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# Interjections in Late Middle English play texts

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A multi-variable pragmatic  
approach

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## **Abstract**

This thesis aims at providing a multidisciplinary in-depth analysis of interjections in Late Middle English play texts. The starting point of the study is historical pragmatics, but it is believed that many variables must be taken into account when linguistic items from text types of long past historical eras are examined. This is particularly true of interjections, which in many ways traverse the boundary between the spoken and the written modes, and of Late Middle English play texts. On one hand, plays may belong to the text type closest to the spoken mode, yet, on the other hand, the Middle English plays include some features quite foreign to speech, e.g. versification. The study is an empirical one, and it employs both qualitative and quantitative methods in the analysis of historical interjections. It is hoped that this study can contribute something to both the fields of literature and of historical linguistics.

Chapter 1 introduces the topic by discussing speech and writing, as well as historical features which one needs bear in mind when studying past stages of language. It also presents the types of drama the study explores.

Chapter 2 explicates relevant theory, the research questions, and discusses definitions of both interjections and play texts. It further discusses historical pragmatics and pragmatics in, general pragmatics, and historical linguistics, including dialectology, and it presents two modern approaches applicable to the language of play texts. An overview of the literature on historical interjections is also provided.

Chapter 3 discusses the multi-contextual background to interjections in Late Middle English play texts. It discusses dialect, scribal transmission, and the religious, social, and cultural history behind the mainly religious play texts providing the data for the corpus developed as part of the present study. Chapter 3 also provides collations of the few texts surviving in more than one manuscript, in order to establish whether there seems to be a pattern for how scribes treated interjection, specifically whether they treated them as meaningful words or as meaningless sounds. The problem of categorising Late Middle English play texts is also discussed. The categories commonly

used to describe these texts are in the main modern conventions, and, therefore, alternative categories are suggested.

Chapter 4 discusses the methodology and the selection and treatment of the data. This chapter provides a presentation of the database developed for the purposes of the present study. Questions concerning the database, its fields, and the interpretation of the data entered into it, are discussed simultaneously as the database is described. A typical entry in the database is exemplified in Table 4-1 on p. 159.

Chapter 5 lists the play texts with manuscript repositories and SCT numbers of the printed texts. The chapter contains descriptive information concerning date of copy, number of hands, dialect, and subgenre. Appendix 1 complements Chapter 5 by giving more detail about, for instance, *dramatis personae*, stage directions, and likely manner of staging.

Chapter 6 discusses each interjection type qualitatively, before some promising findings are compared and discussed in greater detail towards the end of the chapter. Such findings include whether dialect can explain some of the spelling variation found in certain types of interjections, and whether certain play texts exhibit any particular patterns in their use of types and numbers of interjections. The definition of interjections is revisited in Chapter 6 in light of the empirically-based results of the analyses of the actual use of interjections in Late Middle English play texts.

In Chapter 7 some selected items and findings are subjected to statistical analysis. Significance testing is applied to some results, but it is restricted to the sort of findings which can be validly tested in groups of data of rather disparate qualities. It is e.g. difficult to perform a valid significance test of the frequencies of certain interjections in dialect groups consisting of different types of material from different dates.

Chapters 8 and 9 consist of short discussions and conclusions, respectively. Only the main findings are summarised in Chapter 8, and Chapter 9 discusses potential problems and suggests topics for future studies.



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*List of acronyms and abbreviations:*

BL	British Library
EME	Early Middle English
EmodE	Early Modern English
Fol. (ff)	Folio (folios)
LALME	<i>A Linguistic Atlas of Late Mediaeval English</i>
LME	Late Middle English
LP	Linguistic profile
ME	Middle English
MS	Manuscript
OE	Old English
OED	<i>The Oxford English Dictionary</i>
OF	Old French
ON	Old Norse
PDE	Present-day English
r	recto, as in fol. 2r
Scan.	Scandinavian
v	verso, as in fol. 2v

*List of play texts and the abbreviations used for the long play titles:*

Single manuscript plays and prints:

*York cycle*

*N-Town cycle*

*Towneley cycle*

*Chester cycle*

Peniarth *Antichrist* (MS Peniarth prompt copy of one *Chester* pageant text)

- Cycle pageants may be given as numerated in the editions of the cycles: Pageant 23
- Pageant titles are given in inverted commas: ‘Incredulity of Thomas’

- Line numbering in cycles is given as pageant number and line number, e.g. *York* 3: 129

Northampton *Abraham* = the play about Abraham and Isaac in MS Dublin Trinity College D.4.18

Brome *Abraham* = the play about Abraham and Isaac in MS *Book of Brome*.

*Burial and Resurrection* = *The Burial and Resurrection of Christ* in MS Bodleian *e Museo* 160

*Sacrament* = *The Play of the Sacrament*

*Conversion* = *The Conversion of St Paul*

*Nature*

*Everyman*

*Mundus* = *Mundus et Infans*

*Lucidus* = *Lucidus et Dubius*: *Lucidus*

*Occupation* = *Occupation and Idleness*

*Fulgens* = *Fulgens and Luces*

*Hickscorner*

*Magnyfycence*

#### Manuscript play collections:

##### **MS Digby plays** (biblical and miracle plays)

*Conversion* = *The Conversion of St Paul*

*Mary Magdalen*

*Herod* = *The Candelmas' play of Herod's killing of the children*

*Digby Wisdom* (incomplete, cf. *Macro Wisdom*)

##### **MS Macro plays** (morality plays)

*Perseverance* = *The Castle of Perseverance*

*Wisdom* = *Macro Wisdom* (as opposed to the incomplete *Digby Wisdom*)

*Mankind*



# 1 Introduction

## 1.0 An example

A famous Late Medieval English play, the anonymous *Everyman*, includes the sorrowful regret by the generic mankind figure Everyman that death does not wait:

*Alas, shall I haue no lenger respyte?*

Everyman: 131 (punctuation is editorial)

The interjection ALAS is an expression of lament. As an interjection it forms a syntactic unit on its own and it expresses the speaker's emotion and attitude. In the quote above, the interjection ALAS is clearly syntactically independent of the clause that follows it. In the dialogic context ALAS is an efficient signal of Everyman's feelings and of his gradual realisation that he is not well prepared for the moment which every human has to face: dying. In the greater cultural context of late medieval Catholic England (and Europe) this means that his damnation or salvation in the afterlife depends on Everyman's way of living, his reception of a priest's sacrament and absolution, and finally on the mercy of God.

The audience who watched the play *Everyman* had a reason to relate the religious instruction to their own lives. The topic of *Everyman* was a matter of life and death to its contemporary audience. Interjections in plays of this kind may have added to the audience's sense of involvement in at least two ways: First, interjections like ALAS are effective means of characterising the speaker and his emotions. Interjections can conceivably be used to characterise the speaker negatively when used to mark the speaker's unsympathetic reactions, e.g. in the aggressive speeches of the erratic Herod.

Secondly, interjections are affective words employed not to only imitate spoken language, but to induce empathy in the audience, particularly in episodes of heightened emotion. Middle English religious plays contain many moving episodes illustrating representative humans grieving for example at the foot of the Cross. There is a fine line between passion and parody, and in

some Middle English plays interjections appear to mark exaggeration and other kinds of comedy. In sum, interjections function at several levels in medieval drama, from (imitations of) spontaneous emotive expressions to finely-tuned verbal comedy.

Drama engages its audience on many levels, and in these terms Middle English drama was no different from modern plays. Both the medieval and the modern drama frequently instruct and entertain at the same time. But what it instructs, and how it entertains, has changed. The present study aims to provide an informed view of how interjections added to the experience of drama in Late Medieval England. At the same time, the present study takes an informed historical linguistic view as its starting point. It is maintained here that a proper account of a linguistics item such as interjections needs an understanding both of the language to which the item belongs, and of the socio-cultural background to the context in which the item appears.

### *1.1 Aim of the study*

The present dissertation discusses the distribution and function of interjections in Late Middle English drama. It does so from two main angles: historical (variationist) linguistics, and historical pragmatics. This means that several aspects have been considered: Middle English linguistic variation, the peculiarities of both manuscript and early print production, as well as the socio-cultural pragmatics connected to the late medieval play types. All these diverse aspects must be combined in an analysis of interjections in historical texts. Such a multi-level approach is rather new in historical linguistics and pragmatics, and it is hoped that gives better explanatory power than a purely linguistic theory or a purely pragmatic one would.

This study of interjections in play texts may offer a small contribution to the field of Middle English linguistics and manuscript studies. The study also aims at contributing to a better understanding of the meaning-making that takes place in the particular genre of late Middle English drama. It is held that socio-cultural aspects, and not only language, inform the use of interjections in this particular material. Therefore, the late medieval background to the genre and topics of the plays must be considered in the interpretation of the interjections.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The historical linguistic exploration of the texts is necessary to provide well-informed hypotheses on the function of interjections, but it is the pragmatic exploration which provides the bulk of results in the dissertation. The project is data-driven, and involves both quantitative and qualitative methods. Further research questions are described in chapter 2, which also includes relevant theoretical approaches from the fields of historical linguistics and historical pragmatics.

### *1.2 Basis for the study of interjections*

The study of interjections in Middle English play texts must be informed by knowledge of the Middle English language situation and of Late Medieval drama. What follows introduces some relevant topics to both these aspects. In parallel, an outline of the thesis and its eight chapters is drawn.

#### *1.2.1 Background*

Drama texts are socially and culturally bound. It is possible to read play texts as manifestations of written language only, but it is held here that a better analysis may be achieved if they are understood in relation to their historical and cultural contexts. It is for example obvious that some types of Late Middle English drama can only be interpreted with at least a minimum of knowledge of biblical narratives. The analyses of other types of medieval plays need similarly to be informed by the late medieval Catholic belief system which included vices and virtues, fall and redemption, man's need of the sacraments and of God's mercy for ultimate salvation of the soul. Yet other play types require some understanding of the political environment in which they were shaped.

The development and performance of the great biblical cycle plays were directly dependent on the growth of the cities, and of the partly secular and partly religious organisation of trade and craft guilds in the cities. The type of audiences expected to attend performances was probably important for the play composers. Some plays were performed in the open; others took place indoors. The diversity of medieval plays meant that some plays, typically the cycles, were intended for spectators from all levels of society, while other



plays, typically interludes, were written for a select audience. These differences in spectatorship may have influenced the types and the function of the interjections used in play texts.

The late Middle English background, the Middle English language situation and the peculiarities of scribal transmission are discussed in more detail in Chapter 3. Chapter 3 includes regional localisations of the language recorded in the texts, as well as collations of the few play texts extant in more than one copy. The Middle English play types are also discussed in Chapter 3. Details of the manuscripts are found in Chapter 4.

### 1.2.2 *Spoken language*

Interjections are intimately connected to the spoken level of language. They are sometimes regarded as purely emotive expressions which have no denotative or referential meaning (Quirk et al 1972). Interjections may have been included in Middle English drama texts mainly as a speech-imitative device in written dialogues which are otherwise highly organised, versified and rather unlike naturally occurring speech.

However, pragmatic research has found that even short, seemingly unimportant, words, such as discourse particles, take part in the negotiation of meaning in spoken language. Perhaps interjections also take part in the meaning-making in historical plays. This meaning-making occurs at two levels in plays: between the characters on stage, and between the play and its audience.

It will be assumed in the present study that the data found in the written sources had their origin in speech at some point. First, it is unlikely that the forms in question would be employed in drama texts if they were unfamiliar to the audience. Secondly, natural outbursts used in play texts may have become standard drama interjections, as stereotypical imitations of outbursts related to genre.

The present study does not aim at a description of spoken Middle English, but the phonology (pronunciation) of interjections is of importance. For example the distinction between the interjections A and O seems to rest on the quality

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of the vowel sound. Because these two interjections overlap in distribution and function in Middle English play texts, it can be questioned whether their pronunciation was as distinct as their spelling suggests, or whether dialect variation can explain any patterns in the use of A and O. The possibly dialect-bound distribution of (some) interjections is discussed in chapter 8 by means of quantitative methods.

If interjections were stereotypical expressions of emotion and attitude, they may be regarded as the late medieval playwrights' special resource for the efficient signalling of character-reaction to the audience. Such signalling interjections may have been more or less stereotypical, and more or less character-bound. Further, the function certain interjections seem to have had as efficient signals of emotion and/or speakers, may have differed relative to the drama subgenres, or changed relative to the date of the plays.

If interjections signalled specific meanings in play texts, they may be considered to belong to the level of Middle English lexis. All the Middle English play texts include interjections. It is an aim to try to explain why such short, meaningless words were included in play dialogue at all. The functions as well as the possible meanings of the interjection types are discussed in chapter 6 in particular.

### 1.2.3 *Written texts*

Middle English plays exhibit a highly organised type of writing. All the Middle English play texts are versified, and many employ other poetic devices, such as alliteration in at least parts of the text. At the level of structure, therefore, Middle English drama does not look very much like natural speech. Most Middle English drama seems not to aim at a realistic imitation of naturally occurring conversation.

Yet, interjections occur in historical texts, both in direct speech quotations in narrative fiction, and above all, in the dialogue of play texts. The latter genre consists of little but direct speech, and besides the use of interjections, play texts therefore exhibit other typically speech-related features. Speech quotes employ the first and second person pronouns, the present tense of verbs, and deictic words (pronouns, adverbs of time and space). Another quote from

## INTERJECTIONS IN LATE MIDDLE ENGLISH PLAY TEXTS

*Everyman* illustrates both a metrical regularity untypical of speech, as well as features which are typical of the spoken mode:

*O wretched caytyfe, wheder shall I flee,  
That I myght scape this endles sorowe?  
Now, gentyll Deth, spare me tyll to-morowe,  
That I may amende me  
With good aduysement.*  
(*Everyman*: 171-175. Punctuation is editorial)

*Everyman*'s speech is first directed at himself using "I", the "wretched caitiff", before it turns to Death by the use of an address term, "gentle Death", preceded by the marker "now". It can be discussed whether "now" in the speech above is a deictic element or a pragmatic marker, but both the pronouns and the adverb "tomorrow" are examples of (context-dependent) deixis. The speech is in the present tense: "spare me".

Written texts may be more or less close to the spoken mode, and spoken language may show more or fewer affinities with written language. An example of speech-related writing is chatting in web-based debate arenas. An instance of speech closely related to writing is the carefully prepared conference paper. Chapter 6 discusses the Middle English interjections as it presents examples of them in their full co-text.<sup>1</sup> These citations exemplify how medieval play speech draws on elements from speech in combination with poetically constructed written language. Even though drama is the historical genre which is closest to the spoken mode, Middle English drama dialogue is far removed from actual speech.

Koch and Oesterreicher (1985: 23) view the spoken and the written relations of a text ('text' in the inclusive sense) as a continuum where extreme closeness (intimacy) ("Sprache der Nähe") occurs at one end of the scale, and extreme distance ("Sprache der Distanz") occurs at the other. Typical closeness is found in face-to-face communication, while extreme distance is common in scientific writing.

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<sup>1</sup> The term 'co-text' refers to the immediate textual surroundings of interjections; the full verse line in most cases in the present study. The term 'context' refers to the less immediate surroundings; the full dialogue, the play text, the medieval context.

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Middle English interjections belong at the level of closeness in texts which mix typical closeness features with elements mainly connected to the level of distance; poetic, elevated, written language. The question is what interjections contribute to texts like *Everyman*. Are they merely line-fillers, are they employed to break the distance, or do they contribute to meaning-making proper? Chapter 6 explores the dialogic functions of interjections through detailed analyses of each type. The chapter discusses the distribution of interjections in relation to turns (speeches), character types, and possible discourse and poetic/textual functions. The findings are summarised in Conclusions.

### *1.2.4 Historical linguistics and scribal transmission*

Late Middle English had no fully standardised writing system. Medieval English scribes often translated texts into their own dialect in the process of copying them. The language found in Middle English texts therefore varies on several levels: phonology, morphology and lexis.

Written Middle English interjections may be affected by variation on two levels: First, they exhibit orthographic variation, which may reflect pronunciation, i.e. the phonological level. If interjections were treated as sounds by the copyists, it seems plausible that dialectal patterns can be found. Secondly, Middle English interjections may vary in relation to the lexical level (semantics), meaning that if interjections were fixed expressions they would likely have been treated as meaning-making words by the copyists. By contrast, if interjections were conceived of as mere sound, they may have been changed in copying to a greater degree than lexis usually is. Further, if Middle English interjections were treated as lexis a pattern may be found that is suggestive of their meanings.<sup>2</sup>

An example may illustrate. On the one hand, the interjections A and O conceivably represent different phonological (vowel) qualities, as the different spelling forms seem to suggest. Thus one form is used in some ME dialects, while the other may be preferred in other ME dialects; distribution varies, but

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<sup>2</sup> A third option is that some scribes treated interjections as sound, while others saw them as words. These questions are clarified in Chapter 3.

function overlap. It is possible that scribes employing northern dialects preferred the interjection A in concord with the longer retention of Old English (henceforth OE) long  $\bar{a}$  in the region. Regional variation in the use of interjections is explored quantitatively in Chapter 7.

On the other hand, the interjections O and A may represent similar natural outbursts - back vowel, more or less rounded - which have come to be conventionally realised in writing by different graphemes. These conventionalised forms may have become employed in different contexts to serve different functions in written texts, but they do not necessarily reflect any spoken variation at all. The interjection O in the form <o> was possibly associated with biblical usage, especially in vocative phrases like *O Lord*.<sup>3</sup> By contrast, the interjection A may have come to function as the truly expressive outburst occurring on its own rather than in vocative phrases.<sup>4</sup> If so, it is expected that the interjection A is rare in vocative constructions. The meaning and function of interjections are discussed in Chapter 6.

Further, one type of interjection, for example the interjection O, may be associated with one type of play, for example biblical plays, while it is relatively infrequent in other, less solemn subgenres. Similarly, the interjection O could be associated with a particular type of character, either speaker or addressee: God is often addressed in biblical plays by good, Christian characters employing vocative constructions like *O Lord*. The interjection O is possibly associated with the speech of certain speakers in addresses to certain addressees, and these speakers and addressees are related to particular subgenres of ME drama. The function of interjections as a means

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<sup>3</sup> The Oxford English Dictionary says of the interjection O: "In Old English liturgical use probably < classical Latin  $\bar{o}$  [...]; in subsequent use probably < Old French  $\hat{O}$ ..." Frequently, and in many languages, O occurs as a "vocative particle", i.e. it precedes a noun of address.

<sup>4</sup> The Oxford English Dictionary, under headword A, suggests that the interjection A is "imitative of the natural utterance". This natural sound is perhaps reflected in OE in the interjection  $\bar{e}a$ , but Oxford English Dictionary, under headword Ah, suggests that ME A (ah) perhaps stems from Old French rather than from OE, as it is "not found in Old English." The latter point may be due to lack of OE written material likely to include interjections. The interjection  $\bar{a}$  is attested in Old Norse (OED headword Ah),  $\bar{e}a$  is attested in Old English (headword A), and these two do not appear to be very distant from each other, nor from the Middle English interjection A.

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of characterising speakers is discussed in Chapter 6. The relationship between interjections and ME drama subgenres is explored quantitatively in Chapter 7.

Before the questions above can be answered it needs finding out how interjections were treated by the scribes; as sounds or as words. This has never been explored systematically before. The scribes in copying the play texts seem to have had two options: either they regarded interjections (at least the shorter ones) as belonging to the level of phonology (sound-imitative), or they regarded interjections to be part of lexis (words). In other words, the scribes viewed interjections either as context-dependent sounds void of meaning, or as content words contributing meaning to the ongoing dialogue.

Most of the texts in the present study are scribal copies, meaning that very few are original authors' texts. Only a few of the texts survive in more than one copy, but those that are extant in parallel copies have been collated in Chapter 3. The collation aims at recognising patterns in the scribes' treatment of interjections. These patterns can only be established in relation to the behaviour the scribes exhibit in the rest of the texts: if the scribe copies letter-for-letter elsewhere, it is not surprising if the interjections remain the same; if he does not, yet the interjections are stable, this behaviour suggests that interjections were understood to be words. This topic, and others dealing with linguistic and socio-cultural background, is returned to in Chapter 3.

Some late medieval English play texts survive only in print. Any differences in the distribution of interjections related to the different means of text production - scribal transmission versus print - are explored quantitatively in Chapter 7.

### *1.2.5 Late Medieval drama*

Drama is closely connected to the culture and worldview of the society in which it belongs. Middle English drama reflects a late medieval, pan-European outlook, dominated by the late medieval Catholic belief system. Middle English plays can be divided into subgenres partly on the grounds of the plays' relations to this belief system. Following common medievalist drama categorisation (especially Bevington 1975, but see also Beadle et al.

1994, and Walker 2000), the Middle English plays have been categorised into four subgenres.<sup>5</sup>

1. *Biblical plays* are like “living books” depicting stories from the Bible. These plays can be short, illustrating for example only one biblical story, such as Abraham’s (near) sacrifice of Isaac. Other biblical plays are extremely comprehensive: the cycle plays depict biblical narrative from Creation to Doomsday. The cycles consist of a series of smaller plays, referred to as pageants.
2. *Miracle plays* are concerned with conversion through miracle. Some depict episodes in the lives of saints, and may include biblical characters: St Paul and St Mary Magdalene are represented in the English miracle plays.
3. *Morality plays* instruct their audience in moral (Catholic) living; perseverance in the face of worldly temptations and adversity, and the need for heavenly mercy. They employ generic mankind figures and allegorical characters, e.g. vices and virtues.
4. *Interludes* also offer moral instruction, but they may be concerned with issues of a political nature, as well as religious ones. Like morality plays, the interludes often employ allegorical personifications, but the interlude personifications are often more like human types than like representatives of a certain theological outlook (such as vices and virtues are). Some interludes are related to specific circumstances in England, and as political comment the Middle English interlude is less continental and

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<sup>5</sup> The order of presentation of drama subgenres should not be taken to represent an order of development. Clopper (2001: 19-24) discards the earlier assumption about late medieval drama that it developed as a linear evolution from early medieval liturgical plays in Latin via later medieval biblical in the vernacular to secular interludes of the Renaissance. The extant texts, including fragments of plays, do not attest that biblical plays are early and interludes are late, which has been a frequent but erroneous suggestion of the chronology of medieval drama, e.g. in Chambers (1903). All forms co-existed in England, probably for at least two centuries, c. 1350-1550, but there are fragments of interludes predating the fourteenth century, and biblical cycles were performed beyond 1550 at least in Chester. The chronological aspect of Middle English plays types is discussed in Chapter 3. The play texts are dated in Chapter 5. Witness dates are compared to likely dates of composition in the same chapter.

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more nationally bound than the three other subgenres of medieval drama.

The categorisation just described is partly based on the contents of the late medieval plays. It can be hypothesised that a play's contents influenced the types and/or number of interjections used. Biblical plays and interludes, for example, may show different patterns of usage. It is conceivable that plays which include celestial characters among its *dramatis personae* have higher numbers for instance of the interjection O, as this interjection occurs particularly frequently in vocatives addressing God and Christ.

Normington (2009) offers a different approach to the categorisation of medieval plays. She suggests that manner of performance is a decisive factor differentiating between inclusive and exclusive plays. Medieval outdoor drama invited the masses, while medieval indoor drama was written with a select audience in mind. The difference may have had bearing on the types of interjections used in the play texts.

Indoor and outdoor plays are distinct in two important ways: by the audiences that attended each type, and by the qualities of the different physical localities. First, the outdoor play included audiences from all levels of society. Thus it could not aim its subject matter at a select type of audience, for example one of shared learning. This factor may have influenced the type of comedy a play could include. Physical comedy may occur in both play types, while verbal comedy, especially sarcasm and irony, presupposes shared values which may not be present in a very diverse group of spectators. The use of interjections may be related to particular types of comedy, so the aspect of a select, indoor audience versus an uncontrolled, outdoor audience may be important.

Secondly, the physical conditions of the performance, especially the indoor versus the outdoor acoustics, may have influenced the frequency and the types of interjections used. Sonority and the efficient signalling of entrances and exits may have been more important in an outdoor play production than in a more intimate, indoor performance.

Whether medieval drama is categorised into subgenres or into play types based on performance, the play characters obviously remain the same.



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Character types may have a bearing on what types of interjections are used in the different plays. The plays present a wide spectre of different characters: human and celestial, devil and angel, male and female, king and servant. To a large extent the *dramatis personae* can be classified according to the medieval dichotomy of good versus bad, exemplified by heathens versus Christians, vices versus virtues, or bad versus good advisors to a king. Some character types, in particular the mankind figures, cannot be put in either category, but must be understood as representative humans subject to both good and bad influences.

In a textual study a last aspect of play texts may be of importance, namely the manner in which they were produced as texts. 17 of the play texts in the present study survive in manuscript, and six survive as printed texts. Manuscript practices differ from (modern) printing practices when it comes to the shaping of a dialogic text (Culpeper and Demmen 2011: 162). Even in early printed play texts, it is possible that the inclusion (or exclusion) of interjections depend on the manner of text production. This aspect has been studied in Chapter 7.

The character types are discussed in greater detail in the description of the database categories in Chapter 4.<sup>6</sup> The use of interjections by different kinds of characters is discussed in Chapter 6. Some patterns of usage are tested quantitatively in Chapter 7; relating to ME dialects, to manner of text production, to play subgenre and to manner of performance.

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<sup>6</sup> All the plays are listed in relative chronological order by composition dates in Appendix I (the Appendix discusses the plays as plays, while Chapter 5 discusses the texts). Textual factors, such as composition dates and manuscript (witness) dates are included in Chapter 5: see Section 5.28 for a summary list. Play characters are listed in alphabetical order in Appendix II.

## 2 Theoretical approaches

### 2.0 *Abstract*

The present chapter describes research aims and working definitions in greater detail than the previous chapter. It discusses some relevant approaches and methodologies; historical linguistics including manuscript studies, historical pragmatics, and conversation analysis. The chapter also discusses two of the most relevant fields for the present dissertation: 1) the problem of defining interjections, and 2) the study of interjections in historical English drama texts.

### 2.1 *Research questions*

a) What types of interjections occur in Middle English drama and how do they behave? The question is best answered by a description of the various forms and their distribution in play speech and in play subgenres. The distinct types of Middle English interjections can only be recognised through a detailed analysis of spelling forms adopting a micro-level approach.

b) What do interjections contribute to the dialogues in the texts/plays? This question is related to the function(s) interjections perform in their immediate written co-text as well as in a cultural context. The medieval drama is informed by a religious-cultural context which often characterises speakers along dichotomies of good/bad and human/non-human. The analysis of the function of interjections belongs on the macro-level of text exploration.

c) Why are interjections used in Middle English drama texts? This question ultimately relates to the definition of interjections. It is not necessarily the case that a linguistic feature so strongly defined by its relation to the spoken mode, yet codified and employed in highly organised written texts, can be defined by the same theoretical apparatus normally used to define word classes. The functions of interjections may differ in written play speech compared to naturally occurring conversation. In order to grasp any functional differences it is necessary to have a good understanding of the historical genres in which interjections appear. Drama texts employ interjections more

frequently than any other genre. The analysis of interjections in relation to genre belongs on the cultural level.

The first research question above relates to pragmaphilology. Both of the two latter research questions are related to historical stylistics. The difference from conventional historical stylistics is that this approach usually involves an analysis of many features in one text, while the present study explores one feature shared by many texts; interjections.

### 2.1.1 *Distribution*

The present work provides a description of the distribution of interjections in Middle English drama texts at two levels: first, it investigates whether interjections are distributed according to their speech-related nature as spontaneous signals of a speaker's attitude or emotion. If written interjections serve to imitate spontaneity in spoken language, they may be expected to appear at the beginning of the speeches in drama texts. This expected pattern of distribution will be tested quantitatively in Chapter 7.

Secondly, the distribution of certain types of interjections may be connected to the Middle English drama subgenre, and/or the indoor versus outdoor performance types, and/or to types of *dramatis personae*. These questions related to the function of interjections are discussed qualitatively in Chapter 6 and quantitatively in Chapter 7. Chapter 8 summarises the most important results.

### 2.1.2 *Function and meaning*

Further, it is an aim of the present study to answer the question of what interjections do in written drama texts. Ameka (1992a: 113-14) suggests that (spoken) interjections serve three main functions: they express the speaker's emotion and attitude, they are addressee-oriented, and they are communication-focussed. In addition, Taavitsainen (1995: 441; 462) suggests that interjections in historical written texts can serve textual functions.

These insights about the functions of interjections in spoken discourse as well as in written material are studied further in the present work - more follows

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below on the field of interjections and of interjections in historical texts. The possibly differing and/or changing functions of distinct types of Middle English interjections are also explored. The interjection types are discussed individually in Chapter 6.

It may further be hypothesised that interjections were used in ME drama to characterise the speakers. Interjections border on swearing, which is typically used for speaker characterisation in plays. Swear words (and pious oaths) have not been included in the present work, but it is conceivable that some of the short interjections were also used by playwrights to signal character type, in particular along the medieval good versus bad axis. This, and related questions about speaker characterisation, is also discussed in Chapter 6.

### *2.1.3 Definition*

Definitions of interjections are commonly based on spoken language. However, owing to the special nature of (some) interjections as a linguistic unit intermediate between a natural sound and a word proper, it may be questioned whether a definition based on one mode of language production, i.e. speech, is equally fitting to the other mode of language production, i.e. writing. In speech, one problem with defining interjections is to distinguish them from meaningless sounds occurring in (recorded) conversation. In written text this delimitation is not a problem. Since there is no additional information in written text - tone of voice, volume, facial expression - it is more difficult to establish what interjections are meant to express, and to what extent they should be regarded as words, rather than as natural outbursts.

It can also be asked whether the written genre itself may have developed specialised functions for interjections, from being unplanned and spontaneous in nature to appearing as planned expressions in texts loaded with meaning. Some definitions of interjections are discussed below in the present chapter. The question of defining interjections in historical texts is revisited in Chapters 6 (Section 6.11.4) and 9 (Conclusions).

## 2.2 Working definitions

### 2.2.1 Defining interjections - how?

Several definitions of interjections have been suggested in the literature. Most modern definitions relate to the spoken mode and thus include features from speech such as prosody, which are rarely sufficiently reflected in writing and not at all in Middle English drama texts.<sup>7</sup> Another commonly referred feature of interjections is that they “frequently involve the use of sounds that do not occur otherwise in English words” (Quirk et al. 1972: 45). A definition of interjections which includes their tendency to be “phonologically and morphologically anomalous” (Ameka 1992: 105) is a difficult one to adopt as a basis for recognising and distinguishing Middle English interjections, due to the spelling variation in Middle English texts.

Most definitions of language take classical, Aristotelian principles of categorisation as their starting point, carefully ascribing different types of words to distinct and exclusive classes, based on the classical principles of necessary and sufficient features. Interjections commonly end up in a category of left-over words when more important (lexical and functional) categories, such as verbs, nouns, adjectives, and pronouns, are identified and described (see e.g. Quirk et al. 1972).

Biber et al. (1999) renew linguistic classification when they take this group of left-over words, called “inserts”, into account. To the lexical and functional categories they add inserts as a third category, comprising diverse linguistic phenomena, e.g. greetings, discourse markers, and other speech act formulae.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> The lack of marking of prosody and syntactical boundaries in Middle English manuscripts and print is one major reason why manuscript study was performed for the present project. Diplomatic editions were used to collect the data, but as editors commonly mark interjections by inserting a comma, a full stop or an exclamation mark after them and before the following clause, it was necessary to check from the manuscripts (and prints) themselves whether there was any original marking at all. In most cases, of course, there was none, but in some there were *puncti* or *virgules* (horizontal or diagonal slashes) after interjections (e.g. in *Burial and Resurrection of Christ*). These marks were never used consistently, though.

<sup>8</sup> Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 202-3) give an informed account of Biber et al.’s inserts in relation to interjections.

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Interjections clearly belong to the group of inserts, which Biber et al. (1999: 56) admit “play an important role in communication”, but which they nonetheless hold to be more marginal than the other two groups. In the present project it is held that interjections form part of the meaning-making in Middle English drama dialogues, and that in these contexts they may not be marginal to the meaning-making process at all.

A different approach than the classical one to linguistic categorisation can be based on Wittgenstein’s (1953) theory of family resemblance. This is developed by cognitivists, such as Rosch (1978), into a theory of prototype classification. In short, Wittgenstein’s theory objects to the categorisation of cultural phenomena, e.g. “Spiel” (English ‘game’), by employing a classical principle basically developed to suit natural science and its physical objects. Rosch suggests that the human mind groups things, natural and cultural, on the basis of their representativeness, and not by their necessary and sufficient features. Family resemblance theory suggests that words can be grouped with other related words, while prototype theory implies that members of a group can be more or less typical of that group (Taylor 2003).

From the perspective of prototype theory, some interjections may be more typical than others. Quirk et al. (1972: 414) state that “[i]nterjections are purely emotive words...”, while Ameka (1992: 113) suggests that interjections may serve other functions than the subjective expression of emotion, and Taavitsainen (1995) finds that interjections in Early Modern English texts may serve even more functions than those described by Ameka.

In the present study it has been taken as a starting point that prototypical interjections in Middle English drama texts express speaker’s attitude and/or emotion, but that other, less typical interjections may occur, and that other functions than the emotive one may also occur. It is an aim to try to describe the variation in the range of ME interjections, as well as their typical functions in late medieval plays. In order to achieve this aim, I need a working definition which captures the prototypical items and their functions in Middle English play texts.

### 2.2.2 *Interjections: a prototypical definition*

Jucker (2002: 211) adopts a prototype approach to his definition of discourse markers, because the literature provides little agreement as to which elements belong in the category. Jucker finds that some of the recognised, typical criteria for discourse markers are difficult to apply in the study of written texts from the Early Modern English language period. First, phonological features such as reduction ('you know' may be pronounced *y'know*) are usually not reflected in Early Modern English spelling. Secondly, syntactic independence, i.e. the optionality of discourse markers, is often difficult to ascertain in Early Modern English texts, because punctuation does not necessarily reflect it (Jucker 2002: 211-12).

Similar problems as those connected to the definition of discourse markers in historical written texts apply to interjections. On the level of phonology, as mentioned, it is problematic to apply the criterion that interjections often are phonologically anomalous in a study of unstandardised languages like Middle English. On the level of syntax, there is scarcely any punctuation in Middle English play texts marking clausal boundaries and thereby reflecting the syntactic independence of interjections (a feature which interjections share with discourse markers).<sup>9</sup>

Thirdly, Jucker (2002: 213) finds that discourse markers "tend to have little or no semantic content or propositional meaning". He suggests that the prototypical discourse markers satisfy this criterion, but that there are also more marginal elements in the group of discourse markers which have a "residue of semantic meaning" (e.g. 'you know'). The same is true of Middle English interjections: the prototypical ones are short and seem to stem from natural outbursts, while others (e.g. ALAS) have their origin in words and phrases. The latter may still have had semantic meaning in Middle English, or at least a residue of its original meaning.

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<sup>9</sup> The latter has been sought remedied in the present study by reading the texts in full. Through close reading of the texts it is possible to establish from the co-text which interjections always occur on their own, and which are sometimes found embedded in clauses (and are thus less optional to the clause and more word- than interjection-like).

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Fourthly, Jucker (2002: 213) finds that discourse markers “tend to share features on the functional and stylistic level”; they are “generally multifunctional”, and may for instance function both on a textual and on an “interpersonal level”. This simultaneous multifunctionality seems also to be true of interjections, as suggested by Ameka (1992). An interjection may express a speaker’s attitude simultaneously as it appeals to an addressee. For the purpose of the present study, I suggest that prototypical interjections in Middle English play texts express speaker’s attitude (including emotion), while more marginal interjections may serve other functions. Typical, marginal, and multi-functions are described for each interjection type in Chapter 6.

Employing prototype theory, the most central, or prototypical, members of the group of interjections can be described as words occurring alone (syntactically), like inserts. Their primary function is to express speaker’s attitude (including emotion), unlike other inserts. Interjections fulfil several of the six identifying features of inserts (Biber et al. 1999: 1082), but that of syntactical independence has been prioritised in the present definition. One feature, that of expressive of attitude/emotion, has been added in order to identify interjections as different from other inserts, e.g. greetings.

Greetings, and some other types of inserts, may express the speaker’s subjective attitude and/or emotion, but more often they function as conventional phrases. Interjections differ from phrases in this respect, as interjections are (imitations of) spontaneous reactions. In order to delimit the object of study to those inserts which are interjections, the criterion of expressive function was considered a necessary part of the working definition.<sup>10</sup>

Interjections grouped through the application of classical word class definitions are often divided into primary and secondary interjections.<sup>11</sup> The

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<sup>10</sup> Whether the data collected in fact express attitude/emotion in all contexts or not is discussed in chapter 7.

<sup>11</sup> Jespersen (1924: 90) suggested a distinction between interjections which are only interjections and interjections which are used as words otherwise, but he did not apply the terms ‘primary’ and ‘secondary’. One example of a primary interjection is OH, while an example of a secondary interjection may be CHRIST. The first example can



first type consists of short sounds showing close relations to natural outbursts expressed for example in pain or surprise. The second type, secondary interjections, may express emotion and/or attitude in some circumstances, but since they derive from other words, they are also used outside of the typically expressive function. Their potential for expressive function is secondary to their function as content or function words.

The distinction between primary and secondary interjections can be useful, but the boundary remains somewhat fuzzy.<sup>12</sup> The problem of unclear membership (is ALAS a primary or a secondary interjection?) is avoided if prototype theory is applied instead. Prototype theory is used to recognise the central members of a category and to focus on those rather than on where the boundaries of the category should be drawn and the consequent inclusion and exclusion of items. Core members of the family of interjections resemble primary interjections, but interjections which are difficult to assign to either the primary or the secondary category need not be excluded (cf. ALAS).

### 2.2.3 *Interjections: a working definition*

The present work takes as its working definition of interjections that the core members of the class of interjections are short imitations of spontaneous expressions of attitude/emotion, and they form utterances on their own, i.e. they are syntactically independent. One typical member in the group of English interjections is OH. The interjection ALAS derives from a phrase and is slightly longer than OH, and ALAS is therefore a less typical member of the class of interjections.<sup>13</sup> An expression used for swearing, e.g. BLOODY

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only be classified as an interjection, while the second is a member of another word class and is also used non-expressively. Ameka (1992) is one of the scholars who use the terms primary and secondary interjections. So do e.g. Mustanoja (1960), Koskenniemi (1962), and Mazzon (2009). Culpeper and Kytö (2010) prefer the term ‘pragmatic noise’ for a group of interjections which resemble primary interjections very closely.

<sup>12</sup> There is no agreement in the literature whether for example the interjection ALAS belongs in the group of primary or of secondary interjections. Prototype categorisation allows for the inclusion of the interjection ALAS in the present study. ALAS (and the other interjection types) is discussed in Chapter 6.

<sup>13</sup> Cuenca 2000: 37 discusses the interjection OH in relation to the problem of “defining the indefinable”, i.e. interjections. The interjection OH is very common in

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HELL, is related to interjections by common function, but as it consists of two words and each of these belongs in other word classes, BLOODY HELL is more marginal than the others.<sup>14</sup> This kind of secondary/marginal interjection has not been included in the present study.

Wharton (2009) suggests that interjections belong in a continuum of linguistic items stretching from expressive outburst to proper word. His work indirectly explicates why interjections may need different definitions in speech and writing. In spoken language it may be difficult to decide which sounds uttered in conversation are meaningful or not. A linguist working with interjections in (modern) spoken language is thus confronted with the categorical task of selecting which sounds in recorded dialogue should be transcribed for study. A historical linguist, or pragmatist, working with written material has all the interjections readily codified in the texts. The categorical difficulty in this case is deciding which words to include in the study as (core) interjections.

Wharton (2009: 176-77) describes two features generally agreed upon in the various definitions of interjections. Wharton thinks these two features are sufficient for a working definition of interjections: “an interjection is capable of constituting an utterance by itself in a unique, non-elliptical manner”, and “an interjection expresses a mental or emotional attitude or state”. Since these two features are found in many definitions, they may be taken as a starting point for a working definition of interjections. However, the description does not exclude expressions like BLOODY HELL, and since the scope of a dissertation must be delimited in order that it should be finished within a limited time span, I have added a criterion, namely that prototypical interjections are relatively short. Multi-word phrases, like BLOODY HELL or COCK’S BONES, have therefore been excluded. In effect, what is normally considered swearing has not been included.

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modern conversation (Schiffrin 1987), while the interjection ALAS is common in Middle English drama texts. The latter seems always to express emotion (sorrow), while OH seems to cover a range of functions besides the expressive one (analyses in Chapter 6).

<sup>14</sup> This exact expression was not found in the examined material, but there are many others, e.g. euphemisms related to Christ (*cockes bones*), swearing by the devil, and oaths like *(by) Mary*. It is not always easy to distinguish a pious oath from swearing.

### 2.2.4 *Middle English play texts: a definition*

The best witnesses of historical drama are historical play texts. Defining play texts is much more readily done than defining interjections. The term ‘drama’ does not distinguish well between dramatic phenomena as disparate as theatre, play, and play text. In the following, therefore, the term ‘drama’ is used generically, while the term ‘theatre’ will rarely be used at all, as it normally denotes a building specially dedicated to play production.<sup>15</sup> The term ‘play’ commonly denotes both a performance and a type of text, and therefore the term ‘play text’ will be used about the texts in the present study, especially when textual features are in focus.

In contrast to many other literary genres, the drama genre is usually easily identified, as it takes the form of a play text.<sup>16</sup> Play texts are physically organised on the page as written dialogue with speech headings (name of speaker), often with stage directions and/or indications of singing or musical accompaniment (see e.g. the *York* cycle Register, fol. 46r). Middle English plays in manuscripts often have ruling (lines) separating the speeches. The dramatic dialogue takes the form of direct speeches employing first and second person pronouns, address terms (like *father*), and commonly the present tense of verbs: *Alas father, ys that your wyll* (Isaac to Abraham).<sup>17</sup>

A couple of other medieval genres are organised as dialogue, but these are not fictional texts. Witness depositions and trial proceedings also consist of direct speech quotations, but these are clearly related to historical, factual events. The medieval debate genre is somewhat reminiscent of the drama format, because of its dialogic organisation, but the debate is non-dramatic. The debate employs only two speakers in a pattern of short questions and long answers. It aims at explicating a problem, usually a theological or scientific one, and it is not defined as fiction.

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<sup>15</sup> The Theatre, erected in 1576 in London, was the first permanent theatre building in England.

<sup>16</sup> An exception is the type of medieval drama referred to as ‘mummings’. These do not take the form of written dialogue, but as a descriptive prologue explicating the silent performance about to be shown. Mummings have not been included in the present study. As texts, they differ significantly from other types of drama. Their monologic rather than dialogic form means that they scarcely contain interjections.

<sup>17</sup> Quote from the *Chester* cycle, pageant no. 4, l. 286. Punctuation is editorial.

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By contrast, the drama dialogue contains speeches of more balanced lengths than the debate, and it often involves more than two speakers. Dramatic dialogue commonly also indicates that the speakers move, even when there are no stage directions directly stating exits, entrances and other kinds of physical action. Since play texts are distinct from other text types, the definition of them can be based on classical categorisation: Drama texts consist of fictional dialogue in the form of direct speech between participants in action.<sup>18</sup>

Defining the subgenres of medieval drama, however, is not so readily done as defining a text as a play text. Late medieval (c. 1350-1530) English drama does not fall into neat, clear-cut categories. The categories frequently suggested for them - biblical play, morality play, miracle play and interlude – are modern applications. The most common late Middle English terms for drama seems to have been ‘play’ and *ludi* (plural form of Latin *ludus*, ‘game’), while the Greek term ‘drama’ was not used (Clopper 2001: 11). The word ‘play’ was used also for many other kinds of entertainment. Archival records or other documents mentioning ‘play’ may not refer to drama at all, but to music, sports and games (Clopper 2001: 12). Chapter 3, Section 3.6, discusses in greater detail the subgenres of medieval drama and the problems of categorisation. Appendix I contains discussions of each play and its placement within one of of the four subgenres.

Since medieval play categories contain much overlap and have fuzzy boundaries, the identification of medieval play subgenres must be based on prototype classification. This does not mean that the subgenres usually employed are discarded, but it means that there are more or less typical plays

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<sup>18</sup> The term ‘fictional’ excludes dialogic texts like witness depositions as well as the medieval debates discussed above. Play texts are normally intended for performance, but performances are ephemeral, unique experiences inaccessible to us. Performance types will be discussed in the present study, but it is the texts themselves which must form the basis for a study of the use of interjections in medieval drama. It is held that play texts are worthy of study in their own right, and not only as phenomena secondary to the performance of plays. Plays and play texts are further valuable to historical studies for a variety of reasons. One is that play texts yield insights about historical linguistics, because they are closer to the spoken mode compared to most other genres. Further, drama often also offers a direct pathway to understanding a (historical) culture and its dominant ideas.

in each of the subgenres. It is not held that the subgenre categorisation used here is the only way of classifying Middle English drama, but it is a tested categorisation with the advantage of facile comparison to the works of other scholars of medieval drama.

### 2.2.5 *The Middle English play texts*

Plays are cultural objects more easily subcategorised according to Roschian prototype theory, than by applying classical categorisation based on necessary and sufficient features. Subgenre classification is problematic, but necessary for practical reasons of comparison.<sup>19</sup> The distribution of interjections according to subgenre is tested in Chapter 8. In the main, Bevington's (1975) categorisation of Middle English drama has been adopted here. See Chapter 3 for more detail, especially Sections 3.6 and 3.6.1.

Table 2-1 below lists all the 23 play texts providing the data for the present project.<sup>20</sup> The texts are listed by subgenre. The table includes the length of each text ('number of lines') and the dates of manuscripts and prints ('witness date'). Five parallel copies of the play texts have been used for comparison of the scribal treatment of interjections.<sup>21</sup> Data from four of these copies were not included in the database. The parallel copies are listed separately in Table 2-2 below.

Subgenre	Title	Number of lines	Witness date
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<sup>19</sup> Jones (1983), Walker (2000), and Bevington (1975), all provide excellent, although not identical, descriptions of medieval play types. Clopper (2001) provides informed criticism of the subgenre categorisation applied here.

<sup>20</sup> Few play texts survive in more than one copy: the morality play *Wisdom* survives in one full and one fragmented copy. The first, from MS Macro, provided the data for the present study. The *Chester* cycle survives in five full copies, of which the text in MS Hm used by Lumiansky and Mills for their edition has been preferred also in the present study. Where more than one version of a pageant text survives, a situation relevant to both the *Chester* and *York* cycles, I have collected the data from the version used as base text in the editions by Lumiansky and Mills (1974) and Beadle (1982; 2009) respectively.

<sup>21</sup> The term 'parallel copy' means that two (or more) copies are extant. Most of the Middle English play texts survive uniquely, and cannot be compared directly regarding scribal addition, substitution or exclusion of interjections.

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Biblical cycles	<i>York cycle</i>	13,170	1463-77
	<i>N-town cycle</i>	11,337	1468-1500
	<i>Towneley cycle</i>	14,383	c.1500
	<i>Chester cycle</i> (MSS Hm + R: for the text of pageant no. 1 only)	10,775	1591/1600 (Hm/R)
	Chester Peniarth 'Antichrist'	726	c. 1500
Single biblical plays	Northampton <i>Abraham</i>	369	1461
	Brome <i>Abraham</i>	465	1480-90?
	Digby <i>Herod</i>	566	1512
	<i>Burial and Resurrection of Christ</i>	864 + 767	c.1520
Miracle/conversion plays	Digby <i>Mary Magdalen</i>	2,139	1515-20
	Digby <i>Conversion of St Paul</i>	663	c.1520 + 1550
	<i>Play of the Sacrament</i>	927	1520
Morality plays	<i>The Castle of Perseverance</i>	3,649	c.1440
	<i>Macro Wisdom</i>	1,165	1450-1500?
	<i>Macro Mankind</i>	913	1465-70
	<i>Mundus et Infans</i>	974	print 1522
	<i>Nature</i>	1,438+1,412	print c. 1530
	<i>Everyman</i>	921	print 1530
Interludes	<i>Lucidus and Dubius</i>	612	c.1450
	<i>Occupation and Idleness</i>	877	c.1450
	<i>Fulgens and Luces</i>	1,432 + 921	print c.1512
	<i>Hickscorner</i>	1,028	print 1514?
	<i>Magnyfycence</i>	2,566	print c.1530

**Table 2-1 Play texts: titles, lengths, and dates**

In Table 2-2 below the five parallel copies are listed in the same manner as the 23 play texts in Table 2-1 above. The parallel copies have been used in Chapter 3 to provide evidence for scribal treatment of interjections in Middle English play texts. Of these, only data from the Chester Peniarth *Antichrist* were included in the database of interjections. The Peniarth *Antichrist* text is listed in both Tables 2-1 and 2-2, as it is both a parallel copy to pageant 23 in the *Chester cycle*, and an early witness of of the *Chester cycle* which otherwise only survives in late copies. The Chester Peniarth *Antichrist* has, therefore, been treated as a witness in its own right, in contrast to the other

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parallel copies. The late *Chester* cycle manuscripts (MSS A, R, B, and H) have been consulted, but not compared in full to the *Chester* MS Hm used to provide the data (Table 2-1 above).

Subgenre	Title	Number of lines	Witness date
Biblical	Chester Peniarth 'Antichrist' (MS P)	726	c.1500
Parallel copies of cycles and pageants	York pageant no. 3 by Hand B in the Register		1463-77
	York Scriveners' 'Incredulity of Thomas'	196	c.1550
	Chester Coopers' 'Trial and Flagellation' (MS C) (The other full <i>Chester</i> : MSS A, R, B, and H)	408	1599  1592-1607
Morality plays	Digby <i>Wisdom</i> (incomplete)	752	1490-1500

**Table 2-2 Parallel copies: titles, lengths and dates**

In effect, all the extant late medieval drama manuscripts in English have been included, except for fragmentary texts. The main reason for excluding fragments is that they do not provide sufficient context for full analysis of the use of interjections. Medieval plays belonging in England but composed in other languages (French, Latin, Cornish or Scottish English) have been excluded. The *Chester* cycle text has been included, in spite of the late date of the copy (1591), because the play type is typically medieval. A cycle play was performed in Chester in the fifteenth century, and thus the *Chester* cycle belonged in late medieval England, just like the other three cycles did.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> The cycles are the *York*, *Towneley*, and *N-town* cycle, in addition to the *Chester* cycle. The oldest is the *York* cycle play, probably originating in the latter half of the fourteenth century. For a discussion of composition dates, see Appendix I. In the main, witness dates (date of production for manuscripts and prints) are more reliable than suggestions of composition date, which may be based on sporadic civic records referring to the performance of a play, perhaps or perhaps not identical to the extant play text. It is difficult to establish for example to what extent the extant sixteenth century copy of the *Chester* cycle actually reflects century earlier version of the *Chester* cycle. It is attested in civic documents that Chester guilds produced a series of Corpus Christi pageants already in the first quarter of the fifteenth century, but it is

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Six play texts surviving only in early print have also been included, as they are late medieval rather than Renaissance either by composition date or by content.<sup>23</sup> Neither of the printed play texts has a parallel copy extant in manuscript. Including prints in the study lends the opportunity to compare interjections in handwritten play texts to printed play texts. The two formats are compared in Section 7.4.

### 2.3 Theory

The present project draws on a number of theories of language use. First, historical linguistics must be involved, since Middle English texts are marked by two important features: they originate in a historical context when English had no standardised writing system, and they are shaped by a historical manuscript tradition. The linguistic variation found in Middle English texts must be understood and disambiguated in order that linguistic items (like interjections) are properly recognised. Variation caused by for example dialect should be accounted for in a typology of interjections. Manuscript production meant that written texts were copied, changed and reshaped and the texts reflect these processes to a larger extent than most modern texts.<sup>24</sup> Historical linguistics, including the study of scribes and early printers, form part of the context of the interjections occurring in Late Middle English play texts.

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not known to what extent the cycle changed during its lifespan of 150 years. Its day of performance changed, as did its format; possibly due to ever expanding versions the cycle came to be performed over three days during Whitsun (Lumiansky and Mills provide greater detail about the *Chester* cycle in several volumes). When dealing with historical linguistics, witness date is crucially important, since the language of the text more likely reflects the date of the copy than the date of the exemplar. The language and date of a hypothesised (lost) exemplar can only be inferred from the copy that survives. The language of the copy often provides reliable information for a historical linguist to suggest date and provenance of the copy. Again, Chapter 3 contains more detail about historical linguistics and the basis of the methods applied by LALME, i.e. *A Linguistic Atlas of Late Mediaeval English* (1986).

<sup>23</sup> Late medieval versus early Renaissance drama is discussed in Section 3.5.

<sup>24</sup> See Culpeper and Demmen (2011) on early printed play texts, even though their argument is not directly applicable to Middle English manuscript play texts, since printing and manuscript copying may provide quite different restrictions on text production. Differences in manner of text production (format) are tested in Chapter 7.



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Secondly, a study of interjections in drama texts draws on pragmatic theory. Pragmatics presumes that meaningful communication happens within contexts, and that this meaning-making can only be analysed with sufficient consideration of at least some of these contexts. One such shaping context is the drama genre itself, with its dialogic structure and the peculiar double level of communication. Drama communicates on two levels: among the play characters, and from text/playwright to audience.<sup>25</sup> Further contextual features which need consideration are the particularly medieval subgenres and the cast of characters the plays employ. Subgenres and character types are defined by the late medieval culture.

Thirdly, the cultural, or macro-level, context of Late Middle English drama was to a large extent formed by the late medieval belief system. The Catholic faith had a determining impact on late medieval (English) society at large. Many of the play texts serve religious purposes and most, if not all, are shaped by a late medieval religious outlook. Many of the plays were performed on religious holidays. Some plays were intended to teach the Bible, while others illustrated particularly instructive biblical events. Other plays showed their audiences how to be good Christians. A fourth group of plays were aimed at particular, non-religious occasions, but still naturally employed religious elements, such as appeals to God in the prologue.<sup>26</sup>

The late medieval thinking in binary opposites of good and bad, virtuous and vicious, is particularly considered in consideration of the play characters. Some knowledge about medieval play production is also required in order that factors such as the frequent audience addresses are understood. It may also be significant whether plays were performed indoors or outdoors. In short, contextual factors from the micro-level of manuscript to the macro-level of

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<sup>25</sup> The term 'playwright' is an abstraction. Due to the manuscript tradition and recycling of texts that shaped text production in the Middle Ages, there probably rarely is one 'playwright' responsible for a play text. Play texts, like many other medieval texts, are rather conglomerates of additions and changes. Still the word 'playwright' is used in the present study for lack of a better term. In some cases there is an actual playwright behind the play texts, two of them known by name: Henry Medwall and John Skelton.

<sup>26</sup> Cycle plays teach biblical history, morality and miracle plays teach Christian living (and dying), while interludes often employ (semi-)religious characters and speeches.

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the socio-cultural role of drama have been investigated. Chapter 3 supplies more discussion of the background relevant to Middle English play texts.

### 2.3.1 *Historical linguistics*

Language was studied mainly from written texts until twentieth century linguistic scholars turned their eyes (or ears) to spoken language as their main object of study. In the first half of the twentieth century it was fully recognised that speech is prior to writing, both in the history of mankind and in the history of the individual, and for some time it was held that only spoken language is real language. Written language was seen as a representation of speech, a secondary mode to speech, and as a result, written texts came to be regarded as poorer evidence of actual language use. Technological development, especially the possibility to record speech, advanced the study of spoken language use, as it made systematic study of speech possible. The focus on speech, as opposed to writing, laid the grounds for new approaches in linguistics, such as pragmatics (2.4.3 below).<sup>27</sup>

The priority language study gave to the spoken mode left historical linguistics in a dilemma. Historical linguistics dealing with language from before the advent of tape recording can only be performed via the medium of writing, which had been found lacking. One solution to the dilemma of what historical linguistics should study lay in taking written texts as more or less successful representations of the spoken mode, and to continue exploring the language but shifting the focus to for example phonology, which is traceable to a degree in writing.

The aim in historical linguistics for some time was thus primarily to gain insights into the spoken mode of past language stages. This focus led to new knowledge about regional language use in past stages of English. Historical dialectology revealed that the linguistic variation attested in Middle English texts could be explained by dialects and was thus systematic rather than unsystematic and random. The work on *A Linguistic Atlas of Late Mediaeval*

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<sup>27</sup> Semioticians such as Morris (1938) suggested that language (or “signs”) consisted of three levels: syntax, semiotics, and pragmatics (see e.g. Levinson 1983: 1 or Huang 2007: 2).

*English* (henceforth LALME) started in the 1950s (McIntosh 1956; 1963) (more in Chapter 3 below). The *Atlas* (McIntosh et al.1986) was launched in 1986, but results of the work were published for some decades prior to it.

It has gradually been recognised that written texts are valuable objects of study in their own right, and not only as an indirect way of studying (historical) speech (Jacobs and Jucker 1995: 9). Linguistic study has moved from viewing either writing or speech as primary, to recognising that language is both. Language manifests itself along a stylistic continuum (Koch and Oesterreicher 1985; Biber 1988) rather than in the binary opposite pair of writing versus speech.<sup>28</sup> There is more or less speech-like writing, and there is more or less formal, writing-like speech (Hughes 1996: 146). After a period in which naturally occurring speech was considered the (only) valid object of linguistic study, it has been taken into account that writing, as well, may inform our knowledge about (past) language use.

Historical linguistics experienced resurgence after the 1960s and -70s (Jacobs and Jucker 1995: ix). Traditionally, historical linguistic study addresses past language stages synchronically or diachronically. A synchronic historical study implies that a certain chronological section of a language is explored through the use of texts from approximately the same date. A diachronic approach means that earlier stages of language are compared to later stages of language, e.g. Early Modern English is compared to Present-day English, often to trace the development of certain grammatical features, certain parts of lexis, or changes in orthography.

The present work studies the use of interjections both synchronically and diachronically (the latter of course presupposes the first). The time-span covered by the play text material is relatively large; c. 1440-1600 by witness dates. It thus allows for comparison between the fifteenth century and the sixteenth

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<sup>28</sup> Hughes (1996: 146) provides an overview of alternatives to the speech versus writing dichotomy. Many of the alternatives replace the speech - writing dichotomy with others, such as 'planned' versus 'unplanned' discourse, or 'literacy' and 'orality'. Biber (1988, in Hughes 1996: 146) points out the many contradictory findings of studies which have sought to establish differences between oral and written language. Like Koch and Oesterreicher (1985), Biber suggests that language finds expression along a stylistic continuum, rather than in discrete entities (Hughes 1996: 146).

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century material. Further, manuscript texts are generally earlier than the printed play texts, and the different modes of production may affect the use of interjections. Differences are compared by application of quantitative methods in Chapter 7. In addition, the data of the present study will be discussed and compared to the studies on Early Modern English interjections by Taavitsainen (1995) and by Culpeper and Kytö (2010) in Chapter 6.

### 2.3.2 *Historical English dialectology*

Historical dialectology is a branch of historical linguistics which has received special attention in the study of English. English historical dialectologists have developed a methodology which led to the publication of LALME (1986) in addition to numerous studies especially on Middle English.<sup>29</sup> The written language referred to as Middle English (c. 1100-1500) is characterised by systematic, regional variation. Middle English texts can thus be used to study English historical dialects. Conversely, some knowledge about the Middle English language situation is necessary to enable understanding of why and how lexis, morphology and orthography vary.

The study of Middle English interjections may be affected on two of the levels where variation typically is found. Interjections are not inflected, and they are therefore hardly affected by variation on the level of morphology. Variation on the levels of lexis (words) and orthography (and its relation to phonology) could have a bearing on interjections in Middle English play texts. It is possible that interjections were considered as lexis by the manuscript copyists. If so, the medieval scribes would rarely substitute interjections, since scribes were less prone to substitute lexis than to make changes to morphology and spelling.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Chapter 3 explains LALME and its methodology in greater detail. Suffice it to say here that dialect may have affected Middle English interjections, and therefore dialectology has been included in the present project.

<sup>30</sup> Van Dalen-Oskam (forthcoming 2012) finds by the use of stylometric methods that Middle Dutch scribes show “least variation in the content words and most in the function words.” The findings for Middle Dutch scribes seem relevant also to a study of interjections in Middle English play texts. Since interjections can hardly have been thought of as function words, the scribes would most likely have interpreted them either as content words (and rarely changed them), or as sounds (i.e. subject to

By contrast, it is conceivable that Middle English scribes thought of interjections as mere sounds without any meaning (cf. the definition in Quirk et al. 1972). If the latter were true, the different forms of (written) interjections may in some cases represent the same interjection type, and conversely, orthographically similar items may represent different interjection types.<sup>31</sup>

Some of the texts included in the present study exhibit regional language usage, and were used in LALME for linguistic profiling and localisation. Dialect variation in the play texts may influence which interjections are used and how they are realised in writing (spelling). The language of the texts is presented in Chapter 5. Any dialectal patterns in the use of interjections are examined quantitatively in Chapter 7.

### 2.3.3 *Pragmatics*

“Pragmatics may be defined very crudely as the study of language in use.”

This is the simple definition of pragmatics provided in Jacobs and Jucker (1995: ix). Historical pragmatics, then, is the combination of pragmatic methods with historical linguistics (Jacobs and Jucker 1995: ix). Jacobs and Jucker further suggested that the field of historical pragmatics could be divided into “pragmaphilology” and “diachronic pragmatics”. This division is returned to below, following a discussion of recent developments in pragmatics.

Pragmatics was a rapidly growing field in 1995, and it has continued to expand (Huang 2007: 1). There is no universal agreement about the definition of pragmatics any longer. Present-day pragmatics is split into two main camps, referred to as the Continental and the Anglo-American side in pragmatics (Huang 2007; Jucker and Taavitsainen 2012). A proponent of the latter side is Huang (2007: 2; 5), who states that the field of pragmatics attracts attention not only from linguists, but also “from anthropologists,

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variation at the phonological level). If the latter was the case, interjections may have been frequently altered by play text copyists.

<sup>31</sup> Variation in the spelling of interjection/interjection types is discussed in Chapter 6.

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artificial intelligence workers, cognitive scientists, psychologists, and semioticians”.

The Anglo-American branch in pragmatics feels that pragmatics is in need of a definition which better delimits the field. Huang (2007) provides a “working definition” which can be taken to describe the Anglo-American view on what pragmatics is:

Pragmatics is the systematic study of meaning by virtue of, or dependent on, the use of language. The central topics of inquiry of pragmatics include implicature, presupposition, speech acts, and deixis. (Huang 2007: 2)

The Continental and the Anglo-American side in the pragmatics debate would probably agree about the first sentence of the quote above. The last sentence, delimiting pragmatics to “...implicature, presupposition, speech acts, and deixis”, reflects the Anglo-American view that pragmatics deals with linguistics (and nothing else).

By contrast, the Continental European branch of pragmatics is willing to include many more aspects.<sup>32</sup> It is especially important that historical pragmatics be an inclusive field of study. The study of language use in the past needs the same consideration of context as does contrastive language studies. It should not be taken for granted that a meaning-making system, for instance conversational politeness systems, is cross-culturally valid, i.e. valid across contemporary or historical cultures.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Proponents of this side are e.g. Jucker and Taavitsainen (forthcoming 2012).

<sup>33</sup> Fleischmann (2000: 37-39) warns historical linguists about the risk of overlooking (culturally, diachronically) different systems because important factors go unrecognised as a consequence of using apparatus which is not tuned in for them. Even if her warning is directed at issues in historical linguistics, it may also be relevant to other kinds of language study. Fleischmann (2000: 40) seems to imply that historical linguistics in some case is insufficient, and that a “functional, pragmatic perspective” should be applied in the study of historical (Romance) language. The present study agrees with Fleischmann, but sees the need to add that also historical pragmatists should continuously evaluate their theoretical approaches. It is important in historical pragmatics that the researcher recognises both the advantages and the drawbacks to applying any modern methodology to past stages of language. Ideally

The present study agrees with a Continental simple and broad definition: pragmatics is concerned with the meaning-making that goes on in language (discourse), including the context of the discourse situation. Both speech and writing relate to contexts which influence the use of language, such as the choice of words, of register, and the functions of language.<sup>34</sup> Therefore it is held here that pragmatic studies include awareness of context (Vagle et al. 1993: 20).

Pragmatics, like other approaches to language of the 1960s, preferred spoken language as the object of study. Partly as a reaction to the dominating role of Generative Grammar in linguistics at the time, pragmatics gained ground in the 1960s (Vagle et al. 1993: 20). Generative Grammar, or the Chomskian approach, views language as an innate, abstract system which can be studied by an “ideal language user” simply by means of introspection. Pragmatics, in contrast, insists on focussing on real language as manifested in actual speech.<sup>35</sup>

#### *2.3.4 Historical pragmatics*

In historical pragmatics it is assumed that insights gained from the pragmatic study of spoken language may be applicable to earlier language stages, for

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any application of method to (diachronically and/or comparatively) foreign language material should be performed as a test of the method, and not only the material. The present project has considered several pragmatic approaches to interjections in Middle English drama, and found several inadequate for the purpose of describing the distribution and function of interjections in this genre. The material itself has led to the development of new hypotheses, and a set of approaches were gradually found to cover the many factors that seem to have influenced the use of interjections in late medieval English drama: text production, genre, belief system and related cultural aspects.

<sup>34</sup> The influence is reciprocal as, for instance, register and/or particular linguistic functions form parts of what define contexts such as text type (Archer and Culpeper 2009: 288).

<sup>35</sup> Ideal language philosophy goes further back than Generative Grammar (or Generative Semantics as it was first called). For an overview of the history of pragmatics, see Huang 2007: 2-4. While Generative Grammar has lost followers since the 1970s, pragmatics has continued to expand as a method, or many methods, in the study of language and its functions. Particularly since the 1980s pragmatics has grown into a vast field of diverse approaches to communication (Jacobs and Jucker 1995: 3).

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which we have only written data (Jacobs and Jucker 1995: 5). In fact, the application of pragmatics to historical stages of a language is comparable to the application of contrastive pragmatics, i.e. comparing the pragmatics of different languages and/or cultures (Jacobs and Jucker 1995: 3-4). At the very least historical texts can be described using pragmatic terminology, e.g. from politeness theory (Jacobs and Jucker 1995: 5).<sup>36</sup>

The application of pragmatics to historical language can also be used to test the universal applicability of the pragmatic approaches themselves. Jacobs and Jucker (1995: 19) admit that some pragmatic approaches (speech act theory is their example) are best considered non-universal, and the application of them to other languages, or to past language stages, is therefore not advisable.<sup>37</sup> It has been an aim of the present study to find pragmatic methods which provide valid descriptions of Middle English interjections, but with the materials themselves, rather than any specific theory, as a starting point.

Technological advances have again aided the development of new methodologies (cf. audio recording in linguistics above), this time through the use of databases made possible by computers. Larger corpus studies can thus be performed, since electronic corpora facilitate faster studies of vast amounts of data, from both spoken and written texts.

I have not used existing corpora for the present project, as there is none which includes all Middle English play texts. Instead, the present work has included the tailoring, refurbishing and use of a database of 3,087 occurrences of interjections with annotations. The database had to be purpose-built to ensure that all relevant detail from the manuscripts (and prints) was readily accessible for field-combining searches.

The database has been refurbished with data checked in manuscript, rather than with data as they occur in editions. Editors have to make choices in editing medieval texts, meaning that they for instance supply punctuation where the manuscript has none. It can be a matter of interpretation whether the form <a>

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<sup>36</sup> Quite a few scholars have done this when describing the use of *thou* and *ye* in Middle English, since the two personal pronouns (singular and plural) were used to mark familiarity and distance, or disrespect and deference.

<sup>37</sup> Wierzbicka (1991) agrees that speech acts are highly culture-specific.



represents the article or an interjection. If the editor selects the first option, no punctuation will be added; if he or she selects the latter, an interjection, a comma or an exclamation mark is usually added.<sup>38</sup> Many of the existing corpora rely on editions of historical texts. If there are incorrect interpretations in the editions used to develop the corpus, these mistakes are repeated in the corpus. Chapter 4 describes the purpose-built database and its fields in greater detail.

### 2.3.5 *Historical pragmatics and the present project*

As mentioned, Jacobs and Jucker (1995: ix) suggested that historical pragmatics can be described as either “pragmaphilology” or “diachronic pragmatics”. The latter can further be divided into two classes: one takes linguistic form as its starting point; the other starts from pragmatic function. Jacobs and Jucker (1995: x) admit that these two types of diachronic pragmatics can be difficult to distinguish. The present work is perhaps best described as belonging in the field referred to as pragmaphilology by Jacobs and Jucker (1995: 12), but with elements shared with diachronic pragmatics.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> An example of a doubtful interpretation of the Middle English *ay* in the *York* cycle is discussed in Chapter 6, Section 6.8.2: AY.

<sup>39</sup> Jacobs and Jucker’s (1995) description of approaches in historical pragmatics has been updated by Archer and Culpeper (2009: 286). Basically, Archer and Culpeper reformulate the three, and add a fourth branch in their description of historical pragmatics. They divide Jacobs and Jucker’s “diachronic pragmatics” into two branches: 1) pragmalinguistics, which traces how a particular form changes its function diachronically, and 2) sociopragmatics, which traces how functions can be filled by different forms during the course of language change. They describe Jacobs and Jucker’s term 3) “pragmaphilology”, as an essentially synchronic study of historical pragmatics, and propose a fourth term 4) “sociophilology” to describe pragmatic studies taking (historical) context as their starting point for studying historical sociological aspects of language use (Archer and Culpeper 2009: 287). They demonstrate this fourth approach in a corpus-based study of key-features in dialogues from historical courtrooms and drama texts. The *Sociopragmatic Corpus* is a subsection (annotated by Archer and Culpeper 2007) of the *Corpus of English Dialogues 1560-1760* (Kytö and Walker 2006). Incidentally, Archer and Culpeper (2009: 301) demonstrate that historical drama texts are not necessarily well-suited for sociopragmatic study, among other things because they typically have few female speakers. It seems likely that other social groups also are underrepresented in drama. Of course, any underrepresentation of members of certain social classes, age or

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The present work may be placed within pragmaphilology as it has literary texts (drama) as its source, and its analysis includes literary and cultural contexts. On the other hand, the main object of study is a linguistic form: interjections, which cannot easily be distinguished from its functions: expressive, and possibly also conative, phatic (Ameka 1992) and textual (Taavitsainen 1995). Further, interjections are not just one form, but many, and since Middle English orthography is characterised by variation rather than regularity, (interjectional) function must be considered in addition to form-mapping in the tracing of interjections.

The present work combines minute manuscript studies with corpus methodology to arrive at as precise a description as possible of the use of interjections in one particular historical fictional genre. The pragmatic methods applied here are informed by earlier studies on historical dialogic texts and on (historical) interjections, and the present project takes these starting points further by exploring whether interjections were included in Middle English drama as a means of characterising both the subgenre and the speakers.

In order to obtain results as well-informed as possible, both qualitative and quantitative methods are applied. In addition, the results are compared to

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gender groups, does not invalidate the sociolinguistic variability that can be found in drama texts, as long as one is aware that drama characters do not constitute a representative population of a society. Yet, Archer and Culpeper (2009: 304) obtain interesting results in the drama text dialogues, for example that male servants are given directives while female servants are treated more like friends, especially by their mistresses (female employers). Archer and Culpeper recognise that this difference is most likely due to the typical drama plot. It does not necessarily represent real, historical relations between masters, mistresses, and male and female servants. Yet the use of *thou* and *ye* (T and V forms) gives clues to these relations, as it is likely that the pronoun forms also did in contemporary speech. The present study does not make claims about the socio-linguistic use of interjections in late medieval England, as Archer and Culpeper's (2009) sociophilological study does. The reservation against drawing parallels from drama speech to real speech is based on the view that drama employs stereotypes, and that realistic (in the modern sense) characterisation was not an aim of medieval drama. The study of *personae* characterisation seems more precisely described as cultural-stylistic pragmatics in the present project.

other studies of interjections in Late Middle English and Early Modern English texts.

In other words, the present study subscribes to the broad Continental European approach in pragmatics (Jucker and Taavitsainen forthcoming 2012). The Anglo-American definition of pragmatics (see quote from Huang 2007 above) excludes some of the variables considered important in the present study. The Continental pragmatics approach, by contrast, includes social and cultural perspectives in the study of linguistic phenomena. The present study seeks to integrate a wide range of “pragmatic variables” (Jucker and Taavitsainen forthcoming 2012): manuscript studies, historical linguistics and pragmatics, and late medieval socio-cultural studies of religion and drama.

The Middle English play texts are thus studied on a micro level, on a macro level, and on a socio-cultural level in a holistic approach to historical interjections. It is held that interjections form part of the negotiation of meaning in Middle English drama, and that this meaning can best be found through the investigation of “contextual cues” and via the application of the best suited “pragmatic principles” (Jucker and Taavitsainen forthcoming 2012). Further, the present study touches on the field of pragmatic stylistics (Black 2000) as it also aims at finding out more about the Middle English drama subgenres and play types, and about (some of) the individual plays and playwrights (Chapter 6).

Nørgaard et al. (2010) provides descriptions of various branches within stylistics. With regards to (new) historical linguistics, they (Nørgaard et al. 2010: 28) quote Taavitsainen and Fitzmaurice (2007: 2) who state that “stylistic analysis of texts dating from older stages of the English language presupposes a comprehensive knowledge of the period, context and the language in which the text was produced. It also assumes knowledge of genre conventions, existing editions, copy texts and spelling variation, and the role of the editor as a mediator.”

Even though the present project is not a stylistic analysis of one play text – it analyses meaning-making by the use of interjections in many texts - it agrees with the statement above that background knowledge is essential and that

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many aspects must be taken into account in the study of historical texts, their language and functions. Some of the aspects regarding interjections in medieval drama are quantifiable and can be tested for validity. These aspects will be addressed in Chapter 7. Below follows an introduction to the pragmatic approaches used in the study.

### 2.3.6 *Conversation analysis*

Conversation Analysis only claims to describe, not to explain (see e.g. Svennevig 2001). Conversation Analysis (CA) describes how participants in conversation take turns as speakers and listeners, just like speakers and addressees in drama dialogue do. This simplest common denominator for naturally occurring conversation and organised play dialogue was considered a good and non-intrusive starting point for a description of Middle English play dialogue. Conversation Analysis was employed as a descriptive tool in the present project.

Conversation Analysis has revealed that certain patterns recur in conversation (Sacks et al. 1978). It has for example been found that two speakers rarely compete for a turn for long; if two speakers in a group conversation happen to start a turn simultaneously one of them will quickly opt out and leave the floor to the other speaker. The current speaker has ways of 1) keeping the floor, 2) assigning the next turn to a speaker of choice (selecting the next speaker), or 3) leaving the floor open to any of the speakers (who self-select) (Sacks et al. 1978: 10-11). The other speakers can grab the floor, i.e. take a turn when there is a chance for it at a so-called transition relevance place.

The most common turn transitions take place with just short gaps or short overlaps, which are repaired by one speaker stopping to talk. Lapses may occur if no one takes the floor, but the conversation participants often try to avoid long lapses in conversation.<sup>40</sup> In order to keep the conversation flowing,

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<sup>40</sup> Lapses are longer breaks than the normal gap indicating a transition relevance place. Such (infrequent) lapses may be felt as awkward pauses, especially if a selected next speaker does not meet his “obligation” (Sacks et al. 1978: 13) to take the turn. Perhaps rules related to politeness (below) are the reason why speakers rarely leave lapses in conversation, or feel them to be awkward, especially if they do not know each other well, but even in Western societies this could vary. Modern drama texts

the last speaker may take the floor again to deliver a new turn, or (explicitly) to select a new speaker, or another speaker can self-select to take the floor.

Drama dialogue accords well to Conversation Analysis, because CA describes typical conversation and drama dialogue is typified conversation. Drama dialogue normally does not include much of the noise occurring in real conversation, such as hesitations, re-starts, self-interruptions, errors, and unfinished or ungrammatical sentences.

Middle English drama follows the rules described in Conversation Analysis. In addition, the breaching of turn-taking rules is very rare: speakers do not compete for the floor by initiating turns simultaneously.<sup>41</sup> Typically, one speaker holds the floor at a time, and the next speaker is selected by the floor-holder or self-selects to take the next turn. It has not been found that more than one speaker take the floor simultaneously, so that one has to give up his turn and wait for the next chance.<sup>42</sup>

Although it cannot be demonstrated, it further seems unlikely that Middle English play dialogue included lapses between turns. Interruptions, hesitations and false starts are very rare.<sup>43</sup> The smooth development of dialogue is the

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may have stage directions asking for pauses in the dialogue (no stage directions in Middle English drama require pauses), and this seems to indicate that a pause, or a lapse in CA terms, is meaningful in drama. It may imply hostility among the characters. The reverse can also be used for effect; if two speakers speak simultaneously and refuse to give up the floor to the other speaker, it is usually a strong indication of conflict (cf. George and Martha in Edward Albee's (1962) *Who's afraid of Virginia Woolf*).

<sup>41</sup> In performance it may occur that two actors start speaking simultaneously, one of them misassigning his turn, but such mishaps fall outside the analysis of drama dialogue.

<sup>42</sup> There is one important exception in the material: *Magnyfycence* to a greater extent than other play texts actually include competitions for turns and other comments about the conversation itself. The vices Fancy and Crafty Conveyance argue about turns in ll. 632-34, after Fancy's interruption of Crafty's speech. Many of the characters continuously dismiss each others' turns by use of the phrase *Hold thy peace*, or by use of the interjection TUSH (see TUSH in Chapter 6). By such (planned) quarrels about turn-taking and other types of communication-focussed comedy, *Magnyfycence* makes much out of the meta-aspect of play dialogue.

<sup>43</sup> Most play dialogue observes turn-taking rules and avoids much of the 'noise' that forms part of spoken conversation. Dialogue in drama thus seems to typify

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rule in historical play texts. Since drama involves communication on two levels, between the characters on stage, and from playwright to audience, the noises naturally occurring in face-to-face conversation works as noise in the channel from stage to audience. The drama dialogue must run smoothly and unobstructedly, and should be heard even by the audience at the back. At this level of speech, therefore, drama dialogue and real conversation are very different phenomena.<sup>44</sup>

### 2.3.7 *Politeness theory*

As Middle English drama appears to observe the rules of conversation as described in Conversation Analysis, it is possible that other modern theoretical approaches to conversation has similar applicability to historical, organised dialogue. One such approach is politeness theory. This approach was developed by Brown and Levinson (1977; 1987) on the basis of Grice's (1975) co-operative principles in conversation.<sup>45</sup>

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conversation rather than imitate conversation at this level of realism. Black (2000: 3) makes a similar observation about direct speech in narrative fiction: "Even in fictional dialogue the slips of the tongue, repetitions, elisions and opaque reference which characterise the spoken language are seldom represented, save occasionally for humorous effect."

<sup>44</sup> A playwright may choose to observe patterns from naturally occurring conversation by introducing such phenomena as lapses, back-channelling signals and interruptions in the play dialogue (some such features fall within the category of interjections). The effect achieved is not realism (i.e. a natural(istic) dialogue), but focus on communication difficulty or even breakdown (e.g. Pinter). If such conversational noise is overused in dramatic dialogue it will most likely lead to a confused audience, rather than to interesting drama. Some of the interjections used in natural conversation have been analysed in modern pragmatics, e.g. in Aijmer's (1987; 2002) studies on OH and AH, and Schiffrin's (1987) including OH among other discourse markers. Interjections used for back-channelling in conversation (e.g. as "information management markers" in Schiffrin 1987: 73) perform phatic functions (Ameka 1992). This function is rare in historical texts (including drama) (Taavitsainen 1995: 441).

<sup>45</sup> Grice's (1975) model is informed by the view that participants in conversation aim at maximum information effect. Several scholars have found that maximum information is not always the rule in conversation. Participants in conversation have other concerns besides information, for example they usually want to avoid causing offence. Much of the deviation from Grice's principles is caused by politeness strategies. Brown and Levinson's (1978; 1987) propose five politeness strategies,

One of the principles Grice suggests organise conversation - the “Maxim of Manner” - is refined by politeness theory’s taking “face” into consideration.<sup>46</sup> Brown and Levinson (1978: 61) suggest that their model is universal, i.e. cross-culturally applicable, meaning that it should also account for historical cultures. Black (2006: 72) suggests it can be used not only in analysis of conversation, but also to analyse literary discourse, for example play dialogue.<sup>47</sup>

It has been put into question whether politeness theory really is universal (Matsumoto 1988: 403; 421). The concept of face, and the ways we behave in

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building on the concept of (sociological) face, first developed by Goffman (1967) (Black 2006: 72). Leech (1983) has proposed a politeness theory, as well, but Brown and Levinson’s theory seems to have become more influential, or at least more widely discussed in the literature (see e.g. Culpeper, 1998; 2011, below). Black (2006: 72-74) offers an account of both theories.

<sup>46</sup> See Black (2006: 72-3) for a short summary of Brown and Levinson’s Politeness theory: positive and negative politeness, face and face threats. Culpeper (1998: 84-85) also discusses Brown and Levinson’s theory, and he suggests that it can be used to account for impoliteness. He demonstrates its applicability on the (modern) dramatic art of film (*Scent of a Woman*, 1992). Culpeper (1998; 2011) achieves the applicability of politeness theory to dramatic dialogue by reversing it to a theory of impoliteness. Conflict is a common theme in film (and drama), and the breaching of politeness rules is therefore frequently illustrated. The application of (im)politeness theory aid an analysis of how dramatic conflict is expressed in the dialogue and what this impoliteness reveals about the fictional characters. Just as Grice’s cooperative principle is based on an ideal (i.e. non-true) assumption that all conversation aims at maximum information sharing, so Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory is based on an ideal (i.e. non-true) assumption that all conversation aims at harmony through politeness. Black (2006: 24) gives examples of how talk can deviate from the cooperative principles, and from politeness theory, without necessarily invalidating the theories. The occurrence of verbal impoliteness is usually quite easily detected in (medieval) play texts from the reaction of the addressee of impolite talk. Therefore, even though politeness theory may not be cross-culturally applicable, it is possible to localise impoliteness in Late Middle English play dialogue.

<sup>47</sup> Meaning literary discourse at both levels: between the fictional characters, and between narrator and reader (Black 1972: 72). The latter level is absent in play texts, and will not be discussed here. The communication between playwright and audience is qualitatively different, as in drama there is no (explicit or implicit) narrator comment in the same manner as in a novel. Play-expositors occur in some of the Middle English plays (see Appendices), and these plot-external characters may superficially appear similar to (explicit) narrators in fictional texts, but mostly the expositors serve play-practical functions.

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order to maintain face and to be polite, may apply to Western and modern cultures only. It is far from certain that face is the same phenomenon in all cultures at all times in history. Politeness may not have been the same in late medieval English society; drama dialogue is constructed, not natural conversation. It is with some reservation, therefore, that politeness theory should be applied to Middle English drama dialogue

Nevertheless, politeness theory has been applied to historical, written dialogue before. Two approaches are especially interesting to the present study. Politeness theory informs studies on historical socio-linguistic patterns in the use of second person pronouns in conversation. In Middle and Early Modern English there was an element of choice in the application of informal and formal forms in addresses, as English had two possible forms: the informal *thou* and the formal *ye*, earlier the plural form.<sup>48</sup> Mazzon (2009) includes analyses of the use of informal and formal address terms, as well as pronoun switching, in her case study of the *N-town* cycle text. The present project occasionally explores the T/V address term system where relevant for the discussion of the function of interjections.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Formal and informal personal pronouns are used in modern German and French. The French formal variant is the plural *Vous* while the informal alternative is the singular second person pronoun *tu*, and the distinction is often referred to as ‘T/V’ distinction also with regards to other languages than French. English no longer has the alternatives, as the oblique form of the formal plural second person pronoun, *you*, is used in all contexts (there are alternatives in some dialects, used to distinguish between one and many addressees, *youse* and *y’all*, but not to mark the addressee socially). In Middle English the situation was different, and speakers and writers of English had to choose which address term, formal or informal, to use. This selection was based on social situation and the social roles of the discourse participants, but sometimes other factors played a part. Second person pronouns are frequent in play texts, consisting as they do of direct speech in dialogue. Most often the speakers observe social rules in choice of pronoun, but they may change from polite, formal *ye* to impolite *thou*, during the course of an argument. In other cases, inconsistent use of V and T forms cannot be similarly explained, and it has been found that second person pronouns occurring at the end of a verse line may adapt to the rhyme and thus come to contrast the use of formal and informal address terms elsewhere in the text.

<sup>49</sup> The Winchester Dialogues are presented in some detail including the use of second person pronouns and politeness/impoliteness (Appendix I). In another play, *Hickscorner* (c.1514), the use of second person singular *thou* versus *ye* is commented directly in the play text when one of the characters, Freewill, is clearly insulted (as the



Culpeper (1998; 2011) explains and demonstrates how (im)politeness theory can be used to analyse dialogue in film and drama. He (2011: 6) observes that politeness theory is based on a belief that people opt for harmony in conversation, but this is not always true, and politeness theory does not account for such conflict talk. Aggressive discourse takes place both in real life, and especially in the dramatic arts, which more often illustrate conflict than harmony. Politeness theory reversed can be used to analyse impoliteness in dramatic conflict dialogue (see footnote 40). Drama, like film, typically illustrates conflict at several levels. The conflict may be external, or it may be internal (within a character). Conflicts among the characters on stage (or on the film screen) are often expressed verbally and the dialogue can be analysed in order to establish how characters use “language to cause offence” (Culpeper 2011, book subtitle). Some of the Middle English plays contain verbalised character conflicts, and it is conceivable that some types of interjections typically occur in such scenes where characters quarrel.<sup>50</sup>

As a starting point for the present study it is held that expressive interjections do not observe politeness strategies, since they are subjective, spontaneous expressions of a speaker’s emotion and attitude. However, Ameka (1992) suggests that (spoken) interjections may serve not only expressive, but also

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derogative *caitiff* also suggests) by being ‘thoued’: *Auaunt caytyfe! Doost thou thou me?* (Hickscorner: l. 705. Punctuation is editorial).

<sup>50</sup> It should be noted that medieval drama should not unreservedly be measured against the principles of modern Western realistic drama. Character conflict (internal or external) seems less common and less individualised in Middle English plays. In the cycle plays for example, many of the conflicts are merely illustrations of known material and they do not add to the drama in the sense of an unanticipated turn of events - the outcome is given. However, some biblical episodes are elaborated beyond necessary illustration: the Second Shepherds’ play from the *Towneley* cycle, and three of the cyclic pageants about Noah dramatise extra-biblical conflicts in a humorous manner. Other Middle English plays dramatise conflict very explicitly, for example by having vices and virtues engaging in physical battle (Castle of Perseverance), or having vices or devils quarrel among themselves. In such conflicts also the outcome is given - the bad forces will lose – and the episodes are often humorous. Verbal impoliteness, such as swearing and name calling, seems to occur in many such conflict episodes. Swearing, however, has not been included in the present study, so swearing is discussed only in relation to interjections.

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conative and phatic functions, i.e. addressee- and contact-focussed functions respectively (below), and these may be governed by politeness strategies.<sup>51</sup>

The present project discusses whether all three functions of interjections are found in Middle English drama texts, and to some degree this involves considering politeness strategies, especially in situations of character conflict. It is difficult to make claims about Middle English polite behaviour in general, but open conflict in drama is recognisable and therefore politeness (or impoliteness) can be recognised at a lower, dialogue level.<sup>52</sup>

### 2.4 *Interjections: a literature review*

#### 2.4.1 *Some approaches*

Most scholars agree that interjections are difficult to define.<sup>53</sup> Due to this problem with defining interjections, there is disagreement as to which linguistic items belong in the category. Bloomfield (1933) for example, bases the distinction between interjections and other words on prosody and voice pitch, treating the class of interjections as belonging purely to the spoken level of language. By Bloomfield's definition basically any word in the lexicon can function as an interjection if uttered forcefully enough. Bloomfield includes

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<sup>51</sup> Both Taavitsainen (1995; 1997) and Culpeper and Kytö (2010) use Ameka's typology of functions to analyse interjections in historical dialogic texts. In differing degrees they find that interjections are used in historical written dialogue to perform expressive, conative and phatic functions. Taavitsainen (1995) finds few examples of interjections used for phatic functions, and she suggests this function is mainly found in spoken language.

<sup>52</sup> It is possible to reverse politeness theory into a theory of impoliteness which can be applied to organised (conflict) dialogue (Culpeper 2011). (Im)politeness theory has been successfully applied by Culpeper (1998) to film dialogue. Film like drama typically revolves around some kind of conflict. The conflict may be external, caused by forces outside of the characters, it may be internal taking place within one (or more) characters, or it may be a conflict between the characters themselves. Especially in the latter case, it is possible to analyse how characters use "language to cause offence" (Culpeper 2011, subtitle).

<sup>53</sup> See Cuenca (2000) about the indefinability of interjections, or Wharton's (2009) discussion below of the "conceptualist" and "naturalist" views on interjection. Ameka (1992) gives an historical account of the various definitions of interjections.

words such as ‘yes’, ‘oh dear’ and ‘thank you’. He calls one-word interjections ‘primary’ and phrasal interjections ‘secondary’.

Jespersen (1924: 90), somewhat earlier than Bloomfield, proposed a different distinction within the class of interjections. Jespersen suggested that it is useful to distinguish between words belonging in other word classes and real interjections which cannot be put into any other category. The latter are only used as interjections and do not occur otherwise (see also Mustanoja 1960), while the first occur in other contexts: ‘thank you’ and ‘[oh] dear’ are thus not interjections. Bloomfield’s terms ‘primary’ and ‘secondary’ interjections, for one-word and phrasal interjections respectively, are now usually used to denote the distinction made by Jespersen for interjections only (primary) and interjections with multi-class membership (secondary interjections).<sup>54</sup>

Ameka (1992a: 102) finds that many definitions of interjections are problematic because scholars have tended to mix the levels of utterance type and word class, i.e. because “analysts mix up functions and categories” (Ameka 1992a: 104). As Taavitsainen (1995: 439) points out, the boundaries are fuzzy between interjections and other categories with similar pragmatic function (e.g. expressive) and/or syntactic distribution (such as routines and particles). Like particles, interjections are uninflected, and like routines such as greetings, interjections typically occur as syntactically independent mini-clauses.

Some find interjections, like particles, to be a closed group of words (e.g. Fraser 1999). Others define interjections as pragmatic markers which can form utterances on their own, rather than as particles which cannot do this. But in contrast to other pragmatic markers, the category of interjections is

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<sup>54</sup> See e.g. Koskeniemi (1962), Taavitsainen (1995; 1997) and Mazzon (2009). Even though all employ the primary and secondary distinction of interjections, there is not complete agreement as to which interjections belong in which class. The interjection ALAS is referred to as primary in Taavitsainen and as secondary in Koskeniemi and Mazzon. Culpeper and Kytö (2010) include ALAS with pragmatic noise, which is their term for primary interjections. By employing prototype theory in the classification of interjections, ALAS can be included due to it having very clear expressive function even though it derives from a phrase. (But see the discussion of ALAS and its function in Chapter 7).

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open (Norrick 2009: 888-89), because any item can function as an interjection, i.e. as an affective outburst (cf. Bloomfield 1933 above).

If exclamatory function is the only criterion for membership in the class of interjections, any linguistic item can in principle be included depending on for example the pitch of voice in pronunciation (Bloomfield and Norrick 2009). One can, for instance, imagine a personal name being called out in anger. Swearing may be considered a typical interjection, since swearing is often used for exclamatory function to express the speaker's anger, pain, or surprise (*Bloody hell - you scared me!*).

Swearing, however, usually consists of words with membership in other word classes, such as nouns or adjectives. Multiclass membership is of course possible, but a difficulty arises in determining when the particular noun is an interjection and when it is not. Adjectives used in swearing can occur as descriptors (*his bloody shirt was found in the ditch*) or as non-exclamatory modifiers (*it is bloody awful*) elsewhere. Similarly, nouns and verbs used in swearing are also used for non-exclamatory purposes.

Routines, such as greetings and thanks, as well, may or may not be used for expressive/exclamatory purposes. The phrase *Thank you* can be delivered in speech as a mere routine or as an expression of deep gratitude, and it is very difficult to determine when it functions as a polite routine, and when it is truly expressive of the speaker's emotion. A categorical distinction between a non-expressive and expressive use of routines becomes extremely difficult with written material, where additional cues such as facial expression and tone of voice are absent.

### 2.4.2 *Interjections in speech*

Interjections are particularly closely related to the spoken mode, and interjections therefore occur in direct speech quotations in written texts, and very rarely elsewhere in writing. It is not necessarily the case, however, that a definition of interjections based on the spoken mode applies equally well to interjections in written texts. The close relationship between interjections and

body language means that interjections may serve different functions in naturally occurring conversation and in organised written language.

Interjections may be difficult to codify in transcribing naturally occurring conversation, while they are already codified in written texts, and must be considered meaningful utterances rather than more or less meaningful sounds. Interjections may be of natural-biological origin (e.g. FIE may derive from a blowing away of foul smell), and the codification of them is sometimes based on imitation of their oral mode even if this violates the rules of standard orthography (e.g. *mm*).

Many scholars studying spoken interjections point to their context-dependency. As interjections are claimed to have no propositional meaning, they must be interpreted from context. However, Schröder (2003: 107) found in an experimental study of German affect bursts (interjections) that listeners recognised many affect bursts as denoting a specific emotion also when heard (from tape recording) outside of any written or oral context. Norrick (2009: 888) similarly concludes that interjections are normally understood by the participants in the “concrete context” (of speech). In other words, even spoken interjections appear to have meanings.

The results of Schröder’s (2003) experimental study clearly indicate that interjections can be understood context-independently. These results are of particular interest to the present study of interjections, as both studies have performed interjections as starting points. Schröder conducted his study by audio-recording actors uttering a variety of affect bursts and then having listeners describe the emotion implied. The affect bursts were in fact recognised by the listeners at a mean recognition rate of 81.1 % (Schröder 2003: 107).<sup>55</sup>

When Middle English playwrights included interjections in their play texts, one may assume that they did so for a reason. One can further assume that the intention of including interjections was for the actors to perform them on a par with the rest of the text. Interjections may have served as textual clues to the

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<sup>55</sup> Affect bursts denoting ‘admiration, disgust, and relief’ had a very high recognition rate of more than 90 % accuracy, while anger and threats had weaker results for recognition with a rate of just over 60 % accuracy (Schröder 2003: 107).

## 2. THEORY

performers of plays (almost like stage directions), and as clues about characters' emotions to the audience of play performances. It is likely that some interjections had become stereotypical markers of particular emotions and attitudes (Taavitsainen 1995: 447 about ALAS). In addition, Schröder's study of affect bursts suggests that a playwright can trust that the meaning of at least some interjections will be recognised and understood by the audience, since they are usually understood even outside of a linguistic or physical context, i.e. without the additional clues to interpretation which facial expression and body language give.

Schröder (2003: 100) has the term "affect burst" from Scherer (1994), who put "raw affect bursts" at one end of a continuum and "affect emblems" at the other end. Wharton (2009) also describes the category of interjections as a continuum of expressions from natural sounds at one end to lexical words at the other end. He develops this understanding of a "showing/saying" continuum; from sounds that show a feeling to words that tell of an emotional state. The idea of interjections forming a continuum from sound to word can inform studies also of written interjections.

If interjections are thus recognised as semi-words (Goffman 1981) placing themselves on the continuum between meaningless sounds and meaningful words, the problems of categorisation of spoken versus written interjections are in fact found at opposite ends. While a study of interjections in conversation will have to decide what sounds (on the audio-tape) are meaningful, a study of interjections in written texts will have to decide which coded items are interjections and not words. In written texts the interjections are coded for us. We do not have to decide whether they are meaningful and should be transcribed from the tapes recording the conversation. In written texts interjections can thus be taken as meaningful utterances even though they may not be words, i.e. part of language (Wharton 2009: 209; 213).

At the one end of the continuum, then, interjections border on body language, while at the other end they border on (content) words. On the body language (i.e. showing) end of Wharton's (2009) showing/telling-continuum, interjections border on sounds such as hiccups and yawns. Spontaneous cries of surprise may be likened to such sounds. These spontaneous outbursts, however, can also be ordered along a continuum from the biological

irrepressible and meaningless sounds, to the sounds which can be manipulated and may carry meaning. Interjections are close to the latter type of sound.

The example of hiccups and yawns may illustrate the difference between a meaningless sound and a potentially meaningful one. A hiccup does not express emotion and falls outside the interjection category, while yawns may express attitude (tiredness, boredom), and are closer to interjections. Like hiccups, yawns are body language which may be difficult to repress, but like interjections, such as a surprised OH, yawns are often taken to express attitude, to the extent that it has become the stereotypical bored listener's reaction. A yawn on stage (or in film) is not meaningless, yet most would agree that they are not meaningful words. Yawns are merely bodily reactions that even many animals have.<sup>56</sup>

Similar natural sounds can be exploited in fiction in order to typify human natural-emotional expression effectively. Laughter is an example of a meaningful sound, which is usually not considered a word, but which can be imitated in written dialogue (and in drama) to express emotion. It is considered an interjection in the present work.<sup>57</sup>

Laughter is a bodily expression of joy, and it seems to be a universal behaviour specific to humans (in contrast to yawns: while also animals yawn,

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<sup>56</sup> Bodily reactions are outside the scope of the present work, but the fuzzy area between body language and interjections proper should be acknowledged. This area is where students of spoken language need to draw a line between body language that involves sound and vocal reactions that are meaningful or functional in naturally occurring conversation. In transcribing recorded speech it has to be decided which sounds to include and which to ignore. In many cases the decision rests on the interests of the transcriber or the researcher. Therefore it cannot be assumed that all relevant 'noise' is included for example in transcriptions of witness depositions. In written fictional texts, however, the question of what 'noises' deserve codification has already been answered: what is included in the text is meaningful and/or functional. The student of written texts has to draw a line between interjections and other words in the texts. In historical texts this must be achieved without the help of for example punctuation. From the present work I have come to believe that interjections, being on the margin of language proper yet meaningful in their contexts, need distinct definitions in accordance with mode. There are spoken interjections and there are written interjections.

<sup>57</sup> If imitations of yawns had been found in the material, these would also be treated as interjections. None have been recognised.

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they do not laugh?). Laughter is often reproduced in writing as HA HA or a similarly coded imitation of the sound. It is not necessarily a short interjection at all. Further, laughter seems to be more easily repressed than yawns, as we in fact often do repress laughter for politeness reasons (many also suppress yawns for the same reasons, but it is difficult to conceal a yawn completely). It would be impolite to laugh at someone who slips and falls in the street, even though we do so if the faller cannot hear us, for example when watching films. We rarely laugh (or express other emotions) at strangers for their making stupid remarks, even though we would like to. We even fake laughter sometimes, for instance at bad jokes if the situation demands it, either to save the face of the joker, or our own.

If such spontaneous, emotional outbursts can be repressed or faked, there is a problem in the definition of interjections as natural outbursts. Indeed, the source texts of the present study, drama, thrive on the fact that emotions and natural, affective expressions can be feigned.<sup>58</sup> The line between the natural, short expression of emotion and natural body language is thus not all that clear.

The feature of voice (and prosody) has commonly been used in the definitions of interjections (see e.g. Bloomfield 1933). Mustanoja (1960) does not include intonation in his definition of interjections, but as he finds intonation to play an important part in exclamations, he sees written texts as inadequate for the study of them. Mustanoja (1960: 621-2) divides interjections into three classes: primary, secondary, and exclamatory phrases. He suggests that all primary interjections are onomatopoeic, but they need not be short, as they can be reduplicated, for example in HA HA.<sup>59</sup>

Mustanoja suggests primary interjections serve three functions: imitative of natural sounds, expressive of emotion, or imperative, expressing a command,

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<sup>58</sup> This is probably more true of the modern realistic drama than of the medieval drama, but ultimately all plays rest on a mimetic relation to real life, even drama of the absurd does so: absurdism contrasts the realistic and meaningful by presenting something as realistic yet meaningless (or futile). If a play was both unrealistic and meaningless, it would probably not succeed in communicating anything.

<sup>59</sup> Culpeper and Kytö's (2010) term "pragmatic noise" similarly includes reduplications like the interjection HA HA (below), but not all definitions of interjections include imitations of laughter or similar sound-imitations.



like the imperative of verbs. This is reminiscent of but not equal to the typology of functions suggested by Ameka (1992a) and discussed below. Since Ameka's classification of functions has been applied in recent analyses of (primary) interjections, this classification has been used in the present study.

Particularly in historical texts with little or no marking of syntactic boundaries or of prosody (e.g. through the application of any type of *punctus*), it is difficult to analyse the function of for instance the interrogative 'what'. 'What' may function merely as a (syntactically independent) question, or it may serve exclamatory functions like interjections do, expressing emotions such as anger. Since 'what' belongs in the class of interrogatives, and is used other than as an interjection, it has been excluded from the present study. Its function has been noted, however, and will be returned to where relevant.

Primary interjections typically belong to the spoken mode, and yet they occur frequently in the highly organised, written language of Middle English drama. Culpeper and Kytö ask themselves why pragmatic noise is used in Early Modern English written texts (2010: 200). The question is at least as relevant for the older types of English drama in which organisation is even more marked: Middle English play texts are frequently written in an alliterative high style (at least in parts of the text), and always employ versification, especially end rhymes. It must be assumed that interjections occurring in historical drama texts serve a function, and that this function is meaningful in the context. Wharton (2009: 176-77) suggests a definition of interjections consisting of only two elements, shared by 'conceptualists' and 'naturalists' alike:<sup>60</sup> 1) "an interjection is capable of constituting an utterance by itself in a unique, non-elliptical manner", and 2) "an interjection expresses a mental or emotional attitude or state".

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<sup>60</sup> Wharton (2009: 174) coins the term 'conceptualist' to describe those scholars who view interjections as part of language (e.g. Ameka). On the other side stands notably Goffman (and Quirk et al., but also the Latin grammarians quoted in e.g. Ameka 1992) contending that interjections are 'natural' and not an integrated part of language. These contrasting views Wharton seeks to integrate, however, stating that interjections are somewhere in between 'showing' (natural) and 'telling' (language). Interjections can be coded even if they do not 'tell' in the same manner as words do, and this "element of stylisation or coding takes them beyond pure showing" (Wharton 2009: 211).

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Attempts have been made to distinguish between primary and secondary interjections. The purpose has been to avoid the problems connected with a category which includes very diverse items by defining a group of ‘proper’ interjections - the primary ones. Jespersen (1924) suggested a distinction between those interjections which are only used as interjections and nothing else, and those interjections which occur in “ordinary language” (Jespersen 1924: 90). The latter can be used for other functions and purposes than exclamatory ones, while the first type cannot. He grouped this type, the proper interjections, with particles. The distinction between interjections and expressions belonging in other word classes is important. Grouping interjections with particles is problematic, however, because, unlike particles, interjections constitute utterances on their own. They correspond to sentences.

Mustanoja (1960), and later Ameka (1992a: 104), re-establish Bloomfield’s terms ‘primary’ and ‘secondary’ interjections, but with the meaning derived from Jespersen, i.e. primary interjections cannot be used as anything else, while secondary interjections comprise of those words which belong in other word classes and can be used otherwise.<sup>61</sup>

What are by now traditionally referred to as primary interjections are the main object of the present study, but a research object needs careful consideration also of its boundaries. This is perhaps especially true of studies of past stages of language which may have been very different from modern languages and their description in modern grammars and contemporary language studies. Therefore, not only are primary interjections discussed, but some items which are traditionally called ‘phrasal’ or ‘secondary interjection’ have been included. It is believed that interjections form a continuum from natural sounds to words and phrases. In order to study the continuum of such expressions, a rather inclusive definition was preferred.

The prototypical features of interjections are the following:

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<sup>61</sup> Ameka proposed that the term ‘interjection’ should be reserved for the group of interjections not occurring otherwise, while secondary interjections be referred to as “interjectional phrases”. This usage seems not have become common in the literature. Rather, one continues to refer to primary and secondary interjections, or entirely new terms are suggested (“pragmatic noise” in Culpeper and Kytö 2010).

#### INTERJECTIONS IN LATE MIDDLE ENGLISH PLAY TEXTS

- they are short and consist of one word (even though medieval spelling and manuscript production do not always suggest clear word boundaries, and a disyllabic interjection may be written with a space),
- they frequently appear as independent utterances (but again, medieval writing conventions rarely include the marking of syntax)
- they express an immediate reaction: emotion or attitude.

The class of interjections comprise only those expressions which are not used otherwise. These are often related to natural sounds. They are usually short and always uninflected. They express emotion or attitude, and in English they comprise items such as *Ah, Oh, Ha, Mhm, Oy, Tut*. In general these items will be referred to as interjections, but their status as either primary, secondary or phrasal interjections will be discussed where relevant.

The connection to the spoken mode is most obvious for the short, primary interjections (*Ah, Oh, Ha*, etc.). It has been argued that these are as close to body language, like laughter, as they are to language. Goffman (1981) takes this stance on interjections when he describes them as semi-words and refers to them as “response cries”. There may be some truth to this notion that (primary) interjections exist in the margins of language proper, and that they are close to bodily reactions (Cf. Quirk et al. 1972). None the less, many such semi-word interjections are codified and occur in written texts, and must therefore have been considered words by the writers. Even if interjections could have been used as mere line-fillers in verse, they add something to the text from a literary point of view.<sup>62</sup> This “something” has not received the

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<sup>62</sup> I have not found that interjections were employed by ME playwrights or scribes to fill in the metre. On the contrary, I suggest that there are more neutral words which would have served such purposes better (e.g. the particle *now*), if it was at all considered necessary that every line contained the same number of stressed syllables or the same versification throughout. Since it is difficult to be certain about the relationship between ME orthography and ME phonology, it is difficult to suggest which syllables were fully pronounced and which were not. When the pronunciation (of sounds and syllables) cannot be exactly established, one cannot say whether the verse system was rigorously adopted or allowed for flexibility. Versification has not been systematically explored, but in most cases the metre employed in Middle English play texts seems to allow for considerable variation (the pronunciation of the vowel in endings of weak verbs (*-ed*) may have been optional. In Shakespeare such endings can be pronounced or reduced depending on the verse).

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attention it deserves, neither from a linguistic perspective, nor from a literary one.

### 2.4.3 *The functions of interjections*

Volume 18 (2-3) of the *Journal of Pragmatics* in 1992 was dedicated in its entirety to interjections: ‘The universal yet neglected part of speech’ (Ameka 1992a). Ameka’s (1992a: 113) starting point is that interjections are “linguistic signs” of mental states, found in all languages.<sup>63</sup> As linguistic signs interjections deserve linguistic study. Ameka (1992a: 113-14) proposes a classification of the functions primary interjections can serve as linguistic signs. The functional typology is based on Jakobson’s (1960) model of general functions of language. The three functions interjections may perform in speech are expressive, conative and phatic. Ameka’s typology of functions is used by both Taavitsainen (1995; 1997) and Culpeper and Kytö (2010), and will be applied also in the present study.

- The expressive function is speaker-oriented, meaning that interjections express emotive and cognitive states of the speaker (cf. Quirk et al. 1972; 1987).
- The conative function is addressee-oriented, meaning that interjections can be aimed at attracting the attention of an addressee or eliciting a (verbal or physical) response from them.
- The phatic function is communication-oriented, meaning that they are “used in the establishment or maintenance of communicative contact” (Ameka 1992a: 114).

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<sup>63</sup> Note that both emotion and cognition are defined as mental states (Ameka 1992a: . It is understood that “cognition” means more or less the same as the commonly applied “attitude” when it is described what interjections express. Ameka’s term “mental state” in any case tries to reconcile a somewhat artificial division between emotion and attitude/cognition. Whether for instance the state of surprise is an emotive or a cognitive state is not important. What matters is that surprise may cause a spontaneous vocal reaction which can be defined as an interjection. In English the typical interjection expressing surprise is probably OH, and in Norwegian it is ÅH. The examples of OH and ÅH shows two things: the expressions are probably related, yet they have developed linguistically peculiar codifications reflecting slightly different pronunciation. In other words, OH/ÅH is both cross-cultural and language specific – the natural expression has developed into stereotypical forms (and sounds).

The latter point above is explicitly cited from Ameka, because there seems to be some disagreement in the literature as to what the communication-focus of interjections really is. This is returned to in the analysis in Chapter 6.

Ameka (1992a: 114) underlines that the three different functions of interjections may co-occur, and in the present study it has been taken that they do. However, this study has as a starting point that interjections in Middle English play texts mainly function expressively, and whether they are also used for other functions could be secondary. This is demonstrated in Chapter 6 through the analyses of each interjection type.

Since there is categorical overlap, or multimembership, interjections do not always fall into clear-cut functional categories. An example is the ME interjection HO, occurring in the material as a call for attention. On the one hand, the interjection HO is possibly an attention call serving only conative functions while being expressively neutral, i.e. no emotion or attitude is implied. On the other hand, the interjection HO (or HOWE, see Chapter 6), sometimes appears to be an attention call which also expresses anger. In the latter case, the interjection HO functions both conatively and expressively. It is further possible that HO could be used as an angry call for attention aimed at aborting the conversation, e.g. by stopping the addressee from speaking. In this hypothetical context, the interjection HO would serve all three functions simultaneously: conative, expressive, and phatic.

It has been found from the initial reading of the Middle English play texts that in multi-functional contexts, the expressive function often seems to dominate the other two functions. It seems rarely to be the case that interjections are only used for conative functions or only used for phatic ones.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> One exception, however, is the interjection LO, which rarely denotes (spontaneous) emotion or attitude at all. The distribution and function of the interjection LO seems to be so different from the others that it must be asked whether LO really should be considered an interjection in Late Middle English play texts – discussed in Chapter 6. One main use is a play-practical one of pointing to objects and characters. Another is to highlight the start or end of an argument. In both these usages LO corresponds to the imperative of a verb: “see!”

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Even though it can be problematic to establish which functional category each interjection belongs to in written texts, it seems that listeners have little difficulty interpreting interjections in conversation. In face-to-face communication, of course, there are many other clues to the interpretation of utterances (and interjections), besides the linguistic (phonological) ones. Gesture, pitch, intonation and facial expressions are part of our communicating with each other.

Such non-linguistic clues may be especially important for the interpretation of interjections. (As we have seen, for instance Bloomfield included prosody in his definition of interjections.) In the case of written dialogue these clues are missing. Even markers of clausal boundaries are practically non-existent in the present material.<sup>65</sup> Sometimes the surrounding text, such as stage directions in drama and narrative passages in fiction, may explicate the function of the interjections directly. In historical drama texts, however, this is rarely the case. Stage directions are scarce, and rarely concerned with emotion or attitude. The functions of the interjections used in medieval English play texts must be interpreted from the co- and contexts.<sup>66</sup>

### 2.4.4 *Interjections in historical English texts*

How difficult it may be to define interjections, some scholars have braved the task of investigating them in written, historical texts. The work of four of these scholars is presented below. Their approaches differ somewhat: some studies include only interjections; some studies include interjections among a variety of other dialogic features in historical texts; some studies focus only on drama; and yet others examine texts from many genres. Three of the five studies below are concerned with Early Modern English rather than Late Middle English (Taavitsainen 1995, Culpeper and Kytö 2010, and

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<sup>65</sup> No *punctus exclamativus* was found in any of the texts, and *puncti* are used mainly to mark mid-verse caesura rather than syntax. In some texts a *punctus* may occur interjections, giving important clues to the interpretation of clausal boundaries and the syntactic independence of interjections, but such marking is far from systematic in any of the texts explored.

<sup>66</sup> The terms co-text and context are used about the surrounding language (co-text) and the dramatic episode in which the interjections occur (context) respectively.

Koskenniemi 1962). This means that they can be used in the present study for diachronic comparison, but with certain reservations.<sup>67</sup>

1. Koskenniemi (1962) used only drama texts in her *Studies in the Vocabulary of English Drama 1550-1600 (excluding Shakespeare and Ben Johnson)* described as encompassing “New word formations in 104 play texts” (1962: introduction). It is thus a historical-linguistic study of lexis, including primary and secondary interjections.
2. Mazzon’s (2009) book *Interactive Dialogue Sequences in Middle English Drama* takes the form of a case study of the *N-town* cycle, whose text is also included in the present study. Hers is a “study in historical pragmatics” (Mazzon 2009: 1), including several approaches, such as historical sociolinguistics (address terms and pronouns), and primary and secondary interjections (2009: 81-89).
3. Culpeper and Kytö (2010) explore a wide range of dialogic material in a many-faceted study of *Early Modern English Dialogues. Spoken Interaction as Writing*. Their Early Modern English material contains “trial proceedings, witness depositions, drama comedy, didactic works, and prose fiction” (Culpeper and Kytö 2010: 24). They dedicate as many as four of 16 chapters to “pragmatic noise” – their own term for primary interjections including imitations of laughter and other sounds often excluded from the class of interjections

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<sup>67</sup> Reservations concern both the linguistic and the cultural aspects. The challenge of classification based on form (spelling) is greater in Late Middle English than in Early Modern English. For example the spelling form <ha> may represent different interjection types in Late Middle and Early Middle English. Chapter 6 discusses such issues relating to all types of ME interjections. Punctuation is not yet consistent in Early Modern English material, so the difficulties related to lack of punctuation (syntax) are similar for students of the two language stages. An important cultural aspect is that the drama genre may have changed much from the late medieval Catholic play type to the Renaissance drama of Shakespeare and contemporaries. Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 21-22) acknowledge the need to consider (historical) genre; that genre is related to socio-historical context; that such factors change and thus the genre may have changed.

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(Culpeper and Kytö 2010: 199).<sup>68</sup> The term “pragmatic noise” has not been adopted in the present study, but the practice of including laughter and reduplicated interjections has been followed.<sup>69</sup> Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 203, and footnote 6) employ a criterion of non-homonymy between interjections and “related words in other word classes” in order to single out pragmatic noise from secondary interjections.<sup>70</sup>

4. Taavitsainen performs corpus-based studies on interjections and exclamations in two articles from the 1990s:
  - a) ‘Interjections in Early Modern English’ (1995), and
  - b) ‘Exclamations in Late Middle English’ (1997). Having established (1993b, in 1995: 573) that interjections typically occur in fiction and more specifically in speech quotes, Taavitsainen uses the relevant sections of the Helsinki Corpus plus a selection from the *Canterbury Tales* for her 1997 study of Late Middle English.

Taavitsainen’s studies formed the starting point of the present project, and her work has remained a source of inspiration throughout. Mazzon’s (2009) and Culpeper and Kytö’s (2010) studies were only published after the work on the present project was begun.

Like the studies by Koskeniemi (1962) and Mazzon (2009), the present study explores drama only. Like Taavitsainen’s (1995; 1997) two studies, but unlike Koskeniemi’s (1962), the present work focusses only on interjections.

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<sup>68</sup> Mustanoja (1960), however, included imitation of laughter and other reduplicated items (see 2.5.2 above). Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 199) make explicit that pragmatic noise and primary interjections are overlapping phenomena. Their frequent references to Taavitsainen (1995) and Koskeniemi (1962) strengthen the notion that pragmatic noise and primary interjections are comparable entities.

<sup>69</sup> Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 199) mention both laughter and pause-fillers as pragmatic noise items which are usually excluded from the category of interjections. In the present study (imitation of) laughter has been understood as an emotive-expressive interjection not occurring otherwise. Pause-fillers, however, seem not to occur in the Late Middle English drama material of the present study.

<sup>70</sup> The criterion of homonymy is based on the description of inserts in Biber et al. (1999: 1082) (Culpeper and Kytö 2010: 203).



Like Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 22) developed a specialised corpus for their study, so have I developed a purpose-built database for the present project. A purpose-built rather than a general database is necessary in order to accommodate all the contextual features which may have affected the use of interjections in Middle English play texts. The database is discussed in Chapter 4, following a section about the background of the material (Chapter 3).

#### *2.4.5 Interjections in writing versus speech*

What is considered interjections is often based on present-day spoken language. Since interjections occupy a peculiar position between noise and word, however, it is not given that a definition of spoken interjections fits written interjections equally well (see Section 2.3.3). The question of defining interjections will be revisited in Chapter 8 of the present study. It is possible that interjections used in historical written drama offer new insights both into the class of interjections and into Middle English dramatic dialogue. Perhaps the definition of interjections needs revision in light of this.

Interjections used in the Middle English play texts may fulfil different purposes from those that they fulfil in speech. Naturally occurring conversation draws on a wide array of non-linguistic factors. In addition to the features of facial expression, gesture, and pitch of voice already mentioned, real conversation draws on the participants' knowledge of topic and of each other. This mutual horizon of understanding must be created for the characters as well as for the audience of a play performance. Drama dialogue must thus not only communicate information, but in the process it must also establish a fictional world which is effectively recognised by the audience.<sup>71</sup> Compared to other written sources, drama dialogue may be the closest representation we have of historical spoken language (Culpeper and Kytö 2010: 17-18), but it is

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<sup>71</sup> In some medieval play texts, but far from all, a fictional play world is established by the use of an expositor delivering a prologue. In other plays, clues such as costume and properties aid in suggesting a play world, sometimes a historical setting such as the biblical Herod's Court. Nevertheless, in most plays the dialogue itself provides the necessary contexts for successful recognition of plot, characters and character relationships. Interjections may have contributed particularly in suggesting character traits and character relations.

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so according to rules of its own. These rules may inform the use of interjections in Middle English drama, and they may well lead to interjections serving quite different functions in play dialogue compared to natural conversation.



### **3 Background: the multi-contextuality of interjections in play texts**

#### *3.0 Abstract*

This chapter is quite extensive, since it is held in the present study that many factors must be examined in order to reach a fuller understanding of interjections in written Middle English play texts. The present chapter discusses the historical linguistic background of the play texts, as well as the cultural background of late medieval English drama. The methodology behind *The Linguistic Atlas of Late Mediaeval English* is discussed, before the language (dialect) of the play texts is localised by reference either to LALME or to editors. The chapter further includes collations of the few play texts surviving in more than one copy in order to find out how medieval scribes tended to treat interjections. After the linguistic background has been laid out, a discussion follows focussing on those aspects of late medieval English culture of particular relevance to drama and its subgenres. Middle English plays can be categorised into subgenres according to content, or they can be categorised into play types according to manner of production. These two approaches to categorisation are presented towards the end of the present chapter.

#### *3.1 Middle English written interjections*

Two features of the Middle English language are important to the study of interjections. First, there is the potential difficulty in recognising interjections and categorising interjection types in a language which had no written standard. Secondly, medieval manuscript production and scribal practices may have affected the use of interjections in drama texts. These two aspects, linguistic variation and manuscript production, are discussed in the following.

##### *3.1.1 Written dialects*

The Middle English period (c. 1100-1500) can be called the era of written dialects, because regional variation was the norm in texts in the vernacular dating from this time. Old English had developed close to a written standard

in Late West Saxon, but English was in the process of changing from an analytical to a synthetic language at the time of the Norman Conquest.<sup>72</sup> The Conquest of 1066 brought with it change of functions for written English as Norman French replaced English (West Saxon) in affairs of the state. The Norman French aristocracy also introduced Latin as the language of the law at the cost of English, strengthening the position Latin already had as the long established language of the Church and of learning all over Catholic Europe.

As (spoken) English gradually had changed since well before the Conquest, and continued to change well after it, the established West Saxon standard could not survive as an efficient medium of writing. By the Early Middle English period West Saxon no longer reflected spoken English. It was used in copying revered Old English texts even after Norman French was introduced as a literary language, but when new texts came to be produced in the vernacular, new ways of writing English had to be invented.

Due to the post-Conquest tripartite language situation, with English used only for local purposes, written English resurfaced in diverse local varieties.<sup>73</sup> Early Middle English (c.1100-1340) writing is especially strongly coloured by regional variation, but variation continued in Late Middle English. The situation started to change around the time that English gradually regained status as an official language used for central affairs in the early fifteenth century. Gradually, the more regional features of English were replaced by

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<sup>72</sup> See Horobin and Smith (2002: 26-28) for a concise description of the languages used in pre-Conquest England to Early Modern times.

<sup>73</sup> See e.g. Clanchy (1993) on English in writing in the Early Middle English period. Clanchy (1993: 112-13) summarises types of written records, i.e. factual and fictional texts in Latin, French and English, in England 1066-1307.

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colourless variants in writing (Samuels 1989 [1963]: 74-75).<sup>74</sup> There was no standard orthography, however, for some time yet.<sup>75</sup>

The variation in Middle English applies to the written language on many levels; lexically, morphologically, phonologically, as well as orthographically. The work of historical linguists and dialectologists has shown that in most Middle English texts, linguistic variation is not random but systematic. When systematised and explored, dialectal differences can be utilised to suggest dates and provenances of Middle English texts.<sup>76</sup> This is what *A Linguistic Atlas of Late Mediaeval English* (LALME) does. A number of linguistic differences form the basis of the dialect network developed in LALME (McIntosh, Samuels, and Benskin 1986). Some of the play texts in the material of the present study have been localised in LALME, and these are given below in the present chapter.

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<sup>74</sup> See also Davis (1954; 1983) on the Norfolk Paston family's letters, and his description of how the language of the Pastons has few "regional words" (Davis 1954: 134), but still varies extensively even between brothers close in age (Davis 1983: 28). During their letter-writing careers, 1461-1479, these two brothers, John II and John III, avoided provincialisms, but they did not select the same forms and spellings, and they even changed their writing systems in the course of their letter-writing years (Davis 1983: 24-27). Systems were thus individual and relatively unstable even in the late fifteenth century.

<sup>75</sup> The orthographic variation found in the *Chester* cycle MSS dating from 1591 to 1607 shows that even scribes from the same area, and probably copying from the same exemplar, felt free to choose different spelling forms.

<sup>76</sup> For example Scandinavian loans appear in northern texts (the Danelaw area), and some of these loans spread from the north of England and into southern dialects. In the examination of southern texts the use of Scandinavian forms of the third person plural pronouns (they, their, them) supplies evidence for the localisation and date of the text. If the Scandinavian forms *they*, *their*, *them* are not used, but the English forms *heo*, *her*, *hem* appear instead (all forms can appear in a variety of spellings), the dialect of the text is most likely southern and early. Quite a few Scandinavian imports have later become obsolete, but were still in use in ME texts and can be used for the localisation of text languages. Other Scandinavian words entered the vocabulary and form part of the Present-day English vocabulary: *window*, *egg*, and *husband*, in addition to the grammatical forms of the plural pronoun system just mentioned. Some of the interjections discussed in Chapter 6 exist, or have existed, in both languages (e.g. FIE in Section 6.8.9)

### 3.1.2 *Linguistic variation and the present project*

Orthography was not standardised in the period discussed in the present work, and therefore a typology of interjections based on spelling form cannot be used. The spelling of interjections varies to the extent that other contextual information must be used in order to decide whether for example the spellings <a>, <ah>, <a a>, and <ha> represent the same interjection. This aspect is discussed in Chapter 6.

Some studies of interjections (e.g. Culpeper and Kytö 2010: 203) define interjections as items without homonyms in other (related) word classes. The question of homonymy is problematic as regards Middle English, since it is difficult to make claims about pronunciation based on (variable) orthography. The pronunciation of the interjection WE, for example, may or may not have been different from the word ‘why’ (spelt <whi>) often occurring as a pragmatic marker in Middle English play dialogue.<sup>77</sup>

Since spelling forms vary in the Late Middle English period, form-to-function mapping is not enough for recognising interjections. Function-to-form mapping of interjections also has its inherent problems in Middle English, because the function of interjections may overlap with those of (other) pragmatic markers, such as greetings. Further, it is difficult to recognise interjections from syntactical criteria – they form utterances on their own – because Middle English texts do not mark syntactical boundaries like modern standardised written English does. *Punctus* may be used to mark caesura in the middle of the verse lines, but are rarely used to mark a sentence boundary. The *punctus exclamativus* is non-existent in the material of the present study.

## 3.2 LALME

The principles behind LALME are 1) that variation is systematic rather than random, and 2) that scribes often translated copies of literary texts into their

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<sup>77</sup> The matter of ‘why’ versus the interjection WE has not been satisfactorily settled in the analysis of WE in Section 6.8.14, as the interrogative/pragmatic marker ‘why’ was not collected for the present project. The discussion in Chapter 6 of the interjection WE includes more detail about the Middle English exclamatory ‘why’, and whether it can possibly derive from the interjection rather than from the interrogative it has been taken to reflect in Early Modern and later stages of English.

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own dialect.<sup>78</sup> The latter point is important because it entails that many more texts than authorial ones can be used for linguistic localisation. With the aid of other salient features a matrix can be suggested which localises texts (text languages) on the basis of which features it shares with other texts from a certain area, and which features it does not have.

The texts which can be used to anchor features at certain geographical points and at certain times are documents of known provenance and dates (LALME I: 9). LALME exploits such anchor texts to create a network of linguistically localised texts, including literary texts which are mainly undated, of unknown origin, and survive in copy rather than authorial version. The linguistic networking of undated and unlocalised texts by the use of anchor texts is referred to as the 'fit-technique' (LALME I: 10). In this manner, some of the earlier drama texts explored in the present study have been linguistically localised.

Due to gradual standardisation of Late Middle English, however, late texts become less reliable as evidence for linguistic localisation. LALME (McIntosh et al. 1986) includes data up to 1450 from the South, and up to 1500 for the North where material is scarce and dialectal features more persistent. All the play texts in the present study are relatively late, surviving from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The earliest play text surviving in full in England is *The Castle of Perseverance* whose copy is dated to 1440. The language of seven play texts has been localised with linguistic profiles in LALME.<sup>79</sup> Five more scribal languages, in four play texts, receive comments on language, but no linguistic profiles. The play text languages stem from four dialect areas, but in a relatively uneven distribution.<sup>80</sup> Several were

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<sup>78</sup> McIntosh's (1973; LALME I: 13) observations of scribal translation were developed in Benskin and Laing (1981: 56). They found three main patterns: *literatim* copying, translating into the scribe's own language (dialect), and mixed. The two latter patterns are the more common ones. Many scribes tended to change from e.g. mixed to translating when copying a long text. The scale from *literatim*, via mixed, to translating is a gliding one.

<sup>79</sup> The term 'language' refers to varieties of English in the following.

<sup>80</sup> Dialect areas are of course difficult to define, as dialects form continuums rather than groups with clear boundaries. What is referred to as 'four dialect areas' are the



written/copied in an East Midland dialect, which is a colourless and widely used written variety defined by Samuels (1963: 70-71) as one of four incipient standards. It has further been found that many of the extant play texts belonged specifically in East Anglia, one of the East Midlands areas.

Since the texts are late, language localisation is problematic, and as there are few texts from most regions except the East Midlands, there are limits to what linguistic comparisons can yield. However, it is possible that interjections especially exhibit regional patterns, as they supposedly are particularly close to spoken language. This aspect belongs to the level of phonology. It can be hypothesised that for example the short interjections A and O have different distributional patterns in the North and the South of England. What is realised as O in southern texts may conceivably be realised as A in northern texts, as the reflex of Old English long  $\bar{a}$  was retained longer in the North than in the South. Any regional patterns in the distribution of interjections are explored quantitatively in Chapter 7.

However, it is also conceivable that scribes treated interjections as words rather than as sounds, which may also have led to different patterns in different parts of the country, or in different types of texts. Middle English variation on the level of lexis is discussed below, and this aspect is also explored in Chapter 7.

### 3.2.1 *Lexis*

In Present-day English (henceforth PDE), as in most languages, there are still examples of lexis that are connected to certain dialects and geographical areas, e.g. northern ‘lass’ versus ‘girl’. Latin and Anglo-Norman (the French at the time of the Conquest) were greater contributors than Scandinavian to the English vocabulary in the Middle English period.<sup>81</sup> PDE lexis thus stems from two different branches of Indo-European languages. English retains its

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north (including north-west), the Midlands, the East Midlands (East Anglia), and possibly the South.

<sup>81</sup> Horobin and Smith (2002: 27) point out that Anglo-Norman was replaced by Central French among the aristocracy as a more cultivated (and international, i.e. continental) language.

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original northern Germanic vocabulary at the same time as it shows great influence of Romance vocabulary imported from Latin and French. The *Oxford English Dictionary* (henceforth *OED*) suggests that some interjections derive from French, Latin or Italian. If interjections were thought of, and imported as, lexis (see e.g. AY in Section 6.8.2 or in the *OED*), their status as meaningful words most likely influenced how scribes treated them (examined in Section 3.3. below).

It can be difficult to decide which Middle English lexical items were adopted from which language: Latin, Anglo-Norman or French. Similarly, it can be difficult to decide which words are really Scandinavian loans and which were already there in Old English (just remaining unattested), or whether a word such as ‘sister’ derives from OE *swe[o]ster* or ON *systir*. These difficulties are due to the closeness of the three Romance languages, as well as the two Germanic languages: Old English and Old Norse.

The *OED* commentary usually suggests that interjections are either of natural origin, or that they derive from other languages, such as French. Some interjections obviously do; *pardie* is an example (whether *pardie* in fact is an interjection is discussed in Section 6.10.3). The origin of other, shorter interjections is less certain. The *OED* in some cases suggests that a certain interjection type derives from French and/or Italian (see AY and FIE in Chapter 6), although they may be Germanic in origin.<sup>82</sup> On the one hand, these interjections could of course be adopted into English play texts via French and Italian models (see *OED* on FIE: *fi de*). On the other hand, as interjections may be naturally derived sounds, it is possible that they were in use in English too, just unattested in earlier texts. Very few texts are extant from those genres which above all employ interjections in direct speech quotations: play texts. In England, all play texts are late.

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<sup>82</sup> Both interjections AY and FIE (spelt <ai> and <fy>) are still used in Norwegian and Danish, and are thus clearly not particular to Romance languages, which the *OED* suggests they came from.

### 3.2.2 Phonology

Dialect differences on the level of sound (phonology) may be traced in the spelling of Middle English. For example the Old English long  $\bar{a}$  was retained longer in the north than in the rest of England, and frequently this is reflected in Middle English orthography. One example is PDE 'stone', which was normally spelt with an <o> in the south and with an <a> in the north in Early Middle English texts. Thus, on the basis of the spelling of such forms, the relative provenance (north or south) of a text can often be suggested.

One feature which is directly related to sound, and which is important to the interpretation and categorisation of interjections, is the use of the <h>-grapheme. Many English dialects have (and had) so-called 'h-dropping' meaning that etymological/historical /h/ is not pronounced in unstressed position. This feature occurs frequently in Middle English texts, where it takes two digressing paths. Some words which have historical <h> are spelt without it in unstressed surroundings, and this results in forms such as *as* (for 'has') and *is* (for 'his'). Other words which never had aspiration in spoken language are supplied with <h> in spelling as the scribe overcompensates for h-dropping. Forms such as *horiginal* (for 'original') and *hask* (for 'ask') occur. The variability concerning the use of <h> in spelling is directly relevant to the categorisation of interjections. It is a complex matter trying to establish whether forms such as <a>, <ha>, <ah>, <a ha>, and <a a> are different types of interjections or not. The question can only be answered through careful analysis of the context.

In Middle English there were also spelling differences that do not reflect differences in pronunciation, but rather seem to form scribal conventions that sometimes can be connected to certain areas. The typical East Anglian orthographical marker is the spelling of PDE 'shall' v. (and 'should'), with an <x>: 'xal'. The use of the grapheme <x> rather than the otherwise common digraph <sh> (or <sch>) occurs in several of the extant play texts, and localises them more precisely to East Anglia rather than to the more widely distributed East Midlands variant. The x-spelling also serves as a reminder that the relationship between the spoken mode and written realisation is complicated, even at a period in time when there was no standard spelling

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operating as a norm for correctness. There were still conventions in the writing and copying of ME texts. Some such conventions may be referred to as scribal systems. The topic is returned to in Section 3.3 below.

#### 3.2.3 *LALME and scribal systems*

The LALME methodology recognises that medieval scribes operated systematically, and that in most cases the scribe's system reflects his dialect.<sup>83</sup> LALME focussed on a large number of linguistic features (280 items) which were known to vary in Middle English texts. The basis for exploring variation is a scribal text, i.e. a continuous stretch of a text written in one hand. If a manuscript contains the work of two or more scribes, or if one text was copied by two or more scribes, each of these scribal contributions amounts to a separate scribal profile (LALME I: 8). However, LALME does not necessarily examine every scribal text, or even the individual scribal text in its entirety. In texts where more than one hand appears, it is more correct to say that the language of e.g. Hand A in the text is localised, than to suggest that the text itself is localised to any one area. In theory, the remaining text(s), i.e. contributions by Hands B, C and so forth, could be found to exhibit different dialects than that of Hand A.<sup>84</sup>

The use of anchor texts (dated and localised documents) and the recognition that the work of copying scribes can be used as dialect evidence, allow for the inclusion of copied texts, such as literary texts, in the mapping of medieval English dialects. The Atlas does not produce statements of where a literary text was produced geographically, but it develops a virtual map based on the

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<sup>83</sup> Benskin (1992: 73) coins the term 'scribal idiolect' to cover the sum of the scribe's dialect and his acquired habits. In other words, Benskin recognises that some of the variation in ME scribal systems may be explained by other factors, such as instruction, than just the scribe's dialect. Stenroos (unpublished [2005]: 10-12) suggests that besides dialect and training, other factors, in particular genre, may have influenced the way a scribe copied a text. The LALME project did not take other factors than dialect into account (Thaisen, personal communication, April 2012), but the scholars behind LALME are aware that some texts are better dialect witnesses than others (Benskin in e-mail communication in 2010, concerning the Peniarth 'Antichrist' text localised in LALME).

<sup>84</sup> Such is the case with the *York* cycle text, in which three hands appear. It was found that these hands exhibit different dialectal patterns.

presence and absence of linguistic items relative to the language of other texts (LALME I: 12).<sup>85</sup>

Seven scribal texts, occurring in seven of the 23 texts explored in the present project, have been localised in LALME.<sup>86</sup> The languages of four more play texts receive comment in LALME I, but these four scribal texts have not been given linguistic profiles in LALME III.

Many of the play texts, however, are too late for inclusion in LALME. In these cases, editors' localisations have proved useful. Most editors treat the language of the texts in the introductions. They often use a number of features to try and localise a text as precisely as possible: language, text-internal references such as place names, and extra-textual information if such exists. Editors, in other words, usually try to arrive at a geographical provenance of a text or copy.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Some of the play texts in the present study were copied by two or more hands, but LALME uses only one of them for linguistic localisation (if they are localised in LALME at all). In the case of the *York* cycle play copy, none of the two early hands in the manuscript was given a linguistic profile in the Atlas, but the (three) languages of the two hands receive comment in LALME Volume I. The main hand in the *York* cycle Register, Hand B, exemplifies that a text of known geographical origin, the city of York, may still not show local language. The LALME team, detecting the mismatch of known provenance and scribal language, chose not to use any scribal text from the *York* Register for linguistic profiling. Since the language(s) of the *York* cycle has not been localised, the text cannot be used in the present study as dialectal evidence. The *Towneley* cycle text remains the only securely localised northern play text in the present material. The *Chester* cycle text is written in a north-western dialect (Cf. the language of the MS Peniarth 'Antichrist' localised by LALME), and apparently a rather colourless variety of it at that.

<sup>86</sup> The 23 texts explored are those texts providing data for the database. Including the parallel copies of shorter plays, 26 play texts have been examined in the present work. Including the four parallel copies - A, R, B, and H - of the *Chester* cycle, raises the number of play texts examined to 30, but these parallel copies were not included in the database, only the data from MS Hm were, and they have not been studied in their full lengths. Only extracts of scribal texts in *Chester* A, R, H, and B, have been studied: in particular regarding the use of the grapheme <h> in the interjections A and O, and the interchangeability of these two interjections.

<sup>87</sup> Both LALME and editors usually comment on palaeographical evidence, i.e. number of hands found in the copy, what script has been used, and how the work has been divided between the scribes. If the copying of a text was executed by more than

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#### 3.2.4 LALME localisations

The Middle English drama texts whose language has been localised in LALME represent two main geographical areas: mainly the (East) Midlands and to a lesser extent; the North. There is nothing from the South and just one scribal text from the West (Chester in north-west). The scribal languages of as many as four of the play texts were found to belong in Norfolk, East Anglia (East Midlands); and the language of a fifth text, the Northampton *Abraham*, was localised in Northamptonshire (Midlands). The language of the Chester Peniarth ‘Antichrist’ belongs in Cheshire (north-west); and the last one, the *Towneley* cycle text, is written in a Western Yorkshire language (the North). The linguistic profiles are given in Table 3-1 below.

<b>Play title</b>	<b>Linguistic Profile</b>	<b>Hand and date</b>
<i>Castle of Perseverance</i> MS Macro	Norfolk LP 58	One hand, c.1440. MS Macro: Hand B
<i>Mary Magdalen</i> (Digby)	Norfolk LP 4662	One hand, 1515-20 MS Digby: Hand D
Brome <i>Abraham</i>	Norfolk LP 4670 = southern Norfolk “Associations with Stuston, Suffolk”	One hand, late 15 <sup>th</sup> c. MS Book of Brome: Hand A
Northampton <i>Abraham</i>	Northamptonshire LP 4074	One hand, 1461 MS main hand
<i>N-town</i> cycle	Norfolk LP 4280	Main hand, c. 1470
<i>Towneley</i> cycle	Yorkshire WR LP 211 “Hand of Wakefield	Main hand, c.1500. <sup>88</sup>

one hand, it quite often appears that one scribe had greater responsibility than the other(s). Such is the case in the *York* Register, the *N-town* cycle manuscript, and in the latest copy of the *Chester* manuscripts. In some manuscripts it is clear that the text was copied at one point in time, and that glosses, changes, additions were made later by other scribes. This is true of the *York*, *N-town*, and the *Towneley* cycle copies, as well as of some of the shorter plays. All such changes of hand, and dates of hands, are interesting, because they may tell us something about scribal systems as well as about the history of a text.

<sup>88</sup> LALME (Vol. III: 622) describes the main hand behind the *Towneley* cycle copy as “Hand of Wakefield master’s work”. This should probably be taken to mean that LALME chose to base the linguistic localisation on portion(s) of the text contributed to the Wakefield Master by England and Pollard (1897); not that the scribe was the Wakefield Master himself.

INTERJECTIONS IN LATE MIDDLE ENGLISH PLAY TEXTS

	master's work" (LALME III: 622)	
MS Peniarth 'Antichrist'; pageant no. 23 in <i>Chester</i> cycle	Cheshire LP 750	One hand, c.1500

**Table 3-1 LALME III localisations**

The LALME profiles in Table 3-1 reflect what has been frequently commented on in editions of medieval English drama: that so many texts survive from East Anglia in particular. Among the longest texts, however, those of the cycle plays, only the *N-town* cycle was written in an East Midlands dialect (also this belonging in East Anglia).

The language of three of the four great cycles are localised in LALME (Table 3-1) directly or indirectly: The language of the *Towneley* cycle was localised in Yorkshire; the language of the *N-town* cycle in East Anglia; and the language of an early *Chester* cycle pageant (MS Peniarth 'Antichrist') was localised in Cheshire. The latter may provide indirect evidence that the *Chester* cycle copies represent a later variety of the same (Cheshire) language. A comment in LALME points in the same direction: in spite of the late dates of the five full *Chester* copies, the LALME team examined the language in MS HM 2 (one of the five manuscripts) and found that it belongs in Cheshire (LALME I: 92).<sup>89</sup> (See Table 3-2 below)

As regards the fourth and earliest cycle play copy, that of the *York* cycle; the LALME team did not use the text for linguistic localisation. LALME just comments that the language of the main scribe, Hand B, was from considerably south of York (LALME I: 102). The other early hand in the *York*, Hand A, only made a small contribution by copying the three first pageants' texts. The language of Hand A varies (Table 3- below).

### 3.2.5 LALME comments on localisation

The scribal languages of five hands occurring in four of the medieval play texts were not used for linguistic profiling in LALME, but were at some point

<sup>89</sup> MS HM2 is the same manuscript as the one edited by Lumiansky and Mills (1974), and which provided the data for the present study.

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considered by the LALME team. Comments on the scribal languages in these four manuscripts were included in LALME Volume I, and are referred to in Table 3-2 below. Editors' comments on language are included in some cases.

<b>Play title</b>	<b>LALME comments</b>	<b>Hand and date</b>
<i>York cycle</i>	Hand A: language varies (LALME I: 102) Hand B (main hand): "considerably S[outh] of York". (LALME I: 102)	Two hands: A and B (main) Both dated to c.1470 (Beadle (2009: xii) suggests 1463-1477)
<i>Burial and Resurrection of Christ</i>	"Probably Notts language" (LALME I: 148) <sup>90</sup> "probably southern Yorkshire" (Baker, Murphy, Hall 1982: lxxxix)	One hand. 1520 Only one hand, the main hand in the MS, wrote the play text on fols. 140-72.
<i>Wisdom</i> MS Macro	Norfolk (LALME I: 165)	One hand (A), same as greater part of <i>Mankind</i> (below). 15c-d
<i>Chester cycle</i> in MS Huntington 2 (Hm)	Cheshire (LALME I: 92)	One hand: Gregorie. 1591

**Table 3-2 LALME I comments on localisations**

The important *York cycle* text was given no linguistic profile in LALME, and the comments in LALME I suggest that the dialects of the two early copyists were difficult to localise. Hand A of the *York* MS shows two different languages. The language of Hand B, the main scribe, is found to be from

<sup>90</sup> LALME (I: 148) describes two hands in the MS Bodleian e Museo 160, and refers to Baker, Murphy, and Hall (1982) as editors of Hand B found on folios 109-115. Baker, Murphy, and Hall (1982: lxxix), however, suggest that this hand and the hand who copied the play text on fols. 140-172 were the same, while the hand who copied fols 136v-139r is not. They further suggest that the language of the plays (and composition of the plays) belongs in southern Yorkshire, and describe it as a "mixture of forms from the North Midlands and southern Yorkshire [...] a highly contaminated Yorkshire dialect (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: lxxxix; xcvi). Both LALME (1986) and Baker, Murphy, and Hall (1982) place the language in the north-east of the country, and there seems to be no serious conflict between the suggested Nottinghamshire and Southern Yorkshire.



“considerably S[outh] of York” (LALME I: 102). External evidence strongly suggests that the MS was compiled in the city of York as an official Register for the civic authorities (Beadle, 2009: xix-xx), but LALME found that in the main, the language is not from York. Beadle (2009: xxxvi) describes how “[t]he main scribe, by contrast [to Hand A], systematically edited out many northern forms”. Linguistic localisation is therefore problematic.

LALME (I: 165) suggests that the language of MS Macro *Wisdom* belonged in Norfolk. This is in concord with the localised language of the *Castle of Perseverance* text in the same manuscript (LALME LP 58).<sup>91</sup> Further, since the same scribe copied the whole of the Macro *Wisdom* and the main part of *Mankind* in the same manuscript, the LALME comments on the language of the first text may also be suggestive of the language of *Mankind* (below). Eccles, editor of *The Macro Plays* (1969), also finds the language of *Castle of Perseverance* to belong in Norfolk; he places the language of *Wisdom* more generally in East Anglia; and he states even more generally about *Mankind* that it was “written in an East Midland dialect” (Eccles 1969: xxxviii).<sup>92</sup>

LALME (I: 92) places the scribe Gregorie’s language in the *Chester* cycle copy in MS HM 2 in Cheshire. Lumiansky and Mills (1974; 1983) and Mills (1998: 192) provide evidence that the scribes behind all the five late copies of the *Chester* cycle were educated men from Chester. It is likely that they wrote in a Chester dialect, but they may have had different attitudes towards their work: some of the scribes seem to have opted for a legible text, while others seem to have been antiquarian scribes, wishing to preserve not only the

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<sup>91</sup> The *Castle of Perseverance*, however, was copied by a different scribe at an earlier date, so in principle the two texts could have been written in very different varieties of Middle English.

<sup>92</sup> Eccles (1969: xxxviii-xxxix) points out some differences in the languages found in the *Mankind* and *Wisdom* texts copied by the same scribe in MS Macro. One major difference is that this scribe employs the northern forms of the third person plural pronoun in (his part of) the *Mankind* text, while he uses the southern (OE) English forms in his copy of *Wisdom* (Eccles 1969: xxxix). The exemplars most likely had different forms, and the scribe copying from them was, in other words, not a consistently translating scribe. The differences may not invalidate the suggestion that both texts were written in East Anglia. Walker (2000: 258) localises *Mankind* to East Anglia on linguistic grounds and on text-internal references.

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outdated play text, but also its old-fashioned language (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 57-85).

#### 3.2.6 Other localisations: the printed texts

The printed texts all date from the early sixteenth century. All the printing houses were situated in London. The texts may reflect London printers' language of the time, and/or the language of the composer. Some playwrights are known. Medwall's play texts were composed considerably earlier (in the 1490s) than the date of the print in Table 3-3 suggests. The printed texts are still relatively late texts, and the language is expected to be rather colourless. Editors scarcely comment much on the language of the printed texts.

<b>Play title of prints</b>	<b>Play composer</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Printer and date</b>	<b>Some editions</b>
<i>Fulgens and Luces</i>	Medwall (London)	London: both composer and printer	John Rastell, c.1512	Walker 2000 Nelson 1980
<i>Nature</i>	Medwall (London)	London: both composer and printer	William Rastell, c.1530	Nelson 1980
<i>Hicskcorner</i>	Anon	Probably London (refs in text)	Wynkyn de Worde, c.1514	Lancashire 1980
<i>Mundus et Infans</i>	Anon	Probably London (refs in text)	Wynkyn de Worde, c.1522	Lester 1981
<i>Everyman</i>	Anon	East Midlands? Translation from Flemish (Dutch)	John Skot, c.1530	Walker 2000 Cawley 1959; 1961
<i>Magnyfycence</i>	Skelton (northerner, Cambridge education)	Unknown. London printer; northern composer	William Rastell, c.1530	Walker 2000 Happé 1979

**Table 3-3 Editorial localisations of print language**

Table 3-3 illustrates that at least five out of the six printed texts are associated with the capital, either through play composer, printer, or both. London language in the beginning of the sixteenth century can be described as a relatively colourless East Midlands dialect.<sup>93</sup> LALME (I: 12) describes how the dialects of cities, and of London especially, change faster than elsewhere, and that the mapping of urban language can be problematic. Migration from different parts of the country meant that texts produced in London exhibit linguistic features which do not represent one uniform London dialect.<sup>94</sup>

By the sixteenth century much regional variation was evened out in the capital. It is expected at this late date that few strongly regional features are found in texts produced in London for a London audience, and perhaps especially few in printed texts. Wynkyn de Worde, for example, seems to have levelled out dialect features when printing texts (Lancashire 1980: 32). The people interested in play texts, both readers and actors, probably preferred a language not too distant from their own, or their audience's, language.

### 3.2.7 Editorial localisations

LALME provides no comment on the rest of the Middle English play texts in the present project, and editors' suggestions of localisation have been used instead. Editors usually combine linguistic evidence and other kinds of evidence, such as text-internal references, to suggest a likely place of origin. In the following, I have attempted to refer mainly to the editorial suggestions based on the language of the texts. (There is additional detail about the plays' provenance in Appendix I.)

<b>Play title</b>	<b>Language acc to editors</b>	<b>Hand and date</b>
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<sup>93</sup> Lancashire (1980: 32) comments on the language of *Hickscorner*, an anonymous play text printed c.1515 by Wynkyn de Worde in London, that it reflects an East Midlands dialect, and that both the playwright (evidenced by rhymes), and the printer used an East Midlands dialect belonging in London.

<sup>94</sup> Rather, the London language appears to reflect the regions where the most migrants came from at given points in time, leading to the LALME (I: 12) fit-technique's localising early London language mainly to the east of the capital and placing later London languages centrally or to the north and north-west. In other words, the languages found in London text show influences of waves of migration coming first from the north-east of London, and later from the north-west.

### 3. BACKGROUND

<i>Lucidus et Dubius + Occupation and Idleness</i>	South Midlands? (Davis 1969: Essex) <sup>95</sup>	One hand, c. 1450.
<i>Herod</i> MS Digby	Suffolk (Bury?) (Baker, Murphy, Hall 1982)	Two hands: main hand also copied Digby <i>Wisdom</i> . 1512?
<i>Conversion of St Paul</i> MS Digby	East Midlands; East Anglia (Bevington 1975: 665) (Baker, Murphy, Hall 1982: xix)	Two hands, same language, but of different dates. c.1520 + 1550
<i>Mankind</i> MS Macro	East Midlands (Norfolk?) (Eccles 1969: xxxviii) (Bevington 1972)	Two hands, one is the same as that of Macro <i>Wisdom</i> localised to Norfolk. 1465-70
<i>Play of the Sacrament</i>	Suffolk (Babwell/Bury?) (Davis 1979; Walker 2000)	Three hands. c.1520

**Table 3-4 Editorial localisations of manuscript language**

At least four of the six play texts in Table 3-4 seem to represent East Midland dialect, more specifically East Anglian. The remaining texts, the two *Winchester Dialogues* from 1450, are written in a colourless variety, perhaps southern Midlands, not in conflict with the likely place of origin: Winchester in Hampshire (Stenroos 2012: personal communication).<sup>96</sup> All the drama texts

<sup>95</sup> Davis (1969) bases much of his argument on Samuels' (1963) linguistic maps when he suggests Essex or Suffolk as linguistic localisations of the Winchester Dialogue. Samuels' article was written well before LALME was published, however, and now LALME provides better and more helpful maps for linguistic localisation of texts. Stenroos (personal communication) has examined the language of the Winchester Dialogues, and she finds it quite colourless, close to what has been designated East Midland dialect, but a language which can just as likely stem from the southeast Midland area. Stenroos likens the language of the Dialogues to Samuels' "Type 3" (London) language, but with more conservative (i.e. southern) verb forms. It is perfectly possible that the Winchester Dialogues reflect the language of a Winchester writer.

<sup>96</sup> Davis (1969) suggests Essex/Southern Suffolk, based on Samuels' (1963) classification of incipient standards of English. Coldewey (1994: 198) presents the *Winchester Dialogues* as plays from East Anglia apparently based on the language description in Davis (1969), but most likely the Winchester plays did not belong in East Anglia, and they do not conform to the play tradition Coldewey suggests was

in the Macro and the Digby manuscripts apparently belonged in East Anglia. Even though the texts were copied by different scribes and some were not copied at the same time or originally in the same manuscript as where they are now found, the sum of editorial and LALME suggestions about scribal dialects place all text languages in East Anglia.

### 3.3 *Spelling and categorisation of interjections*

In studying Middle English texts one does not have a standardised orthography to rely on for categorisation of words. Even so, it is still possible to recognise most words as belonging in the main word classes of nouns, verbs, pronouns etc, depending on the interpretation of the context, morphology and syntactic function. Even though interjections comprise a diverse group of words, it usually is possible to recognise them in historical texts. Some cases may still be ambiguous, for instance the form <A>: in two instances in the material it is impossible to settle whether the form <A> in the context represents the article or the interjection. There rarely is punctuation to aid the interpretation, nor is there a performance to listen to. Basically the modern reader (and scholar) has to make a choice, or note the case as mainly ambiguous.

A related problem is the categorisation of interjection types based on a spelling system which is not standardised. Many interjections are short, mono-syllabic words, seemingly representing sound rather than word. The spelling forms <o> and <owe> may or may not represent the same sound (or word/interjection). Categorising the form <a> as one interjection, A, and the form <o> as another, different one, is also fraught with difficulties. The spellings <a> and <o> may reflect dialectal variation, for example, rather than variation in function and meaning, i.e. two distinct words.

Another problem area already mentioned is that of forms including the grapheme <h>. Both interjections A and O may be spelt with <h>. In PDE the

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typical for the region. Rather it seems likely that the *Winchester Dialogues* belonged in a college in Winchester and were written by a scribe who reveals very few dialect features. Tentatively, the language of the *Winchester Dialogues* can be described as a colourless southern variety (Stenroos January 2012: personal communication).

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spellings <ah> and <oh> with a final <h> grapheme are the most common ones. In the material also the forms <ha> and <ho> occur, which at first glance appear to belong to different categories than the interjections A and O. However, <ha> and <ho> spellings may be examples of metathesis, scribal error (which may always occur), or scribal overcompensation of h-dropping. The latter should not be treated as a scribal error on a par with the occasional mistake anyone makes in writing, but belongs to the level of more or less systematic variation. The adding of unhistorical <h> (in writing) was quite common in dialect regions where the sound 'h' was dropped in unstressed syllables.

The solution to the three problems mentioned has been as follows:

1. If a form is ambiguous (the spelling <a> may represent the article or the interjection, and this cannot be settled from the context), the ambiguity is signalled by the use of a question mark in the database. There are fewer ambiguous occurrences than was anticipated. Less than 10 out of the 3,078 items entered into the database are ambiguous in this sense.
2. A versus O: Forms spelt with <a> have been categorised as the interjection type A, while forms spelt with <o> have been categorised as the interjection type O, in line with Culpeper and Kytö's (2010) distinction between A-related forms and O-related forms.<sup>97</sup>
3. Spellings which include the <h> grapheme are analysed and categorised in Chapter 6. Some attestations, for example the spelling form <haaaa> seem to represent distinct interjection types; some seem to be non-standard spellings (for example some occurrences of <ha>); while others appear to be attestations of the diachronic development towards those forms that by now have become standard: AH, AHA and OH.

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<sup>97</sup> See Chapter 6 for discussions of the interjections A and O. This is followed in Chapter 7 by a discussion of how these two interjections show some functional and distributional overlap. It is further tested whether any distributional differences can be explained by dialect.

### 3.4 *Scribes and copying practices*

McIntosh (1973, in LALME 1986 I: 13), and Benskin and Laing (1981) have demonstrated how medieval scribes when copying texts in different dialects from their own, mainly adopted one of three strategies:

1. One strategy can be described as *literatim* copying, as a text was copied letter for letter and word for word (the “mirror-copyist” in Benskin and Laing 1981: 58). This strategy is rare.
2. The second strategy involves the copyist translating from exemplar language into his own dialect. This strategy is more frequent than the first; the *literatim* copying.
3. The third strategy results in *Mischsprache*, as the scribe mixes exemplar language with his own dialect (LALME I: 13). This strategy is also common. A system which cannot be described as strategy 1 or 2, may be described as mixing (Benskin and Laing 1981: 56).

Benskin and Laing (1981: 56) admit gliding scales between the three scribal systems just described. They also find that a scribe may change systems while working with a long text. Changing from the third system of mixing into more consistent translation (strategy 2) is common (Benskin and Laing 1981: 56).<sup>98</sup> Consistent *literatim* copying has been found to be relatively rare.

The habits of medieval copyists testify that change and variation was the norm in the Middle Ages: exemplars and model texts were not considered ‘sacred’.

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<sup>98</sup> In fact, most scribes applied mixed copying systems during the process of copying extensive texts. A medieval scribe would perhaps start *literatim* and end up more or less translating the language of the exemplar as he got into the style and language of the text. The reverse is also quite common, i.e. a medieval scribe may have started translating a text in the copying process to make it more accessible to the reader(s) who had ordered it. As the work proceeded, the scribe got used to the language of the exemplar and adopted it, adding words to his active repertoire, so to speak. Since many scribes apply both a practice of mixing, and translating or copying *literatim*, it may be confusing to define them as *literatim* and/or translating scribes. Rather, different scribal approaches may be detected, but these may change not only from text to text copied by the same scribe, but also within the same text (Benskin and Laing 1981: 57).

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Quite opposite to the modern notions of originality, textual autonomy and the associated negative view on plagiarism, medieval writers built on and reworked earlier texts. Similarly, most copyists felt free to change the language of the text they copied, and in particular it seems that they changed morphology and phonology.<sup>99</sup> Most of the texts in this study are copies.<sup>100</sup> Some may be far removed from their original sources by several layers of copying, and some reflect relationships with other texts (not only drama), sometimes from different regions. Consequently, a scribal text (a copy) may show traces of the work of earlier scribes, of other dialects, and of re-workings, additions or exclusions (crossing out of text, removal of folios, and insertion of folios).

Such treatment of sources and texts was deliberate behaviour, and an example can be found in the Wakefield Master's work. He changed and reinvented contents and stanza form of plays he knew when he created portions, perhaps the whole, of the *Towneley* cycle text. The *Towneley* MS HM 1 contains the copy of a full cycle of pageants (small biblical plays), in one hand, based on

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<sup>99</sup> Medieval scribes were of course not entirely free to change words from their exemplars. Especially words in rhyming position, and in alliterative strings of words, were often kept even when inconsistent with the scribe's idiolect. It happens that end rhyming words were changed, however, since it can be found that end rhymes are lost even in texts where another word conceivably would have made sense and kept the rhyme. In such cases it can be assumed that at one stage the text had a perfect rhyme, and that at a later stage a copyist saw it as more important to preserve legibility than rhyme. This copyist has most likely been a thoroughly translating scribe. There can be occasional 'relict' words in otherwise translated text, sometimes simply because the word was so unfamiliar to the scribe that he did not know how to replace it. Relicts are also those words which translating scribes kept even though they did not actively use them otherwise. These words had become part of their passive vocabularies ('relicts' and 'active/passive repertoire' are described in Benskin and Laing 1981: 58-59).

<sup>100</sup> A few may be described as authorial play texts, meaning that they were they were composed and written by the same person. The Winchester Dialogues may be clean copies made by the playwright himself. The *Herod* text in MS Digby seems to be an original work or reworking of several texts into a new play. The authorial corrections in the manuscript imply that the composer wrote and then corrected himself. Lastly, the *Burial and Resurrection of Christ*, in MS Bodleian e Museo 160, also appears to be authorial work done by a writer who reworked a narrative text into a play text. Errors in changing from one genre to another shows this. For more details on manuscripts, see Chapter 5, and for more information about the plays, see Appendix I.



one exemplar, which once was a compilation of different exemplars. Some of the *Towneley* cycle pageant texts are re-workings of *York* cycle pageants. Others appear to be original creations by a talented playwright with an eye to the realistic and amusing, exemplified in the frequently commented ‘Second Shepherds’ Play’. He has been called the Wakefield Master. He may himself have been the compiler of the *Towneley* cycle text, perhaps for the village of Wakefield (Stevens and Cawley 1994: xxvii). The extant copy was made for private ownership, and not for civic authorities, as is the case with the *York* Register.

Most of the texts in this study are scribal copies, and therefore they may show patterns of different scribal behaviours. Even though the texts are relatively late, and only a few provide good evidence for dialect, they may still show influence of different types of scribal behaviours, such as those described in Benskin and Laing (1981). Scribal habits (and printers’ habits) may for example have influenced the use of interjections in the play texts, both quantitatively and qualitatively. On the one hand, since interjections often are described as context-dependent words void of propositional or grammatical meaning, it can be hypothesised that medieval scribes frequently changed or omitted them. On the other hand, if it can be shown that medieval scribes rarely changed or omitted interjections in copying, this behaviour may suggest that the scribes thought of interjections as meaningful words, and treated them as lexis rather than as merely sounds.

### 3.4.1 *Scribal treatment of interjections*

Categorising scribes as *literatim* copyists, translators or mixers (or changing behaviour) is more readily done from texts of which several copies exist. Only few medieval play texts are extant in more than one copy, henceforth referred to as parallel copies. These few parallel copies have been compared, since any patterns found may give clues to how scribes approached interjections when copying. In general scribes were more willing to substitute their own familiar dialectal forms for unfamiliar morphology and orthography than for lexis. This is especially true of words in rhyming position. There are texts in which the scribe for instance has substituted southern ‘child’ for northern ‘barn’ (or vice versa) in midline position, but kept the original word (a relict) in the end

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of verses so as not to distort the rhyme. If the scribe translated from or to a dialect where word-final unstressed 'e' was still pronounced, however, the final 'e' could often be ignored in all word-final positions, even in rhyming pairs.

Many of the forms scribes were likely to translate were short words, or parts of words (morphology). Interjections are short, often monosyllabic, and they can quite easily be exchanged or even left out without disruption of the metre (the pronunciation of unstressed <e> was relatively flexible, see Shakespeare). As interjections are most commonly found first in verses, their substitution will not affect end rhymes. Further, it has been stated about primary interjections that they do not have semantic meaning, but are context-dependent semi-words. All these factors would point in the direction that scribes treated primary interjections relatively freely, but is far from certain whether they actually did so, or whether they may in fact have thought of interjections as words with a particular meaning. If the latter was the case - interjections were considered part of lexis - they could not be substituted or ignored without changing the meaning of the text.

Were interjections treated as orthography/phonology or as vocabulary? This question is important for three reasons. First, if interjections frequently vary in parallel copies, this suggests that they were considered mere sounds, more or less meaningless, and therefore easily ignored or substituted. Secondly, if the opposite is found, namely that Middle English scribes were reluctant to change interjections, dialect may not be a very important variable in the analysis of distribution and function of interjections. Thirdly, and most important, if scribes did not change interjections in copying, this behaviour suggests that they thought of (or at least treated) interjections as meaningful words. The latter point further suggests that meanings can be proposed for Middle English interjections in play texts.

#### *3.4.2 Collation of the parallel copies*

I have compared the language of 10 scribal copies representing five texts in order to establish whether scribes treated interjections as lexis or as sound. The parallel copies have been compared on two levels: the interjections must obviously be compared, but so must the rest of the text language,

because any variation in the interjections must be seen relative to other linguistic variation: If there is little or no linguistic and orthographic variation between the parallel copies, there should be little or no variation also in the interjections used. Conversely, if the parallel copies show linguistic and orthographic variation, the interjections in the texts are also expected to vary. However, if the text languages vary, but the interjections correspond, this indicates strongly that interjections were treated as meaningful words, on a par with other parts of lexis. In order to establish scribal patterns, and the scribes' treatment of interjections in the copies, the following discussion treats not only the interjections, but also other linguistic features.

Four of the five short texts collated to explore scribal variation are cycle pageant texts; the fifth is (parts of) a morality play. Three of the parallel copies are contemporary with one another, while two are almost a century apart. Details about the manuscripts are found in chapter 5.

1. Two contemporary versions of the *York* cycle pageant no. 3 survives. These were copied by scribe A and B into the *York* cycle Register. From the comments in LALME, we know that the behaviour and language of these two scribes differed.<sup>101</sup>
2. The *York* cycle pageant no. 41 exists in two copies, one in the fifteenth century Register written by the main scribe, Hand B, and one surviving in a separate, sixteenth century manuscript (MS Sykes) belonging to one of the guilds.
3. There is a similar situation concerning the *Chester* cycle for which pageant no. 23 of 'Antichrist' survives in all five late full cycle copies, as well as in the Peniarth 'Antichrist' from c.1500 (Lumiansky and Mills 1974).
4. The *Chester* pageant no. 16 survives in a separate copy made in 1599 by scribe Bellin for the Chester Guild of Coopers, as well as

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<sup>101</sup> To recapitulate: Hand A in the York Register shows two different dialects, and it can be hypothesised that he copied more or less *literatim* from exemplars in different dialects. Hand B must have translated the language of his exemplars as LALME states that his language is not from York, and the LALME comments seem to suggest that his language is consistent, in contrast to that of Hand A. Hand B was a professional copyist, but it is not known where he received his training.

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in MS Hm 2, the copy of the full *Chester* cycle made in 1591 by scribe Gregorie.<sup>102</sup>

5. Finally, the *Wisdom* play text is extant in two manuscripts; a full version survives in MS Macro, and a long fragment survives in MS Digby. These parallel copies can be compared up to the point where the Digby MS text ends at close to 2/3 of the full version.

#### 3.4.3 *The York pageant 3 parallel copies*

The two York versions of pageant no. 3 in BL Additional 35290 are contemporary and dateable to c. 1470 (Beadle 2009: xii) when the York Register was produced. LALME (I: 102) finds, however, that the two scribes wrote in different dialects. The first scribe, Hand A, copied only pageants nos. 1 to 3. He shows varying dialect influence in his work, which suggests that the exemplars he used contained different dialects and that he was a more or less *literatim* copyist. LALME describes his language thus:

Hand A, language 1. ff. 4r-7r: York Plays. Language probably of York area or a little west of it, [...] Hand A, language 2. ff. 7v-11r: York Plays. Language very different from that of ff. 4r-7r; possibly from far N Lancs. (LALME I: 102).<sup>103</sup>

By contrast, the LALME team found the *York Register* main scribe, hand B, to have written in a “[l]anguage apparently from considerably S of York” (LALME I: 102).

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<sup>102</sup> Five contemporary copies of the *Chester* cycle survive, but these are not compared in full, simply because this work would amount to a thesis on its own.

<sup>103</sup> For some reason the folio numbering in Beadle does not correspond with LALME’s, as scribe A’s contribution ends on fol. 8r and scribe B’s text starts on fol. 9r in Beadle (2009). Beadle stated in the introduction that he numbered all folios in the manuscript whether they contain text or not (Beadle, 2009: xxiii), while LALME seems to have adopted the foliation by Lucy Toulmin Smith (1885) (LALME I: 102). Her folio numbering left out blank leaves (Beadle 2009: xxiii). Whatever caused the different folio numbers, the ff. 7v to 11r referred in LALME must be the folios containing pageant no. 3, scribe A’s last part.

INTERJECTIONS IN LATE MIDDLE ENGLISH PLAY TEXTS

Hand B copied pageant no. 3 as well as the rest of the *York* cycle text, except for the pageant texts he for some reason seems not to have got hold of.<sup>104</sup> The pageant no. 3 parallel copies are equally long; both containing 95 lines. According to Beadle (2009: xxviii), the texts were copied from the same exemplar, but as mentioned, the scribes wrote in different dialects (LALME I: 102). The linguistic variation of Hands A and B is thus demonstrated in their copies of the *York* cycle pageant no. 3, ‘Creation of Adam and Eve’. Hand A has for example “ga” and “mare” (reflex of OE ā), while Hand B has “goo” and “more” (for ‘go’, line 6, and ‘more’, l.21). Hand A wrote northern “sall” where B has “shalle” (for ‘shall’, ll. 75, 77, 79 etc).

The four interjections in the text are consistently the same in the two versions. All Adam’s addresses to God open with the interjection A in both copies (ll. 45, 52, 61, and 77). Three of these are found in vocative constructions, yet neither scribe chooses to use the interjection O, which might have been expected before vocatives addressing the Lord. The table below illustrates.<sup>105</sup>

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A: *A lorde full mekyll is þi mighte* (1.45, Adam’s first words to God)

B: *A lord ful mekill is þi myght* (1.45)

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A: *A blyssid lorde now at þi wille* (1.61, Adam to God, request)

B: *A blissed lorde nowe at þi wille* (1.61)

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A: *A lorde sene we sall do no thyng* (1.77, Adam to God, gratitude)

B: *A lord sene we shalle do no thyng* (1.77)

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**Table 3-5 Hands A and B in York pageant no. 3, c.1470 (Beadle 2009: xii)**

Especially for hand B the interjection O would appear to be a natural choice, as it is common in vocative contexts, and because as demonstrated, he has the rounded vowel /o/ in his active repertoire (cf. Hand B’s use of the grapheme

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<sup>104</sup> Hand B prepared the *York* Register including leaving blank folios for the inclusion of more pageant texts than those he actually entered. Two of the missing pageant texts were indeed entered into the Register around 1560-70 by the York Register Hand C (Beadle 2009: xxvii). Hand C is identifiable as John Clerke working with overseeing the cycle performance and the texts. He may have been the same person as the scribe who made a prompt copy of pageant no. 41 for the Scriveners’s guild. This prompt copy is compared below to the century earlier parallel copy made by the York Register’s Hand B.

<sup>105</sup> Please note: the following tables comparing language and interjections in the parallel copies, only give line number, speaker and addressee of the second quotation if these differ from the line number, speaker and addressee of the first quotation.

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<o> in 'go' and 'more' above). Hand B does use the interjection O further on in his copy of the *York* cycle text, although relatively infrequently compared to vocative constructions with the interjection A.<sup>106</sup> An example is found in pageant 42, 1.1: *O mightfull god how standis it nowe*.<sup>107</sup>

In general it appears that the interjection A is used in Hand B's language (from considerable south of York, according to LALME) in the neutral, phrase-like vocative constructions to God, while the less common selection of the interjection O may in most cases be an indicator of emotion or attitude in the speaker's vocative addresses. If so, this usage seems to suggest that originally Latin 'O lord' constructions tended to be realised in writing as 'A lord' in the northern play texts (as has been found to be the case in the *Towneley* cycle – see Chapter 7). Further, it seems that the Hand B tended to keep the interjection A whatever his own dialect was like, and despite the fact that he seems to have normalised northern reflex of OE long *ā* elsewhere ('ga' and 'mare') to the southern rounded vowel ('go' and 'more'). In other words, Hand B in the *York* Register appears to have treated interjections as words, rather than as sounds, in his copy of pageant no. 3.

#### 3.4.4 *The York Scriveners' prompt copy*

The guild of Scriveners was responsible for producing pageant no. 41 in the performance of the *York* cycle. Prompt copies of single pageant texts like those surviving from York and Chester were probably owned by many guilds in the towns where cycle plays were staged. Occasional fragments of such prompt copies survive, and thus testify to the tradition, but as fragments they have not been included in the present study. As working texts during rehearsals prompt copies were probably subject to considerable tear and wear, and they may even have been destroyed when the cycle performances were suppressed some time after the Reformation. As late as around 1550, though,

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<sup>106</sup> In fact, also Hand A has four occurrences of the interjection O in his copy of the first pageant text (but none in pageants nos. 2 and 3). These are realised in writing as <owe> three times and as <o> once. The interjection O is discussed in Chapter 7.

<sup>107</sup> Other examples occur in Hand B's copy of pageants nos. 44: 64, 45: 96 and 118, 46: 21 in invocations to God, and in pageants nos. 33: 387; 36: 300 and 301, in vocative addresses to Christ. The interjection O is also used before vocatives in addresses to Mary and Pilate (!) in B's part of the text.

the York guild of Scriveners ordered a new copy of their pageant, 'Incredulity of Thomas', still in existence in the Sykes manuscript in York, City Archives, Acc. 104/G.I (Beadle 2009: xxxi).

Beadle (2009: xxxii) finds it likely that John Clerke made the MS Sykes copy, probably some years prior to his work on the *York Register*, in which he figures as Hand C.<sup>108</sup> The Register did not provide him with his exemplar when executing his work for the Scriveners' Guild, but the two texts may have had a common exemplar, i.e. a century old exemplar by the time when Clerke produced the Scriveners' copy. For the present purpose of comparing scribal treatment of language in general and interjections specifically, it adds to the value of the comparison if one copy is not copied from the other. If the parallel texts employ the same interjections when based on the same exemplar but more than one century apart, this pattern firmly suggests that interjections were rarely changed or ignored by scribes.

The two texts correspond fairly well, except that the pageant no. 41 text in the *York cycle MS* contains 197 lines, while the Sykes MS text is one line shorter with its 196 lines.<sup>109</sup> These are minor differences, however, which are explained as follows: The two lines 17-18 in the *York Register* pageant no. 41 (Hand B's work) occur as just one line in the later Sykes copy.<sup>110</sup> Slightly later in the text there are two half lines, ll. 27b and 28a, in the *York MS*, where Sykes MS has none.

As would be expected, there are differences in orthography in the two copies. There are no yoghs in the Sykes MS, and thorns are less frequent than in the corresponding *York cycle* pageant. The Sykes scribe sometimes overcompensates h-dropping, such as in line 183: *Marcy lord now haske I the*.

<sup>108</sup> Beadle (2009: xxix) finds John Clerke, Hand C, first connected to the *York Register* in 1554, and his entering of marginalia and full pageants' text appears to have taken place regularly from 1550 to 1560. The secretary script of the Sykes manuscript was dated to c. 1550.

<sup>109</sup> Beadle (2009: 398) edited the *York cycle* pageant no. 41 to 198 lines, as he emended one missing line, l. 183, in the *York* pageant text by including the Sykes MS line 181.

<sup>110</sup> *York cycle* 41: 17-18 read: *Vnto þat Criste oure lorde vs wille / Some socoure sende*. Sykes MS l. 17 reads: *Tyll þat Cryst vs some socor send*. (Capitalisation is editorial.)

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The corresponding line in the *York Register* reads: *Mercy nowe lorde ax I the* (l. 185 in Beadle, after the inclusion of l. 183). The two quotations illustrate typical variation between the two MSS, except that the Register hand usually uses thorns rather than <th> in *þe* ('thee').<sup>111</sup> The syntax is slightly different with the adverb 'now' in different places.

Unstressed word-final -e is normally not found in the Sykes MS text, and in the above citation illustrated by words 'now' and 'lord'. They are also gone in end rhymes, e.g. in Sykes ll. 113-18: *scheded, hend, frend, tell, wynd*, and *dwell*. The same stanza in the *York Register* text has: *schende, hende, frende, telle, wende*, and *dwell* (ll. 115-20). The spelling of the latter word, <dwell>, is an indication that unstressed word-final /e/ was disappearing from the spoken language already by the time that Hand B executed his work (c. 1470).

All the interjections are the same in the two manuscripts. There are five occurrences of ALAS, two A, one LO, and one BENEDICITE (Chapter 7 discusses whether BENEDICITE is an interjection or not). The earlier scribe uses double <ll> in ALAS (*Allas*), whereas the Sykes scribe consistently has single <l>. A few examples are given below:

B:	<i>Allas to woo þat we wer wrought</i> (l.1, Peter to John and Jacob, lament)
S:	<i>Alas the woo þat we are wrought</i> (l.1)
B:	<i>A breþir dere what may we trow</i> (l.20, Peter to John and Jacob,
S:	incredulity, surprise) <i>A breder dere whatt may we trow</i> (l.19)
B:	<i>Loo here is mette þat þou ete may</i> (l.68, Jacob to risen Christ, attention
S:	to food) <i>Loo here ys meyt yf þou eytt may</i> (l.66)
B:	<i>Allas for pyne</i> (l.112, Thomas to self or audience, monologue lamenting
S:	death of Christ) <i>Alas for pyne</i> (l.110)

**Table 3-6 York Register (Hand B) c.1470 and MS Sykes c.1550**

<sup>111</sup> The citations also illustrate that a late hand does not necessarily employ a language which is closer to what has become modern standard. The Sykes scribe for example working in the mid-sixteenth century still has the dialectally revealing <h> grapheme in the verb 'ask' (but he has avoided the metathesis implied in the Hand B spelling <axe>).



The citations reveal that even though the language of the two hands varies in some respects (such as tense in the first quote above, and the use of ‘that’ versus ‘if’ in the third quote), the use of interjections does not. All interjections correspond, in type and in distribution.

#### 3.4.4.1 The *York* cycle copyists – a summary

Collations of the copies of the contemporary *York* Register Hands A and B, as well as the copies made 80-90 years apart by the *York* Register Hand B and the MS Sykes copyist, reveal that the interjections remain stable. Except for the spelling of ALAS, no variation of interjections has been found in the parallel copies. The texts employ the same interjections in the same surroundings, and even the functionally close interjection types O and A were not substituted for one another in the copies explored above. If the parallel texts from the *Chester* cycle and the Digby and Macro *Wisdom* copies show the same pattern, there seems to be reason to believe that interjections, these little non-words, were in fact regarded as meaningful.

#### 3.4.5 *The Chester Peniarth 399 D ‘Antichrist’ prompt copy*

Similarly to the situation regarding the parallel *York* cycle copies, there are some pageant texts surviving in two (or more) versions from the *Chester* cycle. The only early MS containing any substantial part of the *Chester* cycle play is the pageant text of Antichrist in MS Peniarth 399 D. The Antichrist pageant is the longest of all the pageant texts in the *Chester* cycle. MS Peniarth ‘Antichrist’ is dated to c. 1500 or slightly earlier (Lumiansky and Mills 1974: xi). By comparison, all the five mss containing the full *Chester* cycle text are late. The earliest of them, the Huntington 2 (HM 2), formed the base text for Lumiansky and Mills’ edition (1974).<sup>112</sup> The HM 2 was copied by Edward Gregorie in 1591 (Mills 1998:185).

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<sup>112</sup> To avoid confusion: MS Huntington (HM) 1 contains the unique copy of the *Towneley* cycle, while MS Huntington (HM) 2 contains the earliest of the five copies of the full *Chester* cycle. The latter is often shortened to Hm, for easier reference when the text (rather than the MS) is discussed in relation to the other *Chester* cycle copies, designated A, R, B, and H (Lumiansky and Mills 1974) (In this system

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LALME (III: 48-9) localised the language of MS Peniarth ‘Antichrist’ in Cheshire, and the team (LALME I: 92) also found the language of the MS HM 2 to belong in Cheshire, but due to its late date it has not been given a linguistic profile in the Atlas.<sup>113</sup> Mills (1998: 185-90) identifies all the known *Chester* cycle copyists as Chester men.<sup>114</sup> All five *Chester* cycle copies include a pageant about Antichrist, though lines are missing in some.<sup>115</sup> According to the late manuscripts, the pageant about Antichrist is no. 23, the penultimate pageant of the *Chester* cycle, and it belonged to the guild of Dyers. The MS Peniarth has no guild ascription, but documents surviving from 1467-68 ascribe the ‘Antichrist’ pageant to the guild of Hewsters (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 175), apparently another term for ‘dyers’ (OED).

The Peniarth ‘Antichrist’ was edited by Lumiansky and Mills (1974 Vol. I: 491-516) as Appendix IIB in their edition of the full *Chester* cycle based on MS HM 2 (the Huntington MS). Even though there are 90 years between the HM 2 and the Peniarth manuscript, they are fairly close in content.<sup>116</sup> The *Chester* cycle pageant no. 23 consists of 722 lines in HM 2, while the Peniarth ‘Antichrist’ text amounts to 726 lines. With the exception of two reversed lines (ll. 193-4), all lines in the two copies correspond up to l. 636, where some verse lines spoken by the Archangel Michael are differently ordered in the two texts. The HM 2 text leaves out four lines (ll. 641-44 in MS Peniarth) from Michael’s speech, thus ending up four lines shorter than the MS Peniarth

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Peniarth is referred to as P, but the full form serves the present discussion better). Both ‘Hm’ and ‘HM 2’ are used in the present study, depending on topic. The designation ‘HM 1’ for the *Towneley* cycle manuscript is used only occasionally.

<sup>113</sup> LALME (I: 92) states about the language used in the *Chester* cycle copy surviving in HM 2: “Language is of little interest apart from vocabulary. Cheshire.”

<sup>114</sup> A survey of the *Chester* cycle copyists is provided in Chapter 5. It is based on Lumiansky and Mills (1974) and Mills (1998).

<sup>115</sup> The two pageant no. 23 copies made by Bellin (the full cycle copies designated A and R – see chapter 5) are especially affected by loss of lines (Lumiansky and Mills 1974: xxix-xxx).

<sup>116</sup> There is a problem with MS Peniarth insofar as someone has edited the text where original letters are faded (Lumiansky and Mills 1974: xii), and a later (modern) restorer has re-inked the whole text. These restorations occasionally obliterate original readings. However, the modern restorer seems at least not to have used MS HM 2 as a model text (Lumiansky and Mills 1974: xii), so if the quotes in the following are in any way affected, and not the original readings by the MS Peniarth scribe, at least the changes are not made to match the MS HM 2 text to which they are compared.

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text, and four lines behind in the rest of the play text (Lumiansky and Mills 1974: 434).<sup>117</sup> From Peniarth l. 649 and HM 2 l. 645 the two texts again correspond.

As expected, Gregorie's language (1591) appears slightly more modern than that of the earlier scribe (c. 1500). Gregorie wrote *land*, *was*, and *mankind* where the Peniarth scribe used *londe*, *wos*, and *monkynde*. In Gregorie's orthography the rounded back vowel is replaced by the unrounded <a>. The unstressed final -e is gone in Gregorie's language, but so it seems to be also in the Peniarth language. Both words 'might' and 'sight' are spelt with final -e in Peniarth (ll. 432 and 577, rhyme position), but 'might' is also realised without final -e (l. 197, rhyme position). This alternation between spellings suggests that the unstressed final -e was gone in pronunciation when Peniarth was copied (composed?), but sometimes kept in spelling, maybe for eye rhyme, and because it was a valid alternative in spelling. In all, the language of the Peniarth 'Antichrist' texts appears quite colourless, but there is still some variation between the parallel copies.

With two exceptions, the interjections in the two copies of the 'Antichrist' text are the same. Interjections are quite plentiful in the texts, totalling 35 occurrences in Peniarth, and 37 in HM 2. There are 10 occurrences of the interjection A (once spelt <ah> in HM 2, 23: 529), 4 occurrences of O, 9 occurrences of FIE, 7 occurrences of OUT, 4 occurrences of ALAS and one occurrence of GRAMERCY (Chapter 6 discussions of whether OUT and GRAMERCY are interjections).

The HM 2 text (Gregorie's) seemingly contains two more interjections than the MS Peniarth text, but quite possibly one of the HM 2 interjections was intended as the conjunction 'and'.<sup>118</sup> The two verse lines where there is a disparity in the use of interjections are cited below. The quotes give but a flavour of the linguistic and orthographic variation found in the two Cheshire

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<sup>117</sup> The other four full *Chester* cycle MSS include the four lines in Michael's speech. In other words, these were not emended by the modern or any other restorer of the MS Peniarth text, even though they must have been available. See footnote above.

<sup>118</sup> Chester pageant 23, line 589 opens with 'and' in the two Bellin copies (designated A and R, see Chapter 5), just like the Peniarth copy does (Lumiansky and Mills 1974: 432 apparatus).

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texts written 90 years apart.<sup>119</sup> (For more, see the second table illustrating the parallel interjections.)

P	<i>You ypocrites that so cryn</i> (l.357, Antichrist to Enoch and Elias, anger)
HM 2	<i>O you ypocrytes that so cryne</i>
P	<i>And nowe knowyn apertely</i> (l.589, third king to Enoch, realisation)
HM 2	<i>A nowe we knowe appertlye</i>

**Table 3-7 The only variation between Peniarth ‘Antichrist’, c.1500 (P) and MS HM2 (Hm), 1591**

Occasionally there is variation in the lexis and thus the meaning between the two texts, but it does not affect the interjections, except the A vs. ‘and’ above. Some examples are given in the table below. The examples have been selected in order to demonstrate both the stability in the interjections, and the degree of linguistic and orthographic variation found between the two copies. The quotes also illustrate that both interjections A and O can be used in vocative addresses to (perceived) celestial beings (cf. the discussion of vocative addresses in the *York* scribal texts above).

P	<i>A lord to the I aske mercye</i> (l.105, Dead 1 to Antichrist, greeting, gratitude, plea )
HM 2	<i>A lord to thee I aske mercye</i>
P	<i>A God a lorde mycle of myght</i> (l.197, fourth king to Antichrist or audience, wonder, outburst)
HM 2	<i>A god A lord mycle of might</i> (l.197, all kings to Antichrist/audience)
P	<i>O lord that art so mycle of myghte</i> (l.432, Doctor to Antichrist, flattery, irony?)
HM 2	<i>O lord thou art so micle of might</i>
P	<i>Oute on the wysarde with thy wylis</i> (l.371, Antichrist to Enoch, anger, rage, phrase)
HM 2	<i>Owt on the roysard with thy wyles</i>
P	<i>Fye on the felone fye on the fye</i> (l.521, Elias to Antichrist, anger, curse)
HM 2	<i>Fye on thee fellonne fye on thee fye</i>
P	<i>Alas put that oute of my syghte</i> (l.577, Dead 1 to Elias, fear, protest)
HM 2	<i>Alas put that bread out of my sight</i>

<sup>119</sup> All quotes from the *Chester* cycle texts follow Lumiansky and Mills’ (1974) u/v normalisation.

**Table 3-8 Some of the 35 parallels in Peniarth, 1500, and MS HM2, 1591**

The interjections ALAS, O, and FIE are consistently spelt the same in the two texts. Both the Peniarth scribe and Gregorie wrote ALAS with single <l> and FIE with the grapheme <y>: *fye*. Neither used the grapheme <h> when spelling the interjection O.

Only the interjections OUT and GRAMERCY vary in spelling in the two texts, in addition to the single <ah> spelling by Gregorie already mentioned. The Peniarth scribe consistently wrote the interjection OUT with the vowel combination <ou>, sometimes using final –e (<oute> in 3 of 7 occurrences). Gregorie spelt all 7 occurrences as <owt> in pageant 23.<sup>120</sup> The spelling of <out> versus <owt> is a typical example demonstrating that early standardisation of English did not develop uni-directionally towards modern spelling. In this case, the earlier copyist used the spelling which has survived in PDE, while Gregorie’s spelling of the word ‘out’ is outdated. The word GRAMERCY occurring only in l. 245, was spelt <Grauntmarsye> by the Peniarth copyist, and <Grantmercy> by Gregorie.

The collation of the MS Peniarth text from c. 1500 and the parallel MS HM 2 text mainly reveals stability in the type, distribution and function of interjections. This stability is the more remarkable considering that the revised, official text for the *Chester* cycle, referred to in documents as the Regenall (‘original’) and apparently functioning like the *York Register*, was lost around 1568 (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 170; 186), i.e. between the points in time when the two copies compared here were produced. In other words, the two texts derived from different exemplars, one pre- and one post-Reformation. Lumiansky and Mills (1983: 85) suggest that the Peniarth ‘Antichrist’, if the dating to 1500 is correct, was a copy of an earlier official ‘Pre-exemplar’ (lost), while the five late copies of the full *Chester* cycle were made from the sixteenth century official Regenall (also lost).<sup>121</sup> Some of the

<sup>120</sup> <owt> was also Gregorie’s preferred spelling of the adverb ‘out’ elsewhere in HM 2. On only three occasions, in pageants nos. 2 and 10, did he write ‘out’ with the grapheme <u> rather than the grapheme <w>. Gregorie’s contemporary scribe, Bellin, preferred the spelling <out> at least in pageant no. 1. Orthographic variation was in other words still common at the end of the sixteenth century.

<sup>121</sup> Discrepancies between the Early Banns, the Late (Protestant) Banns, and the surviving texts, point to the existence of an earlier, different version of the *Chester*

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variation among the five late *Chester* cycle copies is best explained by a common exemplar serving as a working text which included diverse alternatives and corrections (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 22-3). The text for the pageant of 'Antichrist' had not changed much.

#### 3.4.6 *The Chester Coopers' copy of 'Trial and Flagellation'*

Two contemporary copies related to the *Chester* cycle, but produced by different hands for different purposes, have also been collated. The *Chester* cycle pageant no. 16, 'Trial and Flagellation of Christ', was copied singly by George Bellin in 1599.<sup>122</sup> The MS containing the single pageant no. 16 text belongs to the city of Chester's Coopers' Guild (Lumiansky and Mills 1974: xvii). The Coopers were responsible for producing pageant no. 16 together with the "Fletchers, Bowyers and Stringers" (Lumiansky and Mills 1974: v),

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cycle, and already in 1422 documents indicate a civic original: a "Pre-exemplar" (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 170). Lumiansky and Mills (1983: 48) suggest that the extant cycle copies' exemplar, perhaps derived directly from the Pre-exemplar, "took material shape" around 1500-1550.

The editors emphasise the need to view the *Chester* cycle as having no final or original text. The term "Chester cycle" is but a "convenient abstraction" (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 41), and the composition of pageants into a unity as we happen to have them, make up one version (or five versions) out of many possible versions of a fluctuating cycle event. The text(s) were constantly revised, added to, and censored. The cycle was not performed annually in Chester, the performance could be spread over more than one day, it was staged first at Corpus Christi day, later at Whitsun (Mills 1998: 112), and the last performance took place on Midsummer lasting four days (Mills 1998: 149). Some pageants may not have been included in all performances, and some were on occasion staged separately.

<sup>122</sup> Bellin also produced two full *Chester* cycle copies, one in 1592 (A) and one in 1600 (R) (Lumiansky and Mills 1974: ix; xiv-xx), both surviving in the British Library: BL Additional 10305, and BL Harley 2013. Bellin's copy for the Coopers in some respects resemble his pageant no. 16 texts found in the two full *Chester* cycle copies he made. For example l. 109 contains an error common to all his three copies. At the same time the Coopers' text contains readings Bellin did not use in the two full copies (e.g. ll. 221, 228, 234, 241, 272, and 314). Mills (1998: 189) suggests that Bellin used both the lost exemplar and his own 1592 copy when producing the Coopers' guild version. When he from this work discovered mistakes in his own early copy, he returned to the exemplar and copied his second full cycle text in 1600, perhaps on commission (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 66).

but since the city no longer produced a cycle performance when the copy was made, it cannot have been a prompt copy.<sup>123</sup> Lumiansky and Mills (1974: xviii) suggest that the rather pretty Cooper's copy was produced for the Guild's archives, perhaps motivated by the Coopers' pride in the responsibility they had had up to 1575.<sup>124</sup>

Lumiansky and Mills (1974: 517-32) include the Coopers' copy as Appendix II C in their edition of the *Chester* cycle. The Coopers' text has been used in the following to compare Bellin's language to that of Gregorie as attested in pageant no. 16 in MS HM 2. First it can be concluded that there is a discrepancy in the length of the two versions: Bellin's pageant no. 16 text is 408 lines long, while Gregorie's version amounts to only 394 lines.<sup>125</sup> Yet, the interjections correspond closely in the two duplicate texts. There are 2 occurrences of the interjection A, one occurrence of ALAS, and two phrases containing FIE, whereof one contains a collocation of three FIE in sequence (HM 2: l. 51, Coopers MS: l. 55). The only difference lies in the HM 2 text containing an example of PARDIE in l. 358, while the Coopers' copy has nothing in its corresponding line 372 (see the last quote below).<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Prompt copies are play texts used practically in rehearsals and staging.

<sup>124</sup> Similar motivation, as well as antiquarian interest, seems to lie behind the production of all the late Chester cycle copies, as all were made after the last performance of the cycle in 1575. The copyists seem not to have been bothered by the Catholic associations of the cycle, maybe because the cycle text seems to have been revised to meet reform protest, like it was also revised as late as in 1575 to remove objectionable formulations (Mills 1998: 179-182). The citizens of Chester seems proudly to have staged its cycle play for as long as it was allowed them, and probably by the late sixteenth century many thought of the cycle play primarily as a Christian act and a city tradition. However, local Puritans did not see it this way, reflected in a letter dated 1575 (but not sent) by the Cestrian Puritan Christopher Goodman's to the mayor of Chester (Mills 1989: 146; 150-51). The Chester Assembly in 30 May 1575 voted 34 for and 12 against the staging of the cycle that year (Mills 1998: 112).

<sup>125</sup> Bellin's pageant no. 16 text includes an uncorrected repetition of ll. 359-60 (in ll. 363-4), making it two lines longer than it should be (Lumiansky and Mills 1986 Vol. II: 406).

<sup>126</sup> The omission of PARDIE is a feature the Coopers' copy shares with BL Harley 2124 (H), but apparently not with the other Bellin copies (A and R) (Lumiansky and Mills 1974: 301, apparatus l. 358). The text in MS BL Harley 2124 is the latest *Chester* cycle copy, dated 1607. It is also the text which departs most significantly

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The *Chester* ‘Trial and Flagellation’ pageant text contains only few prototypical interjections. All are included below. The citations show both the consistency in the copying of interjections and the (minor) differences otherwise.<sup>127</sup>

HM 2	<i>A janglinge Jesus art thou nowe here</i> (1.9, Annas to Jesus, scorn, greeting)
C	<i>A jangellinge Jesu arte thou now here</i>
HM 2	<i>justifie Marye fye fye on thee fye</i> (1.51, Caiaphas to Jesus, anger, curse)
C	<i>Justifye Marye fye fye one thee fye</i> (1.55)
HM 2	<i>Fye upon the freyke</i> (1.86, Jew 1 to Jesus, anger, scorn)
C	<i>Fye uppon thee freike</i> (1.90)
HM 2	<i>A welcome Jesu verament</i> (1.167, Herod to Jesus, greeting, joy, sarcasm?)
C	<i>A welcome Jesu verament</i> (1.179)
HM 2	<i>Alas I am nigh wood for woo</i> (1.187, Herod to audience, resignation?)
C	<i>Alas I ame nigh wood for woo</i> (1.199)
HM 2	<i>and grantmercye this guyste</i> [guyfte](1.210, Jew 2 to Herod, verb)
C	<i>and grauntmercye this guyft</i> (1.220)
HM 2	<i>save the emperour of Rome pardee</i> (1.358, Caiaphas to Pilate, adverb, offence?)
C	<i>save the emperour of Rome</i> (1.372)

**Table 3-9 Chester pageant no. 16 in MS Hm 2, 1591, and MS C, 1599.**

The orthography differs slightly in the two contemporary parallel copies. Mainly, the variation affects unstressed, final –e, as well as y/i-distribution, but neither scribe consistently sticks to one orthographic solution. For instance in the first citation (l. 9), Bellin writes *arte* and Gregorie writes *art* without final –e. Soon after in the same verse line Bellin has *now* and

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from the other four copies (Lumiansky and Mills 1974: xxvii-xxviii). It is unclear why MSS H and C should correspond in this case, while MSS A, R and C, all by Bellin, do not correspond.

<sup>127</sup> The citations also show an example of GRAMERCY used as a verb phrase (‘thank you for’), and not as an interjection or a pragmatic marker. Neither scribe used the reduced form ‘gramercy’, but retained the connection to the original French phrase: *grant merci*. See chapter 7 for a discussion of GRAMERCY.



Gregorie has *nowe*, this time with final -e.<sup>128</sup> The spelling of the interjections is the same in the two hands.

#### 3.4.6.1 The Chester cycle copyists – a summary

As was the case with the *York* cycle copyists above, the *Chester* cycle copyists seem rarely to change or ignore interjections, in spite of other attested variation.

#### 3.4.7 *The Wisdom text in MS Macro and MS Digby*

The full text of the *Wisdom* morality play survives in Washington, Folger MS V. a. 354, the so-called Macro manuscript. The Macro *Wisdom* text is 1,163 lines long. By contrast, the MS Digby *Wisdom* is incomplete, and only the text's first 752 lines survive (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: lxiii). Both manuscripts contain several play texts in several hands, but only one hand is found in each of the *Wisdom* texts. The Macro *Wisdom* scribe also copied most of the *Mankind* play in the same manuscript (Eccles 1969: xxvii), while the Digby *Wisdom* scribe is the same who copied the main part of the *Herod* text in the same manuscript (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: lxiv). Dating and language of Macro *Mankind* and Digby *Herod* are therefore of relevance for the dating and localisation of the *Wisdom* texts.

The Macro and Digby *Wisdom* copies may be as much as 20 years apart (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: lxv). The latest of them, the Digby *Wisdom*, was not copied from the other, but according to Baker, Murphy and Hall (1982: lxvi), the two texts may have been copied from the same exemplar. Both were written in an East Midlands dialect. One scribal profile from each of the Digby and Macro MSS was localised in Norfolk by LALME (LP 58 and LP 4662 above), but neither of these profiles was based on the *Wisdom* texts. Still, there is reason to believe that both were written in an East Anglian dialect, as LALME (Vol. I: 165) comments that the Macro *Wisdom* belonged

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<sup>128</sup> It is possible that also u/v graphemes differ in the two texts, as these have been normalised in Lumiansky and Mills (1974). I have not had access to the Coopers' guild's copy in order to check u/v distribution, and I do not think it is necessary for the argument made here, as it does not affect the most common interjections in ME drama texts. Only the marginal GRANTMERCY may be affected.

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in Norfolk. The Digby *Herod* text, copied by the same hand as Digby *Wisdom*, shows “some East Anglian characteristics, but rather fewer than that of *Mary Magdalen*” (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: liv-lvi).<sup>129</sup>

There are 25 interjections in the 752 lines in the Digby *Wisdom* version, but only 24 in the corresponding part of the Macro *Wisdom*, lacking the interjection LO in l. 400. Therefore the interjection LO occurs 12 times in the Digby *Wisdom*, but only 11 times in the Macro *Wisdom*. One more difference is found in l. 500, where the Digby *Wisdom* has the interjection AHA (possibly HA HA, see Chapter 7), while the Macro *Wisdom* reads only A. The interjection A thus occurs four times in Digby and five times in Macro. There are five occurrences of the interjection O in both texts. Below are the only two cases where the interjections differ in the *Wisdom* parallel copies. Orthographic variation is testified in the citations in both tables below. Yet, there is almost no variation in the spelling of interjections (more below).

Macro	<i>Thys ys my suggestyyn</i> (l. 400, Lucifer to Mind)
Digby	<i>Lo this is my suggestion</i> (l. 400, Lucifer to Mind, attention to following argument)
Macro	<i>A ser all mery þan a wey care</i> (l. 500, Lucifer to Will, happy, joy)
Digby	<i>A ha sere alle mery than and a wey care</i>

**Table 3-10 The only variation in *Wisdom* in MS Macro and MS Digby**

The remaining 23 interjections are the same in the two parallel copies of *Wisdom*. Both texts for example have the collocation of two interjections in OUT HARROW (l. 325), but in this instance the orthography differs. Otherwise the spelling of interjections is the same in the two MSS: the interjections A and O are consistently spelt without final <h> in both MSS (which is the common practice in such early texts, but other realisations of O occur: see O in Chapter 7). The interjection LO is also spelt the same in both versions: without final –e, double <o> or any other variation. All the interjections correspond in terms of distribution, i.e. they are found in the same contexts. Below are examples of parallel usage of each interjection type in the two *Wisdom* texts.

<sup>129</sup> LALME Vol. III: 358 localises the language of *Mary Magdalen* to Norfolk. Baker, Murphy, and Hall (1982: lxvi) suggest associations to Bury St Edmunds in most play texts in both the Macro and the Digby MSS.

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Macro Digby	<i>A soueren wysdom yff yowur benygnyte</i> (1.39, Anima to Wisdom, respect, plea) <i>A souereyn wysdam if your benygnyte</i> (1.39)
Macro Digby	<i>O worthy spowse and soueren father</i> [emended to <i>fayer</i> in Eccles 1969: 116] (1.69, Anima to Wisdom, respect, gratitude?) <i>O worthy spouse and souereyne fayre</i> (1.69)
Macro Digby	<i>To cum to charyte than haue hys lyknes lo</i> (1.274, Understanding to Anima or audience) <i>To come to charite than haue his lyknesse lo</i> (1.274)
Macro Digby	<i>Owt harow I rore</i> (1.325, Lucifer to audience, anger. Self-presentation, first words) <i>Out herrowe I rore</i> (1.325)

**Table 3-11 Some of the parallels in *Wisdom* in MS Macro and MS Digby**

It is clear from the examples above that even though the scribes wrote in the same dialect, their spellings differ. As has been found in other texts, some scribes for example preferred <ou> while others wrote <ow> in ‘out’ or ‘your’. If the two *Wisdom* texts were copied from the same exemplar and in the same language, the scribes still chose different “accidental” features (Greg 1950-51: 21), such as spelling. However, the spelling of the interjections varied very little, and the types and distribution even less.

### 3.4.7.1 Conclusion

Of the collated parallel copies discussed above, the one which differs in language but not in date, the *York* scribal versions A and B of pageant 3, still contains the same interjections. The ones that differ in date but not necessarily in dialect are the copies of the *York* pageant 41, and the copies of the *Chester* pageant 23. These also show stability in the distribution and function of interjections. In the parallel copies in MS Peniarth and MS HM 2 of *Chester* pageant 23 there are only two instances of variation, even though interjections are particularly plentiful, and the latter was not copied from the first version. The contemporary *Chester* pageant 16 texts by Gregorie and Bellin show stability, as well, and were probably copied from the same, sixteenth century, exemplar. Finally, the close to contemporary *Wisdom* copies, both written in an East Anglian dialect, and possibly copied from the same exemplar, show close correspondence among the 24 interjections they share.

### 3. BACKGROUND

The collation of parallel copies above suggests that scribes rarely substituted interjections in ME play texts. The interjection types used, as well as their distribution, is stable both in contemporary copies by different scribes and in copies of different dates. It seems that the scribes treated interjections as meaningful lexical elements, not easily substituted.<sup>130</sup>

#### 3.5 *Late medieval or early Renaissance?*

The following analysis of the background to Late Middle English drama has to be somewhat superficial and take only the major factors into account. It cannot in any way be exhaustive of the many aspects of the society in which the medieval drama flourished, nor can it offer in-depth analyses of these aspects. It provides an overview of the late medieval background. Literature on history, however, rarely include much in-depth analysis of cultural activities such as plays, and works on early English drama may fail to account for societal, cultural, and religious factors, or they consider mainly one of these aspects. There are excellent works on these topics, which in total have allowed for the following piecing together of a description of the background to Late Middle English plays. I start with a questioning of the categories 'Medieval' and 'Renaissance'.

A clear boundary between late medieval and early Renaissance drama is difficult, perhaps impossible, to draw. Neither the genre of drama, nor written English, changed abruptly around 1500, which is the year often taken to mark the start of the Renaissance period in England. The present study includes texts produced in both periods, because plays like *Everyman* and *Burial and Resurrection of Christ*, as well as the *Chester* cycle manuscripts, originated in the sixteenth century. All three plays are medieval rather Renaissance in nature. The medieval morality play survived well into the sixteenth century, and humanist-oriented interludes were in the making well before the English Renaissance. It would be a superimposition to contrast late medieval and early Renaissance plays by date only. Further, the flaw of such a strict dichotomy of

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<sup>130</sup> Only tentatively can this tendency be generalised to all scribes, of course, and therefore the topic deserves further exploration. This would be possible for example through a comparison of the Chaucer scribes in the many manuscripts containing the *Canterbury Tales*. The *Canterbury Tales* contain interjections in direct speech quotes (Taavitsainen 1997).

medieval and Renaissance play traditions is clearly exemplified by the two plays by Henry Medwall included in the present study: one of the plays, *Nature*, is clearly a medieval morality play, while the other, *Fulgens and Lucres*, is an interlude. Both plays were written in the 1490s. The fact that one man wrote plays of so different orientations serves as a reminder that cultural change happens gradually, rather than abruptly.

The Black Death striking England around 1350 is commonly used as a marker of the beginning of the late medieval period. Late medieval England was marked by turbulence and change in many areas (Walker 2000: vii).<sup>131</sup> The period includes the Hundred-year War with France, internal strife over royal power, growing urbanisation, and an emerging challenge to ecclesiastical powers. Towns and rural areas were organised and governed in different manners. Religious belief and tradition organised life, work, and leisurely activities such as feasts all over England, but while religious organisations were in complete control in some places, other places, specifically some of the greater towns, were self-governed by royal grant. These towns developed strong civic organisations after the mid-thirteenth century.

Most of these factors have only indirect, but nonetheless important, influence on drama. A growing - and increasingly literate - middle class took on more responsibility for the spiritual welfare of themselves and others. As more people could read English, (select) Bible translations and other religious texts in the vernacular emerged (Clopper 2001: 139-141). In total, the late Middle English developed the ideological fundament and the resources it took to develop its own types of drama. The civic Corpus Christi cycles have been held up as the epitome of the English late medieval drama tradition, but there were other types of plays, as well, equally interesting, entertaining, and influential.

The end of the Middle Ages - and conversely, the beginning of the Renaissance - is more difficult to pinpoint than the beginning of the late

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<sup>131</sup> Walker (2000: vii) refers to the period between 1350 and 1550. In the present study, as in most historical linguistic study, the late Middle English period is identified as the years 1350-1500. The year 1500 is commonly referred to as the beginning of the Early Modern period. As mentioned, the present study includes texts from between 1500 and 1600, as well as chronologically true late medieval texts.

### 3. BACKGROUND

Middle Ages. In England, the year 1500 is often referred to as the approximate start of the Renaissance, but the ideas and culture usually associated with the Renaissance were adopted earlier in some areas of English society and later in others. Like most changes, in other words, the change from late medieval to early Renaissance was a gradual one.<sup>132</sup>

The interlude subgenre is, at least in popular opinion, often associated with the Renaissance rather than with the Middle Ages, but the interlude was not new in sixteenth-century England. The other medieval play types were more explicitly shaped by the Catholic faith, and the most decisive changes to English drama would therefore be expected to have occurred with Henry's Reformation in the 1530s (rather than around 1500). However, even the Reformation did not lead to abolishment of the medieval cycles. Their performances in some places continued well after the break with the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>133</sup> Some cycles may have been censored of their most conspicuously Catholic references, but they were not effectively suppressed until the reign of Elizabeth I during the so-called second Reformation.<sup>134</sup>

Further, the English Protestant (Post-Reformation) morality plays look quite similar to their extant Catholic counterparts; the first just uses the form of the

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<sup>132</sup> The term 'change' is preferred to 'development' in this context (cf. Fleischmann 2000). The word 'development' implies improvement, and thereby a bias in meaning towards later being better, i.e. Renaissance culture is seen as an improvement compared to medieval culture. This was very much the impression the Renaissance thinkers promoted themselves, when they coined the phrase 'the middle ages' to describe the cultural "void" they saw between Antiquity and themselves. The present writer intends to avoid such bias in the treatment of medieval drama.

<sup>133</sup> The *York* cycle was performed for the last time in the 1560s or 1570s (Beadle 2009: xxi-xxii), the *Chester* cycle was performed until 1575 (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 192), and documentary evidence suggests that a cycle was performed in Wakefield at least until around 1560 (Stevens and Cawley 1994: xxi). This cycle may have been (a version of) the *Towneley* cycle text, since marginalia in the *Towneley* manuscript suggest that the text was used to produce a play at one point (Stevens and Cawley 1994: xxiv), and it is likely that the manuscript belonged in or around Wakefield (Stevens and Cawley 1994: xix).

<sup>134</sup> The Corpus Christi celebration itself was suppressed in 1548 (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 190), but as shown, at least some cycles were still being performed beyond this year. At this time, however, the *Chester* cycle performance had already been moved to Whitsun, and the very last performance took place on Midsummer.

latter to demonise Catholicism by associating the old faith with the devil.<sup>135</sup> There is no telling, though, how many play texts were destroyed for example during the dissolution of the monasteries (Section 3.5.8). What can be seen from the surviving play texts is that the English drama tradition was varied and sophisticated before the Renaissance, and that this tradition continued through most of the sixteenth century. The factors that were to change drama for ever mostly took place in the latter half of the sixteenth century. The (late) suppression of the cycle plays alongside a gradual discontinuity of the rest of the outdoor play tradition, together with the growing popularity of indoor play types, resulted in exclusive indoor play performances for the aristocracy as well as in the building of commercial theatres for the masses in London.

### 3.5.1 *Church and demography in late medieval England*

Two aspects of late medieval England are of particular importance for the study of the drama of the period, including play texts surviving from the early sixteenth century.

First, the Roman Catholic faith and other aspects of the late medieval belief system colour the drama of the period. Not only does this imply that most plays are deeply religious in content, but also that a certain outlook on life informs the didacticism most of the plays, frequently expressed in the personification of binary opposites of good and evil. Personification of good and bad continues well into the Renaissance drama, only they reflect Protestant outlook after the Reformation (Cox 2000: 6).<sup>136</sup> More detail on this topic follows.

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<sup>135</sup> See for instance, John Bale's fiercely anti-Catholic *King Johan* (1530-60). The Protestant drama continues the dichotomy of good and bad, but whereas the late medieval Catholic tradition contrasted God and devil, the English post-Reformation drama replaced good with Protestant, devil with Catholic, and reason with superstition. The devil survived longer in English drama than did God, as the vices and later the all-evil Vice is merely a continuation of the devil and what he embodied from the start: pride, social disruption, and chaos (Cox 2000: 52).

<sup>136</sup> According to Cox (2000: 8), binary thinking continued for centuries after the Renaissance, and it even informed Chambers' (1903) view on medieval drama, just from the exact opposite view compared to the Middle Ages. Chamber's evaluation of medieval drama was influenced by ideas ultimately stemming from the era of

### 3. BACKGROUND

Secondly, the English late medieval period witnessed important demographic changes. The towns grew, and in some of them a self-confident civic middle class emerged and organised itself in craft and trade guilds. In some places these guilds took on some of the responsibility formerly belonging to the Church. The local guilds, not the religious authorities, developed the great cycle plays as worship in celebration of the transubstantiation on Corpus Christi day in early summer. The Corpus Christi cycles were edification, worship and entertainment in one (Happé 1975: 11), but the English audience could learn important religious lessons in the vernacular from a wide array of late medieval drama types. Section 3.5.6 discusses the biblical cycles.

Most of England was still rural, not urban, and at least some rural areas developed alternative kinds of religious drama.<sup>137</sup> The local, parish church was probably more involved in these smaller-scale plays, than the higher clergy of the self-governed towns were in the staging of cycles. Common to both play types, nonetheless, was that entertainment and devotion went hand

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Enlightenment; that medieval Christian culture was informed by “sacred ignorance” as opposed to secular reason (Cox 2000: 8). In other words, in late nineteenth century scholarly circles, religion had come to be judged as superstition, and deeply religious societies as ignorant. Chambers therefore considered the pagan and secular elements in medieval drama as the more interesting ones. He was wrong, however, in viewing stage devils as evidence of pagan influence. Cox (2000: 2) shows that devils formed part of the religious mindset, and were not “a secular incursion in sacred drama.”

Chambers’ (1903) work on medieval drama was comprehensive and revolutionary in many ways. He saw qualities in medieval plays where many others had found only crudeness, but like most others of his time, perhaps even still, he saw medieval drama mainly as a primitive precursor for the English Renaissance drama. Chambers’ influence has been so strong, Clopper (2001) suggests, that modern scholars still tend to present medieval play types in the order Chambers suggested that they developed; from biblical plays via miracle and morality plays to interludes. Clopper criticises the adoption of these subgenre categories and the order in which they are regularly presented because both give simplistic accounts of what early English plays were like and how they originated and changed. The present writer unfortunately has to plead guilty – also this study presents Middle English plays in the conventional order. However, the topic is discussed here and elsewhere in Chapter 3, in Section 2.2.4, and in Chapter 7. In addition, the present study includes an alternative analysis based on the distinction between open and closed play types, i.e. outdoor and indoor drama (Normington 2009).

<sup>137</sup> The tradition of parish drama is best attested in East Anglia. See e.g. Coldewey (1994) or the short description in Section 3.6.3 below.



in hand. There was little objection to drama, and the tradition lasted for centuries in England, in spite of the country's early break with the Roman Church. Until the Reformation, civic and religious ceremonial was interconnected – any public act, such as oath-taking, was “associated with acts of worship” (Mills 1983: 158). The tradition of didactic (religious) drama did not end abruptly with the Reformation. The rest of this chapter describes Middle English culture, faith, possible sources for plays, and the play types themselves, in more detail.

### 3.5.2 *Towns and the emerging middle class*

Beadle (1994: 86) suggests that the civic cycle play in York developed after the impact of the Black Death paradoxically had led to financial growth in the city. Due to the loss of lives, workers were better paid in towns in need of manpower, and consequently English towns grew, resulting in an emerging urban middle class of artisans and traders organised in guilds. These late medieval towns were partly self-governed communities taking pride in displaying their rich and pious culture in, for instance, religious festivals, processions, and processional plays. The inhabitants of a city may have taken on such costly efforts as staging cycle plays as a way of expressing a communal identity (Tydeman 1994: 13), at the same time as the cycle plays reflect a civic concern for the spiritual welfare of the city's inhabitants (Clopper 2001: 3; 142).

The church calendar provided many occasions for such communal celebrations. In many ways ecclesiastical authorities seem to have been in favour of these religious festivities, and even actively sought to introduce them in order to supplant pagan feasts, such as ‘somer games’ (Clopper 2001: 22). The last performance of the *Chester* cycle play took place during four days at Midsummer, not on Corpus Christi Day or Whitsun, as it did earlier. The papal institution of the Corpus Christi celebration itself, in 1311, may have come about as a way of suppressing pagan feasts during summer.

The growth of a powerful middle class changed late medieval English society at least in some places. The staging of cycles occurred in cities where craft and trade guilds had become especially powerful, and this happened in the north of the country (Clopper 2001: 141). The city of York provides the

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earliest and best example. York was the second largest city in late medieval England, and its guild corporations seem to have accumulated great power, and to some extent contested church for domination and ownership of certain religious ceremonial (Clopper 2001: 3). In 1468 the guild-owned, civic Corpus Christi play in York actually took over the Corpus Christi Day celebration by displacing the procession by the clerics to the following day (Higgins 1997: 86). In towns dominated by ecclesiastical authorities or by religious guilds rather than trade guild organisation, Corpus Christi processions were more common than the staging of cycle plays (Clopper 2001: 121; 142).

Higgins (1997: 86) identifies a power struggle between civic and ecclesiastical authorities in the history of the *York* cycle. In other words, the Corpus Christi cycle in York served not only the means of religious edification, but also as a civic demonstration of power. The guilds' pageant wagons "beat the bounds" around the city centre like the ancient beating of the bounds rituals had served as ceremony of communal identification for centuries already (Higgins 1997: 82-3).<sup>138</sup> Clopper (2001: 141-42) explains how cycle plays came into being mainly in the north, and especially in those towns where civic organisation was strongest at the cost of ecclesiastical authority.

#### 3.5.3 *Rural England*

The history of the city of York and its cycle play is probably not representative of late medieval England as a whole (Beadle 1994: 89). Villages were more common than great cities, and, in most of England, life was still basically rural. Villages were organised differently from towns. Villages had their parish churches and parish priests, rather than cathedrals and higher clergy. It is possible that in some such places at least, church and community was more closely integrated and more likely to cooperate than in some of the towns where powers were divided rather than shared.

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<sup>138</sup> The beating of the bounds ritual simultaneously demonstrated jurisdictional boundaries, identified the community, and cleansed out evil (Cox 2000: 15). A clerical procession, or a religious processional play such as the Corpus Christi cycle, may easily have served similar purposes in the minds of the partakers.

Like cycles connected to specific towns expressed communal identity (Tydeman 1994: 13), a similar motivation may lie behind the smaller-scale East Anglian plays. According to Coldewey (1994: 204-5), such plays may have been staged as communal efforts in rural regions for financial profit of the local parish church. In rural play production the village church and clergy played their parts, while the urban cycle play was owned entirely by the citizens responsible for its production.

Plays were produced also in (at least some of) these rural places, but the village play was of very different format compared to the great biblical cycle. The rural plays were small-scale, flexible play types, presenting a great diversity of biblical and other religious topics. Smaller-scale plays than the cycle, or the grand morality play of *Perseverance*-format, has the advantage that it can be performed indoors, and that again allows performances also in connection with (church) celebrations taking place in winter.

Such play texts survive from the East Anglia. Other parts of England cannot show anything like the play activity documented in this region. That does not mean that similar play types did not exist elsewhere, but one cannot assume that East Anglia was representative of rural England no more than one can assume that York was representative of the late medieval English town. What seems likely, however, is that the extant play material from East Anglia represents common and popular, flexible, Middle English play types, which could have been taken on tour and staged in various locations. It does not necessarily follow that these plays were staged by professional actors. It is possible that the text, rather than the players, moved from place to place (Coldewey 1994: 204). In contrast to the cycles, such small-scale local plays were probably put on for profit (Coldewey 1994: 202), but they were also communal efforts and no less religious than cycles for their mixing edification with worldly affairs.<sup>139</sup>

No other English region shows the same diversity of play types as East Anglia. The extant play material from this area includes all the types of plays we usually recognise as medieval, and discussed in the present project: A

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<sup>139</sup> Mixing the spiritual with the worldly is, of course, common in religious cultures, in which the term 'secular' did not mean the same as today. Religion was integral to society, informing all official activity (Sommerville 1992: 7).

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short biblical play survives about Herod, the purification of Mary, and the escape to Egypt. There is a miracle play about Saint Paul and one about Saint Mary Magdalene mixing legendary and biblical contents. The morality play *Wisdom* seems also to have belonged in East Anglia. Even the *N-town* cycle text belongs in East Anglia, but this cycle differs from the other three extant Middle English cycle plays. It is a collection of three plays, rather than an original biblical cycle connected to the Corpus Christi celebration in any one particular town (Section 5.10 treats the *N-town* cycle in more detail). Coldewey (1994: 190) suggests that the particular play tradition in this rural area functioned quite differently from the traditions of the greater towns, but it was informed by the same Catholic belief system.

#### 3.5.4 Church connections

Medieval drama was once viewed as evolving from religious to secular, and more or less from one subgenre to the next. It was held that medieval plays grew out of the Latin liturgical representational drama.<sup>140</sup> In connection to Easter, the sung tropes in Latin were in some churches accompanied by clerics in simple costume representing the three Marys visiting the empty sepulchre. It was assumed that such church drama developed into biblical cycles in the vernacular, later changing in format to smaller morality plays, gradually becoming more secular and modern.<sup>141</sup> According to this hypothesis

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<sup>140</sup> This is the influential hypothesis claiming an evolutionary development of early drama put forward by E. K. Chambers (1903), but rejected for instance by Tydeman (1994: 9) and Clopper (2001).

<sup>141</sup> The term ‘secular’ will be used with care in the present study. It commonly occurs in discussions about Late Middle English plays, or about certain aspects of such plays, but the word ‘secular’ seems an anachronism to medieval thinking. Dividing life into religious and secular spheres is a quite modern idea. Sommerville (1992: 9, 17) differentiates between cultures based on religion and cultures in which faith is a private choice. Cox (2000: 10) uses the terms “sacred cultures”, in which religious and non-religious activities are inseparable, and “secular cultures”, in which religion is a matter for each individual member. Medieval Europe seems to have constituted such a sacred culture, while modern Western culture is secular (cf. Sommerville 1992). Even the seemingly secular organisation of medieval society into trade and craft guilds, or civic authority as opposed to ecclesiastical authority, was informed by religious obligation. So-called secular interludes, concerned with apparently worldly affairs such as the behaviour of youth, were informed by and express the contemporary religious outlook common to all the plays included in the present

of evolutionary change, the (humanist) interlude evolved from the religious, i.e. Catholic and superstitious, morality play, before finally the English play tradition reached its peak with the finest and “fittest” of them all: Shakespeare.

However, this theory of evolution of the drama from religious to secular, and from primitive to sophisticated has been rejected (Clopper 2001: 19-20). First, rather than the vernacular cycle play evolving from an expanding liturgical play, the two forms co-existed. The alleged step has never been found from church play in Latin performed by the clergy, to an outside, vernacular drama owned and performed by the town guilds. The episode of the Marys’ visit to the sepulchre occurs in all four English cycle plays, but the link between the two types of drama may not be any other than the shared interest in visualising important biblical matter. That one type developed from the other is no necessary assumption. Nativity plays may also have been performed in churches at Christmas, but again, the motif belongs naturally in a play based on biblical material, and a direct origin of the cycle plays in the liturgical representation seems unaccounted for.

Secondly, access to more documentation has made the claim that the other subgenres are later developments of the biblical plays unsustainable. It is true that the biblical cycles seem to have a long history of performance preceding the dates of the extant manuscripts. For example in York there is external evidence from 1377 of the staging of the Corpus Christi cycle that year, but evidently referring to what had already become a tradition (Beadle 1994: 95). This means that the play in some form predates the extant text, dated to c. 1470, by a century. However, it is equally true that some of the earliest attested plays are not biblical plays. The fragment of the interlude of *Clerico*

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study. Ultimately, although not necessarily directly expressed in the text of the interlude, the audience knows that it is vital that a young man learns to behave virtuously, as he will be judged in the end, and the end may come even in youth. However, the interludes are more secular than other medieval play texts to the extent that they do not employ celestial characters or devils. In turn, this means that there are no speeches addressed directly to celestial characters, or to devils. Even though there are prayers with invocations to God also in interludes, he is not a character present on stage or represented by angels. Comparison in Chapter 7 of the interludes to the more directly religious didactic plays may reveal whether plays with and without celestial characters employ different types of interjections.

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*and Puella* survives from the thirteenth century (Lancashire 1984: xiv). The morality play *Perseverance* may have been composed in the early fifteenth century (Eccles 1969: x-ix), and thus the play predates all biblical cycles except for the *York* cycle.

Even though the medieval drama did not grow directly from the liturgical imitations in Latin, it is of course likely that familiar liturgy and its occasional semi-dramatic elements, served as inspiration for religious plays. Religious hymns accompanied at least some of the plays (e.g. the *York* cycle). Further, there is a link between church and late medieval English drama insofar as the Church apparently tolerated, perhaps even promoted, sacred plays. Clopper (2001: 138) suggests that late medieval clerical concern with *ludi inhonesti* was aimed at Midsommer festivals, parish ales and other kinds of lay festivity, and that for example the civic Corpus Christi plays were seen as appropriate replacement for such activity. Other types of decent plays may also have come about as substitutions for indecent *ludi* (Clopper 2001: 20). Even though medieval

The Catholic Church and its belief system informed the medieval drama, as it informed European medieval society at large. Many Middle English play types seem to have had their continental equivalents in Passion plays, morality plays (like *Everyman*), and miracle and saints' plays. They formed part of a pan-European Catholic value system. Even though it is outside the scope of the present project to include plays from outside of England, it is important to recognise that English traditions were not only English. Some Middle English plays may have had Continental roots – like *Everyman* does – while others are thoroughly English yet informed by the late medieval view of good and bad, vices and virtues, even when so-called secular affairs are portrayed.

The sources and inspirations for Middle English plays will be discussed in the following. It is quite possible that continental influences are not treated in the detail the topic deserves, but it is believed that even in concentrating on English influences it will be clear that these too form part of that medieval, pan-European web of texts and other sources.

### 3.5.5 Sources

A great variety of sources, textual and non-textual, may have influenced the Middle English drama. Liturgical plays in Latin were acted in church ceremony, and even though it can be discussed to what degree these illustrations of Easter and Christmas events were drama at all, the use of costume and music was common to them. Such illustrations may be considered sacred ceremony rather than plays, and it is no longer believed that they were the direct precursor of the biblical cycle which Chambers (1903) once held them to be. The Latin liturgical *ludus* continued its life as ceremonial illustration inside the church building performed by the clergy while the vernacular Corpus Christi plays were performed outdoors by lay men.

The Bible itself is the obvious source for the cycles and biblical plays. Late medieval theological interpretation was also important, such as affective meditation of Christ's suffering on the cross (Beadle 1994: 101), inherited from the Franciscan order and meditational literature. The Passion parts of the English cycles emphasise realistic detail in the torturing and crucifixion episodes, in order for the audience to experience affectively the suffering of Christ.<sup>142</sup>

In addition to diverse literary influences, it is likely that religious play types such as Paternoster plays left their marks on the English vernacular plays, especially the morality plays (Lester 1981: xvi). No texts survive, but a civic Paternoster play is known to have been performed in York in 1378 (Bevington 1972: vii). Like the morality plays, but unlike biblical plays, the York Paternoster play staged vices and virtues (Cawley 1959: xv).

Miracle plays had their sources in legendary material, for example about saints. Saints' plays depict miraculous events and conversions, but very few English saints' plays survive. There may have been more; plays of St George

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<sup>142</sup> The *York* cycle demonstrates realistic, even grotesque, detail in the crucifixion episodes when Christ is stretched and nailed to the cross before an audience which is effectively included in the passion episode. Because of this realism, the unknown composer(s) of the *York* Passion episodes is commonly referred to as 'the York Realist' (Beadle 1994: 100).

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are commonly mentioned in the literature about medieval English plays; Clopper (2001: 134), however, contests that English Saints' plays were common. It can hardly be established that such plays existed when no play texts survives; on the other hand, it is obviously possible that such plays could have been performed without ever having been scripted. Saints' legends were common European stock material. Many survive in narrative in English manuscripts.

Late medieval sermons also exerted their influence, particularly on the morality plays (Lester 1981: xvi). Sermons were often concerned with the same topic as morality plays: sinful versus holy living, holy dying, and salvation. In addition, morality *personae* quite often give short sermons themselves (Lester 1981: xvi), exemplified by Mercy's opening speech in *Mankind*, and the description of priesthood in *Everyman* (ll. 732-68) (Lester 1981: xxvi). Similar sermon-like addresses to the audience are found in the cycles, particularly in the prologues and epilogues delivered by expositors in some of the individual pageants. Such play sermons found across the drama subgenres illustrate how the various play types must also have influenced each other.

Morality play composers drew their inspiration from a literary web of texts concerned with religious matters: debates about vice and virtue, works on the art of dying, religious treatises on the seven deadly sins and more (Lester 1981: xvi-xvii). Lester (1981: xv) points to Prudentius' fourth century *Psychomachia* - "The War of the Soul" - as an important indirect source for the morality plays. It describes vices and virtues in physical battle for the soul of man. This topic is central to the morality plays. The *Castle of Perseverance* actually includes such a dramatised combat between vices outside and virtues inside the castle. The opposition between good and bad is not exclusive to morality plays, however, as the personification of good and bad is also found in the interludes.

Medieval romances commonly contain direct speech quotes within the narrative frame. Some of the shorter romances were performed by travelling minstrels, who may have imitated the different voices of the fictional speakers; the Middle English *Dame Sirith* may have been performed in this manner. In other words, the leap from performing minstrel to actor was not



very long. The semi-dramatic narrative of *Dame Sirith* shares topic and verbal similarities with the fragmental English play, *Interludium de Clerico et Puella*, “Interlude of the Clerk and the Maiden” (Bennett and Smithers 1968: 196-97). These two early texts suggest relative closeness between an oral minstrelsy tradition, represented by *Dame Sirith*, and a play tradition, represented by *Clerico et Puella*. The latter text further suggests that the interlude as a play type developed early in England.<sup>143</sup>

The English interlude is concerned with English affairs, but while Bennett and Smithers (1968: 196) suggest that it has its counterpart in the French *farce*, Lancashire (1980: 48) finds certain important differences between the two play types. Lancashire (1980: 48) describes the English interlude as mixing “the moral abstraction of the *moralité* [also a French play type] and the topical comedy of the *farce*.” He suggests that the Scottish interlude reflects the French farce more closely than the English one does. It was not uncommon for the English aristocracy as well as the Scottish one to cultivate French bonds, so some influence may be expected. Both the farce and the interlude are comic indoor plays performed to an exclusive audience. As such they represented the diametrical opposite to the English cycle play or the Continental Passion play performed outdoors to the masses.

In addition to the oral narrative tradition, an unscripted folk play tradition may have influenced religious plays, but any such link can be suggested only very tentatively. No texts survive, but it is commonly held that many small towns had their plays of Robin Hood or St George, since documentary material mentions such plays, and ballad texts survive. Clopper (2001: 12-15), however, warns us that when Middle English records use the term *pley*, this may equally well refer to games and music, and not to drama. External

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<sup>143</sup> The fragment of *Clerico et Puella* survives from the thirteenth century (Lancashire 1984: xiv); i.e. two centuries before the first extant biblical play text in English. The use of the term ‘interlude’ (or *interludium*) is restricted to England only. The French term for similar comic plays was *farce* (Bennett and Smithers 1968: 196-97). It is important to bear in mind that the term ‘interlude’ was not reserved for plays, but could be used about many forms of entertainment, for example between courses at a banquet (Clopper 2001: 17). ME play vocabulary includes *ludi*, play, Corpus Christi play, Whitsun play, pageant, miracle, moral play, goodly play and moral interlude. The list is not exhaustive. Some of the terms survive in modern vocabulary, but rarely with the same meaning, or even consistent modern meaning (Sections 3.6 and 3.6.1).

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evidence still testifies that many forms of organised ‘play and game’, music, mummings, boy bishops, and play performances took place in many parts of late medieval England. Most likely much such entertainment was performed as ephemeral tradition; i.e. learnt by heart by the performers, and never put to paper at all.

The following section provides more detail about the type of play most typically connected to medieval drama tradition, and which also provides the majority of the data in the present study: the biblical cycles. Next follows a section of how religious instruction and entertainment go hand in hand in several types of Middle English plays. A discussion of the play texts as texts is included in the present chapter, which closes with a short look at the differences between manuscript and printed texts.

#### 3.5.6 *The Middle English biblical cycles*

Even though the texts of only four different cycles survive, these texts are so voluminous that the cycle subgenre accounts for more than half of the ME play material.<sup>144</sup> Cycles consist of many smaller plays, so in total each of the English cycles amounts to more than 10,000 lines of text. The cycle play tradition lasted for a couple of centuries in England (approximately from 1370 to 1570). Their impact may have been considerable, both on other types of

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<sup>144</sup> What has often been called ‘mystery play’ in modern scholarship is referred to as ‘cycle’ and ‘cycle play’ in the present study. The full cycle plays will be referred to as ‘cycle’, whereas the many small plays that each cycle consists of will be called ‘pageants’. This is merely an attempt at avoiding confusion concerning the term ‘play’ which is used for single plays, biblical, morality or interlude. The term ‘procession’ indicates a non-dramatic procession in the present study. A procession could be performed by clergy or by lay members of society. A procession of lights was performed annually in Chester on Corpus Christi Day, and the craft guilds seem to have been responsible for that, as well as for the Corpus Christ cycle (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 176). In the medieval play vocabulary, it appears that ‘process’ and ‘procession’ can be used about the progress of (the action of) a play (Cf. the Doctor’s comments in *Conversion of St Paul*). Clopper (2001) discusses Middle English drama terminology, and the difficulties it causes in interpretation of documents referring to ‘play’, ‘pageant’, ‘procession’, *ludi* etc.

The discussion only includes those cycles whose full (or close to full) texts survive, i.e. those cycle texts included in the present study: *York*, *Chester*, *Towneley*, and *N-town*.

medieval plays and certainly on modern studies on medieval drama. The biblical cycles have therefore been treated in some detail in the following.

The biblical cycles have complex histories, as their contents and texts could change during their lifespan. The English cycle play seems to have originated some time after the institution of the Corpus Christi Day in 1311 (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 168-69), which was at first, and in many places only, observed by Corpus Christi processions rather than play performances (Clopper 2001: 121). Cycles developed in towns with strong civic authorities.

Beadle (1994: 86) finds it most likely that the earliest English cycle, the *York* cycle, developed and expanded after the Black Death (3.5.2 above), i.e. from the mid-fourteenth century onwards. The three other extant English cycles – the *Chester*, *Towneley* and *N-town* cycle – all developed later, i.e. in the fifteenth century. The *Chester* cycle as it survives was probably created (or remodelled on the earlier, fifteenth century version) in the sixteenth century (Mills 1998: 163-180). The *N-town* cycle is a compilation of three smaller format play cycles, and its history remains obscure as no records exist which can be tied to the *N-town* text. The *Towneley* cycle text predates the documentary evidence there is connecting the play to the town of Wakefield in Yorkshire.<sup>145</sup>

Three of the extant cycles, *York*, *Towneley* and *Chester*, were at some point connected to the Corpus Christi celebrations. Only *N-town* appears unconnected to any particular church celebration, and to any one particular city and craft guild staging. The *Chester* cycle was moved to Whitsun in the sixteenth century, and has thus also been referred to as a Whitsun play, but it retained many of the characteristics of the pageant cycle as they are known from *York* and *Towneley*. Corpus Christi Day fell in May or June, and it has been suggested that the establishment of this Catholic celebration was a means of suppressing the many summer feasts, games and ales of pagan origin (e.g. Clopper 2001: 136-7).

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<sup>145</sup> In the case of the *Towneley* cycle there are Court Rolls referring to ‘Corpus Christi pageants’ in Wakefield. The documents postdate the *Towneley* cycle manuscript, and it is not certain that the Corpus Christi play referred to is the play found in the MS (Stevens and Cawley 1994: xxi).

### 3. BACKGROUND

The cycles from York and Chester are best documented, and share many similarities. These two will therefore be used as generalising examples in the following description of cycle plays, but the other cycles receive comment, too, especially where they seem to differ from the Chester/York tradition.

External evidence reveals that a Corpus Christi play was performed in York in 1377, and similar documentary evidence (concerning a dispute between guilds) shows that a cycle was performed in Chester by 1422 (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 169). The York *Ordo Paginarum* (a list of pageants) surviving from 1415 illustrates a content of pageants already quite like the *York* cycle as documented in the *York* cycle Register (1463-77). In the case of the Chester cycle, pre-1500 references to 13 different pageants survive, but it is not known to what extent these pageants resembled those in the extant cycle text (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 174-5).<sup>146</sup> The *York* cycle performance was an annual occurrence, while the *Chester* performance was not. When moved to Whitsun the *Chester* cycle performance seems to have been split into a three day event.

The cycles were performed by guilds in the cities of York and Chester for a diverse audience.<sup>147</sup> Most of the actors were guild members, and not professional players. Both the unlearned and the elite were expected to watch the plays, as medieval belief considered religious edification equally necessary for all classes. The *illiterati* - those who could not read Latin - needed to know the Bible, but the aristocracy needed moral instruction too. In

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<sup>146</sup> The thirteen pre-1500 pageants: Adam and Eve, Nativity, Magi, Last Supper, Flagellation, Crucifixion, Emmaus, Ascension, Pentecost, Assumption, Prophets of Antichrist and Doomsday, Antichrist, and Judgment Day (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 174-5).

<sup>147</sup> Happé (1975: 10, referring to Chambers 1903) lists many places which may have staged cycle plays, but it seems better to heed Clopper's (2001: 12-19) warning that what has been (optimistically) taken to refer to cycles and other kinds of drama in records, may actually imply quite different kinds of entertainment. Clopper (2001: 139-142) suggests that York, Coventry, Chester, and Norwich (c. 1527) had full-scope cycles, Newcastle and Beverley had small pageant cycles, while other towns, notably Lincoln and London never developed cycle plays.

the late Middle Ages the wealthy and powerful were considered to be at greater risk of damnation than poor members of society (Cox 2000: 13).<sup>148</sup>

Each cycle pageant belonged to one (or more) guilds, at least in the case of the *York* and *Chester* cycles, and each may have had their individual histories. In York and Chester, the pageants were performed on pageant wagons which were pulled through the city streets to halt for performances on fixed stops. It is not always clear from ME records using the term ‘pageant’ whether it refers to the play or to the pageant stage wagon. The word may even refer to other types of plays (as it may also today).

Even though no consistent picture of the pageant wagons survives, some things are known about them.<sup>149</sup> It is documented that pageant wagons were used in the staging of cycles at least in York and Chester. The guilds in York paid for storage of their wagons outside Mickelgate. An inventory of items, belonging to the York guild of Grocers, describes their wagon as a “cart” with four wheels. Some wagons were double-deckers (Twycross 1994: 46; 48). In York the procession of wagons was manhandled through the narrow streets. Guild accounts and other documents attest that pageant wagons both in York and Chester were richly decorated (Twycross 1994: 46).

It is likely that the more affluent guilds competed for attention by extravagantly equipping the wagons and the actors with gilding and expensive costumes and stage properties.<sup>150</sup> On occasion a particular pageant was performed singly for visiting dignitaries, such as royalty, as a way of

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<sup>148</sup> The rich were particularly susceptible to the primal sins of pride and greed. This view was to change with the new faith (Cox 2000).

<sup>149</sup> Twycross (1994: 46-54) provides a description of a pageant wagon based on the documentary evidence there is, and also of the theatrical effects and machinery employed by the medieval stage. She describes pageant wagons as “custom-built theatrical machines” (Twycross 1994: 46).

<sup>150</sup> It appears that affluent Chester guilds were expected to demonstrate their wealth in the decoration of their pageant wagon (Twycross 1994: 46). Of course, extravaganza in worship was also a proper medieval Catholic attitude, and most likely the immediate motivation for expensive display. Competition for attention, and/or the marketing of products, is a modern interpretation of the guilds’ motivation for costly expenditure on their wagons, properties and costumes. Such a motivation may not have been a conscious one.

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displaying the city's hospitality and culture. Wonderful display was probably at least as important on such occasions as on church year celebrations.

The pageant wagon and the stage effects connected to it may have had roots in other drama traditions, or the other way around; it may have affected the staging of other types of plays. A mobile cart which allowed for acting on it, in the place around it, and perhaps even on a raised platform on top of it, provides a very flexible stage. It could easily be stabilised during performance, rather than moved in procession, and then drawn to another acting area when necessary. If more than one location was needed for one performance, two or more stable carts could serve as different places between which the actors could move. Some of the East Anglian plays may have been performed in this manner.

Many biblical topics were included in the Corpus Christi cycle, as it was a commemoration of the Transubstantiation, and not of any specific biblical or legendary events such as Christmas, Easter or Saints' Days. The life and passion of Christ is central to all the English cycles, but pageants about the Virgin Mary were also common.

Mary pageants survive in fullest in the *N-town* cycle. Similar Mary pageants may have been included in the *Towneley* cycle on those folios which seem to have been deliberately removed from the manuscript, perhaps due to Post-Reformation censorship. As mentioned, the *Chester* cycle experienced a sixteenth century revision (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 48). The changes to the *Towneley* and *Chester* cycles illustrate to some extent that the cycles were flexible plays. The texts incorporate one possible performance text, but the respective performances may never have followed the exact pattern found in the extant manuscripts (see discussion of the *Chester* cycle and its texts in Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 41 – their characterisation of it as “a convenient abstraction” probably applies to the other cycle texts as well).

Many pageants, like that of Doomsday, involved special effects and stage machinery, such as fires and explosions from Hells' mouths, trapdoors, pulleys and other devices for lowering and lifting actors onto or off the acting areas. Both the floor of the pageant wagon and the *platea* ('place', i.e. ground) surrounding it were probably used in the performance when space allowed for

it.<sup>151</sup> Other types of plays may have been staged in a similar fashion, but with one or more scaffolds substituted for the pageant wagon. The *Conversion of St Paul* is among the plays which could be staged in this manner; the *Castle of Perseverance* represents an elaborate variant.

### 3.5.7 *Drama as instruction and entertainment*

The Middle English drama takes on a diversity of expressions from the long, open-air, biblical illustrations performed by amateurs, to the short, indoors plays, some of which were performed by professionals, with all manner of cross-over plays between these extremes. The medieval plays constitute a much more varied group than the modern Western theatre. During the couple of centuries from at least 1350 to 1550, plays of many types seem to have abounded in streets, in custom-built acting arenas, in courtyards, inns and halls. The plays vary in length and in staging possibilities, and they are concerned with a greater variety of subject matter than we often think, even though many of them have a religious-didactic purpose. The plays most often mix the tragic with the comic.<sup>152</sup> What happens during the sixteenth century is that the rich medieval play tradition is gradually narrowed down to include mainly smaller-scale plays performed indoors for the nobility or in the new professional theatre buildings in London.

Middle English drama was intended to instruct, to entertain, and, some plays, notably the cycles, to be devotional expressions in themselves (Happé 1975: 11).<sup>153</sup> In addition to York's famous Corpus Christi play, both a *Creed* play

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<sup>151</sup> Many of the opening speeches in the pageants include orders to the audience to make room for the play.

<sup>152</sup> According to Aristotelian terminology, the typical medieval play is a comedy, resolved, as they are, in happy endings. However, medieval plays were not composed on Aristotelian principles, and therefore it is equally true, and more important, that most medieval drama engages in serious, if not tragic, matter: the salvation of man. Cycles, miracle plays and morality plays are concerned with the redemption of sinful man through the sacrifice of Christ, through man's repentance, Christian living, the (Catholic) sacraments, and, ultimately, through the mercy of God.

<sup>153</sup> Clopper (2001: 23) objects to any sharp differentiation between biblical plays and allegorical and moral drama (i.e. morality plays and miracle plays). He sees the medieval drama tradition from a broad perspective including other types of literature ("romance narratives") and "other forms of pageantry" (Clopper 2001: 23). Clopper

### 3. BACKGROUND

and a *Pater Noster* play were performed in that town, but as no texts survive (Johnston 1975: 55), research on the extant cycle has dominated our image of late medieval plays in cities like York. Johnston (1975: 60, 72) suggests that the *Creed* play and the *Pater Noster* play were staged in procession like the cycle play was, possibly employing some of the very same pageant wagons used in staging the Corpus Christi cycles. It is difficult to be certain about the exact contents of the two plays (but see Johnston 1975), but external references to them reveal that they were didactic plays performed for the benefit of all the citizens of York, like the cycle was.

The extant cycles provide the typical examples of plays produced out of pious intent: the biblical plays illustrated important biblical events, similar to the iconography in churches or illustrations in Bibles and books.<sup>154</sup> Knowledge of

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(2001: 1-3; 21) further argues that medieval drama in its time was not thought of as *theatrum*, and should not be regarded as drama in the modern sense. Middle English plays were not associated at all with what the medieval *literati* may have known about the Classic Roman and Greek drama. From the contemporary terms used about plays - the terminology can be confusingly imprecise - Clopper finds that medieval drama was not theatre, but part of a system of religious *ludi*. The term *ludus* (Latin for play), frequently occurring in late medieval records noting religious celebration, may mean 'play' (in the sense of a play performance), or it may refer to other activities, e.g. pious musical performances. The latter seems to have been preferred to plays e.g. in monasteries and abbeys (Clopper 2001: 13), but even though the clergy were expected to avoid plays, pious drama was considered worthy religious practice for the laity.

<sup>154</sup> Collins (1979: 3) compares cycles specifically to the illuminations in the *Holkham Bible Picture Book* with its three-fold division into Old Testament, New Testament, and Judgment parts. All four surviving English cycles observe this tripartite division. Collins (1979: 1-2) points out that cycle plays have been studied mainly as texts, while their main attraction may have been found in their visual rather than textual effects. Collins links cycles - the *N-town* cycle in particular - first and foremost to the pictorial traditions of the Middle Ages. "[M]agnificent display and [...] elaborate pomp and splendour" (Collins 1979: 1) marks medieval art, ceremony and entertainment. Collins therefore warns against paying too much attention to the textual aspect of medieval drama when it can perhaps more truly be valued in relation to other visual types of art: "painting, sculpture, and tapestry of the era" (Collins 1979: 2). It is perhaps true that when all we have are the texts, the textual aspect tends to overshadow the more elusive visual aspect of the medieval drama. It is certainly held here that play texts give only a fragment of what drama is as performance. However, the present study is concerned with (parts of) the texts - the use of interjections - and not the full picture of play performance. Nonetheless, some of the multimodality of medieval plays is accounted for in the application of



the Bible was essential for salvation, but most people could not read Latin. The cycles provided learning for the unlearned, as did church iconography. At the same time, the English Corpus Christi cycles may have been conceived of as manifestations of Christian faith in themselves, just like the clerical Corpus Christi processions on the same day.

Saints' plays - two survive in the vernacular in England - also illustrate biblical and legendary events, and like cycle plays, they were both instructive and pious. Like cycle plays they were probably connected to seasonal Church celebrations.<sup>155</sup> They include conversions through miracle and provide exempla for holy living. The third miracle play extant in England (*Sacrament*) is similarly concerned with conversion and Catholic doctrine, especially baptism.

Morality plays, like miracle plays, provide exempla in order to teach their audience about good and bad living, the importance of choosing virtue over vice, and the doctrines of man's repentance, his absolution by sacrament and God's mercy. The two play types exhibit differences mainly in the cast of characters, and not in content or intent. Miracle plays rarely include allegorical characters, while morality plays do.

The interlude often employs the same moral dichotomy of good against bad, but on a smaller scale than the morality play: the interlude may be concerned with good, Christian behaviour without treating the full topic of salvation common to the morality plays. The interlude entertains and instructs, too, and most interludes explicitly express Christian beliefs, in particular in prologues and epilogues. They can not be called devotional expressions in the same manner as the cycles were, but the morale of interludes is formed by the same religious outlook as the other Middle English play types. Their polemic is never anti-religious; in Post-Reformation plays it may be coarsely anti-Catholic, but this is of course due to the good intent of instructing its

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Normington's (2009) distinction between outdoor and indoor play production. In contrast to the traditional context-based subgenre categorisation, Normington's classification pays heed to performance types and audience types.

<sup>155</sup> Appendix I includes discussions of appropriate church year days for the performance of the plays about St Mary Magdalene and St Paul.

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audience; or even saving the audience from the devil, i.e. Pope and Roman Catholicism in Protestant plays.<sup>156</sup>

All the Middle English play types seem to have included music; many included comedy, many probably entertained by showing off costumes, decorations and stage properties, and some included spectacular effects like explosions. Entertaining elements seem not to have been in opposition to the serious intentions of late medieval plays, at least for most Middle English Christians. The little opposition there actually was, before the attacks from the sixteenth century Puritans, apparently came from the relatively marginalised Lollard movement. The Middle English *Tretise on Miraclis Pleyinge* objects to plays (*miracula*) on religious grounds, such as presenting “in ‘play’ what God performed in earnest” (Walker 2000: 196), and taking God’s *name in idil* (‘idle’).<sup>157</sup>

Later, sixteenth century, Puritan reactions are mainly anti-Catholic, rather than anti-theatrical (Clopper 2001: 1-2). Some of the sixteenth century restrictions on play performances were connected to quite different, sometimes social, concerns (Coldewey 1994: 206). The civic laws against vagrancy, for instance, prohibited travelling actors in the centre of London, and led to their performing in Southwark and other places outside of city jurisdiction instead (Lancashire 1980: 33).

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<sup>156</sup> The mid-sixteenth century play *King Johan* by John Bale provides an example of harsh Anti-Catholic polemic.

<sup>157</sup> Extracts of the ‘Treatise on Miracles Playing’ (MS BL Additional 24202) are printed in Walker (2000: 196-200). Clopper (2001: 21; 69; 105-106), however, doubts that the Treatise was aimed at religious drama at all. He suggests that it really objects to taking pleasure in “*miracula*, somer games, and other *ludi inhonesti*”, i.e. forms of entertainemen Clopper thinks should not be confused with biblical plays. It is not easy to decide what the term ‘miracle’ in the Treatise really means, but I have not found it to exclude religious plays from its polemic against *myraclis pleyinge*. To the contrary, when the Treatise states about miracles playing that it *3yveth noon occasion if werrey wepyng*, this appears to refer to the Passion episode’s potential for affective piety (Walker 2000: 196), rather than to summergames. Inherent in the Treatise’s (possible) attack on religious drama, however, must be equal amounts of disapproval of *ludi inhonesti*, to use Clopper’s terminology.

### 3.5.8 *The survival of ME play texts*

Relatively few Middle English play texts survive. 20-25 full texts is not a high number, considering the rich play tradition that apparently existed by the late Middle Ages. Tydeman (1994: 9) compares the number of extant English plays unfavourably to the “volume of European play texts surviving from the same period.” There is reason to believe that the Reformation in England, and perhaps the consequent dissolution of the monasteries, led to the destruction of explicitly Catholic texts, including play texts.

The cycle texts seem to have escaped whole-sale destruction, but some of the extant cycle texts appear to have countered Protestant attacks by censorship of Catholic elements (the *Towneley* cycle, Section 5.11) or revision (the *Chester* cycle, Section 5.25). The civic authorities in charge of the staging of cycles only reluctantly gave up the tradition from around the mid-sixteenth century.

Play texts are a peculiar type of text since most are written with performance in mind and not as end products in themselves.<sup>158</sup> Many medieval play texts were perhaps scripted only to be used practically in staging, and may not have been considered worth preserving in books after the event.<sup>159</sup> Others may have been working texts consulted in play production, but open to change in accordance with demands of the concrete performance – the extant text may thus not represent any fixed play text. Some play types were probably never scripted at all. From external records it seems that folk plays, mummings and masques were frequent types of entertainment in medieval England.<sup>160</sup> Plays

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<sup>158</sup> This is not always the case with Middle English play texts. At least two texts, the Northampton and the Brome *Abraham* texts, seem to have been copied as reading material. They survive in manuscript books with other texts meant for reading. The Brome *Abraham* nevertheless has textual relationship to the *Chester* pageant about Abraham. See the Appendix for more about the plays.

<sup>159</sup> Such practical play texts were probably considered secondary and ephemeral, and uninteresting to readers. In the early seventeenth century the librarian of the most important English library of the period, the Bodleian, discarded (printed) play texts as ruffe raffe, unworthy of storage (Brayman Hackel 1997: 113-14). By this time, however, play books were actually kept in the fashionable private library, the so-called ‘closet’ (Brayman Hackel 1997: 113-14), so they were valued as reading material at least by some.

<sup>160</sup> Some texts for mummings survive (two of Lydgate’s mummings are included in Wickham’s (1976) anthology of English interludes), but these differ from play texts,

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of Robin Hood and St George and the Dragon may have been staged in several towns, but their stories only survive in the form of ballads and not as scripted plays.<sup>161</sup>

If many play texts were regarded as ephemeral working texts, then the more than extant 20 texts may not be such a low number. It is problematic to suggest that texts have been lost, and especially, perhaps, to assume that many Middle English play texts must have been lost. Since we do not know to what degree medieval drama was scripted and to what degree their scripts were considered unlitrary, ephemeral texts, it remains speculation to suggest that there must once have been so many more.

The surviving Middle English play texts seem to have been copied for two main reasons: 1) as an aid in play production, or 2) in order to conserve the text itself, as an official register or for private ownership.<sup>162</sup> There is reason to

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as they take the form of lyrical monologues. The “action” indicated by the monologue, took the form of silent mime.

<sup>161</sup> Again, however, Clopper’s (2001) warning may apply. It is uncertain that the term ‘play’ in late medieval records are references to play performances, as there is evidence that sometimes they are not (Clopper 2001:13-14). The English term ‘play’ was, like the Latin *ludus*, used for many kinds of entertainment, pious and pagan. Therefore, it is not certain that an archival reference to a ‘St George play’ actually implies play production, or perhaps music, sports, tournaments, and even parish ales. The Dunmow records of a St Andrew ‘play’, for instance, seems to relate to a local sports competition and not to drama (Clopper 2001: 12-13).

<sup>162</sup> Many of the texts included in the present study survive because someone wanted to preserve the text for posterity. In York, the city authorities collected a register of the many pageants’ texts for keeping and control, while in Chester the once existing official register is lost, and only late copies of the cycle text are extant. The *Towneley* cycle manuscript is rather prettily decorated, which suggests that the text was copied for a private household for keeping, rather than to be used in play production. It is possible that biblical play texts were considered more worthy of preservation (and checking) than other play texts, because of their relation to Scripture. Two Abraham texts survive, while other small format plays seem to have been lost. A Creed play is documented in York, but its text is not preserved. Similarly there seems to be evidence (but see footnote 154 above) of the staging of other small plays, for example St George’s and Robin Hood plays, but no text survives. It is possible that there never was a text for such plays, but that they were performed by actors who knew their lines and repertoires. The printed play texts may have been produced for quite different reasons than the manuscript texts. There must have been a market of readers or of play troupes who wanted material to add to their repertoire, as printed plays exist at

believe that the first kinds of texts were considered ephemeral and that most such prompt texts or actors' copies have been lost. There are a few survivals which testify to their existence, but there may have been many more such prompt copies for example in the possession of the guilds which produced their pageants for the civic cycle plays. It is not known whether the actors of the pageants also had their own part written on a roll - from which term the word 'role' derives (Culpeper and Demmen 2011: 165).<sup>163</sup> It is perhaps equally likely that amateur actors learnt their parts by heart, especially if the same people performed the same parts annually, like the guilds of York produced annual cycles.

The question remains whether enough ME play material survives to support a four-fold subgenre classification in a study of interjections – which after all only constitute a minute part of the texts.<sup>164</sup> A related question is whether the extant material can provide enough linguistic information to support a study

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all. However, the size of this market seems to have been overrated in modern research, at least as regards the early modern printed plays. Contrary to the opinion that printers made fortunes on play books, Blayney (1997: 383-4) finds that quarto prints of plays from 1585 onwards were not in great demand. They were hardly considered a "great read", and neither were the earlier printed plays, as very few seem to have been printed in great quantities (Blayney 1997: 384). All the earliest printed plays, except *Youth*, have been included in the present study. Only a few of these survive in more than one copy. None of them survive in both manuscript and print. For greater detail concerning the play texts, see Chapter 5.

<sup>163</sup> Culpeper and Demmen (2011) find that early modern (1580s) professional players had such roles, i.e. paper scrolls, from which to learn their lines. Actors never had access to the full play text; only the play companies' scribes had fair copies of the plays, which they were to bring forward to the Master of the Revels for licensing (Culpeper and Demmen 2011: 164). It cannot be inferred that this early modern practice of the actors' learning their parts from the roles, also applies to the late medieval types of play production. There are important differences, e.g. in degree of professionalism. Many of the late medieval actors did not have play production as their main occupation at all. It is further difficult to ascertain to what extent amateur as well as professional late medieval actors were literate, or needed to be literate, in order to learn their parts.

<sup>164</sup> Yet, play texts exhibit the highest frequency of interjections of any speech-related genre (Culpeper and Kytö 2010: 268-271). For this reason, of course, play texts are the obvious material for exploration of interjections. (Culpeper and Kytö's study of Early Modern English dialogues show a frequency of 5.5 interjections per 1,000 words in drama. The frequency of interjections in ME drama has been found similar in the present study.)

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of dialectal variation in the use of interjections. Providing evidence for answering the latter question is further complicated by the fact that all the play texts are relatively late (see 3.2.3 for LALME's evaluation of linguistic evidence). Both questions, the distribution of interjections according to subgenre and dialect, are sought answered in Chapter 7.

#### 3.5.9 *The problem of dating plays and play texts*

All the Middle English drama texts are relatively late. The earliest text included in the present study, *The Castle of Perseverance*, survives from c. 1440. Drama was performed in England at least from the mid-fourteenth century, but earlier texts than that of *Perseverance* are either fragmentary, or they survive in manuscripts of significantly later date than their externally evidenced performances. Such is the case with the *York* cycle texts, performed in some form in the city of York since perhaps the mid-fourteenth century, but surviving in a mid-fifteenth century manuscript referred to as the *York Register*.<sup>165</sup> In terms of origin, the *York* cycle text thus predates *Perseverance*, *The Winchester Dialogues*, and the Northampton *Abraham*, all copied before the *York Register*.

In Chapter 5 of the present study, the chronology of the texts refers to the dates of the manuscripts, and not of composition (except when specifically stated).<sup>166</sup> Thus the material comprises texts that originated in the fourteenth century, in the fifteenth century, as well as texts composed or revised in the sixteenth century.

In many cases the extant text postdates the composition of the play by decades. Even though the bulk of the play texts belong in the fifteenth century, both according to manuscript and to composition date, several sixteenth century texts have been included on the grounds that they are late medieval rather than Renaissance texts. The *Chester* cycle text is the most extreme example. It survives in full in five manuscripts, all of later date than

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<sup>165</sup> More information about dates of manuscripts and external evidence of performances is found in Chapter 5 and Appendix I respectively.

<sup>166</sup> Appendix I discusses the composition dates and the history of the play texts if anything is known.

the cycle play's final production in 1575. No one would question that the cycle play is medieval in content and form, and it is naturally included in the present material. Likewise, the morality play subgenre is often regarded as typically medieval, yet a famous example like *Everyman* belongs in the (early) sixteenth century, and only as print. Its origin may not have been very much earlier, in Holland, before it was translated into English perhaps between 1500 and 1510, when it was first printed (Walker 2000: 281).

Smaller scale drama, such as saints' plays and morality plays, may also have been performed long before the random survival of their texts. Some of the earliest extant play manuscripts in England are morality plays, such as the *Castle of Perseverance*, probably composed 1400-25, or the fragments of *Dux Moraud*, dated on evidence of the hand to c.1425-50 (Davis 1970: ci), and *Pride of Life*, dateable perhaps to "the first half of the fifteenth century" (Davis 1970: lxxxv).<sup>167</sup> In the present study, the early *Winchester Dialogues*, dated to 1450, have been categorised as interludes.<sup>168</sup> The line between morality and interlude is far from clear (Happé 1979: 9). The play *Magnyfycence*, for instance, has been characterised both as a morality play (in Happé 1979) with a prince as a mankind example for all, and as an interlude (in Walker 2000) commenting specifically on the court of the young Henry VIII.

### 3.6 Problems of categorisation

One of the aims of the present project is to find out whether there are subgenre differences in the use of interjections in ME drama. However, as the subgenres will tend to overlap, any such variation need be looked at critically. Certain play types per definition employ certain *dramatis personae*, for instance, and therefore variation in the use of interjections, be it in type or frequency, can perhaps be explained by their employment of certain characters rather than by their subgenre status. Similarly, any diachronic

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<sup>167</sup> See Chapter 5 for witness dates. The manuscript containing the *Pride of Life* fragment was lost during the war in Dublin in June 1922. Only nineteenth century descriptions of it survive along with an 1891 edition by Mills, the deputy-keeper of Public Records (Davis 1970: lxxxv).

<sup>168</sup> The view is supported in Davis (1979: 138), Jones (1983: 221-2) and Lancashire (1984: 283).

### 3. BACKGROUND

patterns found relating to the use of interjections in play texts need consideration of subgenre, characters, and play type.<sup>169</sup>

As mentioned in Section 2.2.4, play texts are normally easily distinguished from other texts. Play texts are laid out as direct speeches delivered by the play's named *dramatis personae*. In other words, the physical appearance on the page defines a text as drama. Speech headings give the names of the speakers, and many play texts contain stage directions which suggest that the text was intended for, or has been used in, performance. Such characteristics of drama texts have not changed from the medieval to the modern play scripts.

Manners of play production, however, have changed, especially since the introduction of permanent theatre buildings in London in the last half of the sixteenth century. The medieval play tradition was much more varied than the early modern and modern Western drama, usually connected with permanent theatres and professional acting. Medieval play texts attest to this great variation. Consequently, the medieval drama needs to be looked at as more than a single type of plays. Further categorisation is necessary, but problematic.

Categorising medieval drama into distinctive subgenres must include recognition of much overlap and fuzzy boundaries. Drama categorisation frequently refers to Aristotle's classification into tragedy and comedy, but the medieval plays do not fit into Aristotelian categories. Neither the Middle English nor the modern terminology for medieval play types gives a consistent picture with clearly distinct subgenres of plays. The unsystematic medieval terminology in fact suggests that medieval drama forms a continuum rather than discrete categories.

Middle English (and Latin) terms like 'play', 'pageant', and *ludus* may denote many types of entertainment as well as all sorts of plays. The term 'interlude', for example, denotes musical entertainment in early external evidence, before

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<sup>169</sup> The drama texts included cover almost 200 years, as composition can tentatively be dated to the latter half of the fourteenth century for parts of the *York* cycle, and in addition to the miracle play *Conversion of St Paul* is dated to 1550. The witness dates span 150 years, with the c. 1440 manuscript containing the *Castle of Perseverance* as the earliest, and the 1591 and 1600 *Chester* cycle Hm and R manuscripts as the two latest.



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it comes to be used as a common denominator for a short play, whether morality or interlude, later in the late ME vocabulary (Clopper 2001: 17). Modern vocabulary is not consistent, either. The term 'interlude', for example, is sometimes used to denote a play type different from morality plays (in Walker 2000), and sometimes to denote a play type including miracle and morality plays if these share manners of production (in Wickham 1976). Conversely, the term 'morality play' is sometimes used to denote both morality plays and interludes, because both types are moral plays (e.g. in Happé 1979).

Today the term 'interlude' is usually used to distinguish between the morality play and the interlude. However, the two subgenres are related insofar as both are concerned with morals, and both subgenres include plays which were performed as indoor entertainment for the wealthy. Walker (2000) chooses to call both types moral plays; one concerned with religion, the other with politics.

The terms used in modern scholarship about medieval play types are modern conventions. A common fourfold subgenre categorisation is discussed in more detail in the next section. Several of the extant Middle English plays are difficult to categorise, which raises questions about whether the common categories used about medieval drama are too narrow, too few, or basically incorrect.

Further, the modern terminology used to describe Middle English drama may not be a representative one, as it rests on the extant texts, and we have only more or less random witnesses of what once existed (Section 3.6.1). What survives may not at all be (proportionally) representative of what existed.

It is possible for example that modern suggestions of the wide distribution across England of numerous cycle plays are incorrect.<sup>170</sup> It is commonly held that there is only one English miracle play (e.g. Walker 2000; see also

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<sup>170</sup> The frequency of civic cycles may have been overstated due to misconceptions of civic documents (Happé 1975: 9-10 versus Clopper 2001). The frequency of other types of plays may also have been overstated because what in documents occurs as *ludi*, interludes, play and players does not necessarily reflect play production (Clopper 2001: 12-19). On the other hand, it is also likely that plays (and shows) went unremarked in civic documents.

### 3. BACKGROUND

Appendix I), but it cannot be maintained from a singly surviving text that the play type was rare, that there were no others, nor that any lost miracle play looked like the one which survives.<sup>171</sup> Coldewey (1994: 190) suggests that the short plays typical of the East Anglian region were even more susceptible to chance survival after the Reformation than the cycle texts were. It is further possible that other types of plays were much more common, just less revered as texts, less frequently scripted, and rarely attested in records.

The categories we use to describe Middle English drama do not necessarily give a true picture of that drama, but it is also true that we can only study what we have: the play texts. The categorical uncertainty need be kept in mind, however, particularly in a study dependent on the subgenre classification. To contrast the risk of faulty premises, the play types have also been classified according to method of play production, and several other variables which can complement and adjust the results, e.g. date, language and character types, have been included.

Three approaches to medieval play categorisation have been used in the present study.<sup>172</sup> First, the common categorisation based on content of the plays has been applied. This conventional categorisation is well-known and tested, and even though there is no complete agreement about boundaries and

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<sup>171</sup> Similarly, the *Mary Magdalen* play appears quite untypical of any play subgenre in its cross-over inclusion of biblical material, miraculous conversion, and allegorical characters. It also employs legend, exotic locations, and an array of stage effects. It is dissimilar from the biblical plays, and it does not fit well in the category of morality plays, yet it has elements reminiscent of both. (In the present study it has been categorised with the miracle plays.) Since it is quite clear, even to a modern reader having only the text to judge from, that *Mary Magdalen* must have been a popularly appealing show, it is tempting to suggest that more plays like it once existed. Rather than being a cross-over between better known (i.e. better known to us) subgenres, popular plays like *Mary Magdalen* may have been the most important type of play of the period. Coldewey (1994: 190) suggests that modern scholarship has tended to overemphasise the role of the cycle play as the dominant medieval drama type. Clopper (2001: 113) finds that few medieval English towns were large enough to support such large-scale plays as the cycles. It is perfectly possible that cycles were relatively rare, and that the smaller-scale, mobile play type was much more common.

<sup>172</sup> In addition, linguistic approaches have been applied in order to describe the use of interjections in ME play texts.

membership (below), it makes good sense to study interjections systematically according to the subgenre classification found in most handbooks on Middle English plays.

Secondly, a recent and totally different categorisation of medieval play types has been tried out, following Normington (2009). She distinguishes Middle English plays not by content, but by manner of staging: outdoor inclusive plays and indoor exclusive plays. The two types of categorisation are explicated in the following.<sup>173</sup>

Thirdly, the aspect of text production may have influenced type and frequency of interjections (Section 1.2.5). The play texts are therefore also classified according to how they were produced: as manuscripts or as printed texts.

### 3.6.1 *Categorisation by content*

Medieval playwrights did not compose plays which fit neatly into the categories later devised for them. Yet there are some recurring patterns and these patterns have been used to suggest the categories applied in the present study. The most common categorisation of medieval drama texts is one based on content, as for example in Bevington (1975), or Walker (2000).

There is one point of disagreement in Bevington's (1975) and Walker's (2000) subgenre categorisations, and this point concerns the non-biblical religious plays. Walker (2000: v-vi) avoids the terms 'miracle' and 'morality' and classifies all ME plays into three groups: 1) the biblical ones, 2) the moral ones dealing with "religion and conscience", and 3) the interludes dealing with "politics and morality". This approach has been used to distinguish morality plays from interludes in the present project.

Walker (2000: 209, 213) recognises only one English miracle play, *Play of the Sacrament*, and this play he includes with the religiously concerned (morality) plays. However, there are grounds to classify the *Sacrament* play with other plays concerned with miraculous conversions, which, in contrast to morality plays, do not employ allegory as a structuring principle. The saints' plays, *Mary Magdalen* and *St Paul*, bear such resemblances to *Sacrament*. The

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<sup>173</sup> Detail about plays, subgenre, contents and characters, is found in Appendix I.

### 3. BACKGROUND

present study therefore follows Bevington's (1975) four-fold classification into biblical plays, miracle plays, morality plays and interludes.<sup>174</sup> Section 1.2.5 gives short descriptions of each subcategory of medieval drama. Below follows some reservations to the application of the subgenre categorisation and how the problems can be countered in a multi-faceted study.

In the application of modern categories on historical material, two aspects in particular need be borne in mind. First, the aspect of chance survival influences our understanding of Middle English drama. We admit that some of the plays are difficult to categorise, they may for instance seem to 'bridge the gap' between morality play and miracle play, but for all we know, many more Middle English plays may have been exactly such cross-over types.

The second important aspect which informs the present project, is that the order in which the medieval subgenres are commonly listed - biblical, miracle, morality, interlude - does not represent a chronological development from the first to the last type (Clopper 2001: 14). Even though the evolutionary theory about the development of drama has long been discarded, it seems to have become a convention in presentations of medieval drama to list them in the order above. Westfall (1997: 40) rejects the ideas of the "big bang" theories which "perceive an almost linear evolution from trope to

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<sup>174</sup> Bevington refers to miracle plays as "Saints' Plays or Conversion Plays" (Bevington 1975: 659) rather than to miracle plays. In late medieval terminology, 'miracle playing' seems to have been a generic term for many kinds of plays, cf. the early fifteenth century (Lollard) objection to religious plays: *The Tretise of Miraclis Pleyinge* (see e.g. Walker 2000: 196-97). Walker uses the term 'miracle play' only about the *Sacrament* play from Croxton. He (and others) finds it to be a unique type of play. However, miracles are performed in many medieval plays, and in some of them the miracle is essential to the conversion of important characters. This happens not only in the *Sacrament* play, but also in the two saints' plays, *Mary Magdalen* and *Conversion of St Peter*. 'Miracle play' and 'conversion play' therefore seem equally fitting terms for these plays, and the first has been preferred in the present study to refer to all these three texts. Like Clopper (2001), Tydeman (1994: 18) warns us that "such classifications are in many respects arbitrary, and can obscure interrelations of theme and character, or the wide range of elements within a single piece, and similarities of staging that cut across generic boundaries." The present project heeds the warning by including many other factors besides the traditional classification of medieval drama.

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tragedy, implying if not stating outright that earlier and variant forms (indeed *variant* itself implies a “norm”) are simplistic and monovalent.”

Tydeman (1994: 9) also criticises the theory that the medieval play tradition developed through evolution from the simple to the sophisticated. Further, Clopper (2001: 20) is skeptical of the tendency even in many recent works to persist in presenting the subgenres of ME drama in an order which leaves an impression of linear development. This impression is wrong, yet this order of presentation of subgenres of Middle English plays has also been chosen in the present study. It is a convention only. The table below does not present any chronological order. For witness dates see Section 2.2.5, and for relative order of composition, see Section 5.2.7.

<b>Subgenre</b>	<b>Title</b>
Biblical cycles	<i>York cycle</i> <i>N-town cycle</i> <i>Towneley cycle</i> <i>Chester cycle</i>
Biblical single plays	<i>Northampton Abraham</i> <i>Brome Abraham</i> <i>Herod</i> <i>Burial and Resurrection of Christ</i>
Miracle/ conversion plays	<i>Mary Magdalen</i> <i>Conversion of St Paul</i> <i>Play of the Sacrament</i>
Morality plays	<i>The Castle of Perseverance</i> <i>Wisdom</i> <i>Mankind</i> <i>Mundus et Infans</i> <i>Nature</i> <i>Everyman</i>
Interludes	<i>Lucidus and Dubius</i> <i>Occupation and Idleness</i> <i>Fulgens and Lucre</i> <i>Hickscorner</i> <i>Magnyfycence</i>

**Table 3-12 The subgenres of Late Middle English plays**

### 3. BACKGROUND

The four-fold classification in Table 3-12 is based on the contents of the plays including their relations to religion, i.e. whether the latter is more or less explicitly expressed in the text. This classification can be tested against the alternative approach which follows below. The alternative approach is based on manner of performance; as indoor or outdoor plays. Play categorisation can further be tested against chronology – it may be found that early play texts use different interjections than late ones. It can perhaps be found that interjections are more susceptible to diachronic changes than to register and genre.

#### 3.6.2 *Categorisation by staging*

As regards practical staging, medieval plays were much more varied than modern Western drama (see e.g. 3.6). Normington (2009) argues convincingly that manner of production is a better way of understanding medieval drama than subgenre classification. In short, indoor plays and outdoor plays may have had very different audiences, and the physical surroundings may have put various constraints on the outdoors dramas, and conversely allowed for other types of indoors drama. These aspects may have bearing both on the distribution and on the types of interjections used in the play texts, and therefore the indoor versus outdoor play production will be considered. Two main differences may be of importance for the use of interjections in outdoors versus indoor play texts.

First, there are both visual and aural differences between open-air and indoor production. Presumably, the spectators of the latter type could both see and hear better than what was often the case with outdoor staging. The actors probably had to compensate in outdoor production by using greater gestures, louder voices, and/or stepping forward each time it was their turn to speak. We do not know much about acting styles, but records suggest that a good voice was important. The texts themselves give clues, too. It is for example common in plays that the audience is required to make room and be silent.

It is therefore conceivable that different types of interjections were used in plays dependent on how their staging was planned. The frequent use of *A* before a vocative (name or title for example) in the cycles (outdoor staging) may have been caused by a necessity to mark entrances clearly when playing in crowded streets and markets. It is also possible that the frequency of

## INTERJECTIONS IN LATE MIDDLE ENGLISH PLAY TEXTS

interjections differ between outdoor and indoor plays. If interjections served as efficient markers of emotion and attitude in Middle English drama, it seems likely that they would be of particular value to outdoor plays, in which clearer signalling would be needed.

The second point of importance is that outdoor and indoor plays had different audiences, and the playwright most likely anticipated this. Schematically put, the outdoor plays were composed for the edification of the masses, including both the learned and the unlearned. By contrast, many of the indoor plays were composed with a specific, often educated audience in mind. The audience could be monks in a monastery, aristocratic men and women in a great hall, or students at a university. When the playwright knew the audience, he could shape the play according to their taste and learning. The indoor plays may focus on different topics than the mainly religious outdoor plays, and therefore they may have used different types of interjections.

The problem of categorising ME plays according to manner of staging is that it is not clear in all cases how the plays were staged. Play texts may not give sufficient information about staging in this respect. Further, there are at least two texts which are believed to have been copied as reading material, rather than as play texts proper. However, using Normington's (2009) principles it is possible to infer manner of staging in most cases.

Comparing subgenre classification (3.6.1) to manner of staging gives the following inventory: the biblical cycle plays represent the outdoor play type par excellence, while the shorter biblical plays could be performed either indoors or outdoors. At least some of the short biblical plays may have been performed at special occasions to an invited audience in a guild hall (e.g. the *Herod* play).<sup>175</sup> The three miracle plays were probably all composed for outdoor performance (but see Normington's (2009: 132-134) reservations about the *Play of the Sacrament*).

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<sup>175</sup> See Appendix I for discussions of each play's most likely manner of performance. Much of the discussion is based on Normington (2009), but she does not include all the plays in the material of the present study, so other sources have also been consulted.

### 3. BACKGROUND

The morality plays encompass plays of both types: the *Castle of Perseverance* was certainly staged in the open, while the remaining five morality plays were probably staged indoors. The interludes are all indoor plays, and in many ways they represent the extreme contrast to cycle plays. Interludes are fairly short plays, mostly written for particular occasions, and they were mainly performed in private great halls or school halls to a select audience.<sup>176</sup>

In contrast to the subgenre classification, the distinction between indoor and outdoor staging reflects a diachronic development. The texts of the outdoor plays explored in the present study are generally older than the texts of the indoor plays. In reality the two types co-existed in the sixteenth century, but as religious plays were censored, and as private play staging seems to have become more popular, the indoor plays increased in number while outdoors staging gradually faded out.

The table below presents the play texts and their classifications according to 1) staging, i.e. outdoors and open versus indoors and exclusive, and to 2) subgenre, i.e. topical differences. The number of lines for each text is included in the table to illustrate the considerable variation in length of the plays.

<b>Title</b>	<b>Staging</b>	<b>Subgenre</b>
<i>York cycle</i>	Outdoors	Biblical: the cycles
<i>N-town cycle</i>	Outdoors	
<i>Towneley cycle</i>	Outdoors	
<i>Chester cycle</i>	Outdoors	
<i>Northampton Abraham</i>	?	Biblical: the single plays
<i>Brome Abraham</i>	?	
<i>Herod</i>	Outdoors?	
<i>Burial and Resurrection</i>	Indoors?	
<i>Mary Magdalen</i>	Outdoors	Miracle/ conversion plays
<i>Conversion of St Paul</i>	Outdoors	
<i>Play of the Sacrament</i>	Outdoors	
<i>The Castle of Perseverance</i>	Outdoors	Morality plays
<i>Wisdom</i>	Indoors?	

<sup>176</sup> The *Winchester Dialogues* (*Lucidus and Dubius*, and *Occupation and Idleness*) appear to have been composed as school plays (Lancashire 1984: 283), and plays were produced in fifteenth century Cambridge and Eaton (Walker 2000: 305).



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<i>Mankind</i>	Indoors	
<i>Mundus et Infans</i>	Indoors	
<i>Nature</i>	Indoors	
<i>Everyman</i>	Indoors	
<i>Lucidus and Dubius</i>	Indoors	Interludes
<i>Occupation and Idleness</i>	Indoors	
<i>Fulgens and Lucrez</i>	Indoors	
<i>Hickscorner</i>	Indoors	
<i>Magnyfycence</i>	Indoors	

**Table 3-13 Play texts and manner of staging**

### 3.6.3 Categorisation by text format

The terms of text production, by hand copy or by printers' type sets, may have had bearing on the use of interjections. Since many interjections are short and syntactically independent words, they can easily be ignored by mistake or wilfully in order to save space. A hypothesis may be suggested that printing was less flexible than writing by hand in manuscripts, and that printing play texts may have led to a reduction in the number of interjections. None of the printed play texts survive in manuscript, so no direct comparison can be made, but relative frequencies of interjections in the six printed play texts can be compared to the 17 manuscript texts (Chapter 7 reports quantitative findings).

It is uncertain to what extent printed plays were produced for pleasure reading in the early years of printing. The prints explored in the present study are the earliest printed play texts in England. *Fulgens and Lucrez*, printed c. 1512 is believed to be first, but *Everyman* and *Hickscorner* were also printed very early c. 1512-1514. The earliest print of *Everyman* is fragmented, however, so a later one by Scot has been used in the present study.

None of the prints survive in great numbers, one of them bears the initial of a play collector (Myles Blomefield), and it could be that prints were specially ordered and of interest mainly to collectors, or producers of plays, such as acting companies. These could be hired to perform in well-off households for special occasions, a growing business in late medieval aristocratic circles. Even later, after the advent of permanent play houses in London, and contrary to popular opinion, play texts seem not to have been printed in large numbers (Blayney 1997: 385).

### 3. BACKGROUND

Table 3-14 below lists the play texts in the usual order, this time including information about text production. The table illustrates that the printed texts belong in the subgenres morality play and interlude, i.e. the types of short, indoor plays becoming increasingly popular in late medieval England. All the biblical plays survive in manuscript; even the late copies (1591-1603) of the *Chester* cycle were copied by hand.

<b>Title</b>	<b>Text production</b>	<b>Subgenre</b>
<i>York cycle</i>	Manuscript	Biblical: the cycles
<i>N-town cycle</i>	Manuscript	
<i>Towneley cycle</i>	Manuscript	
<i>Chester cycle</i>	Manuscript	
<i>Northampton Abraham</i>	Manuscript	Biblical: the single plays
<i>Brome Abraham</i>	Manuscript	
<i>Herod</i>	Manuscript	
<i>Burial and Resurrection</i>	Manuscript	
<i>Mary Magdalen</i>	Manuscript	Miracle plays
<i>Conversion of St Paul</i>	Manuscript	
<i>Play of the Sacrament</i>	Manuscript	
<i>The Castle of Perseverance</i>	Manuscript	Morality plays
<i>Wisdom</i>	Manuscript	
<i>Mankind</i>	Manuscript	
<i>Mundus et Infans</i>	Print	
<i>Nature</i>	Print	
<i>Everyman</i>	Print	
<i>Lucidus and Dubius</i>	Manuscript	Interludes
<i>Occupation and Idleness</i>	Manuscript	
<i>Fulgens and Lucretia</i>	Print	
<i>Hickscorner</i>	Print	
<i>Magnyfycence</i>	Print	

**Table 3-14 Play texts and manner of text production**



## 4 Data and Methods

### 4.0 *Abstract*

This chapter describes the methodology employed in collecting and handling the (empirical) data: the interjections. It also describes the methods and theory informing the selection of the texts providing the data. There is a brief description of the methodology called abduction, but most space is given to a description of the purpose-built database and the thinking behind the categories (annotations) in the database.

### 4.1 *Methodology*

Insofar as the actual data is believed to yield the most relevant theories about their function and distribution in Middle English play texts, an inductive method forms a starting point for the present study. Induction is the normal approach in pragmatics, because pragmatics takes actual language use as its object of study, rather than any (deductive) hypotheses about linguistic behaviour. Historical pragmatics also has real language use (in written texts) as its starting point, but in addition, historical pragmatics draws on theories developed in pragmatics concerned with present day spoken language.

The present study belongs in the field of historical pragmatics, and therefore it also considers some pragmatic, and linguistic, theory already developed about interjections. These theories are developed on the basis of speech. Only few studies deal with historical interjections, even fewer with interjections in Middle and/or Late Middle English texts.<sup>177</sup> The analyses therefore include some comparison to work done on interjections in Early Modern English, and

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<sup>177</sup> Most work on interjections has been performed on their function as pragmatic markers in PDE conversation. Many definitions of interjections have been considered in the present study, in order to achieve as full an understanding of them as possible. Some approaches to interjections in modern speech are useful to the study of historical interjections in written texts, while others clarify that there are also significant differences between interjections in naturally occurring conversation and interjections in historical drama dialogue. See Chapter 2.

not only in Late Middle English. As theories on the use and function of interjections are put to the test on the data in the present project, there is also an element of deduction in it.

#### *4.2 Abduction and the present project*

The term ‘abduction’ was introduced by Peirce (1955, in Svennevig 2001: 1) to describe a method that was considered by Peirce to be particularly useful in linguistic studies, as he found the traditional methods, induction and deduction, to be insufficient. Thus, abduction complements the scientific methods of induction and deduction, and includes elements of both. Whereas induction (the ‘bottom-up’ approach in research) does not yield new knowledge, but is used to strengthen a hypothesis, or conversely to discard a hypothesis, deduction (the ‘top-down’ approach) develops explanations that cannot be verified (Svennevig 2001: 5). Abduction is a method that encourages the movement back and forth between induction and deduction. In practice abduction is both induction and deduction, as it is a method that tests preliminary findings in the process and develops new hypotheses as the work progresses. It is particularly useful with empirical data in fields such as historical linguistics and historical pragmatics.

In the present project, abduction means that both form and function have been studied from the outset. It is necessary to consider form and function in complement to ensure the detection of all the interjection types used in the Middle English play texts. Further, to enable the collection of all possible forms of one interjection type, and all possible functions of the interjections, it is necessary to read interjections in their context. Fragmentary play texts lack the context which is of vital importance to the correct interpretation of interjections, and this is the reason why fragments of plays were excluded, even though they are obviously very interesting in a study of the history of English drama.

Form-to-function mapping must complement function-to-form mapping. It means of course that many forms behaving like typical interjections were recorded from the beginning of the project, for example ALAS, WHAT, and MARRY, and only later either included or excluded from the study for various reasons. Those forms that were excluded have not been entered into

#### 4. DATA AND METHODS

the database and are thus not part of the total of 3,087 data records. On the one hand, for example WHAT and MARRY were excluded, because they belong in other word classes and thus appear otherwise than as interjections.<sup>178</sup> On the other hand, some forms functioning very much like typical interjections, but stretching the boundaries of the definition by for example phrasal rather than natural derivation, have been included in the database to gain further insight into the field of medieval drama as well as of interjections.

For instance ALAS clearly derives from a phrase, but was still included in the present study, as it has been in the studies both by Taavitsainen (1995; 1997) and by Culpeper and Kytö (2010).<sup>179</sup> In addition, there are about 100 database records of words which may be developing in Middle English from phrase to interjection: BENEDICITE, GRAMERCY, and PARDIE (see Taavitsainen 1995: 440). Even though these are efficient signals to the audience, and as such perhaps typical of direct speech in drama, their status as proper interjections has been considered problematic.<sup>180</sup> The three types were nevertheless included as one aim of the present study has been to track possible diachronic development of interjections. It is possible that prototypical interjections are not the same across history. For instance the

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<sup>178</sup> Even though MARRY appears otherwise in Late Middle English, primarily as a first name, it appears exclusively for exclamatory functions in particular play texts, mainly in those where Mary is not a character. As such, MARRY serves the same functions as an interjection in some of the texts explored. It is not known when the connection to the name Mary was lost and the distinctive spelling of the two forms became systematic and/or standard, but it had not happened in Late Middle English. Both the name and the secondary interjection are normally spelt <mary>.

<sup>179</sup> Koskenniemi (1962) and Mazzon (2009) also include ALAS but refer to it as a secondary interjection.

<sup>180</sup> The number, however, is small and should thus not affect statistical testing of the prototypical interjections. These signals, *benedicite*, *pardie*, and *gramercy* will be discussed towards the end of this chapter. In my opinion they are routines, used otherwise, but which may carry emotional load or attitude in certain contexts. In contrast to ALAS, which also developed from a phrase, *benedicite*, *pardie*, and *gramercy* have apparently become obsolete. ALAS may not be common in Present-day English, but many (most?) English-speakers still recognise its connotations of lament and pity.

modern WOW is not attested in the present material; still there is little doubt that it is an interjection in Present-day English.

In many ways the present project has come to resemble traditional hermeneutics, and not only in the interpretation of the drama texts. Also the theoretical and methodological movement back and forth between data and relevant theory resembles a hermeneutic circle whose circles expand as new variables are added. Peirce (1955, in Svennevig 2001: 9) called this moving back and forth-approach abduction.<sup>181</sup> Peirce developed abduction as a “process of gaining new knowledge” (Svennevig 2001: 10) based both on observed facts and the inferred, explanatory hypothesis about them, including the discarding of other hypotheses (Peirce 1955: 150-51).

Abduction as a method applied in the present project means that some variables were considered from the outset, while other variables have been added in the process as new hypotheses were developed. The peculiarities of Middle English writing have been considered from the start. It is necessary that manuscript production and the Late Middle English language situation are taken into account when interjections are categorised. Factors to do with

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<sup>181</sup> Svennevig (2001) describes Peirce’s (1839-1914) ideas about abduction as a theory of inference, and as an alternative to (pure) deduction and induction. Deduction is non-productive; it does not yield new knowledge since the conclusion follows from the premises (Svennevig 2001: 10; 13). Induction is productive, but uncertain; the formation of a theory based on the observed involves generalisation which may be incorrect. “Abductory induction” (Peirce 1955: 152), i.e. abduction, starts with observation giving rise to a hypothesis relating them to (other) facts, and which results in a more general description taking a wider context into account (Svennevig 2001: 10). Svennevig (2001: 14-21) suggests the application of abduction on studies of spoken interaction. He evaluates the methodologies of Conversation Analysis (CA) and Grice’s theory (of conversational cooperation) in the light of abductive methods. Both of these theories have been considered in the course of the present project. Svennevig describes both methods as abduction, but one theory of interaction, CA, can be falsified, while the other (Grice’s theory) is theory-driven: it does not allow for testing, and it is therefore less scientific. Svennevig (2001: 21) concludes that “a pragmatic, abductory theory of science involves functional rather than causal explanations...” and “[...] this sort of scientific approach is crucial to the humanities and the social sciences...” Abduction is probably more common in science than what has hitherto been recognised, but it may not always be explicit that abductory methods have been used. The present project considers it important that the approach is made explicit.

#### 4. DATA AND METHODS

production, such as scribal behaviour, date of copy, and dialect variation, initially looked like promising paths of enquiry. These variables were not abandoned, but factors from contextual levels have been added in the process for an inclusive discussion of the function of interjections in Middle English plays.

Literary genre was included early as a possible decisive factor regarding the distribution of interjections, and at first some romances and saints' legends were explored in addition to the drama texts. However, variation in the use of interjections in medieval genres had already been established by Taavitsainen (1994: 208; note 8, and 1997: 573). The drama material also turned out to provide enough material on its own. Instead of a comparing drama to other genres, the drama texts themselves were classified into four subgenres, and, later, into indoor and outdoor play types.

Further, the reading of the play texts led me to believe that the role of speakers and addressees (*dramatis personae*) must be examined. Many of the late medieval play characters are either good or bad, and the use of interjections according to a good versus bad dichotomy may reveal different patterns than those suggested by subgenre. Secondary interjections, especially swearing, are used to characterise speakers in Middle English plays. Heathen characters for example swear by "Mahound".<sup>182</sup> The short, prototypical interjections investigated in the present study, may similarly mark the speaker positively or negatively.

On these grounds, a socio-linguistic, or rather cultural-literary, approach was applied including a range of variables describing the play characters. It has been noted whether the (fictional) speakers are male or female, good or bad, humans or not, and whether addressees are celestial beings or not.<sup>183</sup> The latter point presumably reflects late medieval theological thinking rather than

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<sup>182</sup> 'Mahound' may be a distortion of the name of the prophet Mohammad, and obviously an anachronism when spoken by biblical characters such as Herod, but common in the material. The *OED* describes 'Mahound' as Middle English term for an Islamic deity.

<sup>183</sup> It is common that celestial beings are addressed with the interjection A or O preceding a vocative phrase. Such occurrences, e.g. 'O lord', may be found to be phrasal rather than expressions of emotion or attitude. On the other hand, other characters are addressed similarly. See Chapter 6.



sociolinguistics proper. God, Christ, angels, and devils are rarely considered in sociolinguistics, yet there may be a system in how these characters are addressed in invocations in late medieval English play texts.

The good versus bad character dichotomy may seem a coarse one, but it is nonetheless a common feature of the medieval worldview of binary opposites expressed in the material explored.<sup>184</sup> Celestial characters, virtuous biblical characters, and personifications of good qualities, for example the seven Virtues, have been categorised as good. Devils, demons, evil humans, heathens, and personifications like the seven deadly sins, have been categorised as bad. Some characters are neutral (mankind characters), a few change from bad to good during the course of the play, and yet others (minor roles) are difficult to categorise.

In total, the male characters far outnumber the female characters, yet in some plays the female characters are at least as important as the male ones. It has been explored whether the women characters use different types of interjections than the men. It must be kept in mind, however, that some characteristics may override others, in such a manner that for example the good and bad opposition is more decisive than the binary gender variable.

Other variables were decided on later as the project evolved. For example Conversation Analysis was included as a methodological tool, but it was not a starting point. Normington (2009) suggests an approach to the categorisation of Middle English plays different from the one applied first. Normington's (2009) distinction between indoor and outdoor staging was only added late in the process. The variables are discussed in fuller detail in the description of the database below.

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<sup>184</sup> Cox (2000) gives a good account of the medieval thinking in binary opposites. He further points out that thinking in opposites continued far beyond the Middle Ages, but with different binary categorisations. The medieval dichotomy of good and bad, e.g. personified in virtues and vices, were replaced by other dichotomies later, e.g. after the English Reformation when good equals the new belief, and bad equals the old religious truths, with the Pope epitomising heresy. Similarly the Renaissance thinkers soon viewed the new era as good and enlightened, and the Middle Ages as an age of superstition and ignorance, a void between the culture of the Classical Age and the new birth of Classical learning.

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The importance of understanding the (micro and macro) context of texts in order to understand historical language use was the reason why the collection of interjections was performed manually. Working with the texts and data themselves, rather than gathering them in electronic searches, ensures a more thorough understanding of both the material and the forms in focus: the interjections.

### *4.3 Quantitative and qualitative methods*

Historical texts and the language in them should be studied with many contextual factors in mind, in order to achieve the fullest possible description of how and why they function the way they do. Therefore the present study includes many variables in the discussion of interjections. When the amount of data allows for it, quantitative methods are applied. The quantitative analyses of distribution and function of interjections are performed in Chapter 7, following discussions of the individual interjection types in Chapter 6.

The present study thus applies qualitative methods in combination with quantitative ones. It takes the form of a corpus study of certain linguistic forms (interjections) including context. Each interjection type, its distribution and function, is discussed in Chapter 6. Some of the data have been further examined in terms of figures and statistics. The analyses of the quantitative results include relevant theory from several fields of research, such as historical dialectology, historical pragmatics, and stylistics.

### *4.4 Selection of material*

Interjections are markers of fiction in Late Middle English texts (Taavitsainen 1997: 600) and of direct speech quotations especially (Taavitsainen 1997: 575). They are thought of as primarily belonging to spoken language, and therefore their inclusion in written fictional texts has been explained as an imitation of the spoken mode. Taavitsainen (1995: 440-41; 1997: 575) suggests that interjections may have been used for different purposes in historical written texts than they are in modern speech. Interjections are above all found in historical play texts. There are more interjections in drama than in

any other historical English genre.<sup>185</sup> Therefore, medieval drama seemed the best starting point for an analysis of the use of interjections in Late Middle English writing.<sup>186</sup>

Most extant play texts from the fifteenth century as well as many from the sixteenth century have been included.<sup>187</sup> Fragments were excluded, since the full context is important when analysing interjections. The Shrewsbury fragments include parts of a single actor's lines from three different biblical plays (Davis 1970: xvi), which does not provide enough co-text for an analysis of the use of interjections, and on the same grounds the *Dux Moraud* (early fifteenth century MS, Norfolk) text was excluded, since it contains the lines of one actor only (Davis 1970: cii).

Play texts were excluded if the original manuscript has been lost and the original language no longer can be checked, as is the case with the Norwich Grocers' play, the Newcastle 'Noah' text, and the *Pride of Life* play (which also is fragmental).<sup>188</sup> Plays in Latin, French and Cornish have been excluded.

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<sup>185</sup> Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 267) likewise find significantly more interjections, i.e. pragmatic noise in their terminology, in plays than in any other Early Modern English texts containing written dialogue. In addition to drama, they explore trial proceedings, witness depositions, fiction, and didactic works.

<sup>186</sup> Some observations about interjection types in other (mostly fictional) genres will be compared in Chapter 6 to the use found in the ME play texts.

<sup>187</sup> A list of the included texts is found in Section 2.2.5, and in Section 5.27. Description of the manuscripts and prints is found in Chapter 5, and description of the plays in Appendix I. Beadle (1994: xx-xxii: Chronological Table) provides an overview of play texts including fragments, but it is not entirely in agreement with the dates suggested in the present project, which are based on editions of each text (Chapter 5 provides greater detail).

<sup>188</sup> The Norwich text no longer survives in original or in the eighteenth century transcript Waterhouse used for his 1909 edition (Davis 1970: xxii). The Newcastle 'Noah' pageant text only survives in a late (eighteenth century) corrupt copy (Davis 1970: xl). The early *Pride of Life* morality play was excluded as the manuscript was lost in Dublin in the war in 1922 (Davis 1970: lxxxv), and the text is fragmental: parts were lacking even before the modern transcription was made (Davis 1970: lxxxvi). Besides, the *Pride of Life* was copied in Dublin (Davis 1970: xcvi), and may therefore be linguistically far removed from the varieties of English in the rest of the material. The plays by the Scotsman Sir David Lindsay were excluded on the same basis.

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All other English play texts from before 1500 have been included, and all of these early texts survive in manuscript. The two *Winchester Dialogues* (mid-fifteenth century, Davis 1979: 137-138) are usually ignored in editions of early English drama, but have been explored for the purposes of the present study. All four full cycle texts were included, even though some of them have lacunae due to lost folios, or because parts were never entered into the manuscript (the *York Register*). Lumiansky and Mills (1974) base their edition of the *Chester* cycle on the version found in MS HM 2, and this has also been preferred to the other *Chester* cycle manuscripts in the present study.

It has been more difficult to select material from the sixteenth century. The boundary between the Medieval and Renaissance periods is usually drawn at around 1500, but the English drama does not fall into neat categories of late medieval and early Renaissance plays (e.g. Cox 2000). It is generally held that the Catholic play types referred to as biblical, morality and miracle plays are medieval, but the performance even of these types of plays continued well into the sixteenth century. In the category of interludes it is especially difficult to decide on a boundary between medieval and humanist or renaissance types of plays. Rather the humanist drama is presaged already in the early interludes, which are attested as early as the mid-fifteenth century with the small-scale *Winchester Dialogues*.

The selection of sixteenth century drama texts was based partly on date and partly on content. Only the earlier texts were included, except for the *Chester* cycle copies. All texts belonging in the medieval categories of biblical, miracle or morality plays were included, but not all early interludes were included.

Even though manuscript survival served as an important argument for including a text, print survival was not used as an excluding factor for drama texts.<sup>189</sup> Some early sixteenth century plays are extant only in print and

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<sup>189</sup> The one exception to the principle that all manuscript play texts should be included, is John Bale's *King Johan* from 1530-60. *King Johan* was explored initially, but later excluded on the basis of its complex scribal history and difficulty in dating: the text has been written and revised, perhaps over a period of 30 years by two hands, one of them maybe Bale's own. The play is anti-Catholic: set in historical England and the reign of John of No Land, it is a pro-Henry and pro-Reformation play. Thus

excluding them would mean losing a central late medieval morality like *Everyman*. Rather it would be interesting to compare the types of production of plays, scribal and printed, regarding the use of interjections. In many ways, the introduction of print did not break completely with the traditions connected with manuscript production. Early prints use the same types of abbreviation marks, for example. Early print type sets most often imitate careful handwriting, rather than establishing a new set of fonts. The main delimitation of material explored for the present study, is therefore not based on means of production, but refers rather to time period. The play texts included were all composed before 1530, even though one, the *Chester* cycle text, was not copied in manuscript until much later, and another, *Conversion of St Paul*, has a 1550 addition.

In other words, all play texts of the present study originated before the 1532 Reformation, when the King's legislative power was recognised by the English clergy in Convocation. All the plays were composed before commercial theatre buildings were designed and erected in England. All plays may be called early English plays rather than late medieval, but the latter term is preferred in the present project, as I see no reason to judge early "good" plays as Renaissance, and "crude" plays as medieval. Late medieval England produced high quality drama.

Henry's Reformation was mainly concerned with the secularisation of power, from church to crown, and not primarily with religious reform (e.g. Sommerville 1992: 13). Parliament in 1539 upheld Catholic practices such as clerical celibacy and the importance of confession, and the Church calendar was used to define time for long past the first Reformation (Sommerville 1992: 35). The initial religious reforms were aimed at the practices of the English clergy, including the monasteries and dissident preachers, but not at implementing Luther's Protestantism. With the dissolution of the monasteries

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the Reformation in fact came to operate as delimitation, even though there was little immediate impact on the vernacular drama by the Henrician Reformation. Protestant objection to Catholic plays like the cycles did not hinder the staging of them until the time of Elizabeth I, and the so-called second Reformation (see e.g. the discussion of the *Chester* cycle in Appendix I). Some cycle texts appear to have been revised or occasionally censored (Appendix I: see *Chester* cycle and *Towneley* cycle), but performances continued until 1575 in the case of the *Chester* cycle.

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starting in 1536 one possible arena for religious drama was lost.<sup>190</sup> The performances of vernacular religious plays, in contrast, continued and were still theologically considered relevant.<sup>191</sup> Miracle plays and moralities were not initially opposed after the 1536 Reformation. In fact, several of these play texts only survive in late manuscripts, e.g. all the miracle play copies belong in the sixteenth century by witness date.

Play staging changed, however, since the replacement of power from the church to the crown meant that the upper classes seem to have wanted new forms of entertainment for their own mansion halls. The theatre gradually changed from mainly open-air communal events to select audience indoors productions for special occasions. However, the morals of the plays shown at banquet halls in private homes and institutions mostly conformed to Catholic doctrine, and did not necessarily promote new ideas.<sup>192</sup> The medieval dichotomy of Good versus Bad, for example, survives well into the Renaissance only with an adapted understanding of what was considered bad (Cox 2000: 6). Post-Reformation plays such as Bale's *King Johan* composed c. 1538 (Walker 2000: 480) present promoters of Catholicism as bad and reformers as good. In other words, the play rests heavily on a tradition from medieval drama even though its value system is turned upside down.

Language of the play texts was used for delimitation of the material. Although 'English' in the sense 'belonging in England', properly ought to include the Cornish plays, these were excluded on the basis that they are written in

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<sup>190</sup> Normington (2009: 30) suggests that English convents and monasteries may have developed their own cultural practices, including play staging, as is documented from some European convents. However, records of such activities were lost with the Reformation and the subsequent dissolution of the religious houses in England.

<sup>191</sup> The cycle plays were adapted in various manners. The *Towneley* cycle text includes evidence of such censorship. A reference to the Pope has been crossed out, and the lacunae in the manuscript may stem from a deliberate removal of material such as Marian pageants. The *Chester* cycle as it survives includes relatively little focus on Mary, maybe due to a sixteenth century thorough-going revision when many of the explicatory comments could have been added. The revision could have been performed in expectation of reform protest, mainly to secure the cycle a longer life in Chester.

<sup>192</sup> In fact, Sommerville (1992: 16) sees the secularisation started by Henry's seizure of powers formerly belonging to the church as the starting point, and not the product of intellectual change.

Cornish. Likewise, plays surviving in Anglo-Norman, French or Latin were not included. A line was further drawn along national borders, meaning that plays by for example the Scotsman Sir David Lindsay were not included. The English material in itself has been considered sufficiently challenging as regards analyses of linguistic, i.e. dialectal, variation.

In sum, all English drama texts from before 1500 were included, as well as all later biblical, miracle and morality plays. Early interludes from 1530 or before are included, except the interlude of *Youth*, a forerunner of *Hickscorner* (Lancashire 1980: 41), which has been included. All full drama texts surviving in manuscript format were included, except *King Johan*, which has a particularly complex textual history. Two plays were included which are seldom referred to in the literature on medieval drama, but found in Norman Davis' facsimile edition of *Non-Cycle Plays and Fragments* (1979).<sup>193</sup> These are the two Winchester Dialogues: *Lucretia and Dubius* and *Occupation and Idleness*, of which at least the latter must be considered a play text (Appendix I). In many cases, there is no external (or internal) evidence that the texts were in fact used for play production, but inclusion in the present project depended on whether the text itself belong to the genre of drama, and not on its potential as stage play. (Chapter 5 discusses textual details and Appendix I describes the plays and subgenres).

#### 4.5 Collecting and checking the data

Fleischmann (2000: 33) refers to older language stages and dead languages as "text languages". She makes a strong case for a variationist approach to text languages (Fleischmann 2000: 45; 52). This means taking the variability found in historical texts (the "native speakers" of text languages) seriously by consulting these (manuscripts) rather than editions (critical editions or editions of the best manuscripts). This piece of advice has been taken seriously in the present study.<sup>194</sup>

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<sup>193</sup> The *Winchester Dialogues* were not included in Davis' (1970) earlier edition of non-cycle plays, only in his 1979 facsimile edition.

<sup>194</sup> The present study does not make claims about Middle English as a system - it is, after all, focussed on interjections in play texts only - but it agrees with Fleischmann's

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The texts were read in full at least twice in order that the context and meaning were understood. Data were collected manually during the first reading and annotated with speaker and line numbering from edition. Additional information was added in the second reading. The most recent diplomatic editions were used, and in many cases several editions were consulted and compared. Some texts were edited in the nineteenth century, and even though the quality of early editions varies, they can sometimes yield additional information when compared with later ones. Furnivall for example, does not normalise capitalisation, which may be helpful when interpreting sentence boundaries and the scribe's idea about the clausal independence of a word (or a single grapheme representing a word, for example an interjection). Some texts are available online, but these seem also to be of varying quality, and were used but little in the study. Mainly they were consulted in the early search for medieval plays in ms or print.

After the data had been collected, they were checked as far as possible in manuscript, facsimiles of manuscripts, or facsimiles of early prints from Early English Books Online (EEBO). The *York* cycle Register MS and some of the *Chester* cycle manuscripts were consulted in the British Library in London in April 2008. The *N-town* cycle manuscript (also in the British Library) is unavailable to the public, but was consulted in facsimile by Meredith and Kahrl (1977). The *Towneley* cycle data were also checked in facsimile, this one by Cawley and Stevens (1976). The *York* Register text is also available in facsimile (Beadle and Meredith 1983), as are the Macro play texts (Bevington 1972), the Digby play texts including Bodleian e Museo 160 (*Burial and Resurrection*) (Baker and Murphy 1976), and the non-cycle play texts including the Winchester Dialogues (Davis 1979).

The work concerning data-checking in manuscripts or facsimiles of manuscripts was time consuming, but yielded findings not obtainable from editions, such as scribal habits concerning punctuation and capitalisation in and around interjections. In addition, it meant that the texts were read twice and the interpretation could be improved or corrected. In a couple of instances

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arguments for the inclusion of the manuscript factor in the study of medieval language and linguistic items (interjections, in this case).



interjections which had been overlooked in first time reading, were discovered during manuscript checks.

#### 4.6 *The database*

When the lists of interjections with notes were made, the data were entered into a database with fields for annotation of the collected information.<sup>195</sup> A purpose-built database was developed in order to give easy access to numbers and the features believed to be of importance regarding distribution and function of the interjections. 3,087 recorded interjections, including about 100 controversial ones, were entered into the database with annotations for play, date, scribe, co-text, turn-distribution, speaker, addressee and meaning. The fields in the database and their purposes are described in detail below.

The usability of a database depends on whether the developer has asked the right kind of questions for the hypotheses he or she has. A digital database does not necessarily give more or better answers than the old-fashioned cardboard archive. However, there are some obvious advantages to digital databases. One is the speed with which data can be retrieved, and another is the large quantity of data which it can accommodate. A digital database gives easy access to all occurrences of the searched items.

The third advantage is that new fields can quite easily be added to the database if the researcher develops new hypotheses during the research process. Its greatest advantage is probably that it can filter searches and handle queries with multiple criteria, and thus it allows for the discovery of patterns which may not have been detected from the material alone. Collecting the data, and entering the findings into the database, may be as time-consuming as the creation of any other archive, but there are few limits to the number and diversity of queries which can be performed by it in just seconds.

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<sup>195</sup>As a pilot study, the interjections A and O were recorded first. The results were used for a paper presented at the international conference 'Historical Language and Literacy in the North Sea Area' at the University of Stavanger in August 2009: *The primary interjection 'a/ah' in Late Medieval English Drama*.

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A database can contain information belonging to three levels: referential, descriptive, and analytical information. Hence, the database includes referential notes concerning documentation of each item. First, some annotations in the database are purely documentary, such as the inclusion of the whole verse line where each item occurs. Other referential fields, for example line division, imply some form of analysis of the stanza pattern. Such information is based on the analyses performed by the editors of the texts.

Secondly, annotations of the descriptive kind deal with the context of each item. Some of the descriptions are based on preliminary interpretations of the context, for instance who is the addressee in the case of each interjection/utterance. Finally, two fields refer to information based on analysis of each interjection, both as part of a turn, and as part of a whole play text. One such analytical field records what emotion or attitude the interjection seems to convey in each utterance. The other has been used as a general comment field, where diverse additional information was entered.

The table below illustrates the database fields with examples of content (see next page). The illustrating example, in this case the interjection O, is collected from the *York* cycle text, pageant no. 35, editorially referred to as the 'Crucifixion', line 127. Hand B copied this part of the text in the *York* Register around 1470. The example shows that in the *York* cycle text, the interjection O, spelt <owe>, is uttered by Soldiers no. 4 ('Speaker') when nailing Christ to the Cross. He addresses the other Soldiers ('Addressee'). The interjection O functions as a complaint ('Function') that the cross has been poorly prepared (*werke... all vnmeete*), as the soldiers have trouble fitting Christ's arms to the holes for the nails. Field 'Other' describes alternative interpretations or adds information. Here an alternative understanding is given: The O could perhaps also be interpreted as a cognitive realisation: the soldier realises now why it is difficult to attach Christ to the cross, and he informs his fellow soldiers: *Owe þis werke is all vnmeete*. In this example, O is clearly not in used in a vocative construction, which is otherwise common for O.

The (software) database fields run from left to right and are displayed on screen as information is entered into to the field, but as the paper format does

#### INTERJECTIONS IN LATE MIDDLE ENGLISH PLAY TEXTS

not accommodate the width of the database interface, the fields are presented in the illustration as two rows, one below the other.

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ID <i>Automatical-ly generated ID number</i>	Form	Category	Play	Div of play	Scribe	Genre	Date	Line	Split line	First position	Ns or Sd
169	owe	O	York	35 Crucifixion	B	Biblical	1460	127		Y(es)	
Context	Vocative	Speaker	Sp good	Sp human	Sp gender	Addressee	Celestial	Attitude emotion	Function	Other	MS/print
<i>Owe þis werke is all vnmeete</i>	N(o)	Soldier 4	N(o)	X	M(ale)	soldiers	N(o)	Complaint	Complaint	Cognitive realisation?	BL Add

**Table 4-1 The database**

#### *4.6.1 Annotation*

The Oxford English Dictionary explains the verb ‘to annotate’ as “to add notes to, furnish with notes.” A linguistic item can be furnished with notes manually, for instance in the form of marginal glosses, or on cards in a filing system. The latter has been common practice in linguistic studies. However, with the availability of modern information technology, digital annotation systems have become the rule. These can be large open-access corpora for the use of the public or for a group of people, such as researchers, for example. At the other end of the scale, databases can be small-scale systems which are focussed in on one user’s particular research question.

#### *4.6.2 The database and its fields*

The database created for the purpose of the study of interjections, is a relational database, and Microsoft Access was used to compile it. The fields contain information of different types, such as text, digits, and yes/no categorization (qualification boxes, for example). As mentioned, the annotations, i.e. the data which were entered into each field for every item (record), belong to different levels of interpretation. Some are merely referential or documentary, while others are descriptive and yet others depend on the researcher’s analyses. Some may reflect fuzzy categories, such as literary genres. In this study, for example, the allocation to subgenre relies on partly documentary and partly descriptive evidence insofar as it is based on a categorisation of subgenre which in itself is an interpretative task.

Short descriptions of each field are given below. Criteria are discussed in relation to most fields. First the referential fields of the database will be described. Then descriptions of descriptive and analytical fields follow. Some of the descriptions refer to the example used in Table 4-1 above.

#### *4.7 Referential annotations in the database:*

The referential or documentary data which is entered for every item includes ‘title’ of the play where the interjection occurs, ‘division of play’, ‘line number’, ‘date’, ‘scribe’, ‘genre’, ‘context’ (the verse line in full), and ‘manuscript/print’. The documentary evidence is noted for ease of referencing

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and to give immediate access to the context(s) such as play, scribal part, and linguistic context. It also facilitates retrieval of data in the primary sources when needed.

Some of the documentary data serve a double function: its inclusion does not serve referencing purposes only, but the data may also be used for analysis of the distribution of the items. When for example it was noted whether or not an item, i.e. an interjection, occurs in the first line of a speech, this information can be used to document quantitatively whether interjections typically are found in turn initial position or not. Filtered searches for subgenre and category, for example “biblical” and “alas”, immediately return figures of the number of occurrences of ‘alas’ in all biblical play texts.

##### 4.7.1 ‘Play’

The title of the play was normally given in its commonest modern form in the database, e.g. *York*, for the *York* cycle (cf. Table 4-1 above). Sometimes a shortened form was preferred, e.g. *Herod* for the single play, *the kylling of þe children of Israelle*, in the Digby manuscript. The information was included for the purpose of reference. The only information needed was a name easily recognisable as distinct from the others by the researcher using the database.

##### 4.7.2 ‘Division of play’

‘Division of play’ was needed as a separate field primarily for the cycles, which consist of many smaller plays, usually referred to as pageants. The *York* cycle, for example, comprises 47 pageants, which were recorded as 47 ‘division of play’ categories. Each was entered using its number in the surviving cycle text, together with a short title referring to the pageant’s main content (“31 Crucifixion” in Table 4-1). Further, some plays consist of two parts, and these have been noted as ‘part 1’ and ‘part 2’ in the play division field. This is for example the case with Medwall’s two plays. The ‘division of play’ field was mainly included for referential purposes, but the information can also be exploited in a comparative study of pageants and biblical single plays which deal with the same subject matter, for instance the ‘Abraham and Isaac’ episode. The titles for pageants are usually editorial suggestions, and frequently these titles differ from one cycle play edition to the next. ‘Moses’

in one cycle is perhaps given the title ‘Pharaoh’ by the editor of a different cycle text. What is described as a ‘Noah’ pageant in one cycle, may be two pageants, ‘The building of the ark’ and ‘The flood’, in another. To some degree, such editorial sub-titles were modified in the database to facilitate comparison of topic-related pageant texts.

### 4.7.3 ‘Genre’

The ‘genre’ field refers to the subgenres of late medieval English drama. In part this is documentary evidence, and in part it rests on the interpretation of subgenre (Chapter 3). The drama texts explored in this study were recorded in the database as ‘biblical’ (cycles) and ‘biblical single’ plays, ‘miracle’ plays, ‘morality’ plays, and ‘interludes’. The purpose of the genre field is to enable comparisons of the use of interjections in relation to subgenres of medieval drama. It is an important field, as one of the main aims of the thesis is to describe whether the distribution and function of interjections varies according to play type (and thereby content and character types).

The great diversity of medieval English drama types may be somewhat concealed by a schematic subgenre division (Chapter 3). In a stylistic (or literary) study of the late medieval dramas, each play should ideally be treated separately. However, as this thesis aims at a quantitative study of subgenre trends, a discrete grouping of drama texts was not only practical but necessary. Individual analyses instead of a generic one would make it difficult to trace potential patterns of use, but it is nonetheless important to keep in mind that the allocation of diverse material to one category may be a source of misinterpretation. The analysis of the use of interjections related to subgenre must in any case be performed with an eye to other factors, such as characterisation of *dramatis personae*, date, diachronic changes, and dialect and scribal choices. Subgenre and cast of *dramatis personae* are two sides of the same coin. Date of copy and linguistic diachronic development may overlap with changes in the genre, and any linguistic change discovered should be looked at in concert with genre change.

Provenance of text and scribal repertoire are other factors which may have some bearing on the use of interjections, so subgenre should be considered in relation to the part of the country where the surviving text was produced. If all

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morality plays are East Anglian, for example, dialect rather than subgenre may be a potential explanatory factor behind any linguistic patterns, such as the use of interjections.

### 4.7.4 'Line' and 'Split line'

The 'line' field only contain numbers referring to the line number where the interjections occur. Line numbering was based on the most recent diplomatic edition of the plays. For instance, the line number 127 in the Database Table 4-1 stems from Beadle's 1982 edition of the *York* cycle (primary sources including editions are found in the list of references).

The database includes a field called 'split line' for the relatively few cases where a verse line is split between different speakers, into half or even smaller parts of lines.<sup>196</sup> The letters 'a', 'b', or in rare cases, 'c', are used to show in which part of the split line the item belongs. The purpose of the field was to enable the marking off of interjections occurring as turn starters, but not as verse line starters.

### 4.7.5 'First position'

If interjections imitate spontaneous outbursts as these occur in speech, interjections should typically appear at the start of speeches. It was soon found, however, that all interjection do not function as turn-starters; some appear mid-speech, or (rarely, but still) at the end of speeches. For each record therefore, there is a field where 'first position' is confirmed with a standard

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<sup>196</sup> See e.g. the *Towneley* cycle pageant no. 8, l. 354. The composer/reviser of this cycle play sometimes splits the verse lines among two or more speakers. In this manner the dialogue becomes more rapid and closer to natural speech than in many other play texts. The main principle in all cycle texts, however, including the *Towneley* cycle, is that the turns of the speakers are determined by the start and end of verse lines. The division of lines seems most frequently connected to calls/greetings and replies to these. For instance the *York* cycle pageant of Abraham (no. 10) has three parallel instances where an Angel calls Abraham and Abraham replies within one verse line (*York* 10: 65, 301, and 333). By contrast, the *Towneley* pageant of Abraham and Isaac contains whole stretches of rapid dialogue in which the verse lines are split between father and son, sometimes leaving one turn as short as just half a verse line (e.g. *Towneley* 4: 187-192; 209-211).



value ‘y’ (for “yes”). This is changed to ‘n’ (for “no”) if the interjection does not appear in the first line of a speech. If the interjection does not occur turn-initially, but is found in middle or end of the first line of a speech, this is not marked especially but will be apparent from the ‘context’ field (Section 4.7.7). It is uncommon, but deserves exploration as such usage may turn out to have bearing on the definition of interjections or on the interpretation of an item as an interjection at all (cf. Chapter 6).

#### 4.7.6 ‘NS or SD’

Some turn-internal interjections appear either at the start of a New Stanza (NS), or after Stage Directions (SD). The field was added to the database when these two patterns were discovered. The field ‘NS or SD’ was used to annotate interjections occurring within turns, rather than turn-initially. It was also used to annotate other, unmarked, changes occurring during turns. Sometimes a speaker changes the direction of his/her turn mid-speech, for instance by turning from a character-addressed speech to suddenly addressing the audience. This is very rarely marked by SDs, it is sometimes marked by the stanza format (NS begins), but sometimes it is only detectable from context. This has been noted as ‘turn in add’ in the database NS or SD field.<sup>197</sup>

The first pattern concerns the metrical nature of the drama texts, since many interjections introduce new stanzas rather than new turns. The second is connected to stage business, since it happens that stage directions occur within speeches. The latter type may suggest that one utterance by one character is in fact two turns: the latter part of the speech after the stage direction is a new turn which functions as a response to the action on stage indicated in the directions. The ‘NS or SD’ field was added to refine the analysis of the distribution of interjections.

Long speeches often consist of several stanzas. Interjections are sometimes used as stanza-starters within one speaker’s turn, possibly functioning

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<sup>197</sup> This is not very frequent, and was not annotated systematically from the beginning. Nevertheless the information can be exploited to give a truer picture of when interjections occur as spontaneous turn-starters compared to when they do not. A more systematic approach to exactly these kinds of speech organisation through exploration of SD, NS and unmarked turns in addressees, is a study on its own.

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simultaneously as a poetic and an expressive device. A long lament, for instance, may start with ALAS in turn-initial position, and then continue to have ALAS as a starter of the following stanzas. When this was the case, the (second, third etc) occurrence of ALAS was marked with an 'n' (for no) in the 'first position' field, and 'ns' in the 'NS or SD' field. A related usage is the repetition of a particular interjection in several verse lines in direct sequence. A, O and ALAS are sometimes used in this anaphoric fashion, and consequently such usage was annotated by the term 'anaphor' in the same field.

Sometimes speeches uttered by one speaker are "interrupted" by stage directions, either in English or Latin. It became apparent that the stage directions often referred to action on stage to which the latter part of one speaker's turn was a response or reaction. It seemed that such cases were more precisely interpreted as two turns by the same speaker. When an interjection initiates the second part of such turns ("turn 2"), i.e. immediately after stage directions, it was recorded with the note SD.

A similar situation occurs even when there are no stage directions, but the current speaker still appears to react to stage business. For instance, there may be an obvious shift of addressee during the utterance. Many of the play texts contain few stage directions or none at all, and the speeches themselves may be the only clue that, for example, a new character enters the stage. On some occasions a character apparently turns from one of the other characters on stage, and starts addressing another character or the audience. When shifts in focus or addressee(s) within one speech are clear and related to (unmarked) stage business, they are noted as 'turn' (in action or addressee) instead of 'sd' in the 'NS or SD' field.

To sum up, only interjections which appear in the first line of a speech were marked as 'first position' in the database. However, many non-first position interjections were marked with further comments, either concerning position in the stanzas (NS), or dealing with stage action (SD or 'turn'). The first kind of use seems to imply a poetic use of interjections contradicting the definition of interjections as spontaneous outbursts. The second kind of use, on the other hand, seems to underscore the spontaneous nature of interjections.

#### 4.7.7 'Context'

The 'context' field contains the whole verse line in which the interjection occurs. It is purely documentary and included for immediate accessibility when working with the data. In the Database Table 4-1 (p. 160) the context field of the interjection O reads: *Owe þis werke is all vnmeete*. Big corpora sometimes rely on editors' interpretations and list words without context. In contrast to this approach, a corpus which, like the present one, includes the co-text, allows for reanalyses of ambiguous data.

The interjections and their surroundings were mostly collected from diplomatic editions of the plays, but manuscript and facsimile checks were performed whenever possible for every item. The verse line containing the data, the interjection(s), was entered manually. The context rendering should ideally be as informative of scribal behaviour as possible, meaning as close to original MS detail as possible. Gaps, capitalisation and punctuation, often normalised in editions, were mostly brought back to manuscript appearance. Sometimes editorial choices were noted, however, for instance editorially added punctuation, since it may be useful to compare my own interpretation to that of an editor.<sup>198</sup> It is in any case clear that modern punctuation, such as commas and exclamation marks, is editorial.

The examination of facsimiles and manuscripts showed that some scribes provided some sort of punctuation after interjections. For instance, in the *Burial* and *Resurrection of Christ* text, the interjection A is commonly, although not consistently, written with *puncti* when it appears as a repetitive string of A: <A . A . A .>. Such manuscript detail was noted, for example as 'MS pct' ("manuscript punctuation") in the 'context' or in the 'other' comment field. Scribal use of punctuation and capitalisation regarding interjections will be mentioned where relevant, but as punctuation and

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<sup>198</sup> See Chapter 6 for a discussion for example of the form <ay> in the *York* cycle text, pageant no 5: 71, which was interpreted as an interjection by its first editor, Lucy Toulmin Smith (1885). She adds an exclamation mark. This marking is modified by Beadle (2009: 25) who supplies a comma after AY. However, a third interpretation is possible and more likely: in this context AY seems to be the adverbial 'always': *Ay goddis shalle ye be* (York 5: 71). If the Helsinki Corpus uses Smith's (1885) edition as basis, this may explain why Taavitsainen (1997: 585) sees AY as an interjection in this context.

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capitalisation are not systematic or regular features of manuscripts (or prints), they cannot be studied systematically as markers of interjections. However, the topic deserves separate exploration, perhaps with the inclusion of other kinds of texts. Punctuation can be revealing of the scribe's (or printer's) idea of interjections, both syntactically and as outbursts, even though it obviously differs from modern marking of them.

##### 4.7.8 'Date'

Annotations concerning 'date' rely on the interpretations of editors, who may in turn rely on specialised scholars, such as paleographers and codicologists. The date of the copy is necessary for a diachronic analysis of the use of interjections. Some play texts contain more than one hand ('scribe' below). If these are of different dates, the database contains separate dates for the same text, depending on the date of the hand. In the case of the *York* cycle for example (Table 4-1) two hands - A and B - were recorded with the same date (1460), while the interjections found in the work by scribe C were dated to 1560. (For a discussion of dates, see Chapter 5; for chronological tables, see Section 5.2.7).

##### 4.7.9 'Scribe'

To a large extent, the 'Scribe' category to a large extent depends on the work done by editors of the texts. Different hands in one text are entered in the 'scribe' field as A, B, C etc. If the names of the copyists are known, they are used: Bellin and Gregorie in the late *Chester* manuscripts (Mills, 1998: 185-192). The 'scribe' field in the database is left empty if only one hand was responsible for the production of a text. When a hand is later than the other(s) in the same manuscript, this is reflected both in the 'scribe' and in the 'date' fields ('date' above). The purpose of including the 'scribe' field in the database is to have readily available a piece of information which may explain variation in the use of interjections within one text. It is conceivable that playwright or scribes may have had different repertoires of interjections (Chapters 3 and 6).

#### 4.7.10 *'Manuscript/print'*

The last of the referential fields in the database is fairly uncontroversial. It gives the information of where the text belongs, be it manuscript or print. In this field the common denomination of a manuscript was used if there is one. For example, both 'Macro' and 'Digby' are traditional names for the two mss in which several medieval play texts survive, and were used as manuscript names in the database. Some were referred to by (short form of) repository. The names of the printers were entered for the printed text: for example 'print W Rastell'.

The field was added to facilitate searches of manuscript as opposed to printed text, since manner of text production may have some bearing on the use of interjections (Chapter 7 tests some such hypotheses quantitatively). The field 'manuscript/print' may reflect diachronic development, as well as manner of text production. It is not known to what extent printed texts reflect the language of a composer or of a particular printer, or perhaps the localisation of the printing house. Prints are relatively late in the history of Middle English, and were thus expected to show few traces of regional English. However, there might have been a regional London usage attested in the printed texts, as this is where all the printing houses considered in this study were situated. Dialect is discussed in Section 6.12, and some findings are tested in Chapter 7.

### 4.8 *Descriptive annotations in the database:*

The fields describing the data above the referential level are notes concerning 'category' (of item, as opposed to 'form' meaning spelling), 'speaker', with the sub-fields 'human', 'good', and 'gender'. Further, there are annotations of the 'addressee', with the sub-field 'celestial', and recording of 'vocative' usage.

#### 4.8.1 *'Form'*

Each interjection was entered with its manuscript or printed 'form' (orthography), and with an OED standard spelling in a field called 'category'. The purpose of the referential 'form' field is to note variation in spelling, and

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the purpose of the ‘category’ field is to make comparison possible in spite of spelling variation.

##### 4.8.2 ‘Category’

Assigning each item to one category of interjections was partly based on spelling, and partly on informed choices based on the context. For example, the orthographic realisation <a ha> can be understood as ‘aha’, or ‘a’ and ‘ha’, or even ‘ha ha’ or ‘ah ah’. The relation of spelling forms and categories is discussed in the treatment of each type of interjections in Chapter 6.

##### 4.8.3 ‘Speaker’

The ‘speaker’ field contains the name of the speaker of each interjection. One aim of the study is to find out whether interjections were used for characterisation of the *dramatis personae*. Therefore, the speaker field with its sub-fields relating whether speaker is human, good and of which gender, is of great importance. (See also the list of *Dramatis Personae* in Appendix II.)

Initially the field may appear a purely referential rather than a descriptive one. However, using the speaker names from the plays resulted in a myriad of character names which may in fact be representations of the same character type in medieval drama. For efficient comparison of character types it was considered useful to reduce the variation of speaker names by replacing some with generic terms or consistently choosing English over Latin (Lechery for *Luxuria*, for example, or God for *Deus*). Not all character names were as easy to conflate into one. A distinction which made for easy searches at the same time as information should not be lost was needed. For instance ‘*angelus I*’, ‘Gabriel’, ‘Seraphyn’, ‘Cherubyn’, and ‘good angel’ may all be considered angelic, and were recorded as generic ‘angel’ in the ‘speaker’ field. When names are used in the speech headings, these were added in the field, so forms such as ‘angel Gabriel’ were noted. In this manner, truncated searches on ‘angel\*’ can be performed. Similarly, records for the angel Gabriel can be retrieved, as well (\*Gabriel). Some common names represent different characters, such as the biblical Josephs, Johns and Jacobs, and the many Marys. *Maria Virgo* was noted simply as ‘Mary’, while the Magdalene was called ‘Mary M’. In the same manner “Mary Salome” and “Mary Jacobi”,

sometimes just “Mary I” and “Mary II”, were annotated ‘Mary S’, ‘Mary J’, ‘Mary I’ or ‘Mary II’.

#### 4.8.3.1 Speaker: ‘human’

The ‘speaker human’ field consists of a qualification box where the status of speaker as human was ticked off. Its purpose is to establish whether there is discrimination between human versus non-human speakers regarding their use of interjections. The human speakers were expected to show more spontaneous, human, behaviour in the plays, and thus use more interjections. The ‘speaker human’ field does not reveal whether the non-human speaker is a deity or a devil, a vice or a virtue. However, these distinctions are reflected in the next field, where the character is annotated as good or not (below).

There are human and non-human characters in most medieval plays. The mankind figures of the morality plays have been considered human, as representations of all humankind. For example ‘Everyman’ of the *Everyman* play has been categorised as a human character, while his antagonists ‘Goods’, ‘Kinship’, ‘Five Wits’ etc were categorised as non-human (but neither vices nor virtues, good nor bad in the case of this particular play). However, some of the allegorical characters of morality plays and interludes are difficult to classify. Whether, for instance, the king’s false friends in *Magnyfycence* are to be seen as men or as vices is a matter of interpretation.

All the characters representing people in biblical and miracle plays were considered human, in contrast to deities and devils. The character of Jesus was considered a special case. As late medieval theology put much emphasis on the suffering of Christ for the salvation of mankind (Section 3.5.5), and in doing so underscored his status as human, the Christ character was entered as human before death and non-human (‘celestial’ in the ‘addressee’ field, below) after death (in the ‘Harrowing of Hell’ pageants) or after Resurrection. It remains to be seen whether this distinction for the Jesus character is a valid one.

The role of Expositor (also called *Contemplatio*, *Poeta*, and ‘Doctor’) is common in medieval plays. He welcomes the audience, explicates the action during the play, or makes apologies in the end. The Expositor character

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functions as a link between audience and play. As the Expositor usually stands outside of the action of the play proper, he was annotated as non-human, neither good nor bad, nor male or female (below) in the database

##### 4.8.3.2 Speaker: 'good'

Stereotypical good versus bad established a main division of character type in Late Middle English drama. The 'speaker good' field in the database is a qualification field, rather than a tick box (which leaves only two options). Three types of information could thus be entered: 'y' for "yes", 'n' for "no" (meaning bad), and null, meaning that the field was left empty for neutral characters. 'Speaker good' is again a field connected to interjections as a means of characterisation in medieval drama, as queries can be performed to explore whether good and bad characters use different types of interjections.

Even though many medieval drama characters are easily recognised as either good or bad, there are some which are hard to categorise or who change during the play(s). Heathens are characterised as 'bad', except if, or until, they are converted. Examples are the Jews in the *Play of the Sacrament*, and the Rex and Regina of Marceille in the *Mary Magdalen* miracle play.

Old Testament good characters, such as Moses, Noah and Abraham were annotated by 'y' (for "yes") in the 'speaker good' field, even though they predate salvation through the sacrifice of Christ. The bad humans in biblical plays include Cain and Judas, as well as heathens, such as (the) Pharaoh, Pilate and Herod. These were annotated with an 'n' in the 'speaker good' field in the database. Vices and virtues are stereotypes in their very personification of good and bad traits. Devils are always bad, whereas angels are good. The exceptions are bad angels of the morality and miracle plays. These were annotated 'n' for 'no'.

Expositors in the plays were considered neutral, as were most messengers even when they are in the employment of heathen (therefore bad) characters, such as Herod and Pilate. Soldiers on the other hand, were considered bad in most cases. The 'speaker good' field was left blank (neutral) for some minor characters when their status was unclear or ignorable, but also regarding some types of lead characters, mainly the generic mankind figures. The mankind



characters are not necessarily complex, but they are neither good nor bad, and that seems to be a major point about them. They have sinned, or will be tempted into sin during the course of the play, but such is the fate of every human being. As representatives of sinful man, the mankind figure is not an evil-doer, even when he is led astray by vices.

#### 4.8.3.3 Speaker: 'gender'

Gender is entered in the database as 'm' for male, 'f' for female or null when the speaker is non-human and gender seems irrelevant or irretrievable from context. Gender was annotated for all the human speakers (e.g. biblical Eve = 'f'), but the gender of the non-human ones seemed not always to be of equal importance (e.g. devils, angels, vices, virtues, Expositors or "dead souls"). Again, a principle of caution was employed: if the speaker is not human, and gender appears difficult to establish, the 'gender' field was sometimes left blank in the database.

The gender field was included to explore whether or not interjections were used to differentiate between male and female speakers. Since there are more male speakers than female ones in the plays, and since the study does not include line totals for each speaker, no percentages can be retrieved. However, it can be established whether certain interjections are restricted to the gender of the speaker.

Commonly the vices are represented as male, and the virtues as female (e.g. in *Castle of Perseverance*), but it varies from play to play. When gender was not clear from titles or names in speech headings, it sometimes had to be inferred from any direct addresses to them ("Dame Lechery": a female vice), or the third person pronouns used about them in the speeches of other characters ('he' or 'she').

Jesus was considered male in this study, both before death (when human) and after resurrection ('non-human' and 'celestial'). Angels are often male (e.g. by name). Whether God (*Deus*) should be considered male may seem obvious in the medieval religious context, but most probably the factor of sex is levelled out by the superiority in all matters of this special character. Gender

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was thus not entered for God. The results of this study may help clarify a possible pattern of hierarchical character features.

##### 4.8.4 'Addressee'

The addressees the turns are directed to, have been entered into the database by their titles and/or names following the same principles as speaker names. The present project hypothesises that interjections in historical play texts are mainly used as signals of the speaker's emotion/attitude, but it is nonetheless important to examine whether the addressee can be a determining factor in the selection of interjections. Interjections used to appeal for contact with an addressee serve conative functions (Ameka 1992a: 113). An obvious example is the frequent use of both A and O in vocative constructions, for example in addresses to God (*o lord*). Together with the 'Attitude/emotion' field the 'addressee' field should aid in establishing whether such vocatives are always phrasal and devoid of emotion, or whether emotion and vocative constructions coincide. Other possible patterns of usage may also be found. It could be the case for example that A is preferred in addresses to humans, such as "A, Master Moses" while O is reserved for celestial addressees. (See also the list of *Dramatis Personae* in the Appendix II.)

Addressees are more difficult to assess from the texts than speakers. The speech headings or stage directions in some cases (such as Latin *angelus dicit*) inform the reader who speaks, but not who is spoken to. Stage directions rarely say anything about the addressee. Thus the addressee of each turn or speech in medieval drama may sometimes be difficult to ascertain, and must be assessed from the context. More often than not, the addressee is the second turn-taker in adjacent pairs of medieval drama conversation, but quite often the addressees are the audience (for whom obviously there is no next turn). Sometimes addressees are indicated by name or title in the preceding turn, but the addressee may also change during a speech (above: 'NS or SD').

Addressee names involve the same difficulty of balancing the individual character traits against the need for generic grouping (above: 'speaker'). The system of database-friendly character names must be the same for speakers and addressees. In other words, when 'angel Gabriel' is used as a name for a

speaker, the exact same form must be used in the addressee field whenever he is spoken to.

#### 4.8.4.1 Addressee: ‘celestial’

‘Celestial (addressee)’ was included as a separate field, because celestial was believed to be a possible decisive feature for the employment of interjections, i.e. in characterisation. The field was annotated by ‘y’ for “yes”, and left empty otherwise. Its purpose is simply to provide evidence whether there is or is not a distinctive use of interjections related to the celestial status of the addressee. (This relates to the definition of interjections as natural outbursts of emotion, in most cases having no addressees at all, in contrast to e.g. formulae (Ameka 1992a: 109).)

The frequent use of both interjections A and O in vocative constructions (A or O + name or title) became apparent already when collecting the data. The observation led to the hypothesis that celestial addressees might be addressed differently from non-celestial ones (humans or devils, for example), and that this may influence the choice of interjections. A dominant use of the interjection O for celestial addressees (*O lord*) in accordance with usage known from sermons, hymns and prayers, might be anticipated. Therefore the status of the addressee as celestial or not was added in the database.

Other characters traits than the ones used for speakers, were considered important regarding the addressees. Since typical interjections are believed to be (imitation of) spontaneous outbursts without proper addressees, the status of the speakers may be expected to be non-indicative of the frequency and type of interjections which speakers employ. On the other hand, if medieval playwrights used interjections as a means of signalling character (i.e. for characterisation), rather than for realistic imitation of natural speech, the above-mentioned characteristics of speaker (human vs. non-human, good vs. bad, and male vs. female) may turn out to be significant. Secondary interjections seem to function as means of characterisation in medieval drama. Heathens swear by *mahound*, for example, and bad characters use phrases such as *cockes bones*. Such patterns signal effectively to the audience what the characters stand for. One of the aims of this study was to find whether or not a similar pattern is formed by the use of short, prototypical interjections.

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Some interjections appear not to be speaker-oriented, i.e. of the expressive emotional or cognitive kind, but rather to be oriented towards the addressee. The vocative use of O and A in invocations, for example, may be purely conventional phrases, or they may include both expressive and conative, addressee-oriented functions. O is often used in addresses to the Lord, which may be described as a conative function of O, especially if the Lord is a character on stage.<sup>199</sup>

##### 4.8.5 ‘Vocative’

The interjections A and O have been annotated with ‘y’ and ‘n’ (for “yes” and “no”) reflecting use in vocative constructions, of the ‘A lord’ type. The field was included mainly for ease of reference, as vocative usage can also be identified from the context included in the database. The vocative use of A and O in addressing someone is frequent. Since both forms are also frequently used independently as interjections expressing emotional or cognitive states, the vocative usage of A and O may be fuzzy primary interjections. In vocative constructions A and O often seem to represent overlap usage, since they give the impression of being both exclamatory outbursts and invocations at the same time. Even though for example ‘alas’ is also sometimes used in vocative constructions, ‘alas’ was not marked for vocative usage. The main point of the field was to explore A and O as a routine (O Lord) adopted from Latin.

#### 4.9 *Analytical annotations in the database:*

Analytical annotations are based on interpretations of the interjection in its verbal co-text and dramatic context. The emotion or the attitude the interjections seemed to convey was recorded in the ‘emotion/attitude’ field. A ‘function’ field was added late in the process, for information about interjections which appeared to be function as something else besides an outburst of emotion. For example the interjection A is very often used to a new character entering the stage, and could be interpreted as a kind of routine greeting. The interjection A, in these cases, may or may not coincide with emotion, such as happiness, surprise or fear. In a last field called ‘other’ any

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<sup>199</sup> If God is not a partaking character it does not mean that addressing Him cannot be conative. God was an ever-present entity in medieval Christian belief.

kind of information which could have any bearing on the interpretation of the interjections was entered. Examples are alternative interpretations of emotion, MS details, or usage which traverses the working definition. To some extent the three fields overlap and were mainly explored together.

#### 4.9.1 *'Attitude/emotion'*

The 'emotion/attitude' field was used to describe which emotion or attitude in the speaker seems to be the most prominent at the point when an interjection is uttered. Descriptive words such as 'anger', 'remorse', 'lament', 'surprise', 'joy', 'thanks' (gratitude), 'respect', 'devotion' were entered in the database. Sometimes more than one word was used. The purpose of the field is to enable a description of each interjection's semantic meaning(s).

The interpretation of emotion/attitude was based on context: the situation in the play, the relationship of speaker and addressee and the utterance co-text of the interjection. In a few cases the field was left blank and function was recorded instead, when no special emotion could be traced. One example is the afore-mentioned use of 'a' as a greeting. Even though such greetings often seem to convey feelings of joy, surprise or cognitive recognition of addressee, it is not always so. Occasionally it was therefore just been marked by its function, 'greeting'. A similar ambiguity occurs with the use of 'o'. Often in vocative constructions it appears to have exclamatory function, while in other cases it seems merely to be used in accordance with its Latin source, as a routine invocation to God in prayer.

#### 4.9.2 *'Function'*

The purpose of the 'function' was to clarify whether some interjections have typical functions, besides the expression of emotion or attitude. The field was only filled for some of the interjections, when a specific function seemed clear. For example 'greeting', 'prayer', 'attention call', and 'attention (pointer)' are descriptions used in this field. Some interjections appear to be typically connected to certain kinds of situations. 'A' is for instance frequent in the first meeting of two characters, and may be interpreted as a greeting signal. 'Howe' (in a diversity of spellings) is an addressee-oriented attention call, as it is a call for somebody, usually at a distance. 'Lo' very often has

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been annotated as an attention pointer, as it is frequently used to point to something physical, or to mark the start or ending of an argument. It can commonly be replaced by the verb ‘look (here)’. Its distribution seems to differ from most other interjections, to such a degree that it may be questioned whether it is an interjection at all. ‘Lo’ was frequently found inside speeches instead of as turn-starters and often no particular emotional load was connected to the expression.

##### 4.9.3 ‘Other’

The ‘other’ field is used for any other information that was considered to be of importance, and also to note ambiguity. Sometimes refined interpretations of the meanings of the interjections were noted. For example, ‘anger’ may be entered in the ‘emotion/attitude’ field, but elaborated into ‘rage, madness?’ in the ‘other’ field. Situations may be explained in the ‘other’ field, such as the repeated cases when characters (shepherds, Joseph) are awakened by angels. Such situations may be noted as ‘surprise?’ in the ‘emotion’ field, ‘greeting’ in the ‘function’ field, and ‘awakened’ in ‘other’.

When interjections appear as part of phrases, it was recorded in the ‘other’ field. Such is, for example, the case with ALAS, which commonly is found in constructions of the type “alas that...” or “alas for ...”. The interjection FIE occurs in the phrase “fie on you”. In spite of examples of such usage, ALAS and FIE were collected as interjections. It remains to be seen whether they should be reevaluated and redefined as, for example phrases, or whether the working definition of interjections employed here will need revision (Cf. Chapter 6).

Collocation with other interjections is frequent in the medieval plays. Such usage was noted in the ‘other’ field. For example, both the interjections HARROW and OUT often co-occur with other primary interjections, such as *Owte owte harrowe* (York 1: 97; 30: 157). Sometimes interjections are used only in a semi-spontaneous way, as referred speech or phrases. An example is Lucifer’s cry in *Wisdom: 325: owt harrow I rore*, meaning either ‘Out harrow, I roar’, or ‘Out harrow! I roar!’. The Old English WELLAWAY was included in this study in spite of its nonconformity to the working definition insofar as it is not short and is of phrasal rather than natural derivation. It has been

#### INTERJECTIONS IN LATE MIDDLE ENGLISH PLAY TEXTS

treated as an interjection in the literature, however, and it does function as an expression of emotion.

## 5 The play texts

### 5.0 Abstract

This chapter gives factual information necessary for synchronic, diachronic and linguistic analyses of the data. The chapter supplies the referential information: the manuscript and print repositories, as well as the modern editions used in the present study. It further discusses dates of the manuscripts and prints, number of hands, length of the texts, and any relations between the texts. Playwrights are described briefly if they are known. Dialect localisation is given where such exists. Initially, the present chapter gives short descriptions of two important late medieval play collections - the Macro and Digby manuscripts – in which seven of the 23 texts survive. Then information about the individual texts follows, in chronological order by witness dates. For discussion of the contents and categorisation of the plays, see Appendix I.

Table 5-1 below lists the play texts by subgenre. Within each subgenre, the titles are given according to chronology. Furthest below in the table are the parallel copies, i.e. second copies of manuscript play texts. Only one of these, the MS Peniarth ‘Antichrist’, provided data for the database. The other second copies have been collated to the parallel play texts in Chapter 3 in order to find out how scribes treated interjections. They have been included in the present chapter, since they contribute to the overall picture of medieval drama and the role of play texts.

<b>Subgenre</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Witness date</b>
Cycles and biblical plays	<i>York cycle</i>	1463-77
	<i>N-town cycle</i>	latter half 15 <sup>th</sup> c to 1500
	<i>Towneley cycle</i>	c.1500
	<i>Chester cycle</i>	1591 (Hm) + 1600 (R)
	<i>Northampton Abraham</i>	1461
	<i>Brome Abraham</i>	late fifteenth century
	<i>Herod (MS Digby)</i>	1512
	<i>Burial and Resurrection of Christ</i>	c.1520
Miracle and conversion plays	<i>Play of the Sacrament</i>	c.1520
	<i>Conversion of St Paul (MS Digby)</i>	c.1520 + 1550
	<i>Mary Magdalene (MS Digby)</i>	1515-20



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Morality plays	<i>Castle of Perseverance</i> (MS Macro)	c.1440
	<i>Wisdom</i> (MS Macro)	latter half of 15 <sup>th</sup> cent
	<i>Mankind</i> (MS Macro)	1465-70
	<i>Mundus et Infans</i>	de Worde print 1522
	<i>Nature</i>	W. Rastell print c.1530
	<i>Everyman</i>	Skot print 1530
Interludes	<i>Lucidus and Dubius</i>	c.1450
	<i>Occupation and Idleness</i>	c.1450
	<i>Fulgens and Lucrez</i>	J. Rastell print c.1512
	<i>Hickscorner</i>	de Word print 1514?
	<i>Magnyfycence</i>	W. Rastell print c.1530
Parallel copies	York pageant no.3 by hand B in Register	c.1460
	York Scriveners: 'Incredulity of Thomas'	c.1560
	Chester Peniarth 'Antichrist'	c.1500
	Chester Coopers: 'Trial and Flagellation'	1599
	MS Digby <i>Wisdom</i> (incomplete)	Late 15 <sup>th</sup> century
	The other <i>Chester</i> cycle mss	1592-1607

**Table 5-1 The texts**

### 5.1 *The Macro and Digby collections of plays*

The Macro and Digby collections of plays are important witnesses to the late medieval play tradition. The two collections testify especially to the great diversity of late Middle English drama; without them the picture of the medieval play tradition would have seemed much neater, but the picture would have been untrue. Plays such as the *Castle of Perseverance*, *Mary Magdalen*, *Wisdom*, and *Mankind* contribute to our understanding of a play tradition which included not only biblical drama and great cycles, but plays drawing on popular legend, short and long morality plays, serious and comic allegorical drama, plays which were flexible and easy to stage, and plays which employ complex stage machinery in imitation of spectacular miracles.

## 5. THE TEXTS – AND SOME PRAGMAPHILOLOGY

The Macro manuscript contains only play texts, while the Digby manuscript contains philosophical tracts besides the plays.<sup>200</sup> Both manuscript collections contain work by several hands. MS Macro comprises of three morality plays of varying lengths, styles, and manners of staging. MS Digby contains four play texts belonging to various subgenres of medieval drama: two miracle or saint's plays; *Conversion of St Paul* and *Mary Magdalen*, one non-cycle biblical play; *Herod's killing of the children*, and a fragmented version of a morality play: *Wisdom*, surviving in full in MS Macro. The MS Digby copy of *Wisdom* lacks the last third of the text.<sup>201</sup>

MS Macro is found in the Washington Folger Shakespeare Library MS 5031 (V.a.354). The name Macro stems from an early owner; Cox Macro (Bevington 1972: viii). The manuscript contains the texts of three morality plays, of which the copy of the *Castle of Perseverance* (henceforth just *Perseverance*) is the earliest. This copy was originally unconnected to the other two play texts; those of *Wisdom* and *Mankind*, and only bound in the manuscript with them at a later date. The copying of *Perseverance* is dated to c. 1440 (Eccles 1969: viii), while the two other texts are dated to the latter half of the fifteenth century, perhaps around 1465-70 (Eccles 1969: xxxviii). The texts of *Wisdom* and *Mankind* are connected through a shared hand.<sup>202</sup>

The MS Digby survives in Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Digby 133. Like the Macro manuscript, MS Digby contains several play texts of different dates. Some of the Digby texts share scribal hands, but the texts have not all belonged in a single manuscript from the beginning. The year 1512 is written three times in the part of MS Digby containing the *Herod* text. Baker and Murphy (1976: xiii) find the date a likely one for the copying of this text, even though it means that there is time gap of up to 20 years between the

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<sup>200</sup> The contents of Bodleian MS Digby 133 are described in Baker, Murphy, and Hall (1982: ix). Judging from the titles, the tracts appear to be in Latin and Italian. The texts were copied at different dates up to the seventeenth century. The play texts are among the earliest copies in MS Digby.

<sup>201</sup> The Macro and Digby *Wisdom* copies are collated in Chapter 3 for a comparison of language and especially the interjections in the two parallel copies. The different versions are referred to as Macro *Wisdom* and Digby *Wisdom*.

*Herod* copy and the incomplete *Wisdom* copy by the same hand in the same manuscript. The copy of the Digby *Wisdom* text is dated to c. 1490-1500. Baker and Murphy (1976) date the *Mary Magdalen* copy to 1515-20 on the basis of watermarks, and the main part of the *Conversion of St Paul* to c.1520 (Baker and Murphy 1976: x-xiv).<sup>203</sup> This means that both the *Wisdom* and *Herod* texts are earlier copies than the two miracle play texts in MS Digby, and that the play collection as a whole spans some 30 years in the making.<sup>204</sup>

The chronological order of the copying of the play texts in MS Digby is thus *Wisdom*, *Herod*, *Mary Magdalen*, and *Conversion of St Paul* - the exact opposite of the present manuscript order. The earliest folio numbering suggests that only the text of *Mary Magdalen* was included in an original manuscript. The other play texts were probably bound in with the *Mary Magdalen* copy between 1616 and 1634, possibly between 1632 and 1634 while in the Digby library (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: xii). The texts may have been bound together because the librarian saw a connection in Myles Blomefylde whose name or initials appear on several of the plays' folios.<sup>205</sup>

Both these medieval play collections, MSS Macro and Digby, seem to have originated in East Anglia. The language of the scribe of the Macro *Perseverance* and the language of the Digby *Mary Magdalen* main hand were both localised in Norfolk in LALME (1986), as LP 58 and LP 4662 respectively.

Extralinguistic evidence also suggests East Anglia as the place of origin for most of the play texts in the Macro and Digby collections. A connection to Bury St Edmunds in Suffolk, East Anglia, has been suggested for several of the plays, among them the MS Digby *Herod* play. The basis for this suggestion is that the main scribe of *Herod* is also the scribe of the Digby *Wisdom*, which may be connected to Bury St Edmunds in two ways: First, the

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<sup>203</sup> The text of the miracle play, *Conversion of St Paul*, even contains an interpolation dated to c. 1550 (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: xvi-xvii), suggesting that the play texts in MS Digby were in use for some purpose for half a century or more.

<sup>204</sup> The collection including the philosophical tracts spans a century (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: ix).

<sup>205</sup> The texts may have been bound together because the librarian saw a connection in Myles Blomefylde whose name or initials appear on several plays. Myles Blomefylde also owned the uniquely surviving print of *Fulgens and Lucrez*.

## 5. THE TEXTS – AND SOME PRAGMAPHILOLOGY

Digby *Wisdom* is textually very close to the Macro *Wisdom*, which, according to Baker and Murphy (1976: ix), “has always had Bury connections.” Secondly, the Myles Blomefylde who has signed three of the Digby play texts could be related to the William Blomfild who was a monk at Bury St Edmunds. Myles Blomefylde settled in Chelmsford, but he was originally from Bury, and he may have obtained religious play texts via William Blomfild (Baker and Murphy 1976: ix-xiv).<sup>206</sup>

### 5.2 *Castle of Perseverance*, MS Macro c.1440

The Washington Folger Shakespeare Library MS 5031 (V.a.354) contains the text of the *Castle of Perseverance*, and two other morality plays: *Wisdom* and *Mankind*. I used Bevington’s facsimile edition, *The Macro Plays* (1972) when collecting the data from *Perseverance*. In addition, I consulted Eccles’ (1969) edition of the Macro plays, and Bevington’s (1975) anthology, which includes *Perseverance* and *Mankind*, but not *Wisdom*, the third of the Macro plays. All plays were included in the present study.

Eccles (1969: viii) dates the *Perseverance* copy to c. 1440. The *Perseverance* text is the earliest copy considered in the present study, and by manuscript (witness) date it is the earliest extant English play for which the (almost) full text survives.<sup>207</sup> There are two lacunae in the *Perseverance* text, but enough text remains to allow the study of the interjections in their context. The two breaks appear after f. 170v and after f. 182v, and both breaks seem due to missing leaves in the exemplar (Eccles 1969: ix). Considering that the scribe

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<sup>206</sup> One difficulty with this theory is that the *Herod* copy is the only play text in the Digby collection on which Myles Blomefylde did not sign his name. However, this can be explained if the *Herod* and *Wisdom* copies (by the same copyist) once belonged together physically: possibly Myles Blomefylde claimed ownership of both when signing *Wisdom*.

<sup>207</sup> A fragment of a very early English interlude, *Interludium de Clerico et Puella*, survives already from the thirteenth century (Lancashire 1984: xiv). The text is reproduced in Bennett and Smithers (1968: 196-97). Two early morality plays, apparently contemporary with *Perseverance*, survive as fragments: *Dux Moraud*, dated on evidence of the hand to c. 1425-50 (Davis 1970: ci), and *Pride of Life*, dateable perhaps to “the first half of the fifteenth century”. The manuscript containing the *Pride of Life* was destroyed in a fire in 1922 (Davis 1970: lxxxv), so the ages of the manuscript or the text can no longer be traced.

usually wrote about 48 lines per page, Eccles (1969: viii-ix) estimated that altogether 180-200 lines are lost in the two lacunae. The surviving text totals 3,649 lines in Eccles (1969).

The manuscript includes a stage plan for *Perseverance*, suggesting a theatre-in-the-round production with scaffolds for the main characters (Folger/Macro MS V.a.354, folio 191v). According to Eccles (1969: xxi-xxii), the play was performed by a touring troupe of professional actors, who used the Proclamation to announce their play a week in advance in every new town.

A single scribe copied the *Perseverance* text. The plentiful stage directions are given in Latin, except four that are in English (Eccles 1969: viii; xxiii). The most common stanza consists of thirteen lines, a particular form of verse which it shares with several of the pageants in the *Towneley* cycle (Stevens and Cawley 1994: xxx), some in the *N-town* cycle (Spector 1991: xli), and some stanzas in the interlude *Occupation and Idleness* (Davis 1979: 138).

The language was localised in Norfolk in LALME (LP 58 in LALME III: 307). Eccles (1969: xii) found but a few northern features in the otherwise East Midland vocabulary.<sup>208</sup>

### 5.3 *Lucidus and Dubius, MS c.1450*

The short play text *Lucidus and Dubius* survives in MS Winchester College 33, where it occupies ff. 54v-64v. It is immediately followed in the manuscript by a similar text: *Occupation and Idleness* (below). Together, the texts are referred to as the *Winchester Dialogues* in Davis (1979), who also coined the play titles, basing them on the cast of the two short plays. The Winchester Dialogues were published in a facsimile edition by Davis (1979) together with non-cycle plays from other manuscripts. A transcript of the facsimile is provided by Davis (1979: 179-191) in the same edition.

The Winchester Dialogues are rarely included in studies of medieval drama (Davis 1979: *preface*), even though there can be little doubt that they are play

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<sup>208</sup> Eccles (1969: xii) mentions e.g. northern *nerhand* for 'almost' and *grete* for 'weep'.

## 5. THE TEXTS – AND SOME PRAGMAPHILOLOGY

texts.<sup>209</sup> One noticeable exception is Jones (1983: 222), who describes the Dialogues as “the forerunners of sixteenth-century didactic interludes”. Davis’ edition (1979) has been my only source for the *Lucidus* play.

The length of *Lucidus and Dubius* is only 612 lines, while *Occupation and Idleness* (below) is somewhat longer with its 877 lines (Davis 1979). There are no stage directions in *Lucidus*, and only one in *Occupation*. Several of the play texts in the present study have few or no stage directions, so the lack of them does not disqualify the Winchester Dialogues as play texts.<sup>210</sup> Medieval stage directions are typically concerned with entries and exits, which hardly need marking in plays with so few characters as the two Winchester Dialogues.

*Lucidus* was copied or written around 1450. The watermarks, hand, and script are all consistent with the suggested date. The same scribe was also responsible for the copying of *Occupation* (Davis 1979: 136-37). It is possible that the two texts are authorial fair copies of local work belonging to a college or institution producing their own small-scale plays. Winchester College bred humanist scholars relatively early in England. Together with Canterbury College and the colleges in Oxford, it was a place “aware of the new movement [humanism]” (Mackie 1952: 236).

It is conceivable that students partaking in educational drama formed part of the humanist movement in England from its early days.<sup>211</sup> Perhaps the Winchester Dialogues were written with student production in mind, providing the students with both moral instruction and training in oratory, such as was later to become common in the educational institutions of

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<sup>209</sup> The Winchester Dialogues are laid out as play texts in the manuscript, complete with speech headings and ruled lines separating the speeches. Appendix I of the present study provides a more detailed description of the Winchester plays.

<sup>210</sup> Several of the pageant texts making up the *York* and *Towneley* cycles are completely devoid of stage directions. Most of the stage directions in the *York* cycle are concerned with music or exits. In smaller scale drama such clues are unnecessary if the dialogue itself provides the information that a character leaves, or that the minstrels are requested to play music.

<sup>211</sup> According to Walker (2000: 305), student plays were performed at both Eton and Cambridge when Henry Medwall attended these schools, presumably in the 1470s.

Cambridge and Oxford (Elliot 1997: 68).<sup>212</sup> The Winchester plays require few stage properties and costumes would be ready at hand in a college, at least for *Lucidus and Dubius*. The student Dubius steps out from among the audience to challenge his former teacher, Lucidus. The topic thus seems particularly appropriate for college performance, and no costumes or properties other than those normally found in a college are needed.<sup>213</sup>

Winchester is in Hampshire in the south of England. The language of the *Winchester Dialogues* was not localised in LALME. It contains southern features, for example *hem* for the 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural pronoun, rather than the northern form *them*.<sup>214</sup>

#### 5.4 *Occupation and Idleness, MS c.1450*

The play text *Occupation and Idleness* is found on ff. 65r-73v in Winchester College MS 33, where it follows the text of *Lucidus and Dubius* (above). The two texts are in the same fifteenth century hand, and the date of copying, c.1450, is based on style of hand and watermark in both texts (Davis 1979: 136-7). I used the facsimile edition with transcripts by Davis (1979: 192-208) to collect the data.

In addition to the two title characters, *Occupation and Idleness* employs a third character, referred to as Doctrine. Both the Winchester Dialogue plays contain good and bad (human) types rather than allegorical personifications as they are known from the morality plays. The characters Occupation and Idleness typify good thrift and bad wasting, while the characters Light and Doubt in *Lucidus and Dubius* engage in verbal combat over religious issues.

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<sup>212</sup> Both Cambridge and Oxford later constructed entire halls or special scaffolding devoted to indoors play production (Nelson 1997; Elliot 1997). Many of the sixteenth century college plays were in Latin (Elliot 1997: 68).

<sup>213</sup> Concerning the topic of *Lucidus et Dubius*, however, it is not entirely clear whether the supposedly good character, Lucidus, actually wins the debate. A modern audience at least would normally disapprove of physical punishment in the instruction of children, which is what the play promotes.

<sup>214</sup> The northern form 'them' occurs twice, once in rhyme pair *thayme/payne*, *Lucidus*: l. 289) (Davis 1979: 138). The shape of the grapheme <þ> (thorn) likewise points to the south, as it is always distinct from the grapheme <y>; the employment of the latter grapheme for both values is common in northern texts.

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All characters have more human character traits than their allegorical names suggest. Rather than merely presenting a semi-dramatic dialogue, the *Occupation* text with its cast of three is developed more towards the fully dramatic than *Lucidus*. Davis (1979: 138) describes the *Occupation* play as an early interlude and as a more obviously dramatic text, in effect a better play than *Lucidus and Dubius*.

Since the texts are laid out in the same fashion and are written by the same hand, it has been accepted here that both were intended as plays, even though *Lucidus* may be a poorer attempt at writing for the stage. The *Occupation* text employs much alliteration, especially in the long stanzas (Davis 1979: 138), such as its 13-line stanzas. Both features - alliteration and the 13-line stanza - are more common in the earliest Middle English play texts than in the later ones.<sup>215</sup> No other English interlude in the present project employs the 13-line stanza, and alliteration in interlude dialogue is infrequent.

The text of *Occupation and Idleness* consists of 877 lines, and there is only one stage direction, in Latin. The stage direction marks an exit: *Tunc venit Doctrina* (Davis 1979: 137). The Winchester Dialogues, i.e. the *Lucidus* and *Occupation* plays, share linguistic and orthographic features. Both texts seem to reflect southern English usage and graphemic conventions (see *Lucidus and Dubius* above, and also the discussion of the language in the Winchester Dialogues in Appendix I).

### 5.5 Northampton Abraham, MS 1461

The Northampton *Abraham and Isaac* play text, also called the ‘Dublin Abraham’, survives in a composite manuscript in Dublin, Trinity College 432 (formerly D.4.18). The data for this study were drawn from Davis’ edition (1970) of non-cycle plays, and they were checked in his facsimile edition (1979).

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<sup>215</sup> The 13-line stanza occurs in the early fifteenth century *Perseverance* text, as well as in the *Towneley* cycle, and in the *N-town* cycle’s Proclamation from the mid- to the latter half of the fifteenth century. Alliteration occurs in many play texts, but it is used particularly frequently in the earliest cycle play of all; the *York* cycle, composed before 1415 (the date of the *Ordo Paginarum*. Walker 2000: 10-11).



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MS Trinity College 432 takes the form of a collection of diverse, originally separate manuscripts, both parchment and paper. The leaves were foliated after binding, perhaps late in the eighteenth century, leaving the *Abraham* play text occupying ff. 74v-81r. The paper manuscript is a commonplace book written in the same fifteenth century hand throughout. In addition to the play, the book contains a variety of English poems; among them a copy of Chaucer's *Steadfastness*. It also contains a list of English kings and battles, which is helpful in the dating of the manuscript. A list of Northampton mayors follows the play text (Davis 1970: xlvi-liv); the localisation is thus given in the manuscript material.

The date of the *Abraham* text is similarly settled by the surrounding material in the manuscript. Preceding the play text is a poem about the battle of Towton in March, 1461, and the coronation of Edward IV in June, 1461. Other poems, occurring both before and after the play in the commonplace book, are connected to the latter half of the year 1461, making this a probable date for the copying of the *Abraham* text as well (Davis 1970: li). The date 1461 makes the Northampton *Abraham* the earliest English copy of a biblical play, as it predates by 15 years the copying of the *York* cycle text (Section 5.7), most probably taking place in 1476-77 (Beadle 2009: xii).

The Northampton *Abraham* text is only 369 lines long. It is the shortest free-standing play text in the present study, but the length is similar to the shorter cycle pageants. Even though the Northampton *Abraham* is strongly reminiscent of cycle pageants, it seems unlikely that this play text served the same purposes as cycle texts did. It can sometimes be established from manuscript internal and/or external evidence, such as marginal notes and archival records, that a cycle was performed at a certain place and time. It is, for example, clear from the city records that a *York* Corpus Christi cycle was performed almost a century before the copy of *York* cycle text was produced (Cf. 5.7). There is no such evidence that a cycle ever existed in Northampton (Chambers 1903 Vol. II: 386, in Davis 1970: liv).

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In other words, the Northampton *Abraham* play seems to have had a history of its own, not as part of a cycle, but as a free-standing biblical drama.<sup>216</sup> The extant copy, however, appears not to have been made for practical purposes; i.e. play production. The copy may have been based on a practical play text, but since the surrounding texts in this commonplace book are mainly poetry, the *Abraham* play copy seems intended as reading material.<sup>217</sup> The Brome *Abraham* play (Section 5.10) survives in a similar collection, and appears to be another specimen of plays copied for reading.<sup>218</sup>

LALME (Vol III: 377) localised the dialect of the Northampton *Abraham* play text in Northamptonshire (LP 4074). Davis (1970: lii) saw Northampton itself as the most likely place of origin of the commonplace book in MS Dublin Trinity College 432. He based this conclusion both on linguistic and on extra-linguistic evidence, such as the presence of a list of Northampton mayors and bailiffs starting on fol. 82v. Such a list would presumably be of interest to someone from Northampton only (Davis 1970: xlix).

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<sup>216</sup> Short non-cycle plays based on biblical material survive from East Anglia, in the Macro and Digby manuscripts. Coldewey (1994: 189-210) discusses the East Anglian play tradition, and finds it probable that rural areas produced such short biblical, miracle, and morality plays rather than great cycles. Appendix I contains more detailed discussion of the plays and play traditions.

<sup>217</sup> The Northampton *Abraham* play is unique in England for its inclusion of Sarah as a speaking character. It shares this feature with a French play, the much longer *Le Mystère du Viel Testament* (Davis 1970: lii), which may have served as a source at some point. The character of Sarah adds a realistic dimension to the topic, which is rare in the biblical plays's treatment of other female characters than Mary Virgin. Abraham's Sarah stands in contrast to other small female roles, such as the stubborn wife of Noah or the furious mothers of the children killed by Herod's soldiers. Sarah is treated seriously rather than comically. Her shocked reaction when learning of Abraham's former intention of killing their son, may voice the contemporary audience's (or the reader's) emotions towards this biblical narrative. Sacrificing an only son is, and must have seemed, a grotesque absurdity. Female characters' use of interjections is discussed in Chapters 6 and 7.

<sup>218</sup> The Brome *Abraham*, however, is textually related to a known cycle (the one from Chester), so the Brome *Abraham* provides evidence that play texts were copied for other purposes than play production or civic monitoring of performances (the *York Register* below).

### 5.6 *The York cycle 'Register', MS 1463-78 + 1550-60*

The *York* cycle play text survives in a single manuscript: London, British Library Additional 35290. The manuscript was produced as an official city Register of York's Corpus Christi play, and thus it records the text of an almost full cycle of biblical pageants. It is the earliest and best known of the four surviving English cycles. The *York* cycle was edited by Beadle (1982), who also published an expanded edition of it in 2009. I have used both Beadle's editions and Beadle and Meredith's facsimile edition (1983) for the purpose of the present study. In addition, I checked the data in the British Library in April 2008.

Beadle assessed the production of the *York* Register to have started in 1463-77, with the years 1476-77 as the most likely date for the compilation of the main part of the manuscript (Beadle 2009: xii). The performance of a York Corpus Christi play, however, extends further back. The Register has much in common with the *Ordo Paginarum* from 1415. The 'Pageants' Order' is an extant list in Latin of the order of the pageants containing short descriptions of each pageant's content, its stage properties and characters, as well as the guilds responsible for each (English translation in Walker 2000: 10-11).

The earliest reference to a Corpus Christi play in York is dated 1377 (Beadle 2009: xix), but it is unknown what the exact composition of the cycle was at this date. It may not have included all the pageants, or they may have been much revised before the Register was compiled. Assigning a date to the earliest composition of the *York* cycle is thus complicated, but at least the parallels found in the Register and the *Ordo Paginarum* suggest that the cycle's main format was established by 1415.

Four hands are present in the manuscript Register: Hands A and B are contemporary with each other (c.1470), while Hand C (identified as John Clerke) and Hand D both are later. Only the first three are of relevance to the data considered in the present study. One scribe, Hand B, seems to have had the main responsibility for the work, as he is by far the greatest contributor of text. He also prepared the quires, including those intended for Hand A's work. Hand B filled in titles leaving enough space for all the pageant texts, and finally he rubricated and corrected the text.

## 5. THE TEXTS – AND SOME PRAGMAPHILOLOGY

Hand A copied pageants nos. 1-3. Hand B, the main scribe, made a second copy of pageant no. 3, and he copied the following pageant texts up to and including the last one (no. 47), except for nos 4 and 17. The latter two seem to have been unobtainable for the scribes, as they were not entered into the Register until a century later by John Clerke, Hand C in the manuscript. Clerke also added a passage to pageant no. 7, which had lost parts due to damage to the manuscript. Some pageant texts, for which the main scribe had left space in the Register, were never entered (Beadle 2009: xxi-xxviii).<sup>219</sup>

As deputy for the Common Clerk of York, John Clerke was professionally responsible for overseeing the performance of the Corpus of Christi pageants. For this purpose, he used the century old Register, which for some years at least, was kept in the Holy Trinity Priory, close to the first stopping station for the pageant wagons (Beadle 2009: xx-xxi). Many of the late annotations in the *York Register* stem from the Common Clerk or his deputy's checking the play. John Clerk was further requested by the civic authorities, in 1557 and 1567, to collect the texts for the pageants which were missing in the Register. He entered the texts for pageants nos 4 and 17 into the old Register where space had been left for them by the *York* text's main hand, scribe B (Beadle 2009: xxi-xxix).

The scribes worked from a variety of exemplars collected from the city guilds who owned them. These exemplars are sometimes referred to as 'originals' (or *regynal*) in the *York Register* itself, specifically in the headings for pageants nos. 4, 6, and 7 (Beadle 2009: xx-xxvii; footnote 25 on p. xx). The guilds' play texts, i.e. the exemplars for the cycle text, most likely had a practical purpose, as they may have been used during rehearsals for the annual

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<sup>219</sup> It seems that the exemplar texts were never obtained for the Vintners' and the Ironmongers' pageants (22A and 23A in Beadle, 2009: xxi). Hand C started entering the Vintners' pageant (no. 22A in Beadle 2009: 179) on folio 97v, but he only wrote the name of the guild and 1.5 lines of text. Hand C also commented that the Ironmongers' *matter lakes* on folio 107r (pageant no. 23A in Beadle 2009: 188). Beadle (2009: xxviii) finds no explanation as to why or how both Hands A and B copied pageant no. 3 from the same exemplar. The parallel copies of *York* pageant no. 3 have been collated in Chapter 3.

Corpus Christi Day performances in York. As practical play texts, the individual guilds' copies are called 'prompt copies' in the literature.<sup>220</sup>

One such prompt copy still survives from York: the Guild of Scriveners' 'Incredulity of Thomas' (pageant no. 41 in the Register). It is a sixteenth century copy extant in York, City Archives, Acc. 104/G.1. The copy was probably executed by John Clerke, the Register's Hand C (Beadle 2009: xxxii). The Scriveners' text is included in the present study, but the data were not used in the database.<sup>221</sup>

The cycle text from York totals 13,170 lines in Beadle (1982). Alliteration colours the language. The relatively sparse stage directions are in Latin, and most frequently refer to song. A typical example is found in pageant 12, after l. 144: *Tunc cantat Angelus* (Beadle 2009: 82). In 29 of the 47 York cycle pageants there are no stage directions at all, and only a few were written into the manuscript by the main scribe, B, most commonly in red ink (e.g. pageant 22, below l. 154). There is only one stage direction in English, added by Hand C, in pageant 16, after l. 272: "The Harrode passeth, and the iij kynges commyth agayn to make there offerynges".<sup>222</sup>

According to Beadle (2009: xviii), the main compiler, Hand B, was a professional scribe accustomed to producing books. However, he does not seem to have been from York. The evidence is linguistic; LALME (1986) concluded that his language is "apparently from considerably S[outh] of York" (LALME I: 102). Hand A produced texts in two distinct languages. Language 1 is found in fols 4r-7r, and is "probably of York area or a little west of it", while language 2 is "very different [...] possibly from far N[orthern] Lancs [=Lancashire]" (LALME I: 102). The linguistic variation in Hand A's contribution suggests that this scribe copied *literatim* from exemplar texts reflecting different dialects. By contrast, the York Register

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<sup>220</sup> Greg (1935: xx) uses the term 'prompt-book' about the Chester Peniarth 'Antichrist' (Section 5.13).

<sup>221</sup> The two parallel copies of pageant no. 41 are collated in Chapter 3 of the present study.

<sup>222</sup> Hand C also added stage directions in Latin and other marginalia and corrections. He may have executed this work while monitoring the York Corpus Christi cycle performance (Beadle 2009: xxix, 121).

## 5. THE TEXTS – AND SOME PRAGMAPHILOLOGY

Hand B appears to have translated into his own language (cf. Section 3.4 for a description of different copying styles).

LALME includes no linguistic profile based on the *York* cycle text, and the comment “considerably S[outh] of York” (LALME I: 102) makes it difficult to suggest any specific localisation. If Hand B was a translating scribe, as LALME’s comment suggests, his language most likely represents early to mid-fifteenth century English; a variety of English which he had learnt during his training, which could have taken place some time before the copying of the *York* cycle text around 1470. Even though parts of the *York* cycle originated perhaps as early as a century before the Register was produced - as we know from evidence of performances in civic records - the language of Hand B in the *York* Register should be taken to represent the fifteenth rather than the fourteenth century.<sup>223</sup> This is excepting alliterating vocabulary and words in end rhyme position, where relics of older language typically can occur.

### 5.7 *Wisdom, Macro MS: latter half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century*

The text of the morality play *Wisdom* survives in the same manuscript as *Castle of Perseverance* and *Mankind*: Washington, Folger Shakespeare Library 5031 (Va.354), also known as the Macro MS. Originally, only the *Wisdom* and *Mankind* texts (below) belonged together. In collecting the data, I used Bevington’s facsimile edition (1972). I also used Eccles’ edition (1969) of the Macro plays, and I consulted Walker’s anthology (2000) of Middle English drama.

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<sup>223</sup> At this date, c. 1460-70, while the *York* cycle was still being staged annually, and in contrast to the *Chester* cycle whose extant texts all postdate the last performance, it seems likely that the *York* Register scribes would aim at producing a language of currency to its contemporary audience. The *Chester* scribes, by comparison, were probably dealing with their copying tasks quite differently, since they produced copies out of antiquarian interest towards the end of the sixteenth century (5.26 below). Thus, the language of the *York* cycle text may reflect the time of the production of the copy (c.1470) rather than the date of composition, while the language of at least some of the *Chester* cycle copies (all post-1590) may show attempts at reconstruction towards older linguistic forms.

The Macro *Wisdom* copy is dated to the latter half of the fifteenth century. Eccles (1969: xxx) decides this date both on linguistic grounds as well as on the dating of the Macro *Mankind*, whose copy is dated to 1465-70, since the two texts share a copyist.<sup>224</sup> Regarding the date of the composition of *Wisdom*, Pollard suggested around 1460, and Smart 1460-63 (both in Eccles 1969: xxx). If these hypotheses are correct, both about witness date and composition date, the copy is not far removed from its original in time.

One scribe copied the entire Macro *Wisdom*. The hand is the same as the one behind the main part of *Mankind* (Eccles 1969: xxvii), even though there are some linguistic differences between the two texts (cf. Section 5.8). The play of *Wisdom* has 1,165 lines in Walker's edition (2000), but 1,164 lines in Eccles (1969).

*Wisdom* contains plentiful stage directions, in particular concerning the costumes of the actors. Further, the play contains many mute characters representing for example little devils. In combination, the use of elaborate, symbolic costume and the many visible though silent characters, suggests a play intended to make a visual impression on special occasions. It is not clear whether *Wisdom* was staged indoors or outdoors or if either format was an option at different occasions (see Appendix I for a fuller discussion of theories concerning the staging of *Wisdom*.)

The language of *Wisdom* belongs in the East Midlands, and the use of *xall* for 'shall' places the scribe specifically in East Anglia (Eccles 1969: xxxi).

### 5.8 *Mankind*, Macro MS: latter half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century

The morality play *Mankind* is the third and last of the play texts in Washington, Folger Shakespeare Library 5031 (Va.354), where it survives together with *Wisdom* and the earlier *Castle of Perseverance*. The text of *Mankind* occupies fols 122r-34r in the manuscript (Lester 1981: xxxviii). It is connected to the Macro *Wisdom* (Section 5.8) through a shared copyist (Eccles 1969: xxviii). I collected the data from Bevington's facsimile edition

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<sup>224</sup> The scribe who copied the whole of the Macro *Wisdom* text also copied the greater part (10 folios) of the Macro *Mankind*. A second hand copied the rest of the *Mankind* text (Section 5.8).

## 5. THE TEXTS – AND SOME PRAGMAPHILOLOGY

of the Macro plays (1972), and checked the text and the data in Eccles (1969). The play is also published in Walker (2000) and in Bevington (1975), and it is found in modernised language with an informative introduction in Lester (1981).

Two scribes worked on the text. The first hand copied ff. 122r-32r; the second copied ff. 132v-34r. The main hand, the first, is the same as the one behind the Macro *Wisdom* (Section 5.7 above). The scribe preferred the northern, originally Scandinavian, forms of the third person plural pronoun, *þer* and *þem* ('their' and 'them') when copying the *Mankind* text, while he used only English *her*, and usually *hem*, in his *Wisdom* copy (Eccles 1969: xxxix). This variation between forms suggests that different exemplars underlie the two texts.

The *Mankind* copy is dated to the latter half of the fifteenth century (Lester 1981: xiii). Eccles (1969: xxxviii) suggests the play was "written between 1465 and 1470", because the contemporary coins mentioned in the play text determine its composition to such a date. Further, he finds that the copy must be textually close to the original, as there is no evidence of revision (Eccles 1969: xxxviii). Lester (1981: xiv) suggests the date of composition was 1464-71, disagreeing with Eccles (1969: xxxviii) that the "Master Alyngton" allusion (l. 514) implies that the play must have been written before Allington of Bottisham went into exile with Edward IV in October 1470, an exile lasting until May 1471 (Lester 1981: xiv). The disagreement between Eccles (1969) and Lester (1981), however, is of less importance than their main agreements concerning date of composition, and the chronological closeness between original and extant copy.

Just like with the two other plays of the Macro manuscript, the language of *Mankind* belongs in the East Midlands. East Anglian *xall* ('shall') is used. Place-names in ll. 505-15 link the play to Cambridgeshire and Norfolk (Eccles 1969: xxxviii). According to Lester (1981: xii), the villages mentioned are situated in East Anglia, near King's Lynn and Cambridge. Based on the playwright's knowledge of Latin, Lester (1981: xiii) suggested a possible connection to the University of Cambridge.



The *Mankind* text has 914 lines in Eccles (1969).<sup>225</sup> A leaf is missing early in the play text between f. 122 and f. 123, causing a loss of up to 80 lines of text (Eccles 1969: xxxvii, 156).

### 5.9 *Brome Abraham, MS late 15<sup>th</sup> century*

The *Brome Abraham and Isaac* text is extant in Yale University Library *Book of Brome*, ff. 15r-22r. The name of the manuscript refers to its once having belonged to Brome Hall (Davis 1970: lviii). Brome is a village in Suffolk. The *Brome Abraham* is a single biblical play comparable in topic and length to the Northampton *Abraham* and to the pageants on the same topic found in the four cycles. Thus, in total, six surviving medieval play texts address Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac. In collecting the data for the present study, I have used Davis (1970), and for the checking of the findings I used his facsimile edition (Davis 1979).

The *Book of Brome* is a commonplace book. Among its miscellaneous contents, the manuscript has accounts linking it to the village of Stuston, one mile north of Brome. A single, late fifteenth century hand is behind the *Brome Abraham* text (Davis 1970: lx). This hand also copied other poetic texts in the book as well as documents. The second hand in the manuscript is that of Robert Melton of Stuston, dated slightly later than the first, to around 1500 (Davis 1970: lvii-lx). Melton seems to have used the blank folios of the book for practical purposes. The *Book of Brome* thus contains reading and practical material along with Melton's accounts from 1499 to 1508. Based on the similarity of the two hands and the dates in the household texts, Davis (1970: lx) suggests that the *Abraham* play was copied no earlier than 1454, and most probably later. The language and spelling of the *Abraham* copyist suggest the third quarter of the fifteenth century (Davis 1970: lxii).

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<sup>225</sup> Lester (1981: xxxix) saw one of the lines on the margin (after l. 664) as a stage direction, and thus he ended up with a total of 913 lines. It is difficult to decide which interpretation makes better sense. In any case, the question does not affect the data of this study, and has only very minor bearing on the figures for *Mankind* relative frequency of interjections.

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The language is localised in the southern parts of Norfolk (LP 4670 in LALME III: 363). This dialect localisation hardly conflicts with the northern Suffolk production of the manuscript suggested by Davis (1970: lviii).

A related but longer version of the Brome *Abraham* play is found in the *Chester* cycle, pageant no. 4. Some 200 lines of the Abraham and Isaac episode are textually similar, but the two plays differ in dialect, organisation, length, and cast.<sup>226</sup> The *Chester* ‘Abraham’ contains an earlier episode of Abraham’s life, and in this episode two characters appear uniquely in the *Chester* cycle, and not found in the Brome *Abraham* play.<sup>227</sup>

The order of the speeches differs somewhat in the related parts of the Brome and *Chester* Abraham plays. It has been suggested that the Brome play dialogue develops more logically than the dialogue in the *Chester* version, and this has been used to suggest chronological priority.<sup>228</sup> Most scholars agree that the Brome version is superior to the *Chester* version, but while some have used this conclusion to claim that Brome must be closer to an original version, others have claimed that Brome’s superiority is due to its being a revision. In the present study the two texts will not be compared, but treated as individual texts.

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<sup>226</sup> Lines 105-315 in the Brome *Abraham* correspond in their extra-biblical content, as well as in their expressions and rhymes, to the *Chester* pageant 4: 229-420 (Davis 1979: lxiii).

<sup>227</sup> The two characters are Lot, brother of Abraham, and Melchisedeck, a heathen king. They are not included in any of the other Abraham plays or pageants.

<sup>228</sup> The relationship between the Brome *Abraham* and the *Chester* cycle ‘Abraham’ was detected by Lucy Toulmin Smith. The priority of the two versions has been discussed by several scholars, e.g. by Severs in 1945, who claimed that the Brome text must have been closer to an original. Craig in 1955: 309 still held that the Brome text was an adaptation of a *Chester* version. The general agreement that the Brome version is better than the *Chester* version has been used both to suggest that Brome’s origin is earlier and uncorrupted (Severs’ position), and vice versa, to suggest that it is an improvement (Craig’s position) of a poorer play more closely reflected in the *Chester* cycle copies. According to Fleischmann (2000: 48), the idea of a perfect original and gradual deterioration through copying is a faulty one. However, this does not mean that the reverse is true; that the better version is the latest version. The present project in the main refers to date of copy, and not of original, and by witness date the Brome *Abraham* is a century earlier than any of the extant *Chester* cycle copies of the Abraham pageant.

The Brome *Abraham* play contains only four characters: Abraham, Isaac, God, and Angel. In addition, a Doctor-character sums up the action in the last 31 lines in a direct address to the audience. Such explicating extra-plot characters occur in many Middle English plays. An Expositor appears in the *Chester* cycle. Other terms used for similar expositors are ‘Poeta’ in Digby *Herod* and *Conversion*, and ‘Contemplacio’ in the *N-town* cycle.<sup>229</sup> The Brome *Abraham* text totals 465 lines (Davis 1970), which means only 434 lines of efficient play text when the Doctor’s Epilogue is subtracted. The copy may have been intended as reading material just like the other poetry comprised in the *Book of Brome* (Davis 1970: lxii), and like the Northampton *Abraham* (5.6 above) seems to have been.

### 5.10 *The N-town cycle, MS late 15<sup>th</sup> century*

The *N-town* cycle text survives in London, British Library Cotton Vespasian D VIII. The manuscript is in poor condition, and is now only available to the public in facsimile edition by Meredith and Kahrl (1977). I collected the interjections from Spector (1991), and used Meredith and Kahrl’s (1977) edition to check them. I also consulted Meredith (1987) on the *Mary* play in the *N-town* cycle.

The *N-town* cycle is known by several names in the literature: the *Hegge plays* and the *Ludus Coventriae* being the most common ones besides the designation *N-town* now preferred (Meredith and Kahrl 1977: vii). The *N-town* cycle is no longer identified as the Coventry Corpus Christi play, and any title referring to Coventry has therefore been abandoned. Thus the title *Hegge*, from the name of an owner of the manuscript, was favoured for

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<sup>229</sup> In spite of the variation in terminology, these expository characters are related. For example the Contemplacio in (parts of) the *N-town* cycle is described as an *exposytour in doctorys wede* in the stage directions (opening of *N-town* pageant no. 29). Such Doctor characters provide a link between play and audience, sometimes guiding the audience or calling for attention, and at other times explicating the doctrine of a play or relating the pageants of a cycle by referring back and forth. However, Doctors frequently also appear as characters taking part in the action proper. These are learned characters, such as the Doctors in the temple with Jesus at 12 years of age, or Doctors serving as advisors to kings. No doubt the relations between in-plot and extra-plot Doctors lie in the association with learning, but they must be assigned to different character categories.

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example by Craig (1955), to avoid confusion with Coventry.<sup>230</sup> The term ‘N-town’ occurs in the play’s Proclamation (spelt <N.town> in l. 527), and this is where the designation now used derives from, although the *punctus* is usually replaced by a hyphen in the modern title. It is believed (e.g. by Spector 1991: xiii, Meredith 1987: vii) that the name (*Nomen*) of a place of performance was substituted for *N.town* in the Proclamation by the Bann-bearers (*Vexillators*) when the play was announced.

Some scholars, notably Craig (1955: 278-280), have made a case for the play’s possible connection to Lincoln, while Gibson (1981: 58) strongly suggests that the play originated in Bury St Edmunds. Fletcher (1994: 164-166) rejects the Lincoln-theory, and is sceptical towards the Bury-theory. He suggests Thetford in Norfolk instead, due to its Priory of St Mary, known to have made payments for play production. Fletcher (1994: 167) admits that the issue is difficult to settle, but his general discussion sheds light on those (East Anglian) play texts for which there is no agreed-upon provenance. They may have originated in other places than the greater towns, especially as the play tradition in East Anglia seems to have functioned very differently from the citizen-owned cycles of the great cities in northern England.

The *N-town* cycle differs from the other extant biblical cycles in at least two respects. First, it is a compilation of formerly separate plays, rather than a proper cycle (Spector 1991: xiii). The Marian part (Meredith 1987: 2) and the Passion sequence (Harris 1994: 22) of the *N-town* cycle seem to have been self-contained plays before they were incorporated into a cycle.<sup>231</sup> Both the Mary and Passion parts employ a *Contemplacio* (an Expositor-character, see 5.10 above) not found elsewhere in the *N-town* cycle. *Contemplacio* in the *N-town* Passion refers to a last year’s performance of the first part of the Passion (pageant 29: 6-10): *The last 3ere we shewyd here how oure Lord for loue of man* (N-town 29: 9).<sup>232</sup> The reference indicates that the Passion play once had

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<sup>230</sup> The text of two pageants from a cycle belonging in Coventry exist, but were not included in the present study.

<sup>231</sup> The Mary part contains pageants not included in any of the other cycle plays (Spector 1991: xiii, note 1), and it shows traces of revision connected to its separate history rather than to its inclusion in the cycle (Meredith 1987: 4-5).

<sup>232</sup> For a fuller discussion of the composition and parts of *The N-town Plays*, see Meredith and Kahrl (1977), and Meredith (1987) on the Mary pageants.

been performed (or was intended) as annual staging of separate, consecutive parts.<sup>233</sup>

Secondly, the *N-town* cycle is not connected to a specific town and guild performance as the other cycles are, and neither is it associated with Corpus Christi Day. The Banns simply announce the play for *Sunday next ... at vj of þe belle we gynne oure play* (Proclamation: 525-6). In addition, the *N-town* play was probably staged differently at least from the quite well-documented *York* cycle, perhaps on fixed scaffolds and not on mobile pageant wagons drawn through the city streets. Meredith (1987: 20) found indoor performance of the Mary play in the *N-town* cycle just as likely as outdoor staging. In the present study *N-town* was nonetheless compared to the three other cycles, as in its extant form it, after all, comprises a series of small biblical plays (or pageants), much like the Corpus Christi cycles. Gibson (1981: 64-65) compares the *N-town* cycle to the smaller East Anglian plays, and points out important similarities in particular between the open-air staging of the MS Digby *Mary Magdalen* play and the *N-town* cycle.

Spector (1991: xl-xli) finds that the vocabulary of the Mary and Passion parts appears to be quite late. Consequently, Spector suggests that these parts were no older than the cycle into which they were incorporated. He finds that the date of composition can be no earlier than 1425-50 (Spector 1991: xli). However, dating is more difficult with *N-town* than with the other three cycles, as there are no external references to it.<sup>234</sup> In the case of the *York* cycle, a number of civic records aid in the dating of both the performance

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<sup>233</sup> This manner of production is reminiscent of the Digby *Herod* play, in which the Poeta (Expositor) refers to a last and a next year's performance of different parts of the biblical narrative surrounding the Nativity. The *Herod* play itself consists of three such episodes: the killing of the children, the purification, and the flight to Egypt.

<sup>234</sup> Harris (1994: 34) refers to Lincoln records from 1472 concerning a Corpus Christi play, "which will probably have been on the scale of the N-Town cycle". Apparently, many other, earlier plays were performed at Lincoln (Harris, 1994: 32-4), but it seems uncertain that the Corpus Christi play presented there on occasion in 1472-95 was in fact the *N-town* play (Spector 1991: xv, note 2). Its dialect did not belong there, and may have been too foreign to a Lincoln audience (Harris 1994: 7). Gibson (1981: 59-60) finds that if the *N-town* cycle belonged to a religious guild in Bury St Edmunds, this explains the lack of documentary evidence of the type found in towns such as York, where the staging of the cycle has left traces both in the civic guilds' pay rolls and in the town's public records.

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tradition and the copying of the text into the extant Register. In Chester, too, there are archival references to performances testifying to a much earlier staging tradition than the late dates of the extant manuscripts suggest (Section 5.26).

As regards the third cycle, *Towneley* (5.12 below), the external records are few and later than the extant copy of the play, but they exist, and there are good reasons to believe that the records refer to the cycle whose text is preserved in the *Towneley* manuscript. In contrast, records referring to a performance of the *N-town* cycle either do not exist, or have not been recognised as containing such a reference (Meredith 1987: 9; Spector 1991: xv, note 2).

It is now established that the dialect of the *N-town* copy belongs in East Anglia (Spector 1991: xxix), but it is still unknown where the *N-town* cycle was performed or where the manuscript was kept. It is possible that the *N-town* cycle was an itinerant play (Spector 1991: xiii), as the adaptable Proclamation seems to suggest. However, Harris (1994: 7) finds it unlikely that the play was performed by professionals, since the cast is too large for a medieval travelling troupe. He suggests instead that the text, possibly kept in Bury St Edmunds, may have been “passed from town to town” for local staging by guilds (Harris 1994: 7). This is in concord with the hypotheses put forward in Gibson (1981) of the *N-town* cycle being adaptable for staging of the whole or of smaller parts in various East Anglian parishes. It also fits well the suggestion in Coldewey (1994) that East Anglia, dominated by rural parish organisation, developed a play tradition which differed substantially from the cycle traditions in the bigger towns in the north of England.

Four scribes were involved in the copying of the *N-town* text. They may have worked at somewhat different times, possibly from as early as 1468 to the beginning of the sixteenth century. Hands B and C supply no data for the present study. The main scribe, Hand A, was one of the earliest copyists, but there is no agreement about the date of his hand: dates ranging from the mid-fifteenth to the late fifteenth century have been suggested.<sup>235</sup> It appears that scribe A worked on the text throughout the manuscript. He copied most of the

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<sup>235</sup> See for example Spector 1991: xxii.

text, and he probably rubricated all of it (Spector 1991: xvi-xxiii). Hand D, contributing the interpolated pageant 41 only, seems as early as the hand of A, the main scribe (Spector 1991: xxi, xxxix).<sup>236</sup> Beadle (1977, in Spector 1991: xl) dates the main hand to “perhaps a generation after 1450”. Therefore, 1470 has been used as an approximate date for the *N-town* interjections. If this date is accepted, the *N-town* manuscript predates the *Towneley* cycle copy (c.1500) and is more or less contemporary with the *York Register* (1463-78).<sup>237</sup>

The language of the main hand of the *N-town* text, folios 1-20 in the manuscript, was localised in Norfolk (LP 4280 in LALME III: 339).<sup>238</sup> The cycle consists of the Proclamation and 41 pageants. It has a total of 11,337 lines in Spector (1991). For this text, too, like the texts in MS Digby, Myles Blomefylde connections have been suggested (Spector 1991: xvi; Gibson 1981: 62).<sup>239</sup> Myles Blomefylde may have been a relative of William Blomefylde, monk of Bury monastery (Baker and Murphy 1982: xiv).

### 5.11 *The Towneley cycle, MS c.1500*

The text of the *Towneley* cycle is found in MS Huntington Library HM 1, in San Marino, California. It has also been called the *Wakefield* cycle, since the Corpus Christi cycle performance belonged in the town of Wakefield, Yorkshire. However, *Towneley* has become the usual denominator for this text, after the name of an early owner of the manuscript (Stevens and Cawley

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<sup>236</sup> Both scribes A and D could of course be executing the *N-town* copy late in their careers. This could explain the discrepancies between the dates of the hands. Rather than the copying taking years in the making, it is conceivable that the work was done more or less at the same time by two relatively old men (Hands A and D) having acquired their writing styles some time ago, and two younger ones (Hands B and C) whose hands appear later than A and D’s in style.

<sup>237</sup> The order of composition on the other hand, seems to be *York*, *N-town*, and *Towneley* cycle. It is difficult to suggest a date for the composition of the fourth, the *Chester* cycle, as a major revision of it around 1530 may have left the extant, late copies very dissimilar from an original *Chester* cycle (5.26 below and Appendix I). The *N-town* copy obviously predates any of the copies of the full *Chester* cycle, none of which are earlier than 1591.

<sup>238</sup> The LALME analysis was based on “ff. 1-20, then scan to 106 from K.S. Block...” (LALME III: 339).

<sup>239</sup> Myles Blomefylde, sixteenth century book collector: see the MS Digby collection (5.2 above) and *Fulgens and Luces* (5.14 below).

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1994: xv). Initially I used the early edition by England and Pollard (1897) to collect the data, before I decided on the edition by Stevens and Cawley (1994) instead, since their stanza division has a bearing on the interpretation of the distribution of the interjections in the text.<sup>240</sup> The references to line numbers were changed accordingly. I used Cawley and Stevens' facsimile edition (1976) to check the data.

In the *Towneley* cycle manuscript, the work of two scribes and glosses by several hands are found, but most of the copying was carried out by a single scribe (Stevens and Cawley 1994: xxiii-xxv).<sup>241</sup> The present study includes his work only, which has been dated to c. 1500 (Stevens and Cawley 1994: xv). Other hands supplied marginalia and added guild names to four of the pageants. Some of these marginalia appear motivated by post-Reformation censorship, and some of the lacunae in the manuscript seem caused by the same anti-Catholic mindset (Stevens and Cawley 1994: xviii-xxiv). Folios appear to have been deliberately removed.

Stevens and Cawley (1994: xxii) suggested the mid-fifteenth century as the earliest possible date for the staging of a Corpus Christi cycle in the relatively small town of Wakefield. For economic and demographic reasons, the town could hardly have sustained the burden of staging a cycle play before this date. However, the relationship between the Wakefield Corpus Christi cycle

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<sup>240</sup> Stevens and Cawley (1994: xxix) find that the scribe compressed the opening lines of some stanzas by writing two verse lines as one. In other words, what England and Pollard (1897) identified as nine-line stanzas with mid-line rhymes, Stevens and Cawley (1994) recognised were really 13-line stanzas with end rhyme. The 13-line stanza occurs in many of the *Towneley* pageants texts, and has been seen as a characteristic of the Wakefield Master. Stevens and Cawley's (1994: xxx-xxxi) identification of the 13-line stanzas gives reason to believe that the Wakefield Master contributed more to the composition of the *Towneley* cycle than was previously recognised. See Stevens and Cawley (1994: xxviii-xxxi) and Appendix I of the present study.

<sup>241</sup> The second scribe copied the last pageant text only, the hanging of Judas, which is incomplete and interpolated (outside of its topical order at the end of the manuscript), and therefore excluded from the present study. Admittedly, some of the *Towneley* pageant texts copied by the main hand are also fragmentary, due to losses of folios from the manuscript. These have still been included, as enough context remains in most of the affected pageants to enable reliable interpretation of the interjections in them.



and the extant manuscript is unclear, and it is certainly not the same as with the *York* cycle manuscript (Stevens and Cawley 1994: xxiv), which is an official city register of the play recorded long after a cycle play was first staged in York. By contrast, the MS containing the *Towneley* text appears to be made for private ownership, and it predates any of the references to a cycle in Wakefield by at least fifty years. The *Towneley* cycle may have been composed as a great cycle from the beginning, while the *York* cycle may have expanded gradually as guilds grew in number and pageants were added.

Three civic records mention a Corpus Christi cycle in Wakefield, as well as the existence of an ‘original’ for the play.<sup>242</sup> All three records are later than the manuscript containing the cycle. The *Towneley* manuscript is a decorated book with running text, but no running titles and originally no associations to any guilds. Its physical appearance is thus very different from the plainer *York* Register, which includes guild ascriptions and presents each new pageant text on a new page. The careful execution of the *Towneley* text indicates that the manuscript was produced for a private library rather than for practical use such as staging or monitoring a play (Stevens and Cawley 1994: xxiii). Nonetheless, there are traces in the manuscript suggesting that it was at some point used in play production. These traces include the adding of guild ascriptions, the glosses and corrections to (Post-Reformation) objectionable text, and especially one marginal note on folio 66r reading: *corected and not playd* (Stevens and Cawley 1994: xxi-xxiv).

Five of the pageants in the *Towneley* cycle are revisions of pageants stemming from the *York* cycle. A skilled compiler/redactor commonly referred to as the Wakefield Master seems to have been behind the creation of most of the *Towneley* cycle (Stevens and Cawley 1994: xxvii-xxxi). The work of the Wakefield Master is recognised partly by his dramatic skill, and partly by his use of the 13-line stanza. Stevens and Cawley (1994: xxxi) link his work to 14

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<sup>242</sup> The term ‘cycle’ is of later coinage, and does not occur in any medieval references. Instead terms such as ‘play’ and ‘pageant’ were used. Two of the records from Wakefield from 1556 and 1559 describe the Corpus Christi cycle using the following terms: *pagyauntes of Corpus Christi daye* and *þe regenall of Corpvs Christy play* (Stevens and Cawley 1994: xxi). The ‘regenall’ (“original”) referred to in the records may have been the *Towneley* MS (Stevens and Cawley 1994: xxiii).

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pageants out of the cycle's 32, several more than recognised by England and Pollard (1897).

The variation of stanza forms as well as the nature of the stage directions, suggest there is “a variety of source texts” behind the *Towneley* compilation of pageants (Stevens and Cawley 1994: xxv-xxvi). The extant text is a copy, but need not be far removed from the exemplar, or original *Towneley* cycle compilation, perhaps with the Wakefield master himself working as an author-redactor (Stevens and Cawley 1994: xxvii). It is likely that the *Towneley* cycle was created from many exemplars with additions and revisions at one point in time, rather than gradually developed like the *York* cycle most probably was (Stevens and Cawley 1994: xxx-xxxii).

The language of the *Towneley* cycle is localised in Western Yorkshire (LP 211 in LALME III: 622). The text contains a total of 14,383 lines in Stevens and Cawley's edition (1994). Their stanza division varies radically from that of England and Pollard (1897), making some lines shorter and thereby increasing their number .

### 5.12 *Chester Antichrist, MS Peniarth, c.1500*

The earliest text of the *Chester* cycle pageant about Antichrist survives in a separate manuscript in Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales: MS Peniarth 399 D. Lumiansky and Mills' (1974) edition of the *Chester* cycle includes the text of the Peniarth *Antichrist* in appendices (App. II B: 491-516). This edition was used in the present study.<sup>243</sup>

This small manuscript contains the text of *Chester* cycle pageant no. 23 only, and it seems to have been a guild's prompt copy (Lumiansky and Mills 1974:

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<sup>243</sup> Lumiansky and Mills (1974: xii) describe the text as being “re-inked by a modern restorer”, possibly referring to “MS A” (i.e. MS BL Additional 10305). Lumiansky and Mills (1983: 84) still find more “agreement between H and P (i.e. MS BL Harley 2124 and MS Peniarth 399) than between any other cyclic manuscript and P.” I have taken these comments on the Peniarth *Antichrist* text as evidence that the modern restorer cannot have left the text restored to a degree that it is impossible to infer most of the work by the original hand. Therefore, the Peniarth copy dated 1500 can be compared to one of the late copies of the full *Chester* cycle (as I have done in Chapter 3) (but see Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 76).

xi). (See 3.3.4 for a description of prompt copies). In 1467-68 the Hewsters' Guild in Chester seems to have been responsible for the Antichrist pageant (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 76, 171). In later *Chester* cycle manuscripts the guild is referred to as 'Dyers' (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 171).

Based on palaeographic evidence, Lumiansky and Mills (1974: xi) date the Peniarth *Antichrist* to "the end of the fifteenth century". It thus precedes the surviving copies of the *Chester* cycle by almost a century, as the earliest of the full cycle texts dates from 1591 (5.26 below). Yet, Lumiansky and Mills (1983: 85) find the MS Peniarth collateral with the extant cycle copies. Its early date implies that it cannot have been a copy of the lost sixteenth century exemplar, containing the revised *Chester* cycle (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 85); rather the *Antichrist* text seems to have been continued more or less unchanged from an early to the late version of the *Chester* cycle as it is known from the late *Chester* cycle copies. As the MS Peniarth *Antichrist* text survives separately with no evidence of ever having been part of a cycle compilation, it could perhaps be an individual copy of a fifteenth century "Pre-exemplar" (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 85). This pre-exemplar is a (lost) exemplar of earlier date than the revised exemplar (also lost) from which the late cycle copies stem (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 5).

The Peniarth *Antichrist* text consists of 726 lines (Lumiansky and Mills 1974). It is textually close to, but four lines longer than, the 'Antichrist' text in MS Huntington HM 2 (pageant no. 23). The differences in order and number of lines appear in the passage consisting of ll. 637-648 in the Peniarth *Antichrist*. These differences have been discussed in section 3.3.5 of the present study, where the language and interjections of the two parallel copies are compared.

The language is localised in Cheshire (LP 750 in LALME III: 48). This is the only LALME localisation of any of the *Chester* cycle texts, since all the other surviving copies are too late for inclusion in the Atlas.

### 5.13 *Fulgens and Luces*, print c. 1512

The interlude *Fulgens and Luces* was written by Henry Medwall. It survives in a unique print by John Rastell: STC 17778, now in California, San Marino,

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Huntington Library 62599 (Walker 2000: 307). I have collected the data from Nelson (1980) and Walker (2000), and consulted Moeslein (1981) for information on both Medwall's plays.<sup>244</sup> Greg (in Nelson 1980: 28) dated the production of the print to 1512-16. Walker (2000: 305) suggests a print date between 1510 and 1516.

Medwall was for some time employed by Bishop, later Archbishop, John Morton. Medwall wrote *Fulgens and Lucrez*, as well as the morality play *Nature* (Section 5.21), while in Morton's employment. Probably both plays were to be performed by and for the Morton household themselves, rather than by professional actors. Nelson (1980: 1) suggests the early 1490s as a likely date of composition of *Fulgens and Lucrez*, while Moeslein (1981: 60) suggests 1497 as the year of its performance.<sup>245</sup> Thus, composition may precede the extant print by up to two decades, but no earlier version survives. *Fulgens and Lucrez* is among the earliest play texts to have been printed in England (Nelson 1980: 28; Walker 2000: 305).<sup>246</sup>

The Rastell Press seems to have become competent printers of play texts. The printing of play texts requires some special considerations with respect to the layout of speech headings and stage directions. The three Rastell prints included in the present study indicate that this particular press mastered the technique better than the presses of Wynkyn de Worde and John Skot.<sup>247</sup> Initially, however, it seems that John Rastell had problems placing the speech headings when he printed *Fulgens and Lucrez*, but the difficulties were resolved by the printing of the second part of the play. John and William Rastell's play texts included in the present study are also equipped with many

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<sup>244</sup> Since the print belongs to the Huntington Library, a facsimile of it could not be obtained from Early English Books Online.

<sup>245</sup> Household plays were most likely written for specific occasions, and it is possible in most cases that the first performance was also the last. Since *Fulgens and Lucrez* was later printed, however, it may have been performed repeatedly, perhaps taken up as part of the repertoire of professional players, but there is no other evidence to sustain this hypothesis.

<sup>246</sup> *Hickscorner* and *Everyman* are also early printed plays – see Sections 5.15 and 5.22 respectively.

<sup>247</sup> The present study includes two texts printed by de Worde: *Hickscorner* (5.16 below) and *Mundus et Infans* (5.21 below), and one text printed by Skot: *Everyman* (5.23 below).

stage directions.<sup>248</sup> In contrast, other printers addressed here have few or no stage directions.<sup>249</sup>

*Fulgens and Luces* is a secular interlude, meaning that it does not deal with biblical or religious matters, nor does it employ allegorical or celestial characters, nor any devils. Its morale is concerned with political questions concerning nobility rather than with afterlife, but the text contains the usual pious oaths by God (l.165), the Lord and Savior (l. 202), and by saints (l. 371). *Fulgens and Luces* can be read as a political comment concerning Henry VII's appointment of non-aristocrats to his court; among them Medwall's employer Morton (Wickham 1976: 38). It thus functions on a par with other late medieval interludes like *Magnyfycence* and *Hickscorner* - as entertainment for an elite audience, most likely written to please the commissioner and his friends.

The play is in two parts consisting of 1,432 and 921 lines in Nelson (1980), or 2,351 lines altogether in Walker (2000). The second part of the play includes a dance, probably to be performed by everyone present, audience included, making the two parts more equal in stage time, and more similar to the *Nature* format (5.22 below).

#### 5.14 Herod's Killing of the Children, MS Digby, 1512

The biblical play *Herod's Killing of the Children* is found on ff. 146-57 in a composite manuscript preserved as Oxford, Bodleian Library Digby 133 (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: ix). Like MS Macro, MS Digby contains several play texts included in this study (cf. Section 5.1 above). MS Digby contains three full play texts, and an incomplete fourth: *Wisdom* (a complete *Wisdom* text is found in MS Macro: 5.7 above). Besides *Wisdom* and *Herod*,

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<sup>248</sup> The stage directions in *Fulgens and Luces* are mainly in Latin, in *Nature* they are in English, and in *Magnyfycence* both Latin and English stage directions are used.

<sup>249</sup> There are no stage directions in Wynkyn de Worde's *Mundus et Infans* (Lester 1981: xxxviii), nor in *Hickscorner* by the same printer. John Skot's print of *Everyman* contains only two stage directions. It may be important that the three latter plays are anonymous while the printed plays by the Rastells included here have known playwrights. It is unknown whether the printers aimed at different audiences when they printed play texts, but the inclusion of stage directions seems valuable both to anyone involved in staging plays, as well as to potential readers of play texts.

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two miracle play texts survive in the Digby manuscript: *Conversion of St Paul* and *Mary Magdalen*.<sup>250</sup> First I collected the data for *Herod* from Furnivall (1896) before checking them against the more recent facsimile edition by Baker and Murphy (1976). I have used the line numbering provided in the regular edition by Baker, Murphy, and Hall (1982).<sup>251</sup>

Two hands are behind the Digby *Herod* copy (Baker and Murphy 1976: xii). The main scribe copied ff. 148-55v, but a second hand is responsible for the remainder, ff. 155v-157r (the latter folio contains only two lines). The main hand is also responsible for the copying of the Digby *Wisdom* fragment (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: liii-liv). However, in Baker and Murphy's (1976: xii-xiii) assessment, the *Conversion of St Paul* was not copied by the main scribe as was assumed by Furnivall (1896).

The full title of the *Herod* play is given as *candelmas day & the kyllynge of the children of Israell* in the manuscript (Furnivall 1896: 1). This title was filled in well after the copy was made, but according to Baker, Murphy and Hall (1982: lii), the added title is still the work of the main hand. The main hand also added one of the three dates found in the margins (all read "1512"), and he supplied the list of players found at the end (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: liii). In other words, the main copyist seems to have had the *Herod* part of the Digby manuscript in his possession for some time, and he has worked on it on several occasions. The play texts in MS Digby 133 are of different dates, and the *Herod* is probably not the earliest of them. Baker and Murphy (1976: xiii) find 1512 to be a likely date for the production of the copy.

The Digby *Herod* consists of only 566 lines (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982). This is unusually short, considering that the play in fact dramatises three biblical episodes and not merely one as the title suggests. The play includes episodes of Herod's rage, Mary and Joseph's flight into Egypt, and the

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<sup>250</sup> These texts are also included in the present study, but MS Macro supplied the data for *Wisdom* (5.7 above).

<sup>251</sup> In his edition, Furnivall included the play texts for *Burial* and *Resurrection of Christ* from the MS Bodleian e Museo 160 (Furnivall 1896: vii). Even though Baker and Murphy (1976: vii) disagree with Furnivall that the plays in the two different manuscripts were in any way related, they follow his practice by including the *Burial* and *Resurrection* in both their editions of the Digby plays. *Burial* and *Resurrection* is also included in the present study in Section 5.18 below.

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purification and presentation to Simeon in the temple. Less than 500 lines are devoted to the play proper, as there is both a prologue of 56 lines and an epilogue of 16 lines.

The prologue (by *Poeta*, an Expositor-character) gives the opposite order to the events of the *Herod* play, naming first the Purification and then the part about Herod. The *Herod* prologue also recalls last year's performance of Three Kings and the Shepherds, and the epilogue promises a play next year about Christ's Disputation with the Doctors. All are familiar episodes from Corpus Christi cycles, but they were obviously performed on a different occasion and separately. It is possible that *Herod* is an accommodation of two plays and that the prologue was added especially (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: lx).

The copy shows many signs of revision and adaptation, suggesting that the scribe himself may have been a kind of author of the play in the form it survives. He may have produced a new, "authoritative copy" by borrowing from other texts, or the whole text could also be the main scribe's own work. In the latter case, the extant text appears to be a copy of a first draft of original work, but not a clean copy as it clearly was still being revised (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: liv-lv)

Baker, Murphy and Hall (1982: lxi-lxii) suggest the play was part of the repertoire of a professional group of travelling actors. Meredith (1987: 12) sees a link between the *Herod* play and the Mary parts of the *N-town* cycle in their shared celebration of St Anne, and suggests that *Herod* could have belonged to a guild of St Anne. If that were the case, it is conceivable that the play was staged by members of the religious guild themselves, similarly to how cycle pageants were performed by members of craft and trade guilds (Meredith 1987: 12). Johnston (1975: 55) finds that religious guilds in York were responsible for the staging of the *Pater Noster* play and the *Creed* play (both lost). In other words, even in a town where trade and craft guilds took on the responsibility of educating the masses by providing them with an annual biblical cycle, the Corpus Christi and Pater Noster guilds did not see

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any conflict between similar play activity and their status as religious guilds.<sup>252</sup>

Coldewey (1994: 202) suggests that the *Herod* play was part of a non-cycle play tradition specific to East Anglia, where small plays may have been staged to collect money, for instance for local parish churches (cf. Section 3.5.3 and Appendix I). As such, they may have been adaptable to a great variety of staging possibilities and occasions. It is possible that the *Conversion of St Paul* led a similar perambulatory life, being staged by amateurs for the benefit of the parish in a variety of East Anglian villages.

In his prologue, the *Poeta* explicitly links the play to a church year celebration, the feast of *blissed Seynt Anne* (l. 2). The feast of St Anne took place on 26 July, whereas the feast of the Holy Innocents and Candlemas were winter celebrations.<sup>253</sup> Baker, Murphy and Hall (1982: lxii) find that the *Herod* play could easily have been staged in diverse open-air locations, but it is also possible that it could have been performed indoors.<sup>254</sup>

According to Baker, Murphy and Hall (1982: lvi), the language of *Herod* belongs in the East Midlands “with some East Anglian characteristics, but rather fewer than that of Mary Magdalen.” There is no linguistic profile in LALME (1986) based on the language of *Herod*, but the language of the Digby 133 *Mary Magdalen* was localised in Norfolk (LALME III: 358).

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<sup>252</sup> The Corpus Christi guild was responsible for the *Creed* play and the Pater Noster guild for the *Pater Noster* play in York (Johnston 1975: 55). There seems to be documentary evidence of *Pater Noster* play in Lincoln, too (Craig 1955: 271-276).

<sup>253</sup> Three of the cycles were once connected to Corpus Christi day celebrations (May or June): *York*, *Towneley*, and *Chester*. The *Chester* cycle performance was moved to Whitsun. *N-town* has no particular festival connection. More detail on biblical cycles is found in Section 3.5.6.

<sup>254</sup> Indoor performances would be preferable for church year celebrations during winter, such as the Feast of the Holy Innocents on December 28 or Candlemas celebrating the Purification of Mary on February 2. The *Herod* play seems appropriate also for these occasions. The manner of staging of the plays is discussed in Appendix I.



### 5.15 *Hickscorner*, print, 1514

*Hickscorner* (or *Hick Scorner*) was printed by Wynkyn de Worde perhaps as early as 1514. The unique print, STC 14039-40, belongs to the British Library, C.21.c.4 (Lancashire 1980: 8). The playwright is anonymous, but Lancashire (1980: 34) suggests one Lewis Wynwod in the household of Charles Brandon, duke of Suffolk. The year of 1514 may be applicable both to the composition and the first print (Lancashire 1980: 22). I used Lancashire's (1980) introduction for the present study, but not his modernised text. For collecting the data I used the Early English Books Online (henceforth EEBO) facsimile of the original sixteenth century print.

From the study of other texts than *Hickscorner* from de Worde's press, Lancashire (1980: 13) finds that the printer's "alterations were massive", and he characterises de Worde as a more or less "translating" printer.<sup>255</sup> According to Lancashire, Wynkyn de Worde used an East Midlands dialect whatever the origin of the texts he printed, but in the case of *Hickscorner*, as evidenced by rhymes, both playwright and printer's language point to London (Lancashire 1980: 32).

The topic of the play, as well as the text-internal references to places in London, suggest that it originated in the circle around the young prince Henry VIII. Charles Brandon was a nobleman in Henry VIII's favour, and one of Brandon's London homes may have been the site of performance (Lancashire 1980: 34). A reference in the text to a London jail seems to imply that this prison was close by. In addition, there are many allusions in the text to places in London and its vicinity, such as 'the stews' (l. 184) in Southwark. The play may have been staged by 4-5 professional actors. The London prohibition against vagrancy, including play troupes, did not apply to the suburbs where this play seems to have been performed (Lancashire 1980: 33-35).

Lancashire (1980: 59) dates the composition of *Hickscorner* to 1514 on grounds of references to lost English ships and to English political events, specifically the return of Richard de la Pole to claim the throne. The play is anti-pretender and pro-Henry, but *Hickscorner* himself (de la Pole) plays only

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<sup>255</sup> It should be noted that the description of de Worde's language refers not him personally, but to his press, i.e. the language of his typesetters.

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a small part. It is not he but rather his villain followers who must turn from their vicious behaviour to moral conduct in the end. The play is related to *Youth*, another late medieval interlude (Lancashire 1980: 41-42), but to the popular theme of the follies of the young is added the more specific criticism of those who were against Henry VIII.<sup>256</sup>

The text consists of 1,028 lines. For unknown reasons, there are no stage directions. One explanation may be that the printing of play texts posed particular difficulties for the printer. Such problems were overcome by Rastell (see *Fulgens and Lucreces* above), but maybe they were insurmountable to less competent printers. Another explanation for the lack of stage directions could of course be that there was none in the exemplar. If the play was written and performed in the same household, the playwright may have found directions superfluous, especially if he were instructing the play himself. As an interlude composed for a specific occasion, this may very well have been the case (Lancashire 1980: 24).

*Hickscorner* was probably composed as an occasional piece intended for one particular performance. Lancashire (1980: 24) suggested the visit of the French ambassador during the summer of 1514. When such texts reached the printing press it is likely that the printer's intention was to sell them as reading material (Walker 2000: 302). It is also conceivable that troupes of professional actors were interested in acquiring texts for their repertoire or as models for their own pieces. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, small-scale plays for private entertainment were becoming increasingly popular among the nobility after the fashion of the court.

### 5.16 *Mary Magdalen, MS Digby, 1515-20*

The text of the miracle play of *Mary Magdalen* is found in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 133. The play texts in the Digby 133 manuscript were first edited by Furnivall (1896), who also included the play text found in Bodleian e Museo 160 in his edition. I used Baker and Murphy's facsimile edition

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<sup>256</sup> Like *Hickscorner*, *Youth* is anonymous. It was not included in the present study since many printed interludes start appearing in the 16th century, and I had to make a selection rather than include them all. As *Youth* only survives in later prints, *Hickscorner* was preferred.

(1976) and Baker, Murphy and Hall's edition (1982) when collecting and checking the data for the present study. Following Furnivall, both these editions encompass the play texts from both MS Digby 133 as well as MS e Museo 160, even though Baker and Murphy found no relation between the two manuscripts.

*Mary Magdalen* in many ways represents a peculiar mixture of the biblical, miracle, and morality play types. It can also be described as a saint's play, since the life of Saint Magdalene functions as the principle of organisation. The play presents both biblical and legendary material, including the common conflation of the Magdalene with Mary, sister of Martha and Lazarus, as well as with other biblical characters such as the woman possessed by devils, and the woman who dried Jesus' feet with her hair. The *Mary Magdalen* play has conversion and miracle as its main themes, and Bevington (1975) therefore categorised it with the *Conversion of St Paul* and the *Play of the Sacrament*. This subgenre classification has been adopted in the present study, and all three are here referred to as miracle plays.

Based on the watermarks, Baker and Murphy find that the part of MS Digby containing the *Mary Magdalen* play must be dated to 1515-20. One scribe copied the play text. Besides Myles Blomefylde's ownership (cf. 5.1), *Mary Magdalen* shows only one possible link to any of the other plays in the manuscript. This is a passage it shares with the *Herod* play, and it was the *Mary Magdalen* author who was the borrower (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: x-xxx). The language suggests that the play is earlier than the copy, perhaps originating in the late fifteenth century (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: xl).

*Mary Magdalen* and the three other play texts in MS Digby 133 may have been associated with one another and bound together because the name or initials of Myles Blomefylde occur as marginalia in three of them. The letters MB are written on the first folio of the *Mary Magdalen* part, and on a folio of the *Wisdom* part. The full name Myles Blomefylde occurs at the start of *Conversion*, on folio 37r. It appears that Blomefylde was a collector of books, including play texts. He also owned the unique *Fulgens and Lucre* print (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: xii-xxxii, and 1).

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The *Mary Magdalen* play text contains 2,139 lines (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982). The editions by Furnivall (1896) and Bevington (1975) provide a text totalling 2,140 lines, caused by the inclusion of a line which Baker, Murphy and Hall (1982: xxxii) understood as a complaint by the scribe, and not a part of the play text proper. The end of the play is followed by another scribal comment, this time a verse plea to the *redars* ('readers') to amend what is amiss, and not to blame him, the scribe, for 'lack of cunning'. Baker, Murphy and Hall (1982: xxxii) indeed found the text a poorly executed copy with missing lines and confusion of speakers. The scribe may have been working from a poor exemplar, or the task was beyond his competence.

Only the language of *Mary Magdalen* among the Digby plays was used for linguistic localisation in LALME. The language is localised in Norfolk (LP 4662 in LALME III: 358), and according to Baker, Murphy and Hall (1982: xiii), all the Digby play texts dialectally belong in East Anglia.

### 5.17 *Conversion of St Paul, MS Digby, 1520-25 and 1550*

The *Conversion of St Paul* miracle play survives in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 133. I collected my data from Furnivall (1896) and checked them against Baker and Murphy's facsimile edition (1976). I also consulted Baker, Murphy, and Hall (1982), and Bevington's anthology (1975). The full name of Myles Blomefylde is found on the first folio containing the text (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: 1).

There are two hands of different dates in the *Conversion* text. Baker and Murphy (1976: x) find that the main part was copied by one scribe around 1520, while a single scene, a comic episode with Belial and Mercury, i.e. two devils, is a later interpolation into the manuscript, dated to about 1550. The second scribe put some effort into fitting the extra scene in with the rest of the play, by first cancelling and afterwards copying a speech from the original into the added part (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: xvii-xviii). The language found in the two scribal portions correspond with the palaeographical styles, suggesting that the play (and interpolation) was not composed much earlier than the witness date (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: xxii).

The *Poeta* character in the play delivers a prologue, an epilogue, and in-between guidance of the audience from one *stacon* ('station', e.g. l. 155) to the next. The *Poeta* seems to function more or less like an Expositor in other play types (the *Chester* Expositor or the *N-town* Contemplacio). The term 'poet', however, is something which the *Conversion* play shares with another Digby play, namely *Herod* (5.14 above).

The term 'station' may refer to the two or three different locations in which the plot takes place, and/or on which the performance occurs. Furnivall (1896) called the stations 'Acts' consisting of 161, 198, and 304 lines respectively. Bevington (1975: 664) follows Furnivall's suggestion that the action and the audience moved back and forth between these acting areas, representing the locations of Jerusalem and Damascus with scaffolds for important characters, such as the high priests Annas and Caiphas. Wickham (1976: 105), on the other hand, finds that there was no need for the audience to move, and that the play was rather staged on wagons representing the different locations. These wagons were pulled forward when needed in the action. Even though Wickham (1976: 107) further suggests that *Conversion* may have been staged outdoors or in a "roofed hall" in this manner, it seems more likely that the play was composed for open-air staging (cf. 3.6.2).

The *Conversion of St Paul* totals 662 lines in Baker, Murphy, and Hall (1982). The text length is comparable to that of many cycle pageants, but no cycle includes a pageant about Saint Paul. Instead, Bevington (1975: 664) suggests a connection to the feast of the Conversion of St Paul celebrated on 25 January, which does not seem a good season for outdoor plays. Wickham (1976: 107) suggests that the *Conversion* play belonged and was performed by amateurs, perhaps guild members, who travelled to perform the play in various locations. Such a solution means that the play was performed on any occasion and not restricted to the feast of St Paul. The suggestion is in keeping with Coldewey's (1994) description of the East Anglian play tradition (cf. Section 5.14 concerning *Herod* in the same manuscript).

In the present study, the Digby *Herod* has been categorised with the Corpus Christi cycles as a biblical play, while the Digby *Conversion* has been considered a miracle play together with *Mary Magdalen* and *Sacrament* in line with the classification in Bevington (1975: ix) (Sections 3.6 and 3.6.1

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provide discussions regarding subgenre classification). There is no complete agreement about the staging of these plays, perhaps because the plays were composed (or restructured) to be particularly flexible plays.

The language of the *Conversion of St Paul* was not localised by LALME, but is believed to belong in East Anglia, like the language of the rest of the MS Digby texts (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: xiii).

### 5.18 *Burial and Resurrection of Christ, MS c.1520*

The text of the play(s) *Burial of Christ* and *Resurrection of Christ* survives in Oxford, Bodleian Library e Museo 160 (ff. 140-72) (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: lxxiv). For collecting and checking the data I used Furnivall's (1896) edition, as well as Baker, Murphy and Hall (1982), and Baker and Murphy's facsimile edition (1976). Furnivall published the text together with the plays in the Bodleian Digby 133 manuscript believing that the copyist of the *Burial* and *Resurrection* was the same as one of the Digby scribes. However, Baker and Murphy (1976: vii, xvi) find no relation between the manuscripts or the hands in them.

The *Burial* and *Resurrection* text is dated to 1520 by Baker and Murphy (1976: xv) on the basis of the surrounding texts in the manuscript, in particular to a chronicle referring to dateable events. Baker, Murphy, and Hall (1982: lxxxix) find the chronicle to be the work of a Carthusian monk and suggest that the play text likewise originated in a Charterhouse.<sup>257</sup>

The play is in two parts to be performed on different occasions during Easter. The *Burial of Christ* is thus appropriate for performance on Good Friday, while the *Resurrection* is equally well suited for performance on Easter Sunday. It is not known whether the plays were ever staged, but it is possible that they were intended for "acted meditation" (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: lxxxv), to be performed by and for the inhabitants in the monastery. In

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<sup>257</sup> Baker, Murphy, and Hall (1982: lxxxix-lxxxiii) discuss three Carthusian houses in the northeast which could possibly be the place where *Burial and Resurrection* originated: Mount Grace and Kingston-on-Hull in Yorkshire, and Axholme in Lincolnshire. The strongest case is made for Kingston-on-Hull (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 2000: lxxxii).

Baker, Murphy and Hall (1982: 168) the *Burial* contains 862 lines including the prologue, and the *Resurrection* comprises 766 lines, totaling 1,628 lines.<sup>258</sup>

One scribe was responsible for the work, and this scribe seems also to have been the composer of the play (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: lxxx-lxxxv). It appears that the copyist-composer was revising from a narrative, as there are occasional narrative passages within the speeches in the play text. The writer emended some of these, and halfway through the first play, he seems to have become used to the peculiarities of writing a play text. He no longer makes the mistakes of including the reporting verbs typical of direct speech quotes in narrative (e.g. ‘Joseph said’) in the spoken lines, and the placing of speech headings becomes more regular (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: lxxx-lxxxvi).

The language of the *Burial and Resurrection* is quite different from that of any of the MS Digby 133 texts. According to Baker, Murphy and Hall (1982: xcv), it is “a mixture of forms from the North Midlands and southern Yorkshire.” LALME (1986) writes about the language of Hand A in the manuscript: “Probably Notts language. Notts [Nottinghamshire]” (LALME I: 148), but it was not used for linguistic localisation in the Atlas.<sup>259</sup>

### 5.19 *Play of the Sacrament, MS 1520-1550*

The *Play of the Sacrament* text was at one time bound with unrelated material in a composite manuscript kept in Dublin, Trinity College 652 (formerly F.4.20). Foliation was not added until 1958, but the folios 338-357 containing the play text have later been removed from the manuscript (Davis 1970: lxxi). The folio numbers referred to below are the ones entered in 1958. I collected the data from Davis’ facsimile edition (1979), and I also consulted editions by

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<sup>258</sup> The two texts are thus in total three lines shorter than they are in Furnivall’s edition (1896), due to some mistakes in Furnivall, emended in Baker, Murphy and Hall (1982: lxxxv).

<sup>259</sup> Hand A must be the one responsible for the *Burial and Resurrection* text. LALME’s (Vol. I: 148) comment on Hand B in MS Bodleian e Museo 160 incorrectly refers to Baker, Murphy, and Hall (1982). The text for *Burial and Resurrection*, however, is found on ff. 140-72, i.e. the part of the manuscript LALME assigns to Hand A, and whose language LALME (I: 148) described as probably from Nottinghamshire.

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Davis (1970), Walker (2000), and Bevington (1975). The play is associated with Croxton due to a reference in the Proclamation, l. 74 (Walker, 2000: 214). A comic scene not mentioned in the Proclamation, between Master Brandyche and Colle, seems to have been an interpolation in an earlier version (Walker 2000: 214). The interpolation reveals that the play was not new, and it also shows how play texts could be adaptable, fluctuating texts.

*Sacrament* consists of 927 lines in Walker (2000). In Bevington (1975) and Davis (1979) the Banns are included, making the text total 1007 lines in both editions. Three scribes executed the work (Davis 1970: lxxi). Their contributions are found interspersed in the text: Hand A copied 336.5 lines (ll. 1-39, 189-326, and 485-644), Hand B wrote 149.5 lines (39-188), and Hand C had the greatest part, a total of 521 lines (327-484, and 645-1007).

Davis (1970: lxxi) dates the watermarks to 1526-1546 based on their resemblance to a watermark designated no. 11388 by Briquet (in Davis 1979: 93). The script(s) of hands A and B he dated to “the early sixteenth century”, while Hand C appears palaeographically to be earlier, yet must be contemporary with the other two (Davis 1970: lxxii, lxii), since shifts of hands are found mid-folio.<sup>260</sup> It appears that the C-scribe was older than the others, and that he had a supervising responsibility over the work: Hand C copied the largest portion, and he filled in speech headings in Hand A’s work (Davis 1970: lxxii). Several scribal mistakes are found throughout the manuscript, as omissions of letters or whole words are rather common. In some cases, Hand C seems to have emended the work of Hand A, for instance by adding words omitted by Hand A in lines 546, 622, and 643 (Davis 1970: 75-8).

The Proclamation (l. 11) and the play text (l. 87) explicitly link the events depicted in the play to Aragon, and refer to a presentation ‘at Rome’ in the

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<sup>260</sup> For instance, hands A and B shared the writing of the Proclamation, where hand B took over from A in the middle of a stanza about ten lines into folio 338v (mid-line 39 in Davis 1970: 59). The next change from hand B and back to hand A takes place about mid-folio 341r. Later in the manuscript hand C appears four lines into folio 343v, where it follows hand A. The foliation referred to above is that of the earlier, composite manuscript (Davis 1970: lxxi), and may obscure the fact that the originally independent play “book” only consists of 19 folios, now again separated from the rest (Walker 2000: 214).



year 1461 (ll. 57-8). Continental legends place a similar miraculous story in Paris, dating the events to 1290. Plays based on the legend are known from Italy, the Netherlands and France (Davis 1970: lxxiii). Whatever the relationship to continental versions of the legend, the date of 1461 in *Sacrament* can at least be seen as the earliest possible date of composition for the English play (Davis 1979: 93; Walker 2000: 214).

The plentiful stage directions in *Sacrament* are in English. Many characters, including the Jews, have occasional lines in Latin, perhaps suggesting an original clerical association. However, the extant play text is clearly intended for touring, as the Proclamation promises a performance *at Croxtston on Monday* (l. 74). It seems likely that it was taken on tour by a professional company of actors. According to the list of players given at the end of the play text (Bevington 1975: 759), the 12 roles may be performed by nine actors. The play has been described as the only English (extant) miracle play. Here it has been grouped with the conversion plays, as it shares the topic of conversion with both *Conversion of St Paul* and *Mary Magdalen*. All three are referred to as miracle plays in the present study.

Linguistic evidence places the *Sacrament* text in the East Midlands (Bevington 1975: 756).<sup>261</sup> The extra-linguistic evidence suggests East Anglia, near places called Croxtton and Babwell. Davis suggests that *Babwell Myll* in the text (l. 621) refers to the vicinity of Babwell Priory, “a mile or so from Bury St Edmunds on the road to Thetford in Norfolk”, which is not far from a place called Croxtton also mentioned in the play (Davis 1970: lxxxiv-lxxxv).

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<sup>261</sup> Davis (1970: lxxix) refutes Waterhouse’s (1909) and McIntosh and Samuels’ (1968) suggestions that there is an Irish layer in the language of the *Sacrament* text. The proposed Irish forms, Davis argues, may equally well be English. The ‘Irish’ forms are found in the work of all three hands (Davis 1970: lxxix), a fact which suggests that these forms, most likely from the exemplar(s), were actually current in all three scribes’ dialect and spelling habits and not exotic to them at all. Some examples are *wonneth* (‘dwells’ l. 13), *solle* (‘soul’ l. 860), and *dyrknes* (‘darkness’ l. 752). The front vowel type ‘dyrk’ (in spellings <dirk> and <dyrk>) are found also in works by other eastern English writers. Further, Davis (1970: lxxix) points out that the doubling of consonants in *wonneth* and *solle* is not exclusive to Irish copyists. The confusion of <w> and <v>, and of <t> and <th> found in the *Sacrament* language is not related to Irish, but “common in late Middle English, especially of the east and north” (Davis 1970: lxxix).

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All the place-names, however, appear in the Proclamation and in the interpolated scene, which means that other versions may have contained other or no local references. An earlier version of the play without Banns and the added scene may have been itinerant and performed anywhere. It may also have originated in a religious house.

### 5.20 *Mundus et Infans*, print 1522

The morality play *Mundus et Infans* is also called *The World and the Child*.<sup>262</sup> It survives in a unique print, STC 25982, by Wynkyn de Worde (MacCracken 1908: 496). The print is dated to 1522 in the printer's colophon, where only the Latin title is used (reproduced in Lester 1981: 157). I used Lester (1981) to collect the interjections, and in order to check them, I consulted Farmer's (1909) facsimile reproduction provided by EEBO. In spite of the printer's claims about the novelty of the play on the title page, it is probably some years older than the print (Lester 1981: xv).

The title page of *Mundus* reads *here begynneth a propre newe Interlude of the worlde and the chylde / otherwise called [Mundus & Infans]...* (reproduced in Farmer 1909). In late medieval and early Renaissance terminology, the word 'interlude' was a common denominator for both interludes and morality plays (see Section 3. 6). Since the focus of *Mundus and Infans* is on the salvation of the soul of a Mankind figure, *Mundus* has been categorised as a morality play in the present study, as it usually is in the literature about late medieval drama.

Topically, *Mundus* has quite a lot in common with the early morality play *Perseverance*. Both plays dramatise the life of man from childhood to old age, including his fall and final redemption; and both plays contain two conversions of mankind. The similarity in topic contrasts with the great difference in manner of production of the two plays. *Mundus* is a short play requiring much less preparation of a performance site than *Perseverance* does, and significantly fewer actors, costumes and stage properties. *Mundus* could be performed as an interlude between courses at a banquet, or as a similar

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<sup>262</sup> Play titles employing Latin names are both treated as Latin titles and as English titles in the literature: *Mundus et Infans*, *Fulgens and Lucrez* and *Lucidus and Dubius*. The present study employs the most common titles, hence the seeming inconsistency in the use of Latin 'et' and English 'and' in titles containing Latin names.

type of shorter indoor entertainment. The fifteenth century morality play *Perseverance*, by contrast, is a great outdoor play with several scaffolds or platforms for important characters. It may have required a circular play area, possibly prepared for each performance.<sup>263</sup>

*Mundus* consists of 974 lines (Lester 1981: xl), while *Perseverance* is about four times longer with its 3,649 lines (Eccles 1969). In length of text and manner of performance, *Mundus* compares much better to two other late morality plays, namely *Mankind* (914 lines, in Eccles 1969), and *Everyman* (921 lines, in Cawley 1961). The relatively small number of actors required in staging *Mundus* could imply that it was performed by travelling troupes of professional actors, e.g. in inn yards, like *Mankind* and *Everyman* (see 5.8 and 5.22). Even though all three plays have been categorised as morality plays, they differ much in theme and tone. *Mankind* employs much comedy, whereas *Everyman*, concerned with dying, is more serious in tone. Neither of these two plays, however, contains the traditional vices occurring in *Mundus* and in *Perseverance*. The four plays illustrate that the variation of medieval plays was enormous, even within just one play category (by modern classification).

The anonymous *Mundus* playwright may have been a Londoner (Lester 1981: xiii). There are many allusions in the text to locations in London, some of infamous reputation, most often in connection with Folly's attempts at leading Infans/Manhood astray. Presumably the language is a London dialect, but it includes non-standard forms such as *londe*, *ony* and *understonde* ('land', 'any', 'understand', all in l. 228), and *ylke* (l. 631) rather than 'each'.<sup>264</sup> According to Lancashire (1980: 32), Wynkyn de Worde "levelled" the language to East Midland usage regardless of the text's original dialect. De Worde's press also printed *Hickscorner* (5.16 above).

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<sup>263</sup> The stage map in the Macro manuscript suggests that *Perseverance* was performed in a circular play field surrounded by a ditch. There is still much uncertainty about the performance of the play, just as there is about many of the late medieval English plays. The practical differences between the morality plays *Mundus* and *Perseverance* reveal that even thematically related plays could take on a variety of forms, settings and possibly different kinds of audiences. See 5.2 above and Appendix I for more detail about the *Castle of Perseverance*.

<sup>264</sup> *Lande* is also used, in rhyming pair with *hande* (ll. 224-25).

### 5.21 *Nature*, print c.1530

*Nature* survives in print by William Rastell from c.1530 (Nelson 1980: 3): STC 17779. EEBO reproduces the cropped print in the British Library C.34.e.31. Nelson (1980: 194) used the perfect copy found in Cambridge University Library Syn. 4.53.11 when preparing his edition, incorporating occasional “superior readings” from the British Library version. I collected the data from Nelson’s edition, and checked them against the facsimile reproduction available from EEBO.

The title page of the print presents *Nature* as a “goodly interlude” (Nelson 1980: 92), but as mentioned, the term ‘interlude’ was a generic one for short plays.<sup>265</sup> Since *Nature* is concerned with man’s salvation, it has been classified as a morality play in the present study. *Nature* was composed by Henry Medwall (1461-1501?), who also wrote the interlude *Fulgens and Luces* (5.13).<sup>266</sup> Both plays were probably written in the early 1490s (Nelson 1980: 1, 3) for specific occasions in Archbishop Morton’s household, rather than for professional players. Both plays consist of two parts, and both were probably performed in two sittings during the course of a day of banqueting (Wickham 1976: vii). *Nature* is the only English morality play in the two-part format. The parts are roughly equal in length, with 1,438 and 1,412 lines respectively (Nelson 1980), or 2,850 in total.

The Rastell printing house was situated in London. Two other Rastell prints are included in the present study: William Rastell also printed *Magnyfycence* in c.1530 (below), and his father, John Rastell, printed *Fulgens and Luces* in c.1512 (above). It is likely that the language of *Nature* belongs in the London area, too, as both Medwall and the Rastells worked there.

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<sup>265</sup> The term ‘morality play’ is of later coinage. Wickham (1976) includes morality plays among the *English Moral Interludes*, taking seriously the medieval meaning of the word ‘interlude’, i.e. short play used as an intermezzo during festivities, sometimes but not always between meals (Wickham 1976: vii). For a discussion of play terminology, see Section 3.6.

<sup>266</sup> For biographical information on Henry Medwall, see *Fulgens and Luces* (5.13) above.

### 5.22 *Everyman*, print 1528-9

*Everyman* (or *Every Man*) is the name of the main character in the morality play bearing the same name. The play survives in four prints, of which the two earliest are fragments, while the two later ones, both printed by John Skot, contain the full text (Lester, 1981: xxxix). I collected the data from Cawley's edition (1961), which used the A (the first) print by Skot, now in the Huntington Library, STC 10606.5, as its basis. Skot's A print is dated to c. 1528-9 (Cawley 1961: ix). The second Skot print, from the 1530s, survives in British Library, STC 10606 (Walker 2000: 282).

The earliest of the fragmentary *Everyman* prints is dated to c. 1510-25 (Cawley 1961: ix).<sup>267</sup> Since the fragments are earlier than Skot's full print from 1528-9, it is clear that the play existed in English perhaps already before 1510. If the first Pynson *Everyman* print was produced already in 1510 (Cawley 1961: 205), it rivals that of *Fulgens and Lucrez* (5.13) for primacy of English printed plays.

In addition to Cawley (1961), I used the editions by Walker (2000), and Bevington (1975) in the present study. As *Everyman* is the best known of all the morality plays, it is included in several anthologies of medieval drama. Modernised versions are found in e.g. Lester (1981) and in Cawley (1959).

The morality play of *Everyman* was translated from the Dutch play *Elckerlijc*.<sup>268</sup> Both author and translator are anonymous. The degree of translation is difficult to ascertain, at least to someone who does not read Middle Dutch. Walker (2000: 281) calls *Everyman* a "direct translation" of *Elckerlijc*, while Cawley (1961: xii, 205) claims the English text is not a direct translation. From the citations in Lester (1981: xvii-xviii), it appears that the translator tried to keep both meaning and rhyme. Sometimes this meant rearranging the word order and ignoring the metric pattern by, for instance, extending some of the verse lines. *Everyman* and *Elckerlijc* have somewhat different qualities, but there is no universal agreement that the earliest play, *Elckerlijc*, is superior to *Everyman* (Cawley 1959: 205).

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<sup>267</sup> The Bodleian "Douce Fragment" is STC 10604.

<sup>268</sup> The spelling of the Dutch word 'elckerljic' varies somewhat in the literature.

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The Dutch play was written in the 1490s (Walker 2000: 281) and was first printed in 1495 (Cawley 1959: 203). There may be no more than a couple of decades between the composition of the Dutch *Elckerlijc*, and the translation and printing of the English *Everyman*. The text is too late for linguistic profiling in LALME. The language is most likely a colourless, non-regional variety of English at this date. The play or play text may have come to England along the trading route between Holland and East Anglia.

*Everyman* consists of 921 lines (Cawley 1961). There are only two stage directions (Lester 1981: xxxviii), both in English. The Messenger (an Expositor character) appearing at the opening of the play to give an outline of the action, describes it as *a morall playe; ... The Somonyng of Eueryman* (ll. 3-4). The use of the term ‘summoning’ reveals that *Everyman* is concerned with the ‘Art of Dying’, a popular medieval topic (Walker 2000: 281), but a rather unusual one for an English morality play. None of the other morality plays focusses this singularly on man’s dying. Most of the other plays exploit for example the comic potential of Man’s falling into sin.

The morality play *Everyman* does not revolve around the topic of temptation and fall, nor does it contain the usual cast of vices. Instead it employs neutral personifications of Fellowship, Goods, Strength and the like, which are eventually unhelpful to man faced with Death (see Appendix I). The play only needs a small cast and few stage properties, and may well have been staged by travelling professional players in an indoor performance.

### 5.23 *Magnyfycence, print c. 1530*

*Magnyfycence* was written by John Skelton. It was printed by William Rastell in London around 1530 (Ramsay 1906: xix). The complete copy of the Rastell folio, STC 22607, survives in Cambridge University Library AB. 8.46(4) (Walker 2000: 351). A copy missing the first leaf is in the British Library, and a fragment of another copy is in the Bodleian Library (Ramsay 1906: xvii).<sup>269</sup> For the present study, I collected the data from Walker’s (2000) edition, based on the copy in the Cambridge University Library. I checked the data from a reproduction of the print obtained from EEBO, and for extra-textual

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<sup>269</sup> Ramsay (1906: xvii) used the old shelfmark, “British Museum [...] (C. 34. m. 1).”

information I consulted Happé (1979) and Ramsay (1906). The play was composed before 1530, the date of the extant full print; Walker (2000: 349) suggests 1519-20.

Skelton was born c. 1460 and died in 1529. Educated at Cambridge, he gained qualifications in rhetoric from Cambridge, Oxford and Louvain (Walker 2000: 349). *Magnyfycence* draws on both the morality play and the interlude. It employs personified vices (e.g. Folly) and virtues (e.g. Good Hope) known from the morality play, at the same time as it shares secular interests with the interlude (Ramsay 1906: x). In this study, *Magnyfycence* has been categorised as an interlude, following Walker (2000), Ramsay (1906), and, in fact, Happé (1979).<sup>270</sup>

The text of *Magnyfycence* amounts to 2,566 lines in Walker (2000). There are 51 stage directions in the printed play (Happé 1979: 40), all in Latin until l. 778, after which point most stage directions are in English. Altogether, 23 are in Latin and 28 in English. It is difficult to find an explanation for the sudden shift from Latin to English stage directions about a third into the text. It is also difficult to establish whether the stage directions are authorial or an adaptation by the printing house for the benefit of a reading audience who may not have known much Latin. The inclusion of stage directions suggests that *Magnyfycence* was intended for staging. There is no indication in the text that the play was planned as a two-part piece of entertainment at a banquet, but even though it is long, it is perhaps not overly long for a one-sitting performance.<sup>271</sup> *Magnyfycence* seems best suited for indoor staging. Among

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<sup>270</sup> Happé (1979) edits *Magnyfycence* under the book title *Four Morality Plays*, but he employs the term differently from the present study, and his discussion (Happé 1979: 21-22) places the play within the category of interludes.

<sup>271</sup> A length of between 1,500 and 2,500 lines is common in late medieval English plays. This text length applies to 18 of the 50 complete play texts dating from c.1400 to 1590 listed in Houle (1972). Houle (1972) includes a list of 59 plays and fragments, but since the length of a play can only be established if it survives in full, the fragments were subtracted, and the number 50 was left to give a good overview of the variety as well as a normal text length of early English plays. Only six fifteenth century (based on date of composition) plays are included in Houle (1972). Excluding these, as well as the fragments, reveals that 18 out of 45 (*Pride of Life* being both a fragment and fifteenth century play was not subtracted twice) fall within the 1,500-2,500 lines' "norm". Most of the other plays are shorter, rather than longer. The

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other things, the use of word play and the meta-theatrical comedy of the play seem to demand a certain intimacy between stage and audience.

The language of the play is likely to be fairly colourless and standard, since the playwright was educated at Cambridge. A London dialect is also conceivable, as the capital was the home of the Rastells and their printing press. The *Magnyfycence* text is too late for inclusion in LALME.

### 5.24 York Scriveners' 'Thomas', MS 'Sykes' c. 1550

The York Guild of Scriveners' copy of their 'Incredulity of Thomas' pageant is now found in York's City Archives, Acc. 104/G.1. The manuscript is also referred to as the Sykes Manuscript (Beadle 2009: xxxi). Beadle (2009) includes the text as an appendix, used in the present study to collect the data.<sup>272</sup> According to the *York Register*, the pageant of Doubting Thomas was no. 41 in the *York* cycle. The Register copy of the pageant text and the Sykes copy of the same topic are about a century apart.<sup>273</sup>

The Scriveners' text is 196 lines long, which is two lines shorter than pageant no. 41 in the *York Register*. There are no stage directions in either. The copying of the Scriveners' text was effected by one scribe, probably John Clerke, hand C in the Register of the *York* cycle. His work for the guild of Scriveners was most likely executed before he worked on the Register, entering the texts of pageants nos. 4 and 17 in the century old manuscript between 1557 and 1567 (Beadle 2009: xxvii-xxxii).

The Scriveners' copy is dated to the mid-sixteenth century (Beadle 2009: xxxii). Clearly, therefore, it cannot have been the exemplar for the Thomas pageant in the *York* cycle Register, but neither was the older copy in the Register an exemplar for the later Scriveners' text. The two texts are

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cycles are not included in Houle (1972), but the early and long *Castle of Perseverance* is (3,649 lines).

<sup>272</sup> Beadle (2009: xxxi) notes his debt to Cawley (1952) in the description of the Sykes MS.

<sup>273</sup> A similar situation of parallel copies made a century apart exists in Chester: the *Chester* cycle pageant no. 23 and the Peniarth 'Antichrist' copy. In Chester the guild copy (Peniarth) is the earlier of them. The use of interjections in the parallel copies from York and Chester is compared in Chapter 3.



independent, parallel copies of the same *York* cycle pageant, perhaps based on the same, early exemplar (Beadle 2009: xxxii). Only the text from the York Register provided data for the database. The interjections from the Sykes' copy were not included, but only used for linguistic comparison (Section 3.4.4).

The language of the Sykes manuscript may still, around 1550, exhibit some northern dialect forms if these existed in the exemplar, and/or in the scribe's language. LALME found three dialects in the earlier *York* Register, only one of which seemed to be from York where the performance of the cycle and the Register physically belonged (Section 3.5.6). The comparison of the text of pageant no. 41 in the Register, by Hand B, and the MS Sykes text, by Hand C (Section 3.4.4), as well as of the parallel and contemporary copies of pageant no. 3, by Hands A and B (Section 3.4.3), revealed that the interjections did not vary much. In other words, no diachronic variation between Hands A and C's use of interjections is attested in the 'Incredulity of Thomas' copies.

### 5.25 *The Chester cycle, MS Hm 1591 and MS R 1600*

The text of the full *Chester* cycle survives in five copies, all late. Lumiansky and Mills (1974) based their edition of the *Chester* cycle on the text in MS Hm: Huntington Library HM 2, San Marino California. As MS Hm lacks pageant no. 1, Lumiansky and Mills supply this text from MS BL Harley 2013 (siglum R). The editors used the Huntington HM 2 as their base text, with "significant Variant Readings" from the other four full *Chester* cycle manuscripts provided in the apparatus (Lumiansky and Mills 1974: vii). Lumiansky and Mills (1973) have also published a facsimile edition of MS Oxford, Bodleian Library Bodley 175.

The five full *Chester* manuscripts were produced between 1591 and 1607. The *Chester* cycle was last produced in 1575, so the copies were made for antiquarian reasons, the earliest of them postdating the final performance by 16 years. All five copies are equipped with dates, and the names of most of the copyists are known. The only usable (non-fragmental) early text of the *Chester* cycle is the copy of the single pageant of Antichrist surviving in Wales National Library, MS Peniarth 399 D (discussed in 5.12 above). This manuscript is dated to c. 1500. I collected the data for the present project from

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Lumiansky and Mills (1974), but I also consulted their 1973 facsimile edition, as well as the three British Library *Chester* cycle manuscripts.

Following the practice of Lumiansky and Mills (1974), the MS HM 2 is referred to as Hm below. For practical purposes, all the *Chester* cycle manuscripts have been given sigla (Lumiansky and Mills 1974: ix-xxiii).<sup>274</sup> The manuscripts and sigla are listed below. The five first sigla represent the copies of the full *Chester* cycle, while the last two refer to single pageants' texts. The names of the scribes are given to the right.

Siglum	MS	Date	Scribe
Hm	Huntington Library HM2	1591	Gregorie
A	British Library Additional 10305	1592	Bellin
R	British Library Harley 2013	1600	Bellin
B	Bodleian Library Bodley 175	1604	Bedford
H	British Library Harley 2124	1607	2 anonymous + Miller, main hand
P	Wales National Library Peniarth 399 D (pageant no. 23)	c. 1500	Anonymous
C	Coopers' Guild copy (pageant no. 16)	1599	Bellin

**Table 5-2 The Chester manuscripts, witness dates, and scribes**

<sup>274</sup> To facilitate comparison, Lumiansky and Mills give the readings from the other manuscripts (A, R, B, H) where they differ from Hm in meaning. Variation among the manuscripts in the use of the interjections A and O (or other substitutions or omissions) can be detected from Lumiansky and Mills' apparatus. Orthographic variation, however, is not marked. For example the spelling of the interjection A (as <a> or <ah>) cannot be compared from the 1974 edition alone. For such variation three *Chester* manuscripts were consulted in the British Library in 2008. Some variation was found and is reported in Chapter 7.

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As shown in table 5-2, most of the *Chester* cycle manuscripts contain only one main hand. The main hand in the Hm manuscript has been recognised as one Edward Gregorie, a citizen of Chester (Mills 1998: 187).<sup>275</sup> Data from MSS Hm, R (pageant no. 1 only) and P have been included in the database. In addition, I have used C and parts of the other manuscripts for linguistic comparison, but these were not included in the database.

In addition to the Hm scribe, there is one copyist of particular interest to the present study: George Bellin. He was responsible for A and R, i.e. two of the full *Chester* cycle copies, as well as for C, the Coopers' Guild pageant copy (Mills 1998: 187). Bellin worked as a scribe for the Coopers' Guild in Chester for many years (Lumiansky and Mills 1974: xv). The R copy was used by Lumiansky and Mills to supplement the Hm manuscript for its lack of pageant no.1. The Hm manuscript contains 23 pageants (no.1 is lost), while the *Chester* cycle seems to have had 24 or 25, depending on the division of pageants.<sup>276</sup>

The *Chester* cycle seems originally to have been performed like the *York* cycle was: on Corpus Christi Day by the guilds on movable pageant wagons in the streets (Mills 1998: 173).<sup>277</sup> The main difference between the two cycles is that the *York* cycle was performed annually while the *Chester* cycle was not. At some point in the 1520s Chester's play was moved to Whitsun (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 175, 182), also in early summer, and it was performed over three days instead of just one. Only once in the text, however, does the Expositor refer to the different days (pageant 5, l. 551). This

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<sup>275</sup> Three passages in MS Hm exhibit work of other hands than Gregorie's, but none of these passages contains any interjections and therefore the data for the present study are not affected by the shifts of hands. These passages consist of 11 lines in pageant 5, 25 lines in pageant 6, and one line in pageant 22 (Lumiansky and Mills 1974: xii)

<sup>276</sup> The H copy contains a couple of episodes not included in the other manuscript, and therefore it stands apart from the rest, referred to as the "Group" by Lumiansky and Mills (1974: xxviii).

<sup>277</sup> The earliest reference to a Corpus Christi play in Chester is dated to 1422, from whence a dispute between two guilds is recorded (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 169). At this point, i.e. the first quarter of the fifteenth century, Chester records evidence the existence of three pageants: Nativity, Flagellation, and Crucifixion (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 174-75). In other words, the records reveal that Chester's cycle was developed after the *York* cycle, but before the *Towneley* and the *N-town* cycles.

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reference splits the cycle into an Old and a New Testament part, a division which may reflect the four-day performance of the last staging of them all, in 1575 (Mills 1998: 157-58).

More than the other cycles, the *Chester* cycle makes use of a unifying principle transgressing the individual pageants. This unification is achieved in particular by the means of an Expositor character pointing forwards and backwards between the biblical episodes, focussing especially on signs and prophecies and the fulfilments of them. The prophecies may be staged or simply referred to in the cycle pageants. No other cycle demonstrates such meticulous topical coherence. It seems likely, therefore, that the cycle went through a major revision at some point (Section 3.5.6). The result was the cycle as it survives – a unified series of pageants mainly rid of much particularly Catholic subject matter.<sup>278</sup>

Two sets of Banns exist in connection with the *Chester* cycle, supporting the idea that there was an early and a later version of the cycle: a Pre- and a Post-Reformation *Chester* cycle (Mills 1998: 163-180). Very little is known about the earlier version of the *Chester* cycle, as all surviving manuscripts reflect the later version. Lumiansky and Mills (1983: 48) suggest all extant copies stem from a common exemplar dated to 1500-1550. They (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 41) date the lost exemplar to c. 1530 on the basis of vocabulary and on text-internal references to datable events. Documentary evidence shows that the exemplar went missing around 1568.

Records from 1422 attest two things: a Corpus Christi play existed in Chester at this point, and there was an original master-copy of the cycle of pageants (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 169-70). Three guilds' plays are attested in 1422

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<sup>278</sup> There is, for example, very little about the Virgin Mary compared to the other cycles. On the other hand, there is enough discrepancy among the five extant cycle texts to suggest that the exemplar was a working text offering options in staging. The exemplar contained directions in the margin implying different solutions, and these marginal directions are treated differently by the scribes. Mistakes in the exemplar are also recognisable in the extant copies, because they appear emended in different ways in the copies. On the basis of the mistakes in the lost exemplar, Lumiansky and Mills (1983: 5) suggest that there must have been an earlier "Pre-Exemplar" without them. This fifteenth century pre-exemplar may have been merely the guilds' copies, or, more likely, it was a compilation of these (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 169-70).

or earlier. These are 'Nativity' belonging to the Chester Wrights Guild; 'Flagellation' belonging to Fletchers, Bowyers, Stringers, Coopers, and Turners (5.26 below); and 'Crucifixion' belonging to the Ironmongers (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 174-75). The texts do not survive, so it is unknown to what extent these pageants paralleled the later ones. As the contents of the *Chester* cycle and the details of the individual pageants may have changed much from the cycle's beginning, the earliest archival attestations cannot be taken as the date of composition. Rather, the suggested date of revision, i.e. 1500-50, has been adopted as the composition date in the present study.

The *Chester* cycle text in Lumiansky and Mills (1974) totals 11,076 lines, made up of the 10,775 lines of text in the MS Hm text and the 301 lines from MS R, i.e. pageant no. 1. The *Chester* cycle copies are too late for inclusion in LALME, but there is little doubt that the copies were executed by Chester men and that they belonged in Chester (Mills 1998: 192). The language of the earliest manuscript, the Chester Peniarth 'Antichrist' from c.1500, was localised in Cheshire (LP 750 in LALME III: 48) (5.13 above). However, the later copies may represent a variety of Chester language, or even individual scribal interpretations of what used to be Chester dialect. To varying extents, the *Chester* cycle copyists kept, modernised, or archaised the language of the the exemplar they were copying from. Mills (1998: 189-192) discusses how the *Chester* cycle copies reveal alternative interpretations where the copyists were faced with problems in the exemplar text.<sup>279</sup>

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<sup>279</sup> One example of scribal confusion due to difficulties with the exemplar is the word *pewee-ars* found in MS Hm (Lumiansky and Mills 1974: 310, l. 150). Further, Mills (1998: 189) finds that Belli, who produced two full copies, changed his readings in towards a better text, but a text not necessarily closer to original (i.e. exemplar reading). Similarly, Mills (1998: 192) states about the last copyist, Miller, that he appears to have been particularly "intent on making sense of a difficult Exemplar". This intention implied that he produced the only copy which includes all the optional episodes, but which probably does not reflect a *Chester* cycle as it was staged at any point in the past.

### 5.26 Chester Coopers' 'Trial and Flagellation', MS C 1599

The *Chester* cycle pageant concerned with the 'Trial and Flagellation of Christ' was once the shared responsibility of *The Fletchers, Bowiers, Cowpers, and Stringers...* (in Lumiansky and Mills 1974: 284). The Coopers' Company own a copy of the single pageant text, which corresponds to pageant no. 16 in the *Chester* cycle. Mills (1998: 187) identified the single hand in the manuscript as the same George Bellin responsible for two of the full *Chester* cycle copies (A and R, see 5.25 above).

The copy is dated by the scribe to *the 22th day of August, 1599, in the one and fortie yeare of the Reigne of our Sovereigne Ladye Elizabeth...* (in Lumiansky and Mills 1974: xvii). I collected the data from Lumiansky and Mills' edition (1974: 517-532), where it is included as Appendix IIC. The data have not been entered into the database. The text was used to compare scribal treatment of interjections in parallel copies (Section 3.4.2). In contrast to two of the other single pageant texts (discussed in Chapter 3), the Chester Coopers's text cannot have been a prompt-copy to be used in staging. Like the rest of the late *Chester* cycle copies, it seems made for antiquarian purposes well after the staging of a cycle play had ceased in Chester.

The 'Trial and Flagellation' pageant has 408 lines in Lumiansky and Mills (1974), while there are only 394 lines in the corresponding pageant in the *Chester* cycle in MS Hm. The stage directions are in Latin in both versions. There are fourteen of them in both copies, but they do not always occur in the same places, or with the same meaning.

As the Chester Coopers' pageant text is late, the language has not been localised in LALME. At this date, a fairly standardised language would be expected, except perhaps in rhymes, alliterative phrases and certain collocations. As the *Chester* cycle copies, including the text of 'Trial and Flagellation', were copied for someone with antiquarian interests, there may have been other principles at work for these scribes. If they wanted to preserve the language as well as the contents, some of them may have looked backwards regarding vocabulary and orthography, i.e. they archaised the language. Section 6.10.5 contains a short discussion of any diachronic

changes in the use of interjections found by comparing the *Chester* cycle texts to each other and to the rest of the play texts.

### 5.27 Chronology of text witness and of composition

The evidence of the witness dates of the play copies has been presented above. If the scribes translated in copying from older exemplars, it is expected that the language of the play texts represent the language of the scribes rather than the language of the original play (Chapter 2 discusses scribal behaviour). However, it is also true that scribes tend to treat end rhyme, alliteration and collocations conservatively, and for this reason many of the play texts may contain a mixture of forms (all are versified, and many make use of alliteration).

In order to compare the use and distribution of the interjections in the play texts, it is necessary not only to establish witness dates but also to keep in mind that the play text in some cases was significantly older than the extant copy. Chapter 7 investigates whether there are any differences in the relative frequency of interjections according to which date - manuscript or composition - is used in diachronic comparisons.

Obviously, composition dates are even more uncertain than witness dates. For some Middle English plays there are external records testifying to their performance at a certain time and a certain place, but even in these cases it cannot be established that the text performed matches the text that survives. For most plays there are no such records, and the composition dates must be established from linguistic and/or extra-textual clues in the texts themselves. The present project bases the composition dates given below on editors' suggestions. Appendix I discusses such suggestions and other details about the plays as plays rather than as texts.

Table 5-3 below lists the texts according to date of the manuscript or print. The second table, 5-4, lists the plays according to the likely chronological order of composition.

#### **Witness date order**

1	<i>Perseverance</i> , 1440
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2	Winchester Dialogues, 1450
3	Northampton <i>Abraham</i> , 1461
4	<i>York</i> cycle, 1463-78
5	<i>N-town</i> cycle, latter half of 15 <sup>th</sup> c. <sup>a</sup>
6	<i>Wisdom</i> , latter half of 15 <sup>th</sup> c.
7	<i>Mankind</i> , latter half of 15 <sup>th</sup> c.
8	Brome <i>Abraham</i> , late 15 <sup>th</sup> c.
9	<i>Towneley</i> cycle, c.1500
10	Chester Peniarth ‘Antichrist’, c.1500
11	<i>Fulgens and Lucrez</i> print, 1512
12	<i>Herod</i> , 1512
13	<i>Hickscorner</i> print, 1514
14	<i>Mary Magdalen</i> , 1515-20
15	<i>Conversion</i> , 1520-25 (+ 1550, see below)
16	<i>Burial and Resurrection</i> , 1520
17	<i>Sacrament</i> , 1520s? (editorial disagreement)
18	<i>Mundus et Infans</i> print, 1522
19	<i>Nature</i> print, 1530
20	<i>Everyman</i> print, 1530
21	<i>Magnyfycence</i> print, 1530
22	York Scriveners’ ‘Thomas’, 1550
15b	<i>Conversion</i> , 1550-interpolation (not analysed separately, but in some of the analyses subtracted from the <i>Conversion</i> text)
23	<i>York</i> , two pageant texts by Hand C, 1560-70
24	<i>Chester</i> cycle, 1591 + 1600 (MS Hm by Gregorie and MS R by Bellin)
25	Chester Coopers’ ‘Trial’, 1599 (MS C by Bellin)

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**Table 5-3 Dates: witness dates**



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<sup>a</sup>The date of the *N-town* cycle manuscript is very uncertain. The date 1468 is found in the manuscript, and the watermarks on some of the paper used comply with this date, but the compilation was executed by more than one hand and it may have taken some years in the making (Spector 1991: xxxviii-xxxix).

Table 5-3 illustrates that the earliest copy is that of the *Castle of Perseverance*. There is reason to believe that the *York* cycle was composed at least as early, but the text survives in a copy of later date than that containing *Perseverance*. When two or more texts compete for the same witness date, such as is the case with *Nature*, *Everyman*, and *Magnyfycence*, the play of earliest composition is listed before the others. It is clear in the case of the three texts just mentioned that Medwall's *Nature* is the oldest play of the three; *Everyman* exists in fragmented print before the print dated to 1530 used in the present study, and it is therefore an earlier play than Skelton's *Magnyfycence*. The witness date of the *Play of the Sacrament* has been put to the 1520s, i.e. the most logical solution when Bevington (1975: 756) suggests the late fifteenth century, Davis (1970: lxxi-lxxii) suggests well into the sixteenth century, and Walker (2000: 214) suggests the mid-sixteenth century.<sup>280</sup>

To enable comparison between composition and witness chronologies, a list of relative order of composition is supplied in Table 5-4 below. It should be noted that the composition dates are rarely exact, but taken together they at least offer a list of the plays' relative order of origin. The information in parentheses notes the editors' main arguments for the date (see Appendix I for more detail).

### **Composition date order**

- 1 *York* cycle, before 1415, before 1377? (extra-textual information)
  - 2 *Perseverance*, 1400-25 (language)
- 

<sup>280</sup> Davis (1970) gives the most detailed description, among other things of the undated watermark which look similar to watermarks used between 1526 and the mid-sixteenth century. According to Davis (1970: lxxii), the three hands appear to be of somewhat earlier date than the paper. These facts about the paper and the handwriting, would seem to supply corroborating evidence of a witness date later than 1520 but earlier than 1550.

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- 3 Northampton *Abraham*, 1400-50
- 4 Winchester Dialogues, 1450
- 5 *N-town* parts? (language; lexis)<sup>a</sup>
- 6 Brome *Abraham*, 1450-75 (language)
- 7 *Wisdom*, 1460 (language)
- 8 *Mankind*, 1465-70 (coins)
- 9 *Towneley* cycle, after 1450 (demography of Wakefield)
- 10 *N-town* compilation, 1468? (marginalia, inventory, costume)
- 11 *Sacrament*, after 1461: 1470-1520? (1461 = date in Proclamation to play)
- 12 *Fulgens and Lucrez*, 1490s (extra-textual/biographical information)
- 13 *Nature*, 1490s (extra-textual/biographical information)
- 14 *Mary Magdalen*, end of 15<sup>th</sup> c. (language)
- 15 Chester Peniarth ‘Antichrist’, before 1500?
- 16 *Everyman* in English, 1510? (date of first – fragmentary - print)
- 17 *Herod*, 1512 if authorial (marginalia, structure)
- 18 *Hickscorner*, 1513 (references; listed ships vs. known shipwrecks)
- 19 *Magnyfycence*, 1519-20
- 20 *Mundus et Infans*, before 1522
- 21 *Burial and Resurrection*, c. 1520, authorial
- 22 *Conversion*, 1520?
- 23 *Chester* cycle, 1530 revision?

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### Table 5-4 Relative chronological order of composition

<sup>a</sup> Spector (1991: xl-xli) finds the vocabulary of the Mary and Passion parts in the *N-town* cycle to be relatively late: no earlier than 1425, probably later. The vocabulary indicates that the different parts of the *N-town* cycle originated in the fifteenth century, perhaps around the mid-fifteenth century.

Tables 5-3 and 5-4 differ in length as the witness date list contains more detail about individual hands and insertions in the manuscripts. The *York* Register, for example, contains the work of scribes from both the fifteenth and sixteenth

## INTERJECTIONS IN LATE MIDDLE ENGLISH PLAY TEXTS

centuries, but the fifteenth century *York* cycle already comprised the two pageants whose texts were added a century later by Hand C, as is attested by the space left open for them (see Section 5.6). Even though it is not certain that the texts that Hand C entered into the Register represent the 100 years older pageants, it would be incorrect to suggest that they were composed at the time of Hand C's writing them. The first list (Table 5-3), therefore, separates the work done by Hands A and B from that done by Hand C. The second list (Table 5-4) does not.

Likewise, even though the *Conversion of St Paul* play contains an addition physically interpolated into the manuscript around 1550, it would not be true to suggest that the play was composed this late. The list of manuscript dates, therefore, includes entries for both the original *Conversion* manuscript and for the interpolation, while the list of composition dates only includes an entry for the approximate date of composition of the major part of the play.

By listing the plays by composition dates, the *York* cycle is placed where it belongs in the eyes of many students of medieval English drama: as the earliest (complete) English play. However, Table 5-4 also demonstrates that the morality plays and interludes are not much later than the biblical cycles: *Perseverance* originated in the first quarter of the fifteenth century, and the *Winchester Dialogues* – two interludes – were composed around the mid-fifteenth century. As mentioned (Section 3.5.5), there also exist early fragments (not included) of morality plays and interludes, attesting to the parallel existence of many types of Middle English drama. Neither of the lists above supports a theory of evolution from one play type to another, as has commonly been assumed in discussions of medieval drama (Section 3.5.4).

It remains to be seen whether there are any differences in types and/or numbers of interjections used in the different play types, or according to the date of the play or date of the manuscript in which it survives. Chapter 6 contains discussions of the individual types of interjections, while Chapter 7 tests some of the findings quantitatively.

## 6 The meaning and function of interjections

### 6.0 *Abstract*

This chapter opens with a short re-introduction of the most relevant literature on interjections in historical English texts, before each interjection type is discussed individually. The short (monosyllabic) interjections are discussed first, before discussions of the longer (di- and polysyllabic) ones follow. Some words whose status as interjections is uncertain are discussed towards the end. Lastly the chapter gives a summary of the findings, and returns to the definition of interjections using the actual findings in Middle English drama texts. The major part of the present chapter, however, is devoted to the interjections found in the material. Each interjection type is presented with number of occurrences, variant spelling forms, distribution in speakers' turns, collocations, constructions, and the most common functions. Since one aim is to establish whether interjections serve as markers of subgenre and/or character, the discussion of each interjection type also addresses these issues: whether certain interjection types are connected to certain drama subgenres, and/or certain character types, or whether they appear to be universal, i.e. used by good and bad, male and female characters in all the subgenres. Usage is exemplified with quotes from the material.

### 6.1 *Some conventions of citation and terminology*

In the following discussion, capitals are used below to denote the type of interjection, and angled brackets are used to show spelling forms, in this manner: the interjection A is spelt <a> or <ah>. Quotes are given in italics, and as far as possible in the original spelling. Sometimes editorial punctuation is given for clarity; this is always stated. In the cases of cycle plays, the quotes are given with play title, followed by pageant number and line number, in this fashion: *Towneley* 13: 850. Quotes from other play types are referred to by title and line number only, like this: *Conversion*: 13.

Following stylistic convention, play titles are italicised when they appear in the text, but for ease of reading they are not italicised when occurring immediately after italicised quotes: *Ay so!* / *He is lyke to oure shepe!*

(Towneley 13: 850-1). Line numbers are based on the main editions used. A list of editions is found in the bibliography, and a list of short titles, such as CP for *The Castle of Perseverance*, is found at the very end of the present chapter.<sup>281</sup> A list of play characters is provided in Appendix II. Stage directions are not numbered in editions and therefore the convention in analyses of historical play texts is that stage directions (abbreviated as SD) are given with reference to the preceding line and a + symbol, in this manner: *Towneley 13. SD 40+*.

The terms ‘construction’ and ‘collocation’ are used in the discussion below. ‘Construction’ refers to the clauses which interjections sometimes are part of when they are not syntactically independent. Such constructions commonly consist of an interjection plus ‘on’, ‘for’ or ‘that’, such as ‘fie on you’, ‘alas for shame’, and ‘alas that we were wrought’. The term ‘collocation’ is mainly used about interjections when they occur in a series with other interjections, such as ‘out harrow and wellaway’.

## 6.2 *Previous studies of historical interjections*

The most relevant studies of interjections in historical English texts are relatively recent. As the work on the present project started, it referred mostly to Taavitsainen’s two corpus-based studies on interjections in Early Middle English (1995) and on exclamations in Late Middle English. Only later did I find Koskenniemi’s (1962) work on interjections and other words in play texts of slightly later date (1550-1600) than the material explored here. Important works on interjections in historical texts have been published after the present project started, notably Mazzon’s (2009) book on dialogue in the *N-town* cycle (the text is also included in the present study), and Culpeper and Kytö’s (2010) book on Early Modern English dialogue. The present chapter refers to all these studies, but especially to the works by Taavitsainen and by Culpeper and Kytö.

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<sup>281</sup> A list of abbreviations, such as *Perseverance* for the *Castle of Perseverance*, is given after the list of contents.

## 6. THE INTERJECTIONS

### 6.3 *Types of interjections and their meaning*

In order to recognise the potential for meaning that interjections in plays texts may have had, it is necessary to identify distinct types of interjections. The *Oxford English Dictionary* (henceforth *OED*) supplies a starting point, but even though the *OED* gives valuable information about meaning, etymology, orthography, quotes and earliest attested dates, Middle English interjections must still be interpreted on individual terms for two main reasons.<sup>282</sup>

First, there are relatively few sources, and consequently it is hardly possible for a dictionary to cover all possible aspects interjections in Middle English interjections. The fewer attestations, the less can be said with any certainty concerning each type of interjection in Middle English. Some of the interjections found in the present study do not occur in the *OED* at all, others may happen to attest unusual rather than typical usage, due to random survival. The fewer attestations, the less certainty can be claimed about their typical usage. Secondly, when the *OED* suggests meanings of interjections, it must be borne in mind that Middle English interjections are difficult to categorise due to the Middle English orthographic variation. It is not certain that the spelling forms <a>, <ah>, and <ha> represent distinct types of interjections, or whether they are variable forms influenced by h-dropping (and overcompensation) really representing the same type of interjection.

In addition, since interjections in writing represent spontaneous oral outbursts, the orthographic representation of them may be problematic, even in standardised languages. The spelling forms of interjections are sometimes at odds with the normal orthography of the (written) language in which they occur. In the literature this phenomenon has frequently been used as part of the definition of interjections, when scholars state that some interjections take on anomalous forms or appear as non-words (e.g. Ameka 1992a: 105-06). In Present-Day English these may be spelling forms such as *sh!* However, the term 'anomalous' appears rather meaningless in descriptions of Middle English spelling forms, as Middle English had no standardised orthography. Many forms, not just interjections, appear 'anomalous', or unique, when compared to Present-day English vocabulary.

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<sup>282</sup> Koskeniemi (1962) also gives the meanings of the interjections explored, but these seem in the main to be collected from the *OED*.

The recognition of similar and distinct types of Middle English interjections cannot, therefore, rely solely on the orthographic representation. The problem of orthographic variation does not only amount to the forms with and without the <h>-grapheme mentioned above. It can affect the realisation of vowel sounds, as well. It can be hypothesised that the interjections A and O represent distinct types, or, conversely, that they are merely conventionalised spelling forms really stemming from the same natural expression.<sup>283</sup> If the latter is the case, it is possible that the spelling form <a> is preferred in some dialects, while <o> is preferred in others. In the present chapter, the interjections A and O have been treated as distinct types, but it will be seen that their distribution and function frequently overlap. Chapter 7 explores by quantitative analysis whether any dialect pattern appears in the distribution of A versus O.

Therefore, each interjection has been interpreted from context, with an awareness of the particularities of Middle English orthography and manuscript production. Function-to-form mapping has been used to supplement form-to-function mapping, in order to recognise interjections and distinct categories of them. In this manner some previously unexplored interjection types have been found, and will be discussed in the following. However, this method of identifying interjections has also led to the reanalysis of certain items usually described as interjections, and to the questioning of whether these items function as typical interjections at all.

#### 6.4 *The distribution of interjections*

The distribution of ME interjections is looked at from several angles. First, the present project aims at establishing whether interjections typically appear at the beginning of turns, as expected. If interjections in Middle English play texts imitate the spoken mode, they should occur turn-initially as natural reactions – expressive, phatic, or conative – to ongoing conversation or action. If some interjection types show alternative patterns, they may not be

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<sup>283</sup> Both forms can be spelt with a final <h>, but bearing the variability of Middle English orthography in mind, it is not at all certain that the forms <ah> or <oh> represent sounds with final aspiration whereas <a> and <o> do not. The spelling form <oh> does not occur in the ME play material, but it is found in Early Modern English texts (Cf. Culpeper and Kytö 2010).

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prototypical interjections. Perhaps they rather belong in other pragmatic classes (Cf. Section 6.8.11 on LO).

Secondly, it has been found that interjections can serve poetic (stylistic) functions in play texts, e.g. in sequential repetitions, in poetic analysis referred to as ‘anaphora’. However, interjections occurring in poetic functions seem always to express emotion simultaneously. Such interjection-initiated anaphora, therefore, serve expressive as well as stylistic functions (Cf. Taavitsainen 1995: 462; 1997: 602). An example of such co-occurring functions can clarify this: the following quote stems from the miracle play of *Mary Magdalen*. The speech belongs to the dying Lazarus. The interjection A opens all three lines in sequence.

*A! I bome a-bove, I wax alle swertt!*

*A, good Iesu, thow be my gyde!*

*A! no lengar now I revert!*

(*Mary Magdalen*: 780-82. Punctuation is editorial)

The latter two occurrences of the interjection A above do not occur turn-initially, like interjections typically should according to a definition of them as spontaneous reactions. Yet, all three examples of A conform to another important criterion of interjections; they mark emotion, in this case of pain and/or fear.

Thirdly, it has been hypothesised that interjections mark subgenres of medieval drama, i.e. certain types of interjections may be more frequent in certain types of ME plays. If, for instance, the interjection O stems from biblical usage and is connected to biblical material and characters, such as God, it can be hypothesised that O occurs more frequently in biblical plays than in non-biblical plays. This aspect is connected to that of characterisation of *dramatis personae*, and therefore to the question about function below: are interjections used for characterisation of certain character types?

Chapter 6 discusses in which subgenre of ME plays each interjection type occurs. This, and other questions relating to distribution, is examined quantitatively in Chapter 7.



### 6.5 *The function of interjections*

The present chapter discusses both the distribution and the function of interjections in Middle English play texts. As mentioned, distribution refers to the environment of interjections and the frequency of their occurrence in the various types of late medieval English drama. Some questions concerning distribution, however, partly overlap with questions of function. When interjections are typically distributed in turn-initial position, they may be so because they are used to imitate the natural expression of speakers' emotions or attitudes found in the spoken mode. This potential as emotive expressions is one of the functional sides to interjections.

In the present study, Ameka's (1992) tripartite functional classification of (spoken, primary) interjections has been used (cf. Section 2.4.3). Both Taavitsainen (1995; 1997) and Culpeper and Kytö (2010) employ Ameka's classification in their discussions of interjections/pragmatic noise. Thus, the findings in the ME play material can be compared to these important studies of interjections in English historical texts. In the following, some Middle English interjections have been selected to illustrate the various functions: expressive (emotive and cognitive), conative, and phatic.

The interjections A and AHA may serve as examples of the expressive function in ME play texts. The interjection A expresses speaker's emotion and/or attitude (emotive and cognitive states). The interjection A is, for example, commonly used to express emotion of both joy and sadness, including reaction to sensation such as physical pain; but it can also be used to express cognition, such as realisation. The interjection AHA is not as versatile as the expressive emotive and cognitive A - AHA is used to express speaker's cognitive state, usually realisation.

However, the expressive emotive and cognitive functions often co-occur, for example when the interjection A is used to greet enthusiastically (emotion) new characters while at the same time expressing surprise (attitude) to see the new character, and/or recognition (cognition) of the new character. Since expressive function can only simplistically be divided into emotive and cognitive reaction – feeling and thinking are often interconnected – it is not necessary (or always possible) to distinguish very strictly between them.

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Thus, the cognitive, emotional, as well as the physical reaction to pain, must all be seen as fulfilling expressive functions.

The second function of interjections, i.e. the conative, addressee-oriented function, is found for example in attention calls in the Middle English play material. The interjections HOWE and HO typically serve conative functions. Simultaneously, HO may serve expressive functions, as it is frequently spoken by an angry character. Conversely, the mainly expressive interjection A, can also be understood to fulfil conative function when used in greetings. Greetings between characters frequently open with the interjection A, often with a vocative (name or title of the addressee). In such cases, the interjection A not only expresses the speaker's attitude – recognition – they may be addressee-oriented, too.

Taavitsainen (1995) also finds this kind of conative usage in her Early Modern English material. She establishes that interjections in Early Modern English texts may have addressees (Taavitsainen 1995: 463), contrastive to Ameka's (1992a: 109) statement that conative (and phatic) interjections "may be directed at people, but are not addressed to people." Even if greetings in Middle English drama texts can be spontaneous outbursts, they commonly also have obvious addressees. Often, they seem to denote respect for the addressee. This conative function is found in the frequent use of A and O followed by a vocative, such as in *A Lord* and *O Master*.<sup>284</sup>

The third function of interjections is phatic, i.e. contact-oriented. According to Ameka's (1992a: 114) classification of interjections in speech, phatic interjections comprise the short responses humans make in conversation to establish and maintain spoken contact. These are described in Culpeper and Kytö as "backchannelling vocalisations, such as MHM, UH-HUH" (2010: 205). Middle English drama contains few such backchannelling vocalisations.

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<sup>284</sup> One exception to such a conative, addressee-oriented function occurs when A is used to express surprise bordering on fear. Biblical characters are occasionally awakened by angels bringing messages (e.g. to the sleeping shepherds of the Nativity), and the awoken characters typically react by exclaiming the interjection A. This usage seems to reflect fear, i.e. in this context the interjection serves speaker-oriented, expressive functions, and not conative functions. Interjections caused by fear are comparable to reactions caused by pain: they are spontaneous physical and oral outburst not directed at a listener.

Culpeper and Kytö (2010) claim that many of the pragmatic noise items found in Early Modern English dialogic texts, drama among them, serve phatic functions. However, their analysis seems to rest on a somewhat broader understanding of phatic function than that proposed by Ameka (1992a: 114). Any pragmatic noise that can be seen as serving politeness functions (or breach of politeness strategies, i.e. impoliteness) appears included in the group of phatic pragmatic noise in Culpeper and Kytö. It is possible that more of the Early Modern English material includes focus on conversation itself, than the Middle English play material does. On the other hand, it is also conceivable that Culpeper and Kytö emphasise the politeness aspect of their material to the extent that they classify as functioning phatically those cases in which interjections serve multi-functional purposes.

As stated, the discussion of function need be related to distribution. Interjections may at the same time function as signals of speaker's emotion, as initiators of turns, as markers of subgenre, and as markers of character. In addition, interjections may serve stylistic functions in medieval versified drama (above). Functions may co-occur; the interjections A and O may occur in phrase-like vocative constructions, at the same time as they mark emotion or attitude, and are used poetically as anaphora. All these varied functions must be considered in an analysis aiming at more than a simple description of the distribution of Middle English interjection.

### *6.6 Short and long interjections*

The following discussion of interjection types has been divided in three subsections: short interjections, long interjections, and phrases. It is inherent in the nature of interjections as spontaneous oral reactions, that they are naturally short. The longer interjections appear less spontaneous, since it can be claimed that longer words take more mental processing. The first subsection treats the prototypical interjections which can be described as short, more or less spontaneous, outbursts. By short is meant monosyllabic items. Disyllabic interjections, including reduplicated interjections, are described as long in the following. The phrases, whose status as typical interjections is uncertain, can be either disyllabic or multisyllabic. However, even this simple delimitation has its problems.

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In Middle English the question of which items are short, i.e. monosyllabic, recurs concerning e.g. the interjection types HO and HOWE. It is not obvious that one item is short and the other is long, i.g. disyllabic. Middle English spelling systems in varying degrees reflect the loss of final <e> in pronunciation. In some texts final <e> graphemes are kept in rhyme pairs for example, while the rest of the text reveals that the sound was lost in speech. Thus it is difficult to know whether HOWE (when spelt <howe>) and WAR (sometimes spelt <war(r)e>) were monosyllabic or disyllabic interjections in Late Middle English dialects. In some cases therefore, it can be difficult to draw a line separating the short types of interjections from the longer ones. In the following interjections which are presumed to have been short are discussed first, while disyllabic and polysyllabic interjection types are discussed thereafter. It is assumed that the short interjections are closer to natural outbursts, except for those interjection types which consist of reduplications, such as HA HA. Natural versus phrasal derivation will be discussed in each case.

Especially the works of Taavitsainen (1995; 1997) and Culpeper and Kytö (2010) will be referred to in the following discussions. The present study also includes some interjection types that to the best of knowledge have not been discussed elsewhere. These interjections conform to the working definition, and may have been overlooked previously because they constitute unconventional spelling variants of other types of interjections, or they may be unique for the ME play texts in which they occur. These rare occurrences can contribute to the discussion of the relationship between the spoken and the written level of language especially, since most of them may be closely connected to actual speech (TRUS, TUP, TUT *etc* below). At the same time these unique forms can cast new light on the interjection types that are already recognised as interjections. Some examples are TRUS, QWYST and TUT, of which the latter may be an attestation of the interjection described as a ‘palatal click’ in the *OED* (TUT).

The chapter first discusses the short interjections, i.e. the monosyllabic interjections probably deriving from the natural outbursts closely related to body language. Some have related forms in other languages, while others may be specific to English. These short interjection types conform to the working hypothesis, and their status as core interjections is usually uncontroversial.

Secondly, the chapter discusses the longer interjections, consisting of more than one syllable (or sound). Research on historical interjections also typically includes many of these types.<sup>285</sup>

Thirdly, the present chapter discusses three types of discourse markers formerly discussed by Taavitsainen (1997) as bordering on exclamations in Middle English. It has been examined whether these three items, BENEDICITE, GRAMERCY, and PARDIE, typically form syntactically independent utterances used for expressive functions, like interjections proper. Unlike many interjections, however, these items do not stem from natural expressions, but from words or phrases. BENEDICITE is an import from Latin, while GRAMERCY and PARDIE developed from French, just like ALAS seems to have done (Section 6.9.1). The phrases appear gradually to have developed into single words, and by Late Middle English, they may be on their way of becoming interjections. These three items were included with the point in mind that they may help revising the definition of interjections in the end, or they may add to a fuller understanding of Middle English drama dialogue.

### 6.7 *List of abbreviations:*

The following abbreviations of play titles have been used in the discussion of interjection types. Identical short forms are used in statistics in the figures in Chapter 7.

YC = York cycle  
 NC = N-town cycle  
 TC = Towneley cycle  
 CC = Chester cycle  
 PA = Peniarth Antichrist Chester  
 NA = Northampton Abraham  
 BA = Brome Abraham  
 HK = Herod's Killing of the Children

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<sup>285</sup> Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 230), for example, include ALAS, describing it as different from other disyllabic interjections, the latter are normally reduplications ending in a vowel sound, whereas ALAS is not. Rather, Culpeper and Kytö (2010) include ALAS in the group of A-related forms.

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BR = Burial and Resurrection of Christ  
 CP = Castle of Perseverance  
 Mk = Mankind  
 Wd = Wisdom  
 Ev = Everyman  
 Na = Nature  
 MI = Mundus et Infans  
 MA = Mary Magdalen  
 ST = Conversion of St Paul  
 PS = Play of the Sacrament  
 LD = Lucidus and Dubius  
 OI = Occupation and Idleness  
 FL = Fulgens and Luces  
 Hi = Hickscorner  
 MG = Magnyfycence

### 6.8 *Short interjections*

The tables below illustrate the number of occurrences of each interjection type in each play text. The play texts are referred to in the top row by short abbreviations of the titles, e.g. the *York* cycle is abbreviated to YC (see the list above). The tables' second row gives the raw number of occurrences in each text. If the interjection type in question occurs in many play texts, the tables include all titles and non-occurrence is marked by a horizontal stroke. If an interjection type is infrequent and restricted to only a few texts, the relevant table lists only those play texts which contain the interjection type in question (e.g. in 6.8.2 *AY* below).

#### 6.8.1 *A*

YC	NC	TC	CC	PA	NA	BA	HK	BR	CP	Mk	Wd
150	131	93	108	10	13	31	(1)	32	21	5	8

Ev	Na	MI	MA	ST	PS	LD	OI	FL	Hi	MG
4	2	3	67	1	8	7	18	8	7	25

The interjection A is the most numerous of all interjection types in the Late Middle English play material, with its total of 753 occurrences. 706 are spelt simply <a>, and 43 are spelt <ah>.<sup>286</sup> The remaining four are spelt <ha>. All four forms spelt <ha> belong in the work of one scribe in the *N-town* cycle text, and may be peculiar to his repertoire. The reason for including these four forms with the interjection type A rather than with HA is discussed below.

Due to the variation in spelling in Late Middle English, the interjection types A, HA, AHA, and HA HA can be difficult to distinguish.<sup>287</sup> Frequent loss of <h> in unstressed position and consequent inclusion of unhistorical <h> partly explain why the spelling of these forms varies. An equally important factor could be the difficulty scribes may have had in devising relevant written realisations of spoken natural outbursts. The difference in meaning or usage between A and A-related forms (i.e. HA, AHA, and HA HA) cannot be based solely on orthography, but must be established from the context.<sup>288</sup>

Four occurrences spelt <ha> in the *N-town* cycle have been included in the A class rather than in the HA class (below), because the function is expressive-emotive, like that of A, and they occur singly rather than in collocations or

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<sup>286</sup> Seven occurrences spelt <ay> were first included in the A class as a northern variant, but have later been treated as a type of their own below. Judging from context, three occurrences of A, spelt <a> in the *Towneley* cycle seem to be short forms of 'all' (23: 581, 23: 582, and 26: 604). One example of A in *Mankind* (l. 100) similarly seems to be contracted 'and'. One A in *Christ's Burial* (l. 1) is ambiguous, and could be either an article or an interjection. All these were excluded from the 753 occurrences of A.

<sup>287</sup> Especially reduplications vary in orthography. When A is reduplicated it sometimes occurs as <a ha> even though the cognitive 'aha' (modern spelling) is not implied. Rather it seems the reduplication is used to strengthen the emotion expressed in the single A, and the h-grapheme is inserted as a linking device. The possible distinction between A and HA implied by spelling is uncertain, but distinct HA-forms are relatively infrequent (counting 8 examples, only 3 occurring singly). HA is too scarce for quantitative analysis (Chapter 7), but see 6.8.3 below for a qualitative discussion.

<sup>288</sup> In a few cases, unambiguous classification has turned out to be impossible, and the issue of whether a certain form is an interjection or belongs in another word class remains unsolved. See for example YO, Section 6.8.16, and the occurrence of the form <3o> in the *Mankind* text.

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reduplications denoting laughter or realisation.<sup>289</sup> These four examples of A spelt <ha> are not imitations of laughter, HA HA, or parts of the cognitive expression, AHA. Neither do they correspond to the interjection type HA, which is used to express physical strain or extreme anger (below). These three interjection types, the expressive-cognitive AHA, the expressive-emotive HA HA, and the expressive-physical call HA are more specialised than A, and have been categorised as such (below).

Occurrences of reduplicated <a>, which are not AHA or HA HA, have been interpreted as reinforcing the meaning already present in A, and have therefore been included in this class. Especially in one play text, *Burial and Resurrection of Christ*, the playwright-reviser (Section 5.18) utilises the A interjection to extremes, and simply reduplicates A in order to strengthen the meaning of lament, or even to specify the imitative sound of weeping, often spelling them <A. A.>.<sup>290</sup> These weeping-imitations were included in the A class, but have been counted as one example of A rather than two (or even three). Other dramatists, or copyists, use reduplicated simple A, spelt <a a> without including the h-grapheme at all (cf. <ha> above), to express for example the cognitive AHA, or even laughter (*Perseverance*: 2687). As mentioned, these two specialised functions have been treated as separate interjection types.

Rather more complicated than distinguishing A from HA and other <ah/ha> spellings, is the functional differentiation of A and O (Section 6.8.7). They clearly form different orthographic types, but A and O often seem to overlap in function and distribution, especially before vocatives in addresses to God or other characters. The question remains whether the graphemes <a> and <o> in this context really represented different sounds in all Late Middle English dialects. The two interjection types A and O are discussed in Section 6.8.1.1 and in a separate section in Chapter 7 dealing with dialect variation.

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<sup>289</sup> Mazzon (2009: 83) likewise presents two interjections spelt <ha> as A rather than HA.

<sup>290</sup> Triply repeated A for weeping is found once in the *N-town* cycle text. Like the *Burial and Resurrection* reviser-playwright, the *N-town* scribe uses capitalisation and punctuation: <A. A. A.> (*N-town* 28: 161).



The interjection A functions as an all-round expressive interjection, covering both emotive and cognitive reactions. A is used to express negative feelings such as lament, anger, and fear, but this versatile interjection is also used to express positive feelings of joy and happiness, for example in greetings. At the cognitive end of the expressive-function scale, A can be used to express surprise, realisation, and recognition. Some of these expressions border on or include the conative function as they appear to be addressee-oriented (see quote 4 below). The interjection A is used to show recognition and simultaneously respect for the addressee in greetings (77 occurrences). The following examples demonstrate how A occurring in vocative constructions express a wide range of emotions as well as cognition. All speeches are directed to God, who is present in one of the episodes. The quotes also illustrate the typical turn-initial distribution of the interjection A.

- 1) *a lord god in trinite* (Perseverance: 286, Mankind to audience in sad self-presentation, lamenting humankind. Vocative construction (although presumably not in direct address to God) and expressive function co-occur)
- 2) *A good fadyr why woldyst þat þin owyn dere sone* (N-town 28: 181, Mary to God, lament-prayer. God is not present in this episode. Vocative construction co-occurs with expressive function)
- 3) *A lorde I thanke thee lowde and still* (Chester 3: 41, Noah to God, gratitude, greeting God in direct address, first words in reply to the God character's message about the Flood. Vocative construction co-occurs with expressive function)<sup>291</sup>

The interjection A is not restricted to invocations of celestial beings. The quotes below demonstrate how A is used in addressing humans as well as personified abstraction of varying status. The first quote, no. 4, is Mankind addressing Conscience, a virtuous abstraction. Next follows a quote addressed to the clerk of bad character (Aristorius), i.e. a low status character, and possibly a bad one. The last two quotes are spoken among the three magi, i.e.

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<sup>291</sup> The *Chester* cycle text survives in five full copies. The example of A in the present context reads O in MSS A and R (both by Bellin), and Ah in MS H. In MS B it has the same form and spelling as here, MS Hm. Some interchangeability of A and O, as well as the spelling variants <a> and <ah>, seems testified by the five *Chester* cycle manuscripts.

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good characters of high status. These two quotes illustrate how the interjection A can be used to express sadness (6) and joy (7). The expressive-emotive function of A in quotes 6 and 7 is obvious, and consequently the interjection A cannot be reduced to a vocative routine, like a greeting might be.

- 4) *A conscyence / conscyence now I knowe and se* (Mundus et Infans: 478, Mankind/Infans to Conscience, cognitive realisation in debate. Vocative + expressive-cognitive. Punctuation [slash] from the print)
- 5) *a petre powle good daye and wele J-mett* (Sacrament: 237, Jew Jonathas greeting of clerk Peter Paul, joy, eagerness, recognition. Vocative + expressive of emotive and mental state)
- 6) *A sirs for sight what shall I say* (York 16: 273, King 1 to other Kings (magi), regret, lament (“site” = sorrow), disappointment at having lost sight of the star of Bethlehem. Vocative + expressive.<sup>292</sup>)
- 7) *A siris I se it stande* (York 16: 281, King 1 to other Kings (magi), recognition and joy to see the star again. Vocative + expressive: both emotive and cognitive function)

Taavitsainen (1997: 579-81) notes that the interjection A (or AH) is often used in vocative constructions, also in non-literary genres, for example in homilies. Vocative constructions opening with the interjection A (AH) are also found in the Early Modern English dialogue material of Culpeper and Kytö’s (2010: 225), as well as in the present Late Middle English drama material. Besides the common vocatives to God, for example in *A Lord*, many other characters in the play texts are addressed by A (or O; Section 6.8.7) plus a noun of address (vocative). In some cases these vocative constructions could be mere conventional phrases.<sup>293</sup>

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<sup>292</sup> Cf. ‘alas for site’, in Section 6.9.1 quote 195: many constructions seem to have become fixed expressions. While A in this context may still be interpreted as syntactically independent from the rest of the clause, constructions of the type ‘alas for’ and ‘alas that’ are much more frequent and will affect the classification of ALAS, Section 6.9.1.

<sup>293</sup> The interjection/vocative marker O (below) is used in the same manner. Editors mainly interpret A as an interjection and mark it off from the rest of the clause with a comma, while they see O as part of a vocative construction and rarely introduce commas after O. Consequently editions usually have *A, lord god in trinite* (Perseverance: 286, Man to audience, in Eccles 1969: 11), and *O thu lord whyche art*

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- 8) *A blyssed God thowe be my beylde* (York 17: 87, Simeon's opening words in prayer. Vocative construction, but phrase rather than emotional expression?)
- 9) *A my fader god of heuen* (Towneley 6: 59, Jacob to God (not present), prayer, vocative construction + thanks?)

Even though the use of the interjection A in quotes 8 and 9 may be conventional rather than expressive of any particular emotion, most of the quotes above have illustrated how the interjection A is used to express both positive and negative feelings, and also cognitive states, such as recognition and realisation. The interjection A can also be used to express anger, even by God, but God's use of interjections is rare: one of only 11 examples of interjections used by God is referred below. Bad characters may combine interjection with swearing (11 and 12):

- 10) *A cursyd caym þu art vntrewe* (N-town 3: 166, God to Cain, anger: expressive-emotive)
- 11) *A! what dwill of hell is it?* (Towneley 2: 281, Cain to Abel, anger, fear: expressive-emotive function. Punctuation is editorial)
- 12) *A, devill! What shall now worth of this* (Towneley 26: 543, Pilate to soldiers + Caiphas and Annas, anger: expressive-emotive function co-occurs with vocative function? Punctuation is editorial)

The last two examples, 11 and 12, illustrate how A together with swear words can be used to express anger. Both of the quoted lines include swearing by the devil, and it is the swearing rather than the interjection which characterises the speakers. Associations between the non-Christian characters of plays and Satan, other devils, or 'Mahounde', are very common.<sup>294</sup> Pilate's invocation of the devil (quote 12) characterises both him and his rage. There are no devils in this part of the cycle. The use of the word 'devil' obviously also characterises Cain negatively (11).

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*my defendowr* (Sacrament: 742, Jonathas to image of Christ, 'dread' l. 743. Davis 1970:81). Both A and O are also used in vocative constructions to non-celestial characters in direct addresses. In most ME drama texts the use of O as a marker the vocative appear more conventional, and less expressive, than A in the same position.  
<sup>294</sup> According to the *OED*, 'Mahounde' was "A god imagined in the Middle Ages to be worshipped by Muslims". A heathen God was considered equivalent to a devil.

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The four *N-town* occurrences spelt <ha> function identically to A, and the spelling with an initial h-grapheme can be explained by scribal inconsistency regarding h-spellings. There is evidence of h-loss in the *N-town* text. Two of the four <ha> occurrences are greetings of new characters (*N-town* 8: 133 and 25: 341). The other two occurrences are pleas addressed to God (*N-town* 32: 188 and 42: 66). The interjection A is usually used in greetings and pleas while HA is not. One <ha> example is quoted below.

- 13) *Ha dere fadyr haue me in mende* (*N-town*, 32: 188, crucified Jesus to God, pain or fear. Vocative construction and expressive-emotive function co-occur, similar to *A gracious god help me bis tyde* (*N-town* 14: 274) or see the *N-town* quotes 2 and 10 above.)

Not only is the interjection A extremely numerous, it also enjoys the widest distribution of all the ME interjections in play texts, occurring in all the texts except the short biblical play *Herod's killing of the children* (MS Digby).<sup>295</sup> The interjection A, in other words, occurs in all late medieval English drama subgenres, and in both the fifteenth and the sixteenth century material.

The spelling <ah> occurs only 22 times in the material, and it is only found in three texts, all printed or copied in the sixteenth century: *Nature*, *Sacrament* and the *Chester* cycle. In *Nature* there are only two examples of A: one spelt <a> and the other <ah>. In the *Chester* text (MS Hm) the spelling <a> outnumbers <ah> by 103 to 15 examples. In other words, the ratio in the *Chester* MS Hm is almost 7 to 1 in favour of <a> spellings.<sup>296</sup> In the *Sacrament* text there is a clear distinction between two of the scribes: Hand A has two examples of A, both spelt <a>, while hand C has six examples of A,

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<sup>295</sup> Even in the *Herod* play text, the interjection A was used originally before the copyist restructured a part of the text. One occurrence of A in *Herod* was thereby cancelled by the writer in l. 81, together with a dialogue of 25 lines between ll. 80 and 81 (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: 99, note 9). *A now I perceyue* was changed to *I do perceyue* in line 82, to fit in logically with the text when the dialogue was emended to a monologue leaving the original A inside a turn. The cancelled A is clearly a cognitive realisation in Herod's immediate reaction to the messenger's turn. As the messenger's tale of the three kings was cancelled, the interjection A no longer opens Herod's response.

<sup>296</sup> The *Chester* MS Hm is dated 1591, and it is thus the earliest of the MSS in which the *Chester* cycle text survives in full. The Lumiansky and Mills (1974) edition is based on the Hm manuscript.

all spelt <ah>. The latter scribe, hand C, also has the grapheme <h> in his spelling of O, which are realised orthographically as <oh>.<sup>297</sup> The fact that the *Sacrament* hand C uses the final h-grapheme in both A and O forms suggests that spelling with final –h is based on scribal choice, and probably has little to do with changes in pronunciation, at least at this stage in the English language.

Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 217) state that “[w]ord-final <h> following a vowel is an extremely rare spelling in English, both now and in the Early Modern English period.” Therefore, they find it unlikely that the final grapheme in <ah> was “pronounced as [h]” (Culpeper and Kytö 2010: 217). However, as interjections may be “phonologically anomalous” (Ameka 1992a: 105), it is possible that the A-interjection had/has final aspiration in speech. As mentioned, ‘anomalous’ is a term of little use as a description of any Middle English words, but in Present-day written English the word-final <h> after a vowel is indeed found, exactly in the written realisations of the interjections A and O, now usually spelt *Ah* and *Oh*.

In spoken Present-day English it is not uncommon that at least A, if not O, is pronounced with an audible glottal friction sound that may be transcribed as <h> in spelling.<sup>298</sup> There seems to be no reason to assume that the addition of the grapheme <h> reflects a sixteenth century development in pronunciation. Rather, it seems more likely that the final aspiration was not realised in spelling before that time. One explanation may be that natural sounds can be difficult to transcribe, another that A often occurs in vocative constructions where it may be interpreted as secondary to the vocative itself, and thus regarded as unstressed and un-aspirated (in for instance “A God”).

On the other hand, orthographic distinction between the interjection A and the article ‘a’ has its merits as it facilitates understanding in reading. Thus the introduction of the grapheme <h> in the spelling of the natural outburst A is

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<sup>297</sup> No other play text than *Sacrament* in the material contains the interjection O realised with a final h-grapheme as <oh>. Some of the *Chester* copies do, but not the MS Hm used in the present study. Section 6.8.7 contains greater detail on O versus OH.

<sup>298</sup> The sound seems to be especially pronounced when A/Ah is used to express cognitive realisation, as in: “Ah! (I see!)”.

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perhaps an expected change with the spread of standardisation of the English language from the fifteenth century onwards. The finding in Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 217) that the spelling <ah> is much more frequent than <a> in the Early Modern English dialogues is not reflected in the Middle English drama material, where the situation is exactly opposite. The fact that no <ah>-spellings occur at all in the fifteenth century part of the material strengthens the hypothesis that this spelling form is a diachronic orthographic development.

In most cases, the interjection A occurs turn-initially. Out of its total of 753 attestations, A opens a turn (a new speech) in 553 cases. Further, about a hundred of the examples of A occurring non-turn-initially still seem to be used to mark changes in the action. They are found after stage directions, after unstated changes in the action, or in the position of stanza-openers, all of which can be indications that something happens to which the current speaker reacts. In other words, the current speaker may start a new turn without there being anyone speaking in-between. Therefore, many of the non-initial examples of A still function as expressive reactions to a situation, i.e. as interjections proper.

A few examples of A occur in reported speech within the turns in the plays, such as *A quod Jeremye ...* (N-town 11: 25). These reported interjections are thus turn-openers within a turn. The citation above, in Present Day English: ‘Ah, said Jeremy’, mirrors the direct speech quotes occurring in narrative texts described in Taavitsainen (1997: 579), example no. 7, from Chaucer: ‘*A quod Melibee...*’

Stylistic use of A also occurs in the play material. Sometimes when A is found in non-initial positions, it functions as a poetic-stylistic device.<sup>299</sup> Several occurrences of A can be used in a sequence of verse-lines, or as stanza-openers in long turns consisting of many stanzas, and in this manner A serves a poetic-anaphoric function. The poetic-anaphoric function may be regarded as a stylistic or textual function of interjections, described in Taavitsainen (1997: 601-602). Even though some of the natural spontaneity is

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<sup>299</sup> The textual and stylistic markings described by Taavitsainen (1997: 601-2) are not the same as the stylistic function described here.

lost in such speeches, they may express emotion, especially lament, when for example A or ALAS is used as anaphors in a sequence of verse lines or stanzas.<sup>300</sup>

Whether occurring turn-initially or not, the A interjection is nearly always used at the beginning of a verse line. Only nine A occur line-medially, and then most commonly as repetitions or in collocations. Five of the nine line-medial occurrences of A are quoted below. The items in question have been underlined for ease of recognition:

- 14) *Alas A! Se, is not this a grete feres* (Hickscorner: 446)
- 15) *A se! A se, syres, what I haue brought* (Hickscorner: 510)
- 16) *A A! My dere sone Iesus AA! my dere sone Iesus* (Christ's Burial: 450)
- 17) *Fynde be faithfull? A! foule mot be falle* (York, 32: 224)
- 18) *But we a lone a . lound by by name* (York, 3: 52. MS punctuation)

For clarity, punctuation has been added to all except the last quote (18), where the *punctus* occurs in the manuscript.

The interjection A is frequently found in collocation with the word 'mercy'. The phrase *A mercy* is so common with its 29 occurrences that there is reason to suspect that its origin may have been the (verb + noun) plea 'have mercy' in which the unstressed verb has been reduced to A. Since both the verb 'have' and the interjection A make sense in this context as expressions of despair, the distributional/functional overlap of unstressed 'have' and exclamatory A, and the closeness in pronunciation may both have contributed to a gradual development of a fixed exclamatory phrase: *A mercy*.

The verb phrase 'have mercy' has obviously not been systematically examined in this study of interjections, but it has been checked whether 'mercy' also collocates with the interjection O. Only three examples of the construction *O mercy* were found, and two of these examples are direct addresses to the character Mercy in the play *Mankind*. This play also includes

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<sup>300</sup> There are examples of such anaphoric repetition of other words than interjections, for example GRAMERCY. These also seem to create an affective style, but they are not as directly expressive of feeling as A or ALAS are.

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one example of *A mercy*; this construction is not used to address Mercy. In fact, none of the attested phrase-like *A mercy* occurrences is a vocative construction in direct address to Mercy. Most of them are used to address God, regardless of whether God is a character on stage or not. In the *N-town* text, the collocation *A mercy* is graphemically rendered as one word with no space between the interjection and the noun: *Amercy lorde for oure mysdede* (*N-town* 42: 36). This spelling adds some support to the assumption that ‘*A mercy*’ was used as a fixed phrase in late medieval English drama.

In sum, *A* is a versatile interjection, covering a wide range of emotions and attitudes, and occurring in all types of medieval English drama. In addition, the interjection *A* can be reduplicated or repeated in sequences for emphasis, or to specify the meaning. The interjection *A* is used by both male and female, and by good and bad characters. It is thus not used to characterise anyone positively or negatively. God rarely uses interjections at all, but five examples of *A* are used by God to express his anger. All five occur in cycle plays. Some of the collocations which include the interjection *A* seem to be more or less fixed phrases. One example is *A mercy*, a common collocation which it is tempting to speculate might in some cases be a shortened form of the common phrase ‘have mercy’. Another phrase-like use of the interjection *A* occurs in vocative constructions where *A* seems to have become part of a routine used in greetings and invocations.

### 6.8.1.1 *A* or *O*?

To some degree the interjection *A* competes with *O*, as both are frequently used in vocative constructions like *A fader* and *O lord*. Both *A* and *O* can also be used for the stylistic effect described above, and both *A* and *O* probably enjoyed wide distribution outside of the drama genre, for example in speech quotes in fiction, in hymns, and in sermons. It is discussed later (particularly in Chapter 7) in the present work whether the interjections *A* and *O* are as distinct as the orthographic realisation seems to suggest. The choice between the vowels <a> and <o> need not reflect a great difference in pronunciation, or, conversely, it may indicate different pronunciation according to dialect pronunciation. However, most play texts include both forms, <a> and <o>, an indication that both forms had currency in the dialects represented by the play material. Those text which do not include one or the other form (usually *O* is



unrepresented) always offer other explanations for the exclusion of one form (usually O).

If dialect was not a deciding factor behind scribal selection of A rather than O, or vice versa, it is possible that context was. It can be hypothesised that O was preferred to A in biblical contexts, and especially in vocatives addressing God. However, the examples given in Section 6.8.1 has already shown that this hypothesis is a weak one. The quotes have shown that the interjection A is frequently found in biblical plays and in invocations to God, where the interjection O would have been expected. The late *Chester* cycle manuscripts illustrate that A and O were interchangeable, as the scribe Bellin selected the interjection type O in some contexts where Gregorie employed A. It appears, in sum, that individual scribal habit gave preference to one over the other interjection type, A or O, but most of the Late Middle English writers of play texts preferred A.

By contrast, Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 261) found O-related forms to be more frequent than A-related forms in their Early Modern English dialogues material. ALAS and A are treated as related forms rather than separate types in Culpeper and Kytö (2010). If ALAS and A were grouped together as one class in the present study, the ratio of A to O would be even greater in the favour of A. In the present material, the interjections ALAS and A are the two most numerous types totalling 1,456 attestations. The interjection type O only occurs third on the list with its 365 attestations.

Further, Aijmer's (1987) study of markers in Present-day spoken English establishes that OH is more frequent than AH in modern conversation. In other word, it appears that the interjection type A was preferred to O in Middle English play texts, while the interjection type O is becoming more frequent than A already in Early Modern English, and has held this position since. The Middle English versatile A has since perhaps experienced semantic narrowing resulting in its use as an interjection mainly used for expressive-cognitive functions. The diachronic change in the ratios of the interjection A and the interjection O is discussed further in Section 6.8.7 below, as well as in Chapter 7 on quantitative results (Section 7.2.3). It is discussed in Section 6.1.12 whether the functional overlap and/or differentiation of A and O can be

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explained in terms of dialectal distribution. The findings concerning dialect are tested in Chapter 7.

### 6.8.2 AY

YC	TC
5 (AY)	1? (AY or EY)

It is uncertain whether Middle English AY should be classified as a type of interjection on its own, or whether it is a variant spelling of either A or EY. Initially, the seven examples of AY, spelt <ay>, were included in the A class as northern variants of this interjection type, but the *OED* states about “*ay*, int.” that the Middle English variants were ‘*ey* or *ei*’, and that the spellings <ay> or <ai> are “not found even as variants in Middle English”. According to the *OED* the modern forms “*ay*, *eh* or *eigh*” in northern dialects may reflect either Middle English EY or A. *OED* describes EY as Middle English, not found in Old English, yet “probably a natural ejaculation.” EY could have been an adoption from Old French *ai*, but the *OED* states that this would have given the spelling <ay> or <ai>, which according to the same dictionary is unattested in Middle English. There are 17 examples of the interjection EY in the Middle English play texts, and 6 examples of AY, i.e. forms spelt <ay> that cannot immediately be classified as for example adverbs (‘ever’). All AY occur in just two texts, the *York* and *Towneley* cycles. Neither of these contains the interjection EY.

The *OED* describes the phrase *ay me* found in later periods as an adoption or influence from French or Italian.<sup>301</sup> ‘Ay me’ forms occur in Early Modern English dialogical texts (Culpeper and Kytö 2010: 229-30), and in late sixteenth century drama (Koskenniemi 1962: 73), but not in the Middle English play texts of the present study. Koskenniemi (1962: 69) follows *OED* in suggesting influence from Italian *ahimè* for *ay-me*.

All examples of the possible interjection type AY in the Middle English drama material are described in some detail below, as it has been an aim to try

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<sup>301</sup> The first attestation of *ay me* cited in the *OED* is from 1591, in work by Spenser.

to find out 1) whether AY forms a class of its own, and 2) whether it may not be attested earlier than recorded in the *OED*. If so, it may be that for instance *ay-me* is an independent English formation in which AY and ‘me’ are combined, perhaps on the pattern of ‘wo (is) me’.<sup>302</sup>

Of the seven occurrences of AY spelt <ay> in the present material, it seems clear that at least four, perhaps five, function as interjections. The seven occurrences are restricted to only two texts. Six belong in the *York* cycle, apparently not a northern text (LALME I: 102). The last example of AY belongs in the *Towneley* cycle text, the dialect of which was localised to Western Yorkshire in LALME (III: 622).

Two of the examples of AY in the *York* cycle are possibly affirmative responses, i.e. as realisations of ‘aye’ (‘yes’).

19) *A ay . and I schulde be rewarde* (York 28: 236, Malcus’ response to Caiaphas’ calling him. MS punctuation).

20) *Ay, well were me for ever and ay / if I myght se that babb so bright* (York 17: 132-3, Simeon to God or himself in prayer-monologue. Punctuation is editorial).

The first example is the more ambiguous of the two. It occurs turn-initially in collocation with A, as an eager response by Malcus to Caiaphas immediately after the high priest has called Malcus’ name. AY can mean ‘yes’ in this context, but it can also have an expressive function, denoting surprise, an emotion or cognitive state associated with both A and EY.

The second AY does not occur turn-initially or as a spontaneous outburst, but is found in the middle of a monologue (perhaps prayer) by Simeon in the temple longing to see the Christ child. In this context, AY cannot imply surprise or carry any of the negative associations of EY. It must be either an

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<sup>302</sup> Stenroos (personal communication 2011) pointed out to me a possible early example of *ay-me* in the Early Middle English *Ancrene Wisse*, a religious prose text with occasional direct speech quotes. One of them reads: *Ame dogge ga herut* (fol. 79r, Bennett & Smithers 1968 [1966]: 236 + glossary). This looks very much like an interjection combining AY and ‘me’, the latter perhaps from French *mes* (‘but’). The *Ancrene Wisse* shows much influence from French, and it seems more likely that *Ame* in this text is of either French or English, rather than Italian, derivation.

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exclamation of joy, which is possible for EY (Taavitsainen 1997: 584), or it could be an affirmative ‘aye’ by Simeon to himself or to God. However, this form for the affirmative is rare in the *York* text. Variants of the type ‘3a’ are used, spelt <3a> or <yha>.<sup>303</sup>

Concerning the second AY just described, there is one more possible interpretation. AY could be a stylistic device in Simeon’s monologue-prayer, as it functions as a stanza-opener in the speech. Three of the other stanzas open with A, and therefore AY could serve an anaphoric-poetic function together with these.

In four cases, all from the *York* cycle, the difficulty in distinguishing AY from the word class of adverbs lies in the orthographic overlap with ‘ay’ meaning ‘ever’.<sup>304</sup> Taavitsainen (1997: 584-5) interprets one such example of AY in *York* as belonging in the EY category. She cites: *Ay goddis shalle ye be* (*York* 5: 71) under the heading EY. However, in this context AY does not initiate the turn like interjections usually do. Further, AY here seems not to express any of the emotions typically associated with EY, such as surprise, disgust or fear (Taavitsainen 1997: 584).<sup>305</sup> It could be a rare affirmative parallel to the two AY above, but the serpent-devil’s promise to Eve in this pageant seems to make more sense if ‘ay’ here is the adverb ‘ever’. The devil tries to convince Eve that Adam and herself will be (always) like gods if they eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge.

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<sup>303</sup> *3a harrowe of this traytour with tene!* (*York* 33: 161. Punctuation is editorial) could be Yha/3a/Ay confusion. ‘3a’ is used frequently in this pageant text for ‘yes’, but HARROW never occurs in constructions like this one elsewhere in the material. Therefore, it is possible that it was originally a variant of AY HARROW, but even with this interpretation the clause (it is a one-line turn, no longer than the quote) seems awkward.

<sup>304</sup> Most adverbs ‘ay’ were obviously not collected at all, as they normally differ from interjections in distribution. They are rarely found in positions where they seem to be syntactically independent, like interjections are, and have been interpreted as adverbs. Only occurrences where AY appears to be an interjection type have been studied.

<sup>305</sup> The two editors of the *York* cycle, Smith (1885: 24) and Beadle (2009: 25), both interpret ‘ay’ as an interjection or an affirmative in this line, marking it off from the rest of the clause by an exclamation mark and a comma respectively. If the Helsinki Corpus has Smith’s (1885) edition as basis, this may explain why Taavitsainen sees AY as an interjection in this context.

#### INTERJECTIONS IN LATE MIDDLE ENGLISH PLAY TEXTS

Three more examples of AY in the *York* cycle are somewhat ambiguous regarding the distinction of adverb and interjection. They function as interjections in their contexts, but it is possible that they represent the adverb 'ay' in fossilised phrases. All three examples occur in collocation, respectively with OUT, WELLOWAY and HARROW (all below). These collocations denote fear or panic. They are:

- 21) *Owte ay welaway...*(York 1: 104, cry by the devil Lucifer as he falls from Heaven)
- 22) *Owte Ay herrowe...* (York 11: 403, cry by Pharaoh as he drowns)
- 23) *Owt Ay herrowe! Helpe, Mahounde* (York 38: 343, cry by the devil Satan as Jesus harrows hell. Punctuation is editorial)

In the quotes above, AY may have derived from the adverb 'ay', in meanings such as 'to cry HARROW for ever'. Such a direct combination of interjection and 'ay' occurs once, also in the *York* cycle: *Harrowe for ay* (38: 292). However, collocations like these seem to have become stock phrases used for example in referred speech: *Bot I may cry 'out haroo!'* (Towneley 13: 632, punctuation is editorial). Sometimes '&' or 'and' occur instead of AY: *out I cry and horow* (Towneley 16: 567), *A owt owt & harrow I am hampord with hate* (Mary Magdalen: 722), and *Harraw we cry owt and alas* (N-town 42: 32). The adverbial meaning of AY seems lost or at least irrelevant in these contexts, especially since 'and' can be substituted for AY. 'And' in this context may further be confused with the interjection A. The implication that follows is that A, AY, and 'and', the latter also in the form <&>, all serve the same function of combining elements in constructions as the ones quoted above. The repetition of many different interjections in sequence is most likely used for emphasis. In this function the adverbial meaning of AY, and possibly the meaning of the conjunction 'and', is subordinate.

The last attestation of the form AY, quoted in 24 below, is an interjection proper. It belongs in the *Towneley* cycle, where it signals surprise and disgust as in EY, or cognitive realisation as in A:

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24) *Ay so! / He is lyke to oure shepe!* (Towneley 13: 850-1, Shepherd 2 outburst as he sees Mak's "baby" in the crib: surprise and/or cognition, comic scene. Punctuation is editorial).<sup>306</sup>

Bearing in mind the northern dialectal characteristics of the *Towneley* cycle text, AY could in fact be an example of the northern form found in modern dialects, but not attested this early in the *OED*. In other words, it seems clear that AY was used as an interjection in at least one play texts from the fifteenth century. In light of this, there may be no need to explain several of the ambiguous cases referred to above, as anything but real interjections.

The interjection AY is only used by male characters, and in five out of seven cases it is uttered by bad characters. It is typically these characters who express the long collocations of interjections described above, in fear or despair when they fall dramatically from power. Such collocations with AY are clearly emotive, expressing the speakers' emotions, and they differ from the functions of EY found in other play texts (Section 6.8.8).

The few occurrences of AY in Late Middle English plays are difficult to categorise, but at least some of them are interjections. The *OED* is erroneous in claiming that the spelling form <ay> for the interjection AY is unattested in Middle English. Some examples are ambiguously associated with the adverb 'ay' since both interjection and adverbial usage are conceivable interpretations of the collocational contexts in the *York* cycle text. The occurrence of AY in collocations distinguishes it from EY. AY seems also to function differently from EY since the latter is often used as an aggressive protest, while AY, in the *York* cycle text, is used to reinforce outbursts of fear. The one case of AY from the *Towneley* cycle concords better with the functions of EY than the *York* cycle examples do. It is worth noting that none of these texts includes examples of EY, so it is conceivable that AY in the *York* and *Towneley* texts is just a variant of EY. Since especially the *York* usage of AY differs from the usage normally found as regards EY, it is also conceivable that AY forms a class of its own already in the mid-fifteenth

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<sup>306</sup> This expression of surprise does not occur turn-initially, but from the context it is clear that Shepherd 2 while speaking lines 848-51 leans over Mak's baby's crib and reacts spontaneously mid-speech to what he sees: The 'baby' is not the child the shepherds were seeking, but the lamb stolen from them earlier by Mak.

century when the *York Register* was produced. If so, it may not be necessary to describe ‘ay me’ as a development from French; it could be English.

### 6.8.3 HA

NC	TC	CC
1	6	1

The spelling form <ha>, used for exclamatory purposes, occurs 38 times in the material. However, as mentioned in the description of the interjection A, the <h> grapheme is used somewhat inconsistently in Middle English orthography, and this affects the spelling of A-related interjections. Consequently, only eight of the 38 interjections spelt <ha> have been included in a HA class of its own. These eight occur in the spellings <ha>, <haaa>, <a ha> and <hagh>. The rest of the examples, spelt <ha>, occur in collocations or in reduplications, and form parts of other types of interjections.<sup>307</sup>

The <ha> spellings are mainly found in collocations with other interjections, such as <a ha>, 15 of which have been interpreted as the cognitive AHA (below), while three forms spelt <a ha> are imitations of laughter. The latter, the <a ha> spelling for HA HA (Section 6.9.3) demonstrates that even in these, the grapheme <h> is not used consistently. Four single occurrences spelt <ha> in the *N-town* cycle text have been found to represent the interjection type A (6.8.1), but the boundary between the two types A and HA is a fuzzy one. Due to the difficulty in defining HA as a distinct interjection type, all of its few occurrences are dealt with in detail below.

Two HA have uniquely marked spellings, and these are the main reason why the type has been considered distinct at all. The first, spelt <hagh> in the *Towneley* text, seems to include a written realisation of a final velar fricative in pronunciation, perhaps equivalent to modern ‘argh’.<sup>308</sup> The second

<sup>307</sup> Six of the 38 <ha> occur as sequences of two or more <ha> imitating laughter. In these, each <ha> was not counted separately. See HA HA.

<sup>308</sup> This variant is cited in the *OED* under the headword *ha* (int). It is not mentioned under the headword *argh* (int.), whose earliest *OED* attestation is dated to 1800. This

## 6. THE INTERJECTIONS

peculiarly spelt HA, realised in writing as <haaa> in the *N-town* text, apparently represents a long vowel sound in pronunciation. The *Towneley* form, i.e. <hagh>, does not fit the description of *hagh* in Koskenniemi (1962: 70) as a marker of hesitation, and it is not clear from her only example (1962: 174) that hesitation is what the *hagh* actually implies. It is uttered by Charon as a response to a call for Boatsman (from Wilson: *Cobbler's Prophecy*, l. 693). The context is comparable to the Pharaoh quote below. Both Koskenniemi's and the present attestation of <hagh> occur singly without any immediate co-text in either turns by Charon (Koskenniemi's material) or Pharaoh (present material).

25) Soldier 1: *A my lord*

Pharaoh: *Hagh*

Soldier 2: *Grete pestilence is comyn*

(Towneley 8: 354a-c, Pharaoh to Soldier 1, anger and frustration with bad news, Cf. ll.347; 356.)<sup>309</sup>

Pharaoh's turn consists solely of this outburst, and as such it is a rarity. Late Middle English plays usually have much longer speeches than a single word actually found *inter iectio* ('thrown in') between the turns of Soldier 1 and Soldier 2, i.e. the beginning (a) and the end (c) of line 354, respectively. Pharaoh at this point expresses his anger and frustration with the list of bad news about the plagues of Egypt. As is typical with the *Towneley* cycle text, there are no stage directions explaining the action, but some kind of aggressive interplay between Soldier 1 and Pharaoh seems implied. By contrast, in the next example of an 'anomalous' <ha>-spelling below, the stage directions help clarify the situation. In the *N-town* cycle play the <haaa> spelling is also used in the preceding stage directions in Latin:

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attestation, however, is spelt <agh> without the r-grapheme, just like <hagh> described here.

<sup>309</sup> HAGH is the only word uttered in Pharaoh's turn (l. 354b) here, which is rather untypical of medieval drama. Turns usually consist of at least a whole verse line, and frequently of whole stanzas. The *Towneley* cycle text often employs more realistically rendered turns, meaning that one verse line may be divided by different speakers in sequence, giving a more rapid and life-like dialogue compared to most other play texts. This realism in dialogue may be attributable to the Wakefield Master whose talent has frequently been recognised in the literature on medieval drama. See e.g. Stevens and Cawley (1994: xxxi).



*Omnes resurgentes subitus terram clamau[erunt], ‘Haaa, haaa, haaa!’  
Deinde surgentes dica[n]t, ‘Haaa’ et cetera* (from Spector, 1991: 410.  
Punctuation is editorial). The spoken line in English is:

26) *haaa cleue asundyr 3e clowdys of clay* (N-town 42: 27, Dead souls  
crying in unison as they rise from their graves on Judgment day.

The interjection in the quote above seems to imply the physical struggle of the dead to get up from the ground (‘clouds of clay’). The outcry is not directed at anyone in particular, except perhaps the audience. The intended effect may have been to scare. The stage directions imply that the HA outcry is to be repeated in a chorus, and the spellings <haaa> in both Latin and English testify that the outcry is more than a simple A interjection.

Six HA, spelt <a ha>, seem to form a class of interjections different from expressive-cognitive AHA, as well as from reduplicated A found for example in weeping (Cf. Section 6.8.1). These six examples of HA seem to imply extreme anger, pain, mental or physical strain. In these cases of HA, aspiration appears to be a distinguishing feature. They differ functionally from another aspirated form, AHA (6.9.2), because, in contrast to AHA, the HA interjections do not express cognitive reaction. Five such <a ha> spellings occur in the *Towneley* cycle, and one is found in the *Chester* cycle. In three or four of the examples, the speakers’ extreme physical or mental frustration seems to call for a more marked interjection than simple A used otherwise in the two texts. The markedness may lie in the aspiration:

27) *A ha God gif the soro and care* (*Towneley* 2: 33, Cain cursing horse,  
anger, bodily strain)

28) *A ha dog! The devyll the drowne* (*Towneley* 8: 252, punctuation is  
editorial. Pharaoh to Moses, in anger/wonder/fear at the staff turned  
into serpent).<sup>310</sup>

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<sup>310</sup> The text for *Towneley* pageant 8 is adapted from the *York* cycle (11: 240), where the line reads *Aldogg þe deuyll þe drowne*. However, this was interpreted by Beadle (2009: 73) as a mistake for *A dog*, in concord with the *Towneley* version. No other explanation for *Aldogg* has been found. The *Towneley* playwright probably did not use the *York* Register as an exemplar, but both the *Towneley* pageants with *York* cycle roots and the *York* Register may have been copied/adapted from guilds’ copies.

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Three more HA spelt <a ha> are all spoken by soldiers-torturers (*Tortor* in speech headings) in the *Towneley* cycle. They seem to be imitative of outbursts caused by physical struggle:

29) *A ha Now ar we right arayde* (Towneley 22: 557, Soldier-torturer 3 to Simon, cognitive or physical effort? Stevens and Cawley (1994: 286) edit to *Aha*)

The quote is ambiguous as it can imply a satisfied cognitive AHA, which is how Stevens and Cawley (1994: 286) edit it. The soldiers are in a hurry, as they need have Jesus killed *or noyn* ('before noon', Towneley 22: 527) and he is too tired to carry the heavy cross farther. By the quoted line they have managed to solve the problem by forcing Simon to take the cross, so the interjection could be a satisfied, cognitive AHA.

However, <a ha> above can also be seen as an interjection of physical strain, implying that Soldier-torturer 3 demonstrates the weight of the cross by lifting it off Jesus' back and onto Simon's.<sup>311</sup> This interpretation makes good sense when seen in relation to a similar episode in the next *Towneley* Passion pageant. The two <a ha> spellings in the following pageant, no. 23, cannot be cognitive interjections. They occur as natural outbursts caused by heavy bodily labour when the soldiers pull at Jesus' arms to fit him to the cross. Focus on Christ's suffering is central in Late Medieval affective theology and in the plays illustrating the Passion. The two <a ha> spellings in the quote below express physical strain and have therefore been classified with the HA interjections. The context clearly reveals the soldiers working hard.

30) Tortor 4: *pull pull*  
Tortor 1: *haue now*  
Tortor 2: *let se*  
Tortor 3: *A ha*  
Tortor 4: *yit a draght*  
Tortor 1: *Therto with all my might*  
Tortor 2: *A ha hold still thore*

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<sup>311</sup> As is common in the *Towneley* cycle text, no stage directions clarify the issue.

(*Towneley*, 23: 191-4. In the MS the speech headings are written in the right hand margin and connected to the speeches with lines. The indentation of the four parts of line 191(a-d) is editorial.)

The last example suggesting that HA forms a class on its own is found in the *Chester* cycle (MS Hm). It is an expression of physical pain, spelt <a ha> just like the *Towneley* examples above.

- 31) *A ha marye this ys hotte* (*Chester* 3: 247, Noah in pain from his wife striking him. The form is spelt <Ha ha> by Bellin in his two MSS, A and R, but it seems not to be imitation of laughter. The collocation with the oath 'Mary' implies anger as well as pain).

All HA are spoken by male characters, except perhaps for the dead souls in the *N-town* play. (They are supposedly genderless, non-human characters.) Further, all except Noah in the *Chester* cycle are bad characters. HA could be a marker of malevolence, like the triumphant usage of AHA seems to be.<sup>312</sup> Taavitsainen (1997: 586) similarly finds that HA in the work of Gower is found "in negative contexts". All three examples of HA in her material occur before vocatives. Vocational distribution is also found in the present material,

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<sup>312</sup> Good characters utter 1,523 interjections in the present material, bad characters utter 1,276, and neutral characters are responsible for 251 interjections. These numbers add up to 3,050 interjections of the total of 3,086. The remaining 36 interjections are expressed by speakers whose status as good or bad has been difficult to ascertain, for example because their status changes during the course of the play. The dichotomy of good versus bad in ME plays mainly reflects virtue versus vice (abstractions and personifications), and Christian versus non-Christian characters (non-Christian, heathen and antichristian mostly equal immoral). For example Jews are mainly bad in the ME play material, as heathen murderers of Christ. Anti-Semitism was widespread in the late medieval period. The Jews in the *Sacrament* play are clearly bad when they torture the Sacred Host, but must be characterised as good when they are converted and baptised towards the very end of the play. Aristorius, the corrupt Christian merchant in the same play, is temporarily bad because he sins, but he is restored through repentance and forgiveness from God (ll. 978-79). The King and Queen of Marseilles in the *Mary Magdalen* play are bad when heathen, but good after their conversion which takes place while they still are important characters in the play. Mankind figures can be problematic, as some clearly do bad things before their conversions. Therefore in some contexts, mankind figures may be characterised as bad rather than neutral, which has been used as the default category for them (Section 4.8.3).

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but, as the quotes illustrate, HA occurs singly and independently, as well. In addition, Taavitsainen's Middle English sermon material yielded two cases of the spelling <haa>, suggesting perhaps that at prolonged cry of HA had some currency outside the use by the *N-town* cycle composer or copyist in presenting the striving of the Souls quoted above.

Tentatively, it can be claimed that at least the *Towneley* copyist (or playwright) used <a ha> spellings to represent a distinct type of interjection different from A, AHA or HA HA. Since his is the only occurrence of a <hagh>, it is conceivable that he was particularly apt at reproducing certain qualities of the spoken mode more truthfully than most other writers. This hypothesis receives support by the fact that several types of interjections are unique to his repertoire (discussion in Section 6.12.2). Together with the evidence of the *Towneley* playwright's (more likely than the copyist's) unique forms, it may be concluded that he had an ear for realistic language and used his original forms intentionally. Admittedly, he did not use the <hagh> spelling in the second turn by Pharaoh (8: 25) quoted above, but in this case, the *York* pageant 11: 240 (see footnote 311) may have influenced him towards A. However, he ends up with the spelling form <a ha> rather than the form A of the related *York* pageant.

### 6.8.4 HO and HOWE

YC	NC	TC	CC	PA	NA	BA	HK	BR	CP	Mk	Wd
15	6	27	10	-	-	-	-	-	8	8	1
	(1 ow)	(1 whop)									

Ev	Na	MI	MA	ST	PS	LD	OI	FL	Hi	MG
-	3	1	6	10	1	-	-	1	9	3

HO and HOWE count 109 examples in total, both frequently occurring as calls in the material. Such calls can be non-expressive (HOWE) or they can carry emotional load (HO). The 109 examples of HO/HOWE are spelt <how> in 68 cases, <howe> in 19 cases, <ho> in 14 cases, and <hoo> or <hooe> in 3 cases. In addition, there are five examples which do not open with an <h>

grapheme. Four of these deviant spellings open with the combination <wh>, for example in <whoo> (*Chester* 1: 228), and one opens with <o> in the form <ow> (*N-town* 20: 168). Because these five deviant forms function as calls or commands, they have been classified with HO and HOWE. Ten examples of HO and HOWE are reduplications, as in <how how>. Even more occur twice in a call, but with for instance a noun of address inserted, as in ‘how dame how’. Even though their spelling forms overlap with the interrogative adverb ‘how’, their syntactical distribution and their function make it clear that they belong in Biber’s (1999: 1082) class of inserts, from which interrogatives such as ‘how’ are excluded. Some questions regarding the discourse marking functions of interrogatives and their relationship to interjections and inserts are returned to later in this section.

The two types HOWE and HO are not at all consistently distinguished by spelling in the material. In the present study the form HOWE is used to denote the type of attention calls which seem to carry no emotional load. The form HO is used to discuss the interjection type that expresses emotion, e.g. as an angry command. The spellings of the attention call HOWE and the expressive-conative HO overlap and therefore both forms have been included in one class.

HOWE and HO sometimes collocate with ‘now’, typically *how now*, and with ‘what’, typically *what how*. ‘What’ is an interrogative adverb which can be used for exclamatory purposes in the Middle English play texts. ‘What’ used as an exclamation is syntactically independent, and carries emotional load such as anger or disbelief. However, ‘what’ was not included in the definition of prototypical interjections in the present study, since it belongs in a different word class. Further, it is difficult to form satisfactory conclusions of the functional status of ‘what’, i.e. to what extent ‘what’ denotes emotion in each case, or to what extent it is merely a question.<sup>313</sup>

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<sup>313</sup> It may be possible to distinguish the exclamatory function of ‘what’ from its interrogative function in spoken language when additional information such as pitch of voice and body language is included. However, such prosodic information is non-existent in early written material, in particular before exclamation marks became common.

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By contrast, the distinction between the interrogative ‘how’ and the interjection HO or HOWE is usually easily spotted from the context, and therefore the two have been analysed as different word classes in the present study. However, in Middle English texts the distinction between the interrogative adverb ‘how’ and the interjection HO cannot be based on orthography (or punctuation), since they are often spelt the same (and punctuation is scarce).

It is unclear in many contexts where the interjection(s) HOWE/ HO occurs, how to distinguish between the non-expressive call that merely carries a voice over a distance, and the more typical interjection derived from natural outbursts of emotion. Perhaps the call HOWE has been disyllabic at some point, or a possible distinction may lie in vowel quality.<sup>314</sup> The frequent spellings with final <w>, <we>, and double <oo>, could indicate lengthening of the vowel sound. A long vowel sound makes good sense in the contexts where the attention call HOWE is used from a distance. The short HO, on the other hand, implies a spontaneous, expressive reaction. However, this qualitative difference between HOWE and HO is rarely reflected in the Middle English spellings.

The quote below from the *Towneley* cycle illustrates the two functions of HOWE and HO. First, the spelling form <how> is used for attention, secondly the same form <how> is used as a concerned, expressive warning to stop. Both occur in the same turn by Shepherd 1 (*Pastor* in the Speech Heading).

32) *How, Gyb, goode morne! / Wheder goys thou? / Thou goys ouer the corne! / Gyb, I say, how!* (Towneley 12: 118-21, Shepherd 1 to Shepherd 2, call for attention followed by a description of observation, and then an engaged warning to stop stomping through the corn. Punctuation is editorial).

It is clear from the *Towneley* Shepherd 2’s response in l. 122 that he did not hear the three first lines of Shepherd 1’s call above. The quote below from the

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<sup>314</sup> At first sight, HOWE may look like a combination of the shorter calls HO and WE (below). However, both HO and WE must be characterised as typical interjections, as they seem to be emotional outbursts, while this appears not to be the case with HOWE.

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*York* cycle (no. 33) occurs in a similar situation. It is a call in the dark, rather than a call at a distance. It carries voice but not necessarily emotion. The speaker calls out for attention, but as he cannot see anything, there is rarely any incitement causing emotional reactions. HOWE is often used in situations where the speakers do not see each other, for example when they are on and off stage, or on different sides of a door. Some 70 attestations of HOWE have been classified as such non-expressive attention calls. Below are a few examples.

- 33) *And I haue a loke on hym nowe - howe, felawes, drawe nere* (York 28: 296, Soldier 2 to other Soldiers, call in the dark. Punctuation is editorial).
- 34) *HOw dame, how! vndo 3oure dore, vndo!* (N-town 12: 1, Joseph to Susannah, calling through the door. Punctuation is editorial).
- 35) *How how hyckscorner appere* (Hickscorner : 299, Vice Imagination calls Hickscorner who is off-stage).
- 36) *what how how who called after me* (Hickscorner: 192, Vice Imagination to audience, attention call as Imagination enters from backstage, in response to attention call for him. Comedy).

The emotionally loaded interjection HO occurs at least 24 times, but it is not necessarily spelt <ho>. Anger, disbelief and/or protest are the most common emotions implied by HO, but even joy is indicated in a few instances.

- 37) *We! Howe! Sir Wymond, howe!* (York 34: 60a, Soldier 1 to Soldier 3, attention calls. Collocation with WE implies anger, or at least impatience. Punctuation is editorial).
- 38) *Howe howe felawys nowe in faith I am fayne* (York 30: 50, Pilate to audience, joy or lust for his wife (Cf. line 52), the couple are the only characters on stage. Laughter?).
- 39) *Ho, how can þat be? Yt ys not possible* (Conversion: 440, devil Belial to devil Mercury, anger, protest, 'stop'. Belial accuses the 'fool' Mercury of lying (ll.441-3). Punctuation is editorial).
- 40) *Ho, Saul, þou shalt repent thy vnstablenes!* (Conversion: 483, devil Belial to devil Mercury, anger. Saul is not present, so in this case there is no conative function. Punctuation is editorial).

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- 41) *What how, Neugyse! þou makyst moche taryynge* (Mankind: 694, Nowadays to Newguise (vices), anger and attention call co-occurs. Punctuation is editorial).
- 42) *How, all in fageyng? In fayth I know of youre feat* (Towneley 24: 271, Soldier 2 to Pilate, anger, protest, surprise? Pilate wants Christ's gown in the Dice episode. Punctuation is editorial).

28 examples of the attention calls HOWE are not angry commands (HO) in themselves, but they co-occur with commands of some sort. It is possible that HOWE here functions as a strengthening (boosting) of the command that follows, and this function may have contributed to the confusion of non-expressive calls and angry outbursts. It seems likely that the graded functions of the interjection types HOWE and HO from conative attention calls via commands to exclamations of anger forms a continuum with much overlap.

Even though difficult, it still is preferable to distinguish between a non-expressive neutral call and expressive angry command, since the Middle English play material indicates that only one character type employs the expressive call HO. While the attention call, HOWE, is used by all kinds of characters, the expressive outburst HO is typical of the speeches of bad characters (one exception is the Shepherd in quote 32 above). Below are citations illustrating bad characters' using HO as a command:

- 43) *How, belsabub! Bynde thise boys* (Towneley 25: 97, devil Ribauld to devil Beelzebub, command boosting. Punctuation is editorial).
- 44) *A; hoo sir nowe and holde in* (York 26: 104, Pilate to Soldier 2, command. MS punctuation).
- 45) *How, boy arise! Now þou muste wende* (Perseverance: 2895, vice World to Garcio, his servant, waking him, command booster. Punctuation is editorial).
- 46) *yf 3e wyll haue mankynde how domine domine dominus* (Mankind: 779: vice Nowadays to virtue Mercy, harassment, mock Latin, comedy).



HOWE or HO are used frequently (45 cases) by bad, non-human characters, such as devils, vices, and the bad angel.<sup>315</sup> Further, HOWE and HO are

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<sup>315</sup> Devils and vices are mostly characterised as male or genderless. There are only a couple of female vices; Lechery appears both in *Perseverance* and in *Mary Magdalen*. In addition there is the damned soul of the Queen (*Regina*) in the *Chester* cycle Judgment/Doomsday pageant, as well as Damned Souls (*Malus* 1-4) of unspecified gender in the *Towneley* cycle Judgment pageant. At first, the non-human beings were categorised as genderless, but medieval theology certainly gendered God and angels. A bad angel occurs in two plays, and he is characterised as male, as are the good angels and the named biblical angels (Lucifer, Michael, and Gabriel). Most devils too are referred to as 'he' (or 'himself' or 'his', as in SD 411+ in *Conversion*), and appear to have been understood as male. It seems plausible, however, that gender is secondary to the characterising dichotomy of bad versus good. Further, it appears that abstract characters throughout the late medieval period increasingly are characterised as male and decreasingly as female. In the earliest morality play, *Perseverance*, all of the virtues are presented as female and most (i.e. all except Lechery) of the vices are presented as male (Eccles 1969: xxii). In later plays vices and virtues as well as other types of stereotypical personifications increasingly appear as male. Some such male personifications are Mischief, Nowadays, Newguise, Nought and even Mercy (in *Mankind*; Mercy is usually female: a daughter of God (Eccles 1969: xlii)), Counterfeit Countenance, Crafty Conveyance, Fancy *etc* (in *Magnyfycence*), or Folly (in several plays). The increasing use of male characters apparently at the cost of female characters may be related to changes in the drama tradition as drama became more institutionalised, and maybe also to changes in the views on the roles of women. As mentioned, travelling performers were forbidden inside the centre of London. By the time of Shakespeare, when the theatre had become a regulated institution mostly restricted to purpose-built houses, all parts in plays were performed by male actors. It has been a common assumption (e.g. Eccles 1969: xxii) that this was also the case in the theatre previous to the Renaissance. This assumption is not necessarily true. For example Normington (2009: 20-21) has found that plays were written and performed in nunneries in England by the sisters for a local audience, perhaps the local congregation. As for popular drama, it is possible that late medieval travelling troupes included women, not only men. Eccles (1969: xxxiv-xxxv) somewhat reluctantly finds it difficult to maintain that men (or boys) performed the parts of women dressed up as men in *Wisdom*, when stage directions in the play explicitly mention women: *Wisdom* SD 752+: *Here entreth vi women in sut, [iii] dysgysed as galontys and iii as matrons*. Baker, Murphy, and Hall (1982: lxii-lxiii) similarly accept that the dancing "Virgins" (SD in the MS) in the *Herod* play were in fact female ("village girls"), while finding it unlikely that these girls can have doubled as the mothers in the Killing of Innocent episode earlier in the play. It seems to be a common opinion about early English drama that women could not have speaking parts in plays production, but it is possible that this opinion is based on the exclusion of female actors in later, commercial theatre. It is not necessarily the case that if Renaissance plays precluded women from taking part, the late medieval play tradition must also have done so.

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mainly used by male characters (103 cases), by God (three times), and by Death (once). The types HO/HOWE are very rarely used by women. There are only two occurrences in female speech. The wife of Noah uses HO (spelt <ho>) once in the *Towneley* cycle (3: 332) in the episode where she fights with her husband. The misogynist humour ridiculing Noah's wife as a stupid and obstinate female is quite common, occurring in three of the four biblical cycles. The second HO (spelt <howe>) is spoken by the angry wife of Pilate, another unsympathetic female character (*York* 30: 70).<sup>316</sup>

Less than 24 % of the occurrences of HO/HOWE are found in turns by good characters, and then mostly in the speeches of good, human characters, notably the biblical shepherds from the Nativity episodes of the cycles.<sup>317</sup> In five cases HO/HOWE forms are used by good, non-human characters, such as God, Mercy and Contemplation, in the *Chester* cycle, the *N-town* cycle, *Mankind*, and *Hickscorner* respectively. The one HO (spelt <whoo>) spoken by God occurs in reported speech, rather than as an outburst: *I charge you to fall till I byd whoo* (*York* 1: 288). It may still imply anger with Lucifer and Lightborn, the fallen angels in the Creation pageant. Twice HOWE (spelt <how>) is used in the *N-town* cycle by God as attention calls to biblical characters, Abraham and Moses respectively.<sup>318</sup>

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<sup>316</sup> The latter case (*York* 30: 70) is somewhat ambiguous, as it precedes a question and may be an interrogative. However, the expression implies both anger and protest in the context. The confusion between the interrogative and the interjection could have added to the fuzziness of the HO and HOWE categories. See WE in Section 6.8.14 for a discussion of possible relations with the interrogative 'why'.

<sup>317</sup> Many different spellings of HOWE occur in the shepherds' calls, and therefore it turned out to be difficult categorically to treat HO and HOWE as two distinct classes. However, the shepherds' calls rarely imply anger, which is common in the use of HO by other characters.

<sup>318</sup> The neutral attention call HOWE HOWE may have survived in Present-day English in Santa Claus' stereotypical call *Ho ho*. In popular opinion, Santa's call is often associated with laughter, but the call functions just like the attention call HOWE HOWE in the Middle English play material. In the play texts, HA HA is used to imitate laughter. There is only one case where HO HO possibly could be interpreted as a representation of laughter. This example of HO HO occurs in a joyful context, and it is quoted above in (38), Pilate's speech to the audience, *York* 30: 50.

HO and HOWE are not restricted to particular type of late medieval drama since they occur in all four subgenres in varying orthographic forms. Only three examples of the total of 109 seem to imply a short vowel, simply <ho>. The rest are spelt with final <w> or <we> or some other indication, like the two cases of <oo>, of a long vowel sound. It still seems possible that a spontaneous and emotionally loaded outburst takes a short form, i.e. HO, whereas a call intended to carry a voice over a distance would be more effective if the vowel-sound is prolonged, as in ‘hoo’, i.e. the form which has been classified as HOWE in the present study. In contrast to the emotionally neutral call HOWE, the outburst HO may be characteristic of bad speakers. HO is used in anger, and wrath was considered one of the seven deadly sins in the Middle Ages. Furthermore, anger, aggressiveness, and protest can be seen as reflective of *hubris*, or pride, the main sin of devils since Lucifer’s fall.

Even though Cox (2000: 3) differentiates between devils and vices, these two character types seem closely related in medieval drama, among other things in their frequent use of HO. Some of the attention calls, HOWE, when coupled with commands, also seem to express pride. Together with other aspirated outbursts, especially HA, but maybe also AHA, the interjection HO seems to be a marker of bad characters in Middle English drama, since medieval drama was based on binary oppositions (Cox 2000: 6). The attention call, HOWE, on the other hand, can be void of emotion, but as it is not consistently distinguished from HO in the present material, it is difficult to contrast the two systematically.

Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 243-44) discuss HO and find that in the Early Modern English material, the collocations are important in order to distinguish different uses of HO. The first collocation they discuss is O HO, which they find similar to the cognitive AHA. This function is not attested for HO or HOWE in the present material. The second use of HO in Culpeper and Kytö’s (2010: 244) material is found in collocation with HEY, as in ‘heigh ho’, an expressive-emotive function as a “sigh of despair or resignation”. Even though *heyho* occurs in the present material, it is not used as a sigh of despair (see HEY, Section 6.8.6). The third function of HO discussed by Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 244), that of “attention-getter”, matches the use of HOWE in the Middle English drama material. The attention-getter function is sometimes marked in the Early Modern English material by collocating with

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‘what’ (Culpeper and Kytö 2010: 244 note three instances). The ‘what how’ collocation also occurs in the Middle English material, but it is infrequent.

The use of HOWE between speakers who cannot see each other, is common to both the Early Modern and the Late Middle English dialogues, except that it occurs as <ho> spellings in Culpeper and Kytö’s material and most commonly in <how> spellings in the present material. It is unknown whether there are <how> spellings for the attention call in Culpeper and Kytö’s material, since these spellings were most likely ignored due to their homonymy with the interrogative.

Taavitsainen (1995: 451) includes HO and HOA from the Early Modern English material, finding only five examples, all from plays. The HO and HOA forms “express astonishment”, or are, in the conative function, employed to attract attention (Taavitsainen 1995: 451). The latter conative function concurs with how HOWE is used in the present material, but the expressive function described in Taavitsainen (1995) does not. Taavitsainen (1997) discusses Middle English exclamations, and in this material the expressive-emotive anger (“indignation” in Taavitsainen 1997: 587-88) function occurs, as well as the conative, attention calling, function. Even though the *OED* describes HO as a “shepherd’s call”, this occurrence is not described in Taavitsainen, perhaps because the spelling nearly always includes the <w> grapheme, as in <how>. This spelling, <how> and <howe>, make HOWE susceptible to confusion with the interrogative ‘how’.

In Late Middle English plays the two interjections, HO and HOWE, seem to constitute discrete classes, but the spelling variation indicates that the distinction was unclear to the copyists and printers. HO seems to be an angry command sometimes implying ‘stop’, whereas HOWE seems to represent a neutral call for attention, often over a distance. The most common spelling, however, is <how> for both. It is not always clear from the context whether the command and the call can be distinguished, or whether both meanings co-occur. Still, even in the spelling <how>, the distinction from the interrogative adverb ‘how’ is mostly clear from the context. The interrogative adverbs were not collected, even though they are sometimes used in situations of heightened emotion.

Pragmatic markers similar to HO and HOWE in the present material are ‘what’ and ‘why’. These interrogatives sometimes imply emotions such as anger, surprise, or protestation. Especially ‘what’ often occurs as a syntactically independent exclamatory outburst whose function is rather to express emotion than to inquire for information – it serves discourse marking functions (Lutzky 2012). However, in many cases these functions cannot be distinguished in written material since prosody is not marked. Since ‘what’ is primarily an interrogative, it was not included in the present study. Biber’s (1999: 1082) criteria for inserts excludes ‘what’ on two grounds: ‘what’ has denotative meaning (in contrast to inserts), and it has homonyms in other word classes.<sup>319</sup>

The latter criterion is difficult to use on non-standardised languages, such as Middle English. While ‘what’ has been categorised as belonging in another word class than interjections, and therefore excluded from the present study, ‘howe’ has been interpreted as an interjection proper (or two: HO and HOWE). Its possible homonymy with the adverb ‘how’ can be explained by the Late Middle English linguistic situation. It seems that the interrogative adverb ‘how’ and the interjection HOWE are distinct classes even though both are commonly spelt <how>. The spelling of the interrogative <how> may have influenced the spelling of the interjection, but it does not follow, of course, that the interjection derived from the interrogative. It is perhaps even possible that it is the other way round; that the pragmatic marker ‘how’ in the present material may have derived from the attention call HOWE, rather than from the interrogative adverb (see Taavitsainen 1997: 598-9). (Cf. the discussion of ‘why’ and WE in Section 6.8.14.)

The interrogative ‘what’, in contrast to ‘how’, makes sense as a relevant question on its own, at the same time as it can be used to signal attitude in conversation, i.e. as a pragmatic marker. ‘What’ seems logically applied as an interrogative adverb even when used without any real focus on the reply, whereas ‘how’ seems not to serve this dual function. If a speaker reacts negatively to news in conversation, it seems more logical spontaneously to exclaim disbelief (‘what!?’) than to ask for the ‘how’ (even though elliptical ‘how can that be’ = disbelief, is possible).

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<sup>319</sup> Interjections form a subgroup of inserts.

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In conclusion, HOWE is an addressee-oriented interjection mainly serving conative functions, as it is a call demanding a response, for example physical action. HOWE is used for instance by the shepherds calling each other in the fields in the cycles' nativity pageants. In this function, HOWE does not seem to carry emotional load, and it is thus not a prototypical interjection. HO, on the other hand, often expresses anger in addition to its conative function as a warning signal to stop or to be silent. It characterises the speech of bad characters in particular. It need not be a great problem that it is difficult to decide which of the two functions of HO is primary, that of outcry of anger or warning-command. Interjections often serve more than one function (Ameka 1992a: 114). Rather, the problem is caused by the conative command function of the interjection HO making the distinction between the conative uses of HO and HOWE particularly unclear.

### 6.8.5 HUFF

Na	MA	Hi	MG
1 (huf)	3 (hof hof hof)	3 (huffe huffe huffe)	4 (huffa huffa) <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> reduplicated <huffa huffa> occurs twice in the same verse line

There are only 11 attestations of the interjection HUFF, but it still seems to have had some currency, since it occurs in four play texts belonging in three different subgenres. HUFF has a specialised function in Middle English plays, as only a certain character type, the Gallant, uses it.<sup>320</sup> Gallants mainly occur in interludes and morality plays, but there is one in the miracle play *Mary Magdalen*, as well. The interjection HUFF occurs in reduplications and repetitions, and stands alone only once (in *Nature*). HUFF is spelt <huf>, <hof>, <huffe>, and <huffa>. The latter, disyllabic form, <huffa>, only

<sup>320</sup> HUFF seems to have continued its life as a marker of the Gallant character beyond the late medieval period. Gallants are characters based on the contemporary courtier, and they may have other names such as Courtly Abuse and his like in Skelton's *Magnyfycence*. The *OED* includes a quote from 1610 where HUFF apparently functions exactly like it does in the Middle English plays: '*Histrion-mastix* II, in *Simpson School of Shakspeare* II: 32 *Huffa, huffa, who calls for me? I play the Prodigall child in jollytie.*'

occurs in songs, and seems to constitute a particular use of the HUFF interjection.<sup>321</sup>

- 47) *Huffa huffa taunderum taunderum tayne huffa huffa* (Magnyfycence: 745, Courtly Abuse singing (SD: *cantando*) to himself as he enters, merriment. Song of French origin?)

HUFF is included in Koskeniemi's (1962: 175) list of primary interjections, in the form <huffa>. She quotes HUFF in a speech by the devil, and describes it thus: "attributed to a swaggerer or bully, esp. when introduced on the stage" (Koskeniemi 1962: 175).<sup>322</sup> Both the speaker and the use of HUFF parallel the findings of the present study.

- 48) *Huffe huffe huffe who sent after me* (Hickscorner: 891, Imagination to audience and other characters as he enters. Boastful attention call)  
 49) *Hof hof hof a frysch new galavnt* (Mary Magdalen: 491, Gallant-devil to audience, pride, boastful self-presentation, attention call)  
 50) '*A rutter? huf, a galand!*' (Nature Part I: 1078, Pride to Worldly Affection, referred speech describing a Gallant, the role the Vices' plan for Man. Punctuation is editorial.)

As the quotes illustrate, HUFF occurs in *Nature*, *Magnyfycence*, *Hickscorner*, and *Mary Magdalen*, belonging in the morality play, interlude and miracle play subgenres respectively. HUFF is not found in biblical plays because they usually do not employ Gallant characters.<sup>323</sup> The *OED* describes the noun

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<sup>321</sup> The use of HUFF, spelt <huffa>, in song, is attested in the *OED* citation from the anonymous play *The iij Elements* (in the *OED* attributed to John Rastell, see Farmer 1911: 17): *make rome syrs and let vs be mery with huffa galand synge tyrl on the bery*. The boastful attention call of a 'merry Gallant' matches the Middle English usage.

<sup>322</sup> The descriptions in the *OED* and in Koskeniemi (1962) are identical. Culpeper and Kytö and Taavitsainen do not mention HUFF. Because HUFF is rare, it is perhaps unattested in their materials.

<sup>323</sup> Cox (2000: 31-2) recognises the boastful self-presentation of an *N-town* Demon (devil) as that of a typical 'courtier', i.e. a Gallant. The devil describes his own appearance from line 65: *byholde þe dyvercyte of my dysgysyd varyauns*. He is disguised, dressed after the 'new fashion' (l. 80), and visually a contemporary figure of the late medieval audience. The *N-town* devil, however, does not use HUFF in his self-presentation.

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'gallant' as "A man of fashion and pleasure; a fine gentleman." Used as an adjective, the word 'gallant' could mean "courtier-like" (*OED*). The earliest *OED* attestation of the noun 'gallant' is dated to 1380, and especially the early use of the word seems tainted by negative associations.<sup>324</sup> All the characters using HUFF are bad in the play material of the present study.

The Gallant bridges the gap between the seditious Youth and the sinful Vice, but the Gallant in his fashionable dress seems inspired by certain troubling changes in contemporary society, while Youth and Vice are allegorical personifications of more constant currency. This is not to say that Youth and Vices could not be presented as gallants in some plays. The courtier characters in *Magnyfycence* and *Hickscorner* are young, flamboyant, male intriguants, i.e. typical Gallants.

In several plays, the Gallant is a pretence figure assumed by a vile personification. In *Magnyfycence* the character Courtly Abuse openly takes on the part of the Gallant. In *Mary Magdalen*, Satan sends Bad Angel (*Spiritus Malign*) disguised as the Gallant Curiosity to seduce Mary Magdalene.<sup>325</sup> In *Nature*, the Vices dress Man up as a Gallant. Man's fall into all types of sin is thus visualised by his fashionable, gallant costume. In such contexts of pretence and deception, the Gallant adds dramatic irony to the play. The audience recognises his true nature, whereas the main characters, i.e. prince Magnyfycence and Mary Magdalene, do not. Neither does Man in *Nature* realise that his costume is part of the Vices' scheme of deceiving him.

HUFF may possibly be related to HOWE as both are aspirated calls for attention. The final fricative sound clearly distinguishes HUFF from HOWE, but both typically serve conative functions, occur turn-initially, and, HUFF

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<sup>324</sup> Later, by c. 1600, at least the adjective 'gallant', if not the noun, has assumed more positive values – *OED*, s.v. 'gallant'

<sup>325</sup> The *Mary Magdalen* text and stage directions contradict each other as to who pretends to be the Gallant Curiosity (referred to as Curiosity both in speech headings and in direct address to him). Satan's speech ll. 427-435 indicates that Bad Angel follows Lechery to seduce Mary M, while the stage directions in 546+ indicate that Gallant and Bad Angel are different characters. One leaves the stage with Mary Magdalene, the other approaches World, Flesh and Devil. The Bad Angel's speech in ll. 547-54 suggests that Pride seduced Mary Magdalene. Pride is associated Satan himself in l. 560. The main point, however, remains: the Gallant is an evil pretender.



especially, in a character's speech at stage entries.<sup>326</sup> Thus, HUFF to a greater extent than HOWE, draws attention to the speaker himself, thereby serving as a kind of boastful self-presentation. The HUFF speakers are typically proud, boastful and self-indulgent.

In contrast to HOWE, the attention call HUFF characterises the speaker as evil. While HUFF seems mainly to function as a conative addressee-oriented call, it still expresses pride. Even though HUFF may not be a spontaneous outburst of emotion, the associations it gives to pride clearly mark characters using it. Pride is the sin of the devil (Cox 2000: 55), and the Middle English drama typically associates the devil with the wealthy (Cox 2000: 3). The connection between the devil and the Gallant characters seems clear, if indirect, also in the plays employing no devils among the cast. The interludes *Magnyfycence* and *Hickscorner* both criticise (parts of) contemporary high society through the means of the Gallant character. It seems likely that all Gallant characters represent inherent criticism of the rise of a new class of wealthy opportunists whose behaviour was ultimately antisocial in medieval opinion.

### 6.8.6 HEY

TC	NA	Mk	MI	MG
1 (hey-ha)	2	3	1 (hey-how)	3 (1noun?)

There are 10 occurrences of HEY in five texts belonging to three subgenres in the present material. HEY is spelt <hay> five times, <hey> four times, and <ey> once.<sup>327</sup> HEY occurs twice in collocation with other interjections, once with HA in *Towneley* and once with HO spelt <how> in *Mundus et Infans*.

<sup>326</sup> The fricative-related interjection FIE (Section 6.8.9) may have derived from naturally breathing or blowing a foul smell away from ones nose. It is possible that HUFF developed via similar associations to a proud nose held high in distaste of common people.

<sup>327</sup> One of the attestations of HEY from *Magnyfycence* is spelt <ey> but it is used as a greeting. Another occurrence of HEY from the same text behaves like a noun rather than an interjection: *He dawnsys so long hey troly loly* (l. 1249). The whole expression 'hey-troly-loly' may be the name of a song or dance. A similar use is noted in the *OED* in a 1519 play text: 'Sing, frisky jolly, with hey troly lolly'.

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Quite a few examples of HEY occur in comical contexts. Like HUFF above, HEY is scarce and specialised, but it still seems to have had quite a wide currency as it is used in five different texts. In contrast to HUFF, the attention call HEY is used in biblical plays, and it is not restricted to one type of character.

The *OED* describes HEY as an interjection denoting, for example, exultation and surprise. In the present material HEY is sometimes used in anger, and to mock the addressee, but not for surprise. However, more commonly than the expressive functions described in the *OED*, the interjection HEY is used as a non-expressive attention call, in particular to animals.

The two earliest quotes of HEY in the *OED* in fact look very similar to the interjection EY in Middle English play texts (Section 6.8.8). The grapheme <h> may again have led to difficulty regarding classification. In the present study, EY expresses anger, surprise and protest, while HEY can be used as non-expressive calls. Further, EY interjections are more commonly reduplicated than HEY, and EY usually occurs at the very start of the line. In contrast, HEY may occur within a line or within a turn (four cases, i.e. 40 % of the interjection HEY occurs in non-turn-initial distribution). This distribution suggests that HEY is not necessarily a spontaneous outcry of emotion. The following quotes illustrate the use of HEY in attention calls or commands to animals.

- 51) *Hay, ha!* (Towneley 12: 126, Shepherd 2 to Shepherd 1 as greeting or to the sheep as command? The Shepherds have just greeted each other. There are other calls to the sheep in the same pageant: see TYR below. Punctuation is editorial.)
- 52) *Hay chysshe, come hyder!* (Magnyfycence: 1116a, Fancy to Folly's "dog", attention call and command. Comedy. Punctuation is editorial.)

It appears that the use of HEY in calls to animals is transferred to calls to humans causing the effect of mockery of the addressee. If so, this usage is clearly impolite, but perhaps not spontaneous. Impoliteness on this level implies wilfulness, which sets HEY somewhat apart from the prototypical, spontaneous interjection. According to Culpeper and Kytö (2010),

interjections used for impoliteness serve phatic functions. It needs bearing in mind, however, that the classification of functions is difficult. Interjections used in impolite talk, such as sarcasm, simultaneously also serve expressive and conative functions. First, such impolite, phatic interjections function expressively, too, as they clearly express the speaker's negative attitude. Secondly, when HEY is used for impoliteness, this function often co-occurs with the speaker's wish that the addressee reacts in some way, i.e. HEY also serves conative functions (Ameka 1992a: 113). The following quotes show how HEY is used to offend the addressee through association with calls to dogs.

- 53) *hay doog hay whoppe whoo go yowr wey lyghtly* (Mankind: 720,  
Newguise to Mankind, mockery, attention call as for a dog.  
Expressive, conative and phatic function)
- 54) *Go shake the, dogge, hay, syth ye wyll nedys!* (Magnyfycence: 303,  
Magnyfycence to Fancy, anger, dismissal, similar to EY. Again there  
is the association to 'dog'. Punctuation is editorial.)

The two HEY quotes above express emotion. Both are used in a depreciatory manner, insofar as both address humans as if they were dogs. In quotes 51 and 52 above, HEY appears to serve conative function only, as there is no reason given in the context for the Shepherd to be angry with the sheep, or for Fancy to bear grudges against Folly's (pretence) dog. Quote 52 seems to demand a response, but no emotion is expressed. Both situations are comical, however, and this they have in common with quotes 53 and 54. It is possible, therefore, that HEY serves a textual function as a marker of comedy.

Four attestations of HEY function as conative attention calls to humans without any associations with calls to animals. Two of them occur in comic contexts, while two do not (quotes 57 and 58).<sup>328</sup> Three of the four HEY below occur singly, i.e. they are not reduplicated or part of collocations. They function like greetings, meaning that they are the first words from the speaker to the addressee. At least the two first quotes below thus seem to have both

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<sup>328</sup> One of these HEY is spelt <ey>, illustrating the difficulty in using in orthography as basis for classification. HEY does not express anger or protest, like EY (Section 6.8.8) often does, and therefore, the spelling form <ey> in quote 56 has been classified with HEY rather than EY.

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conative, addressee-oriented functions, as well as phatic, communication-oriented functions. The conative function they share with HEY used as commands to animals.

- 55) *What hey / how care away* (Mundus et Infans: 522, Folly to audience, greeting, attention call, comedy. Punctuation-slash from print. Possibly surprise expressed through ‘what’?<sup>329</sup>)
- 56) *Ey mankynde gode spede yow with yowr spade* (Mankind: 344, Newguise to Mankind, greeting, mockery of Man’s manual labour. Comedy)
- 57) *Vndo þese yates hey who is here* (Northampton Abraham: 84, Abraham to Sarah on the other of the doors (‘gates’), attention call and order. Cf. HO/HOWE above)
- 58) *Hey sirs ; bring þens oure horses in hy* (Northampton Abraham: 307, Abraham to Servants, attention call and order. Manuscript punctuation)

Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 245) find three types of HEY usage in Early Modern English dialogues. First, HEY is used to attract attention, secondly to express surprise, and thirdly to reinforce a question. It is the first kind of usage, attention calling, sometimes with negative implications, which has been found in the present material. A special usage is the calling to animals. This may have influenced the connotations of HEY when used as a command to people in combination with the derogative ‘dog’ in name-calling. Further, it may have influenced the use of HEY as a command from the socially dominant to the socially inferior characters, such as Abraham to his servants and to his wife Sarah, and Newguise to Mankind. By the use of HEY, the commanding characters express their social superiority to the characters they address.

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<sup>329</sup> Lester (1981: 135) suggests that the form <hey / how> represents a yawn, but this seems not to be the case in Folly’s speech in *Mundus et Infans* quoted above (55). Laughter makes better sense in the context of Folly happily entering as he speaks directly to the audience. Koskiennemi (1962: 175) includes no discussion of the interjection HEY, but her material provides four examples of ‘hey-ho’ in a variety of spellings. She suggests they express ‘yawning, sighing, weariness and resignation’, but again, no such feeling seems implied in the use of HEY in *Mundus et Infans*. It is possible, therefore, that the HEY in quote 55 collocates with ‘what’ rather than with ‘how’, and that this is the reason that the printer used punctuation after HEY.

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It is possible that HEY and EY were related outbursts, but both spellings occur in the present material.<sup>330</sup> A possible distinction can be suggested, though: whereas HEY seems to be an attention-getter combined with commands in the Middle English play texts, the interjection EY is used for the expressive-emotive function denoting surprise, anger, and protest.

6.8.7 O

YC	NC	TC	CC	PA	NA	BA	HK	BR	CP	Mk	Wd
44	45	4	19	4	2	1	6	88	10	9	11
(incl. Ow)	(incl. Ow)								(incl. Ow)		

Ev	Na	MI	MA	ST	PS	LD	OI	FL	Hi	MG
18	9	-	52	2	13	-	1	-	4	13
					(incl. Oh)					

The interjection O is very frequent in the present material, although not as numerous as A and ALAS (Section 6.9.1). There are 364 attestations of the interjection O in the Middle English drama texts.<sup>331</sup> The interjection O is spelt <o>, <oo>, <ow> and <owe>, and <oh>.

The simple <o> spelling is by far the most common, with 328 attestations. The 27 forms of O spelt with <w> graphemes, <ow> and <owe>, belong in three early texts: the *York* and *N-town* cycles and the morality play

<sup>330</sup>Taavitsainen (1997: 587) finds no examples of HEY in her Late Middle English material, but she notifies her readers of the comment in the *MED* that it can be difficult to distinguish HEY from EY. This seems to be true also of the present material and, as mentioned, one attestation spelt <ey> has been included with HEY here.

<sup>331</sup> Eight of these could possibly be interpreted as HO or HOWE (Section 6.8.4) lacking the initial <h> grapheme in spelling. All eight examples of O functioning like HO, the angry command to stop, or HOWE, the attention call, are found in biblical cycles; *York*, *N-town*, and *Chester*. They are spelt <o> twice (*York* 11: 1, *Chester* 5: 336), <owe> three times (all in *York* 35: 140, 186, and 211), and <ow> three times (all in *N-town* 4: 92, 12: 34, and 20: 194). The interjection O is quite common in the same texts, i.e. the biblical cycles.

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*Perseverance*. All three texts were copied in the fifteenth century, *Perseverance* being the earliest text by witness date in the entire material. In contrast, the spelling of O with final <h> occurs only seven times, all belonging in the work of just one, late scribe in the *Sacrament* play text.<sup>332</sup> The interjection O enjoys a wide distribution, as it occurs in 20 texts in the present study and in all four subgenres. The three texts that do not employ O are two interludes (*Lucidus and Dubius*, and *Fulgens and Lucrez*), and one morality play (*Mundus et Infans*).

The interjection O can be used to express a relatively wide range of emotions; sadness, distress, lament and remorse are common. Joyful use of O is found especially in relation to gratitude. The expressive-cognitive use of O is quite rare, but 20 cases seem to denote realisation, surprise or confusion. Besides the expressive functions, O also functions in conative contexts, as it is used before vocatives to the addressee. These vocative constructions can be more or less emotionally loaded O. The interjection O occurs frequently in vocative constructions which are not direct addresses. The use of O in the opening of addresses (prayers?) to God (sometimes to pagan deities such as Mars) may express emotion, or it may constitute mere non-expressive routine (Cf. the interjection A in Section 6.8.1). Some typical examples of the possible non-expressive use of the interjection O are quoted below. All are addressed to deities of some kind.

- 59) *O mighty Mars one thee I call* (Chester 5: 133, Baalack (heathen king) invocation of Mars in prayer, conventional phrase: non-expressive, vocative construction)
- 60) *O Iseu bi mellyfluos name* (Mary Magdalen: 1446, Mary M to Christ in prayer. Merely non-expressive vocative or expressive function, as well? Plea?)
- 61) *At 3oure comaundement O prophete Jesus* (N-town 25: 211, Messenger to Jesus, respect, non-expressive vocative)

It is particularly difficult for a modern reader to understand to what extent the addressing of God implied emotion or belonged to the practical sphere of

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<sup>332</sup> The *Sacrament* copy is dated to 1520s by inferring from Davis' (1970: lxii) statements on palaeography and material: "early sixteenth century", watermarks suggest "well on in the century".

everyday life. Furthermore, it can be difficult to decide which play speeches imitate prayers addressing God, and which are emotional outbursts opening with spontaneous expressive interjections. The expressive and conative functions of O co-occurring in vocative constructions, parallel those of the interjection A in similar contexts (Section 6.8.1). As stated, it is often difficult to decide the degree of emotion implied in vocative constructions, especially as regards O, perhaps because a modern reader may be prejudiced by the still seen non-expressive, conventional phrase *O Lord* of the type seen in quotes 59-61.<sup>333</sup> The quotes below, in contrast, seem to imply the expressive function of O in addition to the marking of the conative. The first two (62-63) address God; the third may be an outburst rather than an invocation; the two last quotes (65-66) are addressed at Jesus and personified Worldly Goods. Both imply negative attitude or emotion.

- 62) *O lorde lovyd be thy name* (York 4: 31, Adam to God, greeting in person, gratitude. Hand C in the *York Register*, dated to c. 1560. Vocative construction co-occurs with expressive function)
- 63) *O gracyus god now I vndyrstond* (Mary Magdalen: 1606, Mary M to Angel, expressive-emotive and –cognitive: gratitude and realisation. Vocative + expressive)
- 64) *O good lord . how may þis be* (N-town 34: 101, Longinus to himself or audience? Confusion, surprise that he can see. MS punctuation. Vocative construction co-occurs with expressive function, but the expressive function seems the more important, as there is no communication with God. Possibly an early attestation of ‘O Lord’ used as a pious oath verging on swearing?)
- 65) *O fule, how faris þou now? Foull mott þe fall!* (York 33: 387, Soldier 2 to Jesus, scorn. Punctuation is editorial. Vocative construction co-occurs with expressive function)
- 66) *O false Good cursed thou be* (Everyman: 1451, Everyman to Goods (Worldly Goods = personification), anger. Vocative + expressive)

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<sup>333</sup> Taavitsainen (1997: 445-453) was the first to discuss the use of A and O in “vocative function”. In her Early Modern English material, both the interjections A (Ah) and O (Oh) occurred most frequently in the vocative before nouns of address.

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The interjection O, like A, starts appearing in the modern spelling with final <h> in the Late Middle English play material, but still the simple forms are by far the most common ones. The spelling form <oh> is found in just one text, i.e. in one scribal repertoire. Hand C of the *Play of the Sacrament* text uses both the spelling forms <oh> and <ah>. He is inconsistent in his spelling of the interjection O as <oh>, as he also writes simply <o>, but he consistently writes <ah> for the interjection A. The spelling form <oh> also occurs in some of the late *Chester* cycle copies, although not in MS Hm which has been used in the present project. The *Sacrament* text is dated to c. 1520, and the late *Chester* copies to around 1600, so the spelling form <oh> appears to be a diachronic development. The spelling forms <o> and <oh> seem to be used interchangeably by the scribes employing them.

A more interesting feature regarding the spelling of O is the orthographic distinction between the vocative function and the core interjection found in some of the early play texts: the *York* and *N-town* cycles and the *Castle of Perseverance*. While it has not been found that the spellings <o> versus <oh> can be explained by differences in pronunciation, the spellings <ow> and <owe> occurring in the texts just mentioned, may be caused by spoken differences and/or by functional differences. There are only 25 <ow> and <owe> forms, but they seem to be used according to two patterns. In the two cycle texts, the spellings with the grapheme <w> are used to distinguish the syntactically independent interjection O from the use of O in vocative constructions.

67) *Ow I trowe some torfoyr is betidde vs* (York 40: 160, Pilgrim 1 to Pilgrim 2, expressive, surprise, cf. simple spelling <o> in vocative + expressive *York* cycle quotes 62 and 65, by same hand)

68) *Ow . to plucke 3ow of these cheries it is a werk wylde* (N-town 15: 37, Joseph to Mary, physical strain, sigh, cf. simple spelling <o> in vocative construction in *N-town* quotes 61 and 64. MS punctuation marks the syntactical independence of <ow> here)

In the *Perseverance* text, the spelling forms of O including the grapheme <w> seem to mark the speaker and/or the addressee. In this play <ow> or <owe> occurs in front of vocatives, but never to God (or Virtues). Admittedly, vocative constructions including O to God are scarce in the *Perseverance* text.



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The interjection A is preferred to O in vocative contexts directed at both good and bad, celestial and human, characters. The quotes below illustrate the different uses.

- 69) *Ow mankynde blyssyd mote pou be* (Perseverance: 828, Vice Avarice to mankind, greeting, vocative construction, non-expressive routine?)
- 70) *O pou fadyr of mytys moste* (Perseverance: 3315, Virtue Mercy to God, invocation used in prayer. Influence from Latin in preceding line, perhaps: *O pater misericordiarum* [...])
- 71) *A lord Ihesu wedyr may I goo* (Perseverance: 323, Man Infans to God, lament, plea, vocative construction)

A fourth quote from the *Perseverance* text shows that the spelling form <ow> is preferred as regards the interjection proper. The reduplicated form of O below is syntactically independent and clearly expresses emotion. This usage parallels the distinction between the interjection and the vocative found in the *York* and *N-town* cycles above.

- 72) *Ow ow my good gothe al to wrak* (Perseverance: 2989, Man to himself, expressing lament, despair)

None of the play texts copied after the *N-town* cycle text (MS dated to latter half of the fifteenth century) shows similar attempts at distinguishing between the different functions of the interjection O – as a marker of the vocative, and as an expressive, syntactically independent interjection. As mentioned, the spelling form <oh> occurs as an optional variant in one late text in the material (*Sacrament*), and the scribe does not use it as a distinct type from his other spelling form, <o>. He writes *Oh lord...* (*Sacrament*: 754), and then *O gracyows Lorde...* (*Sacrament*: 756) immediately after.

Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 238) find Early Modern English *Oh* employed in dialogic texts expressing similar emotions to those represented by the quotes above. In addition, they find *Oh* used to signal “amorous distress” in Early Modern English dialogues, an emotion which occurs in only one of the Middle English play texts in the present study. The miracle play of *Mary Magdalen* contains two episodes in which erotic love is expressed. Both the interjection types O and A occur in these episodes, illustrating tainted rather than romantic love. One scene illustrates the sexual attraction between King

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Flesh and the vice Lechery (*Luxuria*). In this context, the interjection O expresses amorous love in the speech of Lechery to her husband King Flesh and vice versa:

- 73) *O ye pryNSE how I am ful of ardent lowe* (Mary Magdalen: 352, Lechery to King Flesh, joy, erotic love (in ll. 353-5 Lechery describes her sexual longing))  
74) *O 3e bewtews byrd I must yow kysse* (Mary Magdalen: 356, King Flesh to Lechery, joy, erotic love (*bewtews byrd* = ‘beautiful bird’))

The second episode including amorous distress in the *Mary Magdalen* text, illustrates how Mary Magdalene is deceived into loving the Gallant who seduced her after the visit with Lechery to the tavern. Mary Magdalene expresses her longing for her ‘valentine’ by using the interjection A, possibly an imitation of a sigh.

- 75) *o nedys I mvst myn own lady* (Mary Magdalen: 524, Gallant Curiosity to Mary M, (pretence) amorous distress . O is used as intensifier of Gallant Curiosity’s insistence that he cannot help loving her, l. 523)  
76) *A god be with my valentyne / my byrd swetyng my lovys so dere* (Mary Magdalen: 564-5, Mary M to herself and audience, amorous distress. Her fallen state is visualised by the seven deadly sins dressing up as devils close to her cottage.)

While worldly love seems to have been a provocative topic in late medieval drama, the love for Christ is sometimes expressed in very affective terms, often employing expressive-emotive use of O. It is possible that such poetic stanzas as the one quoted below, were introduced in play texts from a common stock of religious verse.

- 77) *O þu redulent rose þat of a vergyn sprong! / O þu precyus palme of wytory / O þu osanna, angelles song! / O precyus gemme born of ower lady!* (Mary Magdalen: 2011-14, Angel 1 to Christ in devotion, prayer. Punctuation is editorial.)

In contrast to the findings in Early Modern English written dialogues, as well as in spoken Present-day English (cf. Section 6.8.1.1), the interjection O is less common than A in Middle English play texts. Culpeper and Kytö (2010:

261) find 966 attestations of O and OH (631 of O, and 335 of OH), and only 127 attestations of AH (spelling forms <a> and <ah> grouped together, Culpeper and Kytö 2010: 224) in the *Corpus of English Dialogues 1560-1760*. The situation in the Late Middle English play material is that the interjection A is twice as numerous as O (753 A vs. 364 O).

When the present material is grouped according to composition before and after 1500, it is found that the incidence (occurrences per 1,000 words) of the interjection A experiences a slight decrease from 1.6 in the fifteenth century material to 1.4 in the sixteenth century material (from and including the Peniarth 'Antichrist'). The interjection type O shows the exact opposite pattern when the same measurements are used: the interjection O increases from an incidence of 0.6 in the fifteenth century play material to 1.1 in the sixteenth century material. There appears to be a developmental trend towards increasing use of O at the cost of A, yet, the incidence of the interjection type O never surpasses that of A in the Middle English play texts.

The changing, and ultimately reversed, frequencies of A and O from the ME English play texts compared to Early Modern English dialogic texts is difficult to explain, but might be due to a combination of factors. First, there seems to be diachronic change explained by the interjection type O becoming more versatile than A, while the former all-rounder A experiences a semantic narrowing. This is only true, of course, if the realisation in writing of the vowel sounds in A and O is stable throughout the periods. If ME interjection types A and O do not reflect pronunciation, but rather represent a different system, such as convention, the changes in type frequencies may be explained by Early Modern English spelling freeing itself from the conventional system and adopting a system closer to speech instead.

Secondly, the change from A being more common in ME play texts to O taking over that position in Early Modern English dialogic texts, might have been explained by the different sources used, if it was found that O was dominant in all but the play texts in Culpeper and Kytö's corpus of dialogues. However, this is not the case. Culpeper and Kytö's (2010: 267) figure illustrates that in the Early Modern English data, both O and OH rank above A in all the genres explored.

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Interjections probably serve different functions in play dialogue compared to real conversation. Different pragmatic function may explain why the interjection O is far more common than A in modern English spoken language (Aijmer 1987: 61). Schiffrin's (1987) study of modern use of the interjection OH may explain an important distinction between play dialogue and real dialogue. Schiffrin (1987: 73) finds that OH is used as a pragmatic marker of information management in modern English conversation. She describes OH as a "marker of cognitive tasks" (Schiffrin 1987: 101), and examines how it is used in backchannelling to signal information reception and acceptance, and/or need for clarification. In other words, OH is used to signal problems or flow in the ongoing communication. Schiffrin sees OH as a signal of mental processing rather than as an interjection capable of serving several functions; still, her description (Schiffrin 1987: 73-101) of the typical use of OH in speech illustrates how this interjection serves phatic, communication-oriented, functions. By contrast, the interjection O is not found to serve phatic functions in Middle English play texts, and it seems unlikely that dramatic dialogue in general imitates spoken language on this level (except for some exceptional cases, e.g. absurdist drama which illustrates the breakdown of language, communication, and meaning).

As mentioned, the interjection O is more common than A in Culpeper and Kytö's (2010) Early Modern English material, while A is far more common than O in Middle English play texts. However, the reversed frequencies cannot be explained solely by Culpeper and Kytö's (2010) material including more instances of interjections serving phatic functions in written dialogues. The interjection O serves expressive functions in Early Modern English similar to those found in Late Middle English play texts. Rather than the written Early Modern English being closer to real conversation in the use of A and O, it appears that there are other reasons why the spelling form <a> loses ground to the form <o> from the Late Middle English written plays to their Early Modern English equivalents.

### 6.8.8 EY

NC	CP	Mk	Na	MI	OI	FL
3	2	3	1	2	1	5

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There are 17 interjections spelt <ey> in the Middle English drama material. Three of these EY interjections occur as reduplicated <ey ey>. One occurrence (in *Mankind*, l. 344) of <ey> seems to be a greeting, and could therefore belong in the HEY class (6.8.6 above). It is possible that one AY spelt <ay> (in *Towneley* 13: 850) also belongs in this group (see AY Section 6.8.2), as it expresses surprise, one of the emotions connected with EY (Taavitsainen 1997: 584). However, EY seems to be used not only for surprise, fear or disgust (expressive-motive functions) in the present material, but it can also denote protest (connected with anger), which may serve both conative and phatic functions, as well. Protests in some cases encompass both the conative function of interjections, since it is addressee-oriented, demanding a response, and the phatic function focussing on communication.

- 78) *Ey / ey from fyue kynges thou hast counseyled me* (Mundus et Infans: 393, Man/Infans to Conscience, anger, protest. Punctuation-slash from the original print)
- 79) *Ey Godes mercy* (Fulgens and Lucrez, Part 1: 1028, Servant A to Joan Maid (Ancilla), protest to Joan's interpretation of his previous speech. Servant A continues his turn to amend the misunderstanding. Comical dialogue)
- 80) *Ey what deuyl man wedyr schat* (Perseverance: 1572, Bad Angel to Man, anger.)
- 81) *Ey . Ey . þis was A wondyr note* (Towneley N-town 16: 62, Shepherd 1 to shepherds, surprise, wonder at heavenly song. MS punctuation)

Quote 79 above is from *Fulgens and Lucrez*, a play text in which EY is particularly frequent counting five examples in all. In *Fulgens and Lucrez*, the interjection EY is also twice used in self-repair. In other words, EY is one of the few interjections used for the phatic, communication-focussed function in the medieval drama material:

- 82) *Ey God give it a very vengeaunce / Of wedlocke I wolde have sayde* (Fulgens and Lucrez, Part 1: 903-4, Servant B to Joan Maid, correcting himself mid-speech, since he in l. 902 substituted

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‘penance’ for ‘wedlock’; a ‘Freudian slip’ (*OED*), used in drama for comical effect)

- 83) *Ey Godis mercy where am I now* (Fulgens and Lucrez, Part 2: 46, Servant A to audience in prologue to Part 2. He corrects his own ‘digression’ (l. 48) [f]rom the matter that I began (l. 49))

The phatic function concerns communication itself (Ameka 1992a), in for example self-repairs, backchannels, and hesitators. Interjections functioning on the phatic level are frequent in modern conversation (Aijmer 1987), but rare in the historical drama texts. Taavitsainen (1995: 441) states that the phatic function of interjections “belongs to the spoken language”. It is true of the Middle English drama material, too, that the phatic function is uncommon, but there are a few exceptions where interjections are used in self-repairs, in puns, and in meta-communication. This usage seems mainly to be found in interludes, and it seems to be used for comic effect.

The interjection EY is used in all medieval play subgenres, except miracle plays. Even though five occurrences are found in the same text, the interjection EY is not restricted to just a few texts or scribal repertoires. Examples of EY occur in both the fifteenth and the sixteenth century material, and in material originating in different regions of England. The interjection EY is found in seven different texts: *Perseverance*, *Occupation*, *Mankind*, *N-town*, *Mundus et Infans*, as well as in both of Medwall’s plays, *Fulgens and Lucrez*, and *Nature*. The northern *Towneley* cycle text has <ay> but no <ey> spellings, but as argued above, the AY interjection may be a northern variant spelling of EY in this text.

The interjection EY is found in the speeches of good (4 cases), bad (7 cases), and neutral characters (6 cases).<sup>334</sup> All except one case of EY are spoken by male characters. The female heroine, Lucrez, in *Fulgens and Lucrez* (Part 1: 482), is the only female speaker who expresses the interjection EY. She uses it to Joan, her maid servant, in an expression of surprise. Interjections are otherwise scarce in the speech of the upper class Lucrez. Besides the single example of EY, she utters the conventional LO twice (Section 6.8.11). Her

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<sup>334</sup> Neutral character are for instance Servants A and B in *Fulgens and Lucrez*.

INTERJECTIONS IN LATE MIDDLE ENGLISH PLAY TEXTS

maid, Joan, utters interjections and related items six times.<sup>335</sup> It is possible that Joan's servant status is illustrated by her greater liberty than the upper class Lucre in choice of vocabulary. Joan fights her two suitors both verbally and physically. A more down-to-earth everyday language seems to be used deliberately by the *Fulgens and Lucre* playwright in the subplot of the servants, including Joan the maid.

In contrast to other late medieval plays, the interjections used by the two strong female characters in *Fulgens and Lucre* are not expressions of lament, such as A or ALAS. In the present material, 582 interjections are uttered by women. Of these 582 occurrences, 124 are O, and 354 are A or ALAS. In other words, O, A, and ALAS constitute 82 % of the interjections found in turns by female speakers. Neither of these - typically female - interjections occurs in the turns by the exceptional female main characters in *Fulgens and Lucre*.

6.8.9 FIE

YC	NC	TC	CC	PA	NA	BA	HK	BR	CP	Mk	Wd
13	8	31	33	9	-	-	3	-	-	3	-

Ev	Na	MI	MA	ST	PS	LD	OI	FL	Hi	MG
-	6	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	3

There are 111 attestations of the interjection type FIE in Middle English play texts. The spelling forms include <fy> or <ffy> 56 times, <fye> or <ffye> 53 times, and <fie> only twice. The interjection FIE is used to express anger in at least 90 occurrences. FIE thus mainly serves an expressive-emotive function.

<sup>335</sup> Joan's interjections include the interjection-related PARDIE (exclamatory phrase or pragmatic marker). She also uses the interjection TUSH. Five out of Joan's six interjections are directed at the male servants in the play, and these interjections (or exclamatory phrases) are used to express anger and to dismiss what has been said by the previous speaker. In other words, several of Joan's are communication-focussed and serve phatic functions in addition to their serving expressive and conative functions: Joan argues back. See also TUSH regarding the conflict speech between Joan and her two suitors.

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In some cases, prepositional constructions with FIE seem to imply a curse of the addressee. Such cursing borders on the conative function of interjections, especially when they are explicit as in the first quote below, where ‘God give you pain’ is used as a curse.

- 84) *Fye, hoore, fye! God give the pyne* (Chester 10: 397, Herod to Woman 2, anger/rage, name-calling and cursing of the addressee. Punctuation is editorial)

The interjection FIE is commonly reduplicated to FIE FIE. Each of these occurrences is included in the total number. Reduplications of the interjection FIE often occur with inserts, such as name-calling (a derogative noun referring to the addressee). Reduplications with inserted ‘on’-constructions are also common. These uses are illustrated below.

- 85) *ffy fy on thise dyse* (Towneley 24: 391, Soldier-torturer 2 to dice or audience? Cursing the dice in monologue after losing the game for Jesus’ clothes)
- 86) *we fy fy dewyls on thame all thre* (Towneley 14: 290, Herod to Messenger, anger/rage with the absent magi; the curse is directed at them, cf. quote 87 below from the same turn)
- 87) *we fy on dewyls fy fy* (Towneley 14: 308, Herod to audience or himself in monologue, anger with the three magi and/or the news of the newborn king)

FIE plus ‘on/upon’-constructions commonly include the second person pronoun ‘thee’ (object). The informal pronoun form (T-form) ‘thee’ is consistent with the strong negative emotions towards the addressee implied by the interjection FIE.

- 88) *Why! Fie on þe, faitoure vntrewe* (York 29: 296, Caiphias to Jesus, anger. The term ‘faitour’ is common with the interjection FIE, probably due to the alliterative effect. Punctuation is editorial)
- 89) *Now fy on the[e] stark horson coward* (Nature, Part 2: 676, Envy to Bodily Lust, anger, disgust)
- 90) *ffy on you! Goyth hence* (Towneley 13: 296, Mak to shepherds (you = plural), anger. Punctuation is editorial)



## INTERJECTIONS IN LATE MIDDLE ENGLISH PLAY TEXTS

The interjection FIE can also be used in constructions with ‘for’, and in collocations with other interjections, such as ALAS and WE (quotes 86-87 above), but both ‘for’-constructions and collocations are infrequent.<sup>336</sup>

91) *An Aungel allas alas fy for schame* (N-town 12: 71, Joseph to Mary, anger, reproof of Mary’s explanation of her pregnancy as an angelic visitation. Comedy)

The FIE interjection occurs turn-initially (in the first line of a speech) in 70 out of its 111 attestations, indicating that it imitates natural outbursts. 41 examples of FIE occur within turns, but in five such non-initial cases, FIE occurs at the start of a new stanza, often implying stage action. Several lines in sequence may open with the expression FIE, like poetic anaphora, in effect reinforcing the attitude implied by the context. There are 11 such cases of anaphoric use of FIE in the material. In the example below, the cursing by anaphoric use of FIE functions on several levels. As emotive expressions, these FIE occurrences denote belated regret rather than anger, they function as curses of vanity, and they function as a poetic device in a stanza which also employs alliteration.

92) *Fye on pearles! Fye on prydee! / Fye on gowne! Fye on guyde! / Fye on hewe! Fye on hyde!* (Chester 24: 277-79, Damned (Dead) Queen, to audience, regret. The dead are arisen from the grave (SD 40+) on Judgement Day. The Damned Queen (*Regina Damnata*) curses her vanity in life exemplified by pearls, pride, clothes and beauty. Punctuation is editorial)

The interjection FIE occurs in three out of the four subgenres. It is not used in any of the three miracle plays.<sup>337</sup> The interjection FIE is found in 10 different play texts, but is clearly most frequent in biblical plays. 97 of the 111 FIE occurrences are found in biblical plays, more specifically in the four cycles,

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<sup>336</sup> In contrast to FIE, ALAS-constructions with ‘that’ and ‘for’ are common (below).

<sup>337</sup> Several of the interjections explored in the present study occur in all but miracle plays. Since the miracle plays constitute a very small group of texts in the present study, I hesitate to draw any conclusions based on the fact that certain interjections are lacking in this particular subgroup of ME plays. This topic is worthy of further study, as the lacking interjection types may in conjunction throw some light on the miracle subgenre.

## 6. THE INTERJECTIONS

and in the single *Herod* text. Neither of the single Abraham plays contains FIE interjections, most probably because there are no bad, angry characters in the Abraham episode.

The typical FIE-speaker is a bad, biblical, male character such as Pilate (13 cases in all four cycles), Caiphas (8 cases in three cycles), Herod (22 cases in all four cycles + the *Herod* play), Pharaoh (five cases in two cycles: *York* and *Towneley*), and soldiers (six instances in three cycles). Bad non-humans, such as devils, do not as frequently use the interjection FIE. Only three examples of FIE in are found in the speeches of Satan or other devils, and all three belong in the same play text; the *Towneley* cycle pageant no. 25. In this episode, the *Towneley* 'Harrowing of Hell', Satan curses his subordinate devils twice (25: 165 and 229), and Christ once (25: 365). It may be of importance that most FIE speakers belong in high society. Anger and pride contrast humility, a late medieval virtue which everyone, even rulers of nations, should strive to live up to. As mentioned in Section 3.5.6, upper class members of society were in particular danger of risking damnation due to pride in late medieval theology. If they in addition were heathens, like most of these characters, they were probably seen as beyond salvation.

Occasionally FIE is used by a good character or by females. In these situations, the interjection FIE seems to mark the extreme circumstances of the speaker's anger. The good character Elias - the risen prophet of the Antichrist episode - uses FIE to curse his opponent, Antichrist (*Chester* cycle and *Peniarth Antichrist*). The Antichrist is perhaps the most dangerous biblical character of all (but occurring only the *Chester* cycle), as there is no knowing when he will manifest himself to lead believers to damnation. The episode of Antichrist in the *Chester* cycle, serves to warn the audience of danger, perhaps in the immediate future. When Elias uses FIE to denounce Antichrist, his choice of words suggests that extreme circumstances call for extreme measures. Later in the episode one of the kings denounces Antichrist's tricks by using the interjection FIE:

- 93) *Fye on thee fayture fye on thee* (Chester 23: 353, Elias to Antichrist, anger, curse)
- 94) *Fye on thy workes eychone* (Chester 23: Rex 1 to Antichrist, curse)

Female characters rarely use the interjection FIE. Besides the FIE occurring anaphorically in the speech by the Damned Queen cited in quote 92, there are only five occurrences of FIE in turns by women. All five occurrences belong in the same biblical episode - Herod's killing of the innocents – but is restricted to two plays: the *Towneley* cycle and the *Herod* play.<sup>338</sup> Like in the Antichrist episode described above, the interjection FIE in the killing context implies extreme circumstances. In contrast to the Antichrist episode described above, the mothers fighting the soldiers for the lives of their children include comic relief.

Physical comedy is mixed with extreme tragedy in the *Herod* and the *Towneley* versions of the soldiers' murdering the infants. The mothers lament their children using the interjection ALAS (Section 6.9.1), but they also fight the soldiers, either in resistance or as revenge. Both types of fighting imply extreme anger. The *Towneley* cycle soldiers are physically attacked by the angry women, and they are knocked on their heads and in the groin (16: 491, 517, and 554). A similar fighting scene between soldiers and mothers unfolds in the *Herod* play, where Herod's messenger, Watkyn, is particularly ridiculed. Physical fights between male and female characters was a cause for laughter in another biblical episode, that of Noah, but the anger in the Noah pageants never escalates to the same heights as in the fighting between Herod's soldier and the bereft mothers. Neither Noah nor his wife uses FIE, and neither does Joan or her suitors when they fight in the interlude *Fulgens and Lucre*s (however, they use FO, Section 6.8.10).

Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 249-51) refer to the interjection FIE as a “fricative-related form” together with FO (below). Culpeper and Kytö find three different uses for FIE: First, FIE is used to ‘cast shame on’ something or someone. Secondly, FIE is used to express anger, and often ‘cast shame on’ and anger co-occur. Thirdly, FIE is used solely as an expression of anger when the cause of the speaker's anger is absent. All these usages have been found in the Middle English material. The citations from the Early Modern Dialogues in Culpeper and Kytö look very similar to the ones found in the

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<sup>338</sup> Three FIE interjections occur in two speeches in the *Towneley* cycle (16: 514-515), and two occur in the single *Herod* play (ll. 297 and 309).

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Middle English dramas, even though there are no biblical plays in Culpeper and Kytö's material.

However, the modern expression "shame on you" (suggested meaning of FIE in Culpeper and Kytö 2010: 251), seems slightly weak in comparison to 'fie on you' in the context of ME biblical plays. The term 'curse' has been preferred in the present study. Further, it is held here that the FIE constructions with direct addressees serve conative functions in the Middle English drama texts, rather than phatic ones, as Culpeper and Kytö argue (2010: 251). Even though Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 205) state that they treat the group of phatic interjections "broadly and include usages primarily geared towards the manipulation of social relations", it seems somewhat too broad to include FIE in this group, at least as regards Middle English drama material. Middle English FIE serves expressive and conative functions, rather than phatic ones, described as contact-focussing in Ameka (1992a: 114). Taavitsainen's (1995: 449) suggestion that FIE often connects to swearing in Early Modern English applies also to the Middle English drama material. The FIE interjection occurs together with such words as 'devil', 'faitour' (= impostor), 'traitor', 'harlot', 'whore', and 'whoreson'. On the one hand, such associations seem to underline the conative rather than the phatic function of FIE constructions, as they are clearly addressee-oriented. On the other hand, expressions with FIE do not necessarily demand a response which Ameka (1992a: 113) suggests is implied in the conative function of interjections.

This one-way direction of FIE curses may be why Culpeper and Kytö describe them as belonging in the phatic rather than in the conative category of interjections. However, even though FIE is clearly impolite speech also in Middle English, it is not equally clear that Ameka's typology (1992a: 113-14) includes politeness/impoliteness among the possible phatic functions of interjections. The listed examples of phatic interjections clarify this: *mhm*, *uh-huh*, *yeah* (Ameka 1992a: 114). Such sounds typically serve as hesitators and as markers of information management, described as feedback or back-channelling in conversation. The interjection FIE does not serve such functions in ME play texts. Rather, it is a quite specialised interjection expressing extreme anger, even rage in the case of the mad Herod.

According to the *OED*, the interjection FIE stems from Old French, as a natural exhaling sound made especially as a reaction to unpleasant smell (cf. FO Section 6.8.10). As such, it is possible that similar blowing noises are universal signals of disgust. However, the clearly most common emotion in connection with FIE is anger, both in ‘on’-constructions and in independent occurrences. It makes sense when the *OED* also points to Old Norse as a possible joint source for FIE, since FY and ‘fy deg’ are still used in modern Norwegian and Danish. It is not uncommon at least in Norwegian to hear the phrase ‘fysj og fy!’ (two fricative-initial interjections connected with ‘and’) as an expression of disgust, particularly as a response to something foul or dirty. Since Scandinavian still has, and English has had, FY/FIE in the interjection repertoires, it seems that the form could go back to a common Northern Germanic source, rather than to Old French. The fact that FIE has few or no early attestations does not mean that it was not used in English before French influence set in. Another alternative is, of course, that English FIE is neither derived from French nor specific to Northern Germanic, but that it simply is of natural, maybe universal, derivation (also implied in the *OED*). This aspect is also discussed below concerning the FIE-related FO (Section 6.8.10).

To summarise: the interjection FIE clearly expresses emotion, especially anger. FIE interjections are especially associated with bad human male characters in the subgenre of biblical plays. When FIE is used by good or by female characters it denotes extreme circumstances. FIE may or may not be categorised as a typical interjection: on the one hand, FIE’s status as a typical interjection is disputable insofar as it frequently occurs in constructions, and is thus not always syntactically independent. Prepositional constructions of FIE + ‘on’ are, in fact, more frequent than FIE occurring as a syntactically independent outburst. The use of prepositional constructions together with second person pronouns or nouns of address seems appropriate for FIE, as the addressee-focus is particularly important (i.e. conative function). Sometimes such constructions with FIE are followed by explicit curses, or the FIE + ‘on’ is used as a curse in itself clearly directed at the addressee, whether present or not. On the other hand, FIE always expresses emotion, and it typically occurs turn-initially, as expected of a natural outburst. This turn-initial distribution and the expressive function of FIE, are aspects that argue for the inclusion of FIE among the prototypical interjections in Middle English.

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### 6.8.10 FO

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Fulgens and Luces

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2 (Fo Fo)

The interjection FO occurs once in reduplication in Medwall's interlude *Fulgens and Luces*. Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 252-53) group FO with FIE on the basis of the shared initial fricative sound, as well as on finding that the two interjection types share the same functions. According to Culpeper and Kytö, both FIE and FO perform phatic, discourse-focussed functions in addition to their expressive functions. The initial fricative sound of FO and FIE suggests relatedness, perhaps that both developed naturally from the blowing away of foul smells.<sup>339</sup> However, it is not held in the present study that the interjection FIE serves phatic functions (cf. discussion in 6.8.9). Conclusions regarding FO in ME play texts can hardly be drawn based on just one attestation, but at least this one attestation clearly expresses disgust of foul smell. The interjection FO performs expressive functions, not phatic ones, in the context below.

95) *For he is not in clene lyfe in dede*

*I fele it at my nose*

*Fo fo etc* (Fulgens and Luces: 1212, Servant B to audience, complaint of foul smell of Servant A. The *etc* in the verse line may imply that the actor is allowed to improvise further reactions?)

The interjections FO and FIE appear related as they have the initial fricative sound, and the possible natural derivation, in common. However, FIE does not share the open vowel sound with FO, and while FIE is still found in Scandinavian, FO is not, at least not as a typical interjection. It is possible, as Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 252) seem to suggest, that FO represents an original natural outburst, while FIE in Early Modern English has become the coded, standard interjection in reactions of disgust whether these relate to

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<sup>339</sup> Charles Darwin (1872) suggested that there were some such naturally occurring sounds which he found to be common to many peoples. For instance, "Australians" (Leichhardt's description probably of Aborigines, in Darwin 1872) were reported to utter 'Pooh! Pooh!' to express disgust (Darwin 2005 [1872]: 1201) Both the plosive sound /p/ and the fricative /f/ blow air off from the face.

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stench or to people. If so, it is also possible that FIE in Early Modern English can be used for phatic functions, but Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 251) attest that FIE is commonly used to express anger also in their material. In ME play texts, FIE generally expresses anger, rather than disgust, although the two emotions may be related.

The *OED* does not list the interjection FO, but it includes 9 examples of the interjection *Pho*, the first from 1601 and the latest from 1997. The *OED* describes *Pho* an interjection expressing disgust, but none of the cited usages seem to imply disgust of smell. The quote including FO above is dated to c. 1512 by witness date, or even earlier, in the 1490s, if composition date is used as basis. It therefore seems possible that the form *Pho* in the *OED* was used earlier than the dictionary reports, but has gone unnoticed due to ME spelling variation.

6.8.11 LO

YC	NC	TC	CC	PA	NA	BA	HK	BR	CP	Mk	Wd
97	51	69	22	-	2	7	1	14	9	10	17

Ev	Na	MI	MA	ST	PS	LD	OI	FL	Hi	MG
5	16	7	8	-	2	-	8	10	11	9

LO occurs frequently in Middle English drama with 375 examples in total, spelt <lo>, <loo>, <loe>, and <lew> (rare).<sup>340</sup> LO enjoys a wide distribution as it occurs in 20 out of the 23 texts in the present study, and in all four subgenres. According to the *OED*, the <loo> and <lo> spellings represented different pronunciation in Middle English, evidenced by rhymes. The *OED* suggests that the spelling <loo> representing a long vowel, is a development

<sup>340</sup> The form <lew> occurs in reduplication once in the *Towneley* cycle: *she commys lew lew* (*Towneley* 3: 734, Wife to Noah; attention to the returning dove). The line-final form <lew> rhymes with *vntew* ('unto'), *trew* ('true'), and *new*. This particular spelling therefore seems to be a rhyme adaptation. Otherwise when LO occurs in rhyming position in the *Towneley* cycle text it is spelt <lo> as is the custom of the *Towneley* copyist. There are many examples: *Towneley* 2: 463, 12: 177; 195; 411; 520, and 650, 13: 342, 16: 105, 20: 435, 21: 583, 23: 270, and 29: 411.

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of the Old English interjection *lā*, while the form denoting a short vowel, <lo>, is a short form of the imperative of the verb ‘look’.

In the present material, the short spelling form <lo> is most frequent with 251 attestations. The double <oo> spelling has 101 attestations. The spelling with final <e>, i.e. <loe>, has 20 examples, all of which occur in the late *Chester* cycle text (MS Hm, dated to 1591). This suggests that the form <loe> belongs in a particular scribal repertoire.<sup>341</sup> In contrast to the *OED* distinction between <lo> and <loo> spellings, the present material indicates that scribal preference is more important than sound representation. For example, the *Towneley* copyist uses <lo>, the *N-town* scribes prefer <lo> but also have <loo> (5 examples out of 51, all 5 cases in Hand A’s parts), while the *York* scribes prefer <loo> (69 out of 97 cases, by both Hands B and C).<sup>342</sup> Likewise, Taavitsainen’s (1997: 589) Middle English material did not evidence a distinction between the long form <loo>, deriving from OE *lā*, and the short form <lo>, deriving from ‘look’.

Even though LO is commonly defined as an interjection, it only partly fits the definition of interjections applied in the present work. LO is commonly found to as a syntactically independent expression, in contrast, for example to other marginal interjections such as FIE (Section 6.8.9) or ALAS (Section 6.9.1). However, LO most frequently occurs within turns as opposed to turn-initial occurrence expected of natural outbursts of emotion (e.g FIE). The ratio of non-initial occurrences to turn-initial ones is 233 to 142, i.e. more than 1.5 to 1. Of the 142 turn-initial examples of LO, 40 examples are not turn-starters, but they occur within or at the end of the first verse line, as in:

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<sup>341</sup> Gregorie, the Chester MS Hm copyist, is almost consistent in selecting the form <loe>. He has only two more occurrences of LO besides the 20 <loe>; one spelt <lo> and one spelt <loo>. None occurs in rhyming position in this text.

<sup>342</sup> Most examples of LO do not occur in rhyme position in the present material. No orthographic pattern governed by verse-opening or verse-internal position has been detected. If there was a distinction in pronunciation, this distinction seems to be ignored by the scribes when LO is not used verse-finally (i.e. in rhyming position). The example in footnote 341 above shows that the *Towneley* scribe opted for (eye-) rhyme when spelling LO as <lew> rhyming on ‘unto’, ‘true’ and ‘new’; all spelt with the ending <ew>.



- 96) *helpē pi sylff nought lo mercy ys here* (Mankind: 806, Mischief to Nought, attention to the approaching Virtue Mercy. Comedy)

Further, the interjection LO functions differently from other interjections as the expressive emotive and/or cognitive functions are scarce or non-existent.<sup>343</sup> Rather, LO most commonly functions as a simple (verbal) imperative, like ‘look’.<sup>344</sup> Its main function is to draw attention to something physical on stage, commonly a stage property.<sup>345</sup> As such, LO serves a particular theatrical function, and an accompanying hand or body gesture, such as pointing, is often implied. This usage also occurs in Taavitsainen’s ME drama material, in a function “equivalent to *look*” (Taavitsainen 1997: 591). In the material of the present study, this function is the most frequent one, counting at least 250 examples.

- 97) *Here is more wax ful redy loo* (N-town 34: 246, Annas to Pilate, attention to object: wax. Rhyming position)  
 98) *loo . Here ys iij galouns off oyle clere* (Sacrament: Jew Malchus to Jews, attention to object: oil. MS punctuation)  
 99) *Hayll, luf lord! Lo* (Towneley 16: 105, Messenger to Herod, greeting and probably attention to object: a letter he seems to be carrying (no SDs). Punctuation is editorial)

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<sup>343</sup> The possible exception to non-emotional usage of LO is when it occurs in reduplications: *lo . lo . lo . What se 3e now* (N-town 10: 256, Joseph to bishop, attention and surprise. MS punctuation). Reduplications of LO are uncommon, amounting to 12 examples including those with inserted phrases or nouns: *Lo wyll ye se? lo here cometh one* (Nature, Part 1: 716, Sensuality to Man, attention. Punctuation is editorial). Reduplicated ‘yes yes’ (enthusiasm) or ‘no no’ (fear etc.) can be used in the same exclamatory way as LO, yet ‘yes’ and ‘no’ are not usually described as interjections. In theory any word can be uttered in an exclamatory manner, but as such usage is secondary to their normal function, they are not considered typical interjections.

<sup>344</sup> The difference between LO and LOOK is that LO is uninflected, while LOOK is a full verb following the regular pattern of verbal inflection. LO can, therefore, be described as a particle, but a particle is not necessarily an interjection.

<sup>345</sup> In this sense it can be argued that LO serves conative functions, but the basic question of expressive function remains. It seems implied in Ameka (1992a) that conative or phatic functions should always co-occur with expressive function in interjections proper. If not, routines such as ‘yes’, ‘no’, ‘hello’ would have to be included.

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- 100) *I was chenyde by þe armys lo I haue þem here* (Mankind: 642, Mischief to Nowadays, attention to object: chains/fetters)  
101) *lo take yow here a trepett* (Mankind: 113, Vice Nought to Virtue Mercy, as Nought trips/bullies Mercy (*trepett* = 'trippet', to trip someone), attention to physical comedy)

Besides signalling attention to objects and action, LO is commonly used to draw attention to the character's own person, for example in pious replies to celestial calls, in boastful self-presentations, and in physical comedy. The attention-signalling LO is used both among the characters on stage, and from stage directly to the audience. The possible biblical connotations of LO (Taavitsainen 1997: 589) do not hinder its usage by bad as well as by good characters in the present material.<sup>346</sup> Neither is LO restricted to biblical plays, cf. quotes 96, 98, 100, and 101 above, as well as quote no. 106 below:

- 102) *Loo here indeed* (York 10: 333, Abraham to Angel, reply to call, attention to self)  
103) *Goddis handmayden lo me here* (York 12: 189, Mary to Angel, reply to call, attention to self)  
104) *lo me here redy lord to faryn & to fle* (Perseverance: 482, Vice Pleasure to Vice World, greeting in entering, attention to self)  
105) *Loo, Pilate I am, proued a prince of grete pride* (York 30: 119, Pilate to audience, self-presentation. Punctuation is editorial)  
106) *queyntly go y lo / as pretty as a py lo* (Occupation and Idleness: 83-84, Idleness to audience, attention to his demonstrating a funny gait. Comedy)

As illustrated by the quotes, LO is used by both good and bad characters, by both humans and non-humans (e.g. Vice Pleasure in 104), and by both male and female characters (e.g. Mary in 103).

LO does not imitate a natural outburst in the Late Middle English play texts. The common usage of LO is not expressive-emotive. First and foremost LO

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<sup>346</sup> Bad characters use LO 156 times, and good characters use it 188 times. The 31 remaining speakers are either neutral characters (like expositor-narrators) or difficult to classify as either good or bad (typically mankind figures. For discussions of character classification, see Chapter 4).

signals attention to stage properties, people, and physical action. In this function, LO seems a particularly useful pragmatic marker in play texts: to instructors and/or actors (if they could read), as well as to audiences and potential readers. A stage property, for instance, may need presentation in order for the audience to understand what they are and how they function (see ‘wax’ in quote 97 and ‘oil’ in quote 98 above). In such contexts of pointing something out, which may be peculiar to drama, LO functions like deictic elements such as ‘here’ and ‘now’. Like deictic elements, LO is uninflected.

LO is not only used to draw attention to something physical on stage, but also to mark the abstract, typically in expository or argumentative speeches. It can be used both at the start of an explication or at the conclusion of it. In these contexts, LO is used as a rhetorical discourse marker. In contrast to more typical interjections, LO even occurs as a discourse marker in the speeches of narrator-characters, such as ‘Expositors’ and ‘Doctors’ performing prologues and epilogues. The narrator-expositors scarcely use interjections, since they stand outside the dramatic fiction, and do not engage in dialogue (discussed in Section 7.9.5). The disoursal usage of LO may have derived from religious texts, for instance sermons, but it is not restricted to biblical plays.

- 107) *lo my tokyns shalbe slyke* (Towneley 8: 168, God to Moses, attention marker to God’s explication of signs (‘tokens’), biblical style)
- 108) *lo þis ys þe worthynes of my name* (Wisdom: 38, Wisdom to Anima and audience in self-presentation, conclusion of preceding explication, biblical?)
- 109) *Lo þus be my mayne and my myght* (York 36: 20, Pilate to audience (including Caiphaz and Annas? l. 36), self-presentation, explicating his role as judge of life and death in ll. 7-32)
- 110) *Lo sonne þou mayst se* (Occupation and Idleness: 538, Doctrine to Idleness, attention to argument)
- 111) *Lo syrs thus fareth the worlde alwaye* (Mundus et Infans: 698, Folly in aside to audience, sarcastically paraphrasing the situation. Comedy)
- 112) *Loo, he sais þus: ‘God sall gyffe’* (York 12: 58, Doctor-narrator to audience explicating the words of the prophet Isaiah (= ‘he’). Punctuation is editorial)

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- 113) *LO! Sovereyns and sorys, now haue we schewyd* (Brome  
Abraham, Doctor-narrator to audience, epilogue. Punctuation is  
editorial)

Especially the use of LO in explications, exemplified by the latter quotes, places LO in outer the margin of the interjection category. It could be held that LO in such contexts serves phatic, i.e. communication-focussed, functions, but there is no implied emotion, taken to be a basic property of interjections in the present study. It has been found that narrator-characters, Expositors, who rarely employ interjections, still employ the marker LO. The use of LO in expositions and explications strengthens the impression that LO is not used to express emotion. LO seems more precisely described as a discourse marker when it is used for rhetorical (discoursal) functions. The discoursal usage of LO in Middle English play texts looks similar to how Taavitsainen (1997: 589) describes the use of LO in sermons, homilies and mystical texts in her ME material.

Taavitsainen (1997: 589) suggests that the use of the marker LO spread from “biblical style [...] to other religious writings.” It can be hypothesised that if the discourse marker LO is an adoption from biblical style, it should be especially frequent in the biblical plays in the present study. The cycles and single biblical plays dramatise stories from the Bible and they probably draw on common stock vocabulary from, for instance, sermons, homilies, and hymns. Indeed, LO is very common in Middle English biblical plays. The *York* cycle, for example, contains 97 occurrences of LO, the highest number of attestations in any single text. The biblical plays together contain 263 examples of LO out of the total number of 375. However, biblical plays by far constitute the largest group of ME plays, and, as mentioned, LO is not restricted this subgenre. The incidence (numbers per 1,000 words) of LO is 0.78 in biblical play texts, and not much lower, 0.72, in non-biblical play texts. Whether the use of LO stems from biblical style or not, it is not (or no longer) reflected in the Middle English play subgenres. Further, LO is not particularly frequent before vocatives, as was the earlier, Old English *lā*, according to the *OED*. The vocative function seems to have been taken over by A and O in the Late Medieval drama texts. LO is used by and to all types of characters. LO has become a widely distributed marker in Middle English drama.

Two descriptions of the use of LO are given in the *OED*. Description a) draws a parallel to the interjection O: “In early use, an interjection of vague meaning, corresponding approximately to the modern O! or Oh!” This use is not found in the present material.

Description b) in the *OED* fits the imperative usage of LO in Middle English drama: “Used to direct attention to the presence or approach of something, or to what is about to be said; = Look! See! Behold”.<sup>347</sup> The fact that the “early use” described in the *OED* differs substantially from the later use in Middle English drama suggests that Old English *lā* and Middle English LO in play texts are not the same word.

In Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 257), LO is included as an “other form” in their discussion of pragmatic noise in Early Modern English dialogues.<sup>348</sup> The single attestation of LO in their material, occurs in the second sense described in the *OED*: the imperative, short form of the verb ‘look’. In other words, neither Taavitsainen (1997) nor Culpeper and Kytö (2010) find attestations of the first sense of LO described in the *OED*: an “interjection of vague meaning, corresponding approximately to the modern O! or Oh!”. This use is noted as obsolete in the *OED*, and it seems it was already obsolete in Late Middle English. What remains is the imperative function, equivalent to ‘look’, when LO signals visual as well as aural information.

In the present study, LO is found in texts belonging in both the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In raw figures, the occurrences are approximately evenly distributed among the earlier and later material, counting 190 examples in the fifteenth century texts, and 185 examples in the sixteenth century texts. However, when the size of the material is accounted for, the incidence of LO in the fifteenth century texts is 0.85, while the incidence of LO in the

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<sup>347</sup> Perhaps surprisingly, the phrase *Lo and behold* (cliché?) does not occur in the ME play material, but there are two attestations reminiscent of it: *lo sir behold* (Towneley 8: 257, Moses to Pharaoh, attention to staff/serpent) and *lo serys lo . beheldyth & se* (N-town 32: 169, Caiphaz to Jews and audience, attention to Jesus. MS punctuation).

<sup>348</sup> Koskenniemi (1962: 74) describes LO as a secondary interjection, which suggests that she saw it as a word, or of word-derivation like ALAS, rather than as a primary, i.e. typical interjection.

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sixteenth century texts is 0.52.<sup>349</sup> In other words, there appears to be a trend towards decreasing employment of LO in play texts. This finding corresponds well with Culpeper and Kytö's (2010: 257) finding only one attestation of LO in the Early Modern English dialogues.

To summarise: LO is normally described as an interjection, for example in the *OED*, but the status of LO as an interjection is doubtful. A definition that describes interjections primarily as expressions of emotion and attitude, such as the definitions in Quirk et al (1972: 413), or the one proposed in Wharton (2009: 176-77), as well as the one applied in the present study, must necessarily lead to the exclusion of LO, because this word is not used for expressive functions. LO seems to be used in late medieval drama texts for practical purposes such as pointing out 1) the physical: properties, places and people, or 2) the verbal: as a marker of an argument. It does not mark speakers or subgenres. It may be in the process of becoming old-fashioned and less used during the two centuries covered by the play material in the present study.

### 6.8.12 OUT

YC	NC	TC	CC	PA	NA	BA	HK	BR	CP	Mk	Wd
24	20	33	44	7	-	-	3	-	8	1	2

Ev	Na	MI	MA	ST	PS	LD	OI	FL	Hi	MG
-	-	-	5	7	7	-	1	3	-	1

OUT is a frequent interjection with 166 occurrences in 14 different texts from all four subgenres. It occurs in a variety of spellings, for example <owte>, <ow3t>, and <outte>, besides the most common forms <out> (58 examples) and <owt> (55 examples). Some of the spellings are restricted to one text or scribal contribution. For instance, spellings of OUT with h-graphemes, as in

<sup>349</sup> Incidence means number of occurrences per 1,000 words. The calculation of text sizes is accounted for in Section 7.1. The texts are ordered chronologically by date of composition, leaving 14 texts in the group of fifteenth century texts, and nine in the group of sixteenth century texts (from and including the MS Peniarth 'Antichrist').

#### INTERJECTIONS IN LATE MIDDLE ENGLISH PLAY TEXTS

<outh>, only occur in the *N-town* cycle, pageant 41, which is the work of the manuscript's scribe D. Scribe A, the main hand of the *N-town* cycle, uses two other spelling variants of OUT.<sup>350</sup> The interjection OUT is easily distinguished from the adverb 'out' in the present material, even when the spellings of the two words are not distinct. It has not been found that the speaker exclaiming OUT is actually ordering another character to leave. OUT is uttered in fear, pain, despair and anger, commonly in collocation with other interjections associated with the same emotions. The interjection OUT serves expressive-emotive functions.

The interjection OUT is predominantly found in turn-initial distribution, with 119 examples found as turn-openers, i.e first word in first line of a new turn. Only 47 examples of OUT are not found at the beginning of turns, and of these 47 non-initial examples, at least 21 mark changes in addressee or they open a new stanza, both of which may, in effect, mark a new turn by the current speaker. Its mainly turn-initial distribution indicates that OUT imitates spontaneous reactions.

- 114)        *Outt! Morder- man, I say* (Towneley 16: 521, Woman 2 to Soldier 2, outcry in fear, protest. Punctuation is editorial)
- 115)        *Owte! Owte! Harrowe! Helples, slyke hot at es here* (York 1: 97, Lucifer *IN INFERNO* (Speech Heading 96+), pain, fear. Punctuation is editorial)
- 116)        *Owt alas I am shent* (Chester 17: 177, Satan to audience or self, fear, shame?)
- 117)        *Oute I am madde . my wyttes be ner goon* (Herod: 365, Herod to soldiers and audience, anger, rage, cognitive realisation? MS punctuation)

As the quotes above illustrate, the interjection OUT occurs alone, in reduplication (OUT OUT), or in collocation with other interjections,

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<sup>350</sup> Scribe A writes <out> 13 times and <owt> 3 times, but <owt> only occurs in the final pageant, no. 42, suggesting that the spelling may have been an exemplar form only occurring in the exemplar (guild copy?) of this particular pageant, but not in the other pageant/play exemplars (the *N-town* cycle seems not to be a collection of guild pageants, like the other cycles. Cf. 5.10). The work of scribes B and C in the *N-town* cycle manuscript does not affect the present study.

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especially ALAS and HARROW, as in quotes 114 and 115 above. Taavitsainen (1997: 598) finds the same types of collocation in her Middle English data. Both types, reduplicated OUT and OUT in collocations, reinforce the expressive-emotive function. The interjection OUT is used to express mental and physical pain. It often occurs in the speeches of bad characters, such as Herod (quote 116) and devils (114, 115). There may be an element of comedy in the scenes where such villains cry out in pain or fear. Comedy is certainly intended in quote 119 below from the fight between Servant A and Joan maid, and probably also in quote 120 where the fallen *Chester* Shepherd hurts 'his loins', most likely a euphemism for genitalia. The Shepherds of the Nativity are often portrayed as comical characters (cf. Section 6.8.18 and the *Towneley* Shepherds).

- 118) *Out out Alas what heylith* (= 'aileth') *my soulle* (N-town 14: 364, Devil 1 to audience or Bishop, physical pain)
- 119) *owte þis grevyth us worse þan hell payne* (Conversion: 471, Devil Belial to Devil Mercury, anger, lament? Stage Directions 470+ read 'both [devils] roar and cry')
- 120) *Out out alas for payne* (Fulgens and Lucre, Part 1: 1207, Servant A to Joan maid, physical pain from their fight, comedy)
- 121) *Owt alas hee lyes on his loynes* (*Chester* 7: 266, Shepherd 3 perhaps to audience, empathy. Comedy)

The interjection OUT is also used in deeply tragic contexts, as it commonly occurs in turns by dying characters and in turns by other characters lamenting the dead. The OUT-collocations in these circumstances are the same as those used in comedy.

- 122) *Out out & alas : myn hert is onsondyr* (N-town 4: 174, Cain to self or audience, pain from wounds, dying. MS punctuation)
- 123) *Owt owt and woe is me* (*Chester* 10: 345, Woman 1 to Soldier or self, lament of killed child)
- 124) *owt owt owt owt* (*Chester* 10: 377, Woman 2 to Soldier or self, lament of killed child)

The interjection OUT is used to express particularly strong emotions, most often in collocation with other interjections with connotations of pain and



fear, and especially frequently in the turns of dying characters. Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 230, 239) find that A, ALAS, and O are used in Early Modern English in laments in reactions to death. The same three interjections, and ALAS in particular, are found in laments in the Middle English drama material. However, the dying characters themselves cry OUT more often than they cry ALAS in Middle English plays. Quote 122 above exemplifies usage of both OUT and ALAS in collocation. The interjection ALAS occurs five times in turns by the dying, while the interjection OUT occurs ten times in six turns by dying characters.<sup>351</sup> All the quotes below are found in turns of dying speakers.<sup>352</sup>

- 125)            *Out out I deye here . My dethe is now sought* (N-town 4: 186, Servant boy to blind Lamech, pain and fear, dying. MS punctuation)
- 126)            *I deye outh outh harro* (N-town 41: 475, Prince 3 to audience or self, fear and pain, dying)
- 127)            *What out out allas . I wene I shall dey þis day* (Herod: 381, Herod to audience, fear, pain, dying. MS punctuation)
- 128)            *out I deye! ley on watyr* (Perseverance 2396, Sloth to Flesh, fear of dying. Punctuation is editorial)
- 129)            *Owte! Ay herrowe! Devill, I drowne!* (York 11: 403, Pharaoh, fear of dying, last words as he drowns. Punctuation is editorial)

The interjection OUT sometimes occurs in prepositional constructions: ‘OUT on thee’. This expression usually denotes anger with someone, i.e. it serves both expressive and conative functions. It equals that of ‘FIE on thee’ (Section 6.8.9), but whereas FIE regularly occurs in ‘on’-constructions, OUT only occasionally does so; most commonly OUT occurs as a syntactically independent interjection. OUT is found in ‘on’-constructions in only 24 cases,

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<sup>351</sup> Dying characters calling ALAS (without OUT) occur once in *Perseverance* (l. 2982) and twice in *Mary Magdalen* (ll. 777 and 1759).

<sup>352</sup> Many outcries by Devils, in episodes such as Lucifer’s fall and Harrowing of Hell, are similar to the cries of dying characters and include cries of OUT. However, as Devils do not perish, these outcries are not included with the cries of the dying.

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and 14 of these cases occur in the *Chester* cycle pageant no. 23, and the corresponding *Peniarth Antichrist* (seven in each).<sup>353</sup>

The interjection OUT in 'on'-constructions occurs together with the informal pronoun 'thee', similar to the pattern found in FIE plus 'on'-constructions (Section 6.8.9). The use of the informal second person pronoun 'thee' reinforces the negative attitude towards the addressee implied in both OUT and FIE-constructions. However, while FIE plus 'on' is usually followed by a derogative noun alliterating with FIE, for instance 'faiour' (as in 'fie on thee, faitour'), OUT plus 'on' is most commonly followed by the derogative 'thief' (11 examples), which does not alliterate with OUT but may alliterate with 'thee' (quote 130).

However, 'thief' is also used when there is a plural addressee demanding the pronoun 'you', which obviously does not alliterate. In none of the five quotes below is the addressee a thief in the regular sense. Apparently, the word 'thief' was used in Middle English as a general negative denominator in diverse contexts. It seems that OUT + on + pronoun + thief is stock vocabulary in Late Middle English play texts, and it may be a testimony to the oral longevity of such stock phrases that 'thief/thieves' remains even when the context demands other, non-alliterative items, such as the plural pronoun.

- 130) *Owt owt on thee theife* (Chester 10: 329, Woman 2 to Soldier 2, anger, despair)  
131) *Owte on 3ow theves I crye* (York19: 194, Woman 1 to Soldiers, anger, despair)  
132) *Out on you theffys bothe ii* (Peniarth: 387, Antichrist to Prophets Enoch and Elias, anger, fear?)  
133) *Owt on you theeves both too* (Chester 23: 387, Antichrist to Prophets Enoch and Elias, anger, fear? Corresponds to the same line in the earlier *Peniarth Antichrist* text below)  
134) *Out on the mans mordere* (Towneley 16: 559, Woman 3 to Soldier 3, anger, despair)

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<sup>353</sup> OUT + 'on'-constructions occur mainly in the cycles, but also in the early morality play, *Perseverance*. There are three occurrences in *York*, two in *Towneley*, one in *N-town*, nine in *Chester*, seven in *Peniarth* 'Antichrist', and two in the *Perseverance* play text.

As illustrated above, several OUT+‘on’-constructions occur in the speeches of the bereft mothers of the murdered infants. The speeches have very similar meaning, but again the *Towneley* playwright has been the most innovative of the cycle composers, preferring the more precise expression ‘man’s murderer’ to ‘thief’ (quote 134). Quotes 132 and 133 illustrate that ‘thief’ is used also to good characters, and has general derogative meaning. These quotes also demonstrate the textual closeness between the *Peniarth* ‘Antichrist’ and the parallel text, *Chester* pageant no. 23 of Antichrist, copied a century later.<sup>354</sup>

The interjection OUT is mainly a marker of evil in the present material. As many as 81% (135 of the 166) attestations are uttered by bad characters. Only 24 attestations of OUT belong in the turns of good characters, 19 of which are the bereft mothers (Woman 1, 2, and 3 in the quotes above) in the biblical cycles. The remaining 7 attestations of OUT are found in the turns of characters which have been categorised as neutral or unclear as regards the good-bad dichotomy. About half (87 examples) of the attestations of OUT belong in turns by human characters, and the other half (79 examples) belong in the speeches of non-human characters, such as devils and vices. The dual characteristics of ‘bad’ + ‘non-human’ account for 76 examples of OUT-usage (most of these characters are devils and vices).

Further, it seems that OUT is mostly characteristic of male speech. It is used 27 times by female characters, a number which in itself is quite high, but as many as 19 of these 27 occurrences belong in the Murder of the Innocents episode discussed above. Four of the eight remaining examples of females expressing OUT belong in the turns by Noah’s wife in the fighting episode in the Noah pageants (in the *York* and *Towneley* cycles). In other words, when OUT is used by female characters, they are most commonly engaged in physical fights, the mothers with the soldiers, and Noah’s wife with Noah. Their cries denote pain and fear similar to when OUT is used by male characters. It is possible that women engaging in physical fights with men were considered vile by late medieval audiences. Misogynist comedy is certainly present in the Noah episodes. It may seem more unexpected to a modern reader that there may be an element of comedy in the fights in the

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<sup>354</sup> The two Antichrist texts from MS Peniarth, c. 1500, and MS HM 2 (i.e. *Chester* cycle copy Hm), 1591, have been collated in Chapter 3, Section 3.4.5.

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Murder of the Innocents episodes. Yet, the beatings that some of the Soldiers receive strongly suggest physical comedy. An element of *Schadenfreude* may also be included, meaning that the audience may safely laugh at bad characters being punished. Both the Soldiers and devils seem subject to glee in the cycle plays.

If OUT developed into a stereotypical marker of the tragic, this stereotypicality may have been exploited to achieve comic effect and even parody of the tragic. Parody may have been intended for instance when bad characters receive their due punishment. *Schadenfreude* most likely co-occurs, especially when devils fall.

135)            *Owte! Owte! I go wode for wo, my wytte es all wente nowe*  
(York 1: 105, Devil 2 to himself or audience, outcry of pain in hell.  
Punctuation is editorial)

Comical exaggeration is another effect achieved by the use of stereotypical expressions. When *Fulgens and Lucre's* Servant A cries out in pain as a female, Joan maid, beats him, part of the comical effect stems from his exaggerated cries of pain and fear (quote 120 above). A possible side-effect of employing stereotypical expressions for parody is that the original meaning becomes tainted, and the expression itself may become stigmatised through a process similar to semantic pejoration. It is conceivable that the interjection OUT ultimately became so cliché that it ceased to be used as an interjection. Neither Taavitsainen (1995) nor Culpeper and Kytö (2010) include OUT in their studies of Early Modern English. It was examined, therefore, whether the Late Middle English material of the present study attests a decline in the use of OUT, but no such pattern was found.<sup>355</sup> It is possible that Taavitsainen (1995) and Culpeper and Kytö (2010) simply do not include the interjection OUT because they have taken it to belong in the class of adverbs.

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<sup>355</sup> In the present material, 104 examples of OUT belong in material composed before 1500 (excluding the Peniarth 'Antichrist' dated to c. 1500). The remaining 62 examples of OUT belong in the material that was composed in the sixteenth century. Five post-1500 play texts include OUT: the *Peniarth* 'Antichrist', the *Chester* cycle, the *Herod* play, the *Conversion of St Paul*, and *Magnyfycence*. Accounting for text size in the pre- and post-1500 material, gives the incidence (frequency per 1,000 words) of 0.3 in the pre-1500 material and a rise to 0.5 in the post-1500 material.

In a later article, this time on Middle English, Taavitsainen (1997) reports eight attestations of the interjection OUT in her multi-genre material.<sup>356</sup> Three OUT occur in the Chaucer material, three occur in sequence in the religious *Cloud of Unknowing*, and two OUT occur in drama, in the *Towneley* cycle (Taavitsainen 1997: 598). Koskenniemi (1962: 177) finds two examples of OUT used in combination with ALAS, both interjection types defined, apparently, as secondary interjections in her study.<sup>357</sup> Mazzon (2009) also mentions the interjection OUT in connection with her discussion of the more frequent ALAS in her study on the dialogue in the *N-town* cycle. She describes both types as secondary interjections performing similar functions to HARROW and WELLAWAY; they are expressions of “sorrow, complaint, lamentation, regret and despair” (Mazzon 2009: 86). Mazzon’s description of the typical expressive functions of the collocation of ALAS and OUT corresponds well to Taavitsainen’s (1997) findings, as well as to the findings concerning OUT of the present study. The difference is that OUT in the present material appears in greater numbers and with wider distribution than earlier studies have revealed.

Summing up, the interjection OUT marks strong emotions and is used both in tragic and comical situations. OUT belongs in the vocabulary of the dying, as well as in the outcries of evil, non-human characters. The use - and possible abuse - of OUT in drama, may have undermined its serious function. OUT, once a widely used interjection, seems to have lost its place as a common interjection by the Early Modern English period. The latest attestations in the *OED* belong in the nineteenth century, but they may be examples of rare usage at this late date. The form OUCH, attested first in the nineteenth century according to the *OED*, may conceivably be a modern, American-orthographic, realisation of the interjection OUT. The *OED* describes OUCH as “expressing sudden pain”, a description equally fitting of at least some of the Middle English attestations of OUT.

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<sup>356</sup> Some of the material in Taavitsainen’s (1997) study corresponds to texts included in the present study, but whereas her corpus study includes samples of long texts, the present study explores the full texts. This is the reason why Taavitsainen reports only two examples of OUT in the *Towneley* cycle, when the total number of OUT in this particular text is 33.

<sup>357</sup> The material of the present study is of earlier date than Koskenniemi’s (1962: 9) early English Renaissance drama (1550-1600).

6. THE INTERJECTIONS

6.8.13 OY/OYEZ

YC	NC	TC	Mk
12	1 (2?)	3	3

There are 19, or possibly 20 (below) attestations of OY or OYEZ in the Middle English play texts. The short form OY, including one form spelt <hoy>, has been interpreted as a variant of OYEZ, since the two can occur in combination, and they seem to perform the same function in similar contexts.

In the present material OYEZ occurs in many spelling forms, such as <oyas>, <oyes>, <oyyt>, <o3es>, single <oy> and reduplicative <oy oy>. None includes the z-grapheme (from French) present in the *OED* headword. The syntactic independence of OY and OYEZ is often marked by dots in the manuscripts.

- 136) *Oy . Al maner men takyth to me tent* (N-town 10: 142, Messenger to the men of David's kindred (10: 143), attention to the bishop's proclamation. This is the public crier-usage described in the *OED*. MS punctuation)
- 137) *Kyte oute yugilment . Vta . Oy . Oy .* (York 31: 241, Herod to Jesus, anger, rage, possibly markers of Herod's madness? MS punctuation)
- 138) *O3es . O3es . O3es .* (York 31: 333, Herod's sons in unison to mute Jesus, they cry at him for a response, implies physical torture? MS punctuation)
- 139) *Oyes. Jesu þou iewe of gentill Jacob kynne* (York 33: 264, Annas to Jesus? Attention call by order from Pilate, l. 262. OYEZ (spelt <oyes>) was added by Hand C in the MS, Beadle 2009: 313)
- 140) *Say may þou not here me? Oy . Man, arte þou woode* (York 31: 248, Herod to Jesus, attention call, anger, bullying. Punctuation is editorial except for the dot after OY, which is in the manuscript)

The use of OY and OYEZ is mainly restricted to the biblical cycles, and especially to the *York* cycle. Besides the occurrences in three different *York* cycle pageants (nos. 30, 31, and 33), there is one sequence of OY in the *Towneley* cycle, and one certain and one ambiguous (the 20<sup>th</sup>) example of OY

in the *N-town* cycle. The morality play *Mankind* is the only non-biblical play which has any examples of OYEZ. In *Mankind*, OYEZ occurs once in a sequence, similar to the occurrence in the York cycle in quote 135 above. The *OED* describes OYEZ a “call for silence and attention” used by “public criers”. The expression derives from Anglo-Norman and Middle French. In medieval times such public criers read their official proclamations on behalf of the authorities. In Middle English plays, however, the interjection often expresses anger in addition to its function as a call for attention.

About  $\frac{3}{4}$  (74 %) of the occurrences of OY or OYEZ are found turn-initially. The call OYEZ is used three times in referred speech in construction with the verbs ‘cry’: *cry oyez* (twice), and with ‘holler’ (spelt <halow>): *halow a hoy* (Towneley 30: 368). In several of the episodes where OY and OYEZ are used there seems to be an element of comedy. The interplay between Cain and his servant is comical, and Pilate’s instructing his servant (*Bedellus*) to cry OYEZ loud enough also seems to imply comedy.

- 141)           *and cry 'oyes, oyes, oy!' (Towneley 2: 419, Cain to servant  
Pikeharnes, order, instruction. Comedy. Punctuation is editorial)*
- 142)           *Pilate: Cry 'Oyas'*  
           *Bedellus:       Oyas*  
           *Pilate:                Yit efte, be þi feithe*  
           *Bedellus:                Oyas!                Alowde (in margin)*  
           (= ‘aloud’; a stage direction. Beadle 2009: 30)  
           *Pilate: Yit lowdar, that ilke lede may li[the]*  
           (*York 30: 370a-d - 371. Comedy? Punctuation is editorial*)

OYEZ and OY are used by bad characters, or in one case, by a neutral character: the Bishop’s Messenger (*Nuncius* in Speech Headings in the *N-town* cycle).<sup>358</sup> As mentioned, one ambiguous attestation occurs. It is found in a turn by the disciple Peter, a good character:

- 143)           *O3e bretheryn attendyth to me (N-town 39: 57, Peter to  
Disciples. Attention call or vocative construction?)*

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<sup>358</sup> According to the *OED*, a *nuncio* is a papal ambassador in the Roman Catholic Church, but it .

## 6. THE INTERJECTIONS

There is no space in the manuscript between ‘O’ and ‘3e’ in the quote above, and the form could, therefore, possibly be OYEZ. However, it seems more likely that the expression consists of O as a marker of the vocative, and *3e* as the second person plural pronoun: ‘O ye brothers’. Yoghs are common graphemes in the *N-town* manuscript, but cannot be attested in OYEZ. The interjection OY/OYEZ occurs only once elsewhere in the *N-town* cycle, and then merely as OY (quote 135 above). The fact that all other OYEZ speakers are bad characters, suggests that the Peter quote (142) does not belong in the OYEZ class, but rather is an attestation of the interjection O.

It is quite likely that the use of commands, and especially those of French derivation, marked late Middle English play characters negatively. Such anti-French attitudes occur for instance in the *Chester* cycle when Pilate repeatedly speaks French (26: 134, and 28: 1-8), or in the *Towneley* cycle pageant 16 in the emperor Herod’s concluding words to the audience:

144)           *Bot adew! To the deuyll! / I can no more Franch* (Towneley  
16: 740-1).

OY and OYEZ have a restricted distribution in the Middle English drama material. All except one example occur in biblical cycles. The only non-biblical occurrence is found in a speech by the Vice Nowadays in the morality play *Mankind* (l. 667). OY and OYES are used as attention calls and in referred speech citing attention calls. Such OYEZ calls are uttered by human characters in 16 out of 19 attestations (or 17 out of 20 if Peter’s *O3e* above is included). In sum, OY/OYEZ is used by bad male human characters. The OYEZ interjections seems to mark evil bullies as it is used by Pilate and his servant, by Herod and sons, by Cain, by Annas, and by the non-human Vice Nowadays. The use of OY and OYEZ as attention calls is similar to the much more frequent attention call, HOWE. The latter (HOWE and HO are discussed above), however, does not mark characters negatively, like OYEZ does.

OY and OYEZ are not discussed by Culpeper and Kytö (2010) in their pragmatic noise classes. Neither form is mentioned in Taavitsainen (1995; 1997), or in Koskenniemi (1962). The use of OY/OYEZ may have been so restricted that it simply does not occur in the material of these studies. The



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Present-day English interjection OI seems to have some of the same connotations as OY. The *OED* states about OI: “Used to attract attention. Also used to express objection or annoyance; = oy int.1”. However, the *OED* suggests that the form <oy> is a variant of HOY, whose earliest attestation is dated 1766 in the *OED*. The present material shows that OY was used in fifteenth century English drama, and the relationship between the short OY and the (French) OYEZ is suggested by the fact that the public crier in the *N-town* cycle uses the short form (quote 135), and that both forms occur in sequence in the *Towneley* cycle (quote 140).

6.8.14 WE

YC	TC
51	37

The interjection WE occurs 88 times, but only in a restricted part of the material: the *York* and *Towneley* cycles. WE functions expressively and implies anger and protest, but it seems also to be used for surprise (which may be the cause for a spontaneous protest). Of the 88 occurrences, 73 function as syntactically independent turn-openers, indicating that the expression WE imitates spontaneous reactions. WE is occasionally found in collocations together with other interjections, such as FIE, HO (or HOWE), once with OUT, and once with LO. Quote 149 below illustrates WE before FIE, but in this case, the interjections FIE forms part of an ‘on’-construction, and WE must be understood as forming an utterance on its own. The co-text, nevertheless, is quite typical of the use of FIE, as it denotes anger and surprise.

- 145) *We, nay ser, why shuld I be soo?* (York 33: 235, Messenger to Caiphaz, protest intensifier. Punctuation is editorial.)
- 146) *we! Leyf, I pray the why* (Towneley 15: 16, Joseph to Angel, confusion, suprise, fear. Punctuation is editorial.)
- 147) *We! That is most honest* (Towneley 16: 597, Soldier 1 to Soldiers, protest followed by irony. Punctuation is editorial.)
- 148) *Whe! Do knyghtis, go falle on before* (York 28: 255, Caiphaz to Soldier, call, command, anger. Punctuation is editorial.)

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- 149) *Kyng, in þe deullis name? We! Fye on hym, dastard!* (York 32: 104, Pilate to Caiphaz, anger and surprise, about Jesus. Punctuation is editorial.)

The interjections WE is spelt <we> and <whe> in the *York* cycle, and only <we> in the *Towneley* cycle. Once WE occurs with LO, spelt <we lo> (*Towneley* 8: 310); it is possible that this is a WELLAWAY variant (Section 6.10.1). WELLAWAY stems from OE *wā lā wā* or *weg lā weg/wei lā wei*, and WE could be a reduced variant based on the first part of the expression WELLAWAY. The outburst WEMO (Section 6.9.5), including spelling variants like <wemay>, also appears related to WE. Like WE, the form WEMO is found only in the *York* and *Towneley* cycle texts. The interjection WE often occurs before vocatives like titles, but unlike the interjections A and O, also frequently occurring in this position, WE always serves expressive functions. By contrast, A and O in vocative constructions like ‘O Lord’ sometimes appear to be non-expressive phrases, i.e. mere routines.

- 150) *We lord þai wil noht to me trayste* (York 11: 139, Moses to God, protest, surprise, intensifier? Moses fears he is unworthy and will be ignored)
- 151) *We lorde we may not lede this liffe* (York 11: 313, Egyptian 1 to Pharaoh, lament, fear, protest)
- 152) *Whe man momelyng may nothyng avayle* (York 31: 195, Soldier 1 to Jesus, irritation, anger)

The *OED* describes WE as an “exclamation [...] used for emphasis, or to demand attention,” and refers to the interjection *wi*, described as an “exclamation used to introduce an anxious question or a statement of something regrettable.”<sup>359</sup> The interjection type WI, or rather the spelling

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<sup>359</sup> The *OED* has rather few citations of the use of the interjections WE and WI. Only WE is recorded with citations from drama; the *York* and *Towneley* cycles examined here. The three other WE citations stem from direct speech quotations in two romances and one religious text, all of earlier date than the drama texts. Especially the quote from *Sir Orfeo* (fourteenth century) reveals the status of WE as an interjection proper: *O we, quap he, allas allas* (editorial punctuation). The *OED* citations for WI stem from only two texts, both earlier than the texts in which the spelling form WE occurs: *Poema Morale* and *Cursor Mundi*. It seems likely that the interjection WE was first spelt <wi> before it came to be spelt <we> in Late Middle English. It is

form <wi>, is not attested in the Middle English drama material, but the description of WI in the *OED* fits the use of the interjection WE in the same material. Further, the adverb ‘why’ is sometimes used interjectionally as a discourse marker expressing emotions similar to those expressed by the interjections WE, in particular anger, protest, or surprise. The adverb ‘why’ was not included in the present study, but it has been observed that in some contexts, ‘why’ functions very much like WE does in the *York* and *Towneley* texts.

It is possible, therefore, that the discourse marker ‘why’, usually understood to represent the interrogative adverb in Middle English dialogic texts, derived from the interjection WE and/or WI. Quotes 144 and 145 contain both forms, evidencing that the interrogative and the interjection have distinct spellings in the *York* and *Towneley* texts. The other quotes above match exactly the contexts in which the expressive marker ‘why’ occurs in other Middle English play texts, for instance in the interlude *Magnyfycence*. This function of ‘why’ is once marked by a slash indicating syntactical independence in the *Magnyfycence* text (print).

*Why* / to say what he wyll Lyberte hath leve (*Magnyfycence*: 34,  
Felicity to Liberty, surprise? Pun? Comical debate follows.  
Punctuation-slash from original print)

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possible that an alternative spelling form was <whi>, which may have come to represent both the interjection and the interrogative, later written <why>. Interjectional use of the adverb, in the spelling form <why>, is attested from the sixteenth century in the *OED*. The adverb ‘why’, however, is attested in spellings such as <hwy>, <whi>, <wi>, and <whi> in earlier stages of the English language. The interjectional use of the adverb in Early Modern English could stem from a confusion of the Middle English interjection WE (or WI) and the adverb ‘whi’. The play *Magnyfycence* provides particularly many examples of ‘why’ used interjectionally, e.g. in l. 510: *Why man it were to great a wonder*, and l. 517 *Why wenyst thou horson that I were so mad*. The first example echoes the opening in quote 152 from the *York* play, but implies assertion rather than irritation; the second example, however, does express protest and irritation, which can be inferred from the co-text by the use of the epithet ‘whoreson’ to the addressee. There are examples of interjectional use of ‘why’, spelt <why> in other plays as well, for instance in *Everyman*: *Why, than ye wyll forsake me all* (l.810. Punctuation is editorial).

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The *OED* description of the interjection WI fits rather well as a description of the pragmatic marker ‘why’. ‘Why’ was not included in the present study, since it was understood as a special use of the interrogative adverb ‘why’, like ‘what’ and ‘how’. However, it has been found above that HO and HOWE, even in the common spelling <how>, are used as interjections, and it seems uncertain that the interrogative ‘how’ and the interjection HO are at all related. The same might be true of the interrogative ‘why’ and the interjections WI and WE. The two may have become associated in folk etymology, leading to the adoption of ‘why’-spellings also for WI/WE interjections.

Koskenniemi (1962) and Taavitsainen (1995, 1997) do not include WE or ‘why’ in their studies of interjections and exclamations. Neither do Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 380), but they discuss how the “pragmatic marker *why*” differs from the interrogative ‘why’. Blake (1996: 121) discusses how both ‘why’ and ‘what’ function as exclamatory discourse markers in three plays by Shakespeare. He finds that it is difficult to distinguish between interrogative and exclamatory use of these items (Blake 1996: 122). Blake describes several interpretations of the discourse marker ‘why’ and its related collocations ‘why so’ and ‘why then’. There are a couple of examples of collocations of WE and ‘so’ or ‘then’ in the *York* cycle text, possibly testifying to the existence of these phrases before they appear in the forms including the adverb ‘why’.<sup>360</sup>

Blake suggests that the discourse marker ‘why’ in Shakespeare is used as an intensifier, but that it frequently “also injects some emotion into what follows, whether this is indignation, pain or surprise” (Blake 1996: 132). It has been found also in the present study that expressions with WE in the *York* and *Towneley* cycles sometimes seem to function like adverbial intensifiers like ‘certainly’. The most common use of the interjection WE, however, is as an emotionally loaded expression of anger, surprise, or protest, i.e. similar

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<sup>360</sup> The collocations of WE and ‘so’ or ‘then’ in the material of the present study: *York* cycle 30: 148: *Whe! So sir slepe ye, and saies no more*, and *York* 31: 347: *We, þan is þer no more* (punctuation is editorial). More common are the collocations ‘we how’ and ‘we now’, which are equally reminiscent of some of the expressions Blake (1996: 130) finds in Shakespeare, e.g. *Why how now Generall? No more of that* (*Othello*, 338-339). There are eight occurrences of the collocations ‘we how’ and ‘we now’ in the *York* and *Towneley* cycle texts.

feelings to those described by Blake. The co-text of WE, such as name-calling, clarifies the expressive-emotive function in Late Middle English play texts; the interjection WE co-occurs with the epithets ‘harlot’, ‘thief’ and ‘devil’.<sup>361</sup>

Blake (1996: 133) further finds that ‘why’ is more commonly used as a discourse marker than ‘what’ in his sample of three play texts. Lutzky (2012: 180) makes a parallel observation in her study on pragmatic use of ‘what’ and ‘why’ in Early Modern English plays. ‘Why’ in discourse function far outnumbers ‘what’ with 504 compared to 232 attestations. The reason may be that the discourse marker ‘why’ stems from an interjection, and not from an adverb, as ‘what’ probably does. The interjection WE is found only in the *York* and *Towneley* cycles because these are the only play texts where the spellings of the interjection and the adverb are consistently distinct. Other texts may include the interjection WE, but if it is spelt identically to the adverb, as <whi> or <why>, it has not been recognised as WE.

Another reason for the (seeming?) paucity of the interjection WE might be that some texts simply uses neither WE nor the interjectional-expressive discourse marker ‘why’. The copy of the *Chester* cycle in MS Hm, for example, appears to avoid both (see quote below). Instead, the pragmatic markers ‘now’ and ‘what’ are used in this text. ‘What’ is used interjectionally to express emotion such as anger. Two aggressive speeches by Pilate to his soldiers illustrate such expressive-emotive usage in the *Chester* cycle text in MS Hm. Note that the interjectional ‘what’ in the second quote, reads ‘why’ in the *Chester* cycle text in MS H.

*Nowe by the othe that I have to syr Caesar sworne / all you dogges  
sonnes / shall dye therefore* (Chester 24: 250-52, Pilate threatens the  
Soldiers)

*Fye harlot fye hownde / fye on thee thou taynted taken dogge! / What!  
Laye thou styll in that stound / and let that losingere goe so on the*

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<sup>361</sup> Three examples: York 33: 417: *We! Harlott, heve vp thy hande*, Towneley 2: 319: *we! Theyf, whi brend thi tend so shyre*, and Towneley 14: 290: *we fy fy dewyls on thame all thre!* (Punctuation is editorial in all three quotes).

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*rogge?* (Chester 28: 278-81, Pilate to Soldier 1, anger, rage that Jesus escaped from the grave. Punctuation is editorial.)

WE is almost exclusively used by male speakers in the present material. The single exception is one occurrence where WE is used by Noah's wife, apparently as Noah attacks her, in the *York* cycle 9: 99.<sup>362</sup> WE is not restricted to the speech of bad characters, since the shepherds, Moses, Noah, Abraham, and Joseph employ it. However, Blake (1996: 129-131) finds that the use of the discourse marker 'why' in Shakespeare is associated with menace, the speaker's feeling of superiority, and his contempt for the addressee. This interpretation fits well with some of the *personae* in the Late Middle English plays who employ WE in their speech. Lutzky (2012: 186) also suggests that the use of the discourse marker 'why' is connected with the speaker's superiority, but in addition she finds that 'why' is used to denote surprise, and in contrast to 'what', 'why' is used contrastively, meaning that it functions as a challenge to something the previous speaker said. It is attested in the Late Middle English play texts that WE is used as a spontaneous protest, often simultaneously denoting surprise, or even anger.

### 6.8.15 WAR

NC	TC	CC	CP	Wd	Hi
2	16	2	5	1	1

The interjection WAR is an expressive attention call occurring 27 times in the Middle English drama material. WAR is found particularly frequently in the *Towneley* cycle with 16 examples, but it also occurs in two other cycles, as well as in two morality plays and one interlude.<sup>363</sup> Only miracle plays contain no examples of WAR. WAR commonly expresses anger or fear, but it is also used non-expressively as a conative call of attention to one or more addressees. It is sometimes used in calls to the audience to move and give

<sup>362</sup> Noah and his wife fight in three of the four cycle pageants about Noah and the Ark, because she stubbornly resists getting on board. The episode gives opportunity for both physical comedy and misogynist humour concerning unruly women.

<sup>363</sup> Besides the *Towneley* cycle, WAR is used in the *Chester* and the *N-town* cycles, in the morality plays *Perseverance* and *Wisdom*, and in the interlude *Hickscorner*.

room for the characters.<sup>364</sup> The call WAR may be connected to the verb ‘beware’, but such associations do not explain all the examples of WAR.

The first example of WAR below is a non-expressive attention call for the audience to ‘make room’ for Imagination, a comical play character. The second example, in quote 153, may have similar meaning, but WAR is here directed at the other characters rather than at the audience. In addition, WAR clearly denotes anger, just like it does in the next example, also from Towneley (quote 154) in which WAR is used in collocation with FIE (Section 6.8.9). In quote 155, the interjection WAR denotes fear in the speaker, Abraham, who cannot see who just called him.

- 153)           *Ware make rome he shall haue a strype I trowe* (Hickscorner: 455, Imagination to audience as he runs through the crowd to catch Freewill. Comedy)
- 154)           *war! Let me gyrd of his hede* (Towneley 21: 289, Caiphas to Annas, anger with Jesus. Meaning ‘beware’ = ‘move over’ to Annas and/or soldiers? Punctuation is editorial)
- 155)           *ffy on hym and war* (Towneley 21: 430, Caiphas to Annas, anger with Jesus)
- 156)           *who is that? War! Let me see* (Towneley 4: 58, Abraham to God, fear, reply to God’s call. Punctuation is editorial.)

The interjection, or attention call, WAR, is most commonly spelt simply <war> (20 examples), but the spellings <ware>, <warre>, and <whar> also occur. WAR occurs in reduplications seven times, meaning that 14 out of the 27 occurrences belong in the same lines, and usually in immediate sequence: WAR WAR. Thus, there are two main patterns of usage: seven occurrences of reduplicated WAR WAR, and thirteen occurrences of single WAR. In quote 157 below, the reduplicated WAR WAR can be interpreted as the devil’s special call for attention in entering the stage. It is possible that he at the same time warns the audience to give him room (as in quote 152), and/or that the cry is meant to frighten. It is the only attestation of WAR in the Chester cycle

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<sup>364</sup> There are no stage directions to clarify whether WAR in these cases is used to warn the audience to move out of the way, but based on the contexts this interpretation makes sense. Characters in both cycles and indoors plays could emerge from or move among the audience.

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text. The first example below, in quote 156, bears some resemblance to the usage of WAR in Caiphas' turn in quote 153 above, since both Caiphas and Jew 3 express their eagerness to attack Jesus physically. However, WAR seems to denote different emotions in the two quotes: while Caiphas' WAR implies anger, the Jew's use of WAR seems to imply joy and eagerness.

157)           *Whar whar now wole I* (N-town 29: 185, Jew 3 to other Jews, joy, eagerness for his turn in harassing Jesus)

158)           *Warre warre for now unwarely wakes your woo* (Chester 10: 434, Devil (*Demon*) to audience, greeting or attention call as he enters to collect Herod to Hell.)

The *OED* does not have an entry on the interjection WAR, and the form does not appear to have been discussed in the literature on (historical) interjections. However, Koskenniemi (1962: 177) mentions the forms 'waha, wa how, etc' which may be related to WAR. From Koskenniemi's cited reference, it seems that both forms, 'waha' and 'wa how', occur in the speeches of characters in entering the stage. This usage corresponds well to one function of WAR in Middle English drama texts, illustrated by quotes 152 and 157 above.

Except for the examples found in the turns by Abraham in the *Towneley* cycle text (one is given in quote 155), the interjection WAR is used only by bad characters. The interjection WAR often expresses anger and/or fear, or it is used as a command to the addressee(s). Both anger and authority was connected with pride in the medieval outlook, but since WAR does not occur solely in the speech of such bad characters, it cannot be claimed that WAR marks the speaker negatively.

The use of WAR frequently indicates some kind of physical activity, as it is used in fighting, in threats of physical abuse, and as warnings to move over or to let go of the speaker (*Towneley* 4: 258a, Abraham to Angel). In these circumstances, WAR is not only used conatively, but it often also expresses emotion, which is perhaps not surprising, since fights typically take place in situations when the characters are angry. WAR has quite wide currency, since it occurs in three out of four subgenres of medieval drama. Compared to WE above, WAR is not as numerous, but since WE is restricted to only two play texts, WAR enjoys a wider distribution - textually as well as diachronically.



The morality play *Perseverance* and the interlude *Hickscorner*, for instance, both contain examples of WAR, even though they represent very different play types and the texts are a century apart.

### 6.8.16 YO

YC	TC	Mk
1 (yowe)	5 (io, iofurth)	1 (3o)

YO is another interjection which has not been discussed in other studies. It is infrequent, occurring seven times in total in only three play texts. The interjection YO, spelt <io>, occurs five times in the *Towneley* cycle. It occurs once, in the spelling <yowe>, in the *York* cycle. In addition there is one ambiguous occurrence spelt <3o> in the *Mankind* morality play.<sup>365</sup> No

<sup>365</sup> However, the OED cites the spelling form <3o> in *Mankind* l. 457 as an example of the interjection YO. The form is ambiguous to the extent that it has been analysed differently by different editors. The graphemes <e> and <o> can easily be confused in the text of *Mankind*, as the scribe used a rounded, closed <e> grapheme which in hurried writing may lose the small upper compartment. Eccles (1969: 168) gives *3e*, but refers in footnotes to three earlier editions which vary in their selections. One suggests *3o*, one *3e or Go*, and a third suggested *3e*. Two of these early editions rely on the same transcription by Eleanor Marx (Eccles 1969: vii), which Bevington (1972: xxi) holds to be poor work. Bevington (1972) notes in his facsimile of the Macro plays, that he thinks Eccles' (1969) is the best edition. As mentioned, Eccles does not agree with the OED about the form '3o', but edits to *3e*, which he modernises to 'Ye' in a later edition (Bevington 1975: 919). Walker (2000: 269) prefers *3o*, matching the OED citation most likely stemming from Farmer (1907). Walker (2000: 259) states that he used both the Bevington (1972) and the Farmer (1907) facsimiles when editing the *Mankind* play text. If the spelling is (intended as) <3e>, this leaves two options in analysis. Either <3e> means the plural form of the second person pronoun, or it means 'yes'. The pronoun is normally spelt <3e> in *Mankind*, but this interpretation does not make good sense in the context. 'Yes' is spelt <3is> or also <3e>, for example in ll. 683 and 442. The latter occurrence of <3e> looks very much like the same usage as for *3o* discussed here (l. 457). If the spelling is <3o>, there are again two options in interpretation. Either it is a misspelling of <3e>, most likely the affirmative rather than the second person pronoun, or it is a unique form not used elsewhere in the *Mankind* text, but a possible variant of the YO interjection found in a few other medieval play texts. The OED obviously chooses the latter interpretation, which is also maintained in the present study.

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spelling of YO as <yo> is attested in the Middle English play material of the present study.

Both the forms 'io' and 'yo' are listed in the *OED*:

*io*: A Greek and Latin exclamation of joy or triumph; sometimes in English as *n.*, an utterance of 'Io!', an exultant shout or song.

*yo*: An exclamation of incitement, warning, etc. (also repeated).

The second *OED* description, that of the spelling form <yo>, fits the attestations in Middle English play texts much better than the description of the form <io> does, even though the spelling of the latter (io) is orthographically closer. The spelling form <yo> for YO does not occur in the present material. The graphemes <i> and <y> were used interchangeably in Middle English, so orthography alone cannot be the basis for classification of IO and YO. Indeed, two of the citations the *OED* gives as examples of the form <yo> are taken from play texts forming part of the Middle English drama material of the present study:

159) *iofurth, Greynhorne! And war oute, Gryme!* (*Towneley* 2: 25, Cain enters calling to his animals Greenhorn and Grime, command, threat, anger; the animals are at the plough but will not go (l. 27). Comedy. Punctuation is editorial.)

160) *3o! go þi wey! we xall gaper mony on-to* (*Mankind*: 457, Newguise to Mischief, impatient, angry reply. Punctuation is editorial.<sup>366</sup>)

As the *OED* description of YO suggests, this interjection is addressee-oriented, i.e. it serves a conative function, demanding a reaction of the addressee in at least six of the seven occurrences. YO also serves an expressive-emotive function, as it denotes anger or impatience. This usage is exemplified in quote 159 above. The interjection/call YO is used to spur animals in the citation from *Towneley* (quote 158) above, and this special usage recurs in the *Towneley* text. In this context, YO is not necessarily found

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<sup>366</sup> This line in *Mankind* is l. 458 in Walker (2000: 269) while it is l. 457 in Eccles' (1969) edition, which has been used here.

as a turn-opener, and it may enter into construction with the adverb ‘forth’ in ‘io-furth’ (quotes 158 and 161):

- 161) *Lemyng, Morell, Whitehorn, io!* (Towneley 2: 42, Pikeharnes (Cain’s servant) to animals, command. The grapheme <i> is capitalised in the MS. Punctuation and capitalisation are editorial.)
- 162) *Harrer, Morell, iofurth, hyte!* (Towneley 2: 57, Pikeharnes to animals, command. Punctuation and capitalisation are editorial.)

Since YO is scarce, it has been examined in all particularities and therefore all occurrences of YO in the Middle English play material are discussed in the following. The only example of YO in the *Mankind* text has been referred in quote 159 above. Even though the spelling <3o> is unique, the co-text suggests that it represents the interjection YO rather than the plural form of the second person pronoun (the single form follows in the same turn directed at only one addressee), or the affirmative adverb ‘yes’. Three of the examples from the *Towneley* cycle texts have already been quoted. Two more examples of YO occur in this text; they are found in the same line, and neither occurs as turn-starters. However, in this example YO is not used to spur animals, but to torture Christ. It is possible that a rather specialised function of YO as a command to animals is used deliberately by the *Towneley* composer to illustrate the torture and humiliation of Christ in pageant no. 21.<sup>367</sup>

- 163) *Do-io furth, io!* (Towneley 21: 1, Soldier (*Tortor*) 1 to Jesus, command. The grapheme <i> is capitalised in the MS in both examples of YO here, giving the spelling: <DoIo furth Io>. Punctuation and capitalisation are editorial.)

All the quotes given above illustrate the conative function of YO, and as such the YO parallels the imperative of the verb ‘go’. The construction ‘io-furth’ in the *Towneley* text makes sense as a variant of the expression ‘go furth’, but it does not seem likely that the spelling <io> is caused by the scribe having

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<sup>367</sup> YO in the turns of Cain and Pikeharnes (quotes 158, 160, and 16) could perhaps be variants of HO, as both YO and HO in these circumstances serve conative functions as attention calls. However, both spellings <io> and <ho> occur in the *Towneley* cycle text, suggesting that they were intended as distinct interjections types. In addition, the construction with ‘furth’ is peculiar to YO, in turns to animals and to Jesus (quote 162), and is never used with HO. Both calls imply anger.

## 6. THE INTERJECTIONS

difficulty with the exemplar.<sup>368</sup> Furthermore, the interjection YO denotes anger in the speakers using it, while 'go' may not have such connotations. The single example of the interjection YO in the *York* cycle text, does not serve conative functions: it expresses anger or fear:

164) *Yowe . þat schalke shuld not shameþy be shente* (York 30: 296, Pilate to Caiphas, anger with Jesus or fear of him? Pilate is scared to learn that his wife dreamt that Jesus must not be condemned. MS punctuation)

The spelling form <yowe> may be taken to represent the plural form of the second person pronoun, 'you', in the *York* quote above. However, the second person pronoun 'you' is spelt <3e>, <ye>, <3ou>, <you> and <youe> in the *York* cycle text, and not <yowe>. The forms <yowe> in the *York* cycle and <3o> (possibly <3e>) in the *Mankind* play are peculiar to the cited contexts, and therefore they have both been interpreted as interjections in the present study. Both serve expressive functions.

*OED*'s most recent draft additions to the interjection YO were added in 1993. They describe the use of YO in slang as a call of attention. This description does not fit the medieval play usage of YO, but it does compare well to the Middle English use of OY discussed together with OYEZ in Section 6.8.13. It is conceivable that some sort of relations exist among the historical forms <yo> and <oy> and the modern <yo>. In the Middle English plays, both OY and YO are used by evil, male bullies, but whereas OY functions like an aggressive attention call, YO functions like an aggressive command. The interjection YO occurs only in the *York* and *Towneley* cycles and in *Mankind*, and all these three plays also contain OY.<sup>369</sup> The data, however, are too scarce to support any conclusions as to whether YO in Middle English plays is

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<sup>368</sup> There is a possibility that the exemplar for the *Towneley* copy contained y-like yoghs, normally replaced by <g> by the scribe since he does not use yogh graphemes at all, but in these contexts he replaced the exemplar yoghs with the interchangeable grapheme <i>. This hypothesis seems unlikely, however, considering that <go> would have made sense, and considering that such a replacement must have happened twice: both in the Cain episode and in the Jesus episode, i.e. pageants 2 and 21.

<sup>369</sup> The interjection OY in *Mankind* occurs as OYEZ in a complex spelling: *Oyyt! Oy3yt! Oyet! All manere of men and comun women...* (*Mankind*: 667, Nowadays makes a proclamation on behalf of Mischief (see l. 665). Punctuation is editorial).

metathesis of OY, and whether the two forms together may have formed the background of the Modern English attention call YO.

Summing up, the three spelling forms, <io>, <3o>, and <yowe>, are grouped together in the present study, since all seem related to the *OED* interjection YO. The interjection YO is used in the *Towneley* cycle as commands to animals refusing to move, and to Jesus when he is captured and taken to Annas and Caiphas for judgement. Anger is implied in these examples, as it also is in the *York* occurrence (quote 163). Impatience and anger seem implied in the YO usage in *Mankind*, too (quote 159), where it is used together with a command to leave. All examples of YO are found in turns by bad, male characters.

### 6.8.17 TUSH

YC	NC	TC	CC	PA	NA	BA	HK	BR	CP	Mk	Wd
1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-

Ev	Na	MI	MA	ST	PS	LD	OI	FL	Hi	MG
1	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	16

TUSH occurs 27 times in a variety of spelling forms in the Middle English play material. The variant forms of TUSH include <y> instead of <u>, inclusion of the graphemes <c>, double <ss> and nearly always final <e> (25 examples have final <e>). Some of the orthographic variation in the realisation of TUSH is illustrated by the quotes below.<sup>370</sup> All 27 examples of TUSH occur turn-initially. This turn-starter distribution attests that TUSH is used to imitate spontaneity in dialogue; like natural oral outbursts this interjection is uttered first in speeches. The 27 examples of TUSH occur in three of the four subgenres, and in as many as seven different play texts,

<sup>370</sup> There are two occurrences of TRUS in the (biblical) *Towneley* cycle, but no TUSH, and two occurrences of QWYST in *Mankind* in addition to this play's single example of TUSH. The interjections TYR and QWYST as well as some other infrequent forms, may be related to or function similarly to TUSH. These are discussed below.

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although in several texts it is only used once or twice. 26 out of the 27 occurrences of TUSH are found in morality plays and interludes. It occurs only once in a biblical play (the *York* cycle), and never in miracle plays.

TUSH is a specialised interjection used in only some contexts, and therefore it mostly has only few attestations in each play text. There is only a single occurrence of it in each of the following play texts: the *York* cycle, the morality plays *Mankind*, *Everyman*, and *Mundus et Infans*. However, some play composers seem to have used TUSH more frequently. TUSH occurs twice in Medwall's morality *Nature*, and five times in his interlude *Fulgens and Luces*. As many as 16 examples of TUSH (in 15 lines) are found in Skelton's interlude *Magnyfycence*.

Once TUSH occurs in reduplication: TUSH TUSH (*Magnyfycence*: 2220). 25 of the 26 examples of TUSH are syntactically independent. Two occur before the vocatives 'man' and 'master', but are nonetheless independent from the clause. Only the occurrence of TUSH in the *York* cycle (33: 120) seems embedded in the full clause of the verse line by construction with 'for':

- 165)            *3a tussch for youre tales þai touche not entente* (*York* 33:  
120, Pilate to Caiphas and Annas, contempt for the high priests and  
protest against their arguments)

The *OED* describes TUSH as a "natural utterance" denoting "impatient contempt or disparagement". This description fits the use of TUSH in the Middle English play texts with the addition that it is sometimes also used in phatic (communication-focussed) function, i.e. to dismiss what the preceding speaker said and to request silence. The phatic functioning TUSH is found in *Magnyfycence*, an interlude with especially many attestations of TUSH.

- 166)            Liberty: *It i[s]no mastery...*  
                  Felicity:        *Tushe, let Measure procede,*  
(*Magnyfycence*: 150a-b, Felicity interrupts Liberty to give the word to  
Measure. Punctuation is editorial)

All three functions may co-occur when TUSH is used: it usually expresses contempt (expressive function), at the same time as it is addressee-directed demanding a reaction (conative function), and communication-focussed

(phatic function). The latter two functions are not easily distinguished, since TUSH may aim simultaneously at silencing the preceding speaker, and at ending a discussion. In general, neither aim is achieved. Quote 164 above illustrates: the interjection TUSH is used to interrupt the present speaker, Liberty, but the attempt by Felicity to silence Liberty and pass the turn to Measure, is unsuccessful. It is not Measure, but the interrupted Liberty who proceeds to speak after Felicity's turn.

In a similar manner to the example of TUSH from the *York* text (quote 164), TUSH is commonly followed by either a direct command to be quiet: 'hold your peace,' or a dismissal of what has been said: 'tush for your tales'. TUSH followed by 'hold your peace' occurs no less than four times in *Magnyfycence*, suggesting perhaps a phrasal pattern. Dismissal of previous argument is found for instance when TUSH occurs with variations over the phrase '[I set not] a straw'. Collocations including TUSH and 'a straw' occur three times among the 26 examples. All quotes immediately below are from *Magnyfycence*, but the phrasal 'a straw' also occurs in *Everyman*, quote 173:

- 167)        *Tusche holde your pece your langage is vayne*  
 (Magnyfycence: 251, Fancy to Felicity and Prince Magnificence, impudent greeting; i.e. first words as he enters, command, comedy?)
- 168)        *Tushe holde your pece* (Magnyfycence: 590, Counterfeit Countenance to Crafty Conveyance, command. Check situation!)
- 169)        *Tushe / holde your peas ye speke out of season*  
 (Magnyfycence: 1386, Prince Magnificence to Felicity, angry command. Punctuation (slash) from original print). Check situation, is Mag in the wrong?
- 170)        *Tushe a strawe it is a shame* (Magnyfycence: 549, Counterfeit Countenance to Crafty Conveyance and Fancy, anger not directed at addressee, i.e. not a request for silence, but frustration that they all have little success in their evil plans)
- 171)        *Tushe a strawe I thought none yll* (Magnyfycence: 564, Fancy to Crafty Conveyance and Counterfeit Countenance, anger, protest)

Besides requesting silence by interrupting the present speaker, the interjection TUSH can be used to scorn the previous speaker and/or his speech. This function is clearly expressive, for example of contempt.

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- 172) *Tussh* here is no man that settyth a blank (Fulgens and  
Lucres: 866, Servant A to Servant B, scorns and mocks his former  
friend, implied protest?)
- 173) *Tussh* thy lypes hange in thyne eyen (Magnyfycence: 1048,  
Fancy to Folly, irritation and contempt)

The interjection TUSH typically appears in quarrels among the speakers and can in such contexts function as an angry protest, i.e. TUSH in such contexts may serve both expressive and phatic functions (cf. quote 170). However, TUSH can also be used as a polite dismissal of topic rather as an expression of anger (or contempt for the addressee). Fellowship in *Everyman*, and Folly in *Mundus et Infans* both use TUSH to dismiss a request as but a small favour asked. TUSH used in this manner of understatement, actually suggests that the speaker is boasting, and thus negatively marked by pride. The use of TUSH as dismissal of a request/task occurs in contexts where the audience realises that the speaker promises more than he will be able to live up to. Such premature promises in boasts create dramatic irony. In *Everyman*, for instance, the audience recognises the emptiness of Fellowship's promises. Fellowship prematurely asserts that Everyman's gratitude is uncalled for, not realising that what Everyman will request of his friend Fellowship is his accompaniment in death. In effect the TUSH-speaker is revealed as not trustworthy:

- 174) *Tussh!* By thy thankes I set not a strawe (Everyman: 222,  
Fellowship to Everyman, punctuation is editorial. Understatement,  
dramatic irony: the speaker's reply is revealed as hubris)
- 175) *Tussh* mayster therof speke no thyng (Mundus et Infans:  
662, Folly to Man (Youth), mild protest, diminutive, understatement)
- 176) *Tushe* man I kepe some latyn in store (Magnyfycence: 1144,  
Fancy to Folly, comedy, Fancy's Latin consists of "scraps" (Ramsey  
1906: 36))

TUSH is included as a (primary) interjection in pre-Shakespearian plays in Koskenniemi (1962: 68). Koskenniemi (1962: 176) cites the *OED* description of TUSH as "an exclamation of impatient contempt or disparagement", and she gives two examples of its usage. According to Koskenniemi, the earliest



*OED* attestation of TUSH stems from c. 1440; the attestation most likely being identical to the example quoted in 164 above from the *York* cycle.

Taavitsainen (1995) discusses the use of TUSH in Early Modern English. She finds four examples of TUSH in fiction, one example in trial records and one in the Tyndale Bible, but none in drama. Further, Taavitsainen (1995: 443-44) finds TUSH only in the two earlier periods (1500-1640) of her study of Early Modern English, and not in the later period (1640-1710).<sup>371</sup> The finding that the use of TUSH seems to be on the decrease, corresponds well with the finding in Culpeper and Kytö (2010) that TUSH is more numerous in the earlier period than in the later period of Early Modern English dialogues. They suggest that TUSH was replaced by PSHAW (Culpeper and Kytö 2010: 256). Taavitsainen's (1995: 444) similarly finds in her Early Modern English material that PSHAW occurs when TUSH has disappeared. No PSHAW occurs in the Middle English play material of the present study. However, the *OED* cites later attestations of TUSH than those occurring in the material explored by Culpeper and Kytö (2010), and by Taavitsainen (1995), testifying that TUSH did not vanish completely during the Early Modern English period. The *OED* includes two examples of TUSH in texts from the nineteenth century. The earliest attestation in the *OED* of the interjection PSHAW is dated 1607, the latest attestation is Present-day English, from 1992.

The great majority, 24 out of the 27 examples of TUSH in the present material, belong in sixteenth century texts. It seems that TUSH may have made a boost appearance, lasted for a couple of centuries, and then almost vanished again, like Culpeper and Kytö (2010) suggest. The two fifteenth century attestations in the present material belong in the *York* cycle and in the *Mankind* play. Both of Medwall's plays survive in sixteenth century prints, but if it can be assumed that TUSH was used in the original plays written by Medwall in the 1490s, this means that seven more examples of TUSH are from before the sixteenth century. Bearing in mind that TUSH (and communication-focussed pragmatic markers) seems to have been a favourite in Skelton's *Magnyfycence* (written c. 1519), it becomes less clear that TUSH

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<sup>371</sup> Two examples of TUSH occur in the 1500-1570 material, four occur in the 1570-1640 material, but none in the 1640-1710 material (Taavitsainen 1995: 443-44).

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is a particular sixteenth century phenomenon. It seems clear, though, that some play texts, and *Magnyfycence* in particular, exploit verbal comedy in conflicts to a greater extent than others. The interjection TUSH was at one point at least a good candidate both for signalling conflict and to focus on communication itself.

Due to its specialised function, TUSH is not used in all play texts, but it occurs often enough to be considered one of the typical interjections in Middle English drama. TUSH is widely but unevenly distributed: it occurs in three out of four subgenres, but commonly only once or twice in each text. One play text, however, employs the interjection TUSH especially frequently: Skelton's *Magnyfycence* includes 16 examples of it. In this play text, the pragmatic markers 'what' and 'why' (perhaps from WE, cf. Section 6.8.14) are also used on numerous occasions in the dialogue. The oath 'Marry' also occurs frequently, behaving like a discourse marker denoting the meaning 'verily'. Just like TUSH does, 'what', 'why', and 'Marry' occur as syntactically independent turn-openers, often implying protest and verbal conflict. One example is quoted below in which 'why' functions as a discourse marker (or as an interjection expressing surprise, cf. WE) rather than as an interrogative. The second quote illustrates a typical use of 'Marry' in intensifying function used as an adverbial similar to 'verily' or 'certainly'.

*Why, dwelleth Measure where ye two dwell? / In faythe, he were better to dwell in hell* (*Magnyfycence*: 622-23, Cloaked Collusion to Counterfeit Countenance and Crafty Conveyance, disbelief and joyful surprise, verbal comedy. Punctuation is editorial)

*Mary, so wyll we also* (*Magnyfycence*: 616, Fancy to Cloaked Collusion, flattery, comical interruption of Counterfeit Countenance's speech to Cloaked Collusion promising loyalty. Punctuation is editorial)

The frequent use of TUSH and pragmatic markers denoting conflict talk turns the focus towards communication itself, in much of the *Magnyfycence* dialogue. The marker 'Marry' and the interrogatives 'what' and 'why' have not been included in the present study, but the phatic function of the interjection TUSH in concert with the frequent use of discourse markers sets

the *Magnyfycence* text somewhat apart from the rest of the Middle English play texts. In fact, the verbal comedy, the theatrical illusions in the interplay between Folly and Fancy, together with focus on the dialogue itself leaves the impression of *Magnyfycence* as something of a meta-drama.

TUSH is nearly always used by male characters in the Middle English play material, the only exception being the maid Joan in *Fulgens and Lucrez*. Further, TUSH is used by bad characters in 17 out of the 26 attestations, it is used by neutral characters in the rest (nine) of the attestations, but it is never used by good characters. Bad characters exclaiming TUSH include Pilate in the *York* cycle, Newguise in *Mankind*, Folly in *Mundus et Infans*, Pride and Sensuality in *Nature*, as well as the many evil-doers in *Magnyfycence*: Counterfeit Countenance, Crafty Conveyance, Cloaked Collusion, and the clownish vices Fancy and Folly. These characters mainly use TUSH in addresses to other bad characters, and thus the interjection marks aggressiveness and conflict among vices and other evil-doers. These characters ultimately fail in their malevolent scheming, and the use of TUSH, therefore, may serve both characterising as well as textual functions. As TUSH frequently signals hubris in the bad speakers, it simultaneously foreshadows the failure of these characters.<sup>372</sup>

Even characters generally understood as neutral rather than bad, such as Prince Magnificence, may employ the interjection TUSH in the context of conflict. Two neutral personifications, Fellowship in *Everyman* and Felicity in *Magnyfycence*, utter TUSH at one occasion each. These characters have the potentiality for both good and bad, and are not evil by nature like vices are. Fellowship has the potential for evil; he says he will murder for Everyman (ll. 281-82), but he has been a good friend to Everyman. Felicity represents wealth and prosperity of Crown and country in *Magnyfycence*.<sup>373</sup> If he is

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<sup>372</sup> Hubris is a common term in drama analysis, stemming from Aristotle. In a medieval context of values it can be equalled to pride, the first and original sin personified in the angel Lucifer (Bevington 1975: 797). The fall of Lucifer does not belong in the biblical Genesis, but the topic is included in the surviving cycles' presentations of the Creation (Bevington 1975: 258).

<sup>373</sup> Felicity in *Magnyfycence* is a personified attribute of a kingdom. He prospers or suffers depending on whether he is ruled by Measure (good) or by Fancy (bad). Poverty enters as Felicity's contrast when Prince Magnificence fails.

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wisely governed he is not evil. When Prince Magnyfycence, Fellowship and Felicity employ the arrogant TUSH interjection it may have signalled to the audience that these neutral characters have started behaving like bad ones and are about to do something they, or their masters, will regret.

Only the all-human, neutral characters servants A, B, and maid Joan in *Fulgens and Lucres* are not stigmatised by employing TUSH in their speech. This interlude is not concerned with salvation, but humorously deals with the topic of true nobility. The servants, unlike the noble main characters of the play, use TUSH to each other in anger when they fight in a comic scene in the play. The maid Joan beats both of the male servants, A and B. In this context, the interjection TUSH seems to suggest conflict, rather than pride. In addition, it is possible that TUSH marks the lower class status of the speakers. The servant characters may have appeared like more realistic, everyday characters to the audience than the Roman senator, Fulgens, and his daughter, Lucres. If the actors were recruited among the household staff, as Walker (2000: 305-306) suggests, this would allow for a certain intimacy in the comedy that may be lost to a modern reader. Considering that *Fulgens and Lucres* is a non-religious play performed for entertainment by and for a household, it is possible that the dialogue, including the interjections, reflect contemporary speech to a greater extent than many other Middle English plays. Medwall demonstrates the downstairs rivalry in a lively manner, but the characters are not malevolent and their salvation is not at stake. The servants' use of the interjection TUSH in Medwall's comedy may mark a change in how TUSH was perceived in play texts. It is possible that the interjection TUSH becomes less of a negative marker and more of a phatic interjection in the later periods.

Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 249) describe TUSH as a pragmatic noise typically used for phatic function, since they find that it nearly always suggests impoliteness in Early Modern English dialogic texts. The phatic function of TUSH is also found in the Middle English play material, especially in the interlude *Magnyfycence*. However, all examples of the interjection TUSH do not primarily perform communicative functions, as TUSH clearly also denotes contempt for the addressee, i.e. it performs both expressive-cognitive and conative functions. The use of TUSH often marks impolite speech, but impoliteness in play contexts does not only, perhaps not primarily, imply

focus on the act of communication itself. Rudeness can be expressed in many ways – a fact that is frequently exploited in Middle English play texts - but when the target of impolite language is clearly a character, such impolite language serve all three functions simultaneously. Expressive and conative functions appear more important than phatic ones in most contexts.

In medieval drama, impolite behaviour marks the speaker rather than the addressee, and in most cases where it occur, TUSH marks late medieval play characters negatively. Aggressiveness expressed as rudeness denotes both lack of self-control and a self-assertiveness that medieval (Catholic) society discouraged. Wrath was considered a deadly sin, as was also pride, and they contrast temperance and humility, which were considered virtues (Bevington 1975: 797). In Middle English plays, the interjection TUSH frequently expresses lack of humility, also when used as an understatement in quotes 173-175 above. These seemingly polite understatements are exposed as false in the relevant plays.

To sum up, the specialised functions of TUSH imply that it is mainly used to silence and scoff an addressee in conflicts, but also to diminish a task or request. The latter usage creates dramatic irony, as the speaker cannot live up to his declared self-image. The interjection TUSH is nearly always used by male characters, and mainly by bad speakers. It commonly marks the speaker negatively due to the connotations of anger and arrogance. The exceptions occur when TUSH is used in conflicts by clearly all-human, non-dangerous characters. In *Fulgens and Lucre*s the servants A, B, and Joan comically engage in a fight which Joan wins. In this kind of comedy TUSH can have been used to mark the characters socially, rather than as good or bad. While it would be improper of the high society main characters of *Fulgens and Lucre*s to engage in this kind of comical conflict, the house servants' parallel plot gives the playwright (and the audience) the opportunity to explore the topic of nobility and gender roles from different angle. The use of TUSH for phatic functions seems mainly restricted to one play in the material, *Magnyfycence*, but in this play text, communication-focussed dialogue is conspicuous and involves several types of interjections and pragmatic (discourse) markers.

#### 6.8.18 TRUS, TYR, WHYR, WHOP, PUFF, QWYST,

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*HEM, TUR, TEHE, and WEHE*

TC	Mk	MG
<i>PUFF</i> 1 (in pageant 2)	<i>QWYST</i> 2	<i>HEM</i> 4
<i>TRUS</i> 2,		<i>TUT</i> 1
<i>TYR</i> 2,		<i>TEHE</i>
<i>WHYR</i> 1 and		<i>WEHE</i> 1
<i>WHOP</i> 1 (all in pageant 12)		

Several interjection types occur in unique spelling forms in single texts in the material. These have been detected from function-to-form mapping. Their classification is difficult due to the scarcity of evidence, and since they are few, they have been treated together in the present section, even if only some of them may be related. They may be the playwright's or copyist's own invention for special functions. Some of them seem to have in common that they perform phatic functions, which is relatively rare for interjections in Middle English play texts. At least *QWYST*, *HEM*, and *TUT* seem to serve phatic functions. Two of these, *HEM* and *TUT*, belong in the interlude *Magnyfycence*, a play which I argue is exceptional in its drawing much focus onto the dramatic dialogue (cf. *TUSH*, Section 6.8.17).

The spelling form *TRUS* looks phonologically related to *TUSH* (Section 6.8.17), since the two forms share some graphemic features. Both *TRUS* and *TUSH* open with the grapheme <t>, most likely representing a dental stop; both forms contain the medial vowel grapheme <u>, and both end with graphemes representing sibilants. *TRUS* is only found in the *Towneley* cycle text, which contains no attestations of *TUSH*, so it is conceivable that *TRUS* is a unique scribal spelling form representing the same interjection type as *TUSH*. A notable difference between *TRUS* and *TUSH* is that the first is spoken by good characters, the *Prima Pastorum* Shepherds, whereas it has been found (Section 6.8.17) that *TUSH* is mainly used by bad characters.<sup>374</sup>

<sup>374</sup> There are two versions of a Shepherds' pageant in the *Towneley* cycle MS. These are commonly referred to by Latin titles in the literature, as *Prima Pastorum* and *Secunda Pastorum* respectively. Especially the latter one is famous for its comic realism in the included plot between the Shepherds and the sheep-stealing Mak, but the first Shepherds' play also includes comedy, as can be observed from the lines

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However, the Shepherds are foolish and quarrelsome in the beginning of the *Towneley Prima Pastorum*, so their categorisation as good characters may be erroneous. It is possible that they should rather be evaluated as neutral, minor characters, more or less like messengers and servants.

Both the examples of TRUS are spoken by Shepherds, first to end a quarrel in order to get started sharing a meal, secondly to end the meal in order to rest. Only the first example of TRUS initiates a turn, and this example denotes impatience and anger in conflicted dialogue, thus sharing the expressive-emotive function of TUSH. These interjections share conative functions, too, if TRUS is correctly interpreted as a request for silence. The full turn of Shepherd 1 is quoted below. First he addresses both the other shepherds, before he continues arguing with insults directed at Shepherd 3.

- 177)        *Trus go we to mete*  
              *It is best that we trete*  
              *I lyst not to plete*  
              *To stand in thi dangere*  
              *Thou has euer bene curst*  
              *Syn we met togeder*  
              (Towneley 12: 292-297, Shepherd 1, anger, order for  
              silence?)

However, the second example of TRUS (below) does not compare as well to the interjection TUSH. This example is also quoted in its full co-text, as it occurs in the turn of Shepherd 2 after supper.

- 178)        *It draes nere nyght*  
              *Trus go we to rest*  
              *I am euen redy dyght*  
              *I thynk it the best*  
              (Towneley 12: 413-417, Shepherd 2 to other shepherds.)

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cited in the present section. Both Shepherds' pageants are believed to be the work of the so-called Wakefield Master (Stevens and Cawley 1994: xxxi) (cf. the *Towneley* cycle manuscript in Section 5.11).

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Occurring non-initially, the second TRUS does not imitate a spontaneous outburst like TRUS does in quote 176. Besides, the dialogue at this point is not as conflicted as it was in the first case, and, therefore, the expressive-emotive function is not equally clear. Since there are only two attestations, a conclusion cannot be drawn as to whether TRUS is the *Towneley* variant of the interjection TUSH.

The three interjections TYR, WHYR, and WHOP, occur in the same *Towneley* pageant as TRUS. All three belong (again) in a dialogue of conflict, more specifically a discussion between two of the Shepherds quarrelling about grazing land for Shepherd 1's imaginary flock of sheep.<sup>375</sup> The context suggests that at least the calls of TYR and WHYR are addressed to the non-existent sheep, and not to the other Shepherd (nor to any other speaker). It appears that Shepherd 1 either orders the sheep of Shepherd 2 to move to give room for his own sheep, or he calls out orders to his own sheep (*bell weder*) to move into the grazing fields. The episode is marked by absurd comedy, since neither of the Shepherds has any sheep. Further on in the text (*Towneley* 12: 183), Shepherd 3 arrives to scoff at them for their foolishness. The unique interjections are underlined for clarity in the quote below.

179)

- Shepherd 1: *thay shall go saunce fayll*  
*Go now bell weder* (= bell-carrying wether)
- Shepherd 2: *I say tyr* (to sheep/wether, 'stop?')
- Shepherd 1: *I say tyr now agane*  
*I say skyp ouer the plane*
- Shepherd 2: *wold thou neuer so fane*  
*Tup I say why* (Tup = wether)
- Shepherd 1: *What wyll thou not yit* ('what' used expressively?)  
*I say let the shepe go*  
Whop
- Shepherd 2: *Abyde yit*
- Shepherd 1: *Will thou bot so*  
*Knafte hens I byd flytt*  
*As good that thou do*

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<sup>375</sup> Cf. Stevens and Cawley Vol. II (1994: 482).



*Or I shall the hytt  
On thi pate lo  
Shall thou reyll  
I say gyf the shepe space*

(*Towneley* 12: 163-79, Shepherds 1 and 2 argue about the sheep and the grazing land. Much of the speech is directed at the sheep rather than at the other speaker)

The extract quoted in 176 contains all the singular forms, TYR, WHYR, and WHOP, and at least the first two seem to be commands directed to animals.<sup>376</sup> They serve conative functions, but may be non-expressive, in contrast to for example TUSH, which always expresses emotion and/or attitude, and mostly serves conative, and sometimes even phatic, functions simultaneously. The case of WHOP is uncertain. It may be directed to the sheep or to Shepherd 2, and the herding context may suggest a relationship to HO or HOWE above which is also frequently used as commands or attention calls in the speeches of the Nativity Shepherds in the *Towneley* cycle.<sup>377</sup>

These infrequent and specialised interjection forms are unique for the *Towneley* cycle text. They are more likely introduced by the play composer, perhaps the Wakefield Master (Section 5.11; Appendix I) than by the scribe. This does not mean that he invented special interjections, or that they had no counterpart in speech. The opposite seems more likely to be the case; the *Towneley* composer had a talent for comedy and for employing spoken features to achieve realism even in such an absurd dialogue as that of the Shepherds. He seems to have a penchant for interjections, as he includes a great variety of them, many of which are otherwise rare. The only texts systematically distinguishing between the interjection WE and the discourse marker ‘why’, are the *Towneley* and the York cycle texts. The *Towneley* composer even has one more unique interjection in his repertoire.

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<sup>376</sup> The *OED* describes WHYR as an (obsolete, rare) call used to drive sheep, but the dictionary’s only attestation is exactly the line from the *Towneley* cycle (12: 169) just quoted. (The *OED* uses the line numbering from England and Pollard’s (1897) edition of the *Towneley* cycle, giving the line number 113, instead of 169.)

<sup>377</sup> HO and HOWE are calls to humans, while YO was found to be an attention calls of command to animals used alone and spelt <io> in *Towneley* 2: 42, or used in the combined form <iofurth> in *Towneley* 2: 25 and 2: 47.

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The last interjection type occurring only in the *Towneley* cycle text is PUFF, spelt <puf>, in pageant 2: 279. It is easily classified as a type of its own, because it is clearly a reaction to the smoke from Cain's unsuccessful burnt offering:

180) *Puf this smoke dos me mych shame* (Towneley 2: 279, Cain to self, imitation of blowing? Pain?)

Only the *Towneley* composer employs this form, but it is but one example of an especially rich repertoire of realistic, speech-related forms. These speech-related forms could well be attributable to the Wakefield Master. Pageant no. 12 (*Prima Pastorum* above) is usually recognised as his, due to the stanza form employed throughout this pageant's text, but the Wakefield stanza form is also found in pageant no. 2 (Cain and Abel). Stevens and Cawley (1994: xxxi) make a strong case for this and several more *Towneley* pageants also being the work of the Wakefield Master.

The interjection QWYST does not look related to TUSH phonologically (or graphemically), but the two forms share the function as a conative (addressee-directed) request for silence. This is one of several functions of the interjection TUSH. Also similarly to TUSH, the interjection QWYST is used by a bad character. There are only two examples of QWYST; both occur in the morality play *Mankind* and both occur in the speech of an especially vile character, the devil Titivillus.<sup>378</sup>

However, the two examples of QWYST occur inside turns and not as turn-starters, suggesting that QWYST does not imitate a spontaneous expression of emotion. Further, QWYST is used in asides to the audience, and not in

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<sup>378</sup> The name Titivillus probably reflects Latin *totus vilus*, i.e. 'all vile' (Bevington 1975: 644). The devil Titivillus also occurs in the *Towneley* cycle's Judgment (Doomsday) pageant. Many named devils recur in more than one play text, e.g. Lucifer, Satan, and Backbiter, but, although less frequently used, Titivillus sounds like a more generic term for a devil, perhaps a prefiguration of the later, generic Vice-character. While medieval plays often have many different vices representing different kinds of evil or deadly sins, the sixteenth century drama may employ only one Vice, the schemer and disrupter par excellence. Cox (2000: 76-81) compares the longevity of stage devils, with the relatively short-lived Vice, but warns against understanding the Vice as a mere fool. Both devils and vice(s) continued to be dangerous characters throughout the late medieval period (Cox 2000: 77).

addressing any of the other play characters. Titivillus first explains his evil intentions to the audience before he requests silence ('peace') as he approaches the unwitting Mankind, first at prayer and later at sleep, to whisper enchantments in his ear.<sup>379</sup>

- 181) *qwyst pesse I xal go to hys ere & tytyll þer in* (Mankind 557:  
 devil Titivillus to audience, aside, conspiracy, whispered? He is  
 invisible to Mankind as he whispers into his ear)
- 182) *qwyst pesse þe deull ys dede I xall goo ronde in hys ere*  
 (Mankind 593: devil Titivillus to audience, aside, conspiracy,  
 whispered? The following action parallels the first above)

Both the forms TUSH and QWYST belong in the repertoire of the *Mankind* playwright or copyist.<sup>380</sup> To some degree these interjections perform the same functions, as both can function conatively as requests for silence: *Tushe holde your pece* (Magnyfycence: 590). Still, the *Mankind* playwright does not choose TUSH, but prefers a different form, QWYST, in the addresses to the audience just quoted (180 and 181). There may be two possible explanations: first, in the *Mankind* play, the two forms TUSH and QWYST seem to serve different functions, since TUSH is not used as a request for silence in this play. The interjection TUSH is used only once in *Mankind* (l. 790), and in this context it is used to scoff at the difficulty of a task and thus to self-brag the speaker's skills (cf. TUSH in quote 173, 174, and 175). It is therefore possible that the *Mankind* playwright saw the two forms as performing different functions and distinguished between them.

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<sup>379</sup> The devil Titivillus only plays a small part in the middle of the *Mankind* play, when the vices have failed in corrupting Mankind. This is the famous episode in which the collecting of money from the audience is attested in the play text itself. It has been taken as evidence of a professional play performance, but cf. Normington (2009: 123-24). Titivillus serves as a sort of main attraction: he will not appear unless the audience pays (*Mankind* ll. 457-8).

<sup>380</sup> The term 'playwright' is used in the following, but it must be born in mind that terms such as playwright, play composer, play reviser, and even scribe, are rather nebulous in discussions of the origin of medieval texts. Changes could be made in texts on all levels revision and copying, and therefore the boundaries can be extremely fuzzy between a 'mere scribe', a 'revising scribe', a 'recomposing scribe', and a composer of a new play based on a known text (such as parts of the *Towneley* copies of the *York* pageants).

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Secondly, it is conceivable that the playwright chose a less negatively marked form than TUSH in addressing the audience in fear of causing offence. In contrast to TUSH, there seems to be no expressive function of QWYST, i.e. it does not denote anger with the addressees. Even though the use of TUSH marks the speaker rather than the addressee, it does so because it implies impoliteness. The playwright may have wanted to avoid being rude to the audience, and as quotes 180 and 181 demonstrate, the devil does not appear impolite in these contexts, in spite of the swearing in the second quote. The devil is, of course, no less dangerous to Mankind.

A third possibility, is that QWYST is not related to TUSH at all, but that it constitutes an early form of PST, an attention-getter sound signalling a need for low voices and discretion. The *OED* describes PST as a “whispered signal for silence”. This is in effect the function of QWYST which the *Mankind* playwright seems to have aimed at. The earliest attestation of PST in the *OED* is dated at late as 1863, but as it appears to be rather specialised, it may be scarce and consequently difficult to attest. The *OED* has no entry for QWYST, but the interjection WHYST is described etymologically as a “natural utterance enjoining silence”. The attestations of WHYST are dated from 1425 to 1894, and it is suggested that this “exclamation to command silence” (*OED*) means the same as HUSH. It seems very likely that all these forms are related, and that PST could be a later development. Further, if PST (and QWYST) is meant to be whispered, as the *OED* suggests, it may be difficult to propose spellings which reproduce pronunciation. This difficulty can explain the orthographic differences between forms such as QWYST, WHYST, and PST.<sup>381</sup> What they do share in pronunciation is the final sibilant

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<sup>381</sup> The orthographic distinction in the spelling forms <qwyst> and <whyst> may reflect a common orthographic feature found in Middle English texts. In words stemming from Old English, such as *hwæt*, the cluster /hw/, probably no longer pronounced as /hw/ in Middle English, may be realised in spelling as <qw> or <w(h)>. Very coarsely, the combination <qw> for OE /hw/ can be described as a ME northern and/or conservative feature, while spellings without the grapheme <q> in words such as ‘what’ and ‘wyst’, can be described as a ME southern, innovative feature. However, both types of spelling can be found in late Middle English texts from the same area, and indeed, both spelling forms are found in two play texts in MS Macro, one of which is *Mankind* discussed here. Even though the language of both the *Wisdom* and the *Mankind* play texts has been found to be East Midlands, the *Mankind* scribes use spelling forms with <qw> in contrast to the *Wisdom* scribe

plus dental stop realised as <st> in all three words. The conative, and possibly phatic use of QWYST in the *Mankind* play, seems to correspond exactly to the function of PST.

Skelton's play *Magnyfycence* employs many examples of verbal conflict and verbal deception, and in this way the play effectively produces a meta-theatrical focus on the play dialogue itself. At least some of the play's frequent examples of TUSH were found to serve phatic functions, i.e. to focus on communication itself. The same can be said of the four examples of HEM occurring only in the *Magnyfycence* play text. All examples of HEM occur turn-initially like interjections normally do. Further, HEM can function as an expressive-cognitive interjection, but HEM is in addition used phatically for contact, as it is used to signal mild protestation or correction of turns in the ongoing discourse. In contrast to TUSH, though, the interjection HEM is once employed in a turn by a good character: Measure. The phatic function of HEM is not associated with (verbal) impoliteness. In at least two of the attestations, HEM performs expressive-cognitive and phatic functions simultaneously:

- 183)           *Hem / syr yet beware of 'had I wyste'* (*Magnyfycence*: 211,  
Measure to Liberty, mild protest, warning of Liberty's argument. The  
quotation marks are editorial, to clarify the meaning. The slash  
indicating syntactical independence is from the original print.)
- 184)           *Hem ; that lyke I nothyng at all* (*Magnyfycence*: 664,  
Cloaked Collusion to the other vice-courtiers, cognitive realisation,  
mild protest. Punctuation (semi-colon) is from original print.)

HEM occurs in two more contexts in *Magnyfycence*. Both examples are found before vocatives, more specifically before the name of the addressee. In contrast to HEM in quotes 182 and 183, the two HEM in vocative constructions below have not been marked by punctuation in the original

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(Eccles 1969: xxxix). Both examples of QWYST occur in the part of the text written by the first, main hand of *Mankind*. It is possible that his use of <qw> spellings influenced his spelling of the interjection QWYST to the extent that what would have been realised as <whyst> elsewhere, is realised as <qwyst> in the orthography of Hand A in *Mankind*.

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print. The two examples of HEM below serve conative functions, since they are addressee-oriented calls:

- 185) *Hem colusyon!* (Magnyfycence: 778, Crafty Conveyance to Cloaked Collusion, attention-getter at Crafty's entry (discrete?). It is unsuccessful: Cloaked Collusion and Courtly Abuse engage in an argument concerning whether Cloaked Collusion should heed Crafty's call or not. Verbal comedy. Punctuation is editorial)
- 186) *Hem fansy regardes voyes [vous]* (Magnyfycence: 1196, Folly to Fancy, attention-getter. HEM functions like LO in this context as it signals to Fancy to watch Folly's practical joke at the expense of Crafty Conveyance. Folly pretends to find a louse on Crafty's cloak, l. 1197).

Two more interjection types occur only in the *Magnyfycence* play in the present material. One is an imitation of laughter, spelt <tehe wehe> used in an expression of reported speech (l. 477). It occurs at the end of a turn-initial line, and thus it occupies rhyming position. This may have influenced the form. The most common attestation of imitation of laughter in Middle English drama is some realisation of repeated A-sounds, e.g. spelt <ha ha> (Section 6.9.3 below).

The other unique *Magnyfycence* form is spelt <tut>, and it appears to be an early attestation of the interjection TUT. According to the *OED* the interjection TUT is "natural" and "sometimes represents the palatal click", meaning that the sound of TUT imitates smacking of the tongue to express disapproval "of a statement". The earliest attestation given in the *OED* is from another play by Skelton, *Caudatos Anglos*, dated to c. 1529. Like several interjections found in the *Magnyfycence* text, TUT serves phatic functions. At the same time as it expresses disapproval, implying both emotion and attitude, TUT functions as a comment on what has just been said (phatic function).

- 187) *Measure / tut what the deuyll of hell* (Magnyfycence: 1743, Prince Magnificence to Measure, scoff, disapproval. Punctuation slash is from original print; like the punctuation after HEM above, the slash is used to mark the syntactical independence of the first word, 'Measure', and perhaps also of TUT?)

Combined with swearing, the expression TUT marks the speaker negatively, just like the interjection TUSH. The audience realises that Measure, a good, virtue-like personification, is treated wrongly by Prince Magnificence, the TUT-speaker. As was the case with TUSH (Section 6.9.17), it appears that TUT is used to mark the negative development of a neutral character, in this case, the Prince himself. In Middle English drama such negative markers may serve textual functions, as they signal the speaker's hubris and in effect foreshadow his fall from grace. In addition, both TUSH and TUT serve communicative, phatic functions.

The occurrence of TUSH and TUT, together with frequent use of discourse markers in conflict talk in *Magnyfycence*, as well as the frequent use of puns, verbal comedy, and verbal deceit, marks the play as an early example of communication-focussed meta-drama.

### 6.9 Longer interjections

It could be held that only monosyllabic outbursts should have been included in the present study. Such short, spontaneous overflowing of feeling with no real addressee seems to be Goffman's (1981: 99) definition of "response cries". On the one hand, it has been found that the prototypical interjection in Middle English play texts indeed is a short, exclamatory cry expressing emotion. On the other hand, there are longer expressions in the ME play material fulfilling two important criteria for inclusion in the group of interjections: these form utterances on their own, i.e they are syntactically independent, and they express emotion. However, they are not monosyllabic.

Disyllabic interjections are discussed in the following; multisyllabic expressions are discussed in Section 6.10 below. The latter have been included even though they are not typical interjections (Cf. Section 2.2), because they have been discussed in the literature (Taavitsainen 1995, 1997) as items bordering on, and perhaps developing into, (secondary) interjections.

Most of the disyllabic interjections below have been discussed in Taavitsainen (1995, 1997) and/or in Culpeper and Kytö (2010). Some are discussed in Koskenniemi (1962) and Mazzon (2009). Comparisons are made to the findings in these works, and especially to Taavitsainen for Middle English

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(1997) and Early Modern English (1995), and Culpeper and Kytö (2010) for Early Modern English.

### 6.9.1 ALAS

YC	NC	TC	CC	PA	NA	BA	HK	BR	CP	Mk	Wd
123	141	119	132	4	7	1	4	32	16	26	1

Ev	Na	MI	MA	ST	PS	LD	OI	FL	Hi	MG
12	9	10	13	3	6	-	-	4	8	34

ALAS is a frequent interjection in the present material, counting 704 examples in all. It is more numerous than the interjection O, and second only to the interjection A in Middle English play texts. Only the two interludes, *Lucidus and Dubius* and *Occupation and Idleness* (the *Winchester Dialogues*), do not include the interjection ALAS.

ALAS is found in many orthographic variants: most common are the spellings <alas> and <allas>, but variants such as <alasse>, <allese> and others also occur.<sup>382</sup> ALAS is often spelt with a space after the grapheme(s) representing the initial syllable, such as in the spellings <a las> or, less frequently, <al las>. In some such cases the space is due to conventions in manuscript production (*littera notabiliores*), but in other cases, the space between A and LAS may reflect the compound derivation of ALAS.<sup>383</sup> One example from *Mankind*, line 413, may illustrate: *A las a lasse þat euer I was wrought*.

<sup>382</sup> The first <a> in ALAS is commonly presented in majuscule in MSS, but this feature has not been marked in the angled brackets denoting spelling here. Majuscule and miniscule <a> are not always clearly distinguished in late medieval scripts. What appears to be majuscule forms of the second grapheme <a> also occur, giving the form <AlAs>, e.g. in the *York* text.

<sup>383</sup> In at least some cases the space is caused by the scribe producing *littera notabiliores* by writing line-initial graphemes in different ink and/or at a different time than the rest of the text. In such texts, other line-initiating words also have spaces between the first grapheme and the rest of the word. The spaces in line-initial <a las> are thus not necessarily meaningful, but are simply due to conventions in layout. When ALAS occurs as two elements in line-medial position, in printed texts or in



In Middle English play texts, ALAS seems to stem from two different sources. The *OED* describes the interjection ALAS as a derivative of Old French *ha las* or *a las*. Spelling forms with final grapheme <c> rather than <s> are attested. However, English had its own version in ALACK, deriving from the interjection A (or O) + the noun; *lack*. Since ALAS can be spelt as <alace> in Middle English, and the spelling form <alac> occurring in the Middle English play texts, may represent either ALAS or ALACK, both have been treated together in the present study. Importantly, the two forms share the same functions and meaning in the texts, but ALACK is infrequent compared to ALAS. There are only six examples of the form ALACK, occurring in four different texts: *Conversion*, *Everyman*, *Nature*, and *Mankind*.<sup>384</sup>

In spite of its manifold orthographic variants, ALAS is most often easily distinguished from other words, because it commonly (but far from always)

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MSS where the *littera notabilioris* is not employed, the space may reflect the phrasal origin of ALAS. A more detailed manuscript study of ALAS would reveal any system or lack of such, but is beyond the scope of the present study. All that can be stated here is that ALAS in non-initial position is occasionally spelt with a space between <a> and the rest of the word. This is especially true of the *Mankind* text from MS Macro, but it is also found in the *Perseverance* and *Wisdom* texts in the same manuscript, in the *Mary Magdalen* texts in MS Digby, in the *Burial and Resurrection of Christ* text in MS Bodleian e Museo 160, in the MS Brome *Abraham* text, and in the Skot print of *Everyman* (in the spelling of ALACK). In the *Mankind* text dated to c. 1465, spacing in the spelling of ALAS is the rule rather than the exception. None of the MS Macro scribes employed the *littera notabilioris* convention and therefore line-initial ALAS has been included as attestations of spacing in these texts. Except for the *Mankind* text, spacing of ALAS is infrequent compared to one-word spellings, i.e. the spelling <a las> is less frequent than <alac>, but the fact that such spellings occur in a variety of texts suggests that it had some currency, and perhaps that scribes were in doubt as to whether they should render ALAS as one or two graphic entities.

<sup>384</sup> In the *Mankind* text, ALACK occurs in a line in Latin-English (l. 426), and the spelling form <a lac> in this context, is ambiguous: the form <a lac> may represent either ALAS or ALACK. In a Latin context, the grapheme <c> could represent a sibilant sound. However, the line immediately above (*Mankind*, l. 425) contains ALAS spelt <a las>, i.e. with the grapheme <s>. All the texts employing ALACK also have occurrences of ALAS.

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forms a syntactically independent expression, and because ALAS clearly is an emotive expression with relatively obvious semantics. It denotes sorrow.<sup>385</sup>

188) *Alas, I may well wepe with syghes depe!* (Everyman: 184, to himself, lament. Punctuation is editorial)

Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 230) include ALAS even though it derives from a phrase, on the grounds that the phrase, ‘a las’, opens with the interjection A. They admit, however, that due to its phrasal derivation ALAS is not an equally obvious pragmatic noise item as the shorter noises, usually described as primary interjections in the literature. The *OED* suggests that both the Old French and the English form once was a combination of the interjection A and LAS (Fr.) or LACK (Eng.). In contrast to the versatile interjection A, the meaning and function of ALAS is quite restricted, mainly to express emotions of sorrow. In some cases this notion of grief can be coupled with other reactions, such as surprise or shock. The latter seems sometimes to border on protest, implying a conative function. ALAS can also be used to express empathy with others, another conative function of ALAS, discussed further below.

The interjection ALAS occurs in all subgenres of Middle English drama. It is used by both male and female speakers, and by both good and bad characters.<sup>386</sup> Of the total of 704 examples of ALAS, 318 examples occur turn-initially. In addition, at least 78 of those not occurring turn-initially are found after stage directions, in turn-shifts by the same speaker, or as stanza-openers.<sup>387</sup> Such non-initial distribution means that even non-initial interjections can function as spontaneous turn-initiators: the current speaker reacts to something on stage which may or may not be described in stage

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<sup>385</sup> Only one case of ALAS is unclear, but was still included as it seems best explained as a scribal mistake. The interjection ALAS is once spelt <Als> in the *York* cycle (19: 136). Beadle (2009: 152) edits to ‘Alas’, and no other relevant interpretation than ALAS has been found: *Als for sorowe and sighte* (York 19: 136, Herod to Counsellours, lament.)

<sup>386</sup> God uses ALAS once, but in reported speech, and not as an emotional expressive outburst of sorrow. Reported speech inside of play turns is discussed below.

<sup>387</sup> Further, 42 ALAS are found in anaphoric usage and in repetitions, and some are found in reported speech, meaning that they are not the emotive expressions of the speaker himself.

directions, but which is marked by the introduction of a new stanza and maybe by the use of an interjection to signal a change and a reaction. Adding the 318 examples of turn-initial ALAS and the 78 examples of ALAS as stanza-openers, shows that a little more than half of all attestations of ALAS have the turn-starting distribution typical of interjections. However, almost half of the occurrences of ALAS do not have this distribution, suggesting that ALAS does not only imitate spontaneous outbursts in Middle English play texts. It is used in many circumstances, and in several kinds of distribution.

There are three recurring patterns of distribution of ALAS in the Middle English plays material. First, ALAS occurs as a syntactically independent utterance. In addition, ALAS appears in front of a noun of address, and in reported speech. The use of ALAS in front of nouns, described as “vocative function” in Taavitsainen (1995: 445-46) has here been treated as syntactically independent usage, since the clause following it will be grammatically correct without ALAS. An example is found below in quote 199: “(Alas), sir, ye are undone” (*Magnyfycence* l. 1850). In contrast to A and O, it seems unlikely that both syllables in ALAS in vocative constructions could be unstressed to the degree that the interjection forms a single tone unit together with the vocative following it. Further, and perhaps also in contrast to A and O, ALAS always expresses emotion even when used in front of vocatives.

The second pattern of distribution of ALAS is its common inclusion in reduplications (ALAS ALAS) and in collocations with other interjections. This is returned to in more detail below. An example from the N-town cycle illustrates such reduplication and collocation:

189)        *Alas alas & welaway* (N-town 12: 78, Joseph to Mary, regret)

Thirdly, ALAS frequently occurs in constructions with ‘the’, ‘for’ and ‘that’. Frequent integration of ALAS in constructions ultimately has bearing on the status of ALAS as a typical interjection. Such constructional use of ALAS accounts for 1/5 of all occurrences of ALAS in the Middle English play texts. In fact, ALAS + ‘that’ constructions are so frequent that it might be asked whether independent occurrences of ALAS should be interpreted as elliptical *that*-clauses. In other words, syntactically independent occurrences of ALAS

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may have developed from phrasal, embedded usage, and what is observed in the present material is an ongoing process of ALAS becoming syntactically segregated. The first quote (190) below may be understood as both ‘Alas! My corn is lost. Here is a foul work’ and ‘Alas (that) my corn is lost. Here is a foul work’. In the following quotes, 191 and 192, both from earlier texts than *Mankind*, ‘that’ cannot be left out.

- 190)        *A lasse my corn ys lost here ys a foull werke* (*Mankind*: 547,  
Man to himself or audience, lament)  
191)        *alas þat euere mankynde was born* (*Perseverance*: 2674,  
Good Angel to audience/himself, lament)  
192)        *Allas þat we wer wrought* (*York 19*: 226, Woman 1 to  
Woman 2, lament of the killed children. The clause continues, but  
would still be ungrammatical without ‘that’)

Likewise, ALAS is common in constructions with ‘the’ and ‘for’ in the present material. Similarly to how syntactically independent use of ALAS may have derived from ‘that’-constructions, constructions with ALAS + ‘the’ can perhaps be interpreted as elliptical clauses without ‘for’.

- 193)        *Allas þe tyme and tyde* (*York 34*: 144, John to himself or the  
Marys, lament. Construction, ellipsis of ‘for’: ‘Alas for the time and  
tide’?)  
194)        *Allas for my maistir þat moste is of might* (*York 34*: 106, John  
to self, lament, pity. Construction with ‘for’)

Quotes 193 and 194 above and quote 195 below, all belong in one pageant text in the *York* cycle. Quote 193 possibly illustrates elliptical usage, quote 194 is a construction with ‘for’, while quote 195 below illustrates ambiguous distribution. The verse line cited in the latter quote happens to be followed by a clause starting with ‘for’. It demonstrates how important it is to explore the co-text of interjections, and of ALAS in particular. Reading one line is often not enough to establish whether ALAS is syntactically independent, or belongs in clauses opening with ‘that’ or ‘for’. Similar ambiguous lines regarding the use of ALAS are quite common in the material.

- 195)        *Allas! For syte what schall I saie?* (*York 34*: 116, John to self,  
lament. Punctuation is editorial)

The editorial punctuation chosen in quote 194 marks ALAS as syntactically independent, since ‘for site (= ‘sorrow’) what shall I say’ is grammatically correct without ALAS. However, an alternative interpretation embeds ALAS in construction with ‘for’:

*Allas for syte! What schall I saie?* (York 34: 116, John to self, lament. Punctuation is editorial)

Two of the examples of ALAS from the *York* cycle above, quotes 194 and 195, serve stylistic functions in addition to expressive functions. These two examples of ALAS are found in one soliloquy by John, but as stanza-openers rather than as turn-openers. Three out of the speech’s four stanzas open with ALAS, creating a similar effect to poetical anaphora, besides reinforcing John’s grief. Use of interjections in anaphora, in sequential lines or as sequential stanza openers, has also been found for the interjections A and O.

There appears to be a diachronic change in the distribution of ALAS. It has been found that the syntactically embedded use of ALAS is more frequent in the fifteenth century texts than in the sixteenth century play texts.<sup>388</sup> Syntactically embedded use of ALAS accounts for 21 % of all occurrences in the fifteenth century material, while they account for only 10 % of the occurrences in the sixteenth century material. In other words, the interjection ALAS seems to be in the process of becoming more like typical interjection, occurring more and more frequently as a syntactically independent expression.

Besides clausally embedded use of ALAS, reduplicated ALAS and ALAS in collocations with other interjections, are also common in the Middle English play texts. In all, reduplicated ALAS and ALAS in collocations occur in 167 verse lines. The examples of such usage in the present material correspond well to Taavitsainen’s (1997) findings of similar collocations in other late Middle English genres. Her example (no. 16 in Taavitsainen 1997: 582) from

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<sup>388</sup> The dates are in this case based on witness dates, i.e. dates of manuscripts and prints. Whereas it was found in Section 3.4 that scribes rarely seem to substitute interjections, they may have translated expressions into more familiar phrasing than those found in the exemplar. When the texts are ordered by witness dates rather than by manuscript dates, many of the texts believed to have been composed in the fifteenth century are thought of as linguistically belonging in the sixteenth century. Section 5.27 provides lists.

## 6. THE INTERJECTIONS

Chaucer's Wife of Bath's Tale, *Allas and weylawey*, is reminiscent of quote 196 below from the *Towneley* cycle (and of quote 189 above from the *N-town* cycle). Two more quotes illustrate other common types of collocations with ALAS.

- 196) *Alas alas and welewo* (Towneley 1: 132, Devil 1 to Lucifer, fear, surprise)  
197) *3he ly! Owte, allas!* (York 1: 115 (Hand A), Lucifer to devil 2, anger, protest; they fight in Inferno. Punctuation is editorial)  
198) *Ho! ow3t ow3t alas thys sodayne chance* (Conversion: 433, devil Mercury to devil Belial, lament. Stage directions suggest 'crying and roaring'. Punctuation is editorial)

The particular collocation with WELLOWAY has been found in several early ME play texts, and especially frequently it occurs in cycle plays. In total, there are 16 occurrences of ALAS collocating with WELLOWAY, whereof 15 belong in biblical cycles, and the last in the early morality play *Perseverance*. It seems this particular combination is a stock phrase in early and/or conservative play texts. Taavitsainen's (1997: 582) quotes from Chaucer are even earlier than the play texts of the present study. Quote 189 from the *N-town* cycle text is almost identical to quote 196 from the *Towneley* cycle text. Both cycles belong in the fifteenth century (Chapter 5), but may have drawn on older material as well as common stock vocabulary and verse.

Collocations may reinforce or specify the meaning of the interjection ALAS, as was also the case with the interjection A (Section 6.8.1). Specification of meaning occurs when the expressive function of reduplicated A A is used to imitate weeping (in *Burial and Resurrection*, especially, cf. 6.8.1). The context suggests that ALAS in quote 199 below also denotes weeping, but the difference is that while A A can be interpreted as imitative of the sound of crying, repeated ALAS ALAS ALAS is not imitative, but rather appears as overuse of the stereotypical expression ALAS. Taavitsainen (1995: 447) describes ALAS in Early Modern English as the very stereotype of lament. This stereotypicality may have had its roots in Middle English plays.

- 199) *Alasse alasse alasse I dye for thought* (Magnyfycence: 1967, Prince Magnificence to self or to Poverty. Weeping?)

Both sorrow and empathy with others can be expressed by ALAS. The latter usage was first described in Taavitsainen's (1995: 447) study on Early Modern English interjections. When ALAS is used to express empathy, it serves conative functions. Sincere empathetic use of ALAS is found also in the material of the present study, but ALAS is equally often found to feign pity in turns by bad characters. Such ironic use of ALAS partly relies on the recognition by the audience that ALAS is a stereotypical expression, and partly it relies on the recognition of stereotypical good and bad characters.

Both verbal and dramatic irony are sometimes achieved through the use of ALAS. The meaning of ALAS seems to be so distinct that the audience need but very little context to understand the foul play of impostor characters.<sup>389</sup> Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 231) also describe examples of ALAS employed to

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<sup>389</sup> Verbal irony and dramatic irony are not the same. Both may occur in the play material of the present study. Verbal irony means that a speaker says the opposite of what he/she means. Dramatic irony means that the audience are better informed than the fictional character(s), and are therefore able to recognise that for example the main character is about to make a mistake or is misled by other characters (Abrams (1988: 91-93). Dramatic irony is well-known from the Greek tragedies, as the audience were commonly familiar with the dramatised myths. When Sophocles' King Oedipus insists that the blind Seer reveals the cause of the plagues of Thebes, the audience realises that the root of the evil is Oedipus himself and that by pursuing his quest he will have to punish himself. The biblical material of the medieval cycle plays was similarly mostly familiar to the audience, and as such one could claim that the plays include dramatic irony. However, the cycle plays mainly illustrate their biblical (and apocryphal) stories fairly closely and never implies alternatives to the Divine plan. What is presented is the joyful truth of Christ's sacrifice for mankind, and there is no room for the dramatic irony of Christ's trying to escape his destiny, for example. The actions of lesser characters, such as Herod and Judas, can have been interpreted in the light of dramatic irony by the medieval audience, insofar as the audience would be aware that these characters will be damned for their evil deeds. Medieval drama was not created after Classical pattern, so the intentions of the composers and the interpretation by the audience are better analysed in light of theology than according to Classical Poetics. Nevertheless, dramatic irony occurs in the present plays, most frequently in the comedies, i.e. the morality plays and the interludes. It is especially apparent when bad characters reveal their evil intentions in asides to the audience while leaving other characters ignorant. It may be argued that much of the effect of *Everyman* rests on dramatic irony, as the audience surely would recognise the absurdity in Everyman's trying to bribe Death by offering him money. When the present study refers to dramatic rather than to verbal irony, this will be clarified by use of the full term 'dramatic irony'.

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feign sympathy in Early Modern English dialogue. It seems that ALAS could be used for mock empathy already in Late Middle English plays precisely because its meaning was so distinct and its use so stereotypical. Two examples of feigned pity are quoted below.

- 200) *Alasse syr ye are vndone with stelyng and robberyng*  
(Magnyfycence: 1850, Fancy to Prince Magnificence, feigned empathy, not really sorry for M's losses)
- 201) *Alas a se is not this a grete feres* (Hickscorner: 446, Free Will to audience, mock lament, irony)

While the quotes above are used for (verbal) irony, quote 202 below provides an example of ALAS occurring in a situation implying physical comedy. Comedy can perhaps also explain the very unusual usage of ALAS in quote 203 below, where it occurs in a joyful context. Joseph is often presented as a comical figure in cycle plays.

- 202) *Owt alas hee lyes on his loynes* (Chester 7: 266, Shepherd 3 perhaps to audience, empathy with fallen shepherd, probably physical comedy)
- 203) *Alas for joy I qwedyr and qwake* (N-town 12: 180, Joseph to Mary, joy or lamenting his own weakness?)

Real empathy seems implied in quote 204 below, however, found in the same text as one of the examples of mockery, quote 200, from Skelton's *Magnyfycence*. That ALAS can be used both ironically and sincerely in the same text, implies trust in the skills of players, of the text itself, and a certain familiarity with the audience. In general, it appears that the status of the speaker as good or bad, is a decisive factor in establishing whether empathetic use of ALAS is sincere or not. Sincere empathy with Jesus is certainly implied in the laments at the cross in biblical plays, quotes 205 and 206.<sup>390</sup>

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<sup>390</sup> It can be difficult to distinguish between the self-oriented expressive-emotive ALAS and the addressee-oriented ALAS, for example when Mary laments Christ on the cross. Therefore, empathetic ALAS may be underreported in the present material, as only relatively clear cases were marked in the database.



INTERJECTIONS IN LATE MIDDLE ENGLISH PLAY TEXTS

- 204) *Alas dere sone sore combred is thy mynde* (Magnyfycence: 2323, Good Hope to Prince Magnificence, real empathy as opposed to the verbal irony of the l. 1850 quote above)
- 205) *Alese in euery place Now se I many wound* (Burial of Christ: 789, Mary to Jesus on the Cross, lament, empathy)
- 206) *Alas my love my liffe my leere* (Chester 16a: 241, Mary to Jesus on Cross, lament, empathy)

The interjection ALAS used to express empathy with others, is described by Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 231) as a phatic, communication-oriented function.<sup>391</sup> However, when ALAS is used to express empathy, it can equally well be described as performing a conative, addressee-oriented function as a phatic one. Even though the conative function usually demands a response (Ameka 1992a: 113), and, admittedly, ALAS in these contexts does not focus on the speaker's wish for a reaction, ALAS is not used for communicative contact, either.<sup>392</sup> Examples of ALAS are for instance found in scenes where the Marys and Disciples lament Christ on the Cross, which is not a typical conversation-maintenance situation. The use of ALAS in such contexts in Middle English plays, covers two main functions: that of expressing sorrow, and that of expressing pity with the suffering Christ. It is frequently difficult in these contexts to distinguish the expressive-emotive lament of the speaker from the conative empathy with the addressee, which illustrates Ameka's (1992a: 114) point that interjections can serve more than one function simultaneously.

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<sup>391</sup> Culpeper and Kytö (2010) describe pragmatic noises as performing phatic functions if they are used for impoliteness. Impoliteness is the application of politeness theory reversed. Language is used according to certain rules of politeness (cf. 2.3.7), but as pointed out by Culpeper, language can also be used to cause offence, and it especially often is in conflict talk in films and plays. It is not certain, however, that impolite or aggressive talk necessarily can be described as phatic, and particularly not in historical, non-realistic drama. If the point is to hurt the addressee, such language, including interjections, may rather be described as performing conative functions. If interjections in aggressive contexts are used to express anger, they certainly also perform expressive-emotive functions.

<sup>392</sup> Ameka (1992a: 113-14) describes the phatic, contact-focussed use of interjections as one that is aimed at establishing and maintaining contact or vocalisations to express "attitude towards the on-going discourse".

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The phatic function of ALAS seems close to non-existent in Middle English drama. Rather, the present material reflects Taavitsainen's (1995: 441) finding in her study of corpora including several Early Modern English genres, that the phatic function is rare in written texts from this period. Instead she (Taavitsainen 1995: 441, 461-62) suggests that interjections can be used for textual functions. As mentioned, some such textual functions of interjections have been found in the Middle English play texts. ALAS can be used poetically in anaphora, for example.

There is a special function of ALAS, shared by only one or two other interjections: ALAS is sometimes used to express the feelings of others (rather than those of the speaker himself) in direct speech quotations inside turns. This usage may refer to past events, but more commonly it refers to the future. ALAS shares this feature of foreboding with WELLAWAY (Section 6.10.1). ALAS in reported, direct, future speech is exemplified in quotes 207 and 208 below:

- 207) *May say 'Allas þis daye is sene'* (York 47: 244, Christ to Apostles and Souls on Doomsday, ALAS is the future speech of humans. Quotation marking is editorial)
- 208) *his sange ful sone sall be 'allas'* (York 11: 128, God to Moses about the future of Pharaoh. Quotations marks are editorial)
- 209) *And many a lady for my loue hath sayd alas* (Mundus et Infans: 257, Man Infans to audience, boast, the past.)
- 210) *I wrethe may syngyn wele a wo* (Perseverance: 2217, Vice Wrath to himself and/or audience, pain, self-pity, immediate future)

Taavitsainen (1997: 583) finds similar phrases with ALAS in her Middle English material. Her example (24) from *Reynard the Fox: And they cryed so pitously 'Alas and weleaway'* looks very similar to how ALAS is used in direct speech quotes in the Middle English drama material, e.g. in quote 207 above.

Various uses of ALAS are attested in the Late Middle English play material, and one of these uses is its functioning as an interjection, e.g. in collocation with other interjections. However, the disyllabicity of ALAS, as well as its phrasal origin attested in the frequent spelling with spaces, point in the

direction that it is not a typical interjection in Late Middle English. Both Koskeniemi (1962) and Mazzon (2009: 83) categorise ALAS as a secondary, i.e. phrasal, interjection. The problem with secondary interjection membership is that this category includes routines and phrases which do not have the essential function in common with ALAS; that of expressing emotion. ALAS has been included with pragmatic noise in Culpeper and Kytö's (2010) study on Early Modern English. ALAS is also included in Taavitsainen's (1995) study of primary interjections in Early Modern English, as well as in her study of exclamations in Late Middle English (Taavitsainen 1997).

There are good reasons to categorise the interjection ALAS as a phrasal interjection in Late Middle English, perhaps on its way in of becoming a prototypical (or primary) interjection. The expressive-emotive function of ALAS is well attested in the Late Middle English play material, but the other criterion for interjections is that they form syntactically independent utterances. In this respect ALAS frequently fails, as it so commonly occurs in constructions, embedded in clauses with 'for' and 'that'. Further, the phrasal origin rather than natural origin of ALAS is frequently retained in spelling. However, judging from studies on interjections in Early Modern English ALAS has become syntactically independent by this language period, and its phrasal origin appears to be lost.

The change from syntactically integrated to independent expression is traceable in Late Middle English play texts. It has been found that ALAS occurs less frequently in constructions in play texts written or printed in the sixteenth century than in play texts written in the preceding century. There is little doubt that ALAS consistently expresses feeling in the material, and therefore it functions as an effective signal to the audience in the Middle English drama. This potency as signal of emotion is believed to be the main reason why interjections are used at all in historical plays. ALAS fulfills this criterion of interjections, and is on its way of becoming a typical interjection through losing its ability to be treated as a lexical word used in constructions.

### 6.9.2 AHA

YC	NC	TC	CC	Wd	Na	MI	PS	LD	OI	MG
2	1	2	1	1	1	5	1	1	3	1

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There are 19 occurrences of the interjection AHA in the Middle English play texts. AHA is one of those specialised interjections which has relatively few attestations, but yet is widespread, i.e. it occurs in many play texts from all four subgenres, but it has only one or few attestations in each text.

The interjection AHA is always syntactically independent, but it occurs in a variety of spellings in the material, which means that it had to be recognised via function-to-form mapping. AHA has been categorised as an expressive-cognitive interjection, and it is this specialised, cognitive, expressive function that distinguishes AHA from the related forms A and HA. Orthographic forms both with and without the <h> grapheme, have been included in the AHA class if they perform the expressive-cognitive function associated with insight or recognition.<sup>393</sup>

- 211)        *A . A . than haue I go to ferre* (N-town 31: 42, Satan to audience and/or himself. Cognitive realisation, change of mind. Punctuation from MS)

Most commonly, AHA is written with a space, and it is often spelt without the grapheme <h>. There are five forms spelt <a a> expressing the cognitive realisation, AHA, but there are many forms spelt <a ha> which do not express a cognitive reaction. Forms such as <a a> have been included in the AHA type of interjections if this is how they function, while other forms spelt <a ha> have been included with other types of interjections, e.g. HA HA or A, if

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<sup>393</sup> Taavitsainen (1995: 445; 451) finds A (spelt <Ah>) and HA (spelt <ah ha>) used for cognitive meaning and insight in Early Modern English and A and AHA serving the same functions in Middle English (Taavitsainen 1997: 581). The only <aha> spelling belongs in her Middle English material, more specifically in Chaucer (Taavitsainen 1997: 581). The expression of cognitive realisation has also been found to be one of the many functions of the interjection A in the present study. Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 228) likewise find that A (<ah>) is used to “indicate thought”. They classify AHA with HA (Culpeper and Kytö 2010: 232) and find that the collocation “Ah Ha” is used to denote “insight”, as Taavitsainen (1995) suggested. The Early Modern English dialogues of Culpeper and Kytö’s study provide one collocation <ah ha> and five examples of <a ha>. In the present study, AHA has been classified by its expressive-cognitive function, while HA has been found to be an expression of physical strain and aggression forming a class of its own.

they are found to perform different functions from the characteristic cognitive use of AHA.<sup>394</sup>

The expressive-cognitive function of AHA is sometimes clarified by context:

- 212) *A A . Y se wel be thy menyng* (Lucidus and Dubius: 261, Dubius to Lucidus, cognitive realisation. MS punctuation)  
 213) *A ha thou arte he that Conscyence dyd blame* (Mundus et Infans: 609, Man Infans to Folly, realisation and recognition)  
 214) *A ha fansy and foly met with you I trowe* (Magnyfycence: 2446, Sad Circumspection to Prince Magnificence, realisation)

Because of their orthographic similarity to other interjection types, some examples of AHA are still somewhat ambiguous. Three forms spelt <a ha> in *Mundus et Infans* can be interpreted either as expressive-cognitive reactions or as imitations of laughter. The young Mankind (Infans) character in *Mundus Mankind* changes name or invents a new game, and three times he exclaims happily AHA, in for example:

- 215) *A ha now lust and lykyng is my name!* (Mundus et Infans: 131, Man Infans to audience, self-presentation, cognitive realisation and joyful self-presentation.)

The three examples from *Mundus et Infans* have been included with the cognitive expressions of AHA, while two other forms spelt <a ha> in the same play have been included with the interjection used to imitate laughter, HA HA. The play text clearly contains both interjection types, but they do not have distinct spelling (cf. *Mundus et Infans* quote 213, and quote 224 in Section 6.9.3, HA HA, below).

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<sup>394</sup> Two spelling forms <a ha> have been interpreted as laughter and are counted in the HA HA category: *Chester* 1: 126, Lucifer's joy, and *Mankind*: 613, Vice Newguise's joy. One example spelt <a ha> in the *Chester* cycle, 3: 247, MS Hm, is an outcry of pain, and was therefore included with A and not with AHA. A different *Chester* scribe, Bellin, renders this interjection in his MSS A and R as <ha ha>, even though it clearly does not denote laughter. These are but some examples indicating that 1) the English orthography was not yet standardised by 1592 and 1600, when Bellin produced his *Chester* cycle MSS, and 2) interjections may have given scribes special challenges.

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AHA occurs turn-initially in 14 of its 19 attestations. Turn-initial distribution suggests that it AHA is used to imitate spontaneous outbursts. AHA is sometimes used to express recognition of other characters, occurring in the first greeting words to new characters on stage. Such greetings are expressive-cognitive, but can also imply joyful recognition and thus AHA also serves expressive-emotive functions. Once it seems that anger is implied in a greeting opening with AHA in the interlude *Occupation* quoted below.<sup>395</sup>

- 216) *A a pou dost wel and fine* (*Occupation and Idleness*: 742,  
Doctrine to Idleness, anger in greeting, followed by verbal irony)

In some cases, AHA is followed by an ironic statement, and can thus imply scorn of the addressee. The example above in quote 216 is both a greeting and clearly ironic. The example in quote 217 below, from *Sacrament*, suggests that the cheeky Colle, servant to the quack doctor Brundyche, actually offends the audience when he greets them, since the rest of his speech (ll. 525-72) is all irony. In such a context, 'fair fellowship' becomes an ironic description of the audience. Colle is a purely comic figure in the *Sacrament* play.<sup>396</sup>

- 217) *Aha here ys a fayer felawshyppe* (*Sacrament*: 525, Servant  
Colle to audience, recognition, greeting words in entry.<sup>397</sup> Comedy,  
irony?)

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<sup>395</sup> One reason why the spelling form <a a> in quote 214 above has been taken to represent AHA rather than reduplicated A, is that there are two more examples of the interjection AHA in the exact same spelling in the *Winchester Dialogues* (cf. quote 212 above). A single hand produced both the *Occupation* and the *Lucidus* texts. Besides, the interjection A makes less sense in the context than AHA does, as AHA is used elsewhere in greetings implying recognition and/or realisation.

<sup>396</sup> The interplay between Colle and Master Brundyche in *Sacrament* seems to be an addition to the original miracle play text (Davis 1970: lxxv) (Section 5.19). The episode may be termed 'comic relief', but it is uncertain to what extent the rest of the play is "wholly serious" (Davis 1970: lxxv). The Jews physically harassing the Host obviously represent evil sacrilege, so when one of them loses a hand (SD 435+) it may have invoked laughter and glee, rather than fright.

<sup>397</sup> The line numbering is from Davis (1970). In Walker (2000: 224) this is line 445. The difference in line numbering is due to Davis' inclusion of the play's 80 lines' Banns, thus leaving the play text proper starting at line 81.

The interjection AHA is never found in turns by female character, and most frequently it is uttered by bad characters in Middle English drama. Only two good speakers use AHA: Sad Circumspection in the interlude *Magnyfycence* (quote 214) and Doctrine in the interlude *Occupation and Idleness* (quoted 216). In contrast, 14 examples of AHA are found in the speeches of bad characters: the biblical high priest Annas, the biblical soldier-torturers, devils, Idleness, and the unruly servant Colle. The remaining three examples of AHA are found in the speech of the *Mundus et Infans* Mankind figure (Infans), categorised as a neutral character. However, at this point in the plot he has lost his innocence, and his desire for worldly pleasures has become his main characteristic.

It is possible that AHA is characteristic of proud, often bad, characters. There is a notion of triumph, or *Schadenfreude*, associated with some of the speakers employing the interjection AHA. Triumphant expressions of AHA emphasises the lack of humility in bad characters. Since humility was considered a virtue in medieval thought, and its opposite, pride, was not, it is likely that self-asserted boasting behaviour is typical of vile characters in Late Medieval drama. Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 232) find that some of the examples of AHA in Early Modern English similarly express “a note of satisfaction and triumph”. Drama often reflects the value system of a culture, and even though a Reformation involving change of certain values had taken place since the Middle English plays were composed, some scepticism towards the arrogant bully may well have continued in Early Modern England.

The specialised interjection AHA is attested in all four subgenres of medieval English drama, as well as in material from both centuries covered by the present study. It has been found that aspirated interjections, in particular HA, HO, HUFF, and HA HA (Section 6.9.3) occur especially frequently in the turns of arrogant bullies in Middle English play texts. The interjection AHA seems to be related to the other aspirated outbursts, even though aspiration is not consistently rendered in ME orthography. The interpretation of AHA as an expression of triumphant glee, as well as realisation, corresponds well to the usage found by Culpeper and Kytö (2010) in Early Modern English.

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### 6.9.3 HA HA

YC	NC	TC	CC	CP	Mk	Na	MI	MG
1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	5

There are 15 examples of the imitation of laughter, HA HA, in the Middle English play material. The interjection type HA HA serves expressive-emotive functions denoting joy, sometimes glee, and it is thus rather specialised. As stated, Middle English A-forms can be difficult to distinguish, in particular because there is much variation regarding the inclusion of the grapheme <h>. The classification of A-forms is, therefore, based on function-to-form mapping in the interpretation of the co- and contexts.<sup>398</sup> Imitation of laughter, HA HA, is recognised from context as well as its reduplicated form.

All instances of imitation of laughter are at least reduplications of ha-sounds (spelt <a> or <ha>), and some are much longer sequences of repeated HA. The longest one fills a whole verse line with six spelling forms <ha> in a row (*Magnyfycence*: 1200). Every occurrence of the form <ha> (or <a>) in HA HA has not been counted separately; rather, each reduplication was analysed as one occurrence of the imitative HA HA. Nine play texts contain examples of this interjection type. It does not occur in miracle plays.<sup>399</sup> 12 out of the 15 imitations of laughter occur turn-initially in imitation of spontaneous outbursts.

There are several examples where the co-text clarifies that laughter is implied. In addition to the three quotes below, see quote 224, from *Mundus et Infans*, in which the co-text of HA HA is ‘good cheer’ (= good fun, humour).

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<sup>398</sup> The term ‘co-text’ refers to the text in the immediate proximity to the interjections (commonly the verse line), while the term ‘context’ refers to the broader situation within the play text.

<sup>399</sup> The group of miracle plays is the smallest of the medieval drama subgroups. Quite a number of interjection types are found in the all subgroups except miracle plays, but as the miracle play sample is restricted to only three relatively short texts, it can hardly be concluded from null evidence that miracle playwrights were more restricted in their choices of interjections. Other conclusions based on individual texts can be suggested, and for example the use of the interjection O in the *Sacrament* play is discussed in Chapter 7.



INTERJECTIONS IN LATE MIDDLE ENGLISH PLAY TEXTS

- 218) *Ha! Ha! þis was a mery note* (York 15: 65, Shepherd 2 to Shepherd 1, laughter. Punctuation is editorial.)
- 219) *Ha, ha, ha for laughter I am lyke to brast* (Magnyfycence: 2158, Crafty Conveyance to Cloaked Collusion, laughter. Punctuation is editorial)
- 220) *Ha, ha, ha for sporte I am lyke to spewe and cast* (Magnyfycence: 2159, Cloaked Collusion to Crafty Conveyance, laughter. Punctuation is editorial)

HA HA never occurs in the speeches of female characters.<sup>400</sup> HA HA is most commonly, but not always, uttered by bad characters. Laughter may be associated with glee rather than innocent joy, and HA HA does indeed occur in such contexts in the play texts. Laughing bad characters include the devil Lucifer, the Vices World and Worldly Affection, a Slanderer, the *Mankind* trickster Newguise, and Fancy, Folly, Crafty Conveyance and Cloaked Collusion (all four in *Magnyfycence*), as well Folly in *Mundus et Infans*. Further, an anonymous devil laughs malevolently as he meets Judas after the disciple has left the others at the Last Supper. King World, the enemy of mankind in the early morality play *Perseverance*, is happy that his schemes develop according to his plan for man's downfall.

- 221) *A . A . Judas derlyng myn* (N-town 27: 467, devil to Judas. Greeting of Judas before he brings him to Hell. MS punctuation)<sup>401</sup>
- 222) *A a þis game goth as I wolde* (Perseverance: 2687, King World to himself/audience, triumphant glee)

Other bad characters employing HA HA, appear less frightening than devils and vices, but may still be dangerous to man. Folly and Fancy are two such clown-like vices. In *Magnyfycence* these two are responsible for one purely comical scene in which they argue about each others' pets. Fancy carries an owl which he insists is a hawk (l. 1112), and Folly has a scabby mongrel dog

<sup>400</sup> The same was found for AHA: no female character uses AHA, HA HA or HA.

<sup>401</sup> The inclusion of a devil and his speech is actually presented as optional in the N-town SD 465+: *þan Judas xal gon ageyn to þe Jewys. And, yf men wolne, xal mete with hym and sey þis spech folwyng – or levyn't whether þei wyl - þe devyl þus seyng.* (Spector 1991: 281. Punctuation is editorial)

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called Gryme (l. 1117b). The comedy is marked by laughter also on stage in a humorous interplay between fictional characters and audience.

223) *Ha, ha, ha! Herke, syrs, harke* (Magnyfycence: 1108, Folly to audience, laughing at the expense of Fancy, whom Folly finds more of fool than himself even though it is his name (l. 1109-10). Such word play is typical of *Magnyfycence*, cf. 6.8.17. Punctuation is editorial)

224) *A ha mayster that is good chere* (Mundus et Infans: 687, Folly to Man Infans).

Koskenniemi (1962: 71) discusses HA HA and finds that laughter is used for characterisation, especially in plays from the mid-sixteenth century (i.e. the earlier ones in her material). In the appendix, she gives two examples of reduplicated <ha ha>, described as “sardonic laughter”, but she finds more examples where <ha> occurs three times in sequence (alternatively two <ha> followed by one <he>: <ha ha he>), and these she describes as “typical exclamations of the Vice in Morality Plays” (Koskenniemi 1962: 174).<sup>402</sup> It cannot be concluded in the present study that double and triple <ha> represent different kinds of laughter.

It is true that laughter occurs in the speech of Vices and vice-like characters also in medieval plays, but it occurs in the speech of other kinds of characters and in other play types, as well. However, it is more than likely that Koskenniemi’s (1962: 9, 117-122) material does not include miracle and

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<sup>402</sup> Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 236-38) suggest a different distinction from Koskenniemi’s between reduplicated and triple HA. They find that triple occurrences of <ha>, i.e. HA HA HA, express merriment and often serve expressive-emotive functions. The shorter, reduplicated <ha> forms, i.e. HA HA, “are dominated by the discursial cognitive expressive function” meaning that HA HA expresses, for instance, appreciation of what has been said by the previous speaker, a phatic function comparable to HA (Culpeper and Kytö 2010: 237-38). Further, they find that reduplicated HA HA can be “used to represent laughter serving a sardonic discursial purpose” (Culpeper and Kytö 2010: 238). In other words, Culpeper and Kytö distinguish between laughter that is expressive of emotion and laughter that is used for discursial purposes. Such a distinction may exist in Early Modern English dialogic texts, but it was not found in Middle English play texts. It is more likely that the stanzaic pattern of versified play texts determined the number of HA in imitations of laughter.

cycle plays, but only plays from the subgenres referred to as morality plays and interludes in the present study.<sup>403</sup> (even though one of them includes biblical names in its title, *Jacob and Esau*, Koskenniemi 1962: 119). The interjection HA HA is used in all four cycle plays, where it occurs in turns spoken by bad characters, but also in turns by the (comical) Shepherds, normally categorised as good. Otherwise, it is true also of the Middle English play texts that only bad characters employ HA HA for laughter.<sup>404</sup> HA HA can therefore be seen as characterising speakers negatively in Late Middle English drama.

#### 6.9.4 HARROW

YC	NC	TC	CC	Wd	MA	PS	MG
9	12	11	1	1	2	2	1

(MS R)

HARROW occurs 39 times in eight play texts. It only occurs on its own in three instances; otherwise it is found in collocations with other interjections. It often expresses fear, and the expressive-emotive function is reinforced by the interjections collocating with HARROW, typically ALAS (Section 6.9.1) and OUT (Section 6.8.12).

HARROW occurs in many spelling variants, but is scarcely to be confused with any other word. The spellings <haro>, <harro>, <haroo>, <harrow>, <harraw>, <horow>, <harrowe>, and <herrowe> all occur in the Middle

<sup>403</sup> Three of the 104 plays in Koskenniemi's study carry biblical names: *Jacob and Esau*, anonymous, ante 1553, *David and Behtsabe* by Peele, c. 1589, and *Mary Magdelene* by Wager, ante 1566 (Koskenniemi 1962: 119-121). Although it has not been ascertained to what extent these plays are reminiscent of the late medieval religious play types, it is unlikely that they are very similar to the Catholic plays and more likely that they were symbolic moral plays than direct biblical illustrations or miracle plays. The remaining 101 titles in Koskenniemi's inventory suggest that they were historical tragedies, heroic plays, classically inspired plays, and diverse comedy.

<sup>404</sup> A Shepherd laughs in each of the *York* and the *Towneley* cycles. A Devil and Slanderer 1 laugh in two different *N-town* cycle pageants, and Lucifer seems to be laughing in the *Chester* cycle pageant 1: 126 as he triumphantly boasts of his appearance (l. 126), i.e. *Chester* cycle MS R, by Bellin: the spelling is <aha>. *Chester* cycle MS H has <ah ah>, but here the forms have been taken to represent laughter.

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English play texts, but most frequent is the form <harrow>, counting 15 examples. No scribe is completely consistent in his spelling of HARROW, but Hand B of the *York* cycle text is the least inconsistent in his choosing between only two forms: he prefers <harowe> but has also <herrowe>). The *Towneley* and *N-town* scribes, by contrast, have various orthographic realisations of the interjection HARROW.

In the main, HARROW seems to imitate spontaneous reactions. Of the total of 39 examples, 25 occur turn-initially. A further three examples of HARROW occur as markers of turn-medial changes of addressee, and one example occurs after a stage direction splits a turn. All these occurrences can be described as turn-initiating positions. When HARROW is not found in turn-initial position, it typically occurs in a culminating series of expressive-emotive interjections. Reduplications of HARROW and collocations including HARROW, reinforce the sense of fear in the speaker, but may also denote extreme anger. As HARROW is typically found in collocations with other interjection, its use is incidentally illustrated by quotes given in the former discussions of AY, OUT, and ALAS. Thus quote 225 below is also cited in Section 6.8.2 discussing AY.

HARROW occurs in turns by bad characters, as illustrated by the quotes below. Both Satan and Jonathas, one of the Jews torturing the Host in *Sacrament*, are obviously bad. Satan from the *York* cycle and Jonathas from *Sacrament* are scared by the works of Christ, quotes 225 and 226 below. The *N-town* Satan, quote 227, is angry and perhaps scared, too ('I wonder sore...' follows in line 288), because he is unable to lead Jesus into temptation.

- 225)        *Owt! Ay, herrowe! Helpe, Mahounde!* (York 37: 343, Satan to self, despair as Jesus harrows Hell. Punctuation is editorial)
- 226)        *Ah owt owt Harrow what deuyll ys thys* (Sacrament: 481, Jew Jonathas to self, fear)
- 227)        *Out out harrow Alas Alas* (N-town 23: 287, Devil Satan to audience, anger, rage, despair)

Quote 228 below illustrates one of the rare examples of HARROW occurring alone, whereas quote 229 shows a typical collocation with WE and swearing by the devil. Both are from the *York* cycle Resurrection pageant. The soldiers

are scared when they find the Jesus' body has vanished from the tomb. Again, HARROW is found in turns by bad characters impressed by God's miracles.

- 228) *Harrowe! For ay* (York 38: 292b, Soldier 2 to Soldiers, fear, surprise. Punctuation is editorial: *Harrowe for ay* is a possible alternative interpretation, cited above under AY)<sup>405</sup>
- 229) *Whe! Harrowe! Deuill, whare is he away?* (York 38: 298, Soldier 4 to Soldiers, fear, surprise. Punctuation is editorial.)

The co-occurrence of HARROW and 'ay' in quotes 225 and 228, is reminiscent of similar constructions, such as *out ay harrow* (York cycle) discussed in Section 6.8.2 on AY. It was found that collocations with AY in the York cycle text often renders AY ambiguous, in the sense that it cannot be satisfactorily settled whether AY is an interjection or the adverb, 'ever', in such co-texts. There are three examples in which HARROW collocates with AY, and one example where the two words are at least associated:

- 230) *Harro thefe for ay* (Towneley 26: 451b, Soldier 2 to Soldiers, fear, panic on discovering that Jesus' body is missing from the tomb)

The associations of HARROW with 'ay' may have given rise to collocations such as the ones quoted in the discussion of AY: *Owte ay welaway I well euen in wo nowe* (York 1: 104, cry by the devil Lucifer as he falls from Heaven, also quoted in Section 6.8.2). In many examples of the use of HARROW, there is a notion of eternity, 'for ay', as the characters lose themselves for ever when for example Lucifer falls from Heaven.

- 231) *Alas Alas out & harrow* (N-town 33: 33, Devil Belial to Jesus in Hell, fear, despair. Pageant 33 presents Jesus Harrowing of Hell in the *N-town* cycle)
- 232) *Out harowe hyll burneth where shall I me hyde*  
(Magnyfycence: Vice-like Despair to Mischief, despair)

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<sup>405</sup> The full turn reads: *harowe for ay / I telle vs schente* (York 38: 292b-293). It is quite impossible to decide which interpretation is the more correct: whether the Soldier means that they 'for ever are shamed', or cries 'harrow for ever', since they are shamed.

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HARROW is found particularly frequently in biblical cycles, especially the *York*, *N-town* and *Towneley* cycles.<sup>406</sup> In addition, HARROW is attested in two miracle plays: *Mary Magdalen* and *Sacrament*, both of which have at least some affinity with biblical plays.<sup>407</sup> The *Mary Magdalen* play is based partly on biblical material, and partly on legend about the saint Mary Magdalene. *Sacrament* is based solely on legend, but Christ still plays a part in *Sacrament* as his “image” (SD 634+) materialises after the Jews have tortured the sacred Host until it bleeds (SD 592+). There is a certain resemblance both to the biblical Crucifixion pageants and to Christ’s harrowing of Hell in the cycles.

HARROW seems to mark extreme circumstances. It occurs in cycle pageants addressing the Harrowing of Hell, the Resurrection, the Assumption of Mary (only *N-town* includes this pageant, however) and Judgment Day, and only occasionally in other pageants. In addition, there is one attestation of HARROW in the morality play *Wisdom* and one in the interlude *Magnyfycence*. In all, HARROW occurs in all subgenres of medieval drama, but it is scarce outside of cycle and miracle plays, and even the occurrence in the interlude *Magnyfycence* is associated with Hell through in the co-text.

All characters exclaiming HARROW are male. Further, it has been found that HARROW is only expressed by bad characters, including devils. They typically cry HARROW in collocation with other interjections in fear or in a combination of fear and anger.

Besides its typical expressive-emotive function, it is possible that HARROW also serves textual functions. Taavitsainen (1997: 602) suggests a classification of textual functions of interjections in Middle English texts, and HARROW seems to accord particularly well with two of these textual functions: as “turning points in the plot” and in “intensifying function” (Taavitsainen 1997: 602). In Middle English play texts HARROW sometimes marks the downfall of a bad character, in other words it occurs at turning

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<sup>406</sup> In MS Hm of the *Chester* cycle, HARROW does not occur at all, as it is only found in pageant no. 1, lacking in Hm, and therefore supplied from MS R in Lumiansky and Mills (1974). *Chester* pageant 1 illustrates the fall of Lucifer.

<sup>407</sup> 37 of the 39 examples of HARROW belong in the subgenres of cycle and miracle plays.

points in the plot. HARROW also serves intensifying functions in series of collocating interjections which together stress the fear of the speaker and the predicament of his situation.

### 6.9.5 WEMO

YC	TC
1 weme	9: wemo (3), weme (2), wema (1), wemay (1), wemmow (1), whannow (1)

The interjection WEMO includes forms such as <weme>, <wemo>, <wemmow> and <wemay>. WEMO is infrequent, and, like the interjection WE, only found in the *York* and *Towneley* cycle plays.<sup>408</sup> Since both WE and WEMO are unique to the repertoires of only two scribes, it seems highly likely that they are related interjections. The two interjections share some functions, as well. Both are restricted to male speakers, and neither is used to characterise the speaker, as both WEMO and WE occur in turns by both the good and the bad. Good characters such as the biblical Shepherd, Esau, Lucas and Thomas use it.

233)            *wemmow! Where is this man becom* (Towneley 27: 297,  
Lucas to Cleophas, confusion. Punctuation is editorial)

All occurrences of WEMO are syntactically independent, but two are found in reduplication <wemo wemo> (*Towneley* 2: 200). Six out of the 10 attestations of WEMO occur turn-initially, and seem to imitate spontaneous outburst. WEMO denotes confusion, incredulity, protest or aggression. When the pilgrim Lucas and the disciple Thomas employ WEMO, it seems to express confusion and disbelief, while when bad characters employ WEMO it more typically denotes anger. Anger is especially noticeable in the quoted turn of

<sup>408</sup> One form in the *Towneley* cycle reads <whannow>, at first sight it does not look like WEMO at all. Rather <whannow> looks like a (modern) contraction of ‘what now’, but as nothing like it has been found elsewhere in the ME play material, this interpretation does not seem very likely. The spelling form <whannow> functions like WEMO does: as a spontaneous outburst of disbelief or confusion: *Whannow Peter art thou mad* (Towneley 28: 305, Thomas to Peter, disbelief).

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the high priest Caiphas below (236), as it is reinforced by Caiphas' use of vulgarities in addressing Jesus. Such language, of course, characterises the speaker rather than the addressee. WEMO may occur before a vocative, normally the addressee, and thus it may have a conative function in addition to its expressive-emotive function.

- 234) *Wemay, man, I hold the mad!* (Towneley 2: 150, Cain to Abel, protest, anger. Punctuation is editorial)  
235) *wemo! Felows, hold youre hend* (Towneley 6: 131, Esau to his servants/soldiers, command. Punctuation is editorial)  
236) *weme! The dwillys durt in thi berd* (Towneley 21: 246, Caiphas to Jesus, anger. Punctuation is editorial)  
237) *Weme! Methynke we doote* (York 34: 308, Soldier 1 to Soldiers, meaning is unclear. Punctuation is editorial)

The connection to madness found in quote 234 above re-occurs in the ambiguous spelling form <whannow> also from the *Towneley* cycle text. The similarity between the two contexts gives good reason to classify the unique spelling <whannow> with the interjection type WEMO:

- 238) *Whannow Peter art thou mad* (Towneley cycle 28: 305, Doubting Thomas to Peter, incredulity, confusion, aggression?)

It is probable that the first element in WEMO is identical to the interjection WE, but it is uncertain where the second element in WEMO stems from and what it means, especially since the grapheme(s) representing the vowel sound in the second element varies greatly. Six of the occurrences of WEMO seem to have an open final vowel sound, represented by the grapheme <a> once, and by <o> five times (followed by <w> in two cases). Four WEMO seems to have a final closed vowel sound, represented by the graphemes <e> and the digraph <ay>. The two different types of vowels may suggest different origins.

One conceivable origin of the second element in WEMO in the spelling forms with closed vowel sounds, 'weme' and 'wemay', is the first person pronoun



oblique form, ‘me’ (cf. ‘ayme’ in Section 6.8.2 AY).<sup>409</sup> This hypothesis does not explain the alternative form of WEMO, the spelling forms with graphemes representing open vowel sounds, equally well. The relationship between the Middle English interjections WE, WEMO, and, most likely, WELLAWAY, from Old English *wā lā wā*, deserve further study.

I suggested in Section 6.8.14 above that the interjection WE is related to the pragmatic marker ‘why’ (supposedly from the interrogative adverb ‘why’), since both words occur as syntactically independent emotive expressions denoting anger and protest. It is possible that the interjection WE came to be realised in writing by spelling forms identical to those used in the spelling of the interrogative adverb. Most scribes producing Middle English play texts seem to have conflated the two forms, perhaps assuming that the two forms were identical. However, the *York* and *Towneley* cycle copyists consistently discriminate between WE and the interrogative ‘why’. Both scribes also employ the interjection WEMO, which adds strength to the hypothesis that WE is a distinct interjection type and not a variant spelling form of the pragmatic marker ‘why’ (commonly spelt <whi> in the ME play material, but this feature has not been examined systematically). It is more likely the other way around: the pragmatic marker ‘why’, supposedly stemming from the interrogative ‘why’, may be a misconstrued spelling of the interjection WE in most Middle English play texts.

### 6.10 *Interjections or phrases?*

Four polysyllabic expressions have been included in the present study. One of them – WELLAWAY - is commonly described as an interjection in spite of its length and phrase-like appearance. It is an expression of emotion attested already in Old English. By contrast, the three other polysyllabic interjections discussed below appear to be later formations in English, two - GRAMERCY and PARDIE - stemming from French, and one – BENEDICITE – stemming from Latin. Taavitsainen discusses all four types in her articles on Early

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<sup>409</sup> Danish and Norwegian used to have the expressive lament, ‘ve meg’, chiefly poetic, now rare, but whose first element is recognised also in the phrase ‘akk og ve’ (cf. 6.10.1 WELLAWAY). The Danish/Norwegian expression ‘ve meg’ and the English spelling <wemay> (WEMO) look, and may have sounded, similar.

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Modern English interjections (1995) and Middle English exclamations (1997). These studies have inspired the inclusion of all four forms in the present study of interjections, which the following discussion compares with Taavitsainen's (1995 and 1997) findings.

WELLAWAY stems from an Old English expression of sorrow. Even though WELLAWAY is untypically long for an interjection, the expression appears to have served expressive-emotive functions in English. The three imported phrases, BENEDICITE, GRAMERCY and PARDIE, may have taken on expressive function even though they do not imitate spontaneous outburst, but originally had semantic meaning and were used as clausally embedded words. The three words, BENEDICITE, GRAMERCY, and PARDIE, may thus have followed the pattern of

- 1) lexicalisation of a phrase, exemplified by 'grant mercy', to one word, GRAMERCY, which may express emotion/attitude, or
- 2) direct grammaticalisation of a lexical item into interjection function with loss of original denotative meaning. BENEDICITE may be an example of the latter development, perhaps changing from blessing to expressive outburst (Taavitsainen 1997: 596).

Including atypical items in the present study is useful, since cross-study comparisons may make it possible to establish whether distribution and/or function vary across genres or time. Similar to the pattern found for the disyllabic interjection ALAS, it is possible that polysyllabic expressions may have functioned as syntactically embedded phrases in Middle English but started to function as interjections or other kinds of discourse markers, by Early Modern English. Other patterns may be found which could shed more light on the function of interjections in Middle English play texts, and perhaps whether and how interjections changed.

### 6.10.1 WELLAWAY

YC	NC	TC	CC	BA	CP	Hi
8	12	8	4	1	5	1
		(+ 1				

## WE LO)

There are 43 examples of the interjection (or expression) WELLAWAY in the Middle English play material. The 43 examples include spelling forms ending with the graphemes <o> or <oo> (four in *Perseverance*) rather than <ay>, and one word which appears to be a misspelling: <welasay> (also in *Perseverance*, in l. 2969).

According to the *OED*, WELLAWAY developed from an Old English phrasal interjection, *wā lā wā*. It is found in a wide variety of spelling forms in Middle English play texts (more below). Like the original Old English meaning, the Middle English expression WELLAWAY denotes sorrow. It is sometimes found in turn-initial (i.e. spontaneous) and syntactically independent distribution, and may therefore serve expressive-emotive functions like shorter interjections do.

- 239)           *Walaway! Wa es me now, nowe es it war thane it was* (York  
1: 113, Devil Lucifer to himself, despair, fear. Punctuation is  
editorial)

However, as will be seen from the quotes below, many examples of WELLAWAY occur in line-final rather than turn-initial distribution, meaning that the expression serves rhyme-filling functions. Several of the 28 line-final attestations of WELLAWAY do not imitate spontaneous outbursts, while others may yet be interpreted as such because they occur as the last expression in a row of interjections (quote 242 provides an example). It will also be demonstrated that WELLAWAY in Middle English play texts may occur in phrases and constructions indicating that it is treated as one or several words rather than as an expressive utterance on its own.

WELLAWAY occurs in the turns of both good and bad characters, and does not mark any characters negatively. WELLAWAY is used predominantly by human speakers, especially by biblical male characters, but also by biblical, female characters: Eve, Martha, the lamenting mothers, and the midwife Salomé (the *N-town* cycle). It is predominantly found in biblical play texts, and mainly in texts from the fifteenth century. The use of WELLAWAY in

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the late *Chester* cycle text in MS Hm suggests that the scribe (Gregorie) may have had difficulties in applying it. This is returned to below.

No Middle English spelling forms of WELLAWAY in the present material reflects the spacing which the *OED* suggests for the Old English form, *wā lā wā*. In 34 of the 43 examples of WELLAWAY, it is written as one word without any spaces, as in quote 239 above. WELLAWAY occurs seven times with one space between the first and second element, and twice with two spaces, in spelling forms like <wele a woo> (both occur in *Perseverance*, cf. quote 240 below). In the occurrences with spaces, the space occurs after, and never in front of, the grapheme <l>, i.e. the original meaning of the two first individual elements in OE *wā lā* seems lost.

240)        *so mekyl pe werse wele a woo* (*Perseverance*: 1260, Good  
Angel to Mankind, lament)

241)        *So wala way* (*York* 32: 211, Judas to Pilate, remorse, lament)

WELLAWAY is used for expressive-emotive functions in lamentable situations in the Middle English play texts. The expressive-emotive function is reinforced when WELLAWAY occurs in collocations with other interjections, for instance ALAS. There are no less than 16 examples of ALAS and WELLAWAY collocating with each other, most commonly in phrase-like expressions which may fill a whole verse line.

242)        *Alas alas and walaway* (*Towneley* 23: 671, Joseph of  
Arimatheia to himself, lament)

WELLAWAY frequently occurs in phrasal constructions, similar to reported speech quotes including verbs like ‘sing/cry/say’ WELLAWAY. This syntactic distribution suggests that WELLAWAY in Late Middle English was in the process of “de-interjectionalisation”, i.e. WELLAWAY is no longer used to imitate spontaneous outbursts, but to call up the notion of lament by using WELLAWAY as a syntactically embedded noun:

243)        *We all may say weleaway* (*Hickscorner*: 550, Pity to  
audience, lamenting the state of contemporary society)

244)        *Now may oure song be weleaway* (*N-town* 42: 29, Souls to  
audience, lament)

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- 245) *I, wrethe, may syngyn wele a wo* (Perseverance: 2217, Vice Wrath to audience or self, pain. Punctuation is editorial)
- 246) *My songe maye bee WeleAwaye* (Chester 4: 350, Abraham to Isaac, lament)<sup>410</sup>
- 247) *So welawey may be my songe* (Brome Abraham: 234, Abraham to Isaac, lament, remorse)

Quotes 241 and 247 above illustrate the combination ‘so WELLAWAY’, which is quite common in the material. This combination indicates direct causality between the lamentable situation and the use of expressive-emotive WELLAWAY. Sometimes the combination ‘so WELLAWAY’ is followed by constructions with ‘for’ and ‘the’, similar to those constructions found in the use of ALAS: ‘alas the while’ and ‘alas for pain’ (Section 6.9.1).

- 248) *So welaway* (York 5: 148, Eve to God, regret)
- 249) *Sa welaway for harde peyne* (York 6: 93, Adam to self, lament)
- 250) *so welaway þe whyle* (Perseverance: 3020, Anima to Man in death, lament)

Thus, three main patterns in the use of WELLAWAY can be discerned in the Middle English play texts. First, the lament WELLAWAY can be syntactically independent, although usually occurring in collocation with other interjections. There are 26 examples of WELLAWAY occurring as an independent utterance, but only six of these 26 are examples of WELLAWAY used alone, while the other 20 are collocations of WELLAWAY and other interjections. Collocation with ALAS was illustrated in quote 242 above. Collocations with A, AY, and OUT are also attested.

Both of the other two patterns involve syntactical integration of WELLAWAY into the clause or co-text. The first of these patterns of syntactical integration can be described as WELLAWAY occurring in phrases (of reported speech): ‘we may sing wellaway’. Such usage was illustrated in quotes 243 to 247. The expression WELLAWAY appears syntactically

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<sup>410</sup> The Brome *Abraham* play and the *Chester* cycle pageant concerning the Abraham topic are textually related. See Section 5.9.

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independent in the phrase, but still integrated in the clause which would not have the same meaning without it.

The second pattern of syntactically integrated distribution shows WELLAWAY as part of constructions with ‘so’, ‘for’ and ‘the’. Such usage was illustrated in quotes 240 and 241, and 248 to 250 above. In total, 17 examples of the expression WELLAWAY in Middle English play texts are syntactically integrated in clauses, and do not form independent utterances on their own. One example of WELLAWAY has even been broken up into its individual elements leaving the elements reordered into a unique expression (quote 252 below). The first quote below shows an unusual use of WELLAWAY in which the phrase is still recognisable. The second quote shows how WELLAWAY has been broken up and reorganised as two words in a clause. Both examples occur in the late *Chester* cycle text.

251) *Alas wayle away ys went* (Chester 18: 317, Mary Jacobi to self, lament)

252) *Alas nowe wayle ys went awaye* (Chester 19: 1, Lucas to Cleophas, lament, weeping: cf. l. 5)

The spelling of WELLAWAY in Middle English may be interesting from an etymological and diachronic point of view. The *OED* suggests that WELLAWAY stems from “Old English *weg lā weg, wei lā wei*, an alteration of *wā lā wā*.” The Old English alteration to *weg/wei* could perhaps be the root of the Middle English interjection WE (Section 6.8.14), which in turn appears similar to the Scandinavian lament *ve* in expressions such as ‘akk og ve’ and ‘akk o ve’. The *OED* also suggests that the first element of WELLAWAY was replaced by *wel*, i.e. the adverb ‘well’. This seems attested by the spellings forms of WELLAWAY in the present material, as there are no examples of spaces in front of the grapheme <l>, only after it.

However, the play material rarely renders WELLAWAY as spelling forms similar to the *OED* headword with a double grapheme <l>: WELLAWAY is only spelt with double <l> twice, once in the *N-town* cycle text (26: 8) and once in the *Chester* cycle text (16a: 392). More common are, in fact, spelling variants suggesting a long vowel sound or possibly a diphthong in the first element of WELLAWAY: <wayle>, <weale>, and <weel> occur twice each.

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The two first are found in the *Chester* text, and the later spelling form in the *N-town* text. There are 10 additional examples of WELLAWAY written with the grapheme <e> closing the first element (before another vowel grapheme opens the second element), giving the spelling form <wele> in forms such as <weleaway>. This spelling variant is found in several texts: *Perseverance*, *Hickscorner*, *N-town*, and *Chester*.

Long vowel sounds in the first element of WELLAWAY could perhaps be explained by the expressions being associated with the verb 'wail', rather than with the adverb 'well', as the *OED* suggests. The combination of the verb 'wail' and the adverb 'away' suggests a meaning like 'cry out'. Bearing in mind that WELLAWAY frequently occurs in phrases with speech verbs such as 'sing' and 'say', a possible connection to the verb 'wail' seems relevant, and perhaps more logical in an expression of lament than the adverb 'well' does. This interpretation seems especially likely for the *Chester* cycle text (MS Hm). The scribe of this late manuscript employs WELLAWAY six times, mostly in collocations with ALAS, but included are also the two examples quoted in 251 and 252 above, in which WELLAWAY is treated as a phrase. One of these occurrences even takes an insert (quote 252). It seems likely that the scribe was not altogether certain of how to treat WELLAWAY. In four of his examples of WELLAWAY, it seems logical to interpret the first element as a variant of the verb 'wail', in particular because five of his six spelling forms include what seems to be long vowel sounds in the first element: <weale> (2), <wayle> (2), and <wele> (1). However, neither the adverb 'well' nor the verb 'wail' seem to make good sense in the two constructions with WELLAWAY found in the *Chester* MS Hm (quotes 251 and 252).

The first vowel sound in WELLAWAY is also spelt with the grapheme <a> in the material. Forms with <a> rather than <e> suggest a quite different pronunciation than described above. The preference for <a> in the first element of WELLAWAY is found in the work by the *Towneley* scribe, as well as in the work by the *York Register's* scribe A. In the *Towneley* cycle text spelling forms with the vowel <a> in the first element of WELLAWAY occur seven times. In the *York* cycle text such forms occur three times, and two of these belong in scribe A's part (which does not have other WELLAWAY examples but these two). The *Towneley* cycle scribe has two other forms:

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<welowo> and <we lo> (*Towneley* 1: 132 and 8: 310). The latter is obviously difficult to categorise, but equally obvious is the similarity to <welowo>, which in turn has a clear resemblance to OE *wā lā wā*, i.e. WELLAWAY.<sup>411</sup>

The language of the *Towneley* text has been localised to Western Yorkshire by LALME (Vol. III: 622), i.e. the text is written in a northern dialect. It is possible that the relative infrequency of the interjection O (cf. Chapter 7) and the preference for the back vowel /a/ in the *Towneley* cycle text are associated phenomena related to the northern dialect of the scribe. The material attests that the *Towneley* scribe prefers the interjection A to O to a greater extent than other cycle scribes (cf. Section 7.7), and he prefers the grapheme <a> to variants with the grapheme <e> in WELLAWAY.

The evidence from the *York* cycle text can perhaps also be explained by northern dialect, although this evidence is far scarcer and therefore less certain. The *York* cycle's hand A only contributed the text of three pageants and he seems to have adopted the language of his exemplars (cf. Section 5.6). In contrast, the dialect of the main hand in the *York* Register, scribe B, is not from York, but from further south in the country (LALME I: 102). He prefers spellings with the grapheme <e> in the first element of WELLAWAY: five out of six examples written by him has <e> in this position, only one has <a> (*York* 32: 211).

The realisation of the expression WELLAWAY in the Middle English play material possibly attests two different scribal interpretations: the first alternative suggests that WELLAWAY was interpreted as a fixed (compound) interjection, the second alternative that it was interpreted as a phrase, perhaps including the verb 'wail' plus the adverb 'away'. As WELLAWAY is often treated as a noun (in e.g. 'sing wellaway'), or as a phrase, it cannot be categorised as a typical interjection in the present material, even though it always expresses emotion. This expressive-emotive function distinguishes it from mere phrasal routines, such as 'thank you' and 'hail', both of which may serve non-expressive functions.

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<sup>411</sup> However, the *Towneley* text's example of WE LO (8: 310) has been included in the WE class, and not in the WELLAWAY class, in the present study.



WELLAWAY shares characteristic features with ALAS: both serve expressive functions, yet both frequently occur as syntactically integrated words (cf. ALAS in Section 6.9.1). However, whereas it has been found that ALAS increasingly occurs as an independent, typical interjection in the play material, WELLAWAY seems to change in the other direction: it is typically found in early play texts and less frequently attested in the later ones. Further, its various phrasal manifestations (particularly in the late *Chester* cycle text) suggest that it is in the process of losing ground as an interjection.

Taavitsainen (1995: 443-44) finds one example of WELLAWAY in the earliest material, and none in the later sections of her Early Modern English material.<sup>412</sup> Taavitsainen (1995: 459) suggests that WELLAWAY has already become archaic by the time it occurs in a single attestation in a play text in the subsection 1500-70 of the Helsinki Corpus. She finds six examples of WELLAWAY in Chaucer's *Tales* in her study of Late Middle English, as well as four examples from play texts (Taavitsainen 1997: 595), which are identical to four attestations (from the *York* and *N-town* texts) of the present study.<sup>413</sup> The use of WELLAWAY described by Taavitsainen (1997: 595, 602) corresponds well with the findings of the present study: WELLAWAY expresses emotion and occurs in collocations with ALAS, and in the phrase 'sing wellaway'. She suggests that 'so' co-occurring with WELLAWAY in the phrase 'so wellaway' (discussed above with quotes 247-250) is a scribal misinterpretation of 'say' as in 'say/sing wellaway' (Taavitsainen 1997: 595). In any case, the many phrases with 'so/say/sing' + WELLAWAY in Middle English suggest that scribes had no consistent way of treating it. It was not at all systematically treated as an independent outburst of emotion, not the least illustrated by its use in phrases and in line-final, rhyming position. Thus

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<sup>412</sup>The Early Modern English material in Taavitsainen's (1995) study is divided into three chronological sections, whereof the earliest covers the period 1500-1570. The material in this section partly overlaps with the late texts of the present study. Taavitsainen's (1995: 443) single attestation of WELLAWAY in Early Modern English was found in a play text by Stevenson, i.e. a text which is not included in the present study. The rest of Taavitsainen's Early Modern English material is of later date, drawn from the Helsinki Corpus Early Modern English subsection 2: 1570-1640 and 3: 1640-1710. In her study on exclamations in Late Middle English, she also uses additional material (Taavitsainen 1997: 575).

<sup>413</sup> Since the Helsinki Corpus includes only parts of cycle texts, Taavitsainen (1997) has lower numbers of attestations than the present study does.

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WELLAWAY seems to have served poetical functions, possibly including marking the language of cycle plays as particularly literary (high) style.

### 6.10.2 *BENEDICITE*

YC	NC	TC	MA	Na	MG
1	2	5	2	1	2
(including <i>benste</i> )					

BENEDICITE stems from Latin. The *OED* describes it as an interjection and a noun (for a blessing). In the present material BENEDICITE occurs in three out of four cycle plays, as well as in the miracle play *Mary Magdalen*, in Medwall's morality play *Nature* and in Skelton's interlude *Magnyfycence*. In total, therefore, BENEDICITE has relatively wide distribution occurring as it does in all four subgenres of late medieval drama. It is, nonetheless, infrequent with no more than 13 examples, four of which occur in reduplications, meaning that BENEDICITE occurs in only 11 verse lines or contexts.<sup>414</sup> Few attestations spread over all subgenres of Middle English drama suggest that BENEDICITE serves specialised purposes. Most attestations, however, occur in relatively early texts.

BENEDICITE occurs in the polysyllabic form <benedicite> and in the disyllabic form <benste>. All four examples of the disyllabic <benste> belong in the *Towneley* cycle text, more specifically in the speeches of the Shepherds in the *Prima* and *Secunda Pastorum* (First and Second Shepherds' pageants). Three of the examples from *Towneley* are used as greetings, more precisely described as salutary blessings, while the fourth is somewhat uncertain as it occurs in the speech of a confused Shepherd in waking up from drunken sleep (*Towneley* 13: 517 is quoted in 258 further below).

All but one example of BENEDICITE occur in the first verse line of a new turn, but four such turn-initial examples occur line-finally rather than as turn-openers, the typical syntactic slot for interjections. Thus, BENEDICITE, like WELLAWAY (Section 6.10.1), is found in rhyming position and may

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<sup>414</sup> The reduplications are found in a Shepherd's greeting in the *Towneley* cycle (12: 66), and in the Shipmaster's call or prayer in *Mary Magdalen* (l. 1775).

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therefore serve poetical functions rather than expressive ones. The quotes illustrate that BENEDICITE in Middle English play texts functions as a noun, and as an intensifier (like the adverb ‘truly’), besides its possibly expressive function. In quote 253 below from *Magnyfycence*, BENEDICITE is used as a noun denoting a special type of blessing or prayer. Quote 254 from *Nature* seems to illustrate adverbial usage. The third example may be both an expression of fear and a prayer for help at the same time:

- 253)        *The grace of god vnder benedicite* (*Magnyfycence*: 490, Counterfeit to audience, nominal expression for a prayer)
- 254)        *Ye are passyng hasty benedicite* (*Nature* Part 2: 605, Gluttony to Bodily Lust and Mankind, intensifier like ‘truly’ and ‘verily’. The turn implies concern for Man’s physical well-being, and BENEDICITE is used to reinforce Gluttony’s argument that Man must have meat)
- 255)        *benedicite benedicite* (*Mary Magdalen*: 1775, Shipmaster to self or Boy, distress, prayer? Fear that the mast will break in sudden, bad weather)

BENEDICITE differs from interjections because of its compound form reflecting its Latin, rather than natural, origin, and also because it is frequently found in non-initial distribution where it does not imitate spontaneous reaction. Both polysyllabicity and the non-initial distribution attested when BENEDICITE occurs in rhyme-filling position, are features that it shares with WELLAWAY, but while the latter always expresses emotion, this appears not be the case for BENEDICITE. It is used expressively in some contexts (e.g. in quotes 258-260 below), but in other contexts, BENEDICITE can be used as a conventional greeting routine, i.e. in the first salutation of someone. This is how the Shepherds employ three of the examples of BENEDICITE (spelt <benste>) in two of their turns in *Towneley* 12: 66; 13: 79.

- 256)        *Benste benste / be vs emang* (*Towneley* 12: 66-67, Shepherd 2 to audience, greeting)
- 257)        *Benste and dominus* (*Towneley* 13: 79, Shepherd 2 to Shepherd 1, greeting)

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One more example may be seen as a conventional salutation, but this example differs insofar as BENEDICITE seems simultaneously to express emotions of surprise and perhaps fear. Noah is surprised and confused as he greets the voice of an unknown (God). A similar usage occurs in the turn of a Shepherd woken from drunken sleep. Both quotes 258 and 259 are first words to an unknown spoken by confused characters, and BENEDICITE apparently is used for expressive functions. In the first example, quote 258, the collocation with the interjection A strengthens the hypothesis that BENEDICITE in some contexts is used expressively.

- 258)        *A! benedicite! / what art thou that thus / Tellys afore that shall be?* (Towneley ll.235-37, Noah to God, greeting/first words, surprise, confusion. Punctuation is editorial)
- 259)        *Benste be here in!* (Towneley 13: 517, Shepherd 3 to self or Shepherds, wakes, confusion, hung-over from drink. The meaning is unclear. Punctuation is editorial)

In total, there are four examples in which the use of BENEDICITE seems to express emotion, including the two examples just quoted. In these cases, BENEDICITE is associated with surprise, confusion or even protest, and thus both feelings and cognitive reactions are involved.

- 260)        *On Goddis name, benedicite!* (York 41: 33, Peter to risen Christ, incredulity, confusion, prayer? Punctuation is editorial)
- 261)        *Benedicite I can not vndyrstande* (N-town 10: 175, Joseph to kinsmen, anger, protest, confusion. He cannot take a wife (l. 178). Dramatic irony, comedy?)

A possible fifth example of expressive-emotive and/or –cognitive function occurs in the interlude *Magnyfycence*. There is a certain similarity to the use in quote 261, where the use of BENEDICITE seems to imply both confusion and protest in Joseph's turn as he rejects the idea that he should marry. Likewise, Fancy in the quote from *Magnyfycence* below, seems to protest to Prince Magnificence's insinuations. Fancy, however, is a cunning trickster who frequently uses language, including puns and irony, to fool other characters. In this manner, he is the exact opposite of the naive Joseph. Whereas Joseph's protestation is an honest reaction, Fancy employs

BENEDICITE for phatic function, turning the focus from the reality that he is a trickster onto words, suggesting that it is the Prince who is the offender.

262) *Now benedicite ye wene I were some hafter* (Magnyfycence: 257, Fancy to Magnyfycence, protest, ironical blessing? *hafter* = ‘trickster’, in Walker 2000: 357)

All biblical characters employing BENEDICITE are good characters, while at least three of the speakers from the other play types are not: Vice Gluttony, Counterfeit Collusion, and Fancy. It is conceivable that what was once a pious greeting became a negatively marked phrase in later texts, perhaps through association with protest and anger typical of proud or rude characters.

Taavitsainen (1995: 448-49) discusses two examples of BENEDICITE from the Early Modern English material, and finds that one is used conventionally as a blessing, while the other is used to express surprise. Taavitsainen’s (1997: 596-97) eight examples of BENEDICITE from the Late Middle English material show similar two-fold usage. BENEDICITE has two distinct functions: it is used to express surprise (especially in Chaucer), and as a conventional blessing in greetings. These two functions of BENEDICITE have also been found in the Middle English play text material explored here. In addition, BENEDICITE seems to be used as an adverbial similar to ‘truly’ and ‘verily’. Since BENEDICITE does not always express emotion, but it may be used as a conventional salutation and perhaps as a sentence adverbial, it is not a typical interjection.

### 6.10.3 GRAMERCY

YC	NC	TC	CC	PA	NA	BR	CP	Ev	Na	MI	FL
12	20	7	7	1	2	1	1	5	2	6	1

(noun)

GRAMERCY is much more numerous than BENEDICITE in the present material. GRAMERCY occurs in 65 attestations in 11 play texts from three of the Middle English drama subgenres. Only miracle plays contain no examples. Use of GRAMERCY is found both in fifteenth and sixteenth

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century texts. It is realised in spelling as variants over two main spelling forms, <gramercy> and as <grantmercy>, i.e. with inclusion of the grapheme cluster <nt>. In addition there are spelling forms with <u> before <nt>, with a space, and with <o> instead of the <a> in the initial element, but a main line of distinction may be drawn at the inclusion of the consonant cluster <nt> which more than other kinds of spelling forms shows the relationship to the original phrase: *Grant mercy* (from Old French; *grant* meaning ‘great’, *OED*).<sup>415</sup>

Spellings without the grapheme cluster <nt> amount to 55 examples and are thus five times more numerous than spellings including <nt>. Spelling forms with the consonant cluster <nt> are restricted to the *Chester* cycle text (7 examples), the Peniarth ‘Antichrist’, the *Towneley*, and the *York* cycle texts, meaning that only four scribes use it. Of these four scribes, the latter two have only one attestation of spellings with <nt> in GRAMERCY each, clearly preferring spelling forms without it. The fact that the *Chester* cycle copyist is consistent in spelling GRAMERCY like the original French form (with <nt>) may suggest that GRAMERCY was falling out of use in English, and in the process of becoming a marker of archaic language (Section 5.25, cf. Mills 1998: 189-192).

Both GRAMERCY and PARDIE (Section 6.10.4) developed from French. Like ALAS seems to do (6.9.1), these expressions may have developed into pragmatic markers or even interjections. However, it has been found that GRAMERCY in the Middle English play texts often functions like a marker, or a routine, denoting ‘thank you’, which may or may not express emotion, presumably gratitude. The context suggests deep gratitude in the following quote, as a blind man has just been healed:

263) *Gromercy lord . of þi grett grace* (N-town 26: 482, Blind Citizen to Jesus, gratitude. MS punctuation)

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<sup>415</sup> The inclusion of the grapheme <u> in forms such as <grauntemercye> (e.g. *Chester* 6: 281) is probably reflective of the nasal in French pronunciation. All four spelling forms with <o>, giving the form <gromercy>, occur in the *N-town* cycle text; three of them in the work by hand D in pageant 41. He is consistent in using this spelling form, while hand A uses it only once (*N-town* 26: 482), clearly preferring forms with <a> rather than <o> in the first element of GRAMERCY.

#### INTERJECTIONS IN LATE MIDDLE ENGLISH PLAY TEXTS

GRAMERCY can be used as a noun, denoting ‘thanks’, which does not serve expressive-emotive functions and which cannot form a syntactically independent expression. GRAMERCY is, in fact, frequently embedded in the clause, thus filling the syntactic slot of a lexical word, rather than forming an utterance on its own:

- 264) *A . A . is this their gramercy is this their reward* (Burial and Resurrection Part 1: 410, Nicodemus to Crucified Christ, ‘gramercy’ functions as a noun denoting ‘thanks’. Punctuation in MS)
- 265) *A lorde gramercy nowe I say* (York 17: 174, Simeon to Angel/God, thanks, nominal use denoting ‘thanks’)
- 266) *Mercy and gromercy god now may I be seyand / Thankyng you suete aungyl for this message iwys* (N-town 41: 131-32, Mary to Angel, gratitude for the message of her assumption)
- 267) *Now mercy god and gromercy of this savacyon* (N-town 41: 438, Prince 1 to God (not present), in thanks for his conversion, short prayer?)

GRAMERCY is frequently found in the first line of turns, with 47 examples of such distribution. However, in 10 of the 47 examples, GRAMERCY occurs medially or finally in the verse line. It does not initiate the turn like an imitation of a spontaneous reaction typically would have done. As was the case with WELLAWAY and BENEDICITE, GRAMERCY may form part of a rhyme pair in line-final position. Two examples are given below, followed by an example of line-medial position.

- 268) *My Good Dedes gramercy* (Everyman: 532, Everyman to Good Deeds, thanks)
- 269) *For his 3yfte and many moo good Lord gramercy* (N-town 12: 20, Mary to Joseph and God, thanks)
- 270) *Now gramercy again* (Towneley 24: 371b, Pilate to Soldier/Torturer 3, thanks denoting joy. Pilate is happy to have won Jesus’ clothes from the soldiers by the dice)

As stated earlier, even interjections not occurring turn-initially may still function as spontaneous reactions in the context, if they occur after stage directions revealing changes on stage, or in cases where the context reveals

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changes in addressee or anything else the current speaker reacts to. Typically, new stanzas in the turn by the current speaker may imply turns in the action or a change of addressee, both of which may give occasion for an outburst. GRAMERCY occurring turn-medially (10 examples) rather than turn-initially is found in such contexts only twice, but neither of these seem to indicate any cause for spontaneous reactions. The first of the two is the attestation from *Burial and Resurrection* quoted above (263), but here it is the reduplicated interjections “A . A” which are used to mark the spontaneous reaction, while GRAMERCY merely functions as a noun. The second example occurs in the *N-town* cycle (39: 91) after a stage direction in Latin, and in this case, the use of GRAMERCY seems simply to introduce a short prayer in conclusion of the pageant (ll. 91-96).

- 271)            *Now gramercy lord / and to fulfyllen / þin holy wyll / As it is  
                  skylle / we all accorde* (N-town 39: 91-96, Peter to God (not present)  
                  or audience, in prayer)

The rest of the turn-medial examples of GRAMERCY are used for poetical functions in anaphoric repetitions.<sup>416</sup>

- 272)            *Gramercy, þe lufliest lady of lire / Gramercy, þe fairest in  
                  figure and face / Gramercy, þe derrest to do oure desire* (York 45:  
                  197-199, Thomas to Mary, thanking her, prayer to the holy virgin?)

Even though GRAMERCY is frequently found in the first line of speeches, it often does not function as spontaneous outbursts like interjections do. In many cases it occurs before vocatives such as names and titles (e.g. quote 263). It usually denotes gratitude as an alternative routine to ‘thank you’. Quote 272 from the *York* cycle text demonstrates the use of GRAMERCY before vocative epithets in thanks to the Virgin Mary. The same text contains many other poetical anaphora employing routines, such as ‘hail’ (York 41: 132-43), ‘I thank thee’ (York 41: 170-78), and ‘farewell’ (York 41: 200-208).

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<sup>416</sup> Employment of GRAMERCY in anaphora is also found in the *N-town* cycle (5: 241-42, 11: 290-92, 12: 189-90) and in *Mundus et Infans* (ll. 204-206). All the examples from the *N-town* text are found in turns by good speakers (Abraham, Angel Gabriel, and Joseph, respectively) to good addressees (Mary Virgin and God), while the anaphor in *Mundus et Infans* occurs in a turn by Mankind thanking the vice King World.



Neither GRAMERCY nor any of the other routines just mentioned function as interjections in these turns.

Even though GRAMERCY is frequently used in thanks to God and in other pious contexts, it cannot be attested that GRAMERCY characterises speakers or addressees, as it occurs in turns by and to bad characters, as well. GRAMERCY, in fact, occurs in the repertoire of a great variety of speakers, including female characters, and it is used in addressing the same varied cast of characters, from God to Antichrist, and from Virgin Mary to Pilate.

Taavitsainen (1997: 597) finds GRAMERCY attested in only two texts in her Late Middle English material. The text(s) by Malory attests original usage, i.e. GRAMERCY used as a routine to give thanks, while two examples of GRAMERCY in *Julian of Norwich* “border[s] on interjections as it [i.e. gramercy] gives expression to a subjective state of mind” (Taavitsainen 1997: 597). The same characteristics have been found regarding GRAMERCY in the Middle English play material: GRAMERCY can be a routine, but it can also serve expressive-emotive functions. It is, however, very difficult to decide when deep gratitude is implied. In at least 47 cases GRAMERCY seems to mean ‘thank you’. In addition, the syntactical distribution of many examples of GRAMERCY suggests that it is not treated as a spontaneous outburst similarly to interjections. GRAMERCY must be considered a routine in the Middle English play material, perhaps in the process of becoming old-fashioned.

#### 6.10.4 PARDIE

YC	NC	TC	CC	PA	NA	BA	HK	BR	CP	Mk	Wd
1	1	11	6	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-

Ev	Na	MI	MA	ST	PS	LD	OI	FL	Hi	MG
1	15	1	1	-	-	5	-	11	2	2

PARDIE stems from Old French (and Anglo-Norman) *par Dieu* (‘by God’) (*OED*). PARDIE occurs 58 times in the Middle English play material in a

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variety of spelling forms such as <parde>, <par de>, <perde>, <perdy>, <pardee>, <pardye>, <perdee> *etc.* It is found in 13 texts across all four subgenres. PARDIE never occurs in collocations or reduplications.

Medwall seems to have had a special preference for PARDIE, as 26 examples are found in total in his two play texts, *Nature* and *Fulgens and Lucres*. In other words, Medwall's use of PARDIE alone accounts for 45% of the occurrences in the Middle English play material. PARDIE is especially frequent in interludes, with the highest number of attestations, amounting to 20 examples, occurring in this particular subgenre.<sup>417</sup> PARDIE is used in the early interlude *Lucidus and Dubius* (c. 1450), as well as in *Hickscorner*, in Skelton's *Magnyfycence*, and, as mentioned, in Medwall's *Fulgens and Lucres*. In other words, four out of six interludes employ PARDIE, and as many as 34 % of all examples of it are found in interludes. By comparison, there is but a single example in only one of the miracle plays. It occurs in *Mary Magdalen*, and it seems significant that it is found in a turn by the vicious Galant.

Even though PARDIE is frequently used to denote protest, even anger, it does not occur turn-initially as often as interjections normally do as spontaneous expressions of emotion or attitude. Only 23 examples, i.e. less than 50%, are found in the first lines of turns, and only two of these actually initiate the turn, while the rest occur medially or finally in the first line of a speech. Five examples of PARDIE occurring line-finally form part of short asseverations, reinforcing a positive or negative reply. Together with the short turn-initial 'yes' and 'no', these examples of PARDIE may be considered spontaneous reactions. At least quote 274 below seems to be a spontaneous, angry response:

- 273)            *ye parde* (*Nature* Part 2: 380b, Sloth to Pride, intensifying  
                  adverbial, like 'truly'? Ironic?)  
274)            *Nay par de* (*Lucidus*: 154, *Dubius* to *Lucidus*, intensifying  
                  adverbial, protest)

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<sup>417</sup> Calculation of relative frequencies of PARDIE gives the following incidence (number of examples per 1,000 words): miracle plays = 0.04, biblical plays = 0.06, morality plays = 0.25, and interludes = 0.37.

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- 275) *yei perde* (Towneley 16: 126, Herod to audience, adverbial, 'surely')
- 276) *Close qd a? nay nay parde* (Nature Part 2: 126, Sensuality to Man, protest, mockery)

Yet most attestations (35 of 58) of PARDIE are found inside turns rather than in the opening line, and often PARDIE occurs at the end of verse lines, thus occupying rhyming position. Non-initial distribution suggests that PARDIE is not used to imitate a spontaneous reaction, even though it may express emotion. Rather, PARDIE may have been employed, in some cases at least, to serve poetical function, i.e. to achieve end rhyme. PARDIE occurs in verse-final rhyming position 41 times out of the total of 58 in the present material, i.e. in 71% of its total attestations. Verse-final position is also often clause-final position, frequently leaving PARDIE functioning as an intensifying sentence adverbial. As an intensifier, however, PARDIE may imply both anger and protest. As a marker of protest, PARDIE may serve phatic functions in conversation, since it opposes previous statements in the dialogue.

- 277) *Ye promysed other wyse parde* (Everyman: 270, Everyman to Fellowship, protest, reproof, challenging Fellowship's promise. See TUSHE above, *Everyman* 1. 222.)
- 278) *I am not her bond man parde* (Nature Part 2: 222, Man to Worldly Affection, intensifier, anger)
- 279) *Nay I sayd not so perde* (Fulgens and Lucre Part 1: 871, maid Joan to Servant B, intensifying protest, anger)

Some occurrences of PARDIE appear less aggressive, and more like apologetic responses, exemplified in quote 280 below. In this particular context another pragmatic marker, 'pardon', would make equally good sense. At least one example of PARDIE is used to intensify gratitude implied by GRAMERCY (quote 281 below). Finally, PARDIE is also used adverbially in an insinuation denoting a certain intimacy between the speakers (282).

- 280) *My lady I ment not so parde* (Fulgens and Lucre Part 1: 543, Gayus Flavinius to Lucre, apologetic protest, as in 'pardon' or 'truly')

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- 281) *Grantmercy, syr, perdee* (Chester 16a: 438, Joseph of Arimathea to Pilate, intensifying adverbial, as in ‘thank you sir verily’. Punctuation is editorial)
- 282) *The place that ye wot of parde* (Nature Part 2: 180, Bodily Lust to Man, hinting at the brothels south of the Thames)

In total, PARDIE appears to be used as a discourse marker and a sentence adverbial with diverse connotations. In some contexts, it may be replaced by assertive adverbials such as ‘certainly’, ‘verily’ or ‘truly’. These may function more or less like expressions of anger. In other contexts, PARDIE is used for polite, even apologetic protestation, which may serve both conative and phatic functions in conversation. Very rarely, however, does PARDIE seem to imitate spontaneous, expressive reactions. Its distribution is very unsimilar to typical interjections.

Two texts employing PARDIE deserve separate comments: *Fulgens and Lucre*s and *Magnyfycence*. In the first of these two interludes, PARDIE is used especially frequently in the comic sub-plot including the fighting scene among the servants, Joan and Servant A and Servant B. As mentioned concerning TUSHE, Section 6.8.17, the servants seem to engage in freer speech than the upper class main characters of the play. PARDIE occurs eight times in the servants’ speeches, and then in turns both by female and male servants, while it occurs only three times in speeches by members of higher social rank and then only by male speakers (Gayus and Cornelius; the suitors of Lucre)s and not necessarily denoting the same degree of aggression (cf. quote 280 above). PARDIE is never used by the noble main characters themselves. PARDIE, like TUSHE, seems to mark verbal and physical conflicts, and perhaps also the lower class status of the speakers.

PARDIE only occurs twice in Skelton’s *Magnyfycence*, but its inclusion is important because it provides yet an example of the phatic communication-focus that is so typical for this play (cf. Sections 6.8.17 and 6.12.4).

- 283) *Yet somtyme parde I must vse largesse* (*Magnyfycence*: 1753, Prince Magnificence to Cloaked Coullusion, mild protest, phatic function)

Taavitsainen (1995: 458) finds one attestation of PARDIE in the earliest part (1500-1570) of her Early Modern English corpus, and she characterises PARDIE as swearing. The single attestation occurs line-finally in a play text (by Udall), similarly to many of the attestations in the Middle English play material. In the Late Middle English corpus, Taavitsainen (1997: 597) finds many examples of PARDIE, particularly in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. Again, Taavitsainen suggests that PARDIE is close to swearing. Even though the present study does not find PARDIE to be an interjection in the Middle English play texts, it may share certain features with swearing: it has been found that PARDIE primarily belongs in the turns of bad characters (e.g. the Galant and Vices), or comical characters (the biblical Shepherds and the interlude Servants). As PARDIE is used for protestation, it occurs in conflict, and may be typical of bad and rude characters, the same types of speakers who would employ swearing. However, there are important exceptions, as can be seen in quote 281, where Joseph of Arimathea uses it, and in quote 280, where the honest Gaius Flavinius seems to apologise by employing PARDIE.

Summing up, PARDIE in Middle English play texts does not primarily occur in the same distribution as interjections, i.e. as spontaneous turn-starters. Further, it is often used as a sentence adverbial and a rhyme-filler at the very end of clauses and verse lines. PARDIE cannot be characterised as an interjection, even though it may express emotion or attitude. As frequently, however, PARDIE serves phatic functions, as an adverbial reinforcing the preceding statement, or as a marker of protest, expressing objection to what the previous speaker has said or done. PARDIE can be described as a discourse marking routine in the Middle English play texts.

### *6.11 Some findings and their bearing on the definition of interjections*

Pragmatics bases its definitions on actual language use. After having analysed how interjections function in historical play texts, it is time to return to the definition of interjections. My definition has been based on two criteria: interjections form syntactically independent utterances on their own, and they express the speaker's emotion and/or attitude. These criteria have a bearing on the distribution and the function of interjections. The findings regarding the

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distribution and function of interjections in Late Middle English play texts will therefore be summarised first.

Next follow discussions of the definition of interjections, their possible specific function in plays, and how interjections are treated in the pragmaphilological context of Late Middle English text production. Section 6.12 provides a preliminary dialect analysis, and 6.13 discusses five specific play texts, before Chapter 7 tests some of the findings quantitatively.

### 6.11.1 *Distribution*

Part of the definition of interjections has a bearing on their distribution in written texts. Interjections can be seen as imitations of spontaneous emotional outbursts. This natural expressivity forms the basis for the interjections' ability to form non-elliptical utterances on their own (one of the criteria of the definition employed here). Spontaneous outbursts in speech typically occur as immediate reactions by the speaker, and thus they occur initially in a speaker's turn. It can be predicted, therefore, that if written interjections imitate spoken outbursts, they will occur turn-initially in play texts, i.e. before the emotional reaction is "properly" verbalised, if at all, in the speaker's turn. It has indeed been found that interjections most often occur in turn-initial distribution in Late Middle English drama.

Put differently, the distribution of interjections forms part of their functional definition as expressions of emotion. Thus, expressive function and turn-initial distribution are overlapping findings. However, sometimes interjections do not occur in turn-initial position, but may serve other and/or additional functions in play texts. This is returned to below. Another finding is that some presumed interjections rarely initiate turns at all. Their status as interjections is, therefore, questionable. If they do not fulfill the second criterion of interjections, that of expressive function, these expressions cannot be included in the class of typical interjections at all.

The most significant example is that of the expression LO, commonly defined as an interjection. In Late Middle English play texts, the expression LO does not usually initiate turns; it does not imitate spontaneous outbursts. Further, it has been found that LO rarely expresses emotion or attitude. LO is used as a

signal in Middle English drama to draw attention to an argument, or to something physical on stage. The expression LO, therefore, functions like the imperative of a verb, like 'look'. Since LO is not inflected, in contrast to verbs, it can be compared to deictic elements. In play texts LO functions like the deictic 'here', and may in performance have been accompanied by a gesture towards the object pointed out by the use of LO (or 'here'). As LO is also employed to point out abstract phenomena, like the opening or conclusion of an argument, it fulfills sermon-like rhetorical functions, as well as clearly practical functions in late medieval English drama.

In other cases, non-initial distribution does not preclude an expression's status as an interjection. Occasional non-initial distribution of some interjections can be explained as functional, but at a different level from the functions described in Ameka (1992). Taavitsainen (1997: 602) recognises that interjections in historical fictional texts can serve stylistic functions. One such stylistic function has been found in the present material. Some interjections occur in anaphora, i.e. they serve poetic functions connected to the drama texts' nature as organised verse. Anaphoric-poetic function occurs when two or more lines in sequence open with the same word or expression: *O hatefull happe / o carefull cruelte / O syghynge sorowe / o thoughtfull mysere* (*Magnyfycence*, ll.2047-8).

A, O, and ALAS are all used in anaphora in the Middle English play texts, and FIE and GRAMERCY have also been found in this typically poetical function. Interjections employed in anaphora usually retain expressive-emotive function in spite of their obviously planned, rather than spontaneous, co-text. The expressive function in such repetitions may even be reinforced by the co-text, since the use of anaphora often occurs in situations of heightened emotion. In other words, interjections in anaphora serve stylistic, poetical functions simultaneously as they express emotion.<sup>418</sup>

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<sup>418</sup> GRAMERCY is a possible exception (cf. Section 6.10.3). When used in anaphora, GRAMERCY may express especially deep gratitude, i.e. emotion, but often it is difficult to distinguish emotionally loaded GRAMERCY from the routine 'thank you'. Other non-interjections (e.g. 'farewell') are found in anaphora in the same text – the *York* cycle text – as the anaphora with GRAMERCY was found, and may be a testimony to especially poetical language in this text.

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Taavitsainen (1995, 1997) finds that interjections may serve other textual functions than poetical ones in direct speech quotations in Early Modern English and in Late Middle English texts. She finds that interjections frequently mark turning-taking in direct speech quotations, especially in Late Middle English romances and drama, but that this particular textual function is no longer evident in the Early Modern English material (Taavitsainen 1995: 461). Taavitsainen (1995: 461-62) suggests that marking of turn-taking by the use of turn-initiating interjections aided the audience's perception of the oral performance of a narrative, since such usage of interjections effectively signals that what follows is the speech of a fictional character.

The finding that interjections almost regularly open speeches in drama and romances (Taavitsainen 1995: 461) is important, because it may imply that expressive function of interjections is merely secondary to textual functions in Middle English play texts. However, it is not as clear why interjections should be used merely to mark turns in play texts as in contrast to narrative texts performed by one minstrel, it will be obvious to the audience of a play who speaks when. Textual function like marking of turn-taking could, nonetheless, be a feature medieval drama inherited from narratives which included direct speech quotes (*Dame Sirith* is an example, cf. Section 3.5.5). It was necessary, therefore, to find out whether interjections are used as regularly to initiate direct speech in medieval English narrative as Taavitsainen (1995: 461) claims. In studies of a single linguistic or pragmatic feature, e.g. Taavitsainen's as well as my own, alternative explanations may be overlooked. Consequently, the present study compared the findings from Middle English play texts to a control drawn from narrative fiction and one non-fictional, dialogic text: five saints' legends and one debate.<sup>419</sup>

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<sup>419</sup> The saints' legends explored are those of Saint Edmund from the *Early South English Legendary*, Saint Katherine from the *Northern Homily Cycle*, Saint Juliana from the *Scottish Collection of Legends*, Saint Juliana from *The South English Legendary*, and Saint Katherine from the *South English Legendary*. All include direct speech. All texts were read from Sperk (1970) *Medieval English Saints' Legends*. The debate text explored was edited by Diekstra (1968) and is referred to as the *Dialogue between Reason and Adversity*. It survives in Cambridge University Library, MS li.VI.39.



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It was found that interjections do occur as turn-initiators in the direct speech quotes in the saint's legends, like Taavitsainen (1997: 602) suggests, but they did not consistently initiate turns, and they were, in fact, not even the most frequently used turn-initiators in the control group. Much more common are the use of vocatives, such as 'sir', 'emperor', or 'maiden', and vocative constructions, such as 'dear maiden', to signal direct speech and turn shifts. The following example is one of the many direct speech quotes (turns) in the *South English Legendary*, where Saint Katherine opposes the emperor: *Sire emperour quap þis maide : ich wilni swiþ lute* (l. 41).

Thus, it seems that interjections serve expressive functions first and foremost also in turns in narrative fiction. When interjections are used in direct speech quotes in narrative fiction, they express speaker's emotions, and thus behave like typical interjections. Most speech quotes in the narrative fiction explored are initiated by other expressions than interjections, just as most turns in play texts are. Their potential as effective signals to the audience is secondary to their expressive function.

Interjections in the debate text explored, by contrast, were not at all employed to mark new turns. The debate text explored consists only of dialogue, as the philosophical medieval debates do, yet only three interjections were found in the text. The infrequency of interjections in the debate dialogue forms a clear contrast to the frequency of interjections in play texts. No conclusion, however, can be drawn as to the reason for the relative sparsity of interjections in debates, as only one such text has been systematically explored in the present study. Suffice it to say that the spontaneous character of interjections may be irrelevant to the philosophical debate, even though it is organised as a dialogue.

Taavitsainen also suggests that interjections are used to mark turning points in the plot in plays and narrative fiction. This function was found in the Saints' legends explored: interjections were used to mark climaxes, for instance when the defeated devil Belial screams out in fear of the *South English Legendary* Saint Juliana: *A out out þe deul sede . holdep hure nou faste* (l. 198). The devil's use of expressive-emotive interjections in climactic defeats was also attested in the Middle English play material. It is most likely true of plays, as well as of fiction, that interjections can mark turning-points, but as regards

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drama, it is difficult to avoid a circular argumentation in this respect. Since interjections signal emotion, and emotive and cognitive reactions of the fictional characters are typically connected to turning-points, the use of interjections in climactic moments is predictable.

### 6.11.2 *Function*

The present study comprises only Middle English play texts, and in this material it has been found that the expressive function dominates over the conative function, and phatic use of interjections is relatively rare.<sup>420</sup> However, the boundaries between the different functions are fuzzy, and, as pointed out by Ameka (1992a: 114), the various functions may co-occur. Perhaps due to the fuzziness and overlap in the functional categories, there seems to be some disagreement in the literature, in particular concerning the interpretation of the conative and phatic functions of interjections (see e.g. the discussion concerning FIE in Section 6.8.9). This is discussed below.

It is maintained here, however, that the expressive function of interjections is their most important asset in Middle English drama. The frequency of interjections in late medieval English play texts, I suggest, is due to their potential as relatively clear signals of the speaking character's emotion and attitude. Nevertheless, some Middle English interjections have other functions, too.

It has been found that some interjections in the Middle English play material may serve conative, i.e. addressee-oriented, functions. Sometimes these interjections are used for conative and expressive functions simultaneously. Common interjections such as A, O, and ALAS occur in contexts where they seem to have this dual function as expressions of speaker's emotion/attitude and as conative appeals to the addressee. Invocations to God employing interjections in vocative construction – 'A Lord' – sometimes appear as purely conative, non-emotional phrases, but commonly they imply emotion, for instance distress and sorrow.

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<sup>420</sup> Ameka's (1992) typology of functions of interjections is explicated in Section 2.4.3.

Ameka (1992a: 109) explains the conative function of interjections as addressee-oriented but not addressee-directed. Contrastive to Ameka's (1992a: 109) definition of interjections as speaker-oriented without any real addressee, Middle English interjections such as HOWE and HO seem to be mainly addressee-directed.<sup>421</sup> HOWE and HO represent, respectively, an attention call and a warning call to stop. The latter often expresses emotion, typically anger. This co-occurring expressive function forms the basis for suggesting that HOWE and HO are not identical. Both appear to express a deliberate illocutionary force demanding a reaction of the addressee. In other words, they either function as conative interjections or not as interjections at all, but as routines, one of which – HO – happens to be used by angry characters (see discussion of HOWE /HO in Section 6.8.4).

Further, it has been found that some interjections, notably ALAS, are used to express pity with the addressee. This conative function was first identified in Early Modern English fiction by Taavitsainen (1995: 447). This is a clear example that interjections may serve dual functions as speaker-oriented, expressive of the speaker's emotion, at the same time as they are addressee-directed (and addressee-oriented), focussing on the feelings of the listener. The sorrow and pity expressed by the three Marys in approaching the crucified Christ may represent a typical context where expressive and conative functions of interjections co-occur. The crucifixion episodes invite the audience to contemplate Christ's suffering in concord with late medieval affective piety. Interjections may serve as effective means of achieving the proper empathetic emotions in the audience.

It has been found that the phatic use of interjections is rare in Middle English play texts, with one exception: *Magnyfycence* by John Skelton is the Late Middle English play which focusses on the dialogue itself through the relatively frequent employment of interjections serving phatic functions

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<sup>421</sup> Ameka (1992a: 109) discusses 'primary interjections' as opposed to 'routines'; the first is speaker-oriented and the latter is addressee-directed. The present study agrees that most interjections in ME play texts are speaker-oriented. It has been found, though, that some interjections can be directed at an addressee. It may be that some of these border on routines, notably the vocative constructions of the *O/A Lord*-type, but in most cases they express emotion, in contrast to non-emotional (or emotionally neutral) routines.

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(*Magnyfycence* includes discourse markers to serve similar phatic, communication-focussed functions. See e.g. Section 6.8.17 on TUSH above). As mentioned, *Magnyfycence*, more than other plays, exploits the potential of game in plays to the extent that *Magnyfycence* contains metatheatrical puns and trickery. There is sophisticated humour and mixing of play and real world in other plays, too, but except for *Magnyfycence* there is little problematisation of communication itself. However, the understanding of what is communication-focus in play texts varies.

Culpeper and Kytö (2010) finds frequent examples of interjections (pragmatic noise) serving communication-focussed, i.e. phatic, functions in their Early Modern English material. According to Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 230-232), the pragmatic noise ALAS, for instance, can function 1) as an expressive-emotive signal of the speaker's emotion, but also 2) as a phatic signal of empathy, or 3) as a phatic modifier of disagreement. The first of these functions is common also in Middle English plays: the interjection ALAS is extremely frequent and most often it signals emotion. The second function, the use of the interjection ALAS to show empathy with the addressee is also found in Middle English play texts, but in the present study this function has been categorised as conative, addressee-oriented, rather than phatic, i.e. communication-focussed. The offering of verbal empathy can, of course, be understood as polite behaviour (as Culpeper and Kytö do), but at least in Middle English plays, the interjection ALAS usually expresses deep, affective involvement with the addressee (cf. the Crucifixion episodes described above). It transgresses mere polite conversation.

The third function, the use of ALAS for phatic functions as a “preface to the refusal of a request” (Culpeper and Kytö 2010: 232), is not attested in Middle English drama. TUSH (Section 6.8.17) and some relatively rare interjections (discussed in Section 6.8.18) have been found to serve phatic functions in the material of the present study, but mainly the phatic use of interjections (and other discourse markers) is restricted to one or two play texts, belonging in the interlude subgenre.

Admittedly, there is not always a clear distinction between addressee-focussed (conative) and communication-focussed (phatic) functions in Middle English play texts. Possibly, ALAS is used differently in Culpeper and Kytö's (2010)

Early Modern English dialogues as compared to the Middle English drama material of the present study. However, Taavitsainen (1995: 441) finds that interjections rarely, if at all, serve phatic functions in her Early Modern English material. She concludes that phatic, communication-focussed, interjections (like ‘um’) are typical of spoken language, and atypical of written dialogue. Taavitsainen (1995: 462, 1997: 602) finds that interjections, in addition to serving expressive and conative functions, serve textual functions rather than phatic ones in organised written dialogue. The conclusion Taavitsainen draws concerning (primary) interjections - that their potential for phatic function is typically realised in natural conversation and not in written texts - is supported by the present study.

The dominance of the expressive function of interjections may be characteristic of all drama in comparison to naturally occurring speech in which phatic interjections, such as back-channelling, is very frequent (e.g. Aijmer (1987: 61) finds that OH occurs frequently in “almost any conversation between two or more speakers”). One needs to bear in mind that drama communicates on two levels: between the play characters, and from stage to audience. If dialogue in drama were to imitate natural speech at the phatic level of communication, it would probably interfere with the communication outwards to the audience. Frequent back-channelling (“information management marking” in Schiffrin 1987), pause-fillers, or hesitation markers, so characteristic of unplanned, natural conversation, would in drama turn the focus away from the plot, and perhaps make the stage dialogue difficult to hear and understand.

The different functions that interjections serve in spoken, natural conversation and in written, planned imitations of conversation, for example in drama, may explain the varying frequencies of interjection types in modern speech compared to fictional, written texts. For example, when Aijmer (1987) finds OH to be very frequent in modern conversation, this may be explained by its important phatic function as a back-channelling signal (Schiffrin 1987: 99) in the spoken mode. In Middle English drama, by contrast, the interjection O is never used by the addressee/listener to signal phatic-cognitive reactions to the speaker’s ongoing talk. The interjection O serves different purposes in Middle English plays. Back-channelling is very rare (*Magnyfycence* forming a notable exception) in Middle English drama, as the dialogue simply does not imitate

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real speech at this level. Neither are there any hesitators in Middle English play texts. This kind of back-channelling, or signals of ongoing thought-processing, may be frequent and meaningful in conversation, but would be “noise in the channel” rather than ‘pragmatic noise’ in drama.

### 6.11.3 *Interjections and characterisation*

It was hypothesised that interjections may characterise speakers as, for instance, swearing does. Some preliminary findings concerning characterisation are presented in the following, but the topic is further discussed in Chapter 7, in which quantitative analyses have been performed.

Celestial characters, such as God and angels, rarely employ interjections in the Middle English drama material. By contrast, devils and vices employ interjections frequently; when they are angry, triumphant or scared. Devils express their emotions with a wide variety of interjections. When God employs interjections, he uses the universal A, to express his disappointment or anger.

Male characters use interjections more often than females. Partly, this finding is explained by the fact that there are more male than female characters in the plays, and partly it may be explained by late medieval views on women. Female characters either lament piteously or they rage in anger. The lamenting Marys constitute examples of the good, lamenting female character. On the other hand, Noah’s wife and the mothers of the killed children (the innocents murdered on Herod’s command), are examples of aggressive females. The two types of female, biblical characters use a relatively restricted range of interjections compared to male characters. The exception to the otherwise attested dichotomy between the sexes’ use of interjection types, and the narrow range of interjections used by female characters, is found in the interlude *Fulgens and Lucrez* by Henry Medwall. The two females, Lucrez and her maid Joan, in *Fulgens and Lucrez* constitute modifications of the medieval view of women as either modest or aggressive. Together, these two female characters employ a wider range of interjection types than other female characters in Middle English plays.

Some interjections, in particular the most common ones, seem to be character-universal, i.e. they occur in speeches of both good and bad characters, and male and female characters. A, O, and ALAS are such universal interjections. The attention call HOWE seems also to be non-characterising of the speaker, while the interjection HO, the angry warning, does characterise the speaker negatively. Other, sometimes longer cries of lament seem also to be character-universal, but quite frequently they are employed by bad characters falling from grace. This distribution is probably related to the positive outlook in late medieval drama that bad characters, such as devils, will be overcome.

Less common interjection types often have more specific functions and may be connected to certain character types. It has been found that some of the aspirated interjections in particular, i.e. HA, AHA, HO, and HUFF, are primarily used by bad characters. These interjections seem to denote a degree of pride, or *hubris*. In effect such interjections signal to the audience, or the reader, that the character is arrogant rather than humble, which was the late medieval Christian ideal.

#### 6.11.4 *A return to the definition of interjections and mode*

Interjections stem from natural outbursts and are on the margins of language. This starting point may form the basis for a definition of interjections, but it cannot end there. Quirk et al. (1972: 413; 46) describe interjections as neither part of the grammar nor of the lexicon of English. If interjections are mere sounds, or non-words, there is nothing for linguists to study. Still, interjections have been found to function pragmatically as markers of information-management in present-day conversation (Schiffrin 1987). Further, in contrast to common belief, some interjections can be linguistically productive, i.e. become used as proper lexical words (Wharton 2009: 200).<sup>422</sup>

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<sup>422</sup> Wharton (2009: 200) gives two examples of lexical words developed from interjections: 1) “At the Annual Dentist’s Convention Mrs. Pulley *wowed* the audience with her encyclopaedic knowledge of gold teeth”, and 2) “That is without doubt the *yuckiest* mouthwash I’ve ever tasted.” Wharton’s point is that interjections are not a unified group of words at all, and that even the criterion of syntactical independence, i.e. that interjections form utterances on their own, falls through when interjections appear as words integrated in sentences. The first example attests that the

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Finally, historical written texts include coded elements (cf. Section 2.4.2) which cannot be described as anything but interjections. Interjections, i.e. codified imitations of natural outbursts, are especially frequent in play texts. Written interjections usually form syntactically independent utterances, and they typically express the speaker's emotion and attitude. Due to their origin as natural outbursts, interjections are often monosyllabic, but some are longer.

If language can be described as a continuum (Wharton 2009) from sounds to meaningful words, interjections are those expressions occurring in the middle, i.e. between natural sounds, like yawns, and language proper (in all its productive and modal complexity). The challenge when defining interjections is found in different areas of this continuum relative to the mode in which the interjection occurs: speech or writing. Whereas analysts of contemporary speech have problems deciding which sounds are meaningful, and which are merely 'noise' when records of conversation are to be transcribed, analysts of written texts can assume that everything coded and included in the text is meaningful. Our challenge in analysing interjections in written texts is at the right-hand side of the "natural noise -> interjection-> word" continuum (Wharton 2009, cf. Section 2.2.3): when is an interjection just another word?

I propose that ME interjections must be studied abductively, with an eye to form and function simultaneously, and that a definition must be based on the usage attested in real data. This means that a definition of prototypical interjections may 1) vary in a diachronic perspective, and 2) between the spoken and the written modes.

I have used two main criteria to define interjections in Middle English play texts; one is grammatical, the other pragmatic. The first concerns the ability of interjections to form utterances on their own; the second their function as expressions of emotion/attitude.<sup>423</sup> In the present material, it has been found

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interjection WOW can be used as a verb, in the example as an equivalent to the verb 'to impress'. Wharton's second example illustrates YUCK, an interjection expressing foul taste/disgust, used as an adjective. Neither of these interjections occurs in Middle English.

<sup>423</sup> As mentioned, emotional and mental states are overlapping phenomena. It seems rather pointless to argue that e.g. surprise is either an emotion or a mental reaction, and cannot induce both types of reactions simultaneously.



that some interjections fulfil both these criteria consistently. These are the prototypical interjections, and they are monosyllabic, thereby also fulfilling a third expectation of interjections: their short, outburst-like nature.<sup>424</sup>

The monosyllabic interjections A and O are prototypical interjections in Middle English drama. The interjection A is the most common interjection of all in the material, while O is only third most common. The interjection A usually occurs as a syntactically independent utterance, especially if vocative constructions are counted as such independent expressions, and A usually carries emotional load, also in vocative constructions. The interjection O is also quite frequent in the Middle English play texts, and behaves similarly to the interjection A, but O covers a more restricted range of emotions than A (Cf. Section 6.8.1).

Both interjections A and O are used before vocatives in the Middle English play material, and in some of these cases it can be questioned whether they really are independent or parts of set phrases, and whether they really express emotion or function as mere routines, such as greetings. In other words, interjections like these may have become part of a repertoire of phrases used in play texts, but they have not ceased to function as signals of the speaker's emotion in most contexts.

On the one hand, Ameka's (1992a: 109) definition of (primary) interjections states that these short utterances are speaker-oriented natural outbursts, having no real addressee. On the other hand, Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 209) argue that interjections, or pragmatic noise in their terminology, can be addressed to a hearer, and they are when they occur in vocative constructions. The distribution of interjections in vocatives directed at an addressee, so frequent in Early Modern English and Late Middle English play texts, suggests either that these items (often A or O) are not interjections, or that interjections can have addressees, in contrast to the view presented by Ameka (1992a: 109).

In the present study it has been found that some interjections are directed at addressees, also when they do not occur in vocative constructions.<sup>425</sup> For

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<sup>424</sup> Of course, monosyllabicity cannot form part of a definition of interjections. Many common functional words are monosyllabic, but they cannot occur on their own and are not interjections.

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instance HO signals a warning to stop. HOWE is a call for attention at a distance, while the rare IO (alone or in 'iofurth') seems to be a command to animals to go. The latter is used in the *Towneley* cycle by Cain and Garcio to the animals at the plough (2: 25, 42, and 57), and also by the soldiers to Christ driving him to the high priests (21:1).<sup>426</sup> ALAS seems to be used not only as an outcry of sorrow, but also as an expression of empathy with an addressee.<sup>427</sup> This is also true of Early Modern English interjections (Taavitsainen 1995: 463).

It can be established that interjections in early play texts do have addressees. This finding contrasts the definition in Ameka (1992a), but it is perhaps not surprising given that play speech is always organised and meaningful, whereas speech is typically unorganised, spontaneous, and all sounds may not be wilfully embedded with meaning.

### 6.11.5 *Some special cases*

The interjections A and O seem to be used differently in Present-day spoken English compared to their use in late medieval English play texts. Neither type is used as signals in back-channelling of information management, or similar phatic usage in Late Middle English play texts. Whereas A is twice as common as O in these texts, O is much more common than A in present-day conversation. The different functions of spoken interjections and written interjections may account for some of this diachronic reversal of frequencies. Another important explanation may be that the interjection A is no longer as

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<sup>425</sup> In drama there is the special condition that all the utterances have an intended audience in the crowd or group of people present at the performance. This condition is not what is discussed here. Speaker and listener, or turn-takers in conversation analysis terms, here refer to the *dramatis personae* of the plays engaging in dialogue.

<sup>426</sup> There is a unique form in the *York* cycle (30: 296) spelt <yowe> spoken by Pilate in anger to Caiphaz. This form could be the same IO, but is not used as a direct command. It does not seem to be a variant of the formal second person pronoun in the context, which is regularly spelt <you> by the *York* B scribe. It therefore seems to be an interjection of uncertain meaning and unique spelling.

<sup>427</sup> Some of the forms just listed may not be interjections proper, but the reason is not that they have an addressee, but rather that they do not occur independently, and they are not expressions of emotion or attitude. The one form above failing to meet these two criteria is LO.

versatile as it used to be; it may be that A in Present-day English expresses a more restricted range of emotion/attitude, e.g. of cognitive realisation more or less like AHA. A third explanation may lie in the quality of the vowel sounds the two interjection types A and O are taken to represent. The graphemes <a> and <o> used to represent the interjections A and O may be mere conventions in Middle English play texts, having little to do with actual pronunciation. The graphemic representation of these interjections may since have changed towards a more orthophonic realisation. The Late Middle English play texts attest that the interjection O (or the grapheme <o> representing it) is in the process of becoming more frequent.<sup>428</sup>

The disyllabic interjection ALAS constitutes a somewhat special case in the Middle English play texts. On the one hand, ALAS does not always occur as a syntactically independent outburst, but frequently in constructions with 'for' and 'that'. Further, the possible natural origin of ALAS is not as obvious as it is for short interjections like A, HA, and FIE. On the other hand, ALAS always expresses emotion, and it is almost as numerous as the core interjection A.<sup>429</sup> When the interjection ALAS is looked at in greater detail, a diachronic pattern appears indicating that the use of ALAS is changing in the late medieval play material. There is a decline in the frequency of constructional use of ALAS from the fifteenth to the sixteenth century, meaning that ALAS comes to be used more often as a syntactically independent expression in the later play texts. Thus, it is possible that ALAS can be categorised as a more typical interjection in later written material, e.g. in Early Modern English drama.

It has been found that the polysyllabic expressions WELLAWAY, BENEDICITE, GRAMERCY, and PARDIE belong in other word classes, and in Middle English play texts they function differently from typical

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<sup>428</sup> It was found in Section 6.8.7 that the use of O increases from an incidence (i.e. attestations per 1,000 words) of 0.6 in the play material composed before 1500, to an incidence of 1.1 in the play material composed after 1500 (from and including the Peniarth 'Antichrist'). The incidence of the interjection A decreases slightly in the same material, from 1.6 to 1.4. As can be seen from these figures, the frequency of A remains high, but O seems to be in the process of catching up. It is possible that some of the increase in the use of O can be explained by its replacing A in some contexts, perhaps, for example, in vocative constructions.

<sup>429</sup> In some plays, namely the biblical cycles, the interjection ALAS outnumbers A.

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interjections. This is not to say that they cannot have developed from interjections, or into interjections at a later stage. Like ALAS, other di- and polysyllabic expression may have come to be used only as expressions of emotion in syntactically independent distribution at a later stage or in certain genres. Some, however, appear to be in the process of becoming archaic expression. This is particularly the case for WELLOWAY (Section 6.10.1).

WELLOWAY always expresses emotion, but is found, like ALAS, to occur in constructions, i.e. non-independently. BENEDICITE, GRAMERCY, and PARDIE usually also occur embedded in sentences, and they do not always express emotion. BENEDICITE, for instance, may be used as a noun denoting a type of prayer, while GRAMERCY is similar to the routine 'thank you'. BENEDICITE, GRAMERCY, and PARDIE, are, therefore, better described as routines with a potential for expressive function in the Late Middle English play material.

### 6.11.6 *Diachronic change in spelling forms*

It was found through the collation of the few play texts extant in more than one copy that scribes rarely change interjection types when copying play texts (cf. Section 3.4). In the late *Chester* Hm manuscript, for example, the interjections used are the same as those appearing in the same context/lines in the earlier MS Peniarth 'Antichrist'. Spelling variation, however, is attested in the Middle English play texts, as would be expected, but only a few interjections appear in large enough numbers to allow qualified assumptions of systematic orthographic changes. A couple of the most frequent interjections, A and O, appear in patterns suggestive of a diachronic development in spelling.

The interjection A is realised orthographically as <a> or <ah> in the Middle English play texts, but no spelling forms with a final <h> grapheme occurs in the fifteenth century material. Further, the spelling form <ah> occurs infrequently and in only some of the sixteenth century texts.<sup>430</sup> The two spelling forms of A serve the same functions, and therefore the variation

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<sup>430</sup> It was examined whether <ah> spellings typically start occurring particularly before words which open with vowels, but no connection was found.

between the spelling forms <a> and <ah> seems to be a diachronic development. However, the spelling form <ah> has not become standard in any way during the period when these texts were produced; this is testified by the variation between the two forms found in the five late copies of the *Chester* cycle. Only a couple of the scribes responsible for making the five late copies of the full *Chester* cycle prefer the form <ah> to <a>. <sup>431</sup> The Peniarth 'Antichrist' text from c. 1500 contains no <ah>, only <a> (there are 10 cases). MS Hm of the full *Chester* cycle was produced 90 years later: in it, the text of pageant no. 23, 'Antichrist', has one <ah> and 10 <a> spellings. <sup>432</sup> The two texts exemplify that the spelling of the interjection A with a final <h> grapheme is only introduced late, and that it had become an option, but that it (<ah>) was still infrequent in plays from the late sixteenth century. The other late *Chester* manuscripts show individual preferences for one or the other spelling, i.e. <a> or <ah>, but they also show that none of the *Chester* scribes was consistent in his preferences. There seems to be no other reason for the

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<sup>431</sup> The two anonymous hands in the first part of MS H preferred the spelling form <ah>, while Miller, the main scribe of the same manuscript, preferred the spelling <a> for the interjection A. In general, it appears that the late sixteenth century *Chester* scribes chose freely between the two forms <a> and <ah>. The MS Hm scribe (Gregorie), for instance, uses <ah> in pageant 2, line 561, while Bellin (the scribe of both MSS BL Additional 10305 and BL Harley 2013) and Bedford (scribe of MS Bodleian 175) both have <a> in this line. Bellin sometimes even seems to have corrected his own interpretation, for example when he wrote <ha> in his early copy, pageant 3, line 249, but chose <a> when he made a second copy eight years later. MS Hm has <ah> in the same line: *Ah chyldren meethinke my boote remeeves* (Noah to sons and their wives, *Chester*, 3: 249). Even though it is believed that the scribes worked from the same (lost) exemplar (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 85), they vary in the spelling of A. Edward Gregorie, the scribe of MS Hm, usually preferred simple <a> spellings, in contrast to the quote above. There are 108 examples of the interjection A in Gregorie's version of the *Chester* cycle text, whereof 93 are spelt <a>, and only 15 are spelt <ah>. The 15 <ah> spellings are found in the text of several pageants: nos. 3, 4, 5, 6, 18, 19, and 23, and thus cannot be explained by singular use in e.g. only one pageant exemplar. In pageant 5 ('Abraham and Isaac') the <ah> spellings dominate with five examples to just one <a>. There is a possibility that such differences in orthography can give important clues about the textual history of a manuscript, but this question is outside the scope of the present study.

<sup>432</sup> The difference in total counts of A is due to the fact that one of the interjections in MS Hm, spelt <a> (*Chester* 23: 589), appears as the conjunction 'and' in MS Peniarth (Chapter 3, Section 3.4.5).

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three hands' differences in the ratios of the spellings <a> and <ah> than individual habit.

Hand C of the *Play of the Sacrament* text uses both the spelling forms <oh> and <ah>. He is inconsistent in his spelling of the interjection O as <oh>, as he also writes simply <o>, but he consistently writes <ah> for the interjection A. The spelling form <oh> also occurs in some of the late *Chester* cycle copies, although not in MS Hm, which has been used in the present project.

The interjection O is spelt with final grapheme <h> in only one scribal text. Hand C behind the *Play of the Sacrament*, 1520-1550, writes the spelling form <oh> in addition to the form <o>. He consistently spells the interjection A as <ah>. MS Hm of the *Chester* cycle has no occurrences of the interjection O in the spelling form <oh>, but it is attested in some of the other late *Chester* copies. In the Late Middle English play texts, in other words, the diachronic change in the spelling of A from the form <a> to <ah>, seems not yet to have affected the spelling of O. Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 261) find numerous attestations of both spelling forms <o> and <oh> in their Early Modern English material, but the simple spelling form, <o>, is still more frequent with 631 attestations compared to 335 attestations of <oh>.

An altogether different pattern in the spelling of the interjection O is attested in some of the earliest Late Middle English play texts. In addition to the common, simple spelling form <o>, the interjection O is realised as <ow> or <owe> in the *Castle of Perseverance*, the *York* cycle, and the *N-town* cycle, whose manuscripts are dated to 1440, c. 1470, and 1450-1500, respectively. It is possible that the spellings with the grapheme <w> reflect lengthening, but it seems equally likely that the variant spellings reflect different functions. It has been found that the variation between orthographic realisations with and without <w> grapheme seems to reflect attempts at discriminating between two main functions: i.e. phrasal use of O in vocative constructions and true expressive-emotive use of the interjection O (cf. Section 6.8.7).

### 6.12 Dialect

In order to check whether there is a distinction in the use of the interjections A and O which can be explained by dialect, the material was divided into dialect

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groups. The South is poorly represented by only two short play texts: the *Winchester Dialogues*. The West is similarly represented by a single subgenre, in this case the biblical *Chester* cycle. The North is represented by the *Towneley* cycle text.<sup>433</sup> The East Midlands is relatively well represented by a variety of play texts; all subgenres except interludes are included in the East Midland material. London prints have been assigned a group of their own, consisting of both morality plays and interludes. Finally, the unlocalised *York* cycle text has also been treated separately, as its dialect has not been established, yet it is worth comparing its use of the interjections A and O against the dialect groups.

Dialect	Texts	Word count	Raw A	Raw O
South	<i>L + D</i> <i>O + I</i>	9,142	25	1
West	<i>Chester cycle</i> <i>Peniarth</i>	69,702	119	23
East Midland	<i>Perseverance</i> <i>N-town cycle</i> <i>N Abraham</i> <i>B Abraham</i> <i>Wisdom</i> <i>Mankind</i> <i>Mary Magdalen</i> <i>Herod</i> <i>Sacrament</i> <i>Conversion of St Paul</i>	154,758	286	150
North	<i>Towneley cycle</i>	79,928	96	5
London prints	<i>F + L</i> <i>Nature</i> <i>Everyman</i> <i>Hickscorner</i> <i>Magnyfycence</i> <i>Mundus et Infans</i>	78,867	49	44
?	<i>York cycle</i>	85,780	140	45

<sup>433</sup> First, also the text of *Burial and Resurrection* was included in the group of northern texts, but the localisation of its language is uncertain as the language is mixed (cf. Section 5.5.18). A second reason for excluding *Burial and Resurrection* is discussed below, in 6.12.4 and in the quantitative analyses in Chapter 7.

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### Table 6-1 Dialect groups

#### 6.12.1 *South*

The evidence is too sparse to establish whether the infrequency of the interjection O in the southern material is caused by dialect, by date, or by the register of the plays' subgenre. The latter reason is likely, as the group includes only two short interludes containing, for instance, no deities. Vocative use in addresses to God, typically 'O lord', is therefore not attested in the two texts. Vocative constructions with A are found in addresses to the play characters, such as *A, Dubius, Dubius, many questions hast thou* (Lucidus to Dubius, l. 463. Punctuation is editorial). The use of A in vocative contexts in the Winchester Dialogues marks emotion or attitude, and are not merely phrasal constructions like the 'O lord/A lord' type sometimes can be.

The only O in the southern material occurs in a Latin co-text in the *Occupation* play: *O quam gloriosa hire deth is* (spoken by Doctrine, line 602). Here it is not used in a vocative phrase, which is common for O, but as an interjection proper. It is possible that the use of O, rather than A, is connected to the Latin co-text and the sermon-like context in this part of *Occupation and Idleness*. The analysis of the interjection A (Section 6.8.1) concludes that this interjection type seems to be used for universal expressive-emotive functions, and this is how it appears to function also in the southern *Winchester Dialogues*. It is used in greetings (*A welcome*), in direct addresses/vocatives constructions (*A sir*), for anger, or as a sigh of weariness: *A, douteful Dubius, Doutful dubius* (l. 440, Lucidus to Dubius, weariness. Punctuation is editorial).

The relative frequency of the interjection A compared to O in the southern texts cannot be explained by dialectal retention of Old English long  $\bar{a}$ , since this is a northern dialect feature. It could perhaps be explained by date, as it seems that A is more commonly used for all kinds of contexts in early texts, while O may be in the process of gradually taking over this universal function in later play texts. However, the interjection O is frequent in two other early texts in the present study: the *York* cycle and the morality play



*Perseverance*.<sup>434</sup> Since both are religious plays, in contrast to the *Winchester Dialogues*, it is possible that the frequency of the interjection O is related to subgenre and contents. It seems probable, therefore, that subgenre, rather than date or dialect, explains the scarcity of O in the early interludes *Lucidus and Dubius* and *Occupation and Idleness*.

### 6.12.2 West

The West is also represented by only one subgenre, the biblical *Chester* cycle. The century earlier, but topically related, Peniarth ‘Antichrist’ text was included in the western material.

In total, there are 23 examples of O and 119 of A in the *Chester* and Peniarth texts. A is used in all but one of the 24 *Chester* pageant texts, while O is found in pageants nos. 4, 5, 7, 8, 13, 17, and 23. Both interjections A and O appear before vocatives, and both forms are used to express emotion. Their distribution and function thus seem to overlap, but A is more common than O, suggesting that it functions as universal catch-all interjection type, even in such a late text as the *Chester* cycle.

Comparing the early MS Peniarth with its later *Chester* cycle counterpart, pageant no. 23 (MS Hm), reveals that the two texts correspond closely regarding the distribution of A and O.<sup>435</sup> The only differences are *Chester* pageant 23 containing one O in a line where Peniarth has no interjections, and one A where Peniarth has ‘and’.<sup>436</sup> The similarity in the distribution of A and O in Peniarth, c. 1500, and MS Hm, 1591, may indicate that the use of interjections in the late *Chester* copies is not much influenced by their late dates. Further, the presence of O in the early Peniarth – there are four occurrences – shows that the earliest of the Chester scribes had it in his

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<sup>434</sup> The copy dates of the plays: *Winchester Dialogues* c. 1450, *Perseverance* c. 1440, and the *York* cycle 1463-77. The composition dates of the latter two plays go further back, at least to the beginning of the fifteenth century.

<sup>435</sup> For a survey of *Chester* cycle scribes, dates, and manuscript sigla, see Section 5.25. Chapter 3 contains collations of parallel texts: the use of interjections in *Chester* MS Hm and MS Peniarth is compared in Section 3.4.5.

<sup>436</sup> The variation of O and A in Peniarth vs. *Chester* 23: *O you ypocrytes that so cryne* (MS Hm 23: 357: no O in Peniarth) and *A nowe we knowe appertlye* (MS Hm 23: 589: reads ‘And’ in MSS Peniarth (+ in MSS A and R)).

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repertoire. Thus, the use of O may be explained by subgenre and topic rather than by dialect. All four examples of O in MS Peniarth are found before the vocatives 'lord' and 'gracious lord' (ll. 177, 285, 420, and 432; three addressing Antichrist, one addressing God in prayer). Likewise, four of the 10 occurrences of A in MS Peniarth appear in front of the vocative 'lord' (ll. 105, 169, 197, and 703), suggesting that the two forms were interchangeable in this respect.

From the apparatus in Lumiansky and Mills (1974), it has been found that the six different scribes behind the five late full copies of the *Chester* cycle occasionally make different selections regarding A and O.<sup>437</sup> The variation in these cases seems not to be caused by dialect, since all of the known scribes have been found to be Chester men (Mills 1998: 185-90).<sup>438</sup> The late scribes also vary regarding the spelling of the two forms. While there are no <Ah> or <Oh> spellings in the Peniarth text, A is spelt <Ah> 15 times in the *Chester* cycle text in MS Hm (1591). O is never spelt <Oh> in MS Hm. O with final -h was found only in Bellin's MS R (1600) when investigating pageants nos. 1-4 in all five *Chester* cycle mss. In contrast, A spelt <ah> was found in all five *Chester* cycle mss pageants nos. 1-4.<sup>439</sup> Judging by the individual variation in the *Chester* scribes' spelling forms, there was no difference in pronunciation between A and AH in their dialect. The selection seems to be based on scribal preference.

### 6.12.3 *East Midlands*

If few or no O forms and many A forms can be explained as the northern reflex of OE long  $\bar{a}$ , the non-northern East Midlands group seems to accord with this hypothesis. It has relatively many O compared to most other regional groups. All East Midlands texts except *Herod* contain both forms. However, the group includes no interludes, a subgenre which could be marked by

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<sup>437</sup> The manuscripts are dated 1591-1607 (Lumiansky and Mills 1974: vii).

<sup>438</sup> Gregorie, the scribe responsible for the copying of MS Hm, the basis text in the present study, was from Bunbury, 14 miles south east of Chester (Mills 1998: 185), but this would presumably still be the same dialectal area.

<sup>439</sup> MS Hm has been examined in Lumiansky and Mills' edition (1974), MSS A, R, and H were studied in the British Library, and MS B was studied in Lumiansky and Mills' facsimile edition (1973).

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relative infrequent use of the interjection O, at least judging from the early interludes, the *Winchester Dialogues*. *Herod*, a biblical play, has only O.<sup>440</sup> Even though the interjection A, as always in the material, is more frequent than O, it seems that the relatively high frequency of O in the East Midlands group is related to the type of play texts it includes.

The spelling of O in two of the East Midlands texts may be connected to (local?) speech. The scribes behind two of the East Midlands plays seem to try to differentiate orthographically between O as a marker of the vocative and O as an interjection (Section 6.8.7). Both in *Perseverance* and the *N-town* cycle O is sometimes spelt <ow> or <owe> to mark the expressive-emotive function, or to avoid confusion with the vocative marker O. The *Perseverance* and the *N-town* scribes seem to apply different systems of consistency, as the first uses <ow/e> spellings to mark emotion regardless of whether the interjection occurs in front of a vocative or not. He has only two simple <o> spellings, the first in a Latin phrase and the second in the line immediately following it as a kind of anaphora (ll. 3314 and 3315). The *N-town* scribe always has the simple spelling form <o> as a marker of the vocative, even though it might also express emotion, and <ow/e> only occurs in *N-town* where it is syntactically independent from the rest of the line, as in *Ow . I know weyl I haue offendyd my god* (Joseph to self or audience, *N-town* 15: 44. MS punctuation). There is only one exception, when Joseph addresses Mary, clearly in surprise at discovering her pregnancy: *Ow dame what þinge menyth this* (*N-town* 12: 34).

The spelling forms <ow/e> also occur in the repertoire of the two earliest *York* cycle scribes (Hands A and B), neither of whom ever uses it in front of a vocative, yet sometimes also spell the interjection simply as <o>.<sup>441</sup> If there ever was a difference in pronunciation of the two forms of the interjection type O, it seems this was lost in the dialects of the *York* scribes, and maybe difficult to retain in writing in the dialect of the *N-town* scribe, since he

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<sup>440</sup> In *Herod* one A was cancelled in l. 81, together with a passage of 25 lines between ll. 80 and 81 (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: 99, note 9). The fact that the scribe originally had used A obviously suggests that the form had currency in his repertoire. The rephrasing of line 81 was performed to improve on the dialogue, not as a correction of a mistake.

<sup>441</sup> The sixteenth century *York* scribe, Hand C, does not have it, but there are only three occurrences of the interjection O in his contribution

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chooses a rather rigorous (perhaps syntactically based) system to be able to implement it.

### 6.12.4 North and North minus B + R

When the north of England is represented by both the *Towneley* cycle text and the *Burial and Resurrection* text, the relative frequency of O is the highest of all of the regions. It is very clear, however, that the *Burial and Resurrection* contribution is the sole explanation for this high number, as it drops substantially when compared to the group ‘North minus B + R’ consisting of the *Towneley* cycle text only.<sup>442</sup> There are only five examples of the interjection O in the long *Towneley* text, whereas the much shorter *Burial and Resurrection* contains 88 examples of O.<sup>443</sup>

The *Towneley* copyist primarily used A rather than O, both in vocative constructions and as interjections. For example, Joseph says *A lord I lofe the all alon* (*Towneley* 10: 338) in a thanking address to God or Angel, perhaps a prayer. Cain angrily exclaims *A what dwill of hell is it* (*Towneley* 2: 281) to Abel. The scribe does use the interjection O in similar contexts, but very infrequently. There are 93 examples of the interjection A in the *Towneley* text, and only five examples of O, including one in collocation with HO, in the spelling form <o ho>.<sup>444</sup> The few examples of O are found in three

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<sup>442</sup> It should be noted that statistical testing reveals that the *Burial and Resurrection* text contains by far the highest incidence of interjections per 1,000 words of all the play texts (see Figure 7-1 in Section 7.1.3). In the quantitative analyses in Chapter 7, therefore, the text of *Burial and Resurrection* has been considered an outlier.

<sup>443</sup> The *Towneley* cycle text contains 79,928 words, while *B+R* contains 11,098 words, giving an incidence per 1,000 words of the interjection O at 0.06 in the *Towneley* text and 7.92 in the *B+R* text. The latter is one of relatively few texts to have more O than A. *Herod*, *Conversion*, *Everyman*, *Mankind*, *Nature*, *Sacrament*, and *Wisdom* are the others, meaning that 7 out of 23 texts have more occurrences of the interjection O than of A (while A outnumbers O in 16 play texts). There are no interludes containing more O than A, and the only biblical plays that do so are *Burial and Resurrection* and *Herod*.

<sup>444</sup> Three examples of A (<a>) can be interpreted as short forms for ‘all’ in *Towneley* 23: 581-2, and 26: 604. The Pharaoh’s O HO (*Towneley* pageant no. 8: 279) could be an example of the reduplicated *oh-oh* whose first attestation *OED* (headword: *oh, oh*, perhaps from French) gives as Preston’s *Life of Cambises* c. 1569. If so, the *Towneley* example predates the Preston example by c. 70 years.

different pageants, nos. 8, 16, and 24, an indication that the use of O was not simply restricted to one exemplar among a variety of guilds' prompt copies. Except for a Jewish-Egyptian Slave in pageant 8, the O-speakers are evil characters like Pharaoh, Herod and the torturers of Christ. The use of O could perhaps be interpreted as a marker of bad characters, but that seems surprising considering its possible connection to biblical Latin. In any case, the bad characters in the *Towneley* cycle more commonly use the interjection A in expressive-emotive functions (29 examples).

In addition to the interjection O, the *Towneley* copyist has 27 examples of HO and HOWE, usually as addressee-directed calls to stop (HO), or calls for attention (HOWE) (cf. Section 6.8.4). The five examples of the interjection O cannot simply be explained as h-dropping in the spelling of the interjection HO, as the two clearly perform different functions. In other words, the interjection O and related forms had some currency in the Yorkshire West Riding dialect of the *Towneley* cycle scribe, even though he strongly preferred A. It is still possible that the *Towneley* copyist prefers A to O because his dialect includes the reflex of Old English long ā. The findings are tested in Section 7.7.

### 6.12.5 *London prints*

The group of printed texts were all produced in London during the first 30 years of the sixteenth century. England had experienced much migration into the capital, and the London dialect had probably taken up influences for some time from surrounding dialect areas, as the migrants most likely came in largest numbers from the counties closest to the capital. Ekwall (1956: xlii) finds the most numerous influx of immigrants to London before 1350 to stem from the East Midlands. Some similarity between the East Midland and the London language is thus expected.

In addition, the gradual movement towards standardisation of written English was well on its way by the sixteenth century, the time the printed plays were produced. Material from later than 1500 is therefore regarded as poorer dialect witnesses in LALME (1986. Cf. Section 3.2), and only few texts from after 1500 are included in it. It is therefore not expected that the London print material shows strong dialectal features.

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The London print material consists of three morality plays and three interludes. All six play texts contain the interjection A, amounting to 49 examples in total. The interjection O counts 44 examples, of which 17 belong in two interludes, *Hickscorner* and *Magnyfycence*, and 27 examples belong in the two morality plays, *Nature* and *Everyman*. The interjection O is completely absent from the morality play *Mundus et Infans* and from the interlude *Fulgens and Lucrez*.

The interjection A is more numerous than O in all the interludes, while the situation is the opposite in two of the morality plays: the interjection O outnumbers A in *Everyman* and *Nature*. Again, it may be that the preference for one form over the other is typically related to the subgenre rather than to dialect. Based on the two subgenres included in the group of printed plays, it appears that the interjection O is relatively infrequent in interludes, while it is more frequent in religious plays, such as morality plays, even though *Mundus et Infans* breaks with this rule as it contains no examples of O. Both the interjections O and A are found in vocative constructions as well as in syntactically independent interjections in all the printed texts except for *Fulgens and Lucrez*. The latter uniquely contains no vocative constructions starting with either of these two interjections. It contains no addresses to deities, nor is A or O used in addressing other characters.

No relationship between the dialect and the use of A vs. O was found in the printed material. Rather, it seems the favouring of one over the other is frequently connected to play type, including characters and topic. Medwall's two plays, belonging to different subgenres, certainly seem to follow this pattern: his morality play *Nature* has many occurrences of O, whereas his interlude *Fulgens and Lucrez* has none.

### 6.12.6 ? "south of York"

The relative frequencies of the interjections A and O in the unlocalised *York* cycle do not form a very distinct pattern compared what has been found in the dialect groups.<sup>445</sup> As in all other groups, there are more examples of A than of

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<sup>445</sup> The present discussion is based on 45 of the total of 47 pageant texts in the *York* cycle. Only the contributions by the fifteenth century hands A and B have been included. Hand C copied pageants nos. 4 and 17 around 1550. His work was

O also in the *York* cycle text. The relative frequencies of the two interjections types fall closer to the material from the East Midlands than to any of the other groups, but still the ratio of A to O is 3 to 1 in the *York* text, and 2 to 1 in the East Midland texts, so they are not identical matches (cf. Section 7.7).

The relative frequencies of the interjections A and O in the *York* cycle text differ substantially from those found in the *Towneley* cycle text, i.e. the northern material (Section 6.12.4). This is somewhat unexpected, considering that the two texts are partly related. Five of the pageants in the *Towneley* cycle stem from the *York* cycle, but the few examples of the interjection O in the *Towneley* text do not typically occur in the pageants it adopted from the *York* cycle (two examples do, three do not). The early *York* cycle copyists differentiate between two types of the interjection O. Both copyists employ the spelling form <ow/e>, never using it in vocative constructions, but sometimes, although not consistently, in the spelling of the expressive interjection O.

### 6.13 *Some special playwrights and manuscripts*

Some play texts deserve special comments as regards the playwrights' use of interjections.

#### 6.13.1 *The Winchester Dialogues*

The *Winchester Dialogues* consist of two short interludes, *Lucidus and Dubius* and *Occupation and Idleness*. They survive in the same manuscript in Winchester College. The texts have not received much scholarly attention except for Davis' inclusion of them in his facsimile edition of non-cycle plays (Davis 1979). Due to similarities, it seems likely that the plays were composed by the same playwright. The two texts are written in the same hand, maybe as clean copies of the plays, perhaps executed by a professional scribe who may have been the playwright himself (see Davis 1979: 135-38 for a description of the manuscript, hand and contents).

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excluded, since it is a century later than the work of the two other scribes in the *York* Register.

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The two short play texts are interesting, because they may be the earliest interludes to survive in full (Davis 1979: 138), and because they may be school plays, in which case they are the only extant medieval examples of such plays in English. They are also interesting from a literacy aspect, meaning that the play texts evidence the increasing skills of a playwright. The texts are found in consecutive order in the manuscript, and the varying quality of the two play texts suggests that *Lucidus* was written before *Occupation*, i.e. the order in which they appear in the manuscript seems to reflect the order of composition. The latter is a more fully developed dramatic piece, and the higher quality of *Occupation* is, in fact, reflected in the play's use of interjections. The second play, *Occupation*, is longer than the first, it has three characters against just two in *Lucidus*, more movement is implied, and the verbal and physical comedy is fresher.

A positive development from the first play to the second is also evidenced by the playwright's selection of interjections. The latter play includes a larger number of interjections, and, importantly, a more varied repertoire than the first. *Lucidus* employs 13 interjections in total, including the discourse particle PARDIE (5 examples). The interjection types are few: only AHA (1) and A (7) occur. In contrast, *Occupation* contains 33 examples of interjections of a much wider range. PARDIE does not occur in *Occupation*, but instead the play contains the interjection types O, AY, FIE, and OUT, and the pragmatic marker LO in addition to the interjections A and AHA. In other words, the use of interjections, in particular the variation of interjection types, seems to reveal increasing skills of the play composer.

### 6.13.2 *The Towneley cycle*

The *Towneley* scribe is the only one in the play material examined in the present study whose dialect is located in Yorkshire by LALME (LP 750 in LALME III: 48). A quantitative analysis of the use and distribution of the interjections A and O is presented and discussed in Chapter 7 below. It has been found that the *Towneley* cycle text employs the interjection A relatively more often than other play texts do, and conversely, the text employs the interjection O less frequently than comparable play texts in surroundings where A and O seem to perform the same function. In the main, the context where A and O typically appear interchangeably is in vocative constructions



of the *O Lord* kind. If the *Towneley* playwright (and/or copyist) was sensitive enough to dialect to prefer dialectal A rather than the more conventional O in vocative contexts, he may have been sensitive to other aspects of spoken language too, e.g. the use and codification of infrequent interjections.

The unknown *Towneley* playwright has been referred to as the Wakefield Master, as it appears that the *Towneley* cycle is a skilled playwright's composition through creative adaptation of material from the *York* cycle and independent composition of parts of the *Towneley* cycle (Stevens and Cawley 1994).<sup>446</sup> The *Towneley* composer's mastery of realistic dialogue has been pointed out before. It can be added that he seems also to have had a unique mastery of interjections, since he uses types of interjections not attested elsewhere. Types of interjections only found in the *Towneley* cycle are: PUFF, TUP, TRUS, TYR, WHOP, and YO.<sup>447</sup>

A unique orthographic realisation of HA, the spelling form <hagh>, occurs only in the *Towneley* cycle text (Section 6.9.3). The *Towneley* forms spelt <a ha> are also rather special: they seem to imply bodily labour rather than the cognitive revelation usually associated with AHA. The interjection WE occurs only in the *Towneley* and *York* cycle texts, and the possibly related disyllabic WEMAY also only occur in these texts. As mentioned, the interjection WE may be connected to the interrogative 'why', and *Towneley* and *York* could be the only texts which discriminate between WE, interjection, and 'why', interrogative used to express attitude, such as disbelief. It can be hypothesised, but not proven, that the expressive function of 'why' originally stems from the interjection WE rather than from the interrogative.

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<sup>446</sup> See Section 5.11 for more detail on the *Towneley* manuscript, MS Huntington HM 1. Appendix I provides information concerning the play. The Wakefield Master is believed to be responsible for many, perhaps all the pageants in the cycle, but it is clear that at least five pageant texts he borrowed and adapted from the *York* cycle. Even these he treated with some independency, e.g. by adding episodes (Stevens and Cawley 1994: xxviii). The interjections in these five pageant texts in the *Towneley* cycle (*Towneley* pageants nos. 8, 18, 25, 26, and 30) are more plentiful than in the *York* cycle pageants: 105 versus 81. The interjections are also slightly more varied in the *Towneley* pageants than in the *York* pageants: 15 types versus 13.

<sup>447</sup> The interjection type YO occurs only in the *Towneley* text, where it is spelt <io>, but possibly the forms spelt <yowe> in the *York* cycle text, and <3o> in *Mankind* are related. See YO in Section 6.9.16.

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It is not, and surely was not, always obvious how interjections ought to be codified, but the *Towneley* cycle playwright or scribe seems to have found his own unique solutions for the cases just mentioned. It is clear that the *Towneley* cycle got some of its pageant texts from the York cycle, and in some cases, for example that of the interjection WE, these two texts share special forms. However, the *York* cycle text follows a more common pattern concerning the use of the interjections/markers of the vocative A and O. The use of O in the York text is much more frequent than in *Towneley*. Even if the *Towneley* playwright-redactor, perhaps the Wakefield Master, adopted some interjection types from the *York* cycle, he did not conform to the *York* cycle pattern of O before vocatives.<sup>448</sup> The complete *Towneley* cycle text contains only five O forms (including one <o ho>), and only two of these occur before vocatives. In contrast, the *York* cycle text contains 48 O forms, and 23 of these occur before vocatives.

### 6.13.3 *Burial and Resurrection of Christ*

The meditational play *Burial and Resurrection of Christ* in MS Bodleian *e Museo* 160 seems to be the work of someone unfamiliar with playwriting. It has been mentioned that the play seems to be an adaptation of a narrative, since phrases such as ‘said Joseph’ are sometimes left inside the spoken lines of the play characters; Joseph in this case (l. 80). Baker, Murphy, and Hall (1982: lxxxv) suggest that the text was prepared by a Carthusian monk for the use of the monks themselves during Friday and Sunday of Easter Week (Section 5.18).

The play text, like other texts in the manuscript, focusses on affective piety (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: lxxxviii). Perhaps the monks performed the play or simply read it for meditation and edification. There is a possibility that the surviving play text was never actually performed, but that it was produced

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<sup>448</sup> The *Towneley* cycle redactor-composer most likely did not copy from the York Register, but may have had access to some of the York Guild copies. It is therefore possible of course that these Guild copies employed A and O in the pattern now found in the *Towneley* text but not in the York Register. The main scribe of the York Register seems to have translated the text(s) into his own dialect, from south of York (LALME I: 103). It is this pattern of O rather than A in vocative contexts that is found in Middle English play texts, except the *Towneley* cycle text.

merely as an experiment by the composer. In any case, the play text itself reveals that the playwright either was not experienced in composing practical play texts, or he was not concerned with the aspect of entertainment usually associated with plays. The use of interjections is an indication of his inexperience and/or indifference to the dramatic aspect of the play.

The number of interjections is very high, counting 166 examples, but the range of interjection types is extremely restricted in the *Burial and Resurrection* text. As illustrated by the quantitative analysis in Chapter 7 below these 166 attestations amount to the highest relative interjection frequency of all Middle English play texts, but there are only four different types: A, O, ALAS, and LO (which is not an interjection in the examined material, see Section 6.8.11). The playwright/adaptor developed his own system of specialising the meaning of A by reduplicating it to imitate weeping. He also frequently marked such reduplications by the use of *punctus*, maybe to represent repeated pronunciation rather than one prolonged a-sound. He seems to have opted for pathos, not entertainment.

It could be claimed that the topic of *Burial and Resurrection* does not necessitate more variation in interjection types than the sorrowful weeping and lamenting expressed by A, O and ALAS. On the other hand, the topic of Christ's sacrifice is treated in several of the play texts included in the present study, and the other plays show more liveliness in illustration of the topic and in the choice of interjections. As mentioned, the playwright seems from his selection of interjections among other things, either to be inexperienced with the writing of plays, or to have different concerns than performance with his text.

#### 6.13.4 *Magnyfycence*

The *Magnyfycence* playwright, John Skelton, created a play which focusses more on communication than most other extant late medieval plays. Skelton has created scenes in which the comedy lies in the manipulation of the fiction, as well as in the mastery of words or seeming failure of such. The characters Fancy and Folly, for example, use words to convince each other that their pets are something other than they appear to be.

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Phatic language, such as self-corrections and verbal misunderstanding, occur in the dialogue in *Magnyfycence*. Self-corrections by play characters meta-theatrically point to the situation of drama, and the paradox of realistic dialogue: the speakers are part of a fictional, created world, and therefore any slips of the tongue are obviously planned. The audience is repeatedly reminded of the ironic distance between play world and real world. When characters in other play texts address the audience during the performance, which happens frequently in plays such as cycle plays, these addresses serve practical functions and include the audience in the experience. In cycle plays characters such as Pharaoh may enter the street where the pageant of a cycle is being performed commanding silence in direct audience addresses. The focus on play world created in *Magnyfycence* is entirely different.

The characters in *Magnyfycence* use language to cheat and pretend at the same time as they make paradoxical mistakes in speaking. They interrupt each other and quarrel about whose turn it is to talk (ll. 631-36). Most characters hide behind allegorical names, and some take different names to conceal their malevolent nature. Cloaked Collusion is disguised as a priest (Walker 2000: 351) and takes the name Sober Sadness (l. 681). He has also been referred to as “Sir John Double-cloak” (l. 605) by his fellow conspirators - clearly a hint to his double nature and double costume. Counterfeit Countenance, Crafty Conveyance and Folly see themselves as gallants (l. 511).<sup>449</sup> Counterfeit Countenance chooses the named Good Demeanour (*Demeynaunce*) (l. 674), Crafty Conveyance presents his name as Sure Surveillance (l. 525), and Fancy ‘Small Brain’ (l. 683) refers to himself as Largess (l. 520). Words are deceitful in *Magnyfycence*.

Colloquial speech including slang, proverbs and puns is plentiful to the extent that the text often seems more difficult to understand than older play texts are. Some examples are l. 586: *Here is a leysse of ratches to renne an hare*, metaphorical language, perhaps a proverb; l. 579: *Thou hast made me play the jurde hayte*, of which ‘jurde hayte’ is obscure (Walker 2000: 365); and l. 671: *owle flyght*, meaning ‘evening’ (Walker 2000: 367). What must have seemed fresh and realistic dialogue to the contemporary audience in some instances leaves the modern reader mystified. The use of language and the organisation

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<sup>449</sup> Concerning the term ‘gallant’, see Section 6.9.5: HUFF, above.

#### INTERJECTIONS IN LATE MIDDLE ENGLISH PLAY TEXTS

of dialogue in *Magnyfycence* are completely different from for example the older and more serious *York* cycle, and paradoxically perhaps the earlier of them is easier to understand. Even though both play texts have end rhymes as one organising principle, these two drama types are far more dissimilar in form and style than drama types are today.

*Magnyfycence* is a play which defies categorisation. As mentioned, it can be read as a morality play about the royal but anonymous everyman called Prince Magnificence. At the same time the play can be read as an interlude especially criticising the contemporary young king Henry VIII and his lackeys. Of course, it would be safer for the playwright himself if this criticism was not immediately recognised by the king or his courtiers, or if such criticism were to occur, it could effectively be met by claiming that the play was not about Henry at all, but about anyone. The (modern) reader is left with a text that is obviously a play text, but that escapes subgenre definition, perhaps wilfully. There is at the very least little doubt that Skelton was an experienced writer of many genres (Walker 2000: 349), and that he possessed the competence of exploiting genre conventions.

## 7 Historical linguistics and drama: some quantitative findings

### 7.0 *Abstract*

The present chapter examines the use of interjections in Late Middle English play texts by way of quantitative measures. Diachronic changes and dialectal variation are among those aspects of ME interjections which can be explored quantitatively. Subgenre variation is another measurable variable, as is any hypothesised difference related to manner of staging (outdoor versus indoor drama), or method of text production (manuscript versus print). The subgenre aspect, in particular, is interconnected with the question of various character types' use of interjections, so these two aspects must be seen in concert. Characterisation through use of interjections has been discussed qualitatively in the previous chapter (Chapter 6).<sup>450</sup>

### 7.1 *Preliminaries*

In most tables and figures in the following, the play titles have been abbreviated for practical reasons of space. The abbreviated play titles are the same as those used in Chapter 6.

YC = York cycle

NC = N-town cycle

TC = Towneley cycle

CC = Chester cycle

PA = Peniarth Antichrist Chester

NA = Northampton Abraham

BA = Brome Abraham

HK = Herod's Killing of the Children

BR = Burial and Resurrection of Christ

CP = Castle of Perseverance

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<sup>450</sup> See Chapter 4, Data and Methods, for the classification of character types. See Chapter 6 for qualitative discussions of interjection types and their relation to certain character types.

## INTERJECTIONS IN LATE MIDDLE ENGLISH PLAY TEXTS

Mk = Mankind  
Wd = Wisdom  
Ev = Everyman  
Na = Nature  
MI = Mundus et Infans  
MA = Mary Magdalen  
ST = Conversion of St Paul  
PS = Play of the Sacrament  
LD = Lucidus and Dubius  
OI = Occupation and Idleness  
FL = Fulgens and Luces  
Hi = Hickscorner  
MG = Magnyfycence

### 7.1.1 Proclamations – not drama proper

While carrying out the data collection, it was found that the proclamations, or Banns, of the *N-town* cycle, the *Play of the Sacrament*, and the *Castle of Perseverance* contain hardly any interjections.<sup>451</sup> The Banns for *Perseverance* is 156 lines long, and there are no interjections. The *N-town* proclamation consists of 528 lines, yet contains only one interjection: ALAS, which is not uttered as an interjection, but found in the reported speech of Judas in line 362: *with wepyng sore evyr crye Alas* (cf. Section 6.9.1, quotes 207-210). In the last of the proclamations, the 80 lines long Banns of the *Sacrament* play, there are no interjections except for LO, which it was found hardly functions like a typical interjection at all in Late Middle English play texts (cf. Section

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<sup>451</sup> The *Chester* cycle has two surviving sets of Banns, but neither of these was included from the outset, since MS Hm does not contain any of them. The Late or Protestant Banns announcing the *Chester* cycle were performed in advance (Walker 2000: 201), just like they were in the three plays discussed here. It is not clear how many Bann-readers were required in the performance of the *Chester* Late Banns. The Early or Pre-Reformation *Chester* Banns surviving in MS BL Harley 2150 may have been performed by a 'steward' representing each of the guilds responsible for the performance, at least according to the description introducing the Banns on fol. 86r *The comen bannes, to be proclaimed and ryddon witht the stewardys of every occupacon* (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 278).

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6.8.11 LO). LO is used to draw attention to something physical on stage, or to an argument. It does not serve expressive functions.

Prologues and proclamations are different types of play introductions serving different purposes. Prologues are common in the Late Middle English play material, and are also frequently used in later play types. Prologues occur at the start of a play, and usually they are spoken by a narrator-character, referred to as *Doctor* or *Expositor*, as an introduction given immediately before the performance starts. In contrast, the proclamations for all three plays discussed above are given days in advance of the performance. In all three proclamations, the lines are divided between two speakers referred to as *Vexillators* in the speech headings. These Bann-bearers alternate the reading of the proclamation text, and do not enter into a proper dramatic dialogue. They explicate the main contents of the announced play, but there is no dramatic plot, nor any real interaction in the proclamations. It seems fair to say that the proclamations (or Banns) are not drama proper, and the infrequency of interjections supports this. The proclamations were, therefore, excluded from the total word counts in the following.

### *7.1.2 Calculating text length and incidence*

In order to establish the relative frequency, or incidence, of interjections in medieval drama texts, it was necessary to calculate an approximate number of words per play text. Word counts could not simply be performed electronically, since many of the texts are not available in electronic format. Furthermore, in electronic texts the word counts include speech headings and stage directions, which vary considerably in number and length among the plays. Since these do not form part of the play texts proper, speech headings and stage directions would have to be manually subtracted from electronic word counts, making the process time-consuming. Therefore, instead of electronic counts, or word-by-word counts, estimates of word totals for every play were established out manually, leaving out speech headings and stage directions.

An average was found by counting the number of words in every tenth line in the texts. Counts should allow for variation in metre in a play text, and it was believed that counting as many as every tenth line would guarantee a true



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picture of the number of words even in texts with variation in metre and stanza forms. Modern word division was used as a general rule. The counts were added and the sum divided by the number of lines counted to achieve an average of words per line. The result was multiplied by the number of lines in the play text. The procedure yields an estimate of the total number of words per play, enabling comparisons across individual plays, subgenres, and time.<sup>452</sup>

Table 7-1 below gives play titles, date of manuscript/print, date of composition, text length as word count, and interjections in raw numbers and as incidence, i.e the average number of interjections per 1,000 words of text. The texts are listed in order of witness (copy) date.

Title	Date of MS/Print	Date of composition	No. of words/text length	No. of interjections	Incidence (interjections per 1,000 words)
<i>Perseverance</i>	1440	1400-25	21,967	91	4.14
<i>Lucidus</i>	1450	1450	3,850	13	3.38
<i>Occupation</i>	1450	1450	5,292	32	6.04
<i>Northampton Abraham</i>	1461	1400-50	2,992	28	9.36
<i>York cycle</i>	1463-77	Before 1415?	85,780	553	6.45
<i>N-town cycle</i>	1470 (1468-1500)	Mid-fifteenth century?	77,249	462	5.98
<i>Mankind</i>	1465 (1465-70?)	1465-70	8,097	76	9.39
<i>Wisdom Macro</i>	1465 (1465-85)	1460?	8,300	43	5.18
<i>Brome Abraham</i>	1480? (1460-75?)	1450-75	3,364	41	12.19
<i>Towneley cycle</i>	c.1500	After 1450	79,928	509	6.39
<i>Peniarth Antichrist</i>	c.1500	1500?	4,406	35	7.94
<i>Herod</i>	1512	1512?	4,667	17	3.64
<i>Fulgens and</i>	c.1512	1490s	16,910	50	2.96

<sup>452</sup> Figures for the individual pageants of the cycle plays were also found by this method.

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<i>Luces</i>					
<i>Hickscorner</i>	1514?	1513	8,064	45	5.58
<i>Sacrament</i>	1520?	After 1461	7,165	39	5.44
<i>Mary Magdalen</i>	1515-20	1490-1500?	15,878	158	9.95
<i>Burial and Resurrection</i>	1520	1520	11,098	167	15.05
<i>Conversion A</i>	c.1520	1500-25	4,247	7	1.65
<i>Mundus et Infans</i>	1522	Before 1520	6,709	39	5.81
<i>Everyman</i>	c.1530	c. 1510	6,754	46	6.81
<i>Magnyfycence</i>	c.1530	1520	20,300	125	6.16
<i>Nature</i>	c.1530	1490s	20,130	69	3.43
<i>Conversion B (interpolation)</i>	1550	1550	832	16	19.23
<i>York Hand C</i>	1560-70	1415?	3,810	29	7.61
<i>Chester cycle</i>	1591-1600	1530s?	65,296	395	6.05

**Table 7-1 Texts with word counts and incidence of interjections**

In total, the play material encompasses 493,085 words. The data totals 3,087 items, meaning that 3,087 interjections were recorded with annotations in the database. Of these items, most are prototypical interjections according to the working definition (Chapter 2), and but a few constitute marginal cases. Some are simply ambiguous in the context and a single interpretation cannot be reached.<sup>453</sup> Other marginal cases are those expressions which have been found not to be typical interjections, mainly the polysyllabic forms discussed in

<sup>453</sup> For instance, one occurrence of O, spelt <o>, can represent either the interjection O or the word 'one'. Three examples of A spelt <A> seem to mean 'all' in the *Towneley* cycle. In three instances, AY in the *York* cycle seems to represent the adverb 'ay' ('ever') and not a variant of A or AY. Other marginal cases are words functioning like interjections but lacking in the dictionaries. These occur uniquely or very infrequently. Examples are *Puf*, *tyr*, *tup*, *io* and *wemay* in the *Towneley* cycle text, *Fo Fo* (pew?) in *Fulgens and Luces*, and *qwyst* (pst?) in *Mankind*. *Tut* occurs once, and could perhaps be a variant of *tush*. They are too few to skew the statistics of the present chapter.

Section 6.10. The most important form found not to be a typical interjection, however, is the monosyllabic pragmatic marker LO (Section 6.8.11).

All these have still been included in the calculations of overall incidence of interjections per play text, because the ambiguous cases and the polysyllabic forms are not so many as to skew relative frequencies. All texts containing such forms also include many other, typical, interjections. The item LO has been included in the present project, because it is part of the linguistic inventory other historical pragmatists have examined in their studies of Early Modern English pragmatic noise (Culpeper and Kytö 2010), of Early Modern English interjections (Taavitsainen 1995; Koskenniemi 1962), of Late Middle English exclamations (Taavitsainen 1997), and of (secondary) interjections in the *N-town* cycle (Mazzon 2009: 83-85). In other words, including the marker LO allows for comparison with earlier works on interjections.<sup>454</sup> As mentioned, the same is true concerning the polysyllabic forms discussed in Section 6.10, which are also treated by Taavitsainen (1995 and 1997) as emerging interjections and/or forms bordering on interjections.

### 7.1.3 *Drama versus linguistic witness*

According to the nature of each analysis, the play texts have sometimes been treated as examples of drama and sometimes as linguistic witnesses in the following discussions. Medieval texts, including play texts, are often copies surviving from a later date than the period of origin of the text (or play). Most of the play texts in the present study are such copies, and in most cases it is possible to suggest a likely date of production for the individual copy, i.e. what I term ‘witness date’ in this thesis (Chapter 5 does this). The witness dates for manuscripts and prints are editors’ suggestions based on language, palaeography, and codicology.

Even though less certain dates can be suggested regarding the composition of each play, it is still possible to establish a chronological timeline in which the individual plays are sorted in relative order to each other. There is e.g. a

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<sup>454</sup> LO is included in Culpeper and Kytö’s (2010: 257) quantitative discussions, so any difference in the incidence they find of pragmatic noise in Early Modern English play texts, and the incidence of interjections found in the present study, is not caused by either study’s inclusion or exclusion of LO.

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general scholarly consensus that among the material of the present study, the *York* cycle is the earliest drama, even if its text in the *York* Register is not. From that starting point, I have utilised editorial suggestions (Appendix I) to create a composition timeline by sorting the plays in the most likely order of composition, for example by placing *Nature* in relative order to other plays by using its probable date of composition (1490s) rather than its print date (c. 1530). Table 7-1 shows how date of play composition and date of manuscript or print (witness date) may vary.<sup>455</sup> When treating a play text as drama, I base the analysis on its composition date; when treating it as a linguistic witness, on its witness date.

As can be seen from Table 1, two manuscript play texts have been given special consideration as linguistic witnesses. Both the *York* cycle text and the *Conversion of St Paul* play text include later additions in a separate scribal hand. For linguistic analysis it is necessary to distinguish between the witness dates of each scribal hand, as indicated in Table 1, where *York* Hand C and *Conversion* Hand B have been given separate rows. However, when the play texts are discussed as examples of drama rather than of language, the nature of the additions in these two play texts calls for distinct solutions. In the case of the *York* cycle it is possible that the addition, by the sixteenth century Hand C, goes back to an original exemplar of equally early date as the rest of the cycle text (Section 5.6). When treated as drama, therefore, the *York* text including the work by Hand C is dated to before 1415.<sup>456</sup> In the case of the *Conversion* text, by contrast, the interpolated comic scene added by a later hand (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: xxii) alters the style of the earlier serious play to such a degree that I have chosen to treat it as a “new” play dated close to 1550 when it is discussed as a play rather than as a linguistic witness.<sup>457</sup> This makes

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<sup>455</sup> Separate lists ordering the plays by composition dates and by witness dates are provided in Section 5.27.

<sup>456</sup> The *Ordo Paginarum* surviving from 1415 has served as evidence for an early composition date of the *York* cycle, since the lists of pageants and guilds in the *Ordo Paginarum* suggest that the *York* cycle already at this date was well established and looked very much like it does in the extant Register from c. 1470. Thus the *York* cycle and the *Perseverance* play may have approximately the same composition dates, but *York* was listed first, as at least parts of it may well be earlier than 1415. The earliest reference to a Corpus Christi cycle in York is dated to 1377 (Beadle 2009: xix).

<sup>457</sup> In contrast to Table 7-1, Figure 7-1 below gives the incidence of interjections per play text treated as drama rather than as linguistic witnesses. It should also be

*Conversion* the penultimate play by composition date; only the *Chester* cycle has been treated as a later text (due to the late copy date and the uncertainty regarding the sixteenth century revision of the *Chester* cycle (Lumiansky and Mills 1983: 48).).

Two scribal profiles have, therefore, been excluded when the quantitative analysis in the following is concerned with the texts as linguistic evidence: *York* Hand C and *Conversion* Hand B. The difference is small between the incidence of interjections in the early parts of the *York* cycle text (by Hands A and B) and the incidence of interjections in the full cycle text (including Hand C's contribution).<sup>458</sup> When non-linguistic features of the *York* cycle are discussed, the full play text and the composition date have been used. In contrast to the *York* cycle, there is a great difference in the incidence of interjections in the play text *Conversion of St Paul* depending on whether only the earliest part (c. 1520) is examined or the interpolated comic scene (c. 1550) is included.<sup>459</sup> The "original" *Conversion* play text has an incidence of only 1.65 interjections per 1,000 words, while the incidence in the added comic scene reaches the extremely high score of 19.2 - the two figures are in fact the lowest and highest scores of all in the material.<sup>460</sup> When *Conversion*

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mentioned that proportionally to the full texts, the addition made in the *York* Register by Hand C – two of 47 pageant texts - is quite small compared to the scene added by Hand B to the *Conversion* play. Moreover, the addition by *Conversion* Hand B substantially changes the incidence of interjections in that play text.

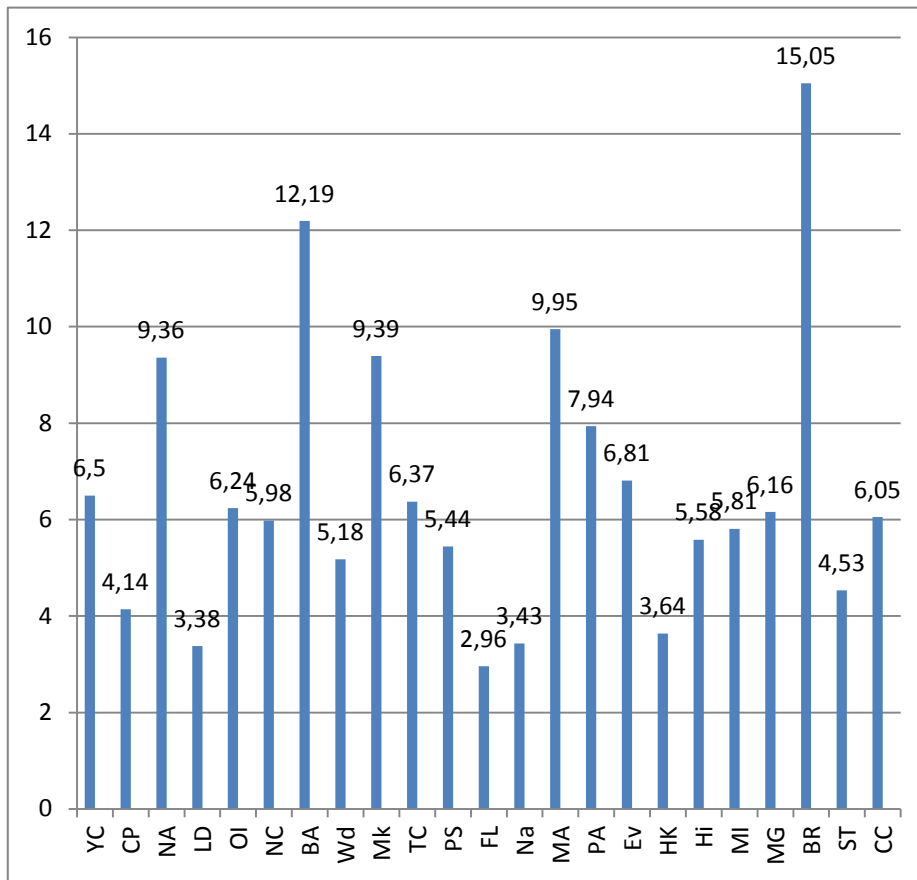
<sup>458</sup> The overall incidence of interjections in the *York* cycle play is 6.5 (interjections per 1,000 words). The text written by fifteenth century Hands A and B has an incidence of interjections at 6.45, while the text added a century later by Hand C has an incidence at 7.61. Hand C copied the texts of only two pageants.

<sup>459</sup> The scribal stretch of Hand B in *Conversion* has not been used as individual evidence, since it does not constitute a text on its own. When the play is treated as a play, rather than as linguistic evidence, both scribal contributions are included, since the later addition is worked into the original text. It is not an aim of the present study to try to reconstruct archetype texts, but to treat the play texts as they survive.

<sup>460</sup> The finding of a very high interjection frequency in the comic scene in *Conversion* suggests that comic interplay is likely to be especially coloured by the use of interjections. However, there are grounds to suspect that tragic episodes also contain high numbers of interjections, e.g. the frequently used ALAS. This aspect concerning the use of interjections in comic and/or tragic scenes has not been tested by quantitative measures, since it is difficult to judge to what extent the various episodes in late medieval drama should be interpreted as humorous or tragic. As mentioned, it appears that comedy is included in the cycle play episode illustrating the soldiers'

## 7. QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

is treated as an example of drama rather than as a linguistic witness, its overall incidence of interjections is 4.53, as can be seen in Figure 7-1 below (*Conversion* is referred to as “ST” in illustrations for reasons of space). In Figure 7-1, the plays are arranged from left to right according to date of composition.



**Figure 7-1 Incidence of interjections per 1,000 words in the plays**

murder of the innocents. Devils can be interpreted both as serious threats and as comic figures. Defining medieval drama (or dramatic episodes) as comedy (or tragedy) based on a high frequency of interjections leads into circular argumentation.

Treated as a full drama, *Conversion* is no longer the lowest scoring play text. Five plays score lower than *Conversion*; the interlude *Fulgens and Luces* has the lowest score of all with its incidence of 2.96. The highest incidence of interjections is found in the somewhat atypical play text, *Burial and Resurrection of Christ*. The text is a play adapted from prose narrative, and it has been suggested it was written in a monastery, perhaps meant as an aid in meditation during Easter (Section 5.18). The frequent use of a relatively narrow range of interjections is discussed in Section 6.13.3. Below it is explored by quantitative analysis how the incidence of interjections compares to the rest of the Late Middle English play texts.

## 7.2 *Diachronic perspectives on interjections in play texts*

The average incidence of interjections is 6.23 (i.e. interjections per 1,000 words) in the Late Middle English play texts. By comparison, Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 268) find an incidence of 5.5 in Early Modern English play texts. Two explanations for the difference in incidences are conceivable: the items included vary between their study and this one, or interjections were more popular in late medieval drama than in early modern drama in England. The higher incidence of interjections in the texts of the present study could perhaps be explained by the inclusion of some long interjections, which would typically fall into the category of pragmatic noise in Culpeper and Kytö.<sup>461</sup> Excluding the forms BENEDICITE, GRAMERCY, and PARDIE from the present study gives a total of 2,951 interjections instead of 3,087, which in turn yields an incidence of 6.0 interjections per 1,000 words, rather than 6.23. This is still a higher figure than the 5.5 interjections per 1,000 words of Culpeper and Kytö's Early Modern English plays.

The difference is not great, however. In fact, the incidence of pragmatic noise in Early Modern English drama compares much better to the incidence of interjections in Late Middle English play texts than it does to any other group

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<sup>461</sup> The pragmatic marker LO need not be excluded for a comparison with the findings in Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 257), as they include LO in their study on pragmatic noise.

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of dialogic texts explored in Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 268).<sup>462</sup> The overall incidence of interjections at 6.23 (or 6.0 excluding the polysyllabic items) in Late Middle English play texts therefore suggests that the definitions of interjection (Chapter 2) and pragmatic noise (Culpeper and Kytö 2010: 199-200) are not totally at odds, and, further, that the findings are comparable. The quantitative difference in the employment of interjections between the late medieval and the early modern plays therefore appears due to an actual decrease in the use of interjections in play texts from one period to the next.

In other words, the lower incidence of interjections in the Early Modern English play texts compared to their Late Middle English counterparts may indicate that interjections were, in fact, more popular in late medieval English drama types than in the drama types immediately following them. It might be possible to establish from the material of the present study, spanning c. 150 years by composition dates, whether a change is indeed taking place during the late medieval period regarding the popularity of interjections.

The material was arranged first by composition date, giving Figure 7-2 below, and secondly by witness date, giving a figure not included. The incidence of interjections in each text was z-transformed in SPSS to gain a better illustration of the findings. Z-transformation normalises the data by calculating z-scores relative to each other and to a mean value fixed at zero (the horizontal axis). Since the data set is normalised, any deviation in the data is easily spotted. The plays are arranged from early (left) to late (right) in Figure 7-2, giving an automatically calculated diachronic trend line. As can be seen, only a very slight trend appears - a line indicating a tendency of increasing employment of interjections in late texts.<sup>463</sup>

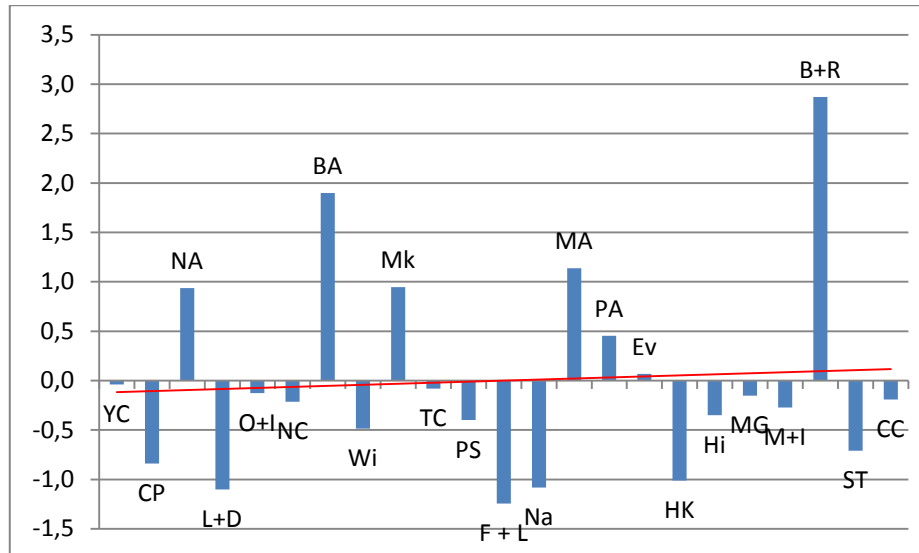
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<sup>462</sup> The incidence of interjections in Early Modern English fiction is 1.7, in didactic works 1.3, in witness depositions 0.3, and in trial recordings 0.1 (Culpeper and Kytö 2010: 268).

<sup>463</sup> The same method was used arranging the texts by their witness dates instead of composition dates, giving a flat trend line, not illustrated here by a separate figure. As noted, when the material is sorted by witness dates, the *York* text is no longer the earliest text, as its production was preceded by the copying of the morality play *Perseverance*, the two interludes *L+D* and *O+I*, and the biblical non-cycle play, Northampton *Abraham*. By witness date, *Perseverance* is the earliest play text of all, dated to around 1440. The *Chester* cycle text is by far the latest one: MS Hm



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**Figure 7-2 z-transformed interjection frequency with trend line**

Even though a clear trend line does not appear, other interesting patterns are discernible from Figure 7-2. When the method of text production (manuscript or print) is compared, it can be seen from the figure that five of the six printed plays score below the zero-mean: F+L, Na, Hi, MG, and MI. Only *Everyman* (Ev) among the printed texts scores above the mean. The method of text production in the sixteenth century is discussed and tested below.

Figure 7-2 further illustrates that all the cycles score relatively close to the normalised mean. The *York* cycle text is practically at the mean score of 0, and the other cycles also come close to the mean, with *N-town* at -0.22, *Towneley* at -0.08, and *Chester* at -0.19. This finding probably has a simple and logical explanation; namely that the cycle plays constitute by far the longest and most varied texts. By their sheer length and variety they provide more representative interjection scores than most other play texts.

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containing the text of the *Chester* cycle is dated 1591 in the MS. It is discussed below why Figure 7-2 may not give a representative picture of the diachronic change in the frequency of interjections in Late Middle English play texts, and why a more representative illustration is supplied in Figure 7-3.

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The greatest variation in incidence is, perhaps expectedly, found in the shorter play texts. The short plays are more consistently created to conform to a single topic or play type and the play composer may have chosen to include many or few interjections accordingly. Thus, the short Brome *Abraham*, for instance, focussing as it does on the gruesome dilemma of Abraham and his son's fear and pleading, shows a high incidence of interjections. Expressive interjections are used throughout the highly emotional dialogue of this play text, creating an extremely moving little piece of drama.<sup>464</sup> A subgenre consisting solely of short plays, the interludes, shows what might be a pattern. The figure illustrates that the interludes appear to have a low incidence compared to the other plays: all five interludes score below the mean, and some, notably *Lucidus* (L+D) and *Fulgens* (F+L), score well below it.

Quite a few plays score below the mean of all play texts (16 out of 23), while those with above-average incidence seem to be well above. The incidence of interjections in *Burial and Resurrection* (B+R) is particularly high, and, because the incidences in Figure 7-2 are normalised by z-transformation, it becomes clear that the incidence of interjections in this play text is well over 2 standard errors of measurement.<sup>465</sup> It is possible therefore that what appears to be a slight increase in the use of interjections from early to late plays is due to the outlier score of the relatively late *Burial and Resurrection* (composed c. 1520). The high score of *B+R* is returned to below (Section 7.7) in a discussion concerning two other non-cycle biblical texts, *NA* and *BA*, also exhibiting relatively high scores. Otherwise, the text of *Burial and Resurrection* has been considered as an outlier and left out of the further statistical analyses of interjections in play texts.

Leaving out the text of *Burial and Resurrection* gives a data set which again can be normalised by z-transformation calculating a new mean based on the

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<sup>464</sup> The Brome *Abraham* is discussed in relation with the Northampton *Abraham* and *Burial and Resurrection* below. The three texts may be examples of plays meant for reading or meditation rather than for enactment. This purpose, of course, does not disqualify the argument above, that the great variation in quantitative use of interjections occurs predominantly in relatively short play texts.

<sup>465</sup> A standard deviation at 1 or 1.5 is sometimes used as a cut-off point for what is considered as a normal distribution; a standard deviation at 2 or more is usually considered an outlier score. As can be seen, *Burial and Resurrection* has an interjection incidence at close to 3 standard errors.

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22 texts not found to have outlier interjection frequencies. This graph gives a radically different trend line from the one in Figure 7-2. The new trend line in Figure 7-3 shows a decline in the overall frequencies of interjections according to date of composition of the late medieval English plays.

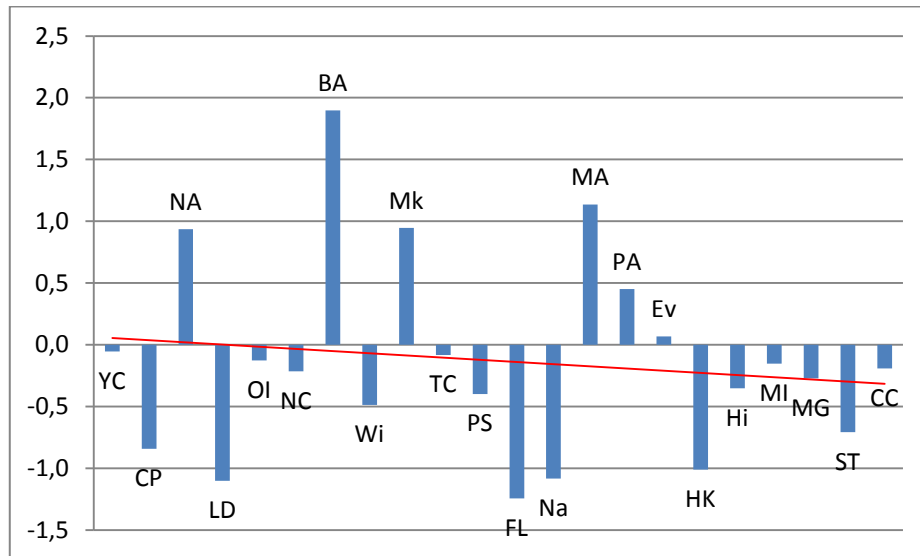


Figure 7-3 z-transformed interjection frequency with trend line excluding B+R

The new trend line appearing in Figure 7-3 illustrates that the text of *Burial and Resurrection* was indeed the cause of what at first seemed to be a tendency towards more frequent use of interjections in the later part of the Late Middle English plays. Figure 7-3 shows the opposite diachronic change in interjection incidence: the trend line clearly indicates an overall decrease in the popularity of interjections in the plays.<sup>466</sup> This finding supports the

<sup>466</sup> Please note that the trend would have been more marked if the *Chester* cycle was excluded, which arguably could have been done for two reasons. First, it is a cycle play and as such belonging in a subgenre which no longer existed among the Early Modern English plays to which it is compared (Culpeper and Kytö 2010). The present study has taken a conservative view on the *Chester* cycle (and its language) by using the late revision date as its composition date. The trend line would have been more clearly dropping if the *Chester* cycle had been taken to be of the fifteenth century – from whence a cycle was being performed in Chester. Secondly, the *Chester* cycle is a very late example of a manuscript play, and play texts in manuscript are usually not considered in studies on Early Modern English play texts, such as Culpeper and

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hypothesis that there is a decline in the use of interjections in the present material, and this corresponds with the finding in Culpeper and Kytö (2010) that there is a lower incidence of pragmatic noise in Early Modern English plays than what has been found to be the case for Late Middle English plays. One explanation for the decrease may be the method of text production, i.e. the change from manuscript to print production during the period. Another may be the types of plays belonging to the different periods of English drama. Both questions are discussed below.

Other patterns than a general increase or decrease in the use of interjections are also discussed in the following. It is for instance possible that individual types of interjections show diverging patterns, such as increasing popularity of some and decreasing popularity of others. Different interjection types may show connections to distinct play subgenres. Some of the interjections are sufficiently numerous to allow for quantitative analysis (some infrequent ones have rather been discussed in Chapter 6). It is further possible that the manner of staging (indoor versus outdoor) influences the number and/or types of interjections used. Play texts meant for reading may exhibit distinct patterns. Some interjection types may have been susceptible to dialectal variation, while others may only appear in particular scribal profiles. Method of text production is explored first.

### 7.2.1 *Method of text production*

It is conceivable that printers were less conscientious in reproducing interjections from their exemplars than scribes were. Both Figures 7-2 and 7-3 illustrate that five out of the six printed plays scored below the mean incidence of interjections (only *Everyman* scores slightly above the mean). One problem with printing versified text is related to the length of the verse lines and the number of letters each printed page can contain. A scribal hand is usually more flexible than type sets are. The scribe could reduce the size of

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Kytö's (2010). The method of text production, in other words, might explain some of the difference between incidence of interjections in the late medieval English plays and Early Modern English plays. As mentioned, the reason for suggesting a late composition date for the *Chester* cycle is its late revision. No earlier text than that found in MS Hm survives (except for the single prompt copy of pageant 'Antichrist' in MS Peniarth).

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letters and spaces if a long line is anticipated, or he could fit words in in the margins. In most cases a scribe could thus manage to fit in all the words of a long line. A printer with a type set of fixed size can do this to a lesser extent than a scribe. Still, he would probably prefer to keep long verses to one line rather than breaking them up. Printers used the same kind of common abbreviations as scribes did, which could, where relevant, save space on the paper. In addition, printers had an array of spaces of varying sizes, so space could be saved by reducing the size of gaps. However, in some cases, printers most likely could only keep a verse line within the breadth of the page by changing the wording, perhaps by ridding the play speeches of “superfluous” little words.

Interjections would be an obvious choice for omission. First, the typical interjection is a short word. Secondly, interjections are most commonly syntactically independent; removing an interjection will not cause loss of meaning or grammaticality in the sentence following it. Thirdly, most interjections are found at the beginning of verse lines, and thus end rhyme is not lost by ignoring them. Consequently, there is a reason to believe that printers may have cast off interjections and used fewer than scribes did. To test the hypothesis that method of text production matters to the relative frequency of interjections in early play texts, prints and manuscripts were compared.<sup>467</sup>

Excluding the results for *B+R*, the incidence of interjections in the remaining 16 manuscript texts was compared to the six printed texts. The Mann-Whitney U test was applied, but the variation in interjection incidence across the grouped texts was found not to be significant ( $P=0.261$ ). However, again the date of the play texts may be of importance. Figure 7-3 above showed that there is a decrease in the interjection frequencies in the later plays compared to the earlier ones. It is conceivable that the decrease is partly explained by the new method of text production introduced during the period in question. Some of the printed plays employ relatively few interjections. A comparison of the late manuscript material to the printed play texts should reveal any such

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<sup>467</sup> Since none of the printed play texts survive in manuscript versions, the comparison cannot be done directly by using parallel versions in print and manuscript of the same text.

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correlation. The incidence of interjections in five post-1500 manuscript texts were therefore compared to the six printed play texts.<sup>468</sup>

The testing of the incidence of interjections in five late manuscript plays versus the six printed plays shows no significant variation (Mann Whitney U,  $P=0.931$ ). The finding indicates that the decrease in the use of interjections in play texts takes place regardless of the method of text production. Thus, the finding that there appears to be a diachronic tendency towards a decrease in the employment of interjections appears corroborated.

However, as can be observed in Table 7-1 above, there is a greater variation in the incidence of interjections in the late manuscript texts compared to the late printed texts. While the variation in prints stretches from an incidence between the low score at 2.96 in *Fulgens and Luces* to the close to average score at 6.81 in *Everyman*, the incidence in the late manuscript texts varies from 3.64 in *Herod* to the high score at 9.95 in *Mary Magdalen*. In other words, it is still possible that the method of text production affected negatively the number of interjections used in plays. It is worth noting that the mean incidence of interjections in the group of prints is 4.74, which is well below the mean at 6.23 for all the late medieval play texts (Section 7.1.2). By contrast, the mean incidence in the group of late manuscripts is 6.44, which is higher than the mean score for all the play texts.

Alternative explanations for the variation in the incidence of interjections in the play material remain to be examined. The two groups just explored consist of different subgenres of late medieval drama. The group of prints comprises morality plays and interludes, while the group of late manuscripts comprises

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<sup>468</sup> The two groups consist of the following texts in manuscript: *Herod*, *Mary Magdalen*, *Conversion* (full text), *Sacrament*, and the *Chester* cycle, and in print: *Fulgens and Luces*, *Nature*, *Hickscorner*, *Mundus et Infans*, *Everyman*, and *Magnyfycence*. All these were handwritten or printed after 1500, i.e. the witness dates are post-1500 for all. There are no printed play texts from before 1500 in England. Two of the manuscript texts in the post-1500 group were composed prior to 1500, as were the two Medwall plays in the group of prints. The Chester Peniarth 'Antichrist' was probably copied around 1500, but was excluded from the post-1500 MS group as a related version is found in pageant 23 in the *Chester* cycle, which is included. Excluding the separate Peniarth text avoids the double representation of one pageant text. The *Burial and Resurrection* text was also excluded because it was found to be an outlier (Section 7.1.4).

biblical and miracle plays. Variations in the quantitative employment of interjections may be explained by subgenre. It is even more probable that the qualitative employment of various interjection types is affected by the subgenres of late medieval drama. Further, any variation in quantity or quality of interjections used in early drama may be due to diachronic changes. These issues are examined below.

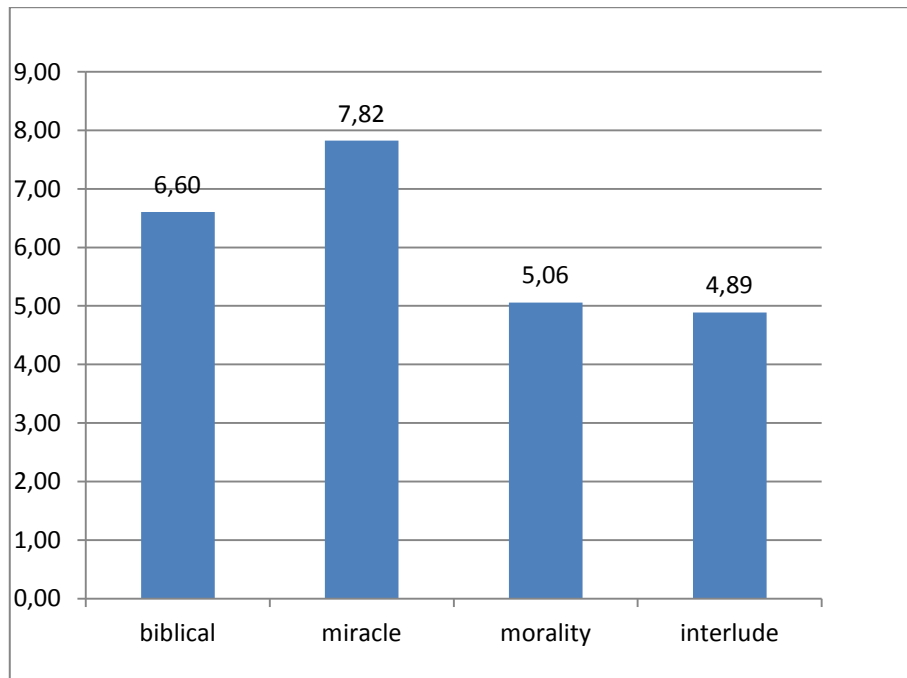
### *7.2.2 Diachronic changes and subgenre*

Since it was found in Section 7.2 (Figure 7-2) that there appears to be a diachronic trend towards less frequent use of interjections in the late medieval plays, it is worth exploring whether similar trends can be found within each subgenre of plays.<sup>469</sup> Further, there may be changes among certain types of interjections. It is conceivable that some types of interjections grew in popularity while others fell out of use in Late Middle English drama. These questions related to diachronic change are addressed in the following. First, Figure 7-4 below illustrates how the four subgenres vary in the overall employment of all types of interjections.

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<sup>469</sup> Section 2.2.5 explicates the classification of medieval drama into four subgenres of Late Middle English plays: biblical, miracle, morality, and interlude.

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**Figure 7-4 Incidence of interjections per 1,000 words according to subgenre**

As can be seen in Figure 7-4, there is considerable variation among the subgenres as regards their employment of interjections. The miracle play group reaches an incidence of almost 8 interjections per 1,000 words. The lowest score is found in the interlude group with fewer than 5 interjections per 1,000 words.

At first glance, the difference in interjection incidence seems to reflect two main groups of plays: those concerned with biblical topics and/or biblical characters, and those which are not. The biblical and the miracle plays belong in the first group and these have the highest interjection frequencies. The interludes and morality plays deal with non-biblical subject-matter, and these have lower frequencies. The latter group of plays consist of early examples of the type of moral plays which the Renaissance drama most clearly draws on. The Early Modern English plays discussed in Culpeper and Kytö (2010) are closer to this non-biblical play group than to the late medieval biblical drama. This relationship appears reflected in the overall use of interjections in the material: the incidence of interjections in the morality plays and interludes



#### INTERJECTIONS IN LATE MIDDLE ENGLISH PLAY TEXTS

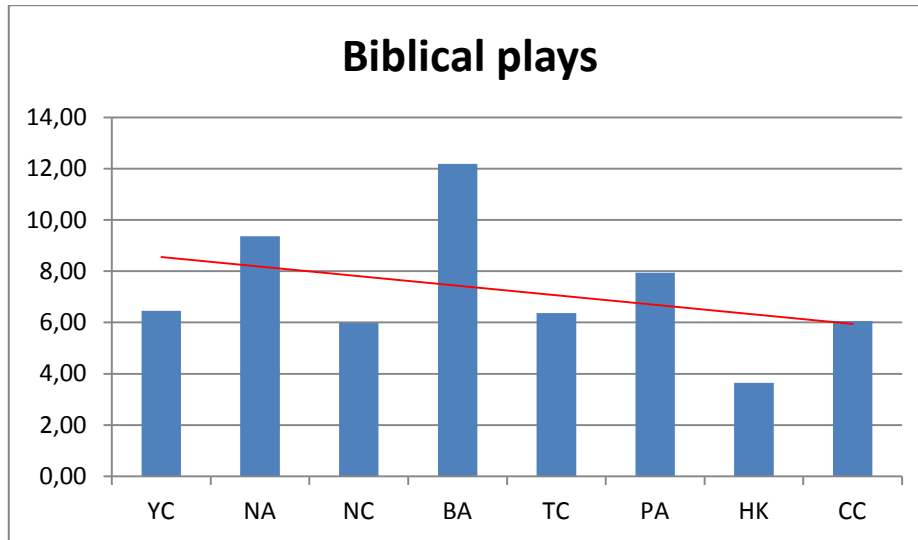
combined is about 5, while Culpeper and Kytö, as mentioned, find the incidence of interjections in Early Modern English drama to be 5.5.

Biblical and miracle plays are very much connected to late medieval Catholicism and the outdoor play tradition. Both subgenres are gradually abandoned during the sixteenth century. By contrast, the smaller-scale indoor play type seems to have become more or less disconnected from its religious background to survive in the early modern period as moral plays of many types and topics. The morality plays *Mankind*, *Nature*, *Wisdom*, *Mundus et Infans* and *Everyman* are typical examples of Catholic religious moral drama; the interludes of *Occupation and Idleness*, *Hickscorner*, and *Fulgens and Lucrez*, in spite of their religious, i.e. Catholic, references, constitute moral plays with clear affinities with post-Reformation drama. Both subgenres provide models for the developing play format: the small-scale indoor moral comedy. It would appear, therefore, that the lower incidence of interjections Culpeper and Kytö find in the Early Modern English plays compared to the Late Middle English plays of the present study is related to the different drama subgenres in the two periods.

However, the variation in incidence of interjections among the subgenres may hide considerable variation within each group of plays. It is worth examining whether the play subgenres included in the present study show individual patterns of change, i.e. whether the general diachronic decrease in the use of interjections is reflected in all the subgenres, as well.

Biblical plays are examined first. Figure 7-4 above showed that biblical plays have a mean score at 6.6 interjections per 1,000 words, but as Figure 7-1 illustrated, the incidence of interjections per play text varies greatly, also among the biblical plays. The highest scoring biblical play was found to be the *Burial and Resurrection* play, and the lowest incidence of interjections is found in the non-cycle biblical *Herod's Killing of the Children*. Leaving out the outlier scores of *B+R* gives Figure 7-5 below illustrating the change in the use of interjections in biblical plays. (All survive in manuscript.)

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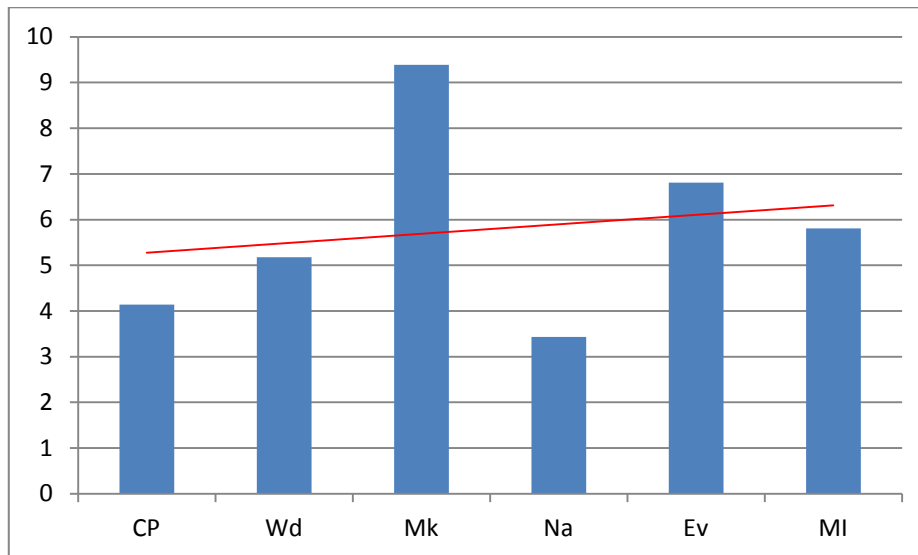
**Figure 7-5 Incidence of interjections in the biblical plays with linear trendline**

Again, in this and the following figures the plays are arranged by date of composition. As Figure 7-5 illustrates, the trend in the biblical plays corresponds with the overall trend in the Late Middle English play texts: there is a decline in the use of interjections in these text. This trend cannot be explained by the ongoing change in method of text production, as none of the biblical plays occurs in print.

The miracle play texts are all relatively late. As there are only three of them, a trend line would not supply any information of value. In a group of three the latest text largely dictates the direction of the trend line. Since the relatively low scoring *St Paul* is the latest of the three miracle plays - both by witness and composition date - there is a predictable decrease in the incidence of interjections in the subgenre of miracle plays. What is most obvious in the group of miracle plays is the great variation in the incidence of interjections, from the high score at 9.95 found in the play *Mary Magdalen* to the low score at 4.53 found in the *Conversion of St Paul*. Any low scores in this subgenre cannot be caused by the method of text production, since all three miracle play texts survive in manuscript, and not in print. The next two subgenres of historical English drama contain both manuscript and printed play texts.

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The subgenre of morality plays subsumes five play texts of very different dates. The earliest is the *Castle of Perseverance*, and the latest is *Mundus et Infans*.



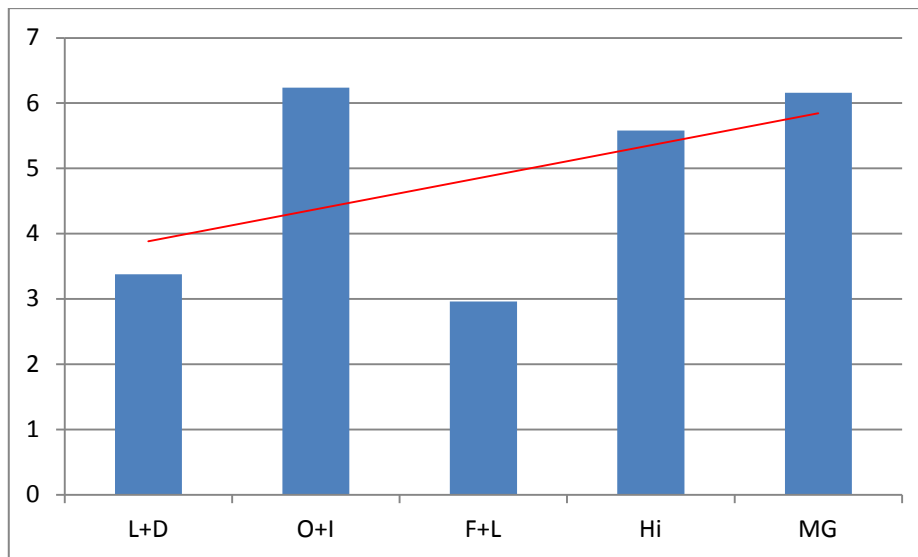
**Figure 7-6 Incidence of interjections in the morality plays with trendline**

The morality play subgenre in Figure 7-6 above actually demonstrates a change in the opposite direction from the general tendency of decreasing use of interjections. The three later plays are produced by print and not by hand, meaning that the findings in the morality play subgenre does not corroborate the hypothesis presented above that printers used fewer interjections than did scribes.

In the morality play group, too, there is great variation in the incidence of interjections. It would be tempting to suggest that the high score at 9.39 in *Mankind* is caused by the high-spirited comedy of this play, but as the figure illustrates, also the serious *Everyman* contains many interjections. The two texts survive in manuscript and print respectively. Thus they provide further exemplification that even though there is a general tendency towards somewhat fewer interjections in printed compared to manuscript material, the question of which factors determine the inclusion (or exclusion) of interjections in early play texts is a complex one.

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The interlude is the last subgenre to be examined for any diachronic change in overall frequencies of interjection incidence. This group is, perhaps surprisingly, another example of a subgenre containing both early and late material. As the mid-fifteenth century *Lucidus* and *Occupation* are rarely included in drama anthologies it is commonly believed that the subgenre of interludes is more modern than the other late medieval play types. The interlude subgenre continues to flourish in the sixteenth century, beyond the period studied in the present project. The group contains both manuscript and printed texts.



**Figure 7-7 Incidence of interjections in the interludes with trendline**

Again, the trend towards more interjections in the later interlude texts than in the earlier ones seems to contradict the overall finding of a decline in the popularity of interjections in late medieval English plays. Figure 7-7 clearly illustrates that interjections were popular also in the relatively late play texts *Hickscorner* and *Magnyfycence*. Both survive in print and both score above the incidence of interjections found in the Early Modern English play texts discussed in Culpeper and Kytö (2010). It is therefore clear that the subgenres of biblical and miracle plays are the causes of the attested decline in the employment of interjections in the material. This finding is particularly interesting bearing in mind that these two subgenres are distinct from the ones

found in Culpeper and Kytö's material. In other words, the late medieval interludes and morality plays, comparable to the Early Modern English drama, seem already to have established a pattern of fewer interjections than the mainly outdoor biblical drama. When a decline in the frequencies of interjections is attested in late Middle English play texts, this decline is attested in the more "old-fashioned" play types, rather than in the subgenres which continue to be popular in the post-Reformation era.

It will next be examined to what extent a general decline in the employment of interjections affects specific types of interjections. First it is explored whether the most popular interjections in late medieval English drama show distinct patterns of increasing or decreasing use. Secondly the same interjection types are explored in relation to the subgenres.

### *7.2.3 The popular interjections and their patterns of use*

The most common interjections in Late Middle English plays are A, O, ALAS, and OUT. It has earlier (in Section 6.8.1) been suggested that the interjection type O may be in the process of taking over some of the functions from the interjection type A in the period explored in the present study. It was established in Section 6.8.1 that A is much more frequent than O in the present material, while the ratio of A versus O is the reverse in Culpeper and Kytö's Early Modern English material (plays and other dialogic texts).

In Section 6.9.1 it was found that ALAS frequently occurs as a semi-interjection in the present material, i.e. ALAS is very often found syntactically embedded in clauses rather than as a syntactically independent core interjection. I suggested (in Section 6.9.1) that ALAS is in the process of de-lexicalisation, i.e. its usage seems to be changing from a word which rarely occurs alone, towards a core interjection which increasingly creates an utterance on its own and whose main function it is to express the speaker's emotion of sorrow and distress. It seems that ALAS is in the process of becoming an interjection, or pragmatic noise, which is how it is treated in Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 230-232). However, it cannot be claimed that the association with the interjection type A (Culpeper and Kytö 2010: 230) is obvious in the Late Middle English play material, because A constitutes an

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utterance on its own, while ALAS often does not, especially in the early part of the material.

The interjection type OUT is rarely commented upon in the literature on historical interjections, a fact which has two possible explanations: OUT has been ignored as an interjection because it has been considered to belong in the word class of adverbs, or it is ignored because it is a Middle English interjection only, and therefore goes unmentioned upon in studies of later historical periods, such as Early Modern English.<sup>470</sup> It will be examined in the following whether any pattern, or any change in pattern, in the use of these four most popular Late Middle English interjections can be deduced from the play texts. The play texts are arranged by witness dates in the figures below.<sup>471</sup>

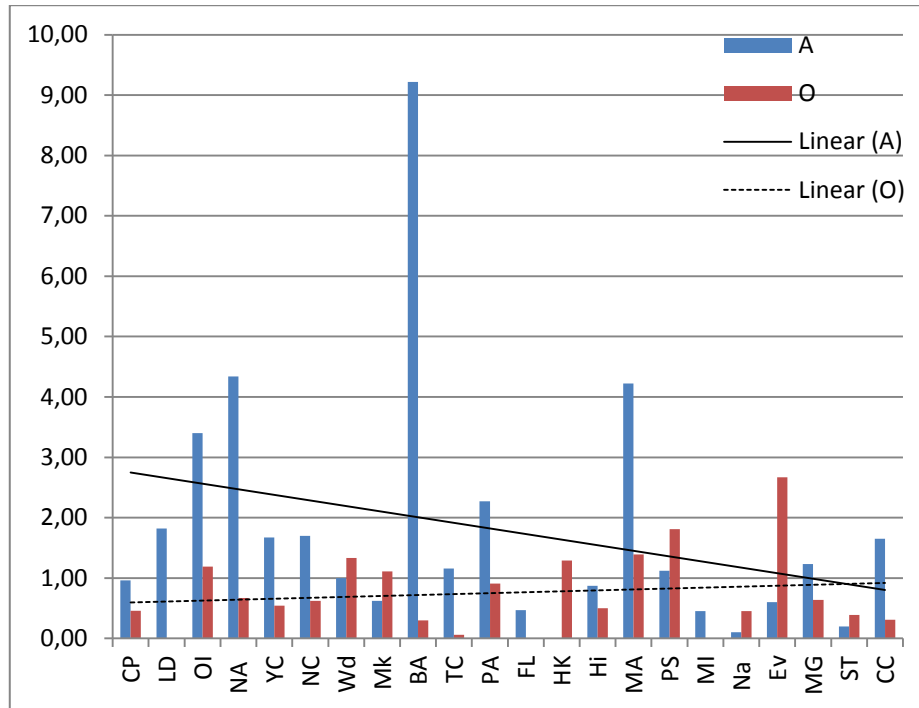
Section 6.8.7 discusses how the frequencies of the interjections A and O change in the Late Middle English play material. By grouping the material into two groups - pre- and post-1500 play texts – it was established that the interjection type A has an incidence of 1.6 in the early group and 1.4 in the later group of texts. The interjection type O occurs with an incidence of 0.6 in the early group, but the incidence rises to 1.1 in the post-1500 group of plays. Figure 7-8 below illustrates this decreasing trend in the employment of the interjection A when the texts are arranged by witness date (date of copy). The figure also shows an increase (the dotted trend line) in the use of the interjection O in the same texts.

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<sup>470</sup> Culpeper and Kytö (2010) do not include OUT among their interjections in Early Modern English material, and neither does Taavitsainen (1995). Koskenniemi (1962) treats two examples of OUT in her sixteenth century material. Taavitsainen (1997) does include OUT in her study on Late Middle English, and Mazzon (2009: 86) mentions it in relation to ALAS in her study on the Late Middle English *N-town* cycle.

<sup>471</sup> The full texts of the *York* cycle and the *Conversion* text are included, but they have been dated according to the distinct quality of the late additions in these texts (Section 7.1.3). The witness date of the *York* cycle is put to c. 1470 (the date of the Register), while the witness date of the *Conversion* text is c. 1550 (the date of the addition to the manuscript in which most of the interjections are found).

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**Figure 7-8 Diachronic trends for the use of the interjections A and O**

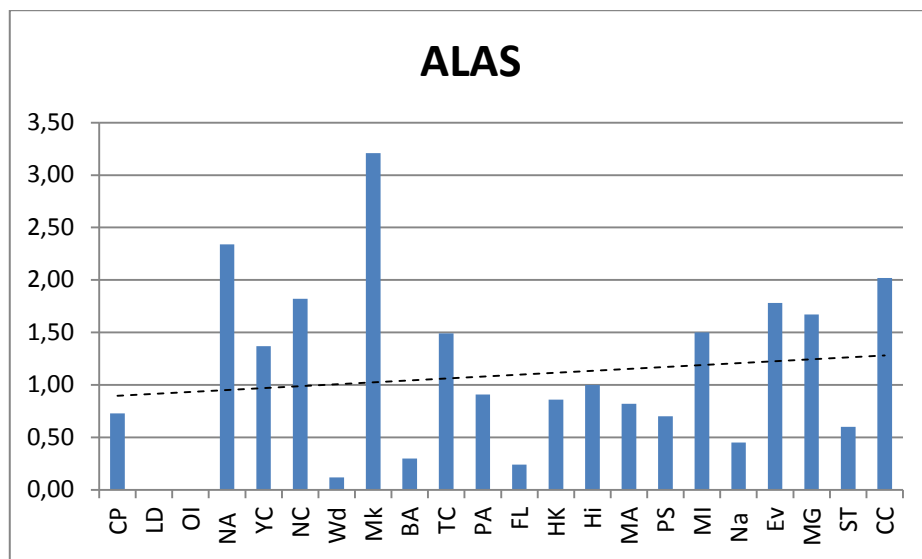
Figure 7-8 above shows what has already been suggested in Chapter 6, that the interjection type O, which is more frequent than A in Early Modern English play texts, seems to be in the process of replacing the interjection type A in the Late Middle English play texts. Some reasons are suggested in Section 6.8.7. The most likely one, I argue, is that early conventions dictate employing A for all-round (expressive and other) functions, while O is reserved for fewer functions. This differentiation means that A is used, for example, for joy, while O is not (cf. Sections 6.8.1 and 6.8.7). Even if difficult to attest, it is possible that the use of A in vocative constructions is closer to routines like greetings, while the use of O in vocative constructions more frequently implies emotion, i.e. it serves expressive-emotive functions expressing e.g. devotion in prayer or distress in invocations to God or other characters.

This possible convention dictating the employment of the interjection types A and O was applied only in the earlier part of the Late Middle English play

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material. It seems not to have been applied in all the early play texts, however, and the system is gradually abandoned during the Late Middle English period. By the Early Modern English period the interjection type O has by far outnumbered A, and most likely also taken over the function as the all-round interjection used in many contexts.

The following figures illustrate the diachronic trends regarding the use of ALAS and OUT. Again, the texts are arranged by witness dates.



**Figure 7-9 Diachronic trend for the use of the interjection ALAS**

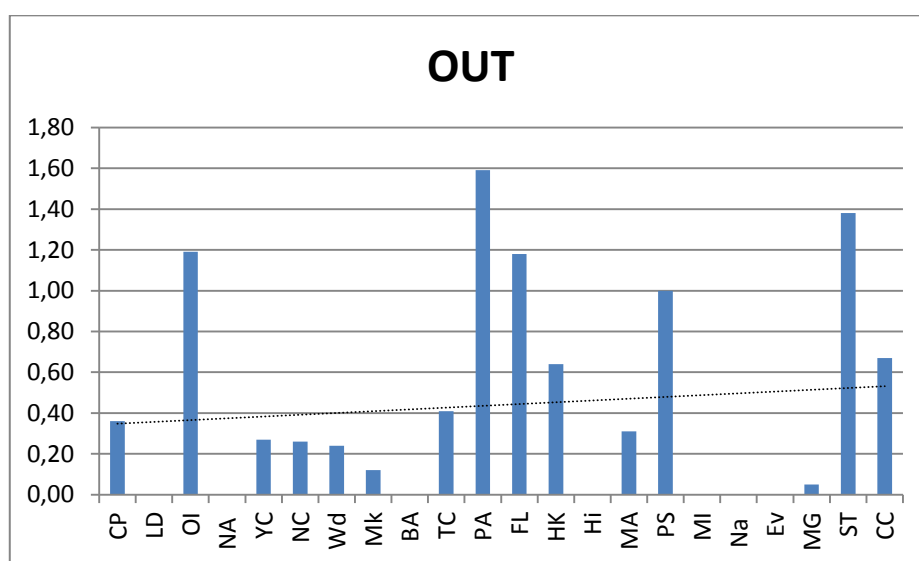
The figure illustrates that ALAS is a popular interjection used in all types of plays throughout the Late Middle English period. However, it was found in Section 6.9.1 that ALAS in this period frequently occurs in contexts where it is syntactically embedded in the clause, or co-text, through the use of phrases such as ‘alas for’ and ‘alas that’. In other words, ALAS is not a typical interjection in Late Middle English; rather it expresses emotion by being used as a proper content word, in expressions similar to ‘pity that I was born’.

In Section 6.9.1 the play material was divided into two groups according to witness date before and after 1500. It was found that syntactically embedded use of ALAS accounts for 21 % of all occurrences in the fifteenth century



#### INTERJECTIONS IN LATE MIDDLE ENGLISH PLAY TEXTS

material, while they account for only 10 % of the occurrences in the sixteenth century material. Figure 7-9 does not illustrate this diachronic change from phrasal use of ALAS towards the use of ALAS as a syntactically independent interjection which appears to be absolutely dominant in Culpeper and Kytö's Early Modern English dialogic material. What can be established is that ALAS has a long history as a popular expressive item in historical English drama, but it only gradually develops from content word of foreign origin to core interjection with the ability to form utterances on its own.



**Figure 7-10 Diachronic trend for the use of the interjection OUT**

Figure 7-10 illustrates among other things that the Late Middle English play texts employ the interjection type OUT in varying degrees; some of the texts do not include OUT among their repertoire of interjections at all. A linear trendline shows a tendency towards increased use of OUT, but as can be seen from the figure above, this trend is clearly defined by two late plays: the miracle play *Conversion of St Paul* (ST) and the biblical *Chester* cycle (CC). Bearing in mind that these are conservative play types insofar as the subgenres in which they belong are not included in the studies on Early Modern English interjections by Taavitsainen (1995) and Culpeper and Kytö (2010), it is possible that OUT is much less frequent if not absent from Early Modern English dialogic material.

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It is worth noting that three of the seven post-1500 play texts do not employ OUT at all, but Figure 7-9 still suggests an increase in the use of OUT during the period under examination. Further, even though a high incidence of OUT is observed in the conservative (biblical and miracle) play types such as *Sacrament* (1.0), Peniarth 'Antichrist' (1.59), *Conversion* (1.38) and *Chester* (0.67), this interjection type is not restricted to these kinds of plays. The interjection OUT is also found in relatively high incidences in the two interludes *Occupation and Idleness* (1.19) and *Fulgens and Luces* (1.18).<sup>472</sup> It cannot be ruled out that the interjection type OUT disappears with the Late Middle English drama, but it seems more likely that it was still in use in Early Modern English drama, as well; except for the Koskenniemi's (1962) two examples, it has just not been included in studies of interjections from this period.

### 7.2.4 Interjection types in the subgenres

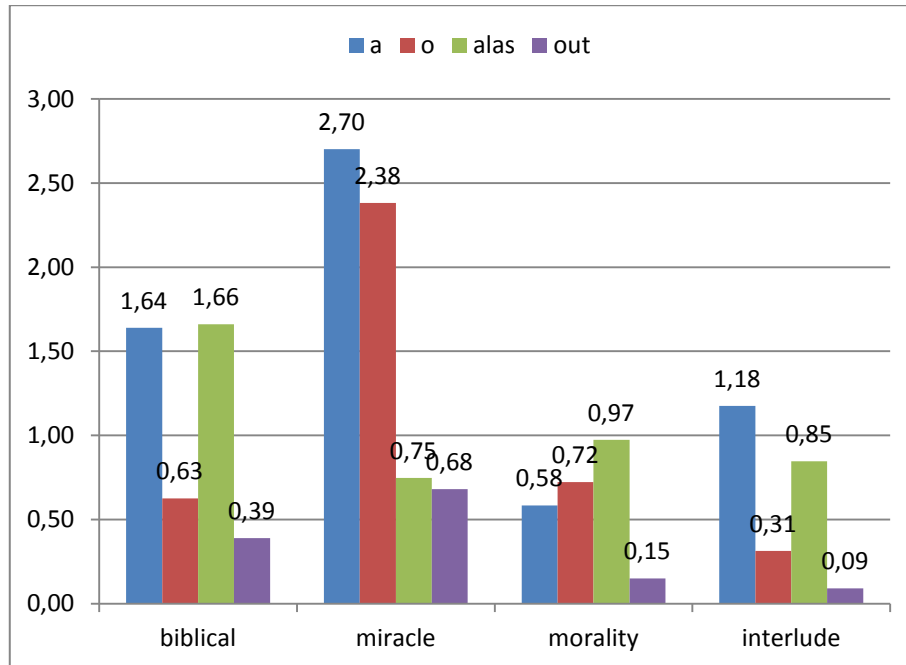
On the one hand, it is possible that the various subgenres explored exhibit varying patterns of usage of different interjection types, or that they are used in increasing or decreasing frequencies according to composition dates of the plays. The most numerous interjections are explored by subgenre and diachrony first. On the other hand, it has been found that the use of the most frequent interjections does not seem to correlate with any particular kind of play, since they occur in almost all plays regardless of subgenre. The use of some less frequent items has therefore also been examined in the following. These items are LO, PARDIE, and WELLAWAY, all found in Chapter 6 to be at the periphery of my definition of interjections.

First, the use of the most frequent interjection types is examined. Figure 7-11 below illustrates the average frequencies of A, O, ALAS, and OUT in the four play subgenres.

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<sup>472</sup> In biblical and miracle plays, the interjection OUT is most commonly employed by bad speakers, most typically by devils but also by bad human speakers. In interludes, OUT is used in fights in half of its occurrences (they are few, however). Physical comedy may be implied in the scenes where OUT is used, i.e. by devils and heathens being punished in the religious plays or when the characters fight in the interludes. It is expected that this type of comedy is found in later play types, as well.

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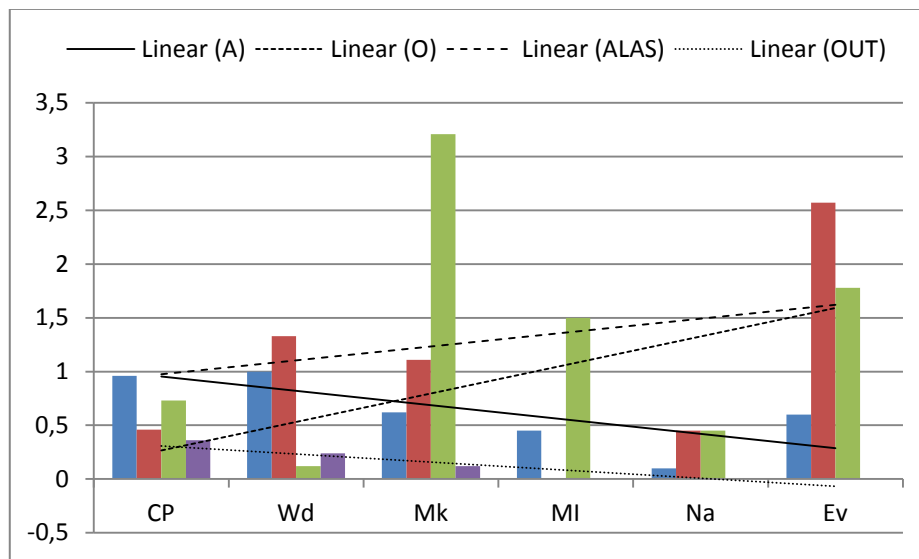
**Figure 7-11 The most common interjection types in all four subgenres**

The figure above illustrates that all four most numerous types of interjections occur in all the subgenres. As can be observed from Figure 7-11, the incidence of each type of interjection varies. The figure shows that the interjection A is more common than O in three of the four subgenres: only the morality plays have more O than A. The interjection type ALAS outnumbers both A and O in two subgenres: biblical and morality plays. The subgenre of miracle plays employs by far the highest number of the four interjection types discussed here.

The most dramatic variation is the great difference in incidence of the interjection O in miracle plays (2.7) compared to interludes (0.31). It is tempting to suggest that the great variation in the use of O between these subgenres is caused by their different connections to religion, and, further, that O is a typical marker of religious language, found for instance in pious invocations such as *O Lord*. However, it was found in Chapter 6 that the interjection A occurs as commonly as O in such co-texts (see e.g. the biblical plays in Figure 7-11). Other explanations are discussed below, where more

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detailed examination of each subgenre and its use of certain interjection types is performed. These discussions inspect diachronic changes in frequencies within the subgenres as well as within each group of the most common interjections. Again, the witness dates rather than composition dates have been used. The biblical plays are examined first.



**Figure 7-12 A, O, ALAS, and OUT in biblical plays**

Figure 7-12 has four trendlines illustrating the change in incidence of the interjections A, O, ALAS, and OUT (illustrated by columns) in the subgenre of biblical plays arranged by witness dates.

A continuous trendline (————) illustrates that there is a marked decrease in the use of the interjection A in the biblical plays from an incidence of close to 4 to an incidence of below 2. A dotted trendline (.....) illustrates a slight increase in the incidence of the interjection O in the biblical plays. Thus, the subgenre of biblical plays mirrors the overall trend found above of a decreasing popularity of the interjection type A matched by a slight but visible increasing popularity of the interjection type O.

The punctuated trendline (- - - -) illustrates a decrease in the use of ALAS in the biblical plays, i.e. a contrastive finding compared to the increasing

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popularity attested for ALAS when all play texts were included (Figure 7-9). A small-dotted trendline (.....) starting virtually at 0 in Figure 7-12 shows a marked increase in the frequency of the interjection OUT from 0 to 1. OUT is used sparingly but meaningfully in six out of the eight biblical play texts. The expressive-emotive interjection OUT is discussed in Section 6.8.12. It was found that it denotes extreme anger, pain, or fear, and it is most often found in the speeches of bad characters, e.g. devils. The data are too few in the case of OUT to make any claims about the popularity of the interjection other than that at least it does not seem to become uncommon or obsolete in this subgenre of late medieval drama. It deserves further study also in Early Modern English play texts, as the findings of the present study certainly suggest that OUT is an interjection and not an adverb.

In the following, it is examined whether the same patterns are found in the other subgenres of early English drama. The miracle plays have been excluded from the examination as they are too few to supply any meaningful trends. The subgenre of morality plays is, therefore, the next group of plays to be examined, in Figure 7-13. The interludes follow last (Figure 7-14).

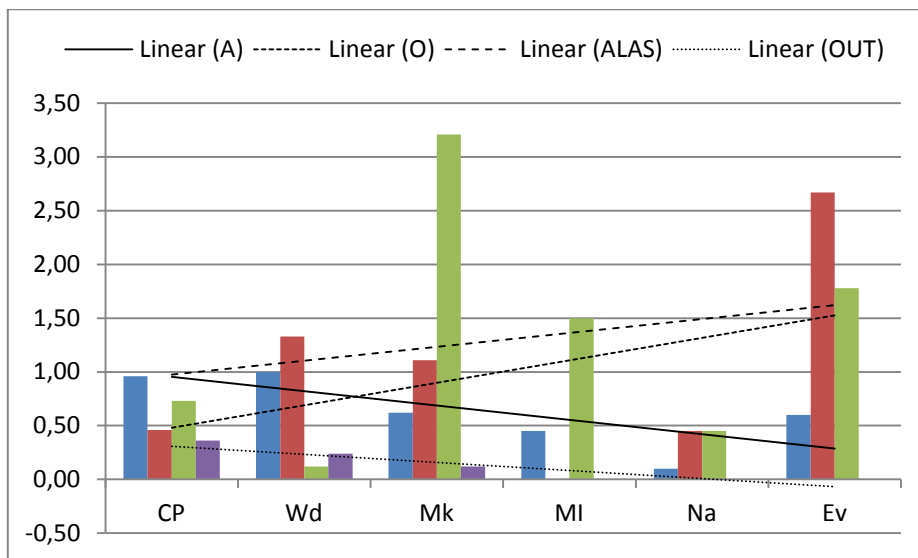


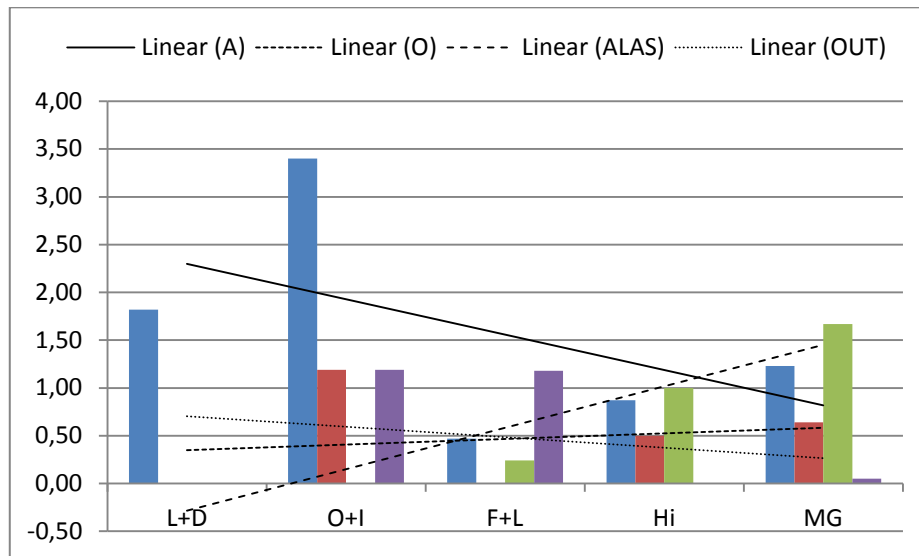
Figure 7-13 A, O, ALAS, and OUT in morality plays

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Figure 7-13 above illustrates that there is a diachronic decrease in the use of the interjection A in the subgenre of morality plays (illustrated by a full, unbroken trendline, as in Figure 7-12). There is in addition a marked increase in the incidence of the interjection O, from around 0.5 to 1.5. This happens in spite of the absence of O in *Mundus et Infans*. Both trends, of decreasing use of A and increasing use of O, parallel the development found in the subgenre of biblical plays above, but it is more pronounced in the morality plays.

The interjection ALAS increases in popularity in the morality plays, while a slight decrease was found in the subgenre of biblical plays. The use of the interjection OUT in morality plays changes radically, as the three latest play texts contain no examples of it. Both these findings contrast the findings in the subgenre of biblical plays.

The interludes are examined next. They are listed according to their witness dates, which in this particular group happens to coincide with the chronological order of composition.



**Figure 7-14 A, O, ALAS, and OUT in interludes**

The figure illustrates that the use of the interjection A is declining also in the last group to be examined, the subgenre of interludes. The extensive use of A

in the early Winchester interludes (*Lucidus and Dubius* and *Occupation and Idleness*) makes the trend line even steeper than it was in the subgenres of biblical and morality plays.<sup>473</sup> As can be observed in Figure 7-14, the three latest interludes actually show an increasing use of the interjection A.

The popularity of the interjection type O increases diachronically in the interludes as it did in both the biblical and the morality plays. This finding suggests that even though the interjection O may originally have been connected to religious plays through influence from vocative phrases like *O Lord* used in e.g. church ceremony, it is no longer restricted to religious types of play in the Late Middle English period. By the Early Modern English period, with its fewer examples of religious drama yet more frequent use of the interjection O, the form is established as a non-religious form.

The interjection ALAS also shows a diachronically increasing frequency in interludes. This finding parallels the results found for the use of ALAS in morality plays, but not in biblical plays, where it shows a slight trend towards decreasing use. The use of the interjection OUT in interludes is decreasing according to Figure 7-14, but again, some reservations are in order, as OUT is attested in only three out of five play texts. OUT occurs in *Occupation*, *Fulgens* and, barely visible in the figure, in *Magnyfycence*. The great chronological distance between the earliest and the latest of these texts, suggests that the interjection OUT had a long life in Late Middle English drama.

In total, the examination of the subgenres support the hypothesis put forward in Chapter 6 that the interjection type O is becoming more frequent in the material of the present study. It is also found that this rise in popularity seems to occur at the cost of the interjection A in Late Middle English drama. This pattern corresponds to the observation in Culpeper and Kytö (2010) that O is more frequent than A in Early Modern English plays. The interjection A is still more popular than O in Late Middle English plays, but its popularity is declining. The interjection ALAS is popular and remains frequent all through the period examined. The interjection OUT shows a decreasing trend, but its

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<sup>473</sup> The playwright behind the *Winchester Dialogues* used the interjection A as a catch-all, especially in the first play (LD), where he does not include its rival, the interjection type O, at all.

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longevity is attested in two of subgenres, in the interludes as well as in the conservative biblical plays.

### 7.3 *Markers of play types*

The frequent interjection types just discussed cannot be seen as markers of any particular type of play, occurring as they do in close to all play texts. Less frequent interjection types might show more distinct patterns than A, O, ALAS and OUT do. Such candidates are the peripheral items LO, PARDIE, and WELLAWAY. These may be connected to certain types of plays, and are discussed as markers of play types in the following

There are different reasons for selecting these items: LO is commonly regarded as an interjection and included in most studies on them. LO may be connected to biblical play types if it stems from religious linguistic practices, such as sermons (Section 6.8.11). The second item, PARDIE, is an expressive discourse marker which appears connected to play types with particular focus on dialogue, presumably indoor plays allowing for more finegrained interplay among the characters than the extensive outdoor plays perhaps could afford. PARDIE typically denotes objection to the words of the previous speaker and as such it serves phatic rather than expressive functions (Section 6.10.4). The last item, WELLAWAY, stems from Old English. In Late Middle English play texts, it is often embedded in phrases, i.e. it does not seem to be treated as a syntactically independent core interjection any longer. WELLAWAY does not occur frequently in Late Middle English play texts, and it may be a marker of conservative language and/or play types.

Since these items, except for LO, are relatively infrequent, a graph will not illustrate their distribution well. Instead, the three items are listed below as raw numbers for each play text in Table 7-2 below. The length of each text is included as word total in order to give an impression of the frequency of each item. The plays are listed according to their witness dates.

<b>Title</b>	<b>No of words</b>	<b>LO</b>	<b>PARDIE</b>	<b>WELLAWAY</b>
<i>Perseverance</i>	21,967	9	1	7 (1 phr.)
<i>Lucidus</i>	3,850	0	5	0
<i>Occupation</i>	5,292	8	0	0



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<i>North Abe</i>	2,992	2	0	0
<i>York full</i>	89,590	97	1	8 (0 phr.)
<i>N-town</i>	77,249	51	1	12 (4 phr.)
<i>Mankind</i>	8,097	10	0	0
<i>Wisdom Macro</i>	8,300	17	0	0
<i>Brome Abe</i>	3,364	7	0	1 (phr.)
<i>Towneley</i>	79,928	69	11	8 (0 phr.)
<i>Peniarth</i> <i>Antichrist</i>	4,406	0	0	0
<i>Herod</i>	4,667	1	0	0
<i>Fulgens</i>	16,910	9	11	0
<i>Hickscorner</i>	8,064	11	2	1 (phr.)
<i>Sacrament</i>	7,165	2	0	0
<i>Mary M</i>	15,878	8	1	0
<i>Mundus</i>	6,709	7	1	0
<i>Everyman</i>	6,754	5	1	0
<i>Magnyfycence</i>	20,300	9	2	0
<i>Nature</i>	20,130	16	15	0
<i>Conversion full</i>	5,079	0	0	0
<i>Chester</i>	65,296	22	6	6 (1phr., 2mix)

**Table 7-2 LO, PARDIE, and WELLAWAY as markers of subgenre**

Table 7-2 shows that the pragmatic marker LO is found in most Late Middle English play texts regardless of date or subgenre. It is very common in early play texts, and absent only from one interlude (*Lucidus*), one biblical play (Peniarth ‘Antichrist’), and one miracle play (*Conversion of St Paul*). It does not seem to be a marker of religious play types, which perhaps would have been expected of an item possibly stemming from biblical language (Taavitsainen 1997: 589). The play types most strongly connected to biblical characters and motifs, the biblical and miracle plays, have an incidence of LO at 0.73, while the remaining play types, the morality plays and interludes, employ LO at an incidence of 0.8. In other words, there is no substantial difference in the frequency of LO between plays drawing on biblical topics and plays which do not. This most likely means that there is little difference in the use of LO also between outdoor and indoor plays.

It was found in Section 6.8.11 that LO rarely expresses emotion or attitude in the speaker, and it rarely occurs turn-initially in imitation of a natural outburst. I suggest that LO in Late Middle English play dialogue, primarily

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serves pragmatic dramatic purposes. It is used to point out a person, object or argument, as an aid to the audience as well as the director and actors in their interpretation of the action of the play. Its use is equivalent to that of a verb such as a 'look', and it seems likely that it is this non-religious, pragmatic function that makes LO popular also in later play types in the Early Modern English period where it is attested both in Taavitsainen (1997) and in Culpeper and Kytö (2010).

PARDIE is much less frequent than LO, but similarly to it, PARDIE is attested in all four subgenres - although with only one occurrence in a miracle play, *Mary Magdalen*. In other words, PARDIE is used in both indoor and outdoor plays, but it appears to be most frequently found in interludes, i.e. in indoor plays which may have had the opportunity of paying particular attention to the dialogue because of their intimate format and relation to the audience. The plays can be grouped according to manner of staging, illustrated in Table 7-3 below.<sup>474</sup> The incidence of PARDIE was calculated for each of the indoor and the outdoor plays. Grouped together, the indoor plays have an incidence of PARDIE at 0.38, while the outdoor plays have only 0.06, figures indicating a significant variation between the two groups of plays. The results were tested applying the Mann-Whitney U Test and the hypothesis that PARDIE marks the indoor play format was confirmed (P=0.03).

Finally, the table illustrates that WELLAWAY is typically found in religious plays and in particular in the biblical cycles. 34 examples occur in cycles, and it is found in all four cycles. In addition, 1 example of WELLAWAY is attested in a biblical single play, the Brome *Abraham*. 7 examples occur in the

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<sup>474</sup> Some play texts cannot be classified as indoor or outdoor plays because it is not known how they were performed or if they were performed at all. Of the 23 play texts, 8 have been categorised as outdoor plays – the four cycles, the three miracle plays, and one morality play: *Perseverance* – and 10 have been categorised as indoor plays – all five interludes, five morality plays, and one biblical play: *Herod*. Three biblical play texts have been excluded on the grounds that they may have been meant for reading rather than for staging (see Section 7.5). These are the Brome and Northampton *Abraham* plays in addition to *Burial and Resurrection*. MS Peniarth 'Antichrist' was excluded, as the *Chester* cycle represents it in the group of outdoor plays. *Wisdom* has also been excluded as there is no agreement about manner of staging (Appendix I).

early morality *Perseverance*, and 1 example occurs in the interlude *Hickscorner*, a relatively late play text.

It seems likely that WELLAWAY may be a marker of conservative play types, and especially of the biblical cycles. Further, it appears to be a marker of conservative language, frequently found in phrases such as ‘sing WELLAWAY’ rather than as a syntactically independent expression of emotion. This phrasal usage may imply that WELLAWAY was in the process of becoming a stock phrase, no longer primarily an expressive interjection on its own. The early *York* and *Towneley* cycles have eight examples of WELLAWAY each, none of which are found in phrases. Other plays contain both forms, phrasal and independent use of WELLAWAY, but perhaps symptomatically WELLAWAY forms part of a phrase when it is employed once in a late interlude. The hypothesis that WELLAWAY is a conservative interjection is strengthened by the confused use of it attested in the late copy of the *Chester* cycle play (Section 6.10.1). The scribe of *Chester* MS Hm has two strange constructions in which WELLAWAY appears confused into the expressions *Alas nowe wayle ys went awaye* (*Chester* 18: 17) and *Alas wayle awaye ys went* (*Chester* 19: 1).

#### 7.4 *Variation according to manner of staging*

An alternative approach to the traditional categorisation of medieval plays into certain content-based subgenres is the division of medieval plays into two groups based on manner of staging: outdoor and indoor drama (discussed in Section 1.2.5). This aspect is intertwined with the chronological aspect, because outdoor plays tend to be early and indoor plays tend to be late, with the important exception of the outdoor *Chester* cycle. When the distribution of PARDIE was analysed above (Section 7.3), the plays were categorised according to manner of staging. It was found that PARDIE is a marker of indoor plays. Some interjections may similarly be connected to either indoor or outdoor plays. It may be hypothesised that outdoor drama makes more extensive use of interjections in general, or of certain types of interjections, because the outdoor format demands a clearer signalling of the action. Conversely, the indoor format with its more intimate connections with its select audience, could afford highlighting the dialogue by employing discourse markers such as PARDIE.

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Normington (2009) argues for an understanding of late medieval drama not based on modern concepts of subgenres foreign to the times of the plays themselves, but based on some obvious differences in the late medieval manner of play production. Some plays were staged outdoors for varied audiences, while others were staged indoors for a select group of spectators. Biblical cycles belong to the first type of play staging, while interludes represent the typical indoor select staging (cf. Section 3.6.2). Even though the distinction is clear, it is not always equally obvious which plays were staged in which manner. Some plays can relatively confidently be assigned to one or the other group; those which cannot have been left out of the following discussion.<sup>475</sup>

It is tested first whether an overall difference in the frequency of interjections can be attested between the two groups of plays. Four texts have been excluded from the following analysis: the *Burial and Resurrection* was excluded on the grounds that it provides outlier frequencies. The Northampton *Abraham* and the Brome *Abraham* have been excluded because they appear to be copied as reading material, and manner of staging may therefore be irrelevant (this is discussed in Section 7.5 below). Lastly, the *Wisdom* play text has also been excluded, since it is has been impossible to establish whether it was performed indoors or outdoors. By contrast, the *Herod* play text is included among the outdoor plays, even though it is difficult to assign to either class with absolute certainty. Some plays conceivably were performed in both manners.

<b>Outdoor plays</b>	<b>Indoor plays</b>
<i>York cycle</i>	<i>Mankind</i>
<i>N-town cycle</i>	<i>Mundus et Infans</i>
<i>Towneley cycle</i>	<i>Nature</i>
<i>Chester cycle</i>	<i>Everyman</i>
<i>Herod</i>	<i>Lucidus and Dubius</i>
<i>Mary Magdalen</i>	<i>Occupation and Idleness</i>
<i>Conversion of St Paul</i>	<i>Fulgens and Lucre</i>
<i>Play of the Sacrament</i>	<i>Hickscorner</i>
<i>The Castle of Perseverance</i>	<i>Magnyfycence</i>

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<sup>475</sup> The excluded play texts are: Northampton *Abraham*, Brome *Abraham*, *Burial and Resurrection*, and *Wisdom*. The Peniarth ‘Antichrist’ was not included, as it is represented as one of the pageants in the *Chester* cycle, an outdoor play.

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Words in total: 366,819 Incidence of interjections: 6.2	Words in total: 96,106 Incidence of interjections: 5.2
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**Table 7-3 Outdoor versus indoor plays**

The incidence of all interjections in plays staged outdoors is slightly higher (6.2) than the incidence of interjections in plays staged indoors (5.2). This variation in incidence of interjections in the two groups is not significant (Mann Whitney U,  $n_1=9$ ,  $n_2=9$ ,  $P=0.730$ ). The possibility exists, however, that individual types of interjections vary according to manner of performance. The significance tests, the one just referred to as well as the following ones, included the incidences of all the plays in the two groups ( $n_1=9$ ,  $n_2=9$ ), and was not based on the mean incidence of the group.

The incidence of the interjection A in the play texts was also tested when they are categorised as outdoor and indoor plays. It is possible that the interjection A was more sonorant and worked better than its rival O on an outdoor stage. However, the use of A was not found to vary significantly according to manner of staging (Mann Whitney U,  $n_1=9$ ,  $n_2=9$ ,  $P=0.489$ ).

The interjection HO/HOWE occurs in many play texts as a call for attention. Possibly this interjection serves both dramatic and practical functions in play performance, e.g. by warning the crowds present at an outdoor performance that players are entering. HOWE is attested in all the plays belonging in the group of outdoor plays, while it is not found in all the indoor plays; it is e.g. not employed in *Everyman*, *Wisdom* or any of the two *Winchester Dialogues*. Thus, it can be hypothesised that there is a higher incidence of HOWE in the group of outdoor plays than in the group of indoor plays. The incidence of the interjection-call HOWE (including HO, cf. Section 6.8.4) was tested across the two groups of plays, but again its distribution was not significantly different in indoor and outdoor plays (Mann-Whitney U,  $n_1=9$ ,  $n_2=9$ ,  $P=0.340$ ).

It can be hypothesised that the discourse marker PARDIE is used particularly often in indoor play types, as it seems likely that the indoor plays could afford greater focus on the dialogue itself than could the outdoor plays (Section 6.10.4). PARDIE is often used to protest the words of the previous speaker, and it often occurs in verbal battles, word play, and misunderstandings among the characters. Dialogue including such features seems to be more common in

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the indoor than in the outdoor plays, and therefore PARDIE was tested as a potential marker of the indoor play dialogue. It was found that there is a significant variation in the employment of PARDIE between plays performed outdoors and plays performed indoors (Mann Whitney U,  $n_1=9$ ,  $n_2=9$ ,  $P=0.031$ ).

Lastly, the interjection OUT was tested across the groups of indoor and outdoor plays, and found to be significantly more frequent in outdoor play types (Mann-Whitney U,  $n_1=9$ ,  $n_2=9$ ,  $P=0.031$ ). This finding suggests that the interjection OUT, which is a numerous interjection in Late Middle English plays, is in fact a marker of the conservative, outdoor plays. Thus, it is perhaps not surprising that OUT goes unnoticed in studies of Early Modern English drama which do not include this type of plays. If OUT only occurs in small numbers in Early English play texts, it may be difficult to recognise that what looks like an adverb may in fact be an interjection stemming from Late Middle English.

It has been found that interjections in general occur in similar frequencies in indoor and outdoor plays. Of the types of interjections analysed, it was found that OUT marks outdoor plays. In Section 7.3 it was found that the discourse marker PARDIE marks indoor plays, and the significance test confirms this finding.

### 7.5 *Play texts for meditation*

Three non-cycle biblical plays focus particularly on suffering and strong emotion. All three plays may have been intended as ways of meditating the sacrifice of Christ: *Burial and Resurrection* by direct representation of the Passion, and the two *Abraham* plays indirectly via the parallel Old Testament story. These non-cycle biblical plays therefore seem to have had a somewhat different function from the cycles, even though both forms dramatise biblical matter.

The three plays have in common that it is uncertain whether they were ever intended for staging. It has been suggested that *Burial and Resurrection* was written and staged by Carthusians as a meditational piece at Easter (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: lxxv), but it is not certain that it ever was performed

like other types of drama. It survives in a manuscript containing diverse material such as translated meditations, a chronicle in the form of a prayer, a list of priors in the Charterhouse dated 1518, and parts of a Christian romance (Baker, Murphy, and Hall 1982: lxxvi-lxxx). The two *Abraham* play texts also survive in manuscripts of miscellanea (Davis 1970: xlvii-li; lviii-lxi), suggesting that they were intended for reading together with the rest of the material. The high incidence of interjections in this group of plays may reflect that they were intended for other purposes than staging, perhaps for reading and contemplation. The incidence of interjections in these three texts as a group was measured to be significantly higher than in the rest of the play texts (Mann-Whitney U,  $n_1=3$ ,  $n_2=20$ ,  $P=.005$ ).

### 7.6 *Characterisation of speakers*

The *dramatis personae* of late medieval English plays may be stereotypical but they still represent a greater multitude of character types than modern Western drama usually does. All sorts of human characters such as Christian and heathen emperors, kings and queens, soldiers, shipmasters and servants crowd the stage. In addition, there are angels and devils, personifications of deeds, faculties, goods, and, commonly, of vices and virtues. Christ appears as man, as resurrected God, and in spirit. Even God himself often takes part in the biblical plays.

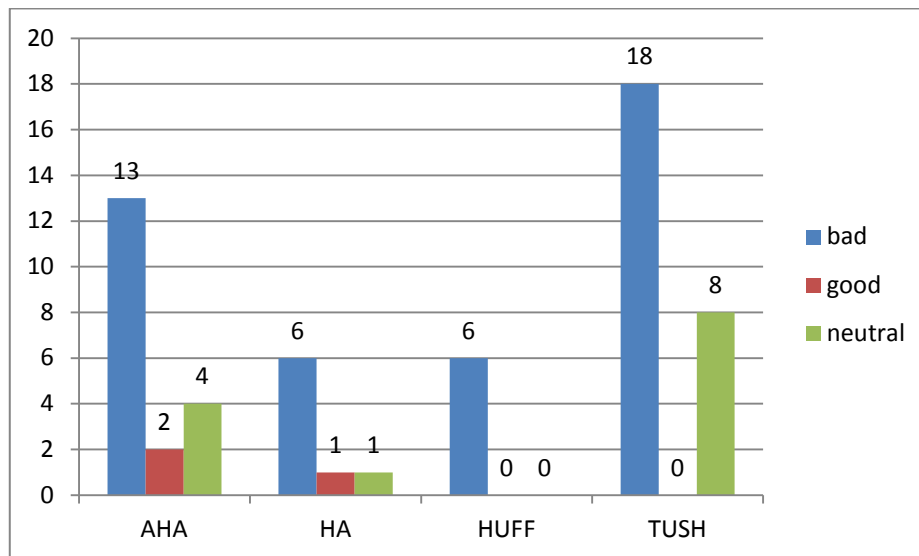
The use of interjections characterises some of the speakers. God and celestial characters like angels rarely use interjections, while demonic characters use interjections frequently. Some interjection types are used by almost all character types. The most common interjections, A, O, and ALAS, are universal in the sense that all types of characters use them, whether the characters be good or bad, human or allegorical, male or female.

However, some types of interjections occur mainly in the speeches of bad characters. It was found in Chapter 6 that the aspirated interjections, AHA, HA, HO, and HUFF, as well as the interjection TUSH, seem to mark characters negatively. Most speakers employing such interjections in late medieval English drama express superiority, anger, and pride, all of which would be considered vicious character traits in the religious outlook of the period. The interjection HO is somewhat difficult to categorise as it seems to

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serve two distinct functions. It can be used as a call for attention over a distance or in the dark, and this variant I tentatively tried to single out by giving it the spelling form HOWE. The other function is a truly expressive one, denoting the speaker's anger, often in a command to cease moving or talking. This was given the form HO. This orthographic distinction, however, is not found in the material – the commonest form for both functions is <how>. In the following discussion the attention calls, HOWE, have been excluded, but the distinction is purely based on my reading of the context and co-text of these particular items.

The interjections cannot be given as incidences in the speeches of good versus bad characters, for the lines of each type of characters have not been counted. Rather, in the following the raw numbers of HA, AHA, HUFF, and TUSH have been used. It should be noted, however, that nothing suggests that bad characters outnumber good ones. It was found that in the general use of all types of interjections is spread fairly evenly among the groups bad and good characters.



**Figure 7-15 The use of AHA, HA, HUFF, and TUSH by different character types**

The raw numbers used in Figure 7-15 gives an idea of how the possibly negatively marking interjection types are distributed in the speech of good



versus bad characters. Since some characters are difficult to categorise as good or bad, or are clearly neither good nor bad, a third category of characters is denoted 'neutral'. It is worth discussing the findings as well as the categorisation of both interjection type and character type for each sample.

The interjection AHA can be difficult to categorise due to spelling (Section 6.9.2). It was found that of the 19 possible attestations of AHA, 13 belong in the turns of bad character, and two in the turns of good characters. In one of the latter cases (good Doctrine in *Occupation*), laughter (HA HA) is an alternative interpretation to AHA. All four examples of AHA used by a neutral character occur in just one text, *Mundus et Infans*. Further, all four examples are spoken by the same character, young Infans as he grows and presents himself to the audience in a new costume. Again, it is possible that AHA in these cases represent laughter. Alternatively, it is possible to interpret Infans as a proud and bad character when he uses AHA.

The interjection type HA is quite rare. Only eight examples are attested, in various spelling forms, in three different play texts (cf. Section 6.8.3). Of these eight, six belong in the speeches of bad characters in the *Towneley* cycle text. The remaining two examples of HA are found in the speech of the non-human dead souls (neutral?) in the *N-town* cycle text, and in the speech of Noah (a good character) in the *Chester* cycle (MS Hm). It is possible that the dead souls should have been categorised as bad rather than as human. At least the context implies that they are frightening as they rise from their graves whilst screaming HA (<haaa>) on Judgment day (*N-town*, 42: 27).

It was established already in Section 6.8.5 that the interjection HUFF only occurs in the speech of Gallants, and Gallants are always bad in late medieval English plays. The spelling varies somewhat, but HUFF is yet easily recognised. It occurs in four different plays. The interjection TUSH is also attested in several play texts (six different ones), but it occurs in the speeches of a greater variation of characters than HUFF does. Of a total of 26 examples of TUSH, 18 are found in the speeches of bad character and 8 are found in the speeches of neutral characters, all in just two interludes, *Fulgens and Luces* and *Magnyfycence*. These are human characters consisting of three servants in the first play, and two characters in the second play, one of which (Felicity)

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may be categorised as a personification depending on the interpretation of *Magnyfycence*.

In all, Figure 7-15 above illustrates that the four interjections, AHA, HA, HUFF, and TUSH, are more frequently used by bad characters than by good ones. There may not be a significant correlation, but at least a pattern seems to emerge. The finding corresponds quite well with an understanding of late medieval drama as consisting mainly of play types largely based on the dichotomy of good and bad. On the other hand, this dichotomy is not always all black and white. Some characters have potential for both, and some do not belong in either category.

### 7.7 *Dialect variation*

It is possible that some interjection types were subject to dialectal variation in Late Middle English. The obvious candidates are the interjections A and O, which seem to overlap in terms of distribution, function, and meaning (cf. Section 6.8.1.1). The *OED* describes the two forms as stemming from different sources: O from Latin and A from English, but their overlapping functions in most of the Late Middle English play texts suggest that they were treated interchangeably by this period.<sup>476</sup> It might have been expected that O, influenced by religious works in Latin, was preferred in invocations to God, while A was used as the truly expressive interjection outside of vocative construction. It is attested that O (cf. Section 6.8.7) often occurs in vocative constructions like ‘O lord’ in the play texts, perhaps stemming from classic Latin influence from Church liturgy, but the interjection A (cf. Section 6.8.1) is attested in exactly parallel co-texts: *A blyssed God, thowe be my beylde* (York 17: 87, Hand C. Punctuation is editorial).

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<sup>476</sup> *OED* states about the interjection O that it probably derived from classical Latin in Old English liturgical use, but also that similar expressions in many languages suggest “independent formation of such a natural utterance”. This means that the interjection O, perhaps also A (as well as Å in Scandinavian languages) may ultimately reflect a natural outburst as a reaction to an event, i.e. a prototypical interjection suitable to express a varied range of human emotion regardless of language. The interjection A in Present-day English, however, seems to have become restricted to express cognitive realisation, while O can be used to express many types of emotions and cognitive states.

No consistent pattern of preference for the interjection O in religious plays has been traced in the material; rather it seems that in the early play texts the interjection A was used for many purposes, including routine greetings, while O was restricted to fewer functions, and perhaps more clearly expressive-emotive ones than A (Section 7.2.3). In most texts, however, it is difficult to spot any pattern at all, except for the finding that diachronically, A is losing ground while O is becoming more frequent.

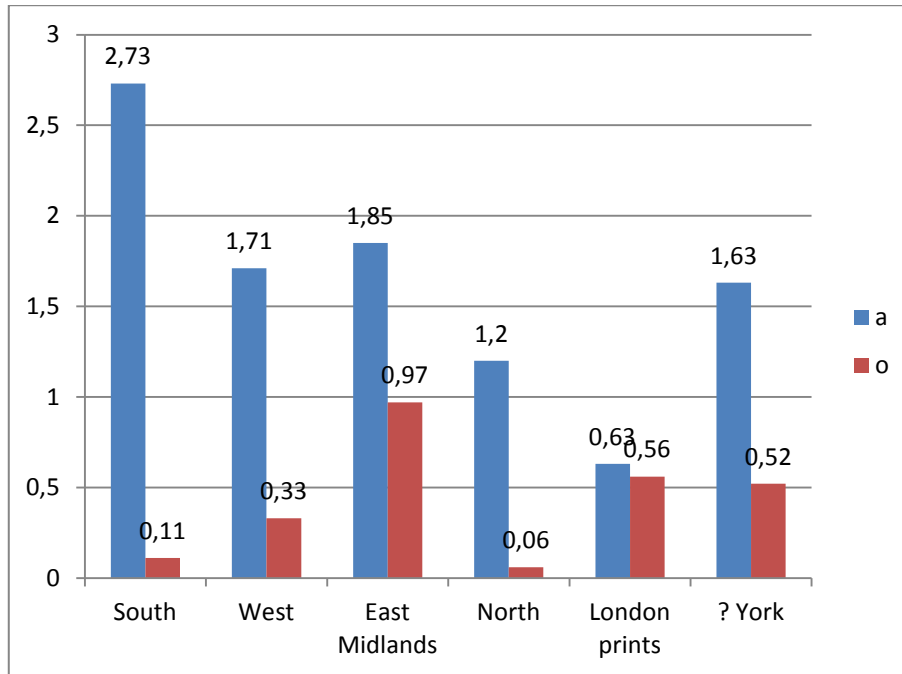
An alternative explanation for the apparent interchangeability of the interjections A and O in Late Middle English play texts may be that the spelling forms <a> and <o> were merely conventionalised orthographic representations of the same interjection (i.e. sound). The written realisations may have been influenced by the Latin O, but perhaps also by the play composer's dialect in terms of his (northern) use of the grapheme <a> as the reflex of OE long  $\bar{a}$ . The play texts were allocated to six groups in order to compare them for dialect variation in the use of the interjection types A and O: South, West, East Midland, North, London prints, and "?" for the unknown dialect of the *York* cycle text (see lists of texts in Section 6.12, Table 6-1). The *York* cycle text was treated as a group of its own on the grounds that the dialect of the main scribe (Hand B) is difficult to establish: LALME (Vol. I: 102) suggests it was not from York.<sup>477</sup>

Section 6.12 provides a discussion of the findings. Since one play text (*Burial and Resurrection*) has been found to show outlier scores (above standard deviation 2), this text has been excluded from the dialect groups. The distribution of A and O in all the dialect groups is illustrated in Figure 7-16 below:

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<sup>477</sup> Cf. Section 3.4.3. LALME (1986 Vol. I) provides comment on the language of *Burial and Resurrection* (excluded from statistical analysis) as well as the *York* cycle, but neither is used for linguistic profiling in LALME Vol. III.

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**Figure 7-16 Geographical distribution of A and O**

Figure 7-16 illustrates that the interjection A is the most common one in all dialect areas, but the dominance of A over O varies greatly across the dialect groups. The difference is highest in the southern and northern groups and lowest in the group of London prints, in which the two forms are almost equally numerous.

However, some reservations are due concerning at least two of the regional groups illustrated in Figure 7-16, because it is likely that the patterns shown can be explained by other factors than dialect. First, the great difference in the employment of the interjections A and O in the southern texts can be explained by the subgenre: there are only two texts in this group, both of which are early interludes probably composed by the same playwright. Secondly, the small variation in the incidence of A versus O attested in the printed material may be explained by their late dates. At this point in time the interjection O was in the process of becoming more widely used, apparently at the cost of A, especially in morality plays and interludes (cf. Section 7.2.4). The printed texts consist of three interludes and three morality plays.

Excluding the South and the London prints leaves the North, represented by the biblical *Towneley* cycle text, as the remaining regional group showing a very clear imbalance in the employment of the interjections A and O. In the North (*Towneley*) the interjection A occurs at an incidence of 1.2, whereas the interjection O occurs at minute 0.06 per 1,000 words. If the interjection O was preferred in plays related to religion and influenced by biblical language, one would not expect such a low incidence of O in a biblical cycle. A mere glance at Figure 7-16 confirms that the West and the group labeled “? York” both have higher frequencies of the interjection type O than the North has. Similarly to the North, these two groups are represented by biblical cycles, the *Chester* cycle and the *York* cycle respectively.

The northern *Towneley* text may have been influenced by the northern dialect feature known as retention of OE long  $\bar{a}$ . Its composer, or copyist, clearly preferred the form A to O, perhaps significantly more so than e.g. the composer, or copyist(s), of the *York* cycle. The *Towneley* cycle text is early enough for inclusion in LALME and its language has been recognised as northern. However, the patterns cannot easily be tested for significant variation, as the size of n (number of words) varies for each group (even though each of the groups North, West, and ?York only consists of one text each, the length of each text varies). Further, Figure 7-16 already indicates that the variation is too small to exclude the possibility of random variation through significance testing (of z-transformed data).

In examining whether dialect is the cause of the great variation in the use of A versus O in the play texts, it seems the most solid analysis is achieved by comparing the northern *Towneley* cycle text to similar texts. The *Towneley* results can purposefully be compared to the results in the slightly earlier, but unlocalised *York* cycle. It is clear from Figure 7-15 that their patterns differ, but then the *York* cycle text contains more of both types of interjections. The same is true of the West, represented by the *Chester* cycle text of later date than *Towneley*. Again, *Chester* has more of both the interjections A and O than *Towneley* has. Further, *Chester* can be expected to have a higher incidence of the interjection O as it is close to a century later than the *Towneley* text, and it has been found that the use of O is increasing in the sixteenth century. The last dialect area, the East Midlands, is represented by texts of a diversity of subgenres and dates, among them the fourteenth century

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*N-town* cycle text. It is possible that either subgenre or dates, or both, explain the pattern, which admittedly is very dissimilar from the distribution of A and O in the *Towneley* text.

A clear conclusion cannot be drawn. It cannot be confirmed that the low incidence of the interjection O in the northern text (*Towneley*) can be explained by its northern dialect – the retention of OE long  $\bar{a}$  – but neither can the possibility be ruled out.



## 8 Discussion

### 8.0 *Abstract*

The present chapter summarises and discusses some of the results. Chapter 9, Conclusions, discusses issues concerning methodology and suggests consequences for future work in the field of interjections.

### 8.1 *Pragmaphilology*

If the findings in Section 3.4 can be generalised, scribes only rarely change or omit interjections. Late medieval scribes seem to have treated interjections as lexis, i.e. as meaningful words, and most likely as conventionalised signals of the speaker's emotion or attitude.

The introduction of a final <h> grapheme in the spelling of the interjections A and O occurs in only some of the latest Late Middle English play texts. The spelling forms <a> and <ah>, and <o> and <oh> seem to be nothing more than a gradual diachronic development of English orthography. No other pattern than scribal preference for one spelling over the other has been found. This is especially apparent in the five late manuscripts containing the text of the *Chester* cycle. Scribes from the same area have chosen different spelling forms or mixed both, sometimes using the final grapheme <h> in O and A, sometimes not (Section 6.11.6). The Late Middle English play texts provide no support for the hypothesis that such forms as <a> and <ah> reflect a difference in pronunciation. The material does show, however, that the interjection type A seems to be losing ground to the interjection type O.

The influence of regional language variation seems to be limited as far as interjections are concerned. The most likely candidates for dialectal variation are the interjections A and O, often used in similar co- and contexts, and both occurring frequently in vocative constructions. However, both types are found in most texts; even the northern texts have O and O-related interjection types. The only text which shows a relatively irregular ratio of A versus O is the *Towneley* cycle texts localised in LALME to Yorkshire. The *Towneley* text employs the interjection O less frequently than the other cycle texts. It cannot be ruled out, nor confirmed, that this pattern is caused by dialect.



The scribes behind the early *Castle of Perseverance* and the *York* and *N-town* texts (all fifteenth century), exhibit traces of a system distinguishing between O in vocative constructions (i.e. before names and nouns of address), and O functioning as typical interjections. They do this by using spelling O as <ow> or <owe> when it does not occur before vocatives, or in specially marked expressive interjections. None of the scribes is totally consistent, and it cannot be established whether the distinction through different spelling forms reflects distinct pronunciation. No similar system is found in any of the later texts.

## 8.2 *Markers of subgenre*

Interjection types vary surprisingly little according to subgenre. On one hand, it may be the case that there is insufficient data for the subgenre assessment, and/or that the modern categorisation of medieval play subgenres is faulty. On the other hand, it is possible that interjections denote typical emotions and attitudes which are shared in late medieval drama. The one possibly marking feature is the relative infrequency of the interjection O in interludes. This infrequency of O may be related to the more secular topics of interludes commonly implying fewer invocations of God. It may be symptomatic that the secular interlude *Fulgens and Lucrez* contains no interjection O at all. There is also only one attestation of O in the two earliest interludes in the material; the *Winchester Dialogues*.

However, it has been found that the interjection O is used in increasing numbers in the Late Middle English play texts at the same time as the interjection A is attested in decreasing numbers in the same texts. The interjection type O, in other words, seems to be in the process of replacing A in many contexts, a hypothesis which corresponds well with the fact that O is far more frequent in Early Modern English play texts than is A. This finding implies that the interjection O, if ever connected particularly strongly to religious types of plays, is in the process of losing its possible link to religious contexts. With the exception of *Fulgens and Lucrez*, the interjection O seems to be spreading to non-religious play types in the later play texts in the material. The interjection O is used, for instance, in the late interludes *Hickscorner* and *Magnyfycence*.

## 8. DISCUSSION

### 8.3 *Markers of character*

Many interjection types occur in the speeches of most kinds of characters: good and bad, male and female, and human and non-human. The exception is God who rarely uses interjections at all. Some interjections, typically less frequent ones than the numerous A, ALAS and O, seem to mark characters negatively. Negative character marking appears in the distribution of HA, AHA, and HUFF especially. These are mainly found in the speeches of bad, arrogant characters.

### 8.4 *The meaning of interjections*

Even though interjections have no propositional meaning, they have pragmatic meaning as more or less standardised imitations of natural emotional outbursts in written texts. Schröder (2003) demonstrates that listeners recognise the emotions expressed by most interjections in tape recorded speech, i.e. even without the aid of facial expressions and gestures by the speaker (Section 2.4.2). It is therefore very likely that interjections used in Late Middle English play texts would be understood as meaningful by the audience. Interjections in plays provided an efficient means for the playwright to express emotions and attitudes in his *dramatis personae*. Some interjections may have overlapping meanings, for instance A, O and ALAS may all express sorrow, but with the plentiful additional clues provided by a play performance, the audience would most certainly understand interjections as meaningfully expressing what they were meant to express.

At one level, written interjections obviously imitate the spoken mode. However, when used in play texts, realistic imitation of speech is not the main function of interjections. Drama rarely imitates natural conversation with its frequent hesitations, re-starts and back-channelling. Doing so would disrupt the communication to the audience. Late Middle English drama is versified and highly organised language. These play texts were not written with realism in mind, and there is no reason to think that a late medieval play would be considered a success because its dialogue was particularly realistic. It was hypothesised that interjections are included in Middle English play texts as an efficient means of conveying the fictional speakers' emotional reactions, and

it has been found that the expressive function of interjections dominate over other possible functions in the play material explored.

### *8.5 Interjections in late medieval English drama*

As interjections are used extensively in late medieval English drama, it can be suggested that dramatists saw them as a special resource of effective signalling of emotion and attitude. Even if 'realism' was not an aim for the medieval playwright, successful drama always depends on some sort of sympathy and understanding with the audience. Religious and didactic drama is connected to late medieval theological emphasis on the suffering of Christ, of the teaching of good (Christian) behaviour as well as the preparations humans should make in the constant threat of death and damnation. The employment of expressive interjections in particular constitutes an effective means of signalling emotion such as lament and pain in the biblical plays, as well as remorse in the serious moralities. Interjections thus enhance the impact of plays that were meant to teach *and* to move their audiences. However, interjections were also employed in comedy. A playwright such as Skelton (*Magnyfycence*) exploited interjections and pragmatic markers to create a play text that skilfully manipulates the dramatic dialogue and the dramatic fiction itself.

## 9 Conclusions

This dissertation has examined 23 Late Middle English play texts in order to find out how and why interjections are used in such highly organised written texts. It has been found that interjections are employed in early plays as an effective means of expressing the fictional speaker's emotion and attitude. Interjections may serve other functions in these play texts, but overall, the expressive function is the dominant one. This means that the definition of interjections need take mode into account: interjections do not have the same functions in (written) play texts as they do in spoken language.

One drawback of a pragmatic study of literary phenomena is that it leaves interpretation of these phenomena in the hands of the analyst. The analysis of what each interjection expresses in each dramatic speech is based on my subjective interpretation. I have sought to remedy this in two ways: First, the study is comprehensive in the sense that it includes many texts and thus allows for quantitative analysis in addition to qualitative ones. Secondly, I have tried to make as well-informed analyses as possible. This means that I have employed my knowledge of Late Middle English, the language as well as the linguistic situation, manuscript practices, and literary analysis in a hermeneutic approach to meaning in texts which in many aspects differ greatly from modern literary texts. I believe that such a many-faceted, variationist approach is the best one in pragmatic and linguistic study of medieval texts, but I am sure that there are aspects that I have missed, or analyses which could have been better in the present work.

Some aspects of the use of interjections in Late Middle English play texts deserve further study. The possible relationship between the interjection WE and the discourse marker 'why' is one such aspect. Further, it would be interesting to perform an in-depth study of only one or two of the interjections, for example A and O. It could perhaps be determined when and why these two interjections cease to overlap, if they do at all, and when and why O takes over the dominance that A enjoyed in Late Middle English plays.

It would also be interesting to follow up the question of whether creative use of interjections is a mark of good craftsmanship in playwrights, as seems to be

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the case with the Wakefield Master behind the *Towneley* cycle. The use of interjections in only one of the texts examined in the present study may reveal usage that has gone unnoticed in such a comprehensive study as this one. It is, for instance, conceivable that some playwrights were more conscious of employing interjections as a means of characterisation or to achieve greater realism in the dialogue than most late medieval playwrights were. Since this is a comprehensive study of the various uses of interjections in a whole genre, such in-depth analysis of only one text, or playwright, has not been possible.

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