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UGO CRISCUOLO, <i>Oriente e Occidente fra Tardoantico e Bizantino: la questione religiosa</i>	3
MAURO MESSI, <i>Polifemo e Galatea: il κῶμος "imperfetto" di Teocrito, Id. VI e XI</i>	23
ILARIA RAMELLI, <i>Caritone e la storiografia greca. Il «Romanzo di Calliroe» come romanzo storico antico</i>	43
PAOLA FRANCESCA MORETTI, <i>La fortuna di un termine "agricolo": plantarium</i>	63
ELISABETTA LONATI, <i>«Ffor god wolde pat alle men ferde well & were sauid». A Late Middle English Pater Noster Tract</i>	83
LUCA CARLO ROSSI, <i>In margine alla «Griselda» latina di Petrarca</i>	139
CRISTIAN CITTERIO, <i>Due figure del Seicento lombardo: i pittori Crespi Castoldi</i>	161
 <i>Note Contributi Discussioni</i>	
DANIELA ROSSELLA, <i>The Rasamañjarī of Bhānudatta</i>	191
MATTEO DOLCI, <i>Tre rhyta apuli dalla collezione Lagioia</i>	199
FRANCESCO TISSONI, <i>Cristodoro e Callimaco</i>	213
STEFANO MARTINELLI TEMPESTA, <i>Nota a Longo 2,2,1</i>	219
GABRIELLA CARTAGO, <i>Le lettere dall'Italia e le lettere in italiano di Byron</i>	223
 <i>Notiziario</i>	
Roberto Fertonani	233

«FFOR GOD WOLDE ÐAT ALLE MEN FERDE WEEL
& WERE SAUID»
A Late Middle English Pater Noster Tract

1. *Introducing religious literature of spiritual instruction*

At the beginning of the XIIIth century, two basic events in the ecclesiastical history of Christianity took place: the IVth Lateran Council and the foundation of the mendicant orders. Both events would sensibly influence not only the forthcoming religious literary production but also the relationship between high and low clergy as well as those between clergy and laity. In 1215, Pope Innocence III called a general council: the Church felt the necessity of being reformed because of the low level of education, sometimes bordering on illiteracy, and the licentious behaviour which spread above all among the parsons of far reaching counties, but not limited to them. Marriage was extremely common among priests without any respect for the vows belonging to their condition; moreover many of them held public offices in deep contrast with their main duties. During the Council an important decision was taken: the sacrament of penance was made compulsory for every Christian, man and woman, once a year at least. As a consequence every priest was invested with a fundamental task, that of leading, preparing and helping the congregation to understand the gospel, to know the principles of their creed and the most important prayers proclaiming them. The believer had to be conscious of his choices and responsible for his actions. It was necessary, therefore, to solve the problems concerning the bad habits and the scanty educational background of the low clergy.

If the council sanctioned the need to intervene on the canon, and the bishops belonging to different dioceses not only in England but all over Europe stressed the resolutions issuing local statutes, the main problem was to carry out the ambitious plan concretely. The mendicant orders, rooted in the reforming movement of the period, served as a positive help

for the bishops and their parish priests: the Franciscans wished to spread the primitive ideal of evangelical poverty while, since the beginning, the Dominicans were scholars and preachers. Both orders favoured the writing of works which functioned as a basis for pastoral activities and joined the priests in their tasks, particularly for the sacrament of penance.

As far as England is concerned, the Franciscans and the Dominicans arrived in the 1220s after having been acknowledged by the Holy See; it can also be highlighted how often the bishops summoned up councils to reassert the decisions dated 1215 and to examine their own clergy on the contents they should teach the laity. This choice was made, for example, by Stephen Langton with the Council of Oxford in 1222 and by the bishop of Chichester in 1246. Probably, the most important event was the Council held by archbishop John Peckham and leading to the Constitutions of Lambeth in 1281. They indeed had a national character and were a landmark till the end of the Middle Ages.

What emerged was thus the exigency of leading the lay man, of instructing him but also of using a comprehensible means of expression to reach the goal: the mother tongue. Any Christian, man and woman, had to know or learn the ten commandments, the sacraments, the deadly sins, the virtues, the gifts of the Holy Ghost as well as the most significant prayers such as the Creed, the Hail Mary and the Pater Noster. The believer had to be asked about these contents during the yearly confession, and the inability to answer could bring to the refusal of absolution.

A great amount of tracts and treatises, sermons, manuals for confession containing not only series of sins but also the corresponding punishments, were produced in England from the beginning of the XIIIth century to the close of the medieval period when the echoes of the Lateran Council were still alive. Most religious treatises continued to be written in Latin or French but many works were also composed in the vernacular for both the educated laity, very few indeed, wishing an individual approach to the Christian faith, and those parish priests who needed simple handbooks and easy discussions for their offices.

Among the most known works of that kind, John Mirk's verse manual *Instructions for Parish Priests* (about 1400) is worth mentioning and quoting, as it clearly states its scope and aim. The austin canon deals with different subjects starting with the priest's duties, he then goes on to deal with the main religious contents to be taught to the flock, proper church behaviour, the deadly sins, the fundamental prayers for the believer, the remedies against errors and, before concluding, summarizes the goals and the addressees of his work:

Hyt ys I-made hem to schowne
 þat haue no bokes of here owne,
 And oþer þat beth of mene lore,

Pat wolde fayn conne more;
 And þow þat here-In lernest most,
 Thonke 3erne þe holy gost,
 That 3eueþ wyt to vche mon
 To do þe gode that he con,
 And by hys trauayle and hys dede
 3eueþ hym heuen to hys mede;
 The mede and þe ioye of heuen ly3t,
 God vs graunte For hys myght. Amen. ¹

2. *The Pater Noster and its tradition*

Given its origin in Christ's words handed down from generation to generation in the gospel, the prayer of the Pater Noster has always played a major role in the religious and literary tradition of Christianity. As far as Anglo-Saxon England is concerned, such a prayer may already be found in Ælfric's sermons where he translated it from Latin and then argued that every Christian should know it. Archbishop Wulfstan asserted that, among the fundamental teachings for the believer, the Pater Noster and the Creed were essential. However, even though the Pater Noster was considered an absolute necessity for everyone, the texts in which it is kept are very few; among the Old English versions those in the Exeter Book, in the Junius (Bodleian, Junius 121) and in the Corpus (CCCC 201) Mss. deserve mentioning. These three versions are not alike one another, the shorter and perhaps the older is the Exeter one ², while the other two are longer. What is interesting about this is the evidence that a standard form of the prayer did not exist in the Old English period.

The Lord's prayer continued to predominate general interest after the Conquest but the final seal occurred in 1215 during the Council: it was asserted that it was the best and the most important prayer because Christ himself taught it, hence it came to be considered a pillar of faith. The discussions about its efficacy in combating the sins and the explana-

¹) E. Peacock (ed.), *Instructions for Parish Priests by J. Myrc*, EETS, o.s. 31, 1868 (2nd revised ed. 1902; New York, Kraus Reprint Millwood, 1981), lines 1923-1934, pp. 59-60. The fact that Mirk chose the metrical form is certainly due to the need to give the audience an easier way to remember the relevant contents of his exposition.

²) W.S. Mackie (ed.), *The Exeter Book. Part II: Poems IX-XXXII*, EETS, o.s. 194, 1934 (for 1933; reprinted 1958), poem XXVII, p. 186: «... fæder þu þe on heofonum eardast / ge[we]ordad wuldres dreame sy þinum weorcum halgad / noma niþþa bearnum þu eart nergend wera / cyme þin rice wide ond þin rædfæst willa / aræred under rodores hrofe eac þon on rumre foldan / syle us to dæge domfæstne blæd / hlaf userne helpend wera / þone singalan sodfæst meotod / ne læt usic costunga cnyssan to swide / ac þu us freedom gief folca waldend / from yfla gehwam a to widan feore».

tions of its seven petitions became more and more numerous: many are anonymous while others have been attributed to famous writers of the period; they may be in Latin but more often in English, particularly since the beginning of the XIVth century. Among the most important writers who discussed the Lord's prayer is Wyclif: in his short treatise *Dis his the Pater Noster*³ (end of the XIVth century) he explains the seven petitions associating them with the seven deadly sins and the seven virtues⁴; at the end of the tract, the excellence of the prayer is highlighted, since it allows

to gete heuently blisse [because it] passiþ alle oþere preieris in auctorite, in solite & profit ... & encloseþ alle þinkyngis þat ben nedful boþe for body & soule ... & oure lord ... made it in schorte wordis & moche witt, for men schulden not be heuy ne excusen hem fro kunnyng & seiynge þer-of.⁵

Given the major role played by the Pater Noster at that time, Wyclif used its spread and renown as a lever to promote his plan to translate the whole Bible. In fact, he was one of the champions advocating the necessity for the vulgarization of the Holy Script because he thought that every Christian, with little or no education at all, should be allowed to read or listen to the tenets of the faith in his own mother tongue; for this reason, in *De Officio Pastoralis* (about 1378), he wrote:

it semyþ first þat þe wit of goddis lawe shulde be tau3t in þat tunge þat is more knowun, ... þe hooly gost 3af to apostlis wit ... for to knowe al maner langagis to teche þe puple goddis lawe þerby; & so god wolde þat þe puple were tau3t goddis lawe in dyuerse tungis; ... & þus crist & his apostlis tau3ten þe puple in þat tunge þat was moost knowun to þe puple; why schulden not men do nou so? & herfore autours of þe newe law, þat weren apostlis of iesu crist, writen þer gospels in dyuerse tungis þat weren more knowun to þe puple. ... & herfore freris han tau3t in englond þe paternoster in engli3sch tunge, as men seyen in þe pley of 3ork, and in many oþere cuntreys. siþen þe paternoster is part of matheus gospel, as clerkis knowen, why may not al be turnyd to engli3sch trewely, as is þis part? specialy siþen alle cristenmen, lerid and lewid, þat schulen be sau3d, moten algatis sue crist, and knowe his lore & his lif. but þe comyns of engli3schmen knowen it best in þer modir tunge; and thus it were al oon to lette sicke knowing of þe gospel and to lette engli3schmen to sue crist & come to heuene.⁶

³) F.D. Matthew (ed.), *The English Works of Wyclif*, EETS, o.s. 74, 1880 (2nd revised edition 1902; New York, Kraus Reprint Millwood, 1978), pp. 197-202.

⁴) *Ivi*, 1st pet./pride/faith, 2nd pet./envy/hope, 3rd pet./covetousness/charity, 4th pet./gluttony/prudence, 5th pet./wrath/justice, 6th pet./sloth/ghostly strength, 7th pet./lechery/temperance.

⁵) *Ivi*, pp. 201-202.

⁶) *Ivi*, pp. 429-430.

The Pater Noster was thus the premise to eternal bliss, the way to the Heavenly Father and, since the salvation of the soul was meant for the educated as well as for the illiterate, the only way to give everybody the same opportunity was that of learning it in English, or rather starting from it, by translating the whole Bible as a means of social improvement.

The quotation also testifies to the popularity of the prayer as the key element in a drama where the seven petitions acted as a successful weapon against the deadly sins; the York Pater Noster play is now lost but it was so popular in Wyclif's time that a gild *Oracionis Domini* was founded so as to preserve it ⁷.

Three other works deserve a brief mention here. The first is the aforesaid *Instructions for Parish Priests*: here the author gives a metrical version of the prayer ⁸, which is a little longer than the most common Latin one; Mirk's Pater Noster is preceded by the advice for the parish priest set to teach it along with the Creed, at least twice or three times a year. The other two are a treatise called *De Pater Noster of Richard Ermyte* ⁹ and a sermon in the British Library Ms. Royal 18 B.XXIII, both in prose and both belonging to the late Middle English period: in the former the attention focuses on the prayer itself, on its explanation, on its excellence and uniqueness: the seven sins are quoted but there is not a real discussion on them even though the Pater Noster is considered a remedy against temptation; only in the latter is each petition linked to a particular sin and then the two analysed ¹⁰.

3. *The Pater Noster Tract*

The anonymous tract whose critical edition will here be presented belongs to the religious and literary climate delineated above. Like those just mentioned, it is a late Middle English work; however, it differs from the

⁷) L. Toulmin Smith (ed.), *York Plays*, New York, Russell & Russell, 1963 (1st published in 1885), pp. xxviii-xxix.

⁸) Peacock, *op. cit.*, lines 410-421, p. 13: «Fader owre þat art in heuene, / Halowed be þy name with meke steuene, / Dy kyngdom be for to come / In vs synfulle alle and some; / By wylle be do in erþe here / As hyt ys in heuene clere; / Owre vche dayes bred, we þe pray, / Þat þow ʒeue vs þys same day; / And forgyue vs owre trespas / As we done hem þat gult vs has; / And lede vs in-to no fondyng, / But schelde vs alle from euel þynge. Amen».

⁹) AARTS, *De Pater Noster of Richard Ermyte. A Late Middle English Exposition of the Lord's Prayer*, Maastricht, ed. from Westminster School Library MS. 3, 1967.

¹⁰) The structure and the contents of the sermon are particularly interesting for our text and will be discussed afterwards.

most common Pater Noster expositions of the period, as it is affirmed by R. Raymo:

A considerably more ambitious commentary on the Pater Noster than the *Standard Exposition* ... survives in two early fifteenth-century manuscripts.¹¹

It is noteworthy that since the beginning of the XVth century prose became the preferred form of expression when writing works of religious instruction; the habit of addressing the individual directly was spreading as well.

The tract, as aforesaid, has come to us in two manuscripts: the former is Ms. 158.926.4g.5, ff. 58v-88r, in Norwich Castle Museum (henceforth NCM), the latter is the Harleian Ms. 1197, ff. 28v-48v, (henceforth H) in the British Library collections.

The work deals with the explanation of the seven petitions of the Lord's prayer connecting them in turn with the seven deadly sins, the seven virtues, the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, the beatitudes and the two precepts of love; in both manuscripts it is integrated among writings of religious character included in Jolliffe's *Check-list*¹². What is really relevant is the fact that the Pater Noster tract, in NCM and H as well, is immediately preceded by Lavynham's treatise¹³, a brief discussion dealing with the seven deadly sins by the carmelite friar Richard Lavynham. This order is interesting because it may well suggest a common source for the two manuscripts.

The text that has been chosen for the present critical edition is the one taken from H. It is not greatly different, neither for the contents nor for the language, from the variant text kept in NCM but for a passage¹⁴ situated in the middle of the tract. The passage, which follows the discussion to the sixth petition and is a further comment on it, does not exist in NCM. It is difficult to establish whether the extract is an original expansion by the Harleian author/copyist or whether it is a deliberate exclusion from NCM because these are the only manuscripts to survive and a clear derivation scheme is impossible to establish. However, a certain de-

¹¹) R.R. Raymo, *Works of Religious and Philosophical Instruction*, in A.E. Hartung (gen. ed.), *A Manual of the Writings in Middle English 1050-1500*, New Haven (Connecticut), Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1986, p. 2280. This quotation does not only highlight the originality of the tract, but it gives useful information for its dating; to support this dating hypothesis other reasons relating to content and language will be put forward later in the discussion.

¹²) P.S. Jolliffe, *A Check-list of Middle English Prose Writings of Spiritual Guidance*, Toronto, Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1974.

¹³) Raymo, *op. cit.*, item 106.

¹⁴) H, lines 541-568.

gree of relationship is documented by common mistakes¹⁵: common origin, if not the direct derivation of one from the other, is beyond doubt.

As far as other differences between the two manuscripts are concerned, they are almost always on the lexical ground but not such as to modify the general meaning¹⁶ considerably. Sometimes the copyist of H seems to take the trouble to convey the meaning more clearly since he modifies the syntactical structure in order to render it more easily comprehensible¹⁷. The Latin quotations, present in both versions, are more often made clear in H rather than in NCM in which they frequently appear abbreviated.

From the point of view of morphological choices, above all those concerning verbal endings, H is no doubt more coherent, keeping – much more than NCM – the same forms for the same function almost all over the tract. It is as if the copyist of H has been more attentive in maintaining or giving a better order and care to the whole writing up, unlike the NCM version which seems to be the result of a more “hurried” hand, perhaps less troubled about forms than contents, or perhaps less skilled.

The script of both the versions is gothic, but once more H has a steadier and more regular hand than NCM: the impact is decidedly clearer and remarkable. The overall greater formal care and coherence helped the choice for H as the basis of the present critical edition.

The possible sources for the text is the first argument to be dealt with in order to stress the cultural climate of the late Middle Ages, announced, however, during the previous centuries. The exposition of the contents will follow, just before presenting the text. The linguistic section has been appended at the end of the tract.

¹⁵) H, lines 454 and 468: *meedful* instead of *needful*. NCM, in the same place, *medful* instead of *nedful*.

¹⁶) H: ... pyne ...; ... wickid ...; ... wickid ...; ... conformyd ...; ... studyen ...
 NCM: ... synne ...; ... schrew ...; ... schrewe ...; ... confirmed ...; ... stonden ...
 H: But 3e, synful wrecchis, he seyth, wiln han forþ 3oure wil in synne & schrewdnesse and so a3ens myn wil 3e preschin.
 NCM: But, þe sinful wrecchis wele han forþ here wil in synne & wrecchidnesse, & a3ens myn wil 3e preischen.
 H: ... and also counceyl & strenthe ... / NCM: ... & also cunnyng & strenþe ...
¹⁷) H: He þat etyth dispise nout hym þat etyth nout, and he þat etith nout deme nout hym þat etyth his mete comounly.
 NCM: Perfore, he þat eteþ dispice not hym þat eteþ no3t, deme no3t hym þat eteþ his mete comounly.
 H: ... and þo3w nout euery londe bryngyth nout ...
 NCM: ... and þou3 euery lond bryngeþ no3t ...
 H: Pricke and chastise my flesch wiþ þin dred. The dred of god is clepid a besy keeping ...
 NCM: Prycke & chastite my flesch with. Þi dred of god is clepyd a besy beky keepyng ...

4. Sources

The tract included in the two manuscripts belongs to a discussion of the prayer which is not only a simple exposition but introduces a more complex and articulate form of religious instruction; it links a series of arguments considered as fundamental for the Christian soul. Sometimes they are in contrast with one another, such as the seven petitions and the deadly sins.

The fight between “god” and “deuele”, between the father of virtue vouching for eternal bliss and the father of sin leading to eternal death through deception, is at the heart of the matter. The strong need to create comparisons is here met. The salvific power of the Lord’s prayer and its strength to contrast the *deadly* or the *capital* sins is not new: it developed mainly from the habit of prescribing the recital of the Pater Noster as a purifying means after the sacrament of confession:

The division of the paternoster into seven parts is at least as old as Cassian, who suggests in isolated phrases that these individual requests would be of value in combating sins. ... Earlier, Ambrose had set the seven gifts of the spirit against sins, and Gregory later also did so.¹⁸

Even though it was not possible to find a direct source for the present tract, it is however interesting to stress how many Latin works, which could be the starting point for others either in Latin or in English, were produced on the same topics.

A Hugonian tract entitled *De Quinque Septenis*¹⁹ is among the most interesting works. It introduces the problem of interdependence among the “sevens” starting from the *capital* sins whose first remedy is precisely the Pater Noster:

Quinque septena, frater, in Sancta Scriptura inveni ... (sent. 2). Primo loco ponuntur septem vitia, id est ... superbia, ... invidia, ... ira, ... tristitia, ... avaritia, ... gula, ... luxuria (sent. 3). Contra hec secundo loco constituntur septem petitiones que in dominica oratione continentur: ... Postea tertio loco sequuntur septem dona Spiritus Sancti (sent. 4). ... spiritus timoris domini, ... spiritus pietatis, ... spiritus scientie, ... spiritus fortitudinis, ... spiritus consilii, ... spiritus intellectus, ... spiritus sapientie (sent. 5). Deinde quarto loco succedunt septem virtutes (sent. 6). ... paupertas spiritus, id est humilitas; ... mansuetudo, sive benignitas; ... compunctio, sive dolor; ... esuries iustitie, sive desiderium bonum; ...

¹⁸⁾ M.W. Bloomfield, *The Seven Deadly Sins. An Introduction to the History of a Religious Concept, with Special Reference to Medieval English Literature*, Michigan, State College Press, 1952, pp. 83-84.

¹⁹⁾ Hugo de Sancto Victore (1096-1141), Excerpta CLCLT-3-CETEDOC, Lovanii Novi-Inquisitio in vol. II, *De Quinque Septenis*, Sententiae 1-72, pp. 100-118.

misericordia; ... cordis munditia; ... pax (sent. 7). Novissime quinto loco disponuntur septem beatitudines (sent. 8). ... regnum celorum; ... possessio terre viventium; ... consolatio; ... iustitie satietas; ... misericordia; ... visio Dei; ... filiatio Dei (sent. 9).

A little further the bond among the “sevens” is made clearer:

Sequuntur itaque septem petitiones contra septem vitia quibus ille oratur ut subveniat qui nos et orare docuit et quod orantibus spiritum bonum ad sananda vulnera nostra et ad solvendum iugum captivitatis nostre daturus esset (sent. 41).²⁰

As well as in our tract, the sequence follows the Gregorian list even though the links with the seven petitions are not the same in the two works. The list of virtues is anomalous; it is also worth remembering that Hugo of St. Victor talks about *capital vices* and not *deadly sins*:

Sunt ergo septem *vitia capitalia*, sive *principalia* et ex his universa mala oriuntur (sent. 11).²¹

Other works deserve mention too; they may have suggested to our anonymous author not only the theme but also the structure of the tract, built on the opposition between the sins and the principles belonging to the supreme good. One of these works is, for instance, St. Bonaventura's *Collationes de Septem Donis*²². In this case the contrast is, at first, with the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, which are able to defeat evil:

Debetis intelligere quod donorum spiritus sancti est quaedam efficacia per quam impugnantur omnia mala est alia efficacia donorum per quam homo expeditur ad omnia bona.²³

Yet, before starting his detailed discussion on the gifts, Bonaventura quotes the various “sevens” among which the sins, the virtues, the beatitudes, the petitions and of course the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost. Unlike Hugo of St. Victor, he talks about *peccata mortalia* (maybe, the influence of the IVth Lateran Council had been spreading):

... septem dona spiritus sancti ... destruuntur *septem peccata mortalia* et introducuntur septem virtutes.²⁴

²⁰) *Ivi*, sententiae 2-9 and 41.

²¹) *Ivi*, sententia 11.

²²) S. Bonaventura (1217/1218-1274), Excerpta CLCLT-3-CETEDOC, Lovanii Novi-Inquisitio in vol. II, *Collationes de Septem Donis*.

²³) *Ivi*, ... collatio 2, par. 2, line 11, sententia 224.

²⁴) *Ivi*, ... collatio 2, par. 3, line 14, sententia 237.

The sins follow the Gregorian list as in *De Quinque Septenis*, but here *Tristitia* is replaced by *Acedia*. After having destroyed the sins, the gifts give birth to the virtues leading to the beatitudes of the gospel. In this case too, the links are the same as those of the Hugonian work. Therefore, the gifts of the Holy Ghost

... omnia mala destruuntur et omnia bona introducuntur ...²⁵

and then

Ista septem dona spiritus sancti tanguntur in oratione dominica²⁶

which is the privileged means given by Jesus Christ to ask the Father for them.

As far as vernacular languages are concerned, the French *Merure de Sainte Eglise* (first half of the XIIIth century) by St. Edmund of Pontigny, then archbishop of Canterbury, and *Somme le Roy* (1279) by the dominican friar Laurent Gallus are worth mentioning. The former deals with many arguments among them the Pater Noster and the deadly sins, adding, as Hugo of St. Victor had done, the beatitudes of the gospel as a further remedy against them. The latter discusses the seven gifts, the seven virtues, the seven petitions of the Lord's prayer and the sins following the Gregorian sequence; this work had a great importance all over Europe and it underwent many translations and arrangements.

In England, an extremely relevant text must be mentioned, the *Ancrene Riwle* (about 1225). In it, it is clearly stated that the Pater Noster is an effective remedy against sins. These are classified as ghostly and fleshly, sins of the devil (pride, envy, wrath), sins of the world (covetousness) and sins of the flesh (lechery, gluttony, sloth). Such a division became then very popular and it may be found in the Pater Noster tract too²⁷.

Among the English arrangements of *Somme le Roy*, the most famous version is the *Ayenbite of Inwit* (1340) by Dan Michel of Northgate but also the anonymous *Book of Vices and Virtues* of the second half of the XIVth century and the contemporary *Speculum Vitae* by William of Nassington are noteworthy. In the latter the Pater Noster is the starting point for a minute analysis of the seven petitions which allow to defeat sin and establish virtue in the christian soul.

During the XIVth century a greater amount of works of religious instruction began to appear in English too, particularly sermons. One of

²⁵) *Ivi*, ... collatio 2, par. 3, line 27, sententia 244.

²⁶) *Ivi*, ... collatio 2, par. 4, line 1, sententia 245.

²⁷) *H*, lines 486, 570, 764.

these, belonging to the end of the XIVth century or the beginning of the XVth, is kept in Royal Ms. 18 B.XXIII²⁸ and contains a precise opposition between each petition of the Lord's prayer and a peculiar sin. Sermon number ix, entitled *Vigilate et orate, Mathei vicesimo sexto*, concentrates on the necessity of being in a state of grace and sharing it with God himself at the moment of prayer because

Per ben many of vs ... þat slepeþ when þey preye, both lered and lewde of all degrees. ... By þis slepe is vndirstond dedely synne.²⁹

Adding, shortly after, which is the best prayer to say and why:

Nowe I will tell you what 3e shall preye and what preyour God is beste plesyd with. I trow þat 3e know it well euerychon, þat is þe Pater Noster ... in þe Pater Noster ben comprehended vij askyns and preyour, and in þese vij is conteynd sotely all þe poyntes in þe world þat anny vitt or reson may comprehend ... Ðan for-asmeche as God biddeþ vs vake vhan we preye, þer-fore I will tell you and declare þe vij dedely synnes ... And þer-fore I þenke be Goddes grace to shewe you how þe vij dedely synnes ben contrarye to þe vij preyour of þe holy Pater Noster ... And þise ben þoo: pride, envie, wraþe, slowthe, couetyse, gloteny, and þe synne of lecherye.³⁰

Then, the author goes on to connect each petition to the correspondent deadly sin as follows: 1st pet./pride, 2nd pet./envy, 3rd pet./wrath, 4th pet./sloth, 5th pet./covetousness, 6th pet./gluttony and 7th pet./lechery³¹. Like in the Pater Noster tract and in the *Ancrene Riwe*, in this sermon the division among sins «of þe fende or of is own flessch or of þe world»³² is used.

Moreover, it is worth remembering that the anonymous author uses a great amount of biblical and patristic quotations, some of which may also be found in H. One of these correspondences, more frequent in the first half of the sermon, seems particularly interesting:

Ego sum panis viuus qui de celo descendi ... «I am brede lyuyng þat commeþ downe from hevene; who-so eteþ worthely of þat brede he shall neuer die withowten ende»³³. (Sermon)

«*Ego sum panis viuus qui de celo descendi. Si quis manducauerit ex hoc pane viuet in eternum*». I am, he seyth, bred of lijf þat cam down from

²⁸) W.O. Ross (ed.), *Middle English Sermons. Edited from British Museum Ms. Royal 18 B.XXIII*, EETS, o.s. 209, 1940 (for 1938; reprinted 1960).

²⁹) *Ivi*, lines 18-20, 22, p. 46.

³⁰) *Ivi*, lines 28-30, p. 48; 2-5, 13-15, 17-19, 22-23, p. 49.

³¹) It is a Gregorian list of sins with minor changes, cfr. *Contents*.

³²) *Ivi*, lines 34, p. 55.

³³) *Ivi*, lines 6-9, p. 52.

heuene, who-so eete of þis bred in þe sacrament, me bodily reseuyunge
or gostly, in þe sacrament weel leuyng and in charite luyng, he schal
neuere deyen wipouten ende. (H 281-285)

After the Latin quotation, both the sermon and the tract give the English translation but, while in the Pater Noster tract the translation is broadened by a short comment, the sermon sticks to the original; only later in the discussion, with almost the same words as the tract, the author of the sermon proposes his explanation:

... þat is to sey, we shall desire to be fed iche daye with brede of bodely
fode, [and] with brede of the Sacrament, reseuyunge it goostely as
prestes resceyve it bodely; for what man þat is disposed by charite and
verry byleve, he resceyveþ as medefully Goddis bodie in his sowle as þe
preste resceyveþ hym in þe holy Sacrament.³⁴

What seems relevant is the fact that the explanation given in the sermon may help to understand the more synthetic version of H and that the same material was extremely widespread and exploited in quite the same way by the many different writers. They were troubled to provide parish priests with manuals to carry out the task given to them at their best: instructing themselves and their parishioners.

The habit of referring to the Bible in the religious works was, of course, a common practice: it gave a greater reliability to the asseverations in matter of faith and creed. In the H tract, quotations are several and they are always followed by their translation and, if necessary, by a further comment: the author, desirous to be understood, addresses the individual directly in his mother tongue. He popularizes the Christian faith and its principles for those who cannot afford a higher level of education to read or understand Latin and more complex theological debates. The Christian man has to conform to the will of God to save his soul but to do this he must be informed of his duties «ffor god wolde þat alle men ferde weel & were sauid» (H 612-613). This is the reason why this tract is ranged among prose writings of spiritual guidance whose aim is that of educating the common people and of leading them towards salvation arranged by the Father of eternal bliss. In order to reach his goal, then, the author must be convincing and produce concrete evidence of what he is saying: the Holy Bible and the Fathers of the Church.

Beyond any possible reference to other texts, what is relevant is that the tract belongs to its day: it falls within the cultural tradition and the demands for spiritual renewal expressed by a society undergoing deep changes as those occurring at the end of the Middle Ages.

³⁴) *Ivi*, lines 28-39, p. 52.

5. *Contents*

The tract opens with a eulogy of the Pater Noster: it is the most complete prayer because, even though it is brief, it contains everything the Christian soul needs. Other prayers too have a great value but this was made by Jesus Christ himself:

This is clepid oure lordis preyere for oure lord, Jhesu Crist made it and tauzte it hise disciplis. And it is best & bereth þe pris of alle preyeris for auctorite & worschepe of hym þat made it. (H 10-12)

It consists of seven petitions, seven prayers needful to the life in this world and to the life which will come after death, in the kingdom of heaven and of eternal rest; these petitions also include the foundations of the Christian faith.

After the presentation of the general topic of discussion, the anonymous author goes on to detail his plan: the explanation of the seven petitions, their power to fight against the seven deadly sins and to conquer the seven virtues by the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost in order to reach the heavenly beatitudes:

Also þis preyere is most of myzt & most profytable for it conteyneth seune petyciouns & preyeris [f. 29v] azens þe seune dedly synnes & enformeth vs whiche ben the seune ziftis of the holy gost, & whiche þe seune vertues of the gospel, & bryngith men to þe seune blissis þat arn knytte þerto in þe gospel. (H 25-28)

A concise explanation of each petition follows; only later, after this general introduction, the real discussion will begin with a thorough and comprehensive exposition of its different contents.

The minute description of the seven prayers extends for more than half the tract, evidence of the great importance held for them in comparison with the other “sevens” (H lines 600, 680, 739, 815, 854). It is immediately followed by the seven deadly sins; each of them, as will happen with the virtues, the gifts, the beatitudes and the two precepts of love, is linked in turn to the respective petition. The beatitudes are actually nine but three of them are directly connected to the seventh petition so that the symmetry of the plan is assured. The treatise ends with the explanation of the two precepts of love which summarize «al þe lawe & al þe prophecie» (H 860). Once more, the division by seven is respected: the first three petitions refer to the first precept and the last four to the second.

The septenary structure of the different sections is applied to the whole tract and it may be thus summarized:

Introduction/Eulogy	-	1
Pater Noster	Seven Petitions	2
Deadly Sins	Seven Sins	3
Virtues	Seven Virtues	4
Gifts of the Holy Ghost	Seven Gifts	5
Beatitudes	Beatitudes (7+2)	6
Precepts of Love	Two Precepts (3+4)	7

The use of the number seven is neither new nor referable to the medieval period only. It often appears in the Bible and as a topic of cosmological speculations which go back to the Babylonians, Egyptians and Pythagoreans³⁵. During the Middle Ages the need to find correspondences is the need to give order and meaning to the known and unknown world and for this reason the symbolical use of numbers, in particular of the number seven, spreads:

Number speculation was not, however, frivolous. It was part of the general desire to find valid correspondences in the universe which is also at the basis of modern science. ... this number, along with forty and a few others, was considered not exact but representative, as it continued to be regarded throughout medieval times.³⁶

The most important sequence of sins, which is also found in our treatise, is that of Gregory the Great. His scheme is summarized in the acronym *SIIAAGL*. The Gregorian order, widespread in medieval times, shows slight differences in the order of vices, even though the essential structure is kept. Such differences may be due either to a misinterpretation between the two “i” (*Ira*, *Invidia*) or the two “a” (*Avaritia*, *Acedia*):

FIRST GREGORIAN LIST	SECOND GREGORIAN LIST
Superbia	Superbia
Ira	Invidia
Invidia	Ira
Avaritia	Acedia
Acedia	Avaritia

³⁵) Bloomfield, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

³⁶) *Ivi*, p. 39. As far as the H tract is concerned, the most important “seven” is that of vices.

Gula	Gula
Luxuria	Luxuria

Other reasons are responsible for a different order among sins: since the sequence of the petitions is fixed, the correspondences may depend both on the personal choice of the author, what he knew and wanted to stress about the sins and the seven prayers³⁷, and, for instance, on important changes in society, hence the need to accept and regulate them through the word of God.

In the present Pater Noster treatise the list of sins follows the Gregorian scheme with minor variations:

PATER NOSTER TRACT LIST
Superbia
Avaritia
Invidia
Acedia
Ira
Gula
Luxuria

It seems, indeed, that there has been a previous change between *Avaritia/Acedia* and then between *Ira/Avaritia*. In the early Middle Ages *Avaritia* is not of great importance, it is only from the middle and later period of this era that the middle classes begin to emerge in society, so that wealth in the form of money and other movables are more desirable and manifest than the great estates of the past.

Trade and investments let people foresee new possibilities for wealth which does not belong to birth, or not only to it: work and industry repay the effort, not laziness. If resentment against sloth and inertia of a previous world sharpen, if *Acedia* is increasingly in contrast with laboriousness, on the other hand the danger is that of being overcome and swept away by the euphoria of this new condition. This is the reason why there is a strong need to ward off the danger and to warn against *Avaritia*:

But, as seyth seynt Austyn, þu wilt haue alle þinge good & þin-self wickid. Thu wilt haue, he seyth, a good wijf, gode seruauantis, gode cloþis,

³⁷) The sequences of Hugo of St. Victor, of Wyclif and of sermon number ix discussed above, for instance, are different.

good mete, good drink, goode bestis, good gold, good syluer. Du wilt haue þin hosin good, þin schon good; þu wilt haue alle þinge good saue þi-self al-oone ... be good amongis þi goodes ffor it is a schame þat amongis alle þi goodes þu aloone art wickid ... (H 586-592)

The hypothesis of a late production of the tract under scrutiny here is confirmed by the pre-eminent position of *Avaritia* as well as by the presence of that middle class more easily prone to covetousness. The author gives a clear cross-section of late medieval English society in which everyone has his task and trade to carry out. It is exactly among the various “arts and crafts” of the rising and urban *bourgeoisie* that businessmen appear:

Alle vs muste trauaylyn for oure breed and oure luyng, or bodiliche or gostliche. Somme bodily as laboreris, officeris, *men of craft, chapmen*, men of armys þat ben ordeynyd to defendin & meyntenyn þe pore peple and holy chirche in ryȝt & trewþe. Oþere muste trauaylyn gostly as souereynys, rewlouris, men of lawe, prechouris, techeris, men of holy chirche, seculer & regular. To þese, it longith princepaly to studyen & techin oþere goddis lawe, londis lawe, holy chirche lawe; to techin hem & rewlin hem in ryȝt & trewþe. Oþere muste trauaylin in redinge and syngyng in bedis, biddinge in holy deuocioun, in seruyse in holy chirche. And so, eche man & womman in his degre must trauayle for his luyng. (H 626-634)

Time is no longer marked by the cycle of seasons, by country life. It is man who is trying to control his whole existence, present and future, first on earth and then after death; however, everything must be won with «meene mesure & manere» (H 727).

This quotation is also interesting for another reason: it gives evidence of the duties pertaining to the ecclesiastical offices as established during the IVth Lateran Council of 1215. Moreover, the distinction between secular and regular clergy is a clear sign of the importance of the mendicant orders who had deeply influenced society carrying out their essential mission. As to this subject, the author highlights the need to be educated in order to educate, perhaps accounting for his work. That the clergy of his time had not yet reached either the satisfactory training or the spiritual and moral purity promoted by the council, is strengthened by some violent attacks against hypocrisy, corruption and ignorance:

Also þese heretikis, þat in pugne þe feyth and sekyn nout þe kyngdom of ryȝt feyth, ... and þese lewid prelatys and curatis and oþere men of holy chirche þat schulden teche oþer men and neyþer þey conne holy writte, ne wiln connen and lettyn hem þat conne, þat þey moun nout techin goddes lawe. (H 219; 222-224)

A little further, in support of his invective, the author quotes the gospel along with its curse:

... *Matthei, xxiiij: «Ve, [f. 34r] vobis scribe et pharisei ypocrite qui clauditis regnum dei ante homines! Non intrastis et intrantes non sinistis introire».*
 Woo be to 3ow maystris of þe lawe, & to 3ow phariseis ypocritis þat schettyn þe kyngdom of heuene afor men, 3e wentyn nout jn and þo þat wolden entrin 3e suffrede hem nout entrin. (H 229-233)

Throughout his work, the author multiplies the examples of improper behaviour and complains about the refusal by the clergy to carry out their mission, hence abandoning «the smale peple» (H 777) to the inability to redeem themselves by means of confession. It is only «þorwh sorwe of herte & schry3fte of mouthe & amendis makinge» (H 580-581), that the state of grace, in which the prayers of the believer are received by God not only for himself but for Christianity as a whole, may be attained:

ffor þe synful man and womman seyth his *Pater Noster* and his *Crede* nout only in his owene name but also in þe name of al holy cherche. (H 593-595)

So, the *Pater Noster* is the universal prayer of a universal community, of a multitude of people having a common lot. There is no possibility of ignoring it safely: as a consequence, this choice would imply ostracism from earthly society and, then, eternal damnation.

AN EDITION OF Ms. HARLEY 1197, ff. 28v-48v

The abbreviations and contractions of the manuscript have been expanded following the usual rules and for this reason there is no mention of them in the spelling of the edited text.

The words which in the manuscript are divided but today considered as one have been linked by a dash.

The punctuation, scant and incoherent in the manuscript, has been adapted to contemporary use. In the printed copy the symbols marking a pause (¶), the mistakes crossed by the copyist, the cross-references at the foot of the page and the notes in the margins have not been reproduced. The use of capital letters too follows modern criteria; at the beginning of a word the double grapheme <ff, Ff> has been kept and the contracted conjunction (̄) has been replaced by the ampersand.

Wherever in the manuscript there are clear mistakes in the spelling of words, they have been corrected and referred to in the footnotes while where the Latin text has been incomprehensible a series of asterisks has been adopted in order to mark the gap.

In the printed text, the passage from the *recto* to the *verso* of the same folio and from one folio to the next is marked by the correspondent numbering. The different sections of the text are pointed out by the symbol §.

The Latin quotations from the Bible and other religious writings have been emphasized in italics. In the manuscript, they are underlined to be distinguished from the English text. Such quotations are generally put between inverted commas in the printed text while their English translation, not always literal, follows without being stressed. Some words, lacking in the text but written in the margins by the copyist himself as a correction, have been inserted and put between inverted commas: “han” (242), “for” (513), “pe whiche” (800).

Pater Noster qui es in celis. Oure fadyr þat art in heuene. [f. 28v] *Sanctificetur nomen tuum.* Halwid be þin name. *Adueniat regnum tuum.* Mote þin kyngdom come to and be knowen. *Fiat voluntas tua sicut in celo et in terra.* Be þi wil don as in heuene so in eerþe. *Panem nostrum cotidianum da nobis hodie.* Graunte vs þis day
 5 oure breed and oure sustenance day be day. [f. 29r] *Et dimitte nobis debita nostra sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris.* And forʒeue vs oure dettis as we forʒeue to oure dettours. *Et ne nos inducas in temptationem.* And lede vs nout in-to temptacyoun and fondyng. *Sed libera nos a malo.* But delyuere vs from euery wicked. *Amen.* So mote it be.

10 This is clepid oure lordis preyere for oure lord, Jhesu Crist, made it and tauʒte it hise disciplis. And it is best & bereth þe pris of alle preyeris for auctorite & worschepe of hym þat made it. Also for it is schort & eesi to conne for it conteynyth but seuene petyciouns. Also for it is most sufficient for conteyneth alle þinge þat is needful to soule & body, to þe lijf of þis worlde and to þe lijf of þe worlde þat is to come. Ffor-why in þis preyere we askin seuene petyciouns of whiche þe þre fyrste
 15 schul ben fulfillid in þe lijf þat is to come in heuene blisse, the þre laste longen to oure lijf in þis worlde, the myd petycioun longith to boþe lyuys, boþe to þe soule & to þe body. And þerfore in þis peticioun we askin oure eche dayes breed and oure breed day be day, þat is to seye oure sustenance to body & soule heer in þe day of
 20 grace and aftyr in þe day of blisse. Of whiche day & feding seyth þe prophet: «*Saciabor cum apparuerit gloria tua*». Lord, seyth he, I schal ben filde & fulfild whane þi blisse schal apeere, whane we schuln see þi blisful face. There, as seyth þe prophete Isaye Ixvʒ°, schal ben sabat of sabat ffor, aftyr þe day of grace and reste from synne, schal comen þe day of blisse & endeles reste from woo and trauayle.
 25 Also þis preyere is most of myʒt & most profyʒtable for it conteyneth seuene petyciouns & preyeris [f. 29v] aʒens þe seuene dedly synnes and enformeth vs whiche ben þe seuene ʒiftis of þe holy gost, and whiche þe seuene vertues of þe gospel, and bryngith men to þe seuene blissis þat arn knytte þerto in þe gospel.
 Also þis preyere conteyneth alle preyeres, ffor-why euery preyere or it is to gete
 30 good or it is to fle wickid, euery good or it is endeles good or gostly good, as grace & vertues, or temperel good, as rychesse & helpe; euery wickid or it is now or it is passid or it is to comene.

The foure fyrste petyciouns ben to getyn good, þe þre laste to fle wickyd.

Whane we seye «Oure fadyr þat art in heuene», we sekin his good wil wiþ a
 35 plesaunt preysing.

Whane we seyn «Halwid be þi name», we aske & preye þat þe name of þe fadyr & of his fadyrhed be confermed & stablid in his childryn, þat, as we clepin hym fadyr, so he wile takyn vs to his chyldryn, þat oure preyere mow þe betere ben herd.

Whane we seyn «Mote þi kyngdom come to», we askin endeles goodes and þe
 40 kyngdom of heuene to oure mede. In þis preyere also we sekin & askin his worschepe þat he be worschepid abouen alle þinge & knowe kyng & lord of alle þynge, kyng of kyngis and lord of lordis, & þat his kyngdom hath noon ende.

Whane we seye «Be þi wil don in erþe as in heuene», we askin grace and vertues to don weel & to fulfille þe wil of god & to fulfille al maner ryʒt for þe wil of god is
 45 souereyn ryʒt & souereyn trewþe; also we askin grace to fle hys offens & to do his wil in alle þinge.

Whane we seye «ʒeue vs þis day oure breed & oure lijflode day be day», we askin temperel good & oure nedeful lijflode. So, fyrst, we askin gostly good þat longith to þe worschepe of god [f. 30r] and to helpe of oure soule and, þanne,
 50 temperel good nedful to oure body and, þerfore, god seyth in þe gospel: «*Querite*

primum regnum dei, et cetera». Sekith fyrst þe kyngdom of heuene & his ry3twisnesse þat is to seye gostly good, grace & vertues and alle þinge temperel nedful schal be 3ouen to 3ow.

55 A3ens wickid þat is pasid we seyn & preye «Lord for3eue vs oure dettis & oure trespas as we for3eue oure dettouris».

A3ens wickid þat is to come we seye «Lord lede vs nout in-to temptacioun», þat is to seye, lete vs nout falle in temptacioun, ne ben hent in þe deuelis snare, ne be disseuyd with his gyle. Temptacioun is þe fendis nette & þe fendis snare to takin wiþ mannes soule; but as longe as þe bryd is out of þe nette & out of þe snare
60 so longe he is sekyr & fre away to flee; but whane he is jnne he may nout flee wiþouten helpe. Ry3t so, as longe as a man wiþstant temptacioun, so longe he is out of temptacioun & out of þe deuelis snare but, whane he consentith, þanne is he jnne & cau3t in þe snare.

A3ens wickid þat is now, boþe bodily & gostly, boþe of synne & of peyne, þat
65 we moun ascapin it, we seyn «Delyuere vs from euery wickid». *Amen*. So mote it be don.

And þis word, *amen*, is vnderstonden at eche of alle þese seuene petyciouns and it is a confyrmacioun þerto, and it is in maner þe ey3the preyere & petycioun confermynge alle þat opere, ffor ey3te is a noumbre of sadnasse & of stabilte as craft of noumbre schewith in kende. And *amen* is a word of ebrw & for dignete it was nout translatyd no mor þan *alleluia*, ffor *amen* is goddes oth in þe gospel and *alleluia* þe songe & þe voys of aungelis. *Amen* also signefieth trewþe & trewely it may also ben grek, *ab a* [f. 30v] *quod est sine et mene quod est defectus*. And so *amen* grek is to seye wiþoute defau3te. Ffor þe *Pater Noster* is a preyere sufficient wiþoute
75 defau3te best of alle preyeris and þo3w opere preyeris ben gode & schulden nou3t ben left þefore: bred is best of alle metis & þo3w oper metis ben ful goode & nedful ffor, 3if a man eete noþing but breed, he schulde horkyn & in cas loþin it; gold is best of alle metalis and þo3w yryn & bras & leed ben wol needful; cloþis of gold & sylk ben mest precious and þo3w wollene & lynene ben wol nedfull.

80 § *Pater noster qui es in celis*: Oure fadyr þat art in heuene.

God is oure fadyr and fadyr of alle þinge bi creacioun in þat he made alle þinge of nou3t & is begynner of alle þinge. He is also oure fadyr bi special puruyance & ordynaunce in þat þat he ordeynyth for vs as fadyr for his chy3ldryn. He is also oure fadyr bi weye of grace in þat þat he hath takin vs to his grace & to his mercy
85 aftyr þe hey3e offens of Adam & of oure-self; and hath ordeyned vs to ben heyris with his dere sone Crist Jhesu in þe kyngdom of heuene. But he is fadyr of Crist only bi nature and kende of þe godhed and, þefore, only Crist may propyriche clepin hym my fadyr, as only þe kyngis sone schal seyn «myn lord þe kyng», and opere, wel tau3t, schul seyn «oure lord þe kyng».

90 Alle we schul clepin god oure fadyr for to abate þe pride of mannes herte, ffor ryche & pore, smal & gret, lord & seruauant, souereyn & soget, alle we han oon fadyr þat made vs alle and, sithþin we han alle oon fadyr, alle we ben breþerin & alle we schulde lyuen in loue & charite as oon fadris chy3ldryn. Therefore seyth þe [f. 31r] prophete Malachie, *secundo capitulo*: «*Numquid non pater vnus est omnium vestrum?*
95 *Numquid non vnus deus creauit vos? Quare ergo despicitis vnusquisque fratrem suum?*». Alle 3e han oon fadyr and oo god made 3ow alle of nou3t, why dispise 3e þanne eche man oper þe whiche is his owne broþer?

And god seyth in þe gospel, *Matthei xx^o iij^o*: «*Omnes vos fratres estis: vnus est enim pater vester, qui in celis est*». Alle 3e ben breþerin & alle 3e han oon fadyr þat is in

100 heuene and, þo3w he be fadyr of alle, 3et speciali he wile ben clepid fadyr of þe pore
& of þe nedy, fadyr of mercyes & god of all comfort. And, þerfore, in þat he
biddith vs clepin hym oure fadyr in þe begynnyng of oure preyere, he wile þat we
preye to hym wiþ feyth & feythfully wiþouten dreed & dou3te as chy3ldryn to þe
fadyr. And þerfore seynt Jamys seyth: «*Postulet in fide nichil hesitans*». A man schulde
105 aske in feyth nout dou3tyng.

Also we schulde preye with charite & ben in charite and, þerfore, we clepin hym
oure fadyr in tokene, þat we schulde ben aloon in charite as we ben alle oon fadris
chy3ldryn. And nout onli preye for oure-self but for alle and, in oure preyere, seke
comoun profyzt & sauacioun of alle, suynge oure fadyr in heuene whiche makith þe
110 sonne to ryse to good & wicke and sent reyn to ryztful & vnryztful, as Crist seyth
in þe gospel.

Also we schulde preye wiþ hope to spede and, þerfore, we seynt: «*Qui es in celis*».
Oure fadyr þat art in heuene. Ffor as seynt Jamys seyth: «*Omne datum optimum et
omne donum perfectum, et cetera*». Euery 3ifte of grace & goodnesse of vertue & of
115 perfeccioun it comyth doun from aboue, from þe fadyr of lyztis. In þat he is oure
fadyr, he is best of wil to helpin vs and bi weye of fadyrhed he [f. 31v] is bounden to
helpin vs, and in þat he is in heuenys and oueral present & beinge. And hys myzt &
his wisdom oueral is endeles in þat he can best helpin vs and he may best helpin vs.
And þo3w he be oueral 3et specialy he is in heuene ffor þere his myzt & his
120 goodnesse & his nobleye schewyth mest & specialyche in good folk & gostly be
grace.

Also in oure preyere we clepin hym oure fadyr in heuene in tokene, þat, as we ben
his chy3ldryn, so we schulde sekyn besily to come to oure fadris dwellyng and in
oure preyere askin princepaly heuenely þingis and gostly þingis, ffor euery kende
125 chy3ld wil seke to his fadris duellinge but, for soþe, he fynt manye chy3ldryn wol
vnkende. And, þerfore, whane þey preyen to hym and seynt here *Pater Noster*, he
may answerin & seynt þat is wretyn, *Malachie, primo capitulo*: «*Filius honorat patrem,
et seruus dominum suum timebit. Si ergo pater ego sum, ubi est honor meus? Et si
dominus ego sum, ubi est timor meus?*». Þe sone, he seyth, worschepith bi weye of
130 kende his fadyr & þe seruaunt schal dredin his lord. Sithþin þanne I am 3oure fadyr,
wher is þe worschep 3e schulde don to me? And, sithþe I am 3oure lord, why dredin
3e me nout? 3e ben wol vnkende chy3ldryn ffor-why hem þat I loue 3e haten and
þat I hate 3e louen: 3e hate 3oure breþerin, 3e hate my lawe & my lore. 3oure tecchis
& 3oure dedis schewin þat I am nout 3oure fadyr, ne 3e nout my chy3ldryn. 3e folwin
135 þe tecchis & þe werkis of þe fende &, þerfore, he is 3oure fadyr. «*Vos ex patre diabolo
estis et desideria patris vestri vultis facere*», *Johannis, viii*°.

§ *Sanctificetur nomen tuum*: Halwid be þin name or worschepid be þin
name.

This is þe fyrste petycioun in whiche we preye, þat, as he is oure fadyr, & fadyr of
140 mercy, [f. 32r] so he wile schewe fadyrhed to vs: hauynge mercy on vs and 3eue vs
grace, so to lyue þat we moun ben his chy3ldryn & worpily cleymyn hym for oure
fadyr, þat þe heritage of heuene blysse pase nout away from vs for oure vnkendenesse.
On many wise þe name of god is dispisid bi ydolatrie, whane men trusten more in
Maumettis, in sorserie, in astronomye, in charmys and wychecraft þan þey don in
145 god whos name is souereyn myzt, souereyn wisdom, souereyn goodnesse, souereyn
trewþe. And þe beneficis þat god 3euith and doth to man, þey arettin hem to
Maumettis stockis & stony and to þe deuelis craft. And so, 3euyn þe name of trewþe,
of myzt, of goodnesse, of wisdom to þe deuyl & his angelis as god hym-self.

Also þe name of god is dispisid bi periurie, veyn othis, dispitous & horrible othis
 150 and, þerfore, he seyth: «*Non affirmes nomen dei in vanum, non enim habebit dominus insontem eum qui assumpserit nomen dei sui frustra*», *Exodi, xx° capitulo*. Thu schalt nout takin goddes name in veyn, for oure lord schal nout haue hym as vngylty þat takith goddes name veynlyche and he schal nout pase vnpunschid. «*Non periurabis in nomine meo, nec pollues nomen dei tui*», *Leuitici, xix° capitulo*. Thu schalt nout,
 155 he seyth, forswere the in myn name, ne þu shalt nout defyle þe name of þi lord god.

Also goddes name is despisid bi wickid lyuynge of cristene peple whane cristene peple, þat berith þe name of Crist, lyuyn nout aftyr Cristis lawe but werse þan heþene peple & wiþ here wickede dedis, as seynt Poul seyth, forsakin þe feyth of
 160 Crist & here cristendom. And, þerfore, Crist seyth: «*Per vos tota die nomen meum blasphematur in gentibus*». Euery day my name is schamyd & dispisid amonge heþene men bi 3ow & 3oure wickid lyuynge.

And, þerfore, þat þe name [f. 32v] of god schulde nout ben dispisid but worschepid in holynesse aboue alle namys, we seyn: «*Sanctificetur nomen tuum*». Halwid & worschepid be þi name, þat is to seye, graunt vs grace noþing to don, ne to willin, ne þinkin wherby þin name schulde ben vnworschepid. And so, we askin þat it be fulfillid þat he bad vs in þe lawe whane he seyde: «*Sancti estote quia ego sanctus sum*». Be 3e holy for I am holy. And in þe gospel he seyth: «*Estote misericordes sicut pater vester misericors est*». Be 3e merciful as 3oure fadyr is merciful. Al holy writ schewith
 170 þat þe name of god is holy, whiche name is clepid vpon vs in þat we ben clepyd goddes peple & cristene men. Whane þanne we schewyn þis in dede & lyuen holilyche aftyr oure holy name þat we han takin of god, þanne is his name halwid & in deede schewid & kid; and, þerfore, þis word *sanctificetur* is maad of *sanctus* and *facio facis* or *fio fis*. And so, in þis preyere whane we seyn: «*Sanctificetur nomen tuum*», we
 175 askin þat his name, which is so holy in hym-self, schulde ben holy & halwid in vs þat han takin þat name and worschepid with oure good lyuynge and nout despisid, ne defilid, ne reprouyd bi oure wickid lyuynge; ffor-to wickyd lyueris and namely foule swereris he may seyn þat is writen, *Malachie, primo capitulo*: «*Vos polluistis nomen meum*», et in *Ysaya lij*: «*Tota die per vos nomen meum blasphematur*». 3e han
 180 defilid myn name and, bi 3ow, al day myn name is scornyd and dispysyd.

§ *Adueniat regnum tuum*: Mote þi kyngdom come to.

The kyngdom of god is holy chirche in erþe & also holy chirche in heuene, also ry3t feyth in herte, also holy writt in booke and also grace. So, in this askyng, we preye þat his kyngdom of holi chirche in erþe, whiche is heer in trauayle [f. 33r] sorwe
 185 and care, mote come to his kyngdom in heuene to ben in reste, joy3e & blysse, and þat it be soone fulfillid þat he hy3te vs in þe gospel whane he seyde: «*Ffiet vnum ouile et vnus pastor*». Per schal ben oon folde and oon schepperde. This schal ben fulfillid atte þe day of dome, whane Crist schal clepe his kyngdom in erþe to his kyngdom in heuene seyng: «*Venite benedicti patris mei, percipite regnum vobis paratum ab origine mundi*». Come 3e, myn fadris blissid chy3ldrin and takith þe kyngdom þat
 190 was ordeyned to 3ow from þe begynnynge of þe world.

In þis kyngdom, as he seyth in þe gospel, alle ry3tful schul schyne as bry3te as þe sonne, þanne schal ben oon folde & oon schepperde, oon kyng & oon kyngdom, for þanne alle prelatie schal cese, as seynt Poule seyth, *prima ad Corinthios, xv° capitulo*.
 195 And, þerfore, þey þat seyn þat it schulde ben fulfillid heer aforþ þe doom, þey ben foolis, ffor holy chirche in erþe schal neuere come to so fewe, ne be so perfy3t þat oon prelate & oon schepperde schulde suffice.

Also, in þis askyng, we preye þat þe kyngdom of feyth mow come to sy3te, þat we
 200 mow knowe & se at ey3e þat we now beleue & see god in his face in whom now we
 beleuen & hopin. Ffor, as þe gospel seyth, it is endeles lijf & endeles joye to se þe
 fadyr of heuene & his sone Jhesu & þe holy gost.

Also, in þis askyng, we preye þat þe kyngdom of holy writte, whiche, for here falsched,
 is takin away from þe Jewis þat þey moun nout vnderstodin it as þe gospel seyth,
 205 mow come to þe vnderstondyng of cristene peple, þat þey mow profy3te þer-jinne
 & kepyn it betere þan þe Jewis dede.

Also, we prey3e in þis peticioun þat þe kyngdom of grace mote come to vs, þat god
 regne in vs & we in hym þorwh charite. For, as seynt John seyth, god is charite and
 who-so duellith in charite he duellith in god [f. 33v] and god in hym. And þanne is
 210 it fulfillid þat Crist seyth in þe gospel: *«Regnum dei intra vos est»*. Þe kyngdom of
 god is wiþ-jinne 3ow.

Ffor þese skillis we seyn: *«Adueniat regnum tuum»*. But mechil folk makin þis preyere
 vnworþiliche, as coueytous folk & proud folk þat sekyn ny3t and day to regne & to
 ben grete in þis worlde bi gyle & falsnesse & ouerleding of here breþeryn and here
 215 euene cristene & lytel or nout trauaylin to haue þe kyngdom of heuene. They sekin
 it nout, þey coueytyn it nout; of þis maner of folk he seyth: *«Ipsi regnauerunt et non
 ex me, principes extiterunt et non cognoui»*, Osee, viij^o capitulo. They han regned &
 nout of me, ne bi myn ordynaunce. Þey were princis & lordes and I knew it nout,
 þat is to seye, I aprouyd it nout but reprouyd it.

Also þese heretikis, þat inpugne þe feyth and sekyn nout þe kyngdom of ry3t feyth,
 220 þey makin nout þis preyere worþiliche. Also selfwise men þat leten bi no manys
 witte but bi here owne; and þese rekeles men þat nout wilen ben tau3t þe kyngdom
 of heuene, þat is clepid holy writte; and þese lewid prelatis and curatis and oþere
 men of holy chirche þat schulden teche oþer men and neyþer þey conne holy writte,
 ne wyln connen and lettyn hem þat conne, þat þey moun nout techin goddes lawe.

225 Alle þese makin þis preyere vnworþily, and it is to drede þat god schal answere to
 hem seyng: *«Non adueniet sed auferetur a vobis regnum dei»*. The kyngdom of
 holy writte schal nout come to 3owre vnderstonding but it schal ben takin away from
 3ow & 3oue to folk þat wyln profy3te þer-jinne. And it is to dredin þat he schal zeue
 hem þe curs þat is wretyn, *Matthei, xxiiij*: *«Ve, [f. 34r] vobis scribe et pharisei ypocrite
 230 qui clauditis regnum dei ante homines! Non intrastis et intrantes non sinistis introire»*.
 Woo be to 3ow maystris of þe lawe, & to 3ow phariseis ypocritis þat schettyn þe
 kyngdom of heuene afor men, 3e wentyn nout jn and þo þat wolden entrin 3e suffrede
 hem nout entrin.

Also enuyous and malycious folk & euery man & womman in deedly synne, þat wyl
 235 nout amendin hem, askyn vnworþily þe kyngdom of grace, þat Crist schulde regne
 in hem, ffor holy wrytte seyth: *«In maliuolam animam non introibit sapiencia nec
 habitabit in corpore subdito peccatis», Sapientiae, primo capitulo*. Grace & wisdom schal
 nout entre in-to þe euele willid soule and it schal nout duelle in þe bodi þat is soget
 to synne. Ffor, as seynt Poule seyth: *«Ly3t and þerknesse, Crist and Belyal acorden
 240 nout to duelle togedere»*; of swich maner folk god may seyn þat is wretyn in þe
 fyrste book of Kyngis: *«Abiecerunt me ne regnem super eos»*. They han cast me away
 þat I schulde nout regne in hem and “han” taken hem to þe fende whose kyngdom is
 wol þerk, as holy writte seyth, *Apocalypsis, xvj^o capitulo*.

§ *Fiat voluntas tua sicut in celo et in terra*: Be þi wil don in erþe as in heuene.
 245 In þis peticioun we askyn þat goddis wil be fulfillid, þat we don alwey his wil & his
 plesaunce and noþing a3ens his wil, ne þat schulde displese hym, but þat oure wil

alwey be submyttid to his wil and conformyd to his wil, þat what-euere he wile ordeynen of vs & oure, þat we ben payed þerwith, eche man and womman seyinge wip̄ Crist in þe gospel: «*Non mea voluntas sed tua fiat*». Nout myn wil but þin wil be
 250 doon; so þat we willin what he wile and louyn [f. 34v] what he loueth and hatyn what he hatith. God hatyth noþing but synne and, þerfore, we seyn: «Be þi wil don in erþe as in heuene». Þat is to seye, as it is don in aungelis, so be it don in men & wommen, and as it is don in þe gode, so be it don in þe wickid bi repentaunce and amendement. And, as it is doon in cristhed of holy cherche, so be it don in al holy
 255 chirche, and as it is don in soule & good wil, so be it don in oure flesch, þe which is maad of erþe þat it acombred nout þe soule, ne forfeite nout aʒens goddes lawe. And so, in þis petycioun we askin specialiche þe vertue of loʒwnesse & of obedyence ffor proud folk wolden alwey han forth here owne wil, wile god nyl god.
 In þis petycioun also we askin þe vertue of charite aʒens enuye, for, in þis petycioun we desyre & askin helpe & sauacioun boþe to gode & wyckid, boþe to frende &
 260 foo. But enuyous folk han joyʒe of oþere mennes dishese and ben sory of here welfare. And, þerfore, proud folk & enuyous folk and oowillid folk and alle þo þat lyuyn aʒens þe wil of god and goddes lawe, tyl whane þey wiln amenden hem þey makin þis preyere vnworþili. Ffor, as seyth seynt Poule: «*Hec est voluntas dei sanctificacio vestra*», *prima ad Thessalonicenses, ij^o capitulo*. This, seyth he, is þe wil of god, ʒoure holynesse, þat ʒe ben maad holy wip̄ goode dedys & good lyuyng. «*Non est voluntatis mee mors impii*», *dicit dominus, Ezechielis xviij: «Deus vult omnes homines saluos fieri*», *prima ad Thymotheum, ij^o capitulo*. It is nout myn wil, seyth god, þat þe synful man schulde deye wipouten ende, but myn wil is þat alle men ben
 270 sauyd. But ʒe, synful wrecchis, he seyth, wiln han forth ʒoure wil [f. 35r] in synne & schrewdenesse and so aʒens myn wil ʒe preschin.

§ *Panem nostrum cotidianum da nobis hodie*: ʒeue vs þis day oure breed & oure sustynauce day be day.
 In þis peticioun we askin fyue maner of bred: foure nedeful to oure soule and oon
 275 nedeful to oure body. The fyrste bred nedful to oure gostly lijf and to oure soule is þe word of god, good counceyl, good techinge. Of þis bred Crist seyth in þe gospel: «*Non in solo pane uiuit homo sed in omni verbo quod procedit de ore dei*». Man & womman lyuyth nout only bi bodily breed but he lyuyth in euery word þat cometh out of goddes mouth.
 280 The secunde bred is þe sacrament of þe auʒter: Crist Jhesu vnder forme of bred and wyn, for he seyth in þe gospel: «*Ego sum panis uiuus qui de celo descendi. Si quis manducauerit ex hoc pane uiuet in eternum*». I am, he seyth, bred of lijf þat cam doun from heuene, who-so eete of þis bred in þe sacrament, me bodily reseuyng or gostly, in þe sacrament weel leuyng and in charite lyuyng, he schal neuere deyen wipouten
 285 ende. The þridde maner of bred is grace nedful to vs alle of whiche bred spekith holy writte in þe book of Wisdom: «*Panem de celo prestisti eis sine labore*», *Sapientiae, xvij^o capitulo*. Lord god, þu ʒeue hem bred from heuene wipouten here trauayle, ffor, as seynt Austin seyth, god ʒeuyth men grace wipouten here trauayle & wipouten here
 290 desert. And, as þe prophete seyth, þis bred strenthith & comfortith mannes herte & wommans in al godnesse. The ferþe bred þat we askyn is þe blisful lijf wipouten ende, þat is, þe blisful syʒte of goddes face, of þis bred seyth þe gospel: «*Beatus qui manducabit panem in regno celorum*», *Johannis, xiiij^o capitulo*. Blissid be he [f. 35v] þat schal eetyn his breed in þe
 295 kyngdom of heuene.

The fifþe maner of breed þat we askin is oure bodily sustenaunce of whiche spekyth holy writte: «*Inicium vite hominis aqua et panis et vestimentum*», *Ecclesiastici*, *xxix capitulo*. The begynnyng of mannys lijf, he seyth, is watyr, bred and cloþinge.

These ben þe fyue louys with whiche Crist fedith day be day fyue þousand of men, 300 boþe bodylyche and gostliche, þat is to seye, alle þo þat ben in þe weye of sauacioun, of whiche feste we redin in þe gospel of seynt John, *vj^o capitulo*. Ffor to haue þese fyue maner of bred we seyn: «*Panem nostrum, et cetera*». 3eue vs þis day oure bred day be day and, so, in þis preyere we askin oure sustenaunce boþe bodyly & gostly. And, þerfore, seynt Mathew seyth: «*Panem nostrum super substancialem da nobis hodie*». 3eue vs oure bred ouermore substancial, þat is to seye, sithþin þu hast 3ouyn 305 vs beyng & substaunce of body & soule, ouermore 3eue vs oure sustenaunce boþe to body & soule and graunte vs þe bred of lijf, Crist, goddes sone, þe whiche is aboue alle substauncis & abouen alle þinge. But, seynt Luuk seyth *cotidianum*, ffor, day be day & every day, eche of þese bredis is nedful to vs and alwey vs nedith to aske þis bred as þe apostolis dedin whane þey seydin: «*Domine da nobis semper hunc panem*», 310 *Johannis, vj*. Lord, seydin þey, 3eue vs alwey þis bred and tak heed how þat we ben tauzt, bi þis preyere, nout to coueytyn ne to askin no gret richesse, no gret tresor, no precious cloþis, no gret delys, no gret deyntes, but only oure nedful lijflode. As Salomon seyth: «*Diuicias et mendicitatem ne dederis michi sed tantum victui meo tribue necessaria*», *Prouerbiourum*, *xxx*. Lord, he seyth, 3eue me [f. 36r] no gret richesse, no gret pouert, but oonly 3eue me þat is nedful to myn lijflode. Ffor, as seynt Poule 315 seyth, 3if we haue mete and drynk & cloþis we schulde ben payed þerwiþ & no mor coueytyn. And þerfore þese glotonys & wastouris þat spendin in oo day in mete & drynk þat myzte suffise hem or oþere many dayes. And who-so gete his bred and his lijflode 320 bi rauayne, bi extorcious, gyle & falsnesse & bi synne eet oþer mennes bred & nout his owne. And he þat wile nout partyn wiþ hys euene cristene of his mete & of his drynk whane he woot hem at nede, he may nout weel seyn «*Panem nostrum*», oure bred, for he kepith it al to hym-self þat schulde be comoune.

We seyn «*Panem nostrum*», oure bred, in tokene þat we schulde in oure preyere sekin 325 comoun profyzt & welfare of alle cristene peple. And alle þe 3iftis þat god sent vs we schulde vsyn, is nout only to oure owne profyzt & oure solas but princypaly to þe profyzt, helpe and solas of oþere cristene peple, þat is to seye, in 3euyng, teching, helping, comforyng. In þis preyere þe ryche man muste abatyn his pryde for, as 330 seyth seynt Austyn, alle we ben beggeris & musten, day be day, beggin oure bred of god almyzty. Also, in þis preyere, we ben enformyd euery day to þinkyn of oure deth & of oure endyng whane we seyn *hodie*, þis day, for, we þat wityn nout to lyue to-morwe schulde nout caren to mochil for þe dayes comyng. Ffor we fyndin in þe gospel þat þe riche man storid hym for many 3eris and wende a lyuyd many a day, 335 [f. 36v] and þe neste nyzt he deyde sodeynly wyckid deth, and all oure lyuynge in þis worlde þey we lyuedin a þousand 3eer, as seyth þe prophete, in þe syzte of god it is but oo day & as 3istryrday þe wiche is pasid. Also, bi þis *hodie*, is vnderstonden þe day of grace & tyme of grace, as seyth seynt Poule; and so, in þis petycioun, we prey3in þat god schulde senden vs oure bred and oure sustenaunce wiþ trewþe & 340 wiþouten synne þorw helpe of his grace. Ffor, who-so eet his bred & getith his lijflode wiþ synne, he get his bred in þe nyzt of synne and nout in þe day of grace. And, þerfore, mys-goten good often tyme mys-happith.

Also ydel folk þat nout wiln trauaylyn, makin þis preyere vnworþily, ffor god seyde to Adam: «*In sudore vultus tui vesceres pane tuo*». In swynk & sweet of þin face þu schalt 345 eetyn þin bred, þat is to seye, þu schalt trauayle to gete þi bred & þi sustenaunce,

ffor seynt Poule seyth: «*Qui non vult operari non manducet*», ij ad *Thessalonicenses, iij*^o. Who-so wile nout werkin ne trauaylin he is nout worþi his mete.

Also þo folk þat ben nout payed wiþ cotidyen metis, þat is to seye comoun metis, but only for lust of þe flesch sekyn deyntes & coryous metis maad bi craft, þey seyñ
 350 þis preyere vnworþili for þey askyn þat þey ben nout payed with. But, heer be war, þat þu deme nout amys of hem þat fare betere þan þu, aftyr here staat & here complexioun & here infyrmyte. Ffor, alle metis & drinkis god made to solas & helpe of man. Nout þe mete ne þe drink is in blame but mys-vse & mys-lykyng. And þu, þat art a fastere and lyuyst in gret abstynence, þanke þi god þat hath 3oue the þat grace
 355 and deme nout omys of hem þat fastyn nout, [f. 37r] as þu dost, for, perauenture, þey moun nout or it is nout spedful to hem and, as good is he þat eetyth as he þat fastith solelyne as good was Crist as seyñ John þe Baptyst, & þo3w Crist tawte & ledde a comoune lyuyng in mete & drynk therfore, seyñ seyñ Poule: «*Is qui manducat, non manducantem non spernat; et qui non manducat, manducantem non iudicet*», ad *Romanos, xiiij capitulo*. He þat etyth dispise nout hym þat etyth nout, and he þat etith nout deme nout hym þat etyth his mete comounly.

Also, þese coueytous prelatis and procuratouris of holy chirche, þat puttyn entyrdit in chirchis and suspendin þe mynystris of holy chirche for no gret gylt but for malice & coueytise, þey makyn þis preyere vnworþily, in as mechil as þey lettyn men from
 365 þe sacrament of þe au3teer, þe whiche is þe bred of lijf nedful day be day to all cristene peple, boþe qwyke & deede, ffor þey preyin for a þing þat þey wolden nout han and lettyn opere þat wolden han it. We fyndin in holy writte þat god fedde þe chy3ldryn of Israel fourty wyntyre in desert with manna þe whiche was figure of þe sacrament of þe au3teer and he neuere wiþdrowe it from hem for no trespas þat þey dedyn. And, þo3w þey offendid hym wol often & wol greuously as we fyndin *Neemie, ix^o capitulo*: «*Manna tuum non prohibuisti ab ore eorum*». Ther schulde non entyrditting, non suspendyng, ne no cursing be don but for a wol gret cause greuous & opyn, ne no man ne womman put from goddes bord, ne ben pryuyd of þat heuenely manna bred of lijf, god hym-self vnder forme of bred, but fore a greuous trespas & opyn
 375 slaundre, as seyñ þe lawe: «*De consecratione domino nostro non prohibeat, prima * * * * * Christus aduersitas. Cum autem exempla de officio iudicis ordinarij. Si sacerdos*». Ffor Crist 3af þe sacrament as weel to Judas as to Petyr [f. 37v] or to John, noutwiþstondinge þat he wiste hym in deedly synne for he wolde nout slaundre hym, so, 3euynge example to men of holy chirche nout to slaundryn here sogettis
 380 and opere folk bi wiþdrawyng of þe sacramentis. Neþeles, 3yf he wite hym in deedly synne, pryue he schal pryuely counceylyn hym to amendement for reuerence of þe sacrament and seyñ hym þe wordes of seyñ Poule, þat who-so receyuyth it vnworþiliche, he receyuyth his dampnacioun.

§ *Et dimitte nobis debita nostra sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris*:
 385 And for3eue vs oure dettis & oure synnes as we for3eue oure dettouris. Bi þese dettis ben vnderstonden þe dettis of synne, as seyñ Luuc seyñ in his gospel, nout temperel dette. For it is leful to man & womman to askin & takin his temperel dette lawefully, with charite. On þre maner we synnen & trespasin & so fallyn in gostly dette, ffor we synnen a3ens god, a3ens oure euene cristene and a3ens oure-self.
 390 And, þerfore, holy writte seyñ: «*Peccauimus cum patribus nostris, scilicet in deum. Jniuste egimus, scilicet in proximum, jniquitatem fecimus, scilicet in nos*», *Judith, vij*. We han synned a3ens god as oure fadris dedin aforñ or ellys moche worse. We han don vnry3tfully a3ens oure euene cristene & oure ney3ebore. We han don schrewidnesse in oure-self, and þerfore we preyen and seyñ: «Oure fadyr» ful of mercy «for3eue vs

395 oure dettis» & oure synnes «as we for3euyn oure dettouris» here trespas & here defau3tis. Ffor-þat we han trespasid a3ens god þerfore we seyn to hym: «Lord for3eue»; and for-þat we han trespasid in oure-self & a3ens oure-self þerfore we seyn: «For3eue vs»; and for-þat we han trespasid a3ens oure euene cristene þerfore we seyn: «For3eue vs as we for3eue oure dettouris». Ffor, as seyth seynt Austyn, alle we
400 ben dettouris [f. 38r] to god and euery man & womman hath sum dettour þat hath trespasid a3ens hym.

And, þerfore, 3if þu wilt haue mercy and for3euenesse of god, for3eue þin euene cristene here trespas, so þat þu loue hym as þin-self & putte away al rankour of herte, so þat þu seche of hym amendis & satisfaccioun lawful 3if he mowe, & þat it
405 be don in charite, mercyabeliche, and nout for to vengyn the. Ffor god seyth: «*Michi vindictam et ego retribuam*». I haue reseruyd vengeance takynge to me & I schal zeldin it whane tyme cometh.

«*Eadem mensura qua mensi fueritis remecietur vobis*», *Luce, vj capitulo*. The same mesure þat 3e metyn to 3oure euene cristene bi þe same it schal ben motyn a3en to
410 for3eue 3ow 3oure trespas & 3oure synnes; 3if 3e for3eue nout, god schal nout for3eue 3ow. And, þerfore, seyth seynt Jamys in his pistil, *ij capitulo*: «*Iudicium sine misericordia fiet ei qui non facit misericordiam*». Doom wiþouten mercy schal be don to hym þat doth noo mercy. And, þerfore, seyth þe wise man: «*Relinque proximo*

415 *tuo nocenti te, et tunc deprecanti tibi peccata soluentur. Homo homini reseruat iram, et a deo querit medelam, qui dicat frustra querit; in hominem inquit similem sibi non habet misericordiam, et de peccatis suis deprecatur, qui dicat frustra. Ipse cum caro sit reseruat iram et propiciacionem petit a deo: quis exorabit pro delictis illius*», *Ecclesiastici, xxvii*. Ffor3eue, he seyth, þin ney3ebore þat doth the harm, & þanne þin synnes
420 schuln ben for3ouyn the. Man þat kepith wrethþe to anoþer man in herte, how sekith he helpe and bote of god? He þat hath no mercy on anoþer man þat is lyk hym in kende, how preyeth he to god for mercy of his synnes? He þat is but flesh and wormys mete kepith wrethþe in herte to his euene cristene and askith he mercy of

425 god? Who, he seyth, [f. 38v] schal preye for his trespas, þat is to seye, as longe as he berith wrethþe & wile no mercy schewe? So longe he gette noo mercy of god, so longe he is nout herd in his preyere ne wol seldam ony man for hym: sithþe þanne, he þat is harmyd preyeth in veyn but 3if he wile for3eue. How preyeth he þat is nout harmyd but harmyth, derith and greuyth oþere bi raueyne, extorciounys, bi gyle, bi
430 my3t and bi ouerleding wiþouten mercy. But, þerfore, as seyth seynt Jamys, þey schul ben dempt wiþouten mercy; and, þerfore, seyth seynt Austyn þat 3if þu lye in þis preyere & nout wilt for3eue þu hast noo fru3t of all þin preyere but þu preyest al in veyn. But, peraenture, þu wilt seyn þat þin emny hath doon so mechil a3ens the þat þu my3t nout findyn in þin herte to louyn hym ne to for3euyn it hym. O, seyth seynt Austyn in sermonis, þu takist heed what man hath don a3ens the, but þu takist

435 non heed what þu hast doon a3ens god. And 3if þu loke weel þin conscyence þu hast trespasid more a3ens god, wiþouten comparisoun, þan ony man a3ens the. And, how wilt þu, he seyth, þat god schulde for3eue the so mochil sithþe þu wilt nout for3eue a litel? Ffor3eue, seyth god, & it schal ben for3oue to the. God, seyth seynt Austyn, hath put in oure power & oure wil how we schul ben demyd at the day of dome. He
440 bad the nout, he seyth, gon in-to þe west to getyn ry3twisnesse ne seylin in-to þe est to getyn for3euenesse, but he sente the to þin owene herte, to þin owene conscience. For3eue, he seyth, and god schal for3eue the. God, seyth seynt Austyn, hath putte in the al þat he askith of the, þat is, þin herte bi loue, repentaunce & for3euynge & mercy schewyng: these ben bote of euery bale gostly þat eche man & womman may

445 finde [f. 39r] in his owne herte. In þese þre, man & womman is of endeles myzt. Ffor
his loue may ben endeles and no synne may ben so gret þat he ne may repentyng hym
& haue mercy, and he may forȝeue alle trespas þat is doon aȝens hym be it euere so
mechil, and he may nout forȝeue so mechil but þat he may forȝeue more. Sithþe
450 þanne, þe mercy of man may þus ben endeles þat it may pase euery trespas, mechil
more þe mercy of god is endeles & pasith al maner synne.

§ *Et ne nos inducas in temptationem*: And lede vs nout in-to temptacioun
& fondeing, þat is to seye, lete vs nout falle in oure temptacioun but sende vs grace &
myzt to wiþstonde it.

455 Temptacioun is needful* as longe as man & womman wiþstant. And, þerfore, seyth
seynt Jamys: «*Omne gaudium existimate fratres cum in temptationes varias incideritis*»,
Jacobi, primo capitulo. Breþerin, he seyth, letith it al joyȝe whane ȝe ben temptid in
dyuerse manere & witith it weel, it is to asaye ȝoure feyth & ȝoure pacyence. And
seynt Poule seyth: «*Non coronabitur nisi qui legitime certauerit*», *ij^a ad Themotheum*,
ij capitulo. Ther schal, he seyth, no man be corounyd but he fyȝte lawfully & besily.
460 And so, wiþouten temptacioun no man may deseruyn heuene blisse, ffor god seyth:
«*Vincenti dabo coronam vite*», to hym þat hath þe maystry I schal ȝeue þe coroune of
liif.

«*Beatus vir qui suffert temptationem: qui cum probatus fuerit, accipiet coronam vite*»,
Jacobus, primo capitulo. Blessid be he þat suffrith temptacioun, for, whane he is so
465 asayed, he schal takin þe coroune of liif. Neþeles, as seyth Crysostomus, þe grete
clerk, no man ne womman schulde ben to bolde to putten hym-self in temptacioun
whane he may flen it.

470 Temptacioun is needful*, for, if a man wiþstonde it, he wynnith mochil mede. Also,
[f. 39v] it is nedful to makin man & womman to knowyn hym-self & his frelte, ffor
holy writte seyth: «*Qui non est temptatus pauca recognoscit*», *Ecclesiastici, xxxiiij*. He
þat was neuere assayid, he knowith fewe þingis, he knowith nout hym-self and, as
holy writte seyth, *secundo Paralipomenon, xx capitulo*: «*In nobis non est tanta fortitudo*,
vt possimus resistere huic multitudini, que irruit super nos. Sed cum ignoremus quid agere
debeamus, hoc solum habemus residui, vt oculos nostros dirigamus ad te». We haue
475 nout myzt j-noȝw of oure-self, ne ben nout of power to wiþstonde þe multitude & þe
myzt of þe fendis fondeing þat fallith vpon vs. We wytyng nout what we moun doon,
ne oþer helpe conne we non but only lyftyn vp oure eyȝin & oure herte to þe lord
seyng: «*Et ne nos inducas in temptationem*». Lede vs nout in-to temptacioun, þe
whiche is þe fendis snare, but ȝeue vs wil, myzt, witte & grace to wiþstonde & alwey
480 to ben waar of þe fendis gyle, þat we ben nout take.

God temptith a man for to asaye hym to don hym worschepe & wynnyn mede þat
oþere men moun knowe his vertue & his goodnesse for god knowiþ al. And, on þis
maner, he temptid Abraham: «*Temptauit deus Abraham*». And, sumtyme he temptith
man & womman to don hem knowen here frelte, here febylnesse & here vnsufficiencye
485 & takin heed to þe grete grace of god. And, þus, he temptyd seynt Philip as we
findin in þe gospel. But þe fende, þe worlde & þe flesh temptin man & womman for
to deseuyng hem & bryngyn hem to endeles vileynye & helle pyne. And, þerfore,
aȝens here temptacioun we preye & seyn: «*Ne inducas nos in temptationem*». Suffre
vs nout to ben led in-to fondeing, alwey þu be oure ledere & oure tutour, [f. 40r] for,

* Line 454 needful: ms. meedful.

* Line 468 needful: ms. meedful.

- 490 þerwhylys schul we nout fallen in temptacioun but alwey stonde & wiþstonde. 3if þu leue vs aloone in temptacioun, þu ledist vs in-to temptacioun. Ffor þi leuyng & þin wiþdrawyng of grace is oure falling, and but þu lede vs weel, þe fende schal ledin vs amys, and þerfore, gode fadyr, forsake vs nout, ne leue vs nout for oure vnkendenesse, for oure pride, for oure vnclennesse & for oure schrewdenesse but alwey kepe vs &
- 495 lede vs nout in-to temptacioun. Whane þe sonne wiþdrawith his lyzt it is cause of þe nyzt & of þerknesse. So is wiþdrawyng of grace cause of þe nyzt of synne & of schrewdenesse and wantyng of grace is cause of falling in temptacioun. Neþeles in god is no defauzte but al þe defauzte is in vs. Ffor, ryzt as þe sonne schynyth alwey ouer al but he be lettyd be þe erþe, or be skyis, or bi oþere obstaculis & lettyngis. So
- 500 þe fadyr of heuene, sonne of ryztwisnesse, sent þe bemys of his grace to alle maner men & wommen, but he be lettyd bi þe erþe of coueytise, or þe skye of pride, or bi oþere obstaculis of rekeleshed, of leccherie, of synne & schrewdenesse.
- «*Ffacit solem suum oriri super bonos et malos et pluit super iustos et iniustos*», *Matthei, v^o capitulo*. He makith his sonne to rise on goode & wickyd, and reynyth on ryztful & vnryztful; he reyneth on euery londe in þe felde and þo3w nout euery londe bryngyth nout forth good fru3t but sum good, sum wickid, sum whete, sum thistelis, sum brembelis & þornys, but þat is nout defauzte of god but it is defauzte of þe londe or of þe telyere. Ryzt so, god sent þe lyzt & þe watyr of hys grace to alle maner folk, but þey disposin hem nout alle alyk. For summe settyn all here wil in goodness and
- 510 [f. 40v] bryngyn forth good fru3t, summe settyn here wil, here loue and here lykyng in schrewdenesse & bringin forth wickid fru3t, somme ben rekeles & veyne & 3euen no tale of goddes grace ne takin non heed to here soulys, and so þe grace of god profyztith hem nout but, “for” here defauzte, god withdrawith his grace & letith hem fallin in fondyng. But, fadyr of grace, graunte vs þin grace & lede vs nout in-to
- 515 fondyng bi wiþdrawyng of þin grace.
- Wol mechil folk makith þis preyere vnworþily as glotounys & dronkelew folk þat, bi exces of mete & of drink lesin here witte, skille & resoun & so fallyn in hard temptacioun & many synnes. Also, men & wommen þat bi mys-gysis & nyce contynauce & foly speche drawn folk to leccherie and alle þo þat willinge & wytinge 3euyen hem to wickid companye & nout wilen flen occasioun of synne. Alle
- 520 þe ledin hem-self in-to temptacioun & also oþere folk. And, sithþin þey ledin hem-self in-to temptacioun & nout wilm flen it, vnworþily þey seyn to god: «*Et ne nos inducas in temptacionem*». Lede vs nout in-to temptacioun. Ffor, alþey he wolde kepin hem out, þey wyln gon hem-self in-to temptacioun. Nout only men bi folye fallin in temptacioun, but ouer þat perlously, þey temptyn god as þo þat, in trust of þe mercy of god, synnen and lyn stille in synne & nout wilm amendin hem in-to here deth day. A3ens swyche folk spekith holy writte, *Judith, viij capitulo*: «*Qui estis vos, qui temptatis deum? Non iste sermo, qui misericordiam prouocet, sed potius iram excitet et furorem accendat, et cetera*». What be 3e þat þus temptyn god? Þis is no speche ne dede for to gete by mercy but rapere to agreue god & heyzliche offendin hym & sterin hym to take wreche. Han 3e, he seyth, sette þe tyme of his mercy & sette hym a day of mercy at 3oure wil. Also þese presumptuous folk þat for trust of here holynesse & [f. 41r] of here treuþe & of here clennessse puttyn hem-self in peryl &, auntyr, whane it nedith nout, wenyng þat for here goodness & here trewþe & clennessse god schulde don myracle & by myracle helpin hem & delyueren hem & so don hem worschepe. «*Non temptabis dominum deum tuum*», *Deuteronomii, vj et Matthei, iijj*. Thu schalt nout, seyth Crist, temptyn þin lord god on þis manere ffor euery man & womman in peryl and nede schal helpin hym-self, as longe as he may, & kan lefullyche preyinge to god for helpe & grace and whane mannys myzt and

- 540 witte faylith, þanne, only betake he hym to god wiþ a good trust & good feyth & al putten in his wil. Sumtyme a man may lefulliche askin myracle & tokene of god for confrmacioun of oþere mennes feyth nout for his owne feyth in hym-self. Also, þey tempte god þat preyen to hym for helpe & han but lytil or non feyth in hym, and þus, temptyn god alle þat ben in wanhope & trusten nout on his endeles mercy.
- 545 Swyche temptin his endeles goodnesse & dispisin it; summe tempten his endeles wisdom & dispisin it as þo þat letin goddes doomys & his ordynauce vnry3tfull and vnskillfull & grochin þer azens. Also, þey þat wenen þat god knewe nout here synne & so wenen to hidyn it & nout wiln ben schreuy. Somme temptin & dispisin his endeles my3t, as þey þat ben bolde in synne & wenen þat god be nout of power
- 550 to punsche here synne & batyn here pride, ne dredin nout his endeles my3t & his ry3twisnesse.
«In simplicitate cordis querite illum quoniam inuenitur ab hijs qui non temptant eum apparet autem eis qui fidem habent in illum», Sapientia, primo capitulo. Sechith god in synlennesse of herte, seyth Salomon, nout with duple herte for he is founden of hem þat temptin hym nout and apperith to hem þat han feyth in hym. And, þerfore, þe [f. 41v] wiseman seyth: *«Ante oracionem prepera animam tuam et noli esse sicut homo qui temptat deum», Ecclesiastici, xviii capitulo.* Aforþ þin preyere, ady3te þin soule wiþ feyth & charite & be nout as a man þat temptith god.
- Also, tempting in holy writte is clepid atenyng & wrech þing. And, þerfore, alle þo
- 560 þat tenyn & offendin god bi brekinge of his ten comaundementis, þey temptyn god sinfully. *«Temptauerunt me per decem vices nec obedierunt voci mee», Numerum, xiii capitulo.* They han temptyd me & atenyd me ten sithis by brekinge of þe ten comaundementis, ne þey obeyedin nout to myn voys, seyde god of þe synful chy3ldrin of Israel. Also, þey þat grocchin and han no pacience wiþ goddes domes
- 565 in seknesse, in losse, in tribulacioun, þey tempte god. But, fadyr oure þat art in heuene, fadyr of mercyes & god of al comfort, lede vs nout in-to þis maner of temptacioun, lete vs nout þus tempte the but sende vs grace wiþ good feyth and good trust, with meke herte & charite the to serue.

- § *Sed libera nos a malo:* But delyuere vs from alle wickid visible & vnuisible.
- 570 Delyuere vs from þe fende, þe worlde & þe flesch, oure meste enemyes whiche ben besy alwey vs to schende. Delyuere vs from wo of synne, oygynal, dedly and venyal. Delyuere vs from synne & peyne of synne, ffor who-so synneth he is dettour of pyne þat longyth to synne. Delyuere vs from all wickid þat was, þat is now and þat is to come. Delyuere vs from all wickid & al woo of body & of soule; saue vs from
- 575 helle pyne and brynge vs þere where is noo woo, no wickid but all weel, all goode & alwey joy3e. But heer tak heed, þu wickid man þat lyuyst alwey in wickidnesse what seynt Austyn seyth to the: *«Deus qui creauit te sine te non iustificabit te sine te».* God þat made the of nou3t [f. 42r] wiþouten the, he schal nout justifie the, ne saue the wiþouten the, ne delyuere the from þin wickidnesse wiþouten þe helpe of the.
- 580 And, þerfore, delyuere þi-self from wickidnesse bi helpe of grace, þorwh sorwe of herte & schry3fte of mouthe & amendis makinge. As longe as þu wilt ben wickid þin-self, þu my3t nout ben delyueryd from wickid, ne ben herd in þi preyere whane þu seyst: *«Libera nos a malo».* Delyuere vs from all wickid. For þu wilt nout ben delyuered from þi-self wickid but, wil god nyl god, þu wilt ben a schrewe, and so
- 585 vnworþili & in maner scornfully, þu preyest to god to ben delyuered from alle wickid for þu wilt nout ben swych as þu preyest god to make the. But, as seyth seynt Austyn, þu wilt haue all þinge good & þin-self wickid. Thu wilt haue, he seyth, a good wijf, gode seruautis, gode cloþis, good mete, good drynk, goode bestis, good

590 gold, good syluer. Ðu wilt haue þin hosin good, þin schon good; þu wilt haue alle þinge good saue þi-self aloone, þu wilt alwey ben wickid. I preye the, he seyth, be good amongis þi goodes ffor it is a schame þat amongis alle þi goodes þu aloone art wickid and nout wilt ben delyuered from wickid. Neþeles, be þu good, be þu wickid, alwey preye & sey: «*Libera nos a malo*». Delyuere vs from all wickid, ffor þe synful man and womman seyth his *Pater Noster* and his Crede nout only in his owene name
595 but also in þe name of al holy cherche.

And, þerfore, alþowh he gabbe & preye vnworþily in his owne name, 3et in þe name of holy chirche he seyth soth & makith worþ preyere. And, þerfore, þu synful man & womman alwey preye & preyse þi god ffor, as seyth seynt Jerom, bi preyere and preysynge þe synful getyn grace and for3euenesse.

600 § A3ens pride we seyn: «*Sanctificetur nomen [f. 42v] tuum*». Halwid be þin name, ffor proud folk wolden alwey han here name halwid & born abou3te. And, þerfore, seyth þe prophete: «*Non nobis domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo da gloriam*». Nout to vs lord, nout to vs, but to þi name 3eue worschepe, glorye & blisse.

A3ens coueytise we seyn: «*Adueniat regnum tuum*». Mote þi kyngdom come to,
605 ffor coueytous folk sechin þe kygdom of þis worlde heer to regne & be lordis and of þe kyngdom of heuene 3euyñ þey no tale and, þerfore, seynt Poule clepith coueytise ydolatrie and seyth þat mys coueytous folk schuln nout haue þe kyngdom of heuene.

A3ens enuye we seyn: «*Fiat voluntas tua sicut in celo et in terra*». Be þi wil don in erþe as in heuene, þat is to seye, ry3t as in heuene þey ben alle of oo wil and in
610 charite, and here wil is conformyd to þi wil. So mote it ben in erþe amongis mankende, þat þey ben alle in charite of oo wil, of oon herte & alle conformyd to þi wil. But, enuyous folk discordin alwey from þe wil of god & ben out of charite ffor god wolde þat alle men ferde weel & were sauid, as seynt Poule seyth: «*Deus neminem vult perire sed vult omnes homines saluos fieri*». But enuyous folk and malicyous ben
615 heuy of oþere mennes weel-fare and glad of here mys-fare, alwey heuy, alwey in euele wil & heuy herte.

A3ens slou3þe and vnlust we seyn: «*Panem nostrum cotidianum da nobis hodie*». Graunte vs þis day oure eche dayes bred, þat is to seye, graunte vs þis day oure nedful lijflode, graunte vs grace so to werkin and so to don þat we be worþi oure bred & oure
620 lijflode. Ffor seynt Poule seyth: «*Qui non vult operari non manducet*». Who-so wil nout werkin, ne trauaylin, but lyuyn in eese & slou3þþe, he is nout worþi hys mete and Crist seyth in þe gospel: «*Meus cibus est vt faciam voluntatem patris [f. 43r] mei*». My mete is to don þe wil of my fadyr in heuene. «*Operamini cibum qui non perit, sed permanet in vitam eternam*», *Johannis, vj capitulo*. Trauaylith so & werkith,
625 so þat 3e moun deseruyn mete þat nout perschith but lestith in-to þe lijf wiþouten ende. Alle vs muste trauaylyn for oure breed and oure lyuyng, or bodiliche or gostliche or gostliche. Somme bodily as laboreris, officeris, men of craft, chapmen, men of armys þat ben ordeynyd to defendin & meynntenyn þe pore peple and holy chirche in ry3t & trewþe. Oþere muste trauaylin gostly as souereynys, rewlouris, men of lawe,
630 prechouris, techeris, men of holy chirche, seculer & reguler. To þese, it longith princypaly to studyen & techin oþere goddis lawe, londis lawe, holy chirche lawe; to techin hem & rewlin hem in ry3t & trewþe. Oþere muste trauaylin in redinge and syngynge in bedis, biddinge in holy deuocioun, in seruise in holy chirche. And so, eche man & womman in his degre must trauayle for his lyuyng.

635 A3ens wrethþe we seyn: «*Dimitte nobis debita nostra sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris*». Ffor3eue vs oure dettis & oure synnes as we for3eue oure dettouris. So, in þis peticioun, we preye god to 3euyñ vs grace to putten away al

rancour & wrethþe of herte, for ellis we mow geten no mercy, ffor wrethþe askith alwey veniaunce and wreche but it be refreynynd. And, þerfore, seyth god in þe
 640 gospel: «*Cum stabitis ad orandum, dimitte si quid habetis aduersus aliquem: vt et pater vester, qui in celis est, dimittat vobis peccata vestra, et cetera*», *Marci, xj*. Whane 3e schul stonde to preye, 3if 3e han ony wrethþe, ony rankour of herte azenys ony wy3t, for3eue it, þat 3oure fadyr þat is in heuene mote for3eue 3ow 3oure synnes for, but 3if 3e for3euynd opere, ellis he schal nout for3eue 3ow.

645 A3ens glotonye we seyn: [f. 43v] «*Et ne nos inducas in temptacionem*». Lede vs nout in-to temptacioun, þat is to seye in-to glotonye, whiche princepaly is clepid temptacioun, ffor wiþ glotonye þe fende temptyd fyrst & princepaly Adam & Eue and les al mankende whane he dede hem eetynd of þe appil a3ens þe forbode of god. With glotonye, fyrst & princepaly he temptyd Crist seyng: «*Si filius dei es dic vt*
 650 *lapides isti panes fiant*». 3if þu be goddes sone, seye & comaunde þat þese stonys turne in-to bred. By glotonye also, princepaly, he temptid þe chy3ldrin of Israel in desert and dede hem grocchen a3ens god tyl þe veniaunce of god fel vpon hem & slo3w of hem many þousend, as we fyndin, *Exodi, xvj et xvij capitulo*. In so mechil þat þe place of here synne was clepid temptacioun, ther is no temptacioun þat sonnere
 655 drawith folk to synne for þe body, be weye of kende, is so mechil enclyned þerto. And, þerfore, whane þe fende wolde lese mankende bi temptacioun, he began at glotonye for of glotonye comyth al fleschly synne as leccherie, wrethþe, hastynesse, slau3þe, wanwit, lesinge of resoun and mechil folie.

A3ens leccherie we seyn: «*Libera nos a malo*». Delyuere vs from wickid þing, ffor þer is noo synne þat makyth mannes soule & wommanes so thral and bonde to synne as leccherie, for in þis synne man & womman becomyth al flesch, as a beste, & þe soule is al ouercome bi þe flesch and maad thral to þe foule lust of þe flesch. And, þerfore, we askin fredom to oure soule & preyen to ben delyuered of þis harde seruage seyng delyuere vs from þe wickid synne of leccherie & wickid companye.
 665 Ffor, as Salomon seyth: «*Qui ungitur fornicarijs erit nequam*», *Ecclesiastici, xxx*. Who-so be knyght wiþ lecchouris he schal [f. 44r] ben wickid. «*In deo non des mulieri id est voluptati carnis potestatem anime tue, ne forte ingrediatur in virtute tua, et confundaris*», *Ecclesiastici, ix capitulo*. And, þerfore, he seyth, 3eue nout to lust & lykynge of þi flesch þe power of þi soule for, 3if þu doo it, schal entrin vpon the & reuye the of þi vertue & of þi fredom & schende the. «*Non des fornicarijs animam tuam in villo ne perdas te et animam tuam*», *ibidem*. 3eue nout, he seyth, þi soule to lecchouris in no þing, be no weye, þat þu lese nout þi-self, ne þi soule, ne þin heritage; therfore seyth seynt Poule, *ad Romanos, vij capitulo*, þat þe flesch fy3tith a3ens þe soule & makith it presoner vnder þe lawe of synne. «*Infelix ego homo quis me liberabit*
 675 *de corpore mortis huius?*». O, I wrecchid man, seyth seynt Poule, who schal delyuere me from þe body of þis deth?, þat is to seye, from þe lordschepe & lust of þe flesch in whiche is deth? «*Gracia dei*». Only, he seyth, þe grace of god schal delyuere vs from þis wo and, þerfore, wiþ al oure my3t, to þe fadyr in heuene, we seyn and crye: «*Libera nos a malo*». Delyuere vs from þe wickid bondage of leccherie. *Amen*.

680 § Bi þese seuen petyciouns we askin also seuen princepal vertues, mest nedful to mannes soule, whiche ben ffeyth, hope and charite, ry3twisnesse, prudence, þat is sle3the, my3t and temperaunce.

Whane we seyn: «Halwid be þi name», we askin parfy3t feyth, þat oure feyth & þe name of Crist in vs mow be schewyd & worschepid be oure gode dedis and oure
 685 gode lyuynge so þat oure beleue & oure lyuynge acorden to-gedere. Ffor, as seyth seynt Jamys: «Feyth wiþouten gode dedis is a deed feyth».

Whane we seyn: «Mote þin kyngdom come to», we askyn parfyzt hope, þat we settyn oure hope, oure trust, oure desyr and oure longynge princepaly in þe kyngdom of [f. 44v] heuene in þat endeles blisse, hopinge sekyrly to come þerto bi þe mercy of god, 3if we don oure deuer and nout fallin in no despeyr for noo synne.

Whane we seyn: «Be þi wil don in erþe as in heuene», we askin parfyzt charite, þat is, to conformyn alwey oure wil to þe wil of god, þat we ben alle of oo wil wiþ god, of oon loue, of oon herte & louyn what he louyth and nobing louen but for hym & in hym and ben in wil nobing to louen ne to willin azens his wil & his plesaunce.

Whane we seyn: «3eue vs þis day oure eche dayes bred», we askin þe vertue of ryztfulnesse, þat is, oure aldris gostly foode, of whiche god seyth in þe gospel: «*Beati qui esuriunt et sticiunt iusticiam: quoniam ipsi saturabuntur*». Blissid ben þey þat hungryn & þristin & desyrin ryztwisesse for þey schul ben fulfillid.

Whane we seyn: «Ffor3eue vs oure dettis as we for3eue oure dettouris», we askin þe vertue of prudence and of sleyste þat Crist tauzte hise disciplis in þe gospel þus seyinge: «*Ecce ego mitto vos sicut oues in medio luporum; estote ergo prudentes sicut serpentes, et simplices sicut columbe*». Lo, seyth Crist, I sende 3ow as schep amongis woluyis; beth 3e þanne sle3y as serpentis & symple as dowis. The dowe hath noo galle, the serpent stoppith his eris wiþ his tayl and þe erþe, þat he mou nout here þe charmour. So, muste vs ben wiþouten galle of rancour & malyce & wrethþe, & soone for3ete wrongis, dispyztis and dishesis as dowis don. Ffor, as Seneca seyth: «*Optimum remedium iniuriarum est obliuio*». The beste remedie of wrongis is for3etyngge, ffor he þat soone for3et soone for3ifyuþ. Also vs muste stoppin oure eris wiþ meende of oure deth & of oure ende and lete wordis pase as wynd & nout charchin hem to mechil, ffor he þat takith his wrong lyztly he for3euþ lyztly, and he þat for3euþ lyztly he getyþ mercy of god [f. 45r] redily, for he seyth: «*Beati misericordes, ...*». Blyssid be þey þat ben merciful, for þey schul getyn mercy of god. And, þerfore, be wys, sly & war and be nout to wrecheþul, but alwey mercyable, ffor þe same mesure þat þu metyst to oþere schal be motyn azen to the.

Whane we seyn: «Lede vs nout in-to fonding», we askin þe vertue of gostly strenthe to withstonde temptacioun, ffor seynt Petyr seyth: «*Aduersarius vester diabolus tamquam leo rugiens circuit, querens quem deuoret: cui resistite fortes in fide*», *prima Petri, v.* 3oure aduersarie, þe fend, goth abouzten 3ow as a leon, rorynge & belwyng, & sechith whom he may deuoure and, þerfore, wiþstondith hym stronge in þe feyth.

Whane we seye: «Delyuere vs from euyl», we askyn þe vertue of temperaunce; þat we tempre oure-self & oure lyuynge in a meene aftyr resoun ffor, as þe philosophre seyth, vertu stant in þe myddis and extremytes ben alwey wickid as ouer-eetyng & drynkyng is wickyd. Also ouer-fastyng & ouer-abstynence is wickyd; ouer-wakyng & ouer-slepyng boþe ben wickid. Man may ben to large in 3euynge & to hard in kepinge, he may ben to ryztful & to mercyable and, þerfore, in al oure lyuynge, & in all oure dedis, temperaunce, þat is to seye meene mesure & manere, is nedful & specyaly in rewle of oure body ffor þe flesch is so wra3w þat he wyle alwey don to mochil or to lytel & alwey ben from þe meene in extremytes. This vertue of temperaunce is wol nedful to weddid folk. For alþey lust & lykyng of þe flesch ben leful to hem be wey of matrymonye, 3et þey muste tempre hem-self & kepe tyme, place, mesure & manere wiþ good entencyoun, for ellys lyztly þey moun synnen to-gedere dedly; and þerfore þe aungyl Raphael seyde to Tobie þat þe fende hath power ouer hem þat so defylyn þe stat of matrymonye [f. 45v] and don al for lust of þe flesch, as bestis wiþouten resoun, and for3etyn here god & honeste of matrymonye. But, lord god, delyuere vs from all wickid and sende vs þe vertue of temperaunce,

and sende vs grace oure liff so to demeene in resoun, mesure & manere, þat we moun fle al wickid þe whiche pasith resoun, mesure and manere.

§ Also, bi þese seuene petyciounys, we askin þe seuene ziftis of þe holy gost.
 740 Whane we seyn: «Oure fadyr þat art in heuene halwyd and worschepid be þin name», heer we askin þe zifte of wisdom to knowe þe ryzt beleue & what is spedful to oure soulis & to þe worschepe of god. Ffor Salomon seyth: «*Filius sapiens letificat patrem*», *Prouerbiourum*, xv. A wys chy3ld gladith his fadyr & doth hym worschepe. «*Confusio patris est de filio indisciplinato*», *Ecclesiastici*, xxij. An euyl tau3t chy3ld &
 745 euyl tecchid is schame & confusioun to his fadyr, and wisdom & good norture of þe chy3ld is worschepe to his fadyr. And, in þe sixtenþe chapitele, he seyth þat god coueytith nout multitude of vntrewe chy3ldryn & vnprofytable and, þerfore, he seyth heue no lykynge ne joye in hem, but þe dred of god be in hem for þe dred of god is begynnynge of wisdom. «*Inicium sapientie timor domini*». Oon chy3ld, he seyth,
 750 þat dredith god, is betere & mor worschipful þan a þousend schrewys.

Whane we seye: «Mote þi kyngdom come to», we askyn þe zifte of vnderstanding to knowin oure god & heuene blisse, nout only be feyth but also be visible creaturis ffor, as seynt Poule seyth: «*Inuisibilia dei per ea que facta sunt intellecta conspiciuntur*», *ad Romanos*, primo capitulo. Inuysible þingis of god, his endeles myzt & his godhed,
 755 ben vnderstondin, seyn & knowyn bi visible creaturis þat he made. Ffor be þe multitude & þe grethed & largehed of [f. 46r] creaturis schewyth þe endeles myzt of him þat made hem alle of nouzt. In þe bewte, ordre & rewle schewith his endeles wisdom, endeles bewte, endeles swetnesse. In þe profyzt of creaturis & þe ende þat he made hem fore-schewith his endeles goodnesse for he made alle þinge to profyzt of man and of resonable creature, nout for his owne profyzt. For he was nout
 760 amendid bi makyng of þe world, ne schulde ben apeyryd þey it wente al to nouzt.

Whane we seyn: «Be þi wil don in erþe as in heuene», we askin þe zifte of counceyl, þat techith vs princypaly to louen oure god & knowe what is his wil, and ben wis & war of þe fendis sleyztis & þe worldis wyls and fleschly lustis þat þey
 765 begylyn vs nout ne make vs to doon noo-þing a3ens þe wil ne þe plesaunce of god. And þerfore seynt Poule seyth: «*Nolite conformari huic seculo, sed reformamini in nouitate sensus vestri: ut probetis que sit voluntas dei bona, beneplacens atque perfecta*», *ad Romanos*, xij. Conformyth 3ow nou to þis wickid worlde, but be 3e reformyd a3en to god in newehed of 3oure witte, þat is to seye, be conceyl of þe holy gost, þat
 770 3e moun asaye what is þe good wil of god wel plesaunt & parfyzt.

Whane we seye: «Graunte vs þis day oure eche dayes bred», we askin þe zifte of connyng & disressioun to knowe what is ryzt & vnryzt, good & wicke, trewe & fals, wiþouten þe zifte of connyng þe vertue of ryztwisesse may nout ben kept. Of þis zifte spekith god, Amos, viij: «I schal», he seyth, «sendin hungryr in erþe,
 775 nout hungryr of bodily bred, ne threst of bodily watyr, but a desyr to herin þe word of god» ffor, now, good techinge & prechyng for synne is wiþdrawe. As Jeremy seyth: «*Paruuli pecierunt panem et non erat qui frangeret eis*». The smale people hath askid [f. 46v] bred of connyng & of goddes word and þer is no man to brekyn it to hem ne to expungnen it.

780 Whane we seye: «Ffor3eue vs oure dettis as we for3eue oure dettouris», we aske þe zifte of pite, þat we kunne haue pite & mercy on oure euene cristene.

Whane we seyn: «Lede vs nout in-to fondeing», we aske þe zifte of gostly strenthe to withstonde þe fendis fondeing.

785 Whane we seyn: «Delyuere vs from wickyd», we askin þe zifte of dred to putten away al maner synne & namely lecherie. And, þerfore, þe prophete seyth: «*Confige*

timore tuo carnes meas». Pricke and chastise my flesch wiþ þin dred. The dred of god is clepid a besy keping of goddes comaundementis wiþ parfyzt feyth & good maneris for dred of hys offens and, so, þe dred of god is begynnynge & endinge of al goodnesse & puttith away al wickidnesse. «*Qui timet deum faciet bona*». Who-so
 790 dredith god he schal don wel & fle wickidnesse ffor, as Salomon seyth: «*Per timorem domini declinat omnis a malo*», *Prouerbiorum*, xv. Bi þe dred of god eche gode man fleth from wyckyð & doth weel to plesin god.

Seynt Gregory seyth þe 3ifte of wisdom fedith mannes soule wiþ lykynge of endeles þingis and gostly þingis. The 3ifte of vnderstondyng elumyneth mannes
 795 herte to vnderstonde þingis þat he herith. The 3ifte of counceyl techith hym nout ben to hasty ne to presumptuous ffor holy writte seyth: «*Ffili nil facias sine concilio*». Do nouzt wiþouten counceyl. The 3ifte of strencthe comforthith in peryl & dred. The 3ifte of kunnyng puttith away ignoraunce & folye. The 3ifte of pite techith mercy & dedys of elmesse. The 3ifte of dred of god abatith pryde and for as mechil as
 800 pride is fyrst & last of alle synnes & temptacionis, þefore þe dred of god “þe whiche” is souereyn remedye a 3ens [f. 47r] pryde, sumtyme is put fyrst of þe seune 3iftis & sumtyme last.

Seynt Gregory, *super Ezechielem*, seyth þat þe 3ifte of wisdom makith a man sobre & sad, vnderstanding makith hym awise, counceyl makith hym sley & waar,
 805 strencthe makith hym herty & willy, connyng makyth hym discreet & resonable in his doinge, pyte makith hym mercyable, the dred of god lo3w & meke.

Seynt Thomas, «*De veritatibus theologie*», seyth þat bi þese 3iftis we ben wissid in lijf contemplatif & in lijf actijf. Contemplatif lijf hath þre fyrste: dred, wisdom & vnderstanding. Dred techith vs to reuerencyn & worschepin þe heye maieste of
 810 god; wisdom techith vs to louen his endeles goodnesse; vnderstanding wissith vs to vnderstonde his endeles trowþe & leuyn hym as endeles trowþe. The actijf lijf hath foure 3iftis: pite in his dedis, myzt for to suffrin, connyng to wisse pite, counceyl to wissing of strencthe and, þefore, connyng & pite ben knyht to-gedere and also counceyl & strencthe.

§ Be þese seune petyciounys we askyn also seune vertuis þat Crist put in þe gospel, *Matthei*, v°, and seune blyssis þerto.

Whane we seyn: «Halwid be þin name», we askin pouerte of spyryzt and lou3nesse, bi whiche þe name of Crist and cristendom is mest halwid & worschepid
 820 in þat þat cristene folk, for his loue, forsakin pompe & pride of þis worlde and erþely goodes, ffor *sanctus*, *id est greco agyos*, *id est sine terra*, þat is to seyne, wiþouten erþe. And, þefore, in holy wryt alle þat forsakin þe worlde and takin hem to pouerte for þe loue of god, kepinge wel here stat, ben clepid seyntis for, be hem, þe name of god is mest worschepid & halwid. And, þefore, as seyth þe lawe, *xij quaestio ij gloria*, god halwid holy chirche in pouert. Thanne, is þe name of oure fadyr in
 825 heuene hal/wid [f. 47v] in vs whane we ben chy3ldryn of heuene and settyn oure loue & oure desyr in heuene blisse and nout in erþely goodis, and þanne we moun seyn wiþ þe apostile: «*Nostra conuersacio in celis est*». Oure conuersacioun & oure lyuynge is in heuene.

Whane we seyn: «Mote þi kyngdom come to vs», we askyn þe secunde vertue
 830 wiþ þe blisse þat longith þerto, þat is, benygnete, mekenesse & pacience for to swyche folk is hyzt þe lond of lijf, þat is, þe kyngdom of god.

Whane we seyn: «Be þi wil don in erþe as in heuene», we askyn grace to sorwyn & mornen for oure synnes & operis also for þat þe wil of god is nout don, but bi synnes & abhomynaciounys greuously god is offendid. Sory þat wickid folk a 3ens

835 þe wil of god han forth here wil and þat synne is in prosperite.

Whane we seyn: «Graunte vs oure eche dayes bred», we askyn loue & desyr of ry3tfulnesse, þat is oure gostly fode & þe blisse þat longyth þerto ffor alle wrongis schul ben redressid in þis world or in þe toþer.

840 Whane we seyn: «Ffor3eue vs oure dettis as we for3eue oþere here», we askin þe vertue of mercy & þe blisse þat longith þerto.

Whane we seyn: «Lede vs nout in-to temptacioun», we askin clenness of herte and þe blisse þat longith þerto ffor, as Crist seyth in þe gospel, al maner synne comyth out of þe herte.

845 Whane we seyn: «Delyuere vs from all wyckyd», we askyn pees princepaly atwixen þe body & þe soule, pees in oure-self, pees and charite amongis mankende and þe blysse þat longith þerto and, in þat, we askin to ben delyuerid from persecucioun & dishese þat is in þis world and bi vertue of pacience come to þe kyngdom of heuene where is noo euyl, noo woo but al weel. And, þerfore, in þe ey3the blessing he seyth: «Blissid be þey þat suffrin persecucioun for þe ry3t, for-why here is kyngdom of heuene». «Blissid schul 3e ben» [f. 48r] he seyth, «whane men schul cursen 3ow & pursuyn 3ow & seyn al wickid a3ens 3ow & lyen on 3ow for my sake», þanne, «be 3e glad & merie for 3oure mede is wol plenteuous in heuene» for, þer, 3e schul haue al wel and ben delyuered from al euyl. *Amen.*

§ Also, be þese seuene peticiounis, we askin grace to fulfille al goddis lawe, 855 ffor-why al goddis lawe stant in two preceptis of charite.

The fyrste is þis: «*Diliges dominum deum tuum ex toto corde tuo, ex tota anima tua, et ex omnibus viribus tuis*». Thu schalt loue þi lord god wiþ al þin herte, wiþ al þin soule, wiþ al þi my3tis. The secunde is þis: «*Diliges proximum sicut te ipsum*», *Luce, x capitulo*. Thu schalt loue þin ney3ebore as þi-self.

860 In þese two, seyth Crist, hangith al þe lawe & al þe prophecie. Be weye of kende, 3if man or womman loue weel an oþer, he schal schewin hym loue in word, in herte, in werk & dede, he schal spekin hym good & be glad of his good name, he schal loue to ben in his companye and ben besi to don his wil & his plesaunce. Ry3t so, who-so loue wel his god he muste schewyn it in speche & reuerencyn his holy name & nout dispisin it bi false & foule obis, sweringe, ne bi no wyckyd speche, glad to spekin & to herin spekin of hym good & worschepe, besi to herin abou3ten his good name & his worschepe. And, þerfore, we seyn: «*Sanctificetur nomen tuum*».

Halwid & worschepid be þi name. Also, he muste ben glad & louen to ben in his companye and, þerfore, we seyn: «*Adueniat regnum tuum*». Mote þi kingdom come 870 to. Þat þu come to vs heer þorwh grace, and regne in oure soulis and aftyr we mote come to the in-to þe kyngdom of heuene to regne wiþ the in endeles blisse. Also he muste ben besi to don his wil & his plesaunce and, þerfore, we seyn: «*Fiat voluntas tua*».

Be þi wil don in erþe as in heuene. Sende vs grace alwey [f. 48v] to don þi wil and þi plesaunce. 3if we schewyn hym ful loue in speche it is tokene þat we louen hym 875 wiþ al oure herte, ffor Crist seyth in þe gospel: «*Ex habundancia cordis os loquitur*». The mouth spekith of swych þing of whiche is plente of in þe herte, ffor þe mouth schewith outward & þe herte inward. 3if we ful desyryn to ben in his companye, þan loue we hym wiþ al oure soule, whiche is ordeynid to be goddes temple, goddes hous & goddes see. «*Quia anima iusti sedes est sapiencie*».

880 Pfor, as seyth holy writ, þe soule of þe ry3tful man or womman is þe see & þe dwellyng of endeles wisdom, þat is, goddes sone, swete Jhesus. 3if we ben besy and don oure ful deuer to fulfille þe wil of god & his plesaunce, þanne loue we hym wiþ al oure my3t. And, so, bi the thre fyrste peticiounys, we askin grace & helpe to fulfille þe fyrste precepte of charite.

885 Be þe foure laste petyciounys we askin grace & helpe to fulfillin þe secunde
precept of charite ffor, in alle þese foure, we preyin for alle oure euene cristene as
for oure-self and desyrin & askin to hem & for hem þe same good helpe & grace þat
we askin for oure-self and ben besi wiþ oure preyere to bryngyn alle to þe same wele
joyze & blisse þat we desyrin & sekin to oure-self, whiche wele & blisse graunte vs
he þat for vs deyde on tre. *Amen.*

890

The end of þe lords preyer.

LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS

What follows is a succinct exemplification of the main orthographic, phonological and morphosyntactic characteristics of the text language. Though aiming at singling out a possible dialectal variety for the text, the analysis will reveal the fairly advanced level of linguistic standardization typical of early XVth century English.

1. Spelling and phonology

1.1. Long vowels

ME	u:	<ou ow u>	<i>þousend/þousand, abou 3te/abou 3ten, mouth/mouthbe, hous, oure, þu/thu, proud, how</i>
ME	o:	<oCe oo o>	<i>dome, doom, good/goode/gode, book, fode/foode, soone, loke, doo/doon/don/do, gold, bord</i>
ME	ɔ:	<oCe oo o >	<i>woo/wo, so, aloone/aloon, stonys, foo, oth/othis/opis, oonly/only, gost, cloþis, lord, lore, noon, louys (loaves), hope, longe, lond, songe, wrong, stronge</i>
ME	a:	<aCe a aa>	<i>name, take, schame, tale, grace, stat/staat, made/maad, cas</i>
ME	ɛ:	<eCe ee e>	<i>teche, sweet (sweat), whete, gret/grete, deth, deed (dead), mete, bedis, brekyn, peple</i>
ME	e:	<eCe ee e>	<i>swete (sweet), dede, redin, deme, nede, seche, seke, heer (here), kepe, felde, fend(e), fredom</i>
ME	i:	<yCe ij y i iCe y3>	<i>schyne, wijf, lijf, yryn, ydel, tyme, wis/wys, rise/ryse, chy3ld, pride/pryde</i>

1.2. Short vowels

ME	u	<u o v>	<i>sonne (sun), sone (son), come, sodeynly, sum/summe, cunnyng/connyng, curs, ful, lust, loue, worþ/worþi, womman, wollene, vp, vnder, trust, moche, worschepe, wormys</i>
ME	ɔ	<o>	<i>god, folk, body, forth, often, ony</i>
ME	a	<a>	<i>þat, appil, craft, smal/smale, þan/þanne, whane, what, war, kan/can, chapman</i>

ME	e	<e>	<i>betere, ellis, nette, men, besy, cherche, merie, mechil, heuene, herte, kept, þerk</i>
ME	i	<i y>	<i>þing/þinge, swich, sithþe/sithþin, blisse/blysse, ryzt, drink, synne, sinful, kyng/kyngis, kyngdom/kingdom, fyrst(e), chirche, bryzte, lyzt(is), fifþe, syzte</i>

1.3. Diphthongs

ME	eu / iu > iu	<eu ew>	<i>treuþe/trewþe, trewe, newebed, fewe, schrewe/schrewedenesse, lewid, schewe, rewle, rewlin, bewte</i>
ME	au	<au aw>	<i>drawen/drawith, lawe, tauzt/tauzte/tawte, cauzt, cause</i>
ME	ai > æi ei > æi	<ay> <ey ei>	<i>day, may, tayl sey/seye/seyde/seith, awey, seylin, neyzebore, eyzte/eyzthe, eyze/eyzin, deye/deyde, lyen³⁸, heyze</i>
ME	oi	<oy oyz>	<i>joyze, joye</i>
ME	ou	<ou ow>	<i>soule, knowe, owene/owne, louznesse, foure, nouzt/nout</i>

1.4. Consonants

1.4.1. Spirants

The interdental spirants, voiced |ð| and unvoiced |θ|, are spelt <þ th thþ>; the spelling <th> is mostly used in verbal endings (3rd person singular); <th> is far more preferred than <þ> which can be found at the beginning and in the middle of a word; sometimes, <th> and <þ> appear as geminate consonants <thþ>: *wrethþe*.

The velar and palatal spirants |χ|/|ç| have different spellings <3 3h h>: *adyzte, slouzhþe, þorwh*; the most common is <3>.

The spelling <3> between vowels and at the beginning of a word sounds as the palatal semi-consonant |j|: *preyze/preye, preyzin/preyen, neyzebore, joyze/joye, heyze/heyte, forzeue, eyze, zer, zeer, zifte, azen*.

The palatal spirant |ʃ| is spelt <sch sh>: *dishese/dishesis, shalt, schal, schame, schewe, schort, schyne, schul*.

³⁸⁾ This spelling seems to suggest the pronunciation |i:|.

The voiced sibilant |z| is spelt <s> : *cese* |s_z_|; the unvoiced one |s| <ce s c ss>: *face, substancial, substaunce, sum, trespasid, vnclennesse, discessioun*.

The unvoiced dental spirant |f| is spelt <ff>: it can be found at the beginning and at the end of a word or following a consonant, as in *zaf, self, suffise, falle, ffor*. It is voiced |v| between vowels or after a liquid except when it is a geminate consonant. The spelling <v> is used at the beginning of a word and it may correspond to two different sounds: *vertue, venyal, vileynye*, |v|; *vp, vnder*, |u|. Instead, <uw> can be found medially: *loue, louys, syluer, dowe*, |v|.

The OE labio-velar spirant <hw> |χ^w| is spelt <wh>: *whane, what, which, who, why*.

1.4.2. Occlusives

The unvoiced velar occlusive |k| is spelt <ck>. The spelling <k> is usually used at the beginning of a word followed by a front vowel: *kingdom, kende, kepe*; in the middle of a word it is always followed by a palatal: *makinge*. But it can be also followed by back vowels: *kan, kunne, rankour*, and may be found at the end of a word: *drink, alyk, swynk*. The spelling <c> is used before back vowels: *can, cam, curs, cunnyng*. In the middle of a word the sound |k| may appear as <ck>: *wicke, wickid*.

The voiced velar occlusive |g| is spelt <g> both at the beginning of a word and after a consonant: *galle, get, gete, brynge, noutwipstondinge, seyngge*.

The unvoiced palatal affricate |tʃ| is spelt <ch> initially and <ch cch> medially: *wrechid, wrecchis, wybecraft, wreche, charchin, charite, cherche, swych(e), teche, tecchid*. The voiced one |dʒ| is spelt <j g i> in words of French origin: *joyze, joye, maieste, seruage, soget, vengeaunce, veniaunce, vengyn*.

2. Morphology

2.1. Nouns

The declensional endings have completely disappeared, except for the possessive case and the plural forms.

The possessive case appears in this text with a certain frequency but the same meaning can be expressed by the periphrastic form modelled on Old French. The characteristic is a sibilant ending; even nouns which had a genitive vowel changed it on the analogy of those in -s. In H the geni-

tive endings are *-es, -is, -ys* ³⁹: *fadris chy3ldryn / 93, goddis wil / 245, goddes oth / 71, Cristis lawe / 158, mannys lijf / 298, mannes soule / 660, mennes dishese / 261, wommanys / 291, lordis preyere / 10, deuelis snare / 62, eche dayes bred / 618, a þousand zeer / 336, fourty wyntytr / 368, a þousand schrewys* ⁴⁰ / 750. The stem vowels *<-e-, -i-, -y->* are alternative but here *<-i-, -y->* are mostly chosen.

The periphrastic form belonging to Old French is particularly used in prose writings: *þe wil of god / 44, þe name of god / 143, þe name of trewþe / 147, the kyngdom of god / 182, oo day bred of many dayes / 319.*

The plural is usually formed by the ending *-s* (preceded by the stem vowels *-e-, -i-* or *-y-*), also spreading among those nouns which did not originally have it: *blissis, bestis, creatouris, dettoures, dettouris, glotonys, þingis, woluyis, wordes, synnes.*

Some plurals have *i-mutation* of the root vowel: *chapmen, man/men, womman/wommen; broþer > breþerin/breþeryn* (*i-mutation and r + -i-/-y- + n*); *chy3ld > chy3ldrin/chy3ldryn* (*r + -i-/-y- + n*).

Some plural forms have no ending at all if they are preceded by expressions of number and quantity: *to fulfille al maner ryzt / 44, fyue þousand / 299, fourty wyntytr / 368.*

Since the late Middle English period the tendency to consider collective nouns as plurals has been established: *hys grace to alle maner folk, but þey disposin hem nout alle alyk / 508-509; mechil folk makin / 211; coueytous folk & proud folk þat sekyn / 212.*

The stem vowels belonging to the plural are *-e-, -i-, -y-* but the two latter are mostly used in this text.

2.2. Adjectives

Almost all the adjectives are invariable apart from the monosyllabic ones ending in a consonant. The strong and weak declensions are partially respected (reduced however to *-e*). The strong declension has *-∅* in the singular while the weak has *-e*. Both the declensions have *-e* in the plural.

³⁹) Since the XIIIth century post tonic *<e>* |ə| took on different timbres. In the North it became |i|, in the Midlands and in the South an intermediate sound between |i| and |e| was established. In the North the genitive, the plural, the present of verbs, the weak preterite and the strong past participle have: *-is, -is, -i, -id, -in*. In the Midlands *<i>* appeared instead of *<e>* for the first time in a XIIIth century sermon at Cambridge Trinity College (R. Jordan, *Handbook of Middle English Grammar: Phonology*, translated & revised by E.J. Crook, The Hague-Paris, Mouton, 1974, § 135).

⁴⁰) Old English numerals had to be followed by partitive genitive; yet, in the same conditions the periphrastic form can be found: *fyue þousand of men* (299).

The strong form is most commonly used, the weak one can be found when the adjective is preceded by possessives, demonstratives or the article.

2.2.1. Strong form

sg. - \emptyset pl. -e > *in hard temptacioun* / 517-518; *pride is fyrst & last* / 800; *selfwise men* / 220.

2.2.2. Weak form

sg. -e pl. -e > *þis harde seruage* / 663-664; *bi the thre fyrste peticiounys* / 882-883; *Be þe foure laste petyciounys* / 884; *The smale peple* / 777.

Some adjectives, preceded or not by the article, are used in the plural form and function as nouns: *ryche & pore*, *smal & gret* / 90-91; *qwyke & deede* / 366; *of þe pore & of þe nedy* / 100-101. Others are formed by suffixes (-ly, -liche) and they are uninflected: *bodily* / 64 and 279; *gostly* / 30; *gostliche* / 627 (cfr. *Adverbs*); *heuenely* / 371.

2.3. Comparison

The comparative and superlative are formed by the periphrastic construction using *mor(e)/most/mest(e)*: *most sufficient*; *no mor þan*; *mechil more*⁴¹; *mest precious*.

Some expressions intensifying the meaning may also be found in the text, such as the partitive genitive of *al* (< OE pl. *alra*) whose meaning, in the periphrastic form, is *of all*. It usually occurs after a possessive: *oure aldris*⁴² *gostly foode* / 696.

The comparative of equality is expressed by the form *as ... so*: *as in heuene so in eerþe* / 3-4.

2.3.1. Irregular comparatives and superlatives: adjectives and adverbs

<i>Good/wel/weel</i>	<i>betere</i>	<i>best/beste</i>
<i>Mechil/moche/mochil</i>	<i>mor/more</i>	<i>most/mest(e)</i>
<i>Lytel/lytil/litel</i>	-	-
<i>Euyll/euele</i>	<i>werse</i>	-

⁴¹) *More*: in this text *more* is always matched with other adverbs.

⁴²) In comparison with the original Old English form *ealra* (gen. pl.), *aldris* shows the dissimilation by the voiced dental [d] and the disappearance of the original genitive substituted by an analogical one in -s.

2.4. *Personal pronouns*

<i>Singular</i>	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	<i>Plural</i>	1 st	2 nd	3 rd
<i>Subject</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>þu thu</i>	<i>he it</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>we</i>	<i>3e</i>	<i>þey they</i>
<i>Object</i>	<i>me</i>	<i>þe the</i>	<i>hym him it</i>	<i>Object</i>	<i>vs</i> ⁴³	<i>3ow</i>	<i>hem</i> ⁴⁴

2.4.1. *Compound personal pronouns*

	1 st	2 nd	3 rd
<i>Singular</i>	-	<i>þi-self þin-self</i>	<i>hym-self</i>
<i>Plural</i>	<i>oure-self</i>	-	<i>hem-self</i>

2.5. *Possessive adjectives and pronouns*

	1 st	2 nd	3 rd
<i>Singular</i>	<i>my myn</i>	<i>þi þin</i>	<i>his hys</i>
<i>Plural</i>	<i>oure</i>	<i>3oure 3owre</i>	<i>here</i>

Possessives may also be intensified by *owne/owene*: ... *his owne*... / 97.

2.6. *Demonstratives: adjectives and pronouns*

2.6.1.

<i>This</i>	<i>þis/this</i>	<i>þese/these</i>	<i>þis preyere / 15; in þis worlde / 17; in þis peticioun / 18; Ffor þese skillis / 211; This is clepid oure lordis preyere / 10; we schewyn þis in dede / 171; Alle þese makin / 225; These ben þe fyue / 299</i>
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This is almost always used as an adjective but it may function as a pronoun too.

2.6.2.

<i>That</i>	<i>þat</i>	<i>þo</i>	<i>alle þat opere / 69; þat is to seye / 19; alle þo þat lyuyn / 262-263; alle þo þat ben / 300; þat han takin þat name / 176</i>
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⁴³⁾ Sometimes it is used as subject: *Also vs muste stoppin ... / 708.*

⁴⁴⁾ In this text *hem* is also used as an antecedent of *þat*: ... *hem þat I loue 3e baten and þat I hate 3e louen / 132-133.* This construction spreads during the XVth century while as far as the singular pronoun is concerned we can go back to the beginning of the XIIth century: ... *of hym þat made it / 12; hym þat etyth / 360.*

That is used either as a pronoun or an adjective but sometimes it still functions as an article.

2.6.3.

Same	<i>same</i>	<i>The same mesure / 408-409; bi þe same / 409; þe same good helpe & grace ... þe same wele joyze / 886-888</i>
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Such a demonstrative may occur both as a pronoun and an adjective; it follows the definite article.

2.6.4.

Such	<i>swich/swych/swyche</i>	<i>of swych þing of whiche is / 876; A zens swyche folk / 527; Swyche temptin / 545; þu wilt nout ben swych as / 586; of swich maner folk / 240</i>
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Such is both a pronoun and an adjective; it may be followed by a relative clause beginning with *as*.

2.7. Interrogatives: adjectives, pronouns and adverbs

2.7.1.

Who	<i>who</i>	<i>Who, he seyth, schal preye for his trespas, ... & wile no mercy schewe? / 424-425; ... who schal delyuere me from þe body of þis deth? / 675-676</i>
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Who is used for the singular and the plural, it functions as a pronoun and refers to human beings.

2.7.2.

What	<i>what</i>	<i>What be ze þat þus temptyn god? / 529</i>
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What is used with a predicative function instead of *who* in this text.

2.7.3.

Where, why, how	<i>wher/why/how (adv.)</i>	<i>Wher is þe worschepe ze schulde don to me? / 131; why dredin ze me nout? / 131-132; why dispise ze þanne eche man oper þe whiche is his owne broþer? / 96-97; And, how wilt þu, he seyth, ...? / 437-438</i>
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2.8. Relative pronouns and adjectives

2.8.1.

That	<i>þat</i>	<i>cristene peple, þat berith þe name / 157-158; þe curs þat is wretyn / 229; hem þat I loue ze haten and þat I hate ze louen / 132-133; The ferþe bred þat we askyn / 292</i>
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That is the most important relative, it is used either with a personal or non-personal antecedent, both nominal and pronominal, singular and plural. It may function either as subject or object.

2.9. Interrogatives and relatives

The development of the relatives from the interrogatives seems to belong to indirect questions in which the interrogative meaning of the pronoun has lost its strength. The final passage from one to the other occurs by the complete loss of the aforesaid interrogative character. They are often used with an indefinite meaning.

2.9.1.

Whatever/ Whoever	<i>What/Who-so</i>	<i>I am, he seyth, bred of lijf þat cam down from heuene, who-so eete / 282-283; «Qui iungitur fornicarijs erit nequam». Who-so be knyht wiþ lecchouris he schal ben wickid / 665-666; Ry 3t so, who-so loue wel / 863-864; so þat we willin what he wile and louyn what he loueth and hatyn what he hatith / 250-251; þu takist heed what man hath don a zens the, but þu takist non heed what þu hast doon / 434-435</i>
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2.9.2.

Which	<i>whiche/which/wiche</i>	<i>eche man oþer þe whiche is / 96-97; in-to glotonye, whiche princepaly is / 646; oure fadyr in heuene whiche makith / 109; his name, which is so holy in hym-self / 175; þe kyngdom of holy writte, whiche ... is takin away / 202-203; þe name of god is holy, whiche name / 170; enemyes whiche ben besy / 570-571; of whiche / 15; these ben þe fyue louys with whiche / 299; of whiche bred spekith / 286; of whiche spekyth / 296; with whiche / 299; in whiche is deth? / 677; swych þing of whiche is plente / 876; bi whiche þe name of / 818</i>
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In this text it has personal and non-personal antecedents. It is used either as a pronoun or an adjective (in particular since the XVth century), in the singular and in the plural.

The adjectival function of *which* spreads above all during the XVth century becoming a sort of mannerism. Yet, the reason of its great diffusion may be due to the need of being clearer⁴⁵. *þat* is mostly used with personal and pronominal antecedents while *which* is preferred as a prepositional relative.

2.9.3.

<i>Who</i>	<i>þat/which/who</i>	<i>god whos name is / 145; to þe fende whose kyngdom is / 242; & sechith whom he may deuoure / 719; in his face in whom / 199</i>
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As subjects *þat/which* are used while *who* is found in this text either as complement or possessive.

2.10. Relative adverbs: *where, there, why*

2.10.1.

<i>Where, Why</i>	<i>kyngdom of heuene where is noo euyl / 847; Ffor-why in þis preyere / 15</i>
<i>There</i>	<i>brynge vs þere where / 575</i>

There has almost the same meaning as *where* and it may occur as its antecedent in some expressions.

2.11. Indefinite adjectives and pronouns

2.11.1.

<i>Al, all, alle</i>	adj. and pron.	<i>in all oure dedis / 727; to all cristene peple / 365-366; best of alle metalis / 78; al to hym-self / 324; all here wil / 509; all þin preyere / 431; oure aldris gostly foode / 696</i>
<i>Bote, boþe</i>	adj. and pron.	<i>These ben bote of euery bale gostly / 444; longith to boþe lyuys / 17; boþe ben wickid / 725</i>
<i>Eche</i>	adj. and pron.	<i>oure eche dayes breed / 618; eche man / 96-97; eche man & womman / 444; eche of alle þese seuene / 67</i>
<i>Euery</i>	adjective	<i>from euery wickid / 8; (originally it was an emphatic form of each)</i>

⁴⁵ T.F., Mustanoja, *A Middle English Syntax, Part 1 (Parts of Speech)*, Mémoires de la Société Néophilologique de Helsinki, XXIII, Helsinki, Société Néophilologique, 1960, p. 195. Such a habit seems to be of Latin influence.

<i>No, noon, non, noo</i>	adjectives	<i>doth noo mercy / 414; he gette noo mercy of god / 425; for no trespas þat þey dedyn / 369-370; hath noon ende / 42; hath noo galle / 703-704; ther schulde non entyrdittyn ... greuous / 371-372</i>
<i>Noo-þing, noþing</i>	pronoun	<i>to doon noo-þing a zens þe wil / 765; noþing to don / 165; noþing a zens his wil / 246</i>
<i>Oon</i>	pronoun	<i>and oon nedeful to oure body / 274-275</i>

2.11.2.

<i>Oþer, oþere, anoþer, oþeris</i> <i>toþer</i>	adj. and pron.	<i>3if man or womman loue weel anoþer / 861; to anoþer man in herte / 420; oþer metis / 76; oþere preyeris / 75; and lettyn oþere þat wolden han it / 367; for oure synnes & oþeris also 833; or in þe toþer / 838; alle þat oþere / 69</i>
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Oþer(e) may follow either the definite article or *þat*: *toþer* seems to be the assimilation of *þe + oþer > þ' oþer > toþer*.

2.11.3.

<i>Who, what</i>	<i>who-so, what-euere</i>	<i>who-so duellith in charite / 208; who-so eete of þis bred / 283; þat what-euere he wile / 247</i>
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Who occurs in the form *who-so*; *what* is found as *what-euere*.

2.12. *The article*

<i>Definite</i>	<i>þe þre fyrste / 15; þe seuene dedly synnes / 26; þe voys / 72; þe kyngdom / 86; þe pore & of þe nedy / 100-101</i>
<i>Indefinite</i>	<i>a confyrmacioun / 68; an euyl tau 3t chy3ld / 744</i>

The numeral which originally preceded *þousand/þousend* was eventually perceived as an indefinite article because of its unstressed position: *a þousand 3eer / 336; a þousend schrewys / 750*.

2.13. *Adverbs*

2.13.1.

<i>Adjective + suffix -e</i>	<i>so longe / 60; as longe as / 59</i>
<i>Adjective + -ly, -liche, -lyche</i>	<i>Bodylyche / 300; comounly / 361; dedly / 733; feythfully / 103; gostly / 120; propyrliche / 87; worpiliche / 220</i>

<i>Adjective with adverbial function</i>	<i>lytel or nout trauaylin / 214; sumtyme is put fyrst of þe seuene ... sumtyme last / 801-802</i>
<i>Possessive case of the adjective</i>	<i>ellis / 638; ellys / 392</i>

Because of both the loss of the final adverbial *-e* and the perception of *-liche* as the adverbial ending, *-lic/-liche* both exist, hence the possibility of confusion between adjectives and adverbs: *alle vs muste trauaylyn for oure breed and oure luyng, or bodiliche or gostliche / 626-627.*

Bodiliche and gostliche: a) as adverbs they must be related to *trauaylyn*;
b) as adjectives to *breed* and *luyng*.

2.13.2.

Five categories may be distinguished:

<i>Degree or quantity</i>	<i>also, as, j-no 3w, lytel, mechil, neuere, ryzt so, weel, wol</i>
<i>Manner</i>	<i>aloon, how, þus, togedere</i>
<i>Time</i>	<i>afor, aftyr, now, often</i>
<i>Place</i>	<i>awey, heer, jnne</i>
<i>Negative</i>	<i>ne, nou 3t, nout, neuere</i>

Ex.: *Moche werse / 392; mechil folk / 516; so mechil / 432; to mochil / 333; mechil more / 449-450; Ryzt so / 61; ryzt as / 498; as weel ... as / 377; who-so loue wel / 864; bras & leed ben wol needful / 78; wel plesaunt & parfyzt / 770; wol þerk / 243; lytel or nout trauaylin / 214; nout for 3eue a litel? / 437-438; as grace & vertues / 30-31; as rychesse & helpe / 31; as craft of noumbre / 70; as fadyr / 83; as longe as / 59; so mote it be / 9; he schal neuere deyen / 284.*

2.13.3. Negative adverbs

In H *nout/nou 3t* are the prevailing negative adverbs but *ne* is also attested:

<i>ne; nout/nou 3t</i>	<i>lete vs nout falle / 57; thu schalt nout ... ne þu shalt nout / 154-155; ne ben nout / 475; ne forfete nout / 256; ne ben hent / 57; ne be disseuyd / 57-58; nout to ben led / 489; he ne may repentyn hym / 446</i>
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2.14. Verbs

2.14.1. Present indicative

<i>Singular</i>	1st	<i>-e</i>	<i>preye</i>
	2nd	<i>-e -est -ist -st</i>	<i>þanke, leue, preyest, takist, ledist, seyst</i>

	3 rd	-th -i/-y/-e + th -e -ø -te -iþ	seyth, duellith, lyuyth, loueth, wiþdrowe, eet, get, gette, knowiþ, ordeynyth
Plural		-e -i/-y/-e + n -n -ø	askin, seye, seyn, metyn, haten, mow, dispise, synnen

2.14.2. *Perfect*

Strong verbs

Singular	1 st	-ø	knew
	2 nd	-	-
	3 rd	-ø	bad, began, les

Weak verbs

Singular	1 st	-yd	aprouyd	Plural	1 st	-edin	lyuedin
	2 nd	-	-		2 nd	-ede -yn	suffrede, wentyn
	3 rd	-de -te -id -yd	made, sente, temptid, temptyd		3 rd	-din -id	seydin, offendid

2.14.3. *Past participle*

Strong verbs

-i/-y/-e + n -n -e	1 st	writen, wretyn	3 rd	bonde	4 th	born
	5 th	forzouyn, zoue, zouen, seyn	6 th	wiþdrawe, taken, takin	7 th	knowen, knowyn

Weak verbs

-i/-y/-e + d -d -te -t -de	askid, filde, fulfilde, lettyd, synned, tau 3t, tau 3te, maad, clepid, clepyd, herd, cast, cau 3t, dempt, kept, led
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2.14.4. *Imperative*

Singular	2 nd	-ø -e	geue, lete, preye, sey
Plural	2 nd	-ø -e -ith -th	beth, sechith

2.14.5. *Present participle*

-inge -yng -ynge	beinge, comyng, confermynge
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2.14.6. *Verbal nouns and gerund*

The verbal nouns are formed by the endings *-ing/-inge/-yng/-ynge* and they spread a great deal during the Middle English period: *for 3euyng /*

443; *preysing* / 35; *techinge* / 277; *oure longynge ... in þe kyngdom of* / 688; *þe begynnynge of oure preyere* / 102.

The development of the gerund is made easy by the analogy with the present participle; it has the same form and is followed by an object. Also possible is the influence of the Latin gerund and of the verbal nouns which can be followed by an object and be qualified by an adverb: *biddinge in holy deuocioun* / 633; *zeuynge example* / 379; *hopinge sekryly to come* / 689; *repentaunce & forzeuynge & mercy schewynge* / 443-444.

2.14.7. Infinitive

-i/-y/-e + n -n -e -ø -ne -yd -yth	<i>han ben seyn flen do be seyne</i>
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The anomalous endings *-yd -yth* may be due to: a mistake by the copyist; the infinitive used as verbal noun in *-eth*, the spirant becoming an occlusive: *wende a luyd* / 334; the influence of Latin: «*Ffacit solem suum oriri super bonos et malos et pluit super iustos et iniustos*». *He makith his sonne to rise on goode & wickyd & reynyth on ryztful & vnryztful* / 503-504.

2.14.8. Verbal noun in *-eth*

The form of that kind of verbal noun occurs in H with the ending *-yd* and it is introduced by *on/an*: *wende a luyd* / 334. The suffix *-yd* belongs to a phonological change from ME *-ep* < OE *aþ/op*, while the further passage *-ep* > *-ed* occurred in the late ME; in this text, *-y-* is the alternative spelling for the unstressed stem vowel probably representing the indistinct pronunciation [ə]⁴⁶. The dental ending was then superseded, since the beginning of the Modern English period, by the most common *-ing*.

2.14.9. Present subjunctive

<i>Singular</i>	1 st	-	<i>Plural</i>	1 st	-ø -e -in -yn -n
	2 nd	-ø -e		2 nd	-ø -yn -n
	3 rd	-ø -e		3 rd	-ø -yn -n

Ex.: *be þu good, be þu wickid* / 592; *He þat etyth dispise nout hym þat etyth nout and he þat etith nout deme nout hym þat etyth his mete comounly* / 360-361; *þat we be worþi* / 619; *Blyssid be þey* / 712; *So mote it be* / 9; *þat ze ben maad* / 226; *þat alle men ben sauýd* / 269-270; *wil god nyl god* / 584; *þat we mow* / 198-199; *þat þu seche* / 404; *þat we tempre* / 721-722; *for, but zif ze forzeuyn opere, ellis* / 644; *þat þey begylyn vs nout* / 764-765; *so þat we*

⁴⁶) Cfr. nt. 39.

willin what he wile and louyn what he loueth and batyn what he batith / 250-251; þat we don alwey / 245; so þat þu loue hym as þin-self & putte awey ... so þat þu seche of hym / 403-404; so þat 3e moun deseruyn mete / 625; Þat þu come / 870.

2.14.10. Perfect subjunctive

Plural	3 rd	-e	<i>ffor god wolde þat alle men ferde weel & were sauid / 612-613</i>
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2.15. Perfect present verbs

2.15.1. Witen, to know (1st group)

Present	Singular	<i>woot, wite</i>	<i>whane he woot hem at nede / 323; 3yf he wite hym / 380</i>
	Plural	<i>wityn, wytyyn</i>	<i>We þat wityn nout / 332; We wytyyn nout / 476</i>
Perfect	Singular	<i>wiste</i>	<i>He wiste hym in deedly synne / 372</i>
Gerund		<i>wytinge</i>	<i>þo þat willinge & wytinge / 519-520</i>

2.15.2. Kunnen, to know / to be able to / can (3rd group)

Present	Singular	<i>can, kan</i>	<i>he can best / 118; he ... kan / 539</i>
	Plural	<i>conne</i>	<i>lettyn hem þat conne / 224; conne we non / 477</i>
Subjunctive	Pr. Plural	<i>kunne</i>	<i>þat we kunne haue / 781</i>
Infinitive		<i>conne, connen</i>	<i>eesi to conne / 12; ne wiln connen / 224</i>

2.15.3. Schal, shall (4th group)

Present	Singular	<i>schal, shalt/schalt (2nd person)</i>	<i>I schal ben filde / 21; þi blisse schal apeere / 22; Thu schalt nout takin goddes name in weyn, for oure lord schal nout haue / 151-152; ne þu shalt nout defyle / 155</i>
	Plural	<i>schal, schul, schuln</i>	<i>þe þre fyrste schul ben / 15-16; Alle we schul / 90; 3e schul / 642; alle þinge temperel nedful schal be 3ouen / 52-53; we schuln see / 22; þin synnes schuln / 419-420</i>
Perfect	Singular	<i>schulde</i>	<i>it schulde ben fulfild / 195; he schulde horkyn / 77; A man schulde aske / 104-105</i>

	Plural	<i>schulde(n)</i>	<i>alle we schulde lyuen / 92-93; 3e schulde don / 131; opere preyeris ben gode & schulden nou 3t / 75; opere men ... þat schulden teche / 222-223. Schulde may also be used to form the periphrastic subjunctive: They han cast me away þat I schulde nout regne in hem / 241-242</i>
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2.15.4. *Musten*, *must* (6th group)

Present	Singular	<i>must, muste</i>	<i>eche man & womman ... must trauayle / 634; þe ryche man muste abatyn / 329; he muste schewyn / 864</i>
	Plural	<i>muste, musten</i>	<i>Alle vs muste trauaylyn / 626; 3et þey muste tempre / 731; alle we ben beggeris & musten / 330</i>
Subjunctive Pr.	Singular	<i>mote</i>	<i>Mote þin kyngdom come to / 23; So mote it be / 9</i>
	Plural	<i>mote</i>	<i>we mote come / 870-871</i>

When *must* is used as a modal verb it has a strong compulsive meaning, but it can also express possibility.

2.15.5. *May*, *may* / to be able to

Present	Singular	<i>may</i>	<i>he may nout flee / 60; eche man & womman may finde / 444-445</i>
	Plural	<i>moun, mow</i>	<i>We wytyn nout what we moun doon / 476; peraventure, þey moun nout / 355-356; for ellis we mow geten no mercy / 638</i>
Subjunctive Pr.	Singular	<i>mou, mow, mowe</i>	<i>þat oure preyere mow þe betere / 38; so þat þu seche of hym ... 3if he mowe / 404 þat he mou nout here þe charmour / 704-705</i>
	Plural	<i>moun, mow</i>	<i>þat we moun ascapin / 64-65; þat opere men moun knowe / 481-482; þat we moun fle / 737-738; so þat 3e moun deseruyn / 625; þat we mow knowe & se / 198-199; þat þey mow profy 3te / 204</i>
Perfect	Singular	<i>my 3t, my 3te</i>	<i>þu my 3t nout ben / 582; bred of many dayes þat my 3te / 319-320; þat þu my 3t nout findyn / 433</i>
	Plural	<i>my 3te</i>	<i>mete & drynk þat my 3te / 318-319</i>

This verb expresses possibility and physical ability. In this text it is used at the perfect tense to form the periphrastic subjunctive.

2.16. Irregular verbs

2.16.1. *Be (to)*

<i>Present</i>	<i>Singular</i>	<i>am (1st), art (2nd), is, be</i>
	<i>Plural</i>	<i>be, ben, arn</i>
<i>Perfect</i>	<i>Singular</i>	<i>was</i>
	<i>Plural</i>	<i>were</i>
<i>Subjunctive Pr.</i>	<i>Singular</i>	<i>be</i>
	<i>Plural</i>	<i>be, ben</i>
<i>Perfect</i>	<i>Plural</i>	<i>were</i>
<i>Imperative</i>	<i>Singular</i>	<i>be</i>
	<i>Plural</i>	<i>be</i>
<i>Infinitive</i>		<i>be, ben</i>
<i>Present participle</i>		<i>beinge</i>

2.16.2. *Go (to)*

<i>Presen</i>	<i>Singular</i>	<i>goth (3rd)</i>
<i>Perfect</i>	<i>Singular</i>	<i>wente</i>
	<i>Plural</i>	<i>wentyn</i>
<i>Infinitive</i>		<i>gon</i>

2.16.3. *Do (to)*

<i>Present</i>	<i>Singular</i>	<i>doo, dost (2nd), doth (3rd)</i>
	<i>Plural</i>	<i>don</i>
<i>Perfect</i>	<i>Singular</i>	<i>dede</i>
	<i>Plural</i>	<i>dede, dedin, dedyn</i>
<i>Subjunctive Pr.</i>	<i>Plural</i>	<i>don</i>
<i>Imperative</i>	<i>Singular</i>	<i>do</i>
<i>Past participle</i>		<i>don, doon</i>

In this tract, it is used with its lexical value and not as an auxiliary.

2.16.4. *Will*

<i>Present</i>	<i>Singular</i>	<i>wil, wile, wilt (2nd), wyle</i>	<i>chy 3ld wil seke / 125; who-so wil nout werkin / 620-621; he wile takyn / 38; þu wilt haue / 402; þu ... wilt / 430-431; Who-so wile nout werkin / 347; þat he wyle alwey don / 728</i>
	<i>Plural</i>	<i>wilen, wiln, wyln</i>	<i>men þat nout wilen / 221; hem ... nout wilen / 529; þey ... wiln / 521-522; þey wyln gon hem-self / 524; ne wiln connen / 224; folk þat wiln / 228</i>
<i>Subjunctive Pr.</i>	<i>Singular</i>	<i>wil, wile, nyl</i>	<i>wil god nyl god / 584; wile god nyl god / 258</i>
	<i>Plural</i>	<i>willin</i>	<i>so þat we willin what he wile / 250</i>
<i>Perfect</i>	<i>Singular</i>	<i>wolde</i>	<i>he wolde nout slaundre / 378; he wolde kepyn hem out / 523-524; ffor god wolde þat alle men / 613-614; whane þe fende wolde lese / 656</i>
	<i>Plural</i>	<i>wolden</i>	<i>þo þat wolden entrin / 232; proud folk wolde / 258</i>
<i>Infinitive</i>		<i>willin</i>	<i>ne to willin / 694</i>
<i>Gerund</i>		<i>willinge</i>	<i>alle þo þat willinge / 519</i>

Will keeps the meaning of the Latin *velle*, instead, the compulsive meaning of *shall* favours its spreading as an auxiliary for the future and the conditional. It implies that the action will or would happen independently of the subject's will. It seems that in the Bible and in other religious writings *shall* is mostly used.

Ex.: *Who, he seyth, schal preye for his trespas, þat is to seye, as longe as berith wrethþe & wile no mercy schewe? / 424-425; And how wilt þu, he seyth, þat god schulde forzeue the so mochil sithþe þu wilt nout forzeue a litel? Fforzeue, seyth god, & it schal ben forzeue to the. God, seyth seynt Austyn, hath put in oure power & oure wil how we schul ben demyd at the day of dome / 436-439; It is nout myn wil, seyth god, þat þe synful man schulde deye wipouten ende, but myn wil is þat alle men ben sauyn / 268-269.*

3. *Dialect*

Despite a careful research into McIntosh's *Atlas of Late Medieval English*⁴⁷, in which a great amount of terms pertaining to different grammatical categories are considered, listed and located, it was not possible to single out a clear dialect variety for the present text. The analysis was carried out on the basis of spelling in order to determine any possible graphic, phonological and morphological isogloss. The starting point was a representative sample of words drawn from McIntosh's and identified in H. Then, their geographical spread was estimated in order to emphasize their local incidence where possible.

Even though the period is that of late Middle English and the language is going towards a smoothing process, we can nonetheless infer from the data previously considered that the linguistic unit is that of the East Midlands but it is impossible to establish clear boundaries because at this stage of evolution they do not actually exist any more.

The two following schemes aim at exemplifying the results of the study.

The former (3.1) highlights the linguistic peculiarities pertaining to the East Midlands: the words preserving dialectal characteristics clearly belonging to lexis in which local varieties are maintained longer.

The latter (3.2) lists a series of terms which have been found in our tract but are also commonly used in other geographical areas, far beyond the boundaries of the East Midlands. All of them represent grammatical words and testify a high degree of standardization.

3.1.

<i>Mechil</i>	It is commonly used and attested in the East Midlands, particularly Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. <i>Mochil/moche</i> are also attested in H but they are less frequent
<i>Arn</i>	It is greatly widespread in Norfolk and Suffolk but also in the East Midlands as a whole and London area
<i>Alþowþ</i>	Attested in Norfolk with such a spelling
<i>Strenctþ-(ith)/(-e)</i>	Found in Berkshire and Norfolk while the substantive is attested in Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire
<i>Neyþer</i>	Attested in Essex, London area, Norfolk and Northamptonshire

⁴⁷) A. McIntosh *et al.*, *A Linguistic Atlas of Late Medieval English*, Aberdeen, Aberdeen University Press, 1986.

<i>Abou₃te(n)</i>	As an adverb, common in the Isle of Ely
<i>Amongis</i>	As a preposition, attested in the East Midlands but also in Shropshire and Staffordshire
<i>Ey₃in</i> (eyes)	Attested in Norfolk and Suffolk
<i>Ey₃te</i> (card.) / <i>ey₃the</i> (ord.)	Central and East Midlands, Huntingdonshire and Norfolk in particular
<i>Fru₃t</i>	Bedfordshire, Huntingdonshire and Norfolk
<i>Herin</i> (hear)	Norfolk

3.2.

SOUTHERN	WEST MIDLANDS	NORTH WEST MIDLANDS
<i>þey</i>	<i>þey</i>	<i>þey</i>
<i>they</i>	<i>they</i>	<i>they</i>
<i>many</i>	<i>many</i>	-
<i>schal</i> (1 st /3 rd ps.)	<i>schal</i> (1 st /3 rd ps.)	-
<i>nout</i>	<i>nout</i>	-
-	<i>þo</i>	<i>þo</i>
-	<i>whiche</i>	-
-	<i>-y_{th}/-i_{th}</i> (3 rd ps. sg.)	<i>-y_{th}/-i_{th}</i> (3 rd ps. sg.)
-	<i>-yn/-in</i> (pl.)	<i>-yn/-in</i> (pl.)

In conclusion, it may be said that everything dealing with the structure, the framework of the language has already taken on standardized features, commonly used almost anywhere in England. On the contrary, on the lexical level, the situation is much more fluid. As far as lexis is concerned: it is more subject to change and has always undergone various external influences which have clearly left their mark on it. This is at least what can be argued from a linguistic analysis of the Harleian Ms. text.

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