

FRENCH PHRASEOLOGICAL INFLUENCE IN MANDEVILLE'S TRAVELS

TIBOR ÓRSI

Eszterházy Károly Főiskola
Francia Nyelv és Irodalom Tanszék
Egészségház utca 4.
H-3300 Eger
orsi@ektf.hu

French influence on Middle English (1100–1500) has been studied mainly from the point of view of vocabulary influence. French also affected English above word level. The present paper hopes to contribute to the study of Middle English phraseology by comparing a 14th century travel account written in French and its translation into English. The phrases of French origin are grouped into categories on the basis of their grammatical function. At least one sample phrase of every category is collated with the corresponding phrase in the French original. The phrases are also examined in a wider linguistic context.

The present paper is part of a thesis discussing the influence the French language exerted on English in the medieval period. It examines areas where French linguistic influence may be supposed. It covers the study of French influence both on the general vocabulary and the learned vocabulary. These areas can be examined fairly well with the help of English historical dictionaries. Unfortunately, etymological dictionaries only rarely discuss the origin of phrases. Neither do the *OED* and the *MED*, which confine themselves to documenting them. A thorough analysis of the question was undertaken in a book by A. A. Prins, entitled *French influence in English phrasing* (Leiden, 1952).

Prins lists, illustrates and comments 600 examples, many of which contain a word or words which – to use John Orr's words – “betray at a glance their foreign provenance”. Prins's work was soon followed by that of John Orr: *Old French and Modern English Idiom*. Orr (1962:v) concentrates “particularly on real *calques*, i.e. words and phrases of genuine Anglo-Saxon components, but foreign in usage and construction; for it is these that show [...] how much of the most apparently homespun in the fabric of our language is in reality of French texture”.

The second volume of *The Cambridge history of the English language*, which covers the Middle English period, devotes only twenty-four lines to the issue (1992:449f): “Foreign sources which were of great importance to word

formation in Middle English played equally as important a role in phrase creation. French in particular contributed to a large number of phrasal idioms (Prins 1952), of which verbal phrases especially have proved productive". The *CHEL* refers to the findings of one single author: Prins.

Prins himself "recalls the work that has been undertaken in this field before the present work was undertaken" (Prins 1952:3). He mentions Sykes, Einkenel and Price. Mustanoja (1960:349) warns that some of the conclusions made by these scholars including Prins "seem to suffer from a certain amount of superficiality".

The study of the phraseological influence in *Mandeville's Travels* leans heavily on Prins's work in so far as his book is still an invaluable source of reference. Prins collected his material from dictionaries and text editions. His material was often checked and completed from sources that became available since then. The electronic edition of the *OED* proved to be a powerful tool to allow us to arrive at valid conclusions. The various types of searches from the complete dictionary corpus yield results that complete traditional searches. Corpus-based searches seem to be particularly useful in testing earliest attestations and collocations. By offering free temporary on-line access to the now complete *Middle English Dictionary*, the University of Michigan Press greatly facilitated research in the field of the Middle English language.

Mandeville's Travels was one of the most popular books in the Middle Ages. It has come down to us in 300 manuscripts. The first part is a pilgrim's guide to the Holy Land, the second is a description of the East. It was written in French in around 1356 and translated into English and eight other languages soon afterwards. We have translations in Latin, German, Spanish, Italian, Danish, Dutch, Irish and Czech. In the present study we compare printed versions of two Middle English and two early Middle French manuscripts.

Manuscripts

1. The Cotton Version (London, British Library MS. Cotton Titus C. xvi) is a conflation in English based on an English translation of the Insular Version – the Defective Version – made from a lost manuscript which lacked its second quire. This defective text was expanded by reference to the Insular Version between 1400 and 1425. The Cotton Version is quoted from Seymour's edition (1967). In the quoted examples "C" stands for the Cotton Manuscript.

2. The Insular Version is a French recension, made in England before 1375, of the original French text. The Insular Version is quoted from Warner's bilingual edition of 1889. The Insular Version is abbreviated to "W" after its editor.

3. The Continental (or Paris) Version, dated 1371, is the oldest French Version and nearest, within present knowledge, to the authors holograph. It is quoted from Letts's edition (1953) and is abbreviated to "P" in the examples quoted.

4. The Egerton Version, made in the first quarter of the 15th century, is a conflation in English based on the Defective Version and a lost English manuscript of a Latin translation belonging to the insular tradition. The Egerton Version was also printed by Warner (1889) and is abbreviated to "Eg" in the quotes.

For our purposes the Cotton Version was collated with Warner's edition of the Anglo-French insular text since these two manuscript show close agreement. The other two manuscripts are only referred to when it seems appropriate.

The possibility of French influence arises in the case of about eighty phrases. The mere fact that they are discussed here does not automatically mean that they are actually of French origin. This will be stated at the end of the study of each single item. Phrases of French origin can be grouped into the following categories on the basis of their grammatical function.

(1) a. Verbal phrases

do/make company, do/make reverence, CRY MERCY,¹ do one's business, do one's devoir, DO/MAKE HOMAGE, do honour, DO JUSTICE, do penance, do reason, do reverence to, do service, give example, have reason, have remembrance of, hold siege, make confession, make feast, make joy, make peace, make a prayer, make reason, MAKE/TAKE A VOYAGE, put to death, put in prison, suffer death, suffer passion, take one's advice, take leave of;

b. Verbs with their arguments

accord to, condemn to (death), DELIGHT IN, deliver of, fail of, serve of;

c. Adjectives with their arguments

CONTRARY TO, CONTRARIOUS TO;

d. Prepositional phrases

at one's command, at random, by force, by navy, by reason, by virtue of, FOR DEFAULT OF, in common, in counsel, in (de)spite of, in a manner, in general, IN PRESENCE OF, instead of, in travers, to myn avys, with one accord, with one voice, WITHOUT DEFAULT, WITHOUT DOUBT, WITHOUT FAIL;

e. Compound words and noun phrases

clove-gillyflower, DEED OF ARMS, GENERALE PASSAGE, nutmeg, last will, man of religion, men of arms;

¹ The phrases in SMALL CAPS will be examined in detail.

f. Other phrases

save your grace, save your reverence, WITHOUT ANY STROKE.

By analysing some phrases belonging to the above categories we hope to illustrate in what ways and to what extent French phraseological influence may have affected English.

To render a phrase of French or Latin origin, the following possibilities present themselves:

1. All the components of a foreign phrase can be taken over unaltered apart from changes in spelling: this is only rarely met with as the function words in English are of native origin, and if we exclude verbal operators and prepositions, only nominal constructions remain, such as compound nouns like PDE *clove-gillyflower* and collocations of nouns and adjectives like PDE *mortal enemy, safe-conduct*, ME *generelle passage*, ME *cousin german*. However, we find †*cry merci*, †*claim quit* etc.

2. The most common procedure of nativization seems to be the use a native verbal operator or preposition with a noun of foreign origin with betrays (sometimes deceptively) at first glance the foreign origin of the whole phrase. Formal and semantic similarity may help to establish a link between native and foreign prepositions. (*in common* – *en commun* – L *in communi*; *in detail* – *en détail*; †*at one voice* (later *with one voice* – *a une voix*).

3. In calques foreign concepts are rendered by native elements. PDE *it goes without saying* was calqued on PDF *cela va sans dire*. ME *withouten ony strok* may have been calqued on OF *sans cop ferir*.

Note that foreign phrases may refer to concepts denoted earlier by native expressions. It is doubtful whether *make peace* translates *faire paix* or developed from OE *frið niman* or *sibbe niman wið* ‘to make terms with’.

VERBAL PHRASES

In the very short discussion of French phraseological influence, the *CHEL* (1992: 449f) refers to only one of the above categories:

The structure of such phrases usually consisted of a verbal operator followed by an abstract noun or adverbial phrase; thus: *do homage, do mischief*, [...] *take keep, hold dear, hold in despite*. Because some phrases can be paralleled in Old English, it is not always certain that they are formations on French phrases with *faire, avoir, prendre* and *tenir*. Nevertheless, because the pattern of the phrases corresponds closely to the French, and many are apparently adoptions with partial substitution of native morphs, it is safe to assume that French influence played a major role in this important addition to English modes of expression. Prins, in his study of such phrases (1952), lists within Middle English more than fifty formations

which have equivalents in, and are likely to be modelled on, French phrases with *faire*, fifteen with *avoir*, twenty-nine with *prendre* and eight with *tenir*. They are especially common from the second half of the fourteenth century. A parallel tendency exists in verbal phrases based upon the Scandinavian-derived verbal operator *get*.

Mustanoja (1960:271f) touches upon verbal phrases in Middle English when he briefly refers to “verb and object phrases” in his chapter devoted to articles, within that to the “non-expression of the article”:

There are numerous phrases consisting of a transitive word and its object where the noun takes no article. Many of these may be native in origin, but many are direct or indirect loans from French. [...] In many of these instances the absence of the article agrees with the French original. In a number of cases the articleless use goes back to Old English (e.g. *bear witness*). A factor which must have greatly contributed to the preservation of the articleless form is the highly stereotyped character of these phrases.

A large number of these phrases are current in Present-Day English, e.g., *to change colour*, *have reason*. In the *Travels* we come across twenty-nine verbal phrases of possible French origin.

DO and MAKE

In French verbal phrases by far the most common verbal operator is *faire* from L *facere*. To French verbal phrases containing *faire* correspond two verbal operators in English: *do* and *make*. *Do* is a common West Germanic verb (wanting in Gothic and Norse). It is found in Old English about 725 in *Beowulf*. Prins (1952:46) writes: “Though *don* had a wide range of meaning and application in Old English, we witness an enormous extension in Middle English under the influence of OF *faire* and partly L *facere*. The verb did not exist in Old Norse.”

Make is also a West Germanic word. In the earliest stages of the West Germanic tongues, the verb corresponded generally to the L *facere* in such of its senses that were not expressed by *do*. The corresponding forms in the Scandinavian languages appear to have been adopted from Low German. OE *macian* is not very frequent until the end of that period, and is used mainly in factitive and causative meanings, but tends to correspond to L *facere* in use. L *facere* was usually rendered by *zewyrcean* in Old English. In Middle English both *do* and *make* are common (and often interchangeable) verbal operators and there does not seem to be a clear-cut semantic difference between them as in Present-Day English.

The extension of the use of *make* is explained and lavishly illustrated in the *OED* under *MAKE* def. 57 and especially def. 59. b.:

With nouns expressing the action of verbs (whether etymologically cognate or not), *make* forms innumerable phrases approximately equivalent in sense to those verbs. In some of these phrases the object-noun appears always without qualifying word; in others it may be preceded by the indefinite article, or a possessive adjective relating to the subject of the sentence. When standing alone, the combination of *make* with its object is equivalent to a verb used *intransitively* or *absolutively*; but in many instances the object-noun admits or requires construction with *of*, and this addition converts the phrase into the equivalent of a transitive verb. [...] Many of the Middle English phrases of this type are literal renderings of phrases with Latin *facere* of French *faire*, the noun being often adopted from one of those languages.

to do/make homage — faire hommage 1 occurrence

C 142/7 *And therefore alle the fissesches of the see comen to maken him homage* [...]

W 96/29 [...] *et ensi tot pesshoun se rent a luy en fessant homage* [...]

c1122 O.E.Chr. an. 1115 [...] *dydon manræden* [...] *his sunu Willelme* [...]

The general sense of *homage* is ‘respect, reverence’. It first occurs in English (probably about 1225), in *King Horn* in the sense ‘a body of vassals owing allegiance’. Later, probably before 1300 in *Kyng Alisaunder* ‘allegiance or respect for one’s feudal lord’. Probably formed in Old French from *homme*, earlier *omne*, from L *hominem* (nominative *homo*) ‘man’ + OF *-age*. The CDE writes: “The often-quoted source of OF *homage* is ML *hominaticum* ‘state of being a vassal’ but there is no mention of this form in FEW, and the Medieval Latin form was probably borrowed from Old French.”

c1300(?c1225) *Horn* (Cmb Gg.4.27) 87/1497: *De king & his homage
zeuen Arnoldin trowage.*

The sense of the earliest English attestation seems to be restricted to English feudal law, which is surprising in case of a loanword from French expressing basic feudal relation. So far no Old French attestation with this sense has been found. OF *homage* was first recorded in 1160 in *Eneas* and in the phrase *faire homage* at the end of the 12th century in *Châtelaine de Coucy*:

(Couci XIX) *Celle que [à qui] j’ai fait de cuer lige homage* [...] (Littré)

The original Old French phrase survives into Modern French with weakened meaning in expressions like *faire hommage de* and *rendre ses hommages*. The earliest English occurrences of the phrase with the verbal operator *do* and *make* are quoted from the MED:

c1300 *SLeg.Becket* (LdMisc 108) 600 *Homage* *he [the prelate] scholde don to him [the king].*

a1400(a1325) *Cursor* (Vsp A. 3) 7500 *And we to þam ma siþen homage.*

Under HOMAGE n., the *MED* lists thirteen examples with the verbal operator *do*, and five with *make*. *Yelden* 'yield', *yeven* 'give' and *beren* 'bear' are also attested as verbal operators. Proximity searches in electronic corpora show that the use of *do* prevailed in the 14th century, especially in the first half, and has remained the prevailing one down to the present day. *Make* tends to be used frequently from the second half of the 14th century. The only occurrence in the Cotton Version also has *make*. The use of *make* as a verbal operator in this phrase has become archaic. The last examples in the *OED* corpus date from the very beginning of the seventeenth century.

Prins considers this phrase as of genuine French origin. According to his argument, "there was no such phrase in Old English (cf. *hyldo*, *aest*, *gielðan*) and since it expresses a purely feudal relation, it is certainly due to French influence."

Prins also mentions the archaic phrase *to do/make manred*. OE *manræd* 'homage', composed of *mannr*⟨*aeacu*⟩*den*, from *mann* 'man' + *r*⟨*aeacuden*⟩ *-red* 'condition', is first attested in 1000, and the phrase *do manred* appears in 1122, relatively shortly after the Conquest. The expression *do manred* survived into the 17th century.

Cotton and the French versions closely correspond to each other here, the phrase is missing in Egerton. Its French origin seems highly probable.

Summary

As the semantic content of the phrase already existed in late Old English, French influence seems to be responsible for the lexical replacement of the original phrase and not for its conceiving.

to do justice — faire justice 1 occurrence
(to do right — faire droit)

C 213/1 *And also wee haue a kyng nought for to do iustice to euery man, [...] but for to keep nobless and for to schewe that wee ben obeyssant wee haue a kyng.*

W 145/37 *Et si auoms vn roy, noun pas pur iustice faire, [...] mes pur noblesse garder et pour aprendre qe nous soioms obeissantz.*

E 145/13 *A kyng we hafe amanges vs, noȝt for to do right to any man [...] bot all anely to lere vs to be obedient.*

Roland 498 *Livrez le mei, je en ferai la justise.*

Roland 3883 *Quand l'emperere ad faite sa justise.*

1137–54 Old English Chronicle:

an. 1137 *Þa the suikes under gæton ðat he milde man was [...] & na iuſtice ne dide.*

an. 1140 *He dide god iuſtise & makede pais.*

?c1200 Ormulum (Jun1) 6258: *ziff he dop þe la3be & rihbt, Ða wurp he þær þin broþerr.*

c1275(a1200) Lay. Brut (CLG A9) 1256: *Heo was swa swiþe wel bi-þouht, þat ælche monne heo dude riht.*

Justice ‘quality of being fair, just’ first appears in English in the phrases quoted above from the *Old English Chronicle*. It was borrowed from OF *justise*, *iuſtice*, learned borrowing from L *iustitia* ‘righteousness, equity’, from *iustus* ‘upright’. The first Old French occurrence in *Vie de saint Alexis* (1050) is spelt *justise*. The word next occurs in Old French as part of the phrase *faire justice de quelqu’un*. Similarly, *justice* first occurs in Old English in the phrase *do justice*. The phrase seems to have been taken over as a whole. The verbal operator is always *do*. The *MED* interprets the two attestations from the *Old English Chronicle* differently: In *He dide god iustice* means the phrase means ‘administer or execute justice’, whereas the other quotation means ‘inflict punishment’. The phrase seems to have both these meaning in the examples from the *Chanson de Roland*: ‘rendre justice’ in its practical application is “synonymous” with ‘châtier quelqu’un’.

Our efforts to find out the origin of the phrase *to do justice* are further complicated by the fact that there existed a native phrase given in the *MED* under RIGHT n. def. 2.e.: *don right*: ‘to do justice, execute judgement’. The first two recorded examples date from the 13th century. The phrase survived into Present-Day English. Prins quotes the English text of the *Ancrene Riwle* written about 1225 (286: *uorte don alle men right*) to which corresponds (199: *de faire droit a toute gent*) in the French version. A similar expression (with the definite article) also occurs in the *Chanson de Roland*:

Roland 3898 *Deus facet hoi entre nus le dreit!*

The two English translations differ here by rendering MF *faire justice* differently. The Cotton Version closely follows the Insular French text. The Egerton Version has the native expression here.

Summary

Prins considers *to do justice* as a doubtful borrowing. However, the fact that both French phrases are attested earlier than the corresponding English ones points to the French origin of these phrases.

(†) to cry mercy — crier merci

'to beg for pardon or forgiveness' 2 occurrences

C 87/4 [...] *they seyn that only to God schalle a man knouliche his defautes, yeldyng
himself gylty and cryenge mercy and bebotyng to Him to amende himself.*

W 59/37 [...] *ils dient qe a Dieu doit homme regehir ses malfaitz, en soi rendant
coupables et en criant mercy et en promettant soy amender.*

C 87/8 [...] *they schryuen hem to God and cryen Him mercy.*

W 59/37 [...] *ils se confessent a Dieu et crient mercy.*

Eg 59/19 *I schryfe me to Godd and askez forgifnes of my synne.*

Earliest attestations of *merci* in French:

Eulalie 27 *Qued auuisset de nos Christus mercit.* 'Que le Christ ait de nous merci.'

Roland 82 *Si me direz a Carlamagne le rei / Pur le soen Deu qu'il ait mercit de mei.*
'Vous direz de ma part au roi Charlemagne qu'au nom de son Dieu il ait pitié de moi.'

12th c. Couci I. V. *Et quant je plus merci vous doi crier.* 'demander grace'

Earliest attestation of *cry mercy* in English:

c1230(?a1200) *Ancr.* (Corp-C 402) 27/14: *Dencheð i hwet 3e habbeð [...] inweaðet
ure lauerd, & crið him 3eorne merci & for3euenesse.*

Fr. text: 31. *li criez merci* (in Prins)

Mercy n. first occurs in English probably before 1200 as *mearci*, in *Ancrene Riwle*, later, *merci* (probably about 1200). It was borrowed from OF *merci* 'reward, gift, kindness, mercy'; earlier *mercit*, from L *mercedem* 'reward, wages', from *merx* (genitive *mercis*) 'wares, merchandise'.

OF *merci* is first attested in the *Cantilène de sainte Eulalie* (880) as *mercit* already as part of the phrase *avoir merci*. The *Chanson de Roland* contains fourteen occurrences of *mercit*, six of which in the phrase *avoir merci*. All these examples including "*Amis Rollant, de tei ait Deus mercit!*" (l. 2887) as well as the one

cited above appear in parts of the text reproducing the current speech of the age. *Avoir merci* seems to be a set phrase in Old French, although dictionaries do not supply it as such. In English dictionaries, however, the corresponding form *to have mercy* is considered as a phrase. *Avoir merci* and *crier merci* are well documented in Old French. Both these phrases have found their way into Middle English and are well documented in that language as well. OF *crier mercy* first appears in that language in the 12th century and means ‘demander grâce’ according to the *DHLF*. The *OED* says that “the English uses [...] represent Old French senses that for the most part have not survived in French, where the word has in great part been superseded by *misericorde*. The chief uses for *merci* in Modern French are in the sense ‘thanks’.”

In the phrase *cry mercy* quoted from the English text of the *Ancrene Riwle* we can witness the effort often made by Middle English authors to explain foreign lexical items by adding native synonyms where the original French text only had the plain phrase. Further Middle English examples abound. The corpus of the *OED* contains about one hundred examples of ME *merci*. On the basis of these examples it is obvious that *merci* first appears in verbal phrases with the operators *have*, *cry* and *do* and not as an independent noun. Strangely, *do mercy* does not seem to have a corresponding phrase in Old French and appears to be an English formation. At the beginning of the 14th century other verbal operators co-occur with *mercy* and become fairly frequent: *ask*, *bid*, *beseech*, *grant*, *pray*, *show*, *take*, etc.

In the Cotton text *mercy* occurs eight times. Three of these occurrences translate MF *misericorde*. Three further Middle English instances do not have corresponding words in the French original. The two remaining occurrences in the Cotton Version (cited above) are the ones which correspond closely to the French original.

Attention must be drawn here to two instances of lexical disagreement. In two expressions² ME *mercy* stands for MF *misericorde*, although *misericorde* word was in use in English earlier but the Englisher chose another word of French origin, the more generally used *mercy*. ME *misericorde* ‘compassion, pity, mercy’ from OF *misericorde*, from L. *misericordia* is first recorded in *Ancrene Riwle* written probably before 1200.

C 8/20 *He sholde go to the aungelle [...] that he wolde senden hym oyle of mercy for to anoynte with his membres.*

W 6/34 [...] *qil priast al angel [...] qe by vosist enuoier del arbre de misericorde [vr. de luile de larbre de], pur oindre ses membres.*

C 8/23 *The aungell [...] seyde to him that he myght not haue of the oyle of mercy.*

²The *OED* writes under TREE 7. b.: “tree of mercy is, in medieval legend, the allegorical tree which yielded the oil of mercy, and was at length to bear Christ for the healing of mankind”.

W 6/35 *Ly angel [...] by dit qe del oile de misericorde ne poait il auoir.*

Notice the following example, too:

c1350(a1333) Shoreham *Poems* (Add 17376) 42/1182–3: *To oure lorde Mercy be cryþ, and biddep hym Mercy and misericorde.*

The quote above from the *MED* is interesting for several reasons. Firstly, it is a recorded occurrence of the phrase *cry mercy* in Middle English. Secondly, *bid mercy* – a synonymous phrase with a native verbal operator – also occurs in the same quote. Thirdly, ME *mercy* – the borrowing of an Old French *mot populaire* and ME *misericorde* – a learned word borrowed through Old French co-occur, probably for the sake of amplification.

Summary

This phrase is probably of French origin. The Cotton Version corresponds closely to the French versions by using the same phrase. The Egerton Version replaces the foreign phrase by a native formula.

to take a voyage — emprendre un viage 1 occurrence

to make a voyage — faire un voyage 1 occurrence

C 3/8 [...] *alle wordly lordes [...] with the comoun peple wolden taken this holy viage ouer the see [...]*

W 2/43 [...] *qe les princes terrienz [...] ouesqe ascuns de lour comune voisissent emprendre la saint viage doultre meer [...]*

P 230/36 [...] *voulsissent entreprendre le saint voiage doultre mer [...]*

C 94/30 [...] *tho that wolen go by that weye and maken here viage be tho costes mowen knowen what weye is there.*

W 65/27 [...] *cils qi vorreient faire ceo viage par ceo coustee y puissent sauoir quel chemin il y ad.*

The *CDE* writes under the entry VOYAGE n.: “Probably before 1300 *viage* ‘a travelling, journey’; about 1300 *veyage*; borrowed from OF *veiage*, *vayage*, *voiage*, *vaiage* ‘travel, journey, voyage’; from LL *viaticum* ‘a journey’, in L ‘provisions for a journey’, noun use of neuter of *viaticus* ‘of or for a journey’, from *via* ‘road, journey, travel.’”

French dictionaries do not consider *faire un voyage* a phrase. The earliest example in Godefroy under VOIAGE n. where *voiage* and *faire* co-occur (*pour un voiage faire a le Mere dieu*, quoted by Prins) dates from the 14th century. In the earliest English attestation in the *MED* cited in (2), ME *veyage* not only appears within a phrase, but also antedates the first recorded examples in French:

- (2) c1300 *SLeg.Brendan* (Hrl 2277:Horst.) 94:
*‘We schulle [...] bede zurne oure louerdes grace þulke veyage to do; hi leten hem dizte
 a gret schip.*

The *MED* lists a great variety of verbal operators: *don* (*gon, holden, maken, nimen, taken*) ~, *wenden* (*on*) ~; without giving further examples until the very end of the 14th century. The *OED* supplies recorded forms from 1297 onwards:

- (3) a. 1297 R. GLOUC. 4921 [...] *toward þis lond þe veage nome*
 ibid. 4509 [...] *þe veage toward Rome he bileuede vor þis cheance* ‘military expedition’
- b. 1313 R. BRUNNE *Handl. Synne* 3946 *To belle þou makyst þy viage.*
- c. 1375 BARBOUR *Bruce* XIV 117 *He his viage soyne has tane, / And straucht towards the plas is gane.*
- d. 1390 GOWER *Conf. I.* 353 *This worthi kniht of his corage Hath undertake the viage.*
- e. *FCand. Sch.-G.* 13212 [*prendre son voiage* ‘seine Reise antreten’] *Cil l’a bien entendu, puis a pris son voiage.*

The quotes in (3a) contain the earliest occurrences of *voyage* in English both as a noun and as part of a phrase. In OE *niman* corresponding to Modern German *nehmen* was the general word meaning ‘take, seize’. It was gradually superseded by late OE *tacan, tōc*, of ON origin, as the general equivalent of L *capere, sumere*, F *prendre*. When the phrase was adopted from French, *niman* was used to translate the verbal operator, but in later examples *do, make* and *take* alternate. In French dictionary sources we find many examples of the phrase *faire un voyage* in Old French but so far we have not been able to come across one single attestation of *prendre (son!) voyage* in the form as cited in (3e) from the entry *PRENDRE* in Tobler–Lommatzsch. This example dating from about 1210 is that comes nearest to the English phrase *to take a voyage* apart from the corresponding phrases quoted above from the French versions. The fact that in Modern Italian we find the phrase *intraprendere un viaggio* also justifies the supposition that there may have existed a similar phrase in Old French. The quote in (3d) is a unique example with the verbal operator *undertake*. Today *undertake* translates French *entreprendre* (cf. ME *entrepris* n. c1430, *enterpryse* v. 1475) but the *ODEE* derives ME *undertake* as a replacement of OE *underfon* ‘receive, take in hand’ and OE *underniman* ‘take in hand, undertake’ and not as a calque on French.

Prins considers this phrase as a genuine borrowing. *Voyage* has corresponding senses both in Old French and in Middle English: 1. ‘journey, pilgrimage’ 2. ‘expedition, crusade’ 3. ‘journey, especially by sea’. This word occurs four times in the *Travels*. In the *Prologue* it stands for ‘crusade’ (C3/8,

C3/13), elsewhere it is used in the sense 'travel by water' (C94/30, C221/36). In (C94/30) the nautical reference is obvious. In C3/13 the sense 'crusade' is made clear by the addition of the noun phrase *generalle passage*. (See this entry.)

Summary

Both phrases are probably of French origin. Evidence is less satisfactory for the phrase *to take a voyage*.

COMPOUND WORDS AND NOUN PHRASES

generelle passage — passage general 'crusade' 1 occurrence

C 3/13 *And for als moche as it is longe tyme passed that there was no generalle passage ne vyage ouer the see [...]*

W 2/445 *Et purceo qil y ad long temps qil neust passage general outre meer [...]*

The example in the Cotton Version adds a synonym of French origin to the original French phrase. The fact that the adjective precedes the noun eases the somewhat learned character of the phrase. It appears to be a unique occurrence. The search in the *OED* or the *MED* corpora has yielded no result for this collocation. The phrase appears in both French versions and the two complete English versions. Under *PASSAGE* n., Littré quotes from the entry *PASSAGIUM* in Du Cange:

XIV^e s. *Je [Charles le Bel (c1295–1328)] laisse à la Terre sainte 50 mille livres à payer et delivrer quant passage general se fera; et est mon entente que se le passage se faisoit en mon vivant, de y aler en ma personne.*

Deluz (1993:238) gives the following note in her edition of the *Travels* in Modern French: "La croisade n'est jamais appelée ainsi à la période médiévale. On la désigne par les noms de voyage, saint voyage ou passage. Le passage général implique la participation des principaux souverains d'Europe, après la proclamation de la paix par le pape."

Summary

This seems to be the only occurrence of the phrase in English. It was probably taken over from French.

deed of arms — fait d'armes 2 occurrences

C 226/26 [...] *withouten doynge of ony dedes of armes [...]*

W 154/34 [...] *saunȝ faire nul bien fait darmes* [...]

Eg 154/13 [...] *na worthyness ne doghtyness Dai vse* [...]

C 229/19 [...] *and haue ben in many a fulle gode honourable compaignye and at many a faire dede of armes*.

W 155/44 [...] *et qy ay este en moint bone compaignie et en molt beal fait* [...]

P 411/19 [...] *et qui ay este en mainte bonne compaignie et veu maint biau fait* [...]

Eg 155/23 [...] *and base been at many [...] dedeȝ of armez* [...]

?1306 *Joinv.* 226 *Et sachiés que ce fu un tres biau fait d'armes.* (Littré)

1340 *Ayenb.*(Arun 57) 163/24 *Be wytnesse [...] me ne prouep nazt þet he by guod knyȝt, ac be moche dede of armes*.

1485 CAXTON *Paris & V.* 9 *Knyghtes redy to faytes of armes*.

The phrase appears in the *OED* under the entry DEED n. 1.b. : “An act of bravery, skill, a feat, esp. in *deed of arms*, and the like”. The complete corpus of the *OED* yields three occurrences from the Middle English period, the first dated 1340, and four from Early Modern English. The corpus of the *MED* contains fourteen examples from the Middle English period. Obviously *deed* is a very old Germanic word used in various senses, of which ‘heroic act’ already appears in *Beowulf*. The extension to the phrase *deed of arms* seems to be due to the influence of the corresponding French phrase *fait d'armes*.

French *fait* developed from L *factum* in the same way as *deed* in English. According to the *DHLF*, “son premier sense est ‘action humaine’, et notamment ‘action remarquable’”. Greimas (1968:277) and Godefroy’s *Lexique...* (1978:223) list the phrase *faire d'armes* ‘se montrer vaillant’. OF *fait d'armes* first occurs in Joinville at the early 14th century. *Feat* appears in English in the sense ‘deed of valour, noble exploit’ in the first half of the 15th century. The phrase *feat of arms* was also taken over in late Middle English. As it first appears in Caxton in 1485, it is posterior to the *Travels*. Since Caxton’s time *deed of arms* and *feat of arms* have both been in use. The doublet *feat of arms* has almost completely ousted *deed of arms*.

Deed of arms occurs twice in the Cotton Version. None of the other texts shows close correspondence. In the Insular Version only one of the examples has the full phrase in French. The Paris text contains only one example and even that is only the head of the full phrase. The Egerton text either uses the native synonyms *worthiness* and *doughtyness* or supplies the very phrase *dedeȝ of armez*. It is mainly on the basis of linguistic evidence outside the Mandeville texts that we can include this phrase among the genuine borrowings.

Summary

The Old French phrase *fait d'armes* was partially calqued as *deed of arms*. Later the foreign form was restored to *feat of arms* and both remained in use.

PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

in presence of — en présence de, (†) en la présence de 1 occurrence

C 117/4 *And yif venym or poyson be brought in presence of the dyamand, anon it begynneth to wexe moyst and for to swete.*

W 80/27 [...] *et, sy venym ou poisoun est porte en la presence de dyamant, tantost deuient moiste et comence a suer.*

P 320/7 *Et si venin ou male poison est portes en presense de dyamant, tantost deuient moiste et commence a suer.*

Eg 80/4 [...] *and, if venym or puyson be brogt in place whare þe dyamaund es, alsone it waxez moyst and begynnez to swete [...]*

This phrase is not examined by Prins. The *OED* (see PRESENCE n. def. 2.a.) does not treat it as one phrase but as a loose set of phrases:

In certain connexions, used with a vague sense of the place or space in front of a person, or which immediately surrounds him. With *of* or possessive; usually preceded by a prep. (*in, before* (arch.), *into, to, from, out of*, etc.); [...] *in his presence* 'before or with him, where he is, in his company'; *from his presence* 'from being with him, from where he is, out of his company', etc.; also persons implied: e.g., *in this (august) presence* 'in the presence of this (august) personage'.

The *Grand Larousse de la langue française* (1976: 4594) clearly distinguishes the prepositional phrases *en présence, en présence de* et *hors la présence de*. *En présence de* was first attested in French as early as 1160. The first example in the *OED* dates from the 14th century. The quotation from the Cotton Version corresponds to modern usage. Interestingly, the Egerton text replaces the phrase with an occasional syntactic solution. The Paris Version corresponds to Modern French with respect to the form of the prepositional phrase. The Insular Version in French does not have a "phrase", only an ordinary syntactical construction with the definite article following the preposition *en*. *En la présence* is still used by La Bruyère, and, according to Littré, "dans la langue de la dévotion: *se mettre, se tenir en la présence de Dieu*".

VERBS WITH THEIR ARGUMENTS

to delight in — se delitier a (?) (*en* in Prins) 1 occurrence

C 143/5 *And there is a full cursed peple, for thei dehyten in nothng more than for to fighten and to sle men.*

W 96/45 *La y ad auxi tres malueis gent; qar ils ne se delectent a nulle chose tanqes ils font a batiller [‘combattre’] et occire lez gentz.*

P 341 *La y a si tres mauuaises gens; car il ne se delitent a nulle chose tant quils font au batillier et a tuer lun lautre.*

When a verb is borrowed from a donor language, it may borrow the argument structure of the verb in the original language. Let us examine this possibility through the example of a verb and its argument. The phrase occurs only once in the *Travels*. Prins listed it as a genuine borrowing from French so our job promises to be an easy one.

PDE *delight*, from ME *deliten* first occurred probably before 1200 in *Ancrene Riwle*, borrowed from OF *delitier* ‘please greatly, charm’, from L *delectare* ‘allure, charm, entice’, frequentative of *delicere* ‘entice, allure’ (*de* ‘away’ + *lacere* ‘entice’). The *OED* writes that “the current erroneous spelling *delight* after *light*, etc. arose in the 16th century and prevailed about 1575”.

OF *delitier* is attested about 1120 in the *Psautier d’Oxford*. From the 12th century onwards, we have a number of recorded forms with *delitier* followed by *en*. This preposition appears to be the usual argument. The earliest quote supplied by Godefroy from the *Roman de Rou* dates from about 1169:

Rou 3^e p., 10551 *Ses chiens aveit, en bois alout / E en chacier se delietout.*

The *Roman de la Rose* (Strubel 1992) contains attestations in which *deliter* is followed by *en*:

Rose 657 *Il avoit aillors pappegauz
Et maint oissians qui par ces gauz ‘bosquet’
Et par ces bois ou il habitent
En lor biau chanter se delitent.*

Rose 4411 *Pour ce i mist nature delit,
Pour ce veult que on s’en delit,
Que cist ouvrier ne s’en fuissent
Et que ceste oeuvre ne haissent [..]*

“C’est pour cela que Nature a mis du plaisir à la chose; c’est pour cela qu’elle veut qu’on y prenne son plaisir: c’est pour que ces ouvriers ne la fuient pas et qu’ils ne prennent pas en haine cet ouvrage [..]” (trans. by Strubel).

OF *delitier* v. pr. could also be followed by *de*. Rouquier (1992: 38) quotes an undated example:

(Men. Reims) *Et commença a vieler une note et en violant se delitoit de son seignor qu'il trové avoit.*

The two French printed versions of Mandeville quoted above both have *a*. The Paris Version (c1371) uses *il ne se delitent a nulle chose*. In the later Insular Version (c1390) already the learned doublet of the verb appears but the argument *a* remains the same: *ils ne se delectent a nulle chose*. *Se delecter* appears about 1361 in *Oresme* as *soy deletter* (without argument) and has been used ever since beside *se delecter à*.

In the Old French examples cited above the verb is always reflexive. Not in the English ones. The *MED* lists an impressive number of examples of *deliten in* and *deliten to*. Here we quote the earliest ones:

c1230(?a1200) **Ancr.*(Corp-C 402) 13b *Eue bibeold o þe forboden eappel ... & feng to delitin i þe bibaldunge.*

Deliten to is first attested rather late:

c1540(?a1400) *Destr. Troy* (Htrn 388) 3867 *Priam [...] Delited to the deuer on dayes be tyme.*

Deliten to can be reflexive:

c1275 *Ancr.* (Cleo C.6:Morton) 52 *Deliten bire*. 'delighted herself, took pleasure in'

c1390 *PPLA* (1) (Vrn) 1.29 *Lot [...] Dilytede him in drinke.*

Deliten in (non-reflexive) appears to be by far the more common form. Prins is probably right in considering the phrase *to delight in* as a genuine borrowing from French. The interesting point is that ME *deliten* takes what seems to be the most frequent argument of that verb while the argument of MF *deliter* and its doublet *delecter* does not represent the most current argument of the verb in Middle French. The single attestation in the Cotton Version does not correspond to the form of the phrase in the French manuscripts. The French attestations themselves differ. They illustrate the tendency to replace "popular" words by learned ones throughout the Middle French period.

Summary

The French origin of the phrase is probable on grounds of available evidence although the collation of the English and French texts does not support this supposition.

ADJECTIVES (NOUNS) WITH THEIR ARGUMENTS

the contrary (without argument) — **a reuers / autres** 1 occurrence

C 101/2 *Thei scholden ben symple, meke, and trewe, [...] but thei ben alle the contrarie and euere enclyned to euylle and to don euylle.*

W 69/39 *Ils duissent estre simples et humbles et veritables, [...] mes ils sont tot a reuers et tot enclin a malfaire.*

P 306/14 *Et ilz deussent estre simples et humbles et charitables; [...] mais ils sont autres et enclins a mal faire.*

Eg 69/16 “*ge schuld,*” *he said, “be symple, meke and sothfast. [...] Bot it es all operwise.”*

The words and phrases in the four examples above are obviously not adjectives with arguments. They are briefly referred to here as they are semantically related to the adjective *contrary*. The four quotations illustrate the typical procedure of the translator of the Cotton text. The word (in this example a phrase) of French origin he uses has no etymological motivation as the corresponding words in the French texts differ. Strangely, *a reuers* and *autres* in the French texts differ in turn. According to the *DHLF*, *a reuers* first occurs in the 15th century. In the Insular Version we have discovered an earlier attestation of the French phrase. Earlier attestations of this kind are often met with in the French versions of the *Travels*, which unfortunately were not included in the corpus of the major French historical dictionaries.

contrary to 1 occurrence corresponding to *contrarie de* in W
contrarious to 1 occurrence corresponding to *a contraire a* in W
 1 occurrence corresponding to *contraire (de)* in W

C 132/22 *But men seen another sterre the contrarie to him, that is toward the south, that is clept Antartyk.*

W 90/27 *Mes homme veoit vne autre qi est al contrarie de celle, qi est vers mydy, qe homme appelle Antartike.*

P 331/11 *Mais on voit vne autre, qui est au contraire de celui, vers mydi, que on appelle Antartique.*

C 170/1 [...] *none of hem ne schalle speke no contrarious thing to the emperour [...]*

W 15/47 [...] *nul de ceux ne purroit oyr parler ne dire nulle chose a contraire al emperour [...]*

P 389/9 [...] *qe nulz de ceulz ne pourroient oir parler ne dire chose qui fust contraire a l'empereur* [...]

C 202/8 [...] *yif they wolde go sle such a lord or such a man that was his enemye or contrarious to his list* [...]

W 138/23 *Et puis il lour disoit qils alassent occire tiel seignour qestoit ses contraires*.

P 389/9 [...] *occirre aucuns grans seigneurs du pays, qui estoient si contraires et ses ennemis*.

Prins treats the phrases *contrary to* and the today archaic *contrarious to* as genuine borrowings from French. The immediate origin of these phrases does not seem to be perfectly obvious. Obvious is the fact that these phrases represent doublets both in English and in French. CL *contrarius* 'opposite, hostile' led to early OF *contrarie* retained in Anglo-French *contrarie*, later OF *contraire* and corresponding forms in the Romance languages. According to this, ME *contrary* in the Cotton Version corresponds to the Anglo-French form. The *MED* has separate entries for CONTRARIE n. and CONTRARIE adj. According to the information on their etymology, both these entries come from L *contrarius*. The Cotton text also includes two occurrences of ME *contrarious*. In French, Medieval Latin gave OF *contrarios* which did not survive into Modern French.

The *OED* gives the "standard" "linear" etymology for CONTRARIOUS: "adoption of OF *contrarios*, adaptation of ML *contrariosus*". The *MED* supplies here, as it frequently does, a "simultaneous" etymology, which supposes that Old French and Medieval Latin may have acted simultaneously: "ML *contrariosus* & OF *contrarios*".

Godefroy has entries both for *contrarios* and for *contraires*. This dictionary supplies twenty-two examples under the entry CONTRARIOS. The *Dictionnaire de l'ancien français* (Greimas 1968) includes CONTRAIRE only as a noun which first appears in the *Chanson de Roland* and derives from L *contrarium*. The *Dictionnaire du moyen-fançais* (Greimas & Keane 1992) gives CONTRAIRE both as a noun and as an adjective, and derives it from L *contrarius* as most dictionaries do. Sense 2 for CONTRAIRE n. m. is 'ennemi, adversaire'. *Armee contraire*: 'armée ennemie'. Within the same entry, the use as an adjective appears only in sense 9 as 'opposé, hostile'. *Parti contraire*: 'parti opposé'. There seems to be little semantic difference between the nominal and adjectival uses.

The *Dictionnaire d'ancien français* (Grandsaignes d'Hauterive 1947) contains both *contraire* and *contrarios*. Both words co-occur in many texts:

Roland 291 *Je t'en muvra un si grant contraire. 'Je te ferai un si grand tort [...]'*

Roland 1222 *Envers Franceis est mult contrarius. '[...] il est plein d'outrages'*

- Rose 4334 *En ma leçon a tant contraire* ‘contradictions’
que je n’en puis neant aprendre [...]
- Rose 18269 *Si sunt fames mout annuieuses* ‘Les femmes sont fort ennuyeuses
et de parler contrariuses [...] et fâcheuses [querelleuses] par
 (ed. Lecoy) leur manie de bavarder.’
 (trans. Lanly)

The modern meaning first appears in Chrétien de Troyes (c1175). *Contrarios* was last used in the 15th century.

Writers of the Middle English period must have felt these loans from French very similar. Chaucer uses *contraire*, *contrarious* and the noun *contrarie* as well. In addition to the adjectives mentioned so far, there was a variant form – ME *contraire* – taken over directly from OF *contraire*. In the *MED*, *contrarie* is derived from L *contrarius*. As a noun, it is first attested in 1275, as an adjective in 1340. *Contrarios* does not appear in either of the French printed versions, which decreases the possibility of its direct French origin.

In Cotton we find three examples of *contrary*. Only the example in (C133/22) has an argument: *to*. In the insular text in French, *contrarie* occurs in the prepositional phrase *al contraire de*. The same phrase in the Paris manuscript is *au contraire de*. According to the *DHLF*, the first attestation of the phrase *au contraire de* dates from as late as about 1450(!). ME *contrarious* occurs four times in the Cotton Version. Two of the examples have arguments but there is no direct correspondence between the English and the French texts concerning the argument structure.

ME *contrarie* is used as a noun in all the three examples in the Cotton text. This absolutive use of the noun (attested in 1290) predates the first occurrence of the word as an adjective (1340). The example in (C133/22) is quoted in the *OED* under CONTRARY a., n., adj. (prep.) def. 2.b.: ‘That which is in opposite position. Obs.’ To this occurrence correspond forms in the French versions that appear to be phrases, while Egerton uses no related phrase here. The examples from the other versions corresponding to the one in (C101/2) all differ completely (*a reuers*, *autres* and *all operwise*) which seems to deny the immediate relation of these phrases.

in the contrary — au contraire de (?) 1 occurrence

C 95/21 *And in the contrarye toward the south it is so boot that no man may duelle there.*

W 65/38 Et a countrarie, vers la terre de mydy il fait si chaud qe nul homme y purroit habiter [...]

Under the entry CONTRARY a., n., adv., (prep.), def. 3.b., the *OED* gives the phrase *on the contrary*, (formerly also *by*, *for*, *in*, *to the contrary*, *in contrary*): ‘on the

other hand, in contradistinction'. The *OED* gives an example from Gower (*in contrarie*, 1393), then it supplies the quotation in (C95/21) dated c1400. The phrasal character of the English phrase does not seem to be convincing. It may simply have a concrete meaning 'in the opposite direction' that is the adjective is used absolutely preceded by a preposition. The great variety of prepositions that occur in the phrase further reduce the possibility of linking it to a French phrase.

According to the *DHLF*, *au contraire* first appears in French around 1370. The sentence containing the phrase in question is missing in the Paris Version, which was copied in 1371. (W65/37) contains the Anglo-French form *contrarie*. As the Insular Version was made before 1375, the French origin of the phrase might be corroborated on chronological grounds.

C 122/15 [...] *or thei meeten ony contrarious thinges*.

W 83/23 [...] *auant qils encontrent chose contraire*.

Three of the four occurrences of *contrarious* in the Cotton text (including the examples cited above) and in (C122/15) translate French *contraire*. *Chose contraire* and *contrarious thinges* seem to be collocations in their respective languages. The corpus of the *OED* supplies sixteen occurrences in which *thing* and *contrary* go together in the Middle English period and three examples where *thing* and *contrarious* collocate. The origin of the phrase is given by Lecoy (1975: III/216): "*Les choses contreres – terme de logique, choses opposées à l'extrême dans un genre et qui font apparaître le mieux leurs différences spécifiques.*"

Summary

As *contrarious to* only occurs in Cotton and the corresponding French word does not appear in the French texts, direct French influence can be excluded in the case of that phrase. The small number of occurrences of forms with arguments of ME *contrarie* do not point to the direct influence of the French texts. The etymology of the Middle English "triplets" can be illustrated in the following table:

c1300 ME <i>contrarious</i>	<	1080 OF <i>contrarios</i>	<	ML <i>contrariosus</i>	<	L <i>contrarius</i>
c1275 ME <i>contrarie</i>	<	Anglo-Fr <i>contrarie</i>	<	—	<	L <i>contrarius</i>
		< early OF * <i>contrarie</i>				
c1325 ME <i>contra(i)re</i>	<	1080 OF <i>contraire</i>	<	—	<	L <i>contrarius</i>

PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

for defaute of – pur defaute de 4 occurrences

C 29/26 *No man may dwelle in that desert for defaute of water.*

W 22/27 *Ne poit homme habiter en ceo desert pur defaute deawe.*

Eg 22/6 [...] *desertes, þe whilk may nogt wele be inhabit for defaute of water.*

P 250 *Ne puet on habiter en ce desert pour deffaute de eaue.*

C 185/6 *Thei hyen in tentes, and thei brennen the dong of bestes for defaute of wode.*

Eg 126/5 *In þat land men liggez in tentes and loogez and driez bestes dung and brynnez for defaute of fewaile [\gt PDE *fuel*].*

W 126/23 *Ils gissent en tentes et ardent fiens des bestes pur defaute de busche.*

P 374 *Il gisent hors aus champs par dedenz tentes, et ardent fiens de bestes sec.*

ME *defaute* appears altogether eleven times in the *Travels*. This number includes the attestations as part of the phrase in question. The *CDE* writes under DEFAULT n.: “1250 *defaute* ‘an offence, crime or sin’, in *Ancrene Riwle*; later ‘failure’ (about 1280); borrowed from OF *defaute*, from *defaillir* (by influence of *faute* and *faillir*), and from ML *defalta* ‘a deficiency or failure’, possibly a form of **defallere*, **defallire* ‘fail’ (L *de-*, *dis-* ‘away’ + *fallere* ‘to be wanting’)”.

The Old French word had two forms: the feminine noun *defaute* (*de* + *faute*) ‘shortage, loss’ first attested about 1112 in the *Voyage de saint Brendan* and the masculine noun *defaut* formed from *defaute* and first attested about 1165. Bloch & Wartburg (1991) remark under the entry FAILLIR: “A *défaute* on a préféré *défaut* qui se distinguait mieux de *faute*.” “In English forms without the final ⟨-e⟩ appear in the 14th century, but those with ⟨-e⟩ came down as late as the 16th. The spellings *defalte* and *defaulte* appear in Anglo-French in the 13th and 14th centuries and in English in the 15th century, the ⟨-l⟩ was not generally pronounced until the 17th or 18th century,” according to the *OED*.

The *GLLF* only contains the phrase *à défaut de* (18th century) and its older, literary variant *au défaut de* (1640, in Corneille). In the *Dictionnaire de moyen français* we find *a la deffaulte de* ‘en l’absence de’. In the *Bon Usage* (Grevisse 1993: 1479) we come across a short reference to *par défaut de* “qui n’est pas figé en locution”. It must be mentioned here, however, that Tobler & Lomatzsch list attestations where *par defaute de* is clearly used as a phrase. The first quotation below is listed under DEFAULT, the second under DEFAUTE:

Ménag. I 126 *par deffault d’obeissance* (also II 256)

Cleom. 12997 [...] *si vous garissez*
La bele, la bien ensaignie
Qui lonc tans a esté loiiie
Par defaute de sa santé.

In most of the relevant examples supplied by Tobler & Lommatzsch, *defaute* is preceded by the definite article. These examples contain plain syntactic constructions. Notice the following example as well cited under DEFAULT. Here we find a syntactic construction in which *por* and *defaut* co-occur:

Troie 27352 *O lor pesast, o lor fust bel,*
Por le defaut del tens novel,
Se mistrent en mer tenebrose.

Godefroy lists two relevant examples. *Por defate de cuer* is attested in a 13th century sermon, the second is taken from a legal document:

Flines, Arch. Nord. 12 mars 1336 *Il fust saisis et adviestis pour defaute de paiement.*

Both the *OED* and the *MED* treat *for defaute of* as a phrase. Both supply first attestations – different ones – from about 1300. The two earliest recorded forms in the *OED* are the following:

1297 R.GLOUC. (1724) 457 *Vor defaute of nyt.*

1369 CHAUCER *De the Blaunche* 5 *I haue so many an idel pougt Purli for defaute of slepe.*

The *MED* gives twelve examples. We quote the earliest and a later one:

c1300 *SLeg.Fran.(1)* (LdMis 108) 229 *Miseyse buy [‘they’] badden [...] For defaute of beore sustinaunce, and for defaute of bokes more.*

a1375 *WPal.(KC 13)* 1185 *Oure folk ginneth to falle for defaute of help.*

The *MED* also gives five examples of *in defaute of* and two examples of *thurgh defaute of*. These varieties of the phrase first occur at the end of the 14th century:

c1390 *Cato(1)* (Vrn) 239 *þorw defaute of knoweleching þou maizt i-greued be.*

a1393 *CA* (Frif 3) 6.271 *I am the more agast That in defaulte of ladischipe, Per chance in such a drunkeschipe, I mai be ded er I be war.*

The Cotton Version contains four occurrences of the phrase *for defaute of*. They always “translate” MF *pur defaute de* in the Insular Version and *pour defaute de* in the Paris text. The Egerton Manuscript has two occurrences of *for defaute of*, besides *by cause of* and *grete defaute es of*. The structure and the meaning of the phrase and even the spelling of *defaute* are identical in the four manuscripts. The examples in Godefroy also prove that the phrase existed in Old French.

Summary

Genuine borrowing.

The fact that we cannot find examples of the phrase *pur defaute de* in Tobler & Lommatzsch is intriguing. The question arises if the occasional confusion in the use of *par* and *pour* might in some way be responsible for this. Both prepositions could be used in Old French and Middle French “pour introduire des syntagmes marquant la cause” (Marchello-Nizia 1997:336, 345). The partial overlap in the grammatical function as well as the similar phonetic form might have contributed to the spread of OF *par defaute de*. The parallel examples that correspond to the similarly constructed (PREPOSITION + LEXICAL WORD + PREPOSITION) phrase *because of* (= *by cause of*) in the Cotton text may help to illustrate this point.

Cotton has five attestations of *because of*. In two occurrences they “translate” *pur cause de*, in two other occurrences *par cause de*, and in one occurrence *pur peccbe contre* of the insular text. The corresponding forms in the Paris text are four instances with the plain syntactical construction *pour la cause de*, and one example of *pour le pechie contre*. In the insular text MF *pur* and *par* appear to be interchangeable. Accordingly, OF *pur defaute de* and *par defaute de* may have coalesced and led ultimately to ME *for defaute of*.

withouten defaute — (?) 1 occurrence

C 12/22 *And at the yeres ende thei comen ayen and founden the same lettres and figures the whiche thei hadde writen the yeer before withouten ony defaute.*

E 9/7 *And at the zere end þai went agayne and fand þe same letters þat þai had writen þezere before als fresch as þai ware in þe first day withouten any defaute.*

W 9/31-33 [...] *ils fuissent defaillez pur default daleine [...] Et al chief del an ils remonteront et troueront les lettres toutes autieles qils les auoient escriptz [et] nestoient riens defaites. (!)*

P 237 *Et au chief de lan il remonterent et trouuerent les lectres autelles que il les auoient escriptes lan deuant, senz estre de riens corrompues ne deffigures.*

Both the *OED* and the *MED* quote the example in (C12/22) ‘defect, fault, damage’ as an ordinary word. The *MED* considers the same combination

of words as a phrase under DEFAUTE 1.(a): *withouten defaute* 'without fail, assuredly' and gives the following examples:

a1350 *SLeg.Cross*(Ashm 43) 53 *Per-by pou myzt wipboute defaute [Ld: faille] to parays euene gon.*

c1440 *Treat. PN(2)* (Thrn) 264 *Amen, pat es to say, 'witterly forsothe, with-owttene any defaute' [...] with-owttene defaute Suffere noghte þe deuelle to assaye vs.*

The Middle English phrase cannot be traced back to an Old French phrase like **sans défaut*. Tobler & Lommatzsch and Littré do not list this phrase. Our nearest guess is OF *sans faille*.³ Notice that in the quotation from a1350 a variant form ME *faille* stands for ME *defaute*. The corresponding lines in the French versions differ at this point. There is a remote possibility to establish a connection between the Insular Version and the Cotton Version. The quotation from the insular text ends in *defaites* 'altered, deteriorated, defective'. The previous sentences contained the words *defaillez* and *defalt* in the phrase *pur defalt de*. These words appear to have been very similar to *defaites* in pronunciation, spelling as well as in meaning and caused an occasional homonymic clash to which the translator seems to have succumbed.

Summary

Although the phrase fits into the pattern WITHOUT *prep.* + ROMANCE WORD, we lack French attestations. Native origin seems to be more likely.

withouten fayle — sans faille 2 occurrences

C 19/19 *And there ben manye perilouse passages withouten fayle.*

W 14/34 *Et la il y a mult perilouse passage et sanz fonz.*

C 213/35 *And wylnest to haue alle the world at thi commandement, that schalle leve the withouten fayle or thou leve it.*

ME *failen* v. 'cease to exist or function, come to an end, be unsuccessful' is first recorded in *Ancrene Riwle* (probably before 1200), was borrowed from OF *faillir* 'be lacking, miss, not succeed', from VL **fallire*, corresponding to L *fallere* 'deceive, be lacking or defective'. The historical and etymological dictionaries do not explain the origin of ME *fail* n. satisfactorily. The *OED* derives it from OF *faille*, n., 'deficiency, failure, fault', from the Old French verb, and adds that the noun is "obsolete, except in the phrase *without fail*, now only used to strengthen an injunction or promise, formerly also with statements

³ This phrase will be examined under WITHOUTEN FAYLE.

of fact, = unquestionably, certainly.” A look at the recorded examples will prove that the whole phrase was taken over as a whole. The *OED* only quotes Middle English examples where *fail* n. occurs in a phrase. The *OED* entry and corpus contain nine quotations that predate the Cotton text. The *MED* supplies the following examples that dates from before the first attestation as an independent noun:

ʔa1300 *Sirith* (Dgb 86) 187 *He saide me, wip-uten faille,
pat þou me coupest helpe and uaille.*

c1300 *SLeg.Cross* (LdMisc 108) 185 *Dare þov miȝt with-oute faille to þarays euene gon.*

c1330 *St.Greg.*(Auch) 115/617: *De douk was proude, wip outen feyle.*

The phrase frequently occurs with the French preposition in Middle English, which proves its French origin. *Sans fail* is a separate entry both in the *OED* and the *MED*. The first recorded example for this variant dates from about the same time as for the phrase with the native preposition:

c1300 *SLeg.Patr.*(LdMisc 108) 156 *Saunt faille, we ne beoth nouȝt so onkynde pat we it nellez, zelde þe.*

Under SAUNS FAILE phr. the *MED* lists altogether twenty-eight examples assigned to two categories:

- a. ‘without fail, without doubt; certainly, assuredly’;
- b. with diminished force, as rime tag: ‘indeed, actually’.

Notice that in the example from ʔa1300 *wip-uten faille* also appears as a rime tag. Interestingly, the original Old French phrase occurs earlier than its lexical element. According to the *DHLF* *sans faille* is first attested in French in 1130–1140 and *faille* “en emploi libre” about 1160. Littré quotes an early example under RECEVOIR:

XII^e s. *St Bern.* 534 *Belleem est senz faille et digne de rezoyvre notre Signor.*

In the *Chevalier au Lion* (*Yvain*) by Chrétien de Troyes the phrase occurs six times, always as a rime tag, as in the quotation below:

1267 *Ne vet tracent perdriȝ ne caille.*
Peor avez eü sanz faille. (ed. Roques)

In the *Roman de la Rose* we find several attestations. The phrase usually – but not exclusively – appears as a rime tag, as in the following examples:

11183 *Et vois par toutes regions
 çarchant toutes religions;
 mes de religion sanz faille
 j'en lés le grain et pregn la paille.*

12781 *Bien fet qui jennes genz conseilie.
Sanz faille, ce n'est pas merveille
 s'ous n'en savez quartier ne aune,
 car vos avez trop le bec jaune.* (ed. Lecoy)

We could cite a wealth of examples to illustrate the extensive use of the phrase *sans faille* in Old French. We must mention here that OF *faillir* first attested about 1050 in *Alexis* also yielded *faillance*, which in fact appears earlier than *faille*. OF *faillance* 'lack, loss, deprivation' in independent use is first recorded at the end of the 11th century in *Gloses de Raschi*. The corpus of Littré contains three Old French examples of the phrase *sans faillance* 'unquestionably, undoubtedly'. The earliest – quoted under FAILLANCE n. from Wace – dates from about 1169:

Rou V. 1432 *Parjure sunt vers tei, si veintras sans faillance.*

This phrase does not seem to have entered Middle English.

The phrase *sans faille* does not occur in the French printed versions of the *Travels*. Of the English versions only Cotton contains occurrences both of which are independent of the French text. In W14/34 MF *sanz fonz* seems correspond to PDF *sans fond* 'without bottom, bottomless' which could qualify MF *passage* 'a place at which a strait or sea is crossed'. How MF *sanz fonz* became ME *withouten fayle* remains a mystery. The translator may have had a hand in it.

Summary

This phrase is a genuine borrowing from French. Its shortness and ease to make rhymes seem to have contributed to its spread both in Old French and in Middle English.

withouten doute — saunz doute 2 occurrences
withouten ony drede — saunz doute 1 occurrence

C 17/28 *For withouten doute I am non other than thou seest now, a womman, and therefore drede the nought.*

C 69/36 *And yit men seyn there that it wexeth and groweth euery day withouten dowte.*

W 47/42 *Et vnqore dient ils qelle croist touz les iours sanz nulle doute.*

C 188/30 *For withouten ony drede, ne were cursedness and synne of Cristen men, thei sholden ben lordes of alle the world.*

W 128/46 *Qar, saunz doute, si ne fust la maluaiste et le pecche des Cristiens, ils serroient seignurs de tout le mounde.*

ME *doute* n. (>PDE *doubt*) occurs twice in the *Travels*, always as part of the phrase *withoute doute*.

The *CDE* supplies the following etymology under DOUBT v.: “Probably before 1200 *duten*, in *Ancrene Riwe*; later *douten* ‘be afraid of, dread’; borrowed from OF *douter* ‘doubt fear’, from L *dubitare* ‘hesitate, waver in opinion’.” DOUBT n.: “Probably before 1200 *dute*, in *Ancrene Riwe*; later *doute* (about 1300); borrowed from OF *doute*, from *douter* ‘to fear, doubt’, from L *dubitare*. The spelling *doubte* is occasionally recorded, probably before 1425, in imitation of the Latin.”

The primary sense of OF *douter* is ‘to fear’. The meaning ‘to fear’ developed in Late Latin. The first attestation in the *Chanson de Roland* illustrates the prominent meaning in Old French until the beginning of the 17th century:

Roland 3580 *Li amiralz, il nel crent ne ne dutet.*

OF *redouter* (intensifying prefix *re* + *douter*) – first recorded in the *Vie de saint Alexis* about 1050 – eliminated the old sense ‘to fear’. OF *redouter* also entered Middle English as *redowte*, in Chaucer. The earliest quote in Littré under DOUTE n. is a late 12th century example where OF *sans* + *doute* co-occur accidentally:

XII^e s. Couci, XVIII: *Sans doute* [‘fear’] *de perir* [...]

Throughout the history of the French language the phrase *sans doute* is used in five major senses: (a) ‘without fear’; (b) ‘certainly, undoubtedly’; (c) (?) ‘sans faute’; (d) ‘certes, je vous accorde que, admettons que’ (first attested c1464 in Commynes); (e) ‘probably’. This is the current sense (first attested in 1665 in Racine).

We found recorded evidence for sense (b) in Bérout (c1181):

Bérout 4019 *Il sont faé, gel sai sanz doute.* (ed. Muret & Defourques)

[‘Ce sont des chevaliers magiciens, j’en suis absolument certain.’] (trans. Jonin)

The earliest example for sense (b) in Littré can be found under DOUTE n.:

XIII^e s. *Lais inédits* p. IV. *Car donc, quel part la pointe* [de l’aiguille aimantée] *wise, La tresmontaigne* [‘le nord’] *est là sans doute.*

Notice the following example with a meaning that cannot be fitted into any of the above categories. The editor suggests 'sans faute'. The *FEW* dates the manuscript to c1200:

Dole 3484 *La kalende de mai commence*
qu'il m'i estuet estre sanz doute [...] (ed. Lecoy)

In Old French a variant phrase *sanz doutance* also appeared. (OF *dotance* is first recorded in *Roland*). The meaning of the earliest attestation cited in Littré under LE pr. seems to correspond to (a):

XII^e s. Ronc. 147: *Et li François les suigent* ['suivent'] *sans doutance*.

The same phrase with meaning (b) is recorded in Littré under *POUDREUX* adj.:

XIII^e s. Ruteb. II, 167 *Piez poudreus et pensée vole,* 'volage'
Et oeil qui par signes parole
Sont trois choses, tout sanz doutance,
Dont je n'ai pas bonne esperance.

Already in Old French both variants of the phrase could occur side by side. In the *Conte du Graal*, Chrétien de Troyes uses *sanz dotance* four times (always as a rime tag) of which we quote one, *sanz dote* once and *sanz nule dote* once:

Perceval 6160 *Sire, chiés le Roi Pescheor*
fui une foiȝ, et vi la lance
don li fers sainne sanz dotance [...]

Ibid. 4836 *Prenez un tornoi a mon pere*
se vos voleȝ m'amor avoir,
que ge vuel sanz dote savoir
se m'amors seroit bien asise
se je l'avoie or an vos mise.

Ibid. 8630 *Et cil respont: Se Dex me salt,*
la ert la corȝ sanz nule dote,
la verité an savez tote. (ed. Lecoy)

The whole phrase entered English unchanged. The French preposition is maintained. The phrase may be "over-represented" in verse literature in both languages as it is frequently used as a common rime tag. Under *SAUNS* prep., the *MED* gives three attestations of *saunt dotaunce* and seven of *sanz doute*. Interestingly, the two phrases are first recorded at exactly the same time:

c1330 *SMChron.*(Roy 12.C.12) 497 *Thilke he spende, saunt dotaunce, Aboute thobt*
ant purveaunce Hou be myhte[...]ys lond ariht lede.

c1330 *Why werre* (Auch) 119 *At even he set upon a koife [...] Adibteteth him a gay wenche of the newe jet, sanz doute, And there hii clateren cumpelin whan the candel is oute.*

Within the same manuscript a phrase may have variants representing various degrees of the integration of the foreign phrase. In *Kyng Alisaunder* both ME *saunz dotaunce* (with a preposition of French origin) and ME *wipouten doutance* (with a native preposition) occur.

c1400(?a1300) *KAlex.* (LdMisc 622) 1827 *Pat londe was lorne, saunz dotaunce.*

c1400(?a1300) *KAlex.* (LdMisc 622) 5909 *Hij ben men, wipouten doutance, Of hard lijf and stronge penaunce.*

Under DOUTE n. 1d., the *MED* gives only one sense for the phrase *withoutoute*: ‘doubtlessly, certainly, surely’. The earliest quote is fairly late:

(c1385) Chaucer *CT.Kn.* (Manly-Rickert) A.1322: *After his deeth man moot wepe and pleyne[. . .] Witbouten doute, it may stonden so.*

Under DOUBT n. def. 4d, the *OED* gives two meanings for the phrase *without doubt*: (a) ‘certainly, undoubtedly’; †(b) ‘without fear, fearlessly’. The three Middle English examples cited in the *OED* all seem to have sense (a):

a1300 *Cursor M.* 2053 (Cott.) *Cham wit-uten dout Sal be his brothers vnderlote.* ‘underling, subordinate’

a1300 *Cursor M.* 6657 (Cott.) *Cums again, wit-uten dute.*

c1410 *Sir Cleges* 44 *Rech and pore [. . .] Schulde been there wythoutton dought.*

Occurrences with meaning (a) vastly outnumber the ones with (b). An exhaustive search in the *OED* corpus produced the following example (under PRUNE v1 B. 1 where meaning (b) can be illustrated with certainty):

1423 JAS. I. *Kingis Q.* lxiv *The birdis [. . .] said ‘wele is vs begone’, We proyne [‘preen’] and play without dout and dangere.*

So far we have proved that OF *sans doute* was partially calqued in Middle English and senses (a) and (b) of the OF phrase had corresponding forms in Middle English. The Cotton Version of the *Travels* contains two examples of the more general sense ‘without doubt’. The quote in C17/28 does not have a corresponding form in the Paris text. To the one in C69/36 corresponds W47/42: *sanz nulle doute*. This attestation is worth noticing. According to the

short etymological reference under SANS NUL DOUTE loc. adv. in the *GLLF* (1972: 1408), the phrase originated in the 20th century.

The quote in C188/30 above translates MF *saunz doute* of the Paris text. ME *drede* n. developed from *dreden* v. (probably before 1200). We quote the etymology of DREAD n. from the *CDE*:

Probably before 1200 *dreden* 'fear greatly', in *Ancrene Riwe* and Layamon's *Chronicle of Britain*; shortened form of *adreden*; developed from OE (about 1000) *adrædan*, a contraction of earlier *ondrædan* 'counsel or advise against, fear' (900, in a version of *Beowulf*); and cognate with OS *antdradan* and OHG *intratan* 'fear, dread'. OE *ondrædan* was misconstrued in late OE as *on* + **drædan* (of unknown origin), but is properly analysed as *ond-*, *and-*, cognate with Greek *anti* 'against' + *rædan* 'advise, counsel' cognate with OHG *ratan* 'to advise, counsel', Gothic *garedan* 'reflect upon'.

There is no mention of the sense 'doubt' in any of the cognate forms supplied in the etymology of ME *drede*.

ME *withouten ony drede* is listed as a phrase in the *MED* under DREDE 4b.: "*withouten (eni) drede* 'without doubt, assuredly, surely'; – often merely emphatic." We quote the two earliest attestations:

a1325 *Heil beo þou Marie Mylde* (StJ-C S. 30) 9 *Ioyful was þin herte with-outen eni drede, Wan ibesu crist was of þe boren.*

(1340) *Azenb.* (Arun 57) 105/8 *Huo þet heþ wel þise uour þinges zopliche, wyþoute drede he ssel by ybhysed.*

The first quote is taken from a prayer, while *Azenbite of Inwyrt* was translated from French. These two occurrences consisting of native words are contemporaneous with ME *saunt dotaunce* and *sanȝ doute*, which points to native origin. The occurrences of *withouten (ony) drede* predate those of *withoute doute*, which again is in favour of native origin. Other Middle English phrases are also recorded: *out of doute*, *no doute* both meaning 'doubtlessly, certainly, surely'.

ME *withouten (ony) drede* only occurs in dialects after the 16th century. Even if arose independently of (Old) French *sans doute*, it was associated with it. It is the form *without doubt* – with the lexical word of French origin – that has survived into Present-Day English.

The crucial issue before forming a judgement on the possible French origin of ME *withouten doute* is to explain the origin of ME *withouten (ony) drede*. ME *drede* is a native English word. The appearance of the now obsolete sense supplied in the *OED* under DREAD n. def. 3 'doubt, risk of the thing proving otherwise' (five examples dating from 1340 to 1556, always in phrases; as a verb, one example c1400) and in the *MED* under DREDE n. def. 4. a, 4 b. 'doubt, uncertainty' (nineteen examples from 1325 to 1500, always in phrases;

as a verb, three examples from c1350 to a1425). In corresponding words in the rest of the Germanic languages this sense is absent. ME *drede* n. previously only meant ‘fear’ but adopted the sense ‘doubt’ from its synonym – ME *doute* n. ‘doubt’. This sense of ME *drede* is attested chiefly in phrases, in the 14th and 15th centuries.

Summary

ME *withouten doute* shows direct French influence. The sense ‘without doubt’ of the phrase *withouten ony drede* arose under French influence.

OTHER PHRASES

withouten ony strok — sanz cop ferir

‘without striking a blow, without fighting’ 1 occurrence

C 188/24 *The Cristene men wenten where hem lykede best [...] and bire enemyes enclosed and confounded [...] in derkness withouten ony strok.*

W 128/44 *Ly Cristiens sen alerent la ou lour plesoit, et lour enemis demourerount conclus et confonduz sanz cop ferir.*

This phrase is not listed by Prins. It may have been partially translated from French. Whenever an English phrase contains the preposition *without* + a French or Latin word, we must consider the strong possibility that the whole phrase comes from these languages. When discussing prepositional phrases earlier in the present paper, we examined three phrases of the WITHOUT + ROMANCE WORD type. We treat ME *withouten ony strok* separately as the supposed Old French model contains a non-finite verb.

In the case of this expression, the chronology of the attestations fully supports French origin. OF *cop*, *colp* (from VL *colpus*, L *colapbus* ‘thump with the fist’, from Gr. *kólaphos* ‘a blow, slap’) and OF *ferir* (from L *ferire* ‘strike, hit’) – the two lexical words of the phrase – were first recorded in the *Chanson de Roland*. *Colp* occurs 50 times, the infinitive *ferir* 46 times, the 3rd person singular form *fier* 31 times. In ten occurrences *colp* and *ferir* collocate. Here we quote two examples:

Roland 1055 *Sempres ferrai de Durendal granz colps.*

Roland 1177 *Pur Deu vos pri, ben seiez purpensez
De colps ferir, de recevoir e de duner!*

The Old French phrase *sans cop ferir* is first recorded about 1160 in Benoît de Saint-Maure:

Benoît 157 *Ainsi furent, sans cop ferir,
Desconfit li un et li autre.*

The quotation from the Cotton text is the first attestation of the phrase in English. It does not appear in the Egerton Version and is also missing from the Paris Version. *Sans coup ferir* in the sense 'without fighting' is marked as "obsolete" or "literary" in French dictionaries. However, the phrase is still current in Present-Day French in the weakened sense 'without meeting or encountering any opposition'.

Under STROKE n. 1.d. the *MED* gives the phrase as *withouten (ani) stroke*: 'without striking a blow, without fighting; without a beating'. Two examples are quoted with *ony/any* and two other without a determiner. The earliest is the one from Mandeville. We managed to find another Middle English example (translated from Old French) in Fragment C of *The Romaunt of the Rose* (a1425?a1400):

RRose 6271 *Thou booly chirche, thou maist be wailed!
Sith that thy citee is assayled. [...]*
6277 *Who myght defense ayens hem make?
Withoute strok it mot be take
Of trepeget or mangonel.* (ed. Robinson)

[‘Holy Church, you may be bewailed since your city is assaulted. Who might afford protection against them? Your city may be taken without discharges of (military engines like) trebuchet or mangonel’.]

Rose 11103 *Iglise, tu iés manbaillie;
se ta citez est assaillie. [...]*
11111 *Qui la peut vers eus garantir?
Prise sera sanz cop sentir
de mangonel ne de perriere [...]* (ed. Lecoy)

[‘Église, tu es mal lotie si ta cité est assaillie. Qui peut contre eux la garantir? Elle sera prise sans essayer coup de mangonneau ou de perrière.’] (trans. Lanly)

The *OED* quotes the above example as well as a number similar obsolete phrases under STROKE n.¹ def. 2.a.:

†*without (any) stroke (of sword)* ‘without fighting’
†*without fighting a stroke* ‘otherwise than by violence’
†*(to die) without stroke*

The perfect match for *without any stroke* would be **sans aucun coup* but in French the phrase fossilized without a determiner. Under STRIKE v. 32. the *OED* supplies other phrases and refers to the French phrase *sans coup férir*:

†*without (a) stroke or (a) blow stricken* (and variants) ‘without fighting’

These examples come closer to the French phrase in that they contain a verbal element. The earliest example of this type in the *OED* corpus is listed under BRAG n.1 the other two can be found under STRIKE v.32.:

1548 HALL *Chron.* (1809) 192 *Melune* [...] *and diuerse other townes yelded and turned at a proude crake, or a Frenche bragge, without stroke stricken.*

1598 R. GRENEWAY *Tacitus Ann.* XII. X. (1622) 171 *By the comming of the Parthians, the Hiberi were driuen out without stroke striking* [sine acie].

1632 SIR T. HAWKINS tr. *Mathieu's Unhappy Prosperitee* 222 *The offer [...] has assured him of the whole Iland without a blow strucken.*

Notice that the quote form 1598 translates a Latin phrase meaning ‘without fighting’. In spite of the structural resemblance of these phrases to *sans coup férir*, their French origin is not very probable. In the Early Modern English period Latin influence prevailed.

Summary

Although the Middle English phrase was used without a verbal element in the 15th century, the chronology of the attestations in the two languages – as well as the fact that its first recorded example in the Cotton Version corresponds to the French original – point to French influence. From the 16th century onwards the phrase came to be used with a non-finite verb. The lack of similar constructions patterned after French suggests that the further development of the phrase is restricted to English.

CONCLUSION

The small number of phrases examined here belong to various types and certainly do not suffice to draw far-reaching conclusions. However, the following observations can be made:

1. Verbal phrases represent the most common type of phrases. Middle English disposes of a wider scale of verbal operators than (Old) French.

2. The number of prepositional phrases increases spectacularly in Middle English, largely due to French influence. The lexical word of a prepositional

phrase is usually of French origin. It is in the field of prepositional phrases that the correspondence between the French original and the English translation appears to be closest. Both in Old French and Middle English a number of prepositional phrases are used with diminished force as mere rime tags.

3. Morpheme by morpheme calquing of French phrases is relatively rare. Adopted phrases often retain a lexical element of French origin. Verbal phrases retain an abstract noun, in many compounds one of the components comes from French, etc.

4. All the phrases except the one in 5. entered English before the Cotton translation was made. They underwent changes in the Middle English period. Their form and use does not necessarily show close correspondence with the French original.

5. The phrase *withouten ony strok* is first attested in English in the Cotton Version of *Mandeville's Travels*.

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