The 9th international Meeting of the Spanish Society for Medieval English Language and Literature was held at the University of the Basque Country in Vitoria-Gasteiz from 26th - 28th September 1996. The volume of the proceedings of this conference appeared in September 1997. It contains 38 papers dealing with linguistic, literary and cultural aspects of Old and Middle English texts. The following is a comment on each of the papers included in the volume.

Manuel Aguirre: "The Phasal Structure of Beowulf"

Aguirre develops the idea that the narrative technique in Beowulf is based on phasing which the author defines in the following terms: "Phasing is an expansion or segmentation of an event into a number of sequenced episodes or moments for the purposes of giving narrative duration, rhythm, tension, climax, and satisfactory resolution".

María José Alvarez Faedo: "Piers Plowman. Author, Sources and Interpretation"

A compendium of the different critical views that have studied the work of William Langland.

Andrew Breeze: "Was Sir John Stanley (c.1350-1414) the Gawain-Poet?"

In this interesting article, A. Breeze develops in a different way Gervase Mathew's hypothesis, which maintained that Sir John Stanley was the patron of the Gawain-Poet. The author of the article convincingly argues in favour of the idea that Sir John Stanley, Lord of the Isle of Man, was in fact the Gawain-Poet.

An analysis of the *Wanderer* on the basis of literary anthropology. The author analyses the O.E. Poem from the linguistic level in order to build a critical approach, as he says, for the interpretation of information at symbolic and conceptual levels.

Xabier Campos Vilanova: "The Busy Ups and Downs of an Anglo-Saxon *Codex Aureus* in the Spain of the Habsburgs"

The author traces the presence of the *Codex Aureus* (today in the Royal Library at Stockholm) in 17th-century Spain. This 8th-century Latin manuscript produced in Canterbury was first located in Spain as part of the library that belonged to Jerónimo Zurita (1512-1582). The manuscript was sold to Johan G. Sparwenfeldt in 1690 for the Swedish Royal Library. The author states that in Spain there are uncatalogued libraries and this fact justifies the question of whether there might still be some Spanish-associated Anglo-Saxon manuscripts in Spain.

Juan Camilo Conde Silvestre: "Anglo-Saxon Monastic Sign Language in a Semiotic Context"

The author points out that the *Indicia Monasteralia* has not received much critical attention during this century. However, the 127 signs for non-verbal communication included in the text enable us to have a view of everyday Anglo-Saxon monastic life. The author also carries out a semiotic analysis of the signs and suggests the extension of some emblematic gestures beyond the limits of the monastery.

Isabel de la Cruz Cabanillas: "Word Loss in Old and Middle English: Some Possible Reasons"

This paper explores the possible reasons for the loss of lexical items in OE and ME. The author explains that apart from non-linguistic reasons, which could be caused by social circumstances, there are several linguistic reasons including "changes within the system" such as "monosyllabism", "difficult pronunciation", "unpleasant associations", "internal displacement" and "homonymy". The author also includes a section in which she discusses the "interference" caused by the inclusion of lexical elements from other contemporary languages.

Javier E. Díaz Vera: "The Dynamics of Old English Phonemes: a Dependency Approach"

Presents an analysis of the OE vowel system on the basis of the dependency approach. The conclusion is that the evolution of OE vocalic sounds is the result of "a compact and natural series of deeply intertwined mutations".

Carlos Ealo López: "The Translation of Middle English Alliterative Verse into Spanish: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*"

http://www.as.uni-hd.de/prolepsis/98_1_mor.html
Deals with the considerations that have to be taken into account in the process of translation of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* into Spanish. The author includes an appendix with three fragments from three translations into Spanish of the first stanza of the poem. One of fragments is the author's own translation of this first stanza.

María José Esteve Ramos: "The Identification of Sources in The South English Legendary. A Case of Textual Connection in the Europe of the 13th century"

As the title of the article indicates, the author analyses several texts that could be considered sources of *The South English Legendary*. She finds similarities between the fragment "Miraculum de Iude" in *The South English Legendary* and Gonzalo de Berceo's "Cristo y los judíos de Toledo" (*Milagros de Nuestra Señora*). Esteve Ramos also suggests that the *Legenda Aurea* could have had an influence on the author of *The South English Legendary*. The author of the paper also points out that the *Life of St. Juliana, De Anuntiatione* and *De Assumptione* are possible sources of sections of *The South English Legendary*.

Alfonso Fernández García & Gabriela García Teruel: "'Knov, Cristene man': Making Things Mean in the Middle English Physiologus"

The paper analyses the ME Physiologus to conclude that fiction and interpretation "form an efficient communicative unit which achieves its objectives (social identity, ideological communication and moral orientation...) By combining both narrative models".

Antolina García Carrascal: "Scribal Errors as Linguistic Evidence in the Medieval Dialogue *Vices and Virtues*"

Studies the scribal errors and emendations in Ms. Stowe 34 (*Vices and Virtues*) copied around 1200. The analysis of these characteristics, according to the author, provides important evidence about the state of the language at the time when the text was copied and used since, as the author says, the text is apparently devoid of some of the artifice the writing norm imposes on the spoken language.

José S. Gómez Soliño: "Pastons, Celys and the Standard Language in the Late Fifteenth Century"

In this interesting and well-documented paper, Gómez Soliño presents a model of the standardising process in the late fifteenth century. The model is illustrated by means of an analysis of the letters written by the Paston and Cely families.

José María Gutiérrez Arranz: "The Precepts of Epistolary Discourse and Letters in Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*"

http://www.as.uni-hd.de/prolepsis/98_1_mor.html
The article starts with a summary of the basis of epistolary discourse. Gutiérrez Arranz distinguishes 3 types of style: *stylus grandis*, *stylus humilis* and *stylus mediocris*. The author points out that Chaucer was familiar with these three styles, but he created a personal model in order to suit his concerns and interests.

Luis Alberto Lázaro: "Orality and the Satiric Tradition in *The Pardoner's Tale*

An analysis of the oral characteristics of Chaucer's *Pardoner's Tale* in connection with the satiric tradition of the Middle Ages. In his conclusions, the author points out that those oral devices such as hyperbole, kinetic imagery, sententious style, etc., make up the core of this tale.

Hugh Magennis: "Food, Drink and Feast in Old English Poetry"

A very well-documented article with an extensive bibliography on the subject, Magennis points out that in Germanic literature drinking is a definitive element. It has a symbolic significance in *Beowulf* and in other OE poems. For example, vows made while drinking are solemn in the Germanic tradition. Drinking is a male and communal activity in heroic poetry, but in Beowulf there are instances that "contradict the warm connotations of drinking". There is a contrast between the many references to drinking and the scarcity of references to food. Magennis develops a well-documented discussion on this fact and concludes that cuisine was not an important part of the Germanic culture. In this respect, the author indicates that this idea coincides with Tacitus's references to this fact. The symbolic associations of feasting are more focused on drinking than on food.

Guzmán Mancho-Barés: "Norse Vocabulary in the *Peterborough Chronicle*. A Case-Study of Historical Sociolinguistics"

The Second Peterborough continuation (1133-1154) is the text studied for this article. The author's starting point is Myer-Scotton's Markedness Model for linguistic activity observation. Macho-Barés indicates that there is evidence of the existence of a "code-switching unmarked mode of linguistic activity in the former-Danelaw" and that the scribe is identified "with a community whose unmarked linguistic code is influenced by the Norse varieties, together with the wish to maintain a balance in the unmarked/marked linguistic choices".

María Belén Martín Lucas: "Self-Vindication and Vindication of the Self in *The Book of Margery Kempe*

The author's analysis of *The Book of Margery Kempe* intends to show that it is a "demonstration of the power of a woman's will to validate herself in a hostile environment".

Miguel Martínez López: "Thomas More and the Medieval Worldview in *The English Poems*"

http://www.as.uni-hd.de/prolepsis/98_1_mor.html
With a selection of extracts from More's *The English Poems*, Martínez López illustrates More's "paradoxical attitude towards medievalism". The tentative conclusion of the paper is that "More epitomises that strand of continuity which links the late medieval to the early Renaissance mainly through ambiguity and revision".

Cristina Mourón Figueroa: "Laws of Literary Interference Applied to English Literature (12th-14th centuries)"

The author intends to analyse the influence of French literature in Medieval England in the period between the 12th and 14th centuries. The analysis is based on I. Even-Zohar's "Laws of Literary Interference", *Poetics Today*, 11/1 (1990), pp. 53-72. The author states that the laws proposed by Even-Zohar are applicable to the period between the 12th and 14th centuries.

Paloma Nuñez Pertejo: "On the Role of the Auxiliary weordan in O.E."

The verb *Weordan* is analysed, especially as an auxiliary of the progressive and the passive. The author considers that the use of this verb sometimes constitutes a variant of *beon/wesan*, but it also has a function of its own. Nuñez Pertejo thinks that this function deserves special attention and that more studies are necessary to consolidate this line of research.

Juan Ignacio Oliva: "Rhythm and Rhyme in English Medieval Lyrics"

Much of the English lyrical production has been lost, Oliva points out. The corpus of English Medieval Lyrics consists of short pieces from the 13th to the 15th centuries. Most of these compositions are religious and the influence of the French school is important. This period is also the time when the traditional English carol appears. The oldest lyrics that survive are 3 religious songs, composed in the vernacular and attributed to St. Godric, a 12th-century hermit from Northern England. During the 13th century most of the songs are anonymous and use alliteration and an archaic iambic rhythm. Oliva states that the "Summer" canon is a magnificent example of the values of English Medieval lyrics that were progressively transformed into the famous Madrigals. An appendix with the musical score of the 14th-century lyric "sumer is icumen" is included.


Traces the references to the Holy Writ made by the Wife of Bath regarding aspects of marriage. Olivares Merino points out that some of those references are wrongly interpreted, "confusion is therefore the word that best defines the first part of the Wife of Bath's Prologue". On other occasions, the references to St. Paul's writings are properly interpreted, but sometimes "Alice uses quotations from St. Paul's writings, presenting his words in such an awkward context that the main result of the combination is comic". The
author concludes that the Wife of Bath's views on marriage are "a poor simplification of what a man-woman relationship can be".

Javier Pérez Guerra: "Medieval Subjects Were Older: Some Communicative and Syntactic Remarks on the Notion 'Subject' from IME to PDE Times"

Focuses on the study of the categories that realise the function "subject". The author's starting point is, firstly, the idea that "Early Modern English requires attention for the purpose of syntactic explanation". Pérez Guerra uses data both from Late Middle English and Present Day English. And, secondly, the author points out that "syntactic change may be due to "functional" reasons, in the sense that "stylistic differentiation" is perhaps the key word as far as syntactic variation is concerned". Then, Pérez Guerra deals with the notion of "subject". In the second section of the article, Pérez Guerra describes the sources of the data he uses: The Helsinki Corpus of English Texts and The Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus of British English. There are three more sections in which the data are analysed and there are several tables which illustrate the results of the research.

Juan Ramírez Arlandi: "Reconsiderations of the Theme of Marriage in The Canterbury Tales"

The theme of marriage in The Canterbury Tales "cannot be limited to the interconnections existing between four, five or six tales". According to the author, the idea of marriage in The Canterbury Tales is "the result of the tension between a secular vision and a religious ideology".

Idoia Roche Ruiz de Garibay: "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight: Politeness in the First Bedchamber Scene"


Louis J. Rodrigues: "Margaret of Antioch --Pseudo-Saint and Martyr"

Rodrigues starts with an explanation of the research done on the Mss. that contain the legend of Margaret of Antioch, and continues with a very well documented analysis of the evolution and continuation of this legend in the Middle Ages. The author also deals with the spread of the cult to Margaret.

Gudelia Rodríguez: "Variation in the Writing System of Three Scribes: The Owl and the Nightingale"
The paper is divided in four parts dealing with (1) an introduction to the development of English Orthography; (2) a general comment on the two Mss. that contain the *Owl and the Nightingale*; (3) a comparative analysis of the orthography of the text in both Mss. and (4) an evaluation of the results. The author presents a very detailed analysis of the orthography of the text and concludes that consistency of spelling is rarely maintained. "In the course of repeated copying...different spelling conventions overlap...the French and Latin traditions, but also the native tradition which was never entirely lost".

Ana Laura Rodríguez Redondo & Manuela Romano Mozo: "Compositional Strategies of Old English Testaments or Wills"

Documents containing wills or testaments in West-Saxon, Kentish and Mercian from 850 to 1050 are the basis of this study. The authors indicate that this paper is part of larger project devoted to the study of the evolution of wills throughout the textual history of English. After some considerations on Anglo-Saxon wills and their oral nature, the authors analyse wills as a "text-type" and their "compositional strategies".

Manuela Romano Mozo: "Some Examples of English Grammaticalization Processes from a Self-regulating Point of View"

The author presents the most recent approaches to grammaticalization that refer to the explanation of English modals. She reinterprets grammaticalization "considering grammar as a complex, open and dynamic system", and focuses her analysis on the development of *WILL* from volitional to epistemic during the OE and ME periods. The author incorporates the theoretical concepts and tools of Catastrophy Theory.

Mª Ángeles Ruiz Moneva: "The Translation of Irony in Rastell's Version of *La Celestina*

Deals with the expression of irony in the dialogues between Calixto and Melibea and Calixto and his servants in Fernando de Rojas's *La Celestina*. Ruiz Moneva studies these dialogues and compares them with their equivalents in Rastell's English version. This is done by taking pragmatics as an approach to the study of irony.

Asunción Salvador-Rabaza Ramos: "Different Hands in the York Mystery Cycle Manuscript"

The importance of the modifications introduced by different hands in the York Mystery Cycle is the basis of this paper. According to the author, the number of hands that introduce modifications or stage directions in the manuscript could be used as internal evidence of the selection of plays that were performed during the celebration of Corpus Christi.

Ania Saorín Iborra: "On the Personal Pronouns in the Vespasian Psalter: Peculiarities of the Language of the Mercian Gloss"

http://www.as.uni-hd.de/prolepsis/98_1_mor.html
Examines the personal pronouns found in the Vespasian Psalter (considered an example of the Mercian dialect) and compares them with the other OE dialectal forms of the pronouns.

Jesús L. Serrano Reyes: "'Els Castells Humans': An Architectural Element in The House of Fame"

Convincingly comments on a passage from The House of Fame which, in his opinion, describes the process of the construction of a human tower. This is a Catalan folkloric manifestation which is still alive (the author uses pictures to illustrate his interpretation of the passage). Serrano thinks that Chaucer was a witness to one of these scenes and maintains the hypothesis that Chaucer visited Catalonia in 1365-66.

Ricardo J. Sola Buil: "Parodic Elements and the Perception of Self in The Canterbury Tales"

The author states that in Gower, the Gawain poet, Langland and the early works of Chaucer, the self might be perceived as part of the fabulated and the conventional. In the Canterbury Tales, Chaucer breaks this traditional path due to the parodic nature of his work. In the author's opinion, the perception of the self is "an outgrowth and source of parody".

Anna Torti: "Henryson Reading Chaucer: From Troilus and Criseyde to The Testament of Cresseid"

In this article, full of insight, the author discusses how "Henrison's reading of Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde in his Testament of Cresseid reveals the strong tension inherent in the difficult relationship between auctoritas and authorship". The article contains numerous notes and an abundant bibliography.

Rubén Valdés Miyares: "Paradise Bound: Sir John Mandeville and the Orient"

Analyses Mandeville's Travels focusing, (1) on the cultural and historical context of the book; (2) on Mandeville's Travels and contemporary English travel writing; and (3) on the orientalist discourse and the medieval imagination. Valdés points out that the meaning of Mandeville, apart from the exotic adventures, is that travelling gives us "the chance to renew ourselves by learning from others".

Mª Purificación Vila de la Cruz: "Variables and Perspectives between Men and Women in The Canterbury Tales"

The author intends to describe the relationship between men and women in several tales in Chaucer's Canterbury Tales. Vila's purpose is to show how variables interfere, thus creating different atmospheres. Vila thinks that variables are "Chaucer's support for all the events described in the Canterbury Tales".

The number of participants and the wide variety of subjects dealt with in these proceedings are clear evidence of the interest that the study of the English Middle Ages stimulates in Spain.

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REVIEWED BY: Bernardo Santano Moreno

AFFILIATION: University of Extremadura

E-MAIL: santano@unex.es

CONTACT ADDRESS: Department of English, University of Extremadura, 10004 Cáceres (Spain)

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