

STUDIES IN THE LANGUAGE OF
SOME MANUSCRIPTS OF
GOWER'S CONFESSIO AMANTIS

by

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VOLUME I

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FOR MY PARENTS

PREFACE

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Jeremy J. Smith

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SUMMARY

This thesis is an investigation into scribal method in the Middle English period, centring upon the copying of MSS of John Gower's Confessio Amantis.

Part One contains the text of the thesis. In Chapter 1 I give the reasons for the choice of Gower's poem for study, summarise the present state of knowledge of the history of Middle English, and set forth the current theories for analysing scribal practice. Chapter 2 is a reconstruction of the archetypal language of the Confessio Amantis, and identifies that language with that of the poet. Chapter 3 is a commentary on the language of all accessible texts of the Confessio, working from data presented in the Appendix of Analyses. This enables the choices made by the scribe who is the subject of the next chapter to be foregrounded.

Chapter 4 is a special study of a group of MSS copied by one scribe, one of the most prolific of the period. I show in detail how he made his choices of linguistic forms amidst the network of pressures acting upon him. In Chapter 5, I draw together the textual and linguistic evidence of the Confessio Amantis MSS, and then set this evidence within its fifteenth-century context. Part Two consists of two Appendices: an Appendix of Analyses, presenting the raw data upon which the discussion in Chapters 3, 4 and 5 is based; and an Appendix of Maps, based upon material gathered for the Survey of Middle English Dialects.

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are commonly used in this thesis:

EME	Early Middle English
ENE	Early New (i.e. Modern) English
LOE	Late Old English
ME	Middle English
MED	<u>Middle English Dictionary</u>
MS(S)	manuscript(s)
NE	New (i.e. Modern) English
NWM	North-West Midland
OA	Old Anglian
ODEE	<u>Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology</u>
OE	Old English
OED	<u>Oxford English Dictionary</u>
OF	Old French
OKt	Old Kentish
ON	Old Norse
SE	South-East
SMED	<u>Survey of Middle English Dialects</u>
SW	South-West
SWM	South-West Midlands
WGmc	West Germanic

PART ONE: TEXT

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

I. This thesis is an investigation into the spelling practices of medieval copyists of the Confessio Amantis, the major English work of the late-fourteenth-century poet, John Gower.¹ Drawing particularly on the identification by palaeographers of single hands copying a number of manuscripts, I seek to explain why such scribes made the choices of spellings they did, and I make special reference to one of the most prolific of these scribes. On the way to this goal, I reconstruct the language of the Gowerian archetype, show how far that language survives in all the available copies of the poem, and note the implications of these data for our knowledge of the work's textual transmission. This thesis contains a large corpus of spellings, culled from a tradition containing over fifty MSS, fragments and early printed books, which corpus can be considered a useful source for the study not only of scribal method but also of the growth and development of standard written English in the fifteenth century.

It will have been noticed that the primary aim of this thesis is an explanatory one; and, since 'explanation' as a goal in linguistic enquiry has recently been the subject of some controversy,² it seems appropriate for me to give some definition of what I mean

by it here. By 'explanation', I mean the evolution of a theoretical model which will account for the phenomena I observe. Of course, it might be objected that my manner of observation will have a particular theoretical model already inherent in it; as Bynon (1977) points out, "which phenomena are in fact selected for attention by the linguist at any particular period will depend upon prevailing attitudes towards the subject and towards scientific investigation in general"³. It is true that I have not couched this thesis in the 'graphemic-phonemic' terms adopted by McLaughlin (1963)⁴, for instance, and this means that I am bound to ask different questions of my data. However, I take it as axiomatic that the asking of different questions can "in turn ... lead not only to better explanations of already known facts but also to the discovery of new ones"⁵. What I have tried to do in this thesis is to present the facts of variation and suggest some interpretations of those facts which seem plausible to me in the light of our current understanding of the Middle English situation.

If this thesis can be said to have a theme, it is one that might to some seem obvious - that the spelling system of each Middle English MS presents its own problems. If history is the essence of innumerable biographies, the history of the Gower 'trad-

ition is one of innumerable scribal choices. But, just as historians describe the 'essence' of those biographies, so it is possible to distinguish certain general patterns of scribal behaviour. It is, of course, impossible to predict what any scribe will do at any particular moment of copying; but the work of McIntosh, Samuels, and Benskin and Laing, in particular, has given us a framework within which scribal behaviour can be seen as like other human behaviour - multifarious, but organised around certain governing principles, and not random. These theories about the behaviour of copyists will be briefly outlined and discussed in 1.III below.

As well as a theory of scribal copying, we now have a much more secure basis for the history of Middle English than we have had hitherto. I refer to the work of the Survey of Middle English Dialects, whose Atlas is, at the time of writing (1985), on the point of publication. The principles by which the workers on the Survey have carried out their researches have been described on a number of occasions.⁶ Of the project, Strang (1970) has written: "The history of ME, and more than ME, is shortly going to be re-written".⁷

As will become plain, I have, through the generosity of the Survey team in allowing me access to their materials, drawn freely on their unpublished, as well as published, findings for my own work.

In the light of this new situation in the world of Middle English scholarship, it seemed a good idea to me at the outset of my researches to apply some of the techniques evolved by McIntosh et al. to one of the most important literary traditions of the ME period, that of Gower's Confessio Amantis. My choice of this poem was determined by a number of considerations, all of which suggested that the use of Survey methods and materials would be illuminating for a study of scribal technique. Chief among these was the new insight into the production of Gower (and other) MSS displayed by the palaeographers Doyle and Parkes (1978). Their findings are discussed at greater length later in this thesis; it is enough at this stage to note that they have shown how one scribe copied a number of MSS of Gower's poem, allowing the possibility of the "closer scrutiny of cases where several manuscripts copied by the same scribe survive" called for by Hudson (1966)⁸. It should be emphasised that, although this thesis is not primarily concerned with palaeography, "its assistance is everywhere presumed".⁹

My other reasons for choosing the Confessio Amantis for study were similarly related to codicological concerns. The poem survives in sixty-three manuscript sources, which makes it the fourth largest ME tradition after The Prick of Conscience, Chaucer's The Canterbury Tales, and Langland's Piers Plowman.¹⁰

There are, therefore, a large number of scribes copying the same text, who can be used as 'controls' for the study of each other's behaviour. Another important consideration is that Gower is known to have issued various 'editions' of his poem.¹¹ This has resulted in a textual problem so complex that any light thrown upon it by a linguistic approach would be helpful.

In order to achieve the goals set forth in these opening remarks, the remainder of this thesis is organised upon the following lines:

Chapter 2 is a reconstruction of the language of the archetypal text of the Confessio Amantis, and identifies that language with that of the poet;

Chapter 3 is a preliminary linguistic survey of all accessible texts of the Confessio Amantis (with the exception of those studied more closely in chapters 2 and 4). This enables the choices made by the scribe who is the subject of the next chapter to be foregrounded;

Chapter 4 is a special study of a group of MSS copied by one scribe identified by Doyle and Parkes (1978), one of the most prolific of his time. I show in detail how he made his choices of linguistic forms amidst the network of pressures acting upon him; Chapter 5 draws together the textual and linguistic evidence of the Confessio Amantis MSS, and then sets this evidence within its fifteenth-century context. In Part II, supporting data and maps are presented as Appendices.

The remainder of this chapter is an attempt to sketch briefly, for the reader's convenience, the necessary historical and theoretical background to the body of the thesis. 1.II summarises the present state of our knowledge of the history of written ME, with special reference to the development of Standard written English. It should be emphasised that this is only a provisional account; as indicated in Sandved (1981), Benskin and Sandved are engaged on a complete re-appraisal of the whole subject.¹² 1.III sets forth the current theories for analysing scribal 'translations' and so-called Mischsprachen.

II. The Survey of Middle English Dialects has concentrated its efforts on the period 1350-1450, and the reasons for its choice of these dates encapsulate the history of later ME. Before ca. 1350, ME was a debased vernacular, lacking in prestige; by ca. 1450, it had established itself as a language suitable for the business of government. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, writing seems to have been an activity largely confined to ecclesiastical 'writing-centres', and records in English are comparatively few. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, 'practical literacy' became much more common, but only after ca. 1450 did a standardised form of written English really take hold beyond its area of origin.¹³ So it is only between ca. 1350 and ca. 1450 that we have a substantial corpus of material which is at the same time the result of writers using their own local variety of the vernacular, which - as we might expect - reflected the spoken medium of the language much more closely than ever since. As with maps of modern spoken dialects, maps of the written dialects of the period show not "separate and clearly delineated regional dialects" but "a continuum, in which the forms of the language [make] up, map by map, a complex of overlapping distributions".¹⁴

It is no longer fashionable to see the history of spoken English as a progress towards Received Pronunciation, and scholars have emphasised the continuity, in the spoken language, from ME dialects to the present day.¹⁵ But, when considering the written medium, it is impossible to avoid the issue of standardisation. In a recent article, Sandved (1981) reviews the entire scholarship of the subject, and demonstrates that it has been precisely the failure to distinguish between written and spoken media which limits the usefulness of earlier studies. He then proceeds to draw attention to, and refine, a classification of 'types' of language first made by Samuels (1963). In this article, Samuels showed how the Survey of Middle English Dialects "provides us with a frame of reference for isolating and classifying those types of language which are less obviously dialectal, and can thus cast light on the probable sources of the written Standard English that appears in the fifteenth century".¹⁶ Samuels distinguished four such 'types' of language, called 'types' and not 'standards' because, in the words of Sandved (1981), "they do not describe absolute uniformity. Nevertheless, seen against the perspective of the ME dialects overall, each type comprises closely similar samples from the cline that is the total range of dialectal variation".¹⁷

Samuels' 'types' are as follows:

Type I is found in the majority of manuscripts attributable to Wyclif and his followers, although it is not restricted to them;

Type II is found in nine fourteenth-century texts from the Greater London area, including the well-known Auchinleck MS;

Type III is the language of the best Chaucerian MSS, such as the Ellesmere MS of The Canterbury Tales, and of a number of texts collected by Chambers and Daunt (1931);

Type IV is the language used in the mass of government documents after ca. 1430, for which reason Samuels has labelled it 'Chancery Standard'.

Of these four types, Type I need detain us least here. Otherwise known as 'Central Midland Standard', its importance is testified by the large number of texts, not only religious, which have survived in it; but it is now considered doubtful that its impact spread beyond the Central Midlands area where it originated.¹⁸ The remaining types are all stages in the history of London English, which became the prestigious¹⁹ - and, eventually, imitated - variety of

English during the fifteenth century. These types, therefore, deserve closer examination here.

The fullest, most recent account of the development of London English at this period is Samuels (1972.1).²⁰ For Samuels, London English in the thirteenth century, as witnessed by the place-name evidence and by Henry III's well-known Proclamation of 1258, was basically Southern, including a set of marked Essex forms. But, in the fourteenth century, London English became a Midland dialect, first of all based upon the kind of language brought by immigration from Norfolk and Suffolk (Type II), and then on waves of immigration from Central Midlands counties. These later varieties were Type III (from the later fourteenth century) and then, with some forms originally North Midland which had moved into the Central Midlands since the time of the first wave from there, Type IV (from ca. 1430).

After ca. 1430, the history of written ME consists of the growth of standardisation throughout the country, and the displacement of local usage. The processes involved here are still uncertain, and Davis (1983) has shown how far standardisation still had to go well after 1450: "Even at this date [ca. 1461 - ca.

1479] well on in the fifteenth century a generally observed written standard was still far from attainment in the fairly reputable society represented by [the brothers John Paston II and John Paston III]"²¹ Samuels (1981) himself notes that "The Babees Book, addressed to children of the 'blood royal' [and dated by its editor to ca. 1475] survives in consistent South Suffolk spelling"²²; and he concludes his article by saying that an "editor of a text written or printed during [this period] must be prepared to face an extremely complex situation"²³. The current view is that standard written English emerged slowly, the product of the "purging of grosser provincialisms"²⁴. Only towards the end of the sixteenth century did spelling become truly standardised in the modern sense - "Once the printers fixed their spellings, a norm was provided for private spelling, and after 1550 we find a gradual improvement in the quality of primary education reflected in greater stability and regularity of spelling in private documents"²⁵. Samuels' typology of late-fifteenth-century spelling systems gives some idea of the extent of the problem. He distinguishes five types, which "can occur in varying combinations, so that some texts have to be graded on a scale"²⁶. These types are:

A. Localisable dialect.

B. Chancery Standard = Type IV.

C. Writing with a regional basis which includes forms from Chancery Standard.

D. 'Colourless' regional writing - "the writer replaced his own forms, not by those of Chancery Standard, but by other forms in very widespread use, especially if they were phonetically well-suited to function as forms intermediate between dialect and standard".²⁷

E. Spelling systems containing mixtures of regional spellings. These arose when "a basically homogeneous spelling system has received slight accretions from various neighbouring dialects ... Spellings which have hitherto been members of regional systems become like the coins when two currencies are combined; they have the same functional value as before, but they pass from writer to writer, or from writer to printer and back again, and their regional significance is lost".²⁸

These categories are useful ones, as we shall see in chapter 5 below, but - as Samuels notes - texts containing writing of Types C - E present many opportunities for speculation, but not for certainty.²⁹

III. In recent articles, McIntosh has made a plea for a "register" of scribes, taking account of material and features used by palaeographers combined with linguistic evidence.³⁰ According to McIntosh, it is theoretically possible to envisage a complete classification of ME scribes in terms of their graphetic profiles (GPs), i.e. the manner in which scribes form their letters, the province of palaeography, and of their linguistic profiles (LPs), i.e., in McIntosh's words, "providing information of some kind about the linguistic system of the example of written language under scrutiny".³¹

The first of these is not within the remit of this thesis, even though the identification of scribe D himself (the subject of chapter 4 below) began with a discovery by palaeographers. (It may be appropriate here to refer to a parallel palaeographical study of scribes employing the variety of script called anglicana formata, like scribe D, by J.J.Griffiths.³²) The LP, however, is central to this thesis, and it is necessary at the outset to establish the theoretical underpinning involved in constructing one.

As McIntosh has pointed out, the use of LP (and, for that matter, GP) analysis begins with an hypo-

thesis and a problem. The hypothesis, which need not detain us long, is: "The output of any ME scribe, judged linguistically and palaeographically, is unique".³³

McIntosh notes that the hypothesis is incapable of proof: "I cannot prove that the Ellesmere Chaucer was not written by twenty scribes of identical habits".³⁴ For practical purposes, however, such a situation can be dismissed as the province of pointless speculation. Even if two hands were involved in the production of identical LPs and GPs (or three, or four ...), we should never be able to tell without external evidence, since they would be in every respect indistinguishable.

More important is the practical problem of developing procedures sophisticated enough to display those traits in GP- or LP-features which characterise, in combination, any given scribe uniquely. The complexities here involve not only the interpretation of the data but also the very gathering of those data at the outset of the investigation; since, in a sense, we cannot know what to look for before we have found it, it is necessary to proceed empirically. For both GP- and LP-features, the gathering of data can probably best be done by using a questionnaire of the kind used for the Survey of Middle English Dialects;³⁵ but the

construction of the questionnaire deserves some thought.³⁶

McIntosh (1974) has suggested an approach for gathering GP-data; for a questionnaire capable of gathering LP-material there would seem to be at least two essentials:

(i) Comparability. The questionnaire for the target scribe should be so designed that it can be related to as many other scribal outputs as possible, the object being for texts to act as controls for each other.

(ii) WPs and SPs (or WLPs and SLPs). As McIntosh (1975) has shown, a LP questionnaire needs to display awareness of the distinction between (a) features which, although written down, seem to reflect characteristics of a spoken-language system (the "spoken profile" or SP; more correctly, the "spoken linguistic profile" or SLP), i.e. contrasting features such as etes: etep, vox: fox, hem: pem, vche: eche, and (b) those features which carry no "phonic" implication (the "written profile" or WP; more correctly, the "written linguistic profile" or WLP), i.e. contrasting features such as sche: she, it: itt, burgh: thurgh: pur3: thur3. It is possible that a scribe -especially, but not exclusively, when dealing with problems such as rhyme or alliteration in his exemplar which differ from his own practice - would feel a constraint over SP-features which he would not feel over WP-ones.

After some initial experiments with other formats, I decided to adopt for use in this thesis the questionnaire used by Samuels for collecting data for the Survey of Middle English Dialects from the Southern half of England. This format met the demand for comparability, since initial study showed (as we might expect) that almost all the MSS of the Confessio Amantis had a Southern dialectal basis, and thus could be usefully compared with the mass of material gathered by Samuels. Furthermore, it seemed likely that this format would meet the requirement for a distinction between SP- and WP-features since, filled in with sufficient care, the questionnaire covered almost all the features noted by McIntosh³⁷ as of both WP- and SP-interest - a list drawn from his experience with the vast number of texts used for the Survey.

Once the data are gathered, analysis can proceed; but, in dealing with scribes copying texts which are not of their own authorship, we are faced with a problem. How far, if at all, is the language of the scribe of the MS in question influenced by the language of his exemplar? This question has been at the heart of the investigations carried out by the Survey, and deserves some discussion here.

Any ME copyist of works not composed by himself must belong to one of the three categories of scribe distinguished by McIntosh (1973) and later re-stated by Benskin and Laing (1981). A scribe copying an exemplar can do one of three things:

"A. He may leave the language [of his exemplar] more or less unchanged. This appears to happen only somewhat rarely.

B. He may convert it into his own kind of language, making innumerable modifications to the orthography, the morphology and the vocabulary. This happens commonly.

C. He may do something somewhere between A and B. This also happens commonly."³⁸

In **many** of the MSS of Gower's Confessio Amantis we find linguistic mixtures - so-called Mischsprachen - made up of forms which do not cohere in any one dialect area, representing the linguistic interventions of subsequent scribes on the archetypal language of the text. Assigning these 'layers' of language to particular scribes is a complex business in its details, but basically simple in conception. A good example of such a study is Samuels (1969), a discussion of the Wycliffite Bible as it appears in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 959. In this study, Samuels showed that no less

than three layers of scribal activity could be reconstructed from the evidence of one MS, representing the activity of five extant and four underlying scribes.

Samuels' approach was based on finding common linguistic features across the scribal stints in the extant MS. A simplified hypothetical example might be as follows:

Three scribes write one MS in collaboration. All of them are scribes of McIntosh's Type C, i.e. they produce a mixture of their own forms and forms from their exemplars. Thus the linguistic mixture in the MS appears as follows:

Scribe	x	y	z
Linguistic mixture	WM and North	E.Angl. and North	Kentish and North

Here we might postulate the Northern layer, common to all three scribes, as the layer of language drawn from the exemplar.

However, this is (admittedly) a simplified hypothetical example. Many problems to do with the relationship between scribe and exemplar are to be found, and have been exhaustively discussed by Benskin and Laing (1981). The following terms and concepts, as

defined by them, are used in this thesis:

Relict: "A relict is a form not part of a scribe's own dialect, but an exotic that is perpetuated from an exemplar whose dialect differs from that of the copyist".³⁹

Repertoire: Benskin and Laing distinguish between active and passive repertoires. "For written language, the active repertoire of any scribe is that range of forms he uses in writing that does not involve copying - in other words, it comprises his spontaneous usage. For most scribes, the active repertoire is not directly known, but deduced ... The passive repertoire comprises those forms which are not part of the active repertoire, but which are nevertheless familiar in everyday usage as the forms of other writers, and which the scribe does not balk at reproducing".⁴⁰

Pseudo-Mischsprachen: Apparent Mischsprachen which "arise merely as a function of scholarly analysis".⁴¹

Benskin and Laing examine three kinds of text which may appear to be "mixed" but whose "mixedness" is really the result of insufficient attention by the investigator to particular possibilities.⁴² They discuss composite texts, such as the Cotton MS of The Owl and the Nightingale, where the scribe copied different parts of the

poem from different MSS, and reproduced the linguistic differences between those MSS; progressively translated texts, where the scribe begins to use his own forms more confidently later in the text; and texts where some forms appear in order to maintain the rhyming or alliterative usage of the original.

Constrained selection: "A scribe follows his exemplar in such a way as to suppress altogether some of his habitual forms, and to alter substantially the relative frequencies of forms that are functionally equivalent. Except for the occasional relict, forms alien to the scribal dialect are not reproduced".⁴³ To give a brief hypothetical example: a scribe has two forms for the item 'IT' in his active repertoire, it and itt. On one occasion, however, he has to copy an exemplar which contains only itt. Itt is familiar to the scribe, and he reproduces it whenever it appears; and, if this were the only evidence we had, we would not know that it was in his repertoire at all.

True Mischsprachen: "A Mischsprache is .. what the late Professor Tolkien aptly described as a 'nonce-language', 'an "accidental" form of the language, occurring in all its details only in one text'. Its defining characteristic is the persistent co-occurrence of dialect forms whose regional distributions are such that

their geographical overlap cannot reasonably be supposed".⁴⁴ Benskin and Laing, having thus defined a Mischsprache, then proceed to describe how the investigator sets about analysing one. In so doing, they make two points which seem to me of special importance:

i) The principle of minimising the number of layers.

Analysis of a Mischsprache, according to Benskin and Laing, begins by finding a location which accounts for the greatest number of forms; "recalcitrant" forms are sifted out, and then subjected to the same process, in order to find the location which will account for the greatest number of those forms. But, as Benskin and Laing point out, "only as long as we assume that the number of geographical subsets is small rather than large does the conclusion [that this is a sound approach] hold. Nevertheless, there is good reason to believe that multiple contamination is not common: it takes only one scribe, who habitually translates from the dialect of an exemplar into his own, to break the chain of communication, to convert the language of the text into a single and internally consistent dialect. ..Such scribes seem to have been a majority in the later ME period ... Similarly .. the more contributions we postulate for which we do not have decisive evidence, the more likely it is that in our reconstruction we

shall be mistaken; and, since we wish to be mistaken as seldom as possible, the fewer opportunities that we give ourselves to make undetectable mistakes, the better".⁴⁵

ii) A definition of 'placing'.

"The importance of placing is .. not that we can say things like 'this contribution belongs to Bedfordshire', but that we can say 'there are attested dialects with which this postulated dialect, this subset of the Mischsprache's total inventory of forms, coheres'".⁴⁶

One further point may be noted from Benskin and Laing's article, because of its importance later in this thesis: Mischsprachen as spontaneous usage.

"The case par excellence of the Mischsprache as spontaneous usage is presented by the man who leaves home, settles elsewhere, and replaces part of his native repertoire with the dialect forms of his new abode".⁴⁷

As we shall see in the next chapter, this category is of particular importance in the case of John Gower himself.

NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

1. Similar studies include: Hamer (1983), Hudson (1966), Lucas (1981), Samuels (1983.1) and Samuels (forthcoming).
2. As in, for instance, Romaine (1982).
3. Bynon (1977), p.17.
4. McLaughlin's approach, although interesting, seems more concerned with description than with explanation.
5. Bynon (1977), p.15.
6. See McIntosh (1963), Benskin (1977) and Benskin (1981).
7. Strang (1970), p.226.
8. Hudson (1966), p.372 n.1.
9. Doyle (1983.1), p.144.
10. For the figures for the number of MSS in each tradition, see Lewis and McIntosh (1982), p.1 and references there cited.
11. For the standard accounts of the textual transmission of the Confessio Amantis, see Macaulay (1900) and Fisher (1965). However, an entirely new approach to the problem has been adopted by Pearsall et al. (forthcoming).
12. Sandved (1981), p.40.
13. Ibid., p.31, and references there cited.
14. Benskin (1981), p.xxix.
15. See, for instance, Wakelin (1982).
16. Samuels (1963), p.407.
17. Sandved (1981), p.39.
18. Ibid., p.40 and n.20.
19. This is, of course, an important sociolinguistic question. For a convenient summary of contemporary attitudes, see Clark (1981).

20. Samuels(1972.1),pp.165-170; see also Samuels (1963), passim.

21. Davis (1983), p.28.

22. Samuels (1981), p.47.

23. Ibid., p.51.

24. See Samuels (1963), p.415, and Davis (1952), passim.

25. Scragg (1974), p.68.

26. Samuels (1981), p.44.

27. Ibid., p.43.

28. Ibid., pp.47-8.

29. Ibid., p.51.

30. Most notably in McIntosh (1974) and in McIntosh (1975).

31. McIntosh (1975), p.222.

32. Griffiths (forthcoming).

33. McIntosh (1975), p.220.

34. Ibid., p.220 n.2.

35. The methods adopted in this thesis for completing such questionnaires are summarised in Benskin and Laing (1981), pp.60-2.

36. For the format of the questionnaire, see pp.41 ff. below.

37. McIntosh (1974), pp.617-624.

38. Benskin and Laing (1981), p.56; and cf. McIntosh (1973), p.61.

39. Benskin and Laing (1981), p.58.

40. Ibid., p.59.

41. Ibid., p.56.

42. Ibid., pp.63-72. Benskin and Laing perhaps dismiss 'progressive mirroring' a little too easily; see chapters 3 and 4 below passim.

- 43. Ibid., p.72.
- 44. Ibid., p.76.
- 45. Ibid., p.83.
- 46. Ibid., pp.83-4.
- 47. Ibid., p.86.

CHAPTER TWO: THE LANGUAGE OF GOWER

I. Fisher (1965) has pointed out that the evidence on which any account of Gower's life is based is incomplete, and, much of it, of a "tenuous and tangential quality".¹ Nevertheless, it would seem a necessary prerequisite for a study of the poet's language that we establish as far as possible from non-linguistic sources when and where this language was formed and used.²

In 1598, John Stow described the appearance of the poet's tomb in St. Mary Overeys Parish Church (now Southwark Cathedral). "John Gower, esquire, a famous poet, was then an especial benefactor to that work [i.e. the rebuilding of the church of St. Mary Overeys], and was buried on the north side of the said church ... he lieth under a tomb of stone, with his image, also of stone, over him ... under his head the likeness of three books, which he compiled. The first, named Speculum Meditantis, written in French; the second, Vox Clamantis, penned in Latin; the third, Confessio Amantis, written in English ... His arms [painted on a shield above the tomb] a field argent, on a chevron azure, three leopards' heads gold, their tongues gules; two angel supporters, on the crest a talbot".³

The books "under his head" identify this John Gower with the poet - an important point, since the name (unlike that of his friend and contemporary Geoffrey Chaucer) seems to have been common in all parts of England in the second half of the fourteenth century. The arms are important, because they tell us about his family background.

According to Fisher,⁴ the origins of Gower's family are to be found at Langbargh in the North Riding of Yorkshire. The Langbargh Gower arms differ from those of the poet in minor details, but Fisher notes a number of similarities which seem to him strong circumstantial evidence for the relationship.

Whatever his origins, a Sir Robert Gower, a retainer of David de Strabolgi, Earl of Athol, first appears in records of 1329. In 1332, Strabolgi granted Robert the manor of Kentwell in Suffolk, and, in 1335, the sheriff of Suffolk was ordered to restore to Robert Gower the Strabolgi manor of Maydenwater. Although the Strabolgi family was more involved politically with Scotland, they had extensive lands in England. They were particularly associated with Chilham Castle in Kent, and it was to the nearby manor of Brabourn that Kather-

ine, widow of the 12th earl, retired in 1337. With her, it seems, went the family of Robert Gower, whose eldest daughter, Katherine, was a god-daughter of the Countess.

The relationship of John Gower the poet to Robert Gower the Strabolgi retainer is obscure, and made more so by the fact that the names John and Robert were especially popular in the (extended) Gower family. Fisher's account at this point is speculative: "When the Strabolgis went south in 1337, Robert Gower and his wife - as yet childless - might have taken with them a precocious (or orphaned, or favourite) nephew (or cousin, or conceivably even much younger brother) to give him the advantage of a genteel education. If the traditional date of 1330 for the poet's birth were at all accurate, he would have been seven in 1337, nearly the right age for such a move".⁵

John the poet was certainly not Robert's direct heir, since the latter's estates descended in 1357 to his daughters Katherine and Joan, whose majorities were proven in Canterbury at that date. Katherine, the elder daughter, died in 1358, and the Strabolgi family, who had held the estates in wardship up to 1357, took possession again. David de Strabolgi, the last earl,

was not dislodged until 1364, and in 1366-7, there are records that Joan Gower sued for possession of Kentwell. By this time she had married William Neve of Wetyng in Grimshoo Hundred, Norfolk, just three miles from Feltwell, one of the manors John Gower the poet held at his death. In 1368, Gower the poet acquired Kentwell from "Thomas Syward, late citizen and peutrer of London, and Johanna his wife, daughter of Robert Gower". The change of husbands is unexplained, and the "late" suggests that Thomas was already dead. By 1369, moreover, Joan (or Johanna) was married again, this time to John Spenythorn, "citizen and tailor of London" who, with Johanna, released Kentwell to John Gower, an action repeated in 1380. In 1385, Spenythorn released Gower "from all actions, real and personal". By this time, Gower had disposed of his property; in a deed executed at Otford, Kent, Thursday 30th Sept. 1373, Gower disposed of Kentwell and the estate of Aldington in Kent (which he had obtained in a complex business transaction between 1365 and 1368) to a group of men including a knight and a priest.⁶

Gower's business dealings suggest a legal or civil service background, rather like Chaucer's. In the Mirour de l'omme he describes himself as wearing a 'rayed' gown, as worn by court officials other than

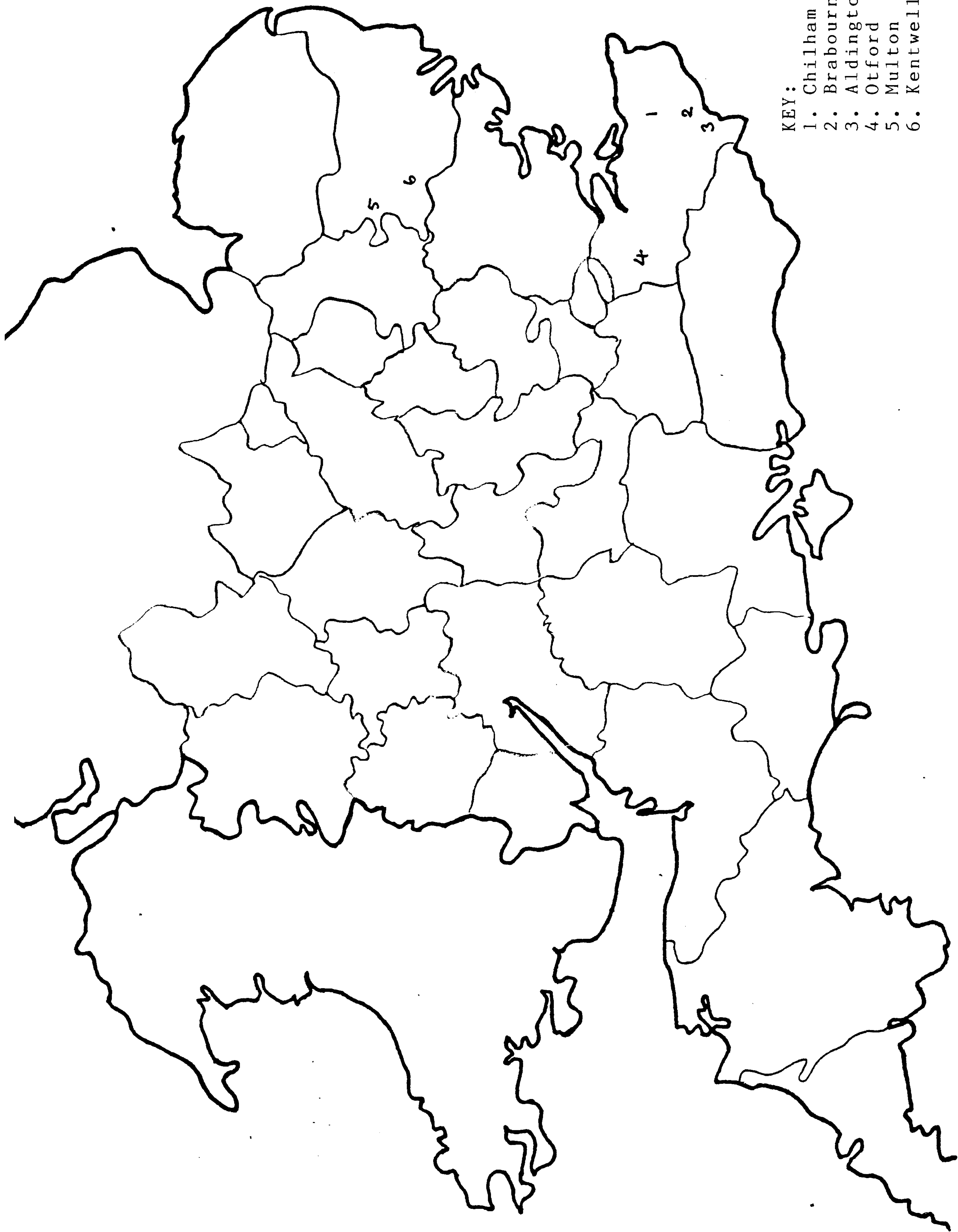
judges and registrars -

".. je ne suy pas clers,/ Vestu de sanguin ne de pers,/ Ainz ai vestu la raye mance,/ Poy sai latin, poy sai romance". ("..I am not a clerk,/ clothed in red or in purple,/ but I wear a garment with striped sleeves,/ I know little Latin or French".)⁷

Gower continued to be involved in land transactions throughout the 1370s, buying estates in London and in Kent (including land near Brabourn, from the heiress of a man who had been, in 1339, one of the witnesses in the final Strabolgi quitclaim of Kentwell, Suffolk). In 1382, he is still described as "esquire of Kent".⁸ However, it seems likely that he was occupying quarters in St. Mary Overeys Priory by the end of the 1370s, by which time he must have become friendly with Chaucer. In 1378, Chaucer, during his journey to Italy, granted Gower power of attorney on his behalf. It seems that Gower began to write poetry in the 1370s, the Mirour de l'omme (apparently the earliest of his three major poems) being composed between 1376 and 1379. The association with Chaucer is marked most famously in the epilogue to Troilus and Criseyde: "O moral Gower, this book I directe/ to the ..."⁹ "Moral" Gower, it

appears, lived in semi-retirement by this time (the mid-1380s), but he was not divorced from contemporary issues. The Latin Vox Clamantis, written around the time of the Peasants' Revolt of 1381, shows an apprehension of social disorder, and the English Confessio Amantis, written in the second half of the 1380s onwards, displays, in the various versions of its dedication, a topical concern with kingship. Gower dedicated the first version of the Confessio Amantis to Richard II - he made the poem, he says, at the command of the king - but in 1392-3 he composed a revised dedication to Henry of Lancaster, Earl of Derby and later King Henry IV, who, probably in return, presented Gower with a ceremonial collar in 1393.¹⁰ In 1398, Gower married, but his relationship to his wife seems to have been that of patient to nurse. By 1402, he was blind, and, in 1408, his will was attested and proven, leaving to his wife, among other items, the rents from his estates, "Southwell in Com. Notth. quam de Multon in Com. Suff.." ¹¹

As the accompanying map shows, Gower's closest connections, other than in London, are with Kent and Suffolk. Our next step must be to see whether, or how far, this mixed background is reflected in his language.



KEY:

- 1. Chilham
- 2. Brabourne
- 3. Aldington
- 4. Otford
- 5. Milton
- 6. Kentwell

II. A first step in any examination of Gower's own language is that a text closest to the poet's own should be selected for analysis. In chapter 5 below, I give a general account of the textual relationships of the MSS of the Confessio Amantis, and I show that these relationships are extremely complex. However, it is possible at this stage to isolate an archetypal body of forms for the whole of Gower's English works. This can be done by comparing passages of independent descent in the two earliest MSS of the Confessio Amantis with Gower's short English poem, In Praise of Peace.¹²

The two earliest extant MSS of the Confessio Amantis are:

Oxford, Bodleian Library, Fairfax 3 (the 'Fairfax MS');
 San Marino, Huntington Library, EL 26 A 17 (olim Ellesmere, the 'Stafford MS').

Macaulay (1900) used the Fairfax MS as his base MS for his edition of the poem. The Fairfax MS was written by three scribes, a main copyist and two revising hands. The Stafford MS is in two hands, different from those in Fairfax: a main hand, and one which supplied a missing leaf (fol.50). For In Praise of Peace, which Gower

included, late in life, in a "collection of fugitive pieces for a presentation volume for Henry IV",¹³ Macaulay selected as his base MS the earliest copy of the poem:

London, British Library, Additional 59495 (olim Trentham).

The Fairfax MS is unusual among ME MSS in that it appears to have undergone three stages of revision:

(a) The original shape of the MS was that which Macaulay termed "first recension". At this stage - which, for convenience, we might call F1 - the MS had the original beginning and ending of the poem with the references to Richard II which were later excised.

(b) Then a second scribe added the later form of the ending over erasures and a replaced leaf. However, he appears to have retained the original prologue. Because of later activity, only book VIII lines 2938-3146 remain from this stage, which we might term F2. It has been suggested to me that this hand also wrote the Trentham MS of In Praise of Peace.¹⁴

(c) Finally, a third scribe carried out the revisions which produced the present text of this MS. We might term this stage F3. The scribe replaced lines 1-146 of the Prologue and Book VIII lines 3147- end. At the same time, some Latin additions were made which put this stage in the history of the MS after the fall of Richard II.

The Stafford MS is what Macaulay termed a "second recension" text. It always had the new Prologue and Epilogue found in the last stage of the Fairfax MS (F3), but it also had disturbances in the fifth, sixth and seventh books, including some fairly lengthy extra passages.¹⁵

Because cross-contamination of textual traditions, detected in comparable works such as Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, might be expected in such texts as the Confessio Amantis, it is important to determine which passages are of certain independence in the Fairfax and Stafford MSS.

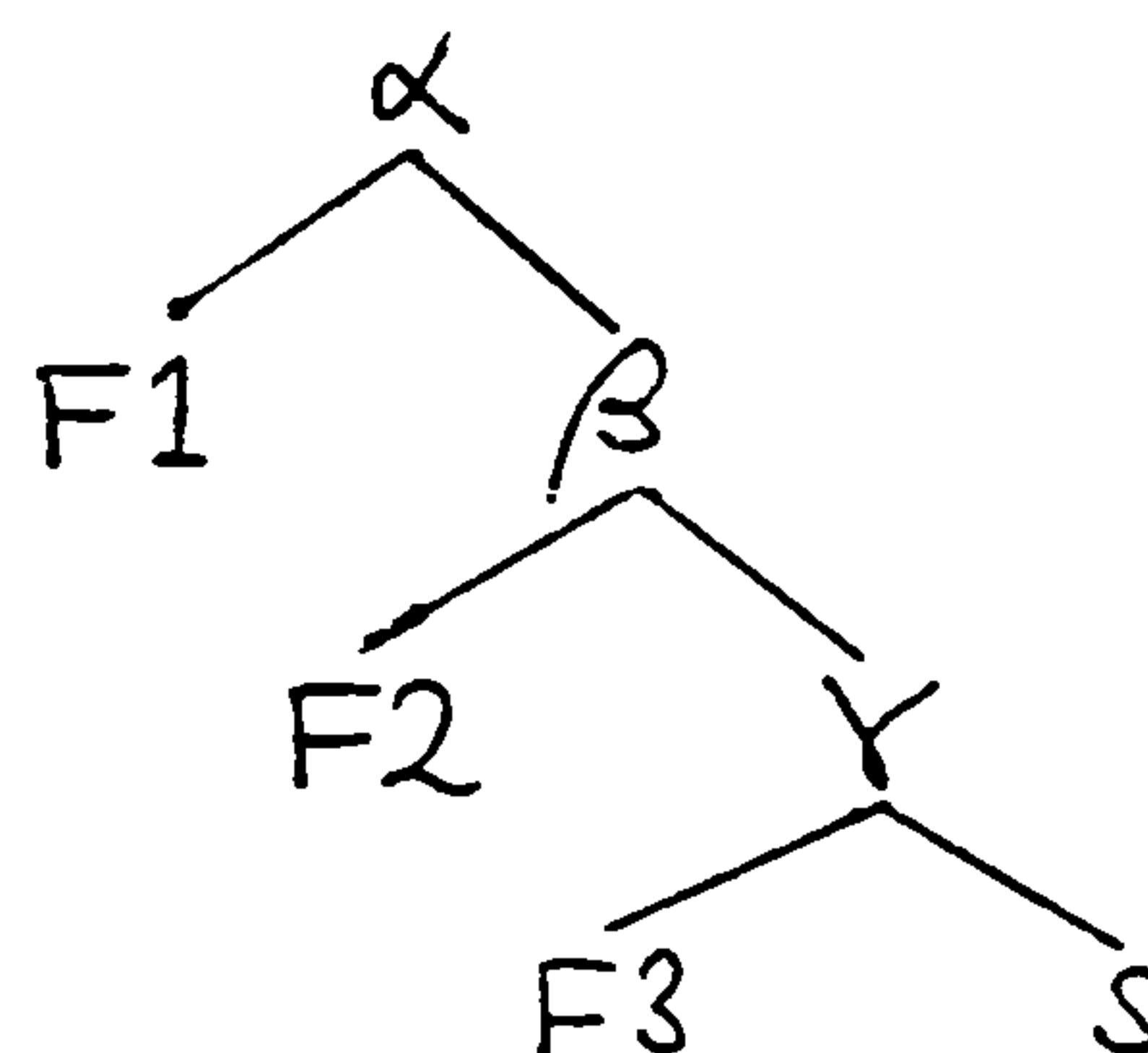
The Stafford MS (henceforth S) cannot have been the ancestor of F1 because F1 had the older beginning and ending of the poem. F1, therefore, must pre-date S. Since most of the text in the Fairfax

MS dates from the F1 stage, this can now be set aside, leaving us with the passages introduced and revised at F2 and F3. S is unlikely to have been the ancestor of the new passages in F2 because F2 only had the Epi-logue, and it would have been logical in any copying of S by the scribe revising the Fairfax MS to include the Prologue - which S always had - as well. Although the passage remaining from this stage in the revision of the Fairfax MS is short, there are one or two errors in S which do not appear in Fairfax. However, these do not in themselves absolutely rule out the descent of the Fairfax MS from S at this stage, as they are very small and could have been corrected by the scribe. It is more likely, although still only just possible, that S is the ancestor of the passages introduced at F3. The only place where F is correct and S is in error is at Prologue line 63, where the Fairfax MS reads To against S Tho. Of course, this slight variation is well within the correcting capacity of a scribe.

We must now approach the problem from the opposite direction. F1 cannot be the sole ancestor of S (if ancestor it be) because of the additional passages in the fifth book which are not in the Fairfax MS but of which there is no reason to doubt Gower's authorship. (There are also some short passages in F1 but

not in S.¹⁶ Unfortunately, they are too short to yield significant linguistic information. Since they could have been introduced or excised in copying, they are not to be taken as evidence for the priority of S or F1, even though they appear to be authorial.) F2 could be an ancestor for the Epilogue but not for the new Prologue, because it did not have it. The Fairfax MS is unlikely to have been the ancestor of S in its F3 form because of the late date (although this is not absolutely impossible).

The relationship between the Stafford and Fairfax MSS can best, perhaps, be illustrated stemmatically:

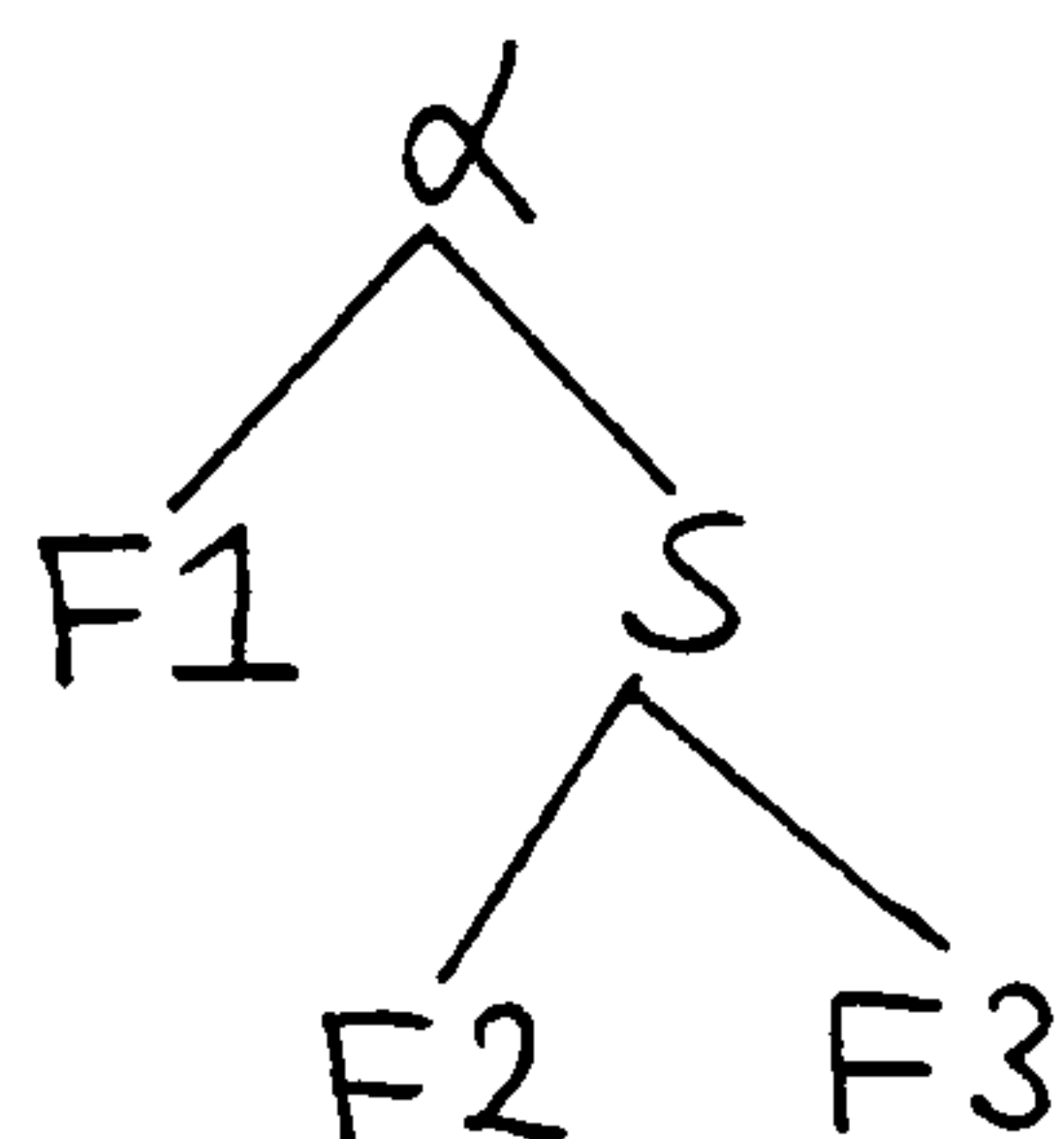


-where S = elements in the Stafford MS but not in the Fairfax MS; F1, F2 and F3 = elements introduced at F1, F2 and F3 respectively. α , β , and γ , of course, need not represent different MSS but, perhaps, simply an authorial copy undergoing continual revision. The

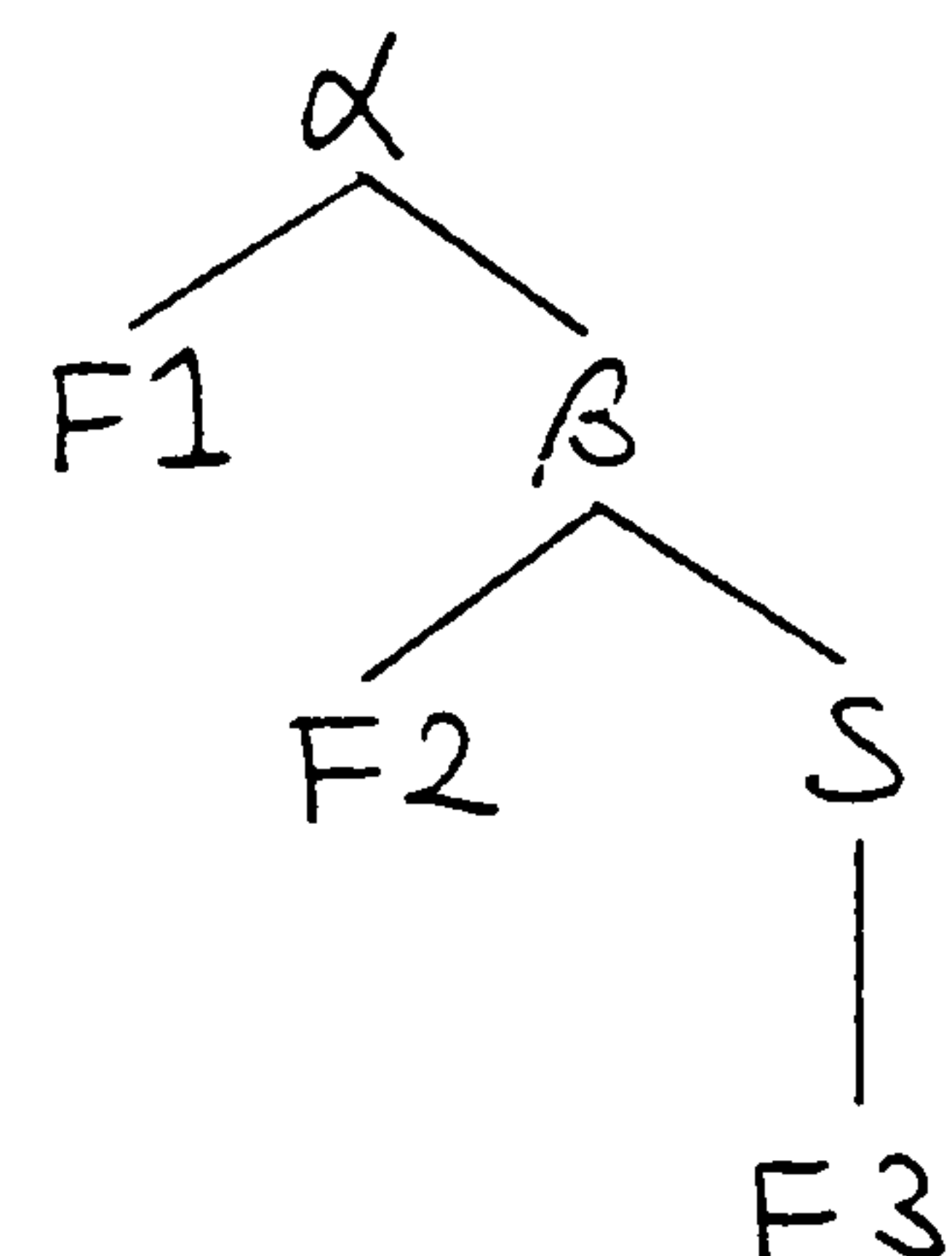
lines between the sigla do not necessarily imply immediate descent but, rather, nearest detectable descent.

Unlikely, if just possible, stemmata which are alternatives to the above are:

(i)



(ii)



We can say, therefore, that there are passages in the Fairfax and Stafford MSS which are definitely (rather than probably) independent. In the Fairfax MS, these make up the main body of the text, leaving aside the lines introduced at F2 and F3. In Stafford, the additional passages in books V and VII - which cannot be copied from Fairfax, which has never had them - are authorial, and must come from a line of descent independent from that of Fairfax as far back as the archetypal revision which produced the second recension.

We have, therefore, three texts of definitely independent descent from an archetypal stage in the

writing of Gower's poetry. These texts are:

- (i) the main body of the Fairfax MS;
- (ii) the additional passages in the Stafford MS;
- (iii) the Trentham MS of In Praise of Peace.

These three texts have separate textual histories as far back as the archetypal point at which they were written. The linguistic forms which they share, therefore, might be termed 'archetypal'. (It seems important, at this stage in the argument, to describe this set of forms as 'archetypal' rather than 'authorial'. It is possible to conceive of the activity of some amanuensis to the poet, who might have imposed his own spellings on all texts originating with his author; or, of course, there may have been general changes or coincidental variations in the language which affected independently the traditions underlying all three texts.)

The following tables list forms as they appear in four texts: the Fairfax MS; the additional passages in the Stafford MS; the body of the text in the Stafford MS (other than that contained in fol.50); and the Trentham MS. The brackets have the following significances: three brackets (((...))) = rare form; two ((...)) = up to ca. $\frac{1}{4}$ of the forms for a given item; one (...) = up to ca. $\frac{1}{3}$ of the forms; no brackets = main (i.e. usual) form.

TEXT: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Fairfax 3; Gower, Confessio Amantis, main scribe. Capital forms omitted.

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>FORM</u>
'THESE'	þese (((þes)))
'THE'	þe
'TWO'	tuo (((two)))
'BOTH'	boþe, boþen
'HE'	he
'HIS' (sg.)	his
'HIS' (pl.)	his, hise
'SHE'	sche (((scheo)))
'HER'	hire, hir (<u>all cases</u>)
'IT'	it (((hit)))
'THEY'	þei (((þey)))
'THEM'	hem
'THEIR'	here, her
'SUCH'	such, suche (((swich, swiche, sich)))
'WHICH'	which, whiche (((wich)))
'EACH'	ech, eche
'MANY'	many, manye
'MAN'	man
'ANY'	eny (((enye, any)))
'MUCH'	moche, mochel (((mechil)))
'ARE'	ben (((beþ, ar, are, aren)))
'IS'	is
3rd pres.sg.	<u>Many contr. forms</u>
'DOES', 'GOES'	dop, goþ
'SHALL' (sg.)	schal
'SHALT'	schalt (((schat)))
'SHALL' (pl.)	schul, schull, schulle, schullen (((schule, schol)))
'SHOULD'	<u>Sg.:</u> schold, scholde, schulde; <u>pl.:</u> scholden, schulden (((schuldyn)))
'WOULD'	<u>Sg. and pl.:</u> wolde (((wold)))
'WILL'	<u>Sg. and pl.:</u> wol (((wole, woll, wile)))
'ASK'	ax-
'BURN', 'RUN'	brenn-, renn-
'WITH(-)'	wiþ
'FROM'	fro, from
'AFTER'	after (((aftir)))
'THEN'	þanne, þo
'THAN'	þan
'THOUGH'	þogh (((þough)))
'IF'	if
'(N)EITHER...(N)OR'	nowþer..ne, neiþer..ne, nouþer..ne; or..or
'SELF'	self, selue, seluen
<u>þilke</u>	þilke
'AGAIN(ST)'	a3ein (((a3eyn, agayn, again)))

'ERE'	er (((err, or, ar)))
'YET'	3it; 3et <u>in Book I</u>
'WHILE'	whil, whyl, while, whye, per- while, perwhiles pat, perwhiles, perwhyles
'TOGETHER'	togedre
'STRENGTH'	strengþe
'BEFORE'	tofor, tofore
past part. prefix	<u>Rare</u> ; ybore
'WERE'	were, weren (((wer, weere)))
OE <u>hw-</u>	wh-
'NOT'	noght (((naght, not, nought)))
'HIGH'	hih, hihe, hyh, hyhe (((hy, hye)))
'EYE(S)'	yhe, yhen (((ye)))
'WORLD'	world (((wordle)))
'THINK'	þenk-
'WORK' (vb.)	worche, worchen, <u>etc.</u> (((werche, werke)))
'WORK' (n.)	werk
pres.part. ending	-ende
'I'	I
'LITTLE'	litel; lyte, lite
<u>-es</u>	-es
<u>-ed</u>	-ed (((-id)))
'MIGHT' (vb.)	miht, mihte, myht, myhte (((myghte))) (<u>sg. and pl.</u>)
'THROUGH'	þurgh
'LESS'	lasse ((lesse))
'WHEN'	whan, whanne (((when)))
'FIRST'	<u>See 2.III below</u>
'CHURCH'	cherche
'SILVER'	seluer
'EVIL'	euel, euele
'HUNDRED'	hundred (((hundrid)))
'DAYS'	daies
'OWN' (adj.)	oghne (((owen, owne, oughne)))
'DID'	<u>Sg.:</u> dede; <u>pl.:</u> deden
'STEAD'	stede
'LET'	let, lete
'WAS'	was
'GAVE'	3af (<u>sg.</u>)
'GIVEN'	3oue, 3ouen
'HELD'	hield (<u>sg.</u>)
'SAW'	<u>Sg.:</u> syh, syhe, sih, sihe (((sawh, sigh))) ; <u>pl.:</u> syhe, syhen, sihen
'CAME' (sg.)	com, cam
<u>clepe</u>	clepe <u>etc.</u> (((call-)))
'HEAR'	hiere <u>etc.</u> (((here)))
Adv. <u>-ly</u>	-ly ((-liche)) (((-lich, -li)))
<u>radde</u> , etc.	<u>See 2.III below</u>

'WHETHER'	wher, wheþer
-er	-er, -ere (((-ir)))
'BEYOND'	be3ende
'COULD'	couþ-, cowþ-
OE <u>y</u>	<u>See 2.III below</u>
'BUT'	bot
'UPON'	vpon
'SIX'	sex, sexe
'SISTER'	soster
'YOUTH'	3ouþe, 3owþe
'THANKS'	þong

TEXT: San Marino, Huntington Library, EL 26 A 17 (olim
Ellesmere, the 'Stafford' MS); Gower, Confessio Amantis,
passages not in Fairfax MS.

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>FORM</u>
'THESE'	þese
'THE'	þe
'TWO'	tuo, two
'BOTH'	boþe
'HE'	he
'HIS' (sg.)	his
'HIS' (pl.)	his, hise
'SHE'	sche
'IT'	it
'THEY'	þei (((þey)))
'THEM'	hem
'THEIR'	here
'SUCH'	such (((suche)))
'WHICH'	which
'MAN'	man
'ANY'	eny
'MUCH'	mochel
'ARE'	ben
'IS'	is
3rd pres.sg.	<u>Many contracted forms</u>
'GOES'	goþ
'SHALL' (sg.)	schal
'SHALT'	schalt
'SHALL' (pl.)	schul
'SHOULD'	<u>Sg. and pl.:</u> scholde
'WOULD'	<u>Sg. and pl.:</u> wolde
'WILL'	<u>Sg. and pl.:</u> wol (((wole)))
'ASK'	ax-
'WITH'	wiþ
'THEN'	þanne
'THAN'	Than
'(AL)THOUGH'	þogh
'IF'	if
'SELF'	self
<u>þilke</u>	þilke
'AGAIN(ST)'	a3ein
'ERE'	er
'YET'	3it
'BEFORE'	tofore
'WERE'	weren
OE <u>hw-</u>	wh-
'NOT'	noght
'HIGH'	hih, hihe

'EYE'	yhe
'WORLD'	world
'THINK'	þenk-
'WORK' (vb.)	worche
'WORK' (n.)	werk
pres.part. ending	-ende
'I'	I
<u>-es</u>	-es
<u>-ed</u>	-ed
'MIGHT'	<u>Sg.:</u> mihte
'THROUGH'	þurgh
'LESS'	lasse
'WHEN'	whan, whanne
'FIRST'	<u>See 2.III below</u>
'HUNDRED'	hundred
'DAYS'	daies
'OWN' (adj.)	oghne
'LET'	let
'WAS'	was
'HELD'	hield (<u>sg.</u>)
'SAW'	<u>Sg.:</u> sih, syh, syhe
'CAME' (sg.)	com, cam
<u>clepe</u> , etc.	cleped
'HEAR'	hiere (<u>inf.</u>), <u>etc.</u>
Adv.- <u>ly</u>	-ly (((-liche)))
<u>-er</u>	-re, -er, -ere
OE <u>y</u>	<u>See 2.III below</u>
'BUT'	bot

TEXT: San Marino, Huntington Library, EL 26 A 17 (olim
Ellesmere, the 'Stafford' MS); Gower, Confessio Amantis,
body of text. Capital forms omitted when not sole forms.

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>FORM</u>
'THESE'	þese (((Thes, þes)))
'THE'	þe
'TWO'	tuo, two
'BOTH'	boþe, boþen
'HE'	he
'HIS' (sg.)	his
'HIS' (pl.)	his, hise
'SHE'	sche
'HER'	hire, hir (<u>all cases</u>)
'IT'	it
'THEY'	þei (((þey)))
'THEM'	hem
'THEIR'	here
'SUCH'	such, suche (((swich, swiche)))
'WHICH'	which, whiche (((wheche)))
'EACH'	ech, eche
'MANY'	many, manye (((mony)))
'MAN'	man
'ANY'	eny (((eni, any, ony)))
'MUCH'	moche, mochel
'ARE'	ben (((are, ar, aren)))
'IS'	is
3rd pres.sg.	<u>Many contracted forms</u>
'DOES', 'GOES'	dop, goþ
'SHALL' (sg.)	schal
'SHALT'	schalt
'SHALL' (pl.)	schul, schull, schulle, schullen (((schol)))
'SHOULD'	<u>Sg.:</u> scholde (((schulde))); <u>pl.:</u> scholden (((schulden)))
'WOULD'	<u>Sg. and pl.:</u> wolde
'WILL'	<u>Sg. and pl.:</u> wol (((wole, wile)))
'ASK'	ax-, ask-
'BURN', 'RUN'	bren-, ren-
'WITH(-)'	wip
'FROM'	fro, from
'AFTER'	after (((aftir, aftre)))
'THEN'	þanne, þo
'THAN'	þan
'(AL)THOUGH'	þogh (((Thog)))
'IF'	if
'(N)EITHER..(N)OR'	nowþer..ne, neiper..ne, nouþer..ne; or..or
'SELF'	self, selue, seluen
<u>pilke</u>	pilke

'AGAIN(ST)'	a3ein (((ayein)))
'ERE'	er (((ar, or)))
'YET'	3it (((3et, yet)))
'WHILE'	whil, whyl, while, whyle, þerwhile, þerwhiles þat, þerwhiles, þerwhyles
'TOGETHER'	togedre
'STRENGTH'	strengþe
'BEFORE'	tofor, tofore
past part. prefix	<u>Rare</u> ; ybore
'WERE'	were, weren
OE <u>hw-</u>	wh-; <u>but cf. occas. spellings such as whyht 'WIGHT'</u>
'NOT'	noght (((nogh)))
'HIGH'	hih, hihe, hyh, hyhe
'EYE(S)'	yhe, yhen (((yen)))
'WORLD'	world
'THINK'	þenk-
'WORK'	<u>Vb.</u> : worche, worchen <u>etc.</u> ; <u>n.</u> : werk
pres.part. ending	-ende (((-inde)))
'I'	I
'LITTLE'	litel; lite, lyte
<u>-es</u>	-es
<u>-ed</u>	-ed
'MIGHT' (vb.)	miht, mihte, myht, myhte (<u>sg. and pl.</u>)
'THROUGH'	þurgh (((þorgh)))
'LESS'	lasse ((lesse))
'WHEN'	whan, whanne
'FIRST'	<u>See 2.III below</u>
'CHURCH'	cherche
'SILVER'	seluer
'EVIL'	iuel (<u>n.</u>), euel (<u>adj.</u>)
'HUNDRED'	hundred
'DAYS'	daies
'OWN' (adj.)	oghne (oughne) (((owne)))
'DID'	<u>Sg.</u> : dede; <u>pl.</u> : deden
'STEAD'	stede
'LET'	let, lete
'WAS'	was
'GAVE'	3af
'GIVEN'	3oue, 3ouen
'HELD'	hield (<u>sg.</u>)
'SAW'	<u>Sg.</u> : syh, syhe, sih, sihe (((saw, sawh))); <u>pl.</u> : syhe, syhen, sihen
'CAME' (sg.)	com, cam
<u>clepe</u>	<u>clepe etc.</u>
'HEAR'	hiere (((here))) <u>etc.</u>
Adv.- <u>ly</u>	-li, -ly (((-lich, -liche)))
<u>radde, etc.</u>	<u>See 2.III below</u>
'WHETHER'	wher, wheþer
<u>-er</u>	-er, -ere (((-re, -ir)))
'BEYOND'	be3ende
'COULD'	cowþ-, coup-, coud-

OE y
'BUT'
'UPON'
'SIX'
'SISTER'

See 2.III below
bot
vpon
sex, sexe
soster, suster

TEXT: London, British Library, Additional 59495 (olim
Trentham); Gower, In Praise of Peace, complete text.
Capital forms omitted.

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>FORM</u>
'THESE'	þese
'THE'	þe
'TWO'	two
'BOTH'	boþe
'HE'	he
'HIS' (sg.)	his
'HIS' (pl.)	his, hise
'SHE'	sche
'HER'	hire, here (<u>all cases</u>)
'IT'	it
'THEY'	þei
'THEM'	hem
'THEIR'	her, here
'SUCH'	such
'WHICH'	which, whiche
'EACH'	ech
'MAN'	man
'ANY'	eny
'ARE'	ben
'IS'	is
3rd pres.sg.	<u>Many contracted forms</u>
'DOES'	dop
'SHALL' (sg.)	schal (((shal)))
'SHALT'	schalt
'SHALL' (pl.)	schal
'SHOULD'	<u>Sg.</u> : schulde (((scholde))); <u>pl.</u> : schulden (((scholde)))
'WOULD'	<u>Sg. and pl.</u> : wolde
'WILL'	<u>Sg. and pl.</u> : wol
'ASK'	ax-
'WITH(-)'	wip
'AFTER'	after, aftir
'THEN'	þanne, þo
'THAN'	þan
'(AL)THOUGH'	þogh (((þough)))
'IF'	if
'SELF'	self, selue (((silf, silue)))
<u>þilke</u>	þilke, <u>etc.</u>
'AGAIN(ST)'	a3ein
'ERE'	er
'YET'	3it
'BEFORE'	tofore

'WERE'	were
OE <u>hw-</u>	wh-
'NOT'	noght (((nought)))
'HIGH'	highe, hihe
'WORLD'	world
'THINK'	þenk-
'WORK' (vb.)	wirche
'I'	y (((I)))
<u>-es</u>	-es
<u>-ed</u>	-ed (-id)
'MIGHT' (vb.)	<u>Sg. and pl.:</u> myht, myhte, myght, myghte
'THROUGH'	þurgh
'LESS'	lasse
'WHEN'	whan, whanne
'FIRST'	<u>See 2.III below</u>
'CHURCH'	cherche, chirche
'OWN'	oghne
'DID'	<u>Sg.:</u> dide, dede
'STEAD'	stede
'LET'	let
'WAS'	was
'GAVE'	3af
'CAME' (sg.)	cam
'HEAR'	hiere (<u>inf.</u>)
Adv. <u>-ly</u>	-ly (((-li, -liche)))
<u>radde</u> , etc.	<u>See 2.III below</u>
<u>-er</u>	-er, -ere, -re, -ir
OE <u>y</u>	<u>See 2.III below</u>
'BUT'	bot
'UPON'	vppon

The following items, in which all three texts of definite independence are in agreement, can be considered certainly archetypal:

þese; þe; two; boþe; he; his (sg.); his, hise (pl.);
it; þei; hem; here; such; which; man; eny; ben; is;
contracted forms of the 3rd pres.sg. verb; schal (sg.);
schalt; scholde; wol; ax- 'ASK'; wiþ; þanne; þogh;
if; self; þilke; a3ein; er; 3it; tofore; weren; wh-
(=OE hw-); noght; hihe; world; þenk- 'THINK'; I; -es;
þurgh; lasse; whan, whanne; oghne; let; was; cam; hiere;
-ly with -liche as a minor variable; -er, -ere, -re;
bot.

Other forms appear in only two of the three texts. One set consists simply of forms for items not present in one of the three texts; these, too, can be considered certainly archetypal:

hire 'HER'; ech; mochel; dop, goþ; bren-, ren- 'BURN',
'RUN'; after, aftir; þan 'THAN'; yhe; werk (n.); -ende
(pres.part.); cherche; hundred; daies; dede; stede;
3af; hield; sih, syh, syhe; clepe.

The following forms, in items represented in all three texts, nevertheless do not appear themselves in all the texts. They may be considered probably, rather than certainly, archetypal:

tuo; her 'THEIR'; þey as a minor variable; suche;
whiche; schul (pl.); schulde, schulden; wole; þo; þough
as a minor variable; were; worche (vb.; cf. Trentham
wirche); -ed, -id; mihte, myht, myhte; com; -li as a
minor variable; -ir.

If we include in our consideration the main body of the text in the Stafford MS, some further forms, probably archetypal, can be added:

bopen; hir; swich, swiche as minor variables; eche; many, manye; any as a minor variable; moche; ar, are and aren as minor variables; schull, schulle, schullen, with schol as a minor variable; wile as a minor variable; or..or; nowþer, neiþer, nouþer; fro, from; or, ar as minor variables for 'ERE'; 3et as a minor variable; þerwhiles (þat); togedre; strengþe; tofor; ybore; hyh, hyhe; yhen; worchen; miht; lesse as a minor variable; litel; lite, lyte; seluer; euel; oughne, owne as minor variables; deden; lete; 3oue, 3ouen; sihe, syhen, sihen, with sawh as a minor variable; here as a minor variable for 'HEAR'; wher, wheþer; be3ende; coup-, cowþ-; vpon; sex, sexe 'SIX'; soster.

We have now isolated the archetypal set of linguistic forms of the Gower tradition; it is next necessary to see how distinctive these forms are within ME. The poetic tradition most obviously comparable to that of the Confessio Amantis is that of Chaucer's The Canterbury Tales; and the language of the most important MSS of this poem, notably the Hengwrt and Ellesmere MSS, is Type III, the earlier stage in the development of written standard English found in London texts at the end of the fourteenth and at the beginning of the fifteenth centuries.¹⁷ I have chosen the following texts as representative of Type III language:

Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, Peniarth 392
 (the 'Hengwrt' MS of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales);
 San Marino, Huntington Library, 26 C 9 (the 'Ellesmere'
 MS of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales);
 Cambridge, Trinity College, B.15.17 (a MS of the 'B-
 text' of Langland's Piers Plowman);
 Certain texts in Chambers and Daunt (1931), viz.:
 The Appeal of Thomas Usk against John Northampton;
 Proclamations of Sir Nicholas Brembre;
 The Petition of the Folk of Mercerye;
 Guild Returns for: (i) Carpenters; (ii) Garlickhithe;
 (iii) St.Katherine, Aldersgate; (iv) St.Fabian and
 St.Sebastian, Aldersgate; (v) Annunciation and Assump-
 tion, St.Paul's (Pouchmakers). (I have omitted the
 sixth return, that for Holy Trinity, Coleman Street,
 since the differences between it and the others suggest
 that it is to be classified as an Essex rather than a
 London text.)¹⁸

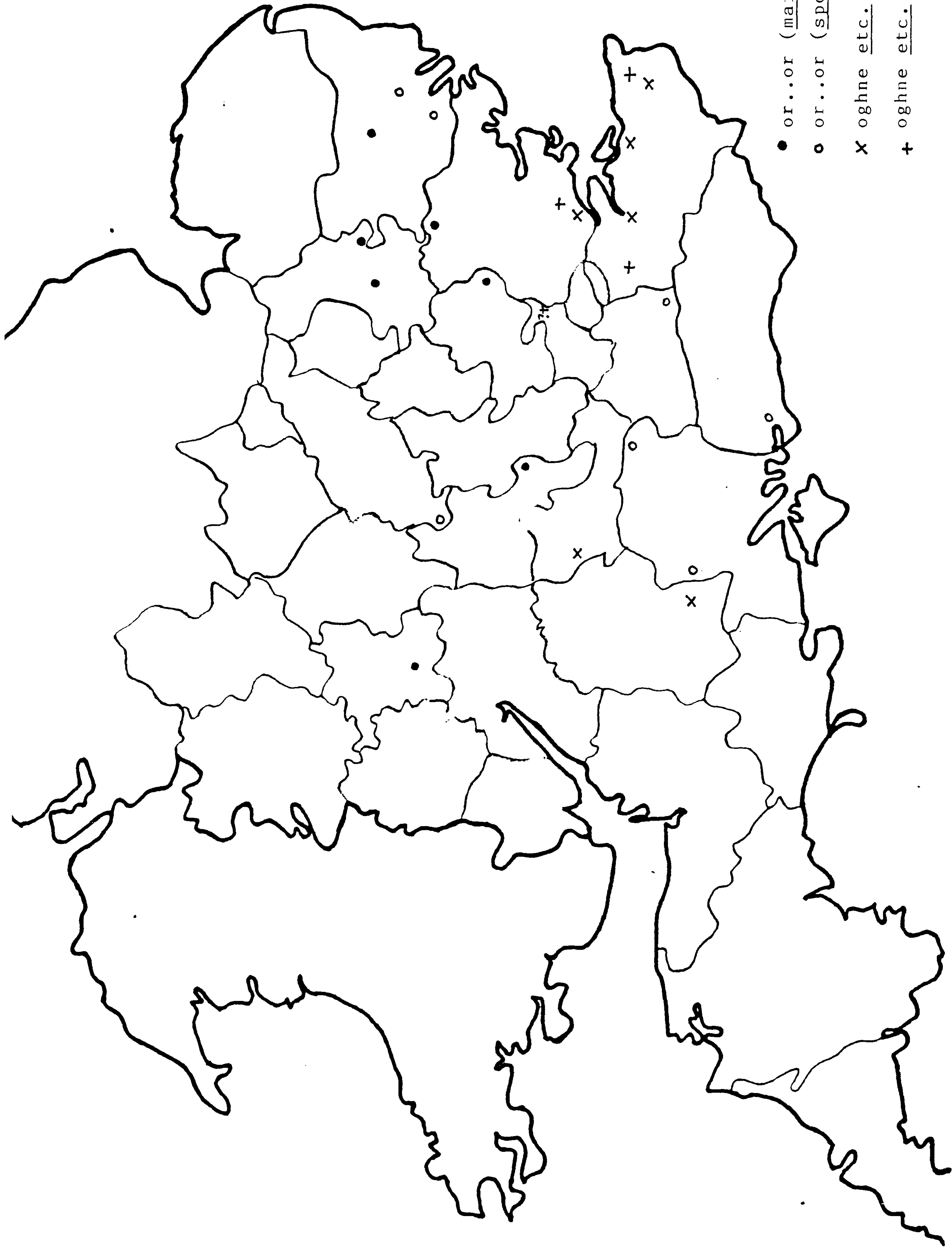
The following table displays some significant
 differences between these texts and the archetypal
 language of the Gower tradition.

ITEM	TEXT	Hengwrt MS	Ellesmere MS	Trinity Piers Plowman	London Documents	Fairfax/ Stafford/ Trenttham
'BOTH'		bothe	bothe	bope, bop	bothe	bope, bopen
'ANY'		any	any	any	any, eny (((ony)))	eny
3rd pres.sg. vb.		<u>A few contr.</u> <u>forms</u>	<u>A few contr.</u> <u>forms</u>	<u>No contr. forms</u>	<u>A few contr.</u> <u>forms</u>	<u>Many contr.</u> <u>forms</u>
'THOUGH'		thogh, though	though	pou3, pei3	theigh, though, bey	bogh
'EITHER..OR'		either..or	either..or	ouper/eiber..or	-	or..or
'NEITHER'		neither	neither	neiþer/neyper	-	nowper
'YET'		yet	yet	yet	yet	3it, 3et
'WHILE'		whiles <u>etc.</u>	whils <u>etc.</u>	whiles, <u>etc.</u>	perwhiles	perwhiles (þat)
'TOGETHER'		togidre(s), togydre(s) <u>etc.</u>	togidre(s), togydre(s) <u>etc.</u>	togideres	togeder(e), togydere, togidre, togydre	togedre
'HIGH'		heigh(e), hy(e)	heigh(e), hy(e)	hei3, heigh(e)	hye, heye, hei3e	hih(e) <u>etc.</u>
Pres.part. infl.		-yng, -ynge	-yng, -ynge	-yng, -ynge	-yng(e), -ing, -eng(e), -engge	-ende
'MIGHT'		myght(e)	myght(e)	my3t(e)	myght(e), mi3te	myht(e) <u>etc.</u>
'SILVER'		siluer	siluer	siluer	seluer	seluer

ITEM	TEXT	Hengwrt MS	Ellesmere MS	Trinity Piers Plowman	London Documents	Fairfax/ Stafford/ Trenttham
'OWN'		owene	owene	owene	own, owne, owen, owene	oghne, <u>etc.</u>
'DID'		dide, diden	did, dide, diden	dide, diden	did, diden	dede, deden
'LET'		lat ((lete, leet))	lat (((leet)))	lat, late, let	—	let
'GIVEN'		yeuen	yiuen, yeuen	3yue	—	3oue, 3ouen
'SAW'		saugh	saugh	sau3, sei3, sey3e	—	sih(e), <u>etc.</u>
'HEAR'		heere	heere	here	here	here, hiere
'SIX'		six, sixe	six, sixe	sixe	six, sixe	sex, sexe

As the dialect maps of the Southern part of England in the Middle English period show,¹⁹ the distinctive features of the archetypal language of the Gower tradition do not present any consistent dialect picture. It is especially noticeable that there are one or two forms which are mutually exclusive dialectally, and restricted to rather small areas: oghne 'OWN' (adj.), and or..or 'EITHER..OR'. The geographical distribution of these forms is plotted on the accompanying map; they are concentrated in Kent and East Anglia respectively. No geographical compromise, allowing us to localise this body of forms in some intermediate position, such as mid-Essex or London, is possible, since these two 'indexical' features are absent from the texts of those central areas, and the evidence for those central areas in the Middle English period is particularly full. It seems more likely that we have here a text containing more than one set of constituent elements - in other words, a 'layered' text.

One set of forms in the archetypal language of the Gower tradition confirms the Kentish layer demanded by oghne:



(i) contracted 3rd sg. pres. verbs, such as makþ, berþ, comp, etc.;

(ii) perwhiles (þat) 'WHILE'. This form is basically Kentish, but it is also found in earlier London texts;

(iii) ie- spellings for ME /e:/ in hiere 'HEAR' etc..

The principal area for these spellings is West Essex and West Kent, although Usk has hield (sg.) 'HELD', which also appears in the archetypal Gowerian language;

(iv) seluer 'SILVER' does appear in the St. Katherine, Aldersgate, Guild Return, but it is commonly Southern and South-West Midland.

Another set of forms supports an East Anglian localisation indicated by or..or:

(i) bopen 'BOTH'. There are Western as well as Eastern manifestations of this form, but in combination with the forms below it can only be East Anglian;

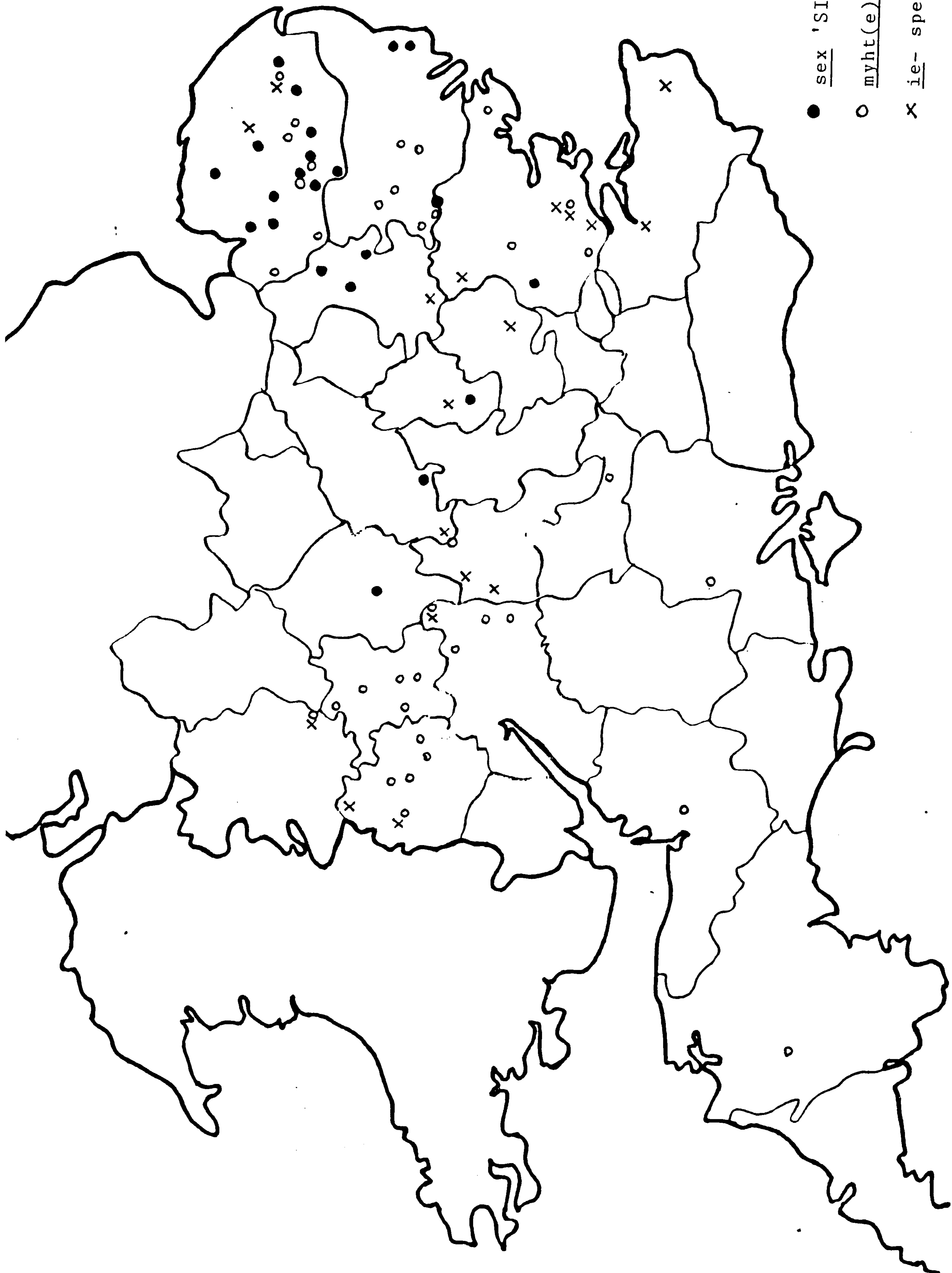
(ii) 3oue (past part.) 'GIVEN': primarily Eastern;

(iii) -h- in myht(e) 'MIGHT', hyh(e) 'HIGH', yhen 'EYES' etc.;

(iv) sex 'SIX': frequent in Norfolk and Suffolk;

(v) nowþer 'NEITHER'.

The distributions of some of these forms are plotted on the accompanying map; the remainder are shown on individual maps in the Appendix.



● sex 'SIX'

○ myht(e) etc.

× ie- spellings

The archetypal language of the Gower tradition, therefore, consists of a mixture of two elements, a Kentish layer and an East Anglian layer. The second of these elements coheres in South-West Suffolk, as is indicated on the maps. An immediate reaction to this discovery might be that this mixture represents intervention by a scribe very close to the poet - perhaps an amanuensis, as suggested above. However, examination of the body of archetypal forms reveals that certain features are proven to be authorial by metre: or..or, the syncopated 3rd sg. pres. verbs, perwhiles þat, perhaps bopen. These authorial forms are found in different dialectal layers, or..or and bopen being East Anglian, perwhiles þat and the high proportion of syncopated verbs being Kentish. If the remaining forms are taken to be scribal, then we would be forced to assume that the scribe or scribes possessed precisely the same two strata as those demanded by the metrically-attested features. This, although just possible, is extremely unlikely, and it seems safest to deduce that the two layers represent different elements in Gower's own language.²⁰

Further, as I showed in 2.I above, there is external proof that Gower was associated with lands in Kent and South-West Suffolk. It seems to me that the

correspondence is too neat to be coincidental. The archetypal language of the Gower tradition, therefore, as represented in MSS Fairfax and Stafford and Trentham, is to be identified with Gower's own language.²¹ The evidence is that these three texts were the work of scribes who were virtually 'mirror' copyists, and who produced texts which are, in all respects except their actual handwriting, as good as autograph copies. As we say in Samuels and Smith (1981), "the text of Gower's work has been authenticated to an extent far greater than is likely to be possible for the copied works of any other author at such a remove in time".²²

III. Now that Gower's dialectal origins have been clarified, it is easier to explain some of the differences between his language and late-fourteenth-century London English.

One of the most obvious differences is in his treatment of the reflexes of OE y, derived from i-mutated WGmc u (so-called 'festes y'. 'Unfestes y', a late West Saxon development of early West Saxon ie, is not relevant here.). Three sets of spellings are found in Middle English for this feature: i, y, representing an unrounding found in the Northern and central regions of the country; e, an unrounded and lowered form, traditionally seen as South Eastern, and first fully witnessed in the tenth-century Kentish Glosses in MS London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian D.vi; and u, preserving the rounding but with a u-spelling through the influence of French scribes, traditionally taken as South Western and West Midland.²³

The evidence for some forms with e as the reflex of OE y in the later ME period is given in the maps in the Appendix. Forms with e remain in some NE words, as in the NE pronunciation of 'BURY', but generally they seem to have been recessive in English by the end of the Middle Ages. Coote, at the end of the sixteenth century, sees the use of e in 'OE y-words'

as an element in "the barbarous speech of your country people".²⁴ The period before ca. 1350 is witnessed by the place-name evidence, which has been the subject of a study by Ek (1972), according to whom "the centres of the e-development are Kent, Essex and Suffolk. East Sussex, East Surrey, Middlesex and London City, Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire may be called border areas where the e-development, however, is the commonest type".²⁵

As noted by Macaulay (1900), Gower's usual mid-line spelling for OE y is e, except before ht-groups, where i, y spellings appear. For OE y, his usual spelling in mid-line is i, y when length is retained; this is also the case with late OE y produced by lengthening before certain consonant groups. OE y with late OE shortening before other consonant groups shares in the e-spelling seen in forms with original OE y. Less frequently, OE y in mid-line appears as i, y; in a few words, OE y can appear as u.²⁶

In rhyme, however, the situation is more complex. Although forms of OE y in e are proven by rhymes with e from other sources, forms with i, y are more common in rhyme in a number of items which have e in mid-line position.²⁷

The obvious text with which to compare Gower's practice is Chaucer's The Canterbury Tales, written by a friend of Gower who moved in the same social milieu. The rhymes of the Chaucer MSS were the subject of an exhaustive study by Wild (1915). Wild showed that, for the most part, Chaucer's rhymes on OE y are close to those established for Gower.²⁸ There is some evidence that Chaucer changed his habits during the course of his poetic career: "Es ist etwas auffällig, dass die Form knet [cf. OE cnyttan] nur in Chaucers fruheren Werken ... im Reime vorkommt, in den [Canterbury Tales] aber nicht belegt ist; während knit nur in den C.T. im Reim erscheint".²⁹ But, as Wild is quick to point out, such changes are sporadic in Chaucer's vocabulary. In general, both Chaucer's and Gower's rhymes on OE y show a tendency to i, y, but allowing e. This was the conclusion drawn for Gower alone by Fahrenberg (1892).³⁰

However, we now know, from the evidence I have marshalled in 2.II above, that the mid-line spellings, as well as the spellings proven by rhyme, represent Gower's own habits; and here Gower shows a definite preference for e-forms. As Macaulay pointed out, this disjunction is particularly apparent in the forms for OE synn 'SIN', where the forms appear as follows:

- senne. Non-rhyme: Prol.920 etc. (24 examples). Rhyme: V.5444, with kenne (OE cennan)(1 example).
- sennes. Non-rhyme: III.2546 etc. (4 examples).
- sinne. Non-rhyme: Prol.457 etc. (4 examples). Rhyme: Prol.1009 etc., with (-)inne (OE)(15 examples); I.3309 etc., with winne (OE winnan)(12 examples); III.2749, with atwinne (OE ontwinne)(1 example); VIII.68, VIII.200, with beginne (OE beginnan)(2 examples).

Macaulay (1900) explained this difference between Gower's rhyming and non-rhyming forms by referring to the exigencies of rhyme. For instance, he explains the variation in the reflexes of OE synn as "certainly due to the greater frequency of the words (such as beginne, winne etc.) which give rhymes to sinne".³¹

Although possible, this cannot be a complete explanation. If the constraints of rhyme alone determined the choice of one variable rather than another, and if in non-rhyming positions there were free variation between i-and e-forms, then we might reasonably expect the i-variable to be more prominent than it is in non-rhyming positions as well.

Part of the answer to this problem may be sociolinguistic conditioning. It might be said that Gower's e-spelling for OE y is his usual form, established by his dialectal origins; and this would doubtless

represent some original phonological fact. However, in an age when poetry was recited aloud, and when aiming for the kind of audience which would expect rhymes on i to be usual, Gower may have felt under pressure to adopt such a rhyme. Although the e-form is the prevailing form in rhyme in early London verse, its more restricted appearance in Type III texts suggests that it was recessive in more 'fashionable' London pronunciation.³²

It is important to maintain here a distinction between the written medium, represented here by the complete corpus of Gower's spellings, and what we can reconstruct of the spoken language through the analysis of his rhymes and metre. Before ca. 1430, of course, there was no true standard written language in English;³³ thus Gower would have no compunction about using e in mid-line, and readers of his poetry would be free to introduce their own pronunciation when encoding the written form in speech. But, in rhyme, the situation was different; the pronunciation here would matter, since a rhyme of OE y on e would not work in up-to-date London spoken language. Thus we might deduce that Gower, in a number of cases, adopted the 'prestigious' rhyme on i; and a spelling with i, y would follow nat-

urally in order to retain eye-rhyme with forms with i, y from other sources.

Even now, this cannot be quite the whole story. Gower may have corresponded with contemporary London speech-habits in his use of i-rhymes for 'OE y̆-words', but he also retained forms in his spoken language which must have seemed either old-fashioned or outlandish to his London contemporaries: berwhiles(bat), or .. or, and the present participle in -ende. These forms are proven to be part of Gower's spoken language by the metre (berwhiles bat and or .. or) and by numerous rhymes (-ende). Gower's failure to modify these forms in the direction of Type III suggests that his dialectal origins had priority for him, and that London influences on their own would not be sufficient to cause him to change his practice.

It seems, in fact, that at most London English simply reinforced tendencies already present in Gower's peculiar mixture of dialects. Maps for a number of forms with OE y̆ show that, although OE y̆ is reflected in e widely in East Anglia and Kent at the end of the fourteenth century, e appeared in fewer words of the group in East Anglia, and is a recessive feature, vary-

ing more frequently with i, y the further away we move from the Kentish e-heartland.³⁴ The evidence is, therefore, that an i, y variable was probably available to Gower from his Suffolk layer, and that this variable was activated by his conformity to London rhyming practice.

A similar pattern of reinforcement, although with a rather more complex outcome, can be seen in Gower's treatment of OE ǣ. The history of this vowel is especially involved; put as simply and as traditionally as possible, in OE only Saxon dialects have both ǣ¹ from WGmc ā and ǣ² from WGmc ai with i-mutation. In OKt, both ǣ¹ and ǣ² appear as ē, while, in OA, ǣ¹ is reflected in ē and ǣ² appears as æ. In ME, words with OE ǣ have /ɛ:/, while words with e have /e:/. Since both /ɛ:/ and /e:/ were spelt e in ME it is possible to distinguish the distribution of the two only by looking at rhymes with forms which arrived at /ɛ:/ or /e:/ from sources other than OE ǣ¹ or ǣ², or by noting the corresponding form when shortened in lOE: forms shortened in a suggest an original OE ǣ shortened to ǣ̆, while forms in e suggest an original ē shortened to ē̆.³⁵

This neat picture is disturbed by Gower's practice. His shortened forms of OE ǣ appear as both a and e, but there is a preponderance of the former. We might take his treatment of the shortened forms of ME dreden 'DREAD' (with OE ǣ) and leden 'LEAD' (with OE ǣ²) as exemplifying Gower's usage. The following table lists the occurrence of shortened forms of these words in the Fairfax MS.

(a) Shortened forms of ME dreden:

- drad. Non-rhyme: VIII.1368.
- dradde. Non-rhyme: IV.2065, etc. (6 examples). Rhyme: with gradde (shortened OE ǣ¹ = self-rhyme) V.5003; with hadde (OE hæfde) I.1668, etc. (8 examples); with (-)ladde (with shortened ǣ²) III.1846, etc. (4 examples).
- dred. Non-rhyme: I.2246.
- dredde. Non-rhyme: V.3360. Rhyme: with spedde (with shortened OE ē) V.3355; with fledde (cf. OE strong vb. flēon; according to ODEE, weak forms develop in 13th century) VI.1804.

(b) Shortened forms of ME leden:

- lad. Non-rhyme: VIII.1375. Rhyme: with bad (OE bæd, inf. biddan) II.759, etc. (6 examples); with glad (OE glæd) II.1941, etc. (3 examples); with unglad (OE un-+prec.) V.7263; with adrad (with shortened ǣ¹) VIII.2107; with bestad (be- + ON staddr) I.1050.
- ladde. Non-rhyme: I.3225, etc. (11 examples). Rhyme: with dradde (with shortened ǣ¹) III.1845, VII.3576; with hadde (OE hæfde) Prol.712, etc. (50 examples); with ouer-ladde (with shortened ǣ² = self-rhyme) VII.3256; with (-)spradde (OE sprædan, with ǣ² = self-rhyme) V.1654, VII.4499.
- ledd. Rhyme: with fedd (cf. OE fēdan) VI.870.
- ledde. Rhyme: with (a)bedde ((on+) OE bedd) V.677, V.3477; with fredde (cf. OE gefrēdan) V.7168; with spedde (cf. OE spēdan) III.2178.

In these items, Gower's rhyming practice is very close to Chaucer's. Chaucer's rhymes on the shortened forms of ME dreden and leden are as follows:³⁶

(a) Shortened forms of ME dreden:

- dradde. With badde (Uncertain etymon; perhaps OE bæddel) CT.E.Cl.523; with hadde (OE hæfde) CT.B.Mk.3402, B.Mk.3918, E.Cl.523; with ladde (with shortened æ²) CT.B.Mk.3918.
- dredde. With spedde (cf. OE spēdan) TC.I.483, LGW.199; with wedde (OE weddian) CT.E.Cl.181.

(b) Shortened forms of ME leden:

- lad. With glad (OE glæd) CT.E.Mch.2415; with had (OE hæfde) CT.B.ML.646; with mad (OE gemædd, with æ² = self-rhyme) CT.A.Rv.4232; with bistad (bi- + ON staddr) CT.B.ML.646.
- ladde. With badde (uncertain etymon; perhaps OE bæddel) LGW(G version)278; with hadde (OE hæfde) CT.A.Kn.1446, etc. (8 examples); with shadde (OE sc(e)ādan) CT.B.Mk.3920; with spradde (cf. OE sprædan, with æ² = self-rhyme) Anel.39.
- ledde. With fledde (cf. OE strong vb. flēon; according to ODEE, wk. forms developed in 13th century) TC.V.1218, LGW.943; with spedde (cf. OE spēdan) LGW.1097, LGW.2310.

There is an evident similarity between Gower's and Chaucer's rhyming usages for these items. Gower has, perhaps, a few more examples of æ¹ in a than Chaucer, but generally they share the same pattern of rhyme.

With the retained long vowels, however, there is a different situation. Wild (1915) shows that Chaucer usually reflects æ² in /ɛ:/, but that he will occasionally allow /e:/.³⁷ This fits in with the preponder-

ance of a- forms we have noted for the shortened form of ME leden in Chaucer's rhymes. Here, Gower differs from Chaucer. Macaulay (1900) notes "that Gower's language has a strongly pronounced leaning towards \bar{e} ; and .. that this tendency is quite as much visible in the words of the $\bar{ae} = ai$ [i.e. \bar{ae}^2] class as in the others [i.e. \bar{ae}^1]"³⁸ Macaulay gives a full list of examples with both. The problem is bedevilled by the large number of self-rhymes and rhymes between \bar{ae}^1 and \bar{ae}^2 , which are valueless and of uncertain value respectively. Even so, there is enough evidence to indicate a definite preference for \bar{ae}^2 reflected as /e:/ in Gower's rhyme-scheme. There are even difficulties with Gower's reflection of \bar{ae}^1 with length retained, in rhyming positions. With dreden, it is plain that the short vowel a in dradde does not necessarily mean a corresponding /ɛ:/ where length is maintained. The following table lists such occurrences, omitting rhymes on \bar{ae}^2 and self-rhymes:

(a) Rhymes on OE \bar{e} (= ME/e:/):

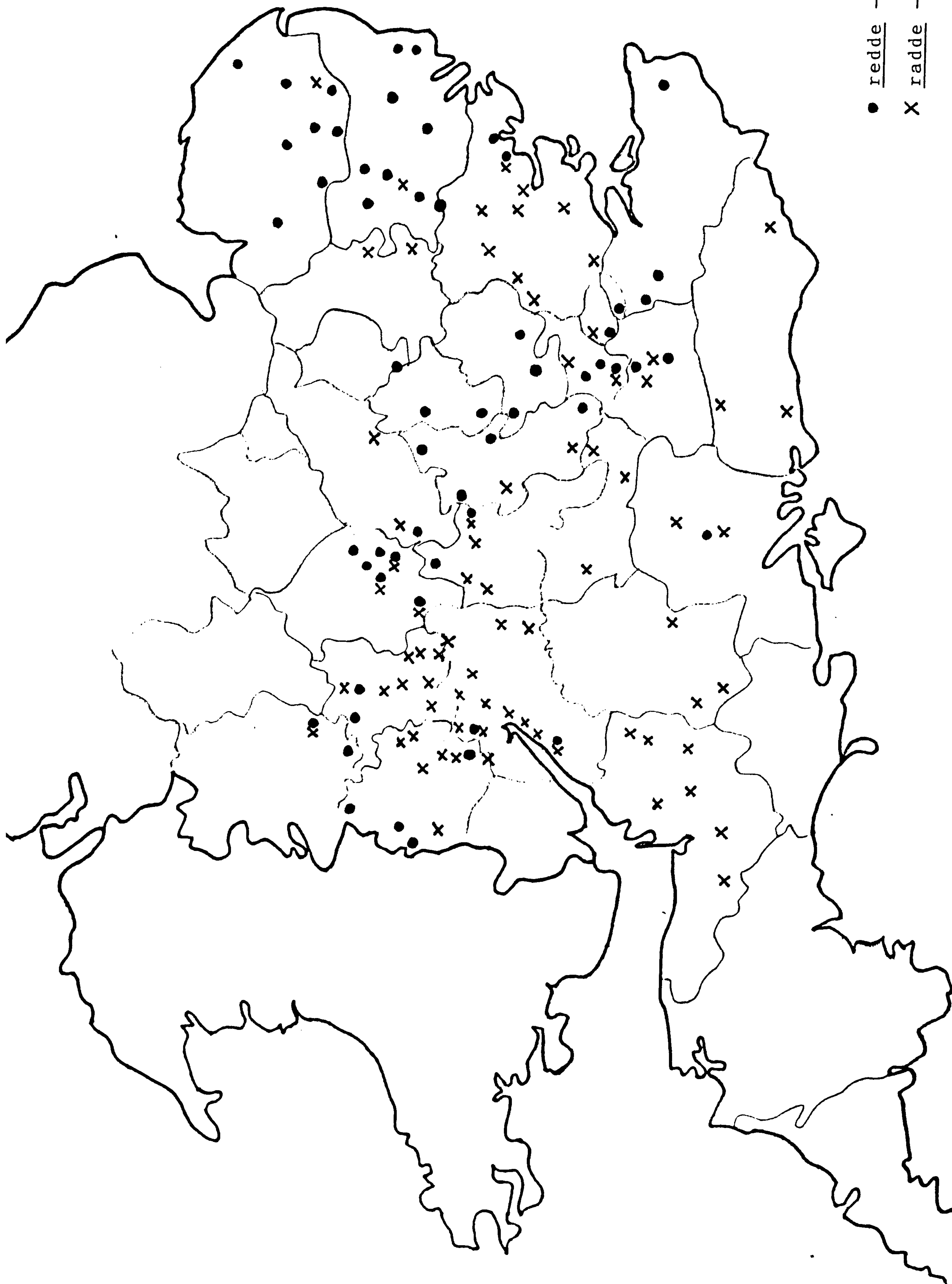
hiede IV.1448, IV.1924, VI.1256; nede I.1987, I.2240, IV.140, IV.331, IV.701, IV.2084, IV.3420; V.5450, VII.3814, VII.5048; spede IV.629, IV.940; brede III.1321.

(b) Rhymes on OE ea (= ME /ɛ:/):

dede 'DEAD' II.3406; rede 'GROW RED' IV.186.

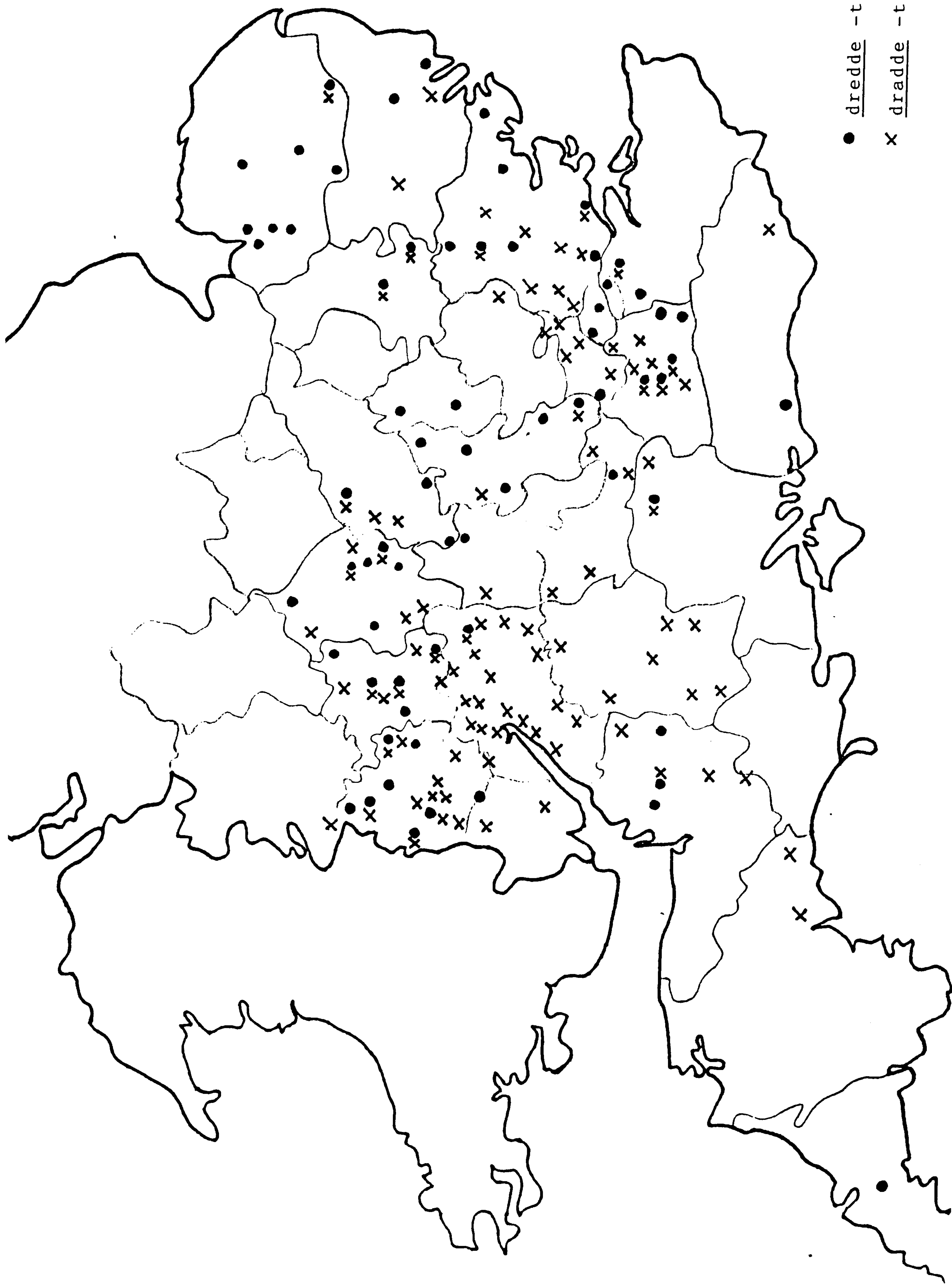
For Gower, the correspondence between shortened $\overline{æ}^{1,2}$ and $\overline{æ}^{1,2}$ with length maintained has become invalid. We might now consider how this correspondence failed.

The shortened forms in a, proven by rhyme, can be explained quite satisfactorily for Gower in the same way as has been suggested as an explanation for the reflection of OE \overline{y} in i in his rhymes. As the accompanying maps show, the a- form appears beside the e- form in Suffolk for both $\overline{æ}^1$ and $\overline{æ}^2$. The Chaucerian form, as we have seen, is more commonly a, and a seems to have been widespread in London. Thus the a- variable, present in Gower's language from his Suffolk layer, could have been reinforced by a London a. This would have been at the expense of the e- variable which we might have expected to have been produced from OE \overline{e} , for $\overline{æ}^1$ in Anglian areas and for both $\overline{æ}^1$ and $\overline{æ}^2$ in Kent. Since the a- form appears in a majority of positions in mid-line in Gower as well, it was presumably rather stronger in Gower's idiolect than the i- variant in 'OE \overline{y} - words'.



● redde -type

X radde -type



● dredde -type

x dradde -type

In the long vowels descended from OE \bar{a}^1 and \bar{a}^2 , however, there was no London form as definite as OE y in i to reinforce any tendency to $/\epsilon:/$, the notional long equivalent to shortened \bar{a} in a . As Wild (1915) has shown, and as we have seen above, Chaucer certainly has occasional rhymes which seem to show ME $/e:/$ in 'ME $/\epsilon:/$ -words'. Although these have been taken as 'inexact' rhymes, Dobson has convincingly argued that they should be taken at face value: "I do not believe that ME poets, writing at a time when poetry was recited aloud and not read silently, would have used 'inexact' or 'analogical' rhymes"³⁹. It is true that after the Great Vowel Shift had taken place, and ME $/e:/$ had become $/i:/$ and ME $/\epsilon:/$ had become (in the first instance) $/e:/$, 'ME $/\epsilon:/$ -words' pronounced with $/i:/$ were seen by some speakers at the beginning of the seventeenth century as-vulgar.⁴⁰ However, there is no evidence that, at the end of the fourteenth century, any stigma was suffered by those who used $/e:/$ rather than $/\epsilon:/$ in such words. Thus it is possible that this uncertainty over the form of \bar{a}^1 and \bar{a}^2 with length maintained in contemporary London English meant that there was no need for Gower to modify his rhyming practice, in this respect contrasting with his usage of the shortened equivalent.

However, there is evidence that London English, as with the reflection of 'OE ^uy-words', in this case was of at most secondary importance for Gower's usage. The fifteenth-century poet Bokenham, who prides himself on his Suffolk speech -

"And þerfore spekyn & wrytyn I wyl pleyndly
Aftyr þe language of Suthfolk speche" ⁴¹

- makes an interesting parallel with Gower, in that he, too, prefers shortened æ¹ and æ² in a, and rhymes æ¹ and æ² with length maintained on /e:/.⁴² The evidence of Bokenham shows that the distinction between the dialectal distributions of the long and shortened forms of the vowel is not simply an index of dialect mixture, as we might be tempted, at first, to presume to be the case with Gower. Rather, it appears that there was a common tendency to raising of ME /ɛ:/ in the dialects of later ME. Both Kentish and Anglian dialects had /e:/ for æ¹ in any case; and, although originally only Kentish had /e:/ for æ², Bülbring has noted that a following d, t, s, n, l or r caused raising of /ɛ:/ to /e:/ widely in the Anglian area.⁴³ It is noticeable that almost all the examples of æ² in /e:/ proven in rhyme in Gower have æ² + one of these consonants. Further, if this evidence were not enough, a raising of ME /ɛ:/ to /e:/ seems to have been an especial feature of Suffolk dialect in the ENE period, and it would be unsur-

prising to find such 'Eastern thinness' already established in late ME.⁴⁴ In fact, examination of Bokenham's rhymes on æ² confirms the existence of a Suffolk ME /e:/.⁴⁵

It is, therefore, also unsurprising that Gower should show a general tendency to /e:/, which could have stemmed either from the Kentish layer in his language, or from the Suffolk stratum, or - with mutual reinforcement - from both. A later London reinforcement cannot be ruled out, but it is not strictly necessary to postulate its existence.

A feature which certainly does not show the influence of contemporary London English is Gower's use of the present participle inflexion in -ende. The map in the Appendix for this item shows the distribution of such forms in later ME. The -ende form was a minor variant in Kent, where the main form was -inde, -ynde, and in the mid-fourteenth-century London dialect (Type II), where the main form was -ande. Chaucer, who must have grown up using some form in -nde (-ande or -ende), adopted the more progressive -ynge.⁴⁶ Gower's persistent use of -ende can be explained most easily by reference to the Suffolk element in his language, for it was here that

his original (Kentish) variant in -ende received reinforcement so that it became his own form. This is confirmed by the presence of an -ende variable in South Suffolk (see Map in Appendix of Maps. It is also widespread in Norfolk and in mid- and North Essex.).

It appears, therefore, that contemporary London English had a minimal impact on Gower. At most, as in the case of OE ȳ being reflected as i in rhyme, it may have reinforced a tendency already in progress in his language; at the least, as with -ende, it had no effect at all. In certain respects, Gower's language resembled that of older, mid-fourteenth-century London. Both had strong Southern bases - Essex in the case of early London, Kent in the case of Gower - and this means that some parallels between the two dialects can be drawn. However, in the majority of features, Gower's language is distinct. Further, any general impression (from, for instance, rhyming practice) that Gower's language resembles that of contemporary London is due to a parallel (and coincidental) development in both. In the late fourteenth century, the language of London was in the process of moving from a Southern to a Midland basis - a direction which Gower, in his mixture of Kentish (Southern) and Suffolk (Midlands) shares.

This pattern of reinforcement and mixture which can be discerned in Gower's language makes it impossible to relate his idiolect to any single underlying system except at the most abstract level. It seems probable that the Kentish element in his language should be given a slight priority; this is suggested by the retention of mid-line spellings of OE y in e, for instance, or by the fact that the Kentish stratum seems to be responsible for such basic grammatical features as the contracted 3rd sg. pres. verbs. But the general conclusion about Gower's linguistic behaviour, based upon my study in 2.II above of the Fairfax, Stafford and Trentham MSS, and upon my consideration in 2.III above of a few problematical issues, must be that Gower's language is founded on the merger of two dialectal systems.

What copyists of the Confessio Amantis made of this mixture is the central concern of the remainder of this thesis.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1. Fisher (1965), p.37.
2. Much of this chapter is based upon findings published in Samuels and Smith (1981), with additions, expansions and corrections.
3. Quoted in Fisher (1965), pp.37-8.
4. Ibid., pp.39-40. Blake (1973) notes Caxton's statement that the Confessio Amantis was "maad and compyled by Johan Gower squyer, borne in Walys, in the tyme of Kyng Richard the Second". Blake writes: "No other source mentions that Gower was a squire or that he was born in Wales. We cannot say where Caxton got this information which has generally been ignored by modern scholars who prefer the view that Gower came from a Yorkshire or Kentish family". (pp. 153-4). This question, however, is discussed by Macaulay (1902), who dismisses Caxton's reference. See also Blake (1979).
5. Fisher (1965), p.46.
6. Ibid., pp. 47-54. I should like to take this opportunity of correcting our statement (Samuels and Smith (1981), p.302) that Gower's family held land at Otford. The evidence for this had been challenged, convincingly, by Macaulay (1902), p.xv. However, a connection with Otford is attested in the Dictionary of National Biography entry for Gower, with reference to a deed executed there (text trans. in Fisher (1965), p.334). Otford was the home of John de Cobham, a close business associate of Gower's, whose family was linked with Gower's throughout the fourteenth century, owning property at Aldington as well as at Otford. See Fisher (1965), pp. 51 ff., for details. See also note 21 below.
7. Quoted by Fisher (1965), p.55.
8. Ibid., p.59.
9. Troilus and Criseyde, V. 1856-7, ed. in Robinson (1957).
10. Fisher (1965), p.68.

11. Ibid., p.66. "Southwell in Com. Notth." seems to be a clerical error in Gower's will; see Fisher (1965), p.67.
12. The following account is based on that in Macaulay (1900).
13. Pearsall (1969), p.22.
14. This suggestion has been privately communicated to me by M.B.Parkes; see also Macaulay (1900), p.550. Macaulay's accounts of the spelling-systems of these extra scribes are accurate (see his pp.548, 552-3).
15. For details, see Macaulay (1900), passim.
16. E.g., Confessio Amantis I.2343-58.
17. See 1.II above, passim.
18. See Samuels (1963), pp.410-1, and Samuels (1983.1), pp.18-20, for the reasons for my choice of these texts for analysis. I have drawn my data from the Ellesmere and Hengwrt texts of the Pardoner's Prologue and Tale, Passus V of the Trinity Piers Plowman, and from the complete texts of the London documents.
19. See Maps for all these items in the Appendix.
20. The form syh(e) 'SAW' presents special problems. It is a form known in London, because Chaucer rhymes on sy once, though usually on say. See Canon's Yeoman's Tale, 1381. The rhyme is with mercy. The sigh-forms in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Fairfax 16 of The House of Fame, lines 1162 and 1429, both rhyme with high 'HIGH'; syen in the same MS of The Book of the Duchess, line 841, rhymes with yen 'EYES'. These latter three occurrences are all self-rhymes, and prove nothing about Chaucer's own usage.

The form syh(e), however, never seems to have been a regular London form in the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries. The only London writer to use it commonly is Hoccleve. In his case, it could either be evidence that his birthplace was Hockcliffe, Beds. (in which case it would be his native form); or, since Hoccleve frequently appears to imitate 'Type III' spelling, it would not be surprising if, for this feature, he had imitated Gower. syh(e) 'SAW' is not the West Suffolk form, but it is a minor variant in S.Essex and West Kent. Most of Gower's connections are with South Kent; but see note 5 above and note 21 below.

21. Because of the problems they present, I discuss certain minority variants in the Fairfax and Stafford MSS here. In Fairfax, I note the following: scheo 'SHE', hit 'IT', sich 'SUCH', wich 'WHICH', mechil 'MUCH', bep 'ARE', schat 'SHALT', schol 'SHALL', wordle 'WORLD', pong 'THANKS' (n.). In Stafford, I note: wheche 'WHICH', mony 'MANY', ony 'ANY', schol 'SHALL', Thog 'THOUGH', whyht 'WIGHT', nogh 'NOT', -inde (pres. part.), porgh 'THROUGH'. As the maps in the Appendix show, most of these minor variant forms can be easily accommodated in Kent and/or South-West Suffolk. However, some points deserve further discussion:

(i) A few forms would seem to indicate West rather than South Kent as the 'Gowerian location': wich 'WHICH'; wh- as the reverse spelling for w- in whyht 'WIGHT'; the occasional u-spellings for OE y in hull 'HILL', gultif 'GUILTY'; and the syh(e)-forms discussed in note 20 above. A West Kent location for this element in Gower's language might also explain scheo 'SHE', which appears once in the Fairfax MS; the form heo 'SHE' does appear, as a minor variable, on the Surrey side of the Kent/Surrey border (see Map for 'SHE' in the Appendix). These forms might suggest that Gower's connection with West Kent, indicated by the Otford/Cobham link, was more important early in his life than the life-records have hitherto been taken to indicate (see note 5 above). Hill (1981), p.137, shows a road running from Otford directly to the Wye valley even in Anglo-Saxon times. Of course, there is an alternative explanation: as the Key to the maps shows, the evidence for the Middle English dialects of Kent is very sparse, and it is possible to argue that such forms as these were found in South Kent, but have not survived in the written evidence. It may be worth recording that Wallenberg (1934) quotes a number of place-names with OE y in u in the area of Aldington: e.g. Kalehulla (mod. Calehill) near Charing in the Pipe Roll for 1175-6, Hexhull (mod. Hinxhill) near Great Chart in the Feet of Fines for Kent of 1247, Borewardeshull (mod. Boars Isle) near Tenterden in the Assize Roll for Kent of 1292. A frequent place-name element in the area is hurst (OE hyrst), e.g. modern Hurst Wood near Charing and Hallinghurst near Smarden.

(ii) Perhaps problematical in the Stafford MS are mony 'MANY' and nogh 'NOT'. However, the maps show minor pockets of both forms in East Anglia, including the South Cambridgeshire/Suffolk border not very far from Kentwell.

22. Samuels and Smith (1981), p.304.

23. See, for instance, Jordan/Crook (1974), pp.66-72.
24. Cited in Dobson (1968), p.36.
25. Ek (1972), p.36.
26. See Macaulay (1900), pp.ci, cv, for copious examples.
27. Ibid.; and see Fahrenberg (1892).
28. Wild (1915), pp.49-50, 74-5, 107-109, 129-130.
29. Ibid., p.57.
30. Macaulay, quite correctly, acknowledged the merit of Fahrenberg's paper as "the only careful study lately attempted of Gower's language". (Macaulay (1900), p. ci n.)
31. Macaulay (1900), p.ci.
32. The reflex of OE y in e seems to have been a characteristic of Type II. See Smithers (1957), pp.47-8, for an account of the rhymes of Kyng Alisaunder. Smithers states that the rhyming evidence "unmistakably points to London as the area of origin" of this poem (p.43).
33. See 1.II above, passim.
34. It may seem logical at this stage to examine those texts whose origins definitely lie in Kent in order to see whether their rhyming practice contrasts with the usage of East Anglian texts such as Bokenham's Legendys of Hooly Wummen (Serjeantson ed. (1936)). Unhappily, the evidence of rhymes in contemporary Middle Kentish texts is, for 'OE y-words', rather disappointing. Bishop Sheppey has rhymes on OE y, but they are mostly self-rhymes. Most of William of Shoreham's rhymes are either self-rhymes or in -nd- contexts, which present special problems. See Jordan/Crook (1974), p.67. As far as East Anglian rhyming texts go, it may be worth noting that both i/y and e as reflexes of OE y are proven in Bokenham's rhymes (see Serjeantson (1936), pp.xlviii-xlix).
35. See Jordan/Crook (1974), pp.75-81. The Essex a-reflex of OE æ¹ and æ² is not in question here (see Jordan/Crook (1974), pp.81-3).

36. I omit the evidence of The Romaunt of the Rose, a translation of uncertain authorship. The references here are taken from Tatlock and Kennedy (1927).

37. Wild (1915), p.70.

38. Macaulay (1900), p.civ. Professor Samuels suggests to me that a number of these would have been valid Kentish rhymes, but on e, e.g. dredde 'DREAD':hedde 'HAD', etc. (cf. Ayenbite of Inwyte ed. Morris/Gradon (1965), hedde 'HAD' etc.). See Campbell (1959), pp.122-123. This means that Gower would have been accustomed to such forms as potential pairings for rhymes from his Kentish layer, though in a different form. This could have been a conditioning factor in his choice of such rhymes.

39. Dobson (1968), p.613. However, see Stanley (1972), p.vi, for an opposing view. Given contemporary sensitivity to spoken dialect, witnessed by Chaucer's use of Northernisms for comic effect in The Reeve's Tale, Dobson's arguments have special force.

40. See the evidence of Gil, cited in Dobson (1968), p.149.

41. Legendys, lines 4063-4.

42. See Serjeantson (1936), p.xxxviii.

43. Cited in Dobson (1968), p.640.

44. See Dobson (1968), pp.613-4, and references there cited.

45. Refs. in Serjeantson (1936), p.xxxviii.

46. For the detail of the London English of Chaucer's childhood, see Samuels (1972.1)p.167. This table shows, incidentally, that some of the features in Gower's language, indicated as contrasting with 'Type III' usage on pp.55-6 above, also appear in 'Type II' language, e.g. perwhiles (pat), -end(e) (although this is only a minor variant in Type II), dede 'DID'. However, see p.79.

CHAPTER THREE: THE LANGUAGE OF THE GOWER TRADITION

The following is a list of all known MSS containing part or the whole of Gower's Confessio Amantis.¹ Where possible, I classify these MSS into the appropriate 'recension' and sub-division used by Macaulay (1900).²

First recension: (a) Revised.

1. Cambridge, St. John's College, MS B.12(34).
2. -----, University Library, MS Mm 2.21.
3. London, British Library, MS Egerton 913.
4. Manchester, Chetham's Library, MS A.6.11 (6696).
5. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 902.
6. -----, New College, MS 326.
7. Princeton, University Library, MS Garrett 136.

First recension: (b) Intermediate.

8. Cambridge, St. Catharine's College, MS 7.
9. Glasgow, University Library, MS Hunter S.1.7.*
10. London, British Library, MS Additional 22139.
11. -----, -----, MS Harley 3490.
12. -----, -----, MS Stowe 950.
13. -----, Society of Antiquaries, MS 134.
14. New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M.125 (olim Quaritch-Hastings).*
15. New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M.126.
16. Olim Mount Stuart, Isle of Bute, Marquess of Bute's MS I.17 (cf. Times Literary Supplement of 24.vi.83, the record of Sotheby's sale of 13.vi.83; this MS has been sold by the Marquess to Messrs. Kraus, who in turn sold it to an "unknown French collector".)

First recension: (c) Unrevised.

17. Cambridge, Pembroke College, MS 307.
18. -----, University Library, MS Dd 8.19.
19. Chicago, Newberry Library, Case MS + 33.5 (Louis H.Silver MS 3)(olim Earl of Carlisle's MS, Castle Howard).
20. London, British Library, MS Egerton 1991.
21. -----, -----, MS Royal 18.c.xxii.
22. -----, College of Arms, MS Arundel 45.
23. New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M.690 (olim Maggs cat. 456(1924), item 184).

* by the same scribe. They are treated together below under MS 9.

24. New York, Columbia University Library, MS Plimpton 265.
25. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Arch.Selden B.11.
26. -----, -----, MS Bodley 693.*
27. -----, -----, MS Ashmole 35.
28. -----, -----, MS Laud misc. 609.*
29. -----, Corpus Christi College, MS 67.
30. -----, Christ Church, MS 148.
31. Philadelphia, Rosenbach Foundation, MS 1083/29 (368) (olim Aberdeen).

Second recension: (a) First group.

32. Cambridge, Sidney Sussex College, MS Δ 4.1 (63).
33. San Marino, Huntington Library, MS EL 26 A.17 (olim Stafford).

Second recension: (b) Second group.

34. Cambridge, Trinity College, MS R.3.2 (581).
35. London, British Library, MS Additional 12043.
36. Nottingham, University Library, Middleton Collection, MS Mi LM 8 (olim Wollaton Hall).
37. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 294.
38. Princeton, University Library, Robert H. Taylor MS (olim MS Phillipps 8192).

Third recension.

39. Geneva, Bibliotheca Bodmeriana, MS Bodmer 178 (olim Keswick-Gurney).
40. London, British Library, MS Harley 3869.
41. -----, -----, MS Harley 7184.
42. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Fairfax 3.
43. -----, -----, MS Hatton 51.
44. -----, -----, MS Lyell 51 (olim Clumber).
45. Oxford, Magdalen College, MS 213.
46. -----, New College, MS 266.
47. -----, Wadham College, MS 13.
48. New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library, Osborn Collection MS fa.1 (olim Witten cat.5(1961) item 24)(see also item 59. below).
49. Washington, Folger Shakespeare Library, MS Sm.1 (olim MS Phillipps 8942).

* by the same scribe. They are treated together below under MS 26.

Excerpts and fragments.

50. Cambridge, Gonville and Caius College, MS 176/97.
51. -----, University Library, MS Ee 2.15.
52. -----, -----, MS Ff 1.6 (the 'Findern' MS.).
53. London, British Library, MS Additional 38381 (transcript of 60. below).
54. London, British Library, MS Harley 7333.
55. -----, University College Library, MS Frag. Angl. 1 (olim MS Phillipps 22914).
56. Oxford, Balliol College, MS 354.
57. -----, Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson D.82.
58. -----, Trinity College, MS 29.
59. R.C.Pearson cat. 13 (1953) item 219 (frag.)(part of 48. above).
60. Tokyo, Takamiya Collection, MS 32 (olim Penrose MS 10 - Delamere).
61. Duke of Sutherland's fragment (now lost).
62. Shrewsbury School fragment.
63. Cambridge, Trinity College, uncatalogued fragment.

Early editions.

64. Caxton (1483).
65. Berthelette (1532).
66. Berthelette (1554).

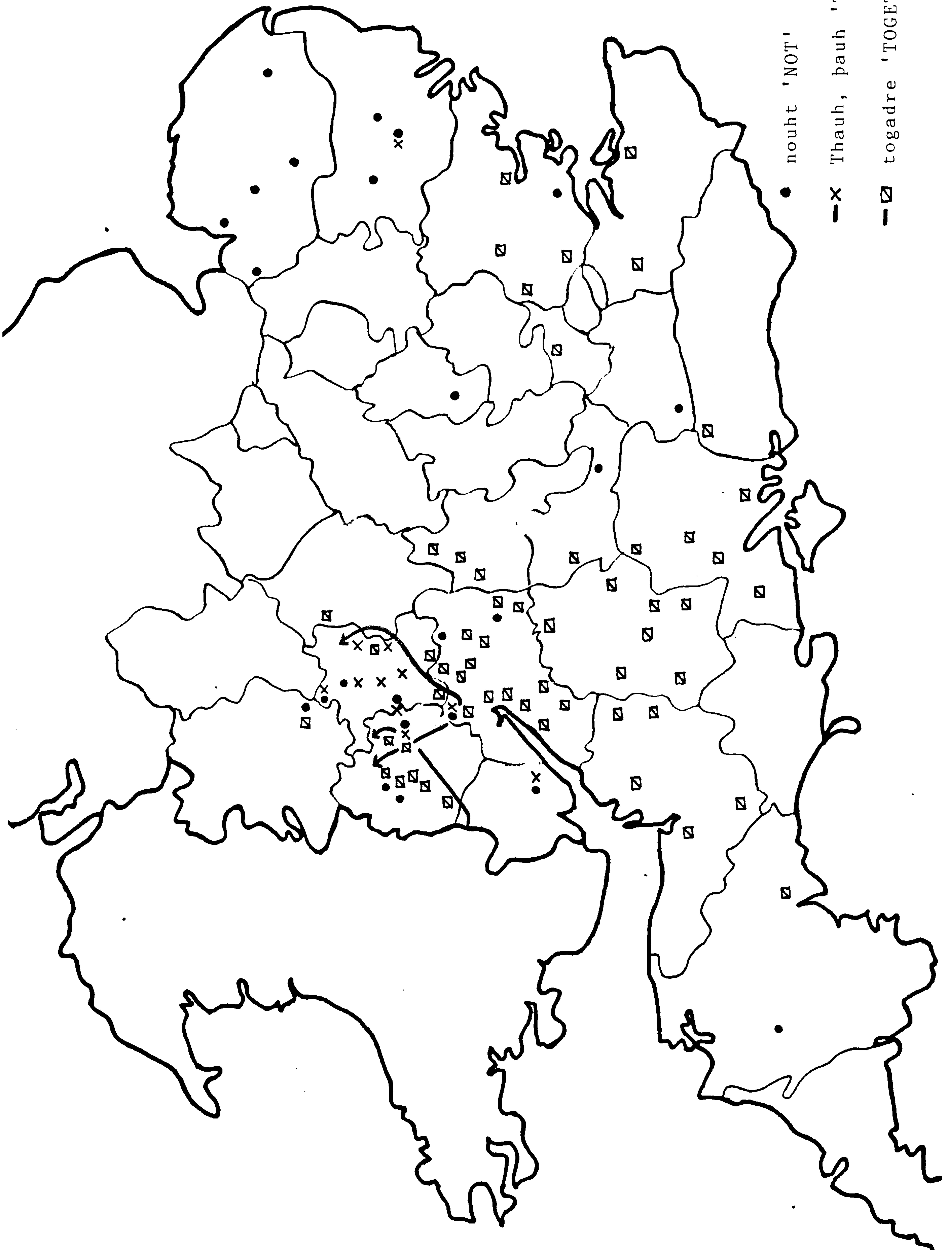
In what follows, I give an account of the language of each hand in the above texts. I except the following MSS, which are treated at greater length elsewhere in this thesis: 42., 33. (discussed in Chapter 2), 5., 20., 24., 29., 30., 34., 37. (discussed in Chapter 4). The data on which this chapter is based are drawn, for the most part, from analyses of tranches of text from Books III and VI of the Confessio Amantis, and on some readings from elsewhere in the poem. These analyses are given as an Appendix in Part II. The Excerpts and Fragments are dealt with separately on pp. 173 - 182 below.

It should be emphasised that this chapter can only be a preliminary outline of the MSS which it treats. As I try to show in Chapter 4 below, exhaustive analysis of every folio of these MSS is needed for them to yield up all their linguistic secrets. Apart from supplying some orientation for future students, the main purpose of this chapter is to place in its contemporary context the kind of scribal behaviour discussed in Chapter 4.

Before turning to the accounts of individual MSS, it is important to make one general point about the methodology adopted here. As indicated in Chapter 1 above, scribes can be influenced in various ways by their exemplars. Forms which appear in the texts they produce can be relicts or the result of constrained behaviour, and this has to be borne in mind when distinguishing the layers of language in a given MS. Thus, in copies of Gower's Confessio Amantis, the appearance of forms which are also Gowerian cannot be taken without question as evidence for the dialect of the scribe's own linguistic input. Whether such Gowerian forms are relicts or constrained features can only be determined after the non-Gowerian forms in the MS in question have been considered; and, in this tradition, these forms are rather few. The reasons for this will be discussed in Chapter 5 below.

1. Cambridge, St. John's College MS B.12 (34). According to Macaulay (1900), this MS was written in one hand "of the first quarter of the fifteenth century".³ Fisher (1965) dates it to the "early 15c".⁴ The MS has been incorporated as a localisable text by the Survey of Middle English Dialects, and I take advantage of the Survey's findings to complement my own analyses. The data are drawn, in the main, from two tranches of text: Book III, lines 1-500, and Book VI, lines 1-500. There appear to be some linguistic differences between the two tranches, so separate analyses appear on pp. 347 - 351 below. Notable forms in both tranches include: heo 'SHE', wech (in Book III) 'WHICH', mony 'MANY', his 'IS', pouh/pauh/Thaugh 'THOUGH', togadre 'TOGETHER', nouht 'NOT', when 'WHEN', furst 'FIRST', huld 'HELD', kuynde 'KIND'.

A number of features in the analyses cohere in North Herefordshire, as the accompanying map shows. However, this 'fit' can be established only for a certain number of the forms in the text. There are others which do not appear in Herefordshire texts other than in this MS, viz. Ther while 'WHILE', or..or 'EITHER..OR'. It so happens that these forms coincide with the forms in the archetypal Gowerian language - indeed, their combination is characteristically



Gowerian. It seems logical to see them as stemming from the archetypal Gowerian exemplar.

The differences between the test tranches in items such as 'WHICH' (wech in III, which in VI) are more probably the result of a shift in the exemplar rather than part of some 'settling-down' process by which the scribe became increasingly influenced by the text before him.⁵ For one thing, Book III is some way into the MS, and we might reasonably expect the scribe to have 'settled-down' by then. Further, such an explanation is supported by the textual situation of the MS. Macaulay (1900) points out that "there is a considerable number of instances in which this MS stands alone among first recension copies in agreement with the Fairfax text. In the sixth book, for example, if [St. John's] be set aside, there are at least 23 passages in which [Fairfax] gives an apparently genuine reading unsupported by the first recension; but in 16 of these cases [St. John's] is in agreement with [Fairfax]. It must be noted, however, that this state of things is not equally observable in the earlier part of the poem, and indeed does not become at all marked until the fifth book".⁶

Its textual situation makes the St. John's MS a particularly interesting one; it is discussed further in Chapter 5 below.

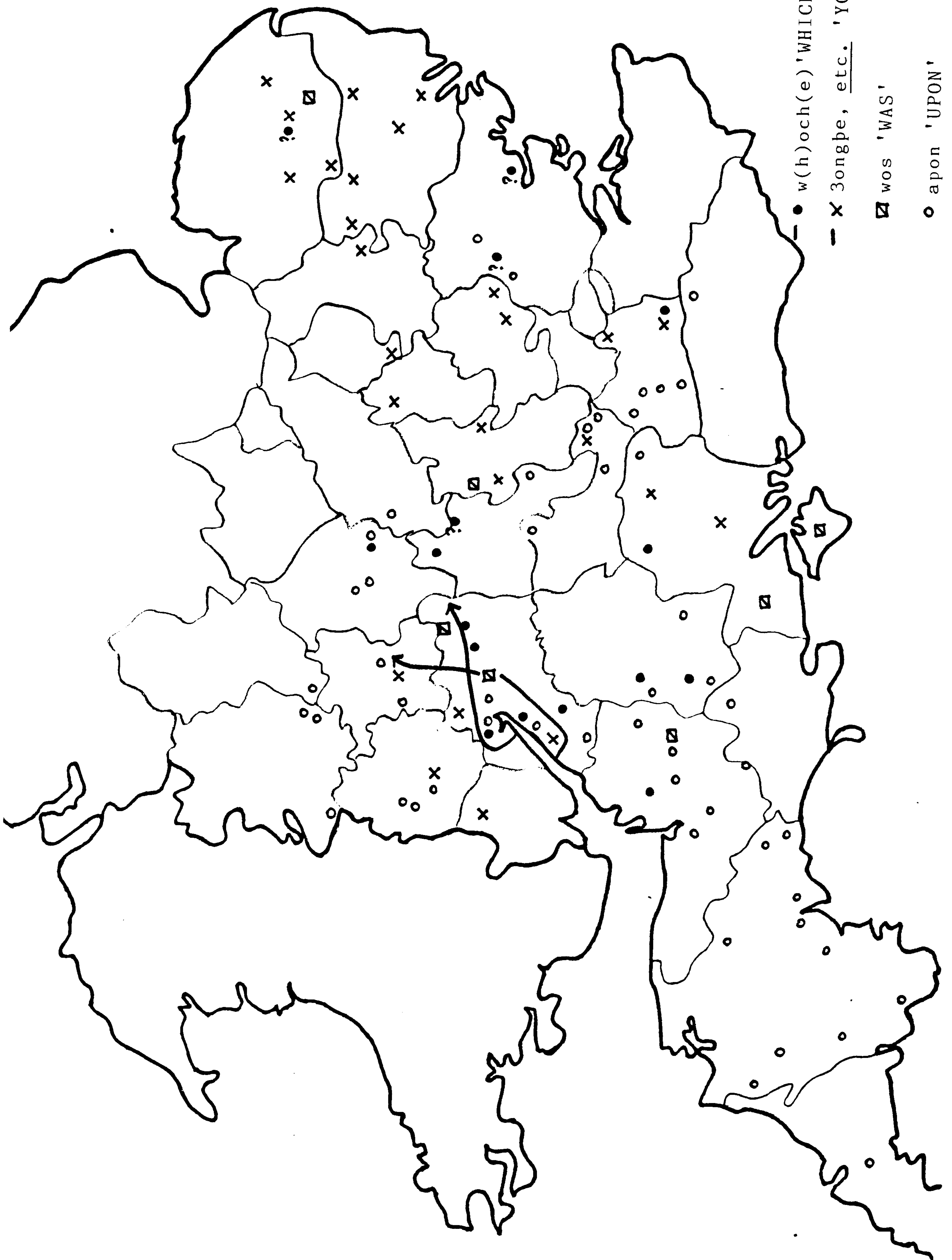
2. Cambridge, University Library, MS Mm 2.21. Textually, this MS is closely related in part to MS Bodley 902 (no. 5). According to Macaulay (1900), several hands appear in this MS, as follows: "(1) ff. 1-32, 41-64, 73-88, 97-136, 145-152, 161-176; (2) ff. 33-40, 89-96, 137-144; (3) ff. 65-72; (4) ff. 153-160; (5) ff. 177-183". A sixth hand adds the occasional marginal note. "In correctness of text and of spelling", says Macaulay, "[Mm 2.21] is much inferior to [Bodley 902]".⁷ More than two-thirds of the MS is written in the first hand.

Macaulay gives no date for the MS. Fisher (1965) considers the MS "fifteenth century"; although this can hardly be quarrelled with, it is, I think, possible to be more precise. The appearance of the script seems to me characteristic of the early fifteenth century, a dating supported by Fisher's classification of the MS as of "Elegant execution and sumptuous illumination, as of MSS ... from Gower's scriptorium and MSS resembling them".⁸

The stint of the first hand in the MS includes Book III, 1-500; the analysis on pp. 352 - 353 below presents forms from that tranche of text. It shows that the first hand of the MS produces a 'layered' text; as the Maps in the Appendix show, forms such as whoche 'WHICH' and oghne 'OWN' do not cohere dia-

lectally in Middle English. On the accompanying map, a number of forms from this hand are plotted, and 'fit' in West Gloucestershire; reference to the Appendix shows that many of the other non-Gowerian forms can be accommodated there, e.g. hit 'IT', wiche 'WHICH', any 'ANY', or 'ERE', thrughe 'THROUGH', seihe 'SAW', bare 'THERE', hire 'HEAR'. Forms such as oghne 'OWN' make up another layer; since oghne is an 'indexically' Gowerian form, we can presume with some confidence that its presence in this MS stems from the Gowerian archetype. To this layer we may, perhaps, assign kesse 'KISS': maistresse 'MISTRESS', Touchend 'TOUCHING' (pres.part.) and walkend 'WALKING' (pres.part.) are probably Gowerian, but the Map for this item in the Appendix shows that -ende endings do appear in West Gloucestershire.

For the remaining scribes in the MS I have been able to make only brief notes, which do not appear in the Appendix of Analyses. The second scribe uses forms which are very like those of the Fairfax MS: hise 'HIS' (pl.), Takþ 'TAKES' (3rd pres.sg.), tofore 'BEFORE', hyhe and hihe 'HIGH', -ende (pres.part.), oghne 'OWN' (adj.), sih 'SAW'. Non-Gowerian forms such as but 'BUT', heyh 'HIGH' and a number of cases



of doubled vowels (oolde 'OLD', ceercle 'CIRCLE', noon 'NONE', mateere 'MATTER') are not especially dialectally distinctive, but horde 'HEARD' (in rhyming position with answerede) displays a rounded vowel usually associated with South-Western dialects. However, there is no real support elsewhere in the text for a Western layer.

Scribe 3 has forms found in the Fairfax MS, but they are widespread in Middle English, and not especially dialectally distinctive: pei 'THEY', bogh 'THOUGH', a3ein 'AGAIN', 3it 'YET'. The remaining elements are hard to localise convincingly: ony 'ANY', wil 'WILL', after 'AFTER', powe 'THOUGH', ware 'WERE' (beside were), 3ete 'YET' (beside 3it). Scribe 4's forms, for the most part, would not be out of place in the Fairfax MS, with contracted 3rd pres.sg. verbs such as 3ifþ, stant, takþ, comp (but makip), hihe 'HIGH' (beside heyhe), myht(e) 'MIGHT' (vb.), lyuende 'LIVING' (pres.part.). However, the forms wopi 'WORTHY', and ony 'ANY' are non-Gowerian. Scribe 5 is probably a Suffolk copyist, with thong 'TONGUE', thowchyng 'TOUCHING', odyr and oder 'OTHER' (beside ooper), schech 'SUCH' (beside such), mechil 'MUCH' (beside mochil), gw(h)an and gwen 'WHEN' (beside whan), is 'HIS', noht 'NOT', brynt 'BURNT', waren 'WERE', rithe 'RIGHT' (beside riht), perhaps mygh 'MIGHT' (3rd

sg.). For the distribution of a number of these forms in Southern Middle English, see the Maps in the Appendix.

3. London, British Library, MS Egerton 913. A fragment only, this MS is in three hands: (1), who wrote fols. 1-26 and 31-6; (2), responsible for fols. 27-30; and (3), who copied fols. 37-47. The MS contains a text of the Confessio Amantis from the beginning of the poem to Book I, line 1701. Macaulay (1900)⁹ gives no date; Fisher (1965) considers the MS "mid-15th century".¹⁰ Analyses for these three hands appear on pp. 354 - 357 below.

The most 'Gowerian' of the three hands is hand 2, with pei 'THEY', ben 'ARE', 3it 'YET', bot 'BUT', -ende (pres.part.), hih/hihe 'HIGH' etc.; hat 'HATH' and Thurwe (beside Gowerian Thurgh) 'THROUGH' must represent another layer. Although Hand 1 retains some Gowerian features, such as -ende (pres.part.) in rhyme, and, possibly, exhibits a modified form of others (e.g. sygh 'SAW'), other features are characteristic of 'Type IV': shulde/schulde 'SHOULD', wil 'WILL', 3et 'YET', not 'NOT', But 'BUT'. oulde 'OLD' is widely recorded in later ME; but bien 'ARE' is either SWM or SE. As shown in chapter 2 above, Gower has ie in words like hiere 'HEAR', but not in 'ARE', which appears in the Fairfax MS as ben. It could, therefore, survive

from a non-Gowerian layer of language.

The third hand in the MS, with shulde and sholde 'SHOULD', pei and pey 'THEY', noght and not 'NOT', But 'BUT' and Togidre 'TOGETHER' would appear to represent a half-way stage between Gowerian forms and forms commonly in use in mid-fifteenth-century Middle English. It is possible that the co-occurrence of werld 'WORLD', silf 'SELF' and Tey 'THEY' points to an East Anglian input. For the distribution of these forms, see the maps in the Appendix.

4. Manchester, Chetham's Library, MS A.6.11 (6696).

Classified by Fisher (1965)¹¹ as a "MS clearly later [than those of Gower's alleged scriptorium] or in another style", this MS was noticed by Macaulay (1900)¹² as follows: "Rather irregularly written .. late fifteenth century .. there are many omissions, apparently because the copyist got tired of his work .. There are many [textual] corruptions, and the spelling is late and bad". Macaulay goes on to note that "at the end in a scroll is written 'Notehurste', which indicates probably that the book was copied for one of the Chethams of Nuthurst [S.Lancs.], perhaps Thomas Chetham, who died 1504. The word 'Notehurst' also occurs at the end of the Glasgow MS of the 'Destruction of Troy', which has in another place the names of John and Thomas Chetham

of 'Notehurst' as the owners of it". Some of this discussion can now be modified in the light of Harris (1983).¹³ Harris points out that the Chetham Gower dates from the "first half of the sixteenth century", and that the text contained therein, far from being the product of careless omission, was the result of conscious abridgement. This abridgement was not the work of the Chetham scribe, since a similar form of the poem appears in a much earlier MS, Princeton, University Library, MS Garrett 136. Harris also refers to Luttrell (1958), which, although not primarily concerned with matters linguistic, is interesting as an essay in graphology. Luttrell showed that the Chetham MS was copied by the Thomas Chetham (ca. 1490-1546) who also copied Glasgow, University Library, Hunter MS V.2.8 - the copy of the alliterative Gest Hystoriale of the Destruction of Troy already noted by Macaulay (1900).¹⁴

Both the test passages in the Chetham Gower have suffered from abridgement; I have, therefore, 'combed' further in Books III and VI in order to record other forms in the analysis on pp. 358 - 359 below. I have combined the readings for the two passages since there appear to be few significant linguistic differences between them. In what follows here, I compare the spelling practices of Thomas Chetham in his copy of Gower and in the Hunterian Gest; for the latter, I have used lines 8421-8940 as a test passage.

The Glasgow Gest Hystoriale of the Destruction of Troy is localised to the S.E.Lancs./Cheshire border, and has been used as a 'fit' text by the Survey of Middle English Dialects.¹⁵ In his copying of the Gower and of the Glasgow Gest, Chetham exhibits some interesting linguistic variations. The following table compares a selection of forms from the two texts with those for the same item in the Fairfax Gower.

<u>Fairfax MS</u>	<u>Gest Hyst.</u>	<u>Chetham Gower</u>
sche pei such, suche many eny scholde, <u>etc.</u> pogh self	ho (((sho, she))) yai (((thai))) suche, soche mony any shuld yof self	she yei (((yai))) suche mony (((many))) any shuld (((sholde))) thoughe, thowe self, selfe (((sef)))
er 3it togedre strengþe	er (((or))) yet [togedur] strenght	er 3it (((yet))) togedre strengthe, streinght
OE <u>hw-</u> = wh-	wh- (<u>but cf.</u> qwit 'WHITE')	wh- (<u>but cf.</u> hos 'WHOSE', ho 'WHO')
noght world worcheþ(3 pres.sg.)	not (((noght))) world [No exx., but <u>this person of</u> <u>vb. usually in</u> -is, -ys, -es, -us] (<u>see below</u>)	not (((noght))) werlde worches
-ende (<u>pres.part.</u>) purgh	thorow	-end, -ende yurgh, thurgh, (((thurght, yro)))
ferst, <u>etc.</u> hundred dede stede syh 'SAW', <u>etc.</u>	first hundreth dyd stid segh	firste hundreth dede stede sy, sey, sy, see

moche oghne bot vpon -ed	miche, myche aune but vpon -et, -it	moche owne but apon -ed
--------------------------------------	---	-------------------------------------

A number of forms in the Chetham Gower differ from the equivalent forms in the Glasgow Gest. Of these, the following would appear to be accommodations, to a greater or lesser extent, to the language of the Fairfax MS: she (Fairfax sche, Gest ho), yei (Fairfax pei, Gest yai), suche (Fairfax such(e), Gest suche/soche), thoughe (Fairfax pogh, Gest yof), 3it (Fairfax 3it, Gest yet), dede (Fairfax dede, Gest dyd), stede (Fairfax stede, Gest stid), moche (Fairfax moche, Gest miche/myche), -ed (Fairfax -ed, Gest -et, -it). In the following, Chetham uses in his Gower the same form he uses in the Gest: mony, any, shuld, firste (Gest first), hundreth, but. In the following, he chooses forms in his Gower which do not appear either in the Fairfax MS or in the Gest: werlde, thorow, seye 'SAW', owne, apon.

It seems probable that Chetham's behaviour here is of the kind which is called 'constrained'.¹⁶ In such an interpretation, mony etc. would represent Chetham's spontaneous, 'active' repertoire, while his variation between, for example, she in his MS of Gower and ho in the Glasgow Gest would show the activation of one of two possible variables in his repertoire when one of them

appears in his exemplar. This explanation of his behaviour is supported by his forms for the present participle inflexion, which in the Fairfax MS is -ende. In his text of Gower, Chetham uses -end(e); in his text of the Gest, the editors tell us, "The present participles end in and, aund, ound, ing, yng, and very rarely in end".¹⁷ It appears, therefore, from the evidence for the Gest, that -end was a very minor variable in Chetham's spontaneous repertoire, but that it became fully activated when he found it in his MS of Gower. If this hypothesis of constrained behaviour is correct, it seems likely that the forms found only in Chetham's Gower, and not in either the Fairfax MS or the Gest (werlde etc.) arose by a similar process. Perhaps these forms appeared in Chetham's exemplar for his Gower MS.

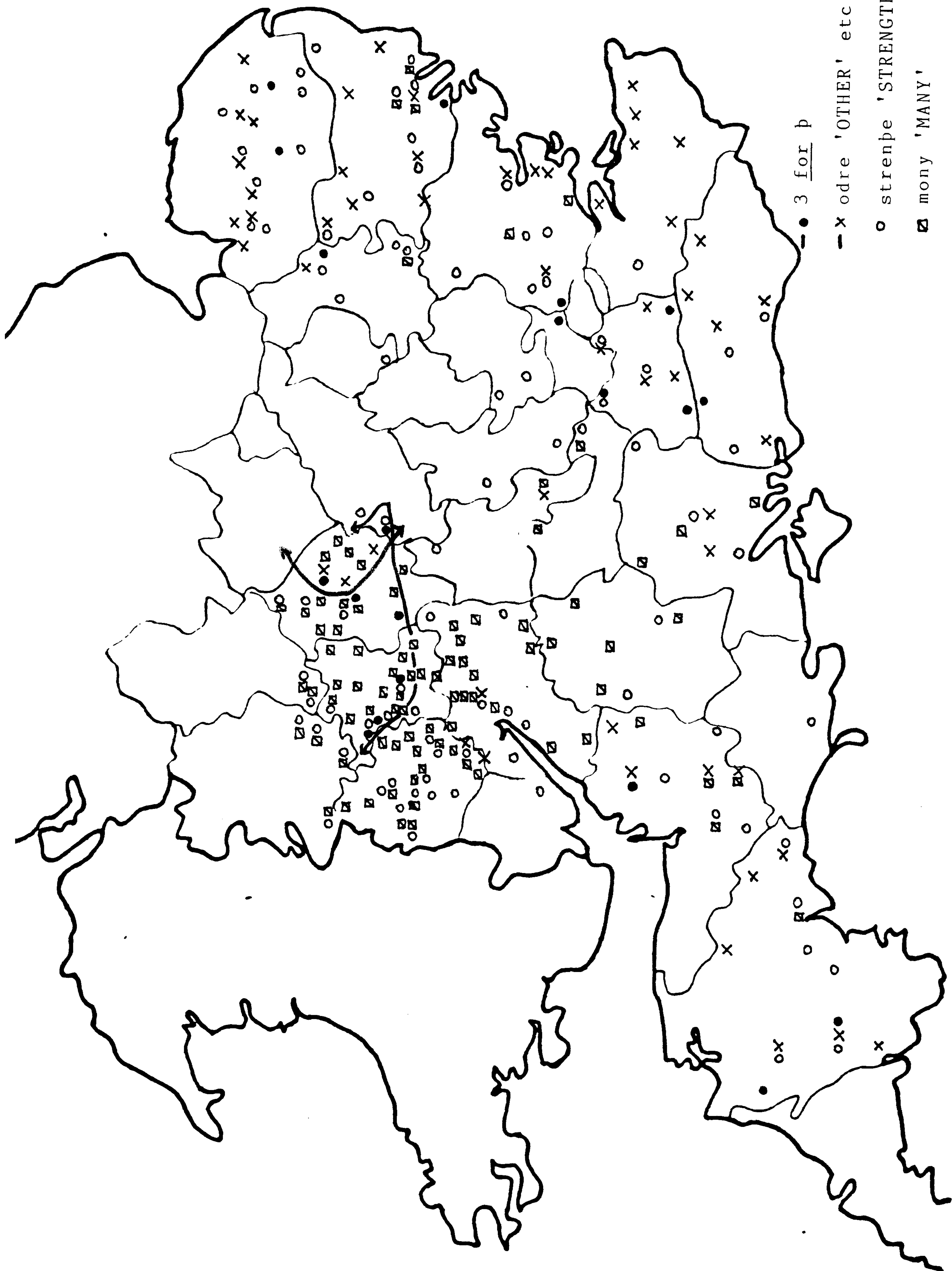
6. Oxford, New College, MS 326. Macaulay (1900)¹⁸ notes: "From the coats of arms which it contains the book would seem to have been written for Thomas Mompesson of Bathampton, sheriff of Wilts. in 1478". The MS was written by two scribes: (1) fols. 1-62, and (2) fols. 63-end. It is interesting that the first scribe seems to have used a 'second recension' exemplar, "while the copyist of the remainder followed one of the revised first recension". The analyses for these two hands appear on pp. 360 - 363 below. Of the spelling of the MS, Macaulay (1900) simply says "poor". Fisher

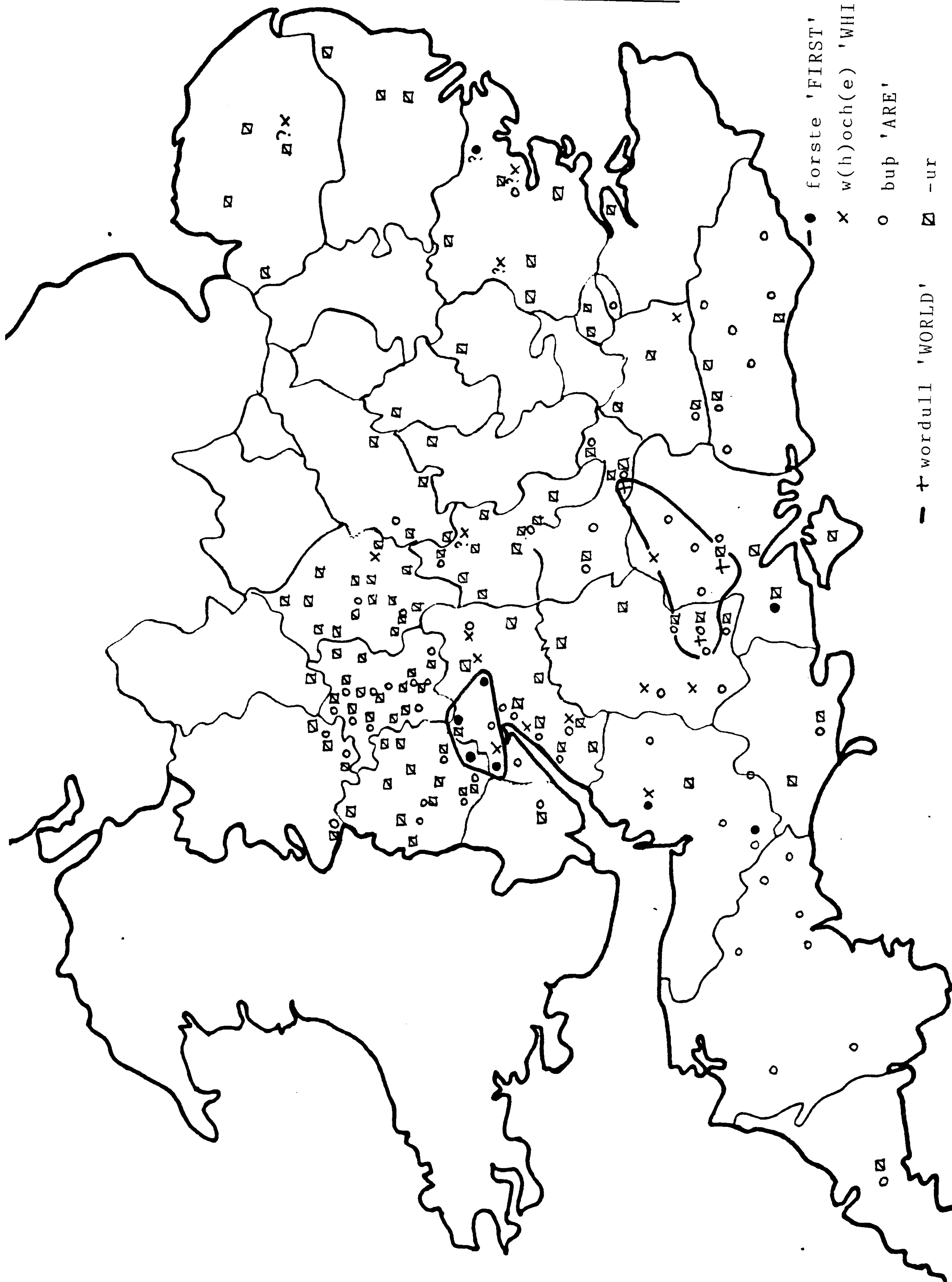
(1965) has nothing to add to this description.¹⁹

In the first hand of the New College MS appear two forms which are dialectally diagnostic: you3e 'YOUTH' with 3 for p, and odre 'OTHER', with d for p. The accompanying map shows how these forms cohere in the South-West Midlands, possibly Warwickshire, when supported by strenpe 'STRENGTH' and mony 'MANY'. Other non-Gowerian forms might also be accommodated there, such as hit 'IT', any 'ANY', or 'ERE', when 'WHEN', as the Maps in the Appendix show. There is at first sight little need to presume the existence of another layer of language here; the only form in the analysis which is not found in the Worcs./Warks. region is beried 'BURIED'. However, a number of forms which appear in the Fairfax MS also appear in combination in this hand, e.g. tuo 'TWO', yhe 'EYE', tofore 'BEFORE', -end (pres.part.), si3e/sigh/sich 'SAW' (cf. Fairfax sihe etc.). As the maps show, all these forms can be accommodated in the Warks./Worcs. area, if the 'principle of minimising layers' is strictly adhered to; but the fact that they do appear together in a MS of Gower at least suggests (although it can hardly be said to prove) that they represent an earlier, Gowerian layer in the transmission of the text. Their appearance could be the result of 'constrained'

behaviour; thus -end is commonly accepted by this scribe, even though it is only a minor variable in the South-West Midlands at this date.²⁰

The language of the second scribe of this MS, as the accompanying map indicates, is hard to localise with precision. Possible localisations include the Gloucestershire/Herefordshire border, or South Wiltshire; given the early ownership of the MS at Bathampton (nr. Wylye), the second is perhaps more likely. Although forst(e) 'FIRST' does not appear in recorded Wiltshire texts, wordull 'WORLD' does. If, on the other hand, a Herefordshire localisation is made, then perhaps schat 'SHALT', which occurs as a very rare minority form in Herefordshire, might be accommodated in that layer.²¹ However, schat is also found as a minority variable in the archetypal Gowerian language; and there are definitely Gowerian relicts in this text, such as or..or 'EITHER..OR'. Other non-Gowerian forms in this hand can appear either in Wiltshire or in the Gloucestershire/Herefordshire border, or in closely neighbouring areas, e.g. hure 'HER', hit 'IT', ham 'THEM', -y3th (3rd pres.sg.), strenþe 'STRENGTH', dude 'DID', þrughe 'THROUGH', kerwyth 'CARVES' and wers 'VERSE' (with w for v).



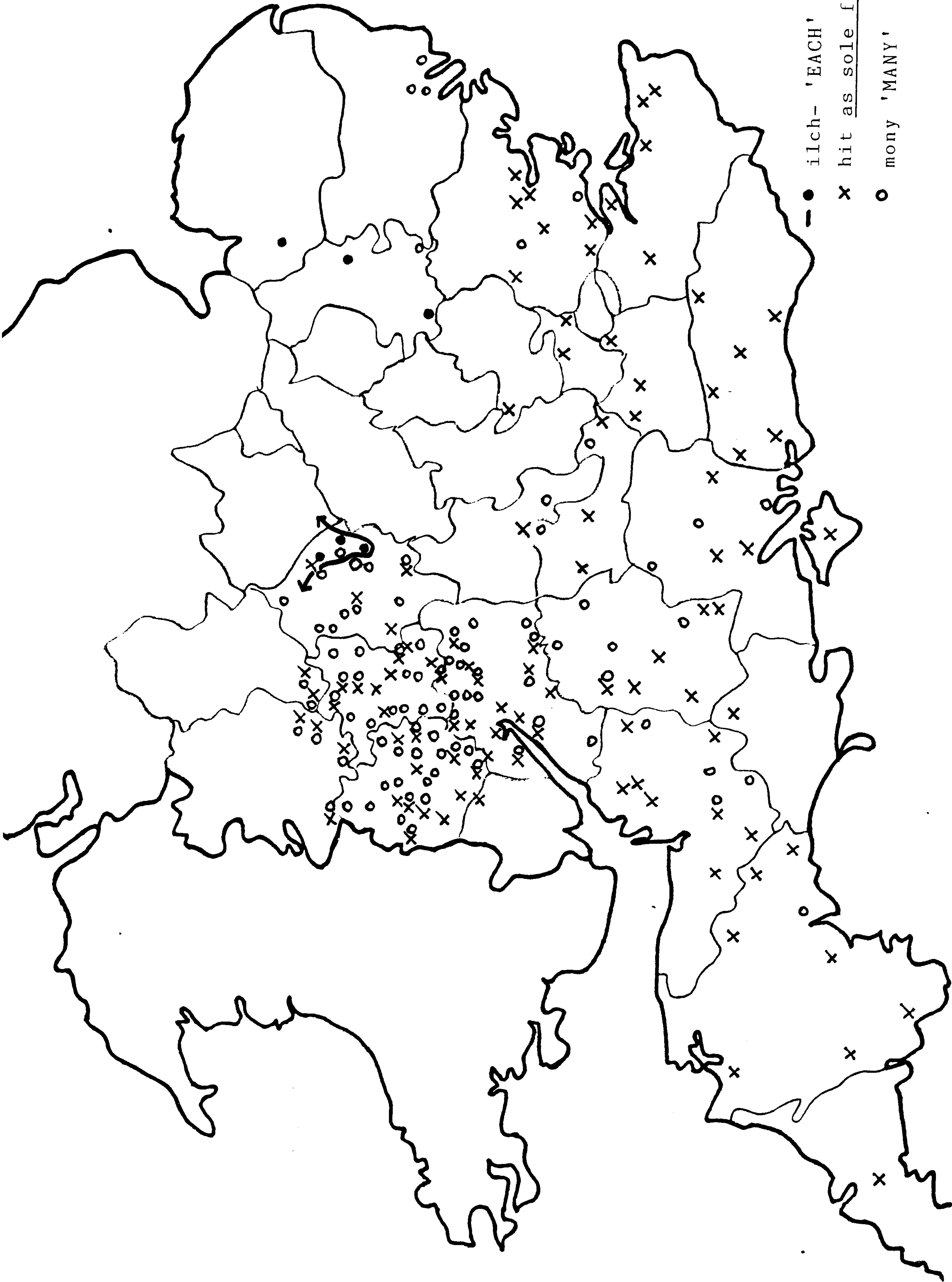


7. Princeton, University Library, MS Garrett 136 (olim Cheltenham, Phillipps MS 2298). Macaulay (1900)

appears to have had little acquaintance with this MS, for his only comment is that the text "agrees with the [Bodley 902/St.John's/Mm 2.21] group, so far as I have examined it".²² In fact, it shares an abbreviated text of the Confessio Amantis with the Chetham Gower. Fisher (1965) dates this MS ca. 1400, but did not examine it personally. This neglect is, perhaps, strange, for, if we accept Fisher's dating, this is the third oldest MS of the Confessio Amantis.²³

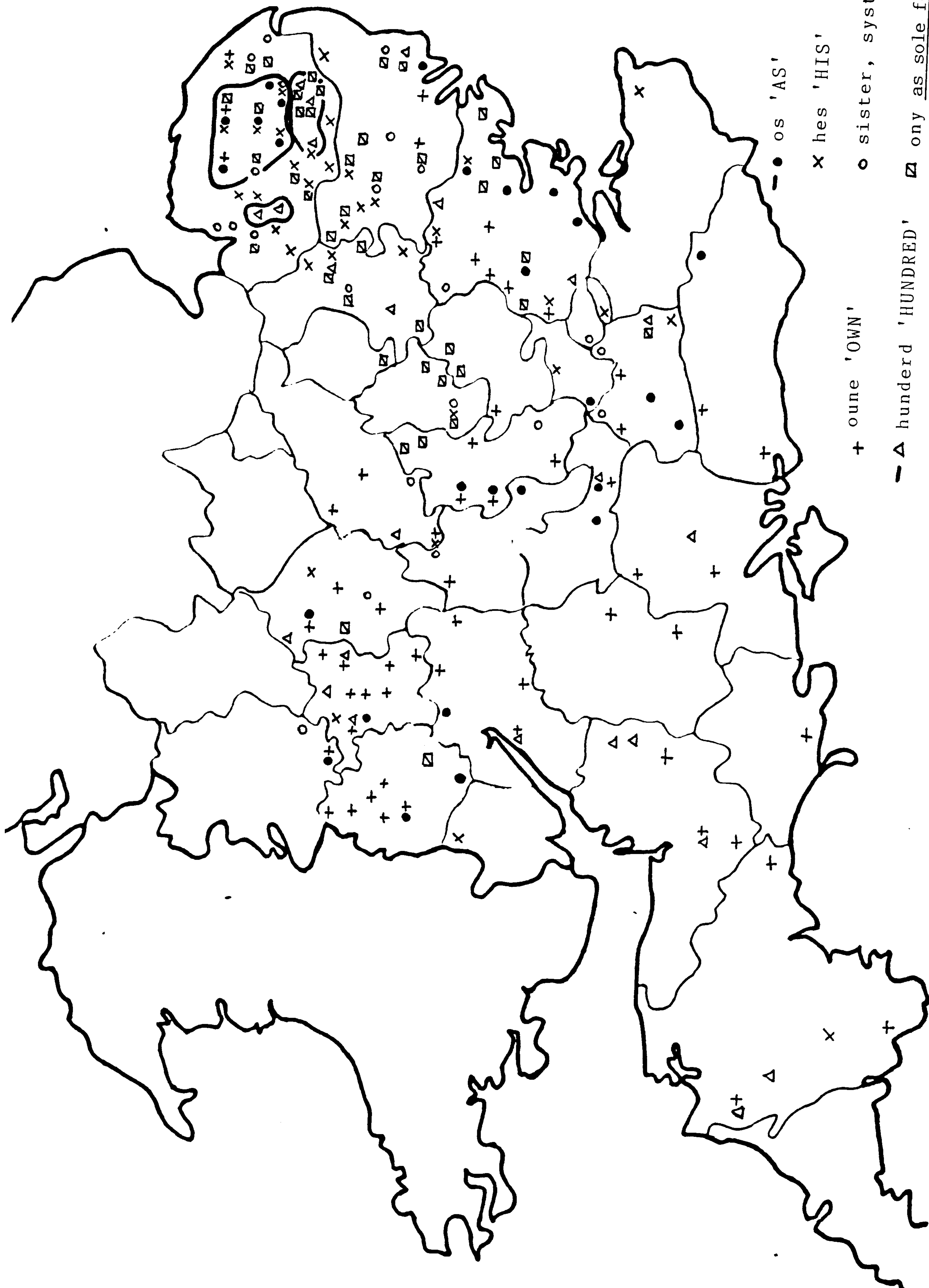
Since there would not appear to be any significant linguistic variation between the tranches from Books III and VI, I have combined their readings in the analysis on pp. 364 - 365 below. That some items are not recorded is caused by the wholesale omission of large portions of the text by the abridger.

As the accompanying map shows, the language of this MS coheres in North Warwickshire, the most notable feature being the diagnostic criterion ilchon 'EACH ONE' supported by mony 'MANY' and hit 'IT' (as the sole form for the item). Most other forms in the text can be accommodated there, including non-Gowerian when 'WHEN', furst 'FIRST', -ur.²⁴ The MS is of interest because it shows that 'dialectal' Gowers existed at a



very early date. It is noticeable that the scribe does not understand Gowerian metre, despite this early date, ignoring the metrically-required contracted forms of the 3rd pres. sg. verb, failing to comprehend Gower's use of -e in adjectives,²⁵ and using the (presumably) disyllabic porow 'THROUGH' rather than Gowerian burgh. Possible relicts from the Gowerian archetype include or..or 'EITHER..OR' and beryed 'BURIED'.

8. Cambridge, St. Catharine's College, MS 7. This MS is described both by Macaulay (1900)²⁶ and by Fisher (1965).²⁷ Fisher dates it mid-fifteenth century; Macaulay considers it somewhat earlier, "before the middle of the fifteenth century". There would seem to be good evidence of early ownership; Macaulay states that the MS was given to the College in 1740 by Wm. Bohun of Beccles (Suffolk), to whose great-grandfather, Baxter Bohun, it was given in 1652 by his "grandmother Lany". As far as text and spelling go, Macaulay is brief: "The text is of a rather irregular type, but often agrees with the [Antiquaries/Glasgow/Stowe] group. It has many mistakes and the spelling is poor". Various leaves are missing in the MS, including the usual test passage in Book VI. The analysis on pp. 366 - 367 below, therefore, is based on the tranche from Book III alone, with some readings from elsewhere.



x hes 'HIS'

+ une 'OWN'

o sister, syste

Δ hundred 'HUNDRED'

□ only as sole form for 'ANY'

Most of the forms in the St. Catharine's MS, both Gowerian and non-Gowerian, can be accommodated in an East Anglian layer, probably from Central Norfolk. A number of relevant forms are plotted on the accompanying map, viz. os 'AS', hes 'HIS', sister 'SISTER', ony (when sole form in text), oune 'OWN', hunderd 'HUNDRED'; other forms in the analysis can be traced in the Maps in the Appendix. There are, however, one or two 'recalcitrant' forms which cannot be accommodated in Norfolk, viz. sheo 'SHE' and horte 'HURT'. Both these forms could indicate some slight 'Western' input; their rarity suggests that they are relict forms. An underlying 'Western' layer could be the explanation for the scribe's use of -y- solely in forms for 'AGAINST'; as the Map for this item in the Appendix shows, such forms appear in Norfolk as co-variables only. It could be that the presence of a -y- form in his exemplar constrained the East Anglian scribe in his choice of variable for this item.

9. Glasgow, University Library, Hunter MS S.i.7 (7);
and 14. New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M.125
(olim Quaritch-Hastings). These MSS were written by
the same scribe²⁸ and are, therefore, treated together
here. The Glasgow MS is described by Macaulay (1900)²⁹

and by Fisher (1965)³⁰. Fisher did not examine the MS personally, and his description of the MS as belonging to an alleged "Advocates Library, Glasgow" is wrong. Both authorities date the MS to the early fifteenth century. Macaulay notes: "A former owner (seventeenth century) says, 'This Book, as I was told by the Gent: who presented it to me, did originally belong to the Abbey of Bury in Suffolk'. If so, the Confessio Amantis was probably read in this copy by Lydgate". Macaulay perceived a close relationship between this MS and the Antiquaries MS (no. 13 below). He continues: "The spelling is pretty good, and in particular it is a contrast to [the Antiquaries MS] in the matter of final -e. This is seldom wrongly inserted, and when it is omitted it is usually in places where the metre is not affected by it". There do not appear to be any significant differences between the tranches from Books III and VI, so I have merged the data from them in the analyses on pp. 368 - 370 below.

Both Macaulay (1900)³¹ and Fisher (1965)³² date the Morgan MS to the early fifteenth century. Macaulay's acquaintance with it seems to have been comparatively slight: "This is a good manuscript, and the spelling is fairly correct. I place it provisionally here, because its readings seem to show a tendency to the [Glasgow and Antiquaries MSS'] group". Since there

would not appear to be any significant differences between the language of the passage from Book III and that of the section from Book VI, I combine the readings for the two tranches in the analysis on pp. 371 - 373 below.

There are few differences between the spelling systems of the Glasgow Gower and Morgan M.125. Both MSS reproduce the spelling of the Gowerian archetype pretty closely, displaying such 'Gowerisms' as the -end(e) endings of the pres.part., oughne 'OWN' (cf. Fairfax oghne), sihe etc. 'SAW', and the syncopated 3rd pres. sg. verbs. However, non-archetypal forms do appear: schuld(e) (beside schold(e)), togidre 'TOGETHER', siluer 'SILVER' (cf. Fairfax scholde, togedre, seluer). It may be significant that, in all these cases, the advancing fifteenth-century form is used; it may be that this scribe is carrying out some 'modernisation', albeit of a very gentle kind, on his exemplar.

As to the other layers of dialect in these MSS, the evidence from the test passages is very slight. Nothing can be made of the sporadic use of segh 'SAW' in both MSS in isolation; as the map in the Appendix shows, it is widespread in Middle English. It is possibly worth recording that both MSS show a shift from

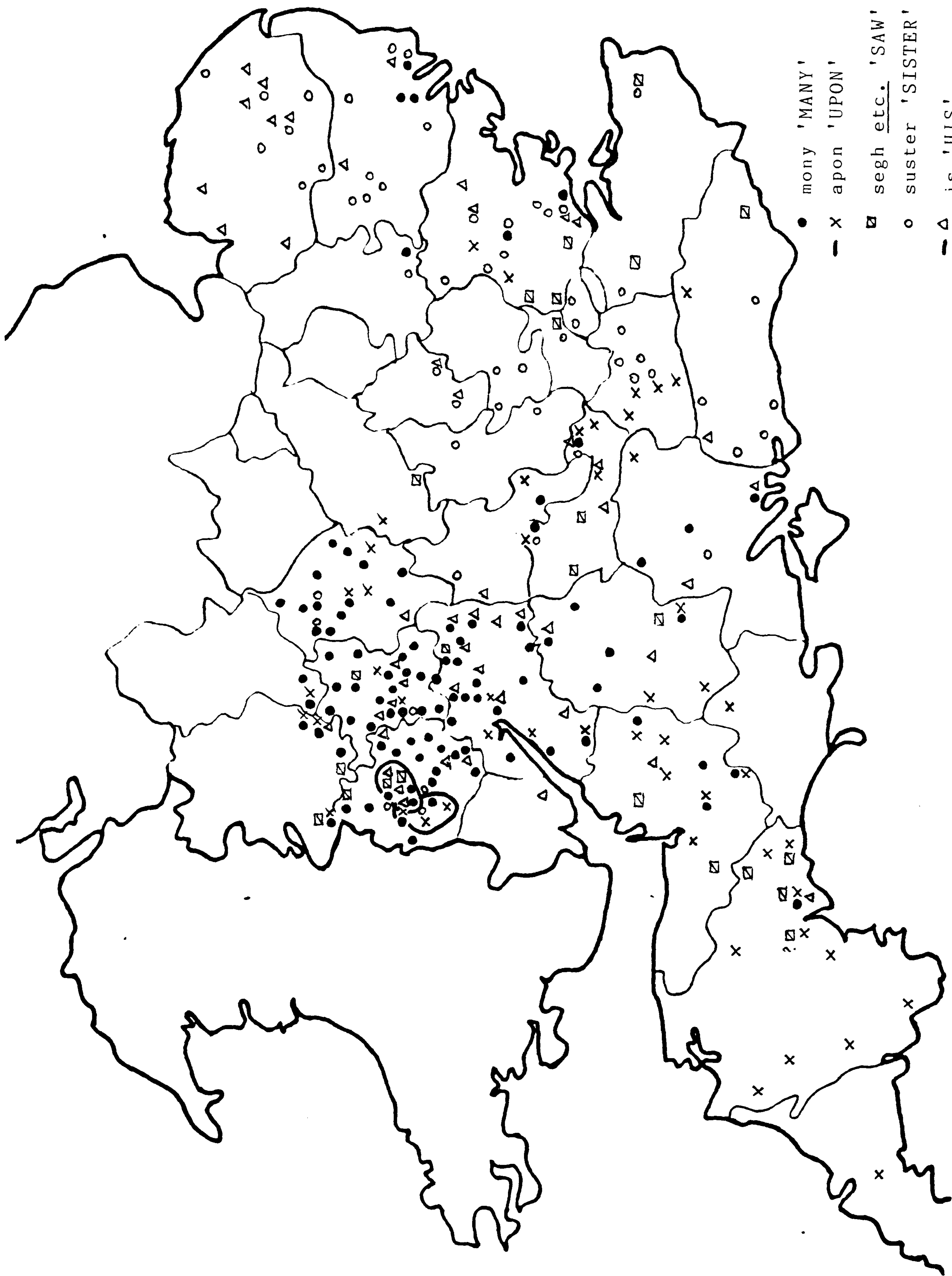
scholde 'SHOULD' in Book III to schuld(e) in Book VI. However, this neat parallel between the MSS is disturbed when we turn to 'NOT'; in Book III, M.125 uses nou3t, with nought as a common but secondary variable and not as a sporadic form, while Glasgow uses nought, with not as a sporadic form. In Book VI, M.125 uses nought, with not and nou3t appearing only sporadically; but Glasgow has practically the exact opposite, with nou3t as the main form and nought as a sporadic form only. It seems likely that such variation is exemplar-conditioned. (For evidence of another, if fragmentary, layer in these MSS, see Chapter 5 below).

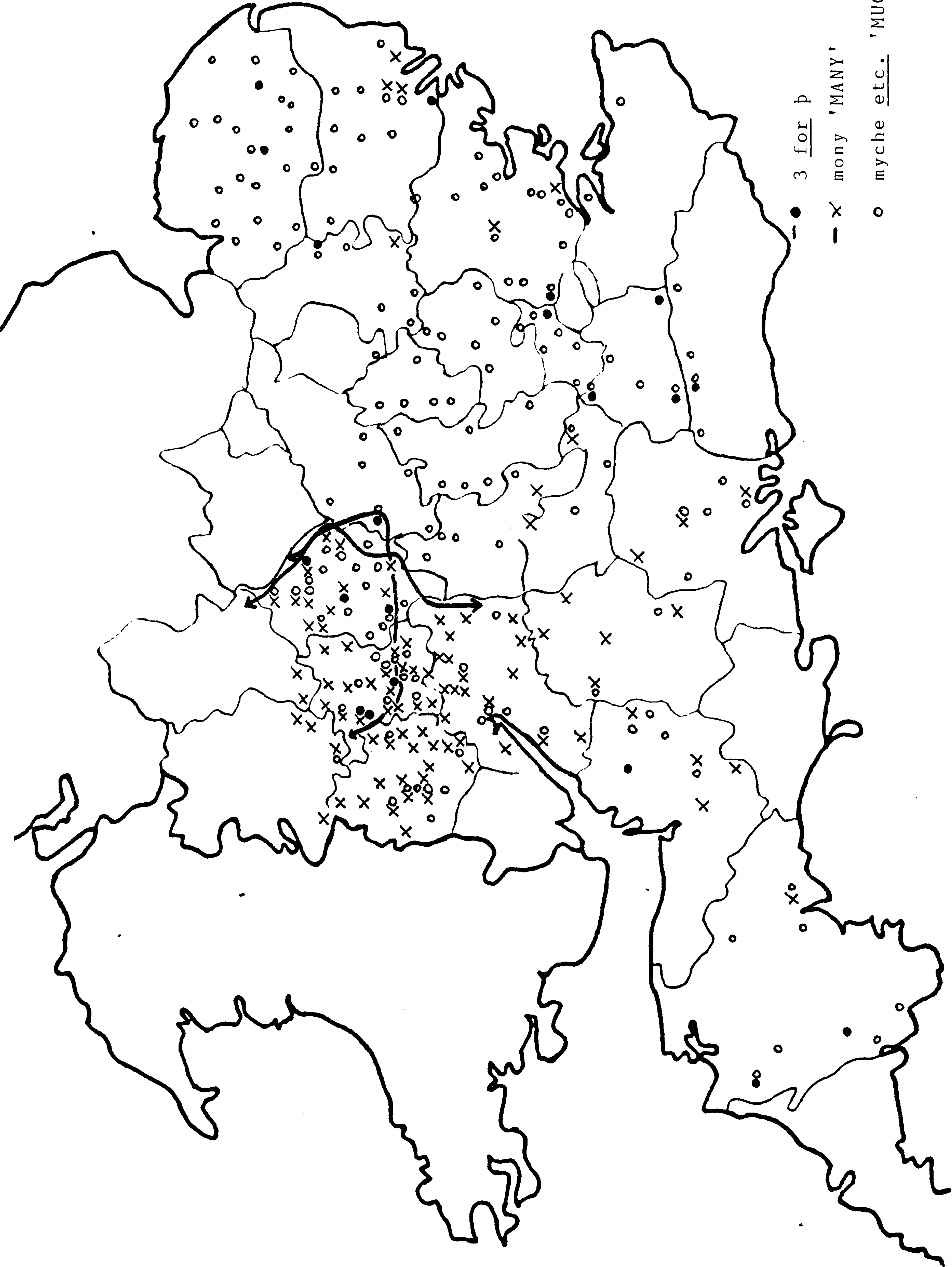
Both MSS show an appreciation of Gowerian metre, with correct use of adjectival -e and of the syncopated 3rd pres.sg. verb forms. Where Gowerian -e is omitted, it has no metrical import (e.g. in his 'HIS' (pl.), where the Fairfax MS frequently has hise).³³

10. London, British Library, Additional MS 22139. This MS is described by Macaulay (1900)³⁴ and by Fisher (1965).³⁵ On fol. 1, the date 1432 appears on a shield, and Fisher therefore considers this to be the date for the copying of the MS. However, it is my impression from examining the MS that this date was added later, which means that we cannot accept Fisher's dating without question. Macaulay records that the MS was

bought by the then British Museum "from Thos. Kerslake of Bristol, 1857". As with the Glasgow MS (no. 9 above), Macaulay perceived a close textual connection between this MS and the Antiquaries MS (no. 13 below). Three hands are to be found in this MS: (1), which copies fols. 1-71, and (2), which copies fols. 72 - end. (3) is an occasional marginal corrector. The second hand also copies a few short poems by Chaucer, 'To you my purse', 'The firste stok', 'Some time this worlde', 'Fle fro the pres'. Analyses for the first two hands appear on pp. 374 - 377 below.

In hand 1 of this MS, the forms generally cohere most convincingly in Herefordshire, as is indicated by the forms mony 'MANY', apon 'UPON', segh 'SAW', suster 'SISTER', is 'HIS' plotted on the accompanying map; other forms in the text also cohere there, as is indicated by the Maps in the Appendix. There are, however, no diagnostic forms. The feature oghne 'OWN' cannot be accommodated in this layer, and must stem from the Gowerian archetype. The forms makp 'MAKES', -end(e) (pres.part.) and sihe 'SAW' could be similar relict forms, or they could be the result of constrained behaviour; as the maps in the Appendix show, they are to be found in the South-West Midlands.





Hand 2 seems freer from the constraints of the traditional Gowerian language. As the accompanying map shows, one linguistic element, represented here by myche 'MUCH', mony 'MANY' and 3 for þ in 3at 'THAT', plausibly coheres in Worcestershire/Warwickshire, although other localisations are possible. The occurrence of perewhile 'WHILE' may indicate that Warwickshire is to be preferred as a localisation, but this could be a relict form, as could be forms such as 3ifþ 'GIVES' and or..or 'EITHER..OR'. Both of these forms, of course, are metrically required. The evidence of the Chaucer pieces by this hand is too slight to aid localisation.

The third, correcting hand would appear to be that of a Northerner, with such lines as 'Eftir þe drink þat þai haue drunke' (fol. 83r, col. 1, line 20), 'of watir nor of vþir kinde' (fol. 83r, col. 2, line 6).

11. London, British Library, MS Harley 3490. This MS was discussed by Macaulay (1900)³⁶ and by Fisher (1965)³⁷; both scholars date it to the middle of the fifteenth century. More recently, it has been discussed by Doyle (1983.2)³⁸, who notes that it bears the arms of Sir Edmund Rede (ca. 1438-70) "of Oxfordshire";

it "may be one of the two Gowers mentioned in his will, 1489". There are a number of coats of arms in the MS other than Rede's. Macaulay classified this MS textually as 'first recension, intermediate': "In individual correctness of text and spelling the MS does not rank high, and it is especially bad as regards insertion and omission of final -e ... It has th regularly for b and y for 3". An additional complication is the evident textual connection between the tranche I have selected from Book III in this MS and the equivalent passage in Addit. 12043 (no. 35 below). There are one or two linguistic differences between the passages taken from Books III and VI in the Harley MS, so I give separate analyses for the two tranches on pp. 378 - 381 below.

A mid-fifteenth-century text, Harley 3490 shows in its language little evidence of the impact of 'Type IV'. However, although a 'dialectal' (as opposed to a 'standardised') text, localising it with precision is surprisingly difficult. The following non-Gowerian forms could cohere in a number of places, as the maps in the Appendix show: is 'HIS', wich(e) 'WHICH', thouh 'THOUGH', ayen 'AGAIN', yet 'YET', strenth 'STRENGTH', nouht/nouth/notte 'NOT', ware 'WERE', wordle 'WORLD', thurh/thoruh 'THROUGH', segh/seih 'SAW', hondrede 'HUNDRED', hilde 'HELD',

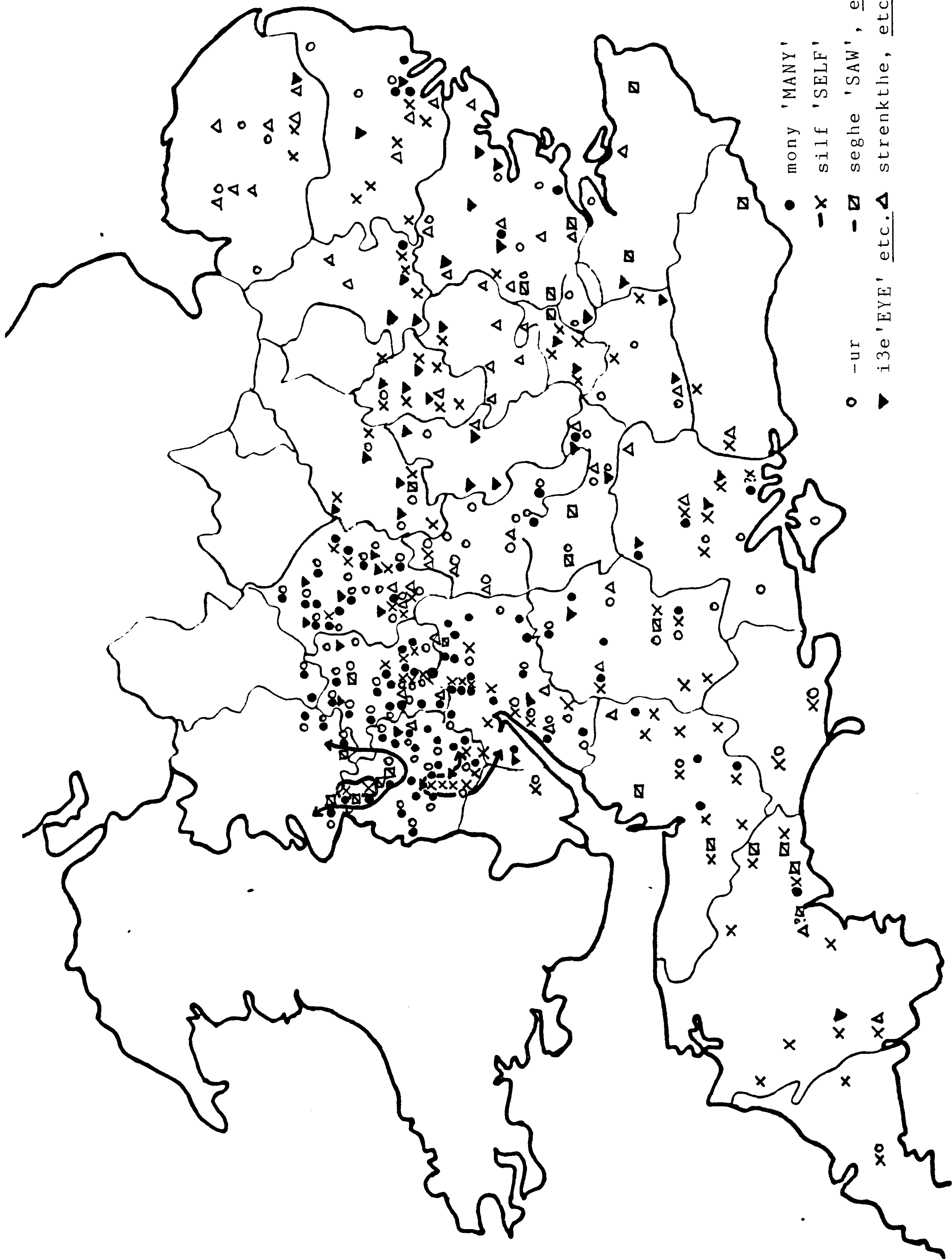
drounge 'DRUNK', an 'AND'. Possible localisations for this mixture of forms include South Herefordshire on the one hand and South Essex on the other; there are a few forms which stem, in all probability, from the archetypal Gowerian language, viz. or..or 'EITHER..OR', owhne 'OWN', therwhile 'WHILE'.

12. London, British Library, MS Stowe 950 (olim Ashburnham). This MS is discussed by Macaulay (1900)³⁹ as follows: "The handwriting is somewhat like that of [Harley 3490, no. 11 above]: the spelling sometimes fairly good, but unequal; bad especially at the beginning. The metre generally good". Macaulay gives no date, although, if he considered the handwriting to be like that of the Harley MS, then he would seem to be pointing to the mid-fifteenth century. Fisher (1965)⁴⁰ considers the MS "early fifteenth century"; its execution, although "good", is of the "simpler" of the two kinds of MS Fisher sees as issued from Gower's alleged scriptorium. There are certain linguistic differences between the passages from Books III and VI which I have studied; on pp. 382 - 385 below, therefore, I have given separate analyses for the two tranches of text.

Macaulay, as indicated above, considered the language of the Stowe MS to be "bad especially

at the beginning", which would suggest that some kind of 'settling-down' process was taking place. In the opening folios of this MS I note forms such as mony 'MANY', thorough 'THROUGH', beselych and besilyke 'BUSILY', propurly 'PROPERLY', i3e and yghe 'EYE'. Forms which are not found in the archetypal Gowerian language are rarer in the two test passages, more so in the tranche from Book VI than in that from Book III. Some dialectally significant, non-Gowerian forms are plotted on the accompanying map, viz. mony 'MANY', silf 'SELF', seghe 'SAW', strenkthe 'STRENGTH', -ur, i3e 'EYE'. Although there are no diagnostic forms, a possible coherence can be detected in Herefordshire. The forms word 'WORLD' and -lyke (for adv. -ly) present a problem, however. They may be relicts from another layer of language in the MS.

Of course, such a localisation does not account for the form oughne 'OWN', which also appears in this MS; and, although a number of the other Gowerian forms reproduced here are also found in the South-West Midlands, their appearance in conjunction with this form suggests a strong Gowerian input: tuo 'TWO', makth 'MAKES', yhe 'EYE', hihe 'HIGH', sihe 'SAW', hielde 'HELD', -end(e) (pres.part.). Throughout this MS the scribe is fairly successful at reproducing



Gower's use of -e. This metrical sensitivity presumably explains why the contracted verbs are the features most frequently reproduced from the Gowerian linguistic tradition.

13. London, Society of Antiquaries, MS 134. This MS is described by Macaulay (1900)⁴¹ and by Fisher (1965)⁴². As well as the Confessio Amantis, it also contains other texts, including Hoccleve's Regement of Princes and Lydgate's Lyf of Our Lady. The MS is in one hand throughout, and there is no indication that it is a composite book. Fisher dates the MS to the "early fifteenth century", and considers it a likely candidate for production from Gower's alleged scriptorium. However, the presence of Lydgate's poem must date it after ca. 1434.⁴³ According to Macaulay, "the book belonged formerly to the Rev. Charles Lyttelton, LL.D., who notes that it came originally from the Abbey of Hales Owen", Worcestershire, a house of Premonstratensian Canons Regular dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. John the Evangelist, and existing until the Dissolution of the monasteries. Ker (1964) records the MS, dating it "s.xv?".⁴⁴ Macaulay noted a special connection between this text of the Confessio Amantis and those contained in MSS Glasgow (no. 9 above), Stowe (no. 12 above) and Addit. 22139 (no. 10 above). He characterises the spelling as "not very good, and in particular

final -e is thrown in very freely without justification". There do not seem to be any significant linguistic differences between the tranches for Books III and VI in this MS, so I have combined their readings in the analysis on pp. 386 - 388 below.

In the Antiquaries MS, despite its early ownership in Worcestershire, there is little linguistic evidence for South-West Midland provenance. Some forms, such as the -ende ending for the pres.part., could be relicts from the archetypal language of the Gowerian tradition. Other features, such as schulde 'SHOULD', not 'NOT', porow 'THROUGH', but 'BUT', may indicate interference from 'Type IV' language. The form 3ongbe 'YOUTH', as the map in the Appendix shows, is not dialectally diagnostic when unsupported by other forms.

15. New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M.126.

This MS was not known to Macaulay (1900), but is noted by Fisher (1965)⁴⁵, who dates it to the late fifteenth century. The fullest account is given by the Morgan Librarian, who has appended a typescript description to the MS. The date given is "2nd half of the 15th century (c. 1460-1475?)". The librarian notes the name '?John. Davy?' on fol. 1, in a fifteenth-century hand; there is no other evidence of ownership before the late seventeenth century. It may be of interest that this MS was owned by "Honest Tom Martin of Pal-

grave" (1697-1771), who also owned the Chicago MS (no. 19 below). Macaulay did know of the miniature pictures which illustrate this MS; he records that nine of them, cut from the MS, were in the possession of A.H.Frere.⁴⁶ They have now been restored. There are some linguistic differences between the two test passages in this text, so I have given separate analyses on pp. 389 - 392 below.

The MS is in the hand of the scribe known as Ricardus Franciscus,⁴⁷ who also copied the following:

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Ashmole 764;
 -----, -----, MS Laud misc. 570;
 -----, University College, MS 85;
 San Marino, Huntington Library, MS 932;
 London, British Library, MS Harley 4775.

The spelling habits of Ricardus Franciscus have been the subject of a recent study, Hamer (1983). Hamer, however, did not examine Ricardus' MS of Gower, but concentrated on comparing his spellings in MS Harley 4775 with those in his exemplar for that MS, MS Douce 372. Hamer sums up his findings thus: "Comparison of [Harley] with [Douce] shows at once what a very close and accurate copyist Ricardus was ... In writing that 'he was a professional scribe who copied extremely faithfully, so that his text is likely to retain even some of the dialectal forms of his exempla', Auvo Kurvinen understated the position. Apart from such

points as his rejection of p and frequent avoidance of 3, he copies most words exactly, even if they appear in a variety of forms ... But a number of other words which appear in [Douce] with various spellings, while often copied by Ricardus in the forms in [Douce], are also quite frequently changed to particular spellings which are so consistently used that they must represent his own preferences or 'dialect'".⁴⁸ Hamer establishes the following significant modifications of his exemplar for the Harley MS by Ricardus:

1. th for p.
2. Ricardus copies 3, but frequently changes it to y/g/gh; he never introduces 3.
3. He expands ampersands.
4. He generally expands abbreviations.
5. He sometimes omits, sometimes introduces, final -e.
6. sh for sch.
7. He distinguishes giftis, gafe and 3iue.
8. "... for the palatal fricative Ricardus shows a strong tendency to substitute gh for whatever is before him".
9. saugh for sawe etc..
10. here for hure 'HEAR'.
11. it for hit.
12. which(e) for wich(e).
13. first for frist.
14. yeue for 3yue 'GIVE' (imperat.).
15. kissid for cussid 'KISSED'.

In most of these cases, a 'standard' form has been substituted for a 'non-standard' one; but Hamer (1983) does record that other 'non-standard' spellings are retained by Ricardus from his exemplar: "hundreth, hundrith, hundred, hundrid, hundret3; eyen, yeen, yen,

eien, ey3en; nobul, nobil, nobill, nobille, noble,
 are all copied".⁴⁹ Why Ricardus accepted hundreth
 but refused to accept hure 'HEAR', cussid 'KISSED'
 could have some dialectal import; was hundreth in
 Ricardus' repertoire already, and simply activated by
 its coincidental appearance in his exemplar? This
 issue is not pursued by Hamer. However, it is diff-
 icult, from the evidence gathered by Hamer, to localise
 Ricardus' dialect. Indeed, as his name suggests, he
 "seems to have been French, or at least strongly
 influenced by French models".⁵⁰

It seems likely, therefore, that Ricardus'
 intervention in his Gower has been similarly limited.
 It seems equally likely that the variation between
 the two tranches of text I have examined is conditioned
 by the nature of his exemplar (e.g. thogh, 3if, ayen
 in Book III, though, if, ageyn in Book VI). The
 scattering of non-standard, non-Gowerian forms -
hit 'IT', thouh 'THOUGH', swich(e) 'SUCH', has 'HAS',
wether 'WHETHER' - make up a 'colourless' mixture.
 As to the minor features of spelling noted by Hamer,
 Ricardus' behaviour in his copy of the Confessio Amantis
 is as follows:

1. th for p (thus it seems likely that wraththe 'WRATH'
 is simply for Gowerian wrappe, and is not a dialectally
 significant feature).
2. 3 is rare in the passage from Book III and it does
 not appear in the tranche from Book VI.

3. I have noted no ampersands.
4. Abbreviations (-er, -e etc.) are very few.
5. His use of final -e is uncertain; thus the ferst + conson. in Book VI, but The ferste + conson. in Book III).
6. sh in sholde etc..
7. He does use Yaf 'GAVE' (a difference from his usage in the texts discussed by Hamer).
8. The reflex of Gowerian h in yhe, sih(e), myht(e) is gh: yghe, sigh(e), might, myght(e).
9. Ricardus uses sigh(e) 'SAW'; I have found no examples of saugh. It seems plain that he has been constrained by Gowerian usage.
10. Ricardus is similarly constrained in his use of hier 'HEAR'.
11. He uses hit only sporadically, and the fact that it appears only in Book III suggests that it is a 'show-through' from his exemplar; it is his usual form in this MS.
12. and 13. which(e) and ferst(e) are regular. The second of these presumably shows some constraint from the archetypal Gowerian tradition.
14. (Not recorded in the analyses). 'y-' forms for 'GIVE' (imperat.) are regular.
15. OE y is generally reflected in i/y, with kysse 'KISS': maistresse, and mynde 'MIND': wynde (sic) 'WEND'; but cf. berthe 'BIRTH', merthe 'MIRTH', presumably constrained forms.

16. Olim Mount Stuart, Isle of Bute, Marquess of Bute's

MS I.17. This MS is discussed by Macaulay (1900)⁵¹ and by Fisher (1965)⁵²; both date it to the early fifteenth century. According to Macaulay, this is a "good manuscript, carefully written and finely decorated. There are very few contractions, and in particular the termination -oun is generally written in full ... and th is written regularly for þ. As regards accuracy and spelling it is very fair, but the scribe adds -e very freely at the end of words". In its textual relations, the Bute MS seems to have a tendency to group with Egerton 1991, Corpus B.67 and, especially, Bodley 294 -

all MSS dealt with at greater length in Chapter 4 below. It would have been interesting to see whether the Bute MS shared any of the special spellings of these MSS but, unhappily, its recent sale has rendered this impossible. In the analysis, the readings are drawn entirely from Book III (including some readings later in that book than lines 1-500); the MS was sold before I was able to check the readings for Book VI. The analysis appears on pp. 393 - 395 below.

Macaulay (1900) noted that the Bute-scribe "added -e very freely at the end of words"; in fact, he is rather more careful than Macaulay suggests. The archetypal Gowerian language, as represented by the Fairfax and Stafford MSS, had a non-metrically-significant -e in words like euere, hise etc.. In both these cases, the Bute-scribe omits the -e regularly. However, he regularly adds an -e in alle, myne, there and where. Otherwise, most of the places where he adds or removes a final -e are in eliding situations; if we allow for elision between -e and a following h- then he can be said to do this almost entirely regularly. In the crucial matter of -e in adjectives, the Bute-scribe is usually correct; the places where -e is dropped when it is grammatically required again seem to be largely in eliding positions. It is for this reason that both strong and weak forms of 'FIRST' appear as ferst in the analysis.

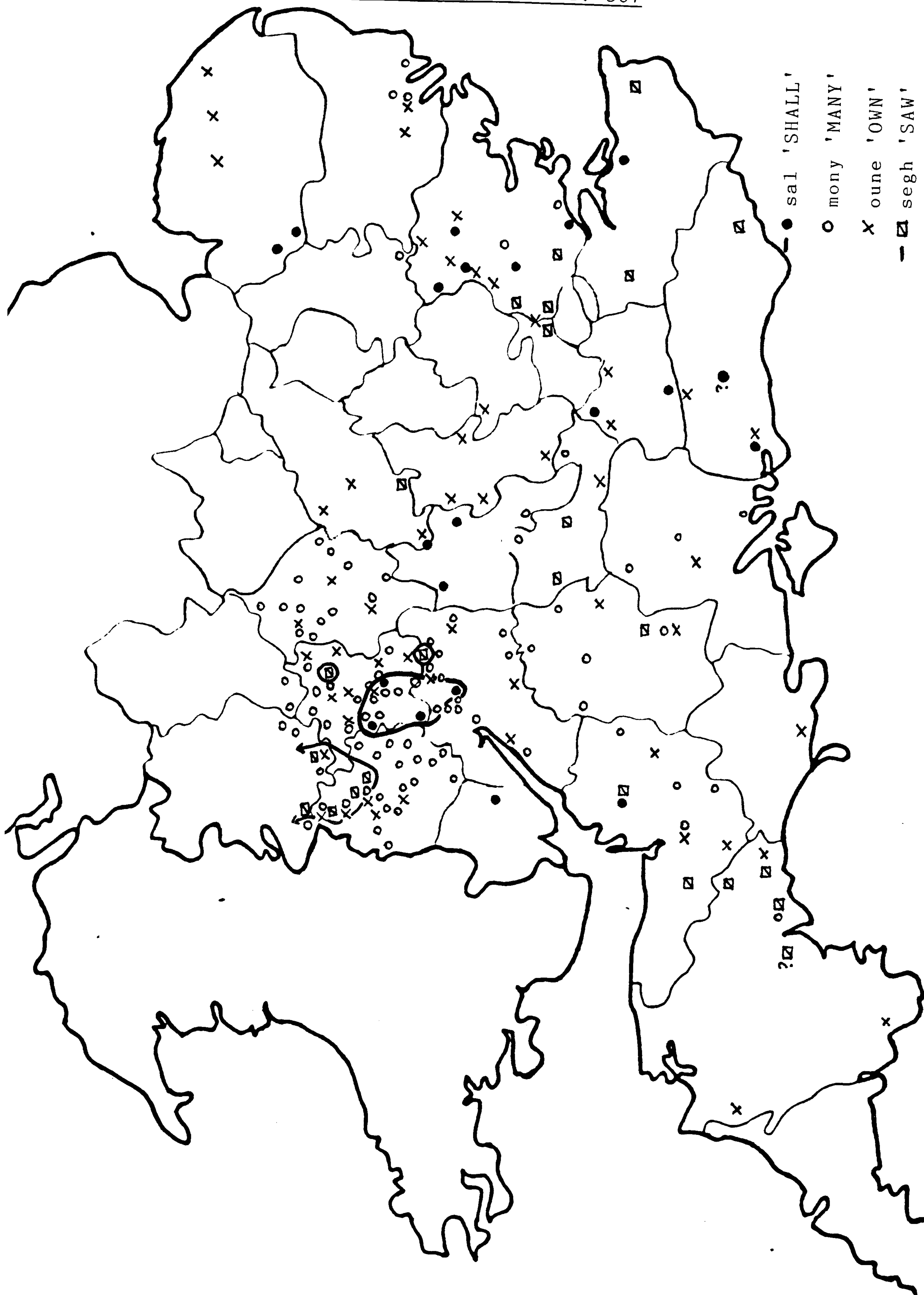
However, it is very noticeable that, in another feature of metrical significance in Gower's poetry, the use of syncopated 3rd pres.sg. verbs, the Bute MS employs only expanded forms. The scribe even uses stondeth for Gowerian stant, a form frequently retained in other MSS even when makþ etc. have been expanded. This mixture of 'correct' -e and 'incorrect' 3rd pres.sg. verbs suggests that both were living linguistic features for this scribe. That this scribe's behaviour is of the kind which is called 'constrained' is indicated by the forms for 'SAW' in this MS. The usual form is sigh beside seigh (although seigh is not in the test tranche). sigh can plausibly be related to archetypal sih; seigh could be the scribe's own usual form, persisting despite constraint from his exemplar, or it could be the result of input from some exemplar intermediate between archetype and extant MS. But it is surely significant that, at precisely the point in the text where the Fairfax MS uses its rare variant sawh 'SAW', the Bute-scribe should use saugh. In this last case, it would seem likely that a very minor variable in the Bute-scribe's repertoire is being activated by the appearance of a similar form in his exemplar.

Otherwise, the spellings of the Bute MS are of little dialectal interest. A number of Gowerian

and sub-Gowerian forms appear, such as oughne 'OWN', -end(e) (pres.part.). Those forms which are non-Gowerian in this text are widespread in later Middle English. The -ur in chamburleyn and the form buried 'BURIED' (Gowerian beried) may be sporadic 'Westernisms', but it is hard to be more specific. The modifications of the Gowerian language by the Bute-scribe seem to be essentially 'modernisations', such as the doubling of vowels to indicate length (cf. 'ARE'), and the almost-complete replacement of p by th (pe and pe 'THE' appear at the very beginning of Book III, when the scribe is using every device he can to compress his text in order to accommodate an illuminated initial.).

17. Cambridge, Pembroke College, MS 307. This MS was not known to Macaulay when he made his edition, although, judging from the entry in James (1905), he became aware of it later.⁵⁴ James dates the MS to the early fifteenth century, a date supported by Fisher (1965).⁵⁵ Early names in the MS include 'Th. Smyth of Norfolk'. There do not seem to be any significant linguistic differences between the test tranches from Books III and VI in this MS, so I have combined their readings in the analysis on pp. 396 - 398 below.

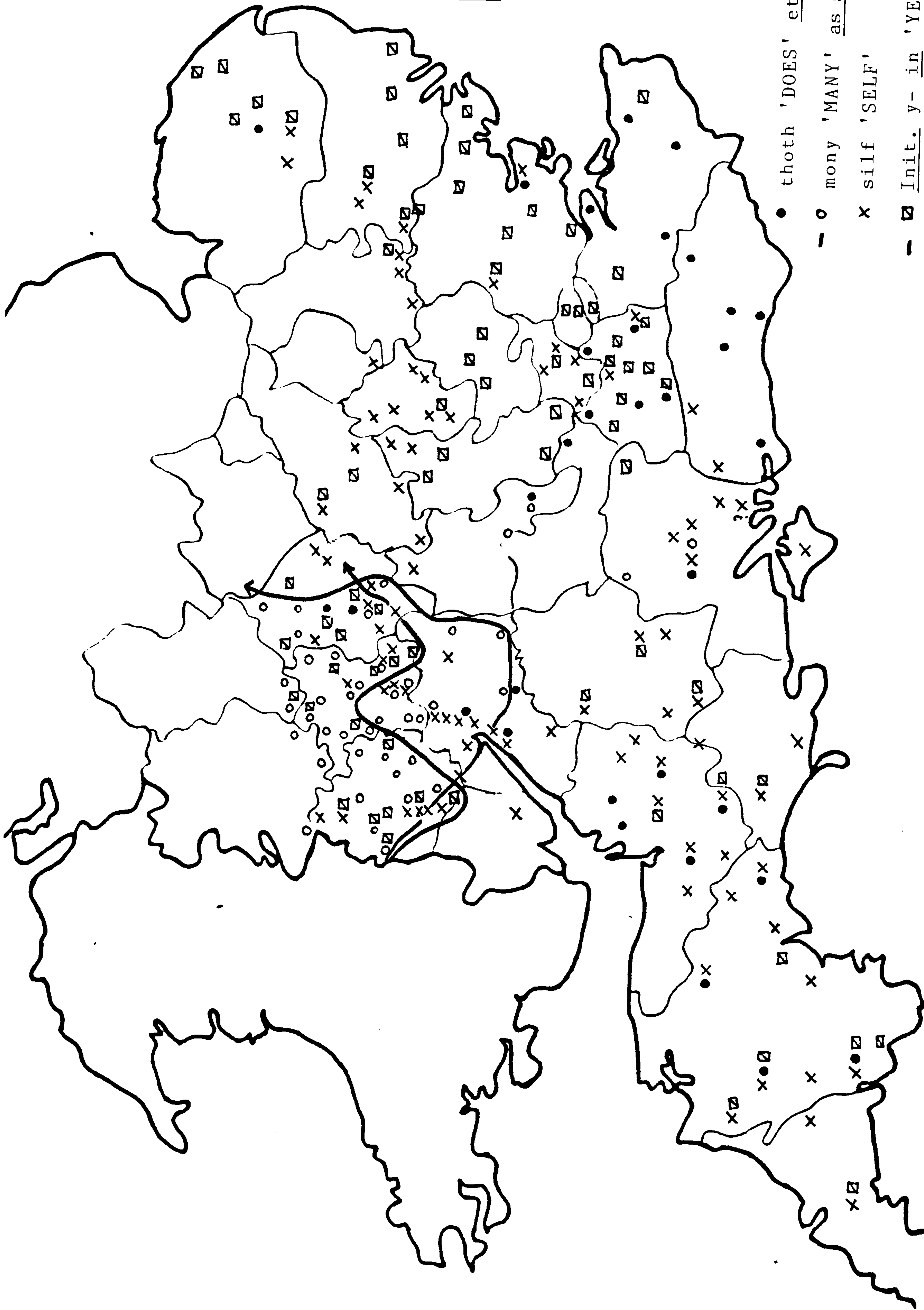
As the accompanying map of sal 'SHALL', mony 'MANY', oune 'OWN' and segh 'SAW' shows, in



conjunction with the maps in the Appendix, most of the forms in the Pembroke MS can be accommodated on the Gloucestershire/Worcestershire border. Such a localisation could even accommodate forms traditionally seen as 'Northern', such as sal 'SHALL'. Even forms which, at first sight, might seem relicts from the archetypal Gowerian language - such as tofore 'BEFORE' - appear there - although it is probable that the co-occurrence of such forms as makþ 'MAKES' and or..or 'EITHER..OR' is not unconnected with the appearance of these forms in the archetypal language, perhaps as constrained forms (or..or is recorded in Worcestershire, and the syncopated 3rd pres.sg. verbs are widespread in the South-West Midlands.).

It should be emphasised, however, that this localisation is only probable; there are possible alternative non-SWM localisations for this MS, such as West Essex (where such forms as those indicated on the accompanying map could also be accommodated).

18. Cambridge, University Library, MS Dd 8.19. This MS is described, although in neither case very fully, both by Macaulay (1900)⁵⁶ and by Fisher (1965)⁵⁷. Macaulay gives no date, and Fisher simply describes the MS as "15th century". Hardwick et al. (1856-67) describe



• thoth 'DOES' etc.

○ mony 'MANY' as sole form

x silf 'SELF'

— [square with x] Init. y- in 'YET'

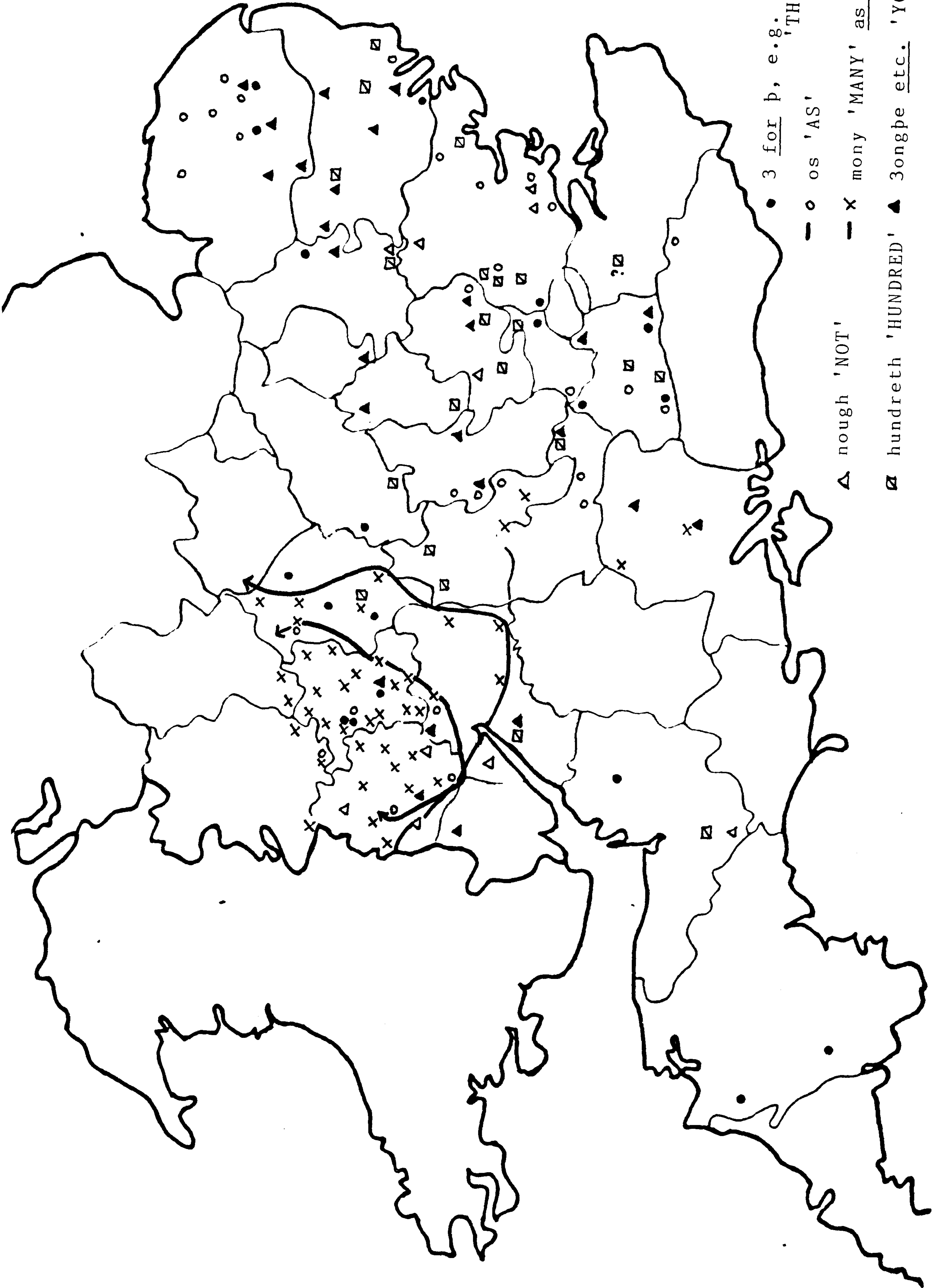
it as written in a "hand of the fifteenth century"⁵⁸. My own examination of the MS would date it to the early part of the fifteenth century. There are one or two linguistic differences between the test passages in Books III and VI, so I have given separate analyses for these tranches on pp. 399 - 402 below.

When accompanied by mony as the sole form for 'MANY', silf 'SELF' and initial y- in 'YET', forms such as thoth 'DOTH' with th for usual ME d are diagnostic for Warwickshire, as is indicated on the accompanying map. Such a layer can accommodate a number of the linguistic features in Dd 8.19, although it seems likely that such co-occurring forms as tuo 'TWO', bryngth 'BRINGS' (3rd pres.sg.), -ende (pres.part.), hielld 'HELD' etc. survive from the Gowerian archetypal language, either as relicts or as constrained forms. oughen 'OWN' must be an attempt to reproduce Gowerian oghne; it is certainly not a possible form in Warwickshire at this date. It is noticeable that a number of the changes in the MS between the two test passages are in the direction of forms more commonplace in Middle English, e.g. mony 'MANY' and yit 'YET' in Book III, many and yet in Book VI.

19. Chicago, Newberry Library, Case MS + 33.5 (Louis H. Silver MS 3)(olim Castle Howard, Earl of Carlisle's MS). This MS is discussed by Macaulay (1900)⁵⁹ and noted

by Fisher (1965)⁶⁰, although the latter did not examine it personally. Both scholars date it to the late fifteenth century. The MS was owned by Thomas Martin of Palgrave, who also owned Morgan M.126 (no. 15 above). Certain folios are missing from the MS, including those containing Book VI, lines 264-500; so the forms from Book VI in the analyses are taken from lines 1-263. I have noted some differences in spelling practice between the two test tranches in this MS, so I have kept the readings from these passages separate in the analyses on pp. 403 - 406 below.

Other than that it is largely written in a West Midland dialect, the language of the Chicago MS is surprisingly hard to localise with precision. A number of forms are plotted on the accompanying map, and a Worcestershire localisation is indicated; but nough 'NOT' is more characteristic of Herefordshire, and the nearest forms of hundreth are recorded in texts from Gloucestershire, Warwickshire and Oxfordshire. If the principle of minimising layers is strictly adhered to, such 'Northernisms' in this text as -and (pres.part.), miky1 'MUCH' and callid (for Gowerian cleped) can be accommodated in Worcestershire; however, there are a comparatively large number of these 'Northernisms' in this text, and they may form a separate 'Northern' layer. There are a very few



• 3 for b, e.g. 3ees
'THESE'

— o os 'AS'

△ nough 'NOT'

— x many 'MANY' as sole form

▣ hundreth 'HUNDRED' ▴ 3ongpe etc. 'YOUTH'

certain relicts from the archetypal Gowerian language: one is mende 'MIND':wende (but kysse 'KISS':maistresse; cf. Gowerian kesse:maistresse). What changes there are during the copying of the MS seem to be minor: pei/pey 'THEY' to pey; wil/wol to wol.

21. London, British Library, Royal MS 18.c.xxii.

This MS is described by Macaulay (1900)⁶¹ and by Fisher (1965)⁶²; both date it to the early fifteenth century.

The most recent account of this MS is in Doyle and Parkes (1978)⁶³, who indicate that the scribe who wrote it is also known to have written the following MSS, making him one of the most prolific of his period:

Cambridge, St. John's College, MS H.1 (204) (Trevisa, Polychronicon);
 London, British Library, Additional MS 24194 (Trevisa, Polychronicon);
 Oxford, Brasenose College, MS 9 (Nicholas Love, Life of Christ);
 Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS fonds anglais 25 (Guy de Chauliac, Cyrurgie).

Because of his similarity to their 'scribe D' (for whom, see Chapter 4 below), Doyle and Parkes name this copyist 'scribe Δ '. The Brasenose and Additional MSS have been examined by workers on the Survey of Middle English Dialects, and I gratefully acknowledge and take advantage of their findings here.⁶⁴ The Paris text

has been edited by Ogden (1971). I have not been able to examine the St. John's MS. The analyses for the Royal MS appear on pp. 407 - 409 below.

The Brasenose MS has been localised by the Survey of Middle English Dialects to South Buckinghamshire. Dialectally-significant features of this MS include: hit 'IT', ham 'THEM', meny 'MANY', mykel and meche 'MUCH', peyh 'THOUGH', -ande (pres.part.), hild 'HELD' - all as minor variables; hondred 'HUNDRED', poru3 'THROUGH' (with porw as a minor variable), or 'ERE', sistres/sustres 'SISTERS'. Some of these features can be paralleled in Additional 24194, e.g. ham 'THEM', pey3 and pey 'THOUGH', or 'ERE', hyld 'HELD', hondred 'HUNDRED', but there are some differences. Some features, minor variables in the Brasenose MS, are here the main forms: meny 'MANY', meche 'MUCH', hit 'IT', porw 'THROUGH'. Other forms appear in the Additional MS which are not recorded in Brasenose: he 'SHE' (as a minor variable), soche 'SUCH', silf and sylf 'SELF'. A similar pattern appears in the Paris MS, with forms such as ham 'THEM', soche 'SUCH', mykel and myche 'MUCH', 3ouen 'GIVEN', -ur as a minor variable.

The implication of these variations of language in MSS by the same hand is that the scribe

has been in each case influenced by his exemplar, causing him either to reproduce 'relict' forms or to exhibit 'constrained' behaviour. It is unsurprising, therefore, that most of the forms in the Royal MS of the Confessio Amantis are either Gowerian (e.g. oghne 'OWN') or, if not Gowerian, widespread in later Middle English (e.g. schulde, togidre, siluer etc.). A few sporadic non-Gowerian forms - hondred 'HUNDRED', poru3 'THROUGH', pei 'THOUGH' - also appear, however, in the Brasenose MS; their presence in the Royal MS may be the result, therefore, of the scribe's own input to the language of the MS. However, mony 'MANY' is not paralleled in the other texts. As the map for this item in the Appendix shows, mony does not appear in South Buckinghamshire, but it does appear on the Berkshire side of the Berks./Bucks. border - so it may be introduced by the scribe of the Royal MS rather than be a relict from some earlier stage in the transmission of the text.

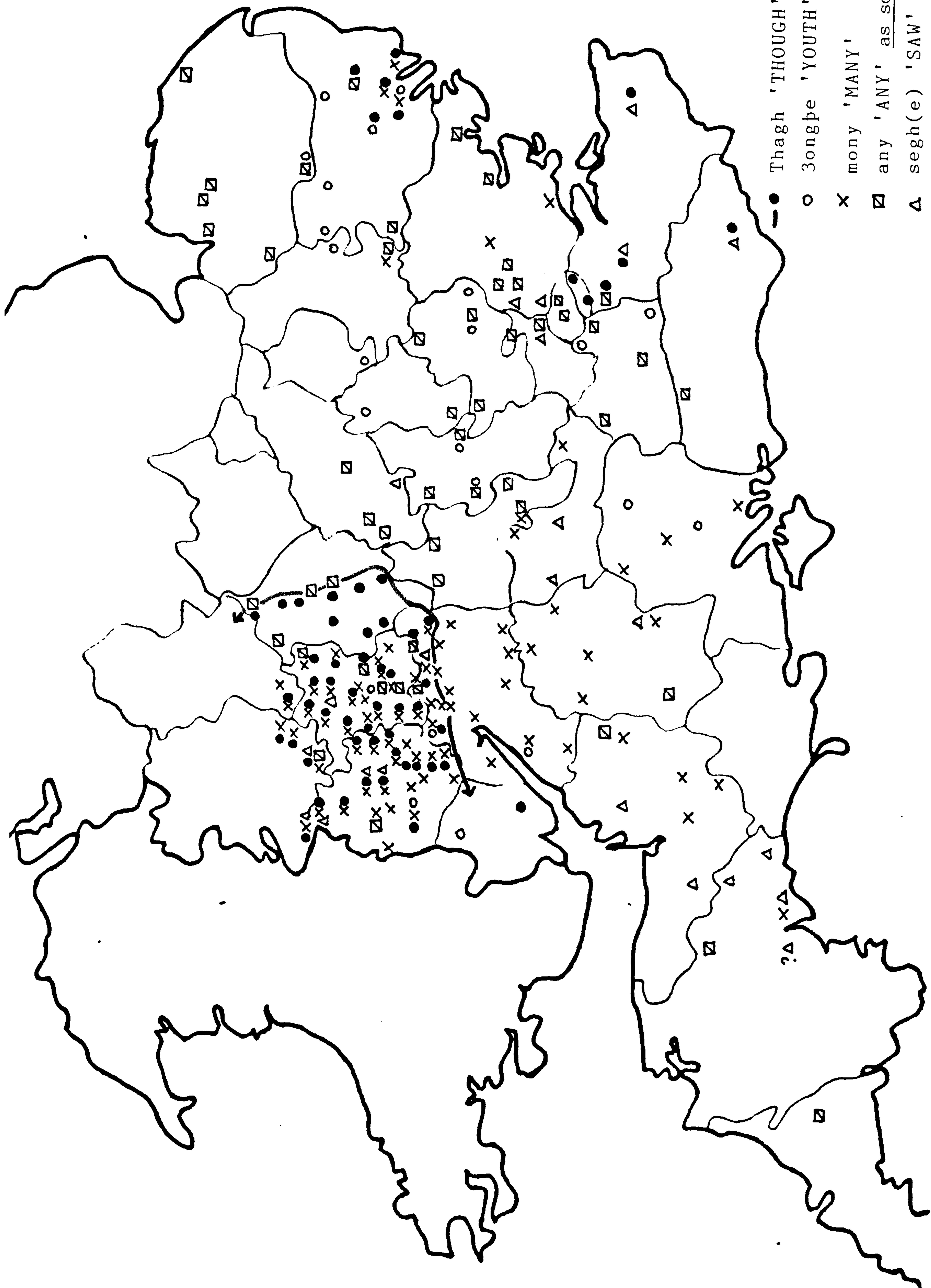
A minor layer, only fragmentarily indicated in this MS, is discussed further in Chapter 5 below.

22. London, College of Arms, MS Arundel 45. Both Macaulay (1900)⁶⁵ and Fisher (1965)⁶⁶ date this MS to the middle of the fifteenth century. Black (1829)⁶⁷ gives the following details of early provenance: "On two

leaves of parchment at the beginning of this MS are these notes (of the xvth century) amongst a variety of others: 'thys boke be longytt on to thomas goodonston gerdeler of London'. - 'this boke be longytt vn To Master Jhon Barthyllmewe Gerdyllar and Marchauntt of London'. From several memoranda on the margins, it appears to have belonged to Michael and Thomas Man, of York, in the reign of Q. Mary". There do not appear to be any significant linguistic differences between the two test tranches, so I have combined them in the analysis on pp. 410 - 411 below.

It is hard to make a close localisation of the language of the Arundel MS. Forms such as silf 'SELF', whas 'WHOSE', oune 'OWN', segh 'SAW', -ur and wopus 'OATHS' do cohere most frequently in the South-West Midlands, as the maps in the Appendix show, but those same maps also show that other localisations are possible. That there is a strong Gowerian element in the language of this text seems undeniable, with the appearance of makþ 'MAKES' etc., -end(e) (pres.part.), oghne 'OWN', sihe 'SAW'.

23. New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M.690 (olim Maggs cat. 456 (1924) item 184). This MS was not known by Macaulay (1900); Fisher (1965) fails to make



the identification of Morgan M.690 with the Maggs catalogue entry.⁶⁸ Fisher considers the Morgan MS to date from the early fifteenth century. The MS is damaged, so the test tranche from Book VI is not available for analysis. The analysis on pp. 412 - 413 below presents the results for the test passage in Book III, with some readings from elsewhere in the MS.

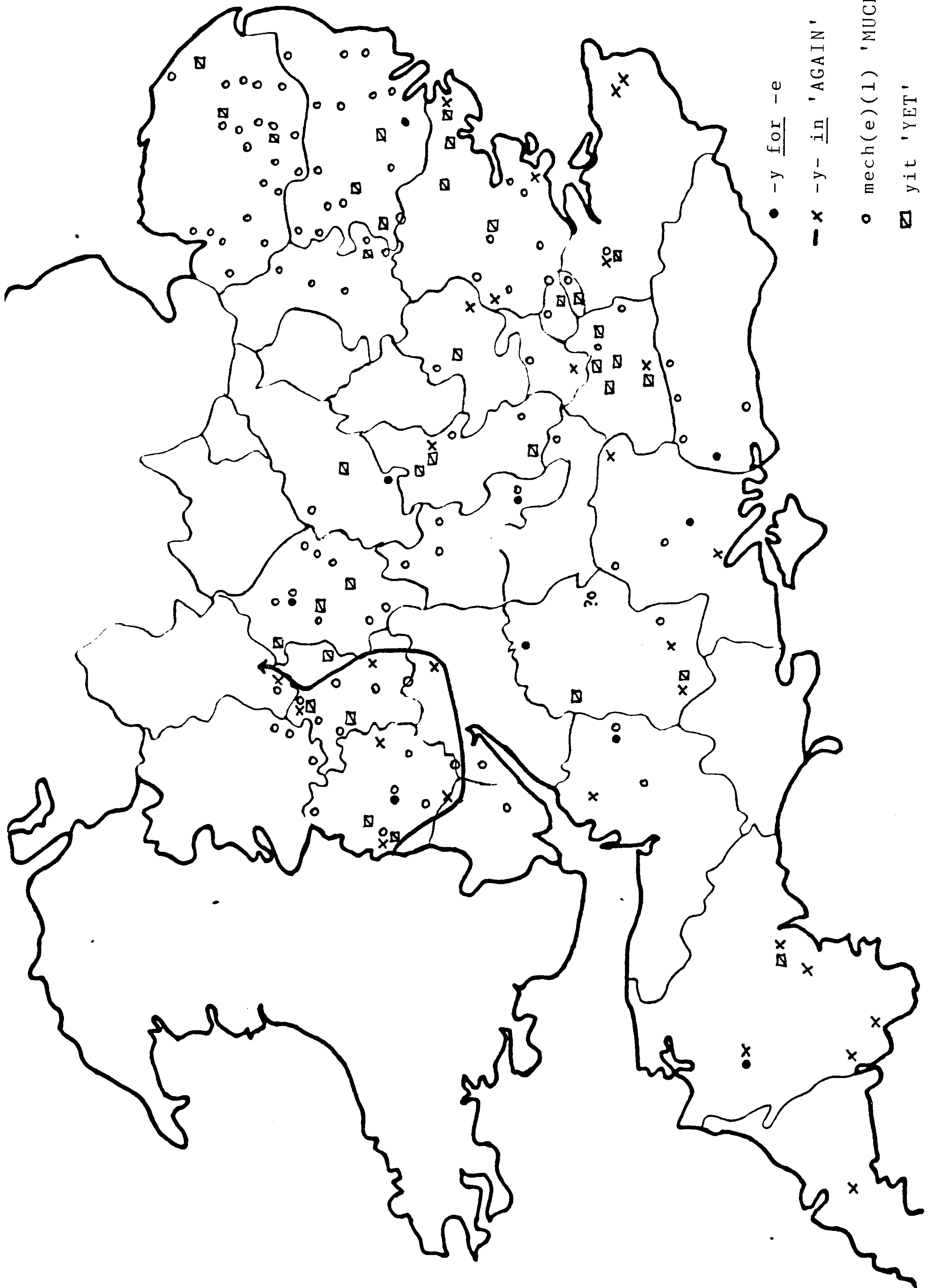
The forms Thagh 'THOUGH', 3ongbe 'YOUTH', mony 'MANY', any 'ANY' (as sole form in text), segh(e) 'SAW' cohere convincingly in the West Midlands, perhaps in mid-Worcestershire; this is indicated on the accompanying map. Such a localisation would not, however, accommodate other forms in this text, notably oghne 'OWN', which must represent a separate layer of language in the text, almost certainly the archetypal language of the Gower tradition.⁶⁹

25. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Arch. Selden B.11.

This MS is discussed by Macaulay (1900)⁷⁰ and by Fisher (1965).⁷¹ Both date the MS to the middle of the fifteenth century. As regards early provenance, Macaulay notes that the "book has the name 'Edward Smythe' (sixteenth cent.) as the owner". Of its text and spellings, Macaulay says as follows: "The text is a poor one with a good many corruptions, from the first line of the Prologue .. onwards, many of them absurd ...

some arising from confusion between p, 3 and y. Thus the scribe (who usually has th for p and y for 3) is capable of writing 'apen' or 'athen' for 'a3ein', 'yer of' for 'per of', 'yeff' for 'pef', 'bi3ete' for 'bi3ete' ... Some northern forms, as 'gude' iii.1073, 'Qwhat' iii.2439. Note agreement with [Bodley 294] in some places ..." There do not appear to be any significant linguistic differences between the two test passages, so I have combined their readings in the analysis on pp. 414 - 416 below.

In combination with the occasional confusion over p/3/y which this scribe displays, the use of sporadic Northernisms in this text gives us a clue to the copyist's behaviour. When he uses the letters p and y, this scribe writes them differently; thus far, we know that he does not come from one of the areas - mainly Northern ones - where, in the Middle English period, these two letters were written identically.⁷² But athen 'AGAIN', yeff 'THIEF' etc. present a further complication. The most plausible explanation for these forms must be that the Selden scribe is copying from a MS where p and y are written identically, as y, and, while copying mechanically, he interprets the distribution wrongly, giving y for p, p for y and, rarely, th for y.



The failure to distinguish p and y is, as I have said, essentially a Northern trait, and it would seem logical to assign gude 'GOOD' and Qwhat 'WHAT' to this layer. The accompanying map shows that a number of the remaining forms can be accommodated in Worcestershire/Herefordshire; the appearance of wrogh 'WRATH' (in rhyming position with goth 'GOES') may be related to the characteristic Worcestershire/Warwickshire 3 for p. It is hard to tell whether the archetypal Gowerian language has had any impact on this text. sih(e) 'SAW' and hihe 'HIGH' can be accommodated in the South-West Midland area already identified, as can -end(e) (pres.part.), although their appearance may be the result of constrained behaviour on the part of the South-West Midland scribe. In that case, these characteristic 'Gowerian' forms have survived at least one intermediate layer of copying in which such forms must have seemed to be 'exotics', viz. the Northern layer already identified.

26. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 693, and

28. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud misc. 609.

These MSS were written by the same scribe⁷³ and are, therefore, treated together here. The Bodley MS is described by Macaulay (1900)⁷⁴ and by Fisher (1965)⁷⁵.

According to Macaulay, "The fineness of the vellum and

the general style of the book seems to indicate that it was written for some distinguished person. The text is very typical of its class. In correctness and spelling it is less good than [Laud 609], oftener dropping final e and having less regard for the metre". Both Fisher and Macaulay date the MS to the first quarter of the fifteenth century. Some differences in spelling can be perceived between the two test passages from this MS, so I have presented their readings separately in the analyses on pp. 417 - 420 below.

The Laud MS is described by Macaulay (1900)⁷⁶ and by Fisher (1965)⁷⁷; both date the MS to the early fifteenth century, Macaulay to the "first quarter". Macaulay notes that "the names Symon and Thomas Elrington (sixteenth cent.) occur in the book". In correctness of text and spelling, Macaulay considered that "the text is decidedly inferior to [Egerton 1991, Corpus B.67 and Royal 18.c.xxii]". The tranche for Book VI is missing from this MS, so I replace it with an equivalent section from Book V (lines 1-500). There are some linguistic differences between the tranches from Books III and V, so I present the results for these passages separately on pp. 421 - 424 below.

The scribe who copied these MSS also copied a MS of Trevisa's translation of Higden's Polychronicon (lot 80 at Sotheby's sale of 8.xii.81).⁷⁸

The following table compares some forms in the text of the Sotheby Trevisa with the equivalent forms in the probable archetypal language of the Trevisa tradition, as represented by London, British Library, MS Cotton Tiberius D.vii.⁷⁹

ITEM	Sotheby MS	Cotton MS
'THE'	þe((þ ^e))(((the)))	þe
'THESE'	þese	þues, þes (((þeos, þeus)))
'TWO'	twey, atwo	twey, twy (((two)))
'HE'	he	he, a
'IT'	it	hyt
'THEY'	þey, þei	hy, huy, a
'THEM'	hem	ham
'WHICH'	which, whiche	whuch, whoche, woche
'MANY'	many, meny	meny, menye (((many)))
'ANY'	eny	eny, any
'ARE'	bep	buþ (bep)
'MUCH'	moche	moche (((muche)))
'SHALL' (sg.)	schal	schal
'SHALL' (pl.)	schulleþ	schulleth, scholleþ, scholleth
'SHOULD'	schuld(e)	scholde
'FROM'	from, from	fram, vram
	(((fram)))	(((vram)))
'AFTER'	aftir, after	after
	(((After)))	
'IF'	if (((3if)))	3ef, ef (((3if)))
'SELF'	self	sylf
'AGAIN(ST)'	a3enst, a3ein	a3enes, a3ene, a3e
'YET'	3it	3ut ((3et))
'TOGETHER'	togider, togidres	togeders, togedders, togedres, togadders
'BEFORE'	tofore	tofor, tofore, tovore

'NOT'	no3t	no3t
pres.part. ending	-ing, -yng	-yng, -ynge
'LITTLE'	litel	lytel, luytel
'I'	I (((ich)))	ich, y
'MIGHT'	mi3t	my3t(e)
'FIRST'	firste	furst, furste
'EVIL'	Iuel	euel
'HUNDRED'	hundred	hondred, honderd
'OWN'	own(e)	oune
'DID'	dede	dude
'HELD'	helde	huld
<u>clepe</u>	cleped	yclepud
OE <u>y</u>	i, y; <u>but cf.</u> brugge 'BRIDGE'	<u>Many</u> u, uy, <u>etc.</u>

Rather few forms in this table appear in both texts and the features in the Sotheby MS which could survive from the Trevisa archetype are comparatively few. The Sotheby Trevisa is much less 'dialectal' than the Cotton MS, in the sense that the chosen variables in the former MS have a much wider currency in ME than many of those in the latter, for example pese 'THESE' and pey 'THEY' as opposed to pues and hy. Given that ich 'I', brugge 'BRIDGE', fram 'FROM' and, even, meny 'MANY' and schulleth 'SHALL' (pl.)(the examples of these last two forms are few in the text of the MS I have been able to examine) could be relict forms, it is, perhaps, too speculative to hazard a localisation.

This scribe's behaviour becomes more comprehensible when we examine his behaviour in the Bodley and Laud MSS of Gower's Confessio Amantis. It is at once plain that, in several instances, this copyist is ex-

hibiting behaviour of the kind we have called 'constrained'. To take a simple example: this scribe uses beb 'ARE' when copying Trevisa, ben when copying Gower. Both are part of his repertoire, but different variables are activated by different exemplars. It is, however, plain that the archetypal language of the Trevisa and Gower traditions does not appear fully in his exemplars. This is shown by the scribe's behaviour with the forms for the item 'IT'. This copyist has two forms for this item in his repertoire, it and hit, and we would expect the latter to be reinforced in the Trevisa-tradition (where the archetypal form is hyt), and the former in the Gower-tradition (where the archetypal form is it). In these MSS, however, the reverse is the case. This would suggest that, in both traditions, a new form of this pronoun was introduced in an exemplar intermediate between archetype and extant MS, and subsequently reinforced a variable - as it happens, the wrong one in each case - in our scribe's repertoire. Presumably the same kind of intervention lies behind our scribe's choice of forms for 'THEY', 'SHOULD' etc..

The input from some exemplar intermediate between archetype and extant MS would also seem to explain some of the changes in spelling practice which can be observed in the course of copying of Bodley 693 and Laud 609. In the Bodley MS, it 'IT', eny 'ANY' and er

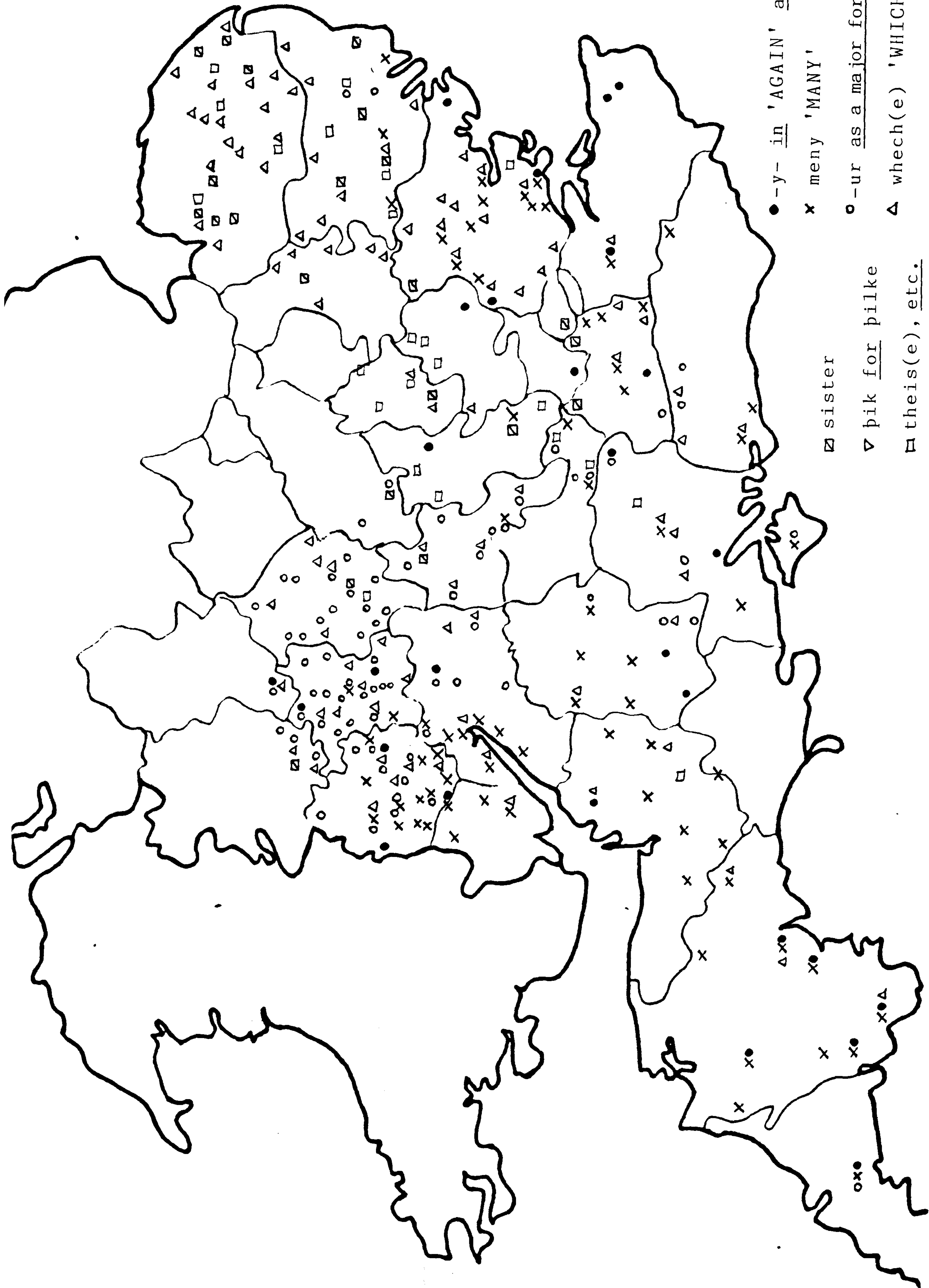
'ERE' all become dominant or more common later in the MS; at first sight these could all be responses to the archetypal practice of the Gower tradition. However, the 'THE', schuld(e) 'SHOULD' and but 'BUT' - none of which is the archetypal form - also become more common. In Laud, the Gowerian forms tuo 'TWO', it 'IT' and noght 'NOT' become more common later in the MS, but so do dide 'DID', -ing (pres.part.) and but 'BUT', none of which is Gowerian. The 'THE', schuld(e) 'SHOULD', dide 'DID' and but 'BUT' are all advancing forms in the fifteenth century, but the Bodley/Laud scribe does not demonstrate any steady shift towards them. It seems much more likely that the variation between, for instance, schulde and scholde represents the influence of some exemplar.

In his Gower MSS, this scribe demonstrates for the most part a mixture of Gowerian, Type III and Type IV forms, but there are a few sporadic features which are out of place: hit 'IT', fur 'FIRE':Ire 'ANGER', hilde 'HELD', scal 'SHALL', sclepe 'SLEEP', lijf and wijf 'LIFE' and 'WIFE' (all in the Laud MS), hit and aftur 'AFTER' (both in the Bodley MS). Whether these forms make any coherent layer is hard to say, as the maps in the Appendix show.

For evidence of another possible, if fragmentary, layer in these MSS, see Chapter 5 below.

27. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Ashmole 35. This MS is described by Macaulay (1900)⁸⁰ and by Fisher (1965)⁸¹. Macaulay gives no date, but Fisher considers it an "early-fifteenth-century MS" (even though he classifies it in the same line as a MS "clearly later or in another style"). There would not appear to be any evidence of early ownership. A point of interest is that the scribe has translated the Latin marginal glosses to the poem into English. The linguistic differences between the test tranches in Books III and VI do not seem significant, so I have merged the results for the two passages in the analysis on pp. 425 - 426 below.

As the accompanying map and the maps in the Appendix show, the set of linguistic features in the Ashmole MS can be accommodated in a number of places. One plausible localisation might be Surrey - but many of the forms cluster in a more concentrated way in Herefordshire. Plainly, the language of this text is basically 'colourless', dialectally-speaking. Either a Surrey or a South Herefordshire localisation could accommodate forms, such as sihe 'SAW', which are also Gowerian; the presence of such forms in this text could be the result of constrained behaviour.



31. Philadelphia, Rosenbach Foundation, MS 1083/29
(368)(olim Aberdeen). This MS was not known to Mac-
 aulay; Fisher (1965)⁸² dates it ca. 1450. I have been
 able to see only a photograph of one folio of this
 MS (fols. 1r and 3v; Prol. 1-90*, 508-600)⁸³; an analysis
 appears on pp. 427 - 428 below. Given the paucity
 of information available, it is probably unsafe to
 attempt a localisation for the language of this MS.

32. Cambridge, Sidney Sussex College, MS Δ 4.1 (63).
 This MS is discussed by Macaulay (1900)⁸⁴ and by Fisher
 (1965)⁸⁵. Both date the MS to the middle of the fifteenth
 century. Macaulay notes the word "'temsdytton' (i.e.
 Thames Dytton) in an early hand"; however, the language
 of the MS has been localised to the Ely area by McIntosh
 (1976). Macaulay notes that "The text has many corrup-
 tions and the spelling is not very good". There do
 not appear to be any significant changes in spelling
 practice during the course of the MS, so I merge the
 readings for the test tranches in Books III and VI in
 the analysis on pp. 429 - 431 below. .

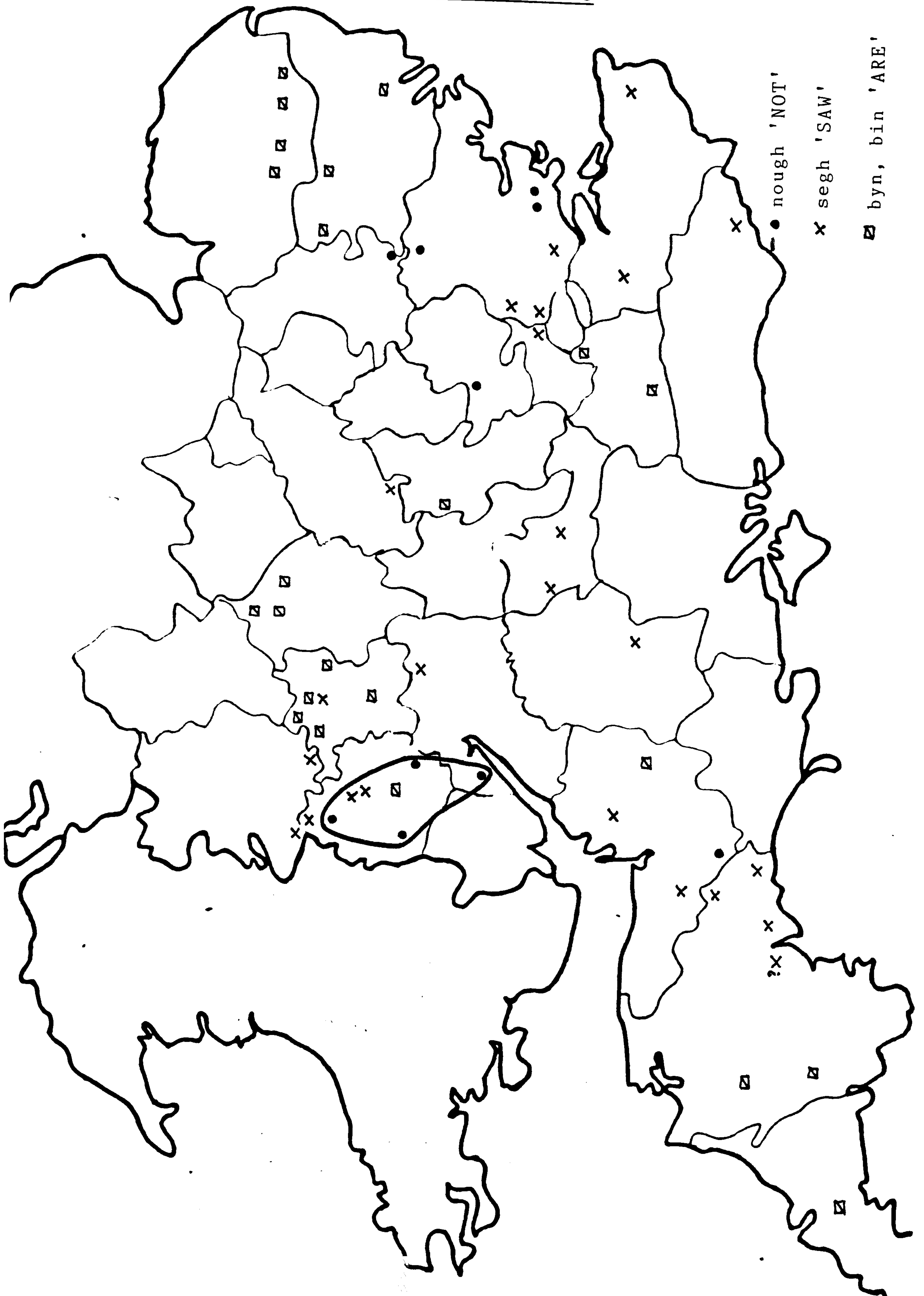
⁸⁶
 McIntosh (1976) notes as dialectally signif-
 icant in this MS the regular use of ageine 'AGAIN',
su- in suiche 'SUCH' and peise 'THESE'. It appears
 that the Survey of Middle English Dialects used the
 text of the Middle English Distichs of Cato in this MS

rather than the Gower,⁸⁷ but the forms McIntosh notes also appear in the Sidney Sussex Confessio Amantis text. The maps in the Appendix show that it is unnecessary to postulate the existence of another layer of language here.

35. London, British Library, MS Additional 12043.

This MS is discussed both by Macaulay (1900)⁸⁸ and by Fisher (1965)⁸⁹. Both date it to the beginning of the fifteenth century. Macaulay records the name "'Elizabeth Vernon' (fifteenth century?) on blank leaf at end". In the nineteenth century it belonged to Bishop Butler of Lichfield. Macaulay records a shift in the MS's textual affiliation after the fifth book; I have, therefore, kept the analyses for the two test tranches from this MS separate on pp. 432 - 435 below.

Most of the material in Additional 12043 which is not Gowerian consists of forms which are widespread in later Middle English, e.g. two 'TWO', thorugh 'THROUGH', first 'FIRST', siluèr 'SILVER' etc.. However, there are sporadic indications of a 'dialectal' layer in the text which is localisable; whether the forms are relicts or sporadic indications of the Additional scribe's origins is hard to say. The forms byn 'ARE', nough 'NOT' and segh 'SAW' are plotted on the accompanying map; they seem most plausibly to cohere in



Herefordshire/Worcestershire, which area would also accommodate other non-Gowerian forms which are more dialectally 'colourless', such as wich 'WHICH', hit 'IT', or 'ERE', alfe 'HALF'. poro 'THROUGH' presents a problem; very rare in the South, it appears only in Eastern texts, as the map in the Appendix indicates. I am, however, reluctant to posit an extra layer in this text on the strength of a single form.

Differences between the two tranches of text analysed in this MS are slight, but those there are seem to indicate that the exemplar for Book VI was rather more 'Gowerian' than that for Book III (cf. owen/owne 'OWN' in III, oughne/oghne in VI). However, both texts show a persistent Gowerian input, indicated by such forms as -end(e) (pres.part.) and fere 'FIRE' in Book III (fer is a minor variable for this item in the Fairfax MS). Other forms, such as pei 'THEY', hihe 'HIGH', yhe 'EYE', 3oue 'GIVEN' etc. may be present as the result of constrained behaviour.

36. Nottingham, University Library, Middleton Collection MS Mi LM 8 (olim Wollaton Hall). This MS is discussed by Macaulay (1900)⁹⁰ and by Fisher (1965)⁹¹. Both date the MS to the early fifteenth century, and Macaulay discusses the textual affiliations of the MS at some length. There are some linguistic differences between the test passages from Book III and Book VI,

so their readings are kept separate in the analyses on pp. 436 - 439 below.

Most of the forms in the Notts. U.L. MS are Gowerian (e.g. 3oue 'GIVEN', -end(e) pres.part.), sub-Gowerian (e.g. oughen 'OWN'), or widespread in later Middle English, as the maps in the Appendix show (e.g. myche 'MUCH', porgh 'THROUGH', shulde 'SHOULD'). However, there are a number of sporadic forms which, in combination, would appear to indicate a Northern or North Midland input to the text: -es (3rd pres.sg.), -and (pres.part.), hundrep 'HUNDRED', gude 'GOOD', knawep (3rd pres.sg.) 'KNOWS', omange 'AMONG'. Some of these, of course, as the maps in the Appendix show, are to be found in the Southern half of England (e.g. hundrep), albeit only sporadically; but omange is not among them. Until the Northern maps for the Survey of Middle English Dialects are finally completed, it is probably over-speculative to attempt to localise this layer from such slight evidence.

39. Geneva, Bibliotheca Bodmeriana, MS Bodmer 178
(olim Keswick-Gurney). This MS is described by Mac-
 aulay (1900)⁹² and by Fisher (1965)⁹³. It dates from
 the early fifteenth century; its former possessors

were, according to Macaulay, "Thomas Stone 'of Bromsberrowe in the County of Glouc.', Henry Harman, William Mallowes (Q. Elizabeth's reign?), John Feynton".

The MS was written by no fewer than six scribes, all of whom are represented in the analyses on pp. 440 - 451 below. The stints of each hand in the MS are as follows: (1) - quires 1, 2, 6, 8-11, 21; (2) - quires 3 and 7; (3) - quires 4, 5, 16, 17; (4) - quires 12-15, 19; (5) - quire 18; (6) - quires 20, 22-24.

As Macaulay points out, the first and fourth hands in the Geneva MS "give a text so closely corresponding to that of [the Fairfax MS], that it is almost impossible not to believe that it is copied from it ... Indeed, whole columns may be found in the parts copied by the first or fourth hand which do not differ from [Fairfax] in the smallest particular, either of spelling or punctuation".⁹⁴ Non-Gowerian forms are scattered throughout the six hands, but in most cases do not cohere sufficiently to form convincing layers.⁹⁵ The only hand with any distinct non-Gowerian input is the third hand, with after 'AFTER', pof 'THOUGH', werld 'WORLD', -ande (pres.part.), es 'IS'. Further study of this MS may make it possible to localise these 'Northernisms' more precisely.

40. London, British Library, MS Harley 3869. This MS is described by Macaulay (1900)⁹⁶ and by Fisher (1965)⁹⁷. As far as I can judge, the language of this MS is essentially identical with that of the Fairfax MS. For this reason, I do not discuss it further here.

41. London, British Library, MS Harley 7184. This MS is described by Macaulay (1900)⁹⁸ and by Fisher (1965)⁹⁹. Macaulay dates the MS to the middle of the fifteenth century; its magnificent appearance, he points out, means that it was "doubtless [written] for some distinguished person". There does not seem to be any evidence of early ownership, other than a puzzling scribble on fol. 24v (not noticed by Macaulay), 'Eke? of Johna I Bon/ The ffer of Eke? lord?', which seems to be in a fifteenth-century hand. Doyle and Parkes (1978) suggest that this MS shared an exemplar with the Magdalen MS (no. 45 below)¹⁰⁰. There do not seem to be any significant changes in spelling practice during the copying of the Harley MS, so I merge the readings for the test tranches in Books III and VI in the analysis on pp. 452 - 454 below.

. In Harley 7184, most forms are Gowerian (tuo 'TWO', hiere 'HEAR' etc.), sub-Gowerian (ougne 'OWN' etc.), or 'Type IV' (but, shuld, togidre). Possible indications of another layer in the text include thof 'THOUGH' and, perhaps, throu3 'THROUGH'. Little can be made of these features in isolation.

43. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Hatton 51. This MS was copied from Caxton's edition and, as far as I can judge, reproduces the spelling thereof. See, therefore, no. 64. below.

44. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Lyell 31 (olim Clumber). This MS was not known to Macaulay (1900); Fisher (1965) did not know of its whereabouts, simply noting its appearance in Maggs Catalogue 691 (1940) as Item 242.¹⁰² It is discussed in full in de la Mare (1971),¹⁰³ who dates it to the middle of the fifteenth century. She notes that the earliest name in the MS, dating from the sixteenth century, is 'Worseley', accompanied by the legend 'Nec temere nec timide'. There do not seem to be any significant changes in spelling practice during the copying of the MS, so I merge the readings for the test passages from Books III and VI in the analysis on pp. 455 - 457 below.

Those forms in the Lyell MS which are neither Gowerian nor sub-Gowerian nor 'Type IV' are dialectally colourless. The combination of sihe 'SAW', -end (pres. part.), ougne 'OWN', hiel 'HELD' etc. indicates a fairly powerful input from the archetypal Gowerian language. The forms they 'THEY', any 'ANY', shuld 'SHOULD', togidre 'TOGETHER' and not 'NOT' are all 'Type IV' forms, widespread in later Middle English. It is hard to see any dialectal significance in wich

'WHICH' in isolation. It is, of course, a minor variable in the Fairfax MS, but here it is the main form.

45. Oxford, Magdalen College, MS 213. This MS is noticed by Macaulay (1900)¹⁰⁴ and by Fisher (1965)¹⁰⁵. Both date it to the middle of the fifteenth century. As far as early ownership goes, Macaulay notes that the MS was "presented to the College by Marchadin Hunnis in 1620. A note by the present Librarian states that he was elected a demy of the College in 1606, appointed second master of the College Grammar School in 1610, and dismissed from that office as 'insufficiens' in Dec. 1611". Macaulay continues: "This MS is in many points like [Harley 7184] in its text, and must certainly have the same origin, both being perhaps derived from a MS dependent on [Geneva] ..."¹⁰⁶; he also notes a special connection textually between this MS and Caxton's edition. There do not seem to be any significant linguistic differences between the two test passages in this MS, so I have merged their readings in the analysis on pp. 458 - 460 below.

The language of the Magdalen MS contains a sprinkling of 'colourless' dialectal forms: or 'ERE', wil 'WHILE', blenkling 'BLINKING', perhaps sporadic y^e 'THE'. A very slight input from the archetypal Gowerian

language is indicated by such forms as -end (pres. part.), comth 'COMES', ougne 'OWN', or..or 'EITHER..OR', yhen 'EYES', tuo 'TWO'; whether these are relicts or constrained items is hard to say. Otherwise, the text contains forms common in later ME (e.g. any 'ANY', shuld 'SHOULD', togidre 'TOGETHER', siluer 'SILVER' etc.). It may be of interest that blenkling also occurs in the Folger MS (no. 49 below).

46. Oxford, New College, MS 266. This MS is described by Macaulay (1900)¹⁰⁷ and by Fisher (1965)¹⁰⁸. According to Macaulay, the MS dates from the "first quarter [of the] fifteenth century". There is evidence of early Hertfordshire ownership: "The name of John Cutt of Schenley, Hertfordshire, appears in the book (late-15th century) ..." Of its orthography, Macaulay says that it is like that of Fairfax 3 "but differs in some points, as 'shal', 'she' etc. for 'schal', 'sche', 'noht' for 'noght', besides being very uncertain about final e, often to the destruction of the metre". This description is a perfectly adequate account, as is indicated by the analysis on pp. 461 - 462 below. As there do not seem to be any significant differences between the two test passages in this MS, I have merged their readings.

47. Oxford, Wadham College, MS 13. This MS is described by Fisher (1965)¹⁰⁹ and, at some length, by Macaulay (1900)¹¹⁰.

The MS is in two hands; hand 1 writes up to IV.2132, hand 2 from there to the end of the MS. Macaulay gives an extensive account of early ownership: "This book was evidently written for one John Dedwood, since his name and device, a piece of the trunk of a dead tree, occur as part of the decorations of the first page. The two blanks at the beginning are written over with a list of Mayors and Sheriffs for a series of years, and these prove to be those of the City of Chester from the year 1469-1499 .. The name John Dedwood occurs among these as Sheriff in the year 1481 and as Mayor in 1483 (but the record in the MS is here damaged). He had also been Mayor in 1468. We may therefore suppose that the MS dates from about 1470 ...". The MS has recently been further discussed and described by Mapstone (1982). She writes as follows: "Although the [Wadham] MS is late and full of errors in .. the Confessio Amantis .. it has, as Macaulay pointed out, some textual interest, in that while clearly descended from the Fairfax MS it has a number of readings that link it both with what Macaulay calls 'the first recension uncorrected type' and with MS Bodley 294, of the second recension group. Its ancestry thus remains somewhat uncertain. But it is interesting that such a late MS should be looking back to the layout and ordinatio of the earlier Gower MSS, where the Latin summaries appear in the margin - in

many later MSS we find them incorporated into the text".^{III} The analyses on pp. 463 - 467 below display the readings from the two test tranches in the Wadham MS.

As a NWM text with strong associations with the city of Chester, the Wadham MS is of great dialectal significance. Forms of interest in hand 1 include: is 'HIS', hyt 'IT', yay 'THEY', thaym 'THEM', yayre 'THEIR', iche 'EACH', mony 'MANY', meche and much 'MUCH', beres 'BEARS' (3rd pres.sg.) etc., thagh and yagh 'THOUGH', yilk (for Gowerian pilke), yet 'YET', egh 'EYE': segh 'SAW', worde 'WORLD' (beside world), wakande 'WAKING' (pres.part.), thruhh 'THROUGH', furst 'FIRST', hundreth 'HUNDRED', ovne 'OWN', stydde 'STEAD', yeres 'EARS', luff 'LOVE', whoke 'QUAKED'. Interesting forms in hand 2 include: hit 'IT', mekul 'MUCH', has 'HAS' (beside hath), agayne 'AGAIN', yet 'YET', hegh 'HIGH', touchand 'TOUCHING' (pres.part.), avne 'OWN', stidde 'STEAD' (beside stedde), segh 'SAW'. These non-Gowerian forms are markedly North-West Midland features in combination. However, examination of the analyses shows that both hands have carried over a number of Southern forms, presumably from the exemplar. Thus, in hand 1, we might note hem 'THEM', bene 'ARE', -(e)th forms of the 3rd pres.sg., tofore 'BEFORE', cleput 'CALLED'. In hand 2, we might note hem 'THEM',

-(e/i)th forms of the 3rd pres.sg., or..or 'EITHER..OR', tofore 'BEFORE', bene 'ARE', clepud 'CALLED'. This characteristic of the Wadham MS was commented on by McIntosh (1973), who says of it: "[The Wadham MS] is written by two scribes and both parts are heavily overlaid with West Midland forms. But it is not surprising, especially at this late date, to find that the conversion from London English is not complete".¹¹² The forms tofore 'BEFORE' and, especially, or..or 'EITHER..OR' are not the usual London forms, as the maps in the Appendix show; and their presence in this MS suggests that the conversion was made from the archetypal Gowerian language rather than from London English. No doubt further study of this MS would reveal other 'Gowerian' forms.

48. New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library, Osborn Collection MS fa.1 (olim Witten cat.5 (1961), item 24). It has recently been discovered that no. 59., the Pearson Fragment, is part of this MS. The MS was known neither to Macaulay (1900) nor to Fisher (1965), but it has been described by Griffiths (1983.1), who dates it to the first quarter of the fifteenth century. Griffiths notes no evidence of early ownership. There are certain differences in spelling practice between the test passages, so I have given separate analyses on pp. 468 - 471 below.

The combination of oghne 'OWN', -ende (pres. part.), sihe 'SAW', hiere 'HEAR' etc. in the Yale MS suggests a very strong input from the archetypal Gowerian language. However, in both sections analysed, there are non-archetypal forms: in the passage from Book III, soche 'SUCH', wiche 'WHICH', wharof and wharto with 'WHERE-'; in Book VI: soche 'SUCH', wiche 'WHICH', pof 'THOUGH'. Non-archetypal shulde 'SHOULD' is common throughout, and it is noticeable that not 'NOT' is more common in the later tranche of text. All these forms are dialectally 'colourless' in this combination.

49. Washington D.C., Folger Shakespeare Library, MS Sm.1 (olim Cheltenham, Phillipps MS 8942). This MS is briefly described by Macaulay (1900)¹¹³ as "in the possession of Messrs. Maggs, Booksellers ... Parchment, rather roughly written, middle of the fifteenth century. From the Towneley Collection". Fisher (1965)¹¹⁴ adds nothing to this description. There do not seem to be any significant spelling differences between the test tranches in Books III and VI, so I have combined their readings in the analysis on pp. 472 - 474 below.

Some features in the language of the Folger MS plainly go back to the Gowerian archetype, for

their combination is too marked to be coincidental: -end (pres.part.), ougne 'OWN', or..or 'EITHER..OR', hield 'HELD', hiere 'HEAR' etc. Otherwise, the language of this MS is fairly 'colourless', with such 'advancing' forms as any 'ANY', shuld 'SHOULD', togidre 'TOGETHER', not 'NOT', first 'FIRST', but 'BUT' etc.. It is noticeable that the scribe uses the letters b and 3 rather infrequently. An interesting feature is the appearance of blenkling 'BLINKING', as in the Magdalen MS (no. 45 above). This would suggest either that one was a copy of the other, or that they share a common exemplar.¹¹⁵

64. Caxton's edition of 1483 (studied in the British Library copy, IB.55077). This edition is discussed by Macaulay (1900).¹¹⁶ The following discussion is based on readings from the test passage in Book III, and a few readings from elsewhere in the text. No. 43 above, MS Hatton 51, is a copy of this print. An analysis of the language of this edition appears on pp. 475 - 477 below.

The language of Caxton has recently been discussed by Samuels (1981),¹¹⁷ who sees as noteworthy the following features of Caxton's spelling practice:

A. Caxton maintains throughout his texts the following: 1. a distinction between tofore (preposition) and afore (adverb); 2. a distinction between hit (stressed) and it (unstressed); 3. ony for 'ANY'.

B. During his career, Caxton changes his forms thus:
 1. thise/thyse 'THESE' are steadily replaced by these/thees; 2. axe 'ASK' is replaced by aske; 3. tha(u)wh 'THOUGH' is replaced by thaugh, though; 4. thurgh 'THROUGH' is replaced by thor(o)ugh, thr(o)ugh; 5. In earlier prints, Caxton distinguishes between them (stressed) and hem (unstressed).

In his Gower, Caxton's forms for these items are as follows:

A. 1. tofore (only case in tranche analysed); 2. it (both stressed and unstressed); 3. ony.
 B. 1. These; 2. axe; 3. though; 4. thorough; 5. hem (both stressed and unstressed).

Samuels' study was based upon an examination of Caxton's own prose and translations from foreign languages. Such texts present Caxton's own spelling systems since, by definition, they cannot show any layers of language from any intermediate Middle English exemplar. Thus, if we examine a print of a translation by Caxton which is contemporary with his edition of the Confessio Amantis, the Golden Legend, we find hit and them, the 'Caxtonian' forms, missing from Caxton's Gower text.¹¹⁸ It seems probable that Caxton used it and hem in his print of Gower because these are the common forms of the Gower tradition; in other words, his practice here is to be explained in terms of 'constrained' behaviour. Another good example of this kind of behaviour is displayed by Caxton's forms for

'AGAIN(ST)'; in the Golden Legend, ageyne, ageynst(e) and ayenst appear, but only -y- forms are to be found in the Gower text (Caxton regularly replaces ME ȝ with y). Caxton's tolerance has limits; he will never use a form for 'YET' other than yet, even though this spoils a rhyme with abyt 'ABIDES'.

More sporadically in his Confessio Amantis print, Caxton reproduces what are probably traditional Gowerian spellings, viz. walkend 'WALKING', feynend 'FEIGNING' (pres.part.). It seems more likely to see these as Gowerian relicts than as constrained forms, even though, as the map in the Appendix shows, -end(e) is known in the Weald of Kent, Caxton's area of origin.¹¹⁹ By this date, they must have seemed very archaic.

It may be of interest to know that, when copying the texts of other authors in English, Caxton did not always exhibit a pattern of constrained behaviour. For instance, the evidence of his copying of Malory's Morte Darthur shows him to have been a 'translator', who must have changed the spellings of his exemplar into his 'own' spellings.¹²⁰ Why Caxton behaved in this way is still a matter of argument. It could be that verse texts, like the Confessio Amantis, demanded closer attention to detail, needed when rhymes had to be observed. Alternatively, Caxton may have felt it necessary to continue a spelling tradition in a court poet like Gower, but not in that of a Warwickshire knight of dubious reputation, like Malory.

65., 66. Berthelette's editions of 1532 and 1554
(studied in the copies in the British Library). The
 1554 edition is essentially a reprint of the 1532
 edition, with a different type and a few spelling
 changes, mostly the substitution of i for y.¹²¹ The
 analysis on pp. 478 - 480 is based on readings from
 the test passage in Book III, and a few readings from
 elsewhere, in the edition of 1532.

With Berthelette's print of 1532, any 'ANY',
yet 'YET', shulde 'SHOULD' are regular forms (cf.
 Gowerian eny, 3it, scholde), and there is widespread
 use of ea-spellings (compared with none in Caxton's
 Gower). Even Berthelette, however, retains forms
 which can best be described as 'Gowerisms',
 such as -end(e) (pres.part.), youen 'GIVEN', perhaps
dede 'DID' etc.. Such forms must have seemed either
 dialectal or old-fashioned to Berthelette's contemp-
 oraries, and prove that this printer, at any rate,
 was a long way from establishing a 'house-style' of
 spelling.¹²² Despite being printed over a hundred years
 after the earliest surviving MS of this tradition,
 Berthelette's Confessio Amantis shows the continuity
 and stubbornness of the traditional orthography of
 Gower's English poetry.

FRAGMENTS AND EXTRACTS¹²³

Of these texts, one (no.61, the Sutherland MS fragment) is now lost, apparently in transit to the National Library of Scotland.¹²⁴ Another (no.59, the Pearson fragment) is part of the Yale MS (no.48 above) and has now been restored to that MS. All the remaining extracts and fragments are to be edited by Harris (forthcoming). What follows here is by way of a sketch of the linguistic contents of each text. Unless the text is very brief, I have not aimed at completeness of coverage; a few linguistically-interesting forms are given in each case. Most of the extracts appear as part of compilations, often beside the work of authors other than Gower; it is, therefore, necessary for a full understanding of the language of the Gower extracts to make comparisons with other texts in the MSS. This is not possible within the small compass available here, so I have not attempted it. However, a future further study of the language of these compilations is planned.

50. TEXT: Cambridge, Gonville and Caius College, MS 176/97. On the top of fol. 23r of this MS, the following lines, a 'lyricised' version of Confessio Amantis Book VI, 1623-1634, appear:

Kny3tes in travayle for to serve
 Wherof the may thanke deserve
 Where as thes men of Armes be
 Some most ouer the gret see
 So that by lande and by ship
 The most travayle for wurship
 And make many hasty rodes
 Som tyme into Ynde & sumtyme to p^e Rodes
 And som tyme in to tartary
 So that the herialtes on theym crye
 Vaillant viallant Lo where he goith
 And then he gyvith hym gold & cloth

This text was not known to Macaulay or Fisher; it is described by Harris (1983). James (1907) considers the MS to date from "cent. xv"; it is, he notes, "rather roughly written".

51. TEXT: Cambridge, University Library, MS Ee 2.15. This MS is discussed by Macaulay (1900), Fisher (1965) and by Harris (1983).²⁵ Interesting linguistic features in the Gower extract include:

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>FORM</u>
'IT'	it (yt) (((Hyt)))
'THEY'	they
'THEM'	hem
'SUCH'	suche (((swyche, schuche)))
'WHICH'	wyche
'MANY'	many
'MUCH'	moyche
'SHOULD'	shulde
'WILL'	woll, wolle
'THOUGH'	Thowe
'SELF'	selfe
'AGAIN'	Ageyne
'SITH'	sethyn
'YET'	yet, yette
'NOT'	not (nought)
'EYES'	ey3en
'THINK'	thynkkethe (<u>3rd pres.sg.</u>)
'WORLD'	worlde
pres.part. ending	-yng
'THROUGH'	Thorowe
'FIRST'	fyrst
'OWN' (adj.)	owyn
'GAVE'	yaffe (<u>sg.</u>)
'HELD'	helde
'SAW'	sawe (<u>sg.</u>)
'WHAT'	what (((wat)))
'BRINGS'	brengeth
'TRUST'	troste, truste
'WASTES'	wastyht (<u>3rd pres.sg.</u>)
NE <u>v</u> -	wysage 'VISAGE', woyse 'VOICE', wertu 'VIRTUE'
'SISTER'	syster
'DOUBT'	dought

52. TEXT: Cambridge, University Library, MS Ff 1.6 (the 'Findern Manuscript'). The most recent discussion of this MS known to me is in the facsimile edition by Beadle and Owen (1977), which supersedes Macaulay (1900) and Fisher (1965). According to Beadle and Owen, there are "some thirty hands to be found in the manuscript". The Gower texts are as follows:

Item 1: (fols. 3r-5r) Conf.Am. V.5921-6052.
 Item 2: (fols. 5r-7r) Conf.Am. IV.1114-1244.
 Item 3: (fols. 7r-10v) Conf.Am. IV.1245-1466.
 Item 13: (fols. 45r-51r) Conf.Am. I.3067-3425.
 Item 25: (fols. 81r-84r) Conf.Am. IV.2746-2926.
 Item 26: (fols. 84r-95r) Conf.Am. VIII.271-846.

One hand writes items 1, 2 and 3; a second hand writes item 13; a third hand writes item 25; a fourth hand writes item 26 up to the end of fol. 89r, where a fifth hand takes over and completes the extract. These hands differ linguistically, as follows:

HAND 1:

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>FORM</u>
'HIS' (sg.)	ys
'HER'	<u>All cases</u> : hure, hyre
'IT'	yt
'THEY'	pey, pay
'SUCH'	soche
'WHICH'	Woche, woche, wyche
'EACH'	Eche, eche
'MANY'	meny
'ANY'	eny
'SHALL' (sg.)	schall
'SHOULD' (sg.)	schoold
'FROM'	ffram
'AFTER'	Affter
'THOUGH'	pou3g
'IF'	yff
'YET'	3yt
'STRENGTH'	strengthe
OE <u>hw-</u>	Wat, wat, wylom
'NOT'	no3t
'HIGH'	hy3e
'EYE(S)'	ye:sye 'SAW'
'WORLD'	wordle; <u>cf.</u> wordlys 'WORLD'S'
'LITTLE'	lytell
'THROUGH'	porwe, porw3
'FIRST'	ffyrst
'OWN' (adj.)	owne
'WAS'	Was, wos
'HELD'	hylde
'SAW'	<u>Sg.</u> : say, sawe; sye:ye 'EYE'
'HEAR'	hyre:matyre; <u>cf.</u> hurde 'HEARD'
<u>ladde</u> , etc.	ledde:hedde 'HAD'; <u>cf.</u> hed 'HAD'
'GOOD'	goud
'HOW'	how3

HAND 2:

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>FORM</u>
'HIS' (pl.)	hys, hyse
'HER'	hyre
'THEM'	hem
'SUCH'	such
'WHICH'	Whyche, whyche, which, wyche
'MANY'	manye
'MUCH'	mych
Contr. 3rd pres.sg.	preyþ, bryngþ
'SHOULD' (sg.)	scholde
'BEFORE'	tofore
'NOT'	noght
OE <u>hw-</u>	whylom
pres.part. ending	touchende, knelende
'THROUGH'	Thurgh, þurgh
'OWN' (adj.)	oghne, ogne
'SAW'	syh (<u>sg.</u>)
<u>ladde</u> , etc.	ladde; <u>cf.</u> hadde
'WAS'	was
'KNIGHT'	knyth

HAND 3:

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>FORM</u>
'IT'	it
'THEY'	they
'THEM'	hem
'SUCH'	such
'WHICH'	Wych
'MANY'	many
Contr. 3rd pres.sg.	þenkþ; <u>but cf.</u> takeþ
'THOUGH'	þogh
'EITHER..OR'	or..or
'YET'	3it, yet
'NOT'	noght, noht
pres.part. ending	knelend
'MIGHT'	myght
'WHEN'	when, whan, wen
'HEAR'	hier (<u>inf.</u>)
OE <u>y</u>	kisse 'KISS'
'BUT'	Bot
'HEED'	hied

HAND 4:

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>FORM</u>
'IT'	Hit, hit
'SUCH'	suche
'WHICH'	Wych, wych, whyche
'MANY'	many

'MUCH'	mychil, mechell
'GOES'	goith
'THOUGH'	thagh
'IF'	yff
'SELF'	selff
'STRENGTH'	strength
'WHEN'	whan
'FIRST'	furst
'OWN' (adj.)	owne
'SAW'	<u>Sg.</u> : sigh; sigh:ligh
<u>clepe</u>	clepyd
'BUT'	But
'FATHER'	fadur
'SISTER'	sustur
'DAUGHTER'	doghter, doghtur

HAND 5:

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>FORM</u>
'IT'	it
'THEY'	pei
'THEM'	hem
'SUCH'	such, siche, suche
'WHICH'	Which, which, wyche, weche
'MANY'	many
'ANY'	any
'MUCH'	mochel
'ARE'	ben
'GOES'	gop
'THOUGH'	pogh
'AGAIN(ST)'	a3ein
'BEFORE'	Byfore
OE <u>hw-</u>	whilom, wat
'NOT'	not, noght
'LITTLE'	litel
'THROUGH'	Thoro
'WHEN'	wan, wen
'OWN'	Owen
'SILVER'	siluer
'DID'	dide
'FIRST'	first
'SAW'	<u>Sg.</u> : sihe, sih
'HELD'	<u>Sg.</u> : behilde, hilde
'BUT'	but
'WISDOM'	wisdam
'PEOPLE'	puple

53. TEXT: London, British Library, MS Additional 38181 is a transcript of text 60., below (qv.).

54. TEXT: London, British Library, MS Harley 7333. This MS is discussed by Macaulay (1900), Fisher (1965) and Harris (1983). The MS comes from St. Mary's Abbey, Leicester. The following features seem linguistically interesting in the Gower passage:

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>FORM</u>
'THE'	the, þe (((þ ^e)))
'TWO'	two
'IT'	it
'THEY'	thei, þei, they
'THEM'	hem
'SUCH'	such
'WHICH'	which, whiche
'EACH'	iche
'MAN'	man
'ARE'	ben
Contr.3rd pres.sg.	stant, fint
'SHOULD' (sg.)	shulde
'WILL'	<u>Sg.</u> : wolle
'THOUGH'	þow, þof
'IF'	yf
'YET'	yit
'EYE(S)'	yen
'SELF'	selfe
pres.part.ending	Touchand
'WHEN'	whan
'FIRST'	first
'HUNDRED'	hundred
'OWN' (adj.)	owne
'DID'	?dudde (<u>sg.</u>)
'HELD'	helde (<u>sg.</u>)
'SAW'	<u>Sg.</u> : sawe, sye
'HEAR'	here (<u>inf.</u>)
'BUT'	but

The text of the Gower selection was written in the main hand of the MS. For an account of the spelling system of this scribe in other parts of the MS, see Manly et al. (1940), vol. I, pp.211-212.

55. TEXT: London, University College, MS Frag.Angl.1 (olim Cheltenham, MS Phillipps 22914). This text is discussed by Macaulay (1900) and by Fisher (1965), although neither seems to have examined it personally. A note in the back end-paper, which is a cutting from the Phillipps catalogue, describes this MS as follows: "fragment of

a very fine MS of the xv century, consisting of four leaves from the fifth book, folio". I would date the MS to the first half of the fifteenth century. Much of the language is Gowerian, and final -e is frequently used correctly (cf. hise 'HIS' (pl.)). Notable Gowerian forms include: hihe 'HIGH', hield 'HELD', yhen 'EYES', hiere 'HEAR', -ende (pres.part.); but the following non-Gowerian forms stand out: owne 'OWN', nough 'NOT', schulde 'SHOULD', porugh 'THROUGH', dide 'DID', seih 'SAW', yuel 'EVIL' (n.), lijf 'LIFE', silf 'SELF', ledde:hedde 'HAD'.

56. TEXT: Oxford, Balliol College MS 354, the 'common-place book' of Richard Hill. It is discussed by Macaulay (1900), Browning (1935), Fisher (1965) and Harris (1983). On fol. 37r of his MS, Hill records that he was born in the hamlet of Langley, nr. Hitchin; 'hansed' at Bergen-op-Zoom, 1508; made free of the Merchant Adventurers, 1508; sworn at the Grocer's Hall, 1511. He was probably born before 1490. Browning comments on the Confessio Amantis text as follows: "It is possible ... that the 'modernisation' from which [the text] has suffered might be of interest to the philologist".¹²⁶ The following forms might be of interest:

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>FORM</u>
'THESE'	thes
'TWO'	two
'BOTH'	both
'HIS' (pl.)	his
'SHE'	she
'HER'	her
'IT'	hit, it
'THEY'	They, they
'THEM'	them
'THEIR'	Ther
'SUCH'	Such, such, suche
'WHICH'	which, whiche
'EACH'	eche
'ANY'	any
'MUCH'	myche, mvche
'SHOULD'	shulde, shuld, shold; showld:yolde, shuld:told
'WOULD'	wold
'ASK'	askith
'AFTER'	after
'THOUGH'	thowghe
'IF'	Yff, yf
'SELF'	self
'AGAIN'	agayn
'ERE'	Or, or
'YET'	yet, yett:wytt

'TOGETHER'	togeder
'STRENGTH'	strenth
'BEFORE'	Beffore
OE hw-	whose 'WHOSE'
'NOT'	not
'HIGH'	high
'WORLD'	world, worl <u>des</u>
pres.part. ending	-yng(e)
'LITTLE'	lytill
'THROUGH'	Thorow
'WHEN'	whan
'FIRST'	firste
'OWN' (adj.)	own
'DID'	did, dide
'LET'	lat
'WAS'	was
'HELD'	held, helde
'SAW'	sigh (<u>sg.</u>); sygh:ligh
'CAME' (sg.)	cam
<u>clepe</u>	cleped, called
<u>ladde</u> , etc.	dradde
'WHETHER'	weyer
'COULD'	<u>Sg.</u> : Cowlde, cowld, cowthe:yowthe
	'YOUTH'
OE y	vnkynde; myrth; shit 'SHUT' (<u>p1.</u>)
'BUT'	But
'UPON'	vpon
'THAT'	yat, <u>yat</u>
'SISTER'	syster
'WORSHIP'	worship
'HOT'	whot
'DAUGHTER'	dowghter
'LIFE'	lyff
'OBTAIN'	opteyn (<u>inf.</u>)
'WIFE'	wyf
'HEART'	harte

57. TEXT: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson D.82. This MS is discussed by Macaulay (1900), Fisher (1965) and Harris (1983)!²⁷ The following features may be of linguistic interest:

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>FORM</u>
'THESE'	thes, these, þes
'SHE'	she
'HER'	hir
'IT'	it
'THEY'	they, Thei
'THEM'	hem
'SUCH'	suche
'WHICH'	Whiçh
'EACH'	eche

'MANY'	many
'MUCH'	mochel
'ARE'	beth
'SHALL' (sg.)	shal
'SHOULD' (sg.)	shulde
'WOULD' (sg.)	wolde
'ASK'	axeth
'THOUGH'	though
'IF'	if
'EITHER..OR'	Or..or
'SELF'	self
<u>thilke</u>	thilk, thilke
'AGAIN'	ayein; ayein:veyn
'ERE'	er
'YET'	yit
'STRENGTH'	strength
'BEFORE'	tofore
'NOT'	nou3t, nought, not
'HIGH'	hih:sih 'SAW'
'EYE(S)'	yhe, yhen
'WORLD'	world, worldis
pres.part. ending	spekende, Thenkende, liggende:des- cende
'MIGHT' (vb.)	my3t, might
'THROUGH'	Thorgh
'WHEN'	whan
'HUNDRED'	hondred
'OWN' (adj.)	owne
'DID'	did, didde, didden
'HELD'	hield (<u>sg.</u>)
'SAW'	<u>Sg.</u> : sih, seigh, segh, sigh; sih: hih 'HIGH', :nyh 'NIGH'.
'WHETHER'	whether
'BUT'	But, but
'UPON'	vpponn, vpon
'SISTER'	suster

58. TEXT: Oxford, Trinity College, MS 29. This MS is discussed by Macaulay (1900), Fisher (1965) and by Harris (1983). The following forms seem of linguistic interest:

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>FORM</u>
'THESE'	these, thes, pese
'SHE'	she (((shee)))
'HER'	her (((hyr, here, hir)))
'THEY'	thay, they, thei, thai
'ANY'	any
'EACH'	eche, yche
'MUCH'	moche, meche, me kyl, my kyl, mechil
'SUCH'	soche, siche, swiche, swyche (((shochę)))

'TOGETHER'	togedir, togedris
'NOT'	not, nat
'YET'	3et, yet
'EITHER..OR'	outher..outher
'ERE'	or (((er)))
'HIGH'	hiegh, high, hye
'EYE(S)'	eyen
'WORLD'	worlde, world
'WHEN'	whan, when
'FIRST'	first, fyrste, fyrst
'CHURCH'	chirche
'MIGHT'	myght, might (((myht)))
'OWN' (adj.)	owne
'SAW'	<u>Sg.</u> : sawe, saw
'DID'	dedyn, did
'HELD'	hylde, helde
'COULD'	couthe (<u>sg.</u>)

60. TEXT: Tokyo, Takamiya Collection MS 32 (olim Penrose MS 10-Delamere). This text is discussed by Fisher (1965) and by Harris (1983). Part of the text is printed by Harris, and I have combed her text for the following linguistic forms of interest:

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>FORM</u>
'HER'	hiere, here
'IF'	yif
'HAD'	hadde (<u>sg.</u>)
'NOT'	nowght, nowt
'WHICH'	wyche
'SHE'	Schee, schee, she
3rd pres.sg.	comyht 'COMES', wyshieht 'WISHES',
'SELF'	selfe
'AGAIN'	ayeen

62. TEXT: The Shrewsbury School Fragment. Discussed by Macaulay (1900), and also by Fisher (1965). I have been able to see a photograph of part of this MS through the generosity of Dr. J.J.Griffiths. The following forms seem to be linguistically interesting: Which 'WHICH', is 'IS', be 'THE', shulde 'SHOULD', worlde 'WORLD', any 'ANY', when 'WHEN', pei 'THEY', ben 'ARE', Bot 'BUT', if 'IF', it 'IT', noght 'NOT', Eye 'EYE': clergie, yit 'YET', chirch 'CHURCH', Michel 'MUCH'.

63. TEXT: Cambridge, Trinity College, uncatalogued fragment. I am grateful to Mr. M.B.Parkes for sending me a photograph of this fragment, discovered in 1983. The following forms are of some interest: noght 'NOT', which 'WHICH', bopen 'BOTH', Bot 'BUT', hier 'HERE', wol and wolle 'WILL', scholde 'SHOULD', Right 'RIGHT', 3iue 'GIVE' (inf.)

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

1. This list, with its numbering and classification of MSS, is that provisionally laid down by Pearsall et al. (forthcoming).
2. Macaulay (1900), pp.cxxxviii ff..
3. Ibid., p.cxxxix.
4. Fisher (1965), p.304.
5. For such 'settling-down' processes, see especially 4.II below.
6. Macaulay (1900), p.cxxxiii.
7. Macaulay (1900), p.cxli.
8. Fisher (1965), p.304.
9. Macaulay (1900), p.cxlii.
10. Fisher (1965), p.304.
11. Ibid., p.304.
12. Macaulay (1900), p.cxli.
13. Harris (1983), pp.28-9.
14. Ed. in Panton and Donaldson (1869/1874).
15. priv. comm. M.L.Samuels.
16. For 'constrained' behaviour, see 1.III above.
17. Panton and Donaldson (1869/1874), p.lix.
18. Macaulay (1900), pp.cxli-cxlii.
19. Fisher (1965), p.304.
20. See the Map for this item in the Appendix of Maps.
21. See the Map for this item in the Appendix of Maps.
22. Macaulay (1900), p.cxli.
23. Fisher (1965), p.304.
24. See the Maps for these items in the Appendix of Maps.

25. See Chapter 4, note 63.
26. Macaulay (1900), p.cxlvii.
27. Fisher (1965), p.304.
28. I am grateful to Dr.J.J.Griffiths for this information.
29. Macaulay (1900), pp.cxliv-cxlv.
30. Fisher (1965), p.304; see also Young and Aitken (1908), pp.10-11.
31. Macaulay (1900), p.cxlvii.
32. Fisher (1965), p.304.
33. See note 25 above, and reference there cited.
34. Macaulay (1900), p.cxlvi.
35. Fisher (1965), p.304.
36. Macaulay (1900), pp.cxlii-cxliii.
37. Fisher (1965), p.304.
38. Doyle (1983.2), p.176.
39. Macaulay (1900), p.cxlv.
40. Fisher (1965), p.304.
41. Macaulay (1900), pp.cxliii-cxliv.
42. Fisher (1965), p.304.
43. For the date of Lydgate's Lyf of Our Lady, see Norton-Smith (1966), p.xiv.
44. Ker (1964), p.95.
45. Fisher (1965), p.304.
46. Macaulay (1900), pp.clxvi-clxvii.
47. I am grateful to Dr.J.J.Griffiths for this information.
48. Hamer (1983), pp.69-70.
49. Ibid., p.70.

50. Ibid., p.69. Although hardly dialectally distinctive, the combination of has 'HAS' and hundreth 'HUNDRED' might suggest some Northern or North Midland input from Ricardus' exemplars. Given the rarity of such forms in this text, they could be the result of a Northerner working in London; for a discussion of such copyists, see pp. 289 - 290 below.

51. Macaulay (1900), p.cxlili.

52. Fisher (1965), p.304.

53. See note 25 above, and reference there cited.

54. James (1905), pp.273-275.

55. Fisher (1965), p.305.

56. Macaulay (1900), p.cl.

57. Fisher (1965), p.305.

58. Hardwick et al. (1856-67), pp.344-5.

59. Macaulay (1900), p.cli.

60. Fisher (1965), p.305.

61. Macaulay (1900), pp.cxlvi- cxlix.

62. Fisher (1965), p.304.

63. Doyle and Parkes (1978), pp.206-208.

64. priv. comm. M.L.Samuels.

65. Macaulay (1900), p.cli.

66. Fisher (1965), p.305.

67. Black (1829), pp.70-1.

68. Fisher (1965), p.305; cf. his items 28 and 31.

69. The form dogter 'DAUGHTER', which appears in this MS, is problematical. Forms with g for more usual 3, h seem to be a feature of early rather than later ME, e.g. ge 'YOU' (nom.), nogt 'NOT', furg 'FURROW' (OE furh) in the text of The Bestiary in MS London, British Library, Arundel 292.

70. Macaulay (1900), p.cl.

71. Fisher (1965), p.305.
72. See Benskin (1982).
73. I am grateful to Dr. J.J.Griffiths for this information.
74. Macaulay (1900), pp.cxlx-cxli.
75. Fisher (1965), p.305.
76. Macaulay (1900), p.cxlx.
77. Fisher (1965), p.304.
78. I am grateful to Dr. J.J.Griffiths for this information.
79. For an account of the language of the Cotton MS, see pp. 198 - 199 below.
80. Macaulay (1900), pp.cli-clii.
81. Fisher (1965), p.305.
82. Ibid., p.305.
83. I am grateful to Dr. J.J.Griffiths for supplying me with this photograph.
84. Macaulay (1900), pp.cliai-cliv.
85. Fisher (1965), p.305.
86. McIntosh (1976), p.46.
87. priv. comm. M.Benskin.
88. Macaulay (1900), p.cliv.
89. Fisher (1965), p.305.
90. Macaulay (1900), p.clvi.
91. Fisher (1965), p.305.
92. Macaulay (1900), pp.clxi-clxii.
93. Fisher (1965), p.305.

94. Macaulay (1900), p.clxi.
95. The form bepe 'BOTH' in the sixth hand, for instance, has two manifestations in ME: the Beds./Herts. border and the Herefs./Monmouth border. See Map for this item in the Appendix. However, there is little else in this hand which is distinctively non-Gowerian and which might support either of these localisations.
96. Macaulay (1900), p.clx.
97. Fisher (1965), p.305.
98. Macaulay (1900), pp.clxii-clxiii.
99. Fisher (1965), p.305.
100. Doyle and Parkes (1978), p.201 notes 102 and 104. Doyle and Parkes are developing a hint by Macaulay (1900), p.clxiii: "[The Magdalen MS] is in many points like [Harley 7184] in its text, and must certainly have the same origin, both being perhaps derived from a MS dependent on [Geneva]". Doyle and Parkes also note a possible connection between these two MSS and Lyell 31 (no. 44 below). Such books, they say, show a degree "of uniformity in text and layout ... [which] may .. reflect commercial book production in the metropolis". (p.201). See also my discussion of the Folger MS, pp. 168 - 169.
101. cf. Macaulay (1900), p.clxv, and Fisher (1965), p.305.
102. Fisher (1965), p.305.
103. De la Mare (1971), pp.74-5.
104. Macaulay (1900), p.clxiii.
105. Fisher (1965), p.305.
106. See note 100 above, and reference there cited.
107. Macaulay (1900), pp.clx-clxi.
108. Fisher (1965), p.305.
109. Ibid., p.305.
110. Macaulay (1900), pp.clxiii-clxv.
111. Mapstone (1982), p.11.
112. McIntosh (1973), p.65 note 17.

113. Macaulay (1900), p.clxv.
114. Fisher (1965), p.305.
115. See note 100.
116. Macaulay (1900), pp.clxviii-clxix.
117. Samuels (1981), pp.45-6. A few of Samuels' findings, as recorded here, have been modified by Gomez-Solino (1984), who shows that Caxton's progression from thise/thyse to these/thees, and from tha(u)wh to thaugh/though, is not so clear-cut as Samuels has suggested (see Gomez-Solino (1984), pp. 467, 475).
118. I have studied the text of part of The Golden Legend printed by Blake (1973), pp.105-110.
119. For Caxton's origins, see Blake (1973), p.xi.
120. For an account of Caxton's spellings in his print of Malory's Morte Darthur, see Smith (forthcoming).
121. cf. Macaulay (1900), p.clxix.
122. For a description of early printing practices, see Bennett (1952), passim.
123. For discussion of the fragments and extracts, see Macaulay (1900), pp.clxv-clxvii, and Fisher (1965), pp.306-7, and his item 32 on p.305.
124. I am indebted to Judith Scott for this information.
125. Such features may cohere in Surrey, e.g. schuche 'SUCH', wysage 'VISAGE' etc.. However, there is nothing diagnostic here.
126. Browning (1935), p.5. The MS has been studied recently by Gomez-Solino (1984), who records the following forms in the Chronicle of London text which Hill included in his Commonplace Book: yt, it 'IT'; her 'HER'; them 'THEM'; any 'ANY'; which 'WHICH'; eche 'EACH'; suche 'SUCH'; myche and mych 'MUCH'; chirch 'CHURCH'; togeder, together 'TOGETHER'; self, selff 'SELF'; own 'OWN'; shuld 'SHOULD'; than, then 'THEN'; thorow, thorowe 'THROUGH'; not 'NOT'. The corresponding forms in Hill's text of the Confessio Amantis are: hit, it; her; them; any; which, whiche; eche; such, suche; myche, mvche (sic); ['CHURCH' not available]; togeder; self; own; shuld, shulde, shold and showld; ['THEN' not available]; Thorow; not.

The implication would seem to be that Hill was essentially a 'translator' into his own language (although the sub-Gowerian forms for 'SHOULD' and 'TOGETHER' might be worth noting; cf. Gowerian scholde, togedre. It may be that Hill was constrained by his exemplar as far as these forms were concerned). See Gomez-Solino (1984), p.637, and references there cited.

127. MS Rawlinson D.82 is a localisable text used by the Survey of Middle English Dialects (text 664 - see the Key to the Maps in the Appendix). It is only part of what was originally a much larger book. For an account of the hands in the MS, see Harris (1983), p.30 note 15 and references there cited. The Rawlinson MS itself is all in one hand. The Survey researchers based their localisation on tranches of text taken from the prose Siege of Thebes and Siege of Troy. For the features recorded from the Gower text, the following forms appear in the Survey analysis: thes, bes 'THESE'; she 'SHE'; hir (((here))) 'HER'; hit (((it))) 'IT'; pei, pey 'THEY'; theym, peym 'THEM'; suche 'SUCH'; which 'WHICH'; [eueryche 'EVERY']; many 'MANY'; moche 'MUCH'; ben 'ARE'; shal(1) 'SHALL' (sg.); shuld(e) 'SHOULD' (sg.); wold 'WOULD' (sg.); asked, axed, axing 'ASK(-)'; bough 'THOUGH'; if 'IF'; [no exx. of 'EITHER..OR' recorded]; self 'SELF'; [no exx. of thilke etc. recorded]; ayen(st) 'AGAIN(ST)'; er, or 'ERE'; yit 'YET'; strenght(e) 'STRENGTH'; before, byfore, bifore 'BEFORE'; not, no3t 'NOT'; hie 'HIGH'; eighen 'EYES'; world(e) 'WORLD'; -ing (pres.part.); my3t, might, myght 'MIGHT'; thorgh, porgh 'THROUGH'; whan 'WHEN'; [no exx. of 'HUNDRED' recorded]; owne 'OWN'; did(de) 'DID'; held 'HELD'; sey, sawe 'SAW'; wheper 'WHETHER'; but 'BUT'; vppon 'UPON'; suster(es) 'SISTER(S)'. Comparison of the texts in Rawlinson D.82, therefore, would suggest that the scribe was largely a 'translator', but that he allowed through occasional relict forms (or..or, -ende, hield, sih etc.) when copying Gower. His behaviour with 'IT' may be the result of constraint; it is the Gowerian form, and its presence in his exemplar may have caused the scribe to activate what was otherwise only a very minor variable in his repertoire.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE LANGUAGE OF SCRIBE D'S MANUSCRIPTS

I. In a recent important article, the palaeographers A.I.Doyle and M.B.Parkes revealed the existence of a small group of scribes active at the beginning of the fifteenth century in copying manuscripts of (among other works) Chaucer and Gower.¹ They based their nomenclature for these scribes on their appearance in Cambridge, Trinity College, R.3.2, a copy of Gower's Confessio Amantis, written by no fewer than five hands: A, B, C, D and E. Scribes A and C are not yet known elsewhere. Scribe E is Thomas Hoccleve, poet and clerk of the Privy Seal. Scribe B wrote the 'Cecil Fragment' of Troilus and Criseyde, now at Hatfield House, and both the Hengwrt and Ellesmere MSS of the Canterbury Tales. Scribe D is one of the most prolific copyists of his time. His hand has so far been recognised in 12 manuscripts, viz.:

Cambridge, Trinity College R.3.2 (Gower, Confessio Amantis; D is responsible for quires 9, 15-19, and parts of 14);
 London, University Library V.88 (Langland, Piers Plowman; olim Ilchester MS);
 London, British Library, Additional 27944 (Trevisa's translation of Bartholomaeus Anglicus de proprietatibus rerum; D is responsible for fols. 2-7v, 196-335v);
 London, British Library, Harley 7334 (Chaucer, Canterbury Tales);
 Oxford, Corpus Christi College, 198 (Chaucer, Canterbury Tales);
 Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 902 (Gower, Confessio Amantis; D is responsible for fols. 2-16v);

Oxford, Corpus Christi College, B.67 (Gower, Confessio Amantis);
 Oxford, Christ Church 148 (Gower, Confessio Amantis);
 New York, Columbia University Library, Plimpton 265
 (Gower, Confessio Amantis);
 London, British Library, Egerton 1991 (Gower, Confessio Amantis);
 Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 294 (Gower, Confessio Amantis);
 Princeton, University Library, Taylor MS (Gower, Confessio Amantis; olim Rosenbach 369, olim Phillipps 8192. D is responsible for only parts of this MS. Unfortunately, I have been unable to examine more than part of one folio from his stint.).²

The characteristic palaeographical features of scribe D have been described by Doyle and Parkes (1978). D, they note, is one of a number of scribes using anglicana formata who "at first sight ... are difficult to tell apart ... since the salient characteristics of this version [of the script] lie in the refinement, the careful proportions and disciplined qualities of the handwriting".³ D's place of work was in London, proven by his collaboration in the Trinity Gower with a known person, Thomas Hoccleve. The sheer quantity of information which can be culled from D's manuscripts, and the variety of texts in which he is involved, make him an obvious candidate for the kind of study looked for by McIntosh (1975,.1976).⁴

The remainder of this chapter is, as far as I can make it, an exhaustive study of all those texts

copied by scribe D to which I have been granted access.

Material was gathered for these texts using the techniques described in Chapter 1 above. For statistical purposes, full questionnaires were carried out for the following tranches of text:

Confessio Amantis: where available, the first 500 lines from the Prologue and from each book of the poem;
Canterbury Tales: one section from each of the fragments (A-I) traditionally identified by editors;
De proprietatibus rerum: three passages of 10 folios each from the second stint in the MS by scribe D (the passages were taken from the beginning, middle and end of the stint. D's first stint is in Latin).
Piers Plowman: the complete texts of Passus I, III, VII, IX, XIV and XIX. The MS is much damaged, and many of the other Passus are fragmentary.⁵

The choice of these tranches was governed by the following considerations:

- a) They had to be large enough to yield a statistically-valid quantity of data in high-frequency items;
- b) It is known that, for a number of reasons, some

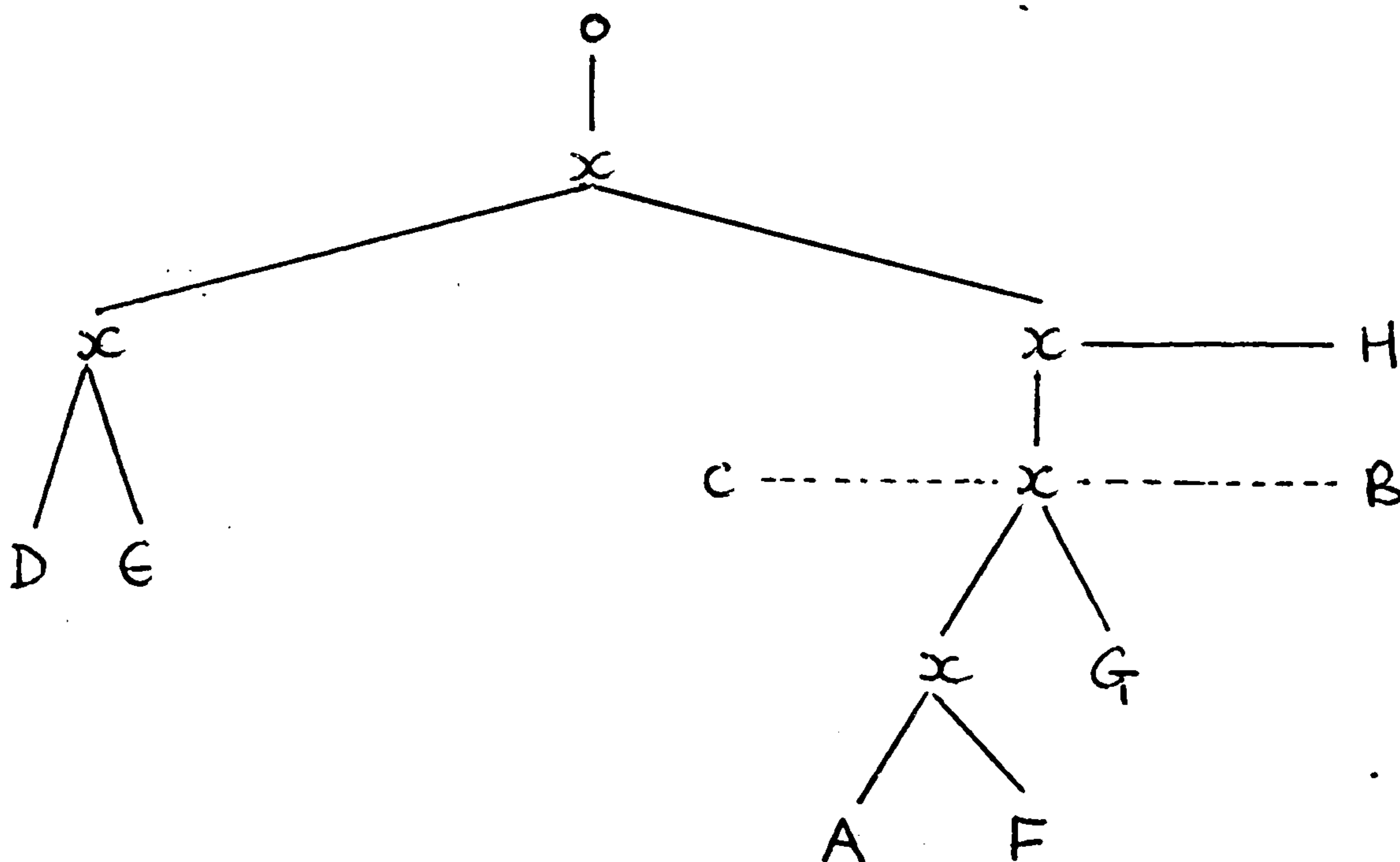
scribes do change their habits during the copying of a single MS. It is, therefore, necessary to study sections from different points in any given MS.

After these questionnaires were completed, the entire texts of the MSS were read in search of forms not recorded in the tranches originally studied. In the case of the Chaucers and Gowers, non-Type III and non-Type IV forms were noted throughout;⁶ in the case of the Gowers, forms which were not archetypal (see Chapter 2 above) were also noted.

What follows in this chapter is based upon this accumulation of data. 4.II is a discussion of the linguistic contents of each one of scribe D's MSS in turn. 4.III draws some conclusions about D's behaviour from this discussion, including some observations on the origins of scribe D. I suggest there also a chronology for the production of his MSS. The data themselves appear in the Appendix of Analyses in Part Two.

II. a) TEXT: London, British Library, MS Additional 27944; Trevisa's translation of Bartholomaeus Anglicus de proprietatibus rerum. The fullest recent account of this MS known to me is in Seymour et al. (1975).⁷ However, their description of the scribal stints is in error, and should be corrected by reference to Doyle and Parkes (1978).⁸ For control purposes, I have also analysed the language of the other two scribes in the MS, and of MS London, British Library, Cotton Tiberius D.vii (first hand). The analyses for the Additional MS appear on pp. 482-494 below; those for the Tiberius MS on pp. 495-497 .

The textual relations of the MSS of Trevisa's translation of Bartholomaeus Anglicus are discussed in a preliminary fashion by Seymour et al. (1975). A projected Volume 3 of their edition,⁹ which will include a full textual account, has not yet (1985) appeared, so I depend for textual information on their stemma, which I reproduce here for the reader's convenience:¹⁰



This stemma, the editors say, holds good for the complete work. The sigla signify the following MSS:

- A London, British Library, Additional 27944
- B Bristol City 9
- C Cambridge, University Library, Ii v.41
- D London, British Library, Harley 4789 (lacks 19 leaves)
- E Oxford, Bodleian Library, e Musaeo 16 (imperfect)
- F New York, Columbia University Library, Plimpton 263
- G New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, M.875
- H London, British Library, Harley 614 (lacks 1 leaf)¹¹

According to the editors, "three MSS (A, D, H), written before 1430, give a text noticeably less corrupt than in any of the other, later MSS".¹² We have no known Trevisa holograph, and Seymour et al. suggest that "by analysis of these eight closely affiliated MSS and by a linguistic redaction comparable to textual editing, a skilled team could doubtless recover much of Trevisa's spelling habits".¹³ Of course, the analogy they draw cannot be an exact one; scribes frequently made complete, or almost complete, 'translations' of their exemplars into their own idiolects, and the success of such a proceeding as the editors suggest would depend on a great deal of good fortune (as, for instance, with the Gower MSS discussed in Chapter 2 above). In fact, of the other 'good' MSS mentioned by the editors, MS H, with siche 'SUCH', silf 'SELF', lijf 'LIFE', myche 'MUCH' shows a strong input from Central Midlands Standard (Type I),¹⁴ while MS D seems largely 'translated'

into 'Type III' London language, although containing a few relicts from elsewhere: wachches 'WATCHES' (vb.), for instance. The editors noticed this, and chose MS A as their 'base' text because it "preserves better than any other MS the linguistic character of the lost common archetype".¹⁵

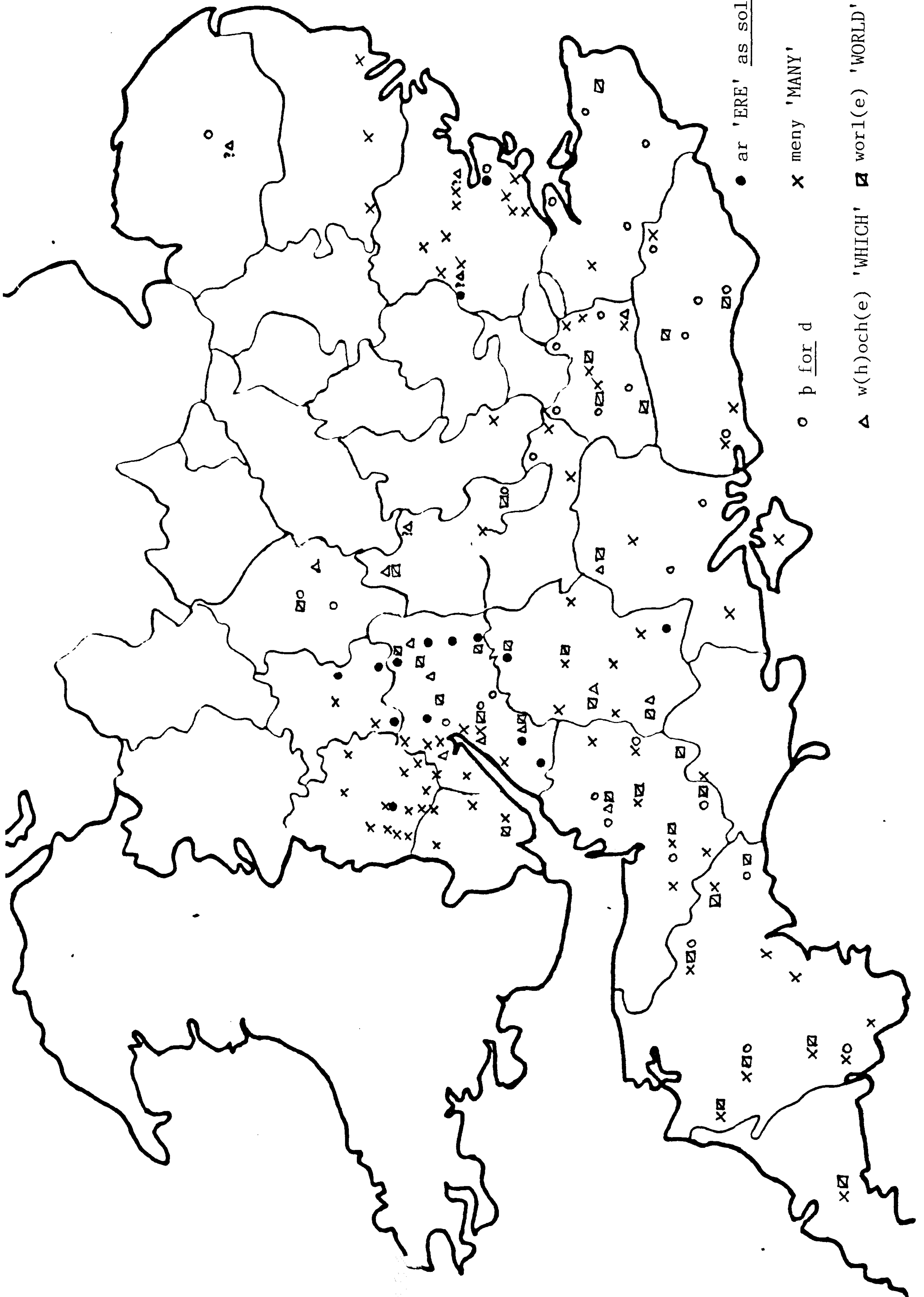
However, it is possible to supply control texts which might enable us to judge how far scribe D, the third scribe of MS Additional 27944, has intervened in the language of his exemplar. One such control is supplied by the other two scribes in the MS. Their practice must be treated with care, since they, no doubt, introduced their own idiosyncracies, and coincidental translation by all three scribes in the MS cannot be ruled out.¹⁶ Nevertheless, examination of their stints might explain some relicts and choices in scribe D's own stint, and common agreement in forms is, at least, suggestive of the nature of the exemplar common to all three scribes in the MS. Another control is supplied by a text of Trevisa's other long work, his translation of Higden's Polychronicon.¹⁷ Two early MSS of this text seem to reflect well the language of Berkeley in South Gloucestershire, where Trevisa was vicar and was patronised by the local magnate, Sir Thomas Berkeley:

London, British Library, Cotton Tiberius D.vii (first hand);
 Manchester, Chetham's Library 11379 (I am indebted to the Survey of Middle English Dialects for two readings from this MS on p. 201 below.)

Trevisa himself was a Cornishman, and had lived in Oxford (he was a Fellow of Exeter College from 1362-5, and was one of those expelled from Queen's College for "unworthiness" in 1379); but both Polychronicon and De proprietatibus rerum were translated at Berkeley, and we might reasonably expect texts which circulated locally to exhibit South Gloucestershire characteristics. The language of the Tiberius text certainly coheres convincingly in South Gloucestershire, as the accompanying map shows.

In comparison with the Tiberius MS, all three scribes in the Additional MS have a tendency to use forms which are less strongly marked as South-West Midland in Middle English. Full references are given in the Analyses in Part II below; the following table summarises a few items which demonstrate this:

Tiberius	Scribe 1	Scribe 2	Scribe 3 (=D)
he, a	he ((a))	he (((a)))	he (((a)))
hue, heo, a	[sche]	she	sche (((he)))
w(h)oche, whuch	whiche	whiche	which(e)
meny(e), many	many [mony]	many [mony]	many (((manye, many)))
fram, vram	from ((fro, from))	fro ((from))	fro (((from)))



Tiberius	Scribe 1	Scribe 2	Scribe 3 (=D)
þey, þey3	þey ((þei3, þou3)) (((þagh)))	þogh (((þei, þoghe, þey3e)))	þough (((þou3, þeyhe, þei3)))
þelke, þulke	þilke	þilke	þilke
3et, 3ut	3it	3itte	3it
<u>OE y =</u> u, uy, y	i, y; <u>a</u> <u>few exx.</u> <u>of</u> u, uy	<u>mostly</u> i, y; <u>but cf.</u> hulles 'HILLS'	i, y, u, uy

In each of these cases, the Additional scribes use forms which are fairly widespread in ME, less dialectally 'coloured' than the equivalent forms in the Tiberius MS. Nevertheless, the general linguistic character of all three hands in the Additional MS is marked by the appearance of South-Western forms (as is indicated above by the reflexes of OE y).

Two sets of forms are common to all three scribes: (i) a set which reproduces features characteristic of the Tiberius MS, and (ii) a set of sporadic 'Northernisms'. Many of the forms in the first set are minor variables, and this suggests that they are relicts from the archetypal Trevisa-tradition, as represented by the Tiberius MS, rather than forms within the 'active' repertoire of the scribes. Examples are:

a 'HE', hit 'IT' (cf. Tiberius hyt), possibly ha
 'THEY' (cf. Tiberius hy, huy, a), bup 'ARE', silf
 'SELF' (cf. Tiberius sylf), pey and pei3 'THOUGH' (cf.
 Tiberius pey, pey3), furste 'FIRST', oune 'OWN' (adj.),
si3 etc. 'SAW' (cf. Tiberius si3, sy3), hurep 'HEARS',
apon 'UPON' in scribe 1's stint; a 'HE', ar 'ERE',
ham 'THEM', tofor(e) 'BEFORE', pei and pey3e 'THOUGH'
 (cf. Tiberius pey and pey3), si3e 'SAW' (cf. Tiberius
sy3, si3) in scribe 2's stint; a 'HE', he 'SHE' (cf.
 Tiberius hue, heo), hit 'IT' (cf. Tiberius hyt),
meny 'MANY', silf 'SELF' (cf. Tiberius sylf), peyhe
 and pei3 'THOUGH' (cf. Tiberius pey and pey3), furst
 and furste 'FIRST', huyrep 'HEARS' (cf. Tiberius hure
 (inf.)), sigh 'SAW' (cf. Tiberius sy3, si3), -chch-
 in 'STRETCH' etc., whare 'WHERE' (cf. Tiberius whar),
benthing 'BENDING' (cf. pewe 'DUE', elpere 'ELDER' in
 Chetham MS) in scribe 3's (i.e. D's) stint. The
 'Northernisms' are few, and some can be found sporadic-
 ally in the South-West Midlands. However, their co-
 occurrence across all three hands in the Additional MS,
 combined with their non-appearance in Tiberius, suggests
 that they are relicts of another layer in the ancestry
 of the Additional MS. Possible examples are: pe whilke
 'WHICH', -es (3rd pres.sg.), sexpe 'SIXTH', til 'TO' in
 scribe 1's stint; beir and beire 'THEIR', pe whilke

'WHICH', hundreb 'HUNDRED', til 'TO' in scribe 2's stint; beire and pair 'THEIR', -es (3rd pres.sg.), sexe 'SIX', til 'TO' in scribe 3's stint (i.e. D's).

A more precise localisation of these 'Northernisms' can be made if we include in this layer the following, dialectally-restricted, non-Tiberius forms: mony 'MANY', meche 'MUCH', pagh 'THOUGH', or 'ERE' in scribe 1's stint; mony 'MANY' in scribe 2's stint. Scribe 1 seems to have been a copyist slightly more faithful than his collaborators to their common exemplar, going by his reflection of Tiberius-forms. His evidence for this 'Northern' layer, supported by mony 'MANY' in scribe 2's stint, might suggest that this layer is a North-West Midland one.

A few forms in the individual hands do remain unaccounted for by these layers; but, before turning to them, I want to look at some items for which D's forms change during the course of his copying of the text: 'THEY', 'ARE', 'WILL', 'TOGETHER', 'EYES', 'NOT', 'LESS', 'FIRST', SELF'.

In four of these items - 'ARE', 'WILL', 'NOT' and 'LESS' - D moves in the course of copying towards the form found both in the stint of scribe 1 - of the collaborators the one most faithful to the common exemplar - and in the Tiberius MS. The clearest

example of this process is to be found in D's treatment of 'LESS'. At the outset of his stint, -e- forms (lesse, etc.) are dominant, and remain so for most of the first tranche of text analysed. By the end of the first tranche, however, the first lasse-form has appeared; and, for a while, they co-occur. By the second tranche, however, lasse is fully established, and D persists with it to the end of the stint. A similar process takes place with 'WILL'; D moves from wil to wol in a very straightforward way.

The situation with regard to 'ARE' and 'NOT' is more complex. With 'NOT', D begins with four forms which, at the outset, appear with the following frequency: nought (nou3t)((not))(((nat))). During the course of copying, however, the first two forms in this sequence reverse their positions so that nou3t becomes dominant, and nought immediately subordinate. It seems that D increasingly favours the 3- form for this item; and that this is probably conditioning from the exemplar is shown by scribe 1's use of nou3t and no3t as his main variables, and by the appearance of no3t in Tiberius. However, D is not prepared to give up his ou-spelling in favour of o. This pattern of partial response to his exemplar is one which we shall see recurring in D's MSS.

D's forms for 'ARE' are of considerable interest, and display a shift-pattern comparable with that shown for 'LESS'. D's practice with this item is to move from Midland ben to Southern beþ; from being a minor variant at the outset, beþ forms become increasingly dominant as copying proceeds. Plainly, D is changing under the influence of his exemplar, from a South Midland to a Southern basis.

Further study shows an interesting, and maintained difference between D and his likely exemplar in his forms for this feature. From the evidence of Tiberius and scribe 1, it seems likely that D's exemplar included bup- forms, strongly South-Western in ME. This form is too outlandish for D, and there is not one example of bup, as far as I can see, anywhere in his stint. (There are a very few examples of the other form with the - presumably - rounded vowel, beop). Plainly, a process analogous to D's behaviour with 'NOT' is taking place. D will change his spelling practice - but only so far.

The remaining forms I have isolated are more problematical. For 'THEY', pay and pey co-occur more or less equally until quite late in scribe D's stint, when pey becomes dominant. This persistence well past the point where we might expect D to have 'settled

down' with his exemplar suggest that it is the exemplar, not D, which has changed. The forms for 'TOGETHER' are rather few, and show a shift away from the Tiberius/scribe 1 form, from forms with -e- to forms with -i-. This seems to follow a parallel movement to 'LESS', 'WILL' etc. - even though the direction is away from the probable archetypal language - so we might suspect that the exemplar is responsible for the shift; but we have no hard evidence for such influence. With his forms for 'EYES', D moves from a set of mixed forms (yen, y3en, ei3en, yhen) at the outset to the dominance of yhen later on. Again, it seems likely that the exemplar caused D at last always to choose this variable in his repertoire. With 'FIRST', the -u- forms become more dominant as copying proceeds; given the practice in Tiberius we are probably on fairly firm ground in seeing this as influence from the exemplar causing D to change his customary practice, but we do not have much evidence (other than a few sporadic forms) from the other scribes in the Additional MS. Finally, silf 'SELF' persists as a minor variable throughout D's stint, but it becomes suddenly dominant at one or two points in the third tranche analysed above. This suggests an irregular pattern in the exemplar for this item; that silf-forms are

part of the tradition of this text is shown by the Tiberius form, sylf, and by scribe 1's sporadic silf.

In a number of forms, therefore, we can see D changing his spelling practice, and that change taking place as the result of contact with an exemplar. The 'pre-change' forms, therefore, in all probability represent his customary practice, his 'spontaneous' usage. For D's origins, therefore, we need to look for an area where lesse 'LESS', ben 'ARE', wil 'WILL' and nought 'NOT' are usual. However, D's refusal to use bup, beside his acceptance of bep, suggests that he will turn to other forms if they are familiar to him, even though they are only minor variables in his spontaneous repertoire. In other words, D's behaviour is of the kind which has been defined as 'constrained'.¹⁸ We can, therefore, refine our evidence for D's origins; we need to look for an area where lesse, ben, wil and nought are preferred, but where lasse, bep, wol and nou3t are familiar. All these forms are widespread in ME, of course. However, D also accepts a fair number of Western forms, and his acceptance of these, given his habits of copying already determined, suggests that his origins are to be sought in the West. The obvious area in the West

where his behaviour with 'LESS', 'ARE', 'WILL' and 'NOT' can be localised is South Shropshire, the extreme south of Staffordshire, and the North-West of Worcestershire. The most Southerly of these three is suggested by D's treatment of 'MANY'. Both scribes 1 and 2 include mony as a sporadic minor variant for this item. D's refusal to accept this form is, perhaps, significant, since it was almost certainly in his exemplar.

Such a localisation of D's origins is supported by two sporadic features which do not seem to go back to any exemplar we can detect: D's use of -ww- in blowwe 'BLOW', iowwes 'JAWS' etc., and two occurrences of e- as the past participle prefix. The first of these, as the Map in the Appendix shows, appears in South Shropshire and North Herefordshire, but a related form, -uu-, does appear in a NW Worcs. text: temaruuen 'TOMORROW' in Cambridge, Trinity College B.14.39. The prefix in e- can appear in the South-East, as the Map in the Appendix shows, but it also appears as a rare variable in Worcestershire (cf. Worcester Cathedral Chapter F.10).¹⁹ It now seems a reasonable hypothesis that D's origins, insofar as they can be judged from his Trevisa, are to be found in NW

Worcs. or S.Shropshire - more probably the former.

I shall be returning to the issue of D's origins later in this chapter.

There remain one or two 'recalcitrant' forms in the Additional MS:

1. sich 'SUCH', noiper 'NEITHER' in scribe 1's stint; noiper 'NEITHER', liif 'LIFE' in scribe 2's stint; and mich 'MUCH' in scribe D's stint.

2. oughne 'OWN' in scribe D's stint.

The presence of sich, noiper, liif and mich in the same MS - albeit in different hands - might tempt us to postulate some input from 'Central Midlands Standard', especially when it is remembered that a related MS, Harley 614, was translated into CMS. Both MSS, it might be thought, could be reflecting some common ancestor which began a tradition of copying Trevisa's book in the Central Midlands. However, the forms are very few from which to postulate another layer of language in the text - and, as the Maps in the Appendix show, these forms are fairly widespread in distribution in ME. They can easily have been introduced independently by the three scribes.

The form oughne 'OWN' is more puzzling. It is diagnostic for Kent in ME; and it would only be supported

if we remove forms such as bagh 'THOUGH' and the e- prefix past participles from the other layers established as present in the language of the MS. oughne 'OWN' stands out as a 'rogue' form; the reasons for its presence here will be discussed at length in 4.III below.

In some ways, D's Trevisa MS is the most important text of all for understanding his behaviour. Scribe D, as has been indicated in 4.I above, was active in four traditions: Chaucer, Gower, Langland and Trevisa. Of these, the first three present immensely difficult textual problems, which complicated the nature of the exemplar which D was copying and, no doubt, presented him in each text with a variety of linguistic mixtures, quite possibly changing during the course of copying, with which to react. In the Trevisa MS, the textual situation is clear; and the evidence here is that D made a steady response to the nature of his exemplar. These issues will be pursued further below.

b) TEXT: London, University Library, MS V.88; Langland, Piers Plowman 'C-text' (olim 'Ilchester' MS). The most recent notice of this MS known to me is Pearsall (1981). As far as I know, there is no indication of the ownership of this MS before it came into

for the first two visions in Piers Plowman. Commenting on Samuels (1963), Hussey asked: "Does this mean that Langland went back to Malvern, like Shakespeare to Stratford, with the difference that Langland went on writing? It is a remarkable concentration of C MSS, even when we remember that their dialect is that of their scribes and not necessarily that of the author".²²

We can, therefore, reasonably suppose that underlying the Ilchester MS, at however great a remove, lay a 'Malvern' C-text MS. To provide us with 'control' MSS, in order to distinguish possible relict or constrained forms in the Ilchester MS, we might examine the main textual families of the Piers Plowman C-text tradition in order to find textually-independent, South-West Midland MSS.

Carnegy (1934) and Donaldson (1949) classify the Ilchester MS as belonging to their 'Group 'i'',²³ which also includes the following MSS (I give beside each one the dialect placing given it by Samuels (forthcoming)):

San Marino, California, Huntington Library HM 143 (the language of this MS is localisable to S.W.Worcs., "with some slight signs of interference typical of London copying");
 London, British Library, Additional 35157 (South-West Worcestershire, but copied by a N.W.Worcs. scribe);
 Oxford, Bodleian Library, Douce 104 (an Anglo-Irish MS);
 Oxford, Bodleian Library, Digby 102 (South-West Worcs.);
 London, British Library, Additional 34779 (olim Cheltenham, Phillipps 9056)(South-East Shropshire).

The remaining 'C-text' MSS were divided by Carnegie and Donaldson into the following groups:

- (I) the 't' group (mixed MSS, only partially C-texts);
- (II) the 'p' group;
- (III) Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, Additional 773,B (considered by Donaldson (1949) to be "very corrupt").

The 't' group of MSS presents special problems, because of their mixed textual nature. MSS in this group include, for instance, MS Cambridge, Trinity College R.3.14 (594), much of which is an 'A-text' of the poem (and which, therefore, may include 'peripheral' linguistic features). For this reason, I do not discuss the 't' group further. The 'best' MS of the 'p' group is, according to Donaldson (1949), the so-called 'Whitaker' MS, San Marino, California, Huntington Library HM 137 (olim Cheltenham, Phillipps 8231), whose language can be localised to the Gloucestershire/Herefordshire border. The 'best' 'i' group MS, other than the Ilchester MS itself, is San Marino, California, Huntington Library HM 143. This last MS is written in a language which closely resembles what was probably Langland's own.

By drawing together these two MSS, it is possible to make some deductions about the probable

nature of the exemplar for the Ilchester MS and foreground those features in its linguistic make-up which differ from that of its putative exemplar. Of the two, HM 143 is the more valuable for this purpose, for the language of HM 137 is further from that of the putative archetype.

The general linguistic impression left by the Ilchester MS is that it is a much less strongly South-West Midland text than HM 143 and HM 137. Even though a fair number of forms which might be considered South-West Midland do appear, e.g. OE y in u in fure 'FIRE' etc., fram 'FROM', vche 'EACH', sulue 'SELF', -us and -ur, 3ut 'YET' etc., many of them are only minor variables in the text. The following table indicates a few differences between Ilchester and the 'control' MSS:

Ilchester	HM 137	HM 143
It, it (((hit)))	Hit, hit	Hit, hit
He, he	He, he	He, a (((A)))
Many, many(e)	meny(e)	many, monye
self, seluen <u>etc.</u> (((sulue, silue)))	self, selue	sulf, sulue (((suluen)))
3it (((3ut)))	3ut	3ut

With 'IT', 'MANY', 'HE' and 'SELF' in the above table, it is noticeable that the Ilchester-scribe has chosen a 'Type III' form where a non-'Type III' form appears

in one or both of the other texts. 3it is not the main 'Type III' form for 'YET', but its distribution in Middle English is nevertheless more widespread than that for 3ut.²⁴

The remaining forms in the Ilchester MS which differ from the equivalent forms in the 'control' MSS fall into the following sets:

1. pair 'THEIR', hundreth 'HUNDRED', ony 'ANY', -ande (pres.part.), sagh 'SAW', lesse 'LESS', call- 'CALL', or 'ERE', a higher proportion of wil to wol 'WILL' in the Ilchester MS than in HM 137 or HM 143. These forms are less common in the South-West Midlands than in the North or North Midlands, and we might be tempted to see them as representing a separate, Northern layer in the language of the text. However, they are occasionally found in the South-West Midlands; so, on the principle of minimising putative layers, they might be accommodated in the South-West Midland layer already identified in the text.
2. oghne and oghene 'OWN', -ende (pres.part.), per-
whiles pat 'WHILE'. oghne is mainly Kentish in later Middle English, and its appearance here is somewhat puzzling. This form, however, assumes great importance in this thesis, and I shall return to it in 4.III below. For the time being, I shall leave it aside. The other

two forms also appear in Kent, in the case of -ende as a minor variable. They can, however, be accommodated in the South-West Midlands - if not, in the case of perwhiles pat, in Worcestershire - so they should, perhaps, be assigned to that layer, which is the better established in the language of the MS.

3. segh 'SAW', noiper and noyper 'NEITHER', iche 'EACH', ham 'THEM', silue 'SELF' do not appear in the 'control' MSS but, as the Maps in the Appendix show, all are well-established in the South-West Midlands.

4. 3he 'SHE'. This form is restricted in the Ilchester MS largely to Passus III, where 6 examples appear; one example appears in each of Passus VI and X. Such forms are well-attested in the South-West Midlands in later Middle English, but restriction to a small portion of the text in this case suggests some conditioning from the exemplar separate from that indicated above.

The origins of the most important of these layers is discussed in 4.III below.

c) TEXT: Oxford, Corpus Christi College, MS 198; Chaucer, The Canterbury Tales. The fullest description and textual account of this MS known to me is still Manly and Rickert (1940); but see also Blake (1984). Analyses for the Corpus MS appear on pp. 516 - 542 below. The arrangement of the Tales in the MS is as follows:

Gen.Pro. - Knight - Link - Miller - Link - Reeve -
 Link - Cook - Gamelyn - Link - Man of Law - Link -
 Squire - Wife of Bath - Link - Friar - Link - Summoner -
 Link - Clerk - Merchant - Franklin - Second Nun -
 Link - Canon's Yeoman - Physician - Link - Pardoner -
 Shipman - Link - Prioress - Link - Thopas - Link -
 Melibee - Link - Monk - Link - Nun's Priest - Link -
 Manciple - Link - Parson.

The Corpus MS of The Canterbury Tales was placed by Manly and Rickert (1940) in their 'c-group' of MSS, which also included London, British Library, MS Lansdowne 851 and London, British Library, MS Sloane 1686. Another group of MSS which Manly and Rickert considered to be closely related is their 'd-group', the 'best' MS of which is Sussex, Petworth House MS. 'Control' analyses from these MSS are appended on pp. 545 - 547 , 548 - 550 , and 551 - 553 respectively.

Along with other MSS of the cd-groups, the Corpus MS of The Canterbury Tales has already been the subject of a dialectal study, that of Kerby-Miller (1938). Her conclusion was as follows: "On the basis of variant spellings which c and d MSS have in common it has been concluded that the cd ancestor and the c and d ancestors where the groups are separable contained many of the dialectal forms found in the MSS. Of these forms the u-spellings for OE y are, as far as is known, the only ones limited to a definite dialect

region, and they indicate a scribe of the Western or Southern areas where the OE sound was retained. Whether most of the group u-spellings were due to the scribes of the group ancestors or whether they were first written by a scribe of a higher MS is not clear from the evidence".²⁵

Earlier, Kerby-Miller discusses the language of the Corpus MS as follows: "Corpus, the best and earliest (probably written before 1410) of the c MSS, has more often than any other MS evidence for the Western and Southern u-spellings [as a reflection of OE y] in the cd ancestor. Since it also preserves more of what appears from comparison with MSS of other classifications to have been the spelling in Chaucer's MSS than do most of the cd MSS, it is probable that the scribe was a careful copyist of spelling. Hence those dialect spellings in [Corpus] which occur in no other MS may be, rather than proof of the scribe's dialect, forms which the scribes of the other MSS written at later date rejected".²⁶

Kerby-Miller used very few criteria for her dialect study; she was not aware of the identity of the scribe of this MS. In what follows, I shall test her conclusions, using more modern means of dialect analysis.

The textual problem of The Canterbury Tales has long been recognised as exceptionally complex. Manly and Rickert (1940) revealed the existence of widespread contaminations between textual traditions, and variation in textual history, in many cases, from tale to tale; although their interpretations have been questioned,²⁷ the complexity of the problem which they distinguished has not been. The Corpus MS is no exception to this rule; its text has already travelled a good distance from the putative archetype of the tradition despite its early date.

To see how far these travels are reflected in the spellings of the Corpus MS, we need not only controls supplied by texts closely related - the Lansdowne, Sloane and Petworth MSS already mentioned - but also a control which reflects the archetypal language of the Canterbury Tales tradition. The obvious text for this purpose is the well-known Ellesmere MS. Although this MS differs linguistically in a number of ways from what has recently been suggested as Chaucer's own spelling, it does, nevertheless, with the Hengwrt MS by the same scribe, provide a good example of the 'Type III' language which almost certainly lies at the heart of the Canterbury Tales tradition. Comparison with Hengwrt/Ellesmere, therefore, should reveal those features which do not go back to the archetype and presumably, therefore, mark intervention by other

scribes between the archetype up to and including Corpus itself. For this reason, an analysis of the language of the Ellesmere MS is appended on pp. 543 - 544 below.²⁸

Like D's copies of Piers Plowman and Trevisa, the Corpus MS presents a dialectally-mixed text which is, at the same time, not markedly dialectal (as will become apparent in the tables below). Some features appear to be concentrated in certain portions of the MS; others are either evenly spread or so sporadic that any special concentration within the text is hard to detect.

Leaving aside for the time being the first of these two groups, there would appear to be a number of sets of linguistic elements within the Corpus Mischsprache:

1. There are many features which resemble the parallel form in the Ellesmere MS - although, interestingly, a number of these are minor variants. Examples include: swich(e) 'SUCH', bough 'THOUGH', neiper 'NEITHER', bey 'THEY', hem 'THEM', if 'IF', nat 'NOT', many 'MANY', saugh 'SAW', purgh 'THROUGH', yeue(n) 'GIVEN', hire 'THEIR'. A number of other forms in the Corpus MS, although not found in the Ellesmere MS, are to be found in other Type III texts: pese 'THESE', such(e) 'SUCH'

here 'THEIR' (and, even, pair), eny 'ANY', beigh 'THOUGH', for example, all appear in London texts printed by Chambers and Daunt (1931).

2. Another set of forms includes vche 'EACH', bopen 'BOTH', nough and nou3 'NOT', mon 'MAN', persistent OE y in u, uy in fuyr 'FIRE' etc., and the rhyming words writynk 'WRITING': pink 'THING'. With these forms might cohere: ar 'ERE', meche 'MUCH', seluer 'SILVER', -ur, nouper and Noyper 'NEITHER' and, even, werld 'WORLD'. As the Maps in the Appendix show, these forms cohere in the South-West Midlands.

3. However, werld is much more common in Northern and Eastern areas, and there are sporadic traces of East Anglian dialect in the text, combined with what may or may not be a separate Northern dialect. Diagnostically East Anglian is drynclyng (n.) 'DROWNING',²⁹ beside schat 'SHALT'. As the Maps in the Appendix show, other forms could be classified with these: bopen 'BOTH' is found in East Anglia as well as in the West Midlands, and the forms say 'SAW', ony 'ANY', bey 'THOUGH', and the frequent -ij- forms in wijf 'WIFE', lijf 'LIFE' would also cohere there.

4. There are a number of forms which might make up a separate Northern layer: ilke 'EACH', ware 'WERE', bem 'THEM'; peir and pair 'THEIR', displeases 'DISPLEASES', etc. (3rd pres.sg.), til and till 'TO', felynglik

'FEELINGLY' (adv.), haly 'HOLY'. As the Maps in the Appendix show, some of these forms are recorded sporadically in the South, even though their heartland is in the North. They might, if the principle of minimising possible layers is strictly adhered to, be accommodated in either the South-West Midland or East Anglian layers already identified. However, haly 'HOLY' is hard to accommodate in such areas.

5. oughne 'OWN' (adj.). At this date, this feature is mainly Kentish. Other possible Kentish forms in this text can be equally well accommodated in the other sets of forms already distinguished in this text; e.g. seluer 'SILVER' is also found in the South-West Midlands. oughne, however, is a 'recalcitrant' form which does not cohere with any of the elements distinguished above. It may be remembered that oughne, oghne also appeared in D's copies of Piers Plowman and Trevisa. The form is of some importance for understanding D's practice, but I propose to continue to leave it aside here; it will be discussed further in 4.III below.

The following table compares the forms in the Corpus MS with the equivalent forms in the four 'control' MSS, Ellesmere, Lansdowne, Sloane and Petworth.

ITEM	Corpus	Ellesmere	Lansdowne	Sloane	Petworth
'THESE'	þese (((these, þis)))	thise	þes	thes, these (((thez, theise)))	þise
'BOTH'	boþe (((bothe, bothen, boþen)))	bothe	boþe (((bothen)))	bothe	boþ (((bothe, boþe, boþþ)))
'HIS' (sg.)	his	his	his(((is)))	his	his
'HER'	hir, hire (((here, her, hyre, hure)))	hir, hire	hir, hire	hir, here	her, hure
'THEY'	þey (((þei, þay)) (((Thay, They, þai they)))	they	þei (((Thei, þeie, þaie)))	they, theye (((thaye)))	þei (((Thei, They)))
'THEM'	hem (((þem)))	hem	hem	hem (((them)))	hem (((ham)))
'THEIR'	here (((hire, þair, þeir)))	hir, hire	here (((hire, þeire)))	here, hir	her
'SUCH'	such (((suche, swich, swiche)))	swich, swiche	suche (((such)))	soche	such, suche (((swiche)))
'WHICH'	which (((whiche)) (((whyche)))	which, whiche	whiche (((whyche)))	whiche (((which)))	which (((whiche)) (((woche)))
'EACH'	ech, eche (((iche, vche, ilke)))	ech	iche, yche, ilke	eche, ilke	eche, ilk
'MANY'	many	many, manye	mony (((many)))	many (((mony)))	mony (((monye)))
'MAN'	man (((mon)))	man	man	man	man
'ANY'	eny (any) ((ony))	any	any	any	eny
'MUCH'	moche (mochil) (((mekel, mochel, meche, mechel, mechil)))	muche, moche	muche	moche	moche
'ARE'	ben (((be, been, beþ, are, aren)))	been	bien (((buen, been, bene)))	ben	bene (((aren)))
'SHALL' (sg.)	schal (((schull, schulle, schall)))	shal	schal (((schall)))	shalle (((shall, shal)))	shal

ITEM	Corpus	Ellesmere	Lansdowne	Sloane	Petworth
'SHALT'	schalt (((schat)))	shalt	schalt, shalt	shalt	shalt
'SHOULD' (sg.)	scholde, schulde	sholde	schold, shold	shulde (((shuld, sholde)))	shuld (((shulde)))
'THOUGH'	þough (((Though, þey, þeigh, They, þei3, þou3, þey3)))	though	þouhe (((þeihe)))	Theye, Thou3, theye, they, thou3, though, thouh	þou3e (((þough)))
'IF'	if (((yf, yef, 3if)))	if	if	yf (((If)))	3if (if)
'NEITHER'	neyþer, neiþer (((noyþer, nowþer, nouþer, noþer)))	neither	neyþer	neither	neiþer
'ERE'	er (or) (((ar, eer)))	er	ar (((Ere, er)))	or (((Er)))	er (((Er, eer)))
'WERE'	were (((waren)))	were	were (((Were, Weere, weere, weer, ware)))	were	were (((weren)))
'NOT'	nought (not, nou3t) ((nat)) (((no3t, nougþ, nough, nou3)))	nat (((noght)))	nouht (((nou3t, Not)))	not ((nought)) (((nat)))	not, nat (((Nou3t)))
'WORLD'	world (((worldē, werlde)))	world	werld, werlde	world, worldē	world, worldē
'THROUGH'	þurgh (((thurgh, þorgh, þoru3, þorough, þorough)))	thurgh	þoruhe (((Thorwhe, þoruh)))	Thorugh, Through through	þorgh (Thorgh, þorghe)
'SILVER'	siluer (((seluer, seluir, syluer)))	siluer	siluer	siluer	siluere
'HUNDRED'	hundred	hundred	hundrep	hundred	hundred
'OWN'	owne, owen (((oughne)))	owene	owen	owne	owne
'GIVEN'	yeue, yeuen, 3euen, yiue, 3ouen, y3oue, 3iue, 3iuen	yeuen yiuen: lyuen	3euen, y3eue	youen, Iyoue yeuen: lyuen	3euen, 3eue

ITEM	Corpus	Ellesmere	Lansdowne	Sloane	Petworth
'SAW'	saugh (((saw,sawe, seigh,say, seyh,seih)))	saugh	sawhe	sau3	seegh
Adv.- <u>ly</u>	-ly ((-lich, -liche, -lik)))	-ly	-ly	-ly ((-lye)))	-ly
OE <u>y</u>	u, uy, i, y	i, y; <u>occas.</u> u, e	i, y; <u>some</u> u, e	i, y; <u>some</u> e	i, y; <u>occas.</u> u, e
'DROWNING' (n. A.2456)	dryncl yng	drenchyng	drynchinge	-	drenchinge
'DISPLEASES' (3rd pres.sg. D.293)	displeses	displeseth	displesep	-	displesep
'HOLY'	haly (<u>once</u>)	-o-. -oo-	-o-	-o-	-o-

That a 'Chaucerian' layer appears in the Corpus MS seems highly probable, when the forms of the Ellesmere MS are compared; this has already been discussed on p. 219 above. South-West Midlands layers appear in both Lansdowne and Petworth, but there are difficulties in seeing these elements as making up a shared hyparchetypal layer, as does Kerby-Miller (1938). Most of the language in the Lansdowne MS is localisable to the South-West Midlands, perhaps Worcestershire, with the following forms: is 'HIS', nouht 'NOT', mony 'MANY', bien and buen 'ARE', schol 'SHALL', iche 'EACH'. Blake (1984) has suggested that the Lansdowne MS is a copy of Corpus; since Lansdowne is a more markedly South-West Midland MS than Corpus, the South-West Midland forms in the former cannot come from copying from the latter.

This would suggest that the South-West Midland element in Lansdowne was introduced by the scribe of the MS. Whatever is the exact relationship between the MSS, it is undoubtedly close, as we shall shortly see. There are also 'Northernisms' in the Lansdowne MS, viz. ware 'WERE', peire 'THEIR', hundreb 'HUNDRED' and, possibly, werld(e) 'WORLD'. However, these forms do not occur in the equivalent passage in Corpus and, if Lansdowne is a copy of Corpus, they cannot belong to the same 'Northern' layer I identified in the latter. The maps in the Appendix show that such forms can be accommodated, as minor variables, in the South-West Midlands (although hundreb does not appear in Worcestershire texts).

The language of the Petworth MS can be localised to the South-West Midlands as well; but it coheres not in Worcestershire but, more probably, in the Gloucester/Herefordshire/Worcestershire border region, with hure 'HER', ham 'THEM', woche 'WHICH', mony(e) 'MANY' as sole form for this item, sclayn 'SLAIN' and sclepe 'SLEEP'.

The form oughne 'OWN' does not appear in any of the control MSS, nor are there any other indications of a Kentish element in the language of these MSS.

In order to investigate the possibilities of an underlying East Anglian layer in the language of these MSS, it is necessary to pass to items where particular forms are concentrated in restricted portions of the Corpus MS. Such concentrations are to be expected - and, therefore, catered for in analysis - in confused textual situations like the Canterbury Tales or Piers Plowman traditions. Items which change in form during the course of copying in the Corpus MS seem to fall into two groups. One set changes gradually; at the beginning of the MS the forms are frequent, but they become progressively less so, finally disappearing altogether. Another set appears suddenly, late in the MS, and is comparatively frequent there.

By its behaviour, the first of these sets would appear to be like the similar set found in D's copy of Trevisa - the text in which D exhibits his behaviour uncomplicated by textual confusion. It may be remembered that there, with lesse 'LESS' etc., a shift away from the scribe's own form to the form of the exemplar could be detected. Such adjustments are well-attested as a common feature of scribal behaviour. Thus, in Corpus, D appears to use more 3-spellings in words like 'YET', 'AGAIN' than g, gh or y as copying proceeds. There is a tendency for wil 'WILL' to become progressively less frequent in the MS, although it is already a minor variant at the outset.

At the beginning of the MS, pei is the preferred form for 'THEY', but it becomes an increasingly rarer variant, finally being replaced by pey; a parallel development appears to take place with the other, much rarer forms for this item in the MS, pai and pay. pai appears only early in the MS. Of the remaining items which changed during the course of copying in the Trevisa MS, the forms are here stable, or in stable variation, throughout. Thus ben 'ARE' is dominant throughout the MS, and there are no occurrences of togedere 'TOGETHER' or silf 'SELF' (almost certainly because the probable archetypal forms, as indicated by those of the Ellesmere MS, are ben, togidre(s) and self respectively). With 'FIRST', the i- form is dominant, with the e- form as a minor variant; neither Kerby-Miller (1938) nor I found any u- forms. There is no shift from lesse to lasse 'LESS' as copying proceeds; both forms persist throughout the MS. With 'EYES', there is no consistent form, as the analyses on pp. 516 - 542 below indicate.

None of these shifts is especially dialectally significant. The forms which appear late in the MS, however, include two dialectally significant features, the forms for 'GIVEN' and 'MUCH'. The following table is a complete list of all the forms for 'GIVEN' in three MSS, Corpus, Lansdowne and Petworth. In these MSS, the non-Ellesmere form 3ouen etc. is distributed in a most interesting way.

Line ref.	CORPUS	Order of tale in MS	LANSD.	Order of tale in MS	PETW.	Order of tale in MS
Kn.915r	yiuen	1	3iuen	1	3euen	1
1086	yiue		3eue		3eue	
1089	3iuen		3euen		3euen	
1166	yeue		3eue		3eue	
1470	yeue	2	3eue	2	3eue	3
ML.333	yeuen		3euen		3eue	
444	yeuen		3euen		3eue	
Sh.1597	3oue	11	y3eue	11	3oue	2
Ml.2190	3oue	12	-	12	-	12
2245	3oue		y3if		3eue	
2270	3oue		3eue		3eue	
2485	y3oue		y3eue		3euen	
2690	3euen		3euen		3euen	
3035	3ouen		3ouen		3euen	
Mk.3425	3euen	13	3euen	13	3euen	13
Pd.449	3euen	10	3euen	10	3euen	11
779r	3iuen		3euen		3euen	
922	y3oue		y3eue		3eue	
WB.204	-	4	3eue	4	3oue	5
212	-		3if		3oue	
400	3iue		3eue		3euen	
401r	3iue		3eue		3eue	
631	3iuen		3eue		3euen	
771	3iuen		3euen		3euen	
Fr.1553	3iuen	5	3euen	5	3euen	6
Sm.1721r	3iue	6	3eue	6	3eue	7
1735	3iue		3eue		3eue	
Cl.758	3iuen	7	3euen	7	3eue	8
Sq.541	yeuen	3	3euen	3	3euen	4
Fk.1450r	3iue	8	y3eue	8	3eue	9
SN.470	y3ouen	9	y3ouen	9	y3ouen	10
480	3eue		3eue		3eue	
Pn.150	3euen	14	3euen	14	3euen	14
220	3eue		3oue		3euen	
250	3ouen		3ouen		3euen	
285	3oue		3oue		3eue	
415	-		3ouen		3euen	
485	-		3oue		3eue	
595	-		y3ouen		y3euen	
715	-		3ouen		y3eue	
780	-		3ouen		3euen	
Gam.870	youe	1a	3eue	1a	3oue	1a

[- = missing from MS. The Tales are listed in the above table in the traditional 'Bradshaw' order,³⁰ in order to show the textual relationship between Corpus and Lansdowne more clearly.]

The forms in 3ouen etc. in Corpus, backed up by their presence in Lansdowne and Petworth, were evidently in the common ancestor of all three MSS. They cohere dialectally with the East Anglian layer I have distinguished in Corpus, as the Map for 'GIVEN' in the Appendix shows, and by the principle of minimising layers should be assigned to that set of forms. However, in this case there is a puzzle, for the sporadic East Anglian forms - such as drynclyng - are not concentrated in the same part of the MS.

A possible explanation might run as follows: At an earlier stage in the transmission of the texts found in the Lansdowne and Corpus MSS, an East Anglian exemplar - also the ancestor for Petworth - was in its turn copied by two scribes. The first copied sections equivalent to 1-8 above in Corpus (very approximately); he removed most of the 3ouen-forms, and only a few relicts of an East Anglian exemplar survive, such as drynclyng 'DROWNING', the youe/3oue forms in Gamelyn, schat 'SHALT' and possibly bopen/bothen 'BOTH' (since this last form does appear in the South-West Midlands as well, its appearance in both Lansdowne and Corpus may, of course, be simply coincidental). The second scribe copied text equivalent to 9-14 in Corpus above; more tolerant than the first, he allowed the 3ouen-forms to stand. This may be supported by the distrib-

ution of the forms for 'MUCH'; meche-forms are found only after section 9 in both Corpus and Lansdowne MSS. Whether this picture applies to the Petworth MS as well is hard to say, given the presence of 3oue-forms in the Wife of Bath's Tale in this MS; the fact that the equivalent forms are missing in Corpus (although not in Lansdowne) emphasises the tentative nature of this explanation.

Despite this tentativeness, it can be claimed with some assurance that the Corpus, Lansdowne and Petworth MSS share a common East Anglian ancestor, and this may be of interest when examining the other 'c-group' MS, Sloane 1686. The language of the Sloane MS is localisable to East Anglia, possibly East Suffolk, with theise 'THESE', them 'THEM', soche 'SUCH', mony 'MANY', wull(e) 'WILL', youen 'GIVEN', theye 'THOUGH', vnkendely 'UNKINDLY' (with OE y) and Ya 'YES' (this last form does not appear in any of the other MSS discussed in this section). Dean, in her comments on this MS in Manly and Rickert (1940), records the appearance of xall 'SHALL' and xalt 'SHALT' in fragment D of this MS. The restriction of these forms - which are strongly East Anglian, as the Maps in the Appendix show - to this small part of the MS suggests that they are relicts from some exemplar, and that the exemplar underlying

at least part of Sloane 1686 was also East Anglian. The Sloane MS is dated to 1480-90 by Manly and Rickert (1940); it cannot, therefore, itself be responsible for the East Anglian forms in the Corpus, Lansdowne and Petworth MSS, all of which date from the first quarter of the fifteenth century. However, the common exemplar it shares with the other MSS may be the source of the East Anglian forms in the latter as well as of xall etc. in Sloane. Such an explanation is too speculative to pursue further in this study; greater certainty might be arrived at were all the MSS of the cd - group to be subjected to a fresh dialectal study using modern methods of dialectal analysis.³¹

d) TEXT: London, British Library, MS Harley 7334; Chaucer, The Canterbury Tales. The fullest account of this MS remains Manly and Rickert (1940); but see also Tatlock (1909), Brusendorff (1925), Donaldson (1974). The order of the Tales in this MS is as follows:

Gen.Pro. - Knight - Link - Miller - Link - Reeve - Link - Cook - Gamelyn - Link - Man of Law - Wife of Bath - Link - Friar - Summoner - Link - Clerk - Link - Merchant - Link - Link - Squire - Franklin - Second Nun - Link - Canon's Yeoman - Doctor - Link - Pardoner - Shipman - Link - Prioress - Link - Thopas - Link - Melibee - Link - Monk - Link - Nun's Priest - Link - Manciple - Link - Parson - Retraction.

The analyses for Harley 7334 (pp. 554 - 576) are followed on pp. 577 - 581 by analyses of MSS Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, fonds anglais 39, and Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, Peniarth 392. The reasons

for the selection of these MSS as controls will become apparent in what follows.

Textually, Harley 7334 is independent from all other MS-groups. According to Manly and Rickert (1940), it is the "earliest example of the commercial type of MS picked up from many sources and edited with great freedom by someone other than Chaucer. The exemplars which it used evidently became available at different times and to different extents to scribes of other MSS. Interesting as [Harley 7334] is, it is never authoritative".³²

As with the Corpus MS of The Canterbury Tales, the choice of an archetypal control is fairly straightforward. In this case I choose N.L.W. Peniarth 392, the 'Hengwrt' MS, since, according to Manly and Rickert, it is rather closer textually to Harley than is Ellesmere, and might give evidence for some of Harley's peculiarities. The choice of other controls, however, is fraught with difficulty, since Harley's textual relationships shift from Tale to Tale, and also within Tales. In The Pardoner's Tale, however, for which evidence is conveniently available in the Chaucer Society Print of 'Specimens', Harley is affiliated with Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, fonds anglais 39, a MS

written by the scribe John Duxworth for, and with corrections by, Jean comte d'Angoulême, probably ca. 1422-36. Discussion of the Hengwrt and Paris MSS, therefore, is included in what follows.

The general character of the language of the Harley MS is indicated by the following table of comparison with the 'Hengwrt' MS.

ITEM	Hengwrt	Harley
'THESE'	thise	þese
'BOTH'	bothe	boþe, bothe (((bathe)))
'THEY'	they	þay (þey) ((Thay)) (((þai, bei, thay, They)))
'THEM'	hem	hem
'THEIR'	hir	here (((þeir, hir)))
'SUCH'	swich, swiche	such (((swich, suche)))
'EACH'	ech (((eech)))	ech, eche (((ilk, ylk)))
'MANY'	many, manye	many
'ANY'	any	eny (((ony)))
'MUCH'	muchē, muchel	moche (mochil) (((mochel, mekil)))
'WILL'	wol	wol (wil) (((wyl)))
'THOUGH'	thogh ((though))	þough (Though) (((Theigh, though, þeigh)))
'IF'	if	if
'SELF'	self	self (((silf)))
'AGAIN(ST)'	agayn, agayns	agayn (a3ein) (((A3ein, A3ens, Again, Agayn, Agayns, Ageyn, ageyn, agayns, a3einst, again, agains, a3eyn)))
'ERE'	er	er
'YET'	yet	3it (((3et)))
'WHILE'	whil, whiles	whil etc. (((þerwhiles þat C.548)))
'TOGETHER'	Togidres	togider, togideres

ITEM	Hengwrt	Harley
'NOT'	nat (((nought)))	not (nought) ((nou3t, nat)) (((nough)))
'HIGH'	heigh, heighe	high, heye, heih, heihe, hye, hie, hey3, hey3e, hy3e, heigh, hyhe, hihe, heyh, highe, heighe, heygh
'EYE(S)'	eyen	eyen, eyhen, yhen, yen, y3en; ye, yhe, ey3e, eye
pres. part.	-yng, -ynge	-yng, <u>etc.</u> ((-and)))
-es	-es	-es ((-us))
-ed	-ed	-ed ((-id, -ud))
'THROUGH'	thurgh	burgh ((Thurgh, porugh)) (((thurgh, poruh)))
'FIRST'	first, firste	first, firste (((ferst, ferste, furst)))
'SILVER'	siluer	siluer
'OWN'	owen, owene	owne, oughne (((owen, oughn)))
'DID'	dide	dede (((did, dide)))
'HELD'	heeld	helde, heeld, hild, hield, huld
'SAW'	saugh	saugh (((sey, saw, sawh, seyh, say, seih, seigh, saw3)))
clepe	call-, clepe-	clepe- (((call-)))
'HEAR'	heere	heren, here, heere, hier
-er	-er	-er (((-ir, -ur)))
OE <u>y</u>	i, y	<u>frequent</u> u, uy, <u>e.g.</u> fuyr 'FIRE' (<u>beside</u> i, y, <u>occas.</u> e)
3rd pres. sg.	-eth	-ep; <u>but occas.</u> -s, <u>e.g.</u> comes, bathis, writes
'EARTH'	erthe	erbe, eorbe
'THIEF'	theef	þeof

Many of the forms used in the Harley MS are widespread in Southern ME; but the presence of Kentish oughne 'OWN' beside Northern bathe 'BOTH' shows that, once again,

scribe D has produced a Mischsprache. There would appear to be at least four possible sets of forms in the Harley MS:

1. A number of forms in the Hengwrt MS also appear in Harley, e.g. þey 'THEY', any 'ANY', agayn 'AGAIN', er 'ERE', nat 'NOT', eyen 'EYES', saugh 'SAW', burgh 'THROUGH', togidere(s) 'TOGETHER', swich 'SUCH' etc.. Many of these, however, are only minor variants (e.g. nat, swich).

2. A South-West Midland element in the language of the MS is strongly marked: þeof 'THIEF', eorþe 'EARTH', nough 'NOT', ar 'ERE', seih, sawh and seyh 'SAW', -ur, -us and -ud, furst 'FIRST', huld 'HELD', silf 'SELF', yhen 'EYES', and many examples of OE y in u, uy, e.g. fuyr 'FIRE', put 'PIT'.

3. A few Northernisms form a possible separate element: til 'TO', þeir 'THEIR', bathe 'BOTH', mekil 'MUCH', -and (pres.part.), 3rd pres.sg. in -s, e.g. comes, writes, bathis. It is possible that this Northern input is responsible for Harley's having more examples of call- 'CALL', wil 'WILL', or 'ERE', ony 'ANY' than the Corpus Canterbury Tales by the same scribe. It could also be responsible for the wholesale loss of Chaucerian 'final -e' in this MS.

4. A Kentish element is indicated by oughne 'OWN'. Such a set of forms might also include hiere 'HEAR' and

berwhiles pat 'WHILE', but these could also be assigned to the better-established South-West Midland input already indicated above.

The forms which change during the course of the Harley MS present difficult problems. Hitherto in scribe D's MSS, we have been dealing with comparatively straightforward examples of concentration of forms. With Harley, however, the situation is highly complex, and to indicate the nature of the problem I might briefly sketch in the appearances of the forms for 'WILL' in the test tranches. In the sections analysed from the General Prologue and the Miller's Tale, the Man of Law's Tale and the Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale, wol is the dominant form, with wil as, at most, a sporadic variant. In the Merchant's Tale, however, wil suddenly becomes the dominant form. In the Franklin's Tale, wol displaces wil, and it is still the dominant form in the Canon's Yeoman's Prologue and Tale, although wil has increased as a proportion of all the forms for this item. In the Pardoner's Tale, the two forms are approximately equal in number but, by the Shipman's Tale, wil has once again become only a minor variant. In the Manciple's Tale, wil is fairly frequent; in the Parson's Tale, it is only sporadic.

At first sight, such variation in a common item might seem to be simply the result of scribal whim. However, the evidence of the other MSS by scribe D suggests that the source of confusion is likely to lie in the exemplar for this MS. D was plainly familiar with both wil and wol, as the appearance of the forms in his other MSS shows, and, no doubt, the appearance of one or the other in his exemplar activated the corresponding form in his repertoire. From the distribution of the forms for 'YET', 'AGAIN' and 'ANY' it seems likely that they, too, are present in such a confused pattern through such 'constrained' behaviour.

<u>ITEM</u>	A	B1	B2	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
'YET'	3it	3it	3it	3it	3it	3it	3et	3et	3it	3it
'AGAIN'	ageyn	a3ein	a3ein, agayn	a3ein	-	agayn	agayn	agayn	agayn	agayn
'ANY'	eny	eny	eny	eny	eny	any, eny	eny	eny	any, eny	any, eny, ony

(Main forms only are recorded in the above table.) A problem here is that there is no correspondence in variation between particular forms; in other words, the shifts between forms for different items take place at different points in the text. However, all the forms here are common in ME, and such confusion sits well with the picture given by Manly and Rickert (1940) of exemplars for this MS being brought together from various sources. In such conditions, texts with 3it and

eny, 3it, eny and any, 3et and eny etc. could easily be brought together to activate in turn the corresponding forms in scribe D's repertoire.

One group of shifting forms, however, do seem to correspond in distribution in the MS. Dean, following Furnivall (1885), noticed that "early in the MS there are -ud, -us endings ... giving way to -id, -is endings"³³. The -us, -ud and the related -ur endings are generally Western, as the Map in the Appendix shows, and it would seem logical to group them with the South-West Midland element already noticed. However, other South-West Midland forms - such as fuyr 'FIRE' etc. - persist fairly steadily throughout the MS, whereas -us, -ud and aftur 'AFTER' are not found after the Knight's Tale, and -ur is only sporadic after then.

Other forms correspond to this pattern. At the beginning of the MS, cowde 'COULD' is dominant, but is replaced by coupe soon after. Probably the clearest correspondence is manifested by the use of or 'ERE'. The following is a list of all the forms for this item in the Harley MS:

Line ref.	Form	Line ref.	Form	Line ref.	Form
GP.36	Or	1683	or	2688	or
255	or	2209	or	2983	Or
835	er	2356	or	3070	or
Kn.1040	Er	2398	or	Mi.3540	or
1155	-	2637	er	3630	or
1629	or	2647	er	3691	or.

Line ref.	Form	Line ref.	Form	Line ref.	Form
3735	-	691	Er	468	-
3789	er:	701	er	494	er
	ther	892	-	669	-
3800	or	WB.171	Er	Fk.733	-
Rv.4170	er	178	er	960	-
4195	or	287	er	1103	-
4241	or	353	er	1177	-
Ck.4349	or	732	er	1189	-
4362	or	755	er	1320	or
ML.119	or	802	Er	1322	-
199	er	841	er	1364	er
420	ar	847	er	1496	-
437	or	911	er	1615	er
468	Or	995	er	1623	or
475	or	1012	er	SN.55	er
573	er	1049	Er	182	er
903	Er	1107	er	337	er
1066	Or	Fr.1317	er	375	er
Sp.1251	Er	1415	Er	488	er
1459	er	1619	er	544	er
1578	er	1628	er	CY.555	Er
1586	er	1664	er	709	Er
Pr.1667	er	Sm.1692	er	899	Er
1730	er	1836	er	970	er
Tp.2015	Er	1851	er	985	er
Me.2230	er	1856	er	1060	er
2530	er	1886	er	1106	er
2535	er	1891	or	1169	Er
2665	er	2220	er	1170	er
Mk.3206	er	2229	er	1180	er
3261	er	C1.42	Er	1256	er
3315	er	178	er	1273	er
3328	Er	307	er	1312	er
3691	or	389	er	1328	er:
3748	er	536	er		per
3987	er	550	er	1362	er
4152	er	611	Er	Mc.52	er
4191	er	624	er	285	er
4289	er	660	er	287	Er
4303	-	947	Er	Ps.90	er
4368	er	1160	Er	175	or
4438	er	1163	er	230	er
Do.35	Er	Mr.1462	er	405	er
192	er	1662	er	470	er
241	er	1830	Er	715	er
249	er	2132	er	725	or
286	er	2133	er	825	-
Pd.362	er	2174	er	920	er
662	-	Sq.130	Er		
671	er	373	er		
680	er	460	er		

This table shows that or persists as a very minor variable throughout the MS but, at the outset, it is dominant. In fact, it follows the same distributional pattern as the -us, -ud forms already distinguished. There would appear to be two possible explanations for this pattern. One is that two scribes copied a MS with or; the first scribe introduced -us, -ud and retained the or-forms, the second kept only a few or-forms as relicts. Another possibility is that -us and or are part of the same 'layer' of language, and that the scribe who introduced this 'layer' gradually changed his habits under the influence of his exemplar. Given the principle of minimising possible layers in a text, the second explanation would appear the more likely. Whether this latter scribe is to be identified with scribe D is hard to say.

Two other forms deserve mention here: pey 'THEY' and nat 'NOT'. In most of the Harley MS, these Type III forms are at most minor variants beside dominant pay and not, nought. However, the analyses show that pey and nat are markedly dominant in the Miller's Tale and in the Man of Law's Tale. In the General Prologue, pei and pey predominate, and pey shares dominance with pay in the Franklin's Tale (in

both the General Prologue and the Franklin's Tale, however, nat is only sporadic). It is possible that the pey-forms are part of the or-er shift already discussed. However, the sudden appearance, and equally sudden disappearance, of dominant nat suggests a peculiarity of the exemplar. It may be significant that Manly and Rickert (1940) notice a change in the palaeographical make-up of the Harley MS between the Man of Law's Tale and the Wife of Bath's Tale (where nat gives way to not as the dominant form). Manly and Rickert note that rubricated page-headings and the systematic use of incipits and explicits begin only after this point in the MS.³⁴

The evidence of the control MSS does not throw any great light onto the language of the Harley MS. The 'Type III' forms in the Harley MS which also appear in the Hengwrt MS probably stem from the archetype, but Hengwrt does not share the Northern, Kentish or South-West Midland elements in the Harley MS. The Paris MS shares some of Harley's 'Northernisms', but this seems to be coincidental. What is known of John Duxworth suggests that he came from East Anglia, and the following non-Chaucerian forms in his MS can be accommodated in that area: them 'THEM', peir 'THEIR', ich and ilk 'EACH', mony 'MANY', shuld 'SHOULD' as sole

form for this item, furst 'FIRST', hundreth 'HUNDRED',
ya 'YES', yongthe 'YOUTH', calle (for Chaucerian
clepe). There are also a number of certain 'Northern'
relicts; but the MS is remarkable for the copying of
a number of 'corrections' introduced by post-Chaucerian
copyists, and one such 'correction' demonstrates that
the 'Northern' elements found in both Harley and
Paris are not related. Crow (1935/6) notes that for
the 'difficult reading' dere ynogh a jane (Clerk's
Tale 999) Paris substitutes nought worth a chery stane.
According to Crow, stane 'STONE' "would not have been
used by Duxworth, who writes ston elsewhere, except
for the sake of the rime"³⁵. However, elsewhere Crow
shows that Duxworth was an exact - indeed, slavish -
copyist,³⁶ and it is to be expected that the stane-form,
resulting from a correction, was transmitted from the
exemplar. The Harley reading for this line is the
original 'difficult reading', dere ynough a lane; and
this is something of a disappointment, since it suggests
that the Northernisms found in the Paris MS and in the
Harley MS do not go back to some common ancestor.
Neither Kentish nor South-West Midland elements in
Harley can be explained with reference to the Paris MS.
This means that with Harley, unlike with Corpus, we
are thrown back on the readings of that MS alone for
evidence for the origin of the linguistic sets in its
text.³⁷ The most interesting of these sets for our
purposes will be discussed further in 4.III below.

e) - 1): TEXTS: D's MSS of Gower's Confessio Amantis.³⁸ As has already been said, Macaulay (1900) and Fisher (1965) classify the Gower MSS into three 'recensions' and various 'sub-recensions'. As indicated in 3.I above, D's MSS fall into the following groups:

First recension, unrevised:

- 29. e) Oxford, Corpus Christi College, MS B.67;
- 24. f) New York, Columbia University Library, Plimpton MS 265;
- 30. g) Oxford, Christ Church, MS 148;
- 20. h) London, British Library, MS Egerton 1991;

First recension, revised:

- 5. i) Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 902;

Second recension, (b):

- 37. j) Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 294;
- 34. k) Cambridge, Trinity College, MS R.3.2;
- 38. l) Princeton, University Library, Taylor MS.

As I have tried to show in chapter 2 above, the archetypal language of the Gower tradition corresponds to that found in the Fairfax MS. The language of that MS, therefore, supplies the main 'control' for all D's Gower MSS.

I begin my consideration of D's copies of the Confessio Amantis MSS with the 'first recension, unrevised' MSS which, it has traditionally been claimed, represent Gower's earliest conception of the poem. To avoid repetition, I treat texts e) - h) together.

MSS e) and h) are discussed both by Macaulay (1900) and by Fisher (1965). Macaulay did not know of MSS f) and g); Fisher knew of f) (although he did

not examine it personally), but did not know about g).

The following table compares forms in texts e) - h) with the equivalent forms in the Fairfax MS. It should be emphasised that this table is only a rough summary; for the complete sets of forms, showing variations between the test tranches, the analyses in Part II below should be consulted (pp. 582 - 649). The forms of the Fairfax MS are given in chapter 2 above (pp. 42 - 44).

ITEM	Fairfax	Corpus B.67	Plimpton	Christ Church	Egerton
'THESE'	þese (((þes)))	These, þese	These þise,þese	These, þese	These,þese (((þis)))
'TWO'	tuo (((two)))	Tuo,tuo	Tuo,tuo (((Two, two)))	Tuo,tuo (((two)))	
'BOTH'	boþe,boþen	Boþe,boþe (((boþen)))	Boþe,boþe, boþe	Boþe,boþe	Boþe,boþe (((boþen)))
'SHE'	sche (((scheo)))	Sche,sche (((she)))	Sche,sche	Sche,sche	Sche,sche
'IT'	It,it (((hit)))	It,it	It,it (((Hit,hit)))	It,it (((hit)))	It,it (((hit)))
'THEY'	þei (((þey)))	They,Thei, þai,þay,þei, þey	They,Thei, þai,þay,þei, þey	Thai,þai, þey,þei	They,Thei, Thay,þay, þey,þei
'THEM'	hem	hem	hem (((hem, ?hiem)))	hem	hem (((hem)))
'THEIR'	here,her	here,her	here,her (((þair)))	here,her (((hire)))	here,her
'SUCH'	such,suche (((swich, swiche, sich)))	Such,such (((suche)))	Such,such (((suche, swiche)))	Such,such (((suche)))	Such,such (((suche, swiche)))
'WHICH'	which, whiche (((wich)))	Which, which (((whiche, Wich, wich)))	Which, which (((whiche, wich)))	Which, which (((whiche, whis)))	Which, which (((whiche, wich)))
'EACH'	ech,eche	ech,eche (((ych)))	ech,	ech,eche,	ech
'ANY'	eny (((any, enye)))	eny (((ony)))	eny, (((any)))	eny,any (((ony)))	eny (((any,ony)))

ITEM	Fairfax	Corpus B.67	Plimpton	Christ Church	Egerton
'MUCH'	moche, mochel (((mechil)))	moche, mochil (((muchel, müchil, mykel mekil)))	moche, mochel, mochil (((muchel, mykel, muchil, muche)))	moche, mochil (((muchel)))	moche, mochil, mochel (((mykil)))
'ARE'	ben (((bep,ar, are,aren)))	Ben,ben (((Been,be, are,been, bep)))	Ben,ben (((Been,be, ar,are, been)))	Ben,ben (((Been, are,bep, been)))	Ben,ben (((been,Been, are:fare)))
Contr.3rd pres.sg.	takp, <u>etc.</u>	takp, <u>etc.</u> <u>beside</u> takep <u>etc.</u>	takp, <u>etc.</u>	takp, <u>etc.</u>	takp, <u>etc.</u> <u>beside</u> takep, <u>etc.</u> schalt
'SHALT'	schalt (((schat)))	schalt	schalt (((schat)))	schalt	schalt
'SHOULD' (sg.)	schold, scholde, schulde	scholde (((schuld, schulde, schold)))	scholde, schold (((schulde)))	schulde, scholde (((schold)))	scholde, schold, schuld (((schulde)))
'WILL'	wol (((wole, woll, wile)))	Wol,wol, wole (((wile)))	Wol,wol (((wil, wole, wile)))	Wol,wol, wole (((wile, wil)))	Wol,wol (((Wil,wil, wile)))
'AFTER'	after (((aftir)))	After, after	After, after, After, after (((aftir)))	After, after, after (((Aftir, aftir)))	After, after
'THEN'	panne,po	panne,po (((Than, pan,pen, Tho)))	panne,po (((Than, panne)))	panne,po (((Than, pan,pen, Tho)))	panne,po (((Than,Tho, pan,poo, panne)))
'THAN' 'THOUGH'	pan pogh (((pough)))	Than,pan Though, pough (((pouh, poug)))	Than,pan Though, pough (((Thoug, pogh)))	Than,pan Though, pough	Than,pan Though, pough
'IF'	if	If,if (((If)))	If,if	If,if	If,if
'(N)EITHER ..(N)OR'	nowper ..ne, nouper ..ne, neiper ..ne; or..or	nouper ..ne, neyper ..ne; or..or	nouper ..ne, neiper ..ne; or..or	nouper ..ne, neiper ..ne, nother ..ne, nouper ..ne; or..or	nouper ..ne, nouper ..ne, neiper ..ne, or..or
'SELF'	self, selue, seluen	self, selue, seluen (((silf)))	self, selue, seluen (((silf, selfe)))	self, selue, seluen	self, selue, seluen

ITEM	Fairfax	Corpus B.67	Plimpton	Christ Church	Egerton
'AGAIN(ST)'	a3ein (((a3eyn, agayn, again)))	A3ein, a3ein (((agein)))	A3ein, a3ein (((agein, a3en)))	A3ein, a3ein (((Ayein, ayein, agein, a3ain)))	A3ein, a3ein
'ERE'	Er,er (((err, or,ar)))	Er,er	Er,er	Er,er	Er,er (((or)))
'YET'	3it (((3et)))	3it	3it	3it (((yet, yit, 3et)))	3it
'TOGETHER'	togedre	Togidre, Togidere, togydre, togidre, togider, togydere	Togidre, Togider, Togydere, togidre, togedre, togidere	Togedir, togidre, togidere, togider, togedere, togedre	Togidre, togidre, togider
'STRENGTH'	strengpe	strengpe, strengp	strengthe, strengpe	strengpe	strengpe, strengp (((strengpe)))
'BEFORE'	tofor, tofore	Byfor, tofore, before, bifore, byfore	Tofore, tofore, tofore	Tofore, Before, tofore	Tofore, tofore, tofor (((bifor)))
'NOT'	noght (((naght, nought, not)))	nought (not) (((no3t, noght, Nough, nough)))	nought, noght (((nat, not, nough, nogh)))	nought (((Nought, noght, not, nough)))	nought (nou3t) (((not, nough, nou3, Nought)))
'HIGH'	hih,hihe, hyh,hyhe (((hy,hye)))	hihe, heih, hie (((high, hy)))	hyh,hihe, high,heih, heigh, heihe, heighe (((hy)))	hihe, heih, hyhe, hih, hegh	hihe,heigh, heih,high (((hie, highe)))
'EYE(S)'	yhe,yhen (((ye)))	yhe;Ihen, yhen	yhe,eye, eyhe;yhen, eghen	yhe;yhen	yhe;yen, yhen
'WORLD'	world (((wordle)))	world (((worldde)))	world (((worldde, word)))	world, worldde	world
pres.part.	-ende	-end, -ende, -ing, -yng (((--ande)))	-end, -ende, -ing, -yng (((--and, --ande)))	-end, -ende, -ing, -yng (((--ande)))	-end, -ende, -ing, -yng (((--ande)))

ITEM	Fairfax	Corpus B.67	Plimpton	Christ Church	Egerton
'LITTLE'	litel	litel	litel	litel (((litul)))	litel
-es -ed 'MIGHT' (vb.)	-es -ed(((id))) miht, mihte myht, myhte (((myghte)))	-es(((us))) -ed might, mighte (((migh)))	-es(((us))) -ed(((id))) might, mighte (((migh, miche)))	-es(((us))) -ed might, mighte	-es(((us))) -ed(((ud))) might, mighte (((migh)))
'THROUGH'	purgh	purgh, porgh (((Thurgh, porugh)))	Thorugh, Thorgh, purgh, porgh (((Thorug, thorgh, porugh)))	purgh (((Thurgh, Thorgh, porgh, porugh)))	Thurgh, purgh, Thorugh, porugh, porgh
'LESS'	lasse ((lesse))	lasse ((lesse))	lasse, lesse	lasse ((lesse))	lasse ((lesse))
'WHEN'	whan, whanne (((when)))	Whan, whan (((whanne, when)))	Whan, whan (((When, Whhan, whan, whanne)))	Whan, whan (((whanne)))	Whan, whan
'FIRST'	ferst, ferste, first, firste	fferst, ferst, first, ferste	ferst, first, ferste	Ferst, fferst, ferst, first, ferste, firste	Ferst, fferst, ferst, first, ferste
'SILVER'	seluer	siluer	-	siluer	siluer
'OWN'	oghne (((owen, oughne, owne)))	owen, owene, oughne, owne	oughne, oghne (((oughe)))	owne, oughne, owen, owene	owne, oughne (((owen)))
'GIVEN'	3oue, 3ouen	3oue, 3iue	3oue	3oue, 3iue	3oue, 3euen
'HELD'	hield	held, hield, heeld (((huld)))	held, hield (((hild)))	hield	hield (((hild)))
'SAW' (sg. and pl.)	syh, syhe, sih, sihe (((sawh, sigh))) syhe, syhen, sihen	saugh, seih, sihe, syh, segh, seigh, sigh, seh; seyhe, seihe, sihen	seih, seyh, sih, sihe, sygh, seigh, saugh, syeh, segh; seghe, seyhe, seihe, seyhen	sih, seigh, syh, seih, sihe, segh, syhe; segh, seyh, seyhe, sihe	saugh, seigh, seih, sigh, sihe, sih, seyh; seyhen, sihe

ITEM	Fairfax	Corpus B.67	Plimpton	Christ Church	Egerton
'HEAR'	hiere	hiere, heere, hier, hiereþ	hiere, heere, here, hiereþ, hiereth	hiere, heere, here, hiereþ	heere, hiere, hiereþ
Adv.- <u>ly</u>	-ly ((-liche)) (((lich, -li)))	-ly (((liche, -lich, -leche)))	-ly (((lich, -liche)))	-ly ((-leche, -lich, -liche, -lyche)))	-ly (((lich, -liche)))
- <u>er</u>	-er,-ere ((-ir)))	-er ((-ur, -ir)))	-er, -ere, -er ((-ur,-ir)))	-er ((-ir, -ur)))	-er ((-ur, -ir)))
OE <u>y</u>	<u>See chap.2</u>	i,y; <u>occas. e,u</u>	i,y; <u>occas. e,u</u>	i,y; <u>occas. e,u</u>	i,y; <u>occas. e,u,uy</u>
'BUT'	bot	But,but	But,Bot, but	But,but	But,but
'SISTER'	soster	suster, soster	suster, soster (((Sostir)))	suster, soster	suster, soster
'LIFE'	lif	lif,lijf	lif	lif,lijf	lif
'WIFE'	wif	wif,wijf	wif	wif,wijf	wif
'SLEIGHT'	sleihte, sleyhte, sleighte	sleight, scleight	sleight	sleight	sleight
'YOUTH'	3oupe, 3owpe	3oupe	3oupe	3oupe, 3ongpe	3oupe

Our immediate impression on studying the table above is that scribe D is appreciably closer in these texts to the archetypal language of the tradition in which he is copying than in those texts of his which we have seen hitherto. In many of the instances quoted above, scribe D's main form reflects either directly, or with very slight modification, that of the archetypal text, e.g. 'TWO', 'THEIR', 'SUCH', 'ANY', takþ etc., 'AGAIN', 'NOT', 'HIGH', 'EYE(S)',

-ende (pres.part.) etc., 'FIRST', 'OWN', 'GIVEN', 'HELD', 'SAW', 'HEAR'. In all these items, the main form selected by scribe D in these MSS differs from that found in 'Type III' MSS such as the Ellesmere and Hengwrt MSS of The Canterbury Tales; in a number of cases, the form he chooses is distinctively Gowerian in this combination (e.g. takþ etc., 'EYE(S)', -ende, 'OWN', 'SAW'). Even where the archetypal form is not so markedly reproduced by scribe D, it is generally to be found in at least one of his MSS, if only as a minor variant, e.g. bopen 'BOTH', þei 'THEY', schat 'SHALT', togedre 'TOGETHER', soster 'SISTER'. The only consistent modifications D carries out on the archetypal language are to introduce (usually) u before gh when preceded by a back-vowel letter, e.g. oughne 'OWN' (Gowerian oghne), and to replace ht by ght in might, right etc. (Gowerian miht, riht).

This impression of closeness to the archetype is not a false one; however, examination of the non-archetypal variants in D's copies of the Confessio Amantis shows that a number of interesting problems remain. Apart from the archetypal language of the Gower tradition, there would appear to be at least two other dialectal elements in MSS Corpus B.67, Plimpton, Christ Church and Egerton:

1. A South-West Midland coherence of non-archetypal forms is to be found in these texts. Individually, these forms are hardly diagnostic; in such a persistent combination, they strongly indicate the presence of an extra 'layer' of language in each MS. Examples of such forms are: scleight 'SLEIGHT', druye 'DRY', -ur, huld 'HELD', nough 'NOT' supported by ych 'EACH', ony 'ANY' as a minor variable, pouh 'THOUGH', silf 'SELF', seh/seghe/seih 'SAW', -leche (in the Corpus MS); huyre 'HIRE': desire, -ur, nough and nogh 'NOT', also dude 'DID' (Gowerian dede is general in the other MSS), supported by any 'ANY' as a minor variable, silf 'SELF', hild 'HELD', seghe/seghe/seih 'SAW' (in the Plimpton MS); 3ongpe 'YOUTH', -ur, nough 'NOT' supported by ony as a minor variable, hegh 'HIGH', seghe/seih 'SAW', -leche (in the Christ Church MS); fuyre 'FIRE' etc., -ur, nough and nou3 'NOT', also eorpe 'EARTH' beside erpe (Gowerian erpe is general in the other MSS), supported by any and ony 'ANY' as minor variables, hild 'HELD', seih/seyh 'SAW' (in the Egerton MS).

2. A group of possible 'Northernisms' can be detected in each of D's MSS here discussed. Individually, each could just be accommodated in the South-West Midlands layer already distinguished, as the Maps in the Appendix show. However, their persistent presence at exactly the same point in all these texts indicates that they form a distinct layer of language. They are:

hengande 'HANGING' (pres.part.)(I.1682), weylande
 'WAILING' (pres.part.)(I.3035), criande 'CRYING'
 (pres.part.)(II.760), mykel 'MUCH' (II.2251), mekil
 'MUCH' (III.1994) (in the Corpus MS); criande 'CRYING'
 (pres.part.)(II.760), mykel 'MUCH' (II.2251), Preyand
 'PRAYING' (pres.part.)(III.1969), pair 'THEIR' (V.2389)
 (in the Plimpton MS); hengande 'HANGING' (pres.part.)
 (I.1682), criande 'CRYING' (pres.part.)(II.760) (in
 the Christ Church MS); hengande 'HANGING' (pres.part.)
 (I.1682), cryand 'CRYING' (pres.part.)(II.760),
mykil 'MUCH' (II.2251), Preyande 'PRAYING' (pres.part.)
 (III.1969) (in the Egerton MS). This set of forms is
 of great interest for understanding the textual
 transmission of the Confessio Amantis MSS, and I shall
 be discussing it at length in chapter 5 below. With
 this layer are also to be linked the -us forms found
 in all four of D's MSS here discussed; the reason for
 this linking will be discussed in chapter 5 as well,
 as will the reasons for the presence in the above list
 of pair 'THEIR' and mekil 'MUCH', which are recorded
 only in single MSS above.

In general, the pattern of behaviour exhibited
 in these Gower MSS coheres with D's practice as demon-
 strated in those of his texts which we have already
 examined. For D, the exemplar is of central importance.

The non-Gowerian, non-'Type III' forms are remarkably few for such a large-scale copying of an idiosyncratic spelling-system, and this is probably to be taken as an index of scribe D's professionalism. The 'Northernisms' are sporadic relicts only,⁴⁰ and their reproduction at all simply confirms this picture of great care on the part of the scribe; the South-West Midland forms, from the evidence marshalled in discussion of his other MSS, are probably the result of D's own contribution to the Mischsprachen of his MSS.

There are, however, some items which vary in form during copying in a very marked way. The most obvious item in which this phenomenon is demonstrated is 'THEY'. The following tables show the shifts in frequency during copying for this item in each of the four Gower MSS I am examining at present:

Corpus

Book \ Form	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
They	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Thei	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	1
pei	2	8	10	15	12	24	10	7
pey	3	17	1	-	-	-	1	1
pay	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	3
pai	11	15	6	2	-	2	1	9

Plimpton

Book \ Form	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
They	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-
Thei	1	-	-	-	1	-	1	-

Plimpton (cont.)

Book \ Form	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
pei	8	10	7	5	4	1	3	2
pey	3	4	7	5	6	3	8	18
pay	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	1
pai	-	3	2	2	-	1	1	1

Christ Church

Book \ Form	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
Thei	1	-	-	-	2	-	1	-
pei	8	10	-	6	1	2	4	-
pey	10	-	-	-	-	-	2	5
pai	1	15	17	10	10	5	6	9

Egerton

Book \ Form	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
They	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	2
Thei	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Thay	2	2	-	1	1	-	-	1
pei	-	-	-	-	2	2	8	1
pey	1	2	1	1	4	2	3	12
pay	15	20	17	13	5	3	2	8
pai	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-

At first sight, we find nothing but confusion here. In Corpus, the sequence is pai - pey - pei - pei/pai; in Plimpton, pei - pey; in Christ Church, pei - pai; in Egerton, pay - pay/pei/pey - pei - pay/pey. Such confusions can be paralleled in a few other items, e.g. 'THROUGH', 'OWN', 'LIFE' and 'WIFE'. In general, these shifts in form in each of these items do not take place at the same place in the text as the shifts in form for

any other item. Thus, for instance, in Corpus, wijf and lijf are concentrated at the beginning and end of the MS; in Plimpton, there is a constant oscillation of dominance between borugh and borgh for 'THROUGH'; in Christ Church, owen replaces oughne as the dominant form for 'OWN' after Book IV; and, in Egerton, owne replaces oughne as the dominant form for 'OWN' only after Book VI.

Explanations of various kinds are possible for individual forms in individual MSS; but the only explanation which works for all occurrences is to see this pattern of behaviour as some sort of response to the exemplar. This explanation has the advantage of cohering with D's known pattern of behaviour in other MSS - most notably, the MS of Trevisa's translation of Bartholomaeus Anglicus de proprietatibus rerum. Changes in forms for particular items certainly occur there, but, in general, the pattern is one of steady response to an exemplar.

As the Maps in the Appendix show, all the forms for these items could cohere in at least one of the layers identified in these texts. For instance, pei is the Gowerian form; pey, the 'Type III' form, is widespread in various ME dialects; pai and pay could

be South-West Midland forms - and, therefore, be part of scribe D's personal contribution to the language of these texts - or could stem from the 'Northern' exemplar which underlies all four MSS. pay/pai forms are, rarely, found in London, as is indicated in the Glossary to Chambers and Daunt (1931).

Why the exemplars varied in these (comparatively few) items is hard to say with certainty. One possibility is that different exemplars underlie different portions of text; this has the advantage of fitting in with the confused textual problem known to exist in the Gower MSS. D's gradual shifts may be his 'settling-down' responses to transitions between exemplars written by different scribes; these exemplars themselves may have shown similar processes of shift, as scribes became increasingly more, or less, like their exemplars. This shifting process, of course, need not have happened at the same pace in all items; it is possible to visualise a pattern of constrained behaviour in which certain constrained forms bulked larger in the scribe's 'dialectal consciousness', as it were, than other, similarly constrained features which were, for him, more peripherally part of his repertoire. In sum, the scribe may have moved more rapidly to some constrained features than to others when confronted with them in his exemplars.

Why these exemplars should have exhibited shifts in these items, and not in others, may be to do with the WP/SP distinction I discussed in 1.III above. It is noticeable that, insofar as the nature of the exemplars can be determined, D differs from those exemplars in SP ('spoken profile') features rather than WP ('written profile') ones. However, the pai/pei, lif/lijf and oughne/owne distinctions would appear, at this date, to represent a WP rather than a SP distinction; and this may have been the case for other scribes also. They may have felt more at liberty to interfere with forms in their exemplars which differed from their own in WP terms, rather than those which manifested SP differences. This explanation, however, is offered only tentatively; it seems unlikely that it applies, for instance, to the porgh/porugh distinction exhibited in the Plimpton MS (this form is discussed in 4.III below).

Ways in which such hypotheses might become less speculative are discussed in chapter 5 below. What is strongly indicated here is that D's response is primarily to his exemplar.

The forms for a remaining item, 'SAW', are of interest for establishing a chronology of scribe D's MSS. This item will be discussed further in 4.III below.

i) TEXT: Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Bodley 902; Gower Confessio Amantis. This MS is noticed by both Macaulay (1900) and by Fisher (1965).⁴¹ According to the former, the textual status of the MS is high; it is "a very good [MS] of the revised type". Scribe D is responsible only for the first two quires of this MS (fols. 2-16v). The first leaf of the book is lost, and was supplied in the sixteenth century from Berthelette's second edition. Two other early-fifteenth-century scribes continue the text after D: Hand 2 (fols. 17r-80v, to the end of the tenth quire in the MS) and Hand 3 (fols. 81r- end). The analyses for the three hands appear as follows: hand 1 (= scribe D), pp. 650 - 652 ; hand 2, pp. 653 - 654 ; hand 3, pp. 655 - 656 .

Macaulay (1900) notes that, in Bodley 902, "the columns nearly correspond with those of the Fairfax MS up to fol. 81, after which point some attempt is made to save space by writing the Latin verses in the margin". Plainly, there is a close connection between Bodley 902 and the archetypal tradition of the poem represented by the Fairfax MS. That at least part of the MS is almost certainly directly copied from the archetype is shown by the second hand in Bodley 902, which is almost indistinguishable in orthography from the Fairfax MS. Hand 3 is almost as close; the only significant modifications of the

archetypal language in this hand are: the consistent removal of -end(e) (pres.part.) and oghne 'OWN' and their replacement by -inge/-ynge and owne respectively; not appearing as frequently as noght; Eein 'EYES' beside Gowerian yhen; seih 'SAW' beside archetypal syhe.

As far as scribe D's stint is concerned, the general impression is that the text is very close to the archetype in language. This is illustrated by the following brief table of comparison:

ITEM	Fairfax	Bodley 902/ Scribe D
'TWO'	tuo (((two)))	tuo
'SUCH'	such, suche (((swich,sich, swiche)))	Such, such (((suche, swich)))
'EACH'	ech, eche	ech
'ANY'	eny (((enye, any)))	eny
'MUCH'	moche, mochel (((mechil)))	moche, mochel, mochil
'THOUGH'	þogh (((þough)))	þough
'IF'	if	If, if
'(N)EITHER..(N)OR'	nowþer..ne, neiþer..ne, nouþer..ne; or..or	nouþer..ne; or..or
'AGAIN'	a3ein (((a3eyn, agayn, again)))	.a3ein (((a3eyn)))
'ERE'	er (((err, or, ar)))	er
'YET'	3it ((3et))	3it
'WHILE'	whil, whyl, while, whyte, þerwhile, þerwhiles þat, þerwhiles, þer- whyles	whil, Therwhiles þat
'TOGETHER'	togedre	togidre
'BEFORE'	tofor, tofore	tofore
'NOT'	noght (((naght, not, nought)))	nought

ITEM	Fairfax	Bodley 902/ Scribe D
'HIGH'	hih <u>etc.</u>	hih, hihe
'EYE(S)'	yhe, yhen (((ye)))	yhe, yhen
pres. part.	-ende	-end, -ende, -ing, -yng
'MIGHT' (vb.)	miht, mihte, myht, myhte (((myghte)))	might, mighte
'THROUGH'	þurgh	Thurgh, þurgh
'SILVER'	seluer	seluer
'OWN'	oghne (((owen, owne, oughne)))	oughne
'HELD'	hield	bihielde
'SAW'	syh, syhe,	saugh, sih, seih
(sg. and pl.)	sih, sihe (((sawh, sigh)))	
'HEAR'	syhe, syhen, sihen hiere (((here)))	hiere, hier, hiereþ
'BUT'	bot	But, but (((bot)))
'SISTER'	soster	soster

In the above table, there are a few non-archetypal forms (seih, saugh 'SAW', togidre 'TOGETHER', swich 'SUCH' etc.), but, for the most part, the only non-archetypal forms regularly produced here are those subjected to scribe D's spelling rule discussed above, viz. the insertion of u between back vowel and gh, e.g. oughne (Gowerian oghne), and the replacement of Gowerian ht by ght, e.g. might for Gowerian miht.

The only significant shift in forms within this brief text is exhibited by the forms for 'THEY' (not included in the above table). In the Prologue, the forms pei and pey are co-dominant; by Book I,

pei is dominant, with pey, pai and Thei only sporadic. The movement is towards the archetypal form, which is also the main form in the other two hands in the MS. The most obvious explanation would be to see this behaviour as part of some scribal 'settling-down' process.

j) TEXT: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 294; Gower, Confessio Amantis. This MS is discussed both by Macaulay (1900) and by Fisher (1965).⁴² The analyses for this MS appear on pp. 657 - 675 below.

As with his other copies of the Confessio Amantis, in Bodley 294 scribe D reproduces closely the archetypal language of the Gower tradition. The following table compares some forms in Bodley 294 with those in MS Fairfax 3.

ITEM	Fairfax	Bodley 294
'THESE'	þese (((þes)))	These, þese (((þis)))
'TWO'	tuo (((two)))	Tuo, tuo
'BOTH'	boþe, boþen	Boþe, boþe (((boþen)))
'THEY'	þei (((þey)))	Thay, They, Thei, þei, þay, þai, þey
'SUCH'	such, suche (((swich, sich, swiche)))	Such, such (((suche)))
'WHICH'	which, whiche (((wich)))	Which, which (((whiche)))

ITEM	Fairfax	Bodley 294
'EACH'	ech, eche	ech
'ANY'	eny (((enye, any)))	eny
'MUCH'	moche, mochel (((mechil)))	mochel, moche, mochil
Contr. 3rd pres.sg. 'SHALT'	takþ <u>etc.</u> schalt (((schat)))	takþ <u>etc.</u> Schalt, schalt (((schat)))
'THOUGH'	þogh (((þough)))	Though, þough
'(N)EITHER..(N)OR'	nowþer..ne, neiþer..ne, nouþer..ne; or..or	nouþer..ne, nowþer..ne; Or..or, or..or
'SELF'	self, selue, seluen	self, selue, seluen (((silf, sel)))
'TOGETHER'	togedre	Togidre, togidre
'BEFORE'	tofor, tofore	Tofore, tofore
'NOT'	noght (((naght, not, nought)))	nought, not, nou3t (((Nough, nough)))
'HIGH'	hih, hihe <u>etc.</u>	hih, hihe, high (((heigh, hy)))
'EYE(S)' pres.part.	yhe, yhen (((ye))) -ende	yhe, yhen (((ye))) -end, -ende, -ing, -yng (((-ande)))
-es 'MIGHT' (vb.) 'THROUGH'	-es miht, mihte þurgh	-es (((-us))) might, mighte Thurgh, þurgh, þorugh (((þorgh)))
'OWN'	oghne (((owen, owne, oughne)))	owne, oughne
'GIVEN'	3oue, 3ouen	3iuen, 3oue
'HELD'	hield	hield, hielde, held, hild
'SAW' (sg. and pl.)	syh, syhe, sihe, sih (((sawh, sigh))); syhe, syhen, sihen	seigh, saugh, sih, syh, seih, sigh, sihe, syhe
'HEAR'	hiere (((here)))	heere, here, hiere, hier, hiereþ, huyre
-er OE <u>y</u>	-er, -ere (((-ir))) <u>see chapter 2</u>	-er (((-ur))) i, y, e, u; <u>cf.</u> fuyre 'FIRE', fuyr
'BUT'	bot	But, but
'EARTH'	erþe	erþe, eorþe; <u>cf.</u> eorþely
'WIFE'	wif	wif, wijf

A few minor, non-archetypal dialectal inputs can be detected in this MS. They cohere with elements distinguished on pp. 250 - 251 above in D's 'first recension, unrevised' MSS:

1. The form hengande 'HANGING' (pres.part.)(I.1682).

2. A South-West Midland element, indicated by such forms as eorþe and eorþely 'EARTH(LY)', OE y in u/uy (e.g. fuyre 'FIRE'), -ur, huyre 'HEAR', nough 'NOT', supported by silf 'SELF', hild 'HELD', seih 'SAW'.

The implications of the presence of these elements in this MS as well as in others will be discussed further in 4.III and 5 below. At this stage, it is simply necessary to note whether any changes in the language of Bodley 294 can be detected in the course of the MS. In fact, most forms are either regular throughout the MS, or too sporadic to give any indication of changes in spelling practice. The only feature which does definitely change in form during the course of copying is 'THEY'. At the outset of the MS, þay is by far the most common form; but, from the beginning of at least the second test tranche of text, it is overshadowed by þei and þey. At first sight, this may seem to cohere with the 'settling-down' process detected in D's copy of Trevisa; but, as has been indicated on pp. 254 - 256 above, the forms for 'THEY' present special difficulties in D's MSS.

k) TEXT: Cambridge, Trinity College, MS R.3.2; Gower, Confessio Amantis. This MS is discussed by Macaulay (1900) and by Fisher (1965), but the fullest recent account is in Doyle and Parkes (1978). For a further discussion based on Doyle and Parkes, see 4.I above. The analyses for the five hands in the MS appear on the following pages in Part II below: hand A, pp. 679 - 680 ; hand B, pp. 681 - 682 ; hand C, pp. 683 - 684 ; hand D, pp. 676 - 678 ; hand E, pp. 685 - 686 .

The language of scribe D's stint is very close to that of the Fairfax MS - if anything, it is closer to the archetypal language of the Gower tradition than is any other of D's copies of the Confessio Amantis, with the possible exception of his stint in Bodley 902 (both, incidentally, MSS where D is collaborating - though it is hard to deduce the significance of this correlation). A few forms in D's stint in this MS are compared with the equivalent Fairfax forms in the following table:

ITEM	Fairfax	Trinity MS, Scribe D
'THESE'	þese (((þes)))	þese
'TWO'	tuo (((two)))	Tuo, tuo
'BOTH'	boþe, boþen	boþe
'THEY'	þei (((þey)))	þey (((They, thei, they, þei)))
'SUCH'	such, suche (((swich, swiche, sich)))	Such, such (((Suche, suche)))
'WHICH'	which, whiche (((wich)))	Which, which (((whiche)))

ITEM	Fairfax	Trinity MS, Scribe D
'ANY'	eny (((enye, any)))	eny
'MUCH'	moche, mochel (((mechil)))	moche, mochil
'FROM'	fro, from	fro, ffram
'THOUGH'	þogh (((þough)))	þough (((Though)))
'AGAIN(ST)'	a3ein (((a3eyn, agayn, again)))	Ayein, ayein (((agayn)))
'ERE'	er (((err, or, ar)))	er
'YET'	3it ((3et))	yit
'TOGETHER'	togedre	Togidre, Togidere, togidre
'BEFORE'	tofor, tofore	tofore
'NOT'	noght (((naght, not, nought)))	nought
'HIGH'	hih, hihe, hyh, hyhe (((hy, hye)))	hih, hie, hihe, high
'EYE(S)'	yhe, yhen (((ye)))	yhe, yhen
pres.part.	-ende	-inge, -ynge, -ende
-es	-es	-es (((-us)))
'MIGHT' (vb.)	miht, mihte, myht, myhte (((myghte)))	might, mighte
'THROUGH'	þurgh	þorgh (((Thorugh, þorugh, Thorgh, thurgh, þurgh)))
'SILVER'	seluer	siluer
'OWN'	oghne (((owen, owne, oughne)))	oughne
'GIVEN'	3oue, 3ouen	youe
'HELD'	hield	held
'SAW'	sih, sihe <u>etc.</u>	sih, saugh, sigh, seigh, Seih, seih
'HEAR'	hiere (((here)))	hiere
OE <u>y</u>	<u>see chap. 2</u>	i, y; <u>occas.</u> u, e
'SISTER'	soster	suster
'LIFE'	lif	lif, lijf
'WIFE'	wif	wif, wijf

Those forms in the above table which are un-Gowerian are widespread in ME, e.g. bey 'THEY', togidre 'TOGETHER', saugh 'SAW' etc.. A noticeable feature which has not appeared in D's MSS so far is the scribe's use of y instead of 3 in yit 'YET', youe 'GIVEN', ayein 'AGAIN' etc. (This may be due to the exemplar, indicated by similar choices made by scribes A and B; see analyses of their practice on pp. 679 - 682 below).

Possible South-West Midland features, of the kind with which we have become familiar in D's MSS, are comparatively rare in this text. seih 'SAW' and fram 'FROM' could be assigned to such a layer but, unsupported, are hardly diagnostic. Two forms which might have been assigned to this layer - lijf 'LIFE', wijf 'WIFE', and the -us ending in tribus 'TRIBES' (VIII.136) - can more easily be explained as from some exemplar.

Comparison with the other hands in this MS is not especially illuminating. Scribe C's forms are close to the archetypal language of the Gowerian tradition. The other scribes are rather more independent. Scribe A prefers y to 3, th to p; he does not reproduce Gowerian oghne 'OWN' and -ende (pres.part.). It is likely, however, that the exemplar for his portion of the text was written in Gowerian language; this is suggested by the -thth- spellings, which are

a careful rendering of the characteristic Gowerian
 -þþ- in words like wrappe 'WRATH', etc.. Non-Gowerian
 forms in A's stint, such as or 'ERE', seye 'SAW' are
 not sufficiently distinctive for an attempt at
 dialectal localisation to be made. Scribes B and E,
 judging by comparison with other texts written by
 them, are generally 'translators' into their own
 usage.⁴⁴

1) TEXT: Princeton, University Library,
 Taylor MS. For reasons which I mention in the Preface,
 I have been unable to study this MS in any detail.
 However, through the generosity of Dr. J.J.Griffiths,
 I have been enabled to see photographs of a few folios
 of this MS, including part of fol. 24r, which is
 part of scribe D's stint. With the exception of
might(e) 'MIGHT' and nought 'NOT', D's spellings
 seem very close to those of the archetypal language
 of the Gower tradition.

III. In this section, I discuss scribe D's dialectal origins and postulate a chronology for his MSS.

In all of scribe D's MSS we find linguistic mixtures - so-called Mischsprachen - made up of forms from the archetype and other, 'recalcitrant' forms which represent the linguistic intervention of subsequent scribes on the archetypal language of the text. Assigning these other layers of language to particular scribes (including the scribe of the extant MSS) is a complex business in its details, but basically simple in outline, and I have discussed the processes involved in 1.III above. If we look for common elements in his MSS, the impression must be that D's own contribution to the Mischsprachen lies in the South-West Midland elements which appear in all his MSS. I shall argue shortly that this is not a false impression, but we need to be careful about how we arrive at this conclusion. A noticeable feature, also found throughout D's texts, is the form oghne, oughne 'OWN' (adj.), strongly Kentish at this date. It is the only diagnostically Kentish feature to be found in all of D's MSS. Reference to his copies of Gower, however, shows where this form almost certainly came from. A linguistically 'foregrounded' feature, which scribes

of the Confessio Amantis strove to reproduce throughout the fifteenth century, oghne, and the related oughne, must have been learnt by scribe D through repeated copying. Having learnt the form, he then spread it into traditions which never included it (such as The Canterbury Tales, Trevisa and Piers Plowman).

This leads to a major methodological problem. If D can learn forms during the course of his copying career, then it is at least theoretically possible that all the 'recalcitrant', non-archetypal forms he uses have been learnt in the same way, through contact with different exemplars. If such were the case, unless we had strong external evidence that we had all of D's MSS, we would be entitled to despair of finding any shape in D's linguistic practice. Benskin and Laing (1981) have shown how scribes can change their habits of copying as a stint proceeds. If we extend this description to cover the copying of several MSS of the same text, we could visualise a scribe changing completely from one kind of language to another.

In fact, examination of the forms D actually uses soon reveals that such despair is unnecessary. oughne/oghne is almost the only form in D's repertoire

which is not part of, or cannot be assigned to, either the archetypal tradition of D's non-Gowerian texts, or the persistent South-West Midland layer in all his MSS.⁴⁵ Its ups-and-downs in the Gower MSS are probably the result of exemplar-conditioning; in D's other MSS, it is generally sporadic, and the major form in a tranche of text only when the item is rare.

We might speculate briefly on why D chooses to learn this form from the Gower tradition. Three possible explanations present themselves (which may, of course, have acted in combinations). First, forms of 'OWN' with medial 3, gh are comparatively widespread in Early Middle English.⁴⁶ The scribe may have seen such forms in old MSS from his own original dialect region, and invested it with the prestige of archaism; when it appeared in the Gower exemplars, it was a 'constrained' rather than a 'relict' form. His adoption of the form cannot have worried him from the point of view of pronunciation, since it seems likely that, by this date, even in Kent, the contrast owen etc.:⁴⁷ oghne etc. was a written rather than a spoken one.

A second explanation might be that his use of the form was unconscious learning from continually copying MSS of Gower. In my view, this is unlikely; the evidence of scribes later in the fifteenth century

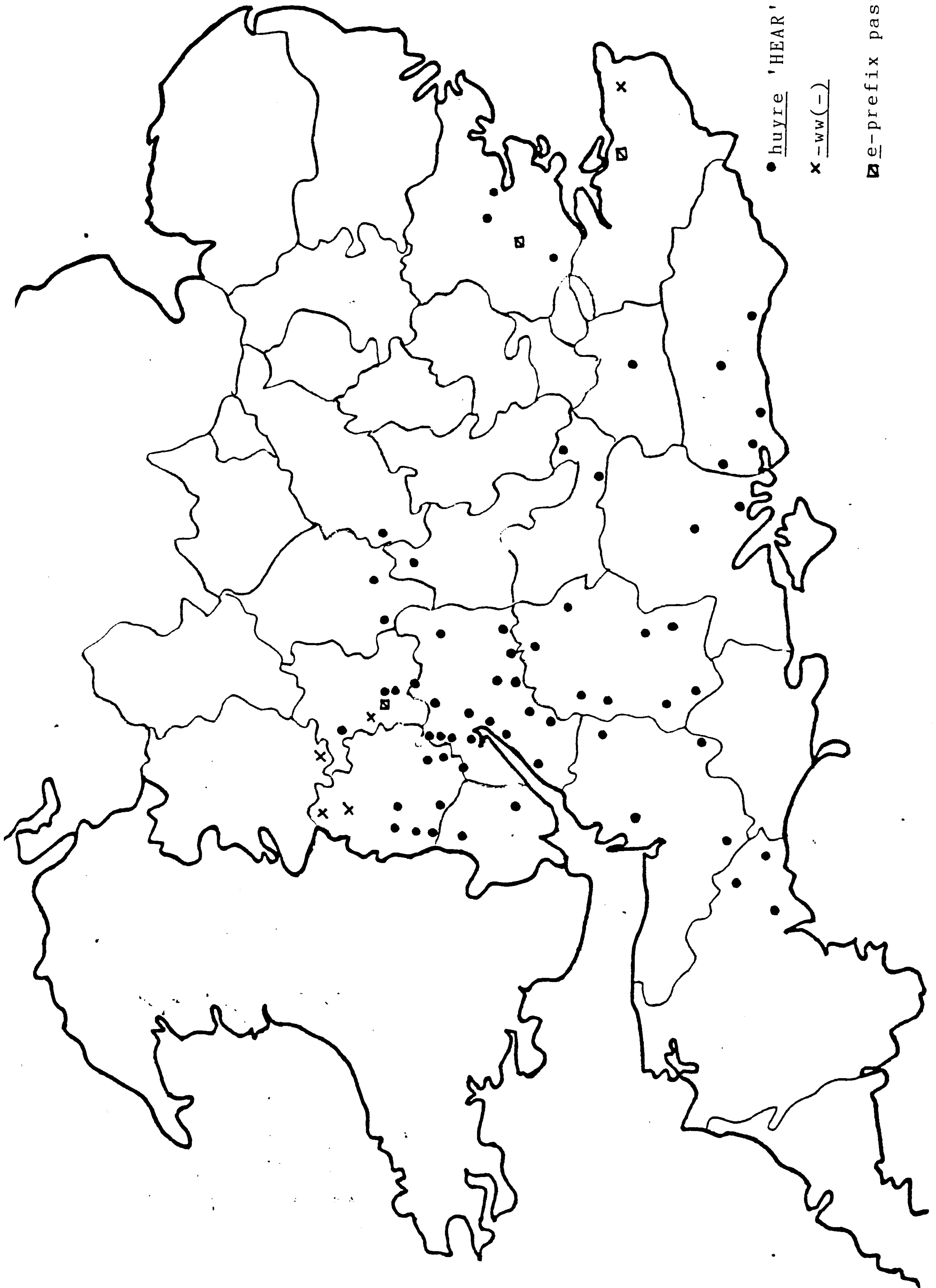
shows that oghne was a 'foregrounded' feature which copyists of Gower took pains to preserve.⁴⁸

This leads me to my third, and favoured, suggestion, which is that scribe D adopted oughne as a conscious 'hypercorrection', believing it to be a prestigious feature in terms of the 'advancing' forms of English at the period. He was, of course, mistaken, for oughne (other than in texts of Gower) did not survive long as a Middle English variant.

Once oughne has been set aside, D's dialectal origins become more apparent. D's cooperation with a known person, Thomas Hoccleve, in the construction of the Trinity Gower suggests that he shared Hoccleve's place of residence, London. But his persistent South-West Midland features suggest that he was an immigrant to the capital from that area.

It may be possible to make a more precise localisation than 'South-West Midland' for this element in scribe D's repertoire of forms. On the accompanying map, I have plotted a few features which, from the evidence mustered in 4.II above, especially on pp. 207 - 208, 213, 220, 235, 250 and 262, stem from D's origins. They cohere most convincingly in Worcester-shire.

Scribe D's origins



A core of forms, persistently cohering in the South-West Midlands, backs up these 'diagnostic' features. These forms are most clearly indicated in D's Gowers - most clearly, because in these texts there does not seem to have been any previous interference from South-West Midland exemplars. Thus, a 'characteristic' MS by scribe D will include a scattering of forms such as ych 'EACH', ony and any 'ANY', pouh 'THOUGH', silf 'SELF', nough etc. 'NOT', hegh/heih etc. 'HIGH', huld and hild 'HELD', seh/seih/segh etc. 'SAW', -leche, -ur, OE y in u/uy e.g. fuyre 'FIRE', 3ongþe 'YOUTH', eorþe 'EARTH'.

Now that scribe D's dialectal origins have been established, it is possible to give a summary account of his behaviour. I have indicated at a number of points in 4.II above that D's primary linguistic reaction is in response to his exemplar; and, although I do not here contradict this claim, it is necessary to state that D's response to his exemplars is not straightforward. This complexity is illustrated by the following table of forms in D's copies of Trevisa, Langland, Chaucer and Gower. The table has been simplified for reasons of space.

ITEM	Scribe D's copies of:			
	Trevisa	Langland	Chaucer	Gower
'THESE'	þese (((þise)))	þese, þise (((þis)))	þese, þise (((þis)))	þese (((þis, þise)))
'TWO'	two	tuo	tuo (((two)))	tuo (((two)))
'BOTH'	boþe, boþ	boþe(((boþ ^e , bothe)))	boþe, bothe (((bothen, boþen)))	boþe (((boþ ^e , boþen)))
'SUCH'	such, suche (((swiche)))	such, suche	such (((swich, swiche, suche)))	such (((suche, swiche)))
'ANY'	eny ((ony))	eny (((ony)))	eny (((any, ony)))	eny (((any, ony)))
'MUCH'	moche <u>etc.</u>	moche <u>etc.</u>	moche <u>etc.</u>	moche <u>etc.</u>
'WILL' (main forms)	wol ((wil))	wol, wil	wol, wil	wol
'THOUGH' (main forms)	þough	þogh	þough	þough
'AGAIN' (main forms)	a3ein	a3ein	a3ein	a3ein
'YET' (main forms)	3it	3it	3it	3it
'TOGETHER'	togidre <u>etc.</u>	togidre <u>etc.</u>	togidre <u>etc.</u>	togidre <u>etc.</u>
'NOT' (main forms)	nought, nou3t	not, noght, nat	nought, not, nou3t	nought <u>etc.</u>
'HIGH'	hihe, high, highe, hi3, hi3e, hyhe, hih3, hey	heye, heihe, hie, hihe, hey, hye	heigh, hye, heih, hihe, heyhe, hei3e, heihe, hiegh, high, heye, hey3e, hie, hy3e, hyhe, heyh, highe, heighe	hih, hihe, hyh, hyhe, hy, hye, heih, hie, high, heigh, heihe, heighe, hegh, highe
'EYE(S)'	yhe, yhen (((yen, y3en, y3e, ei3en, eiien)))	eyes, yhen, yhe, eyhes	yghen, eyghen, eyhen, eye, eyen, ye, yhen, ey3en, yhe, ey3e, y3e, y3en, yen	yhe, yhen, Then, eye, eyhe, eghen
pres. part.	-yng, -ynge (((ing)))	-yng, -ynge, -ing	-yng etc.	-end, -ende, -ing, -yng (((and, -ande)))
'THROUGH'	þurgh, þorugh	þurgh, þorgh, thurgh	þurgh (other forms <u>sporadic</u>)	þurgh (þorgh) (other forms <u>sporadic</u>)
'HELD'	hielde	halde, helden	held, heeld, heelde, helde, hild, huld, hield	hield, held heeld, hild, huld
'HEAR'	hier-, her-, heer-, huyr-	her-	her-, heer-, hier-	her-, heer-, hier-

In this table, several forms persistently appear in all or a majority of the traditions within which scribe D is copying. Such forms as pese, tuo, such, eny, moche, wol, pough, a3ein, 3it, togidre, nought, hihe, yhe(n), purgh, hield, her-/heer-/hier- may, therefore, be considered to make up scribe D's 'basic repertoire'. However, this table might be compared with the following listing of the equivalent forms in the archetypal language of the traditions cited:

ITEM	Trevisa	Langland	Chaucer	Gower
'THESE'	pues, peos, pes, peus	this, pis, thise	thise	pese (((pes)))
'TWO'	two, twy	two	two	tuo (((two)))
'BOTH'	bope	bothe	bothe	bope, bopen
'SUCH'	such, soche	suche (((such)))	swich (((swiche)))	such, suche (((swich, swiche, sich)))
'ANY'	eny, any	eny	any	eny (((enye, any)))
'MUCH'	moche, muche	moche	moche, muche	moche
'WILL'	wol	wol	wol	wol
'THOUGH'	pey, pey3	thogh, thouh, thow	though	pogh
'AGAIN'	a3ene, a3enes, a3e	a3enes, a3eynes	agayns	a3ein (((a3eyn, agayn, again)))
'YET'	3ut	3et, 3ut	yet	3it (((3et)))
'TOGETHER'	togedres etc.	togedre(s)	togidre(s)	togedre(s)
'NOT'	no3t	nat (((nauht, no3t)))	nat (((noght)))	noght (((naght, not, nought)))
'HIGH'	hy3	hey, heye	heigh, heighe	hih, hihe, hyh, hyhe (((hy, hye)))
'EYE(S)'	-	yes	eyen	yhe, yhen (((ye)))
pres. part. 'THROUGH'	-yng, -ynge porou3	-yng thorw	-yng, -ynge thurgh	-ende purgh
'HELD'	huld	halde	heeld	hield
'HEAR'	hure	here	heere	hiere (((here)))

What is plain from a comparison of these two tables is that the forms which make up scribe D's 'basic repertoire' coincide most frequently with the forms in the archetypal Gower tradition.

There would appear to be two possible explanations for this phenomenon. Either scribe D has learnt the Gowerian forms, and spread them to other traditions, or the forms correspond coincidentally. The second explanation may sound, at first, unlikely; but, now we know D's dialectal origins, it becomes more possible. The great majority of forms in D's repertoire, and all the forms in his 'basic repertoire', have a widespread distribution in Middle English, as the Maps in the Appendix show. They could be assigned to the South-West Midland layer already identified - and perhaps, given the principle of minimising layers, should be. The only forms in D's repertoire which cannot be explained in these terms are the form oughne etc. 'OWN', already discussed above, and a few relict forms from individual traditions.

Central to an understanding of scribe D's behaviour is the concept of constraint. Here, as so frequently in this chapter, D's copying of Trevisa helps us to understand his practice. It will be recalled that, in this MS, D shows 'constrained'

behaviour over forms for 'ARE' etc., and thereby also showed that there were limits to his accommodation to his exemplars. The 'Gowerian' forms scribe D selects are, it would seem, also his 'own' forms; and there are 'Gowerian' forms he rejects. For instance, D very rarely reproduces Gowerian togedre 'TOGETHER'; his preferred form for this item is almost always with medial -i-, -y-. The form with -e- was almost certainly in his exemplars for the Confessio Amantis; the fact that he chose not to reproduce what was a very common Southern form of the word shows that it was definitely not in his repertoire.

D's linguistic behaviour, therefore, is the result of a complex interrelationship between his exemplars and his dialectal origins. Despite the similarities, it is unlikely that he learnt forms from his Gower MSS, other than oughne etc.; but it is possible that repeated copying of Gowerian forms reinforced them as variables so that they also appear more frequently than might have been expected in his copies of Trevisa, Langland and Chaucer. An added complication is illustrated by his Trevisa and Langland MSS; as is indicated on pp. 198 - 200 and pp. 213 - 214 above, D tends to choose more commonplace rather than dialectally-restricted variables from those available in his exemplars - even though the language of those exemplars

must have had many similarities with his original language. This has obvious sociolinguistic implications, which are discussed in chapter 5 below.

A remaining question is: is it possible to establish a chronology of D's MSS using linguistic criteria alone? A crude method of constructing such a chronology might be simply to count up non-archetypal South-West Midlands features in each MS, and then place them in descending order of frequency; the fewer the South-West Midlandisms, presumably the further in time from D's origins (given that he seems to have worked in London). We have to omit the MSS of Piers Plowman and Trevisa from our considerations, since the archetypal language of these traditions is in any case Western. The figures for the complete texts of Gower's Confessio Amantis are as follows:

MS	Estimate of possible SWM features (rounded to the nearest 10)
Corpus B.67	450
Plimpton 265	340
Christ Church	290
Egerton 1991	250
Bodley 294	170

The equivalent figures for Harley 7334 and Corpus 198 are 270 and 180 respectively. However, The Canterbury Tales is a shorter text than the Confessio Amantis, so further calculations are needed. To produce truly

equivalent figures, we have to divide the estimates of non-archetypal South-West Midlands forms in each MS by the number of lines in that MS. This produces the following results:

MS	Equivalent figure (up to 3 dec. places)
Harley 7334	.014
Corpus B.67	.013
Plimpton 265	.01
Corpus 198	.009
Christ Church	.009
Egerton 1991	.007
Bodley 294	.005

There are so few non-archetypal South-West Midland features in D's stint in Bodley 902, and the passage which D copies is so comparatively short, that I hesitate to place it in this sequence. For what it is worth, D's stint in Trinity R.3.2 has ca. 30 forms which could be assigned to an independent South-West Midland layer. D copies 43 folios of English text in this MS giving, very approximately, 7,000 lines of the poem. This would make the Trinity figure .004 (to three places of decimals), making it, with Bodley 294, last in the sequence I identify above.

Of course, these figures must be treated with a good deal of suspicion. As I have tried to

show above, each MS presents its own linguistic problems, which constrained scribe D in all sorts of ways. A fair percentage of the totals I have amassed above consists of rather few items. I have not been able to think of a convenient and statistically meaningful way of taking account of the longer lines in the Canterbury Tales MSS, or of the presence in that text of substantial portions of prose. Nevertheless, it must be admitted (albeit reluctantly) that these figures are the best evidence for a sequence in D's Chaucers and Gowers that we have.

Some supporting evidence, however, is available for the Gowers in D's forms for 'SAW'. It does appear that, generally speaking, D distinguishes in his MSS of the Confessio Amantis between the forms he uses for this item in rhyming and non-rhyming positions. In rhyme, presumably because it is the more 'foregrounded' situation, he exhibits a greater tendency to use the archetypal form. In some MSS, however, the archetypal form would appear to spread into non-rhyming positions as well. The MSS would appear to arrange themselves into the following sequence:

MS	non-Rhyme	Rhyme
Corpus B.67	seih	seih, sihe
Plimpton 265	seih	sihe, syhe
Christ Church	seih, seigh, sihe, syhe	sihe, syhe
Egerton 1991	seigh (seih, sigh)	sihe
Bodley 294	sih (seih, seigh)	sihe
[I have removed sporadic forms.]		.

This sequence would seem to be supported when we notice how frequently the non-archetypal South-West Midland forms for this item (seih/seh/segh etc.) appear in the various MSS. The figures are: Corpus B.67, 190; Plimpton 265, 123; Christ Church, 106; Egerton 1991, 54, Bodley 294, 36. This pattern is in the main supported by the somewhat rarer forms for 'HIGH', 'NIGH'. Here, the figures for occurrences of neih, negh, heih, hegh etc. are as follows: Corpus B.67, 66; Plimpton 265, 48; Christ Church, 32; Bodley 294, 28; Egerton 1991, 22. In this case, however, Bodley 294 and Egerton 1991 reverse places in the sequence. Similar reversals happen between Corpus B.67 and Plimpton 265 as, for instance, with occurrences of -ur: Plimpton 265, 24; Corpus B.67, 20; Christ Church, 17; Egerton 1991, 16; Bodley 294, 10. The examples here, of course, are few; they show that a steady sequence of texts is only to be had when forms are viewed en masse. However, a basic pattern would seem to be available: Corpus B.67, Plimpton 265 and Christ Church form one group, presumably 'earlier', Egerton 1991 and Bodley 294 form a 'later' group.

The external evidence for a chronological sequence has been marshalled, for the most part, by

Doyle and Parkes (1978), and subsequently confirmed by Doyle (1983).

1. Doyle and Parkes note that the decoration of D's Piers Plowman MS "seems more appropriate to the late fourteenth century than that which appears in D's other manuscripts, and this manuscript might therefore be taken to represent one of D's earlier efforts".⁴⁹ I have not placed this MS within my sequence, for reasons given on p. 277 above. However, the form oghne 'OWN', which appears sporadically in the text, indicates that D had copied at least one Gower MS (perhaps now lost) before this one. The fact that he writes oghne rather than oughne - his usual attempt at reproducing the Gowerian form - may suggest that he was still assimilating the feature. Another possibility is that the Ilchester MS was written rather later in the sequence than Doyle and Parkes suggest. Most of D's production consists of copies of Chaucer and Gower, courtly poems for courtly audiences; a different 'provincial' style of decoration may well have been felt appropriate for a 'provincial' poem like Langland's Piers Plowman.

2. Corpus B.67 appears to have been a 'speculative' volume; a mercer's mark appears at the beginning of

the MS instead of the owner's coat of arms which is found in other productions by D.⁵⁰ The linguistic evidence suggests that this is one of D's earliest Gowers. The scribe could have been testing the market, or advertising his capabilities, with the production of such a MS, subsequently reaching the highest in the land with the Christ Church MS and MS Bodley 294. (see 3., 8. below).

3. The arms in the Christ Church Gower "indicate that the volume was completed, and possibly commissioned, not before 1405, for one of the sons of Henry IV, probably Thomas, Duke of Clarence (d.1421)".⁵¹

4. Manly and Rickert (1940) note the name 'Burle' in Corpus 198; if this is John de Burle (as they imply), then the MS could be before ca. 1413, when John died. However, the MS could have belonged to his son, William.⁵²

5. "In MS Bodley 902, D wrote a direction in the margin to the miniaturist who has been identified ... as 'Johannes', an associate of John Sifrewas until at least 1408".⁵³

6. "In Oxford, Bodleian Lib., MS Bodley 294 and London,

Brit. Lib., MS Egerton 1991 the miniatures are by Hermann Scheere or a leading associate of his, and these two artists appear together in other manuscripts datable from 1405 until 1414 at least".⁵⁴

7. Doyle and Parkes note that Bodley 294 and Egerton 1991 "are in a larger, more formal version of D's handwriting[. It] is difficult to decide whether the differences between these and the other books produced by him are to be attributed to a chronological development, or whether they are to be explained as attempts on D's part to meet the requirements of specific commissions".⁵⁵

8. Bodley 294 was owned by Humfrey, Duke of Gloucester, after 1414, and possibly earlier.⁵⁶

9. Both Bodley 294 and Trinity R.3.2 contain the account of Gower's works Quia unusquisque in the version which includes the words "dum vixit". Doyle and Parkes have shown that these MSS must have been copied after the poet's death in 1408.⁵⁷

10. The death of Hoccleve, a collaborator with D on the Trinity Gower, gives the date 1426 as a terminus ante quem for this MS.⁵⁸

The evidence for a sequence here is hardly conclusive; but what there is puts Egerton 1991, Bodley 294 and the Trinity Gower at the end and the Corpus Gower at the beginning - which does roughly correspond to the sequence I have suggested on linguistic grounds. According to Doyle and Parkes, "Scribe D's products so far identified amount to about 2,000 leaves of large dimension; scribe Δ 's to about 1,000. At the usual rates of writing, and of survival, they are likely to represent at least ten to twenty years' work in each case".⁵⁹ We might, therefore, see D as active between ca. 1400 and ca. 1420.

My placing of Harley 7334 so comparatively early in the sequence of D's production could have implications for Chaucer studies. As Doyle and Parkes (1978) show, the four earliest MSS of The Canterbury Tales were written by two scribes, their scribes D and B. B's two MSS of the Tales, the Hengwrt and Ellesmere MSS, have recently been shown to fall in sequence respectively before and after the Trinity Gower stint by their scribe. Leaving Corpus 198⁶⁰ aside as the later of D's two Chaucer MSS, Harley and Hengwrt would therefore seem to be the earliest MSS of The Canterbury Tales. If anything, Harley 7334

would seem to be somewhat the older of the two, since at least four complete MSS of Gower's Confessio Amantis seem to have been copied between it and the Trinity MS. The only record of B's activity between Hengwrt and the Trinity MS is the 'Cecil Fragment' of Troilus and Criseyde (of course, B could well have copied texts between Hengwrt and Trinity which have not survived, or have not yet been identified).

This priority of Harley 7334 might explain its peculiarities. Owen (1982) has commented that it is "the most sparsely glossed of all the early [Canterbury Tales] manuscripts".⁶¹ Its text contains idiosyncratic readings which are apparently the work of an editor; its order of tales is unique. On fol. 58v of the MS, there is a direction in the margin which reads "Icy commencera le fable de Gamelyn"; as Doyle and Parkes (1978) point out, "the future tense implies that the writer of this direction had decided to supply the deficiency caused by the incomplete Cook's Tale, and on fols. 59-70 D has copied the Tale of Gamelyn".⁶² The marginal direction clearly implies that Gamelyn was somehow separate from the other Tales, and was to be specially included. The presence of that tale in a number of MSS evidently goes back to the editor who prepared D's exemplar for the Harley MS.

In this chapter, I have examined the complete available output of one of the most prolific medieval scribes yet distinguished. In chapter 5, I wish to place scribe D in his fifteenth-century contexts, both linguistic and textual.⁶³

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

1. Doyle and Parkes (1978).
2. I am grateful to Dr. Griffiths for informing me of the existence of this MS, and of the presence of scribe D's hand in it. My reasons for not being able to examine it are discussed in the Preface. A photograph of an illumination from this MS, accompanied by a few lines of text (not by scribe D) appears in Griffiths (1983.2).
3. Doyle and Parkes (1978), pp.177-178.
4. See 1.III above.
5. The Passus-numbering is the traditional one for C-texts of Piers Plowman, as adopted by Skeat (1873). For the reader's convenience, I indicate above each of the analyses presented in Part II below the numbering used in the most recent edition of the C-text, Pearsall (1978).
6. For 'Type III' and 'Type IV', see chapter 1 above.
7. Seymour et al. (1975), pp.xi-xviii.
8. Doyle and Parkes (1978), p.177 n.25.
9. A reference to this volume appears under 'Work in Progress' in Seymour et al. (1975), p.xix.
10. Seymour et al. (1975), p.xiv.
11. Ibid., p.xi.
12. Ibid., p.xii.
13. Ibid., p.xii n.1.
14. For the character of 'Type I' language, see chapter 1 above, and Samuels (1963), p.407.
15. Seymour et al. (1975), p.xii.
16. A brief account of the spelling systems of the three scribes in the Additional MS appears in Seymour et al. (1975), pp.xiii-xiv. The editors noticed that the spelling system of the MS was not consistent, and saw this as "both an advantage and a disadvantage. It enables the spelling system of A's copy-text to be more precisely determined by the comparative use of three controls, but it also slightly complicates the Glossary ..." (p.xiii).

17. For a convenient account of Trevisa and his writings, see Sisam (1921), p.145.
18. For a definition of 'constrained usage', see 1.III above.
19. See also map on p. 271 below.
20. Samuels (1963), p.416.
21. I am grateful to Professor Samuels for allowing me to see this article prior to publication. In what follows, I have drawn on his placing of MSS.
22. Hussey (1969), p.14.
23. cf. Donaldson (1949), pp.227-231. New work on the Piers Plowman MSS has suggested that MS Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 851 - dismissed by Kane and Donaldson (1975) as "worthless for editorial use" (p.14) - is, in fact, an important 'ur- A-text' of the poem. See Rigg and Brewer (1983). However, the evidence of this MS is still so much a matter of controversy that it does not seem appropriate for me to include a discussion of it here.
24. It may be noted that the 'Hengwrt' MS of The Canterbury Tales has it, he, many, self, yet; see pp. 577 - 578 below. For the distribution of 3ut, see the map for 'YET' in the Appendix.
25. Kerby-Miller (1938), p.82.
26. Ibid., pp.29-30.
27. As by, for instance, Kane (1984).
28. For Type III, see chapter 1 above. For Chaucer's spelling, see Samuels (1983.1); for the language of the Hengwrt/Ellesmere scribe, identified first by Doyle and Parkes (1978), see Samuels (1983.2).
29. The drinklen-form appears in East Anglian texts and, occasionally, in Northern ones. The MED has the following citations: drinkelen, drinkilden in Genesis and Exodus (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 444); drinklid, drenklid, drenkild, drenkil, drinkled in the Cursor Mundi (Goettingen, University Library, MS Cod. theol. 107); Drenklid in the Paris MS of The Canterbury Tales (B.N. fonds anglais 39); drenkled in both Parts I and II of the Chronicle by Robert Mannyng of Brunne (London, Lambeth Palace MS 131, and London, Inner Temple Library, MS Petyt); drynkelyn in the Promptorium Parvulorum (Winchester, Cathedral Library,

Sylke stede MS); drynklyn, drynklyd in Bokenham's Legyndys of Hooly Wummen (London, B.L. Arundel MS 327); drenklyd, drynkelyd in Bokenham's Mappula Angliae (London, B.L. Harley MS 4011); drenkelyd in The Castle of Perseverance (Washington, Folger Shakespeare Library, MS V.a.354 (olim 5031, olim Macro MS)). OED has quotations under Drenkle (v.).

30 For the 'Bradshaw order' of The Canterbury Tales, see Owen (1968), and references there cited.

31. Such a project is suggested in 5.III below.

32. For Harley 7334, see Manly and Rickert (1940), Vol. I, pp.219-230. For the choice of Hengwrt and Ellesmere as control MSS, see note 28 above and references there cited. For the relationship between Harley 7334 and Hengwrt, see Manly and Rickert (1940), Vol. II, p.496. Both Hengwrt and Harley 7334 are 'anomalous' MSS, as opposed to Ellesmere, which heads Manly's and Rickert's 'Group a'. However, it should be emphasised that Harley 7334 and Hengwrt have only a tenuous relationship.

33. Dean's findings are reported in Manly and Rickert (1940), Vol. I, p.222. This phenomenon had been noticed by Furnivall (1885), p.vi.

34. Manly and Rickert (1940), Vol. I, p.223.

35. Crow (1935/6), p.21.

36. Ibid., passim.

37. The Northern exemplar for the Harley MS. It seems best to confine further speculation about D's relationship to his exemplar for this MS to a footnote, since it is not directly relevant to the argument of this chapter, nor offered as in any way proven. A plausible outline of the conditions in which Harley 7334 was constructed might run as follows: Various fragments of text were brought together, some with more 'Type III' features (such as wol, nat) than others. If we accept the second hypothesis on p. 240 above, then a Northern scribe prepared an exemplar, his Northernisms disappearing as copying proceeded. The appearance of this exemplar was, perhaps, rather like that of Sloane 1686 (although there were probably rather a lot of 'rough edges'; see note 60 below). From this putative MS, D copied his text, whose magnificent decoration (perhaps underplayed by Manly and Rickert (1940), Vol. I, p.220) shows it to have been a copy for the open market, or a patron, rather than a book-shop's copy-text.

It may be of interest to record at this stage that a 'Northern' exemplar-maker seems to lie behind many early copies of Gower's Confessio Amantis as well (see chapter 5 below). It is tempting, of course, to see these 'Northernisms' as being the work of the same man. However, there is no proof; and Samuels (forthcoming) notes that such 'Northernisms' are common in London texts: "This phenomenon ... seems to have arisen because northern scribes working in London tended to copy very literally and exactly with just the occasional lapse into their own spelling. Such sprinklings of Northern forms are thus a useful indication of London origin, even though the dialect of the later copyist was not London. They recur frequently in the B-texts [of Piers Plowman] and in Chaucer manuscripts".

38. See pp. 87 ff. above.

39. See Macaulay (1900), pp.cxxxviii - clvi, Fisher (1965), pp.304-305. For a description of the Plimpton MS, see Gardiner (1981); for the Christ Church MS, see Doyle and Parkes (1978).

40. Their status is discussed further in chapter 5 below.

41. See Macaulay (1900), pp.cxxxviii - cxxxix, Fisher (1965), p.304; see also Doyle and Parkes (1978).

42. See Macaulay (1900), p.clv, Fisher (1965), p.305.

43. See Macaulay (1900), pp.cliv - clv, Fisher (1965), p.305, Doyle and Parkes (1978), passim.

44. For other MSS by scribes B and E, see Doyle and Parkes (1978), pp.170, 182. Some of their points have been contested by Ramsey (1982); but Ramsey's arguments have been conclusively rejected by Samuels (1983.2). An account of scribe B's spelling system is given by Samuels (1983.1, 1983.2). In order to check Hoccleve's (= Scribe E's) spellings in his Gower text, I examined his spellings in one of the MSS he copied of his own poetry, San Marino, California, Huntington Library, HM 111 (olim Phillipps 8151), printed by Furnivall (1892). Almost all the forms in E's stint in the Trinity Gower also appear in HM 111, e.g. they 'THEY', swich 'SUCH', any 'ANY', ageyn 'AGAIN', nat 'NOT', hye 'HIGH', dide 'DID', let 'LET', heeld 'HELD', but 'BUT'. A complication is that E's stint in the Trinity Gower has shulde 'SHOULD' whereas the same item in HM 111 appears as sholde (cf. Gowerian scholde). There are a few Gowerian relicts in Hoccleve's Gower: takth 'TAKES' etc., nouthir 'NEITHER' (cf. neither in HM 111), or..or 'EITHER..OR';; but nouthir is quite common in ME, and takth and or..or are required by the metre.

45. The form perwhiles bat, which is Gowerian (cf. chapter 2 above), also appears in the text of The Pardoner's Tale in Harley 7334, spoiling the metre. This could be a learnt form, but perwhiles bat is to be found in the South-West Midlands, as is shown by the Map for this form in the Appendix, albeit not in Worcestershire. It could, therefore, be assigned to the input into the Mischsprache of this MS from D's origins.
46. o3e(ne) appears in MS London, British Library, Cotton Caligula A.ix of The Owl and the Nightingale; a3en appears in the same MS of La3amon's Brut; a3henn appears in The Ormulum, MS Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 1; oghe appears in the Kentish Sermons in MS Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud misc. 471. All these texts are in Bennett and Smithers (1974).
47. Some of the problems to do with the status of -gh- in ME are discussed by Stanley (1972), pp.111-2; see also Dobson (1961).
48. See chapter 5 below.
49. Doyle and Parkes (1978), p.195.
50. Ibid., p.209.
51. Ibid., p.208.
52. Manly and Rickert (1940), Vol.I, pp.98-9.
53. Doyle and Parkes (1978), pp.195-6.
54. Ibid., p.196.
55. Ibid., p.196.
56. Ibid., p.208.
57. Ibid., pp.163-4, esp. n.3.
58. Ibid., p.185.
59. Ibid., p.208 n.120.
60. Blake (1984) argues a case for Corpus 198 preceding Harley 7334 in chronological sequence. Although I am reluctant to argue against his authority as an editor, I do not find his conclusions wholly convincing. His thinking on this matter may be summarised as follows: Certain extra passages of The Canterbury Tales do not

appear in Harley 7334. There are some indications that the Corpus scribe (or his 'editor') knew that some of these lines should be there, but that they were not available to him. He was only able to incorporate them in the Harley MS. For this reason, Blake considers that Corpus precedes Harley. However, it seems to me that Blake does not allow for an alternative, equally plausible explanation, viz. that the scribe was aware of the changes made in Harley, allowed for them in Corpus but, because of the confusion in the atelier (distinguished by Doyle and Parkes (1978)), never got round to incorporating the new passages into the Corpus MS. Further, Blake does not take account of the direction 'Icy commencera le fable de Gamelyn', and the implications of the future tense of the verb (cf. Doyle and Parkes (1978), p.194). I prefer to keep to the traditional view, that Harley 7334 precedes the Corpus MS. It may be worth recording that the MS has been considered the earliest surviving MS of the Tales; Furnivall (1885) wrote that "[The Harley MS] is perhaps, by a few years, the oldest extant MS of the Tales, and contains an excellent text".

One problem remains with my placing of Harley 7334 so early in this sequence, viz. the occurrence of 'Gowerian' oughne 'OWN'. This would indicate that D had copied a Gower beforehand; yet, in my sequence, all the Gower MSS follow the Harleian MS. There may, of course, have been another copy of the Confessio Amantis by D which has not survived or been identified. Alternatively, I may have placed Harley 7334 too early in the sequence of MSS. Since my chronology is based upon the appearance of SWM features in each of D's products, it may be that other SWM forms, which I have assigned to D's own input to the Mischsprache contained in Harley 7334, may in reality be part of the independent layer in the text to which I assigned the -us inflexions (see pp.238 - 240 above). Whatever the explanation, the appearance of oughne in Harley causes me to reiterate the tentativeness of my sequential ordering of MSS.

61. Owen (1982), p.245.

62. Doyle and Parkes (1978), p.194; see note 60 above.

63. The problem of final -e in scribe D's Gowers. It may be of interest, although it not part of the main argument of this chapter, to investigate a major feature of Gowerian morphology, final -e, in the MSS by scribe D. Macaulay (1900), in his discussion of

Corpus B.67, Egerton 1991 and Bodley 294, noticed certain metrical differences between the three MSS. In Egerton, he says, "the scribe seems to have a good ear for metre, and seldom goes wrong in any point of spelling which affects the verse, though apt to omit final e in case of elision". In Bodley 294, Macaulay noticed similar care: "As in the case of [Egerton 1991], the copyist is careful of metre, and while omitting final e freely before a vowel, rarely does so where it affects the metre, and seldom adds e unduly". The Corpus MS, however, according to Macaulay, is "less good in spelling, especially as regards final e" (Macaulay (1900), pp.cxlvii-cxlviii).

My examination of the MSS suggests that Macaulay's statements about the Corpus MS, at any rate, need modification. The most important feature in the use of final e in both Gower and Chaucer is "the distribution of adjectival forms ... required by a regular syllabic metre" (Samuels (1972.2), p.445). This distribution reflects the old English situation. Weak adjectives require final e in both singular and plural declensions; strong adjectives require final e in the plural, but not in the singular (with the exception of those with Germanic ja-stems). The distinctions were already formal, if not archaic, in Chaucer's time; we might expect scribe D, active in the decades after Chaucer's death, to show confusion about what is unlikely to have been a living part of his language. In fact, in four of the complete texts of the *Confessio Amantis* D copies, -e in adjectives is present or absent more or less correctly according to the strong/weak distinction. To demonstrate this, the table below is a listing of all the strong singular occurrences of 'OLD' in Corpus B.67, Plimpton 265, Christ Church, Egerton 1991 and Bodley 294. I have omitted forms with a following vowel, since -e could be elided in that position.

Line ref.	Corpus B.67	Plimpton 265	Christ Church	Egerton 1991	Bodley 294
I.1072	olde	old	old	old	old
I.1444	old	olde	olde	old	old
III.1204	olde	olde	olde	old	old
III.1899	old	olde	olde	old	old
III.2033	old	old	olde	old	old
IV.2041	old	old	olde	old	old
IV.2412	old	old	old	old	old
V.2103	old	old	olde	old	old
V.3945	old	old	olde	old	old
V.4134	old	old	-	old	old
V.4159	old	old	-	old	old
VI.1383	old	old	olde	old	old
VIII.2439	old	old	old	old	old
VIII.2766	old	old	olde	old	old

(-e is regular in all the MSS for the strong/weak plural and weak singular forms). The number of strong singular adjectives with -e in the Christ Church MS is so markedly different from the practice in other MSS that it is likely that the presence or absence of e was the result of some external pressure on D, either from his exemplars or from some corrector. It seems doubtful that, unaided, D could get the form both so right in some MSS and so wrong in others.

As well as in adjectives, the evidence of the Fairfax and Stafford MSS of the Confessio Amantis shows that Gower used -e in other positions where it seems simply to be a written marker without metrical significance. Examples are: hise 'HIS' (pl.), hire 'HER' (all cases), and -ere in neuere, euere, manere etc.. In all these forms, D usually omits -e, giving his, hir, neuer etc. (although manere is quite frequent in rhyming positions). There do not seem to be any distinctions between MSS with regard to this feature.

Apart from the strong/weak adjective distinction, D sometimes adds -e where it does not occur in Fairfax; there does not seem to be any grammatical rule for this, but it is noticeable that it is more common in Corpus B.67, Plimpton 265 and Christ Church than in Egerton 1991 and Bodley 294. In a test passage of 500 lines at the beginning of Book III, I found the following number of occurrences of -e not in Fairfax: Christ Church - 20; Corpus B.67 - 18; Plimpton 265 - 17; Egerton 1991 - 2; Bodley 294 - 2. This does not omit places where -e could be elided or appears in rhyming position; if these are omitted, the figures shrink to: Christ Church - 8; Corpus B.67 - 6; Plimpton 265 - 5; Egerton 1991 - 1; Bodley 294 - 1. This might seem to support some rough division of the MSS into two groups, viz. Christ Church, Corpus B.67 and Plimpton 265 on the one hand, Egerton 1991 and Bodley 294 on the other.

However, another metrically-conditioned feature, the presence or absence of the syncopated 3rd present singular verbs, would not support such an ordering. Over the same test passage, I found the following expanded - and, therefore, metrically deficient - forms: Corpus B.67 - 10; Egerton 1991 - 8; Christ Church - 3; Plimpton 265 - 2; Bodley 294 - 2. There is no correlation with the distribution of final e here. There is, of course, no reason why scribe D should have correlated them linguistically (for the reverse behaviour, see pp.129-132 above), but the failure is interesting since it shows that D was uncertain about the metrical basis of Gower's poetry.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

I. As I have shown in Chapter 2 above, there are a number of features in the Fairfax and Stafford MSS of the Confessio Amantis which are, in combination, diagnostic of Gower's peculiar mixture of Kentish and Suffolk dialects. From the discussion in Chapters 3 and 4 above, it is plain that a number of these forms became 'traditional' in the spellings of the Confessio Amantis MSS - and, for some features, even of the early printed editions of the poem. The following table, with texts grouped together according to date, gives a crude indication of the survival of four forms which are characteristic of Gower's own language, viz.

- (a) sih, syh etc. 'SAW';
- (b) pres.part. endings in -ende;
- (c) the usual form of the 3rd sg.pres. verb is synco-pated, e.g. makþ, berþ, comþ etc.;
- (d) oghne (adj.) 'OWN'.

In this table, + = present, even as a minor variable, in any hand or hands of a given text; - = not present. 0 means that examples for the item in question are lacking in the text available. The dates are self-explanatory; within each section, the order of MSS is alphabetical.

TEXT \ ITEM	<u>sih</u> , etc.	<u>-ende</u> , etc.	<u>makb</u> , etc.	<u>oghne</u> , etc.
<u>xv 1</u>				
Add.12043	+	+	+	+
Bodmer	+	+	+	+
Bod.294	+	+	+	+
Bod.693	+	+	+	-
Bod.902	+	+	+	+
Bute	+	+	-	+
Christ Church	+	+	+	+
CCCO B.67	+	+	+	+
Dd 8.19	+	+	+	-
Egerton 1991	+	+	+	+
Garrett	+	-	-	-
Glasgow	+	+	+	+
Harley 3869	+	+	+	+
St.John's	+	+	-	-
Laud 609	+	+	-	-
Morgan M.125	+	+	+	+
Morgan M.690	+	+	-	+
Notts. U.L.	-	+	-	+
New Coll.266	+	+	+	+
Pembroke	-	-	-	-
Plimpton 265	+	+	+	+
Royal 18.c.xxii	+	+	-	+
Stowe	+	+	+	+
[Taylor <u>omitted</u>]				
Trinity R.3.2	+	+	+	+
Yale	+	+	-	+
<u>xv 1,2</u>				
Mm 2.21	+	+	+	+
<u>xv 2</u>				
Add.22139	+	+	+	+
Ashmole 35	+	-	-	-
Antiquaries	+	+	-	-
<u>xv mid</u>				
Arundel	+	+	+	+
St.Cath.	-	-	-	-
Egerton 913	+	+	+	+
Folger	+	+	-	+
Harley 3490	+	+	-	+
Harley 7184	+	+	-	+

TEXT \ ITEM	<u>sih</u> , etc.	<u>-ende</u> , etc.	<u>makp</u> , etc.	<u>oghne</u> , etc.
<u>xv mid (cont.)</u>				
Lyell	+	+	-	+
Magdalen	+	+	+	+
Rosenbach	-	+	0	-
Selden	+	+	-	-
Sidney Sussex	-	-	-	-
<u>xv 3</u>				
New Coll.326	+	+	-	-
Wadham	-	-	-	-
<u>xv 3,4</u>				
Morgan M.126	+	+	-	+
<u>xv 4</u>				
Caxton	+	+	-	-
Chicago	+	-	-	-
<u>xvi 1</u>				
Hatton	+	+	-	-
<u>xvi 1,2</u>				
Berthelette	+	+	-	-
Chetham	+	+	+	-

The pattern of spelling here seems to me to show conclusively that there was an orthographic tradition within which the MSS of the Confessio Amantis were produced. It seems to me to be straining credibility too far to suggest that this idiosyncratic spelling-mixture persists in so many MSS through pure coincidence. However, to make the argument conclusive for the stubbornest sceptic, it may be a good idea to look for the same spellings

in the nearest comparable large MS-tradition, that of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales. The following table lists the occurrence of the same spellings in texts of the Pardoner's Tale, printed by the Chaucer Society from all the MSS available to them.¹ The Pardoner's Tale is roughly comparable in length with the test passages I have examined in the majority of the Confessio Amantis MSS. The order of texts is purely alphabetical.

TEXT \ ITEM	<u>sih</u> , etc.	<u>-ende</u> , etc.	<u>makp</u> , etc.	<u>oghne</u> , etc.
Add.5140	-	-	-	-
Add.25718	-	-	-	-
Add.35286	-	-	+	-
Ash.App.124	-	-	-	-
Ash.App.127	0	-	-	-
Barlow 20	-	-	-	-
Bod.414	-	-	-	-
Bod.686	-	-	-	-
Caxton 1478	-	-	-	-
Caxton 1484	-	-	-	-
Chol.-Norton	-	-	-	-
Christ Church	-	-	-	-
CCCO 198	-	-	-	+
Dd 4.24	-	-	-	-
Delamere	-	-	-	-
Devonshire	-	-	+	+
Egerton 2726	-	-	+	-
Ellesmere	-	-	+	-
Gg 4.27	-	-	-	-
Glasgow	-	-	-	-
Harley 1758	-	-	-	-
Harley 7333	0	-	-	-
Harley 7334	-	-	+	+
Harley 7335	0	-	-	-
Hatt.Don.1	-	-	-	-
Helmingham	0	-	-	-
Hengwrt	-	-	+	-
Hodson	-	-	-	-
Ii 3.26	-	-	-	-
Ingilby	-	-	-	-

TEXT \ ITEM	<u>sih</u> , etc.	- <u>ende</u> , etc.	<u>makp</u> , etc.	<u>oghne</u> , etc.
Lansdowne	-	-	-	-
Laud 600	-	-	-	-
Laud 739	-	-	-	-
Lichfield	-	-	-	-
Linc. Cath.	-	-	-	-
Mm 2.5	-	-	-	-
New Coll.314	-	-	-	-
Northumberland	-	-	-	-
Paris Angl.	-	-	-	-
Petworth	-	-	-	-
Phillipps 6570	-	0	-	0
Phillipps 8136	-	-	-	-
Phillipps 8137	-	-	-	-
Rawl. Poet. 149	-	-	-	-
Rawl. Poet. 223	-	-	-	-
Royal 17.d.xv	-	-	-	-
Royal 18.c.ii	-	-	-	-
Selden B.14	-	-	-	-
Sloane 1685	-	-	-	-
Sloane 1686	-	-	-	-
Thynne	-	-	-	-
Trinity R.3.3	-	-	+	+
Trinity R.3.15	-	-	-	-
TCO 49	-	-	-	-

In this table, it is noticeable that the only MSS with, for instance, gh-type spellings for 'OWN' (adj.) are those by scribe D, Harley 7334 and Corpus Christi College Oxford 198, and two MSS, Devonshire and Trinity College Cambridge R.3.3, which contain layers of language localisable in Kent - where oghne etc. would occur naturally.² The syncopated verbs were a minor variable in Chaucer's own language - comth Pard.Tale 781 is required by the metre - so it is, in fact, surprising that so few examples of such forms survive in the MSS of The Canterbury Tales. It would seem to be proven, therefore,

that forms like sih, -ende, makp etc., oghne in the Gower MSS are, generally speaking, constrained forms or 'relicts' whose presence indicates the strength of spelling tradition in the copies of the Confessio Amantis made down to, at least, the early sixteenth century.

Examination of the Confessio Amantis MSS in comparison with copies of The Canterbury Tales shows that the authority of spelling tradition could be just as strong in less 'foregrounded' features as in those I have discussed above. We might examine here two forms which seem to have been archetypal in both Confessio Amantis and Canterbury Tales traditions - bot 'BUT' and s(c)hold(e) 'SHOULD'. In both cases, the advancing form in the fifteenth century differed from these: but and s(c)huld(e). If we include in the totals all the MSS containing bot, even as a minor variable, then ca. 44% of the Gowers have bot compared with ca. 7% of Chaucers. A similar count for 'SHOULD' shows a similar contrast: ca. 81% of Gowers have the form with -o-, against ca. 43% of Chaucers. Plainly, the force of archetypal tradition fluctuates from item to item, but the proportionate force on the two traditions I examine here remains the same.

It would be theoretically feasible to examine many such items and array them in a similar way; but I

am not sure that this would be particularly interesting. The point of the argument I have mustered above is, I think, made, viz. that the Confessio Amantis MSS display a stronger, more continuing pressure from the language of the archetype than do the Canterbury Tales MSS.

Whether the Gower MSS show the influence of Type IV 'Chancery Standard' is more difficult to determine. Davis (1983) has recently emphasised how the processes of standardisation in the written medium in the fifteenth century have to do with choices among a wide range of possible variables: "Why one or other of these variants has gradually come to be adopted as the approved type can seldom be confidently determined, and we can often do little more than simply observe the way in which each gives ground or is discarded".³ As I noted in chapter 1 above, Benskin and Sandved are now engaged in investigating the whole subject, and it is not possible to predict the outcome of their researches. However, Samuels (1972.1) gives a short list of 'Type IV' features, and it may be of interest to tabulate the appearance of such features in the Gower MSS. Samuels' table⁴ is as follows:

Chaucer	1430 onwards	Chaucer	1430 onwards
yaf nat bot swich(e)	gaf not but such(e)	hir(e) thise thurgh sholde	theyre, þeir(e) þair(e), her thes(e) thorough, þorow(e) shulde

In the table which follows, + = the presence of a 'Type IV' form for the item in question, even as a minor variable in one hand only; - = the non-appearance of such a form anywhere in the text examined. The table has certain obvious limitations. I do not include results for the items 'SUCH' and 'THESE' for, coincidentally, the forms for these in the archetypal language of the Gower tradition are identical with those in 'Type IV'.⁵ I do not count her as a distinctive 'Type IV' form for 'THEIR' - again, it is Gowerian. I include thr-type forms of 'THROUGH' among the 'Type IV' forms, since it seems to have been a development of porow etc.. I omit MSS by scribe D, which are discussed in chapter 4 above.

TEXT \ ITEM	'GAVE'	'NOT'	'BUT'	'THEIR'	'THROUGH'	'SHOULD'
<u>xv 1</u>						
Add.12043	-	+	+	-	+	+
Bodmer	-	+	+	-	-	+
Bod.693	-	-	+	-	-	-
Bute	0	+	+	-	-	+
Dd 8.19	0	+	-	0	-	-
Garrett	-	+	+	-	+	+
Glasgow	-	+	+	-	-	+
Harley 3869	-	-	-	-	-	-
St.John's	-	-	-	-	-	-
Laud 609	0	-	+	-	-	+
Morgan M.125	-	+	+	-	-	+
Morgan M.690	0	-	+	-	-	-
Notts.U.L.	-	+	+	-	-	+
New Coll.266	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pembroke	0	+	+	-	-	+
Royal	-	+	+	-	+	+
Stowe	-	-	+	-	-	+
Yale	-	+	+	-	-	+

TEXT \ ITEM	'GAVE'	'NOT'	'BUT'	'THEIR'	'THROUGH'	'SHOULD'
<u>xv 1,2</u>						
Mm 2.21	-	+	+	-	+	-
<u>xv 2</u>						
Add.22139	-	+	+	-	+	+
Ashm.35	-	+	+	-	+	+
Antiquaries	-	+	+	-	+	+
<u>xv mid</u>						
Arundel	-	+	+	0	-	-
St.Cath.	0	+	+	-	+	+
Egerton 913	0	+	+	-	-	+
Folger	0	+	+	-	+	+
Harley 3490	-	+	+	-	-	-
Harley 7184	-	+	+	-	+	+
Lyell	-	+	+	-	+	+
Magdalen	-	+	+	+	+	+
Rosenbach	-	+	+	-	0	-
Selden	-	+	+	-	-	+
Sidney Sussex	-	-	+	-	-	-
<u>xv 3</u>						
New Coll.326	-	+	+	-	+	+
Wadham	-	+	+	-	-	+
<u>xv 3,4</u>						
Morgan M.126	-	+	+	-	-	+
<u>xv 4</u>						
Caxton	-	+	+	+	+	-
Chicago	-	+	+	-	-	+
<u>xvi 1</u>						
Hatton	-	+	+	+	+	-
<u>xvi 1,2</u>						
Berthelette	-	+	+	+	+	+
Chetham	+	+	+	-	+	+

This table indicates that there is a general movement towards forms which Samuels (1972.1) considers characteristic of 'Type IV'. In 22 MSS dating from before the mid-fifteenth century, 55 '+' symbols appear; in 19 MSS dating from the mid-fifteenth century and later 65 '+' symbols appear. This, however, is hardly a decisive shift. It is noticeable that, in the forms for 'GAVE', the 'Type IV' form barely appears on the table. In many cases the 'Type IV' form is a minor variable only; in other places it is a co-variable with Gowerian forms. These conditions explain the presence of '+' signs for but and schuld(e) in the table immediately above for MSS which are recorded as having bot and scholde in chapter 3. The figures in the table above can be seen as similarly distorted by the fact that I do not exclude 'dialectal' MSS which coincidentally contain forms also found in Type IV.

Nevertheless, a general movement towards 'Standard' forms can be detected; and the evidence of scribes B and D, and of Gower himself, may indicate something of the processes involved here. Scribe B seems to have been a Londoner. A 'translating' scribe, he has no hesitation in converting the texts he copies, generally speaking, into his own variety of Type III.⁶ Plainly,

he has no worries about the status of the language he uses. He makes no attempt generally to reproduce Gowerian forms.

Gower himself seems to have lived in London for much of his career, but to have made little or no accommodation to London English. As I have tried to show in Chapter 2 above, his forms stem from his dialectal origins, in Kent and Suffolk.

Scribe D is much more insecure about his linguistic origins than Gower and scribe B. Like B, he worked in London; however, unlike B, he seems to have been engaged, linguistically speaking, in suppressing his SWM origins. The reasons for this must be that other varieties of English existed which he considered, consciously or unconsciously, superior to that in which (presumably) he had been brought up. In this, he shares in the habits displayed by many scribes later in the fifteenth century. Gomez-Soliño (1984) has noted how gradual accommodation to Chancery Standard can be seen in the letters of Cardinal Wolsey (even though East Anglian forms persisted in his written language throughout his career)⁷; and replacement of native Norfolk forms by those in more widespread use can also be seen in the autograph letters of Edmond Paston II.⁸

A reason for the difference between D's behaviour and that of Gower, another provincial who came to the capital, may be to do with date. D was active a generation after that which first read the Confessio Amantis. For Gower, the status of English was not assured. For a serious discussion of the contemporary state of society (the Vox Clamantis), the poet chose Latin; for an explicit discussion of the "microcosmic combat of Passion and Reason in fallen man"⁹ (in the Mirour de l'Omme), he chose Anglo-Norman.

For D, who seems to have made a specialty of copying vernacular MSS, English was evidently much more significant than Latin or French. Moreover, a particular variety of written English, the language of London, seems to have achieved a prestige status for him. This is plain in all his MSS, even those which in all probability were copied from SWM exemplars. As I have shown in 4.II above, D will adopt a 'Type III' form rather than a SWM one when copying Piers Plowman or Trevisa - even though he grew up in an area where SWM forms would be natural. In this he contrasts with scribe B, whose linguistic self-confidence could well have stemmed from his awareness that London English, his own language, was on the way to achieving prestige status. D, a provincial who had made his way to the capital, seems to have been

abashed by the language he found there. Back in the provinces, contemporary copyists of 'courtly poetry' were less worried. At about the same time as D was beginning his career, a North-West Midland scribe was producing MS London, British Library, Cotton Nero A.x of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight in 'undiluted' Cheshire/Staffordshire English,¹⁰ while the scribe of MS Cambridge, St. John's College B.12, was making a 'translation' of the Confessio Amantis into the dialect of Herefordshire (albeit with a few relict and constrained forms).¹¹

In such a situation, the significance of scribe D lies in his comparatively early date. D attempted to be something he was not in origin, a writer of 'standardised' English (as he would perceive it). However, before at least 1430 and the emergence of Chancery Standard, there was no settled standard written English - in the modern sense - for D to adopt. Thus D takes oughne 'OWN' into his 'active' repertoire, despite that form's 'provincial' status. The mass of evidence which D supplies seems to show that the pressures which produced standardisation were already present in London English at the beginning of the fifteenth century, but that an established set of 'standard' forms did not yet exist.

The evidence of the MSS of the Confessio Amantis as a whole shows that standardisation was hardly a straightforward matter. If we attempt to classify these texts in terms of Samuels' typology of late and post-Middle English spelling systems,¹² we soon discover that none is written in 'pure' Chancery Standard (Samuels' Type B). Most present a mixture of Gowerian forms and dialectal forms; in many cases, the dialectal element is an example of Samuels' Type D, 'colourless' regional writing. The collection of messy lects which makes up the corpus I present in Part II below and discuss in Chapters 3 and 4 above supports the thesis which Clark (1976) puts forward in another context - "scribal practice ... does not so much directly reflect any linguistic milieu as represent a compromise between various constraints".¹³

These are complex matters, which indeed "bristle with problems";¹⁴ it is probably over-speculative to proceed further until Benskin and Sandved have completed their researches. One thing, however, is clear from the data I have mustered at the outset of this chapter: scribes copying the Confessio Amantis, as a rule, paid a great deal of attention to the minutiae of spelling in their exemplars. It is to issues to do with the textual criticism of the entire manuscript tradition of the poem that I now wish to turn.

II. The most recent full account of the textual transmission of the Confessio Amantis is that of Fisher (1965), but it is largely based on Macaulay's observations over half a century before. A new collation, by Pearsall et al., is under way, but as yet no firm new conclusions have been reached.¹⁵ So the starting point for any discussion of the tradition must, as so frequently in this thesis, be Macaulay's work.

The basic division of the MSS made by Macaulay was threefold: "The first recension ...is that in which the conclusion of the poem contains praises of Richard II as a just and beneficent ruler and a presentation of the book for his acceptance. The second has ... additional passages of the fifth and seventh books, with a rearrangement of the sixth book ..., while the conclusion of the poem has been rewritten so as to exclude the praises of the king, and in some copies there is also a new preface with dedication to Henry of Lancaster. The third exhibits a return to the form of the first as regards the additional passages, but has the rewritten preface and epilogue".¹⁶ However, Macaulay also noted further groupings within these three sets of MSS, and he recognised that "many errors in the text of the first recension appear also in some copies of the second, and even of the

third".¹⁷ He explained such changes in the following way:

"The process by which this was brought about is made clearer by the fact that we have an example of a manuscript which has passed from one group into another partly by erasure and partly by the substitution of leaves, apparently made under the direction of the author. This is MS Fairfax 3 ... If a new book had to be specially prepared for presentation, the case would be different, and it might then be worth while to incorporate the additional passages with the fully revised and re-dedicated text, as we find was done in the case of the ... Stafford MS. Another matter which can evidently be explained in the same way is the reappearance in some copies of the second recension of errors which belong to the first. In producing the originals of such manuscripts as these, partially revised copies of the first recension must have been used as the basis, and such errors as had not yet received correction appear in the new edition".¹⁸ By such arguments Macaulay accounted for the 2nd- and 3rd-recension MSS. In the first recension MSS, he noted evidence of authorial correction and revision, including metrical smoothing which (in Fisher's words) indicated "that the manuscripts were copied from three exemplars, or the same exemplar in three stages of correction".¹⁹ This is, perhaps, an oversimplification of Macaulay's position;

the latter was careful to show that further complexities existed, although he was equally careful not to become bogged down in an attempt at explanation which would, given his initial approach, have probably been fruitless.²⁰

It seems to me that the linguistic contents of the MSS can throw light upon the processes involved here.²¹ In my discussion of scribe D's MSS, I showed how there is a persistent set of sporadic forms which seem to be relicts from a 'Northern' layer underlying both the 'recensions' of the Confessio Amantis with which D was involved. In the following table, I show the readings for these forms not only in D's MSS but also at the same places in the text in MSS considered by Macaulay to be the 'best' representatives of their recensions and sub-groupings (other than those by D, of course). These MSS are:

First recension (unrevised):

Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 693
 Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud 609
 London, British Library, Royal 18.c.xxii .
 First recension (intermediate):

Glasgow, University Library, Hunter S.i.7
 New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, M.125

First recension (revised):

Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 902
 Cambridge, St. John's College, B.12(34)

To the forms distinguished as 'Northern' in scribe D's output, I add one other form here: the use of -us in opus 'OATHS', tribus 'TRIBES' etc.. I do this because the distribution of this form suggests that it is to be associated with this element in the language of these MSS. Its presence as part of this 'layer' would suggest that this layer is not simply 'Northern' but 'North-West Midland'.

The 'North-West Midland' forms do not appear in those 3rd-recension MSS where they would be sufficiently 'foregrounded'. In the Wadham MS, tribus 'TRIBES' appears at VIII.136, and 'mykel(mekyl &c.)' appears at II.2251, according to Macaulay's footnotes; but the Wadham MS is not only a North-West Midland MS itself, but also the product of a curious textual history which makes it untypical of the 3rd-recension MSS.²² I have found none of the forms recorded below in the Stafford MS. I have not been able to check all the readings in the Sidney Sussex MS, but Macaulay does note that it has tribus VIII.136. For Macaulay's '2nd recension (b)', my access has been limited for this purpose to the MSS copied, in whole or in part, by scribe D, viz. Bodley 294 and Trinity R.3.2 respectively. A table summarising the 'NWM' forms follows.

MS	Royal 18.c.22	Corpus B.67	Plimpton 265	Christ Church 148	Egerton 1991	Bodley 294	Bodley 693	Laud 609	Glasgow	Morgan M.125	Bodley 902	St. John's	Trinity R.3.2
line ref.													
I. 1682	-ande	-ande	-ende	-ande	-ande	-ande	-and	-an(sic)	-ande	-and	-ende	-yng	-
3025	-ende	-ande	-ende	-ende	-ende	-ende	-end	-ende	-end	-ende	-ende	-ende	-
II. 760	-ande	-ande	-ande	-ande	-ande	-ende	-and	-and	-ende	-ende	-ende	-ende	-
2251	mykel	mykel	mykel	moche	mykil	moche	mekyl	mekil	mykel	mykel	moche	moche	-
III. 1969	-ande	-ende	-and	-ende	-ande	-ende	-and	-ande	-ande	-ande	-ende	-ing	-yng
1994	mykel	mekil	moche	moche	moche	moche	mikel	mekil	mochil	moche	moche	moche	much
V. 936	-us	-es	-us	-es	-es	-es	-is	-es	-es	-es	-es	-es	-es
2389	her	here	pair	here	here	here	her	peir	her	here	here	hire	here
2989	-es	-es	-es	-es	-us	-us	-es	-es	-es	-es	-es	-es	-es
VII. 4118	-us	-es	-es	-us	-us	-us	- <u>us</u>	-us	-us	-us	-es	-es	
4593	-es	-es	-es	-es	-es	-es	-is	-us	-es	-es	-es	-es	
VIII. 136	-es	-es	-es	-us	-us	-es	-us	-es	-es	-es	-es	-es	

Features such as mykel 'MUCH', tribus 'TRIBES', hengande 'HANGING' (pres.part.) are not part of the spelling-tradition of the Confessio Amantis, as represented by the Fairfax and Stafford MSS. Yet they persistently appear in corresponding places in the text in MSS which show very different forms of that text - so different that Macaulay (1900) and Fisher (1965) can write in terms of 'recensions' of the poem.

One school of thought might, in similar circumstances, argue for 'contamination' between different lines of descent from the archetype.²³ In this view, mykel etc. would be 'difficult readings' which the scribe would incorporate into his text when checking his usual exemplar against another MS.²⁴ I am not sure about the applicability of such an argument in this case, for two reasons. Firstly, I find it hard to believe that professional scribes, like those I have selected for study here, took the trouble to choose what must have been 'accidental' dialect variants from another MS and with them replace the persistent archetypal forms which appear to have coincided with their own usage. Secondly, it is possible that the concept of 'contamination', in its traditional sense whereby the careful scholar would place variant readings side-by-side, ready for the application of scholastic rigour, is out of place in the hurly-burly of the

busy commercial atelier of the fifteenth century. It seems much more likely that the scribe in such circumstances 'ate what was set before him'; this, at any rate, is the implication of my studies of D's reproduction of Gowerian metrical practice in Chapter 4 above.

A possible answer to the problem is Macaulay's discussion of the revision of the Fairfax MS. This can, perhaps, now be paralleled elsewhere in medieval studies by the example of the Piers Plowman MSS. In their exhaustive study, Kane and Donaldson (1976) showed that Langland, when he came to revise the poem into the state we call the 'C-text', chose to take a corrupt MS of the earlier 'B-text' and then, presumably by erasure and substitution of leaves, converted it into the new text he wanted.²⁵ This kind of process may well have been easier and quicker than a modification of the collection of wax tablets which probably made up the poet's 'foul papers'.²⁶

However, such conversions cannot, it seems to me, be the whole answer to the problem; such wholesale revisions cannot explain all these MSS. Another hypothesis which might gain favour in the light of recent codicological research may lie in the use of the concept

of the 'booklet'.²⁷ Exemplar-copies of texts such as the Confessio Amantis and The Canterbury Tales were not firmly bound, but existed in booklets loose in the bookshop; these booklets would be cobbled together for scribes to copy as occasion and the market demanded. No doubt groups of booklets had a tendency to stick together, but disturbance would not be difficult. We can even postulate the kind of circumstances in which such disturbance might arise. Several MSS of the Confessio Amantis and The Canterbury Tales are written in several hands - presumably in order to speed up production of 'rush orders'.²⁸ When the exemplars were split up among the contributing scribes, it must have been only too easy to shuffle up those exemplars when they were returned to the bookshop owner for storage.

The confusion in the Confessio Amantis MSS, it would seem, came about most probably through a combination of these processes I have outlined. Gower undertook revisions of his work, but the atelier-system made, in many cases, nonsenses of those revisions. Doyle and Parkes (1978) have queried the argument for a scriptorium 'managed' by the poet himself, by pointing to the confusions in the organisation of MS production. In truth, when Chaucer and his contemporaries told their "litel bokes" to "go", they were abandoning their work entirely to the vagaries of the atelier-system.

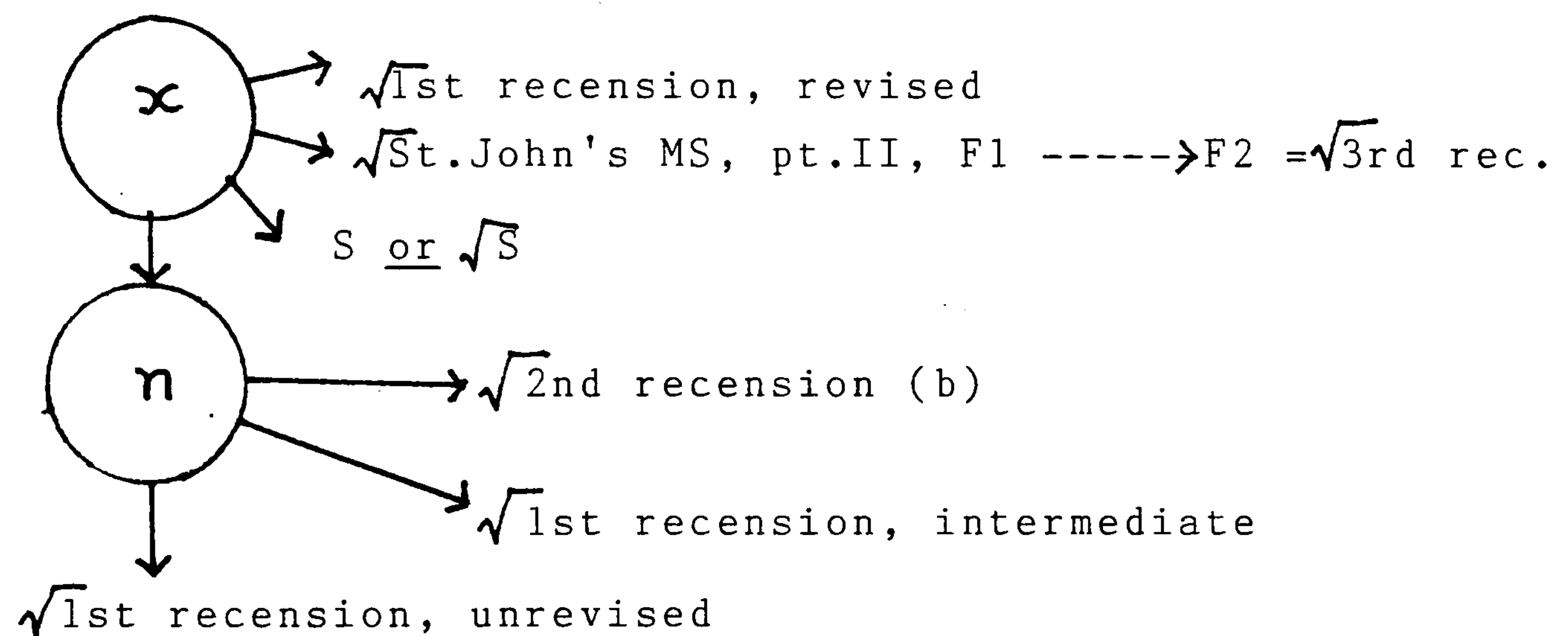
We might now consider the 'North-West Midland' elements in the light of these new possibilities. It would appear that a 'North-West Midland' exemplar underlies the following of Macaulay's groupings:

First recension, unrevised;

First recension, intermediate;

Second recension, (b).

(It may underlie the Sidney Sussex MS, from Macaulay's 'Second recension (a)').) This exemplar does not appear to underlie Macaulay's First recension, revised, or Third recension. Using the textual evidence I have marshalled in chapters 2, 3 and 4 above, we might produce the following 'stemma' to express the relationships between the MSS:



In this diagram, x = the authorial input; n = the 'North-West Midland' common exemplar. I use the $\sqrt{}$ -symbol in the same way as do Manly and Rickert (1940), to indicate a common ancestry. I make no attempt to indicate possible subsequent contamination.

The fact that one non-archetypal text seems to underlie, in part or in whole, so many copies of the Confessio Amantis - including most of those in which scribe D was involved - causes me to question Doyle and Parkes (1978) when they state that "demand [in the early fifteenth century] was rarely certain enough to make it a commercial proposition for a stationer to retain a single exemplar to serve as a basis for the production of multiple copies".²⁹ The evidence of the 'North-West Midland' forms might suggest that one exemplar, at any rate, had a widespread influence. Whether that was direct influence, of course, is another matter; the variation shown by scribe D over some of his linguistic forms ('THEY' and 'NOT' are good examples) seems likely - given the evidence I discuss in chapter 4 above - to have been the result of further scribal intervention in the transmission of the texts.³⁰

I do not believe it is possible to go further along these lines until the full collation of the MSS by Pearsall et al. is completed, and until other linguistic studies of the Gower MSS, on the lines of my study of scribe D in chapter 4 above, have been completed. It is probably too speculative, also, to suggest more local connections between individual groups of MSS - although it is hard to avoid speculating, for instance,

about the West Midland connections of the 'first recension, unrevised' group.³¹ Do these MSS, or some of them, spread from an exemplar which reached the West Midlands at an early date? Or are they the product of a London atelier whose master, from the West Midlands himself, made a point of employing apprentices from his area of origin? Until we know much more about the book-trade in the provinces as well as in London, this kind of speculation is difficult to support; it is certainly not something on which I feel qualified to pass judgement.

III. We might now proceed to summarise the findings of this thesis.

1. I have reconstructed the language of John Gower, and I have shown, as Samuels and I (1981) have written elsewhere, that "the Fairfax and Stafford MSS are, in all respects except their actual handwriting, as good as autograph copies, and that the text of Gower's work has been authenticated to an extent far greater than is likely to be possible for the copied works of any other author at such a remove in time".³²

2. I have shown that it is possible to deduce some of the sociolinguistic pressures which were exerted on Gower when he wrote the Confessio Amantis.

3. I have demonstrated that the Gowerian language, as revealed in the Fairfax and Stafford MSS, was transmitted through layers of scribal copying throughout the fifteenth century in a very remarkable way.

4. I have presented a corpus of spellings for the entire available MS tradition of the Confessio Amantis, giving the starting point for future research. I have commented on the relationship of the language of this tradition to the growth of Standard written English.

5. I have applied the techniques of linguistic analysis evolved by the Survey of Middle English Dialects to the important identification of scribes by Doyle and Parkes (1978). By an exhaustive analysis of all the available output of one copyist, one of the most pro-

lific of the Middle Ages, I have made a number of discoveries about scribal practice, not only with regard to the Confessio Amantis MSS which he copies but also to his texts of Chaucer's The Canterbury Tales, Trevisa's translation of Bartholomaeus Anglicus de proprietatibus rerum, and Langland's Piers Plowman. I have been able to gauge the pressures exerted by the scribe's exemplars on his own copying, and I have suggested a chronology for his MSS. I have discussed his dialectal origins and the sociolinguistic context within which he worked.

6. I have suggested a new approach to the problems of textual criticism in the MS tradition of the Confessio Amantis.

It seems appropriate to conclude this thesis with some suggestions as to lines of research for the future. Palaeographical study has not been the concern of the thesis, but it is very necessary to reiterate its importance for the linguistic study of ME MSS.³³ Further identifications of scribes writing more than one MS will, no doubt, increase our understanding of scribal method significantly.³⁴ Similarly, study of the commercial context and ownership of MSS will aid our understanding of the linguistic content of these texts.³⁵ New insights into textual criticism, aided

perhaps by advances in computer technology,³⁶ may make the disentangling of layers of language in ME MSS a much simpler task.

In the field of the linguistic study of commercially-produced MSS of the fifteenth century, which has been the concern of this thesis, a very great deal remains to be done. The Gower MSS, other than those by scribe D, deserve much greater scrutiny than I have been able to devote to them here. The language of the Chaucer MSS has not been closely studied since Dean's work, printed in Manly and Rickert (1940) over forty years ago. Many questions to do with the language of the Hoccleve³⁷ and Lydgate MSS remain to be answered.

But the burden of this thesis has been to show that it is not for lack of a theoretical base that we are held back. No doubt the theories about scribal copying practice which I have examined and tested herein will need modification in the light of new problems. But these theories, I argue, give us a fresh approach to the study of the scribe, one of the chief transmitters of medieval culture.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE

1. The relevant Chaucer Society publications are Zupitza (1892) and Furnivall (1898).
2. I am indebted to Professor Samuels for information about the language of the latter two MSS.
3. Davis (1983), p.23.
4. Samuels (1972), p.169.
5. See chapter 2 above.
6. See chapter 4, pp.266, 290 above, and Samuels (1983.1, 1983.2). Samuels shows that scribe B makes certain accommodations to the Gower text he copies, but that these are within a pattern of constrained behaviour.
7. Gomez-Soliño (1984), discussed by Samuels (1981), p.52 n.2.
8. Samuels (1981), p.43, and p.52 n.1 and references there cited.
9. Pearsall (1969), p.7.
10. For the localisation of this well-known MS, see McIntosh (1963), p.396.
11. See pp. 91 - 93 above.
12. For this typology, see pp. 12 - 13 above and references there cited.
13. Clark (1976), p.24.
14. Samuels (1981), p.51.
15. This project was announced in the John Gower Society Newsletter for 1983, and in Griffiths (1983.2), p.163 n.2. A very recent study of Macaulay's collation of the Confessio Amantis MSS is Nicholson (1985), but this article, based solely on Macaulay's published textual variants, simply re-examines the sequence of copies of first recension texts. Nicholson does not, I think, place sufficient emphasis on the Fairfax MS as a text in whose construction and revision the poet was closely involved. I am grateful to Kate Harris for this last reference.

16. Macaulay (1900), p.cxxviii.
17. Ibid., p.cxxx.
18. Ibid., p.cxxx.
19. Fisher (1965), p.117.
20. e.g. Macaulay (1900), p.cxxxiv: "The relations of the [second recension (b) group of MSS] with the first recension and with one another are difficult to clear up satisfactorily ..."
21. The relationship between linguistic study and textual criticism has, of course, been central to this thesis. It has been important in OE as well as in ME studies, so a bibliography for the subject might include not only Atkins (1922), Benskin and Laing (1981) and McIntosh (1962, 1963), but also Scragg (1973) and Sisam (1953).
22. For the Wadham MS, see pp. 164 - 167 above.
23. The concept of 'contamination', often referred to by textual critics, is conveniently defined by Reynolds and Wilson (1974), passim.
24. See Reynolds and Wilson (1974), pp.199-200. I have, of course, here perverted the traditional usage of this concept in postulating the scribe as exercising this maxim rather than the modern editor. I excuse myself by emphasising that I am arguing here for the inherent unlikeliness of this picture of scribal activity in this context.
25. See Kane and Donaldson (1976), chapter 4.
26. Professor Samuels kindly points out to me that there is a problem with this picture of the process of revision in Piers Plowman. This is that no C-text (except D's) contains the London relict forms that are to be expected in any B-text (see Samuels (forthcoming)). This might suggest that Langland re-copied the revised text for subsequent copying. This is perfectly possible; one might visualise Langland making a 'fair copy' from the 'corrected' B-text in front of him. However, Russell (1969), p.48, points out that the process of revision was probably unfinished: "One might venture to go a little further and postulate that the unfinished C-version was put into a publishable form by an editor or literary executor. For if the process of revision was not completed, it seems very unlikely that its author was able to oversee the production of a final fair copy".

27. See Doyle and Parkes (1978), p.191 and esp. n.60.
28. For examples of the Confessio Amantis produced in this way, see chapter 3 above. Examples of Canterbury Tales MSS written in several hands include: London, British Library Addit. 5140 and 25178; Oxford, Bodleian Library Bodley 686; the Cardigan MS; London, British Library Egerton 2726; Glasgow, University Library, Hunter U.1.1; olim Cheltenham, Phillipps 8137; Oxford, Bodleian Library Rawlinson poet. 149; London, British Library Royal 17 D.xv, Royal 18 C.ii and Sloane 1685.
29. Doyle and Parkes (1978), p.201.
30. It is likely that the 'NWM' exemplar-maker was working in London; this is indicated by the fact that the forms which indicate his presence are rare and sporadic (see chapter 4, note 37 above).
31. See chapter 3 above.
32. Samuels and Smith (1981), pp.303-304.
33. See Doyle (1983.1), p.144.
34. See Griffiths (1985).
35. Some aspects of these problems have been discussed at the York Conferences on Fifteenth-century MSS; see Pearsall (1983).
36. For the application of computer technology to textual criticism, see Griffith (1978), a study of the MSS of Juvenal's Satires.
37. Ms. Judith Jefferson is, I understand, working on spelling in MSS of Hoccleve's poetry copied by the author himself (see also pp. 266, 290 above). I am indebted to Professor J.A.Burrow for this information.

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