2 for 925-992 versus 993-1066: 6.744 with 2 degrees of freedom

Probability that data are significant: 99%

TABLE 2A: COMPARISON BY GENDER OF TESTATOR, WOMEN VERSUS MEN & COUPLES: NUMBERS OF WILLS MENTIONING ANCESTORS' SOULS

Gender of Testators	Mention Ancestors' Souls	Do Not Mention Ancestors' Souls	Totals	% Mentioning Ancestors' Souls
Women	4	7	11	36.60
Men & Couples	12	36	48	25.00
Totals	16	43	59	27.12

Fisher's Exact Test for Women versus Men & Couples: $p = .21$

Probability that data are significant: 79%

TABLE 2B: COMPARISON BY GENDER OF TESTATOR, WOMEN & COUPLES VERSUS MEN: NUMBERS OF WILLS MENTIONING ANCESTORS' SOULS

Gender of Testators	Mention Ancestors' Souls	Do Not Mention Ancestors' Souls	Totals	% Mentioning Ancestors' Souls
Women & Couples	5	11	16	31.25
Men	11	32	43	25.58
Totals	16	43	59	27.12

Fisher's Exact Test for Women & Couples versus Men: $p = .23$

Probability that data are significant: 77%

APPENDIX 1: LIST OF THE WILLS USED IN THIS STUDY

Legend:

number used in figures / date of will / name of testator / Sawyer number

underlined wills mention ancestors' souls; *italicized* wills may be ambiguous and are discussed in detail in the text.

- 1 / 805 to 832 / Æthelnoth / S 1500
2 / 833 to 839 / Abba, reeve / S 1482
3 / 845 to 853 / Badanoth Beotting / S 1510
4 / 855 / Dunn / S 1514
5 / 871 to 889 / Alfred ealdorman / S 1508
6 / 873 to 888 / *King Alfred* / S 1507
7 / 900 / Ceolwynn / S 1513
8 / 900 ? / Ordnoth / S 1524
9 / 931 to 939 / Wulfgar / S 1533
10 / 932 to 939 / Alfred thegn / S 1509
11 / 942 to 951 / Theodred / S 1526
12 / 946-947 / Earl Æthelwold / S 1504
13 / 946 to 951 / Ælfgar / S 1483
14 / 950 / Wynflæd / S 1539
15 / 950 to 1025 / Wills of Siflæd / S 1525
16 / *951 to 955 / Eadred / S 1515*
17 / 955 to 958 / Ælsige / S 1491
18 / 957 to 958 / Æthelgeard / S 1496

- 19 / 958 / Æthelwyrd / S 1506
- 20 / 961-995 / Æthelric / S 1501
- 21 / 962 to 991 / Æthelflæd / S 1494
- 22 / 964 to 980 / Brihtric Grim / S 1512
- 23 / 966 to 975 / Ælfgifu / S 1484
- 24 / 968 to 971 / Ælfheah / S 1485
- 25 / 971 to 983 / Æthelmær / S 1498
- 26 / 973 to 987 / Brihtric and Ælfswith / S 1511
- 27 / 975 to 1016 / Ælfhelm / S 1487
- 28 / 978-1016 / Ærnketel and Wulfrun / S 1493
- 29 / 980-990 / Æthelgifu / S 1497
- 30 / 984 to 1016 / Wulfwaru / S 1538
- 31 / c. 986 / Æðelstan Mannesson / S 1503a
- 32 / 987 / Æthelwold / S 1505
- 33 / 998 / Leofwine / S 1522
- 34 / 1000 / Wulfgeat / S 1534
- 35 / 1000 to 1002 / Ælfflæd / S 1486
- 36 / 1002 to 1004 / Wulfric / S 1536
- 37 / 1003 to 1004 / Ælfric archbishop / S 1488
- 38 / 1004 to 1014 / Æthelflæd to St. Paul's / S 1495
- 39 / 1007 / Godric / S 1518
- 40 / 1008 to 1012 / Ælfwold / S 1492
- 41 / 1015 / Athelstan Ætheling / S 1503
- 42 / 1017 to 1035 / Leofflad / S 1520
- 43 / 1017 to 1035 Manat the Anchorite / S 1523

- 44 / 1020 and after / Thurketel Heyng / S 1528
45 / 1022 to 1043 / Wulfsgie / S 1537
46 / 1035 to 1040 / Ælfric bishop / S 1489
47 / 1035 to 1044 / Leofgifu / S 1521
48 / 1038 or before / Thurketel / S 1527
49 / 1042 to 1043 / Ælfric Modercope / S 1490
50 / 1042 to 1043 / Thurstan / S 1530
51 / 1042 to 1053 / Wulfgyth / S 1535
52 / 1042-1066 / Ulf / S 1532
53 / 1043 to 1045 / Thurstan son of Wine / S 1531
54 / 1047 to 1070 / Æthelmær bishop / S 1499
55 / c. 1050 / Eadwine / S 1516
56 / 1050 / Æthelric Bigga / S 1502
57 / c. 1050 / Thurkil and Æthelgyth / S 1529
58 / 1052 to 1066 / Ketel / S 1519
59 / 1053 / Eadwine of Caddington / S 1517

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* † *

OLD ENGLISH *ĒO* IN MIDDLE KENTISH PLACE-NAMES¹

1. MIDDLE KENTISH AND PLACE-NAME STUDIES

The Middle English period is characterised by its great dialectal diversity and has as one of its most peculiar varieties the dialect of Kent, Kentish, also called south-eastern variety. Those who have traditionally searched for the regional features reflected in anchor texts from Kent have regarded this variety as a Middle English dialect in which sound changes have an unconventional behaviour.

Complementary to these traditional textual analyses is the onomastic approach developed within the field of medieval dialectology during the 20th century. Following this approach, names are regarded as true informants of phonological change, and place-names, in particular, as “the material which has so far proved most profitable for the investigation of OE and ME dialects” (Kristensson 1967: XII). The inherent condition of place-names as accurate locators of dialectal variants and their importance in providing sometimes the only evidence of specific sound developments has produced works such as Serjeantson (1922, 1924, 1927a, 1927b), Ekwall (1931), Smith (1956), and Ek (1972, 1975).

This onomastic approach to medieval dialectology received a further boost in the 1950s when Kristensson decided to embark on a survey of the Middle English dialects. So far, this project has given place to four volumes Kristensson (1967, 1987, 1995, 2001). This research project, still in progress, aims to investigate the dialects of Middle English through the formal study of place-names and surnames from c. 1290-1350 and has as its primary source the Lay Subsidy Rolls, the official documents that more faithfully seem to reflect the local uses. The last volume published by Kristensson (2001) has an obvious interest for those concerned with Kentish

¹ This paper is part of a research project titled “Diccionario nuclear sintáctico de base semántica del léxico del inglés antiguo”, funded by the Gobierno Autónomo de Canarias (No. PI 1999/136).

matters since it deals with vowels (except diphthongs) in the Southern counties (the dialect of Kent included).

The main intention behind this research paper is to participate of this onomastic perspective and contribute to Kristensson's investigation by doing a formal analysis of OE *eo* (a diphthong that has traditionally been regarded as dialectally relevant in Middle Kentish) in medieval place-names of Kent. This analysis, for both the first (or unique), and the second constituent of a Kentish compound noun,¹ will be done by checking our early Middle English material against the data assembled for late Middle English, that is name-forms from the 12th and 14th cc. respectively.

With this time-span in mind, we cannot limit ourselves to take the above mentioned Subsidy Rolls as our single primary source, mainly because these Rolls date back only to the second half of the 12th c., this being a period when they had not even been regularly and consistently established. On the other hand, there are authors who consider other documents to be equally valid to these as medieval dialectal sources. Arngart, for example, claims that the Assize Rolls have "a nearly equal right with the Subsidy Rolls of being described as local documents" (1949: 26-27).

Kentish registers from, among others, these two sources (the Subsidy Rolls and the Assize Rolls) also comprise Wallenberg's *The Place-Names of Kent* (1934) —henceforth *PNK*—, which is regarded up to now as the most important compilation to carry out research on the medieval place-names of Kent.² We will consequently take as a main source for the data gathering of this piece of research Wallenberg's *PNK*³, where the author, after scrutinising the most relevant English documents, shows the reader the written name-records of every single farm, village, parish and hundred of medieval Kent. These records, besides their corresponding source

¹ The intention behind this lies in checking whether the position of this OE sound in a stressed or in an unstressed syllable affects its ME development. Ek (1972: 66) claims that this fact does not affect the ME development of this OE variable.

² Ek (1975) also uses, as a basis for his Kentish data, Wallenberg's *Place Names of Kent*.

³ Apart from other secondary sources: Anderson (1934-1939), Cameron (1961), Reany (1964), Copley (1968) and Ekwall (1980).

references, include an etymological definition that served as a basis for the data gathering.

The authors of *A Linguistic Atlas of Late Mediaeval English* (McIntosh et al. 1986) —henceforth *LALME*— following an evidently geographical perspective but still adopting a new methodology (that of applying systematically a strict questionnaire of linguistic items to a heterogeneous selection of texts), get to draw a more approximate picture of the dialectal variation of late medieval English (c. 1350–1450). Although the intention behind the authors of this *Atlas* may have been different, the scarcity of medieval sources also allows us to profit from the formal diversity captured in the 14 Kentish Linguistic Profiles generated thanks to the fit-technique. *LALME* therefore will also constitute a potential frame, among others, with which to compare our 14th c. data.

2. GENERAL DISTRIBUTION¹

We centre upon the study of the evolution of OE *ēo* firstly because in Kentish “the long diphthongs underwent a separate development” (Hogg 1992: §5.210), and secondly because “it is only the long OE diphthong that is of interest. OE *eo* did not undergo any particularly Kentish development” (Ek 1972: 8).

The origin of OE *ēo* is the Germanic diphthong **ēu*. This diphthong seems to have passed into primitive Old English preserving the second element *-u*, although it does appear as *ēo* already in early texts. During the Middle English period, we will see however how the historical evolution of *ēo*, at least in the dialect of Kent, is intimately connected with the development of another Germanic diphthong, **īu*. This long diphthong, in a first stage of Old English, also preserves the second element *-u*, but will soon develop into *īo* (Luick 1914/1941: §191; Campbell 1959: §297; Jordan-Crook 1974: §§84-85; Hogg 1992: §5.160).

¹ Variables and variants will be generally represented in italics. We only use “<>” or “[]” when spellings or sounds, respectively, are meant explicitly. In order to conform to this convention, some illustrative quotations had to be slightly modified, that is, adapting the original format to this one.

The degree of interrelation between both diphthongs is such that Wyld (1921), Campbell (1959), Hogg (1992) or Ek (1972), among others, consider that, in Kentish, both of them (either long or short) are confused and, as regards the long one, *īo* seems to be more common than *ēo*. In Kentish documents from, according to Campbell (1959: §297) and Hogg (1992: §§ 5.155-5.162), the 9th c. and, according to Ek (1972: 13), the 7th c., we notice a marked tendency to raise the point of articulation of the first element of the diphthongs *ēo* and *eo* (although this tendency seems to be less evident in the second one). Besides, we can infer from the *Kentish Glosses* (KG) that the diphthongs *ēo* and *īo* coalesced into one long diphthong *īo* (or *īa*),¹ while short *eo* and *io* coalesced, on the other hand, into *eo* in West Saxon, Mercian and Kentish (Hogg 1992: §§5.155-5.160). These conclusions, based on the KG, are confirmed by the Middle English developments observed, for example, by Jordan-Crook (1974: §§84-85), or Luick (1914/1941: §§260-261) (for the latter, the change *ēo* > *īo* is first registered in Kent in the 7th c. and finally generalised in the 10th c.).

Leaving Kent aside, it seems to be the case that already at the end of Old English the diphthong *ēo* is monophthongised to *ē* in Essex and Suffolk. This smoothing process that, at the end of the 12th c. and the beginning of the 13th c., will affect the Southwest, the Central and West Midlands, the territory of London and its adjacent counties (except Kent), changes *ēo* into a rounded [ö:]. This [ö:] is generally unrounded during the 13th c., except in the Southwest and the West Midlands, and progressively changes to an *ē*, represented with either the typical spellings of the time, that is <e, ee, ei, ey>², or the Anglo-Norman spelling convention <ie>. As far as the West Midlands and the South-western counties are concerned, the process of unrounding does not take place until much later (14th - 15th cc.), and therefore it is here where it will keep on being spelt with the original <eo>³

¹ “It will be observed that the first element of *eo* tends to be raised in Kt., producing *io*, or, with unrounding of the second element, *ia*” (Campbell 1959: §280 (n. 3)).

² “*ē* is often written <ei, ey>, esp. in the South [...] This spelling is probably nothing but a graphic symbol for *ē*” (Thuresson 1950: 251; see also Kristensson 1967: 172.)” (Ek 1972: 95).

³ This distribution coincides with that offered by Jordan-Crook in the dialectal map adapted from Moore, Meech, and Whitehall (1935), in which we single out that “line F represents the eastern and northern limit for OE *ēo* retained as a front round vowel /ø:/ spelled <eo, o, oe, u, ue>” (1974: § 84 (Remark 5)).

for a longer time. While preserving its roundness this sound may gradually raise to [y] and be represented with the Anglo-Norman spelling conventions <o, u, ue, ui, uy, oe, eu> (Wyld 1921: 129-34; 1927: §168-69; Mossé 1952: §30; Campbell 1959: §329 (2); Ek 1972: 12-13; and Jordan-Crook 1974: §84-85).

In South-eastern texts, particularly in Kentish, the old diphthong *ēo* is frequently spelt <ie, io, ye>. These digraphs are however inconsistent (Wyld 1927: §169) because we can occasionally find in Kentish spellings such as <ia, ee, oe, eo, e, i, y> (Wyld 1921: 12; Campbell 1959: §297; Jordan-Crook 1974: §85; Hogg 1992: §5.160). Campbell (1959: §329 (2)) and Jordan-Crook (1974: §85 (2)) have argued that <ie, ye>, typically Kentish digraphs, could represent a diphthongal pronunciation (with a rising diphthong) and suggest that in Kentish the monophthongisation process of OE *ēo* may not have existed. For Wyld (1927: §169) and Brook (1965: 70-71) this is extremely improbable since <ie> (and maybe also <ye> in Kentish) is an Anglo-Norman representation frequently used in Middle English as an expression for [e:].

For Ek (1972: 108 and 119-120), however, the traditional development *ie* evidenced in Kentish texts and place-names is not due to the Anglo-Norman orthographic influence but it merely represents a variant of a diphthongal development that might have been smoothed to *i* in a subsequent stage. He bases this inference on the following solid premises: (i.) the diphthongal character that forms with *ye* show; (ii.) the presence of forms with *ie* before 1350, when the Anglo-Norman convention was used only occasionally; (iii.) the possible ambiguity that could have been created with the *e*-development of OE *y* in this south-eastern side of the country; (iv.) the absence of forms with *ie* or *ye* in counties like Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire or Huntingdonshire (Ek 1972: 108 and 119-120).

3. DISTRIBUTION OF OE *ĒO* IN TWELFTH-CENTURY KENT

3.1. FIRST ELEMENT

20 Kentish localities from the 12th c. have a first or unique element that derives from OE *ēo*. These Middle Kentish developments alternate fundamentally between variants with *e* and alternatives with *i*.

As regards the *e*-variant only *Beckenham* and *Greatness* present in the 12th c. an exclusive *e*-development (see table 1). Other four localities present a predominant *e*-development alternating with diverse minor variants (see *Bensted*, *Greet*, *Chelsfield* and *Leaveland* in table 1). In five of them the development is mixed, either <e/i> (see *Ridley*, *Newchurch* and *Tudeley* in Table 1), <e/ea> (see *Grain* in table 1 below), or <e/io> (see *Lewisham* in table 1). Finally, in other four localities, *Newenden* (*Selbrittenenden Hd.*), *Newington* (*Milton Hd.*), *Newnham* and *Preston* (see Table 1: 12th c. Kentish place-name forms with *e* in the first or unique element), the *e*-variant appears as a non-predominant development.

With respect to the *i*-variant *Ifield*, *Twinney Creek*, and *Newington* (*Folkestone Hd.*) (see Table 2: 12th c. Kentish place-name forms with *i* in the first or unique element) present exclusive developments. In *Newington* (*Milton Hd.*), *Newnham* and *Newenden* (*Selbrittenenden Hd.*) <i> is the predominant development (see Table 2). As we saw earlier on, in *Ridley*, *Newchurch* and *Tudeley* the development is a mixed <e/i> (see table 2). Finally, in *Chelsfield* and *Leaveland* (see Table 2) <i> is in a non-predominant distribution.

We also have a relative high percentage of digraphs in the first element of these 12th c. place-names. These traditionally Kentish forms are <ea> in *Bensted* and *Grain* (see both of them in Table 1); <eo> in *Lydden* (*Folkestone Hd.*) (*Hleodaena* c. 1100 *Dom Mon*); <ie> in *Greet*, *Leaveland* (see both of them in table 1), *Lewsome* (*de Lieurechestune* 1176 *Facs*) and *Lydden* (*Folkestone Hd.*) (*Lieden* 1176 *BM Facs*); and <io> in *Leaveland* (see table 1). In agreement with Ek, we can only admit those place-name forms with <ie> as standing for a real diphthongal pronunciation.¹

Ek (1972) distinguishes in his analysis, as so do Jordan-Crook (1974: §109), among: (i.) a diphthong *ēo* + *w*; (ii.) a diphthong *ēo* unaccompanied by *w*; and (iii.) a diphthong *ēo* before consonantal groups with a homorganic

¹ See above Ek's considerations in this respect (Ek 1972: 108 and 119-120).

voiced consonant causing lengthening. The first category applies to OE *nēowe* and *ēow* that appear as first constituents of our place-name forms in the 12th c. The rest of our constituents belong to the second category, whereas there are no candidates for the third one.

OE *nēowe* and *ēow* are in this sense worth being analysed in detail because in both of them we have to consider the possible particular evolution of the diphthong *ēo* when in the vicinity of *w*. Ek reminds us that Jordan (1974: §109) and Luick (1914/1941: §399) claim that, as a consequence of the vocalisation of the semivowel, *ēo* + *w* will give place to a diphthong [eu] that will in turn become [iu], but “Luick also says that in spite of a development [eu] > [iu] the writing <ew> was still kept in most cases” (Ek 1972: 113). It is precisely this argument that Ek uses to highlight as special those forms with <i> in their orthography.

We registered five localities with the lexical term *nēowe* as first constituent in twelfth-century Kent. In all of them, except *Newchurch*, where we have a mixed development <e/i>, the variant, exclusive in the case of *Newington* (*Folkestone Hd.*), and predominant in the case of *Newington* (*Milton Hd.*), *Newenden* (*Selbritten Hd.*) and *Newnham*, is <i> (see Table 2). We also registered one case with OE *ēow* in *Ifield* (see Table 2) where the *i*-development is exclusive. Maybe these *i*-reflexes from the 12th c. are equally special to those analysed by Ek (1972) because in them *ēo* + *w* > *īw* is the rule.

Discarding the place-name forms compounded in their first element by a first constituent in which *ēo* is combined with *w*,¹ what clearly predominates in our 12th c. material is the *e*-development, even though some *i*- and *ie*-forms are still around as possible witnesses of their original diphthongal nature.²

3.2. SECOND ELEMENT

¹ This change also happens on one occasion in which *w* precedes the diphthong in question (cf. *Twineneia*, *Tuineneia*, *Tuinega*, *Tuinga* for the locality of *Twinney Creek*).

² See section 2 for an explanation to the formal diversity of Old English *ēo* in Kentish.

Only one Kentish locality, *Tollingtrough Green*, was registered for the 12th c. with a second element that derives from an Old English term with *ēo*, that is, OE *trēow* ‘tree’, a lexical element that corresponds with Ek’s first category. This locality is in the North-western quarter of Kent and its behaviour is the predominant mixed development <e/o> that alternates with a rare <ui> (*Tolte(n)trui* c. 1100 *Dom Mon*; *Toltintro* 1178-9 *P*; *Totingetre* 1187-8 *P*).¹

4. DISTRIBUTION OF OE *ēo* IN FOURTEENTH-CENTURY KENT

4.1. FIRST ELEMENT

34 Kentish localities with OE *ēo* in the first element were registered for the 14th c. Out of them, 27 present an *e*-development: 22 exclusively; only *Tudeley* and *New Hythe* in a predominant way; and finally *†Redemeregge*, *Deerton St.* and *Lymbridge Green* with a non-predominant distribution (see Table 3: 14th c. Kentish place-name forms with *e* in the first or unique element).

The abundant realisations with <e> (a variant that is even present in name-forms going back to OE *nēowe*) contrast with the behaviour observed in the first (or unique) constituent of other seven 14th c. localities showing an *i*-reflex. Five of these localities have an exclusive <i> and only in *Lymbridge Green* and *New Hythe* is this development predominant or rare (see Table 4: 14th c. Kentish place-name forms with *i* in the first or unique element).

The presence of digraphs is as follows: <ay> and <ey> in *Deerton St.* (see table 3); and <ye> in *Tudeley* (see table 3) and *Lydden* (*Folkestone Hd.*) (*Lyedene* 1304 *Ass*; *Lyeden*’ 1313 *Ass.*). In my opinion again, we can only admit forms with <ye> as standing for a real diphthongal pronunciation.²

¹ We do not really know whether to attribute the variants *ui* and *o* for *Tollingtrough Green*, as Ek (1972: 95) and Jordan-Crook (1974: §109 (2)) do, to a “shifting of stress in OE”, or to the fact that, according to Reany, they may be an evidence of a possible rounding of *ēo* in Kent (1925: 343ff.). In any case, the same criterion we use here must also be applied to the *o*- and *u*-reflexes of *†Redemeregge* (see Table 3).

² See above Ek’s considerations in this respect (Ek 1972: 108 and 119-120).

With respect to OE *nēowe*, we have 11 Kentish localities of the 14th c. compounded in their first (or unique) element by this Anglo-Saxon lexical constituent. As opposed to what happened in our place-name forms of the 12th c., and obviously coinciding with Luick's opinion,¹ the most frequent development in them is *e*. The only exceptions are *Nizel's Heath* and *New Hythe* with an exclusive and a rare *i*-development respectively (see Table 4).

The preponderance of the *e*-variant is therefore much more significant in the 14th c. than in the 12th c., even though we keep on having examples in this century where a certain number of *i*-forms show their definite reluctance to disappear, and some very sporadic digraphs (in particular the presumably diphthongal <ye>) are still present.

4.2. SECOND ELEMENT

We only registered one Kentish locality, *Ebbsfleet*, for the 14th c. with a second constituent deriving from an Old English lexical element with *ēo* (OE *flēot* 'fleet'). Its behaviour is that of an exclusive digraph <eo> (*Hyppelesfleet* 1308 *Th*) for which we can not assure a diphthongal pronunciation.

5. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Generally, there exists a clear difference between the registers corresponding to early Middle English and those of the 14th c. when comparing our Kentish place-names with OE *ēo* in the first element. In agreement with Ek's statement about the *i*-forms being much more expected in the early material (1972: 114), we find that the frequency of *e* and *i* is similar for the 12th c., whereas for the 14th c., although some localities with *i* are still documented, the predominant development is *e*.

Besides, whereas in the 12th c. we register some varied alternatives (mainly digraphs) with a certain regularity, the end of the Middle English period is characterised only by their very sporadic presence. On the other

¹. See Ek's quotation on Luick cited above, where despite the development [eu] > [iu], Luick considers that <ew> was still kept in most cases (Ek 1972: 113).

hand, the scarcity of registers (only one locality per century was registered) for the second constituent does not allow us to establish conclusive comparisons. This fact should not however underestimate the validity of our analysis since “the position in stressed or unstressed syllable of the word or word-element, containing the OE *ēo* does not affect the development of this sound.” (Ek 1972: 66).

Likewise, with respect to the behaviour of OE *ēo* + *w* in our place-name forms, we observe here a similar tendency to the one observed in the general analysis, that is, a much more abundant presence of the *i*-development in the 12th c than in the 14th c. material.

Ek concludes his South-Eastern analysis claiming that in Kent “*ēo* [...] became *īo* [...]”. This stage seems to have been reached at the latest in late OE. In very early ME the *īo* developed into *īe*.” (1972: 122). His general table (1972: 94) seems to contradict, however, this conclusion since of all the forms recorded in it only 15.7 % present an *i*-development. This inconsistency is stressed when we centre upon the registers corresponding to the period 1300-1500 where the percentage of *i*-forms only reaches 7%.

Our results do coincide with Ek’s table, and therefore also contradict in part his own conclusion, since in our analysis the predominance the *e*-variants predominate over the *i*-variants. The only coincidence here lies in the fact that the *i*-variant appears with a higher frequency in the 12th c. than in the 14th c., a fact that is directly connected with the peculiar development observed for the place-name forms compounded by OE *nēowe*.

The material *LALME* offers for OE *ēo* is practically non-existent since, of all the items recorded in the corresponding Kentish Linguistic Profiles, only one, the Anglo-Saxon feminine pronoun *hēo* corresponding to ModE *she*, contains in its etymology the diphthong in question. This pronominal item has traditionally been regarded as a controversial element among English historical linguists because of the lack of unanimity on ascertaining its true etymology.¹ This fact does not make of OE *hēo* precisely the most adequate term with which to contrast the results provided by our analysis of *ēo*.

¹ The hypotheses that at present try to explain the modern development of an initial palatal make reference to the nature of the original diphthong and to the peculiar developments that this could have undergone in the Northern territories,

However, this paper is part of a dissertation in which other OE variables were analysed and their behaviour correspondingly contrasted with the formal diversity shown by those items of *LALME* that originally contained such a variable¹. Consequently, it is coherent to analyse here also the evidence, although scanty in this case, for OE *ēo* in *LALME*'s items, that is, in SHE (< OE *hēo*).

Forms with an *i*-variant (i.e., <i, y, ye>)² in this *Atlas* (pre)dominate in LPs 5890, 5900, 5940, 5960, 6050 and 9380, that is, those located in the Northern and North-Eastern areas of the county. The LPs in which *e* (i.e., <e, ee>) is exclusive are 5881, 5970, 5980, 5990 and 9470, that is, those that gather around the Central and Western areas of the county.³ We have to pay heed to the fact that these registers correspond to a late Middle English stage and, yet, we still observe in them, with all the reservations its etymological origin may produce, a certain abundance of forms with *i* (<i, y, ye>). It is therefore evident that the results provided by this *Atlas* do not precisely coincide with those obtained here.

6. CONCLUSION

The most outstanding fact that we can draw as a conclusion to this paper is that, as opposed to what we could expect, we do not seem to have among our place-name forms the digraphs and/or diphthongs <ie, io, ye> with the necessary frequency as to consider such realisations as characteristic of Middle English Kent. In other words, they are very infrequent in our sources and in this sense we can say that our corpus-data does not endorse the traditional view.

In fact, had it not been for the frequency, specially in the 12th c., of place-name constituents with OE *ēo* + *w* (for which Jordan-Crook and Ek already

¹ This is, in fact, my PhD dissertation, titled *Dialectología y Toponimia del Kéntico Bajomedieval* (Universidad de La Laguna, 1999; unpublished).

² We interpret this digraph according to Ek (1972: 95).

³ It is worth noticing the coincidence between forms with *e* and the palatal character of the previous consonant (i.e., *sche*, *schee*, *she*), and those in which the *i*-reflex combines with a previous aspirated *h* (i.e., *hi*, *hy*, *hie*). It is only occasionally that the form *he* appears (LPs 5900 and 5960).

claim a special *i*-development), the predominance of a ‘regular’ *e*-variant would have been much more significant, relegating to a second place those digraphs/diphthongs that have traditionally been regarded as typically Kentish.

María Auxiliadora Martín
University of La Laguna

TABLE 1: 12TH C. KENTISH PLACE-NAME FORMSWITH *E* IN THE FIRST OR UNIQUE ELEMENT

OE <i>*bēoga</i> ‘bent; Submissive’	BECKENHAM	<i>Becceham</i> c. 1100 Text Roff.
OE <i>bēonet</i> ‘long and thick grass’	BENSTED	<i>Bedenestede</i> c. 1100 Dom Mon; <i>Beantesteda</i> c. 1100 Text Roff; <i>de Bentested</i> ’ 1199 FineR.
OE <i>*grēon</i> ‘grain’	GRAIN	<i>Grean</i> c. 1100 Text Roff; <i>Gren</i> 1189 Reg Roff
OE <i>grēot</i> ‘sand, gravel’	GREATNESS	<i>Gretenersce</i> c. 1100 Text Roff (Arch C 44, 53)
	GREET	<i>de Grete</i> 1327, 1334, 1346, 1347, 1348 Subs; <i>Griete</i> 1304 Ass.
OE <i>hrēod</i> ‘reed’	RIDLEY	<i>Redlege</i> 11 DM; <i>Riddelee</i> 1198 FF.
OE <i>nēowe</i> ‘new’	NEWCHURCH	<i>Niwancirc</i> 11 DM, <i>Newechirche</i> 1198 FF.
	NEWENDEN (SELBRITTENDEN HD.)	<i>Niuuende</i> , <i>Niwendenne</i> , <i>Niuuendene</i> c. 1100 Dom Mon; <i>Newendenna</i> 1157 StAug; <i>Niwendeñ</i> 1165-6 P; <i>Niwedeñ</i> 1166-7 P.
	NEWINGTON (MILTON HD.)	<i>Niwantun(e)</i> , <i>Niuuentune</i> c. 1100 DomMon; <i>Newton</i> 1172-3 P; <i>Niweton</i> ’ 1175-6 P.
	NEWNHAM	<i>Newenham</i> 1177 Reg Roff; <i>Niwenham</i> 1182-4 ib
OE <i>prēosta</i> ‘priests’	PRESTON	<i>Prestetune</i> c. 1100 Dom Mon; <i>P’stune</i> , <i>P’st</i> ’ 1154-89 Subs.
OE <i>*pēof</i> ‘thief’	TUDELEY	<i>Tiuedelee</i> c. 1100 Dom Mon; <i>Theudelei</i> c. 1100 Text Roff.
OE <i>Cēol</i> Pers. N.	CHELSFIELD	<i>Cilesfeld</i> c. 1100 Text Roff; <i>de Chelesfeld</i> 1176-7 P; <i>Chelesfeld</i>

OE Lēofa Pers. N.	LEAVELAND	<i>1185-1214 Reg Roff; 1198 FF; Chelefeld' 1194 Cur</i>
		<i>Liofeland, Lieveland(e) c. 1100 Dom Mon; Levelande c. 1175 ArchC 4, 211; Leveland c. 1180 ib., 215; de Liveland' 1199 Cur.</i>
OE *Lēowsa / Lēofsa Pers. N.	LEWISHAM	<i>Liofesham 11 DM; Leueseham c. 1100 TextRoff</i>

TABLE 2: 12TH C. KENTISH PLACE-NAME FORMS WITH / IN THE FIRST OR UNIQUE ELEMENT

OE <i>betwēonum</i> 'between'	TWINNEY CREEK	Twineneia 1166-7 P; Tuinenea 1190 P; Tuinega 1191, 1192 P; Tuinga 1194 P.
OE <i>ēow</i> 'yew-tree'	IFIELD	Iuelda c. 1100 Text Roff; Yfeld 1174-84, 1177 Reg Roff.
OE <i>hrēod</i> 'reed'	RIDLEY	Redlege 11 DM; Riddelee 1198 FF.
OE <i>nēowe</i> 'new'	NEWCHURCH	Niwancirc 11 DM, Newechirche 1198 FF.
	NEWENDEN (SELBRITTENDEN HD.)	Niuuende, Niwendenne, Niuuendene c. 1100 Dom Mon; Newendenna 1157 StAug; Niwendeñ 1165-6 P; Niwedeñ 1166-7 P.
	NEWINGTON (FOLKESTONE HD.)	Niwan tune c. 1100 Dom Mon.
	NEWINGTON (MILTON HD.)	Niwantun(e), Niuuentune c. 1100 DomMon; Newton 1172-3 P; Niweton' 1175-6 P.
	NEWNHAM	Newenham 1177 Reg Roff; Niwenham 1182-4 ib.
OE *þēof 'thief'	TUDELEY	Tiuedeale c. 1100 Dom Mon; Theudelei c. 1100 Text Roff.
OE <i>Cēol</i> Pers. N.	CHELSFIELD	Cilesfeld c. 1100 Text Roff; de Chelefeld 1176-7 P; Chelesfeld 1185-1214 Reg Roff; 1198 FF; Chelefeld' 1194 Cur
OE <i>Lēofa</i> Pers. N.	LEAVELAND	Liofeland, Lieveland(e) c. 1100 Dom Mon; Levelande c. 1175 ArchC 4, 211; Leveland c. 1180 ib., 215; de Liveland' 1199 Cur.

TABLE 3: 14TH C. KENTISH PLACE-NAME FORMS WITH *E* IN THE FIRST OR UNIQUE ELEMENT

OE <i>bēonet</i> ‘long and thick grass’	BENSTED	<i>Bentestede</i> 1312 FF; <i>Bentsted</i> 1316 Ipm, etc.	
	BENTHAM HILL	de <i>Benthame</i> 1327 Subs; de <i>Benthamme</i> 1332, 1338 Subs; de <i>Benehamme</i> 1334 Subs; <i>Bentham</i> (p.) 1348 Subs.	
	BENCHILL FM	Cf. <i>Phps. Will.</i> de <i>Benteleye</i> 1301 FF.	
IA <i>brēosa</i> ‘horsefly’	BRISHING COURT	WD., B.	<i>Bresyng</i> 1346 FA; <i>Bresynge</i> 1362 Cl; <i>Bressing</i> 1368 Cl; <i>Bressinge</i> Ipm.
	BRISSENDEN		<i>Bresindenn</i> ’ 1346 Subs; <i>Bresynden</i> 1327, 1334 Subs; <i>Bresynden</i> ’ 1338, 1347 Subs; de <i>Bresyndenn</i> ’ 1346 Subs; de <i>Bresindene</i> 1348 Subs.
OE <i>dēop</i> ‘deep’	DEPTFORD		<i>Depford</i> ’ 1351 FF; <i>Depford</i> ’ 1313 FF; <i>Deppeford</i> ’ 1314 FF; <i>Depford</i> 1334 Fine; <i>Depeforde</i> 1344 FF.
	DIBDEN		de <i>Depedene</i> 1310 FF; 1332 Subs; de <i>Depeden</i> ’ 1315 FF; de <i>Depedene</i> 1327 Subs; <i>Depedenn</i> ’ 1334 Subs; de <i>Depedenne</i> 1338 Subs; <i>Depinden</i> ’, <i>Depe(n)den</i> ’ (p.) 1348 Subs.
OE <i>dēor</i> ‘deer’	DARGETS WD.		De <i>Dergate</i> (s. <i>Horsted</i> 116 E 2) 1313 Ass.
	DARGATE		De <i>Dergate</i> 1348 Subs.
	DEERTON ST.		de <i>Dertone</i> 1334 Subs; de <i>Deyr</i> -, <i>Drayton</i> ’ 1338 Subs; de <i>Dy(e)r</i> -, <i>Draytone</i> 1346 Subs; de <i>Dyerr</i> -, <i>Drayton</i> ’ 1347 Subs; de <i>Dertone</i> , <i>Drayton</i> ’ 1348 Subs.
OE <i>hl̥eo</i> ‘shelter’	LYDDEN		<i>Ledene</i> 13 StAug.

	(RINGSLOW HD.)	
OE <i>hrēod</i> ‘reed’	†REDEMERE GGE	<i>Redmeregge</i> 1301 Subs; <i>Rodmeregge</i> 1323 FF; 1396 Pat; 1398 Ipm; <i>Rodmeresregg</i> ’ 1332 Subs; <i>Rude-merigge</i> , <i>Rodemerigge</i> 1343 Cl; <i>Rodmerugg</i> 1344 Cl; <i>Redmeregge</i> 1369 Cl; <i>Rodemerigge</i> 1374 FF; <i>Red-marerugg</i> 1376 Pat; <i>Rodmerugge</i> 1379 Cl.
OE <i>nēowe</i> ‘new’	NEWBURY	<i>Neuburgh</i> 1342 Ipm; <i>Newburgh</i> ’ 1348 Subs; <i>Newebourgh</i> 1349 Ipm; <i>Newburgh</i> 1357, 1395 BM I.
	NEWCOURT WD.	<i>Newecourt</i> 1327 Subs; 1343-4 Ass; 1343-4 Ass; <i>de Neweco(u)rt</i> 1332, 1334, 1338 Subs; <i>Newecourt</i> 1346 FA.
	NEWENDEN	<i>Neuyn-</i> , <i>Newyndenn</i> ’ 1313 Ass; <i>de Newynden</i> ne 1332 Subs; <i>de</i> <i>Newyndn</i> 1334 Subs, etc.
	NEW HYTHE	<i>Niweheth</i> 1316 Cl; <i>Neweheth</i> 1320 FF; <i>Neuheth</i> 1323 Cl; <i>Neweheth</i> 1325 Inq.
	NEWLAND (CALEHILL HD.)	<i>de la Newland</i> 1313-4 Seld 24, 195; <i>ate Newelonde</i> 1327 Subs, etc.
	NEWLAND (PORT OF NEW ROMNEY)	<i>Newelandeswall</i> 1351 Pat.
	NEWLANDS	<i>Atte Newelonde</i> 1327, 1332, 1334, 1347 Subs.
	NEWNHAM FM.	<i>de Newenham</i> 1332 Subs.
	NEWSOLE FM.	<i>de Newesole</i> 1304 Ass; 1327, 1332, 1334 Subs, etc.
	NEWSTREET FM.	<i>Neustrete</i> 1327 Subs; <i>de</i> <i>Newestrete</i> 1347 Subs.
OE <i>prēosta</i> ‘priests’	PRESTON FM., HILL	<i>Preston</i> ’ 1377 FF; <i>Preston</i> 1325 Cl; 1330 Ipm; <i>de Prestone</i> 1332 Subs; <i>de Preston</i> ’ 1334 Subs; <i>Preston</i> 1346 FA; 1372 Cl.
	PRESTON FM.	<i>de Preston</i> ’ 1348.

	PRIESTWOOD,	<i>de Prestwode 1327, 1332, 1338</i>
	P. GREEN	<i>Subs.</i>
OE <i>*þēof</i> ‘thief	TUDELEY	<i>Teudele 1316, 1320 FF; 1324-5</i>
		<i>BM I; 1324 Cl; 1327 Ipm;</i>
		<i>Thewdele 1313 Ass; Tewedale</i>
		<i>1316 FA; Teu-, Tyedele, Tyendale</i>
		<i>1353 FF, etc.</i>
OE <i>Lēofmæc</i> Pers. N.	LYMBRIDGE GREEN	<i>de Lymeryng’ 1316-28 Ass; 1327</i>
		<i>Subs; de Lemeryng’ 1334 Subs.</i>

TABLE 4: 14TH C. KENTISH PLACE-NAME FORMS WITH / IN THE FIRST OR UNIQUE ELEMENT

OE <i>hlēo</i> ‘shelter’	LYDDEN VALLEY	<i>Lhydene</i> 1313 Ass.
OE <i>nēowe</i> ‘new’	NEW HYTHE	<i>Niweheth</i> 1316 Cl; <i>Neweheth</i> 1320 FF; <i>Neuheth</i> 1323 Cl; <i>Neweheth</i> 1325 Inq.
	NIZEL’S HEATH	<i>Nigheselle</i> 1327 Subs; <i>Nys(h)ell’</i> 1332 Subs; <i>Nyselle</i> 1346 Subs; <i>Ny-</i> , <i>Niselle</i> 1347 Subs; <i>Niselle</i> (p.) 1348 Subs; <i>Nisell’</i> 1380 FF.
OE <i>Hēopwell</i> Pers. N.	EBBSFLEET	<i>Hyppesfleot</i> 1308 Th.
OE <i>Lēofwynn</i> Pers. N.	LYDDENDANE FM.	<i>de Lyuenedane</i> 1327 Subs; <i>de Lyuyndan’</i> 1347, 1348 Subs.
OE <i>Lēofa/Lēofwine</i> Pers. N.	†LYMBOROUGH BOTTOM	<i>de Lymb’gh’</i> 1327, 1332, 1346 Subs; <i>de Lymbergh’</i> 1332 Subs; <i>Limberghe</i> 1334 Subs, etc.
OE <i>Lēofmær</i> Pers. N.	LYMBRIDGE GREEN	<i>de Lymeryng’</i> 1316-28 Ass; 1327 Subs; <i>de Lemeryng’</i> 1334 Subs.

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CONVENTION VS. CHOICE IN SECURING
THE GOOD-WILL
OF THE READER: THE CELY LETTERS

ABSTRACT

In the Middle Ages, the popular *ars dictaminis*, or the art of letter-writing, fluctuated between the principles of applied rhetoric and the freedom of personal choice. The most popular trend was the compromise arrived at by the School of Bologna, with its 'approved format' for a letter, which spread throughout mainland Europe from the 11th century onwards. Ciceronian principles were applied to the question of letter-writing, and treatises were written, in which the main concern was not so much theoretical principles, but the presentation of model letters intended to be copied *verbatim* by the future writer. The situation was slightly different in England, where not many treatises were produced at any one time. Yet letter-writing became increasingly popular there. Modern linguistic research has focused on the study of medieval rhetorical treatises in general (Murphy, Camargo) and on the evolution of the genre in England (Denholm-Young, Richardson) as well as on the analysis of surviving letter-collections in particular (Davis, Whigham, Henderson). Most recently, and particularly thanks to the compilation in Helsinki of the *Corpus of Early English Correspondence*, current research goes a step beyond purely linguistic analysis, to focus on sociolinguistic and pragmatic issues. The present paper is part of a wider personal project aiming at discovering the interface between language and society as revealed by the Cely letters. In this sense, while providing a purely linguistic description for present purposes, my work follows a sociolinguistic/pragmatic line of analysis. Thus, my ultimate aim is to study the expression of the medieval *captatio benevolentiae* as a pragmatic tool within the framework

of Brown and Levinson's politeness theory (1987) in the field of historical pragmatics.

INTRODUCTION

The first aim of this paper, which is descriptive rather than theoretical, is to ascertain the level of linguistic flexibility, in terms of both structures and lexicon, present in the expression of the rhetorical element known as *captatio benevolentiae*, or the securing of the good will of the reader. The second aim, which is closely connected with the first, is to gauge to what extent *captatio* is formulaic or unfixd.

Norman Davis defined *captatio*, understood as the opening passage of the letter only, as "a long sequence of conventional phrases and sentences constructed with minor variations upon a regular pattern" (1965: 236). In this paper we shall examine, in the context of the Cely letters, not only that opening passage, which corresponds to the traditional view of *captatio* as one part of the letter, but also other aspects of *captatio* embedded throughout the remaining sections of the letter, which relate to the understanding of *captatio* also as a device, liable to be employed elsewhere. This eclectic combination of both characteristics, along the lines established by Hugh of Bologna in the 11th century, seems to render a more complete definition of what *captatio* really is, and that is the one adopted here. I propose the following taxonomy of topics dealt with under the heading of *captatio benevolentiae*:¹

- (1) address or direct praise of the reader.
- (2) commendation of the writer himself.
- (3) expression of gratitude.
- (4) notification of the health of those near the writer who are very close to the reader; or a desire to hear of the reader's good health.
- (5) acknowledgement of having received a letter from the reader.

¹ This has been dealt with in detail in Sánchez Roura, T (2001).

- (6) notification of the main purpose of the letter, i.e. introduction of the exposition proper.
- (7) offer of service.
- (8) apology for finishing the letter at that point, not offering any more news.
- (9) pious valediction.
- (10) addition of the apologetic 'in haste'.

It must be noted that not all the above topics, or subsections, are present in one single letter –a matter which seems to be socially determined- but the ordering of these is fairly standard. Some topics are particularly associated with the second part of the letter: these are the commendation, gratitude, health, acknowledgement of receipt and the introduction of the body of the text. However, flexibility of location is apparent in the letters.

The corpus of data used here consists of the collection of letters belonging to the Cely family exclusively, covering the period between 1472 and 1488. The number of informants is around 37, all of whom are male, except one. They belong to the family circle as well as collaborators and friends. The corpus was chosen for the following reasons: these letters reflect the daily life of the late medieval English merchant, a position which involved dealings with people belonging to all social classes; the letters deal with a mixture of commercial and domestic affairs, which makes them highly attractive, and finally, the letters are autographed and not the product of the embellishments of a professional scribe. For the purposes of the present study, which aims to focus on the description of linguistic issues only at this preliminary stage, irrespective of social parameters, the letters have not been re-arranged in any way and they have been studied in the same chronological order presented by their last editor.

Following the above consideration of what items qualify as instances of *captatio*, their linguistics description may now be undertaken, in terms of syntactical structure and lexical items. It will then be possible to gauge the extent to which there is flexibility and variation, and this in turn will indicate whether such elements are formulaic in wording or not.

SYNTACTIC AND LEXICAL ANALYSIS OF *CAPTATIO BENEVOLENTIAE* IN THE CELY LETTERS

(1) ADDRESS

We shall be looking at the address proper which occurs at the very beginning of the letter, and not at the honorifics employed throughout the letter; in any case, the latter are usually simple noun phrases of the type ‘your mastership’ or ‘your good lordship’ functioning as the objects of a verb. Titles of address used as proper vocatives in the opening of the letter offer more interest because the syntactical structure is quite varied, from the simple ‘wellbeloved brother’ to more complicated structures of coordinated NPs, as we shall see now.

Titles of address can be divided into two groups, depending on whether the NP is simple or coordinated. The results of the study are reflected in the following tables:

Table 1. Syntactic structure of titles of address: simple phrases.

Structure	Examples
i. N	Syr, Jorge Cely, bedfellow, brother
ii. Adj	Wellbeloved
iii. Adj + N	Wellbeloved brother, worshipful sir
iv. [Adj+ and + Adj] + N	Honorable and worshipful sir
v. [Adv + Adj] + N	<i>Right wellbeloved brother, right worshipful sir, right trusty friend</i>
vi. (a) [Adv + (Adj +and+ Adj)] + N	<i>(a)Right reverent and worshipful father, right reverent and wellbeloved brother</i>
(b) Adv + [Adj+and+Adj] or [Adv+Adj]+and+ Adj	<i>(b) Right trusty and wellbeloved</i>
vii. [(Adv + Adj) + and + (Adv + Adj)] + N	<i>Right reverent and heartily wellbeloved brother</i>
viii. (a) [(Adv + Adv) + and + Adj] + N	<i>(a)Right interly and wellbeloved brother</i>
(b) [(Adv + Adv) + Adj] + N	<i>(b) Right interly wellbeloved brother</i>
ix. (a) [Adv + Adj] + [N ₁ +and+ N ₂]	<i>(a)Right trusty sir and brother</i>
(b) Adj + [N + N]	<i>(b) Reverent syr and brother</i>

x. (a) [Poss + (Adv + Adj)] + N	(a) <i>My full trusty friend</i>
(b) [Poss + (Adj + and + Adv + Adj)] + (N ₁ + and + N ₂)	(b) <i>My trusty and very trusty friend and lover</i>

Table 2. Syntactic structure of titles of address: coordinated phrases.

Structure	Examples
i. {Adj+N} and {Poss[(Adv+Adj) + N]}	Worshipful sir and my special friend
ii. (a) {[Adv+Adj] + N} and {Poss + [Adj + N]}	(a) <i>Right worshipful sir and my reverent master</i>
(b) {[Adv + Adj] + N} and {Poss + [(Adj + Adj) + N]}	(b) <i>Right worshipful sir and my singular good Lord</i>
iii. {[Adv + Adj] + N} and {Adj + N}	<i>Right worshipfull sir and wellbeloved cousin</i>
iv. {[Adv + Adv] + Adj} and {Poss + [(Adj + Adj) + N]}	<i>Right heartily wellbeloved and my special good brother</i>
v. {[Adv (Adj +and+Adj)] + N} and {Poss + [(Adj + Adj) + N]}	<i>Right worshipful and reverent sir and my special good friend</i>
vi. {Adj + N} and {Poss + [Adj + (N ₁ +N ₂)]}	<i>Reverent sir and my speciall friend and gossip</i>
vii. {[Adj + and + Adj] + N} and {Poss + [Adj+(N ₁ +N ₂)]}	<i>Reverent and worshipfull sir and my special friend and gossip</i>

The next step is to see what lexical items are used to fill the categories of adverb, adjectives and nouns. The adverb most often used is *right*, but *interly*, *heartily*, *very* and *ful* also occur. The last two are selected only after the possessive *my*, and when a second adverb is needed in a compound then the first two are selected. The two adjectives by far the most often used are *worshipful* and *wellbeloved*, which represent the opposite poles of politeness, followed by *reverent*; other adjectives, such as *special*, *good* and *trusty* seem to be context-dependent, since they are only selected if following the possessive; the adjectives *singular* and *honorable* are very rare in our data. The possessive used is always *my*, which is very rare in simple NPs but by contrast it is almost obligatory in the second NP of a compound, as can be seen in Table 2 above. The nouns most often used are *sir*, *master*

and *brother*, which logically reflect the fact that most letters were written between brothers or from inferior to superior; however, brothers could also be addressed as *sir*, and close collaborators could address each other as *brother*. Other nouns used are *father*, *cousin*, *gossip*, *friend*, *lover*, *bedfellow* and proper names. Occasionally the adjective *wellbeloved* is nominalised. The most common collocations are between adjectives and nouns which denote either positive or negative politeness, such as *wellbeloved brother/cousin/friend* and *worshipfull sir/ master*; however, mixed types also occur, where a positively polite noun, such as *father/ cousin /brother* is associated with a negatively polite adjective, such as *worshipfull*; so the collocation *worshipfull father* is fairly frequent at the end of the 15th century. We may conclude that the titles of address offer a flexible syntactic structure, but with a rather limited set of lexical items, which is due to the reduced number of relationships among the senders and recipients of the letters in this corpus.

(2) COMMENDATIONS

A prototypical commendation usually opens a letter, with the writer commending himself directly to the reader, as in what we shall label as Type 1:

(1) I recomend me wnto you

Commendations may occur in other contexts (types 2, 3 and 4), which are usually embedded elsewhere in the text. We can define them as follows:

Type 2: the writer commends himself to someone else at the reader's end, as in:

(2) Syr I pray you that ye woll recomaund me vnto my master
yours fadere

Type 3: a third person commends himself to the reader via the writer, as in:

(3) Syr, my Lord of Sente Jonys commende hym to you

Type 4: a third person commends himself via the writer to someone else at the reader's end; this is a very rare circumstance, but occurs in:

- (4) ... say vnto hem that Hary Seyseld recomaunde hem vnto
yowre brodere

A binary distinction may be established according to whether commendations are realized by means of a verb or a noun, as in the prototypical structures:

- (5) I **recomaund** me vnto you
(6) afftyr all dew **recomendassyon** pretending

The basic formula S+V+O+PP as a simple main clause, which is almost invariably transcribed as 'I recommend me unto you' as in (5) above, is used to represent type-1 commendations, direct from writer to reader, as well as type 3, from a third person via the writer to the reader, as in (7) below:

- (7) Syr, owr cosyn Cowldayll recomendys hym and hys wyffe to
you

Commendations of the 2nd and 4th types, whereby either the writer or a third person commends himself to a third party at the reader's end, are embedded as a subordinate clause, typically the object of the verb 'pray'.¹ Fluctuation in how to build this construction is apparent in our data, as we have the same number of instances for 'pray + bare infinitive', 'pray+ to-infinitive' and 'pray+ that-clause', as in the examples below:

- (8) I **pray** you **recomend** me to my brother Robard
(9) I **praye** you **to recomend** me to owr osten
(10) Syr I **pray** you **that** ye woll recomaund me vnto my master
yours fadere

It may be said that the syntactic variation seen so far does not obey any pragmatic dictates since syntax is simply adapting itself to the message: the basic formula is needed for a direct message to the reader, whereas the subordinate construction is necessary to ask the reader to do something. However, further variations, involving the addition of optional adverbials in the VP, may be seen as choices made for a particular purpose, that is, choices which are pragmatic in the sense of trying to use the language to best effect. It is not a question of semantics only: the idea of 'heart', the element

¹ There is even an example of type-2 commendation expressed in the imperative form: 'comende me to Twyhessylton and aull good fellows'

most often used as we shall see below, in an attempt to demonstrate closeness and friendship, or positive politeness, is translated into different syntactic options, from a mere adverb to a longer PP with a clause embedded in it; thus, however friendly the overall tone tries to be, it will sound more or less deferential depending on the length of the expression. These variations seem to affect only type-1 commendations, since the clauses exemplifying types 2, 3 and 4 always exhibit the basic pattern.¹ From this we may infer that types 2, 3 and 4 are sufficiently sincere by themselves, and that type-1 commendations seem to need extra strengthening elements to make them sound more convincing and less of a formula.

The most popular construction by far, outnumbering even the unmarked one, is the addition of an adverb, either before or after the verb, as in²:

(11a) I recomende me **harttely** wnto yow

(11b) I **louly** recommend me vnto yowre masterschypp

Phrases of comparison are also attached, the most popular being those introduced by ‘as’, in comparisons of the ‘as....as’ type, as in:³

(12) I recommend me vnto you **as hartely as** I can

The prepositions used to introduce optional PPs are ‘in’ and ‘with’; the former introduces the expression ‘in ... wise’ to indicate how the commendation is performed; it is either ‘in the best wise I can or may’ or ‘in as loving/hearty wise as I/heart can (think)’; ‘with’ is invariably used in the expression ‘with all my heart’.

The noun ‘recommendation’ is always the head of the PP as in ‘after due recommendation...’, used to represent type-1 commendations exclusively, most often appended before the basic formula seen above (5), with or without variant extensions, the most common being the inclusion of the

¹ The exceptions are items 94, 194 and 214, in which a third person commends himself to the reader via the writer (type 3) ‘heartily’. Two of those instances are the only commendations from a woman to the writer.

² It must be noted that the collocation of the adverb before the verb is subjected in 99% of cases to the inclusion of the phrase ‘after due recommendations’ before the subject.

³ Other constructions with ‘as’ are: ‘as heart can think’, ‘as lovingly as heart can device or think’, ‘as heartily as I can device or think’, ‘as heartily as I can or may’, ‘as tenderly as heart can think’ and ‘as lovingly as heart can think’.

adverb 'lowly'.¹ The effect created by such relatively verbose phrases is that of a more deferential and distant attitude on the part of the writer. The prototypical unmarked version is:

(13) affter dew recommendacyon I lowly recommend me unto
yowre masterschypp

Variation at this level involves modification of the noun 'recommendation' by means of a premodifier, invariably 'all', and a postmodifier, as in:

(14) afftyr **all** dew recomendassyon pretending / had / precedyng

Either modifier may also be omitted, rendering something like "after due recommendation". Both the basic pattern and the variation are equally popular.

The action of commending is invariably represented by the verb 'recommend' or its related noun 'recommendation', even though the vocabulary might have allowed other possibilities, such as 'trust' or 'charge' for example. Semantic variation concerns the optional elements around the basic pattern as seen before, characteristic of type-1 commendations. This, in turn, means that types 2, 3 and 4 do not exhibit much semantic variation.² The elements which are susceptible of variation are the pronouns referring to the reader, the adverbs in the main clause and the lexical items in the PPs. Let us see them in turn: (1) the pronoun of address: the prototypical 'you' of 'I commend myself to you' may change to an honorific term, such as the usual 'your mastership' or 'your good lordship', for example. This serves the purpose of enhancing the social distance between correspondents; (2) the adverb used to modify the act of commendation is most commonly 'heartily'; however, 'lowly' is also very much used. This is a particularly interesting dichotomy from a pragmatic standpoint, in that it reveals a different approach on the part of the writer: positive politeness or warmth in the first case, negative politeness or deference, in an act of self-humiliation, in the second; and (3) variation in the PPs revolves around the entity of

¹ There are only a couple of instances in which the 'after' phrase comes at the end of the main clause (145, 192).

² There is one instance of the use of the verb 'beseech' as a synonym of 'pray' in one type-2 commendation.

‘heart’ and its related adjectives and adverbs. In this sense, the ‘as’, ‘in’ and ‘with’ phrases are semantically parallel in so far as they all include terms connected with ‘heart, such as ‘hearty, heartily, loving, lovingly, tenderly’.

We may conclude that commendations exhibit little syntactic and lexical variation, but that what little there is seems to be pragmatically determined.

(3) GRATITUDE

Gratitude to the reader is basically understood as being on the part of the writer himself, although there are instances of the gratitude of other people to the reader conveyed by the writer. A third type would represent the reader’s gratitude to someone else at the reader’s end. We shall label these as types 1, 2 and 3, as in:

(15) hertely thankynge yowe of the greht cheyr and wel fayr þat I
had wyth yowe (Type 1)

(16) and thay thanke yow of your greyt labor in byeng of ther
stowe (Type 2)

(17) and I pray yow thanke them for me (Type 3)

Instances of gratitude of type 1 exhibit two different structures, personal and impersonal, as in:

(18) I comaund me to you, **and I thank you** hertely **of** the good
lodgeng that ye fand vs at Derford

(19) I recomande me vnto you as hertyly as I can, **thankynge you**
of your good will shewed vnto me at all seasons

Both structures are relatively frequent and the previous clause does not seem to preselect one or the other, unless, of course, the clause containing the gratitude message is a completely independent one, in which case the personal construction is selected, as in:

(20) Syr, I thanke you at hyt pleschyd you to leue me Goos

Either structure may include the adverb *heartily*, but it seems to be more popular with the personal construction, which is coherent from a pragmatic point of view, since this personal construction is the more positively polite of the two, as in (18) above.

The verb *thank* may take two complements (very rarely just one), the prepositional one indicating the cause of the gratitude. There is fluctuation concerning the preposition used, which is either *for* or *of*, although *of* is the one more often used by far, as in:

(21) and I thanke you of your grehyte coste and scheyr

(22) and I thanke you for the grete coste that 3e dyd on me at
your departyng

Type-2 instances of gratitude exhibit the personal structure only, as in:

(23) and my godfather recomendys hym to yow, and thankys
yow for yowr rememberans of hys stofe

There is also fluctuation in the preposition which introduces the complement, which again can be either *for* or *of* indistinctly.

Type-3 instances of gratitude, whereby the writer thanks someone else at the reader's end, are always embedded in a subordinate clause which is the object of the verb *pray*, with the verb *thank* in the bare infinitive form, as in:

(24) and I pray yow thanke them for me

There is no lexical variation in the expression of gratitude, which relies solely on the verb *thank*, which in turn may be modified by the adverb *heartily* exclusively. We can conclude that the expression of gratitude does not exhibit much syntactical flexibility and no semantic variation; it does show, however, instability concerning the choice of the preposition.

So far, we have studied pattern and variation from a mere linguistic point of view, regardless of any sociological variable. But if we simply stop to analyse **who** says what in what way, it is probable that what looked like repetitive formulaic patterns may be the hallmark of one individual writer as opposed to the hallmark of the genre of correspondence. Let us analyse the following topics in this light.

(4) HEALTH MATTERS

The mention of health matters is an aspect of *captatio* which seems to be socially constrained in a very marked way, since it is only incorporated in

the letters of those correspondents who are very close, and it is generally avoided by writers addressing the socially superior addressee. This can be stated since the basic social network of social relations among the principal correspondents is known, and by analogy the social standing of other writers of whom we know very little can be inferred. In this way, if a writer does not mention health at all, it is clearly the case that he is not close to the reader and vice versa, inclusion of health matters indicates less distance between correspondents. Having said this, another difference between letters of family members and more sporadic writers must be mentioned, concerning how to address the health issue. Close relatives and friends tend to inform each other about the health of those near them, who are close to the reader – whereas sporadic writers more deferentially inquire about the reader's health.

If we analyse the structures employed, patterns seem to emerge, although these are not uniform across letters, which would denote a general formulaic usage, but rather characteristic of certain writers. This suggests a personal style that repeats itself from letter to letter. In this way:

a. Richard Cely seems to use the following:

- (25) (furthermore) informing you or please hyt you to wet /
understand...at the making of this our father and mother were
(an we all were) in good health, thanked be God.

Variations include basically the addition of a coordinated clause, as in

....

- (26) ...and send you their blessings
(27)... and desire greatly to hear of yours.
(28) ... and so we trust that you be.

b. William Cely never touches on this topic, except on three occasions: to acknowledge George's illness, to inform of someone's death and to let George know of his own sickness. The syntactic structures are all different:

- (29) be the whych I vnderstond ye be well mendyd off yowre
grett sycknesse, wheroff I am ryghyt gladel, and I thanke God
off yowre goode rekewer,
(30) Furdermore, plese hett yowre masterschypp to be enfformyd
that Margere ys dowghter ys past to Godd. Hytt was berydd

thys same daye, on whoys sowle Jhesu hawe marsy. Syr, I vnderstond hytt hadd a grett pang: what sycknesse hytt was I cannott saye,

(31) I hawe byn a lykuill dysseyd, but I thancke Godd I am amendyd and walkynge, and Joyssse hathe ben syke allso, butt nowe he ys well mendyd, thankyd be Godd,

c. The two other members of the family, the father, Richard, and the more distant brother, Robert, use the same basic structure as George:

(32) At the making of this letter we were in good health...

Differences appear when thanking God, which the father states baldly, whereas the brother passivizes:

(33) I thank God

(34) Blessed be God

Note however that Richard the elder is not monotonous in his structures but exhibits variation:

(35) Desiring to hear of your recovering

(36) Youre moder and I desire for to hear of your recovering

d. William Maryon, Thomas kesten and the rest of the sporadic authors seem to opt for:

(37) Desiring to hear of your welfare

which in the more deferential letters is followed by a relative clause which is a prayer to God to preserve health. Thus,

(38) Desiring to hear of your welfare, the which I beseech almighty Jesus to preserve and keep unto his pleasure and yours.

The nouns used to refer to different aspects of people's well-being are the following: *health* and *welfare* by far, together with *sickness*, *amendment*, *amending*, *recovering*, *prosperity*. The adjective most often used to modify health is *good*, in collocation with the word *health*; others, used to modify the person himself are: *hooll*, *merry*, *comforted*, *amendyd*, *sick*, *well mendid*, *sore sick* and *strong*. Other expressions, used to refer to a medical condition, are *fare well*, *died*, *had a great pang*, *past to God*, *deceased*. Pattern and variation are also observable in the pious vocabulary embedded in the

relative clause appended to the word *health*: the deity is usually *God, the good Lord, Jesus, almighty God* and *almighty Jesus*, who are *thanked* or *blessed*; the deity is asked to *keep, preserve, maintain, increase* or *continue* the reader's health, usually *to his pleasure* and onto the reader's *heart's desire*, which admits some variation, as in *to your heart's ease and will, to your most profit both of body and soul* or *to your pleasure*. From the above it may be concluded that both pattern and variation are present throughout the letters as a whole, but it is my tentative suspicion that whereas pattern characterises the letters of an individual, variation is apparent between individuals.

(5) ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

It must be noted that only frequent correspondents acknowledge receipt of a letter, which they tend to claim to understand, usually repeating its contents. Once again, pattern and variation seem to occur: the former, across letters by the same author, and the latter, across authors. This way, one individual's mode of expression may be singled out. So, for instance:

a. Richard the younger fluctuates between:

(39) Sir, I haue ressauyd a letter from yow wrytt at

and

(40) ... informyng you that I haue ressauyd a letter from you wryttyn at

The way he finishes this sentence is quite variable, fluctuating between nothing at all and one of the following versions:

(41) ... the qweche I do whell wndyrstonde / the qweche I wnyrstond riught whell

(42) ... wherby I wndyrstonde ...

(43) ... wherein I fynd

That is, if regurgitation of the previously received letter is included, one of the structures above is selected.

He is not consistent either, in the amount of information he adds regarding the date and place of the letter received.

b. William Cely's letters always conform to the same pattern. His acknowledgment of receipt is another example of this. He invariably introduces it in the following way:

(44) Furdermore plese hit yowre masterschypp to vnderstonde
that I haue receyued an letter ffrom yow the whych I haue
redd and well vnderstond...

If recapitulation of the letter is included, this is introduced by one of the following:

(45)... be the tenour wherof I vnderstond...

(46) ... be the whych I vnderstond...

(47) ... howe that...

Slight variations include:

(48) Fyrddymore, lyke hytt yowre mastyschypp to haue yn
knowlege that thys day I haue receyued yowre lettyr

(49) Fyrdymore, lyke hyt yowre mastyschypp to wytt that I
haue receyued yowre lettyr

He sometimes includes the name of the bearer and details concerning when and where the letter was sent from.

c. Richard the elder is another author who seems to follow the same pattern from letter to letter. He introduces the acknowledgment of receipt abruptly, immediately following the opening greeting, linking it to this by means of 'and', as in:

(50) ...and I haue resayuyd a letter from the wrete (...)the weche
letter I haue wyll understande euery ponte.

He does not offer a recapitulation of a previously received letter, therefore his acknowledgements of receipt end in 'understand'. Only once does he topicalize the date of receipt, as in:

(51) The laste day of Octobor I haue resayuyd a letter from you,
wrote at Bregys the xxijj day of Octobor, the weche letter I
haue wyll understand,

d. William Maryon introduces yet another structure which he selects quite often in his letters; this is:

(52) Ferdermor, and yt plesse yow, ye schall vnderstonde that I
haue ressayved a letter from you wreten at Calles the xxviii day
of Marche, the wyche letter I haue well vnderstonde that...

He also uses to:

(53) Ferdermor, plessed you to wete that / Plessed you to
vnderstond that

e. George Cely also makes use of one and the same structure from letter to letter, along the lines of the one used by William above:

(54) Fordyrmor plesyth yt yow to vndyrstonde I resseywyd an
lettyr ffrom yow wrytt at London the fforst day of May, the
wheche lettyr I haue rede and do whell vndyrstonde

f. Other isolated authors show a variety of structures:

(55) ... Letyng you wnderstond / wit þat I resauyd a letter from
you, be the whiche writtyng I ondirstond

(56) Certefyng you that I receyved a lettre from you (...). The
tenour of which lettre I vnderstode ryght wele and therupon

(57) ... I haue receiued your kynde and louyng lettre and wel
vnderstonde alle þingys þerynne contened

as well as the already familiar:

(58) Fordyrmor plesythe ytt yower Lordshyp to vndyrstond that
Y haue ressaywyd an lettyr ffrom yowr Lordshyp beryng datte
at Napullus the last day of Novembyr drectyd to my broder
Rychard and me.

Lexical variation in the acknowledgement of receipt of a letter occurs with the 'informing' verb that opens the clause and at the end, to introduce the recapitulation, if any. In this way the verb most commonly used to acknowledge receipt is *understand* in expressions of the type seen above, followed by *inform*, *let wit/understand*, *certify*, *have (in) knowledge* and *to be informed*. Recapitulation is also introduced by the verb *understand* in a majority of cases, in a variety of constructions as seen earlier. On the basis of the above it may be concluded that the syntactic structures exhibited show a constant patterning across letters by the same author, which varies across

authors. As mentioned before, the patterning may well define an author's style but not the genre as a whole. There is not much lexical variation regarding the items selected to fulfil the different categories and functions in these clauses.

(6) INTRODUCTION OF THE EXPOSITION

The body of the text is usually introduced in a way similar to the one used when dealing with health matters and the acknowledgement of receipt, namely one of the *please it you to understand* variations. Now, if an author has already selected this expression earlier in the letter, he might resort to a different one to start the body of the letter proper, usually by means of a shorter form, such as *furthermore*, *also* or simply the honorific *sir* immediately followed by the main point of the letter. Alternatively, he may repeat the same phrase again. The same happens whenever a new item of news is introduced later in the text: the author may either repeat the *please it you to know* phrase, he may simply use the honorific for each new point or he may simply start a new sentence with no connectors. Concerning this topic, it seems that a pattern across authors pervades the letters, in favour of what may be called a formula; however, there is also a good deal of variation at the syntactical and lexical levels, although in the case of the "*please it you to understand*" formula it might be a case of unsettled syntax as opposed to true variation. Before we proceed to the analysis of the various forms, it must be said that, once again, a pattern across the letters of one individual author does seem to be at work too, thus characterising his style. In this sense, the letters of Richard the younger introduce the body of the text by means of the honorific *sir*, because he has already used the other formula to introduce health matters and acknowledgement of receipt. This contrasts sharply with the style of William Cely, who as we know, hardly ever mentions either topic; thus, he feels free to use the "*please it your mastership to understand*" formula to introduce the body of the text. A formula which, together with the honorific *sir* and the connectors *and*, *also* and *as for*, he repeats throughout the text.

The style of Richard the elder boasts a direct and concise coordinator *and*, which he uses to link the main body of the text abruptly to the initial salutation. Another form he uses is the open *ye shall understand that...*

The other authors use a variety of resources, in many cases depending on how they have begun the letter.

A variety of connectors are employed to link the main body of the text to the second part of the letter; such connectors are also used throughout the rest of the text whenever a new item of news is mentioned. They can be divided into four groups:

a. very short ones: adverbs, conjunctions and nouns:

also	and	sir
further	as for	item
furthermore	as touching (the matter)	item sir

b. finite clauses:

I understand by (that)
Ye shall understand (that)
I lete you wit (that)
The cause of my writing is this

c. non-finite clauses (gerund):

ascertaining you (that)
certifying you (that)
doing you to wit (that)
informing you (that)
informing you as for
letting you understand / wit/ have in knowledge (that)

d. others (with *please* and *like*)

like it you to wit / to be enformed (that)
like it your mastership to understand as for

without *it*:

pleased you to wit (that)

pleaseth you to understand / wit (that)

with *it*:

please it you

please(th) it you to wit / understand / to be informed (that)

different word-order:

it please you

it please you to wit / understand (that)

if it please you to wit / understand (that)

Variation at the syntactical and lexical level is certainly available; patterning seems to be, once again, a question of stylistic characteristics of the individual writers, who opt for one way of expression and use it throughout their letters.

(7) OFFER OF SERVICES

This aspect of *captatio*, as in the case of gratitude, is certainly free in sentiment and only included when it is really meant. There are very few instances of this in the Cely letters. The wording varies from letter to letter, but two patterns seem to emerge, with and without an explicit conditioning undertone in the subordinate clause, as in:

a. with explicit condition:

(59) And ther be any thytge that I can do for yow in
Ingelonde...

(60) Ande if ther be any theng that I can do ar may ffor yow...

(61) And yf het ly in my power...

b. without explicit condition:

(62) and anything pat I cane do vnto pleser...

(63) and any servis that I can or may do for you here...

(64) and sir, eny seruice that I can or may do for your
maystership here...

The main clause exhibits one of the following variations:

- (65) I wyll do yt wyth all my hartte
(66) I am ande schal be at yowre comandement,
(67) I schall do as moch that: schal be vnto your plesure,
(68) ye shal fynde it redy
(69) ye shall fynde me as redy to do it and as glad as any man on
lyve
(70) hyt schall be redde to my powhere
(71) shall be r(e)dy atte your desyre,

Offers of service tend to end with a pious good wish, which becomes the usual valediction at the end of the letter. This is usually attached by means of a relative clause, as in the following instances:

- (72) ... the weche conowthe God, ho haue yow in ys kepynge,
amen.
(73) ... that knowleth Jhesu, who kepe you.
(74) ... as knoweth owre Lord, qwou send you good fortune
wyth þe accomplishment off your goodly desyrys.
(75)... by Godys grace, who euer preserue you.
(76) at knowith the blessid Trynyte, whom I beseche to preserve
you into good helthe, amen.
(77)... be the grase of God, how haue you in ys kepe.
(78)... and that God knows, how preserue.
(79)... as oure Lord God knowith, who Y beseche to preserue
you and youre in felcitate long duryng.

All instances of this pious valediction are slightly different, showing a wide range of syntactical structures and lexical items, from which it may be argued that this aspect of *captatio* does not seem to be formulaic.

(8) END OF NEWS

The announcement that the letter has reached its end is characterised by its abruptness and conciseness in all cases. The basic formula is:

- (80) No mor to you

This admits very little variation, either syntactic or lexical. Syntactically, this phrase may appear either independently, as in (81) above, or as the direct object of a clause, as in:

(81) I wryte no mor to you

In either case, the PP *at this tyme* may be also added, as in:

(82) No mor to you at this time

(83) I write no mor to you at this time

Occasionally, William Cely adds the honorific *sir* before the phrase and also occasionally the complement *to you* is omitted, as in:

(84) No more at this tym

(85) I wryte no more

The bare expression '*no more*' is rarely found. At the lexical level, the only variation present involves the substitution of the pronoun *you* for the honorific NP *your mastership*. We may conclude that this part of the letter is certainly formulaic in wording, both syntactically and lexically.

(9) PIOUS VALEDICTION

All writers include a pious valediction of some sort at the end of their letters. 'Of some sort' refers to the actual length of the farewell. Thus, correspondents within and outside the family who are on close terms and write to each other frequently will opt for a short form, whereas writers addressing a socially superior reader, or who write to each other sporadically, will opt for a longer, more deferential form, both of which we can see below:

(86) But Jhesu kepe you

(87) But almighty Jesus hath you in his blessed keping

Another characteristic of pious valedictions is their level of syntactic independence in the text. Short farewells are usually independent clauses, linked to the rest of the text by a mere 'but' (in the sense 'no more news except ...'). By contrast, longer sequences usually come at the end of a clause, to which they are semantically related, by means of a relative, as in:

(88) By the grace of God, who have you...

The prototypical valediction, among very frequent correspondents, is:

(89) But Jhesu kepe you

Variations of this are as follows:

(90) But Jhesu / our Lord kepe (you) and all yours (amen)

(91) But the Trinity / almighty Jesus have you (and (all) yours)
in his (blessed) keping

(92) Jesu have you in keping

(93) Almighty God have us all in his blessed keping

(94) But almighty Jesu save you and kepe you

(95) But almighty Jesu preserve (you) and kepe you

Further variations include:

(96) But the Holy Ghost be with you

(97) But the Holy Trinity have you in his keping

(98) But almighty Jhesu preserve and kepe you and all yours long
in good health and pro

(99) Jhesu kepe you and send you good health

(100) But I pray to the Trinity send you health and bring you
well hither

(101) But our Lord send you long life and good to his pleasure
and yours

(102) But I pray Jhesu that all things may be well conveyed

(103) Be the grasse of God, who have you and all yours in his
keeping, amen / the which have you in his keping

Lexical variation occurs in both the names and adjectives used to refer to the deity (*Jhesu, our Lord, the Trinity, almighty God, Holy Ghost, Holy Trinity*) and also the actions asked for (*kepe, have in keping, send, save, preserve*). The pious valediction of the shortest type is a pattern of individual writers but also across writers, which would point towards its being formulaic; longer versions are based on the prototypical one with extensions that do not imply variation in the core structure of the expression. Lexical items provide a limited degree of variation.

(10) 'IN HASTE'

The 'in haste' phrase seems to be formulaic in the case of Richard Cely the elder, who always includes it in his letters, with the variation 'in great haste'. There are a few other authors who include it very sporadically, from which we may infer that its use was not stereotyped but of necessity. The 'in haste' phrase always comes at the end of the letter, between the attestation and the signature, and on three occasions it is used on the dorse of the letter, as a kind of urge to the bearer. Concerning the reasons for the inclusion of the 'in haste' phrase, the writer may be referring to his writing in a hurried, careless manner due to something or other that needs his attention more urgently and will not let him devote more time to the letter; or he may be referring to the urgency to finish the letter because the bearer is waiting on the stirrup ready to depart.

CONCLUSIONS

Pattern and variation, or conventional formulae versus free choice, are terms which are closely interrelated rather than being mere opposites. In my view, an overall pattern, both at the syntactic and lexical levels, becomes clear when reading the Cely letters. However, far from being the epitome of conventionalism, this pattern emerges precisely because of the choice each individual writer makes from among the possible variables the language offers. These he uses exhaustively throughout all his letters, producing what we could call his own personal formulae. In other words, due to the fact that the number of authors and writing contexts in the Celys is somewhat limited, we become accustomed to certain expressions which we read repeatedly throughout the letters. These are not necessarily conventions of the genre, but rather the personal hallmark of each author, who has acquired a writing style which he exhibits in one letter after another, although depending to a certain extent on whom the addressee is.

When such sociolinguistic variables as author and addressee have been taken into account, it has been shown that those writing styles do vary across

authors, thus denoting the existence of variation and consequently free choice. A study of the pragmatic use and effect of these expressions (forthcoming) sheds light on this issue, in the sense that it seems to be the case that choices are made by the writer both before deciding whether to include a certain topic or not (e.g. health matters), and at the moment of giving it linguistic shape (i.e. deferential or warm). It is my claim that this also seems to support the hypothesis that such passages, i.e. most instances of *captatio benevolentiae*, are present for a purpose and not as a customary technique.

Teresa Sánchez-Roura
University of Santiago

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* † *

THE SEMANTICS OF MIDDLE ENGLISH COMPOSITE PREDICATES¹

1. INTRODUCTION. AIMS AND SCOPE

The goal of this paper is to classify the Composite Predicates² formed with the light verbs *maken*, *don*, *haven*, *taken*, *yeven* and *nimen* extracted from the Middle English section of the *Helsinki Corpus of English Texts, Diachronic and Dialectal*,³ on the basis of the semantic content they express. After describing the main semantic groups into which the Composite Predicates in our data may be subdivided, the prevailing semantic categories with each light verb studied are analysed. Finally, Composite Predicates which consist of the same deverbal object and different light verb are considered.

Composite Predicates (henceforth, CPs), are structures which consist of a verb phrase followed by a nominal object. The syntactically main verb, usually *do*, *have*, *give*, *make* or *take*, is partially delexicalized and has accordingly been called a light or support verb. It acts as a basis to which the grammatical features of tense, person and number are attached. The nominal object carries the lexical content, acting as a non-verbal predicate. Sentence (1) below contains an example of a prototypical Present-Day English CP, *have a look*:

(1) He told me to *have a look* at the report.

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² The term *Composite Predicate* ultimately goes back to Cattel (1984) and has been more recently adopted by Akimoto and Brinton (1999a), Matsumoto (1999), Kytö (1999) and Tanabe (1999).

³ Further information on the Helsinki Corpus may be found in Kytö (1993) and in Rissanen, Kytö and Palander—Collin (1993).

Different semantic classifications of Present-Day English CPs have been put forward by Nickel (1968: 8), Akimoto (1990), Stein (1991), Dixon (1991: 354 ff.) or Quirk and Stein (1991).

Stein (1991: 23) establishes the following semantic groups for CPs with *give*, *have* and *take*: perception, mental activity, verbal activity, consumption, bodily care, contact activity, physical action, involuntary reaction, potentially voluntary reaction and voluntary reaction, while Quirk and Stein (1991: 198—9) replace voluntary reaction with tentative action.

Nickel (1968: 8) distinguishes six semantic subclasses of nouns which combine with *give*, *have*, *make* and *take*. These are nouns denoting movement or rest, vision, the action of speaking, sounds, the action of cleaning and, finally, nouns denoting the action of drinking. Claridge (2000: 142 ff.) has classified the nouns that enter in combinations with light verbs into the following categories: entity, state, verbal activity, concrete activity, abstract activity and mental/emotional process.

Focusing on the semantics of the deverbals rather than on the combinations themselves, Akimoto (1990) differentiates several semantic categories of nouns with which *give*, *have*, *make* and *take* tend to combine.

In view of the data extracted from the ME section of the *Helsinki Corpus*, we propose the following tentative classification of Middle English (henceforth, ME) CPs, based on the dominant semantic categories in our data (groups with more than ten tokens). Due to the difficulties in establishing watertight compartments, it may be possible to ascribe some of the combinations to more than one group, and in addition, subgroups have been distinguished within some categories.

1. FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS. This group consists of structures which express the entertaining of a certain sentiment, being in a particular frame of mind, experiencing a certain sensation or emotion.
2. OFFENSIVE ACTION. CPs which express a hostile action, an action which implies some sort of physical or psychological damage make up this group.

3. MENTAL ACTION. A wide number of combinations indicate the action or process of thinking, some sort of mental action or activity in general. The deverbals in this group can be further subdivided into nouns which express an action of guarding, of paying careful attention, care, or regard, deverbals which express the mental action of trusting, confiding, relying on a person or thing, and deverbals which express the formation of an opinion or notion concerning something by exercising the mind upon it.
4. SPEECH. CPs which express an action which involves the uttering or pronouncing of words or articulating sounds also occur in our data.
5. REDRESS. The reparation, amendment or correction of an error or fault is the semantic content indicated by a number of the structures analysed.
6. JUDGEMENT. Some of the units in our data indicate the action of taking legal steps to establish a claim or obtain judicial remedy, a legal process, or the taking of a judicial decision.
7. ENDEARMENT. A notable part of the structures recorded express the manifestation of good disposition or some sort of affection for someone or something.
8. MOTION. A subset of CPs refers to actions which involve changing place or position, the process of moving.
9. AGREEMENT. Combinations which denote the action of coming to an accord or an arrangement between two or more persons as to a course of action, a mutual understanding, a covenant, or treaty also occur in our data.
10. HOMAGE. CPs that indicate the acknowledgement of respect, reverence, dutiful respect, or honour, estimation or appreciation make up this subgroup.
11. TRADE. Several structures indicate the action of carrying on trade, buying and selling, of having commercial dealings with someone.

2. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

After describing the major categories in our data, we next review the type of actions expressed by each of the light verbs analysed in this paper. For each verb, the groups are presented in order of decreasing frequency of occurrence.

2.1. *DON*—CPS

Don—CPs tend to fall into the following semantic subgroups in our data:

2.1.1. OFFENSIVE ACTION

This is the most numerous category. It contains combinations with deverbals such as *bismer*, *damage*, *despite*, *disease*, *guilerie*, *harm*, *hurt*, *inconvenience*, *justice*, *loth*, *offense*, *outrake*, *peine*, *persecucioun*, *punishment*, *qued*, *sanchip*, *scathe*, *shame*, *shond*, *sorwe*, *unese*, *unresoun*, *unright*, *vengeaunce*, *vileinie*, *wene*, *wo*, *wough*, *wrake*, *wreche* or *wrong*.

Sentence (160) below contains a CP which belongs to this semantic group, *don offense*:

(2) (^ (\Tercia mulier.) ^) Ye false traitours! Vnto God ye *do grett
offens*, To sle and mordere yong children þat in þer cradelle
slumber! (ME4: CMDIGBY, 106)¹

2.1.2. REDRESS

Combinations with nouns such as *almesdede*, *amend*, *amendment*, *alms*, *andetnyse*, *charite*, *dedbote*, *lak*, *penaunce*, *penitence*, *remedie*, *sacrifice*, *shrift*, or *reowsunge*, as in (161) below, occur:

¹ All the examples quoted have been extracted from the ME section of the *Helsinki Corpus*. Each quotation contains information on the subperiod to which it belongs, namely ME1 (from 1150 to 1250), ME2 (from 1250 to 1350), ME3 (from 1350 to 1420) or ME4 (from 1420 to 1500), the abbreviated title of the text from which it has been extracted and the page number where it can be found. The full titles of the texts as well as more information on them may be found in Kytö (1993).

- (3) Be þare þe Hælend on his godspelle cwæð, ‘*Doð reowsunge*, for þam ðe heofene rice neahlæcð’. (ME1: CMBODLE, 42)

2.1.3. ENDEARMENT

CPs with *ese*, *esinesse*, *favour*, *godnesse*, *god*, *grace*, *kindenesse*, *love*, *merci*, *milce*, *plesaunce*, *thanking* or *thanks* belong to this category, exemplified with *don ese* in sentence (162) below:

- (4) Sche is agreyd to speke wyth me, and sche hopythe to *doo me ease*, as sche saythe. (ME4: CMPRIV, 441)

2.1.4. HOMAGE

Combinations with *buxomnesse*, *feute*, *homage*, *honour*, *manred*, *worship* or *reverence*, as in example (163) below, make up this subgroup.

- (5) For certes, namoore *reverence* shal be *doon* there to a kyng than to a knave. (ME3: CTPROS, 291 C.2)

2.2. HAVEN—CPS

CPs usually belong to the semantic fields which follow.

2.2.1. FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS

This is the most numerous group with *haven*. Akimoto (1990: 869) also distinguishes this category of nouns in combination with *haven* as a light verb, and Tanabe (1999: 105) points out the tendency of *haven* to combine with nouns expressing emotions.

Different feelings and emotions, such as pleasure, as in *haven liking* in (6), scorn, as in *haven disdein* in (7) or suffering, as in *haven care* in (8), may be expressed with *haven*—CPS:

- (6) Ah þuncheð ham softe & habbeð mare delit þrin; þen ei oðer *habbe i licunge* of þe worlt. (ME1: CMHALI, 131)
- (7) Certes, wel oghte a man *have desdayn* of synne and withdrawe hym from that thraldom and vileynye. (ME3: CMCTPROS, 290 C.2)

- (8) (^Mercy.^) I *haue* moche *care* for yow, my own frende. (ME4: CMMANKIN, 163)

Abhominacioun, affecioun, appetite, aue, blisse, comfort, compassioun, charite, deth, defaut, deinte, delectacioun, delice, deliting, desire, despite, devocioun, disport, drede, drednesse, embethanc, enclinaunce, envie, favour, feeling, fere, fervour, game, gladnesse, grevaunce, grure, hevinesse, jalousie, joy, liking, longing, love, loving, lust, merci, merveille, milce, mirth, morning, nede, nith, ofthynking, onde, ore, overhohe, peine, pite, pleie, plesaunce, pride, reuth, reuthnes, scorn, shame, sorinesse, sorwe, swetenesse, tene, torment, tribulacioun, win, wleatunge, wo, wough, wonder, wrong, yerning and zeles also belong to this category.

2.2.2. MENTAL ACTION

This is a numerous class which includes units that may express belief, as in *haven confidence* in (9) below, attention, as in *haven hed* in (10), or opinion, as in *haven estimacioun* in (11) below:

- (9) The preste, *hauyng confidens* in hys promysse, was wel content, (ME4: CMKEMPE, I 57)
(10) uor he ne *heþ* none *hede* of longe ryote of tales y-slyked / ne y-rymed. (ME2: CMAYENBI, I 99)
(11) "Thou *hast*," quod sche, "the ryght *estimacion* of this". (ME3: CMBOETH, 447 C.1)

Also in this category are CPs formed with belief, businessse, confidence, cure, deliberacioun, diligence, dreme, durstinesse, feith, forthynking, hope, ileve, keping, knouing, knouleche, knouleching, kunning, meditacioun, memorie, mind, mistrouing, opinioun, penaunce, premeditacioun, remorse, repentaunce, regard, suspect, suspicioun, sweuening, thought, trust, understanding, ward and witing.

2.2.3. MOTION

Fal, *cours*, *passage*, *climbing*, or *fare*, as in (170) below, are nouns which express an action which involves movement and which have been found in combination with *haven* in our corpus.

- (12) Na for þam þt þe deofel *hæfde* æni... *fare* to ure Hælende oðer his mæð wære þt he him ahwær on neawste come, 3if he hit for ure lufe |P98 ne 3eðafede. (ME1: CMBODLE, 96—98)

2.2.4. SPEECH

Communicacioun, langage, speche, word or *talking*, as in (171) below, are examples of this category.

- (13) Thei graunted his peticioun, and broute him forth to þe castel of Flynt, where þe duk and he *had* but a smal *talkyng*, and þan rydyn to þe castell of Chestir. (ME4: CMCAPCHR, 213)

2.3. *MAKEN*—CPS

Deverbals from the semantic fields which follow have been recorded forming CPs with *maken* in ME.

2.3.1. SPEECH

A variety of *maken*—CPs indicate the production or articulation of sounds. This is the case with *declaracioun*, in (172) below, as well as with *answere*, *avaunt*, *bere*, *bost*, *compleint*, *crie*, *lesing*, *mencioun*, *mind*, *mon*, *morne*, *morning*, *notice*, *pleint*, *preier*, *proclamacioun*, *prophecie*, *protestacioun*, *questioun*, *rehersaille*, *relacioun*, *rem*, *replicacioun*, *sermoun*, *site*, *song*, *sorwe*, *weilawei* or *warning*.

- (14) Wherefore me semeth conveyent, syth that I speke of the ascendent, to *make* of it speciall *declaracioun*. (ME3: CMASTRO, 670 C2)

2.3.2. OFFENSIVE ACTION

Deverbals in this subgroup include *breking*, *care*, *faisithe*, *manace*, *wasting*, or, as in (173) below, *perturbacioun* and *troubling*:

- (15) he scholde be more feblid & more *perturbacioun* or *troblyng* schulde *be made* in hym. ME3: CMPHLEBO, 47)

A number of CPs expresses the action of contending in battle, of striving for victory or struggling. This is the case with *afray*, *conquest*, *debate*,

defense, enarminges, justes, resistance, strife, werre or assault, as in the following example:

- (16) And also þe friday folwyng in þe same Woke of Estarne, in þe same 3er of owre lord þe kyng xvj=e=, Thomas Bradle, John Spaldyng, William Schyngilwode, preest, & Richard langeford, with other mo vne-knowen, in þe feld of Stebenythe, vp-on þe land of John 3ereld by-syde Schordych, with force & armes, bowes & arwes, swerdes & bokelers & other wepene, & þere *asawt madyn* to þe sone of John 3ereld and to þe 3omen of Schordych. (ME3: CMDOCU3, 233)

2.3.3. AGREEMENT

Accord, alliaunce, appointment, bargain, bond, composicioun, conspiracie, convencioun, covenaut, covin, forme, saughte, treue or foreward, as in (175) below, frequently occur in our data.

- (17) the seide Byssshop Dean and Chapiter that tyme beyng hadde lycence to enclose the cimitary ther as hit more pleyntly apperyth yn a *composicion* ther of *made*. (ME4: CMDOCU4, 84)

2.3.4. JUDGEMENT

Maken combines with nouns such as arbitrement, award, dom, jugement, proces, rightfulness, serche, testament, sute, or statut and ordinaunce, as in (176).

- (18) Also þat þer schal non wardeins *make* non newe *statut*... ne newe *ordinance* with-oute assent of alle þe bretherhede, & þat it be don on on of þe foure dayes afor seid. (ME3: CMDOCU3, 53)

2.3.5. REDRESS

Combinations with alms, amendes, amendment, aseth, offring, offrende, reformacioun, relief, restitucioun, sacrifice, shrift or penitence, illustrated in (177) below, belong to this subgroup.

- (19) þe blake cros limpeð to þeo þe *makieði* þe worlt hare *penitence* for ladliche sunnen. (ME1: CMANCRE, 30)

2.3.6. TRADE

Alienacioun, dispense, feffment, fyn, marchaundie, paiement, raunson, sale, transmutacioun, yielding and assessing and levy, as in (178) below, form CPs in combination with *maken*.

- (20) *assessyng and levy was made* amonge the sayde Bysshoppis tenantis of ij dymes. (ME4: CMDOCU4, 81)

2.3.7. MOTION

Coming, departing, haste, lepis, pilgrimage, stiring, wei, or, as in (179) below, *breid*, express actions which involve movement in combination with *maken*.

- (21) And ate laste I *make abreid*, Caste up myn hed and loke aboute, Riht as a man that were in doute And wot noght wher he schal become. (ME3: CMGOWER, I 317)

2.3.8. MENTAL ACTION

This category gathers deverbals such as *comparisoun, disencioun, division, eleccioun, estimacioun, force, strength, thought* or *bepenchinge* and *memorie*, reflected in (180) below.

- (22) þet is to alle guode herten / þet eche daye zuteliche be zoþe loue *makeþ memorie* / and *bepenchinge* of his passion. (ME2: CMAYENBI, I 112)

2.4. TAKEN—CPS

Taken favours combinations with deverbals belonging to the following semantic subgroups.

2.4.1. MENTAL ACTION

This category includes combinations with deverbals such as *avis, avisement, conseil, cure, direccioun, force, gome, hed, high, kep, red, repentaunce, regard, tent, thought, witnesse, yeme* or *attendaunce*, illustrated in (181) below:

- (23) And all for lacke of our maysters and nouryces all wrapped in neclygence *taketh* none *attendaunce* to us. (ME4: CMINNOCE, 6)

2.4.2. FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS

Care, compassioun, conscience, displesure, displesaunce, herte, joy, lust, merci, mon, pite, shame, sorwe or talent express feelings in combination with taken, whether pleasure, as is the case with taken lust, or suffering, as in taken displesure, in (182) below:

- (24) Also I praye yow feele my lady off Norffolkys dysposicion to me wardys, and whethyre she *toke* any *dysplesure* at my langage, ore mokkyd ore dysdeyned my wordys whyche I hadd to hyre. (ME4: CMPRIV, 449)

2.4.3. MOTION

Taken in combination with *gate*, *pilgrimage*, *sauf passage*, *viage*, *wei* or *trace*, as in the following sample, denotes actions in this category.

- (25) Alisaunder and Candace To chaumber *token* her *trace*, (ME2: CMALISAU, I 422)

2.4.4. REDRESS

CPs with *bote*, *discipline*, *penaunce*, *shrift* or *right*, as in (184) below, enter into this category.

- (26) Bute ðu *neme riht* of ðe seluen of ðe misdades ðe ðu mis–dest, mid fasten, oððer mid wake. (ME1: CMVICES1, 125)

2.4.5. AGREEMENT

This group includes combinations with *appointment*, *treue*, *accord*, *agrement* or *forme*, shown in the following sample:

- (27) So þat þer was bituene hom . god *fourme inome* . Hou sir edward mi...te best . out of warde come. (ME2: CMROBGLO, 756)

2.5. YEVEN—CPS

Most *yeven*—CPs in our data belong to the following semantic classes:

2.5.1. ENDEARMENT

Aid, benisoun, blessinge, grace, greting, hereword, love, merci, ore, pardoun, queming, thanking, thanks, and comfort and delite, which occur in (28) below, combine with *yeven* in our data.

- (28) [^20.^] That is, he [P383 *gafe* thaim *comforte* and *delite* in his worde. and swa he toke thaim fra corrupcioun of thoght. that has na sauoure in swete thyng. and of this. (ME4: CMROLLPS, 383—384)

2.5.2. SPEECH

Answer, answering, grone, hete, malisoun, song, voice, warning, word, or speche, as in (29) below, belong to this category.

- (29) he said, "nai, nai goddote, Moght i not be sua light o fote." Wit þis *gaue* ysaac a *grane*. (ME3: CMCURSOR, 220)

2.5.3. OFFENSIVE ACTION

With *yeven*, deverbals in this subgroup express the action of striking a blow (cf. Akimoto 1990: 869) as is the case with *buffet*, *clout*, *deth*, *stroke*, *tripet* or *dint*, in (30) below.

- (30) So harde *dent* he hire ...*af*, þe brein cleuede on is staf. (ME2: CMBEVIS, 81)

Nouns such as *accusing*, *bale* or *mischaunce* also belong to this category.

2.5.4. MENTAL ACTION

The units in this subgroup may express opinion, as is the case of *yeven assent* in (31) below, belief, as in *yeven truth* in (32) or attention, as in *yeven force* in (33):

- (31) The king therto *yaf* his *assent*, Demetrius was put in hold, Wherof that Perseus was bold. (ME3: CMGOWER, I 175)

(32) Alswa in þis commandemente es forbodun to *gyffe trouthe* till socerye or till dyuynyng... by sternys, or by dremys, or by any swylke thynges. (ME4: CMROLLTR, 10)

(33) ...yf þou forgete or ouersyttes Tyme of housel, þat þou weyl wytes, lytel *fors* of hym þou *zyues*, þou louest hym nat þat þou by lyues, And ouer alle þyng he loueþ þe beste, And þou ne wylt, a nyztys geste, lete hym herber yn hys hous. (ME3: CMHANSYN, 320)

Other deverbals in this subgroup include *attendaunce*, *credence*, *entent*, *feith*, *kep*, *regard* or *tent*.

2.5.5. JUDGEMENT

Jugement, *dom*, *right*, *sentence* or *veredict* belong to this subgroup. The multiple deverbals *dom* and *sentence* in (34) below exemplify this semantic subtype:

(34) (^Phariseus^) Herke sere prophete we all 3ow pray to *gyff* trewe *dom* and just *sentence* Vpon þis woman which þis same day In synfull advowtery hath don offense. (ME4: CMLUDUS, 206)

2.5.6. HOMAGE

Servise, *glorie*, *honour*, *laude*, *worship* or *truage*, as in (35) below, form *yeven*—CPs in ME:

(35) Horn makede Arnoldin þare King, after king Aylmare, Of al westernesne, For his meoknesse. þe king and his homage 3euen Arnoldin *trewage*. (ME2: CMHORN, 68)

3. DEVERBALS COMBINED WITH SEVERAL LIGHT VERBS

The previous classification of CPs has evinced that the same deverbals may be combined with more than one light verb and that the resulting CPs may be synonymous or different in meaning. We now concentrate on CPs formed with the same deverbals but different light verb in our data, to unveil systematic similarities and differences in meaning that are obtained between them.

Scholars disagree in their interpretation of the contribution that the verbal and the nominal element in the CP makes to the structure as a whole. In this sense, Live (1973: 31) has noted that

The first part is almost devoid of lexical meaning but embodies the associated grammatical information, being the bearer of the inflectional endings (thus indicating tense, number and person). The second part carries the lexical load, conveying verb—like meaning, although its form is not that of a verb;¹

The role played by the verbal element in the CP structure has been limited to that of a “copula” with a transitive value (Curme 1935: 69). Jespersen (1942: 117) calls it a “light verb”, and points out that it serves as a basis “to which the marks of person and tense are attached”, and Halliday (1967: 60) maintains that it only indicates “that there is a process involved”.

Likewise, Renský (1964: 290) emphasises the “relative semantic emptiness or total absence of the finite verb”, which Müller (1978: 9) qualifies as “inhaltsarmen”, or poor in content. Cattell (1984: 2) argues that the verbal element is “semantically very ‘light’[...]” and it is used “to mean very little more than a verbal action occurred [...]” and it does “only a little more than provide the verb—function and carry the signification of tense and number”.

Sciullo and Rosen (1990) seem to share this view and consider these verbs to be “(semi)light” or “empty”. Kytö (1999: 168), Brinton and Akimoto (1999a: 2), and Tanabe (1999: 98), follow Quirk *et al.* (1985: 750), who describe the verbal element as being one of “general meaning”, thus agreeing with Algeo (1995: 204).²

¹ Live (1973: 33) goes on to state that the light verb “bears considerable resemblance to an auxiliary. It is weakly stressed, while the deverbal gets secondary or even primary stress. Its characteristic lexical meaning is eroded [...]” Hiltunen (1999: 136), who follows Koskeniemi (1977), agrees with the identification between the verb in CPs and copular verbs.

² Algeo (1995: 204) affirms that the verb is semantically general while the object is semantically specific.

In contrast, the nominal element, referred to as “deverbal object” (Live 1973), “eventive object” (Quirk *et al.* 1985: 750),¹ or “agentive object” (Matsumoto 1999: 60), is thought to be “the really important idea [...]” (Jespersen 1942: 117), and so “the action is spelt out [...]” in it (Cattell 1984: 2), and it carries the bulk of the meaning (Hiltunen 1999: 136).

Although the commonest belief is that the semantic load of the combination falls on the nominal object while the verb is practically devoid of meaning, some scholars are of a different opinion. Wierzbicka (1982: 759)² and Dixon (1991: 340, 346—354)³ emphasise the semantic contribution of the CP to the sentence as a whole and Stein (1991: 15) rejects “the idea of *have*, *give*, *take* being mere ‘connectives’ or ‘light’ verbs. [...] Each of the verbs *have*, *give*, *take*, etc. brings its specific meaning to the particular construction [...]”

In this sense, the perusal of our data has revealed that, even though it is true that some stylistic or emphatic meaning difference may be involved, pairs consisting of the same deverbals but different light verb are often synonymous. This is the case with combinations of *maken* and *taken* with nouns from the semantic category *agreement*, such as *maken treue* and *taken treue*⁴ in (36) and (37) below:

(36) it ys expressly ageinis the *trieux* and appointment *made* &
take betwix (youre Rea)mes landes and subgiettes of the oon
parties. (ME4: CMDOCU4, 268)

(37) þis 3ere, aboute seynt Donstones day and feste, Edward kyng
of Engelond *toke trewes* wiþ þe kyng of Fraunce, in hope of pees.
(ME3: CMPOLYCH, VIII 351)

¹ Quirk *et al.* (1985: 750) refer to it as *eventive object*. It “is semantically an extension of the verb and bears the major part of the meaning”. Algeo (1995: 204) and Kytö (1999: 168) follow Quirk *et al.* (1985).

² Wierzbicka (1982: 759) maintains that “the have a V construction is agentive, experiencer—oriented, antidurative, atelic, and reiterative”.

³ According to Dixon (1991: 340) “each of HAVE A, GIVE A and TAKE A adds a special semantic element to the basic sentence”.

⁴ *MED treue* 6. Peace, amity, accord; used esp. of relations between God and man; a covenant; an accommodation, a settlement; also, a reconciliation; taken (maken).

Synonymous CPs result from deverbals denoting mental actions, such as *attendaunce*¹ combined with *taken* and *yeven*, or *force*² in combination with *maken*, *taken* or *yeven*, as in (38), (39) and (40) below:

(38) I *take* no *force* though I have both theire hedis: for he slew my brothir, a good knyght and a trew. (ME4: CMMALORY, 48)

(39) Sche, takyng lityl heed of her wordys, let it passyn forth as sche had *mad* no *fors* tyl he wolde comyn & preyin for grace hys—self. (ME4: CMKEMPE, I 222)

(40) (^New Gyse.^) I *gyff* no *force*, by Sent Tanne! (^Nowadays.^) Leppe about lyuely! þou art a wyght man. (ME4: CMMANKIN, 156)

The same is true with other deverbals, such as *repentaunce*³ in combination with *haven* and *taken*, or *taken* and *yeven* combined with *kep*⁴ or, as illustrated in (41) and (42) below, with *tent*:⁵

(41) The fooles þat faithe is fallen fra *Take tente* to me now, or ye ga. (ME4: CMYORK, 69)

(42) Y rede 3ow alle, 3eueþ gode *tent*, whederward þat Pers ys went. (ME3: CMHANSYN, 192)

Verbal actions may be expressed by CPs formed with different light verbs. *Don preier* and *maken preier*,⁶ are synonymous expressions, as is the case with *maken answeere* and *yeven answeere*, in (43) and (44):

(43) Not wolnyng other wise yanne as before trete ner conclude / but yf yay haue other in commandement from yaire souueraines /

¹ *MED attendaunce* 1(a) The act of paying attention, concentrating, or devoting oneself; maken, taken, yeven.

² *MED force* 10b don (haven, maken, taken, yeven), to pay attention to (something).

³ *MED repentaunce* (a) Repentance, penitence, sorrow for sin or wrongdoing; contrition; also person.; ben in (of), haven (taken).

⁴ *MED kep* 1(a); taken (nimen, yeven), to take notice, take heed;(b) yeven, keep track of (sth.); 2(b) yeven to (unto), to be concerned about (sth.), have concern for, bother about. 3(a) yeven on, protect (sth.).

⁵ *MED tent(e* 2, 1(a); taken (nimen, yeven), to take notice, take heed;(b) yeven, keep track of (sth.); 2(b) yeven to (unto), to be concerned about (sth.), have concern for, bother about. 3(a) yeven on, protect (sth.);

⁶ *MED preier* 2a(e) maken (don, bidden, seien), to say (one's) prayer(s or devotions; pray; holden preieres upon, senden preieres on, say prayers over (a sacrificial animal); *MED answeere* 1 A reply to an inquiry or request; maken, yeven (ayain), to reply, give an explanation;

The *answar* may be wel *maad* yat til yai be ful thorough wiy vs / yat yay shal no thyng haue but were. (ME3: CMOFFIC3, 121)

- (44) Butt iff þatt Drihhtin be wiþþ himm All opennlike onn erþe. & ure Laferrd Jesu Crist Himm 3aff anndswere & se33de. (ME1: CMORM, II 225)

Actions which fall into the semantic category *homage*,¹ such as *don honour* and *maken honour* or *don homage* in (45) and *maken homage* in (46) below, provide further examples of synonymous CPs:

- (45) [{}HOMAGE{}] Whan a freman schall *do* his *homage* to his chef lord þat he halt of his chef tenement, he schal holden his handys togedyr. (ME4: CMREYNES, 145)

- (46) Certys he dede grete outrage, To *make* þe deuyl so moche *omage*. (ME3: CMHANSYN, 8)

In the semantic category *redress*, *don amendes* and *maken amendes*, as in (47) and (48) below, or combinations of the deverbal *shrift* with the light verbs *don*, *maken* and *taken* in (49), (50) and (51), are further examples of semantically equivalent CPs²

- (47) by men of Cipres. þerfore kyng Richard chasede þe kyng of |PVIII,109 þe lond, þat wolde nouȝt *doo amendes*, from citee to citee, for to þe kyng 3alde hym to kyng Richard. (ME3: CMPOLYCH, VIII 108—109)

- (48) he haue restored of alle maner |P57 dettes touching þe breþerhede, & *make amendes* of his trespas, vp þe ordinance of þe foure wardeyns. (ME3: CMDOCU3, 56—57)

¹ *MED homage* 2 In phrases: (a) *beren* (*don*, *maken*, *yelden*, *yeven*), to acknowledge one's allegiance (to sb.), pay homage; also fig. *MED honour* 1(b) *beren* (*don*), *beren* (*don*, *yelden*, *yeven*) to, *yeven* unto, to honor (sb. or sth.); *don*, perform (one's) devotions, worship.

² *MED amendes* 1 (a) Reparation, retribution, amends (as for an offense or crime, or for harm done); *don*, *maken*, *paien*, make amends, compensate; — often with of phrase. *MED shrift* 1 a) Confession to a priest, auricular confession; also person; in (o, of, with) mouth; wind, oral confession; soth (sothfast, verrei); haven on herte, to intend to confess; *maken o* (of) mouth; Penance imposed by the priest after confession; chiefly in phr. as to take, *nim shrift*; to do shrift; to give shrift. *MED shrift* 2(a) An instance or act of confession to a priest; to his, at his confession; (b) *don* (reheresen, sheuen, tellen), to make (one's) confession; [...] *maken*, make (one's) confession; also, make (one's) confession (to God); *MED nimen* 7b *nim shrift*, confess one's sins, receive penance from a confessor, do penance for sin.

- (49) Eft we findeð on ða hali writt ðat ðe cniht ðe weapne berð unlawliche, ne chapmann ðe beið and selð mid unri[^{h}]twisnesse, ne mužen neure soðe *scrifte don*, ðare [^{h}]wile ðe hie ðese wike befeleð. (ME1: CMVICES1, 121)
- (50) *Schrift* schal beon ofte i *maket*. for þi is i þe sawter. (ME1: CMANCRE, 165)
- (51) '*Nimeð scrifte* of ʒewer sennes, hit neiheð heuene riche'. (ME1: CMVICES1, 121)

Haven, *maken* and *yeven* may be combined with various deverbals to express actions included in the group *judgement*. This is the case with structures such as or *dom*¹ with *yeven* and *maken*, or *maken sute*² and *haven sute* in (52) and (53) below. The resulting CPs are once again equivalent in meaning:

- (52) and I can nought beleue þat in þis cas þe same John myght by yowr lawe any swich *sute haue* ageyn me as yowr lettre specifieth. (ME4: CMOFFIC4, 6)
- (53) þe entent of þe seyd Walter in a *sute* þat he *made* ageyn þe seyd Priour of a voweson of þe chyrche of Sprouston (ME4: CMOFFIC4, 12)

Synonymous structures with *don* and *yeven* and the same deverbals from the category *endearment* have been recorded. By means of example, see *don* and *yeven* combined with *grace*³ in (54) and (55) below:

- (54) For as bi þe lawes of emperoures, whan a gret lord haþ no child, he may chese a pore mannes sone, ʒif he wole, and make of hym his eir bi adopcioun, þat is to seye bi auowerie, so þat men holdeþ it as for his sone and auowed to bere his heritage. þis *grace dide* vs God þe fadre, nouȝt for oure deseruyng, as seynt Poule seiþ. (ME4: CMVICES4, 100)
- (55) he schal haue eueri wyke of þe box to his sustinance xiiij d, til god ʒiue hym *grace* of recouerance, he to preye & bidde for alle breperen & alle cristne. (ME3: CMDOCU3, 54)

¹ *MED dom* 2 (a) A judicial decision, a sentence at law; right, wrangwis; *yeven* (*maken*), to pass sentence.

² *MED sute* 6aLaw. (a) A lawsuit; a legal action undertaken to redress a wrong; *haven* (*taken*) *ayen*, *taken ayenes*, to bring a lawsuit against (*sb.*); *maken* (*seuen*), bring a lawsuit.

³ *MED grace* 4(c) *don*, *yeven to*, to grant (*sb.*) a favor, do a favor.

Synonymity between pairs of CPs with the same deverbal but different light verb in the subgroup labelled *fight*¹ is attested by structures such as *don bataille*, *yeven bataille* and *taken bataille*, or, as exemplified in (56) and (57) below, *haven werre* and *maken werre*:

(56) Afftir the deth of Uther regned Arthure, hys son, which *had* grete *warre* in hys dayes for to gete all Inglonde into hys honde.
(ME4: CMMALORY, 44)

(57) Alle so hyt ys accordyd that hangyng thys presentte trefte and appoyntement noo maner of *warre* shalle be *made* by–twyne hem ande the oste of oure soverayne lorde the Kyng of Inglonde.
(ME4: CMGREGOR, 120)

Differences in meaning between combinations consisting of the same deverbal but different light verb are often due to the fact that different semantic connotations of the deverbal involved intervene in each combination. This is the case with pairs such as *haven memorie*² vs. *maken memorie*³ or *don bote*⁴ vs. *taken bote*,⁵ exemplified in (58) through (61) below:

(58) Worschypfull souerence, I haue wretyn here The gloryuse remembrance of my nobyll condycyon. To *haue* remos and *memory* of mysylff þus wretyn yt ys, To defende me from all superstycyus charmys. (ME4: CMMANKIN, 164)

(59) For euery messe *makeþ memorye* Of soules þat are yn purgatorye. (ME3: CMHANSYN, 321)

¹ *MED werre* 1b d *haven werre*(s), wage war(s); holden, engage in warfare, carry on war; *maintenen werre*(s), carry on or manage a war (wars) [see also *maintenen* v. 6.(b)]; also, pay for or sustain a war; *maken* (a), *usen*, make war, wage (a) war. *MED bataille* 1(b); (b) *don* (fongen, taken), engage in combat; [...] 2a(a) *yeven* a, engage (an enemy). *MED taken* 37b(a) join battle, engage in combat, make war.

² *MED memorie* 2(a) Memory or recollection (of sb. or sth.); awareness or consciousness (of sb. or sth.); state of mind [quot.: Orch.Syon]; [...] (c) *haven*, to remember (sth.); intend (to do sth.).

³ *MED memorie* (a) A memorial; deed, edifice, etc., in commemoration of somebody or something; also, keepsake, commemorative gift or token [quot.: ?a1439]; reminder [quot.: ?c1425]; for (a, the), in, into the, as a memorial (to sb. or sth.), in memory or commemoration (of sb. or sth.); *maken* of, to commemorate (sb. or sth.).

⁴ *MED niman* 7(b) to make amends for one's sin.

⁵ *MED bote* 1(a) *don*, do (sb.) good, aid, be profitable to.

(60) hit falleþ þe kyng of fraunce bittrore þen þe sote, bote he þe rapere þer-of welle *do bote*, wel sore hit shal hym rewe. (ME2: CMPOEMH, 13)

(61) and for þene mon þet hit er ahte. and þaȝet *nime bote* to criste. (ME1: CMLAMBET, 31)

More revealing seem the differences that are obtained between combinations with certain nouns grouped under the headings *endearment*, *offensive action* and *feeling*. The same deverbal combined with *don* or *yeven* tends to express an action, whether positive or negative, hostile or beneficial, performed by an agentive subject, and whose recipient is different from its agent, while when combined with *haven* or *taken*, the subject tends to be an experiencer subject.¹

The above made remark is supported by pairs such as *haven comfort* and *yeven comfort*² in (62) and (63) below, or *don despite* and *haven despite*³ in (64) and (65):

(62) yf þu woldist verily trostyn in me & no-þyng dowyntyn, þu maist *han gret comfort* in þi-self & mythist comfortyn al thy felaschep wher ȝe ben now alle in gret drede & heuynes. (ME4: CMKEMPE, I 230)

(63) Seint Eadmund him ȝaf *confort*: ant tolde him ȝwat it were. (ME2: CMSELEG, 437)

(64) Than had the kyng and all the barownes grete mervayle that Balyne had done that aventure; many knyghtes *had grete despite* at hym. (ME4: CMMALORY, 47)

(65) Daud þan said, "drichtin for-bede þat þou suld thinc to do suilk a dede, Or euer him *do despit* or scam, þat drichtin smerld has in his nam". (ME3: CMCURSOR, 446)

¹ Note, however, that combinations of *don* and *taken* with *vengeance*, *MED vengeance* 1(d) taken (don, nimen, yeven), exact retribution, carry out revenge, are synonymous.

² *MED comfort* (a) Pleasure, delight, gratification; cacchen, haven, enjoy (sth.); don, amuse (sb.).

³ *MED despite* 3 An act designed to humiliate, insult, or harm someone; humiliation, insult, injury, outrage, or an instance of it; don, to humiliate, insult, or injure (sb.), disparage (sth.), commit an outrage. 4 (a) Injured feeling, resentment, grudging; haven in, haven of (at), holden of, to feel resentful about, bear a grudge against.

Combinations of *sorwe*¹ with *don*, *haven*, *maken* and *taken* occur in (66) through (69) below:

(66) And þer he *dyde* myche *sowrrov* for he myȝt not synke. (ME4: CMSIEGE, 91)

(67) Sire, i schal al one, Wiþute more ymone, Wiþ mi swerd wel eþe Bringe hem þre to deþe." þe kyng aros a moreȝe, þat *hadde* muchel *sorȝe*. (ME2: CMHORN, 38)

(68) On boþe half þe mayne gentes Wen[{n{]ten hom to her tentes, And token rest al forto amorowe, *Makande* wel grete *sorowe* For her lordes, for her ken, |PI,223 þat layen yslawe in þe fen. (ME2: CMALISAU, I 222—223)

(69) And as the booke seyth, whan sir Launcelot was departed she *toke* suche *sorow* that she deyde within a fourtenyte. (ME4: CMMALORY, 204)

The preceding examples show that while the combination with *maken* expresses an action in the category *speech*, the structure with *don* falls into the field of *hostile actions*. The compounds with *haven* and *taken* denote *feelings* and *emotions*.

4. CONCLUSION

The analysis of the semantics of CPs has exposed the most salient semantic contents expressed by CPs in ME. The different light verbs have been seen to favour combinations from certain semantic fields, which hints at the verb's capability to impose restrictions on the range of nouns with which it may combine (cf. Akimoto 1990; Hiltunen 1999: 146). In addition, our survey has evinced the semantic weakness of the light verbs studied, as attested by a number of synonymous combinations of the same deverbal with different verbal elements. Finally, our enquiry has brought to light the existence of predictable differences in meaning between CPs consisting of the same light verb and different deverbal noun.

¹ **MED** *sorwe* 1(d) an expression of sorrow, lamentation, weeping; [...] lamentation; *maken*, to lament, mourn. 1(g) *haven* (up, to be (very) sad, suffer (great) grief; [...] *nimen* (taken), become sad, be sad. 2(d) (d) harm, damage, injury; also, an injury; *don* (*maken*), to do harm, cause trouble.

In our opinion, those cases of synonymous CPs with the same object but which differ in their verbal element evince the decrease in the lexical meaning of the verbal predicate. It is true that the verb tends to carry a general actional meaning but it may be the case the lexical load provided by the verbal element may be a heavier or lighter one depending on each particular combination. Therefore, there is likely to be a gradient in the semantic load of the verbal elements of CPs.¹

The following Table visually summarises the semantic categories which prevail in our data. The semantic categories are listed in order of decreasing frequency in the global corpus. Numbered cells indicate semantic categories which predominate with each light verb. The number in the cells represents the order of frequency, from highest to lowest, with which they appear with a given light verb.

TABLE 1: CPS: SEMANTIC CLASSIFICATION

	DON	<i>HAVEN</i>	<i>MAKEN</i>	<i>TAKEN</i>	<i>YEVEN</i>
FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS	—	1	—	2	—
OFFENSIVE ACTION	1	—	8	—	2
MENTAL ACTION	—	2	7	1	3
SPEECH	—	4	1	—	4
REDRESS	2	—	4	3	—
JUDGEMENT	—	—	3	—	5
ENDEARMENT	3	—	—	—	1
MOTION	—	3	6	4	—

¹ Algeo (1995: 206) is of the opinion that “semantic generality or specificity is, to be sure, a continuum. Yet it is possible to recognize degrees along that cline”.

AGREEMENT	—	—	2	5	—
HOMAGE	4	—	—	—	6
TRADE	—	—	5	—	—

Teresa Moralejo Gárate
University of Murcia

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* † *

EXPECTATION VS. EXPERIENCE:
ENCOUNTERING THE SARACEN OTHER
IN MIDDLE ENGLISH ROMANCE

The representation of the Saracen in medieval literature is an issue that has attracted a great deal of attention from literary scholars. Early interest concentrated upon the representation, or perhaps more correctly the misrepresentation, of Islamic culture within the medieval west. Dorothee Metlitzki's seminal 1977 study *The Matter of Araby in Medieval England* provides a useful summary of the ways in which images of the Saracens were constructed in Middle English. By the time of romances such as *Beues of Hamtoun* and *The Sowdone of Babylone* the Saracen can be seen to have been most often represented in one of four ways: 'the enamored Muslim princess; the converted Saracen; the defeated emir or sultan; and the archetypal Saracen giant.'¹

In recent years critical attention has increasingly concentrated upon developing an understanding of the function of the Saracen within the process of medieval identity formation. As the antithesis of the Christian West, the image of the Saracen provides a powerful racial, cultural and religious Other during the later Middle Ages. Making use of psychoanalytic theory, scholars such as Jeffrey Jerome Cohen read medieval images of the Saracen as acting to simplify the inherent complexities of individual and national identity.² By adhering to the binary paradigm of Christian as good and Saracen as evil, the oppositional model of identity formation produces a

¹ Metlitzki, D. 1977. *The Matter of Araby in Medieval England*. Yale University Press, New Haven: 161. Metlitzki provides a useful discussion and summary of the four stock Saracens: 160 – 197.

² Cohen, J.J. 2000. *Of Giants: Sex, Monsters, and the Middle Ages*. Minnesota University Press, Minneapolis: 132 – 3.

construction of identity that, while reductive, allows a clearer and less problematic definition of self and nation.

However, not all representations of the Saracen are as uncomplicated as this paradigm suggests. This paper investigates the construction of the Saracen Other in two romances, the Middle English *Guy of Warwick* and *Beues of Hamtoun*.¹ These two narratives present constructions of the Saracen Other that bear useful comparison, highlighting both the mechanisms of difference and the subjective nature of difference itself. By examining how these romances represent the dissimilarity of East and West I hope to shed some light upon the processes that are involved in their construction of difference.

Dorothee Metlitzki, commenting upon the depiction of the Arab world in *Beues of Hamtoun*, concludes that: ‘*Sir Beues* tells us what the average Englishman in hall and marketplace knew or imagined about the Saracens.’² By traveling into the lands of the East, Beues and similar heroes such as Guy of Warwick are depicted as encountering one of the constituent elements in the process of identity formation – the Other. This experiencing of the racial and religious Other provides for the heroes themselves, and vicariously for their audiences, an important element in the construction of identity. Through the medium of the romance, the cultural process of otherness is given shape in the form of the Saracen world, enabling both the literary hero and the literate audience to ‘encounter’ the Other.

The cross-cultural experience as represented in the romance of *Guy of Warwick* produces what one might imagine to be an image typical of

¹ This paper deals expressly with the Middle English versions of the *Beues* and *Guy* narratives, not their Anglo-Norman antecedents. As such it represents a synchronic as opposed to a diachronic study of these romances. This approach privileges the concerns of the audience of these texts over those of their ‘authors’, a key tenet of the reception theory approach to literature. By examining the Middle English versions of these romances as texts in their own right, regardless of their degree of indebtedness to their Anglo-Norman antecedents, we can move closer to an understanding of these texts as they may have been read and understood by their contemporary audiences. Cf. Cohen: 91.

² Metlitzki: 120.

medieval Orientalism.¹ In a manner analogous to the historical crusader experience, the Islamic world is characterized by hostile territorial ambition. Making use of traditional romance generic conventions such as heathen Sultans, treacherous stewards, wrongly imprisoned knights and devilish giants, the Saracen Other is constructed through contrasting archetypes of religion, honour and physical appearance.

Guy's first encounter with the Saracen world occurs after he has already established his reputation as a renowned knight. Guy's early career, prompted largely by his desire to win the heart of Felice, the Earl of Warwick's daughter, is spent in tournaments in Normandy, Spain, and Germany, and in numerous wars in Italy and elsewhere on the continent.² While at the Emperor Reyner's court in Germany, Guy and his companion Herhaud encounter foreign merchants arrived from the east and bearing momentous news. The merchants tell of the dire need of Ernis, Emperor of Constantinople, who is besieged by a Saracen host led by the Sultan of Coyne. This second-hand report of the Saracen Other provokes the desire to confront it. Equipped by the Emperor with a company of one hundred German knights, the two Englishmen travel to Constantinople and put themselves at Ernis's command. From the very start, this *aventure* has a markedly different tone to those that Guy has undertaken thus far. Guy wishes to aid the Emperor against the Sultan's forces, who *pat lond destrud & men aqueld, / & cristendom pai han michel afeld* (2853 – 4). Here Guy's motive seems to be one of Christian solidarity, although Herhaud does add the corollary: *y graunt it be / Miche worpschipe it worþ to þe* (2855 – 6).

Once in Constantinople, Guy is recognized by the Emperor as a powerful ally, and is soon thrown into battle against the Sultan's forces. It is here that Guy encounters for the first time the Saracen Other – in the person of the

¹ In this paper I will be referring to the fourteenth-century Middle English version of the *Guy of Warwick* narrative, as found in the Auchinleck MS (MS Advocates 19.2.1). Zupitza, J. 1883 – 91. *Guy of Warwick*. [EETS] Kegan Paul, London.

² Felice, a particularly demanding romance *objet d'amour*, repeatedly rejects Guy's advances, compelling him to undertake increasingly dangerous and time-consuming journeys to win her love. It is ironic then, that when she does finally agree to marry Guy, he has reached a stage in his life when his mind has begun to turn to more spiritual matters, and he soon leaves her to pursue a spiritual quest as a pilgrim.

Sultan's nephew, *þe amiral Costdram* (2905). This initial image of a Saracen warrior is presented in surprisingly complimentary terms:

So strong he is, & of so gret miȝt,
In world y wene no better kniȝt;
For þer nis man no kniȝt non
þat wiþ wretþe dar loken him on.
His armes alle avenimed beþ:
þat venim is strong so þe deþ:
In þis world nis man þat he take miȝt
þat he ne schuld dye anon riȝt.
(*Guy of Warwick*, 2907 – 14).

Costdram is a knight of great strength, without peer, upon whom other men fear to look. However, the envenomed nature of Costdram's weapons mark him out as Other, casting doubt upon his honour and differentiating him from Christian knights such as Guy, to whom the use of such weapons is both unknown and unthinkable. Costdram here represents an image of a knightly Other, *unheimlich* in comparison with the normative values of Guy's own Western conception of knighthood. Costdram's role as a *doppelgänger* figure in relation to Guy is emphasized by the way in which the battle is structured. Each of Guy's knights are involved in individual combats within the wider melee, pairing off with named opponents – Herhaud slays the King of Turkey (2943), the French knight Tebaud kills Helmadan (2949), while the German Gauter strikes down Redmadan (2955). This initial encounter with the Saracen Other establishes a comparative paradigm for Guy's subsequent experiences.

While Guy and his knights see off this first assault with some ease, the Sultan's host, and the Saracen Other that it represents, is not so easily dealt with. They are soon once more at the gates of the city. After seeing his first sortie beaten off, the Sultan personally leads the next attack, one that leads him into direct conflict with Guy. The Sultan strikes first, after which the following exchange occurs:

Wiþ gret hete he smot to Gij,
Opon his helme, sikerly,
þat he feld þat o quarter.
To Gij he seyde a bismer:

‘Y-sestow, lord? bi Apolin,
Pat was a strok of a Sarrazin!’
Gij to þe soudan smot þo,
His helme no was him worþ a slo:
Resares euen forþ þe breyn
Helme & flesse he carf wiþ meyn.
þan he seyð to him a bismar:
‘Mahoun halp þe litel þer!
Bodi & soule no nouȝt þer-of
No is nouȝt worþ a lekes clof.
Hou so it go of mi wounde,
Of Mahoun þou hast litel help y-founde.
Er þou scorndest me,
Of mi wounde þou madest þi gle:
Leche gode schal ich haue,
Pat mi wounde schal to hele drawe;
þou hast a croun schauen to þe bon;
Tomorwe þou miȝt sing anon.
Wele þou þouȝtest to ben a prest,
When þou of swiche a bischop order berst!’
Now biginneþ þat gret fiȝt
(*Guy of Warwick*, 3631 – 55)

The Sultan exalts in his blow: *bi Apolin*, / *Pat was a strok of a Sarrazin!* However, Guy returns the buffet with some interest, slicing through the Sultan’s helmet and across the top of his scalp. Guy points out that Mahoun has been of little help to the Sultan, and interprets this lack of martial aid as a sign of the inferiority of the Saracen religion, which, in Guy’s opinion *is nouȝt worþ a lekes clof*.¹ The Sultan’s lack of fortune with his blow to Guy’s helmet is understood by Guy as representing the weakness of the Saracen faith, while Guy’s all-together more effective blow is given Christian meaning through Guy’s tonsorial taunt: *þou hast a croun schauen to þe bon*; / *Tomorwe þou miȝt sing anon*. / *Wele þou þouȝtest to ben a prest*. Guy’s martial exegesis interprets the difference between the two sword-blows as demonstrating the relative worth of the Christian and Saracen faiths.

¹ Mahoun (Mohammed), along with Apolin and Ternagaunt, is one of the unholy trinity of deities commonly ascribed to Islam during the Middle Ages.

This demonstration of Christianity's superiority undermines the Sultan's belief in his gods, and this leads to a remarkable renunciation of the Saracen triumvirate. After retreating injured from the battle, the Sultan is approached by an *amiral* who reports their battlefield losses. The *amiral* tells him that due to their misfortune, his troops have turned away from their gods: *Our godes ous hateþ, for soþe to sigge* (3678). The Sultan has the idols of their gods brought before him, and publicly berates them:

Fy, fy,' he seyð, 'on [þe], Apolin!
Pou schalt haue wel iuel fin,
& þou, Ternagaunt, also:
Michel schame schal com 3ou to;
& þou, Mahoun, her alder lord,
Pou nart nou3t worþ a tord!
(*Guy of Warwick*, 3699 – 704).

He then physically attacks the idols, breaking them to pieces with a stave.¹ This internal crisis of faith corresponds with the breaking of the Saracen lines, and they retreat from Constantinople once more.

Amidst the warfare, Guy also finds time to become embroiled in the subterfuges of the Emperor's steward, Morgadour. After repeated attempts to incriminate Guy in relation to the Emperor's daughter Clarice, the treacherous steward manipulates Guy into volunteering for the near-suicidal task of acting as an envoy to the Sultan.² Upon arriving at the Saracen camp, Guy enters the Sultan's pavilion and addresses the sultan with the following speech:

Pan seyð Gij þe Englisse,
'Vnderstond to mi speche:

¹ This is a common motif that is also found in, amongst others, the early-fourteenth-century Middle English *Otuel and Roland*, where the Saracen King Garcy destroys his own idols after his champion Clarel is defeated by Otuel. O'Sullivan, M. 1935. *Otuel and Roland*. [EETS] Oxford University Press, Oxford.

² The nature of Constantinople itself, as a liminal space between Orient and Occident, is particularly interesting with regards to the history of East-West contact in the Middle Ages. As the site of cultural hybridity, where cultural norms such as honour are mutable, the city operates as both the object of violent contest and the location of cultural contact.

Bilke lord þat woneþ an heye,
þat al þing walt fer & neye,
& in þe rode lete him pini,
Al cristen men to saui,
& in þe se made þe sturioun,
So 3if 3ou alle his malisoun,
& alle þilk þat ich here se,
þat mis-bileued men be;
& þe at þe first, sir soudan,
Cristes wreche þe come opan!
Yuel fure breninde fast þe opon,
& cleue þi brest doun to þi ton!
For icham Gij 3e mow wel se,
Yuel mot 3e alle y-the!
Vnder-stond, treitour, mi resoun:
Haue þou Cristes malisoun,
& alle þilke forþ mitt te,
þat ich her about þe se.
þe heye god þat is ful of miyt
Binim 3ou 3our limes & 3our siȝt!
Bi me þe sent word þemperour Garioun,
þat miȝti men haþ in his bandoun,
burch wham þou art y-brouȝt to schond,
& hoteþ þe wende out of his lond.
(*Guy of Warwick*, 3889 – 914).

Guy then proposes that the Saracens find themselves a champion to fight him, and that this single combat will determine who shall rule the land.¹ This offer is rebuffed after Sultan discovers the envoy to be none other than Guy, the slayer of the Sultan's nephew Costdram, and the Sultan orders him to be seized and thrown into his dungeon. Guy responds to this by decapitating the Sultan and fleeing the camp, pursued by a host of Saracens.

Guy's first encounter with the Saracen Other constructs a cultural opposition that leaves no room for compromise or co-existence.² His speech to the

¹ A proposal that prefigures Guy's most memorable moment – his legendary final combat with the giant Danish champion Colbrond at Winchester.

² This is in contrast to a speech made in similar circumstances by Beues of Hamtoun, which will be discussed later in this paper.

Sultan is notable for the uncompromising attitude of religious intolerance towards the Saracens, an attitude that is characteristic of the whole romance. Guy defines himself as one of the *cristen men*, who have God's grace, in opposition to the *mis-bileued* Saracens, highlighting the binary nature of difference in this romance's construction of the Saracen Other.

Guy's second major encounter with the East takes place after he has returned home to England and married his liege's daughter Felice. Once he has won the hand of his lady, Guy comes to the realization that all his great deeds thus far in his life have been for temporal ends. Seized by a spiritual passion, Guy determines to leave his newly won bride and wander the world as a pilgrim doing the Lord's work: *Y schal walk for mi sinne / Barfot bi doun & dale. / Pat ich haue wiþ mi bodi wrouzt / Wiþ mi bodi it schal be bouzt, / To bote me of þat bale* (29: 8 – 12).

Guy travels to Jerusalem and Bethlehem, before eventually arriving in Antioch, where he encounters Jonas, the Christian Earl of Durras. Jonas tells him a long tale of misfortune, which has resulted in Jonas being sent to search for Guy in order for him to champion the Saracen king Triamour in a judicial combat.¹ Guy, moved by Jonas's claims that King Triamour will kill his sons if Jonas fails to find Guy, keeps his identity hidden but offers to fight in Guy's stead. The two then set out for Alexandria to face the combat and to save Jonas's sons from the axe.

This judicial combat, against the Sultan's giant champion Amoraunt, highlights two important elements of the Saracen Other: Gigantism and Honour. The first of these, the trope of the Saracen giant, is evident in the initial description of Amoraunt:

Pan dede he com forþ a Sarrazine,

¹ A long and complicated tale, in which Jonas and his sons defend Jerusalem from the Saracens, but then make the fatal mistake of following them into their own lands where they are captured by the Saracen King Triamour. Sometime later, Triamour's son inadvertently slays the Sultan of Alexandria's son following an argument over a game of chess, which leads to Triamour's accusation by the Sultan and his committal to the judicial duel. Triamour, faced with the prospect of fighting Amoraunt, seeks the advice of his Christian prisoners who inform him of the renown of Guy and Heraud, which leads to the King offering Jonas his freedom if he can find Guy.

Haue he Cristes curs & mine
Wiþ boke & eke wiþ belle.
Out of Egypt he was y-come,
Michel & griselich was þat gome
Wiþ ani god man to duelle.
He is so michel & vnrede,
Of his siȝt a man may drede,
Wiþ tong as y þe telle.
As blac he is as brodes brend:
He semes as it were a fende,
þat comen were out of helle.

(*Guy of Warwick*, 62: 1 – 12).

The excess of the Saracen Other, previously alluded to in Guy's experiences at Constantinople, is here manifested in the body of the giant Amoraunt. This avatar of bodily excess, the conquering of which is so important to the process of the physical and spiritual maturation of the Romance hero, combines the Other of the Giant with the Other of the Saracen, creating a potent synthesis of these two elements of identity formation.¹ The Saracen Giant embodies all those things that the Romance hero by necessity approaches, but must not become: he is *michel & unrede*, huge and uncontrolled – an image of unrestrained masculine power, which Western heroes such as Guy must seek to control and sublimate within chivalric codes of behavior and honour. This uncontrolled masculinity is given demonic form in the figure of the Saracen Giant, characterized by the blackness of the fiend, the Western archetypal construction of the uncontrolled nature of the African.

Guy's judicial combat with Amoraunt also provides an opportune moment to illustrate a third point of Saracen Otherness – the lack of chivalric honour possessed by the denizens of the East. After a long and fierce period of fighting, the giant Amoraunt is stricken by a great thirst and offers Guy the following bargain:

Ac lete me drink a litel wiȝt

¹ Much has been written on the role of Giants regarding identity formation, most recently and engagingly by Jeffrey Jerome Cohen in his study *Of Giants: Sex, Monsters, and the Middle Ages*.

For þi lordes loue ful of migt
þat þou louest wiþ wille,
& y þe hot bi mi lay,
3if þou haue ani þrest to-day,
þou shalt drink al þi fille.
(*Guy of Warwick*, 114: 7 – 12).

Guy, constrained by the chivalric code of honour, allows his opponent the time to refresh himself, and when Amoraunt has done so, their battle resumes. However, when in turn Guy requires water, Amoraunt reneges on his promise and replaces it with a conditional one: he will allow his opponent to drink only once he has revealed his name to him. Sorely oppressed by both the heat and his thirst, Guy declares his name and requests once more that the giant allow him to drink. Amoraunt, upon discovering that his foe is none other than the hated Guy, again refuses to allow his adversary to slake his thirst, and attacks him in the water when Guy attempts to drink without leave. The untrustworthy nature of the Saracen comes to the fore once more in the unequal exchange of drinks, and Guy's condemnation of the giant seems to characterize all those Saracens with whom he has experience:

‘Amoraunt,’ þan seyð Gij,
‘þou art ful fals, sikerly,
& ful-filt of tresoun.
No more wil y trust to þe
For no bihest þou hottest me:
þou art a fals glotoun.’
(*Guy of Warwick*, 130: 7 – 12).

Fals is one of the most damning condemnations used by Guy within the poem. Of the nine occurrences within the poem, eight are used to describe Guy's traitorous enemies, and it is fitting that Amoraunt's double falsehood receives two of these.¹

Guy of Warwick constructs the Saracen Other in a manner that provides a clear contrast between East and West. This representation is materialized in

¹ The ninth occurrence is reserved for condemnation of the Saracen trinity.

the form of Amoraunt, whose untrustworthy nature is exceeded only by the demonic origin of his grossly oversized body, and who represents a religion and culture that is worthy only of martial resistance and opposition. For Guy, and his audience, the Saracen Other is defined by its binary opposition to the West, and his encounters with this Other merely reinforce and illustrate the difference that is expected.

In contrast to this, *Beues of Hamtoun* presents a more complex image of the Saracen Other that in many ways questions the construction present in *Guy*. In this romance, similar to *Guy* in that it is again ostensibly set in the time of Anglo-Saxon England, Beues is exposed to the East when only a child, and in many ways becomes a type of cultural hybrid figure, lacking the preconceptions regarding the East that Guy exhibits. *Beues* problematizes the three points of difference that I have highlighted in *Guy of Warwick*: religion, honour, and physical appearance.

Beues's initial encounter with the Saracen Other occurs when he is sold by his mother's knights to merchants. He is taken over the sea to Armenia and arrives in the land of King Ermyn. The king, highly impressed by the well-built and beautiful child, asks him his name and story. Beues tells all, and the king, being widowed and with only his fair daughter Josian, offers to marry Beues to his daughter and make him the heir to the kingdom if he will convert to the worship of Apolyn. Beues declines however, due to his love of Christ. Beues's first experience of the Other is constructed in the form of a threatening conversion narrative, where the Christian Beues must withstand temptation and reaffirm his own Christian, and English, identity. However, Beues's Christian faith, once established, is permitted by King Ermyn, implying a degree of religious tolerance foreign to the East as constructed in the *Guy* narrative.

Despite having reaffirmed his faith in Christ, Beues has missed much of the Christian upbringing that constitutes Guy's character – a lack that is illustrated in his first experience of religious conflict. While out riding with the King's men, Beues is told by a Saracen knight that it is Christmas, which men in Beues's country make great bliss in, and that Beues should honour his God as the Saracen honours his own. Despite the Saracen knight's

framing of Christmas in terms of religious tolerance, the reference to the Christian holy day has an opposite effect on Beues:

Beues to þat Sarasin said:
‘Of Cristendom ȝit ichaue a-braid,
Ichaue seie on þis dai riȝt
Armed mani a gentil kniȝt,
Torneande riȝt in þe feld
With helmes briȝt and mani scheld;
And were ich also stiȝ in plas,
Ase euer Gii, me fader, was,
Ich wolde for me lordes loue,
þat sit hiȝ in heuene aboue,
Fiȝte wiȝ ȝow euerichon.
Er þan ich wolde hennes gon!’
(*Beues of Hamtoun*, 607 – 18).¹

Beues associates Christmas not with the mass or with religious observance, but rather with the tournaments that he remembers witnessing in his childhood.² This martial remembrance stirs the boastful youth to declare that he could defeat all fifty of Ermyn’s knights if he had the mind to, for the love of his God. The Saracen takes offense at Beues’s boasting, and mocks him in front of the other knights, who look to teach *þe ȝonge cristene hounde* (621) a lesson. Beues fights back and slays all fifty of Ermyn’s knights. Beues’s first fight is contrived through an opposition in religion, a point that is emphasized by its setting on Christmas day. Beues seeks to compensate for his lack of knowledge about Christianity through a bloody martial baptism. Denied the community of fellow Christians, his performance of the Christian faith is facilitated through the only means he has available to him – violent conflict with the religious Other. What makes this more remarkable is that it follows the Saracen knight’s demonstration of religious tolerance: *Anoure þe god, so i schel myn / Boþe Mahoun and*

¹ All quotations are from Kölbing, E. 1894. *The Romance of Sir Beves of Hamtoun*. [EETS] Kegan Paul, London.

² The practice of Christmas tournaments is also mentioned in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. ‘Þis kyng lay at Camylot vpon Krystmasse... / ...þer tournayed tulkes by tymeȝ ful mony, / Justed ful jolilé þise gentyle kniȝtes,’ ll. 37, 41 – 42. Tolkien, J. R. R. and E. V. Gordon, 2nd ed. Davis, N. 1967. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. Oxford University Press, Oxford: 2.

Apolyn! (605 – 606). It seems that for the audience of the fourteenth-century *Beues*, the only good Saracen is a dead Saracen. However, after this conventional beginning to the construction of the Saracen Other in *Beues*, things become less straightforward.

Beues, exposed from such an early age to religious tolerance from his Saracen hosts, seems willing to contemplate a reciprocal tolerance towards the Saracen religion. However, this tendency is never fully realized and leads to Beues exhibiting what amounts to at times an almost schizophrenic attitude towards the Saracens.

After being made a knight by King Ermyn, and having proved himself by slaying a notorious wild boar, Beues is implicated by the jealous royal chamberlain in a tryst with the King's daughter Josian. Unaware of Ermyn's displeasure, Beues agrees to carry a letter, in the manner of Hamlet, to the king's erstwhile enemy Brademond.¹ On arriving at Brademond's city of Damascus, Beues witnesses a number of Saracens leaving a mosque (*mameri*) after prayers. He is so incensed by this sight that he rushes into the mosque and slays the heathen priest. He then throws the mosque's idols into a nearby fen.² After this impulsive act of iconoclasm, Beues enters Brademond's hall and greets him thus:

‘God, þat made þis world al ronde
Be saue, sire king Brademond,
And ek alle þine fere,
þat i se now here,
And ȝif þat ilche blessing
Likeþ þe riȝt nobing,
Mahoun, þat is god þin,
Teruagaunt & Apolin,
Be blessi and diȝte
Be alle here miȝte!

(*Beues of Hamtoun*, 1373 – 82).

¹ However, unlike the Prince of Denmark, the naïve Beues declines the opportunity of reading the letter en route, once again exhibiting a misplaced trust in his Saracen hosts.

² Beues's iconoclastic act illustrates another common medieval misapprehension regarding Islam, which of course as a religion prohibits the use of images.

Beues exhibits in his speech a religious tolerance that is in conflict with his earlier impulsive actions. He first offers a Christian blessing, but concedes that if Brademond prefers, he may be blessed by his own gods instead. Beues's tolerance of the religious Other, albeit only on an intellectual level, is in stark contrast to the condemnation of the Saracen religion found within the speech that Guy makes in similar circumstances. However, while Beues seems to have come to an intellectual acceptance of the Saracen religious Other, he is still unable to countenance its physical manifestation.

Beues's tolerance also applies to the untrustworthiness of the Saracens. He repeatedly encounters their lack of honour, but much to his own disadvantage, refuses to draw any general conclusions based on this experience. It is not until he has been deceived by King Ermyn, his chamberlain, and King Brademond that he learns to distrust Saracens. After slaying the giant brother of King Grander, Beues enters the giant's castle and makes the giant's lady feed him, but having finally learned the untrustworthiness of the Saracens, he makes her eat and drink a bit of everything first, in order to avoid being poisoned. Beues, having been raised within the East, seems unable to view the actions of the Saracens with the discerning view of an outsider, as Guy does, and is thus condemned to take a much harder route to an understanding of the nature of the Saracen Other.

The third aspect of the Saracen Other, so central to the construction that we find in *Guy*, is that of the giant. In *Beues*, we again find this stereotype undermined in the form of Ascopard, Beues's giant page. Beues first encounters Ascopard after he has absconded with Josian from the court of Mombraunt. The giant has been sent by the sorcerer-king Garcy to reclaim Josian for his master King Ivor. Ascopard is a curious giant, who claims that in his own land he was taunted and bullied by the other giants for being so small: *Eueri man me wolde smite; / Ich was so lite & so meruy, / Eueri man me clepede dweruy* (2524 – 26). Beues duly defeats Ascopard, but spares him his life at the urging of Josian, and instead accepts the giant as his page. After escaping from the east, Josian is baptized by the bishop of Cologne, but Ascopard refuses, claiming that he does not wish to be drowned, and declares that *Icham to meche te be cristine!* (2596). Despite his benign

conduct, Ascopard remains the immutable and unconvertible Other, and in the end proves ultimately untrustworthy by reverting to the service of his original master and abducting Josian.

The characteristics of the Saracen Other operate in a different manner in *Beues of Hamtoun* compared to *Guy of Warwick*. While Saracens do in the end turn out to be perfidious, giants devilish, and the Saracen religion damnable, Beues has great difficulty in identifying these aspects of the East. In comparison to Guy, Beues has not been exposed to the preconceptions that identify these elements of the East, and is forced to discover them for himself. Beues's experience with the Saracen Other is one of discovery, whereas Guy's experience is simply one of expectation and reinforcement.

Beues's status as a cultural hybrid comes into clear focus upon his eventual return to England. Having lived for so long in close contact with the Saracen Other, and with a giant, an Armenian wife, and amazing horse in tow, he attracts trouble and is forced to leave again. Eventually he returns to the East where he becomes the King of the newly Christian kingdom of Mombraunt. Beues's incompatibility with the West marks him out as a hybrid figure, caught between two cultures and two worlds. Despite the narrative's affirmation of the Western image of the Saracen Other, Beues can be seen to only partially share this evaluation. Beues becomes a hybrid figure who has the ability to convert the East, rather than Guy, who can only confront it.

Beues's inability to clearly define himself against the Saracen Other raises a number of problems concerning the nature of difference in these two texts. The Other in *Guy of Warwick* is constructed in terms of simple difference, while in *Beues*, difference and identity can be seen to be much more complex. The following episode in *Beues* illustrates this point nicely. After delivering the treacherous letter, Beues is imprisoned by King Brademond in a pit full of snakes. Here he languishes for some seven years, finally escaping by deceiving the second of his two gaolers by impersonating the first:

Po queþ Beues wiþ reuful speche:
'For þe loue of sein Mahoun,
Be þe rop glid bliue adoun

And help, þat þis þef wer ded!
(*Beues of Hamtoun*, 1624 – 27).

Beues's ruse, if one can call it that, is accomplished merely by asking for aid by '*þe loue of sein Mahoun*', and if this is all that is required from him to masquerade as a Saracen then the difference between Beues and the Other is narrow and complex indeed. One wonders what effect this may have had upon the audience of the text – if the Other is so easily impersonated, does this make it less threatening, and therefore less of a ready target for the purposes of identity formation.

The construction of the Saracen Other in these two romances provides an interesting insight into the way in which fourteenth-century England imagined the East. While *Guy of Warwick* represents the paradigm of simple differentiation between Christian and Saracen that is typical of many medieval texts, *Beues of Hamtoun* presents an all-together more complex situation. Subjected to the acculturation experienced by all intercultural travelers, Beues is caught between the expectations of Western Christian society and the experiences that he undergoes. This becomes problematic for both Beues and his audience when he encounters Saracens who do not conform to the cultural and generic expectations of Middle English romance. It is due to this complex construction of the nature of medieval otherness that *Beues* stands out as a romance of considerable interest to scholars of cultural identity.

Robert Rouse
University of Bristol



THE EDUCATION OF THESEUS IN *THE KNIGHT'S TALE*

Considerable agreement has been reached on the general aesthetic of the *Knight's Tale*, in which complexities arise from conventionality and the very two-dimensionality of characters like Palamon and Arcite make them vehicles of compelling themes of order and destiny.¹ And yet we have not reached such agreement on Theseus, the tale's central character. Is he to be taken as a type of Jovian wisdom, presiding over and resolving the disorderly passions of the other characters?² Or is he himself emotionally unstable, sadistic in his worst moments and Machiavellian in what appear to be his best?³ Is his closing theodicy successful and definitive, an honest failure, or a deliberate deception?⁴ Each of these positions has been persuasively maintained, as have other positions in the rather large spaces between them.

I would like to suggest that in evaluating Theseus's character we recognize a quality that he shares with no others in the Tale, the ability to change over time in response to experience. Medieval fiction - much of Chaucer, for example - tends to represent character as static. It is this quality of Palamon and Arcite that so disappoints the unprepared modern reader. And yet the dynamic character who grows and changes as he achieves deeper insight is not uncommon in medieval fiction. He most frequently appears in the first person as a narrator-protagonist like Dante or Langland's

¹ Prominent exponents of these qualities have been Muscatine, Underwood, Jordan, Burlin, and Kolve.

² See Gaylord, Robertson (260-66), Bolton, Cooper, (79-81).

³ See Neuse, Webb, Aers (174-95), and Jones; Jones condemns Theseus and his approving Knight-narrator, assuming an identification of viewpoints that the present study questions.

⁴ Instances of the first view are Gaylord and Ruggiers (161). Underwood and Salter represent the second view. Neuse and Jones represent the third view.

Will, two of the numerous progeny of Boethius.¹ (In contrast, Chaucer's own *persona* in his early poems seems a deliberate antithesis to this dynamic convention in his sturdy resistance to growth and insight.) The dynamic character sometimes appears in the third person as well. Notable examples are Gawain in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and, I would argue, Theseus in *The Knight's Tale*. Theseus grows from the rather naïve self-assurance he first displays on his return from Scythia to a soberly ironic detachment that finally approaches that of the Knight-narrator himself.

Let us first examine the Knight-narrator, whose vision in the story, like Saturn's power in the universe, encompasses all the rest. His attitude toward the characters in his fiction seems oddly ambivalent. He frequently describes them and their doings with the traditional superlatives of romance. For example, the laments of the Theban women are such

That in this world nys creature lyvyng
That herde swich another waymentynge...
(901-02)²

Arcite's sorrow in exile surpasses that of any "creature/That is, or shal, whil that the world may dure" (1359-60). When the knights assemble for Theseus's grand tournament,

... ther trowed many a man
That never, sithen that the world bigan,
As for to speke of knyghthod of hir hond,
As fer as God hath makid see or lond
Nas of so fewe so noble a compaignye.
(2101-05)

And so on.

And yet, as many critics have pointed out, there is an ironic detachment that transcends this naïve wonder and forces the latter's mere conventionality on our attention.

¹ In terms used by Schless (209-10, in discussing *Troilus and Criseyde*), Palamon and Arcite are instances of "character revelation" while Theseus is an instance of "character development," a more "organic" process of change.

² I follow the text of Benson.

This can express itself gently, as when the Knight assures us that the charming occasion of Theseus's tournament would draw as many noble knights today as it did then:

Ye knowen wel that every lusty knyght
That loveth paramours and hath his myght,
Were it in Engelond or elleswhere,
They wolde, hir thanks, wilnen to be there -
To fighte for a lady, benedicitee!
It were a lusty sighte for to see.
(2111-16)

The last couplet expresses the viewpoint of a spectator rather than a participant, a retired athlete content to watch and perhaps criticize younger men taking the field.

A few lines later, in the catalogue of arms, there is a hint of something routine and no longer of vivid interest, confirmed when the Knight cuts it short:

Ther is no newe gyse that it nas old.
Armed were they, as I have yow told,
Everych after his opinioun.
(2125-27)

A long life enables one finally to assimilate the vision of long centuries of history, in which all becomes flat, stale, and repetitious.

The conspicuous use of explicit transitions and of the figure called *occupatio* has a diminishing effect on characters and events, right from the beginning when Theseus appears amid the trappings of his Scythian victory only to be brushed aside:

And thus with victorie and with melodye
Lete I this noble duc to Atthenes ryde,
And al his hoost in armes hym bisyde.
(872-74)

"And certes," the knight goes on, "if it nere to long to heere," he would have told us all the wonderful deeds that so impressed Boccaccio, Chaucer's source, deeds ticked off like headings in a table of contents or - perhaps

better - like marginal cues in a manuscript one riffles through quickly. A reader of old stories and of life learns performe how to skim:

I have, God woot, a large feeld to ere,
And wayke been the oxen in my plough;
The remenant of the tale is long ynough.
(886-88)

I will take my cue from the Knight and consign most of the other examples of this skimming to a note.¹ Readers of Chaucer know them well and know that they reinforce the pattern set in this one.

These transitions and *occupationes* make a peculiar virtue of necessity. When Chaucer's Knight says that he is skipping material, he speaks literally for his creator. Chaucer gives us the whole plot of the *Teseida* in about one fifth the lines of verse.² So of course he must pull us from place to place, always a bit out of breath and watching the clock. But this serves his theme as well. The dismissive curtness with which he treats Theseus, Palamon, and Arcite suggests that their grand exploits and gestures are only so much posturing, that if we dwell on them too long they will become boring. It seems that we simply cannot afford to take these heroes as seriously as they take themselves.

The deprecation implied by the use of these formal devices reaches a disturbing extreme in the accounts of Arcite's death and funeral. Arcite's dying speech, with its cries against fate ("What is this world? What asketh men to have?") and its noble resignation of Emily to Palamon ("Foryet nat Palamon, the gentil man.") is followed by a ghastly account of his body's collapse (2798-2807). Then comes a cruelly abrupt *occupatio*:

His laste word was, "Mercy, Emelye."
His spirit chaunged hous and wente ther,
As I cam nevere, I kan nat tellen wher.
Therfore I stynte; I nam no divinistre;
Of soules fynde I nat in this registre,

¹ Lines 994-1000, 1187-90, 1198-1201, 1459-61, 2197-2208, 2261-64, 2809-16, 2919-66. I discuss the last two in detail.

² See the "Explanatory Notes" in Benson, pp. 827, 828, 831, 834, 838, for correspondences between the Tale and Boccaccio.

Ne me ne list thilke opinions to telle
Of hem, though that they writen wher they dwelle.
Arcite is coold, ther Mars his soule gye!
Now wol I speken forth of Emelye.
(2808-16)

The *occupatio* not only skips over, it negates an ascent to the eighth sphere which Boccaccio granted to Arcite's soul and which Chaucer reserved for Troilus.

The cold dismissal not merely of Arcite but of the appeals against his fate with which we cannot help but identify suggests an almost unearthly detachment. Or else they suggest a defensive strategy in the face of a sorrow that is too great to bear. Charles Muscatine calls this sort of passage "a deftly administered antidote," rightly distinguishing it from "an actively satiric strain" (187) but, perhaps, understating its forcefulness. The point seems to be that tragedy's antidote here must be strong enough to sound like cruel satire. To yield to the tragedy is to become unfit for life which, indifferent to Arcite's tragedy just as it is to Theseus's triumphs, simply demands that we keep on going. The very finality of triumph or tragedy demands our dismissal of them. The narrator's gesture of dismissal suggests that of the characters in the Robert Frost poem responding to the accidental death of a farmboy:

They listened at his heart.
Little - less - nothing! - and that ended it.
No more to build on there. And they, since they
Were not the one dead, turned to their affairs.¹

An even more disturbing *occupatio* occurs at the funeral of Arcite. It is perhaps the best known instance in the tale, and it goes on for an astonishing forty-seven lines. Of course, it calls attention to the details of the eighty-odd *ottave* of Boccaccio's Eleventh Book, which it skims over. But our attention is drawn more clearly to the rudeness with which all this healing ceremony is swept aside like so much rubbish. The negatives that commonly figure in an *occupatio* ("I will *not* speak about this and that because...") are repeated so

¹ "Out, Out --," in Frost: 136-37.

relentlessly that they come to express a larger negation, one of weariness and disgust. To give just a sample, the Knight will not describe

The mirre, th'encens, with al so greet odour;
Ne how Arcite lay among al this,
Ne what richesse aboute his body is;
Ne how that Emelye, as was the gyse,
Putte in the fyr of funeral servyse;
Ne how she swowned whan men made the fyr,
Ne what she spak, ne what was hir desir;
Ne what Jeweles men in the fyre caste...
I wol nat tellen eek how that they goon
Hoom til Atthenes, whan the pley is doon;
But shortly to the point thanne wol I wende
And maken of my longe tale an ende.
(2938-45, 2963-66)

The extremity of this passage in its violation of even the somewhat loose decorum of the poem's style suggests the conclusion of *Troilus and Criseyde*, which may have been written at about the same time. There the poignant beauty, the grandeur even in pain and defeat, of an old, pagan world and of the story it yielded are suddenly spurned and mocked by a narrator whose assent to them had been more complex and whole-hearted than the Knight's:

Lo here, of payens corsed olde rites!
Lo here, what alle hir goddes may availle!
Lo here, thise wrecched worldes appetites!
Lo here, the fyn and guerdoun for travaille
Of Jove, Appollo, of Mars, of swich rascaille!
Lo here, the forme of olde clerkis speche
In poetrie, if ye hire bokes seche.
(TC, V, 1849-55)

E. T. Donaldson has shown how the last couplet of this stanza undoes "the work of the five lines preceding it."¹ The lure of the old story outlasts the narrator's trumped-up scorn, and the last lines invite us to a sympathetic contemplation of what the earlier lines indict. The Knight makes no such reversal as he presses on impatiently to the end of his story. He has an old

¹¹ *Speaking of Chaucer*: 99.

man's knowledge that the ceremonies that amplify our deaths are finally as empty as those that amplify our adolescent longings for girls like Emily, that our very mourning, from a sufficiently detached viewpoint, proves to be a form of infatuation. An attachment to these ceremonial trappings and the passions that they seek to dignify must be abandoned for - what? The love of Christ who, the narrator of *Troilus* assures us, "nyl falsen no wight, dar I seye,/That wol his herte al holly on him leye" and who obviates the search for "feynede loves" in this world (TC, V, 1845-46, 1848)? I think not. The Knight's assents to any destiny for the soul beyond this earth are perfunctory and no match for the chilly agnosticism with which he commits Arcite's soul to the questionable guidance of Mars. In freeing us from illusion, the Knight offers us something less exalted but more tangible: a sense of balance, the stoic's poise in a world governed by an inscrutable and unstable Fortune, in which

It is ful fair a man to bere hym evene,
For al day meeteth men at unset stevene.
(1523-24)

With this we can, like Frost's characters, turn to our affairs, knowing that the cruelty of our doing so is a necessary condition of life.

This lofty detachment is what Theseus must approach as the story progresses. It is a fairly distant goal as we first meet him returning from Scythia. His response to the Theban ladies' weeping shows a hearty egotism:

"What folk been ye, that at myn hom-comynge
Perturben so my feste with crynge?"
Quod Theseus, "Have ye so greet envye
Of myn honour, that thus compleyne and crye?
Or who hath yow mysboden or offended?
And telleth me if it may been amended,
And why that ye been clothed thus in blak?"
(905-11)

Theseus quite unselfconsciously takes his own triumph to be a universal condition. He refers all others' feelings to his own, and finds offense, even intentional offense, in the ladies' discordant weeping. When he offers his help, he asserts his sense of universal control and his right to adjust the

scales of joy and woe. The eldest lady's appeal to Theseus quietly puts him in his place:

She seyde, "Lord to whom Fortune hath yiven
Victorie, and as a conqueror to lyven,
Nat greveth us youre glorie and youre honour,
But we biseken mercy and socour..."
(915-18)

Theseus's conquest and his joy in it are as much an accident of "Fortune and hire false wheel,/That noon estaat assureth to be weel" (925-26) as the ladies' woe. The universal order and the scales of joy and woe are in other hands.

Arcite reaffirms the Theban lady's judgment when he comforts Palamon in prison:

"Fortune hath yeven us this adversitee.
Som wikke aspect or disposicioun
Of Saturne, by som constellacioun,
Hath yeven us this, although we hadde it sworn;
So stood the hevene whan that we were born.
We moste endure it; this is the short and playn."
(1086-91)

There is, of course, a telling irony in Arcite's all-too-accurate ascription of their troubles to Saturn, but his remarks also carry forward a consistent pattern by which those who benefit or suffer at the hands of Theseus look past him to a higher agency whose mere instrument he is.

The narrator himself does the same thing when he brings Theseus to the scene of Palamon and Arcite's fight. The poem's most strikingly brusque transition introduces its most Boethian passage:

Up to the ancle foghte they in hir blood.
And in this wise I let hem fightyng dwelle,
And forthe I wole of Theseus yow telle.
The destinee, ministre general,
That executeth in the world over al
The purveiance that God hath seyn biforn,...
For certainly, our appetites heer,

Be it of werre, or pees, or hate, or love,
Al is this reuled by the sighte above.
This mene I now by myghty Theseus...
(1660-65, 1669-73)

He will tell us of Theseus, but instead he spends some time telling us of destiny. Theseus is interesting to us for his actions and their effects on Palamon and Arcite and their unfolding story. But Theseus's actions, at least when viewed as leading to these interesting effects, have their origins elsewhere. The narrator, with an old man's detachment and insight, looks straight through Theseus to explore those remoter origins of his interest and only then shortens his focal length to the Athenian hero.

He does so in a finely ambiguous line - "This mene I nowe by myghty Theseus." The alogical association of his mightiness with the rule of "the sight above" in the preceding line confers upon Theseus the momentary dignity of a "man of destiny."¹ But this dignity is ambiguous as well. To be a man of destiny is, under one aspect, to incarnate a superhuman force, to present to other men the compelling image of their own fortunes. Under another aspect, it is to be the instrument, the mere tool, that lay readiest to hand when Fortune set indifferently to her work. The latter aspect begins to seem the more relevant when we learn Theseus's motives for going out that day to his predestined appointment with Palamon and Arcite. He simply wanted to hunt deer. This disjunction of intention and resultant action characterizes Theseus's role at each turning point of the plot.² He is, in fact, an instance of that general human condition lamented by Arcite in a homely simile:

¹ Stanbury makes a generally similar comment on the ambiguity of Theseus's association with destiny: "'This mene I' refers literally of course to the general coincidence, that Theseus should in effect be ruled by destiny and the driving fatality that should join his desire to hunt with the order of the stars. Yet the phrase also suggests, of course, that Theseus is destiny; that his sight rules. And in a sense, so it does, as the text moves increasingly to arrangements of visual spectacle that are under Theseus' purview. He watches: 'under the sonne he looketh, and anon/ He was war of Arcite and Palamon' (1997-98)." This controlling gaze of Theseus, analyzed by Stanbury in a generally Lacanian manner, achieves its apogee of power in the tournament, "embodied as visual display below the gaze of Theseus in the window - himself in a position of double visibility, poised to view the tournament but also to be seen as well by the people," just before it is to be neutralized by Saturn's bolt.

² A principal point of Underwood's essay.

We faren as he that dronke is as a mous.
A dronke man woot wel he hath an hous,
But he noot which the righte way is thider,
And to a dronke man the wey is slider.
(1261-64)

His rage at discovering his enemies gives way before the tears of his ladies and his own good-humored consideration of Palamon and Arcite's motives. With avuncular condescension he jokes about a passion that he is happy to have outgrown:

"The god of love, a benedicite!
How myghty and how greet a lord is he!
Ayeyns his myght ther gayneth none obstacles....
I woot it by myself ful yore agon,
For in my tyme a servant was I oon.
And therefore, syn I knowe of loves peyne
And woot hou soore it kan a man distreynе,
As he that hath ben caught ofte in his laas,
I yow foryeve al hoolly this trespaas...
(1785-86, 1813-18)

It is a commonplace of medieval thought and a principal theme of the *Knight's Tale* that Venus and Amor are among the principal agents of Fortune. The man who comes under their sway has committed himself to one of the world's corruptible delights with a devotion that resembles (and displaces) the religious. The man who is above Fortune, who places his trust in the goods of the reason or of heaven, is, by the same token, immune to the blandishments of Venus. But it is a false corollary to assume that immunity to these blandishments shows by itself a superiority to the Fortune that they serve. To outgrow one subjection is not to outgrow the other. Theseus's confidence that he can not only forgive Palamon and Arcite but resolve their conflict and save them from the effects of their passion arises in great part from his sense that he is superior to erotic love and from the false inference that he is superior to Fortune as well.

The expression of this confidence is the grand tournament. The "noble theatre" erected for it is a small cosmos in which the contrary forces of Fortune are resolved in a providential synthesis. Shrines to Venus, Mars, and Diana are contained in its larger design, and so, symbolically, are the

contrary wills of their devotees, Palamon, Arcite, and Emily. Within each shrine, the malign effects of each deity are the main themes of their elaborate murals. But these effects, with their tendency toward chaos and dissolution, are themselves resolved into, contained by, the order of art. They, like the tournament itself, are meant to present an esthetically realized image of destiny controlled by Theseus's benign and godlike providence. And, as the tournament is about to begin, Theseus appears "at a wyndow set,/Arrayed right as he were a god in trone" (2528-29).

The sense of godlike creation and controlling power, as well as benevolence, informs his herald's announcement of the tournament's rules:

"The lord hath of his heigh discrecioun
Considered that it were destruccioun
To gentil blood to fighten in the gyse
Of mortal bataille now in this emprise.
Wherefore, to shapen that they shal nat dye,
He wol his firste purpos modifye."
(2537-42)

The rules, of course, will now exclude the weapons that typically bring combat to a mortal conclusion. The herald's language is full of Boethian resonance. Theseus's "heigh discrecioun" as he modifies "his firste purpos" suggests the First Mover of Boethius. And Theseus is confidently disposed to do what only God can do (and what God has chosen *not* to do), to override destiny and "to shapen that they shal nat dye."

But the real order impinges on Theseus's benign alternative order. The grand designs of great men must give way to the petty quarrels of gods. The moment when this happens, when Arcite is cut down in his moment of triumph by "a furie infernal" (2684), is introduced by a curious call to attention:

The trompours, with the loude mynstralcie,
The heraudes, that ful loude yelle and crie,
Been in hire wele for joye of daun Arcite.
But herkneth me, and stynteth noyse a lite,
Which a myracle ther bifel anon...
(2671-75)

Who is the Knight-narrator hushing here? Logic tells us that it must be his fellow pilgrims, and that this is one of those periodic calls on the wayward attention of the audience that are so common in the tail-rime romances. But logic is overruled by the immediate context, where the noise - the "loude mynstralcie," the yelling and crying of the heralds - come from within the story. In a calculated breach of dramatic decorum, the Knight looks into his story and into Theseus's arena. The narrative gesture is in its way as eruptive as Pluto's bolt, and its import is the same. Both tell the crowd and Theseus himself that they must stint their noise, that noise is all that their ceremony and their values amount to in the face of the Saturnine reality that now reveals itself.

With the downfall of Arcite, Theseus is called upon to abandon his illusions about controlling destiny. He is called upon to shoulder the burden of wisdom born by the Knight-narrator and revealed in that ironic detachment from all the grand deeds and grand passions of the story.

The call to wisdom is traumatic. For the first time in the story, we see Theseus at a loss, forced to seek the aid and consolation of someone else. His father Egeus offers him and his people the cold comfort that must suffice:

"Right as ther dyed nevere man," quod he,
"That he ne lyvede in erthe in some degree,
Right so ther lyvede never man," he seyde,
"In al this world, that some time he ne deyde.
This world nys but a thurghfare ful of wo,
And we been pilgrymes passynge to and fro.
Deeth is an ende of every worldly soore."
(2843-49)

Critics sometimes place Egeus's pilgrimage metaphor in the well-known Augustinian tradition that makes our earthly life a pilgrimage to the heavenly Jerusalem. Our earthly life derives its only true meaning from its transcendent goal, according to this tradition, and so this world, in and of

itself, is a fit object of contempt.¹ This is the wisdom that Egeus would convey to the worldly Athenians, so bemused in their dreams of love and martial glory.

But the Christian's pilgrimage, miserable though it may be in its temporal dimension, is redeemed by the shining clarity of its eternal goal. The alert Christian always has a sense of direction. Egeus's pilgrims, on the other hand, only wander "to and fro." Egeus cannot improve upon the agnosticism we noted in the narrator as he refused to speculate on the destination of Arcite's soul. The wisest voice in the tale conveys that agnosticism to Theseus as the only adequate explanation of the collapse of his grand and well-meant designs.

It is worth noting, too, how much Egeus's fatalism resembles that of Palamon and Arcite. The old man's "pilgrymes passynge to and fro" recall Arcite's man "that dronke is as a mous":

"A dronke man woot wel he hath an hous,
But he noot which the righte wey is thider,
And to a dronke man the way is slider.
And certes, in this world so faren we;
We seken faste after felicitee,
But we goon wrong ful often, trewely."
(1262-67)

So youth and age agree in their fatalism. They differ only in their degree of resignation to it. It is in the age that intervenes, the age of Theseus, that the sense of control over one's destiny emerges. This sense is illusory and yet necessary, for the world demands of some of its children a purposeful will, fruitful in the works of civilization.

These works include, in moments of extremity, gestures of reassurance and consolation. And these are now demanded of Theseus. For the death of Arcite is, to the people of Athens, an intimation of meaninglessness and despair. "Why woldestow be deed," the women of Athens cry, "And haddest gold ynough, and Emelye?" (2836-37) The lament is, at first glance, absurd, and many readers only give it that first glance. But it really differs very little

¹ See Robertson: 374-75, and Huppé: 72-73.

from the more common laments that still greet a young man's death - that he was so young, that he had so much to live for. There is the same naïve but necessary assumption that death comes only to those who are ready for it, that those upon whom we load life's prizes will not betray our exalted sense of what we have bestowed by dying before they can enjoy them. Unfairly, inevitably, we blame the dead for disabusing us.

"Human kind cannot bear very much reality," as Eliot said in a somewhat different connection, and a mature leader must sometimes bear it for his people, offering them something different. The ceremony of Arcite's funeral and the closing theodicy are what Theseus offers. They are his last great constructive efforts. They express not the self-confident optimism of the tournament, but the chastened sense of how great are the needs of his people for order and meaning and how limited are his powers to meet those needs. Both are gestures of consolation. Neither will bear close examination.

We have already discussed the Knight's subversion of Arcite's funeral. The circumstances surrounding Theseus's closing speech and certain details of its argument give rise to a similar questioning. The speech rationalizes and solemnizes the union of Palamon and Emily, but that romantic motive serves a political motive. Theseus and his counselors desired "To have with certain countrees alliaunce,/And have fully of Thebans obeisaunce..." (2973-76), and the marriage of Palamon and Emily is the most opportune means to that end. If we would idealize Theseus, we might be tempted to pass over these lines in embarrassed silence. If we would denigrate him, we could produce it as an instance of his Machiavellian cynicism. Neither approach is satisfactory. Theseus and his people, because they are not the one dead, must turn to their affairs. A statesman like Theseus cannot act from pure motives. Indeed, the effort to do so may be productive of harm. Theseus has learned this in the course of the story. He has learned, as well, that the sense of acting from pure motives is still as necessary to his people as it once was to him. And so, statesman that he is, he represses the political aspect of his proposal, even though it has been the result of public deliberation (2970-74). They will have what they need from him: a healing, happy epilogue to a tragic love story.

A. C. Spearing has pointed out an interesting discrepancy between Theseus's theodicy and what we know from earlier episodes about how the gods actually govern (76-77).¹ Theseus has Jupiter governing all through his fair chain of love. But we have seen that Jupiter could not control the quarrel of Mars and Venus and had to yield to the darker sway of Saturn. We have seen, further, that no love links gods and men. Mars and Venus fear dishonor if they cannot keep promises whimsically given to Arcite and Palamon. Saturn's solution satisfies them - Mars no less than Venus - and Arcite goes to his death.

Some of this seems present to Theseus's mind, because his assertions about universal order are really quite guarded. There is, indeed, a certain poignancy to the opening lines of his speech, coming simply from their being in the past tense:

"The Firste Moevere of the cause above,
Whan he first made the faire cheyne of love,
Greet was th'effect, and heigh was his entente.
Wel wiste he why and what therof he mente,
For with that faire cheyne of love he bond
The fyr, the eyr, the water, and the lond
In certeyn boundes, that they may nat flee."
(2987-93)²

Nothing in these lines is inconsistent with the suggestion of entropy ever since that grand creative effort so long ago. Nothing forbids the surmise that the First Mover, like Theseus, was disappointed with the way things turned out.

Theseus's assertions about how the Jovian plan works today - the sureness with which our allotted days run out "in this wrecched world adoun" (2995) - really do no more than adorn and palliate the words of

¹ In the same vein, Strohm notes Theseus's "*quest* for a reaffirmation of authority - both earthly and divine - in his *projected* faith in a benign heavenly hierarchy, ruled not by the malign and arbitrary Saturn but by a more even-keeled 'Juppiter, the kyng,'" adding that "Chaucer takes care that his audience understands Theseus to be wrong..." (133, emphasis added).

² In his prose translation of the *Consolation of Philosophy*, Chaucer correctly translates the source of this passage, Book 2, Metrum 8, in the present tense. See Benson: 420.

Egeus: just as there never died a man who did not once live, so there never lived a man who did not die. The counsel that he draws from this shows a becoming lack of assurance.¹ This is the mature Theseus, no longer out to set all things right:

“Thanne is it wysdom, as it thynketh me,
To maken vertu of necessitee,
And take it weel that we may nat eschue,
And namely that to us alle is due;
And whoso gruccheth ought, he doth folye,
And rebel is to hym that al may gye.
And certainly a man hath moost honour
To dyen in his excellence and flour,
Whan he is siker of his goode name...”
(3041-3049)

The last three lines - and the argument that they introduce - show an edginess, a move to cover all bets, even if the various arguments one makes for an audience's assent are not entirely consistent with one another. Theseus is putting forth a rationalization in which he does not quite believe. He is responding to his people's need for belief and hope. Armed with these, they will greet “with alle blisse and melodye” (3097) the marriage of Palamon and Emily, imputing a benign purpose to the new upward swing of Fortune's wheel.

In Theseus Chaucer gives a unique development to an idea embodied by characters as diverse as Pandarus, Nicholas the Clerk, and the Pardoner. Each of these characters weaves elaborate schemes - depending to a greater or lesser degree on his plausible rhetoric - to control destiny. Each would create a world of his own in which he reigns as a god, ironically detached, pleased by the intricate marvels that lie subject to his will. Each soon learns his folly. The turn of Fortune's wheel reveals the larger order in which the projector's most important role is likely to be as the butt of some cosmic

¹ Lawler cites what “at first glance seem[s] a mere pause for breath” in Theseus's speech (3000-02): “Ther nedeth noght noon auctoritee t'allegge. / For it it preeved by experience, / But that me list declaren my sentence.” Lawlor paraphrases thus: “all this is likely to be perfectly clear to all of you from your experience; it is just that I feel the urge to say what is on my mind.” He finds in the lines “a sudden loss of [Theseus's] customary aplomb, as if he were speaking not so much to instruct others as to work out in words the meaning of his own experience” (86-87).

joke. Some of this general meaning of Pluto's "furye infernal" emerges more clearly when we compare it to Absolon's hot coulter and the blunt obscenity of the Host that silences the Pardoner.

Frequently opposed to this type of character is the man or woman of *trouthe*, that unchangeable integrity that shows to best advantage when Fortune's wheel swings downward. Troilus is the clearest example. True to the end to a love that has proven, like this world itself, to be mere fiction, Troilus's soul is projected by its purity clear beyond the planetary instruments of Fortune's sway. Pandarus, after some frantic last-minute efforts to patch up the fiction he has promoted so enthusiastically, crumples with it.

Theseus is a harder case. Like Pandarus, he has promoted fictions throughout the story. Early in his education by life these fictions center on himself and the sufficiency of his good will. He is the knight-hero who forestalls fate, righting the wrongs of the Theban widows by conquest, untangling the web of passionate love in a grand tournament. But his last fiction centers on something unseen beyond the fixed stars, whose superior force he can no longer doubt and whose good will he must invoke - perhaps invent - in the tentative rhetoric of a ceremonial address. Because he is a governor, he cannot set aside the fictions of order and purpose, nor soar above them like Troilus. But, because experience has brought him the wintry insight of Egeus and of the Knight-narrator, he cannot rest on them either.

I have argued that the contradictory aspects of Theseus's character are resolved in a reading that sees him developing and changing through the story. Different resolutions of these same contradictions have been offered in the comprehensive and subtle analyses of H. Marshall Leicester and Lee Patterson, and it would be useful to distinguish my position from theirs.

Leicester's analysis of the *Knight's Tale* (221-382) takes up more than a third of a long book, and there are many aspects of it which I must simply commend rather than discuss. The following propositions, however, bear on the subject of this paper:

The *Tale* is conveyed to us by a single voice whose contradictions are those discoverable in any single voice that honestly represents the polarities that define the subjective (1-14 and *passim*).

The narrator's voice presents us with a progressively more adequate image of Theseus as governor until, in the "First Mover" speech, the voices of the Knight and Theseus are one. The essential movement here is that of the Knight's voice which *realizes* Theseus as we see him at the close (262-65 and 370-71).

The Knight, in his manipulation of narrative materials, and Theseus, in his decisive exercise of authority, enact throughout the *Tale* parallel programs of "demystification," leading us to identify human agency rather than impersonal fortune as the spring of action and change in our lives (246, 250, 263-64).

I agree with the first proposition, which is an instance of Leicester's central argument for a reconstituted, theoretically more sophisticated version of the "dramatic" way of reading Chaucer. He objects to readings that see some parts of the *Tale* as spoken by the first character described in the *General Prologue* while other parts come from Chaucer the Poet. If the poem came to us simply as *Palamon and Arcite*, as cited in *The Legend of Good Women* (F 420-21), we would struggle to make sense of its shifts of tone and its unstable attitude toward its subject without recourse to the theory that it is haunted intermittently by a voice other than Chaucer's. Chaucer's own attribution of it to the Knight may well have come after it was written, when Chaucer was populating the *General Prologue* and asked himself what sort of character he (Chaucer) sounded like when he gave voice to this tale. The invention of the Knight leaves the voiced integrity of the *Tale* undisturbed, although it does make explicit the obvious difference from the voiced integrity of the probably contemporaneous *Troilus and Criseyde*. This line of reasoning is quite simple, once Leicester has pointed it out.

My disagreement with the second proposition follows naturally from my belief that Theseus grows over the course of the story (which, after all, spans some ten years). This is a development located *within* the story, not on its narrative surface, where, in fact, the Knight maintains a fairly consistent stance *toward which* Theseus moves. We see from the earliest lines the

Knight's confident and explicit stage management of Theseus and the others, and we recognize in this a scope of vision denied to them.

I believe, further, that the Knight's narrative acts, which he so consistently forces upon our attention, differ fundamentally in their efficacy from Theseus's chivalric acts, and so the two cannot be joined in the program of demystification attributed to them by Leicester's third proposition. We cannot evade the Knight's insistence that each turn in his story comes "by aventure or cas." The insights shared by Palamon, Arcite, and Egeus on this point are, as far as we know, correct. The problem, of course, is that they are also disabling. If we are to live in society - that is, if we are to *build* a society - we must construct habits of thought that connect our intentions with our desired outcomes through the medium of our actions. Otherwise, action becomes impossible, and society unbuilds itself.¹ But the constructive activity, bearing as it does on habits of thought, is essentially rhetorical, a matter of discourse that persuades us that our actions are meaningfully related to our goals. This is the task of the mature governor, who deploys discourse rather than armies, who sustains the naïve faith of the community in its institutions from a point outside of its naïveté. His stance is, in Leicester's term, "disenchanted," and Leicester's account of how Theseus performs government in his last speech seems to me to be definitive. My point is that Theseus arrives at this stance late. His earlier actions, as conqueror, as jailer and liberator, as benevolent master of the tournament, participate in the naïveté, the "enchantment," that is the easy target of Saturn's bolt from hell.

Patterson's analysis concentrates on the disenchantment with the chivalric ideal described by Johan Huizinga, arguing that it is this specific order, rather than order in general, that is the object of the *Tale's* attention, and that the attention is one of critique rather than celebration (167-174).²

¹ Cf. Donaldson's comment that the narrator "is, after all, an old soldier who has observed that deaths in battle have no connection with any recognizable system of earthly justice and that to expect a good man to avoid an ill end is to expose oneself to paralyzing frustration" (*Chaucer's Poetry*, 1066).

² Patterson cites Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages*, trans. F. Hopman (London: Edward Arnold). A new translation by Rodney J. Payton and Ulrich Mattitzsch entitled *The Autumn of the Middle Ages* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996) includes material omitted by Hopman.

Late Fourteenth Century chivalry is a visibly cosmetic artifice, in Patterson's view, and Chaucer exposes the contradictions between its professed ideals and its founding brutality. Patterson's critique also targets a related contradiction "in a different register" between the mastery sought and the sense of determined impotence found in chivalry's obsessive study of astrology (220). In Palamon and Arcite Patterson finds "a chivalric consciousness so narrowed in scope as to have become frozen within a double posture of erotic need and martial violence" (213). Moreover, Theseus's decision-making and the Knight's narrative strategies of "iteration and sectioning" and *occupatio* are, for Patterson, trapped in the same iron ring of constructed fatality and unacknowledged obsolescence. Patterson summarizes his argument with typical clarity and force:

... Chaucer shows that the narrowed consciousness and obsessive fixation of Arcite and Palamon are not the other against which Theseus's and the Knight's rationality is to be defined but a dark version of that very rationality itself. The same ambivalent vacillation between utter helplessness and unconstrained desire that characterizes the Theban lovers marks both the cultural order imposed by Theseus and the narrative organization articulated by the Knight. In their narrow repetitiveness and yearning for finality both Theseus and the Knight unavoidably witness to the form of consciousness that characterizes the Theban lovers. The suicidal rhetoric of the Theban lovers is more subtly reenacted in Theseus's hapless decision making and still more subtly in the narrative strategies of the Knight. And what links all three levels of analysis is the gap between structures of belief and historical experience, between late fourteenth-century chivalric ideology and the facts of life in Chaucer's England. It was noble culture's inability to come to self-consciousness, to rewrite its own ideology in relation to socioeconomic change, that the *Knight's Tale* records. (230)

Patterson certainly grants to the Knight a single narrating voice, an internally consistent subjectivity. Thus he would agree with Leicester in opposing those readers who hear Chaucer cutting in on the party line. But Patterson's version of the Knight's discursive integrity closes the Knight off from the central insights of the *Tale*, leaving them to the privileged inference of Chaucer and his readers.

As a general principle, I think that it is risky to regard as “unreliable” a narrator as shifty as the Knight.¹ When a narrator is of more than one mind about his subject matter (so much so that some readers provide him with more than one head), he is *ipso facto* in a privileged position relative to his all-too-single-minded characters. In telling their story he is likely to convey to us the whole truth that they blindly inhabit. I would argue that the Knight conveys the very truths that Patterson identifies as central to the *Tale*. He does so, moreover, in those very moments of narrative juncture that Patterson sees as evasive subterfuge. For example, in a passage cited near the beginning of this essay, the Knight tells us that he will “lete this noble Duc to Atthenes ride” without the aggrandizing details found in Boccaccio because his narrative task gives him too large a “feeld to ere.” In such a moment Patterson hears the narrator struggling to control recalcitrant material and “to articulate a world from which temporality and contingency have been banished. (213)” But surely Theseus’s heroism has been rendered contingent and temporal (i.e., obsolete) by the impatient modernism of this narrator as he repackages an old story for the shortened attention span of the Canterbury pilgrims.

The Knight’s dismissal of chivalry, expressed most clearly in these transitional passages, is no simple thing. As I noted above, the Knight, looking back on a career as a chivalric practitioner, finds himself of more than one mind about it. He still responds to its gaudy allure.² He can be drawn to “geeste ‘rim, ram, ruf, by lettre” in the classic alliterative manner when he describes the clash of Palamon’s and Arcite’s superlative armies.³ But soon enough he calls our attention to the hollowness that lends volume to this noise, and he cuts it off with the rebuke (“stynteth noyse a lite”) that introduces Saturn’s strike at Arcite. Finally, as I suggested earlier, the long *occupatio* that describes and discredits Arcite’s funeral can be read as a

¹ Wayne C. Booth defines a narrator as “*reliable* when he speaks for or acts in accordance with the norms of the work (which is to say the implied author’s norms), *unreliable* when he does not” (158-159, with further references in the index.

² Cf. Leicester: 225-26, 241-42.

³ The deprecatory characterization of alliterative verse is that of the Parson (X. 43). On the Knight’s alliteration, see discussions cited in Benson, note to 2601-16 (839).

palinode on chivalry's entire elaboration of aggression and desire. And the point that I would stress here, in contrast to Patterson, is that it comes to us consciously and deliberately in the Knight's own voice. Chaucer speaks to us through him, not around him.

We can plausibly speculate on the historical circumstances that called this voice into being and suggested the theme of Theseus's education. Chaucer and his contemporaries could look back some thirty years to the triumphs of Edward III's war against France, triumphs carefully elaborated with the trappings of chivalric myth. Central to these events was the gallant Black Prince, Edward's eldest son who captured King John of France at Poitiers and seemed to incarnate the spirit of Arthurian romance. They could also look back on what followed in the 1360s and 1370s: the reversal of almost every victory of the war, the protracted Egean gloom of Edward's senectitude, and the surrender of the Black Prince to dysentery, a wasting insult to his martial glory that suggests the fate of Arcite.

The voice that responds to this historical context belongs to a knight whose rust-stained tunic shows his indifference to the panoply that filled Theseus's arena, whose resumé skips over the largely canceled glories of Crécy and Poitiers to feature distant struggles toward the always postponed victory of the Crusade. Despite what we know (and what Chaucer knew) about the corruption of the crusading impulse, the Crusade retained its symbolic importance as an irreproachable goal and final cause of the chivalric enterprise.¹ By uniting this enterprise with the grace of the Redemption, the Crusade gave knighthood its only means of transcending the inflexible necessity written in the stars. The devotion that brings the

¹ Fradenburg, in a very challenging Lacanian reading of the Tale finds that it embodies "the fantasy of chivalry... that powerfully recuperates the *jouissance* of aggressivity by rewriting it as incalculable, inscrutable love" (54). Such a mordant judgment can encompass not only the dying Arcite nobly resigning Emily to Palamon but also the Knight soberly, humbly representing the crusading ideal. The question is not whether we can assent to this judgment but whether we can attribute it to Chaucer. If I am interpreting Fradenburg correctly, she implies that we can and thus would seem to come, by a different route, to something like Jones's position, discrediting the Knight (see note 3). I doubt that we can do this. I think that we must consider Chaucer to be sufficiently of his era to posit the Knight's crusading background as a value not to be questioned, as foundational in its way as the piety of his Parson.

knight to this Canterbury pilgrimage expresses his Christian knighthood as clearly as his military exploits did. They represent his distinctive response to the bitter insight attributed to the Black Prince on his deathbed: "We are not lords here. Everything that happens here must happen. No one can turn it aside."¹ But he does not speak of his devotion, whether expressed in prayer or in the siege of Algezir. His narrative imagination – that of a Christian looking back to a pagan time and placing himself just inside the verge of its aspiration – is captivated instead by the struggles of men who have not achieved grace and who cannot transcend necessity. Their struggles do, after all, represent the daily reality of the human condition where the best response to necessity, the one that is both wise and practical, is to make a virtue of it.

Daniel M. Murtaugh
Florida Atlantic University

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¹ Chandos Herald, *La Vie du Prince Noir by Chandos Herald*, ed. Diane B. Tyson (Tubingen: Max Niemeyer, 1975): lines 4114-16; cited by Patterson, 214.

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REVIEWS

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NOTICES

Charles R. Dodwell 2000. *Anglo-Saxon Gestures and the Roman Stage* (Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England, 28). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press [xvii + 171 pages; 99 plates. ISBN Hardback: 0 521 66188 9].

Anglo-Saxon Gestures and the Roman Stage is the posthumous work by Professor Charles Reginald Dodwell (1922-1994), who bequeathed in life an important collection of key books and articles on medieval art: ranging from the general introduction *The Pictorial Arts of the West, 800-1200* (1993), to the more specific texts *Anglo-Saxon Art: A New Perspective* (1985) and *Aspects of Art in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (1992). Most Anglo-Saxonists, however, would know him for the facsimile edition, in collaboration with Peter Clemoes, of the *Old English Illustrated Hexateuch* (British Library Cotton Claudius B.iv) (1974). The original notes and some chapters already written by Charles Dodwell have been assembled and given definitive form by one of his disciples, Timothy Graham.

This book explores the Asimilarity [in form and meaning] between gestures portrayed in certain areas of late Anglo-Saxon art and those occurring in the illustrated manuscripts of the plays of Terence (xiii). As such, this piece of research originates in a manuscript containing a cycle of illustrations of Terence=s plays (second century BC) preserved in Rome, at the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana (Vat. lat. 3868), and possibly composed at Corvey in France. In dating this manuscript, familiarly known as *Vatican Terence*, Dodwell displayed the faculties of a detective scrutinizing the history of art in late antiquity and the early middle ages. Evidence as miscellaneous as hair-styles, dress and garments of the characters portrayed in the miniatures, and a frontispiece illustration of a bust of the playwright supported by two masked actors suggest that the *Vatican Terence* was probably composed in the first half of the third century AD, and that the model for the miniatures may derive from the North of Africa (1-21).

A large section of the book (*Dramatic gestures in the miniatures*, 34-100) is devoted to interpreting the meaning of the gestures represented in the miniatures of this third-century manuscript. Some of these gestures are straightforward and can easily be interpreted in the light of contemporary

kinesics: shaking hands to denote “friendship”, patting someone’s back to indicate “approval”, placing the forefinger on the lips to request “silence”, and brandishing the fist to show “hostility” or “belligerence.” Other gestures in the miniatures are interpreted on the basis of external evidence. In this sense, Quintilian’s *Institutio Oratoria* (late first century AD) becomes an important source for ascertaining the meaning of gestures denoting “insistence”, “forcefulness”, “refusal” and “agreement” or “acquiescence”. Additionally, it suggests that some of the dramatic gestures in the *Vatican Terence* were also part of the rhetorical *actio*, as performed by Roman orators. Most gestures, finally, have to be interpreted in the light of the internal evidence provided by action and plot as they unfold in the different plays by Terence. This is the interpretative procedure for a majority of gestures denoting moods or reflecting how actors responded to diverse dramatic situations, as the plays were being performed on stage: “perplexity”, “dissent”, “compliance”, “restraint”, “sadness”, “apprehension” or “fear”, “supplication”, “amazement”, “pondering” or “reflecting”. In fact, Dodwell concluded that most of these gestures seem to have been peculiar to the Roman stage, and that the original drawings later copied in them may derive from actual performances of the plays on the stage. Indeed, many of the gestures indicating mood are unrelated to contemporary body actions and, in case they are, they have utterly different meanings; for instance, the act of raising two middle fingers of the hand is nowadays understood in parts of the English-speaking world as an insulting way of expressing “derision”, while in the Roman stage, and in the particular performance of Terence’s plays, it meant “compliance” or “conciliation”. Only one of the gestures agrees partially with the meaning it has in contemporary kinesics: this is the expression of “agreement” or “approval” by Ajoining together the thumb and forefinger to form a circle, while the other fingers are outstretched (61). This gesture, which Dodwell traces back to Quintilian’s *Institutio Oratoria*, closely resembles the “OK” gesture widespread in some parts of the English-speaking world, and may have been an ancestor of it.

The second part of the book (*Anglo-Saxon gestures*, 101-154) examines a variety of Anglo-Saxon illustrated manuscripts in search of the “English” gestures connected to those portrayed in the miniatures of *Vatican Terence*.

The manuscripts where instances of the Roman gestures are found are all devoted to Christian issues: among others, the *Tiberius Psalter* (British Library, Cotton Tiberius C.vi), the *Harley Psalter* (British Library, Harley 603), the *Bury Psalter* (Vatican Library, Reg. lat. 12), the well-known *Junius Manuscript* (Oxford, Bodleian Library Junius 11), containing the poems *Genesis*, *Exodus*, *Daniel* and *Christ and Satan*, and, finally, the *Illustrated Hexateuch* (British Library, Cotton Claudius B. iv), edited by Dodwell himself in collaboration with Peter Clemoes (1974). All of them were probably composed in Canterbury during the late tenth and early eleventh centuries.

Six of the gestures displayed in the *Vatican Terence* appear repeatedly in the illustrations of the late Anglo-Saxon manuscripts under scrutiny: the gestures for “perplexity” or “puzzlement”, “sadness”, “fear” or “apprehension”, “supplication” and “pondering” or “reflection” are systematically reproduced in Anglo-Saxon illustrations. Similarly, the gesture for “approval” or “acquiescence” is also reproduced with slight variations, like replacing the forefinger with the second finger when touching the thumb to form a circle, or even leaving a gap between the relevant finger and the thumb. It is surprising that these six gestures are exclusive to late Anglo-Saxon England, and that there is no trace of them either in contemporary continental sources, or in English manuscripts after the Norman conquest. This implies that the interpretation of the Anglo-Saxon gestures is only based on the internal evidence provided by the illuminated texts in the different manuscripts. For instance, a gesture like *laying a hand to the side of the face*, which recurs in the context of death and funeral throughout the *Illustrated Hexateuch*, can only be interpreted as the expression of “sadness” (111).

A most exciting part within this detective-like research in the history of early medieval art is the attempt to establish the possible link between the gestures that had been actually used in the performance of Terence’s plays on the Roman stage, the inclusion of miniatures reflecting them in the later Vatican manuscript of this playwright’s production, and, finally, their adoption by the Benedictine monks who were copying and illustrating Anglo-Saxon manuscripts more than eleven centuries after Terence’s death, and seven centuries after the *Vatican Terence* had been copied. This

connection cannot be established by way of the sign language used by Benedictine monks on certain occasions and in certain dependencies of the monastery to keep with the precept of silence imposed by the Rule of St Benedict and his numerous local adaptations. One Anglo-Saxon exhaustive list and description of Benedictine sign language survives in British Library, Cotton Tiberius Aiii, ff. 97v-101v (Banham ed. 1991). It suggests that the function of gestures within sign language systems was basically “deictic” or “indexical”: they were used to identify objects and persons in the context of the monastery, so that the day-to-day life of the community was made easier when the *summum silentium* was required by the Rule. On the contrary, the six gestures analysed in this section -like their sources in the *Vatican Terence*- do not have this communicative function, but aim at *represent[ing] moods artistically* (147).

The gap between the monastic school at Corvey, where the *Vatican Terence* seems to have been copied, and late Anglo-Saxon Canterbury, where most of the medieval manuscripts showing some of the Roman theatrical gestures were written and illuminated, can only be bridged after a thorough (re)search in the Anglo-Saxon and Carolingian manuscript contexts of the Benedictine reform. The immense popularity of Terence in the Middle Ages is attested, for instance, in the survival of more than one hundred fragments or complete copies of his works before the year 1200. This reputation makes it highly plausible that an illustrated copy of his plays, based on the *Vatican Terence* or related to it, was available at Canterbury in the late tenth or early eleventh centuries. Even though this “missing link” has not been unearthed, Dodwell puts forward some conclusive hypotheses on the cross-currents of art and manuscript illumination between England and Northern France. For instance, Dodwell explores the connections between Corvey and late Anglo-Saxon England and refers particularly to the invitation by Æthelwold of monks from this community to instruct members of Abingdon monastery. Any of these monks, or those coming from Fleury on diverse errands, could have brought to England an illustrated copy of Terence’s plays with him. Similarly, the existence of a twelfth century illustrated copy of his plays (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Auct. F 2.13), possibly based on a source from Reims, together with the survival of another Carolingian manuscript of Terence (Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, SP.4bis)

copied at Reims and known to have been closely related to the Canterbury *Eadui Psalter* (British Library, Arundel 155), lead Dodwell to explore the connections between Reims and Canterbury in the late Anglo-Saxon period as a possible bridge for the mutual influence of both texts: an illustrated copy of Terence may have followed the route from Reims to Canterbury that the famous *Utrecht Psalter* took around the year 1000. Such connections, initially based on a common interest in monastic reform, eventually developed into artistic links and exchanges, not only involving texts and illuminated manuscripts, but also individual artists. In this sense, Dodwell draws attention to the possibility that any of the three Anglo-Saxon scribes who were working in the continent during the late tenth and early eleventh centuries (two Anglo-Saxon miniaturists were working at Fleury and one at Saint Bertin at that time) may have returned to England with the relevant manuscript.

Two final puzzles remain to be resolved. Firstly, it remains to be explained why some Benedictine monks who had taken vows of poverty and chastity and [...] were primarily interested in depicting the Christian story, should turn to this pagan source for gestures that had originally been used to support the acting out of the plays of Terence with their *earthly scenes* (154). A possible solution –only indirectly suggested by Dodwell– turns up when these six gestures are seen in the changeable context of the ecclesiastical views on gestures and gesticulation in the Middle Ages. After a period when all gestures were utterly rejected by the Church as sinful expressions of the body, a separation between gestures and gesticulation was established. The former were accepted as a means to achieve salvation, particularly when they expressed feelings and moral values: the inner movements of the soul, like charity, penance and piety (Schmitt 1990; 1991: 64-65; Le Goff 1994: 40-64). The six gestures adopted by Benedictine monks –“perplexity”, “sadness”, “fear” / “apprehension”, “supplication”, “pondering” / “reflecting”, “approval” / “acquiescence”– were not body movements consciously or unconsciously associated with the performance of everyday activities (gesticulation), but adequate kinesic responses to moods and feelings. It is this indissoluble relationship of gestures with moods that may have favoured the unexpected association of the original Roman, dramatic,

secular contexts of Terence=s plays with situations common for the Benedictine monk who was representing biblical and liturgical events. An interesting example is suggested by the Anglo-Saxon manuscript context of the gesture for “agreement” or “acquiescence”. The *Eadui Psalter* (British Library, Arundel 155) contains an illustration of St Benedict (f. 133r) venerated by a group of Canterbury monks who are offering him a copy of his own Rule. Inscriptions in this miniature point to the importance the founder of the order conferred on obedience and humility as the greatest of monastic virtues, to the extent that this picture may depict the practice of these qualities by members of the community. The representation of the saint in the process of approaching the third finger to the thumb in order to form the circle indicating that he approved the attitude and behaviour of these monks, as in the miniatures in the *Vatican Terence*, would agree with the context of the Rule where a whole chapter (VII) is devoted to the twelve stages leading to the exaltation deserved by the person *who humbleth himself* (pp. 123-126).

Eventually, this piece of research also questions the breach between classical and medieval theatre which the history of western drama has traditionally assumed. From the perspective of a profane person on the subject (like myself) the presence of dramatic Roman gestures in late Anglo-Saxon Christian manuscripts suggests that classical drama was known by these monks. The Church may have forbidden its representation, but Benedictine monks were not only making use of dramatic gestures from the Roman stage in their own illustrations, but also knew their original meaning, or elicited it from a close reading of the Latin texts of Terence=s plays, whose moral stance contributed to make him popular among the literate medieval community.

All in all, this is a remarkable piece of research, covering a time span of more than twelve centuries in realms of Western Europe as diverse as the Roman world and late Anglo-Saxon England. As Professor Dodwell’s last lesson, it shows his capacity for intuition and his deep knowledge of medieval culture and of the history of art.

Juan Camilo Conde Silvestre

University of Murcia

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BULLÓN-FERNÁNDEZ, María 2000: *Fathers and daughters in Gower's Confessio Amantis*. Woodbridge: Brewer. Publications of the John Gower Society, volume 5. viii + 241 pp. \$90.00/ €90.00.

This is a book worth reading for several reasons, and I hope it will set an example for many other scholars in the medieval field. I must confess that when I received it I was first quite taken aback by its title, as I expected it would unwind into a long and complex series of biased revisionist attitudes towards Gower. It is not. It is a well-argued, very well documented and academically sound piece of critical scholarship, and I think it deserves not just this sort of praise, but also some gratulatory words.

First, because it is not an archetypal feminist-polarised review of Gower's attitudes and ideology in his *Confessio*, although the author uses very wisely updated and contrasted feminist theories for most of its pages. Second, because it is never anachronistic: both the poem and the author are always carefully set in their historical and literary context, and while many logical excursions into other authors and periods are present in the different sections, I have not been able to detect any serious delectation in revising Gower from a contemporary-biased position. When we deal with the fourteen and fifteen hundreds many people tend to forget that society was considerably different then, and that moral judgement should best be relegated to a conveniently private discussion rather than aired with postmodern and postfeminist (maybe post feministic?) approaches.

Third: its integrity and coherence. Though several parts of the book: in chapters numbers two and four (see what the author says on pages viii, 75 & 158), and no less than in two sections of the first and fifth chapters ("Fathers and daughters: defining authority", pages 1-41; and "Textual Fathers and Textual Daughters: The 'Tale of Rosiphelee'...", pages 177-189), namely those devoted to the Tale of Rosiphelee and to the Tale of Apollonius (pages 45-64), were previously published in 1993, 1994 (also reissued in 1999), 1995, and 1998, they were rewritten in such a way that the book has an absolute continuity in its main themes. This is no mean achievement, as we are accustomed to finding many scholarly books whose miscellaneous and do-it-yourself origins betray a last minute rush of sending the original to the

publisher without proper editing. María Bullón-Fernández has managed to avoid that and to have a group of mentors and advisers who have helped her to reach a remarkable book.

Fourth: the author demonstrates an extensive comparativistic approach that shows true erudition and an excellent use of references, both modern and, very especially, early ones. All in all, if one is to find some minor element for criticism, there may be several footnotes whose purpose is merely referential (bibliographical information), that might have been incorporated into the main text (for instance notes 11 and 12 –page 5- in chapter one are the first non essential ones that the reader finds). However, most of the information, secondary discussion, amplification or debate contained in the footnotes tends to be interesting.

Fifth: despite its price, it is likely to become core reading for any Gower student and fundamental reading for most scholars devoted to the later medieval literatures. I could add some five or six other reasons of a more detailed and subtle importance for the strenuous medievalist, but I think these five may suffice as for now.

This monograph: *Fathers and daughters in Gower's Confessio Amantis*, also has a very revealing subtitle: *Authority, Family, State and Writing*. And as it promises, the four issues are discussed thoroughly and at sufficient length. It has five main sections: Defining Authority (pages 1-41), Redeeming Daughters (pages 42-101), Supplantation and Exchange (pages 102-129), Limiting Authority (pages 130-172), and a very noticeable last chapter: Textual Fathers and Textual Daughters (pages 173-215). A bibliography (pages 217-234), and then a names index and a topics index (pages 235-241) close the volume. The book is well balanced, and the publishers have taken great care: there are very few errata, such as for example the order of Howard Bloch's cited works on page 220, or an "s" missing in Johns Hopkins in the data for Elborg Forster's 1978 English translation of George Duby's *Medieval Marriage* (page 223). The structure of the volume is simple: a long introductory chapter (but summarising as well: hence that my discussion below will be centred on it), and then four chapters that present, exemplify and explain all the possible attitudes and

types of incest including fathers and daughters to be found in the different parts of Gower's *Confessio*.

Chapter 1: *Fathers and Daughters: defining authority* (pages 1-41), has these sections: [Introduction (pages 1-5)] It is not indicated as an introduction, but that is what those pages are. Then, "Discourse, Incest, and the Law" (pages 5-17); "Fathers and Daughters, Kings and Subjects: Familial and Political Authority" (pages 17-29); "Gender, the Private, and the Public" (pages 29-33); "Textual Authority" (pages 33-41); and, again without a label, the last part could be titled [Organization (pages 38-41)].

Chapter 2: *Redeeming Daughters: Thaise, Peronelle and Constance* (pages 42-101), is the first case study and collection of exemplary samples. It is headed by an "Introduction" (pages 42-45); and then three tales are discussed: "The Tale of Apollonius of Tyre" (pages 45-64), devoted to Thaise's exploits (it is significant to mention that the French poet François Villon also wrote poems to Thaïs some decades later); "The Tale of the Three Questions" (pages 64-75) where King Alphonse and his daughter Peronelle contend on the virtue and intelligence of Petro, the model knight; and finally "The Tale of Constance" (pages 75-101) where, especially if we confer it with Chaucer's own version, Constance symbolises the Church, and Bullón-Fernández very intelligently brings Julia Kristeva's interpretations on Christ and His Mother to her support of Gower's feminisation of the *Ecclesia*.

Chapter 3: *Fathers as Husbands, Husbands as Fathers: Supplantation and Exchange* in the "Tale of the false bachelor" and the "Tale of Albinus and Rosemund" (pages 102-129), is built on two stories, and is the shortest section in the book, as it deals (mainly) with the problems of supplantation and envy and their rather gruesome consequences on the self and identity, and ambiguity and the perils of both misunderstanding and drinking (in a way: the *Bibe cum patre tuo* is also a wink towards the excesses of power). Its structure is simple: an "Introduction" (pages 102-104); and then "The Tale of the False Bachelor" (pages 104-115); followed by "The Tale of Albinus and Rosemund" (pages 115-129).

Chapter 4: *Limiting Authority: Leucothoe, Virginia, and Canace* (pages 130-172), as in the cases of chapters two and five, also deals with three tales. It is

headed by an express “Introduction” (pages 130-133); and immediately we are confronted with “The Tale of Leucothoe” (pages 134-145); “The Tale of Virginia” (pages 145-157), a staple in many medieval works dealing with public and private affairs in a wider political context: it is the sad story of Virginius (father), his daughter Virginia and the wicked Roman Apius Claudius (a king in the tale), and how Virginius and Virginia react when the father thinks that the king has exceeded his authority and that a subject is not a serf or mere property. The crucial part of the plot, however, is that Claudius, acting as a tyrant, tries to have Virginia and deprive her of her virginity without her father’s consent. Finally we find “The Tale of Canace and Machaire” (pages 158-172), a tale also about the limits of authority, but a tale where the heroine, Canace, seems to challenge her father’s authority rather than that of the ruler. The tale questions his right to order her to kill herself, even though she has committed incest with her brother.

Chapter 5: Textual Fathers and Textual Daughters: The “Tale of Rosiphelee,” the “Tale of Jephthah’s Daughter,” and “Pygmaleon and the statue.” (pages 173-215) finally analyses the father-son-like relationship of Genius and Amans, and centrally Bullón-Fernández’s main thesis –as I see it- of the author as father, the text as a daughter, and the act of writing (or narrating) as a transgression of the cultural establishment as Gower does not want to commit himself and tries to stand apart from other more outspoken contemporary colleagues. However, the author herself is likely to contend otherwise and say that the book does not argue that writing is a transgression of the cultural establishment, or that Gower wants to stand apart from his contemporary colleagues, i.e., that indeed Gower wants writing (narrating) to become a major voice that influences political decisions. The “Introduction” (pages 173-177) helps us to remember Gower’s position of authority as creator or giver of life, and the narration’s (semi?)ancillary status. All that is illustrated by “The Tale of Rosiphelee” (pages 177-189); “The Tale of Jephthah’s Daughter” (pages 189-199), the only biblical story in this study; and “Pygmaleon and the statue” (pages 199-215), where Pygmaleon is presented by Bullón-Fernández as the confessor and the statue the confessant, in clear parallel with Genius and Amans on the one hand and Gower and his narratio on the other. In this Gower departs from other sources (Ovid, *Le Roman de la Rose*...), and Genius/Pygmaleon are

implicated in the desire of creation that they are trying to regulate. That both fall in love with their creation, and as their creation is part of themselves, is the sort of Narcissism that Bullón-Fernández enhances by a whole set of references and comparisons with the tradition and forms of courtly love. Both characters are blind to the structures of “authority and the incestuous implications involved in artistic creation” (p. 212). That both artists produce female offspring, and both are also husbands to their creatures. In the case of Pygmalion, he exerts absolute power. However, Genius (or Gower?), Bullón-Fernández explains, self limits his voice and his dominion over his text.

The book as a whole deals with the problem of incest presenting both literary and historical evidence for that sort of problem when siblings and fathers and daughters are involved. The mother/son problem is atoned (but dealt with) as the election of Elektras rather than Oedipuses is more in connection with what Bullón-Fernández labels as “discourse, incest and the law.” She presents the Christian canonical position and points out very significantly that Genius’ position as a priest is what allows Gower the poet to defend confession as a means of instructing Amans. As a result of this suasory attitude, a section on lechery and its subdivisions according to medieval catechisms follow suit. That Genius explains to Amans that sibling incest was “the necessity of times”, and that incest and sexual desire precede taboo, is first discussed by using the story of the Flood and the “naturalness” of incest. This historical development from the times in which there were no laws against incest through Abraham’s time implies evolution. Siblings are now forbidden fruit, but one may resort to cousins. The convenience of “acts against kynde” is now discussed and Genius becomes some sort of Lévi-Strauss, Rubin and other feminist critics, Butler... I have found particularly becoming the way in which Bullón-Fernández deals with the issues of homosexuality and heterosexuality when she explains how Genius has used the stories and metamorphoses of Narcissus and Iphis. As one may have expected, Genius promotes procreative sexuality –and the author procrastinates a little bit by commenting on the point that creative writing and the exchange of words can be compared to the exchange of women.

This leads to the immediate discussion of familial and political authority, and hence to the expounding of the Tale of Apollonius as an example of the subjection of woman in marriage in accordance with canon law. The public and private spheres, the views on the self and society are brought to the front while Bullón-Fernández implements how the performative power of language taboo subverts ideology in Gower's discourse. While incest can remain as a family matter, once that family has social power, the case becomes public. Now we are to find the implications applied to the case of king Richard II. Gower argues that tyrants can be deposed (?), or at least this is my reading of Bullón-Fernández's interpretation. And if the *Confessio* was in the make around 1390, Richard II had had lots of trouble with his subjects. From the Peasants' Revolt in 1381 to his legislative and financial policy in 1397-1399 that ultimately might have led to his deposition by his cousin. Richard II's refusal to comply with the law turned him into a tyrant... and doing away with tyrannical moods is allowed... or this is what I gather from this book. However, I may be wrong or have read those pages too fast. If Gower was a clerk in 1390, I wonder whether all this issue may be an extrapolated anticipation of what we find later on pages 37-38. Especially as Bullón-Fernández now leads us towards the argument that the King is a father (to his children and to his people), and that regal rules (applicable to daughters and subjects) complement political rules (that govern the relations of the king and his wife together with his relation to the land). This is very well argued and Bullón-Fernández most convincingly presents the fact that the queen (or a woman) is a land to be governed without oppression; just the same as family relations are similar to those in between king and nation. That the king must be a loving and caring father to his children, or a good and faithful husband to his queen is not just medieval politics: it is something that Bullón-Fernández brings forward from her reading of Genius's teachings.

In the same way that government has been illustrated in the private and the public arenas, gender is now brought forth. This is introduced by the contention of textual authority (although the author discusses this at length in the last chapter), where Genius has become the narrative voice, and hence leads the development of the plot and the story, and Amans a devoted audience. Bullón-Fernández quite cleverly wishes to avoid incongruities at

this point and advances her idea that Gower has used “divided counsel” by using Genius as the leading voice, but keeping control as author and thus conducting the exhortative aim of the poem. Bullón-Fernández transforms the argument by proving that Gower is exploring textual authority, and hence both Amans (internally) and Gower (externally) question Genius’s *auctoritas*. If Genius can be considered (page 35) as Gower in his priestlike manner, when Amans’ name is disclosed, we learn that he is called John Gower, and in such a way Gower, the author, becomes a character. Bullón-Fernández proves her point very well: Gower is both *auctor* and *persona* (even *personae*). So, the text is similar to the author’s daughter and performs a feminine role (page 37, also, expanded in pages 199ff.). The ultimate result, a brilliant thesis in this book: Gower refuses to create one auctorial voice because, as a father to his text, he does not want to commit incest with his literary daughter.

A final explanation of the organization of the book (pages 38-41) closes this introductory section where the author has raised a multitude of expectations. Her last paragraph here summarises most of what will be expounded (page 41):

This book asks why Gower raises the spectre of incest, but, more crucially, it also asks why fathers and daughters are so central to some of the most significant tales in his Middle English poem... Due to the hierarchical and gendered character of this relationship, this type of incest enables Gower to explore the boundaries of power and authority in different, though interrelated, spheres, and to raise questions about power, subordination, and the limits of the authority figure...

Together with what I have found most interesting: Bullón-Fernández does not just ask questions: she answers them quite deftly. The author has also been able to demonstrate that Genius’ authority and Amans’ questioning are a rather sharp and double-edged razor with which the author shows how “Gower’s own anxieties about his relationship with his own text” (page 41) work as the underlying leit-motif in the *Confession*. The fatherly authority of the author/narrator/character is ultimately contested by the model of personal and social hierarchy in Gower’s life and in Gower’s society. An enjoyable book. Read on.

S. G. Fernández-Corugedo
University of Oviedo

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FERNÁNDEZ ÁLVAREZ, María Pilar 1999: *Antiguo Islandés. Historia y lengua* (Introducción de Julia Fernández Cuesta y María José Mora). Madrid. Ediciones Clásicas (Serie: Lenguas Indoeuropeas). 365 pp. ISBN 84-7882-365-4.

Tras la publicación de las obras *Manual de Lengua Gótica* (Salamanca, 1983)¹ y *Manual de Antiguo Alto Alemán* (Salamanca, 1988) nos encontramos aquí con lo que constituiría el tercer manual en castellano de una antigua lengua germánica elaborado por María Pilar Fernández Álvarez, profesora titular del Departamento de Filología Clásica e Indoeuropeo de la Universidad de Salamanca.²

El mérito principal de esta obra radica en que se trata de la primera gramática del islandés antiguo publicada en nuestro idioma, cosa que a todas luces supone un gran paso para la paulatina, pero constante, introducción en nuestro país de la lengua y literatura islandesas, un enorme (y apasionante) ámbito de investigación que, lamentablemente, apenas goza de la presencia que merecería en nuestras universidades.

Antiguo Islandés. Historia y lengua está dividido en diez apartados con los que se pretende ofrecer una detallada introducción a la lengua islandesa antigua y, en menor medida, a la literatura medieval islandesa. Cada apartado está formado por diversos capítulos que, a su vez, se subdividen en varios epígrafes. Esta organización en apartados, capítulos y epígrafes dota al libro de un fácil manejo para aquellos que deseen consultar aspectos específicos de la antigua lengua islandesa o, simplemente, para quienes deseen familiarizarse con esta lengua de un modo general.

En el primer bloque del libro (pp. 23-65) se nos ofrece una introducción general elaborada por las profesoras Julia Fernández Cuesta y María José Mora, de los Departamentos de Lengua Inglesa y de Literatura Inglesa y

¹.- En 1988 se llevó a cabo una segunda edición de esta obra realizada con la colaboración de la profesora Ana Agud Aparicio.

².- También habría que destacar la colaboración que, junto a Catalina Montes y Gudelia Rodríguez, realiza la profesora Fernández Álvarez en el volumen *El inglés antiguo en el marco de las lenguas germánicas occidentales* (Madrid, CESIC, 1995), así como su participación con Carlos Búa e Ignacio Juanes en la traducción del *Heliand* antiguo sajón (Madrid, Marcial Pons, 1996).

Norteamericana de la Universidad de Sevilla. Esta introducción comienza con una contextualización general del antiguo nórdico dentro del marco de las lenguas indoeuropeas. Se tratan aquí las principales características de las lenguas germánicas, los dialectos del germánico y el antiguo nórdico (donde hemos echado de menos alguna mención al gotlandés, posiblemente la lengua escandinava antigua más emparentada con el gótico), los periodos del antiguo nórdico, una aproximación a las runas y, por último, una panorámica general sobre la literatura en antiguo nórdico donde se trata de las Eddas, la poesía escáldica y los distintos géneros de sagas (de obispos, de reyes, de islandeses, contemporáneas, de la antigüedad y caballerescas). En definitiva, esta sección introductoria del libro cumple sobradamente con su objetivo de ofrecer un punto de partida general para adentrarse posteriormente en la gramática específica del antiguo islandés. No obstante, hemos detectado algunas pequeñas erratas o inexactitudes en esta introducción que sería conveniente corregir. Por ejemplo, en la página 43 se nos dice que la *Völuspá* “recoge los mitos nórdicos más significativos en forma de preguntas y respuestas”. Esta aseveración tal vez se deba a alguna confusión con la *Gylfaginning* de Snorri Sturluson o con el *Vafþrúðnismál* recogido en la Edda Poética, que sí poseen ese carácter dialógico.

El segundo bloque temático (pp. 67-102) se compone de un análisis de la fonética antiguo islandesa dividido en dos partes: Vocales y consonantes. En esta sección se estudian las distintas metafonías, metátesis, etc... sufridas por el antiguo islandés, todo ello relacionado con otras lenguas germánicas antiguas y el indoeuropeo. No obstante, mientras que en la página 87 se ofrece una clara sinopsis de la pronunciación de las vocales, una enumeración similar hubiera sido hartamente clarificadora en el apartado correspondiente a la pronunciación de las consonantes (pp. 100-01). Con todo, se trata este de un apartado bastante detallado que ayuda a obtener una panorámica general de la fonética antiguo islandesa, aunque aquí también hemos detectado unas cuantas erratas o errores que, sin ánimo de desmerecer el notable esfuerzo que supone la confección de un manual de estas características, quisiéramos indicar: En la página 77 se traduce *sok* como “cosa”, cuando en realidad ese término significaría más exactamente “causa, sanción, motivo”. “Cosa”, en antiguo islandés, sería *hlutr*. En la página 79 se

traduce el adjetivo *víss* como “experto”, aunque una traducción más fiel sería “seguro, sabio”. “Experto” sería, más bien, *kunnigr* o *kunnandi*.

El tercer bloque temático (pp. 103-78) está dedicado a la morfología y en él se tratan, en primer lugar, las distintas declinaciones (débiles y fuertes) que afectan a los sustantivos, adjetivos y a los distintos tipos de pronombres (personales, posesivos, demostrativos, etc...). La siguiente sección de este tercer bloque temático se centra en la morfología verbal y trata sobre la formación de los verbos débiles, los verbos fuertes, restos de formaciones verbales irregulares, formas reflexivas, etc... Al igual que en el bloque anterior, aquí también se procura insertar la morfología del antiguo islandés en el contexto más amplio de otras lenguas germánicas y el indoeuropeo, lo cual agradará, sin duda, al lingüista comparativo. No obstante, en la sección dedicada a la morfología verbal, hemos echado en falta un tratamiento específico de los verbos irregulares *vilja* (“querer”) y *fá* (“obtener, poder, etc...”), dado que se trata de dos verbos de uso muy habitual y ofrecen además una serie de características que merecerían ser estudiadas con cierto detalle. Aparte de esta ausencia, también nos hemos encontrado aquí con una serie de erratas o errores que, aunque en algunos casos no revisten gran importancia, podrían no obstante confundir al lector que se enfrente por primera vez al antiguo islandés o que no tenga unos conocimientos más profundos de esta lengua. Así, en la página 120 se traduce el término *misgerandi* como “reo”, pero una traducción más fiel sería “transgresor”. En la página 128 aparece *fyrst* cuando en realidad debería aparecer *fyrstr*, dado que se está hablando de un ordinal en caso nominativo singular masculino de declinación fuerte. En la página 134 se transcribe “itt” en vez de *pitt* al referirse al pronombre posesivo de segunda persona en acusativo singular neutro. Lo mismo sucede en las páginas 140 y 141, en las que aparece “verra” en lugar de *hverra* y “eittvat” en vez de *eitthvat* respectivamente. En la página 143, dedicada a los adverbios de modo, se nos dice, por ejemplo, que *sumstaðar* (“en alguna parte”) se deriva a partir del nominativo *staðr* (donde *-staðar* sería el genitivo que se usa para formar el adverbio de modo), lo cual es correcto. Pero siguiendo en esta misma línea explicativa, se nos dice a continuación que el adverbio de modo *einskonar* (“una especie de”) deriva de “konar” (ya de por sí genitivo), cuando se debería decir que deriva del nominativo *konr*, al igual que el caso anterior. En la página 153 aparece

“ló” en vez de *sló* (pretérito del verbo *slá* = “golpear”) y en la página 159 se escribe “vissi” en vez de *vissim* (primera persona del plural del pretérito optativo del verbo *vita* = “saber”). También sería conveniente corregir algunos errores aparecidos en la última sección de este tercer bloque, dedicada a la formación de palabras, ya que en la página 174 se traduce *Vestfylldir* como “los pueblos del Oeste”, cuando en realidad este término hace referencia a los habitantes de Vestfold, en Noruega. En esta misma página se traduce *kussi* como “vaquita”, pero lo correcto sería “ternerito” (“vaquita” sería *kussa*, con la típica terminación *-a* de muchos sustantivos femeninos de declinación débil). Por otra parte, en la página 177 se traduce “útføttr” (*útfættr*?) como “de pies planos”, aunque como se puede ver por su clara etimología, este término se refiere más bien al “patizambo”, es decir, a alguien que junta las rodillas y, a partir de ahí hacia abajo, separa las piernas, quedando afectado por lo que en traumatología se denomina “varus fisiológico”. Por último, en la página 178 se traduce el término legal *legorð* por la expresión (un poco larga) “yacer con una mujer”, cuando podría haberse traducido mejor por “fornicación”, “seducción” o, más exactamente, “coito ilegal”.¹

El cuarto bloque temático (pp. 179-223) está dedicado a la sintaxis y se divide en tres apartados principales: Uno dedicado a la sintaxis nominal (casos, adjetivos, artículos, pronombres), otro a la sintaxis verbal (tiempos, modos, formas reflexivas, voz pasiva) y, por último, otro dedicado a la sintaxis oracional (concordancia, frases sin sujeto, elipsis, oraciones subordinadas, orden de palabras). Ese bloque sigue la misma línea expositiva que los anteriores (abundantes epígrafes y explicaciones esquemáticas acompañadas por numerosos ejemplos) y supone ya el colofón de todo lo anteriormente analizado. De hecho, y dada la importancia de este bloque, se nos avisa desde el principio en una nota a pie de página de que se ha “procurado traducir los ejemplos del antiguo islandés, entresacados de los textos seleccionados, lo más literalmente posible” (p. 179). Sin embargo, en este bloque nos encontramos también con diversas erratas o errores de traducción que pensamos deberían haberse corregido antes de la publicación de este manual. Así, nos encontramos que en la página 183 se traduce *þeir*

¹.- A este respecto véase el interesante análisis que de este término realiza Jenny Jochens (1995: 32-33).

fara como “viajaron” en lugar de “viajan”, que sería lo más literal, puesto que el verbo está en presente de indicativo. En la página 189 se traduce la expresión en dativo *fundi okrum* (sic) como “vuestro encuentro”, cuando en realidad es “nuestro encuentro” (*fundi okkrum*). En la página 194 se debería traducir *skelfr* (presente indicativo) por “tiembla”, y no “tembló” (“tembló” sería *skalf*). También hemos detectado una cierta incoherencia en las distintas traducciones que se nos ofrecen en las páginas 201 y 213 de la frase (extraída de la *Saga de Egill Skallagrímsson*) “*konungr sagði, at hann myndi þar hvárki at vinna*”. En la página 201 se traduce como “el rey dijo que él no decidía (mejor “decidiría”) ninguna de las dos cosas”, mientras que en la página 213 se traduce como “el rey dijo que él allí no ganaría a ninguno.”

En el bloque quinto del libro se nos ofrece un útil índice en donde se registran las palabras mencionadas en los apartados de fonética, morfología y sintaxis. Cada palabra remite además a las páginas donde aparecen.

En el bloque sexto (pp. 225-62) se incluye una serie de apéndices sobre los paradigmas de las distintas declinaciones y conjugaciones, así como un listado de formas verbales y nominales irregulares. En este último caso, tal vez hubiera sido útil, en beneficio de una mayor claridad, una especificación de los tiempos o casos en que se encuentran las palabras listadas.

En el bloque séptimo (pp. 289-312) se nos ofrece una antología de textos procedentes de la literatura medieval islandesa, entre los que se encuentran fragmentos de la *Saga de Egill Skallagrímsson*, de la *Edda en prosa* y de la *Edda en verso*. Creemos que se trataría de un buen recurso práctico para el estudiante de este manual si se hubiera incluido a lo largo de los distintos bloques una serie de ejercicios de traducción de progresiva dificultad al estilo del manual de Sigríð Valfells y James E. Cathey (1981), aspecto que hemos echado de menos.

El bloque octavo incluye un breve (pp. 315-38), pero útil, diccionario antiguo islandés-español (basado en gran medida en el vocabulario que se emplea a lo largo del manual y en los textos seleccionados en el bloque anterior) que en cierto modo subsana la absoluta carencia de diccionarios de esta lengua en nuestro país.

Por su parte, el bloque noveno (pp. 339-61) ofrece una amplia bibliografía que, aunque útil, presenta a nuestro juicio una serie de ausencias, erratas e irregularidades que son, en cualquier caso, subsanables: Así, en la parte dedicada a manuales publicados (p. 241) echamos en falta la inclusión del magnífico texto de Bruno Kress (1982) que, pese a centrarse en el islandés moderno, complementa al también clásico manual de Stefán Einarsson, cuya segunda edición de 1956 sí se cita, aunque al igual que el de Kress, también se centra en el islandés moderno. En la sección bibliográfica dedicada a diccionarios, glosarios y léxicos hubiera sido aconsejable incluir el excelente diccionario mitológico de Rudolf Simek (1984). Igualmente, en la sección “el antiguo islandés y otras lenguas germánicas” hemos echado en falta el utilísimo manual de Orrin W. Robinson (1992). En la sección destinada a la literatura, llama la atención el predominio de obras dedicadas a las *Íslendigasögur* y a los textos éddicos, en perjuicio de las obras dedicadas a otros géneros literarios como, por ejemplo, las *Fornaldarsögur* o las *Riddarasögur*. En este sentido, se hubiera agradecido la inclusión de obras clásicas como las de Margaret Schlauch (1934) o Stephen A. Mitchell (1991), por citar sólo un par de ejemplos. Es también en esta sección sobre literatura donde nos encontramos con alguna que otra errata. Así, se atribuye en la página 355 la autoría del libro *Eddas and Sagas* (Reykjavík, 1988) a Peter Foote, quien en realidad es el traductor de la obra al inglés; el autor es Jónas Kristjánsson. En la sección bibliográfica denominada “ediciones, traducciones en español y crestomatías” (pp. 352-54) se sitúa el lugar de edición de las traducciones de Santiago Ibáñez *La saga de los Ynglingos* y *La saga de Ragnar Calzas Peludas* en Madrid, cuando la editorial de estos textos es de Valencia (Ediciones Tilde). Por último, en la sección bibliográfica llamada “varia” se incluye la versión inglesa de la obra de Lucien Musset *The Germanic Invasions* (Pennsylvania, 1975) sin aludir a la versión española en dos volúmenes publicada por la editorial Labor de Barcelona en 1973 y 1975, cosa que hubiera sido recomendable en un manual dirigido al lector en castellano. Por último, dudamos de la pertinencia de incluir en esta sección bibliográfica (y, por extensión, en la bibliografía de este manual) una obra como *El oráculo vikingo* (Barcelona, 1988) de Ralph Blum, donde se habla de las runas desde un punto de vista divulgativo y pseudo-esotérico que tal vez hará las delicias de los adeptos a

la *New Age*, aunque sospechamos que no constituye material científico de primer orden.

El décimo bloque con que concluye este libro (pp. 363-65) recoge una serie de abreviaturas de los términos filológicos y literarios que se han empleado.

No obstante, y a pesar de las erratas y/o errores que pueden ser corregidos en una posible segunda edición (en la que se debería procurar también subsanar los problemas tipográficos a los que seguramente se ha enfrentado esta primera edición, ya que no entendemos por qué en la introducción se utiliza la letra “ð” mientras que en el resto del texto se utiliza una “<-d>” que se sitúa al margen de la grafía estándar del antiguo islandés), *Antiguo islandés. Historia y lengua* es una obra cuanto menos necesaria en el mercado bibliográfico en lengua castellana. Ofrece una buena panorámica global de esta lengua germánica antigua y resulta especialmente útil si se la considera ante todo como una descripción gramatical del islandés antiguo. En definitiva, como hemos dicho al principio, un importante paso en la introducción en nuestro país de este apasionante mundo de la Islandia medieval.

Mariano González Campo
Universidad de Murcia

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LIUZZA, Roy M. 2000. *Beowulf: A New Verse Translation*. Peterborough: Broadview. 248 pp. \$7.95.

Roy Liuzza's *Beowulf* is a proficiently executed project which offers not only a masterly Present Day English translation of the poem with scholarly notes, but also very useful supplementary material, intended to provide a historical and literary context for the reading of the poem. In his preface to this volume, Liuzza claims that "the present work is intended to bring together a readable and reliable translation with adequate notes, a collection of supporting texts and commentary, and an introduction that situates the poem in a literary history" (9). He certainly achieves his purpose: this translation is not only "readable and reliable", but also intense, lively, and manages to communicate the original force of the Old English poem that we sometimes miss in most translations since Burton Raffel's, and which is often set aside for the sake of syntactic or metrical coherence-- something which, in fact, the original poem does not always follow so strictly.

Liuzza divides his introduction into five different parts, each offering brief but straightforward discussions on the main subjects of scholarly controversy in the study of the poem.

In the first section, "*Beowulf* Between Myth and History," we are offered a laudably objective summary or outline of the story in the poem, explaining "parallels between the hero's combat and various elements of Northern Folklore and world mythology" (14), and providing references to the main studies on this particular subject.

In "*Beowulf* Between Song and Text" Liuzza discusses the oral-formulaic elements in the poem as well as the historical and legendary allusions which, he claims, drive "the poem's art and meaning" (23). He also introduces the widely debated subjects of the date of composition and the intended audience of the poem. This leads him to ask "why did an English poet feel drawn to work this old material into such a powerful story?" (27), to which he tries to give an answer discussing the origin of the poem and the theme of heroism, and framing *Beowulf* in its historical context. He finally concludes that "stories of generous and noble heroes like Beowulf may have served as a kind of 'invention of tradition' (in Eric Hobsbawm's phrase) for

the demoralized English nation in the face of Danish attack” (29). This, however, may be somewhat confusing, taking into account that he does not discuss the theory claiming that the *Beowulf* poet condemns paganism and the heroic ideal, which is also a matter of neverending controversy, till the following part of the introduction. His assertion (following J. Earl and C. Davis) that the poem “celebrates the warrior in heroic isolation” (29) is maybe too quick too, for the same reason.

In this same section he also defines *Beowulf* as “Obscure in its origins, inarticulate in its purposes, enigmatic in its history” (20). This and his reference to the poem’s “allusive complexity” (21) lead him to a brief discussion on the “digressions” in the poem, giving the main scholarly opinions on the subject; though he finally chooses to agree with Leyerle that “there are no digressions in *Beowulf*” (qtd p. 30), in the sense that every one of the so-called digressions has a specific purpose in the development of the story.

In “*Beowulf* Between Court and Cloister” Liuzza discusses the Pagan/Christian dichotomy, noting that “Critics of *Beowulf* are divided on many issues, but none is more important than the significance of the poem’s religious elements” (31). He points out the most extreme positions, as Cabaniss and McNamee’s theory that *Beowulf* is a type of Christ or Goldsmith’s opinion that the *Beowulf* poet condemns paganism and heroism. He also mentions the scholarly trend claiming “that the poem’s origin and ethos are essentially pagan” (31). Liuzza detaches himself from all of them and takes a safe (and the commonest) intermediate position by claiming that:

These two extreme positions capture quite dramatically the dilemma caused by what can be regarded as the poem’s deliberate ambivalence: *Beowulf* is a secular Christian poem about pagans which avoids the easy alternatives of automatic condemnation or enthusiastic anachronism (32).

In this part of the introduction, which is a fairly difficult task to undertake because of the complexity of the subject it deals with, Liuzza sometimes seems to be assuming that the reader is familiar with the controversy in question and the different scholarly positions. Thus, to the newcomer to the field, some of his assertions may seem contradictory, but

this is no more than a reflection of the numerous inner contradictions of the poem, to which we are exposed as soon as we decide to devote ourselves to the serious study of *Beowulf*.

In “*Beowulf* Between Old and Modern English”, Liuzza briefly explains the basic Old English poetical features: variations, appositions, repetitions, formulae, and so forth. He also discusses here some of the problems he encountered when facing translation, and adds a (kind of) review of his own translation and a statement of his main purposes when undertaking the task.

Thus, this introduction concentrates in less than forty pages all the main points of scholarly discussion and basic controversies in *Beowulf* studies, and reflects no doubt Liuzza’s knowledge of the poem as well as his dedication and devotion to it. For students, this introduction will be more helpful than most guides to *Beowulf*, of which most (as Nicholson’s or Baker’s) are compilations of renowned essays. Bjork and Niles’ *A Beowulf Handbook* is the only one which presents a general overview of all the main controversies in *Beowulf* studies, but it is too complex and dense for the average undergraduate.

The translation of the poem, for which Liuzza follows mostly Klaeber’s text --though he adopts some of the emendations suggested by Mitchell and Robinson and some other editors-- is, as claimed above, faithful to the original in that it does not fail to transmit its liveliness and intensity. Furthermore, many of the characteristic features of Old English poetry are retained, as quite a few kenningar and metonymies (with explanatory notes), thus adding to that same effect to which every serious reader of *Beowulf* feels so attracted, and which is, according to many, the most appealing feature of the poem. This is his translation of the moment in which Beowulf realizes that his sword fails to harm Grendel’s mother (ll.1518- 1522 a):

Then the worthy man saw that water- witch,
A great mere- wife; he gave a mighty blow
With his battle- sword— he did not temper that stroke—
So that the ring- etched blade rang out on her head
A greedy battle- song (100).

The meter is somewhat irregular (as it is in the original poem, in fact). Liuzza tries to stick to a four stress pattern with a medial pause, and alliterative sounds, though “these are by no means as marked as they are in the original, and on rare occasion are foregone altogether” (47). But as the translator himself claims, “As with any translation certain effects are lost in the pursuit of others” (47). Liuzza admits he has chosen to place “fluency and precision at the top of ... [his] list of goals” (47). He is not “trying to make Old English out of Modern English” (46) either, so that it does not sound odd to the modern ear. The use of archaisms is, for that same reason, consciously avoided. Most *Beowulf* translators (Donaldson, for instance, to name a very popular translation) preserve or even overexploit the use of archaisms in their texts in order to stress the poem’s ancient character. However, the outcome of their effort is bound to prove awkward and tedious.

The extent to which Liuzza is concerned about preserving the sense of the original text drives him to translate the half- line “Gaeth a wyrd swa hio scel” (455b) as “*wyrd* always goes as it must!” (pg.67). ‘Wyrd’ is an untranslatable Old English word (normally translated as simply ‘fate’ by those interested in highlighting the poem’s pagan essence or ‘providence’ by those who would rather stress its Christian coloring) whose meaning and sense pervade the poem. Liuzza chooses to retain the original and add an explanatory note discussing the range of meaning of the Old English word.

The so- called “Lament of the Last Survivor” is one of the most widely-known amongst the key passages of the poem. Critics of translations frequently resort to it to illustrate their claims, since it is a highly evocative passage which reflects important aspects of Anglo- Saxon culture in general and central issues of the poem in particular (as the importance of *wyrd*). Liuzza translates the first lines of this passage as follows:

Hold now, o thou earth, for heroes cannot,	Heald þu nu, hruse, nu haeleð ne mostan,
the wealth of men—Lo, from you long ago	eorla aehte! Hwaet hyt aer on ðe
those good ones first obtained it! Death in war,	gode be Eaton. Guð-deað fornam,
and awful deadly harm have swept away	feorh-bealo frecne, fyra gehwylcne
all of my people who have passed from life,	leoda minra, para ðe þis lif ofgeaf,
and left the joyfull hall. Now have I none	gesawon sele-dream; nah, hwa sweord wege
to bear the sword or burnish the bright cup,	oððe feormie faeted waege,

the precious vessel -all that host has fled (122) drync-faet deore; duguð ellor scoc (2247- 54).

As seen here, Liuzza endeavors to follow the original text very closely, but adopts the Old English metrical patterns only up to an extent that will prevent his translation from sounding awkward to the modern ear. The result is thus a *Beowulf* which is both faithful to the original and comprehensible; its meaning not at all obscured by labored attempts at conforming to cumbersome structures. Rather, this translation flows in a smooth continuity.

As it is common in most *Beowulf* translations, Liuzza includes a glossary of the proper names found in the poem, as well as the Geats, Danes, and Swedes' family trees. He also adds a helpful reconstruction of the Geatish-Swedish wars, presenting the "fortunes of the Geatish royal house" in chronological order, since they are far from being "told in a straightforward way" (157) in the poem.

The translation is followed by five appendixes with explanatory notes, which are very useful to help contextualize *Beowulf* in its literary, historical, cultural, and academic background. Appendixes A and B focus on the poem's sources and its allusions: "Characters Mentioned in *Beowulf*" introduces some of the characters in the poem as they appear in other sources, as King Hygelac, Beowulf the Dane, or Finn. "Analogues to themes and events in *Beowulf*" includes relevant excerpts from *Grettis Saga*, Saxo Grammaticus's *Gesta Danorum*, Snorri Sturluson's *Heimskringla* and *Ynglinga Saga*, *The Life of Saint Gildas*, and the *Blickling Homilies*; offering thus a good general survey of some of the main parallels to the *Beowulf* story.

Appendixes C and D offer information about the original context of the poem:

In "Christians and Pagans," we find some translations of well-known documents dating from the late sixth to the late tenth century showing, on the one hand, to what extent Christianity was rooted in Anglo-Saxon society at the time of composition of *Beowulf* and, on the other, the extent to which the condemnation of the pagan past was or was not prevalent. "Contexts for Reading *Beowulf*," includes some selections of manuscripts dating from the approximate time of the copying of the *Beowulf* codex, offering thus a

literary context for the poem. Furthermore, “each comments, in some way, on the central themes of the poem” (196).

In Appendix E: “Translations of *Beowulf*,” Liuzza brings together twenty different translations of “the coastguard’s speech” (ll. 229- 257 in the poem); from Sharon Turner’s (1805) to Frederick Rebsamen’s (1991); trying to illustrate how differently (even divergently) things can be interpreted depending on who reads them and when. Liuzza tries to prove that “The history of the poem in modern English reflects not only progress in linguistic and historical knowledge but changes in attitudes towards the poem’s meaning and style” (212).

This new translation of *Beowulf*, thus, offers fairly good supplementary material which is extremely useful for both the scholar and the student, and makes an excellent “textbook” for teachers and students of this “unruly poem” (16). The prize (\$ 7.95 in the US) makes it also affordable for everyone interested in the subject.

Since Heaney’s translation of *Beowulf* and Liuzza’s came to the reading public at about the same time, it may seem unavoidable to offer at least a quick comparison of both texts: Liuzza’s shows the skill of an expert, he includes explanatory notes, scholarly references, and additional readings; the only thing I missed was an Old English facing- page version. Heaney does use the facing- page format in the bilingual edition, but his *Beowulf* seems to me more a popularization of the poem (in the sense that he tries to offer the general reading public an easy- to read version of a poem renowned for its complexity) than a serious scholarly translation. It may be useful for initially catching the student’s interest, but not as a textbook. For a facing- page format, I would rather stick to the more reliable version by Howell D. Chickering.

As a final note, I think it suitable to add that an errata list was sent by Roy Liuzza to all Ansaxnet list members, still available in the Ansaxdat database for both subscribers and non- subscribers to the list. (<http://www.mun.ca/Ansaxdat>).

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Universidad de Sevilla

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EDITORS' NOTES & SELIM NEWS

I.— *Selim*

II.— The reformed Statutes of Selim can be read and downloaded at:

<http://www.uniovi.es/~selim/SelimEstatutos2002.pdf>

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*Explicit
hoc totum
pro Xpto
da mihi potum*

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