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"The Middle English *Alexander B* and Its Sources – A Reassessment"

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Introduction

The Middle English *Alexander and Dindimus* (*Alexander B*) stands out for its transmission and content, yet it has received very little scholarly attention down to the present day. The fragment relates a fictive correspondence between Alexander the Great and Dindimus, King of the Brahmans, in whose territory Alexander happens to come on one of his numerous campaigns. Alexander is eager to find out about the Brahmans' way of life, of which he has already heard much which seems rather unbelievable to him, and, driven by curiosity, manages to make contact with Dindimus. What follows is a philosophical dispute about religious beliefs, morality, and rulership: whilst Dindimus, on behalf of the Brahmans, accuses Alexander of vane territorial expansion and inhumane behaviour, Alexander criticises the Brahmans for their excessive self-restriction and generally life-negating attitude. The text brilliantly illustrates how the struggle between *hybris* and *curiositas* culminates in the character of Alexander, which places it among the most important contributions to the Alexander portrait in Medieval English literature. Furthermore, with its focus on the discussion of philosophical questions in an intercultural setting, *Alexander B* impressively documents how Oriental cultures were received in the High and Late Middle Ages.

The text survives only in a single manuscript, Bodley 264, which is known for its many elaborate illustrations. Apart from *Alexander B*, the manuscript contains two French texts, a version of the *Roman d'Alexandre* and Marco Polo's *Voyages*, the latter of which was added to the manuscript together with Middle English *Alexander and Dindimus* in early fifteenth-century London. Clearly, the manuscript's contents are united in their travel literature topic, yet the combination and order of the texts raise questions about the process and purpose of its composition. There is reason to assume that through a thorough reassessment of the text's sources, which has been started in the context of MA studies and will be continued in more depth as part of a PhD project, it will be possible to further clear up the provenance of Bodley 264. Hence, the reassessment is not primarily done for its own sake, but rather to lay the necessary groundwork for a project which aims at addressing questions of transmission, translation, and cultural history at the same time. In this way, the project will add to the recent commentary by Khalaf, in which many of these questions remain unanswered.

The need for a reassessment of the sources has come to light through a critical evaluation of the research which has been done on *Alexander B* so far: three editors (SKEAT 1878; MAGOUN 1929;

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KHALAF 2017) have discussed *Alexander and Dindimus* either in comparison with the I^2- or the I^3-recension of the *Historia de preliis*; however, none of them satisfyingly argues for their particular Latin reference text. Magoun, although correctly pointing out that the I^3 text of a 1492 incunabulum used by Skeat is not at all suitable for comparison with the Middle English (71f.), does not provide sufficient evidence for I^2 and against I^3. Almost ninety years later, Khalaf, who follows Magoun in the identification of I^2 as the recension at the basis of *Alexander B*, fails to close this gap. Further to this, none of the editors takes into account that two I^2 manuscripts produced in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century England, Cambridge Corpus Christi College MS 129 and Cambridge Corpus Christi College MS 370, do have Latin readings which are different from those offered by the other manuscripts considered so far and which, in many cases, do match the English phrasings impressively well. This paper sheds light on the question of source in two major steps: firstly, it argues why Magoun and Khalaf – the latter in Magoun's tradition – are right in identifying the I^2-recension of the *Historia de preliis* as being closer to the Middle English than I^3; secondly, it shows why P_5, and with it C_1 and C_2 in being closely related to it, need to be considered better for comparison with the Middle English than the other manuscripts of the ε-tradition which have been proposed by Khalaf (Bx_1 and Br_4). At the same time, however, the analysis points to the limits of P_5, C_1, and C_2 in explaining the Middle English text, thus stressing that thorough work with all textual witnesses is necessary to come to an informed conclusion. The analysis is based on transcriptions of the digitised Cambridge manuscripts as well as the legacy of Alfons Hilka, which contains images of all ε-manuscripts except for Br_4 and which the Göttingen Staats- and Universitätsbibliothek is lucky to own.[1]

Contextualising the two different recensions

The term 'Alexander romance' denotes a large group of different texts relating the exploits and heroics of Alexander the Great. It was amongst the most influential texts throughout the Middle Ages, with its reception giving rise to a total of two hundred versions of the text in thirty-five different languages. The romance is a compilation from two major sources, namely a historical, though in parts novel-like, account of Alexander's deeds, and a collection of pseudo-historical letters mainly addressing Alexander's life and his wondrous adventures across India and the East. The Alexander romance was first compiled and further expanded by an unknown compiler from Alexandria around 300 AD, who is usually referred to as Pseudo-Callisthenes (Steinmann 5–6).

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[1] Hilka himself transcribed Br_4 in Wroclaw before the manuscript was destroyed in World War II.

Julius Valerius was the first to translate the Pseudo-Callisthenes from Greek into Latin in the early fourth century. However, the Latin text most influential throughout the Middle Ages was produced by Archpresbyter Leo, who translated a different recension of the Pseudo-Callisthenes in mid-tenth-century Italy.[2] Leo's text was then frequently adapted and interpolated, a most relevant result of this process being a text referred to as *Historia de preliis*. Amongst many other materials, the *Historia de preliis* also contains a revised version of the *Collatio Alexandri et Dindimi* (*Collatio* I) which had been circulating since late antiquity without being connected to the Pseudo-Callisthenes tradition (Steinmann 6–7). This revised version of the *Collatio* I, which merged with the *Historia de preliis*, is called *Collatio* III (Cary 14).[3]

The interpolated version of Leo's text, that is the *Historia de preliis* (I^1), was subject to further adaptations which gave rise to two different recensions of that text, namely I^2 (early twelfth century) and I^3 (early thirteenth century) (Steinmann 7).[4] I^2 and I^3 represent independent reworkings of I^1 (Pfister 1912, 251; Hilka 1920, xx; Steffens VIII) which do considerably differ in so far as I^2, whilst in its phrasings being particularly close to I^1, contains additions from various sources: "J^2, spätestens im 12. Jahrhundert geschrieben, lehnt sich sprachlich eng an J^1 an, erweitert den Text jedoch durch Zusätze aus den kleinen Traktaten, Valerius Maximus, Pseudo-Methodius, Josephus, Pseudo-Epiphanius und vor allem Orosius, so daß sie auch seit Ausfeld ,Orosius-Rezension' genannt wird" (Steffens VIII); I^3, in turn, is a version of I^1 fundamentally reworked both in terms of language and content. Pfister summarises this as follows (1912, 254–5):[5]

> Aber während J_2 den Wortlaut von J_1 nicht systematisch änderte, sondern sich im wesentlichen darauf beschränkte, durch sachliche Zusätze, besonders aus Orosius, den Stoff zu bereichern, lässt sich bei J_3 ein dreifacher Unterschied von J_1 feststellen. Zunächst fällt eine vollständige Umarbeitung des Wortlautes auf: die Fassung ist sprachlich viel reicher, schwülstiger, phrasenhafter. Ferner werden allenthalben bald kleinere Sätze, bald grössere Stücke, meist moralisierenden und reflektierenden Inhalts eingelegt, eine Erscheinung, die sich vor allem in den Briefen breit macht ... Als drittes wichtigstes Merkmal kommen noch eine Reihe grösserer Interpolationen erzählenden und beschreibenden Inhalts hinzu, die der Bearbeiter aus anderen Quellen selbständig hineinverarbeitet hat.

The I^2- and the I^3-recension each survive in numerous manuscripts.[6] They were then translated into many vernacular languages (Magoun 41), with one of the results being the Middle English *Alexander and Dindimus* which survives in MS Bodley 264 only (Magoun 3). The Middle

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[2] On the circumstances of Leo's transcription and translation in Naples cf. Steffens VII–VIII; Magoun 40–41.

[3] What is referred to as *Collatio* II, in turn, denotes a strongly revised version of the *Collatio* I which, just like the *Collatio* III, is still clearly identifiable as belonging to the *Collatio* I text. However, unlike the *Collatio* III, the *Collatio* II survives as an independent text (Cary 14; Steinmann 9).

[4] Steffens notes that the different Latin recensions were initially labelled I^1, I^2, and I^3, the 'I' standing for 'interpolation'. In order to avoid confusion with the Roman number, the capital 'I' has often been replaced by a capital 'J' (J^1, J^2, and J^3) (Steffens VII). 'I' and 'J' now still coexist in secondary literature.

[5] Cf. also Hilka 1920, xxii.

[6] For an overview of the manuscripts cf. Hilka / Bergmeister II V–XV (J^2); Steffens X–XXIV (J^3).

English version, however, represents only a very small part of the Latin text, namely for the most part the correspondence between Alexander and Dindimus in the version of *Collatio* III.

Evidence for I^2

In the introduction to his edition, Khalaf opens his chapter on sources by stating that "the two previous editors [i.e. SKEAT and MAGOUN] treated the matter of the sources of the Middle English poem differently", and continues more precisely (xl):

> Skeat ... proposed the comparison of the text with the J_3 version of the *Historia de preliis* found in an incunabulum printed in Strasburg in 1490 (1878:xiii–xv). Relying on Hilka's (1917) edition of HdP published in parallel with the Old French *Prose Alexander*, Magoun argued for the derivation of *A&D* from the J_2 redaction on the basis of the order of the episodes and the identification of numerous common readings.

Adding to the research of BECKER 1889 and PFISTER 1941, who have equally argued for I^2 as being the source of the B fragment, Magoun indeed positions himself clearly on the question of source, to the point that he claims "that in *Al. B* we have an almost slavishly faithful translation of a J^2-text very similar to M^1" (72).[7] The way in which the episodes have been re-ordered as compared with Zingerle's numbering of I^1 is very much at the centre of Magoun's argument against I^1 as source text (cf. Magoun 71).[8] Unlike GÖLLER 1989, who discussed the recension question based on micro-level variations between the texts to finally leave it undecided, Khalaf clearly follows Magoun's argumentation in favour of I^2 (cf. Khalaf xli). However, he does not add evidence to what Magoun provided as part of his 1929-edition. In discussing the sources of the Middle English, Magoun gives a range of readings supporting his argument for I^2 and against I^1 (cf. Magoun 72–77) – an approach which in itself is reasonable, yet it is no sufficient basis to argue against I^3. The following sub-chapter aims to close this gap by making clear why I^2 necessarily has to be considered the recension of reference when attempting a Latin–Middle English comparison. In so doing, it both draws on and adds to Magoun's evidence for the I^2 recension of the *Historia*.[9]

The I^2-recension is characterised by numerous additions and expansions of different length which do correspond directly to passages of the Middle English version and thus make it unlikely, if not impossible, for a single manuscript of the I^3-recension to be the only immediate source the English reviser translated from. The examples below perfectly illustrate how longer

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[7] In line with the information Magoun could access through Hilka's 1920-edition, Magoun named München, Hof- und Staatsbibliothek cod. lat. 824 (M^1), as the manuscript closest to the Middle English *Alexander B* (cf. Magoun 115; also Khalaf xl).

[8] Zingerle established a numbering of *Historia*-episodes when editing the *Alexanderroman* by Rudolf von Ems; his numbering has been referred to ever since.

[9] In the following, the text of I^3 is taken from the edition by Steffens; the Middle English follows the edition by Khalaf. All I^2-readings are taken from C_1. This is because, based on the results of a first attempt to quantitatively assess the possible source texts, C_1 is considered best for a Latin–English comparison (cf. pp. 10–15).

passages of the Middle English have no parallels in I[3], whereas I[2] contains all the key ideas of the Middle English text. Considering how close the Latin is to the Middle English – both content- and language-wise –, it seems fair to assume that the scribe cannot have come up with as detailed and analogous an account without drawing on the text of I[2].

I[2]	ME (ll. 206–228)
Sed si hoc uerum est multum estis mirabiles homines. Proinde per has litteras te multum rogando mandamus ut si uerum est hoc nuntietis nobis.	Forþi biseche Y þe, seg, ȝif it soþ were, Send me t[iþ]inge tid and tel me þe soþe, Þat Y may witen of ȝour werk and of ȝour wonus alle. For ȝif men saiþ bi ȝow soþ þe sawe þat Y hirde Of more meruailouse men miȝhte I nought kenne.
Quod si sapienter hoc feceritis et possit fieri sequar uitam uestram quia semper ab infantia mea studium habui discendi.	'Ȝif Y wisdam or wit in ȝour werk finde Þat God aloweþ ȝour lif and likeþ ȝour dedes, Y schal ȝour costomus, king, couaite to holde And fonde [s]or bi miȝht ȝour fare to [suwe]. For fram þe ȝouþe of my ȝer ȝerned ich haue Of wide werkus to wite and wisdam lere.
Sic enim docemur a nostris doctoribus ut uita nostra irreprehensibilis sit a bene uiuentibus.	We weren tauht in oure time and tendide lorus Of oure doctourus dere demed for wise, Þat non haþel vndur heuene so holi is founde Þat mihte alegge any lak our lif to reproue.

Sed si hoc uerum est multum estis mirabiles homines – "For ȝif men saiþ bi ȝow soþ þe sawe þat Y hirde / Of more meruailouse men miȝhte I nought kenne"; *Proinde per has litteras te multum rogando mandamus ut si uerum est hoc nuntietis nobis* – "Forþi biseche Y þe, seg, ȝif it soþ were, / Send me t[iþ]inge tid and tel me þe soþe, ...": the parallel syntax of the two conditional sentences is striking here; note especially how the Middle English is a faithful rendering of the complex Latin sentence structure in the second example: *te multum rogando mandamus* – "forþi biseche Y þe"; *ut si uerum est* – "ȝif it soþ were"; *hoc nuntietis nobis* – "send me t[iþ]inge tid and tel me þe soþe"; also note the direct translation of *mirabilis* – "merveillous" as a key term.

... et possit fieri sequar uitam uestram quia semper ab infantia mea studium habui discendi – "Y schal ȝour costomus, king, couaite to holde / And fonde [s]or bi miȝht ȝour fare to [suwe]. / For fram þe ȝouþe of my ȝer ȝerned ich haue / Of wide werkus to wite and wisdam lere": the main clause is translated faithfully from the Latin, with *et possit fieri sequar* (*uitam uestram*) turning into "Y schal (ȝour costomus) ... couaite to holde" in the Middle English, which the reviser then elaborates on in the following line; *ab infantia mea* finds its precise, yet poetic alliterating counterpart in "fram þe ȝouþe of my ȝer".

... ut uita nostra irreprehensibilis sit a bene uiuentibus – "Þat non haþel vndur heuene so holi is founde / Þat mihte alegge any lak our lif to reproue": whilst it is clear that the Latin underlies

the Middle English version, this example illustrates that in many cases key words of the Latin, such as *irreprehensibilis* and *bene uiuentes*, have not been directly translated, but rather shaped into more precise or complex thoughts.

Cf. also the following passages for more evidence:[10]

I^3	–	
I^2	*id est nudi sapientes*	
ME (12)	Now is þat name to mene 'þe nakid wise'	

I^3	–	
I^2	*quem phison sacra scriptura commemorat*	
ME (138f.)	þat Phison is called, / þat writen is in Holi Wriht and wrouht so to name	

I^3	–
I^2	*Iouem autem dicitis tenere spiritum aeris. Appollinem pro eo quod ipse primum inuenit medicinam et musicam dicitis esse deum manuum.*
ME (697–703)	Iuno þe ioilese ȝe iuggen for noble And weihuus sain þat he witeþ in his worde one, A spild spirit of þe air þat may speke wondrus And telle what bitide schal of tene oþur of welþe. Ȝe leuen alle in Appolin and also ȝe tellen Þat, for he medisine made and ministralus craftus, Ȝe holde hin giour ful good and god of þe handus.

I^3	*Unus deus uos instruit fornicari, alter bibere, alter litigare.*
I^2	*Unus deus facit uos fornicari, **alter manducare**, alter bibere, alter litigare.*
ME (757)	And somme eggen in ese **to eten** and to drinke, / Þei bysette ȝou so in sinne and in gile / Þat ȝe wirchen hur wil and worchipen alle.

Cases in which the Middle English is obviously based on passages of I^2 which lack an equivalent in I^3 run through the whole text. Some of the most relevant examples, referred to by Middle English line numbers, are: 83–90; 99f.; 229–32; 239–42; 267–74; 408–13; 426f.; 443–48; 653–58; 994f.

Adding to what is suggested by the major omissions in I^3, micro-level variations do also provide evidence for I^2 where I^3 offers a possible source text for the Middle English. The following analysis of linguistic detail makes clear why, even on the micro-level, there is hardly any way to argue that the I^3-text can be regarded as the main source of *Al. B*:

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[10] The following examples have already been used by Magoun for his argumentation against I^1 (cf. Magoun 72–77).

I²	I³	ME (ll. 23–26)
Corruptibiles gimnosophiste **alexandro omni laude digno** scribimus.	Corruptibiles Ginosophiste **homini Alexandro** scribimus.	'Þe gentil Genosophistiens þat goode were of witte **To þe emperour Alixandre** here answerus wreten, **Þat is worschipe of word worþi to haue** And is conquerour kid in contres manie.

The Latin encomiastic addition *omni laude digno* is clearly reflected by the Middle English and, thus, goes beyond the text of I³.

I²	I³	ME (ll. 59–62)
At illi ostenderunt ei tugurria et speluncas in quibus habitabant. Et dixerunt ad eum: "**Hic concubitus sufficit per singulos**."	At illi ostendentes tuguria ei et speluncas, in quibus habitabant, dixerunt: „**Hic per dies singulos requiescimus**."	Þanne þei caire wiþ þe king hur cauus to schewe And kennen þe conquerour hur costumus alle, And saide: "Seg, **to us silf sofisen þis cauus**. Of oþur hous þan her arne haue we no nede."

Both syntactic and lexical make-up of the Middle English are highly suggestive of the I²-version: cf. especially *hic concubitus* – "þis cauus" as subjects, both including the *demonstrativum* which is missing in I³, where one has to read hīc as a local adverb; also note the fairly direct translations of *sufficere* – "sofisen", and *per singulos* – "to us silf", which cannot go back to the I³-text.

I²	I³	ME (ll. 69–72)
Cui illi dixerunt: „Da nobis immortalitatem quam optamus habere, **quia diuites de omnibus rebus sumus**."	Illi dixerunt: „Inmortalitatem da nobis, **quia nichil aliud peroptamus**!"	Þanne saide þei: "Wordlich weiȝ, we wische of þei ȝifte Ailastinge lif to lacchen upon erþe; Þat us derye no deþ desire we nouþe, **For oþur wordliche won at wille we haue**."

The Middle English is closer to I² in several respects: the relative clause *quam optamus habere*, which is missing in I³, seems to match the Middle English phrasing "we wische of þei ȝifte"; with its positive phrasing, *quia diuites de omnibus rebus sumus* makes a pretty exact ground for translating "For oþur wordliche won at wille we haue", especially considering the vocabulary used: *omnes res* – "wordliche won"; *diues esse* – "at wille haue". I³, by contrast, uses negation, which leaves it a lot more unspecific than I² as it does not address the abundance of earthly goods which is at the heart of the Middle English text. The same can be concluded in terms of vocabulary, with *peroptare* not offering the same parallels as I² (cf. a.).

I²	I³	ME (ll. 161–170)
Cum autem uidisset alexander quia nullo modo potuit transire ipsum fluuium propter beluas, uocauit ipsos bragmanos quos uiderat ultra fluuium istum, **statimque unus ex ipsis cum quadam parua nauicula uenit nauigans ad eum**.	Cumque vidisset Alexander, quod nullo modo ipsum fluvium transfretare poterat, tristabatur multum. Statimque iussit, ut naviculam de viminibus fabricarent et vestirent eam coriis animalium et per ipsum fluvium transirent. Factumque est. Et intravit in eam unicus miles.	As prest as þe pris king sai his pres stinte Þat he fer wiþ his flok fare ne miȝte For þe bestus of bale þat bi þe watur ferde And harm of þe houndfich þat houede þerinne, Of þe seggus þat he sai biȝonde þe side stronde H[e] dide calle fforto come to carpen him tille. Whan þei hurden is houp, **hastliche aftur** **A lud to a litil boot lepus in haste** **And raþe to þe riche king romwus alone** And aftur of Alixandre askeþ his wille.

This case is special in so far as plot and language of I³ are fundamentally different from the Middle English, whereas I² is very close to the English text: Alexander being in a sad or frustrated mood (*Alexander ... tristabatur multum*) is no part of the Middle English, and the same is true for the act of making a boat out of wattle, which is described in quite much detail in I³ (*iussit, ut naviculum de viminibus fabricarent et vestirent eam corriis aimalium*). Just like I², the Middle English relates a shorter and differently focused version in saying that some Brahman "hurries to a little boat on his own" (cf. bold print above). There are, therefore, no signs of the key terms of I³ (*uimen*, *fabricare*, *coria animalium*, *uestire*, *unicus miles*), whilst ME "a litil boot" directly renders *parua nauicula* (instead of I³: only *nauicula*), and ME "to þe riche king romwus alone" is very likely to be translated from *uenit nauigans ad eum* (instead of I³: only *intrauit in eam* [*nauiculam*]).

I²	I³	ME (ll. 277–282)
Ideo uolumus a te petere ueniam pro hac autem re de qua nos rogando mandastis super omnia. Quia nichil proderit si scribo tibi de uita et consuetudine nostra quia **tempus non habes ad legendum** eo quod **occupatus es** in causis bellorum.	Scripsisti siquidem nobis, ut vitam et mores nostros tibi seriatim indicaremus, quod impossibile reputamus. Et si tibi de vita nostra aliquid scriberemus, nullum posses enucleare saporem eo quod **mentem tuam cause bellice tenebrarunt**.	Of þat þou senteste, sire king, to say þe tru[t]he, Of al þe lore of our lif wiþoute long dwelle, Haþel, for þin hendschipe haue vs exkused, For we ne konne þe nouht kenne our costomus alle. Þouȝh I, lud, of our lif lettrus þe sende, Prince, hit profiteþ nouht to preche of oure dedus. **Ȝe ne haue no tome no time to tende my sawus**, For **ȝe so busiliche ben**, wiþ, aboute þe werre.

A look at the lexicon of each of the versions reinforces the impression that I^3 uses rather special words such as *seriatim*, *enucleare*, and *tenebrare*, whilst a basic lexicon and plain style are characteristic of I^2 and the Middle English. This means that, even though I^3 may relate the same events or actions as I^2, its phrasings are often only little intuitive and very different from those of the Middle English where I^2 is very close to the poem. In the example above, Alexander's campaigns are key to Dindimus's argument, who states that whatever he might explain to Alexander about the Brahmans' way of life will fail to come to fruition because Alexander is busy with warfare: clearly, the Middle English translates from and builds upon the Latin I^2-text (cf. *tempus non habes ad legendum* – "Ȝe ne haue no tome no time to tende my sawus"; *occupatus es in causis bellorum* – "For ȝe so busiliche ben ... aboute þe werre"); I^3, by contrast, with *nullum posses enucleare saporem eo quod mentem tuam cause bellice tenebrarunt*, is unlikely to be the source of the Middle English as it employs vocabulary and metaphoric expression which are missing in the English poetic rendering.

I^2	I^3	ME (ll. 355–362)
Aquam de tabeno flumine bibimus. **Laudem deo ore uel corde semper canimus**. Quicquid enim facimus id est dormire, comedere, bibere uel aliud propter deum facimus et desideramus uitam futuri seculi.	Aquam Tebaboni bibimus et gustamus. **Unum solum deum altissimum colimus sibique laudes assidue predicamus**.	Whan we ludus in þis land liste to drinke, We turnen tid to flod – Thabeus is called. Þereof we taken atast what time þat vs nedeþ **And herie þe heie God wiþ herte and with tounge**. What so we worchen in þis worlde, or waken or slepe, Or in erþeliche ese eten oþur drinke, For his sake þat it sente soþli we worchin To sustaine his seruantis as himsilf likus.

The Middle English phrasing "we ... herie þe heie God wiþ herte and with tounge" most probably goes back to Latin I^2 *laudem deo ore uel corde semper canimus*. I^3 has an entirely different version of this idea, reading *unum solum deum altissimum colimus sibique laudes assidue predicamus* and, thus, stressing the notion of a single heavenly God whom the Brahmans continue to praise, yet without specifying how exactly they do it.

In summary, this chapter has shown through a variety of examples that the Latin I^2-redaction is closer to the Middle English than I^3. Major arguments to confirm this are: omissions of considerable length and quality in I^3 which are clearly part of the Middle English version; additions in I^3 which are in no way reflected by the Middle English, however their significance is debatable as the English reviser may well have decided to cut out certain passages as part of

his poetic rendering (poetic licence); more or less slightly different accentuation in rendering specific events or actions; syntactic and lexical parallels between I^2 and the Middle English where I^3 has a different lexicon or sentence structure. These observations are in line with Pfister's and Hilka's remarks on the differences between I^2 and I^3, and a close reading of the Middle English has made it clear that the English reviser is very much guided by the text of I^2.

Evidence for sub-branch of ε (Bx₁, Br₄, and P₅) within the γ-tradition

Khalaf introduces his argument identifying ε, "a sub-branch of the γ tradition" (Khalaf xlii),[11] as the manuscript group containing the witnesses whose Latin text is closest to the Middle English *Alexander B* (Khalaf xli). "In particular", he states, "we refer to MSS Br₄, Bx₁, and P₅" (xli). Based on the *stemma codicum* by Hilka / Bergmeister, it seems reasonable to focus on ε when searching for possible source texts of the Middle English; further to this, Khalaf's list of passages to argue for Bx₁, Br₄, and P₅ includes common variants of high relevance to the Middle English (cf. Khalaf xlii–xlvii). Still, considering that inaccuracies in dealing with the manuscripts can be found throughout Hilka / Bergmeister's edition, and that Khalaf's work very often relies on this edition even where double-checking is absolutely necessary, it is vital to examine in how far the other manuscripts of the ε-tradition, P₁, K, and B, need to be included into the consideration of sources. However, in the context of my MA thesis in progress, this could only be done on a sample basis using Khalaf's list of passages to argue for Bx₁, Br₄, and P₅.[12] Accordingly, each B, K, and P₁ have been checked against the list to see if the variants referred to by Khalaf are indeed exclusive to the group of Bx₁, Br₄, and P₅.

Overall, closer analysis suggests that there is reason to agree with Khalaf in his selection of Br₄, Bx₁, and P₅ as witnesses particularly close to the Middle English text. Interestingly enough, however, B and P₁ have two of the passages used by Khalaf to argue for Bx₁, Br₄, and P₅. There is, therefore, no doubt that in the long run it is necessary to compare the manuscripts through proper transcription so as to come to a well-informed conclusion.

Evidence for P₅, C₁ and C₂ within sub-branch of the ε-tradition

The aim of this sub-chapter is to show why Khalaf's conclusion that nothing can be said on the question which of the ε-manuscripts is closest to the Middle English or in itself might be the

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[11] All sigla used to refer to manuscript groups go back to Hilka / Bergmeister's *stemma codicum* in the I^2-edition from 1976.

[12] Whilst, generally speaking, the list is good, its presentation is partly confusing: *d* and *k* do argue for only a single or two of the manuscripts in question, although from Khalaf's introduction one must understand that all of the manuscripts will contain each of the variants. The difference must be due to Khalaf's approach to list "the most relevant" (xlii). However, considering the editor's intention behind the list, it seems more reasonable to include *d* and *k* in his second argument (cf. Khalaf xlviii–l), with which he attempts to prove a "strikingly complex situation of commixture and contamination in the source-text" (Khalaf xlviii).

very source the English poet-reviser translated from (cf. Khalaf xlviii) needs reconsideration. This is mainly because Khalaf, in drawing on Hilka / Bergmeister, assumes that C_1 and C_2 have the same text as P_5 without checking the actual manuscripts: "Therefore, it would be logical to suppose that the source of *A&D* might be represented by one of the two manuscripts now held at Cambridge, Corpus Christi College (MSS CCC 129 and CCC 370, which Hilka called C_1 and C_2) which are copies of P_5" (Khalaf xlviii). However, transcription of the two Cambridge-manuscripts shows that each of them has a text different from P_5, and that neither of them is likely to be directly dependent on P_5 or vice versa. It rather seems as though all three manuscripts were copied from a lost exemplar which may well have been the text the English poet-reviser translated from. Considering the readings of P_5 together with those of C_1 and C_2, all of Khalaf's passages arguing against P_5 except for one can be easily challenged. In the following, Khalaf's sample passages are quoted alongside their Latin P_5, C_1 and C_2 equivalents in order to prove how in each particular case at least one of them has a reading as good as the reading of Bx_1 or Br_4.

ME: Þe proude Genosophistiens were þe gomus called – Now is þat name to mene 'þe nakid wise'.	
Br_4, Bx_1	nudi sapientes
P_5	mundi sapientes
C_1, C_2	nudi sapientes

Khalaf presents *mundi sapientes* as evidence to argue against P_5, yet both C_1 and C_2 clearly read *nudi sapientes* which is taken up in the Middle English. However, *mundi* and *nudi* are so similar both in terms of spelling and sound that this reading alone is not suitable to argue for C_1 as the source text of *Alexander B*.

ME: For ȝif men saiþ bi ȝow soþ þe sawe þat Y hirde / Of more meruailouse men miȝhte I nought kenne.	
Br_4, Bx_1	Sed tamen si hoc verum est, multum estis mirabiles homines.
P_5	*om.*
C_1	Sed si hoc verum est, multum estis mirabiles homines.
C_2	Sed hoc verum est, multum estis mirabiles homines.

This relatively long sentence which one finds faithfully translated into Middle English is missing in P_5, hence Khalaf uses it to argue against the Paris manuscript. C_1 and C_2, which have not been taken into consideration, do have the sentence. However, it needs to be acknowledged that all manuscripts except P_5 read *Sed tamen si hoc verum est, multum estis mirabiles homines* (cf. Hilka / Bergmeister II 75); therefore, the sentence is not in any way exclusive to the Cambridge manuscripts, still it weakens Khalaf's evidence against P_5.

	ME: We ne haue fere of no fon þat faren wiþoute, / Ne we agayn hem [t]o go nol no gome procre, / Ne of no haþel vndur heuene any help seche; / We ne doute none douhtie ne no dede sterne, / Ne we no wilne no win of watur no of londe.
Br$_4$, Bx$_1$	Et ideo inimicos quos foris habemus non timemus nec adiutorium cuiuspiam contra illos querimus neque de mari neque de terra, sed securi semper et sine aliquo timore vivimus.
P$_5$, C$_1$, C$_2$ (with very slight differences)	Et ideo inimicos quos foris habemus non timemus nec adiutorium cuiusquam contra illos querimus, nec de terra nec de mari aliquem ad nostrum iuuamen querimus nec petimus, et sine omni timore uiuimus.

Khalaf misreads this passage as evidence against P$_5$ due to inaccuracies in Hilka / Bergmeister's critical edition. From the critical apparatus one must understand that P$_5$ reads *et ideo inimicos quos foris habemus non timemus nec adiutorium cuiuspiam contra illos querimus* **nec de mari** *aliquem ad nostrum iuvemen petimus et sine omni timore vivimus*; in fact, however, P$_5$ has *... contra illos querimus* **nec de terra nec de mari** *aliquem ad nostram iuvamen petimus et sine omni timore vivimus*, which includes *terra*. Apart from that, Khalaf seems to compare Latin and English phrasings which are in fact not equivalent in a strict sense. Much unlike what Khalaf suggests with his example, it seems reasonable to read the passage as quite strong evidence for P$_5$, C$_1$ and C$_2$ when considering the Latin and English passages in their entirety. Unlike any other manuscript, P$_5$, C$_1$, and C$_2$ all have the addition *nec de terra nec de mari aliquem ad nostram iuvamen (querimus nec) petimus*. Looking at the Middle English, I would like to argue that this addition is at the basis of "Ne of no haþel vndur heuene any help seche" (l. 348), whilst the preceding line goes back to Latin *nec adiutorium cuiusquam contra illos querimus*.

	ME: We raiken to oure romauncus and reden þe storiuus / Þat oure eldrene on erþe or þis time wroute.
Br$_4$	legimus facta predecessorum nostrum et vestra
Bx$_1$	legimus facta predecessorum nostrorum
P$_5$	legimus facta predecessorum nostrorum et uestra
C$_1$	legimus facta predecessorum nostrorum et nostra
C$_2$	legimus facta predecessorum nostrorum et uestra

The Middle English suggests a Latin exemplar reading *legimus facta predecessorum nostrorum et nostra*. From the manuscripts considered, only C$_1$ has this variant. Even though in this particular case letters *n* and *u* are clearly distinguishable in C$_1$, the situation is different for large parts of the remaining text. Thus, the example's significance is to be viewed critically and in consideration of the fact that whichever exemplar the English reviser translated from might well have had a spelling of *uestrorum* or *uestra* which was either misread by the poet or considered less appropriate for his poetic rendering.

Apart from the examples cited, Khalaf gives no passages speaking against P$_5$ except for one:

ME: I rede þat þe, riche emperor, ful raþe þat þou founde / Touyrcomen enemis þat arn [þ]e wiþinne.	
Br4	Tu autem, imperator, ista omnia vince et istos inimicos quos intra corpus tuum habes.
Bx1, P5, C1, C2 (with slightly different word order)	Tu autem, imperator, omnia ista uince et omnes inimicos quos contra corpus tuum habes.

In fact, P_5, C_1, and C_2 each read *contra corpus tuum*, which does not correspond as well to the Middle English as Br4 *intra corpus tuum*. However, considering the passage as a whole, it seems disproportionate to give too much weight to the question of preposition here, since the imagery contrasting in- and outside actually dominates larger parts of the Latin. Hence, it seems fair to conclude that in order to come out with the Middle English, the English reviser did not necessarily have to rely on a text reading *intra* at this stage. Additionally, one might even consider that *wiþinne* was used by the poet to produce an alliteration of vowels here, and that although he could well have gone for a different phrasing if considered better, he might also have chosen *wiþinne* for reasons of form. This seems all the more likely as the semantic difference which is at stake here can be described as relatively slight.

All of Khalaf's other examples do support P_5, although sometimes not exclusively; those, however, which do exclusively provide evidence for P_5 can be identified as most convincing with good reason:

ME: Dredful dragouns drawen hem þiddire, / Addrus and ypotamus and oþure ille wormus / And careful cocodrillus þat þe king lette. / For skaþe of þe scorpionus askaþe þei ne miȝte, / So riue romede þei þe riuer biside.	
Br4	*om.* dracones et serpentes
Bx1	*om.* dracones
P5, C1, C2 (with very slight differences)	eo quod erant ypotami multi et scorpiones et dracones et serpentes et corcodrilli, qui omni tempore ambulabant per ipsum fluuium ...

P_5, C_1, and C_2 are the only manuscripts to mention all five kinds of animals referred to in the Middle English. Khalaf correctly identifies P_5 as the manuscript with the best text out of his selection of three, yet he does not fully explore the potential of this passage for his argument as he is again misguided by Hilka / Bergmeister's edition. From the apparatus, Khalaf understands that P_5 reads *eo quod erant scorpiones et dracones et serpentes et corcodrilli*; this would mean that P_5, whilst still being closest to the Middle English, only covers four out of five animal species rendered by the English reviser. However, in documenting the variant readings, Hilka / Bergmeister must have wanted the reader to understand *eo quod erant **ypotami multi et** scorpiones et dracones et serpentes et corcodrilli*, which makes P_5 – and C_1 and C_2 in having the same variant – manuscripts coming even closer to the English version.

> ME: Þou hast robbed wiþ þi rout .ij. riche strondus, / Þere þe grauel of þe ground was of gold ore; / Þat on was called Erenus and þat oþur large / Þe peple callede Paccolus, þat þou pore madest.

Bx_1, Br_4	–
P_5	Uos pactoli atque erini fluuios ...
C_1	Uos pactoli atque ermi fluuios splendidos auro currentes absque colore pauperes reddidistis.
C_2	Uos Paccoli atque Erini fluuios ...

Neither Br_4 nor Bx_1 include this passage which is taken up by the Middle English reviser, and it seems unlikely, if not impossible, that the poet came up with his Middle English lines without drawing on a text mentioning Hermos and Paktolos. Furthermore, the spellings of C_2 are particularly suggestive of the Middle English version.

> ME: We witen, weies, ful wel þat ȝe were alle / Bremliche ybrouht forþ and bred of þat modur / Þat is stable to stonde and stonus engendreþ / And þe erþe is called þat euery man helpeþ.

Br_4, Bx_1	–
P_5, C_2	quia, sicut nos consideramus, illa uos mater genuit que et lapidem genuit.
C_1	quia, sicut nos credimus, illa uos mater genuit que et lapidem genuit.

The Middle English is an impressively direct translation from the Latin texts of P_5, C_1, and C_2. Interestingly enough, and unlike Br_4 and Bx_1, B and K, which have been excluded from closer analysis by Khalaf without much explanation, do also mention *mater terra* as the origin of both stones and mankind. Therefore, despite P_5, C_1, and C_2 having the best text among the five manuscripts considered above, B and K will need to undergo careful assessment in the broader context of PhD.

Further to the examples which Khalaf pointed out in his edition, a study of micro-level variation between the texts of Bx_1, Br_4, P_5, C_1, and C_2 has substantiated the argument that, contrary to Khalaf's suggestion, the texts of P_5, C_1, and C_2 are closest to the Middle English poem. As with the assessment of B, K, and P_1, the analysis is based on the set of key Latin readings attached to this paper.[13] In total, C_1 features fifty-two out of sixty key readings, which – quantitively spoken – makes it the manuscript having the best text for comparison with the Middle English. The results for the other manuscripts are as follows:

Br_4	Bx_1	P_5	C_1	C_2
23 / 60	32 / 60	45 / 60	51 / 60	47 / 60

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[13] Cf. appendix. The key readings identified are to be understood as work in progress without any claim to completeness.

The fact that P_5, C_1, and C_2 are quite clearly ahead of Br_4 and Bx_1 in terms of numbers may suggest that these three manuscripts are rich in exclusive and unparalleled readings; in fact, the picture is much more complex, with very often one of the other ε witnesses having the same or at least a very similar variant. The following two readings document rather slight semantic differences between the Latin texts, yet they stand out for their exclusiveness to P_5, C_1, and C_2 (or either of them):

ME: And herie þe heie God wiþ herte and with tounge.	
Br_4, Bx_1	Laudes deo semper canimus
P_5, C_1, C_2	Laudem deo ore uel corde semper canimus.

The addition *ore uel corde* is clearly rendered by the Middle English reviser. Moreover, the example perfectly illustrates how the formal requirements of Middle English alliterative poetry give rise to additions in the translation process. "Þe heie God" adds an attribute to Latin *deus*, and this is most likely because the alliterating *h* is key to the structure of the line. With its focus on Latin–English translation strategies, the PhD project will discuss more examples of this kind in full detail.

ME: Hit comeþ ʒou bi custum so clanly to libbe!	
Br_4	**non** habetis in consuetudine facere ea que natura humana facere solet.
Bx_1	**nec** habetis in consuetudine ...
P_5, C_2	**nec** habetis in consuetudine facere, ea que natura humana facere solet.
C_1	**hec** habetis in consuetudine facere, ea que natura humana facere solet.

All manuscripts except for C_1 have some kind of negation, whilst the Middle English clearly seems to go back to the positive phrasing of C_1.

With these observations made, some general method-related criticism seems appropriate. Whilst the quantity of readings is certainly indicative of how close different Latin texts are to the English poem, its limits are obvious as all key readings used go back to a process of subjective selection. Further to this, it lies in the nature of the method that any differences in the significance of readings cannot be accounted for. It is, therefore, necessary to transcribe all ε manuscripts as part of a future project so as to make conclusions on the question of source more reliable, and to make it easier to compare specific passages in different manuscripts through digitisation of the transcriptions.

Conclusion

There are three major results of this first attempt to reassess the sources of Middle English *Alexander and Dindimus*: in a first step, the paper has made clear why the recension question

has finally been decided in favour of I^2, which is new in so far as the argument has been based on clear evidence for the first time; secondly, it has shown how close inspection of all accessible manuscripts of the I^2 *Historia de preliis* allows for more precise conclusions regarding the sources of Middle English *Alexander and Dindimus* than those suggested by Khalaf. Unlike suggested by Hilka and, resultingly, all the editors of the Middle English, C_1 and C_2 are no mere copies of P_5. In fact, they each have a different text, yet the differences between them are less numerous and significant than one might have expected. Judging from the number of key readings included in each of the manuscripts which have been proposed as possible source texts by Khalaf, a sub-group within ε, C_1 – with very few more readings than P_5 and C_2, but many more than Bx_1 and Br_4 –, is best suited for comparison with the Middle English poem. At the same time, however, based on the transcriptions of P_5, C_1, and C_2, there is reason to assume that none of the texts was the (only) actual source the English reviser translated from, and that they are in no way directly dependent from each other. Adding to what is suggested by the fact that only relatively few key readings are exclusive to the Latin texts of P_5, C_1, and C_2, this may well be read as extra evidence for a lost exemplar which combined many of the key readings identified. Lastly, however rewarding the detailed analysis of Latin variants for the reassessment of sources, one must not forget to understand the Middle English *Alexander B* as a poetic text of its own kind. This means that, whilst being very close to its Latin source, it is equally shaped by the conventions of the alliterative tradition and a poetic genius whose originality and style deserve due attention in future research. My PhD project aims to account for this through providing a bilingual digital edition of *Alexander and Dindimus* which focuses on exploring Latin–English translation strategies as well as the cultural-historical dimension of the text.

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Key Latin readings to assess the source texts

Passages or phrasings are defined as ‚key readings' if they precisely render the Middle English and if at the same time at least one clearly worse variant can be identified in one (or more) of the other manuscripts discussed; a key reading is the more telling the more exclusive it is to a particular manuscript.

Lat.	ME	Br₄	Bx₁	P₅	C₁	C₂
Oxidraces enim sunt superbi homines. (90)	ll. 4f.	-	x	x	x	x
id est nudi sapientes.	l. 12	x	-	-	x	x
id est nudi sapientes [without addition] Cum autem audisset ... *om.* semper celum inspicientes/intuentes futura rimantes	ll. 12f.	- (inspicientes)	- (intuentes)	x	x	x
Alexandro omni laude digno	l. 25	x	x	x	x	x
nullomodo valet aliquis (a) nobis tollere	l. 36	x	x	x	x	x
discurrendo per totum mundum	l. 80	x	x	x	x	x
Nos enim sumus ministri **dei** facientes voluntatem eius.	ll. 84–90	x	- (non)	x	x	x
... **statim** exiebat ignis ex eis et incendebat eum.	l. 136	-	x	x	x	x
om. Bragmani enim sunt homines qui nihil possident quod prede pateat. In illa terra nascitur piper.	-	-	-	x	x	x
... eo quod erant ypotami multi et scorpiones et dracones et serpentes et corcod(r)illi	ll. 156–60	- (ypothauri; *om.* dracones et serpentes)	- (*om.* dracones)	x	x	x
multum essent differentes	l. 200	-	-	x	x	x
Sed si hoc verum est, multum estis mirabiles homines.	l. 209f.	x	x	-	x	x
... regum gaudium. Cognovimus per tuas litteras ...; *om.* Audivimus inviatissime rex prelia tua et felicitatem tuam ubique subsecutam. Sed quid erit homini satis cui totus non sufficit orbis cognovimus.	l. 255ff.	-	-	x	x	x

Nos (etenim) Bragmani simplicem et puram vitam ducimus;	ll. 287f.	-	-	x	x	x
om. Bragmani regem habemus non pro iusticia sed pro nobilitate servanda. Quem enim locum habet vindicta ubi nulla fit iusticia.						
... aut aliquas venationes facere sive de quadrupedibus terre sive de avibus celi. Habundanter enim annonam habemus ...	ll. 299–304	x	x (v. capere)	x	x	x
... sanitatem semper habemus. Trepidiciores/Impediciores enim sunt ad deum diligendum et serviendum et negocia sua facienda deteriores et (h)abiliores ad egritudines sucipiendas qui frequenter comedunt cum extensione ventris. Nullam medicinam ...	ll. 313–18	x	x	x	x	x
Laudem deo **ore vel corde** semper canimus.	ll. 358–62	-	-	x	x	x
Laudem deo ore vel corde semper canimus. Quicquid enim faicmus id est dormire comedere bibere vel aliud propter deum facimus. **[order]**		-	-	x	x	x (ut est)
Sed cum locuti fuerimus, non dicimus nisi veritatem et statim tacemus.	ll. 367f.	x	x	x	x	x
Paupertatem quam habemus **diligimus** quia illam pro diviciis computamus et eam communiter habemus.	ll. 373–76	x	x	x	x	x
Nec damus divicias pro peccata nostra/peccatis nostris sicut vos facitis.	ll. 388–91	x	x	x	x	x
Nullum vestimentum in variis coloribus tingimus	l. 402	x	x	x	x	x
facta predecessorum nostrorum et nostra	ll. 467f.	-	-	-	x	-
(in) parvo tempore	l. 519	-	x	x	x	x
id est canem **Tri**cerberum	l. 536	x	-	x	x	x
Vos pactoli atque ermi fluuios splendidos auro currentes absque colore pauperes reddidistis.	ll. 524–27	-	-	x	x	x

Quia, sicut nos consideramus/credimus, illa mater vos genuit que et lapides genuit.	ll. 585–88	-	-	x	x	x
Dicunt enim/etiam Cerberum esse in inferno qui habet **quatuor** capita.		x	-	x	x	x
summitatem capitis	l. 658	-	-	x	x	x
Cererem, pro eo quod fuit inventrix frumenti, dicitis deam esse ventris.	ll. 689–92	x	x	x	x	-
Mercurio alitem sacrificatis	ll. 726f.	- (mella solvitis)	- (cum melle pranditis)	x	x	-
propter committenda mala videlicet adulteria, fornicationes et furta	ll. 784–89	-	x	x	x	-
Propter committenda mala videlicet adulteria, fornicationes et furta **et cetera mala**.	ll. 784–89	-	x	-	x	-
Tale est/esse in infernum qui semper sitit et numquam saciatur.	ll. 790f.	-	- (tantallum)	-	x	x
et vos ... ydra vocamini et estis [without addition]. Et omnia alia que doctores vestri dicunt esse in inferno... *om*. ydra id est feditas viciorum nascencium. Ydra habet novem capita que latine scedra/excetra dicitur quia uno capite ceso tria excrescunt/extendunt/excrescebant. Sed ydra fuit locus evomens aquas vastans vicinam civitatem in quo uno meatu clausa multa erumpebant. Que Hercules videns locum extussit et sic aque clausit meatus. Nam ydra aqua est. Unde Ambrosius: Heresis velut quedam ydra vulneribus suis crevit et dum sepe reciditur pullulavit igni debita incendio peritura post saturitatem.	-	-	-	x	x	x
Heu, vos miseros, qui talem fidem tenetis de qua post mortem tormenta sustinere cogamini/cogitamini [without addition] (Valete.) Hac igitur epistola ... *om*. Psallentes enim sicut dii vestri quos sine racione colitis o vos infelissimi quorum et religio crimen est et vita supplicium.	ll. 806–10	-	-	x	x	x

3

Hec habetis in consuetudine facere, ea que natura humana facere solet.	l. 833	-	- (nec)	x	x	-
secundum nostram considerationem	l. 840	x	- (vestram)	- (vestram)	- (vestram)	- (vestram)
aut deos non esse dicitis aut invidiam ...	ll. 841f.	-	x	-	x	x
om. Quodsi liceret vos ... remanserat ipsa penuria.	-	-	x	x	x	x
Sed si nos essemus in finibus uestris, non essemus pauperes, sicut uos estis ...	ll. 872–5	-	x	x	x	x
tanta mundi magnitudo et multitudo	ll. 914f.	- (magnitudo)	x	- (magnitudo)	- (curiositas)	- (multitudo)
et quando sincerus dies est	l. 925	-	-	-	-	-
mens et cor in gaudio sunt	l. 927	-	x	x	x	x
Multa enim delectabilia sunt que **ad usum nostrum** occurrunt.	ll. 945f.	x	n/a	-	-	x
omnes bonos fructus habemus de terra et habundantiam piscium maris et delicias **auium** habemus de aere	ll. 953–56	x	x	-	x	x
ista bona donata nobis **et non vobis** esse videantur	ll. 963f.	-	-	x	x	x
Recepta vero Dindimus hac epistola legit et statim scripsit Alexandro epistolam continentem ita: ...	ll. 967–72	x	x (slightly variant)	-	-	-
Audi, rex Alexander: Non sumus (nos) habitatores ...	l. 979	-	x	x	x	x
pergimus ad **domum** patrum nostrorum	l. 985	x (ad domos)	- (terram)	x	x	x
Non gravant nos peccata nostra	l. 987	x	x	x	x	-
om. Nullum furtum facimus	-	-	x	x	x	x
qui(a) ex nobilibus nati estis	l. 1012	-	x (de nobilibus)	x	x	x
Nos autem, qui **veritatem** cognovimus et scimus ipsam naturam auri, ...	l. 1022	-	x (cognoscimus)	x	x	x
quia, si **sitierit** homo et biberit aquam, tollitur sitis eius.	l. 1032	x	- (sciscierit)	-	-	x
Igitur, si de eadem natura **esset** aurum, ...	l. 1034	x	x	x	-	x

om. Enceladus	-	- (Enchelandus)	-	- (encalandus)	- (encalandus)	- (ericalandus)
Et illud quod de malis hominibus lex nostra/vestra iudicat vos naturaliter et non propter deum illud patimini. Unde meritum a deo non debetis habere. Ergo cruciari debetis in futura(m) vita(m). Cum ergo in penis sitis in hac vita omnibus diebus vite vestre et in futuro similiter cruciari debe(a)tis: miserabiliores estis omnibus hominibus. Mali enim homines gaudent in presenti vita quamvis illis pena in futuro apparetur/preparetur.	ll. 1100–11	-	x	x	x	x
propter hoc tamen **ut predixi**	l. 1122	-	x	x	x	x
total readings (out of sixty)		23 /60	32 /60	45 /60	**51 /60**	47 /60

Daniel McCann

"Consume and Devour: Fevered Passions in *Discretio* Literature"

Consume and Devour: Fevered Passions in *Discretio* Literature.

1) Ioie hastow for to muse Vpon thy book, and therin stare and poure, Til þat it thy wit consume and deuoure.[1]

The act of reading can, sometimes, come at a considerable cost: sanity. Implicit within the exchange between the Dialogue's characters is an acknowledgement of the dangerous and potentially harmful power words can exert over the mind. Made explicit here is the fact that reading is not a passive act but rather a powerful, and to some extent treacherous, activity. The imagery Hoccleve uses to describe it is an inversion of the commonplace medieval understanding of the process of reading – an act comprised of reading, meditation and rumination (*lectio*, *meditatio* and *ruminatio*). Instead of the reader slowly and carefully savouring the book he figuratively eats, it is the book which eats the mind of the reader. Images shift from those of thought and vision ('muse' and 'stare'), to those of fluidity and ingestion ('poure', 'consume', 'deuoure'). The lines convey the visceral potency and inexorable nature of the act itself – how quickly the book can turn and swallow the reader. What it specifically consumes is the 'wit', a medieval word with a vast range of subtly different meanings from 'the mind', to 'reason' itself, to the 'mental powers comprising intellect', and even 'mature discretion'.[2] Hoccleve's point is that reading can override reason, can manipulate the mind in a way that overwhelms its rational abilities by overly stimulating the soul's emotional powers. He is not the only author to make such observations:

2) And he also erriþ greetli, þat bi vnmesurable and vndiscreet seyinge or synginge of salmes or ympnys, falliþ in-to fransye or in-to woodnes, or in-to bittir heuynes. Þerfore it is good þanne for to stynte fro multitude of wordis, and þinke oonli in þin herte as esily as þou maist.[3]

This text, a translation by Walter Hilton of the work of Dom lluis de Fontibus (c.1383), is clear in its warning on over-abundant reading. A 'multitude of wordis' can cause dangerous psychological problems such as madness, frenzy or depression. Too many words can generate a 'bittir heuynes', a state of emotional intensity that is ultimately poisonous. Far from helping the soul through treating the emotions, immoderate reading and recitation of the Psalter can cause an emotional instability that damages the soul. One of the key words here is the adjective 'vnmesurable', meaning not simply 'limitless', but also 'inordinate', 'immoderate', and 'intemperate'.[4] Any religious reading must, therefore, be carefully

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[1] Thomas Hoccleve, 'A Dialogue', in 'My Compleinte' and Other Poems, ed. Roger Ellis (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2001), ll. 404–6.
[2] MED, 'pouren' (v.(1+2)).MED, 'wit' (n.).
[3] Walter Hilton, *Eight Chapters on Perfection*, p. 8, ll. 113–18.
[4] MED, 'unmesurable' (adj.).

calibrated to ensure its salutary effects. As this text asserts, any reading regimen must avoid being 'vndiscreet'. This adjective, which means 'without prudence' and 'extreme' lies at the very centre of comments on the dangers of religious reading.[5] It covers more than simply the frequency of such reading and incorporates the manner, mode and results of its deliberate emotional manipulation.[6] Without discretion, itself a virtue in the period, reading results in physical and spiritual harm rather than health. This paper is concerned with that spiritual virtue, and how it becomes increasingly paramount as a means of ensuring salutary reading. It will begin by considering a range of texts that diagnose emotional problems, and will focus on the highly medical ways in which such problems are understood. It will then move to consider an exemplary discretion text - the *Chastising of God's Children* and its use of medical terminology.

3) A good medicyne vn-wyseli taken may be cause of a mannys deth.[7]

Even the best medicine can be dangerous, its effects veering from healthful to harmful through the mode of its usage. Without care, without control, medicine will cause only damage. Such an observation is equally applicable to therapeutic reading and the medicines of the soul it evokes. Those emotional medicines that Julian of Norwich notes - dread, penance, compassion and longing – are themselves dangerous and damaging if not correctly used. Their potency is, in part, their problem: any powerful medicine must be used in accordance to set parameters – and emotional medicines generated through reading all the more so. Frequent meditation on Christ's suffering, yearning for him, and contemplation of divinity are fraught with danger, as the cognitive and emotive impacts of these activities can cause individuals to

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[5] MED, 'undiscreete' (adj.).

[6] This is in part due to the psychological nature of its operation. As Jean Leclercq notes, religious reading causes 'a kind of chain reaction of associations which will bring together words that have no more than a chance connection, purely external, with one another', as such the order of the reading process 'really follows a psychological development, determined by the plan of associations, and one digression may lead to another or even to several others' (Love of Learning, p. 74). In essence, such reading is potentially problematic as it is psychologically ungovernable. Such concerns are made during the period as well. As Guigo II notes in the Scala Claustralium, anyone who practises lectio divina must take care: 'Sed caveat sibi iste ne post contemplationem istam, qua elevatus fuerit usque ad coelos, inordinato casu corruat usque ad abyssos' (PL 184, col. 483B) ('but let such a man beware, after having reached contemplation, in which he was raised to the heavens, lest he fall back in disorder to the depths'). The translation is in The Ladder of Monks, A Letter on the Contemplative Life, and Twelve Meditations, ed. and tr. Edmund Colledge and James Walsh (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1981), p. 83. Without the modulating influence of habitual order and practice, reading can become dangerous. Moreover, he makes it clear that reading is not inherently beneficial: 'Legere enim et meditari tam bonis quam malis commune est' (PL 184, col. 478A) ('The good and the wicked alike can read and meditate') (p. 72). As reading is, in terms of its psychological operation, morally neutral, great care must be taken.

[7] Harold Kane (ed.) The *Prickynge of Love*, 2 vols (Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik der Universität Salzburg, 1983), p. 138, ll. 9–11

4) 'trauayle þeire ymaginacion so vndiscreetly, þat at þe laste þei turne here brayne in here hedes'.[8]

The mention here of the imagination is crucial, as any act of reading requires the operation of the imaginative faculty to generate memory phantasms. These phantasms are part image and part emotional reaction to that image. Thus, cautions regarding the 'vndiscreet' imagination are, at their core, cautions about the dangers of immoderate emotional states. Such immoderation is the main cause of damage and dissolution to the soul. An overly stimulated imagination will not only run amok, generating bizarre physiological sensations and disturbances such as 'a fals hete', but also act as the main vector by which demonic temptations occur. The rationale is clear: a mind beset with disordered images will produce similarly disordered emotions:

5) Streyne not þin hert in þi brest over-rudely, ne oute of mesure; bot wirche more wiþ a list þen wiþ any liþer strengþe. For ever þe more listly, þe more meekly & goostly; & euer þe more rudely, þe more bodely & beestly. & þerfore bewar . . . sekirly soche rude streynynges ben ful harde fastnid in flescelines of bodely felyng, & ful drie fro any wetyng of grace; & þer hurte ful sore þe sely soule, & make it feestre in fantasie feinid of feendes.[9]

To function correctly, medicine must be meticulous. The problem here is not effort, but rather a lack of moderation and proper understanding in that effort. The key word is 'rudely', an adverb which has a range of meanings all operative here, from the obvious of 'roughly', 'violently' and 'forcefully', to the less obvious of 'carelessly', 'unskilfully', and 'without judgement'.[10] The idea of immoderation is inherent in this word choice, and describes here the excess and imprecision of those 'streynynges' of the 'hert'. The passions of the soul – its emotional medicines – are out of order. It is a state contrasted with the better course of treatment – to 'wirche more wiþ a list þen wiþ and liþer strengþe'. Once again, delimitations are key. This word 'list' has a range of meanings, covering 'desire' and 'love', but also 'cunning' and 'stratagem'.[11] Its usage here conveys the sense of ordered love, of strategically planned and enacted emotion.[12] This is also reflected in the careful structure of the passage, as the use of prose rhythm and rhyme in 'listly/meekly/ goostly' enacts the very order it describes. It alone leads to God and treats the soul, whereas the immoderate and rude love causes sickness, making the soul 'feestre in fantasie feinid of feendes'. While the whole

[8] Phyllis Hodgson (ed.), *The Cloud of Unknowing and The Book of Privy Counselling*, EETS, O. S. 218 (London: Oxford University Press, 1944), p. 96, ll. 22–4.

[9] *Cloud*, p. 87, ll. 5–15.

[10] MED, 'rudeli' (adv.).

[11] MED, 'list' (n.(2+3)).

[12] René Tixier notes that this phrase is also a proverb used frequently by the author in his works and translated from Richard of Saint Victor, see '"Good gamesumli pley": Games of Love in The Cloud Of Unknowing', The Downside Review, 108 (1990), 235–53 (251 n.3).

passage uses elements of alliteration and prose rhythm, it becomes denser here, falling most strongly on those fricatives which generate a sense of urgency through their sinister sound. The rapid dissent into chaos and sickness is enacted both through the end rhyme of 'rudely/bodely/beestly' and in this cascade of alliteration. Rich in medical meaning is the word 'feestre', which primarily means 'ulceration', but also 'fistula' and 'poisonous decay'.[13] The result of immoderate emotion is made clear: it will cause the imaginative faculty to ulcerate, to become a cognitive and emotional fistula where the emotions become poisons and demonic temptation occurs. Far from helping the soul, the therapeutic emotions of dread, penance, compassion and longing can in fact destroy it. When used 'vndiscreetly', they corrupt the soul in specific ways. The negative effects are given colourful articulation:

6)   Some sette þeire iȝen in þeire hedes as þei were sturdy scheep betyn in þe heed, & as þei schulde diȝe anon. Som hangen here hedes on syde, as a worme were in þeire eres. Som pipyn when þei schuld speke, as þer were no spirit in þeire bodies . . . I sey þat þei ben tokenes of pride & coryouste of witte, & of vnordeynde schewyng & couetise of knowyng. & specyaly þei ben verri tokenes of vnstabelnes of herte & vnrestfulnes of mynde, & namely of þe lackyng of þe werk of þis book.[14]

This example of spiritual physiognomy makes it clear that strange countenances and bodily disturbances are the result of corrupt emotions. The imagery used is startling and potent – rolling eyes, brutalised animals, parasites in the ear, and an inability to speak. Such imagery endows the overall diagnosis with a degree of force and gravitas: these overt physical symptoms point to an equally unsettling spiritual problem. It is the emotions that have been corrupted – 'vnstabelnes of herte & vnrestfulnes of mynde' – generating not virtue but the vices of 'pride & coryouste . . . & couetise'. Instability and the reference to beastly behaviour echo prior advice that focuses on immoderate emotion. Yet they go further, noting that the proper operation of the mind and even body have been compromised. Without precision, without order, these emotions corrupt and destroy. Instead of soul-health there is only further damage to the state of the soul. Madness is the result, a complete breakdown of the inner wits. As Hilton notes, he who

7)   'ouertravillis be ymagynacion hys wyttes, and be vndiscrete travelynge turnes þe braynes in hys heued & forbrekes þe myȝtes & þe wittes of þe saule & of þe body . . . in a fransy'.[15]

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[13] MED, 'festren' (v.).

[14] *Cloud*, p. 97, l. 21 to p. 100, l. 2.

[15] Carl Horstmann (ed.), *Of Angels Song*, in Yorkshire Writers: Richard Rolle of Hampole, an English Father of the Church, and His Followers, 2 vols (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1895–96), vol. 1, pp. 179–80.

A lack of moderation will cause systemic cognitive problems that result in demonic temptation and a kind of spiritual infection. Frenzy or 'fransy' – phrenesis or frenesis – was understood by medieval medicine as a quasi-chronic brain infection, and is used here to make similar warnings regarding the purification of the emotions.[16] In the broadest sense, misused and misapplied emotions can cause both sickness and sin. The texts of the *Cloud*-corpus can provide some clarification. This is a grouping of four letters of spiritual guidance, and three translations and adaptations of other works of spiritual discernment and contemplative guidance.[17] The translation of the *Benjamin Minor* notes:

8) ouer moche drede bryngiþ in dispeyre. And ouer moche sorow castiþ a man into bitternes & heuines of kynde, for þe whiche he is vnable to receyue gostly coumforte. And ouer moche hope is presumpcioun. And outrageous loue is falteryng & glosyng. And outrageous gladnes is dissolucioun and wantonnes. And vntemprid hateredyn of synne is woodnes. And on þis manner þei ben vnordeynd & vnmesured, & þus ben þei tornyd vnto vices.[18]

Without order and control even the most salutary emotions turn into poisons that damage and destroy. The whole passage is comprised of a lexis of excess and immoderation, with the constant repetition of 'ouer moche', 'outrageous', and the echoing sounds of 'vntemprid/vnordeynd/ vnmesured'. here the dangers of a loss of control and moderation are made clear: an emotion evoked too strongly and without sufficient care will become corrupt, corrupting the soul itself. In this manner it moves not closer to the goal of sowle-hele but further from it and from God. other texts go into more detail regarding these potential dangers, and often focus on a particular emotion. In the *A Pistle of Preier*, the effects of dread are given sustained attention. There is danger with drede even in the practice of prayer:

9) Bot for-þi þat þer is no sekir stonding upon drede onliche for drede of sinking into ouer moche heuines, þerefore schalt þou knit to þi first þou3t . . . a sekir staf of hope to holde þee bi in alle þi good doinges.[19]

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[16] Luke Demaitre, Medieval Medicine: The Art of Healing, From Head to Toe (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2013), p. 133.

[17] Tixier, '"Þis louely blinde werk": Contemplation in the Cloud of Unknowing and Related Treatises', in William F. Pollard and Robert E. Boenig (eds), Mysticism and Spirituality in Medieval England (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1997), pp. 107–38 (107 n. 1).

[18] *A Tretyse of þe Stodye of Wysdome þat Men Clepen Beniamyn*, in Phyllis Hodgson (ed.), *Deonise hid Divinite and Other Treatises on Contemplative Prayer related to The Cloud of Unknowing*, EETS O. S. 231 (London: Oxford University Press, 1955), p. 38, l. 11 to p. 39, l. 1.

[19] *A Pistle of Preier*, p. 49, ll. 11 to p. 50, l. 12.

Fear can become fathomless. It is figured here as an emotional mire that will soon envelop the soul within its bleak totality. Its limitless nature can cause an 'ouer moche heuines' – a state of spiritual depression and dejection that is all-consuming. The advice here is to seek balance, a form of emotional moderation and control through the evocation of another emotion – hope. Without such a combination, drede will become too strongly felt, and begin to damage the soul and mind. The word used here – heuines – has a range of meanings that show how complex the effects of drede can be. While it is used here primarily to mean a sort of psychological lassitude and oppressive anxiety, it has additional meanings that cover the sin of sloth or spiritual torpor, as well as the emotions of sorrow and despair.[20] Too much drede has, therefore, the potential to generate a corrupted penitential subjectivity – a sorrow that twists into despair. Problems with the emotions are rarely self-contained, and the dangers of drede can easily overlap with the dangers of other emotions evoked in the treatment of the soul. Thus, although sorrow for sin is of course important, it too must be moderated and kept in check. It is an issue that the *Cloud* author returns to in greater detail over the course of his other works.

10) Bot in þis sorow nedeþ þee to haue a discrecion on þis maner: þou schalt be ware in þe tyme of þis sorow þat þou neiþer to rudely streyne þi body ne þi spirit, bot sit ful stylle, as it were in a slepynge sleiȝt, all forsobbid & for-sonken in sorow. [21]

The problem is not with sorrow per se, but rather the level of its intensity: it must not be 'rudely' – or immoderately – evoked. The words used to describe it emphasise moderation, stillness and calm. While the overall goal is to be 'all forsobbid & for-sonken in sorow', it is a sorrow that is 'ful stylle', experienced in a manner akin to 'slepynge'. There is a gentleness and silence to sorrow, a sense of tranquility and repose. There are no roaring tears, no frantic energy, only utter immersion in sorrow. The use of the intensifier 'for' in 'forsobbid & for-sonken' is significant, as it conveys a potency that has to some extent spent itself: the loose alliteration here suggests a state that is beyond tears – that deep and total sorrow which comes after all tears have been shed. Such language conveys depth not exuberance, a totality of feeling rather than its initial outburst. It is an emotion of utmost delicacy, balanced within itself by the presence of another: like the hope within drede, this sorrow 'is ful of holy desire'.[22] Its composite nature will safeguard against the dangers of excess. As ever 'discrecion' is key. Without it, this sorrow will become disruptive and uncontrollable, overwhelming the soul and leading to sin and demonic temptation. It is the utmost corruption of the penitential impulse that other texts explore in more detail:

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[20] MED, 'hevinesse' (n.).
[21] *Cloud*, p. 83, ll. 14–27.

[22] Cloud, p. 84, l. 7.

11) Þou shalte hate þi synne, þou shalt not hate þi-selfh as a man, but as a synful man. For-whi, what shul we hate but þat þat is euel & contrarie & noyous to vs. Soþeli not ellis. What is þenne worsh þenne for to reise vp þi-seelf aȝeynst god & what is more contrarie þen for to kast ouȝte þe medicine of cristes blood. And what is to þe more noyous þenne sleynge of þyn owne soule, þus hast þou don to þyn owne seelf & mykel wers þen I can telle þe, þere-fore þourȝe consideracioun of þi vilite, lerne for to hate þi-self as þou hast made þe, and loue þat god hath made.[23]

Initially contrition works to purge sin, and more broadly helps erode pride and self-love. Yet the consideration of one's sins that sorrow entails can soon become problematic. Without careful control, sorrow soon oversteps its boundaries, generating a mental perspective that views sin and life as equivalent. This misapprehension is the root cause of additional problems. Hating the self is, indirectly, a twofold form of rebellion against God. In the first instance, such hatred of the self seeks to harm God's own creation, and thus is not really contrition but rather a nihilistic attitude. In the second instance this self-hatred dismisses Christ's sacrifice as, seemingly, neither necessary nor sufficient. In this way, an immoderate emotion can soon become not simply spiritually damaging, but also pathological – generating sin itself. Immoderate and uncontrolled emotions will fester, producing sicknesses within the soul both subtle and gross. Pride is first among them:

12) A þis is pryue pestylence bitterer þan deeth, but ȝif a man be war of hit. For-whi, hit dryueth oute criste fro þe soule þat may not suffre presumpcioun ne pride reste wiþ hym . . . þis pride makiþ a soule tome & voide of goostli gladnesse & of grace of deuocioun & of quyknesse of spirite, and kestiþ hym in-to accidie into ydelnesse þat a man leseth affeccioun of charite þat haue to god & to man, and makith hym hard & vnkynde wiþ-outen affeccious, and hit makiþ al þynge þat shulde be referrid to goddis worship, for to be al turned to his owne worshepe & to his owen ese and to þe feendis disseyte.[24]

Like a plague, pride acts as a corrosive and relentless force that consumes everything of spiritual value. Its presence not only halts any progress made in the restoration of the soul, but negates it. Instead of moving closer to that state of health, the soul in fact becomes more diseased. The phrase 'tome & voide' conveys the extent of this damage. For a soul to be 'tome' means that it is not only empty, hollow and uninhabited, but also spiritually deprived.[25] The use of 'voide' enhances this sense of spiritual bareness, and extends it to show additional problems within the soul. The vast semantic range of this word allows various interpretations, such as 'spiritually worthless', 'arrogant', 'devoid of reason' and

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[23] *Prickynge*, p. 96, ll. 2–12.

[24] *Prickynge*, p. 139, l. 16 to p. 140, l. 8.
[25] MED, 'tome' (adj.).

'spiritually apostate'.[26] Pride destroys all virtue in the soul, harming rather than healing it. From here, the sin of *accidia* – or spiritual sloth – emerges, and the soul soon is overwhelmed with a lethargy that prohibits any chance of its recovery. Pride and sloth generate a profound indifference within the soul to the needs of others: the emotional powers are unmoved by God or his creation, as the soul in effect becomes completely isolated locked within a smug and perpetual self-regard. This is potentially the most dangerous state for the soul to be in, as such self-fixation means that it cannot be easily treated again with more moderately applied emotional medicines.

What is needed is emotional order, emotional discretion. The overarching concept – *discretio spirituum* – has a long history. Initially it is seen as a way to discern angelic spirits from demonic, but is later expanded to incorporate discernment of emotional and interior motivations and thoughts. It overlaps with the concept of *probatio* – or testing – used extensively in the literature of female visionaries. over the course of the Middle Ages, the ambit of *discretio spiritum* widens to incorporate more pastoral usages for laymen and women. Yet, at its core, this concept engages with the emotional aspects of the religious life. For St Benedict it is the *mater virtutum*, integral to the regulation of both community and self.[27] St Bernard refines this idea, noting that

13) 'discretion is not so much a virtue, as much as it is a certain moderator and charioteer of the virtues, the director of the affections, and the teacher of right living'.[28]

Discretion is key in controlling the emotions as it is 'the very principle of order and wisdom within love'.[29] Without it 'virtue becomes vice, and natural affection itself a force that disturbs and destroys nature'.[30] Even when used as medicines, emotions must be subject to a moderating and organising principle. As the *Tretyse of þe Stodye of Wysdome* notes,

14) 'þe vertewe of discrecioun nediþ to be had, wiþ þe whiche alle oþer mowen be gouernyd. For wiþouten it, alle vertewes ben tornid to vices'.[31]

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[26] MED, 'voide' (adj.).

[27] The Rule of St Benedict: Latin and English, tr. Luke Dysinger, o. S. B. (Santa Ana, CA: Source Books, 1997, rep. 2003), 64, p. 153.

[28] Sermones super Cantica Canticorum, in Sancti Bernardi Opera Omnia, ed. Jean Leclercq, Henri Rochais, Charles H. Talbot, 2 (Rome: Editiones Cistercienses, 1957–1977), Sermo 49 2. 5: 'Est ergo discretio non tam virtus, quam quaedam moderatrix et aurigam virtutum, ordinatrixque affectuam, et morum doctrix'. The translation is from Ann W. Astell, 'A Discerning Smell: olfaction among the Senses in St Bonaventure's Long Life of St Francis', 59 Franciscan Studies, 67 (2009), 91–131 (108 n. 68).

[29] Ann W. Astell, 'A Discerning Smell: Olfaction among the Senses in St Bonaventure's Long Life of St Francis', 59 *Franciscan Studies*, 67 (2009), 91–131 (108 n. 68).

[30] Bernard of Clairvaux, On the Song of Songs III, Cistercian Fathers Series 31 (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1979), p. 25, 'Tolle hanc, et virtus vitium erit; Sermo 29, PL 183, col. 1018D.

[31] *Stodye*, p. 39, ll. 6–8.

As the emotions are the shared fundament between vice and virtue, control of them becomes all the more important. Accordingly a number of texts emerge over the course of the period that counsel spiritual discretion. These texts aim to help their readers understand and govern their own emotional lives. The most notable is the *Chastising of God's Children*, a discretion text that seeks to ensure the health of the soul, and extols the importance of maintaining a constant inner vigilance over its emotions. Written in the late fourteenth century, this text has much to say about the problems of emotional stimulation. A diagnostic impulse lies at the very centre of the text that goes beyond simply stating a connection between sin and sickness. Immoderate emotions, or states of 'vnstablenesse', generate a whole host of spiritual pathologies – or 'foure goostli feueris'. The use of medical language here is significant, as medieval medicine understood fever as an affliction (*passio*) of the heart: precise medical language is being used to discern the nature and extent of emotional maladies. The result is that the text conceives of spiritual fevers as highly specific disorders of the emotions – disorders that beset 'þre kyndes of men'. Within this specification is that sense of spiritual physiognomy: immoderate emotions will affect different people in different ways. Variety of persons means a variety of spiritual complexions, and so the need for precision in both emotional stimulation and treatment is all the greater. If the text seeks to function as a 'remedie' for such problems, it must invest considerable energy in understanding the subtle shifts and changes between different spiritual complexions.

The most precise and detailed way in which the text can diagnose spiritual pathologies – corrupted emotion – is through the language of fever:

15) Suche men as I spak of, whiche bien so replete of wiked humours, þat is to seie to vnskilfulli and vnresonabli bien enclyned to lustes and eesis of þe bodi, fallen oft siþes into foure maner of feueres, dyuers men into dyuers feuers as þei bien disposid.[32]

Correct diagnosis depends upon adequate models of categorisation and classification. This entire passage is a brilliant synthesis of medical and religious terminology. It begins, as medieval medicine itself does, with the humours. Those 'wiked humours' mentioned earlier in the text are rendered here as initial states that soon develop into more complex and dangerous pathologies. As with prior paragraphs, this one presents these 'wiked humours' as emotional disorders – as inclinations to 'lustes and eesis of þe bodi'. Such states are, at their core, corrupted emotions, sinful desires. Building upon this medical model, the passage soon moves to more complex diagnostic terminology. From the humours we move to complexion theory, as these corrupted states lead to four types of fever that are themselves keyed to 'dyuers' types of persons. The key words here are 'enclyned' and 'disposid' which emphasise this sense of precise diagnosis: they convey the point that while wicked humours – corrupted

[32] Joyce Bazire and Eric Colledge (eds), *The Chastising of God's Children, and The Treatise of Perfection of The Sons of God* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1957), p. 126, ll. 6–10.

emotions – are everywhere, they will manifest differently in different types of people. This is the most sophisticated aspect of the passage, as it uses medical terminology to understand, conceptualise and diagnose the emotional disorders besetting religious life. As the text goes on to note, fever is 'propirly in goostli remeuyng a uariaunce of þe herte': such language not only mirrors the medical definition of fever, but also directly applies it to deal with the instabilities and variances within emotional states themselves (p. 126, ll. 11–12). The specification 'propirly' makes it clear that the use of fever is not just a metaphor, but instead a functional equivalent for understanding systemic corruption within the emotions and how they manifest in each person.

The text goes on from here to list each type of fever, specifying 'cotidian', 'tercian' in its two distinct forms, 'quartan', and the doubly dangerous 'double quarteyn' (p. 126, l. 11; p. 127, l. 3; p. 129, l. 11; p. 129, l. 19). each of these falls roughly into the medieval medical category of interpolated fevers. These are fevers that are not constant, but which wax and wane during a specified time period, and are classified according to their patterns of recurrence within a set number of hours. These terms are used here to make reference to passions that are unstable and inconsistent in their manifestation. each type of fever is understood in terms of behavioural and psychological factors that depend upon the problems with the emotions. The first, 'cotidian', is essentially a state of emotional instability coupled with a lack of self-knowledge. Those who have it,

16) liʒtli þei bien stired and som tyme troubled; her þouʒtes bien ful chaungeable, now heere, now þere, now so, now þus, liche to þe wynde. Þis is a cotidian feuere, for wiþ suche uariaunce þei bien turned and occupied from morwe into euen, and sum tyme in nyʒt, boþ sleepynge and wakyng. Al be it þat þis infirmyte may sum tyme stonde wiþout deedli synne, it lettiþ neþeles gosstli excercises and sauour of god.[33]

This is a state of discord and dissension brought about through a lack of fixity and focus. The behavioural problems associated with this type of fever are essentially forms of inconsistent religious practice, but they are born out of a psychological problem. As the text notes, those who have this fever are too easily 'stired' – they suffer from an emotional hypersensitivity to both external and internal stimuli. When they are evoked, the emotions lack depth, and so change into others. As a result their 'þouʒtes bien ful chaungeable' and are 'liche to þe wynde': variability in emotions leads to variability in cognition, and eventually to inconstancy in behaviour. Such variability also leads to more damaging spiritual problems, as those who suffer from this fever 'oft siþes þei forʒetten hemsilf': self-knowledge, that key aspect in the treatment of the soul, is utterly corroded through instability in the emotions (p. 126, ll. 15–16).

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[33] *Chastising* (p. 126, l. 18 to p. 127, l. 1)

The next fever 'is clepid a tercian, whiche may be seid inconstaunce or vnstablenesse', and is subdivided into hot and cold forms (p. 127, ll. 3–4). The hot form is a more pernicious version of cotidian fever. Those who have it display no fixity in their actions and behaviours at all: they are the 'fallen of vnstabilnesse' as 'þis dai þei cheesen oo lyueng or oo deuocion, tomorwe þei cheese anoþer' (p. 127, l. 21; p. 127, ll. 12–13). The second form, however, is more explicitly related to the emotions:

17) Þe secunde feuer of vnstabilnesse is causid of coold, whiche sum men haue þat gladli wil loue god wiþ sum oþer þing, to þe whiche thynge þei putten her herte vnwiseli, and louen it more þanne nede is. Suche men bien diuided in hemsilf, bicause þei knowen nat wele hemsilf . . . Faire wordis þei shewen wiþout, but the contrarie is in þe herte. Þei desiren her uertues to be knowe, and for a fewe uertues ʒit þei wolden haue worshyp.[34]

Method and measure are the problems here. Those afflicted with this form of spiritual fever are overly fixated upon the methods and practices of religious life, and ignore the overall goal: God. The initial impulse of love towards God becomes misdirected among myriad religious practices. Yet, such emotional misdirection does not equate with a lack of intensity. Immoderation in love is also present, as those with this fever love the trappings of religious life 'more þanne nede is': the emotion grows unchecked, with no measure or discretion. As this emotional fever runs its course, the results become increasingly dangerous. The lack of emotional focus and measure generates not only a division within the self, but also a form of spiritual ignorance – 'þei knowen nat wele hemsilf'. This lack of awareness is a key element in the fever's spiritual pathology, and underpins its central danger: pride. Misdirected and immoderate love soon turns inwards, causing a lack of self-knowledge and a pernicious desire to 'haue worshyp' from others. Far from generating a salutary meekness, immoderate emotion becomes the source of a damning spiritual pride.

The presence of pride – the fist and greatest manifestation of self-love – becomes the defining characteristic of the next two spiritual fevers.

18) of an vnresonable inclynenge of þe fleshli kynde, and a derk pride priueli hid, bicause of suche vnstabilnesse in sum men the quartan feuere is causid. of þis vnstabilnesse, þat is to seie, whan a man is aliened, or wilfulli gooþ out fro god, fro hymsilf, fro al sooþfastnesse and fro al uertues . . . Þis sikenesse is more perlous þan ony of þe oþer whiche I haue reherced, for out of þis quarteyn þat is clepid alienacioun sum men fallen into anoþer feuere, þat is clepid double quarteyn, þat is to seie necligence or sleuth . . . bicasue he is slow and necligent in al maner þinges þat longen to everlastyng hele.[35]

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[34] *Chastising* (p. 128, l. 12 to p. 129, l. 6)

[35] *Chastising* (p. 129, ll. 9–23)

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The central image in this passage of a dark pride is both compelling and sinister. It conveys with vivid force the insidious nature of these spiritual malaises and their corrupting influence. As with all the other spiritual pathologies, the root cause is 'vnstabilnesse' – a lack of order and control. As it manifests and progresses, such a condition causes further degeneration and problems for the person's spiritual health. Instead of pursuing the health of the soul, such persons pursue their own variable desires and particular vices – they suffer from 'alienacioun'. This word has a range of meanings that cover medical, judicial and theological contexts, two of which are operative here. Medically, the word means 'derangement' or 'insanity', usually due to the presence of fever.[36] Theologically, it means estrangement or desertion from God. This 'quartan feuere' thus combines these senses to figure a form of insanity that results in estrangement from God: a complete – and completely insane – removal 'fro god, fro hymsilf, fro al sooþfastnesse and fro al uertues'. Such a fever results in the negation of all progress in sowle-hele, and begets yet more sins and vices. From it stems the 'double quarteyn', a fever that is not simply pure sin but also the direct opposite of spiritual health itself: from this madness comes the sins of spiritual sloth and lassitude. each of these fevers are dangerous and to be avoided, but they all share the common cause of 'vnstabilnesse', or lack of control and moderation in the emotions (p. 188, l. 28). The text, however, does not rest with providing just a diagnosis of spiritual pathologies. Its medicinal frame goes much further than that, and offers remedies as well:

19) Þerfor a souereyn remedie to alle þese goostli feueris, in what degree a man stonde, it is goode to wirche bi counsaile, þat he falle nat fro goode lyueng ne fro his deuocion, ne chaunge nat to worse bi his vnstablenesse.[37]

Advice, not emotion, is the best medicine for these dangerous fevers. To 'wirche bi counsaile' is an inherently communal process, one that consists of seeking out and submitting to the advice and wisdom of someone else. Instead of proceeding alone, self-medicating with the emotions without caution or control, such 'counsaile' means that all treatment exists with an endless process of consultation. A confessor figure, thus stabilises, makes the treatment of the soul operate within the frameworks of order and moderation.

The treatment offered consists of two levels. The first is this element of intersubjectivity: the self is kept away from solipsistic tendencies and the self-loving dangers of immoderate emotions, by engaging in a consultation with another that extends a penitential subjectivity into a continuous process of self-analysis and monitoring. Related to this is the second element – meekness: to submit to the advice and counsel of this spiritual doctor, to subject all emotions and thoughts to an endless process of scrutiny, is a potent antidote for pride

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[36] MED, 'alienacioun' (n.), specifically senses 2 and 3.
[37] *Chastising* (p. 190, ll. 7–10)

and presumption. These elements are consistent with the practical application of the virtue of discretion, as they help ensure the salutary presence of humility and work to check any extreme or immoderate emotions. other texts offer identical advice. For the *Cloud*, the soul's continued development towards God depends upon the 'counsel of sum discrete fader' as this will ensure that the soul's various stirrings are properly understood and controlled.[38] Here confession becomes an activity that extends beyond the sacrament of penance and the evocation of a penitential subjectivity, and moves towards a heightened form of spiritual diagnosis and treatment. The *Treatise of Discrescyon of Spirites* is more explicit:

20) loke þan besily by þe witnes of þi counsel and þi concience, ʒif þou haue be schreuyn and lawfuly amendid, after þe dome of þi confessour, of alle þe consentes þat euer þou consentid to þat kynde of synne þat þi þouʒt is aworde of. And ʒif þou haue not be schreuen, schriue þee þan as trewly as þou maist by grace and by counsel. And þan wite þou riʒt wel þat alle þe þouʒtes þat comen to þee aftir þi schrift, stering þee eft to þe same sinnes, þei ben þe wordes of oþer spirites þan þin owne.[39]

Guided introspection is the key to controlling the soul's various and powerful passions. here confession is not just about the remission of sin, but rather the creation of specific modalities of self-awareness. It is not sufficient to be aware of the presence of sin in the soul; what is also needed is a deep awareness of the very motivations and impulses of spiritual ascent. The emphasis here lies more on 'þouʒt' than on 'synne'. The psychology of sin is merely an initial stage in obtaining the health of the soul, and must progress into a deeper and more fundamental engagement with the soul's preoccupations and motivations. A distinction between temporal periods undergirds this passage, and brings its subtlety and nuance into sharper relief. Initially, it begins with the self alone, with the unaided and unadvised progress of reformation within the soul. This state is akin to 'vnstabilnesse', as it is full of uncertainty regarding the soul and its motivation: despite any prior progress in the soul's treatment, it is a stage full of 'doute', of 'iuel þouʒtes', of 'vnknouing'.[40] Such internal confusion can only be remedied by the work of 'counsel' and 'concience', which are associated with an 'aftir' time within the soul. This is a temporal period characterised by calm certainty and knowing 'riʒt well' and also communal assistance: the self is not alone here, but guided and assisted by another person. This moment of 'counsel' is one of intense intersubjective engagement, as the thoughts and emotions of the old self become tested, modulated and controlled through the presence of this confessor. While such confessional self-awareness still exists within the sacrament of confession and makes the soul 'as it were, a clene paper leef', it does exert other, more salutary, effects:[41]

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[38] Cloud, p. 92, ll. 12–13.
[39] Discrescyon of Spirites, p. 88, ll. 13–20.
[40] Discrescyon of Spirites, p. 88, l. 11; p. 88, l. 11; p. 88, l. 8.
[41] Discrescyon of Spirites, p. 90, l. 22.

21) Þe sely soule, at þe licnes of a schip, atteineþ at þe last to þe londe of stabelnes and þe hauen of helþe, þe whiche is þe clere and þe soþfast knowing of himself and of alle his inward disposiciouns; þorow þe whiche knowing he sitteþ quietly in hymself, as a king crouned in his rewme, miȝtly, wisely, and goodly gouernyng himself and alle his þouȝtes & steringes, boþe in body & in soule.[42]

The 'counsel' of confession leads to the health of the soul in ways beyond simply cleansing it from sin. In keeping with the nautical metaphor, the 'hauen of helþe' is reached through what confession promotes within the soul: self-knowledge. This self-knowledge is the essence of discretion, figured here as active knowledge that enables total command over the passions and powers of the soul. Mastery of the waves and waters soon turns into mastery of the self. The metaphors deployed here shift from maritime navigation to those of sovereignty and governance, and function to merge the key concept of 'helþe' with that of 'goodly gouernyng'. Knowledge of the 'inward disposiciouns', a form of spiritual physiognomy, enables all 'þouȝtes & steringes' to become subject to precise control and regulation. This is the goal of discretion: a complete harmony within the self, an order and moderation of the emotions that ultimately extends to both body and soul.

Above and beyond order, such introspection generates other important states and virtues within the soul. Confession's intersubjective aspects are vital to the emergence of meekness: the open and honest submission to another person in confession is an act that by its very form encourages humility. As *The Mirror of St Edmund* notes, meekness comes 'þorw knowynge of þi-self: ffor þow maiȝt not seon þi-self soþliche wȝuch þow art, þat þou ne schald be Meked'.[43] Meekness, therefore, is a key part of discretion's overall impact upon the soul, and is understood as similarly therapeutic. In the *Chastising* true 'lownesse' is seen as 'anoþer remedie' for spiritual ills and fevers. Later materials advocate a reading strategy based upon temperance and knowledge of one's spiritual disposition. *The Myroure of Our Lady*, an early fifteenth century commentary on the distinctive office of Brigittine nuns, offers an excellent example:

22) Yt is expediente that eche persone vse to rede, and to study in this maner of bokes, suche matters as be moste conuenyeute to hym for the tyme. For yf eny were drawen downe in bytternes of temptacyon or of trybulacyon yt were not spedefull to hym for that tyme to study in bokes of heuynes & drede, though he felte hymselfe wyllyng therto, but rather in suche bokes as mighte sturre vp hys affeccyons to comforte and to hope. And so is yt to be

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[42] Discrecioun of Stirings, p. 64, ll. 17–23.

[43] Carl Horstmann (ed.), The Mirror of St Edmund, in Yorkshire Writers: Richard Rolle of Hampole, an English Father of the Church, and His Followers, vol. 1 (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1895–96), p. 261.

sayde dyuersely after the diuersyte of dysposycions that persones ar sturred wyth for the tyme.[44]

Reading requires not simply a text, but also a self-awareness of one's emotional disposition. Advice is given here, as well as a warning: all reading must be carried out in a manner that ensures moderation and balance of the emotions, otherwise imbalance and harm will result. In practice, the emotional complexion of the person must not only be taken into account but must also frame and guide all reading activity. The key words here are 'tyme' and 'conuenyeute' as they foreground a sense of precision, order and control. The semantic range of 'conuenyeute' is particularly significant, as the word conveys the senses of 'suitable', 'appropriate', 'effective' or 'well suited to function', and 'morally fitting'.[45] To read in this way is to read in the most functionally optimal and morally appropriate manner. Much like the Cloud's emphasis on the importance of 'list' – an ordered stratagem of love – this text extolls the benefits of reading in accordance with a plan, with the level of precision and focus that comes from true self-knowledge. Reading is precisely modulated, tailored to the given emotional disposition of the person as it exists at a given moment.

Emphasis falls upon this idea of precise control: the alliteration in 'dyuersely after the diuersyte of dysposycions' draws attention to the complexity not of a given text but of the person who reads it. This awareness of variability, of constant fluctuation in emotional temperament, is the guiding principle of all reading here. emotions still exist, and are still evoked by reading, but they all exist within a precisely controlled framework. Instead of amplifying the baseline emotional state of the soul, the reading material ought to contrast with it. The text offers advice that is much like Galenic medicine's concept of *eucrasia*, or balance: the emotions are subject to allopathic treatment, as those with a currently depressive emotional state ought to read material that promotes comfort and hope. To read in this way is to be attuned to one's inner state, and to seek out reading material that stimulates the emotions into harmony, not excess. Such complexional reading offers treatment that is more bespoke and directed, that avoids extremes. Fear, penance, compassion and longing all have their place, but to ensure they do not corrupt and harm the soul they must be finely attuned to the state of the soul, evoked and experienced only as and when necessary. When used discretely, the texts of sowle-hele will treat the soul and its emotions, but they will do so through ordering those emotions, bringing a harmony to the soul that moves it towards a deep humility and calm – towards complete health: salvation.

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[44] John Henry Blunt (ed.), The Myroure of Our Lady, EETS E. S. 19 (London: N. Trübner & Co, 1873), p. 69.
[45] MED, 'convenient' (adj.).

Julia Wellnitz

"Not Necessarily a Narrator: Deixis of Proximity in Chaucer's *The Man of Law's Tale*"

Julia Wellnitz

Not Necessarily a Narrator: Deixis of Proximity in Chaucer's *The Man of Law's Tale*

The first person narrator has frequently been accepted as a significant instance of perspectivisation in the *Canterbury Tales* in general and not least in *The Man of Law's Tale*[1]. I would like to refer to three recent examples. Erwin, who approaches the tale from the perspective of affective theory, considers one purpose of the tale to be the transport of affect that is essentially made possible by the voice of "a very complex, very human narrator" (2016:59). Benson believes that the man of law's presentation of Saint Constance's pity makes him appear "almost as if he were pleading her case in a court of law" (2008:9), and Morgan concludes that "[i]t is the narrator who gives substance to our sense of respect and sympathy for Constance by his personal interventions" (2010:31). Their assumption of a text-internal human narrator who is able to intervene into the narrative of the tale appears to be reasonable if the *Canterbury Tales* are considered a coherent whole. In the *General Prologue*, the tale is assigned to a specific personalised teller introduced as an excellent "sergeant of the lawe" who is "war and wyse" (*GP* I.309) and especially the prologue and introduction to the tale employ some legal terms that may be associated with a man of law – even if they are predominantly used by the Host.[2] The tale itself, however, has been observed to contain "nothing . . . that has specifically to do with a lawyer" (Pearsall 2002:257). Furthermore, as Spearing has suggested, the tales are not orally told tales but rewritings, i.e. written compositions based on textual sources (2005:119). In the case of *The Man of Law's Tale*, Chaucer's direct source is 'De la noble femme Constance'[3], which is contained in Nicholas Trevet's fourteenth-century Anglo-Norman chronicle, and probably also Gower's version of the tale in his *Confessio Amantis*. This textuality is also very explicit in the tale itself in which it is, for instance, stated at one point that the *I* is not able to find the name of a castle in the source "text" (*MLT* 100.905) of the tale. Against this textual background and in light of the various references to oral speech in the tales, e.g. verbs such as *tellen*, Spearing argues that the tales, by and large, only create the idea of oral storytelling and cannot without doubt be proven to have been compiled according to the principle 'first the creation of the teller, then the creation of the tales' – the latter of which can be attributed to the imagined mind of particular personified tellers (2005:119). As he also identifies instances attributed to the textual *I* that are not teller-unique and occur in most of Chaucer's tales, e.g. expressions of ignorance in the form "[b]ut in what wise, certeinly, I noot" (*MLT* 100.892), he remarks, with reference to Lawton (1985:92), that the "'I' of most medieval narratives does not represent a speaking individual, real

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[1] All citations of Chaucer's texts are taken from Benson, editor. 2008. *The Riverside Chaucer*, 3rd edition. References to *The Man of Law's Tale* will be made in the following form: '*MLT* page(s).verse(es)'.
[2] For examples of this legal language, see Morgan (2010:6-7).
[3] See Miller for a discussion of Chaucer's usage of Trevet's chronicle (1975:49-71).

or fictional, but is merely one element in the rhetoric of storytelling" (2005:118). Taking this assumption that will be further discussed below as a point of departure, I shall argue that *The Man of Law's Tale* contains instances of the textual *I* of which the deictic quality of pointing to the physical and imagined corporality of any human being serves as a means for the reader to be closely drawn to and identify with the story. In this function, the *I* interacts with other deictic expressions, especially tense, spatial deictics and verbs of movement, and, while sometimes drawing attention to the process of narration, it enhances the reader's experience of the story rather than a particular narrator's view of the story.

For this purpose, Spearing is of special value because he provides a deictic analysis of lines 142-203 of *The Man of Law's Tale*. He focusses specifically on the use of tense and the functions of the pronoun *we* in order to show that their usage encodes subjectivity in a way that cannot unambiguously be grasped by the category 'narrator' (2005:123-130). Although Spearing considers some instances of the *I* in this tale, his main aim is to show that subjectivity is not restricted to this textual *I*, which is why he has chosen a passage that features only three occurrences of the first person personal pronoun and does not give an account of the dominant usage of *I* in other passages of the tale. In particular, he opposes readings of the tale, such as Astell (1991:91), which consider the tale to contain views of an obtuse narrator. He disagrees with their assumption that there is a clear distinction in the tale between narratorial passages, which are uttered by an obtuse narrator whose comments must not be taken at face value, and non-narratorial passages, which convey "facts" or Chaucer's views (Spearing 2005: 121-122). While he has a closer look at deictics in order to show that such a clear-cut distinction between narratorial and non-narratorial passages is not evident in the tale, I shall show that a narrator-independent analysis of deixis can help reveal how the story creates for the reader imagined spatio-temporal immediacy and emotional closeness to Constance's story. To this end, I shall briefly elucidate the main assumption of the narrator-approach to narrative texts and illustrate possible conceptual and linguistic reasons why an approach that is not based on the narrator-concept might be insightful with regard to medieval texts. In a next step, I shall introduce the main deictic categories examined here, considering their usage in speech as opposed to writing, and, against this background, provide a deictic analysis of a small sample of selected *I*-occurrences in *The Man of Law's Tale*.

The narrator-approach is based on a communicative model of narrative and its basic assumption is that a narrative always has a narrator who is different from the real author and, importantly, as many narrative models hold, who is different from the implied author. The 'implied author' is the mental image the reader creates of the real or – if unknown – of the

potential author while reading a text (Chatman 1978:148).[4] This distinction is reasonable to make in cases of an unreliable narrator where the narrator does not "speak . . . for or act . . . in accordance with the norms of the work (which is to say the implied author's norms)" (Booth 1983:158-159). Such a case is, for example, Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* where racist comments of the narrator Huck cannot be seen to be shared by Mark Twain. In many medieval narratives, however, this distinction that assumes a speaking narrator is not always helpful, as Spearing (2015:71) remarks. He has noted that many dominant narratological definitions of the narrator, be it considered "an agent or . . . the agency or 'instance' that tells or transmits everything [=the narrative]" (Phelan and Booth 2005:388) or "the single, unified, distinct human-like voice who produces the whole narrative discourse we are reading" (Margolin 2014:par. 5), attribute to the narrator a consistent consciousness that allows him[5] to communicate the narrative to the implied, i.e. textually presupposed, reader and potentially to the real reader. He has traced the history of the term 'narrator' (Spearing 2015:67-70) and has not only found that it is mainly used with regard to post-1700 prose narratives but also that it is absent in medieval thought (Spearing 2015:66). On this evidence, he argues that a unified narrator as understood in the definitions above does not exist in the Middle Ages and cannot be appropriately applied to medieval narratives, which often have a non-unified and fragmentary status (Spearing 2015:71-75). This fits the fragmentary *Canterbury Tales* to a tee, which, structurally, do not presume a fixed order of reading. Specifically in *The Man of Law's Tale*, the assumption of a coherent relationship between the tale and its prologue and epilogue poses problems if only because the prologue makes reference to a prose tale (Prologue *MLT* 88.96), while the tale is in verse (*MLT* "Explanatory Notes" 854).

In order to further illustrate Spearing's point of the conceptual and linguistic inapplicability of the narrator to many medieval texts, I shall provide three of his examples. The first example considers the dream vision *Piers Plowman* which narratological approaches consider to be told by the first person narrator called "Wylle". This narrator is also a character in the story. Hence, it is a homodiegetic narration, which, as Genette has first proposed, can generally be distinguished from a heterodiegetic narration in which the narrator is not a character within the story (1980:84). This textual *I* tells us at some point that his wit has waxed (Spearing 2015:75). Kerby-Fulton, who analyses manuscripts containing *Piers Plowman*, notes that a gloss in British Library MS Add. 10574 (Passus 15) appears to also attribute the textual *I*'s mad state

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[4] This model of narrative communication is not described comprehensively here as my analysis diverts from its main assumption of the necessary existence of a text-internal narrator. See Chatman for a prominent detailed account of this model (1978:147-151).

[5] I shall use the masculine personal pronoun to refer to the narrator throughout this writing as the poet of *The Man of Law's Tale* is male.

of mind to the *compilator* of the story: "[n]ota de condicionibus compila[to]ris huius libri"[6] (2012:232). While she concludes that the annotator does not distinguish between the author of the tale, who is responsible for the compiling of the story, and the narrator (Kerby-Fulton 2012:232), Spearing argues that there is equally no distinction between the concept of an author, the compiler of the story, and the narrator for medieval writers. He elaborates that to medieval writers "the textual *I* was (what we would call) a proximal deictic, and they did not distinguish between its possible fictional and autobiographical referents" (Spearing 2015:75). Central to my analysis is his understanding of the textual *I* as expressing deictic proximity, a quality on which Spearing elaborates in *Medieval Autographies* and which he considers a systematically used means in a number of non-lyrical medieval texts he calls autographies (2012:257). This deictic quality becomes graspable in a second example taken from this book. It concerns the following passage from the allegory *Wynnere and Wastoure* (1):

> (1) But *I* schall tell yow a tale that **me** bytyde ones, / As *I* wente in the weste wandrynge **myn one** / Bi a bonke of a bourne (39.31-33) [my emphasis throughout this essay]

In these three short verses, the first person pronoun, which seemingly designates the teller of "a tale" (*Wynnere and Wastoure* 39.31) and a person experiencing something that "bytyde [him] ones" (*Wynnere and Wastoure* 39.31), occurs four times in different forms. These forms are the nominative *I*, the dative case *me*, and the reflexive pronoun *myn one*. However, this textual *I* "has no real individuality other than a location 'in the weste' [*Wynnere and Wastoure* 39.32]" (Spearing 2012:25). Rather, the emptiness of personhood Spearing describes here makes this pronoun suitable as a tool for what he calls 'experientiality,'[7] i.e. experiencing the story in a way that is "separable from any individual experiencing consciousness" (Spearing 2012:20). The *I* does not appear to *narrate* the story but draws attention to the story itself, for instance with the help of activity verbs such as *wenten* and *wander*. This proximal function is best illustrated in comparing it to the effect of what Spearing labels an instance of the ethic dative (2012:11). It occurs in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* when Sir Gawain "bede hym [=his chamberlain] bring hym his bruny and his blonk sadel" (2012) for his journey:

> (2) That other ferkez hym up and fechez hym his wedez / And graythez **me** Sir Gawain upon a grett wyse. (2013-2014)

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[6] Kerby-Fulton's translation: "note the conditions of the compiler of this book" (2012:232).

[7] His usage of the term is explicitly differentiated from Fludernik's usage of the same. She employs it to define narrativity: "For the narrator the experientiality of the story resides not merely in the events themselves but in their emotional significance and exemplary nature. The events become tellable precisely because they have started to mean something to the narrator on an emotional level. It is this conjunction of experience reviewed, reorganized, and evaluated ('point') that constitutes narrativity" (1996:70).

Spearing holds that the ethic dative pronoun *me*, which is untranslatable into English, does not denote a narrator or any human being but is rather similar in effect to the shift from past ("bede hym" (2012)) to present tense ("graythez" (2013)). It draws the reader into the event of Sir Gawain receiving the appropriate dress for his journey (Spearing 2012:11).[8]

  Having talked about the deictic quality of some textual *I*s in medieval texts, I shall briefly put them more systematically into the context of the other deictic categories under scrutiny here. I will then illustrate that their usage in written texts as opposed to speech does not always require a communicative model of a speaking narrator. From an oral-communicative perspective, deictic expressions locate the speaker of an utterance in time and space in a certain situation, which is illustrated in (3). Example (3) contains examples of what, according to Fillmore, are three different categories of deixis, that is person, space and time deixis (1997:61):[9]

 (3) a. A: I shall be here tomorrow.
   b. B. See you.

Person deixis linguistically encodes the participants in a conversation (Levinson 1983:61), here speaker A (*I*) and addressee B (*you*). These personal pronouns are usually regarded as so-called shifters which change their reference during a conversation. In other words, speaker A utters (3)a to addressee B, but after the event of turn-taking, addressee B turns into speaker B uttering (3)b to the new addressee A. Spatial deixis, encoded in the adverb *here* in (3)a, specifies the location with respect to the speakers, while temporal deixis, here expressed by the adverb *tomorrow*, specifies the time relative to what Fillmore calls the 'encoding time', that is the moment of the speaker's utterance (1997:66). Notably, the respective speaker and his spatio-temporal situation is the 'deictic centre' of his utterance, i.e. the anchoring point from which the deictics in an utterance can be interpreted (1997:66). Specifically, utterance (3)a becomes meaningless if its addressee B does not know and is not part of speaker A's situational context. In these face-to-face situations, it is the speaker's bodily position that makes deixis meaningful and decodable for a hearer. As has been sketched above, such an oral-communicative model of deixis in which a narrator, that is a speaker, talks to the (implied) reader or addressee has been frequently applied

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[8] In some languages, such as German, the ethic dative is still used today. If *me* is an ethical dative form in Spearing's example, a translation of the line "graythez me Sir Gawain upon a grett wyse" (2013) could read 'Er kleidete mir Sir Gawain prachtvoll ein.' However, as the ethic dative tends to refer to a person who "is represented as taking a sympathetic interest . . . in the action which is not performed by him or for him" (Visser 1963-1967:630-631; par. 695; vol. 2), such a translation would imply that the *mir* denotes the speaker. As I agree with the proximity effect of this pronoun here, which is not likely to be uttered by a suddenly intervening speaker, I would not necessarily call this occurrence of *me* an ethical dative but rather a usage of a personal pronoun that stresses for the reader Sir Gawain's perspective and his emotional involvement during him being dressed.

[9] Fillmore distinguishes two further deictic categories, namely social deixis which encodes the social relationship of the speakers towards each other and discourse deixis which encodes the preceding or following discourse of a conversation (1997:61). Both types are not central to my paper and will not be considered further here.

to narrative texts. There is, however, also linguistic counter-evidence for the application of such a speaker-centred model to narratives. As Spearing has illustrated, writing does not have to be seen as underlying speech: "when I write "I", the word does not emerge from anyone's mouth, and its deictic energy – the energy of pointing, looking, feeling, imagining – is freed for a wider variety of expressive purposes" (2012:10), some of which will hopefully be seen in play here. That there are problems involved in seeing writing as representing speech is furthermore highlighted by the fact that some narrative sentences, for instance free direct discourse passages as in (4), might be considered, as Banfield argues, unspeakable[10] (4)a and observerless (4)b:

> (4) a. Now he threw away his cigarette. They watched him. (Banfield 1987:273)
>   b. The sun had now sunk lower in the sky. (Banfield 1987:273)

In both sentences, there is no directly identifiable speaker *I* who forms a deictic centre. In fact, in (4)a., the imagined deictic centre is occupied by the character encoded in the third person pronoun *he*, which here means 'not I while I speak', a movement of the deictic centre from the speaker to another person. Equally, the temporal deictic *now* locates the character's throwing away of the cigarette as happening within the now of the story, while the past tense form *threw* anchors the action as happening 'not now while I speak' during the narration. In other words, person and temporal deictic expressions do not only locate the action in the deictic centre of the character but also in that of a speaking *I*, thus making them appear as deictically diffused (e.g. Jahn 1999:104) or as Banfield would call it, unspeakable from the perspective of a speaker with a single deictic centre. However, while the larger context makes clear that the character's action is observed by other story-internal characters, here referred to as *they*, the action described in sentence (4)b does not have any fictional observer and therewith what is called an 'empty deictic centre' (Banfield 1987:270). Still, and most importantly, the temporal deictic *now* creates the impression of subjectivity or deictic closeness with regard to the sunset and the throwing away of the cigarette. While these examples are meant to illustrate the deictic differences in speech and writing, they also show, especially (4)b, that deixis in narrative can create the impression of experience independent of a speaking narrator or other individual consciousness. This observation provides a basis for a narratorless analysis of the Middle English examples Spearing gives us, and a starting point for the following examination of some of the deictic effects of the textual *I*s in the *Man of Law's Tale*.

One such bundle of occurrences where the textual *I* is very present and which is considered a frequently used method of representing consciousness in Middle English narrative is, according to Fludernik (2011:84), 'narratorial empathy'; "the empathetic assumption of a

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[10] For a full account of what Banfield calls unspeakable sentences, see Banfield (1982).

protagonist's feelings by the narrator or bard".[11] In this regard, most narrator readings would probably agree that the tale contains many instances of the narrator expressing pity for the heroine's suffering. Astell, for instance, states that the narrator expresses "overt sympathy for Custance" (1991:91). Similarly, Barlow agrees as an aside that the "internal narrator imitates the heroine's piety" (2010:399) and Dinshaw observes "the extreme pathos and rhetorical affect of heroine and her narrator" (2001:24). Notably, both Barlow and Dinshaw consider this narratorial empathy as critical. While Dinshaw attributes to it a "hollowness" (2001:24), Astell considers it the utterance of an obtuse narrator whom Chaucer has chosen to critique the common pity of his contemporaries "with its misdirected veneration of the saints" (1991:91). This sympathetically obtuse narrator is less evident if we take a closer look at some potential examples of narratorial empathy from the perspective of deixis, which shows that the numerous unambiguously sympathetically tinged remarks do not arrive from a single and consistent consciousness:

(5) a. This same accord was sworn on eyther syde; / Now, faire Custance, almighty God thee gyde! (*MLT* 90.244-245)
b. And forth she sailleth in the salte see. / O **my** Custance, ful of benignytee, / O Emperoures Yonge doghter deere, / He that is lord of Fortune be thy steere! (*MLT* 93.445-448)
c. Allas! Custance, thou hast no champioun, / Ne fighte kanstow noght, so weylaway! / But he that starf for **our** redempcioun, / And boond Sathan (and yet lith ther he lay), / So be thy stronge champion this day! / For, but if Crist upon myracle kithe, / Withouten gilt thou shalt be slayn as swithe. (*MLT* 96.631-637)
d. O queenes, lyvynge in prosperitee, / Duchesses, and ye ladyes, everichone, / Haveth some routhe on hire adversitee! / An Emperoures daughter stant alone; / She hath no wight to whom to make her mone. / O blood roial, that stondest in this drede, / Fer ben thy freendes at thy grete nede! (*MLT* 96.652-658)
e. O **my** Custance, wel may thy goost have feere, / And, slepynge, in thy dreem been in penance, / Whan Donegild cast al this ordinance. (*MLT* 98.803-805)
f. Almyghty God, that saveth al mankynde, / Have on Custance and on hir child som mynde, / That fallen is in hethen hand eft soone, / In point to spille, as **I** shal telle yow soone. (*MLT* 100.908-910)

Notably, two of the overtly sympathising examples, (5)b and e, contain an explicit pronominal *I* in the form of the possessive pronoun *my* which is part of the lamenting interjections *O my Custance*. Since there is no evidence that this *I* is a character within the story, these occurrences of the first person pronoun seem to be clear candidates for designating a heterodiegetic narrator lamenting Custance's suffering. Such a text-internal narratorial voice *I* is seemingly also evident

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[11] It is noteworthy to point out Fludernik's (2011:84) note that the *I* of medieval texts can also refer to a real narrator who delivers a text in front of an audience, which may have been the case for *The Man of Law's Tale*. This situational context may have allowed the oral narrator to give rise to further rhetorical and deictic effects of the *I*, which will not be considered here for reasons of space. Nevertheless, the references to textuality in the tale are evidence that the tale was privately read (see also Pearsall 2002:295) and a potentially oral delivery of the tale does not deny the textual presence of the *I*.

in the various interjections that introduce an apostrophe, such as "o" (*MLT* 93.446-447) and "allas" (*MLT* 96.631). Interestingly, however, this textual *I* does not only address text-external characters, that is "Almyghty God" (*MLT* 100.908) who is asked to "[h]ave . . . some mynde" (*MLT* 100.908) ((5)f) on Constance and her child but he also addresses text-internal characters. Constance herself, for example, has been wished God's help after the marriage to a man, the Syrian Sultan, whose "condicioun" (*MLT* 91.271) Constance does not know when the textual *I* states "Now, faire Custance, almighty God thee gyde!" (*MLT* 90.245) ((5)a) and "He that is lord of Fortune be thy steere!" and, equally, "queenes . . . / Duchesses, and ye ladyes, everichone, / Haveth some routhe on hire [=Custance] adversitee" (*MLT* 96.652-654) ((5)d). From the narrator-perspective, these narrator's addresses to characters would be considered instances of metalepsis in which the diegetic world is accessed or, as Genette calls it, intruded by the heterodiegetic narrator who, logically-speaking, is not part of this story-internal world (1988:234). Such narratorial intrusions appear to confuse the distance between the time of the story, henceforth story-NOW, and the time of the narration, henceforth narration-NOW, by making the story-external narrator part of the story. But if we apply this concept of an omniscient narrator-character communication to the tale, we introduce a sense of readerly distance to Constance's situation, which the tale does not create deictically. In fact, an understanding of these instances as metalepsis draws attention to what is perceived as the logical separateness of the world of storytelling and the world of the story. This separateness does not fully capture that Constance's story-NOW experience is deictically brought most proximally to the readers. This proximity, which includes both the impression of spatio-temporal immediacy as well as of emotional closeness to the story, is made possible through a textual *I* who is not necessarily an omniscient consciousness but rather points to a sense of *we* that encapsulates the human, especially Christian, ability to share the experience of Constance's suffering. In this regard, Spearing's observation is noteworthy that the frequent first plural deictic pronoun *we* always refers to shared either British or Christian aspects of culture in the tale (2005:128-129). One of these occurrences, here used in the form of the possessive pronoun *our*, can also be found in the examples above, (5)c, namely in an instance where fearful hope for Constance's survival is attributed to Christ who "starf" (*MLT* 96.633) for human sins to bring about "our redempcioun" (*MLT* 96.633), i.e. human salvation. Certainly, the prayers to God in which he is asked to be Constance's guide in a situation where Constance is depicted as unable to help herself ("Ne fighte kanstow noght, so weylaway!") (*MLT* 96.632) attribute strong faith in Christ to this textual *I*, but this faith does not gain its emotional power in the tale by being the faith of an individual narrator. When Spearing sees the tale to be an expression of "poet and audience . . . [being] associated in feeling themselves members of a British and Christian community with its roots in

a distant past" (2005:128)", it can be added that this sense of shared Christian faith is fostered in these textual *I*s and *we*s in a way that a personified narrator-understanding cannot do. Rather, the pronoun's deictic ability to point to any human being might be seen to provide the dominantly Christian readers in Chaucer's time with a point of religious identification.

Furthermore, these remarks contain more than the identification with and feeling of a shared Christian community. Rather, the Christian community becomes almost tangible as part of the readers' "emotional realities" (Morgan 2010:31). While Morgan appears to use this term in the sense that the narrator's emotional reaction to Constance's unjustified suffering is understandable to us readers as we respond in the same way to unjustified suffering in real life (2010:31), I borrow his phrase to indicate how the story itself presents Constance's suffering in a way that it becomes a seemingly immediate experience of her emotional reality for the readers. One deictic element that creates this sense of bodily presence for the readers has been indirectly observed by Barlow with regard to example (5)f, the textual *I*'s direct invocation of "Almighty God" (2010:404). Barlow states that the narrator's "use of the present tense and of the prayer genre position him as experiencing the moment in time with the audience and the heroine rather than from a position of an omniscient narrative authority" (2010:403). Although he ascribes the choice of a certain tense to the narrator rather than the poet Chaucer, he pinpoints a dominant element that all the examples in (5) as well as those still to consider, share, that is "experiencing the moment [=the tale] in time with . . . the heroine". However, his narrator-approach to the tale urges him to relativise what he has noted himself to be the case; the "emotional depths" (2010:404) of these passages. Thus, he goes on to assume that since the narrator knows that Constance will be saved in the end, the narrator's pretence of ignorance about Constance's fate in his prayer are not sincere but instead "a deployment of the *idea* of faith to enhance the suspense" (2010:404). If one embraces this perspective, the narrator's invocations of God, ((5)a-b), to make Constance rise healthily from her suffering would also just serve to convey the idea of faith. (5)a-b is requoted here in parts:

(6) a. The same accord **was** sworn on eyther syde; / **Now**, faire Custance, almighty God thee gyde! (*MLT* 90.244-245)
    b. He that is lord of Fortune be thy steere! (*MLT* 93.445-448)

Barlow is surely right in assuming that the expression of faith is fictional and abstract to the extent that the prayer is part of the tale's rhetoric. Still, we cannot be sure that Chaucer's contemporary audience considers the tale to be fiction. In fact, Chaucer's sources for the tale claim to be historical (Spearing 2005:21). More importantly, however, temporal deixis, here indicated by the present tense as well as the present perfect, fundamentally gives rise to more than an abstract and fictional idea of faith. It creates the illusion of "identification with an

experiential centre which is that of the story, not of the storytelling" (Spearing 2005:127). While, in oral communication, the present tense locates an event encoded in a verb at the time of a speaker's utterance, present perfect aspect expresses anteriority with regard to the moment of utterance. The latter is non-deictic as its anchoring point is not the moment of utterance but tends to be considered a means for the speaker to express the relevance of an event with regard to the moment of the speaker's utterance or its duration from a past point in time until the present moment of the utterance. However, the present perfect and present tense forms in the tale do not only relate to the narration-NOW of a potential textual *I*. Instead, they occur both with narration-NOW events, "faire Custance, almighty God thee gyde! (*MLT* 90.245), "thou hast no champioun, / Ne fighte kanstow noght" (*MLT* 96. 631-632), "O blood roial, that stondest in this drede (*MLT* 96.657) and with story-NOW events experienced by characters, such as Donegild who "cast al this ordinance" (*MLT* 98.805) or Constance "that fallen is in hethen hand" (*MLT* 100.909). And it is the story-NOW perspective that dominates the narration NOW-perspective as indicated by the deictic temporal adverb *now* (6)a. This deictic adverb emphasises that the textual *I*'s good wishes for Constance are relevant to the story-NOW and hence marks the text-internal decision of Constance and the Sultan's marriage, which is morphologically marked as past tense ("was sworn" (*MLT* 90.244)), as having been made in the very recent past of the story-NOW. Similarly, the present perfect form in (5)f presents Constance's subjection to "hethen hand" (*MLT* 100. 909) as a recent event within the story-NOW.[12]

We have seen that the narration NOW-perspective, the narratorial voice, is put in the background in our examples. What still exists implicitly in (6) or explicitly in other passages discussed so far is a textual *I*. One might argue that the *I*'s purpose comes closer to what Glauch (2010:172) described for Middle High German homodiegetic narratives, e.g. dream visions, and what Fludernik considers to be a characteristic of narrativity itself; that is that the narrator does not consider himself to be a narrator but someone who experiences the story (Glauch 2010:172)[13] and that the tale's events "have started to mean something to the narrator on an emotional level" (Fludernik 1996:70). Nevertheless, it is not the experience of the *I* that is important. Rather, the deictic weavings of this passage indicate the experience of the story itself

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[12] There is varying evidence whether the semantic distinction between simple past describing a finished past action and present perfect describing an unfinished action with relevance to the present moment is already fully established in the fourteenth century. While, for example, Visser observes that the present perfect aspect is rather gradually coming into being in the Middle English period (Visser 1963-1967:749-754; par. 805; vol. 3), Bauer, who analyses Chaucer and Gower texts, finds that the modern English distinction is largely made during Chaucer (1970:100-106). For my analysis, it is mainly important that the present perfect examples considered in the tale can all be read as referring to actions that are relevant to the story-NOW or have just been completed.

[13] Original quote: „ . . . als Erzählenden erfindet sich der Ich-Erzähler durchaus nicht, aber er erfindet sich als Erlebenden" (Glauch 2010:172).

is highlighted. The effect is most palpable in (5)c and e, here cited again as (7)a-b, and is brought about by tense and deictic demonstratives:

(7) a. **O my** Custance, wel may thy goost have feere, / And, slepynge, in thy dreem been in penance, / Whan Donegild cast al **this ordinance**. (*MLT* 98.803-805)
    b. Allas! Custance, thou hast no champioun, / Ne fighte kanstow noght, so weylaway! / But he that starf for **our** redempcioun, / And boond Sathan (and yet lith ther he lay), / So be thy strong champion **this day**! / For, but if Crist upon myracle kithe, Withouten gilt thou shalt be slayn as swithe. (*MLT* 96.631-637)

The proximate deictic *this* (7)a.-b is used in connection with nouns relating to Constance's miserable situation, e.g. Donegild's "ordinance" (*MLT* 98.803-805). Donegild's plan is her intention to destroy the marriage between her son King Alla and Constance by her pretending in a letter that Constance has given birth to a child who is "so horrible a feendly creature" (*MLT* 89.751). It also refers to the day when Constance is falsely accused of the murder of Hermengild. The deictic does not indicate a specific narrator's emotional nearness to Constance, but it creates for the reader the illusion of spatial and temporal nearness to Constance's situation. In (7)a, the deontic modal verb *mouen*, here used in the sense of 'to have good reason', ostensibly indicates that a graspable narrating *I* is able to know Constance's feelings and considers her fear to be understandable ("wel may thy goost have feree" (*MLT* 98.803)). But this *I* only functions as a subjectivised centre that captures the experience of the anxiety of Constance's spirit. It is the *whan*-clause *when Donegild cast al this ordinance* that does not only locate Donegild's plan as a story-NOW event, but, by being syntactically and temporally-semantically subordinated to a main clause that contains the *I*'s expression of sympathy, it also indicates that the sympathy for Constance's fear is temporally bound to and part of the reality of the story-NOW.

That this sympathy for and closeness to Constance does not derive from a consistent narrator is also evident in the number of pathos-less instances, such as (8), where we find neutral descriptions that indicate the beginning or end of a sequence of events.

(8) a. There nys namoore, but "Farewel, faire Custance!" / She peyneth hire to make good contenance; / And forth I **lete** hire saille in thys manere, / And turne I **wole** agayn to my matere. (*MLT* 92.319-322)
    b. And thus in murthe and joye I **lete** them dwelle; / The fruyt of this matiere is that I telle. (*MLT* 93.410-411)

In (8)a., the narrative context is again the farewell of Constance who has to go to Syria to marry the Sultan. The sorrowful atmosphere surrounding her farewell is visible both on the part of Constance and her folk watching her leaving. Not only is Constance described as "woful" (*MLT* 92.115), trying to hide her sadness in a strong attempt "to make good contenance" (*MLT* 92.320),

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but her folk, who venerate Constance as a saint and consider her "the mirour of alle curteisye" (*MLT* 89.166) and the "ministre of fredam for almesse (*MLT* 89.168), bring her to the ship most "solempnely" (*MLT* 93.116). They seem to only sorrowfully accept that they can only say "Farewel, faire Custance!" (*MLT* 92.319) ((8)a). As an aside, it is remarkable that wishing Constance farewell is represented as a direct speech act that can be assigned to both the textual *I* and story-internal characters, for instance, the folk that bring her to her ship. This referential ambiguity draws attention to the story itself rather than the voice of a narrator. It is during this emotionally heightened narrative event that the textual *I* intervenes by technically indicating the end of this scene with the note "forth I lete hire saille in thys manere" (*MLT* 92.320). Similarly, the textual *I*'s intervention in (8)b fittingly occurs at the end of a narrative sequence in which the Sultan has been described as welcoming Constance "with alle joye and blis" (*MLT* 93.409). This intervention does not likely express the narrator's wish that Constance may enjoy the time with the sultan because such a narratorial wish would be an expression of ignorance towards what the textual *I* has acknowledged before as the evil plan of the Sultan's mother. The textual *I* has shown that he is aware of the Sultan's mother intention to kill her son and the party guests after Constance's arrival in Syria when this *I* describes this mother as a "wikked goost" (*MLT* 93.404). Since these instances do not draw attention to the textual *I* as a narrator, I would like to suggest and show that they emphasise the process of narration. As Wagner observes for a passage in the thirteenth-century German *Prosalancelot*, a translation of the French *Lancelot en prose* (9), the *I*'s purpose is not so much a text-internal narrator but is similar to the editor of a movie (2016:134) who resorts to cuts, dissolves or other transitions to signal a change in scene:

(9) Nu mußen wir laßen beliben die rede von dem konig und sprechen furbas von dem truchseßen, wie er dethe.[14] (*Prosalancelot* I.26.2-5)

If we compare (9) to Chaucer's *I* who indicates the end of the farewell and welcoming scenes, these lines emphasise in a similar way that the narration of the king is finished and that the narration of the seneschal begins. While Wagner (2016:134) explicates for (9) that "it is the narrator's job to bring the sections of the story together", Lawton puts the Chaucer example in (8)a into the context of the brevity-topos and usefully considers it to contain "signs of the poet's unfolding of the narrative" (1985:92). Contrary to Wagner's perception, however, these interventions of a textual *I* are not narratorial. They are rather textual traces that can be assigned to an implied poet's judgement about what he thinks to be "the fruyt" (*MLT* 93.411) of the tale, based on his sources, his own perception, considering limits of space and time and, last but not

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[14] English translation: "Now we have to leave the narration of the king and have to speak further about the seneschal and what he thought." (Wagner 2016:134).

least, considering the main topic. The implied author tells us, for example, what he intends to be the tale's main topic when he specifies towards the end of the tale that "[of] Custance is my tale specially" (*MLT* 103.1125). Also the modal verbs *let* and *will* used in (9) do not express the plan of a narrator, but they are text-internal signs of the implied poet indicating that the story makes it necessary to leave a character or scene at a certain point.

This editor-like technical aspect of the tale is evident at various other points in the tale whenever the audience's attention is directed from one narrative scene on to another narrative scene (10). What is more, these examples are similar to the emphatic examples above as they also point to the experience of the story as such:

(10) a. But now **wol I unto Custance go**, / That fleteth in the see, / Fyve yeer and moore, as liked Cristes sonde, / Er that hir ship approched unto londe (*MLT* 100.900-903)
b. But to kyng Alla, which I spak of yore, / That for his wyf wepeth and siketh soore, **/ I wol retourne**, and **lete I wol Custance / under the senatournes governance**. (*MLT* 101.984-987)

Although reference is made to an *I* in both examples, the focus is not story-telling but story-showing. While 'story-telling' refers to a narrator presenting a story, 'story-showing' means that the events of a story present themselves spatio-temporally without focus on a specific speaking narrator. Story-showing is, for instance, created with the help of the verbs *go unto* and *retourne*, which each evoke the idea of movement. Notably, this movement is not presented as a movement towards abstract narrative sequences, rather, the textual *I* depicts movement towards characters, "unto Custance" (*MLT* 100.900), or even a character's movement towards other characters, e.g. Constance being given "under the senatournes governance" (*MLT* 101.987).[15]

The analysis that has been conducted is both based on and scrutinises Spearing's observation that the *I* in many medieval texts does not behave like the novel-based narrator but functions similarly to our contemporary understanding of a proximal deictic. On the one hand, this observation has been supported in the limited and non-representative number of examples considered where the textual *I* does not have any remarkable referential characteristic. It is not an empathetic narrator but the *I*'s referential unspecificness that helps draw the reader closely to entities that are part of the experience of the story-NOW, e.g. to the day of Constance's departure. However, it has also been shown that this proximity function is not restricted to this pronominal deictic. In fact, the *I* interacts with other deictics that bring about emotional and spatio-temporal closeness, such as present tense and present perfect forms with regard to a past story as well as deictic verbs of movement. On the other hand, there are some instances where

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[15] This reading of the passage as displaying movement towards agents in the story is supported by the *MED*, which lists places or persons as possible objects for these verbs (e.g. *MED* online, *gōn* (v.), sense 2b.).

the ability to convey this proximity to the reader is only made possible by endowing this *I* with Christian faith. Certainly, Christian faith is the only notable personised characteristic of this *I* in the examples considered and does not make up a complex human consciousness. However, in these cases one might conclude that it is not "experience that is separable from an individual experiencing consciousness" (Spearing 2005:20) which is made possible but experience separable from a certain individual or a narrator. In other words, the experience of this *I* in itself is not important but we need the deictic fiction captured by any bodily and conscious individual in order for the reader to approach and identify with it. Finally, we have seen examples where the textual *I* goes beyond a deictic when it draws the readers' attention to the choices the implied poet has to make when working with a story that has a textual history. The implied poet can be discovered in the tale as one who changes the audience's view on the story by attaching his own emphasis to the constellation of narrative scenes. However, the poet is not present as a specific writer. In fact, he appears like a movie-editor putting images together that show themselves to the reader. This consideration of a story that appears to show itself without a narrator can be finally pinpointed with the help of (11):

(11) I lete al his [=Constance's child Maurice] storie passen by (*MLT* 103.1124)

Here the textual *I* makes reference the omission of material that is contained in the poet's textual sources. This omitted material is described as "passing by", which, as the *MED* suggests, means 'be omitted, go by without mention' (*MED* online, *passen* (v.), sense 9a.). Although both translations express the meaning of the implied author's *I*'s procedure with regard to the process of meaningfully arranging narrative scenes, it is the second sense that captures closest the view of the story that presents itself from its own point of view. Narrative participants that are considered irrelevant appear to move past the readers silently and those that are given importance move into the readers' focus as if they are touchable or at least directly observable. This feeling of movement to the readers is not the result of the "personal interventions" (Morgan 2010:31) of a fully-fledged narrator or even a man of law but rather supported by spatial deixis, tense and the emotionally intensified deictic quality of the *I* which is able to point to any human being's body and consciousness.

For future research it might helpful to consider a more exhaustive account of deixis in this and the other tales as well as in other medieval narratives. One could also go further beyond Spearing's valuable insights on the textual *I*, and, where available, compare the narratives to their potential source texts in order to consider whether the meanings of the tales are shaped by the use of text-specific deixis. It might also be worthwhile to consider more systematically

borderline cases where the deictically shaped *I* is no longer clearly different from a textual *I* who has more consistently developed into a fully consistent and fictionalised narrator. In this context, manuscript analyses might provide insight into the readers' perception of the deictic or potentially less deictic status of the textual *I* in medieval narratives.

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Sabine Daffner-Wenger

"Conceptual Metaphor in Old English Hagiography"

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CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR IN OLD ENGLISH HAGIOGRAPHY[1]

Abstract

The present paper explores metaphoric and related figurative language in six lives of saints from the *Old English Martyrology*, strictly following the cognitive framework of similar studies on Present Day English by, e.g., the *Pragglejaz Group*. For this purpose, altogether 1,265 lexemes have been analysed by correlating their contextual and basic meanings in order to arrive at a list of mappings between specific source and target domains, i.e. between two semantic fields which deviate, but interact, thereby creating metaphoric meaning. One advantage of the present approach over hand-picking obvious metaphors in a text is its structured methodology: This aids to overcome the conceptual structures naturally embedded in the modern researcher's mind and thus facilitates the detection of metaphors effective in Anglo-Saxon England in the 9th to 11th century. While some of the mappings identified by this method, such as DEATH IS REST, are universally understandable across cultural, spatial and/or temporal boundaries, others may today not be perceived as obvious anymore, as for example (RELIGIOUS) LEARNING IS A (GUIDED) JOURNEY, which is exemplarily discussed in detail in this paper. A comparison of the respective passages in the Old English texts with their Latin source texts further illuminates the metaphoric language identified for Anglo-Saxon England.

1. What is Conceptual Metaphor?

Metaphoric language is ubiquitous. Without consciously realising it, people use innumerable metaphors every day. As studies from the field of cognitive linguistics have shown, metaphors are not restricted to language alone. Metaphors seem, on the contrary, to be deeply embedded in human thought and mind: "Our concepts structure what we perceive, how we get around in the world, and how we relate to other people. Our conceptual system thus plays a central role in defining our everyday realities" (Lakoff and Johnson 2003 (1980), 3).

In the Lakoffian approach, metaphor is seen as a "cross-domain mapping in the conceptual system" (Lakoff 1993, 203) of human thought. This means that one domain of human experience (concept) is understood in terms of another domain of experience. Both domains possess certain correlating characteristics that make them comparable to each other. Due to these correspondences, features of one domain – the target domain – may be expressed by features of the other domain – the source domain. The mappings, i.e. the set of ontological correspondences, are denoted systematically by the formula TARGET DOMAIN IS SOURCE DOMAIN (ibid., 206-208.).

This rather abstract notion may best be illustrated by an example. If, for instance, a relationship is not working out very well, one might hear sentences such as "We're *stuck*", or "I don't think this relationship is *going anywhere*" or even "We'll just have to *go our separate ways*." All these sentences are instances of the LOVE IS A JOURNEY conceptual metaphor. Here, aspects of

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[1] The present paper is based on a study presented in a master's thesis of 2018 in Medieval and Renaissance Studies at LMU Munich.

love (the target domain) are expressed by corresponding aspects of the everyday area of journey (the source domain): the lovers ('we') become travellers, the events in the relationship become a joint journey, a separation means travelling on one's own, etc. (Lakoff and Johnson 2003 (1980), 44-45 and Kövecses 2010, 6-8). The table below illustrates the systematic set of correspondences (i.e. mappings) relevant for this metaphor:

Source: JOURNEY		*Target: LOVE*
the travelers	$\longrightarrow$	the lovers
the vehicle	$\longrightarrow$	the love relationship itself
the journey	$\longrightarrow$	events in the relationship
the distance covered	$\longrightarrow$	the progress made
the obstacles encountered	$\longrightarrow$	the difficulties experienced
decisions about which way to go	$\longrightarrow$	choices about what to do
the destination of the journey	$\longrightarrow$	the goal(s) of the relationship

Fig. 1: Set of Correspondences (Mappings) for the LOVE IS A JOURNEY Metaphor; taken from Kövecses (2010, 9)

As can be seen, features of one domain are systematically transferred to corresponding features of the target domain. Thereby, the principle of unidirectionality applies: usually the more abstract concept is made intelligible by means of the more concrete concept (Kövecses 2010, 7). However, such a transfer of features is commonly only selective. While certain aspects of the source concepts are highlighted, i.e. used in the mapping, other aspects are hidden, i.e. supressed (Knowles and Moon 2006, 43). For this reason, source domains may serve various target domains. Similarly, target domains may make use of more than one source domain. Accordingly, LOVE may not only be understood in terms of JOURNEY, but depending on the context also as WAR, MAGIC, MADNESS, A PHYSICAL FORCE (ELECTROMAGNETIC, GRAVITATIONAL, etc.) or as A PATIENT (Lakoff and Johnson 2003 (1980), 49).

Another principle of conceptual metaphor, and probably the most relevant for the present paper, is the question to what extent metaphor is culture-specific or used cross-culturally. As Knowles and Moon (2006, 79-94) show, some metaphorical expressions may occur in a similar manner in different languages. One example is the word *jewel*, which may not only refer to a gem, but to any object precious to someone (e.g. a loved one). This similarly applies to French *bijou, joyau* 'gem' / 'something valuable' or German *Edelstein, Juwel* 'gem' and the more figurative *Juwel, Goldstück* 'something precious'. Consequently, this concept "crosses the language-culture barriers" (ibid., 81), i.e. the same concept is used and understood in different languages and cultures.

Other figurative language, by contrast, may only be used in one language and culture, such as the colloquial English metonymy *wheels* or *motor* for 'vehicle' (ibid., 84). While a sentence such as "I'd be out and about if I had *wheels*" ('wheels' *Oxford English Dictionary – OED*) might at first lead to some confusion among speakers not belonging to the same speech community, uncertainties may easily be eliminated by simply asking a person of the relevant speech community. But how about older periods of English, for example Old English? Due to the temporal and social distance of Present Day English and Old English, the changing cultural background and the differences in the underlying ideologies, the identification of metaphoric language is not always easy. A rigid methodology as proposed by the *Pragglejaz Group* may help to reveal metaphoric mappings not

distinct or even foreign to the modern recipient. Since the initial aim of the present study was to gain a better understanding of Anglo-Saxon language and thought, both in general and with respect to gender roles in particular, the approach as outlined in the following section was chosen as a basis for the textual analysis of Old English hagiographic texts.

2. <u>Metaphor Identification</u>

The *Metaphor Identification Method (MIP)* was first introduced in 2007 by a collective of researchers (*Pragglejaz Group*) with the aim to provide a tool for identifying metaphorical language based on a consistent set of criteria equally employable for research in various disciplines. In simplified terms, the method involves the following steps (*Pragglejaz Group* 2007, 1–3):

1. Gain an understanding of the complete text to be analysed.
2. Subdivide the text into its lexical units.
3. (a) For each unit, determine the meaning in context.
   (b) For each unit, find the basic contemporary meaning.
   (c) Compare the contextual and basic meaning; if they differ, decide whether the contextual meaning may be understood when compared with the basic meaning.
4. If yes, the lexical unit may be marked as carrying metaphoric meaning.

Once again, an example helps to illustrate the procedure of step No. 3. First, the contextual meaning needs to be determined (3a), which arises from the situation described in the passage of a text, i.e. the relation, attribute or entity described (*Pragglejaz Group* 2007, 3). In one of the saint's lives analysed in the present study, the Christian girl Euphemia is ordered to be thrown into a furnace. However, the pagan servant appointed to this task sees himself unable to lay hands on Euphemia because of an epiphany of angelic guardians. He states that *ðis me is <u>hefi</u> to donne,* which Rauer translates, in this context, as 'this is <u>difficult</u> for me to do' (Rauer 2013, 184-185). The contextual meaning of *hefi* is thus 'difficult'. Next, the basic meaning of the lexeme is to be ascertained with the help of a dictionary (3b). This basic meaning tends to be the more concrete, more precise meaning, which is often "related to bodily action" and tends to be historically older (*Pragglejaz Group* 2007, 3). In many dictionaries, the basic meaning is found as the first meaning mentioned in an entry. In the example, the basic meaning of *hefi* according to the *Dictionary of Old English (DOE)* is 'heavy', 'of great weight'. By comparing the contextual and basic meanings (3c), it becomes clear that difficulty is expressed by a term literally describing weight, so the underlying concept is DISTRESS IS WEIGHT. The lexeme may thus be marked as carrying metaphoric meaning. [2]

In a case study done by the *Pragglejaz Group* with six researchers, who independently analysed Present Day English texts, the agreement of what was to be marked as metaphorical was

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[2] In this step, the method actually identifies any non-literal language, i.e. metaphors as well as metonymies and other polysemy. The *Pragglejaz Group* sidesteps a discussion of metonymies and excludes them from their study. To separate metaphors from metonymies, they suggest the "like" test: "if 'like' fits meaningfully in an 'A is B' statement […] then the expression is metaphorical" (*Pragglejaz Group* 2007, 31) and may be marked, if the "like" test cannot be meaningfully applied, the lexical unit remains unmarked. An example would be *oncierran* in *he […] ne mihte hiere geþoht oncierran* 'he could not change her mind' (Rauer 2013, 132-133). Since 'changing someone's mind' is **like** 'turning their thoughts to face another direction', the lexeme is metaphorical. In contrast to the *Pragglejaz* approach, metonymies have been included in the master's thesis on which this paper is based. Due to the limited scope of this paper, however, they will not be discussed here.

rather high, for which reason the method seemed promising. Nevertheless, it needs to be kept in mind that results may vary, depending on the type and discourse of the text. Deviations from the standard variety combined with a standard dictionary used for determining the basic meaning of a lexical unit might, for example, generate imprecise results. Similar problems may arise with respect to geographical, dialectal and/or historical variation (ibid., 18–23), which is, of course, potentially problematic for Old English texts.

In order to apply this method, several choices had to be made beforehand on the criteria applied for the analysis. Thus, after gaining a general understanding of the text samples (*MIP* No. 1), which were taken from the *Old English Martyrology* (Rauer 2013; see section 3 of this paper), each sample was subdivided into its lexical units (*MIP* No. 2). Similar to the *Pragglejaz Group's* approach (*Pragglejaz Group* 2007, 15), *lexical unit* is here understood as the lexical entry as found in a dictionary (Radford 1999, 4-5). *Lexeme* will in this paper be used synonymously to *lexical unit*. Steen (2007) criticises the broad definition of lexical units by the *Pragglejaz Group*. His example is the noun *squirrel* and the corresponding verb *to squirrel*. While the *Pragglejaz Group* treats the verb as an extension of the noun and thus finds the verb to carry metaphoric meaning since it transfers the characteristics of the animal to human action (2007, 27-28), Steen argues in favour of a strict separation of the word classes. In his approach, however, the verb would then not be marked as metaphorical, since it carries today only one meaning, and, consequently, contextual meaning and basic meaning are then the same (Steen 2007, 14-15). Due to the limited written evidence of Old English, on which a dictionary has to rely, I decided to follow the *Pragglejaz* approach and to include as much information on the lexical units as possible, even if this might result in grammatical categories to occasionally become a bit blurred[3].

For determining the basic meanings of the lexical units, several dictionaries had to be consulted. The *DOE* would meet nearly all requirements if it were already completed. The corpus on which it is based contains any texts written in Old English from about AD 600 to AD 1150 (Momma 2016). Since the *DOE* does so far only include entries for the letters A to H, which will be problematised in section 5, most of the lexical units had to be analysed by means of Bosworth-Toller's *Anglo-Saxon Dictionary* (*BT*) and its *Supplement* (*BTS*) (1898 / 1921). Although *BT* is rather comprehensive, the *Supplement* needed to be consulted regularly due to inaccuracies in entries of the main volume, particularly for the first letters of the alphabet. In the cases where both *BT* and the *BTS* have entries, the latter was usually favoured. Many entries in the *DOE* and *BT* (and *BTS*) are similar in their structure and content. Other entries have been found to deviate from each other, and in these cases the *DOE* was favoured. In some cases, additional information on the etymology of a lexeme was required. Here, the *OED* and the *Electronic Middle English Dictionary* (*MED*) were consulted additionally.

Although the work with different dictionaries is not ideal (the *Pragglejaz Group* used the *Macmillan Dictionary for Advanced Learners* only; *Pragglejaz Group* 2007, 15) as the choice whether the contextual and basic meanings deviate or not might in some cases be dependant of the dictionary consulted[4], it was deemed reasonable not to base the study on *BT* and *BTS* only but to

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[3] One example of blurred categories is the noun *heahfæder* (Rauer 2013, 132), which means, according to the *DOE*, 'God the Father' or 'patriarch'. As a dictionary entry exists, Steen would in his approach have to rely on this entry alone. However, the noun is a compound formed from the adjective *heah* 'high' and the noun *fæder* 'father'. Since the constituents of the compound reveal additional, potentially relevant information on the noun, both the noun *heahfæder* and each of its constituents have in the present study been taken into consideration.

[4] For a survey of strategies and principles in entry-writing for dictionaries, and the choices made for the *DOE*, see dePaolo Healey, 1996, 71-74.

use the *DOE* whenever possible. Thus having outlined the methodology, this paper will now turn to the Old English text samples analysed.

3.   The Analysed Old English Texts

All text samples analysed in the study presented in this paper were taken from Rauer's 2013 edition of the *Old English Martyrology* (*OEMart*), a collection of informative material on martyrs and saints as well as on events in the life of Christ and his followers (Kotzor 1981, 175*-178*). The martyrology might, due to its encyclopaedic character, have been used as a reference work for a learned Anglo-Saxon readership (Rauer 2013, 1). The original date of composition probably being c. 800 – c. 900 (Rauer 2013, 3), the oldest fragments surviving today date to the late 9th century (Kotzor 1981, 43*; 109*). The most comprehensive manuscripts of the *OEMart* are B[5] and C[6], which date to the late 10th / early 11th century and to c. 1050 – 1075 (Kotzor 1981, 56* and 75*). Of manuscript B (and in one case of C), the following entries have been selected:

Saint	Gender	No. Of Lexemes in the Samples	Lexemes Carrying Metaphoric Meaning in %
Alban	Male	138	5 %
Bartholomew	Male	263	6,8 %
Euphemia	Female	182	8,8 %
Felicity	Female	106	15 %
Fursa	Male	185	16,8 %
Marina (Margaret)	Female	391	11,5 %

Fig. 2: Table of saints selected from the *Old English Martyrology*

For all of the selected lives of the saints, potential Latin source texts have been determined in recent years (Rauer 2013 and 2003). Thus, a comparison of the metaphoric language identified in the *Old English Martyrology* with the respective passages in the Latin exemplars was possible in order to see whether the metaphors were directly adapted from Latin, amended in the process of transmission, or whether they are specific to Anglo-Saxon language and thought.

Returning to the earlier example of DISTRESS IS WEIGHT, a comparison of the expression *ðis me is hefi to donne* with the Latin text reveals that the same concept applies in both languages: the difficulty is here described by the lexeme *graue* (i.e. *grave,* lit. 'heavy') (Mombritius 1978 [2010], 456). As it has not been amended in the process of transmission, the conceptual mapping must have been universally understandable in both cultures. Incidentally, the concept DISTRESS IS WEIGHT survives similarly in Modern German, e.g. in the expressions such as *es fällt mir schwer* or *schweren Herzens*, as well as in Present Day English, although it seems to have passed out of use in English since few citations of the lexeme *heavy* in connection with negative emotion date later than the 19th century (*OED,* 'heavy'). To sum it up, the concept has been found to cross cultural boarders and even great temporal distance.

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[5] London, British Library, Cotton Julius A. X, ff. 44r–175v.
[6] Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 196, pp. 1–110.

4. General Results

As can be seen from the table above (Fig. 2), the percentage of identified lexemes carrying metaphoric meaning range from 5 % to nearly 17 %, irrespective of the texts' length. The corpus was designed in order to see whether there are differences between male and female lives, yet neither the lengths of the texts nor their portion of metaphoric lexemes display any difference regarding the saints' gender[7].

All but one saint, Fursa, are martyrs. Yet although the story of Fursa contains proportionally the most metaphors, many of them circle around the same topic, i.e. BODY, SOUL, MIND and HEAD: one night, Fursa is led away from his body from some angels, who show him unnamed horrors and marvels. When his soul is brought back to his body, Fursa's soul looks down at it but does not recognise it anymore and has to be forced to return into it: *Ond ða ða Godes englas eft his gast brohtan <u>to</u> þæm lichoman, þa locade he <u>on</u> his agenne lichoman swa swa <u>on</u> uncuðne hræw, ond he nolde næfre eft <u>on</u> ðone lichoman gif he nyde ne sceolde* 'And when God's angels then brought his soul <u>to</u> his body, it looked <u>down</u> <u>on</u> his own body as if <u>on</u> an unknown corpse, and it would never have <u>entered</u> his own body again except that it willy-nilly had to' (Rauer 2013, 48-49). Here, a number of prepositions used throughout the whole text show the spatial dimensions in which Fursa's soul and his body are located. Of course, a preposition alone does not seem to be a strong indicator or metaphoric language. However, prepositions are, in their basic meanings, often used to express motion in space. As Lakoff and Johnson (2003 [1980], 14-21) have shown, the mind tends to structure the world and abstract concepts by means of spatial experience (which often leads to the so called orientational metaphors, e.g. GOOD IS UP, FUTURE IS FRONT, PAST IS BACK, etc.). In the present example, the inside and outside relations of soul and body express a container metaphor (ibid. 29-30). The soul looks down *onto* the body and does not want to return *into* it. Consequently, the BODY becomes the VESSEL FOR THE SOUL, but the saint's soul, his identity, his thinking self, can exist independently of the body, while the body without a soul becomes a corpse (*uncuðne hræw*).

In comparison Fursa's experiences, which take up a great part of the story, the other saints' lives seem to be more varied in their use of figurative language. Many of the metaphors identified are easily understandable for the modern reader. The conceptual metaphor DISTRESS IS WEIGHT has already been discussed. Similarly transparent are metaphors such as DEATH IS REST, for example in *Ic þe þonne selle minne lichoman to deaðe, þæt ic on heofonum <u>reste</u> hæbbe* 'Then I will give you my body to death, so that I can <u>rest</u> in heaven' (Rauer 2013, 132-133) or in *Þisse fæmnan lichoma <u>restet</u> [sic!] neah Calcidonia þære ceastre* 'The body of this virgin <u>rests</u> near the city of Chalcedon' (Rauer 2013, 184-185). Here, the basic meaning of *rest* is 'rest, quiet, freedom from toil', and *restan* means 'to cease from toil, be at rest' (*BT*), although from the context it becomes clear that the topic of these two scenes is actually death. Consequently, a conceptual mapping between DEATH and REST exists.

A prominent group of metaphors that protrudes in all six lives is the mapping of LIGHT / CLEANLINESS / BEAUTY / INTEGRITY with SANCTITY / MORALITY / DIVINITY, and, complementarily, the mapping of FIRE / DARKNESS / THORNS with EVIL. This is not surprising given the context of

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[7] Neither does the content of the lives display striking differences regarding gender: all saints are either of high rank or unknown social status. None of the female saints is killed because of a refusal to marry a suitor. No sexual element is mentioned, nor is the female body treated any differently than the male one. All martyr saints are passive in their actions, though with varying degrees of passivity. In summary, the content of the selected stories does not seem to be constructed in such a way that male and female saints are treated differently.

Christian hagiographic writing and the revival of Neoplatonic philosophy in Anglo-Saxon Britain, which can, for instance, also be found in the later works of King Alfred (Ritzke-Rutherford 1979, 120-131). When Marina is taught the Christian faith, *heo geleornode þæt heo on <u>clænnesse</u> God gelefde* 'she learned to believe in God in <u>chastity</u>' (Rauer 2013, 132-133), where the basic meaning of *clænnesse* is 'cleanness', i.e. 'being clean or clear' (*BT*). Consequently, the metaphoric concept MORALITY IS A STATE OF CLEANLINESS applies. When Fursa dies, he is buried in Péronne, *ond his geearnunga þær wæron oft <u>beorhte</u> gecyþet* 'and his merits were often <u>gloriously</u> revealed there' (Rauer 2013, 48-49), with *beorhte* literally meaning 'brightly, brilliantly' (*DOE*). Here, the underlying concept is SANCTITY IS LIGHT.

It should be pointed out that the metaphoric connection of DIVINITY and BEAUTY is, at least in the text samples analysed, not once used to describe a saint or a human being in general. Instead, *fæger* with its basic meaning 'beautiful, fair' (to the senses / perception) (*DOE*) describes angelic beings (*Ic geseo <u>fægere</u> weras stondan in ðissees ofnes muþe* 'I can see <u>beautiful</u> men standing at the door of this furnace', Rauer 2013, 184f.) as well as a monastery (*he getimbrede <u>fæger</u> mynster* 'he built a <u>magnificent</u> monastery', Rauer 2013, 48-49). This is insofar remarkable as the connection of SANCTITY and PHYSICAL BEAUTY exits in the Latin exemplars, especially for the female saints, e.g. in the passion of St. Margaret: *formosa erat* 'she was beautiful', or *propter pulchritudinem eius* 'because of her beauty' (Clayton and Magennis 1994, 194-197). The compilator and translator of the *OEMart* seems not to have considered this aspect of sanctity of relevance for their work.

The Old English conceptual metaphors described above have, apart from the last one, been found in a similar manner in the earlier Latin source texts, and they are also still plausible to the modern reader. By means of the *Metaphor Identification Method*, however, one concept emerged, which does not seem to have equivalents in the respective passages of the Latin source texts and might thus, at least in the present context, be specific Anglo-Saxon. This concept, which has been denominated (RELIGIOUS) LEARNING IS A (GUIDED) JOURNEY, will be put up for discussion in the following.

5.   (RELIGIOUS) LEARNING IS A (GUIDED) JOURNEY - a Potentially Independent Old English Concept?

In four of the sample texts, instances of the potential (RELIGIOUS) LEARNING IS A (GUIDED) JOURNEY metaphor have been detected. Firstly, the formerly pagan Alban is taught by the priest whom he accommodates in his house: *Ðurh sumne preost he wæs <u>gelæred</u> to Godes geleafan* 'He had been <u>introduced</u> to Christianity by a priest' (Rauer 2013, 120-121; a more literal translation would be 'he was taught the Christian faith by some priest'). The critical lexeme is here the verb *gelæred*.

First of all, the infinitive form of the verb needed to be determined. In the above verb phrase, *ge-* is a prefix indicating the participle form, while the auxiliary *wæs* marks the passive. The infinitive of the verb should, consequently, be *læran*. As was already mentioned earlier in section 3, the dictionaries consulted occasionally deal with lexemes differently, which is also the case here. In the *DOE*, *(ge-)læran* cannot be searched. Apparently, the lexeme will be listed only under the letter L, which reinforces the assumption that *ge-* is in this case considered merely a grammatical prefix indicating the participle. In *BT*, however, two lexical entries have been found which may be applicable, i.e. *læran* or *gelæran*, each of which having supplementary entries in

BTS. Gelǣran is denoted as a derivate of *lǣran* in the entry of *BT*.[8] The basic meaning of the lexeme *lǣran* in *BTS* is 'to show the way (lit. or fig.) to a person'. Since the contextual meaning of the lexical unit is 'to teach', a metaphoric shift seems to apply, and TEACHING becomes some sort of SHOWING THE WAY.

However, the entry for *gelǣran* in *BTS* complicates the understanding of the lexical unit. Here, the basic meaning is 'to teach', with its first subordinate numbering 1. listing examples occurring with accusative (of person). Consequently, the basic and contextual meaning would in this case be the same and the lexeme would have to be marked as non-figurative. However, under number 3., the entry for *gelǣran* lists examples with accusative (of person) and a preposition, which carry the meaning 'to bring someone to something by teaching', 'to instruct in'. The 'bringing' does then again involve some kind of motion, while *to* indicates the direction / destination, and again a metaphorical reading applies.[9]

The respective passage in the Latin source text is only indirectly comparable. The Anglo-Saxon compilator did not translate the passage faithfully, but freely adapted the general storyline. In the Latin version, the passage reads as follows:

> Quem dum orationibus continuis ac uigiliis die noctuque studere conspiceret, subito diuina gratia respectus exemplum fidei ac pietatis illius coepit aemulari, ac salutaribus eius exhortationoibus paulatim edoctus relictis idolatriae tenebris Christianus integro ex corde factus est.

> When Alban saw this man occupied night and day in continual vigils and prayers, divine grace suddenly shone upon him and he learned to imitate his guest's faith and devotion. Instructed little by little by his teaching about salvation, Alban forsook the darkness of idolatry and became a wholehearted Christian. (Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 28-29)

The Latin equivalent to *(ge)-lǣran* is thus <u>*edocere*</u>, an intensified form of *docere* 'to teach, instruct'. However, the image represented in the Latin text is different from the Old English version of the *OEMart*. The former pagan faith is here 'left behind' (*relinquere*) in favour of the new Christian faith, i.e. a rather abrupt motion away is indicated.

A similar wording as in the life of Alban is found in the live of Felicity, who <u>*gelǣrde þa*</u> *hyre suna <u>to</u> Godes geleafan* (in this context: '<u>brought up</u> her sons in God's faith', Rauer 2013, 218-219). Again, the preposition *to* suggests motion towards something or someone according to its basic meaning in *BT*. A comparison to the Latin source text is not possible, since the respective passage seems to have been first introduced in the story by the compilator of the *OEMart*.

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[8] Mitchell and Robinson (2012) only briefly mention that *ge-* "sometimes has a perfective sense" (p. 58). Martín Arista (2012) discusses the potential process of grammaticalisation that *ge-* went through, "undergoing a semantic fading […] and getting progressively restricted to the past participle" (431). Lindemann (cf. Trobevšec-Drobnak 1992, 14-15) argues that this prefix could add additional information to verbs, especially of direction, concretion and/or type of motion but that it was used inconsistently. Kastovski (2013) outlines that *ge-*, at a time when it still carried recognisable meaning, could denote 'perfectivity' or 'result', for example in *ge-ascian* 'learn by asking' (p. 21). It cannot be determined in this paper which of the potential functions of *ge-* applies in the example. A further investigation in this direction might be worthwhile. It should be pointed out however, that, according to Lindemann, the prefix might provide additional information on the direction of the action described.

[9] A consultation of the *OED* does unfortunately not clarify the matter. Only the lemma *lǣran* is searchable and leads to the entry for *lere, v.* This entry has apparently not yet been fully updated in the third edition. On the uppermost level, the meaning of the lexeme is 1.a. 'to teach; to give instruction'. On level 1.b., the lexeme can mean 'to show the way to, lead, guide; to lead (the way)'; however, this meaning is not attested before c. 1330, which is obviously incorrect as the form is already attested in *BT* and *BTS*.

The topic of teaching seems to have been of primary relevance for the compiler and translator in general. In the life of Marina (Margaret), the girl is given to a foster mother, where she learns about the Christian faith: *Ond heo wæs sona on hire cildhade befæsted Cristenum wife to fedanne, ond æt þære heo <u>geleornode</u> þæt heo on clænnesse God gelefde* '… and from her she <u>learnt</u> to believe in God in chastity, (Rauer 2013, 132-133). In one Latin version of the legend, however, the girl is already born as a Christian: "Ipsa uero <u>Spiritu Sancto replete</u>, mox autem ut de sua matre nata est, data est ad nutriendum in quondam cuiutatem habentem ab Antiochia stadia xv." ('She, however, <u>filled with the Holy Spirit</u>, as soon as she was born from her mother, was given to be fostered in a certain city fifteen stades from Antioch', Clayton and Magennis 1994, 194-195). Here, the girl is a VESSEL filled with the Holy Spirit, so the underlying concept is completely different. Similarly, in another Latin version which might also have served as a source for this entry (Monte Cassino 52, Clayton and Magennis 1994, 225), the girl is only described to pray to Christ daily, yet without any indication of how and from whom she has learnt it. It is possible that the compiler of the *OEMart* had had a particular interest in explicitly stating that the Christian faith is something that has to be taught by an authoritative person. That the expression *(ge)-lǣran to Godes geleafan* occurs in eight more entries from the *OEMart* seems to reinforce such an assumption[10].

Summarising the discussion so far, the basic meanings of the lexemes *lǣran* and *gelǣran* are ambiguous and might thus be either metaphoric or non-metaphoric. The use of the preposition *to*, however, indicates some motion towards a destination, which supports the suggestion that those meanings of the lexeme apply that involve 'bringing' or 'showing the way'. Consequently, it is deemed reasonable that the metaphor (RELIGIOUS) LEARNING IS A (GUIDED) JOURNEY prevails. The frequency of the fixed expression *(ge)-lǣran to Godes geleafan* as well as the consequent alterations to the Latin source texts during the process of transmission furthermore indicate that such a learning is restricted to religious guidance and that the compiler and translator of the *OEMart* wanted to put an emphasis on this concept.

If a metaphor is indeed assumed, another example could be added which express this conceptual mapping. In the entry for Marina, the pagan reeve Olibrius tries to force the saint with tortures to renounce her faith: *ond het mid monige wite hi þreagan <u>from</u> Cristes geleafan,* 'and ordered her with many tortures to be forced <u>away</u> from Christ's faith' (Rauer 2013, 132-133). If in the earlier expressions, religious learning is seen as a journey with the Christian faith being the destination, while the preposition *from* is to be understood as a local relation or motion away from a place, i.e. the faith. The tortures are then a brutal way to lead the saint astray, not with careful guidance but with force.

6. Teaching and Guidance in the *Metaphor Map of Old English* and the *Historical Thesaurus of English*

Bearing the above examples in mind, the *Metaphor Map of Old English* (Anderson 2015) will now be considered. Here, it has been found that a weak metaphor connection indeed seems to exist between the area of education and the area of progressive movement. Unfortunately, the only example explicitly mentioned for this mapping is the verb *(ge)folgian* 'to be the pupil of'.

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[10] See the lives of Patrick (17 March), Columba of Iona (9 June), Barnabas (10 June), James the Greater (25 July), Matthew (21 September), Andochius, Thyrsus and Felix (24 September), Chrysanthus and Daria (28 November) and Thomas (21 December); (Rauer 2013).

Nevertheless, this shows that a traceable tendency in Old English to connect education and motion apparently exits.

In the *Historical Thesaurus of English* (Kay et al. 2007), *(ge)lǣran* is to be found in nine different contexts. The most relevant for the issue at hand are found under:

- Society / Authority / Control / vt. Control / Guide
- Society / Education / vt. Educate
- Society / Education / Teaching / vt. Teach (a Person)
- Society / Travel and Travelling / Aspects of Travel / a Journey / Guidance in Travel / Guide/Lead/Show One the Way
- Society / Travel and Travelling / Aspects of Travel / a Journey / Guidance in Travel / Lead Back

The above list shows that the verb obtains two different meanings of relevance, one that has to do with teaching and knowledge, one that has to do with travelling. The below chart shows a detail view of the lexemes carrying the meaning 'to guide':
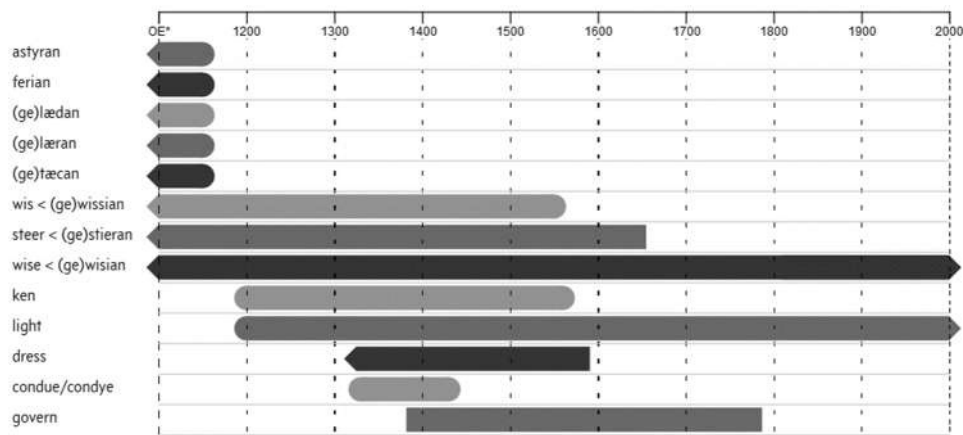

Fig. 3: *(ge)lǣran* in the timeline of lexemes used for 'to guide', taken from the *Historical Thesaurus of English*, detail view (Kay et al. 2007)

As can be seen, several lexemes meaning 'to guide', including *(ge)lǣran,* have stopped being used by the last third of the 11th century, i.e. the period in which the first linguistic consequences of the Norman Conquest would have been noticeable.

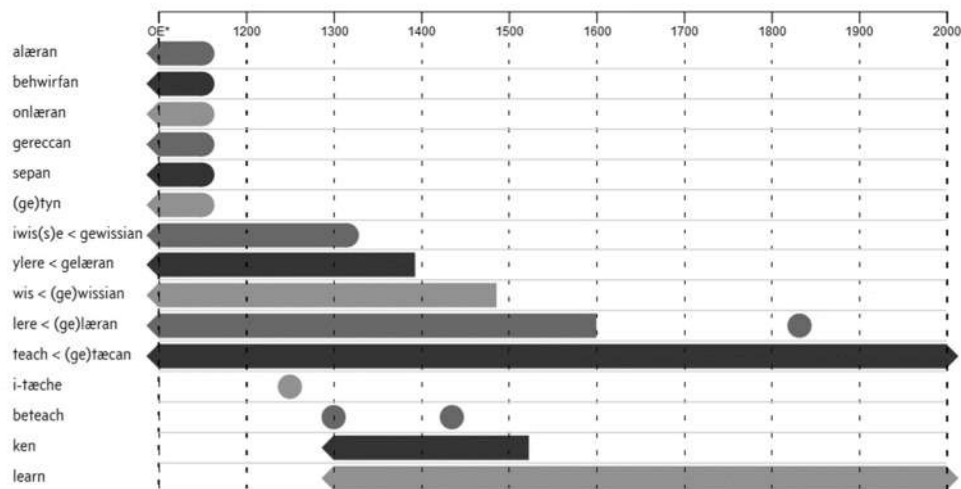In comparison, a search for lexemes meaning 'to teach (a person)' displays the following:

Fig. 4: *(ge)lǣran* in the timeline of lexemes used for 'to teach (a person)' taken from the *Historical Thesaurus of English*, detail view (Kay et al. 2007)

Fig. 4 shows that *(ge)lǣran* with the meaning 'to teach (a person)' continued to be used until c. 1600. Consequently, the same verb, *(ge)lǣran*, apparently used to have both the meaning 'to teach' as well as 'to guide', the latter of which died out in the 11th century. Is it possible that a conceptual (metaphoric) connection existed between the two meanings, which died out once the verb ceased to be used for both meanings?

Of course, it needs to be kept in mind that the *Historical Thesaurus of English* uses the same reference works as the present study, i.e. the *OED*, *BT* and *BTS*, and where possible, the *DOE* (Kay et al. 2007). As outlined earlier, search results in these dictionaries have been found to be ambiguous. Nevertheless, the above findings seem to point to the existence of a metaphoric mapping (RELIGIOUS) LEARNING IS A (GUIDED) JOURNEY, which was in use in Old English but might have ceased to be used in the 11th century, and which has for the text passages analysed not been found in the Latin exemplars.

7. Conclusion

Six text samples from the *Old English Martyrology* were analysed for their metaphoric language, applying the *Metaphor Identification Method* originally developed by the *Pragglejaz Group* for Present Day English texts. The findings were compared to the relevant passages of the Latin sources. The initial aim was to gain a better understanding of Anglo-Saxon language and thought. The conceptual mappings presented in this paper reflect some of the areas in which such an understanding can take place.

It has been outlined that the most prominent groups of mappings had inter alia to do with aspects of sanctity and with good and evil. Such an emphasis is not surprising in hagiographic literature, especially regarding the revival of Neoplatonic thought by the 9th century in Britain. Also, the separation of BODY and SOUL and the self-awareness of the saint's soul is, though not surprising given the genre, all-encompassing throughout the various lives. It has also been found that one concept discussed might be specifically Anglo-Saxon, at least in the selected samples in

comparison to their Latin sources, i.e. (RELIGIOUS) LEARNING IS A (GUIDED) JOURNEY. However, further investigation of this phenomenon is crucial for a more definite assertion.

It should be pointed out that this concept, as well as some other, weaker metaphors, might have been overlooked had the metaphors been hand-picked and not systematically worked out by means of the *Metaphor Identification Method.* In this respect, the methodology has proven advantageous for Old English. As has also been shown above, some metaphoric concepts proved to be rather subtle and only came to light due to the strict methodology. They could then be understood and be classified because they were occurring in more than one saint's life or by the help of inconspicuous word classes such as prepositions. Unfortunately, the method is also rather time-consuming, as each lexeme needs be analysed again and again due to the changing context. It is therefore only deemed suitable to a limited extent for large amounts of text. However, if an analysis of larger amounts of text is desired, it might be useful to apply the method to selected, particularly relevant text passages only.

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Karel Fraaije

"Old English Charms for the Loss of Property and Livestock:

The Folkloric and Religious Contexts"

The following paper is a reduced version of a chapter from Karel Fraaije's PhD thesis about the Old English Metrical Charms and their West Germanic context. The work presented here is made up of the original chapter's introduction, a truncated discussion of this same chapter's section on folkloric themes in *Metrical Charm* 9 (an idiosyncratic poetic incantation that is usually grouped together with a number of other Old English incantations for the redress of theft and the loss of property), as well as the chapter's conclusion. It is worth noting that *Metrical Charm 9* is introduced with some detail in a section of the PhD that has not been included in the submitted excerpt. The key parts of the following discussion focus on the interpretation of two decontextualised passages of *Metrical Charm 9,* and for those readers who are not familiar with the short Old English poem it is, therefore, advisable to read first the primary text included in the appendix. The enclosed edition of *Metrical Charm 9* follows the version of Dobbie's *The Minor Poems* (1942), volume 6 of the *Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records*; the translation is merely a guide for the reader and not part of the PhD thesis. Ultimately, it is expedient to bear in mind that the discussion below constitutes a draft and that the numerous footnotes and references have not yet been verified.

Old English Charms for the Loss of Property and Livestock: The Folkloric and Religious Contexts

Introduction

In 1896, Robert Priebsch commenced his article about "an Old English Charm and the 'Wiener Hundesegen'" with an unambiguous apology: "though it is only a charm, or rather a portion of

one, that I have to offer to the friends of Early English literature, I venture to hope that this trifle will not be altogether devoid of interest".[1] He then proceeded to compare a single line from an Early Middle English incantation for the protection of property and cattle to a similarly-worded phrase from the so-called "Wiener Hundesegen", a tenth century German poem for the blessing of sheep dogs.

Since the former text included the sentence "þer nes inemmed ne wolf ne þef" (neither wolf nor thief takes anything there) and the latter "Christ uuart gaboren êr uuolf ode diob" (Christ was born before wolf or thief), Priebsch postulated that the similarities between the two poems preserved an echo of a Germanic composition that circulated among the continental Saxons prior to their emigration to Britain. In his view, both the English and the German charm had, in their long transmission history, been stripped of their original cultic references to the worship of "Wuotan" or "Woden", and they had subsequently been sanitised through the inclusion of more acceptable Christian expressions. By the same logic, the allegedly "corrupt" alliteration of the Middle English phrase (the expected metrical pattern would require an additional <w>) permitted the emendation "Wæs Woden geboren ær wulf oþþe þeof" (Woden was born before wolf or thief).[2] Problematically, however, Priebsch devoted only a cursory footnote to the Latin section of the English incantation, which he viewed as "still more corrupt and scarcely worth transcribing".[3] Similarly, he did not think very highly of the text's remaining vernacular sentences: "save for the curious first line", the verse was "as marrowless as a bleached bone".[4]

The esteemed philologist and manuscript scholar from Germany never changed his mind about the literary quality of the early Middle English charm, reiterating more than twenty-five years later in a follow-up study that citing the entire source would be futile: "Was dann noch folgt ist sinnloses Zauberlatein und für uns ohne Interesse" (what follows afterwards is senseless magical Latin, and for us without interest).[5] Notably, the extent to which Priebsch disparaged the poetic quality of early medieval documents for the prevention of various forms of thievery has not been replicated in subsequent scholarship. However, scholars who wish to address specifically

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[1] Priebsch 1896.

[2] Here Priebsch agrees continuous an argument that was first explored in (von Karajan 1858).

[3] Priebsch 1896.

[4] Priebsch 1896.

[5] Priebsch 1922, 6.

the literary quality of such documents have traditionally admitted that these texts are not the most inspired literary creations that the medieval period has to offer. For example, in 1907 John M. McBryde opined that a certain linguistic and narratological abruptness is "characteristic of many charms, which, being sometimes meaningless collocations of words and phrases, are often made up of independent formulas, either whole of in part, strung together without any connecting links".[6]

The purpose of this chapter is not to claim that McBryde was mistaken when he typified medieval theft incantations as formulaic. In fact, it merits emphasising that formulaic recursivity constitutes one of the most prolific characteristics of verse charms related to the retrieval of stolen objects and the protection of property. It does, however, merit noting that texts which demonstrate imitative structural properties are not categorically devoid of appealing literary themes and images. As demonstrated below, theft incantations sometimes contain remarkable and multi-layered references to contemporary folklore, as well as to religious narratives and devotional practices. Similarly, they appear to have borrowed from various contemporary literary traditions, from legal texts to psalm translations and they themselves feature in a broad range of other writings, from early medieval hagiography to nineteenth-century German short stories.[7]

Nevertheless, the fact that influential scholars have traditionally preferred to criticise the literary value of these documents may be part of the reason why theft incantations are presently understudied and ill-understood. While it is true that the Anglo-Saxon specimens have received scholarly attention over the years, many comparable texts from later periods have not garnered a substantial critical response. Some have only been published once and continue to escape mainstream attention in inaccessible or obscure editions; numerous others have never been edited and exist only in manuscript form.[8]

Paradoxically, the fact that most early medieval theft and property-protection charms are not widely known may also have contributed to the fact that Robert Priebsch, who had a prodigious knowledge of early medieval German manuscripts on account of his role as catalogue editor, failed to recognise a tenth-century Latin analogue to his purportedly pagan Saxon charm.

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[6] McBryde 1906. Also see (McBryde 1907, 1917).

[7] For hagiographical theft-charms, see the section on of this chapter related to Garmund; for nineteenth-century references, see (Kögler 1898, Klapper 1896).

[8] I presently have about 10 examples. Precise manuscript references will follow.

In Codex 40 from the Stadtbibliothek in Trier, a short inscription on the reverse of folios 74-75 claims to protect animals "de dentibus luporum, de manu latronum" and includes the phrase "ante fuit Christus quam lupus".[9] Certainly, the existence of an earlier Latin parallel for the Old High German and Early Middle English lines cited above neither immediately disproves nor proves Priebsch's Wuotan-Woden hypothesis, but it does destabilise his assertion that the section of "sinnloses Zauberlatein" that follows the vernacular poetic "trifle" constitutes an uninteresting object of study.[10] In order fully to understand early medieval compositions that mean to protect various forms of property, it is serviceable to consider that most surviving specimens constitute individual responses to much more widespread literary, incantatory, and ritualistic traditions, and that having a contextual understanding of such traditions is essential for producing nuanced readings of individual texts.

> **Here a substantial section of the PhD chapter has been omitted in order to facilitate a discussion at SEM 2019. The missing sections have a combined length of about 6000 words and discuss the following topics: 1. Definitions and editions of the Anglo-Saxon Metrical Charms against theft, 2. Their legal contexts and relation to early medieval legislation.**

While recent scholarship has mostly concentrated on interrogating the legal background of the Anglo-Saxon theft charms, some of the earliest academic discussions that examine these texts concentrate on explicating their potential religious and folkloric resonances. As we observed earlier with Priebsch's discussion of a Middle English shepherd's charm, the philological objective to identify vestiges of pre-Christian beliefs was not infrequently accompanied by an outspoken disregard for the intellectual and literary value of the medieval sources. We should, therefore, not be surprised about the distinctly "Priebschian" sentiment that emanates from a letter which John Kemble wrote to Jacob Grimm on May 10th, 1835. Before jocularly reassuring his German colleague that he had "immediately on [his…] return to England […] conformed to the custom of [his…] countrymen, and shaved off [his…] moustachio", Kemble includes a transcription of

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[9] Holzmann 2001, 190, Smallwood 1989.

[10] Priebsch 1922.

one of the so-called Macaronic Charms. He admits he is "not well acquainted enough to judge", but nevertheless declares "superstitions of this sort can be but of little service" and he prefaces his transcription with the advice to "burn it" if it should not prove useful.[11] As is clear from a short statement in the appendix of Kemble's monograph *The Saxons in England*, the "value" that he did attribute to Old English theft charms was that they bore the "unmistakeable marks of Anglo-Saxon paganism".[12] As regards Jakob Grimm's response to his colleague's incendiary recommendation, we know the German scholar must have felt the spell was worth preserving, because he included an edition of it in the *Anhang* to his *Deutsche Mythologie*.[13]

The just related correspondence between Jakob Grimm and John Kemble certainly has an anecdotal significance—these days, scholars of Old English who openly encourage the incineration of their own transcriptions are hard to find. Equally, it is useful from a historical perspective because it gives us a greater understanding of the opinions and motivations that helped to shape modern perceptions about potential pagan resonances in Germanic theft charms. Still, it is important to recognise that our knowledge has increased since 1835, and over the course of the previous two centuries several hypotheses have been advanced that specifically concern the cultural and literary derivation of some of these documents. Most of the published scholarly discussions offer arguments that rest on intricate explanations of single texts, and to understand the potential religious and folkloric influences in these documents we need to examine how interpretations of separate incantations have contributed to established contemporary views. The most ergonomic way to embark on such an examination is to study each of the main incantatory branches of the Anglo-Saxon theft charms in turn. In this manner, it is possible to provide comprehensive syntheses of published arguments, as well as detailed considerations of specific folkloric and religious themes.

Metrical Charm 9

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[11] Wiley 1971, 104-105.
[12] Kemble 1876.
[13] Grimm 1875-1878.

The Garmund Conundrum

The enigmatic identity of "Garmund," a supposedly powerful figure who is commanded to "have and hold" missing cattle, significantly problematises our current understanding of *Metrical Charm 9*. Since the etymology of OE *gar-mund* is "spear-protection", researchers have regularly sided with Felix Grendon, who argued in 1909 that the name refers to a "mythological spirit or personage" from a submerged pre-Christian narrative culture.[14] Correspondingly, Karl Schneider believed in 1961 that Garmund was an Anglo-Saxon avatar of a more widespread, Indo-European archetype, and that his persona shared a literary heritage with such mytho-heroic characters as Freyr (a fertility god in Old Norse tradition) and the Ashvins (two divine twins in Sanskrit literature).[15] Gert Sandmann, who was Schneider's PhD student, rehearsed the thesis of his *Doktorvater* in 1975, and supplemented it with the somewhat farfetched idea that the invocation in *Metrical Charm 9* might relate to a runic diagram "vid stulld" (against theft) from Early Modern Iceland.[16]

In 1977, Joseph Harris was more ambivalent about his perspectives on Garmund's derivation when he admitted that "Schneider's reasoning is too circuitous to be convincing" while simultaneously conceding that "a supernatural creature of a low order seems to fit the context best".[17] Two decades later, Stephanie Hollis also preferred an equivocal perspective: she did follow Harris in describing her German colleague's views as "speculative", but later omitted to substantiate her own opinion, which was that the name "strongly suggests conflation with a pagan entity".[18] Thomas Hill unconditionally rejected a foundational constituent in Schneider's Indo-Germanic hypothesis in 1978— "Schneider's suggestions seem to me invalid"[19]. Nevertheless, the former's resolve did not deter Willy Braekman and Frits van Oostrom from endorsing the latter's views to supply a pagan background for a Middle Dutch incantation from the fifteenth century.[20]

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[14] Grendon 1909.

[15] Schneider 1961, 42.

[16] Sandmann 1975, 118.

[17] Harris 1975b, 29.

[18] Hollis 1997, 143.

[19] Hill 1978, 488.

[20] Braekman 1997, van Oostrom 2006.

In 1980, John Miles Foley initiated a new interpretative paradigm and preferred to read the name *Garmund* as "Spear-hand". Using analogues from Serbian folklore, he identified the figure as "a heroic anthropomorphization of the spell's magic power, the warrior-image who performs the practitioner's command".[21] Foley's argument is in some sense unique because it is based chiefly on modern parallels. Nevertheless, its basic premise—that there exists a manifest relation between the genres of epic and charm—also figures in Judith Vaughan Sterling's article from 1983. In this publication, the author envisions Garmund as a mythological hero whose narrative context supposedly resembles that of Beowulf and Breca of the Brondings.[22] As pointed out by Schneider, a genealogical section in *Beowulf* does mention a character called Garmund as an older kinsman of Offa, but Vaughan Sterling appears to have overlooked this circumstance.[23] The latest scholar to advance Foley's premise is Paola Tornaghi, who argued in 2010 that "the magician does not operate directly over the hostile reality, but pleads with a mythic figure to help him fulfil more successfully what he is unlikely to be able to carry out on his own".[24]

Finally, some scholars have endeavoured to establish a relation between Garmund and Christian narratives. Oswald Cockayne thus deliberated in 1867 whether or not the unusual invocation was perhaps a mangled reference to St. Germanus.[25] Charles Singer and John Grattan also asserted in 1952 that the name was a rendering of the saint's appellation, opining that the idiosyncratic spelling was due to the fact that the Anglo-Saxon text relayed a Welsh pronunciation.[26] Three decades later, Judith Vaughan-Sterling supplemented Singer and Grattan's argument by recollecting that the *Historia Brittonum* (c. 828) relates an episode in which St. Germanus revives a slaughtered calf. In her article, she briefly deliberates whether such narratives provide sufficient proof to conclude that the saint was perhaps "thought of as the special friend of cattle", but she refrains from offering a firm response to her own rhetorical question.[27]

As is clear from the preceding paragraphs, scholarship about the identity of Garmund is

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[21] Foley 1980, 82.

[22] Vaughan-Sterling 1983.

[23] Schneider 1961.

[24] Tornaghi 2010.

[25] Cockayne 1864-1866.

[26] Singer and Grattan 1952) Also see (Sims-Williams 1990, 301.

[27] Somewhat vaguely, she relates that "perhaps the suggestion is not impossible", see (Vaughan-Sterling 1983).

marked by considerable controversy, and scholars typically find common ground chiefly in their recognition of the interpretative difficulties. Vaughan Sterling consistently prefaces the Old English name with the adjective "mysterious", while Paola Torneghi prefers "mythic and mysterious"; Godfried Storms simply writes about a servant of God "about whom nothing is known".[28] What is perhaps less clear from the above synthesis, however, is that most scholars who have queried Garmund's identity have done so in a cursory and somewhat evasive manner. Joseph Harris, Judith Vaughan-Sterling, Stephanie Hollis, and Chiara Benati all relegate their observations to a footnote.[29] Grattan and Singer, Patrick Sims-Williams, and Godfried Storms offer a few sentences each.[30] Karl Schneider is, at present, the only scholar who has extensively discussed the charm's mysterious invocation, but he is also the person with whom nearly all subsequent researchers have preferred to disagree. By way of comparison, we may say about Garmund's problematic identity what Mark Twain purportedly once said about the weather: everybody is talking about it, but nobody seems to do anything about it.[31]

It is perhaps understandable that scholars have associated Garmund with mythical or pre-Christian traditions, for the beseeching of "heathen" or uncanonical characters does occur in classical as well as post-medieval theft charms. For example, classical Greek texts occasionally invoke Hermes, the god of thieves, and one incantation from the fourth century even advices the charmer to interview the head of a recently deceased corpse.[32] Equally, (Early) Modern Danish, Norwegian, and German charms sometimes petition figures such as "Dalix," "Remperas," and "Erbagast."[33] Not much is known about the first two, but the third can be identified with the outlaw "Elegast," a furtive and supernatural thief that figures in some Dutch and German romances.[34] In theft incantations, all these characters are commonly invoked through a version of the same vernacular formula, which in Norwegian runs "du […] som er regerende Herre over

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[28] Vaughan-Sterling 1983, Tornaghi 2010, Storms 1948.
[29] Harris 1975b, Vaughan-Sterling 1983, Hollis 1997, Benati 2017.
[30] Singer and Grattan 1952, Sims-Williams 1990, Storms 1948.
[31] Congress 2010, 370-371.
[32] Zellman-Rohrer 2016.
[33] Klapper 1896, Spamer 1958, 192, Bang 1901-1902, 660.
[34] Lunzer 1927.

alle Tyve. Jeg maner dig [...]" (you, who are the ruling lord over all thieves, I beseech you).[35]

Despite the potential unchristian or unorthodox invocations in some theft charms, Cockayne was probably already correct in 1867 when he suspected that Garmund is a representation of St. Germanus. There are several reasons to agree with him, and the first of these is that the charm's full invocation runs "Garmund, godes thegn".[36] Schneider somewhat spuriously used a denotation of the Greek word τέκνον to translate the etymologically related þegn as "Kind" (thus facilitating the cultic translation "child of god"), and Tornaghi interpreted Garmund's descriptive label as a "military term [...]" that constituted a "typical element[...] of a warrior culture".[37] However, the designation "Godes ðegn" is in Old English literature almost exclusively used to refer to Christian figures, and it often seems to function as a vernacular alternative for the widespread Latin expression "famulus dei".[38] For example, Ælfric of Eynsham (c. 955 – c. 1010) discusses the lives of Saint "Mauricius, se mæra godes ðegn" and Saint "Matheus[, …] an ðæra twelfa Godes ðegna, þe awrat on Ebreisc ærest þa godspel".[39] In a homiletic text, the same Old English author also designates the seven sleepers as "ða seofan godes ðegenas".[40]

Moreover, St. Germanus is appropriate for an Old English theft charm. Constantius of Lyon (fl. c. AD 480) authored an influential *vita* about this holy man that was widely read in early medieval Europe and which profoundly informed the content and structure of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, the main text of the manuscript in which *Metrical Charm 9* appears.[41] Significantly, Constantius' narrative includes two sections that relate how the protagonist miraculously resolves instances of larceny. The first describes how a tax collector named

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[35] Köhler 1883. Also see (Pócs 2009, 43-44) (Auen 1854) (Boudewijn 2010).

[36] ll. 6.

[37] Schneider 1961, 41, Tornaghi 2010, 454.

[38] Magoun 1937.

[39] Skeat 1881-1900.

[40] Most occurrences of the expression in Old English concern descriptions of holy figures, but it is also sometimes used as a stand in label to refer to any person practicing the Christians faith: The fact that the charm gives a specific name, Garmund, diminishes the likelihood of this latter interpretation. Equally, it is unlikely that the phrase rehearses the exorcisitc filler phrase "N., famulus dei", because the subsequent imperative verbs (hafa, ...) make clear that the name Garmund cannot refer back to the supplicant "ic". Instead, he must be the person that is invoked and commanded to undertake the desired action.

[41] See Bezzone 2013.

Ianuarius mislays his purse; after realising he is no longer in the possession of his moneybag, the distraught official turns to Germanus for help. The latter tells him to have patience, promises him there is no reason to worry, and subsequently interrogates in secret "unum ex his, qui pati consueuerant". The possessed individual initially denies the crime, but confesses after the saint exorcises his afflicted spirit "cum uoce maxima".[42]

The second hagiographical section is even more significant, because it relates an instance of cattle theft. The relevant passage describes part of a journey to Arles, which the saint undertakes just after his first Insular mission.

Necdum territorium suae civitatis excesserat, viam leniter carpens, eratque, inminente iam vespera, dies pluvius: cum subito comitatu suo nudus pede, cucullo vacuus, nimis expeditus viator adcrescit, cuius etiam nuditate condoluit. Qui dolose inhaerens contubernio, iungitur mansione et inter innocentes occupatosque custodes, qui Deo, non animalibus vigilabant, iumentum, quo senior vehebatur, praedo nocturnus arripuit. Die reddito amissio evectionis agnoscitur et, ut sacerdoti animal non deesset, unus ex clericis in peditem mutatur ex equite. Dumque iter agitur, circumiecti comites intuentur beatum virum extra morem conceptam laetitiam vultus obumbratione velantem. Quod cum ab omnibus videratur, unus ex reliquis, circumiecti comites intuentur beatum virum, extra morem conceptam laetitiam vultus obumbratione velantem. Quod cum ab omnibus videretur, unus ex reliquis, auctoritate concepta, causam laetitiae percunctatur. At ille inquiens: 'Paululum commoremur, quia infelicis illius labor et inridendus est et dolendus, quem mox videbitis aestuantem'. Cumque delapsi animalibus substitissent, paulo post eminus intuentur peditem, post se manu captum animal deducentem. Qui brevi adiungitur; dum ille accelerat, hi morantur, statimque vestigiis provolutus, crimen quod commiserat con tetur et ita totius noctis spatium inretitum esse se retulit, ut longius prodire non posset nec evadendi viam aliam repperisset, nisi ut abductum animal reformaret. Ad haec vir beatissimus: 'Si hesterna', inquit, 'die nudo tibi tegimen dedis- semus, furandi necessitas non fuisset. Quod deest, accipe; reforma, quod nostrum est'. Itaque confessor criminis pro poena commissi non solum veniam, verum etiam praemium cum benedictione suscepit".[43]

Germanus was quietly making his way and had not yet left the territory of his own city [*civitas*];

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[42] Ch. 2.
[43] Ch. 20 in Borius 1965.

the evening was about to fall, and the day was rainy, when suddenly a barefoot traveller, who did not even wear a cloak, joined his group, and Germanus felt sorry for his lack of clothing. Maliciously clinging to the company, he joins them at their night abode and, among these innocent custodians, whose attention was for God not the animals, during the night stole the mule that carried the old man. Once the day arrived, the loss of the animal is noticed and, so that the priest would not lack an animal, one of the clerics chose to walk instead of ride.

And while they were on their way Germanus's companions, who surrounded him, notice the blessed man was hiding some amusement in his face, which was not his usual custom. And when this was noticed by all, one of them, after having gathered courage, asks the cause of his amusement. And he says, "Let us stop for a short while, because the unhappy labour of that one, whom you will soon see in distress, is at once amusing and painful." As they had stopped after dismounting from their animals, they notice, a little behind them, a man on foot leading the stolen animal by hand. He hastily comes closer and, while he speeds up, the group halts. He immediately prostrates himself at their feet and confesses the crime he had committed. He felt entangled, for the entire night, as if prisoner in a net, in such a way he could not move further, neither to find a way to escape, nor to return the stolen animal. To these words, the most blessed man answers, saying, "If, yesterday, we had given covering to you when you were naked, there would have been no need for stealing. Take what you need; give back what is ours." And so the man who confessed to the crime received not only a pardon for what he had done, but also in fact a reward with a blessing.[44]

The passage just cited clearly illustrates Germanus's proficiency in redressing instances of cattle theft. Like the time he retrieved Ianuarius' missing purse, the holy man here appears to be in the possession of a miraculous perceptive ability that allows him to detect the "unhappy labour" of thieves and criminals.[45]

Additionally, it is interesting to observe that the plight of "being entangled, for the entire night, as if prisoner in a net" closely resembles the imprecatory objective of numerous medieval thief curses. For example, an incantation from Cambridge University, MS Addit. 5943 declares that

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[44] Translation taken from (Bezzone 2013).

[45] Also see (da Silva 2013, 38-39)

> yf here come eny fon
>
> me to robbe, other me to sclon;
>
> they stond as style as eny ston,
>
> they haue no powere away to gon.[46]

Likewise, Harley MS 2584 contains a text "Pro larronibus [sic] & inimicis meis" that includes the following lines:

> ʒif any þeues hider take
>
> þᵗ þei stande stille as any stake
>
> as euer þer was any y bounde
>
> & as euer was þe mulston.[47]

While the charms quoted above are from the Middle English period, it is clear that they rehearse earlier, Old English, themes. In this manner, the incantatory relation between a "stake", a "mulston", and "þeues" is also acknowledged by an Anglo-Saxon schematic drawing that is supposedly able to assist in the prevention of bee theft. The instructions that accompany the diagram, which is usually referred to as *Columcille's Circle*, advise the performer thus: "Writ þysne circul̀ mid þines cnifes orde on anum mealm-stane and sleah ænne stacan on middan þam ymbhagan; and lege þone stan on uppan þam stacan, þæt he beo eall under eordan, butan þam gewritenan" (write this circle with the point of your knife on a grindstone and hit a stake [into the ground] in the middle of the apiary; and place the stone on the stake, so that it is completely under the ground, except for the writing).

Conclusively, the idea that the composition of Germanus' saint's life was informed by notions concerning the function and effect of binding spells is also supported by the fact that texts from the latter genre often confirm the ability of specific saints to detain criminals and to

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[46] McBryde 1907.

[47] McBryde 1907.

guide home stolen livestock.[48] Examples from medieval Germany, for example, frequently call upon St Peter in the following way: "binde, Petrus binde".[49] Significantly, some specimens also affirm, in similar manner to the hagiographical section cited above, that the thief will remain trapped in the same place over night. A seventeenth century English example (with medieval precursors) thus exclaims:

> yᵗ you theeves be bounde all so sore
>
> as St. Bartholomewe bounde the devell wᵗʰ yᵉ heare of his heade so hore
>
> Theeves, theeves, theeves, stande you still & here remain
>
> till to morowe yᵗ I come agayne.[50]

The apparent relationship between thief curses and the cited section from Germanus' hagiography indicates that the holy man from Auxerre was perhaps not, as Vaughan Sterling has suggested, "thought of as a special friend for cattle". Instead, it is more likely that he was considered "a special friend" for individuals who wished to prevent or redress theft.

Metrical Charm 9's idiosyncratic spelling of the saint's name is perhaps not fully explicable; the possibility exists that *Garmund* is simply a corrupted or misspelled form of Germanus. However, it is worth noting that the marginal scribe of CCCC 41 is not innocent of treating holy names in unusual ways: St. Helena is invoked through the phrase "Ic geþohte sancte ead elenan", with the atypical adjective *ead* appearing as an ungrammatical infix between *sancta* and *elenan*.[51] Similarly, a Hiberno-Latin theft incantation on the same folio preserves vernacular Irish spellings: "petur pol patric pilip marie Brigit felic in nomine dei 7 chiric qui queri inuenit".[52] "Garmund" is not Germanus' Irish name, as the Old Irish Litany of Jesus shows that in Irish this is probably

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[48] An early reference to the protective and guiding power of a saint is attested in Paulinus of Nola (355-431), *Carmen 18*.

[49] Also see (Ohrt 1929/1930, Thorpe 1852, 196-197)

[50] McBryde 1907.

[51] cf. "se eadega sanctus Gregorius" and "þa eadigan sanctam marian". Also see (Magoun 1937).

[52] Also see section 54 "Un quatrain irlandais dans un manuscrit anglo-saxon" in (Grosjean 1963) The Irish origin of the passage is clear from the word forms used—a comparable litany in the *Liber Hymnorum* runs "Petar, Andreas, Pilip, Pol".

"German".[53] However, it is conceivable that we are here dealing with a Germanicised rendering of an originally Brittonic form. As mentioned before, Grattan and Singer believed *Garmund* to be Welsh, but the geographical origin of the manuscript suggests Cornish is equally if not more likely.

There are several reasons to allow the possibility that the name Garmund constitutes an Anglicised Brittonic form, and the first of these is linked to the further marginal content of the manuscript in which the name appears. As shown in the schematic given above, the just cited Irish incantation was at some point embedded in an Old English document for the same purpose;[54] as far as the later Anglo-Saxon period is concerned, such a merging of Hiberno-Latin and Old English traditions is redolent of the multi-cultural and multi-lingual milieu of South-West England. This observation remains an educated guess when it is presented in isolation, but it is, in this instance, strengthened by the manuscript's mentioning of saints such as St. Patrick, St. Felix, and St. Bridget. In Cristopher Hohler's view, the manuscript's prominent interest in distinctly Insular holy figures could be indicative of cultural ties with a large southern English monastic centre such as Glastonbury.[55] Bishop Leofric bequeathed the manuscript to Exeter Catheral in 1072 (also a South-Western location), and while the manuscript was perhaps already annotated by this time, it is possible that *Metrical Charm 9* was added to the margin of page 206 in a not too distant location. The combined likelihood of CCCC 41's South-Western origin and the strong influences of Insular liturgical traditions on its marginalia thus permits the hypothesis that the charm was copied in a Brittonic, possibly Cornish speaking, region of Britain.

We already observed that Welsh, which is a Brittonic language, uses *Garmon* as a vernacular form for Germanus, whereas Irish uses *German*.[56] It is, therefore, possible that Cornish also had a native version of the saint's name. As Olson and Padel have argued, the holy man's name in this language was "perhaps *Germon* under the influence of the Latin name; the /œ/ of the second syllable could, less probably, have been spelled instead with *u*, giving *Garmun* or

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[53] Plummer 1925, 33.

[54] This is a reference to an earlier section of the chapter, which includes a schematic listing the relation between the various Old English Metrical Charms against theft.

[55] Hohler 1980.

[56] For variants of Germanus' name in Welsh, see (Shaw 1973, 136).

Germun".[57]

The orthography of the element -*mund* is similar to the reconstructed Cornish pronunciations as proposed by Olson and Padel, and it is thus interesting to observe that members of the Brittonic language family often render the *er* element of Latin borrowings as *ar.* Thus, Latin *taberna* > Welsh *tafarn,* Breton *tavarn.*[58] Intriguingly, the tendency of "Britons" to "corrupt" expressions with medial *er* was also noticed by Bede, who offers the following dialectological aside in a passage about the missionary ambitions of a certain Ecgbert:

> quarum in Germania plurimas nouerat esse nationes, a quibus Angli uel Saxones, qui nunc Brittaniam incolunt, genus et originem duxisse noscuntur; unde hactenus a uicina gente Brettonum corrupte Garmani nuncupantur.[59]

> He (Ecgbert) knew that there were many nations in Germania, of whom the Angles and the Saxons that now inhabit Britain, derive their origin. For this reason, the neighbouring people of the Britons corruptly call them *Garmani.*

The poor early medieval attestation of the Brittonic language family and the singularity of the marginal scribe's English dictate that arguments about the morphology of *Garmund* must remain conjectural. Nevertheless, the manuscripts' Hiberno-Latin liturgical material, its Anglo-Saxon historiographical content, and its South-Western provenance permit the possibility that "Garmund" is, in fact, an anglicised version of Germanus' Welsh or Cornish name. If accurate, the first lexical element attests to a typical Brittonic mutation of -*er*- to -*ar*-; the second possibly constitutes an English reinterpretation of the foreign element –*mon**/-*mun**as the native element -*mund.*[60]

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[57] Olson and Padel 1986, 56.

[58] Hamp 1980. For a more precise description of the phenomenon and examples, see (Jackson 1953, 280).

[59] Bk. V, ch, 9. in Mynors and Colgrave 1969.

[60] Olson and Padel 1986, Clark 1992, 459).

Cursing with the Thistle

While scholars have typically identified the nebulous identity of Garmund as the most pernicious obstacle in the interpretation of *Metrical Charm 9*, the text's explication is also problematised by its concluding imprecatory section. In the poem's final four lines, the speaker declares

> Eall he weornige,   swa syer wudu weornie,
>
> swa breðel þeo swa þystel,
>
> se ðe ðis feoh   oðfergean þence
>
> oððe ðis orf   oðehtian ðence.[61]

This passage is marred by a number of palaeographical discrepancies, and before we can offer our own translation we need to establish an understanding of previously published arguments regarding its correct interpretation. In 1909, Felix Grendon followed Oswald Cockayne by emending "syer" to "fyre" and "breðel" to "bremel", translating the first two lines as "as fire destroys wood, as bramble or as thistle injures thigh".[62] Meanwhile, in 1937, Francis Magoun changed "þeo" to "seo" and preferred Thomas Toller's suggestion from 1921 to read "breðel" as "briðel". He thus interpreted the same lines as "wie dürres Holz vermorscht, so gebrechlich sei (er) wie Distelwolle" (as withered wood decomposes, may he be as fragile as thistledown).[63] However, neither Magoun nor Grendon appear to have fully grasped the passage's meaning, and Godfried Storms thus offered a more definitive translation in 1948. He read "syer" as "fyre", "breðel" as "briðel", and "þeo" as "seo", proposing "as wood is consumed by fire, may he be as fragile as a thistle".[64] The remaining two lines have caused fewer difficulties, and may be understood as "he who considers stealing this cattle, or considers misappropriating this property".

As is clear from the previous paragraph, the interpretation of *Metrical Charm 9*'s imprecatory section has not been without controversy, and a continued sense of confusion about its correct interpretation was presumably what caused Anne Matthieu to publish the following

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[61] ll. 16-19

[62] Grendon 1909.

[63] Magoun 1937.

[64] Storms 1948. Lea Olsan still prefers "may he thoroughly wither, as dry wood withers, as bramble does, so the thistle" (Olsan 1999, 412).

argument in 1999: "Il est probable que les magiciens anglo-saxons savaient comme leurs homologues du continent débarrasser les champs de ces plantes nuisibles" (it is probable that Anglo-Saxon magicians knew like their counterparts of the continent to clear fields of these weeds); in her view, "la destruction du voleur se ramenerait ici à une pratique de magie agricole maintes fois éprouvée" (the destruction of the thief looks back here to a practice of agricultural magic proven numerous times).[65] Even though some medieval literary traditions do refer to the nettling properties of thistles in order to evoke negative connotations, it is unlikely that *Metrical Charm 9* preserves a memory of pan-Germanic aggravations concerning uncomfortable agricultural labour.[66] Instead, it is more probable that it employs an idiosyncratic verbal simile related to thistledown in order to articulate a more conventional incantatory objective, the cursing of a potential thief.

To support the premise just offered we may briefly compare the charm to two similar imprecations from contemporary sources. The first of these appears in the Old Icelandic *Skírnismál*, a poem from the Poetic Edda, possibly as early as the later tenth century, which relates how the god Freyr has hopelessly fallen in love with a giantess named Gerðr. The text features a dialogue between the latter and a character called Skírnir, Freyr's representative and servant. Skírnir initially attempts to convince the giantess of his master's good intentions, but when he notices his flattery is falling on deaf ears he embarks on an imprecatory tirade. Towards the end of this he exclaims:

> Ver þú sem þistill,
> sá er var þrunginn
> í ǫnn ofanverða[.][67]

> May you be as a thistle,
> that is bursting
> at the end of the harvest.

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[65] Mathieu 1999. Similar arguments have been proposed about the curse in *Skírnismal*. Aside from Harris, see (Heizmann 1996, Mitchell 2007, Steinsland 1990, Reichardt 1939).

[66] For additional litarary traditions involving thistles, see (Steinsland 1990, Marzell 1929/1930a, b.

[67] 1997.

Joseph Harris was the first to notice the similarities between the just cited curse and the section from Metrical Charm 9. In 1977, he argued that the Norse adjective *þrunginn* had a similar meaning as the Old English adjective *breðel*; citing numerous lexicographical parallels, he showed that both words connote brittleness, fragility, and immanent organic decay.[68] He also proposed that explaining the reason why *Skírnismál* and *Metrical Charm 9* ue a similar, thistle-inspired metaphor "must begin with [postulating] the probable existence of an old, perhaps common Germanic, tradition".[69]

Harris' argument concerning the semantic and conceptual overlap of *breðel* and *þrunginn* is persuasive, but the validity of his pan-Germanic hypothesis is imperilled by an additional and hitherto unnoticed literary parallel. For, the Anglo-Saxon charm does not only correspond closely to the cited passage from *Skírnismál*, it also resembles an imprecatory section from *Psalm* 82 (83). In the Latin version of the latter text, the psalmist implores his God to subject infidels to the following fate:

> Deus meus, pone illos ut rotam,
> et sicut stipulam ante faciem venti.
> Sicut ignis qui comburit silvam […][70]

> Make them like a wheel, my God,
> like chaff before the wind.
> As fire consumes wood.

Placing *Psalm 82* (83) and *Metrical Charm 9* side by side, it is easy to discern that both use the same "like fire will consume wood" construction in order to inflict a curse on a potential malefactor. Likewise, the close textual relationship between *Metrical Charm 9* and *Psalm 82* (83) is explicitly confirmed by the manner in which the latter's Old English translation (preserved in the *Paris Psalter*, dated to the eleventh century) treats the same simile: *Metrical Charm 9* declares

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[68] Harris 1975a.

[69] Harris 1975a.

[70]

"swa fyre wudu weornie" (just as fire consumes wood), while the Anglo-Saxon rendering of *Psalm 82* (83) uses the words "swa færincga fyr wudu byrneð" (just as fire suddenly burns wood).[71]

No relation between the biblical verse's "chaff" and the incantation's "thistle" is so clear, but still, we may adduce the fact that thistles, like dandelions, disperse their seed in the form of a feathery airborne pappus (a modified calyx that surrounds the petals of a flower). While the Old English translator of *Psalm 82* (83) rendered the Latin term "stipulam" as "windes healm", the notion of airborne dispersal is equally central to the terms "pappus" or "thistledown". We may thus interpret the incantation's "brittle thistle" as an unconventional, yet conceptually appropriate term that means to evoke the image of a chaff-like substance that is carried away by the wind (Figure 1).

To provide some further context for the imprecation of *Metrical Charm 9*, we may note that highlighting the frailty and transience of human beings by comparing them to a tuft of airborne seeds is not uncommon in medieval and Early Modern literature. In *De Klucht van Pyramus en Thisbe* (a Dutch farce from 1669), the main character declares

> Gelijk als de Paardebloem vergaat,
> Die al zeer vroeg op 't Veldt schoon staat,
> Zo drukt ook meê de Minnesmert

> Like the Dandelion perishes,
> Which already stands in the field beautifully very early
> So, too, lovesickness oppresses.[72]

In the same way, the German encyclopaedic poem *Der Renner* (c. 1300) records the following statement, which it attributes to "her Salomôn" and "her Job":

> Des glîchseners trôst und hoffenunge sint
> Als distel blüete, die der wint

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[71] ll. 36b, edition in (Krapp 1941).

[72] The edition provides no page or line numbers. The cited section appears about halfway through the play. Leeuw 1669).

Füert über velt und si zeströuwet[.][73]

The consolation and hope of the dissembler are

Like the bloom of a thistle, which the wind

Carries over the field and disperses.

In an English context, we encounter a similarly worded notion in an early version of Wycliffe's bible: "For þe hope of þe vnpitouse is as a wull loke or þistildoun þat of þe wynd is taken awey".[74]

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[73] ll. 21888-91. The relevant section is edited in (Ehrismann 1908-1911).
[74] Lindberg 1959, 295.

Figure 1: chaff (left) and thistledown (right). The images show that both substances are brittle, light, and likely to be carried off by a sudden gust of wind.

The notion of imprecating thieves, either *ante-* or *post factum*, features prominently in a broad range of incantatory traditions, and numerous historical documents dating from antiquity to modern times provide evidence to support the idea that *Metrical Charm 9*'s thistle-wool malediction responds to a much more widespread literary tradition.[75] For the sake of concision, we cannot provide a complete discussion of the literary history of imprecations here. However, since our discussion pertains chiefly to the Anglo-Saxon period, we may compare *Metrical Charm 9* briefly to the contemporary tradition of entering curses into books and documents. Significantly, texts used for this purpose frequently employ a strategy that is comparable to that of *Metrical Charm 9*, issuing out stark warnings to potential robbers, or pre-emptively anathemising individuals minded to pursue a course of action that differs from that stipulated in the respective piece of writing.[76] Thus, some of the manuscripts that bishop Leofric donated to Exeter Cathedral (MS CCCC 41 included) contain an inscription that runs "Hunc librum dat leofricus *episcopus* eccl*esie* s*ancti* petri ap*osto*li in exonia ubi sedes episcopalis est ad utilitatem successorum suorum. Si quis illum abstulerit inde, subiaceat maledictioni" (Bishop Leofricus gave this book to St. Peter in Exeter, where the episcopal seat is, for the use of successors. May the person who removes it from there be subjugated to maledictions).[77] In similar manner, the will (c. 871-888) of Ældorman Ælfred terminates in the following malediction: "Ond swa hwylc mon swa hio wonie. 7 breoce gewonie him God almahtig his weorldare on eac swa his sawle are in eona eonum" (And whoever may diminish or infringe them [the preceding written statements], may God almighty diminish his worldly possessions and also the glory of his soul).[78]

Given that poetic thief curses in Old English constitute a smaller subcategory in a more widely attested literary genre, we may supplement our earlier observation about *Metrical Charm 9*'s appropriation of a simile from *Psalm 82* (83) with some additional critical remarks. First, we should acknowledge that throughout the Middle Ages the psalms served as a principal font for both official and unofficial maledictory traditions. We thus clearly notice the influence of the psalms on the formal development of formal Benedictine maledictions, a genre which developed

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[75] For examples of relevant curse traditions, see (1972-2008, Graf 2005, Ziebarth 1895).

[76] Book curses are currently understudied. Nevertheless, some further examples and a more elaborate description of the genre can be found in (Arnovick 2000, 2006, Drogin 1985, Eis 1962.

[77] James 1912, 81.

[78] Danet and Bogoch 1992.

over the course of the early Middle Ages, and which drew heavily on the stylistic templates of particular biblical passages: an early medieval monastic curse from Saint-Wandrille first orders the user to sing seven specific psalms, and then enters into an "original" section that includes quotations from several others, including the "as fire consumes wood" simile from *Psalm 82* (83).[79] In this regard, it might be useful to consider Lester Little's comment on the influence of the Psalter on daily monastic discourse:

> The religious recited texts and heard them […] Through repetition and prolonged rumination they absorbed these texts, which in turn supplied them with a rich biblical vocabulary and idiom. They spoke a language based on the Bible, much as, in the United States some Southerners—[…] and not only preachers—do. They did not search the Bible in order to quote from it, because they had it in their minds already.[80]

Meanwhile, it is equally worth noting that some of the same biblical texts appear to have fulfilled a specific role within the narrower context of medieval theft-sorcery. For example, a German psalter from the thirteenth(?)-century (Studienbibliothek Dillingen, MS XV 51) preserves the following marginal remark written above a transcription of Psalm 2: "dien psalm sprich úber rober und úber dieb" (speak this psalm over a robber and over a thief).[81] Similarly, we may note that in "einer Münchener Hs. (Kr. 240) des 11–12. Jahrh., bl. 4" we find the following text:

> si quid furto amiseris, canta cum veniis psalmum 'quid gloriaris' (Ps. 52, 1) novies in honore IX ordinum angelorum, vel septies canta in recordatione septiformis gratiae et die orationem hanc: 'Deus qui Judae lignum vel signum sanctae crucis in loco Calvariae ostendisti, ostende mihi quod perdidi vel perditum est, et restitue secundum magnam misericordiam tuam'.[82]

> If you have lost anything through theft, sing when it happens the psalm "quid gloriaris" (Ps. 52, 1) nine times in honour of the nine orders of angels, or seven times in remembrance of the sevenfold

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[79] Little 1993, 64-65, Ó Curraoin 1963, Wiley 2001, Davies 1892, Leeson 2014, Little 1975, 1979, Dürig 1976)

[80] Little 1993, 81.

[81] Wunderle 2007, 80.

[82] Mone 1838.

> [nature of] grace, and pray the following: "God who showed to the Jews the wood or the symbol of the holy cross at the place [called] Calvary, show me what I lost or what is stolen, and return it according to your great benevolence".

As we may expect, the use of the psalms in theft-sorcery did not cease after the end of the medieval period, and in 1539 a certain Hendric Palync was interrogated in Gent for a "eene coniuratie ter causen van eenen juweele dat hij verloren hadde" (a conjuration on account of a jewel which he had lost). The records state that "in de coniuratie moet ooc eenen psalm ghelesen zijn, zo hij meent *quicumque vult salvus esse*" (in the conjuration one must also read a charm, *quicumque vult salvus esse*, as he believes).[83]

We may thus propose that *Metrical Charm 9's* thistle curse participates in a more widely attested incantatory tradition: like many other texts from the same period that mean to solve or pre-empt theft, it offers a description of a maledictory hypothetical situation that should take effect the moment a potential malefactor perpetrates a specified prohibited action. The fact that it uses phraseology borrowed from the psalms to articulate such a warning is not too surprising, because we witness a similar process in other contemporary literary traditions related to cursing and anathematisation. Similarly, we also encounter the incantatory deployment of the psalms in certain medieval and post-medieval theft-rituals. Conclusively, some have proposed that *Metrical Charm 9*'s malediction might look back to a common Germanic tradition, but it is more likely that the Old English charm's reference to thistle wool negotiates a compromise between two advantageous incantatory strategies: it uses the alliterative soundscapes of vernacular poetry in order to evoke a series of maledictory images that eventually derive from Latin, biblical literature.

Here another section of the PhD Chapter has been removed in order to meet the submission requirements of SEM 2019. The missing section discusses two more folkloric themes (the charming in all wind directions and the enchanting of footprints), as well as a number of references that provide clues about the potential application and transmission of medieval theft charms. The omitted section has a length of around 4000 words.

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[83] van Werveke 1896.

Conclusion

For the most part, theft charms articulate a selection of themes from the same fixed set of incantatory ambitions: ideally, they mean to prevent property from being stolen, to retrieve lost items, to arrest the person responsible, and to inflict some form of punishment on successful malefactors. The words which theft incantations use in order to verbalise these themes, though frequently traditional, are not necessarily derived from earlier texts for the same purpose. *Metrical Charm 9* thus borrows heavily from pertinent religious literature: It alludes to the invention of Christ's cross to exemplify a beneficial antecedent for retrieving missing items, while it curses a potential thief by using an imprecation from the Psalms.

Another general proposition we may offer here is that theft incantations commonly demonstrate a preoccupation with various levels of oracular wisdom. In Western medieval traditions, knowledgeable and powerful figures are not infrequently part of a Christian tradition, and thus the Anglo-Saxon charms petition men and women such as St. Germanus and St. Helena. In ancient Greece, oracular knowledge was often associated with the Gods and the dead, and we thus encounter theft-rituals that involve invoking Hermes and interviewing skulls. In post-Reformational traditions, meanwhile, when the power of saints begins to diminish, we notice another shift in the consensus about which powerful characters are most knowledgeable about thievery; German and Scandinavian incantations thus sometimes open with conjurations of characters such as Arbagast, Remperas, and Dallix, who are all "regerende Herrer over alle Tyve".

The interest in an expertise that governs theft incantations is, however, not just a recurrent thematic principle that helps to typify the figures that such documents adjure; it also enables us to capture a fragmentary image of the type of people who seem to have known, spread, and, occasionally, vended such incantatory literature. Buried in the medieval records of numerous European libraries, we find texts that recollect the plights and practices of physicians, priests, officers of the law, wise men and women, as well as experienced shepherds and farmers.[84] These people all had different lives and lived in different times. Yet some of the texts they employed to resolve one of life's most common and perturbing problems—the loss of personal

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[84] This statement refers back to a section of the chapter not included here.

property—demonstrate fascinating and enlightening similarities. For a redeeming and perhaps unexpectedly even-tempered statement we may return one last time to Robert Priebsch: "To collect these [texts] in a more thorough way than hitherto, to be earnestly on the look-out for their literary relationship, is a task not always easy, but grateful and interesting".[85]

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[85] Priebsch 1896, 428.

Appendix 1: Metrical Charm 9 in Old and Modern English

Ne forstolen ne forholen nanuht, þæs ðe ic age, þe ma ðe mihte Herod urne drihten. Ic geþohte sancte Eadelenan and ic geþohte Crist on rode ahangen; swa ic þence þis feoh to findanne, næs to oðfeorrganne, and to witanne, næs to oðwyrceanne, and to lufianne, næs to oðlædanne.

> 6 Garmund, godes ðegen,
>
> 7 find þæt feoh and fere þæt feoh
>
> 8 and hafa þæt feoh and heald þæt feoh
>
> 9 and fere ham þæt feoh.
>
> 10 Þæt he næfre næbbe landes, þæt he hit oðlæde,
>
> 11 ne foldan, þæt hit oðferie,
>
> 12 ne husa, þæt he hit oðhealde.
>
> 13 Gif hyt hwa gedo, ne gedige hit him næfre!
>
> 14 Binnan þrym nihtum cunne ic his mihta,
>
> 15 his mægen and his mihta and his mundcræftas.
>
> 16 Eall he weornige, swa syre wudu weornie,
>
> 17 swa breðel seo swa þystel,
>
> 18 se ðe ðis feoh oðfergean þence
>
> 19 oððe ðis orf oðehtian ðence.

May nothing that I own be stolen or concealed, in the same way that Herod could not (steal or conceal) our lord. I contemplated the blessed Saint Helena and I contemplated Christ, hung on the cross. So I intend to find these cattle, not to let them go far away, and to know where they are, not to let them get lost, and to love them, not to let them be led away.

> Garmund, servant of God
>
> Find those cattle and bring back those cattle
>
> And have those cattle and hold those cattle
>
> So that he never has lands to guide them to

Nor a fold to carry them to

Nor houses to confine them in.

Whoever does so, may it never benefit him

Within three nights I know his power

His courage and his might and his powers of protection.

He completely withers, just as fire withers wood,

He is as brittle as a thistle,

He who thinks about driving away these cattle

or steal these goods.

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