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Norse-derived vocabulary in *La estorie del evangelie*

Abstract: While the study of Norse-derived terms in medieval English has benefitted from recent etymological advances (e.g. the Gersum project), the exploration of their process of integration lags behind. The latter requires the analysis of the dialectal and semantic distribution of the terms, as well as their interactions with other members of their lexico-semantic fields. This paper offers a case study of this approach by presenting the first comprehensive account of the Norse-derived terms included in *La estorie del evangelie*, an early Middle English poem from south Lincolnshire/north Norfolk. Besides identifying and classifying the Norse loans on the basis of the Gersum typology and the *Historical thesaurus of English*, the paper examines the different layers of scribal reworking in its seven fourteenth- and fifteenth-century manuscripts from various dialectal areas to separate the Norse-derived terms that can be attributed to the original composition from those that represent later lexical substitutions, thus tracing the terms' fate into the late Middle English period. This work shows that this understudied text offers valuable information on the interaction between native, Norse and French terms both in the early Middle English period of the original Fenland author and the later period of the surviving copies. Given that the methodology showcased here should not be restricted only to the analysis of Norse-derived terms, the paper's significance transcends its immediate focus, as it also contributes to our understanding of medieval English lexicology more broadly.

Keywords: dialectology; lexical borrowing; Middle English; Old Norse

1 Introduction

Historical linguists interested in medieval English lexicology have had much to celebrate in the last 20 years or so, with the completion of key scholarly resources that have opened up many possibilities for our understanding of the Middle English

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lexicon: for instance, the *Historical thesaurus of English* (hereafter *HTE*) has provided a much needed tool to standardize semantic classifications, thus facilitating cross-study comparisons, and to explore historical semantic relations and change; the *Linguistic atlas of early Middle English* (hereafter *LAEME*) now stands next to the *Linguistic atlas of late medieval English* (hereafter *LALME*) to cover the whole of the Middle English period and the two of them enable meticulous studies where medieval dialectology can be given a broader diachronic perspective; and various projects, such as the *Bilingual thesaurus of everyday life in medieval England* and the Gersum project: The Scandinavian influence on English vocabulary (Dance et al. 2019; see further below) have sought to expand our understanding of the impact that multilingualism had on the make-up of the medieval English lexicon.

By focusing on the Norse-derived terms recorded in the various manuscripts of the early Middle English poem known as *La estorie del evangelie* (hereafter *Estorie*), this paper showcases the opportunities that bringing these resources together can offer for the study of the lexical effects of early medieval Anglo-Scandinavian contact and, more generally, for medieval lexical work. The Gersum project has provided researchers with a typology of unprecedented systematicity for the identification and classification of Norse-derived terms in English (see Section 3.1); while this is a key initial step, in order to fully understand the impact that these terms had on the medieval English lexicon, we also need to explore their process of integration and accommodation, which comprises a wide range of issues, such as the analysis of their distribution and diffusion in connection to both dialects and lexico-semantic fields and, in terms to the latter, the semantic and stylistic relations that the Norse-derived terms established with other members of their fields. However, these requirements are not restricted to the study of Norse-derived terms, because it is only by combining various linguistic approaches, viz. etymology, onomasiology, semasiology, word-geography and, whenever possible, stylistics and sociolinguistics, that we can gain a better understanding of the whole lexical system. In this respect, the relevance of this study transcends its primary focus to provide an example of how various of these different approaches can be brought together in medieval lexicology.

In order to tackle these wide-ranging issues, Section 2 introduces the text, with particular reference to its manuscripts and the (limited) scholarly attention it has attracted so far. After explaining the parameters for the identification and semantic classification of the Norse-derived terms recorded in the poem, Section 3 focuses on disentangling the terms that can be said to be part of the original text from those added in later substitutions. Section 4 brings the findings of the study together, highlighting its significance at various levels. The Appendices, which can be found in the online version of the paper (https://doi.org/10.1515/flin-2021-2032), include the two tables that are the backbone of the analysis presented in Section 3.

2 *La estorie del evangelie*

Estorie presents a metrical life of Christ based ultimately on the Bible and, probably more directly, on Peter Comestor's encyclopaedic work *Historia scholastica* (*ca*1169–1175), a key resource for biblical study that was translated into various European languages (see Campbell 1915: 534; Millward 1998: 49–55; Morey 2000: 6–7, 15, 206; Turville-Petre 1990: 29). Given the date of its earliest witness, the text was probably composed in the late thirteenth century. Its Anglo-Norman title derives from the brief introduction that precedes the 396-line fragment of the poem included in the so-called Vernon Manuscript (MS V; see below, Table 1, and Blake 1990: 51).

2.1 Its manuscripts and their connections

Fragments of the text have been identified in seven manuscripts, whose features are summarized in Table 1 on the basis of the information provided by *LAEME*,

Table 1: Manuscripts recording *La estorie del evangelie*.

Siglum	Manuscript	Provenance[a]	Date	Number of lines and place in the text[b]
D	Dulwich College, MS XXII, fols. 81v–85v	South Lincolnshire[c]	*ca*1300	519 (beg. to l. 528)
P	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson C 655 (various folios)	Somerset LP 5220	*ca*1350	262 (ll. 853–1057, 1388–1389, 1727–1844)
V	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Eng. Poet a.1 (Vernon Manuscript), fol. 105r–v	Central Worcestershire LP 7630	*ca*1390	396 lines (beg. to l. 574)
S	London, University of London Library, MS V 17 (Clopton Manuscript), fols. 97v–111v	Central Worcestershire LP 7650	*ca*1400	1764 (beg. to l. 1974)
B	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Additional C 38, fols. 71v–82r	Worcestershire	1410–1420	1703 (beg. to l. 2435)
R	London, British Library, MS Royal 17 C xvii, fols. 152v–155v	Northern Lincolnshire LP 45	Early 15th century	501 (ll. 1905–2441)
L	London, British Library, MS Lansdowne 388, fols. 373r–380v	Central East Midlands	15th century	515 (ll. 1879–2404)

[a]LP refers to the Linguistic Profile for each manuscript in *LALME*. [b]The line numbers in the overall text covered by the fragment in each manuscript provided within brackets refer to the reconstructed text in Millward's (1998) edition. This edition is the primary source for this study and, accordingly, all the line numbers provided elsewhere in the article are also based on it. [c]Until *LAEME*'s compilation, the manuscript was often attributed to northwest Norfolk, on the basis of McIntosh's (1987) argument; see however *LAEME* (dulwicht.tag, # 182) and Laing (1993: 108).

LALME, Millward (1997: 155–156 Table 1, 1998: 12 Table 2) and Morey (2000: 205–206; see also Campbell 1915).

As Millward (1998: 43–49) points out in the introduction to her edition of the various versions of the text (the main source for this brief account of stemmatic relations), no manuscript can be assumed to be the direct (or ultimate) source for any of the other manuscripts. D, the earliest witness, is assumed to be the closest to the original in terms of dialectal origin and ordering of the lines. However, it appears to include some additions (e.g. ll. 69–144, 151–178, 269–282 and 443–454), as suggested by the fact that the rhyming scheme and the complexity of the explanations presented in these unparalleled lines significantly differ from what we find elsewhere in the text. The original author seems to have started his work in monorhyming quatrains, but their use decreases in frequency as the poem progresses, with couplets replacing quatrains. However, even though the lines preserved only in D belong to the beginning of the poem, they are in the main (95%; Millward 1998: 25) written in couplets.

V and S are very closely aligned in both wording and dialect, and, although one cannot be said to be the source of the other, they are likely to share a common ancestor, even if S's direct source might be more northerly than V's (see further Turville-Petre 1990). This source might share its exemplar with B, although it is important to note that B has been clearly revised with three aims: to abridge the text, to modernize it (in terms of metre, spelling, morphology, lexis and, whenever rhyme made this possible, syntax), and to normalize it. In spite of his tendency towards modernization, the B scribe seems to have understood traditional or dialectal words that caused trouble to the other Worcestershire scribes (see Millward 1997 and below). Indeed, McIntosh (1987: 186–187, 190) notes that B seems to preserve more phonological, morphological and lexical features of the original dialect than V, particularly in rhyming position, for the preservation of rhymes is one of the guiding features of the B scribe's work, as noted by Millward (1997).

L and R seem to form another subgroup as they share a number of readings not found in the other versions (e.g. ll. 1919, 1929, 1931, 1938, 1950 and 1953); however, Millward (1998: 46) notes that they are not as close as V and S, or even S and B. Finally, none of these versions shows any clear connection with P; its lines only overlap with those in B and S, but the differences between these versions make P an outlier.

2.2 Scholarly interest in its Norse-derived terms

Unfortunately, the text has not received much scholarly notice either from a literary or a linguistic perspective. While its passionate delivery and graphic imagery

have been noted (Morey 2000: 206), its account of Christ's life has not commanded much attention, on the one hand because *temporale* narratives (Middle English poems on the life of Christ) tend to be much less studied than lives of saints; and, on the other, because this particular account has been sidelined in favour of others, such as that presented in the *Long life of Christ* recorded in the near-contemporary *South English legendary* (see Pickering 1973). From a linguistic perspective, the discussion has focused on the dialectal features of its seven manuscripts, in an attempt to establish where they come from and where the original composition of the poem might have taken place. The most detailed accounts in this respect are provided by McIntosh (1987) and Millward (1998: 14–43), as part of her introduction to the parallel edition of the various manuscripts. McIntosh's (1987: 186) suggestion that the original composition should be associated with "the extreme north west of Norfolk or, less probably, the far north of Ely or the most south eastern part of Lincolnshire" has gained general acceptance.

The Norse-derived terms recorded in the text have been part of the discussions regarding its original place of composition for a long time. Thus, in her study of the manuscripts preceding her edition of the text in D and B, Campbell (1915: 541–552) claims that "the large number of Scandinavian loanwords found in *D*" is consistent with her hypothesis that the text is likely to originate from the East Midlands, probably further south than the south Lincolnshire of Robert Mannyng of Bourne. McIntosh (1987) disagrees with Campbell's assessment regarding the significance of the Norse terms in the poem (but not in terms of its likely dialectal origin):

> compared with *Havelok* the number is fairly small, and some of them (e.g. *greithe*, *greye* 'prepare', 362, 427; *egge* vb. 'urge', 24, 146; *ille* adj. 'bad', 16, 470) belong to that interesting and somewhat puzzling set of words which by early Middle English times had spread far beyond the areas of Scandinavian settlement and already had a foothold in many places south of the area with which we are concerned. In general the comparatively small number of Norse words […] would tend to support the conclusion, if support were needed, that just as the poem probably had its origin only very little to the south of south Lincs., it cannot plausibly be assigned anywhere much further north of there either. (McIntosh 1987: 190–191)

Neither Campbell nor McIntosh provides an in-depth study of the Norse-derived terms in the poem, though. Millward's (1998) assessment of these terms is similarly restricted to the mention of some of them as part of a general discussion about the lexical substitutions that one can find in the various manuscripts in the introductory comments and textual notes to her edition.

However, in spite of the limited linguistic attention that the text has received in general, and in relation to its Norse-derived terms in particular, it has much to offer to the historical linguist interested in Middle English dialectal variation and the make-up of the lexicon of medieval English:

(i) As already noted by McIntosh (1987: 188), the poem can be said to be one of the few extant texts from the Fenlands, an Scandinavianized area for which we do not have much information during the Old and early Middle English periods (see Fisiak and Trudgill 2001). In that respect, and thanks to its significant length (when we put the various extant fragments together, we have just over 2,400 lines of text), it can provide substantial information for the transition period between other major works from this area: the *Ormulum*, a text that has been attributed to late-twelfth-century south Lincolnshire (*LAEME*: ormt.tag, #301; Parkes 1983) on the one hand, and other important Lincolnshire/Norfolk texts, such as *Havelok the Dane*, *Bestiary* or *Genesis and Exodus* (*LAEME*: havelokt.tag, #285; bestiaryt.tag, #150; and genexodt.tag, #155, respectively), which are near-contemporary with our text.

(ii) Given that the various manuscripts of the text come from both Scandinavianized and non-Scandinavianized areas, the study of their lexical choices, particularly in non-rhyming position, is extremely helpful for our understanding of the integration of these words into their respective lexico-semantic fields more broadly, in relation to the various dialectal areas represented by the later manuscripts.

3 Norse-derived terms in *La estorie del evangelie*

3.1 Identification and classification of the Norse-derived terms

As suggested earlier, the study of the Norse-derived terms in a text has to start with their identification. Given the systematicity that the Gersum project has brought in this respect, the terms considered in this article are classified according to its typology, which is summarized here:[1]

– Category A words exhibit conclusive phonological (A1), morphological (A2), or phonological and morphological (A3) evidence in favour of their Norse derivation.

– The roots of Category B words are not attested in Old English before one can see the impact of Anglo-Scandinavian linguistic contact, but are attested in Old Norse; this category is subdivided between those words whose root, besides English, is only attested in Old Norse (B1) and those whose root is also attested in other Germanic languages (B2).

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1 For a detailed explanation, see the Gersum project's website (under Dance et al. 2019), and Dance (2019).

- Category C words are those whose root is attested in Old English in contexts beyond the impact of the Anglo-Scandinavian linguistic contact but which exhibit some peculiarities suggestive of possible Norse influence, in terms of their derivational form (C1), their inconclusive phonological features (C2), their meaning (C3), the compound or phrase they appear in (C4) or the frequency of their use (C5).
- Category D words are extremely problematic either because there is no clear etymological explanation for their root (D1) or because their exact meaning and/or form are not clear and therefore it is difficult to provide etymological explanations for them (D2).

Thus, when dealing with B–D words, we can only talk about Norse-derivation in terms of possibility or probability, not certainty and, in fact, words in categories B–D are also further classified in relation to the likelihood of Norse-derivation: for words given as BB or CC there is also an alternative explanation and scholars are divided with regard to the need to invoke Norse influence, while the evidence for Norse-derivation is even weaker for words classified as BBB, CCC or DD, and often there is an even better explanation that does not involve Norse derivation. For this reason, the latter set of words are excluded from this study.[2]

Lower-case letters are also added in the Gersum classification to indicate the existence of a West Germanic cognate with the same form, sense or usage (a), the particular association of the word with the Scandinavianized areas in terms of the onomasticon (b) or lexicon (c), or the initial cultural association of the word with the Scandinavian newcomers (d).

Appendix 1, which is the basis for the discussion in the following sections, presents the terms recorded in *Estorie* for which Norse derivation can be suggested. There and elsewhere in the paper the form of the lexeme and its relevant meaning are given in accordance with the *Middle English Dictionary* (hereafter *MED*) and the glossary at the end of Millward's (1998) edition. In those cases where the *MED* lists a lexeme with its native form and the entry discusses both the native and the Norse-derived forms, the Norse-derived form under consideration is given here in angular brackets so as not to give the indication that this is the head-form in the *MED*.

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2 They include ME <cledde> 'clad', whose rhyme with <fede> (ll. 2338–2339L) suggests/eː/rather than/ɛː/(cf. OIcel. *klæddr*; see the *Oxford English Dictionary* online, hereafter *OED*, s.vv. *clothe* and *clead*); ME *fērlī* 'marvel' (see Gersum s.v. *ferly*, n.); ME *herberwe* (cf. Gersum s.v. *herber*); ME *mirkenesse* (cf. Gersum s.v. *merk*); ME *missen*, because its sense in the text (l. 12) is likely to be a continuation of that of OE *missan* 'to escape the notice of a person' and, hence, there is no reason to assume a semantic loan (cf. Gersum s.v. *mysse*); ME *manslaught* 'murder' (see Gersum s.v. *man-slaʒt*); ME *moninge* 'remembering' (see Dance 2003: 398; Gersum s.v. *mynne*); and ME *shē* 'she' (see Gersum s.v. *scho*).

Appendix 2 presents the semantic classification of the Norse-derived terms included in the various versions of the text on the basis of the *HTE*. It attempts to capture the whole semantic range of the terms in the text, not just their core meaning. Its significance lies on two factors associated with the integration of the Norse-derived terms into medieval English: on the one hand, polysemy and semantic productivity can be taken together with morphological productivity and its use as the core member of a lexico-semantic (sub)field as signs of the integration of a loan into the recipient language. On the other hand, in order to assess the impact that Norse-derived terms had on medieval English, be it at a general level or in relation to particular dialects, we need to go beyond general statements about their number and their contribution to non-technical vocabulary and explore the various lexico-semantic fields they became part of. As noted in the Introduction (Section 1), the possibilities for cross-textual comparison that the *HTE*'s offers are fundamental in this respect (cf. Pons-Sanz forthcoming). For instance, Skaffari (2009: 151–152) gives an overview of the semantic classification of the Norse-derived nouns recorded in his corpus of early Middle English texts; this classification, however, is not directly comparable to that presented in this paper because it is based on the *Thesaurus of Old English* instead of the *HTE*. Pons-Sanz's (2015) work on the lexico-semantic field of EMOTION in the *Ormulum* offers a better *comparandum* because it also follows the *HTE*. Interestingly, *Estorie* records significantly fewer Norse-derived terms in this field, even though the text does include plenty references to the emotional responses of its characters and its audience (see further [25]).

3.2 Norse-derived terms in the original text and their handling in the extant versions

Once the terms that one can consider to be Norse-derived are identified, the next step in their analysis involves establishing which of them are likely to have been part of the original text of *Estorie*. Given that D is said to be the manuscript which is dialectally closest to the original, unless there is clear evidence to the contrary (e.g. in connection with its likely additions, on which see Sections 2.1 and 3.3), its lexical choices are likely to go back to its archetype. This argument is strengthened when the term is shared by other versions as well. When there is no evidence from D, words that appear in rhyming position (particularly when they are shared by various versions/textual groups) can also be assumed to have been part of the original text, although this assumption is not unproblematic (cf. <hende>, on which see [43]).[3] The lexical choices in the original composition are compared with

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3 For a study of the tendencies by medieval scribes to retain the words that appear in phonologically/stylistically significant contexts, such as rhyming or alliterating position, see Stenroos (2002).

those in the *Ormulum* and *Genesis and Exodus* (a text from southern Lincolnshire or northern Norfolk from *c*.1250; see Arngart 1968: 45–47) because of the similarities between these three texts in date, dialect and topic.[4] This comparison is helpful in order to put decisions about whether to associate a term with the original composition or not into a wider context and to flag up particular contributions that our text can make to medieval lexicology.

On the basis of these principles and other decisions based on other relevant types of existing evidence (e.g. the dialectal distribution of terms/forms as represented in *LAEME* and *LALME*), the following fifty-one Norse-derived terms can be considered to have been part of the original composition:

(1) ME <agēn/agēn(e)s> word-field (<agēn/agēn(e)s> 'against' and ME <agēnsaiing> 'contradiction, opposition'): this word-field is attested only in D, R and B. *LALME* records that the forms with <g> for the preposition (item 36, AGAINST) are in the main concentrated in the north and east, while the manuscripts from Worcestershire tend to prefer forms with <ȝ> (the forms prevalent in S and V), although there is some alternation between forms with <ȝ> and <g> in some of them (LPs 7600, 7690 and 7750). As such, it is likely that B's <g> goes back to its source, whether the original composition of *Estorie* or an intermediate copy. The original *Estorie* text is likely to have included forms of the preposition with <g>, but whether the use of these forms was as consistent as the extant manuscripts suggest is harder to establish (cf. the alternation of velar and palatal forms in the *Ormulum*; see Rynell 1948: 59).[5] Equally unclear is whether the original text would have preferred the form with the genitive singular ending -*es* (as in D and R) or without (as in B), for both forms are attested in Worcestershire, Lincolnshire and Norfolk during the early and late Middle English period.

(2) ME *ai* 'always': this adverb can be found in both rhyming (ll. 304 and 653) and non-rhyming positions (l. 30), which suggests that it is likely to have been well integrated into the language of the original poet. This suggestion is in keeping with the fact that the adverb is also frequently attested in our two Fenland *comparanda* (see Arngart 1968: s.v. *ay*; Holt 1878: s.v. *a33*). When the adverb appears in rhyming position, it is retained by all the versions that record the relevant lines (viz. ll. 304 and 653); however, in non-rhyming position (l. 30), V replaces it with ME *ěver*; this

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4 Morey (2000: 133) explains that *Genesis and Exodus* follows *Historia scholastica* very closely, so the texts are also closely connected in terms of their sources.

5 *Genesis and Exodus* does not offer good *comparanda* for cases where the distinction between a native and a Norse-derived form depends on the presence of a palatal or velar sound because <g> could represent either in this text (see Arngart 1968: 16–18).

is interesting because the term seems to have enjoyed fairly widespread use in late Middle English (cf. Gersum s.v. *ay*; *MED* s.v. *ai*).

(3) ME <alswonge> 'very hungry': this is the only Middle English context where the compound adjective/phrasal structure is recorded, and where the word-field refers to HUNGER specifically. The simplex, ME *swonge* 'lean, gaunt, emaciated', seems to have been a highly dialectally restricted term, for it is otherwise only recorded in a manuscript from Northumberland including medical works (London, Wellcome Medical Library, MS 225; LP 765) and the *Promptorium parvulorum*, a text with self-reported Norfolk origin (Horn forthcoming; *MED* s.v. *swonge*).[6] In this respect, it is interesting that, in its only attestation in our text (l. 328), while the adjective is retained in S and V, which often shy away from Norse-derived forms (particularly V), it is replaced with <gonge> (cf. ME *găngen* 'to wander') by B; this maintains the rhyme but significantly changes the meaning of the passage; compare *Þe hungery in god he made stronge,/Ant þe riche he lette alswonge* (ll. 327–328D; 'He made the hungry for good[ness] strong and let the rich [be] very hungry') with *Þe hungry in god he made stronge,/& þe riche lete ydel gonge* (ll. 327–328B; 'He made the hungry for good[ness] strong and let the rich go in vain'; see McIntosh 1987: 190; Millward 1998: 60). The single attestation of the adjective and the fact that it is restricted to rhyming position suggest that it might have been a fairly peripheral member of its lexico-semantic subfield (cf. ME *hungrīe* 'hungry' in l. 327).

(4) ME <ar/or> 'before': the Norse-derived forms are likely to have been part of the original author's language, as suggested by the fact that D, S and V agree in ll. 183 and 343, while in D's additions the native form of this preposition/conjunction/adverb (ME *ēr*) is used instead, in both rhyming and non-rhyming position (ll. 80, 137 and 270; cf. the presence of these forms in the *Ormulum*, albeit only as an adverb, and *Genesis and Exodus*; see Arngart 1968: s.v. *or*, adv.; Holt 1878: s.v. *ar*). While the presence of the Norse forms in R and their absence from L are in keeping with other lexical choices (e.g. cf. [8], [16] and [40]), the absence of these forms from B is notable, as this manuscript often retains the Norse-derived forms.

(5) ME *birthe* 'birth': all the versions that record l. 369 (viz. S, D, V and B), the only time where the concept is mentioned in the text, agree in their use of the word, even though it appears in non-rhyming position, which attests to its presence in the original. This is not surprising, as the term enjoyed fairly widespread use from the early Middle English period (cf. *LALME*'s maps for item 91, BIRTH). The native (cf. OE

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6 See Gersum s.v. *swangeande* for a possible attestation of the adjective in l. 111 of *Pearl*, a North-West Midlands text.

gebyrd) and the Norse-derived forms coexisted in the Fenlands, with the *Ormulum* using forms with <d> and *Genesis and Exodus* recording forms with the fricative consonant (see Arngart 1968: s.vv. *birðe* and *birðen*; Holt 1878: s.v. *birde*).

(6) ME *bōn* 'request, prayer': the presence of the term twice in rhyming position and its retention by the various manuscripts (ll. 1859SB and 2403LBR) suggests that this noun was part of the original composition (cf. its presence meaning 'prayer' in the *Ormulum* and *Genesis and Exodus*; see Arngart 1968: s.v. *bone*; Holt 1878: s.v. *bone*). Its widespread attestation in Middle English (see Dance 2003: 264–265, 343; *MED* s.v. *bōn*) might explain the fact that V seems to introduce it in l. 362, where D, S and B have the native synonymous noun ME *bēde* 'prayer' instead.

(7) ME *bōthe* 'both': the facts that D, V and B agree in their use of this term in l. 375 and that L and R similarly share the term in ll. 2068, 2074 and 2158 suggest that it was part of the original composition, which is in keeping with its presence in the *Ormulum* and *Genesis and Exodus* (see Arngart 1968: s.v. *boðen*; Holt 1878: s.v. *baþe*). Its varied use as pronoun (e.g. l. 375), adjective (e.g. l. 1931) and adverb (e.g. ll. 2068 and 2074) is indicative of its integration into Middle English, which might explain why S seems to have substituted it in l. 1931 for ME *but* + the definite article, which are the words in B, L and R (cf. *LALME*'s maps for item 94, ʙᴏᴛʜ).

(8) ME *brennen* 'to burn': B and L agree in their use of a present participle form of this verb in rhyming position in l. 2281; this, together with the fact that L's <brennanande> for <brenande> is indicative of the scribe's lack of familiarity with the form and hence its retention because of its position (see Millward 1998: 71), suggests that the Norse-derived form was present in the original composition (cf. its use in the *Ormulum* and *Genexis and Exodus*; see Arngart 1968: s.v. *brennen*; Holt 1878: s.v. *brenned*). B maintains the Scandinavianized form in the root but replaces the participial ending with *-ing*, in keeping with the substitution of <myslikyng> for <myslykande> in l. 2080. Interestingly, R, which often retains the Norse-derived forms, replaces the Scandinavianized form with the native <bur-nand>, although non-metathesized forms were very common by the late Middle English period (cf. *LALME*'s maps for item 97, ʙᴜʀɴ).

(9) ME *bresten* word-field (ME *upbresten* 'to destroy' and *tŏbresten* 'to burst open'): given that a form of ME *upbresten* exhibiting lack of metathesis (<-iste>) is needed in rhyming position in l. 466 and that this form is shared by D, V, and B, one can assume that the verb was present in the original composition. Notably, S has a form of ME *upbreiden* 'to reproach, rebuke' here instead; this later substitution links this line with the rhyming scheme of the next quatrain. This lexical change is notable, as S does have the verb *tŏbresten* in l. 1318 in non-rhyming position, while B prefers

ME *brēken*; that S's wording in l. 1318 might represent the lexical choice of the original author is suggested by the fact that *tŏbresten* can be said to render more closely L *diffundo* 'to spread, diffuse, scatter' in Acts 1:18, which Millward (1998: 243, note to ll. 1318–1319) gives as the ultimate source for this extract.

(10) ME *callen* 'to name': the frequent use of the verb in rhyming position (all the contexts where two or more manuscripts agree) suggests that it was part of the original composition, while its polysemous use (see Appendix 2) is indicative of its significant integration into the language of the author (cf. its use in *Genesis and Exodus* but not in the *Ormulum*; see Arngart 1968: s.v. *calles*). There is some disparity between the various manuscripts when the verb does not appear in rhyming position: in l. 435 D alone records the Norse-derived verb, whereas S, V and B have ME *clepen*; similarly, only P has the Norse-derived verb in ll. 1744 and 1755, while the native verb is recorded in S and B, and S, respectively. These cases of ME *callen* might be later substitutions, in keeping with the facts that ME *clepen* might have been the core member of the subfield in the author's idiolect (cf. ll. 502 and 1074, where it appears in non-rhyming position in all the versions recording these lines) and that ME *callen* was widely attested in late Middle English (see *LALME*'s maps for item 103, CALL). However, it is notable that P's LP in *LALME* records only forms of the native verb for the past participle (other forms in the paradigm are not included in the LP), which could be taken instead as evidence in favour of the presence of the Norse loan in the original. It is therefore not clear whether *Estorie* might represent a transitional text between the *Ormulum*, where ME *clepen* is the core member of the lexico-semantic subfield, and *Genesis and Exodus*, where the Norse verb appears to have become the core member instead (see Holt 1878: s.v. *clepen*; Rynell 1948: 60, 92); or whether its linguistic choices are in stronger alignment with those of the latter text.

(11) ME *casten* 'to throw (out, off)': the fact that this verb can be found in rhyming position (l. 932) suggests that it was part of the original composition and, indeed, the D scribe also uses it in his interpolations (ll. 81, 111 and 164). In that respect, it is interesting to note that it is not attested in the *Ormulum* or *Genesis and Exodus*, where the preferred verb to express this concept is ME *werpen* (see Arngart 1968: s.v. *werpen*; Holt 1878: s.v. *werrpenn*). Its use is always retained by the various manuscripts even in non-rhyming position (e.g. ll. 2, 935, 1066, etc.), which is indicative of the fact that, by the late Middle English period, it was widespread enough for it to be understood and accepted by scribes from different dialectal areas (cf. Gersum s.v. *kest*, v.; *MED* s.v. *casten*).

(12) ME *crōked* 'deformed': since S, P and B share the use of the adjective in l. 982, one can infer that the adjective was part of the original text. It is only recorded in

two contexts with very similar wording (cf. l. 1034S), but the fact that it appears in non-rhyming position can be taken as evidence in favour of its integration into its lexico-semantic subfield. While Orm did use the noun *crōk* 'crook', he turned to the native ME *croumb* to express the meaning 'crooked, bent' in a metaphorical sense in ll. 9207 and 9653, although his choice there might have been dictated by the need for a stressed syllable before the caesura (see Holt 1878: s.vv. *croc* and *crumb*).[7] The concept does not feature in *Genesis and Exodus*.

(13) ME *dīen* 'to die': the placing of this verb in rhyming position and its use by various manuscripts even when that is not the case (e.g. l. 1117SB) suggest that it was part of the original wording of the text and that it might have been the core member of its lexico-semantic subfield. Notably, while both the *Ormulum* and *Genesis and Exodus* also record the Norse-derived verb, it is not the most common verb used to express this concept in either of them (cf. the native ME *swelten* and *sterven*, respectively; see Arngart 1968: s.vv. *deigen* and *starf*; Holt 1878: s.vv. *deȝenn* and *swelltenn*; Rynell 1948: 60, 91). In terms of this verb, the wording in *Estorie* is closer to that in *Havelok the Dane*, where it is also dominant (see Rynell 1948: 69). The retention of ME *dīen* in manuscripts from various dialectal areas is in keeping with its widespread use in late Middle English (see *LALME*'s maps for item 114, DIE). In this respect, it is interesting that in l. 1770, instead of S's ME *dīen*, P records <sterres>, which is likely to be a corrupted form of <sterves> (cf. Millward 1998: 249, note to l. 1770).

(14) ME *eggen* word-field (ME *eggen* 'to urge' and ME *egging* 'urging, encouragement'): the retention of these terms in various manuscripts is a testament to their being part of the original text (cf. their use in the *Ormulum*; see Holt 1878: s.vv. *eggenn* and *egging*) and their widespread use in later times (cf. *MED* s.vv. *eggen* and *egging*). They appear both in non-rhyming (the verb; l. 24) and rhyming positions (the noun; e.g. l. 145), where the rhyming element is actually *-ing* and hence other terms could have been selected instead (cf. l. 395, where S and V record the Norse-derived noun, while D has ME *lŏnginge* 'yearning, desire' and B has the French-derived near-synonym ME *dĕsīringe*, which is likely to have been part of its modernizing agenda as it is otherwise only attested from the late fourteenth century; see *MED* s.v. *dĕsīringe*). The widespread use of the deverbal noun in late Middle English (cf. Gersum s.v. *eggyng*; *MED* s.v. *egging*) renders unclear whether D's ME *lŏnginge*, or S's and V's ME *egging* was the original word in this context in l. 395.

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7 On the metre in the *Ormulum*, see Solopova (1996).

(15) ME *fĕlaue* 'fellow, companion': its placement in rhyming position, where it is retained by all the manuscripts that have this line (l. 1735SPB), suggests that the term was part of the original text (cf. its absence from the *Ormulum*, where only its native near-synonym ME *fere* is recorded instead; see Rynell 1948: 60). This noun is only attested once, while ME *fere* appears a number of times, albeit also always in rhyming position (e.g. ll. 225, 375, 1182 and 1724). *Genesis and Exodus* similarly presents the dominance of the native noun, which is also recorded there in non-rhyming position (see Arngart 1968: s.vv. *fere* and *felage*; Rynell 1948: 92). The placing of the Norse-derived noun in rhyming position is likely to have been a determining factor for its retention in P, as *LALME*'s maps for item 132 (FELLOW) show that the term, albeit frequently attested in northern and Midlands texts, was not particularly common further south than an imaginary line cutting the country through southern Northamptonshire (cf. LP 781 and LP 4707) and southern Cambridgeshire (cf. LP 4773).

(16) ME <fra/fro> 'from': the case here is in some respects similar to that in connection with *agēn(es)* (see [1]), as D and R prefer the forms without the final nasal consonant (but cf. l. 173, where D has <from> in one of its additions), which are also to a great extent retained in B, S, and L (but cf. ll. 240, 685, 1890, 1897, 1901, 1965, etc.), although the latter show variation between the Norse-derived and the native (ME *from/fram*) forms. The presence of the Norse-derived form in the original composition is in keeping with the preference for nasal-less forms both in the *Ormulum* and *Genesis and Exodus* (see Arngart 1968: s.v. *fro*; Holt 1878: s.v. *fra*; Rynell 1948: 60, 92).

(17) ME *gēten* 'to watch over, protect': the verb's place in rhyming position in its only attestation and its presence in all the versions that include this line (l. 437SDVB) are indicative of its being part of the original text (cf. its use in the *Ormulum*; see Holt 1878: s.v. *gætenn*). Nonetheless, the core member of this lexico-semantic field appears to have been the native ME *yēmen*, which is more frequently attested, mainly in rhyming position (ll. 239, 460, 901, 1834, 1897, 2393), but also in a non-rhyming environment (l. 1886SB). The native verb is also Orm's preferred verb to transmit this concept (see Holt 1878: s.v. *ȝemenn*); similarly, *Genesis and Exodus* does not record the Norse-derived verb, but does record ME *yēming* 'care, protection', a noun belonging to the same word-field as the native verb (see Arngart 1968: s.v. *geming*).

(18) ME <gĕten> word-field (ME <gĕten> 'to get; beget' and <bigēten> 'to beget'): the Scandinavianized forms with <g> are preferred by D and B, and can be found in contexts where there is overlap between the two manuscripts (ll. 391 and 397). S and V, on the contrary, either have forms with <ȝ> (l. 1598S) or avoid the verb

altogether (ME *winnen* appears in ll. 391SV and 397SV). In that respect it is interesting that they both have a Scandinavianized form in the only occurrence of ME <gĕten> in rhyming position (l. 545); as noted above, this is the context where non-idiolectal forms are more likely to be retained (even though the rhyming element is only -*ete*; cf. <biȝete> in l. 545B). This adds further evidence in favour of the presence of Scandinavianized forms in the original, which is in keeping with their use in the *Ormulum* (see Holt 1878: s.v. ȝettenn; Rynell 1948: 60). The Scandinavianized forms are also part of D's own choices (cf. l. 154).

(19) ME <gēven> word-field (ME <gēven> 'to give', <forgēven> 'to forgive' and <gift> 'gift'): the situation with regard to this word-field is similar to what we find in connection with the ME <agēn/agēn(e)s>, <ageyn> and <gĕten> word-fields ([1], [18] and [41]), i.e. the manuscripts show clear preferences between the Norse-derived <g> or the native <y/ȝ> forms, to a great extent, in connection with their dialectal origin: D, R and B, which, as noted above, retains many more of the northern and eastern features than S and V, prefer forms with <g>, while S and V consistently prefer native forms (e.g. ll. 50, 145, 667 and 1880; cf. *LALME*'s maps for item 153, GIVE). Given that L, which normally prefers native forms (e.g. ll. 1976, 2143, 2191, 2224, etc.), records a form with <g> in l. 2293 and that P, for which *LALME* only records native forms as part of its LP (cf. l. 1021), has a <g> form in l. 916, it is very likely that the original included Scandinavianized forms, although how consistent their use was is difficult to establish (cf. the alternation between native and Scandinavianized forms in the *Ormulum*; see Holt 1878: s.vv. ȝife and ȝifenn; Rynell 1948: 60).

(20) ME *greithen* 'to prepare': even though the verb does not appear in rhyming position, the fact that various manuscripts attest it in the same context is indicative of its well-integrated use in the original version (ll. 370DV and 436SDV; cf. its common attestation in the *Ormulum* and *Genesis and Exodus*; see Arngart 1968: *greiðet*; Holt 1878: s.v. greȝȝþenn). These lines are also helpful because of the insight that they give us into the various manuscripts: S and V normally (albeit not always; cf. [2]) go hand in hand in their retention of a Norse loan; however, S seems to have struggled with this verb (<gretly> in l. 370 and <greye> in l. 436; see Millward 1998: 230, note to l. 370), even though it was also fairly well-attested in the (South-)West Midlands (see Dance 2003: 357; Gersum s.v. *grayþe*). B, the other Worcestershire manuscript, replaces the verb with the phrase *māken rēdi* 'to make ready' as part of its modernization agenda (see Millward 1997: 162–163). The fact that its use in l. 2130L is very similar to that in ll. 370 and 436, as they all refer to someone preparing the way for someone else, could be taken as indication that ME *greithen* rather than R's French-derived

ordeinen was the original term in this line. This suggestion is also in keeping with the fact that the latter is neither attested in the *Ormulum* nor in *Genesis and Exodus*, as its attestations are in the main post-1300, particularly post-1350 (see *MED* s.v. *ordeinen*).

(21) ME *heil* 'hail': the attestation of this greeting in various manuscripts, even though it does not appear in rhyming position (ll. 229SDVB, 1168SB and 1438SB), is indicative of its presence in the original (cf. ME *heilen* 'to salute' in the *Ormulum*; see Holt 1878: s.v. *heȝȝlen*). The fact that its use does not seem to have been restricted to the Scandinavianized areas by the time it is attested in Middle English (see the *MED* s.v. *heil*, interj.) probably facilitated its retention in later copying.

(22) ME *hēthing* 'contempt, scorn': even though this noun is only attested in one of the versions (l. 1382B), its use in rhyming position and the fact that the alternative form <henigge> in l. 1382S (cf. ME *hēning* 'insult'?) does not fully participate in the rhyming scheme (cf. ME *clōthing* in l. 1383SB) hints at the possibility that the Norse-derived noun was part of the original text (cf. its presence in the *Ormulum*; see Holt 1878: s.v. *hæþinng*), while S's form is the result of the scribe's lack of familiarity with it. After all, its attestations are in the main associated with the Scandinavianized areas, although its presence in V as part of the devotional text *A talking of the love of God* is notable in this respect (see McIntosh 1987: 190 note 12; *MED* s.v. *hēthing*, sense 1; Millward 1997: 163, 168 note 3, 1998: 243, note to l. 1382). The original author's preferred term to refer to the expression of CONTEMPT appears to have been ME *upbreiden*, although it is also attested only in rhyming position (ll. 244, 905, 1233, etc.).

(23) ME *ille* word-field (ME *ille* 'wicked action, wrongdoing, sin' and *ille* 'badly, with displeasure'): the use of this noun and adverb in various versions of the same context (e.g. ll. 16SDVB, 479SDVB and 1499SB) suggests that they go back to the original author (cf. the attestation of the adjective and adverb in the *Ormulum* and *Genesis and Exodus*; see Arngart 1968: s.v. *ille*; Holt 1878: s.vv. *ille*, a. and *ille*, ad.).[8] Their presence in rhyming position in all the contexts where they are attested is likely to have been a determining factor in their retention for, *pace* McIntosh (1987: 191), the use of this word-field is in the main associated with the Scandinavianized areas (see Gersum s.vv. *ille*, adj., *ille*, adv., and *ille*, n.; *MED* s.v. *ille*, adj., *ille*, adv., and *ille*, n.). In this respect, the disparity between S on the one hand, and P and B on the other in l. 948 is intriguing:

    S: *He may þe egge to synne & ille* ('he is able to incite you to sin and wrongdoing')
    P: *He may þe egge & into sunne tille* ('he is able to incite you and entice you to sin')

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8 On the semantic evolution of the members of this word-field from MORALITY to EMOTION and then HEALTH AND DISEASE, see Wełna (2011: 197–199, with references).

B: *He may þe to synne egge & tille* ('he is able to incite you and entice you to sin')
P and B's agreement on the use of ME *tillen* 'to entice, lure' in spite of the fact that
there is no obvious connection between these two versions could be taken as
evidence in favour of the possibility that the original author coordinated ME
eggen and *tillen*, a seemingly uncommon verb whose attestations are particu-
larly (albeit not solely) associated with northern and eastern texts (see *MED* s.v.
tillen, v.3), and that S's ME *ille* is an innovation.

(24) ME *laue* 'law, set of rules': the common presence of the noun in rhyming
position (e.g. 42, 696 and 1919) and its use by the various versions in the same
contexts even when it is not (e.g. ll. 476 and 479) points to its attestation in the
original text.[9] In fact, this seems to have been the author's preferred term to
express this concept, as its French-derived near-synonym ME *lei* is almost always
in rhyming position (e.g. 600, 1051, 1408 and 1489).[10] This is not surprising, as the
Norse-derived noun was very extensively used already by the end of the Old En-
glish period (see Pons-Sanz 2013: 157–159; cf. its dominance in the *Ormulum* and
Genesis and Exodus; see Arngart 1968: s.vv. *lage* and *lay*; Holt 1878: s.v. *laȝhe*;
Rynell 1948: 60, 92).[11] This widespread attestation of the loan and its word-field can
account for later innovations; consider, in this respect, the presence of ME *unlaue*
'unlawfulness, violation of law' in l. 1653B as opposed to the phrase *with oure laue*
'against our law' in l. 1635S. The derivative is not attested elsewhere in the text, but, at
the same time, most of its attestations in Middle English texts are associated with texts

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9 B and S differ in terms of the presence of ME *laue* (B) versus *lei* (S) in rhyming position in l. 1253;
ME *laue* is likely to have been the original term on the basis that the rhyme <say> – <lai> in ll. 1252–
1253S creates a monorhyming quatrain in a context where the other lines are paired in couplets (see
above, Section 2). S's LP in *LALME* records the forms <sauȝ, sye, say> for item 236.40 (SAW, 1/3 p. pl.)
as characteristic of this scribe, which can be taken as an indication that <say> in l. 1252S might be a
dialectal substitution (cf. l. 1805SB), which in turn triggered the use of the French loan in the next
line.

10 S and B differ in terms of the only context in the text where ME *lei* appears in non-rhyming
position: compare *For þat we þonne [h]aueþ a lay, & þoru þe lay he ded shal be* (ll. 1489–1490S;
'Because we have a law and, according to that law, he must be dead') with *For þat lawe we haue in
oure lay, And thorou þat lawe he shal deed be* (ll. 1489–1490B; 'Because we have a law in our custom
and, according to that law, he must be dead'). In B's wording the two loans are not synonymous;
instead, ME *laue* is used to refer to one law and ME *lei* refers to something broader ('a set of laws,
custom', or even 'religion, belief'; see *MED* s.v. *lei*). It is difficult to establish which version is
closest to the original, although the wording in the Vulgate for the context that this extract is
supposed to ultimately render, viz. *Nos legem habemus, et secundum legem debet mori* (John 19:7;
'We have a law and, according to that law, he must die'), could argue in favour of the simplicity in
S. It could be the case that the original used ME *lei* in rhyming position in l. 1489 and ME *laue* in l.
1490, and that the wording that we have in S and B are separate attempts to achieve some
consistency, a key factor behind B's editing (see Section 2.1).

11 As is the case in *Genesis and Exodus* and unlike the *Ormulum* (see Dance 2011: 168; Rynell 1948:
60), *Estorie* does not record any cases of the native ME *ē*.

from Scandinavianized areas, including *Genesis and Exodus* (see the *MED* s.v. *unlaue*, n. 1), so it is difficult to establish what the original wording might have been.

(25) ME *mēk* word-field (ME *mēk* 'meek, humble', *mēknesse* 'humility, obedience', *unmēknesse* 'aggressiveness, rudeness'): while *Estorie* includes fewer Norse-derived terms referring to the lexico-semantic subfield of EMOTION than the *Ormulum* (see Section 3.1), it agrees with the latter in the prominence of the ME *mēk* word-field. These terms are attested both in rhyming (ll. 316, 1012, 2348 and 2363; in the last two cases the noun helps to create a rhyme based on the derivative suffix) and non-rhyming position, where the overlap between various versions is suggestive of their presence in the original (e.g. ll. 1002SB, 1016PB). Indeed, these are likely to have been the author's preferred terms to refer to HUMILITY/SUBMISSIVENESS and, in fact, our text records ME *unmēkenesse* about a century earlier than the other attestations of the noun in *MED* (s.v. *unmēkenesse*). The centrality of the Norse-derived adjective is suggested not only by the high number and position of its attestations, but also by the facts that the near-synonymous French-derived adjective ME *debonaire* only appears in rhyming position (l. 1016), while the native ME *mīlde* is only attested in l. 1016S, most probably the result of a later substitution for the Norse-derived adjective. Similarly, in l. 1002, P's wording also differs from that in S and B, and does not include the Norse loan. Given that S and P otherwise retain the word-field, these apparent substitutions cannot be easily attributed to lack of familiarity with the Norse-derived terms (cf. l. 321, where D's hypermetric line suggests that its wording and the avoidance of the Norse-derived noun might be innovative, while the presence of ME *mēknesse* in S, V and B is likely to be original). After all, even though the word-field was not attested in Old English texts (see Pons-Sanz 2013), its records are fairly widespread from early Middle English (cf. Dance 2003: 368–369; *MED* s.vv. *mēk*, *mēklī* adj. and adv., *mēknesse*, etc.).

(26) ME *nai* 'no': the presence of this interjection in rhyming position (ll. 414, 1488, 2097) and its attestation in various versions when it does not carry the rhyme (e.g. ll. 1197, 1202, 1413) are suggestive of its presence in the original text (cf. the use of the adverb in the *Ormulum* and *Genesis and Exodus*; see Arngart 1968: s.v. *nai*; Holt 1878: s.v. *naȝȝ*). Its widespread use from early Middle English (see Dance 2003: 369; *MED* s.v. *nai*, interj.) might explain its retention by the various versions in all contexts, as well as its presence in l. 2099B, where it is probably a later substitution, as L and R have the conjunction ME *but* instead.

(27) ME *nevenen* 'to address, call': while ME *callen* (see [10]) seems to have been fairly well integrated into the original poet's idiolect for the expression of this concept, ME *nevenen* was probably a more peripheral member of the lexico-semantic field, as suggested by the fact that it is only recorded once, and in rhyming position (l. 2011), where all the versions that have this line retain it.

Notably, our text adds further evidence for the use of the verb in the Fenlands around the late thirteenth century, a period and place for which *MED* (s.v. *nevenen*) otherwise only records the verb in the near-contemporary works of Robert Mannyng of Bourne (*fl.* 1300).

(28) ME *sāme* 'same': the fact that both S and B include this adjective in l. 1272 suggests that it is likely to have been part of the original composition. This throws further light on the attestation of the adjective, as all its records in *MED* (s.v. *same*) come from late- fourteenth-century texts, with the sole exception of the *Ormulum*. The fact that the use of the adjective seems to have been fairly widespread in the late Middle English period is likely to have contributed to its presence in S. Even though the adjective only seems to have been used once in the original text of *Estorie*, its presence in non-rhyming position suggests that it was probably well integrated into the author's idiolect, although the core term for the expression of this meaning was the native adjective ME *ĭlke* (e.g. ll. 555, 1365, 2059; cf. l. 297, where the native rather than the Norse-derived adjective appears in D's interpolation; Holt 1878: s.vv. *ilke* and *same*).

(29) ME *saughte* 'reconciled': the presence of the adjective in rhyming position in l. 1387, where all the versions that include the line (S and B) retain it, is suggestive of its presence in the original composition (cf. its use in the *Ormulum* and *Genesis and Exodus*; see Arngart 1968: s.v. *safgte*; Holt 1878: s.v. *sahhte*).

(30) ME *sēmen* 'to seem, appear': its attestation in rhyming position (l. 462), where all the manuscripts which record this line have it, points to its presence in the original text (cf. its use in the *Ormulum* and *Genesis and Exodus*; see Arngart 1968: s.v. *semet*; Holt 1878: s.v. *semeþþ*). The fact that it is only attested once in the text is indicative of its less central role in the expression of this concept, the main verb being ME *thinken* 'to seem, appear' (e.g. ll. 21, 352, 420DB, etc.), as is the case in the *Ormulum* and *Genesis and Exodus* (see Arngart 1968: s.v. *ðinken*; Holt 1878: s.v. *þinnkeþþ*).

(31) ME *sēre* 'various, different': the adjective is only attested twice in the text, both cases in non-rhyming position, which could be taken as indication of its integration into its lexico-semantic field. Its presence in L's and R's version of l. 2187 is suggestive of its use in the original composition (cf. its attestation in the *Ormulum* but not in *Genesis and Exodus*; see Holt 1878: s.v. *ser*). Its presence in l. 2194R is also likely to represent the original wording, as R's *sere tonges* is closer to *variis linguis* ('various languages'), the text in Acts 2:4 (the ultimate source for this context; see Millward 1998: 254, note to ll. 2183–2209), than L's *her tounges* ('their languages'; cf. L's use of the form in l. 2187), while B's *alle manner* ('all manner[s]') creates a

hypermetric line and is probably part of the text's modernizing agenda (cf. its use of the French-derived ME *langāge* instead of the ME *tonge* in the same line).

(32) ME *sēte* 'seat, throne': its use in rhyming position (l. 201) and its attestation in all the versions that record l. 238 are indicative of its presence in the original composition (cf. its attestation in the *Ormulum* and *Genesis and Exodus*; see Holt 1878: s.v. *sæte*; Arngart 1968: s.v. *sete*). Its maintenance in the Worcestershire manuscripts is in keeping with its fairly widespread distribution in Middle English texts (see *MED* s.v. *sēte*, n.2). Indeed, its polysemy (see Appendix 2) is further indication of its integration into medieval English.

(33) ME *skīe* 'sky, heavens': the fact that S and B, the two versions which record l. 576, where the term appears in rhyming position referring to the abode of the angels, have the Norse-derived noun is indicative of its use in the original version (cf. its presence in *Genesis and Exodus*; see Arngart 1968: s.v. *skie*), although the ME *hĕven* 'heaven' word-field is likely to have been the author's preferred way to express this concept (cf. ll. 957 and 1001, where the various versions have different members of that word-field).

(34) ME *scōre* 'set of twenty': the only two manuscripts that record l. 733, S and B, agree on their use of this numeral in non-rhyming position, which can be taken as evidence that it was present in the original composition (cf. its presence in *Genesis and Exodus*, but not in the *Ormulum*, which only records ME *twentī*; see Arngart 1968: s.v. *score*) and is in keeping with the fairly widespread attestation of the numeral in Middle English (see *MED* s.vv. *four-scōre* and *scōre*).

(35) ME *sterne* 'star': even if ME *sterre* was probably the original author's preferred term to refer to this celestial body (as suggested by the agreement between various versions in non-rhyming position; see ll. 609, 651, 655, 657, etc.), the Norse-derived *sterne* is needed in l. 641 to maintain the rhyme, which suggests that B presents the original wording in this line while S's use of ME *sterre* can be interpreted as an example of this version's avoidance of dialectally marked Norse-derived terms (cf. *LALME*'s maps for item 153, STAR; McIntosh 1987: 190; *MED* s.v. *sterne*; Millward 1998: 234, note to l. 641). If indeed the native noun was the author's preferred term and the Norse-derived noun was a more peripheral member of the lexico-semantic field, used only because of stylistic/formal constraints, *Estorie*'s lexical choices would be closer to those in *Genesis and Exodus*, where only the native noun is recorded, while the *Ormulum* only attests the loanword (see Arngart 1968: s.v. *sterre*; Holt 1878: s.v. *steorne*; Rynell 1948: 61, 93).

(36) ME *tāken* word-field (ME *tāken* 'to take' and *bitāken* 'to hand over'): the fact that the various versions of the text often agree in the use of this word-field in both rhyming (e.g. l. 688, 715, 878, etc.) and non-rhyming position (e.g. ll. 205, 256, 318, 458, 1302, etc.) is a clear pointer to its presence in the original version. In fact, this seems to have been the original text's core verb for the expression of TAKING both literally and metaphorically, not only because of the wide range of meanings of ME *tāken* (see Appendix 2), but also because the infrequent use of the native near-synonymous ME *nimen* word-field is in the main restricted to rhyming position (see ll. 1179, 1342, 1955, etc.; but see also l. 1736, where ME *undernimen* 'to reprove, rebuke' is recorded in non-rhyming position). In this respect, the original's lexical choices are in keeping with D's own choices (cf. ll. 121, 132, 138 and 139, where ME *tāken* is recorded, and l. 104, where ME *binimen* 'to take away' appears in rhyming position), as well as Orm's, while in *Genesis and Exodus* the native word-field still dominates (see Rynell 1948: 61–69, 93–100 for a thorough account of the overlap between these verbs in the latter two texts). Given that the presence of the native word-field in rhyming position is not without exception, that S tends to have the Norse-derived verb in both rhyming and non-rhyming position, and that the Norse-derived field was increasingly taking over from the native one in late Middle English, we can wonder whether the discrepancy between B and S in ll. 713 and 1076, where B records ME *tāken* and S ME *nimen*, might be the result of B's concern with modernization and consistency rather than a further example of S's replacement of a Norse-derived term. Similarly, the presence of the Norse-derived verb in l. 2176R, where L and B have no equivalent verb, is also likely to represent a later lexical change.[12]

(37) Forms of the 3rd person plural pronoun *thei*, *their*, *theim*: we know that the various forms in the paradigm were integrated into English at different rates (Cole forthcoming; Howe 1996: 154–160) and this disparity is also shown by the various manuscripts and, probably, by the original composition. The presence of the subject form in some shared contexts (e.g. l. 45), even though some of the manuscripts (particularly V and to a lesser extent S) tend to prefer *h*-forms, suggests that *thei* is likely to have been part of the original text. D and R agree in their preference for the use of *theim* and *their*, while the manuscripts originating outside the Scandinavianized

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12 The situation is less clear with regard to l. 2288, where L records *yēven dōm* ('to give a sentence'), thus referring to the 'high justice' (l. 2287) that is going to hand out the sentence, while R has *tāken dōm* ('to receive a sentence'), which refers to the sinful man of l. 2283 awaiting judgement (cf. ll. 2231 and 2327). If L's wording departs from the original, it cannot be said to be the result of L's lack of familiarity with the Norse-derived term, as L retains it elsewhere (e.g. ll. 1972, 1992, 2010, etc.); cf. R's wording in l. 2010, which differs from L and B with regard to the absence of ME *tāken*.

areas (including B, which otherwise often records the addition of the *th*-subject form as part of its modernizations, e.g. ll. 617, 1067, 1572, etc.) consistently record *h*-forms.[13] L records both *h*- and *th*-forms for these pronouns. Since the non-subject forms are already recorded in the *Ormulum*, they were probably also part of the original *Estorie* text. However, just as we find some alternation of the various pronominal forms in the *Ormulum* (see Johannesson 1995), it is also likely that the *th*-forms were not used in all contexts in the original text (cf. l. 68, 240, where D shares with other versions *h*-forms for the object; see further Cole and Pons-Sanz forthcoming).[14]

(38) ME *thral* 'servant, slave': the fact that the term appears in rhyming position in its only attestation (l. 2368LR) indicates that it is likely to have been part of the original composition (cf. its presence in *Genesis and Exodus*; see Arngart 1968: s.v. *ðral*). Interestingly, R records what seems to be a corrupted rendering of the Norse-derived noun (<oryuall>); if this represents scribal misunderstanding, it is surprising given the widespread attestation of the noun in Middle English (see *MED* s.v. *thral*; Millward 1998: 256, note to l. 2368). This is the only context in the text where slavery is referred to, notably, in connection with servitude to the Devil. *MED* (s.v. *thral*, sense 2) gives *Cursor mundi* as the earliest attestation of this use, but this context can be said to offer an earlier Middle English attestation of a phrase which, after all, has its roots in Old English (see Pons-Sanz 2007a: 181–189, 2007b).

(39) ME *til* 'until; to': the agreement between D and B in ll. 195 and 380 could be taken as indicative of the presence of the term in the original composition. Indeed, the familiarity with this form in this dialectal area is further suggested by its common attestation in the *Ormulum* and *Genesis and Exodus* (see Arngart 1968: s.v. *til*; Hille 2004), as well as D's use of the term in its additions (e.g. ll. 74, 76, 108, 110, etc.; see also ll. 225 and 484, where D is the only version to record the Norse-derived loan). R's and B's common use of this preposition/conjunction while the other Worcestershire manuscripts (S and V) have ME (*for*)*tŏ* instead is also in keeping with the common attestation of the term in texts associated with the Scandinavianized areas. In fact, it is notable that, while L and R share the native preposition in l. 2287, B seems to have replaced it with the Norse-derived alternative.

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13 On the decline of null subjects during the Middle English period, see Walkden and Rusten (2017) with references.

14 *Th*-forms have traditionally been classified as Norse-derived; however, it is likely that polygenesis played a role in their development, with native demonstrative forms co-existing with forms resulting from Anglo-Scandinavian contact (see Cole and Pons-Sanz forthcoming). Given that establishing clear-cut etymological distinctions in this respect is extremely difficult, the relevant rows in the table in Appendix 1 should be interpreted just as a record of the *th*-forms in the manuscripts.

(40) ME <tīþinge> 'information, message': as with other forms where the difference between native and Norse derivation rests on a single phoneme (e.g. [1], [18], [19] and [41]), the various manuscripts show different forms. D, S and V include forms with the dental fricative (cf. its presence in the *Ormulum* and its absence from *Genesis and Exodus*, where the native form is preferred; see Arngart 1968: s.v. *tiding*; Holt 1878: s.v. *tiþennde*), which seems to point at the presence of the Norse-derived term in the original composition. B (see ll. 507, 560, 611, etc.) and L (l. 1973) prefer instead forms with the dental plosive. That the original probably included the Norse loan is further suggested by ll. 559–560: Millward (1998: 233, note to ll. 559–560) explains that the extant versions of l. 560 do not rhyme because the original term is likely to have been <tiþende>, with the Norse derivational suffix (cf. OIcel. *tíðindi* and Orm's *tiþennde*), as this form would have rhymed with l. 559's <wende>.

3.2.1 Norse-derived terms less securely present in the original text

While the extant evidence seems to point rather strongly to the presence in the original *Estorie* text of the fifty-one Norse-derived terms discussed in the previous section, the evidence in this respect is not as clear for the following nine words:

(41) ME <agēn> word-field (ME <agēn> 'again' and <agēncoming> 'return'): the forms of this word-field in B and R have the Scandinavianized <g> as opposed to the native <y/ʒ>, which can be found in S (ll. 592, 645, 690, 1149 and 1385) and L (ll. 1991, 2155 and 2402; cf. [1], [18] and [19]). Even though we do not have any form of the adverb in D, given that *LALME*'s maps for this term (item 37, AGAIN) suggest that the <g> forms are in the main associated with the north and east, it is possible that the original would also have had these forms, although the adverb is not recorded in the *Ormulum* (as noted above, note 5, *Genesis and Exodus* cannot offer useful *comparanda* in this respect).

(42) ME <gres> 'grass': that the native form ME *gras* was part of the original text is suggested by its attestation in rhyming position in l. 914. The case of the Norse-derived form <gres> in l. 55, where it does not rhyme, is much less clear because only D records this form, while S, V and B have the native form. The presence in D and, possibly, the original text is in keeping with the fact that this form is particularly characteristic of northern and eastern dialects (cf. its presence in the *Ormulum* and *Genesis and Exodus*; see Arngart 1968: s.vv. *gres* and *gresseoppes*; Holt 1878: s.v. *gresess*; Rynell 1948: 60, 92).

(43) ME <hende> 'hands': in l. 2016 R records the *i*-umlauted plural <hende>, which represents a form of the Norse athematic cognate of OE *hond*, a *u*-stem noun (cf.

OIcel. *hendr*), while L and B record the native English form <hond(e)>. Interestingly, these forms appear in rhyming position, which leads to differences in the rhyming pattern (cf. <wende> 'to go' in l. 2015R vs <(to) wond(e)> 'to refrain from' in l. 2015LB). Millward (1998: 252, note to l. 2016) suggests that the Norse-derived form was the original term and that lack of familiarity with it led the L and B scribes to change it and, in turn, change the rhyming terms in the previous line. While this might indeed be the case, it is difficult to say so with certainty (cf. the absence of this form from the *Ormulum* and *Genesis and Exodus*; see Arngart 1968: s.v. *hond*; Holt 1878: s.v. *hand*).

(44) ME <henged>: S, P and B record different past forms for a verb meaning 'to hang (intrans.)' in l. 1788: S's <henge> could be interpreted as a strong form that goes back to OE *hōn* (trans.),[15] B's <hanged> represents the native weak verb OE *hangian* (intrans.) and P's <henged> is associated with ME *hengen*, of possible Norse origin. *OED* (s.v. *hang*, v.) records such forms as being characteristic of the Scandinavianized areas (cf. their presence in the *Ormulum* and *Genesis and Exodus*; see Arngart 1968: s.v. *henget*; Holt 1878: s.v. *henngde*), which would suggest that P's form might have been in the original composition, although this is not beyond doubt.

(45) ME *leisen* 'to loosen, set free': the four versions that attest l. 322 have different words as part of the text's rendering of the Magnificat (Luke 1:48–53): while D and B explain that God is powerful *to le(y)se and binde* ('to loosen and bind'), a common expression in the Bible (cf. Matthew 16:19 and 18:18), S and V associate his power instead with *lame and blynde* ('the lame and the blind'; V's wording). The Magnificat does not refer to either combination, so it is difficult to establish what might have been the original wording. However, given that S and V are more closely associated than D and B, we could infer that the pairing of the two verbs in the latter was part of the original, and that the wording in S and V might be an attempt, on the one hand, to bring the wording closer to the next line, where God is presented as a 'physician of mercy' (l. 323); and, on the other, possibly to avoid an unfamiliar verb: while D records the Norse-derived <leyse>, B has the native <lese> (cf. OE *līesan* > ME *lēsen* 'to loosen, set free'; cf. ll. 4, where S, D and V have ME *lēsen*; and 844, where S also records this verb instead of B's ME *undōn*). The original might have included the Norse-derived form, which is only attested in Middle English in a handful of texts associated with the Scandinavinized areas, but, interestingly, none of them is from Lincolnshire or East Anglia (see the *MED*

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15 The transitive-intransitive distinction in this and related verbs does not seem to have lasted long into the early Middle English period (see *OED* s.v. *hang*, v.).

s.v. *leisen*). The original text of *Estorie*, or at least MS D, offers valuable information for the geographical distribution of the term in Middle English.

(46) ME *skil* 'understanding, reason; ability': even though only S records l. 1702, the presence of the Norse-derived noun in rhyming position could be taken as evidence in favour of its use in the original composition. Admittedly, the case would be stronger if other manuscripts recorded the line as well, for a later addition by S would be in keeping with the widespread use of the term in Middle English (see *MED* s.v. *skil*). The integration of the noun in the broad dialectal area of the original author is further suggested by its use in D's interpolations, both in rhyming (ll. 136 and 165), and non-rhyming position (l. 161), as well as in the *Ormulum* and *Genesis and Exodus* (see Arngart 1968: s.v. *skil*; Holt 1878: s.v. *skill*).

(47) ME *though* 'though, although': this conjunction is only recorded in ll. 1110B, 1117B (in both these cases S records the native variant <þey>) and 2400B, where B's wording differs from L and R. *LALME*'s maps for item 32 (THOUGH) suggest that <þowe>, B's spelling, and <thowe> are not particularly common spellings for the conjunction, but they are more common in the Fenlands than in Worcestershire, where they are otherwise only recorded in LP 7680. This might be an indication that B's forms represent those of an eastern original (cf. the presence of the Norse-derived conjunction in the *Ormulum* and *Genesis and Exodus*; see Arngart 1968: s.v. *ðog*; Holt 1878: s.v. *þohh*), but whether this was the wording in the initial composition of *Estorie* or a later substitution (as it is likely to be the case in l. 2400B) is not clear.

(48) ME *wrong* 'wrongdoing, injustice': this noun is attested in non-rhyming position in two lines which are only recorded in S (ll. 1502 and 1534); as such, it is difficult to know whether it was part of the original composition (cf. its presence in the *Ormulum* and *Genesis and Exodus*; see Arngart 1968: s.v. *wrong*; Holt 1878: s.v. *wrang*, n.) or a later substitution. The widespread use of the noun in Middle English (see *MED* s.v. *wrong*, n.2) would be in keeping with both retention in non-rhyming position and substitution by later scribes.

3.3 Norse-derived terms associated with specific manuscripts

The previous section has already identified a number of examples where a particular version seems to have introduced one or more further cases of a Norse-derived term which is (more or less) likely to have been part of the original

composition. This section focuses instead on six Norse-derived terms which cannot be easily associated with the original composition and should probably be interpreted instead as later substitutions.

3.3.1 MS B

(49) ME *lōsen* 'to free, release': S, D and V agree in relation to the presence of ME *lēsen* in l. 4, while B is the only manuscript to record the Norse-derived near-synonym ME *lōsen*, a verb which is not recorded in early Middle English texts from the Fenlands (see *MED* s.v. *lōsen*, v.3).

(50) ME *unlaue* 'unlawfulness, violation of law': on the possible association of the term with B, see (24).

3.3.2 MS D

All the terms included here are only recorded in D's additions (see Section 2.1).

(51) ME *bigginge* 'sojourn, stay': Millward (1998: 229, note to l. 312) explains that <biginge>, the rhyming word in l. 312D, is likely to represent ME *biginninge* 'beginning' (cf. Campbell 1915: 612, note to l. 308), although it might also be a reflex of the dialectally marked Norse-derived noun ME *bigginge* 'sojourn, stay' (referring to John's stay in the desert). This noun is also attested in *Genesis and Exodus* (Arngart 1968: s.v. *bigging*; cf. ME *biggen* 'to dwell, stay' in *Ormulum* and *Genesis and Exodus*; see Arngart 1968: s.v. *biggede*; Holt 1878: s.v. *biggenn*). Even if it is indeed the Norse-derived noun that is represented here, this word-field does not seem to have been the original's author's preferred set of terms to express the concept DWELL/ABIDE, for he tends to rely on ME *dwellen* (e.g. ll. 585SB and 1041SP) and (*a*)*bīden* (l. 830SB) instead.

(52) ME *sleighlī* 'secretly, quietly': its presence in non-rhyming position in l. 271 and its integration into English inflectional patterns (the adverb appears in a comparative form) are indicative of its integration into D's idiolect (cf. the use of the adjective ME *sleigh* 'secret, cunning' in the *Ormulum*; see Holt 1878: s.v. *sleh*). This attestation is one of the four records of the term from *ca*1300 or earlier in *MED* (s.v. *sleighlī*) and the only one from the Fenlands; this makes D an important manuscript for the study of this term's chronological and dialectal distribution.

(53) ME *skin* 'skin': this noun is attested in non-rhyming position in both its contexts (ll. 112 and 115), which suggests that it was well-integrated into D's idiolect (cf. its presence in the *Ormulum*, where it overlaps with ME *fell*, and its absence from

Genesis and Exodus; see Holt 1878: s.v. *skinn*; Rynell 1948: 61). The only other context in the text where SKIN is referred to, viz. l. 1639S, records the native ME *fel* (in non-rhyming position) instead, which suggests that the latter rather than the Norse-derived noun might have been the core term in the original author's idiolect.

(54) ME *thrīven* 'to thrive, prosper': in its two attestations (ll. 153 and 444), this verb appears together with ME *waxen* 'to increase, grow', a collocation, also recorded in the *Ormulum*, which might have its roots in Old Norse (cf. early Swed. *threfs ok växste*; see Olszewska 1962: 125 note 1).

4 Conclusions

The in-depth analysis of the Norse-derived terms attested in the extant versions of *La estorie del evangelie* is significant at various levels. Firstly, although these terms have been used in the past as part of discussions on the dialectal origin of the text, they had never been studied as a whole before, nor had there been any exploration of the impact that various layers of reworking had on intra-textual variation. Secondly, this paper has shown that, although the text has been sidelined by historical linguists, it has much to offer to our understanding of early Middle English Fenland English. When we compare the raw number of Norse-derived terms in our text with that in its closest *comparanda*, the results might not seem particularly impressive (cf. Section 2.2): if we count all the terms that can be associated with the original composition (with more or less certainty; see Sections 3.2 and 3.2.1), we are dealing with 60 terms (when derivatives and different forms of the paradigm of the third person plural pronoun are counted separately), while Brate (1885) and Arngart (1968) identify over 200 and approximately 120 Norse loans, respectively, in the *Ormulum* and *Genesis and Exodus*. Nonetheless, these numbers do not mean much: (i) Brate's and Arngart's attribution of Norse derivation does not follow the tight parameters imposed by the Gersum typology; (ii) the two *comparanda* are longer than our text (*Genesis and Exodus* has 4,162 lines, while the *Ormulum* includes approx. 20,000 lines, which makes our text, which approx. 2,400 lines, seem rather short); and (iii) the study of the extent of Norse influence on the text needs to go beyond a numerical evaluation to the analysis of the process of integration of the terms into their respective lexico-semantic fields and, until this is accomplished for all the texts, comparisons remain fairly superficial (see Section 3.1). It is notable in this respect that only a handful of the terms discussed in Sections 3.2 and 3.2.1 are restricted to rhyming position, which seems to suggest that most of them were fairly well integrated into the idiolect of the original author, including grammatical terms. They are not only words whose

integration was rather widespread (e.g. ME *laue* or *mēk*; see [24] and [25]), but also words with more restricted use. In fact, the handling of some Norse-derived terms in *Estorie*, e.g. ME *callen*, *casten*, *crōked*, *dīen*, and *tāken* (see [10]–[13] and [36]), offers valuable data to inform our understanding of their process of integration into this dialectal area, for there exist clear differences between the text and its Fenland *comparanda*.

When we leave aside a quantitative approach, the significance of our text becomes even clearer, as it can provide interesting insights for Middle English lexicology, including word geography. *Estorie* records a previously unattested derivative or phrasal structure, which also offers a new meaning for its word-field (ME <alswonge>; [3]), besides providing earlier attestations for both derivatives and phrases (ME *unmēkenesse* and *develes thral*; [25] and [38]) and further evidence for the use of words in Fenland English, either reinforcing rather patchy evidence (see ME *nevenen* and *sāme*; [27] and [28]) or offering completely new attestations for this dialectal area (ME *leisen* and *sleighlī*; [45] and [52]).

Thirdly, the analysis of the retention, replacement or introduction of Norse-derived terms in later copies of the text also offers extremely helpful insights into the perception of and familiarity with these terms by late Middle English scribes from a range of dialectal areas. The lexical choices in V, S and P are particularly important for understanding the handling of these terms in non-Scandinavianized areas (e.g. S's substitution of ME *upbreiden* for *upbresten* and *sterre* for *sterne*—even at the expense of rhyme—and its misunderstanding of ME *greithen* and *hēthing*; or V's replacement of ME *ai* with ME *ěver*; see [2], [9], [20], [22] and [35], respectively), including their increasingly widespread use (e.g. S's and P's introduction of ME *ille*, n., and ME *callen*, respectively, while ME *bōn*, the only Norse-derived term introduced by V, had enjoyed general popularity earlier; see [10], [6] and [23]). B cannot necessarily help in that respect because of the likely dialectal origin of its source (see Section 2.1), but its choices provide invaluable evidence to allow us to witness the loans' fight for survival against French-derived words (e.g. B's replacement of ME *greithen* with ME *māken rēdī*—cf. R's substitution of ME *ordeinen*—ME *sēre* with *alle manĕre* and possibly ME *egging* with ME *dĕsīringe*; see [14], [20] and [31]) or against native near-synonyms (e.g. B's replacement of ME *tŏbresten* with ME *brēken* and ME *nimen* with ME *tāken*, and its preference for ME *thei* and *though* in contexts where the original composition did not have an equivalent; see [9], [36], [37] and [47]).

In his review of Millward's (1998) edition, Hirsh (1999: 330) explains that her work will probably enable future research to enhance "our understanding of the culture and the spirituality of the period". It is a shame that Hirsh did not highlight the contribution that the edition can make to linguistic work, which is, after all, an important part of our understanding of the medieval period's multilingual culture.

Hopefully, this paper has shown that the text and its various versions deserve an important place in our study of the lexical impact that Anglo-Scandinavian contact had on medieval (Fenland) English. However, by showcasing how we can make good use of recent advances in historical lexicology, the significance of the paper goes beyond its main focus to exemplify the type of painstaking work that one has to conduct, alongside the handling of large corpora, if we are to reconstruct and understand previous stages in language history.

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