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Title

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Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/0tb597k2>

Journal

Comitatus: A Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 21(1)

ISSN

0069-6412

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Publication Date

1990-10-01

Peer reviewed

Mak's Sothren Tothe: A Philological and Critical Study of the Dialect Joke in the *Second Shepherd's Play*

A fourteenth-century scholar with a well-tuned ear for English dialects described the dissonant sounds among his countrymen as a "strange wlaffyng, chyteryng, harryng and garryng, [and] grisbittyng,"¹ a discordance both the Wakefield Master and Chaucer exploited to help create certain characters. In the *Second Shepherd's Play*, the Wakefield Master gives his sheep-stealer Mak a Southern accent, while Chaucer supplies his two students in the *Reeve's Tale* with a Northern dialect. The use of a contrasting accent adds an amusing and sophisticated dimension to both works—as well as offering a neat puzzle for the modern philologist.

Mak's impersonation of a yeoman from the south is the first of his many deceptions aimed at the three shepherds in the Wakefield/Towneley Cycle's *Second Shepherd's Play*. Within the context of the play, the scene helps to establish Mak's lying but lovable nature as well as his relationship with the other shepherds. But for the philologist the scene has an additional interest. Like the similar use of a contrasting accent in Chaucer's *Reeve's Tale*, it not only helps to define character, but also key dialect characteristics, since each poet has chosen only the most obvious and important markers to evoke the contrasting language of his speakers. This study of the dialect joke in the *Second Shepherd's Play* focuses first on these key markers as illustrated in the language of the *Second Shepherd's Play* and the *Reeve's Tale*, then turns to the implications of the use of a contrasting accent in both the tale and the play. For just as Chaucer's sophisticated use of dialect in the *Reeve's Tale* enhances our enjoyment and appreciation of Chaucer's artistry, the dialect joke in the *Second Shepherd's Play* adds to our understanding of the play's sophistication in style, staging, and significance.

By chance the contrasting accent Chaucer chose to imitate in the *Reeve's Tale* was Northern, not so very different from the Wakefield Master's usual speech. For his own language joke, the Wakefield Master chose a dialect approximating Chaucer's London accent, with its Southeast Midlands and

Kentish features. Thus a comparison of the particular features each poet selected in order to create contrasting dialect helps isolate key language features distinguishing a Northern from a South-Midlands accent.

Various studies of Middle English dialects define these key linguistic markers, most recently and authoritatively the *Linguistic Atlas of Late Medieval English*.² Specialized studies of the Wakefield plays and of Chaucer help to complete the picture. Margaret Trusler, in her study comparing the language of the Wakefield Master with that of the York Miracle Cycle, isolates a number of key Northern (and Western) features, as does A. C. Cawley in his edition of the Wakefield plays.³ Both of these studies identify the Wakefield Master's dialect as North-Midlands, helping to confirm that the Towneley Cycle of miracle plays originated in Wakefield, a Yorkshire town less than thirty miles southwest of York, site of the most famous cycle of medieval miracle plays. F. N. Robinson and A. C. Baugh similarly isolate features of Chaucer's South-Midlands dialect.⁴

But most useful for a comparison of the dialects of the Wakefield Master and Chaucer is J. R. R. Tolkien's lively and thorough study of the Northern dialect in the *Reeve's Tale*.⁵ Tolkien focuses on and defines the key features that distinguish the Northern dialect used for the clerks' passages in Chaucer's tale from the poet's usual London/South-Midlands dialect. Using hints from Chaucer's text, Tolkien identifies a village in Northumberland as the birthplace of the two Cambridge students from the "fer north" in the *Reeve's Tale*. Their accent no doubt would have contained more Northern features than the Wakefield poet's North-Midlands dialect. Still, Mak's "sothren tothe" approximates Chaucer's own speech, just as the Northern clerks come rather close to capturing the Wakefield Master's usual language.

Key features that distinguish Chaucer's dialect from Northern speech fall into three categories: phonological, grammatical, and lexical. Each is reflected in the dialect markers that both Chaucer and the Wakefield Master exploit in their uses of contrasting dialect.

The single most important phonological marker distinguishing a Northern speaker from a South-Midland's speaker is the pronunciation of ⟨a⟩ and ⟨o⟩. In the North, Old English /a:/ retained its ancient pronunciation, while in the South-Midlands (SM), ⟨a⟩ became ⟨o⟩, as reflected in SM ⟨home⟩, ⟨stone⟩ and ⟨more⟩, rather than Northern (N) or North-Midlands ⟨hame⟩, ⟨stane⟩, and ⟨mare⟩. In his study of the *Reeve's Tale* Tolkien identifies thirty-seven cases of Chaucer's substitution of N ⟨a⟩ for his usual SM ⟨o⟩ in the ninety-eight lines of the clerks' dialect, the most obvious dialect characteristic that he used.

In the Wakefield Master's eighteen lines containing Southern dialect, Mak substitutes SM ⟨o⟩ for Northern ⟨a⟩ at least twice, perhaps as many as five times. (See the appendix for an annotated copy of the passage containing these lines.)⁶ In lines 201–2, Mak explains that he is a yeoman, “the self and the some, /sond from a greatt lordying.” The Northern (as well as the South-Midlands and Chaucerian) form for ⟨some⟩ was ⟨same⟩. In this case, Mak's use of Southern dialect is incorrect, but does show the pattern of N ⟨a⟩ altered to SM ⟨o⟩. A. W. Pollard in his edition of the play silently corrects ⟨some⟩ to ⟨same⟩, apparently recognizing Mak's error but eliminating one instance of the poet's comic dialect.⁷ Cawley, who retains ⟨some⟩ in his edition, points out that ⟨some⟩ for ⟨same⟩ may have been a dialect feature of “extreme N.W. Midl.”⁸ Mak's second attempt at South-Midlands dialect in line 202 is equally incorrect, as he substitutes ⟨sond⟩ for Northern ⟨sand⟩; in the South-Midlands the word was normally ⟨sent⟩. In both cases, the poet makes use of a highly recognizable South-Midlands feature, as Mak has changed the Northern ⟨a⟩ in ⟨same⟩ and ⟨sand⟩ to ⟨some⟩ and ⟨sond⟩ in order to approximate the South-Midlands ⟨o⟩. Mak's errors may have added to the humor for the play's original audience, for he is a sheep-stealer, not a scholar.

A third possible N ⟨a⟩ to SM ⟨o⟩ change may be ⟨yomon⟩ in line 201, though, like ⟨sond⟩, ⟨yomon⟩ was probably a Western rather than a Southern feature. Cawley suggests that a scribe might have altered the original ⟨yomon⟩ to the present reading ⟨yoman⟩, obliterating a third case of this same phonological feature.⁹ The rhymes certainly support this view, as the other rhyme words in lines 199 through 202 are ⟨gone⟩, ⟨ylkon⟩, and ⟨some⟩.

Two other possible SM ⟨o⟩ for N ⟨a⟩ examples are SM ⟨lo⟩ for N ⟨la⟩ in line 197 and SM ⟨not⟩ for N ⟨na⟩ in line 198. In these cases, both forms were common in Northern and South-Midlands texts; it may be significant that Mak chose the SM ⟨o⟩ dialect marker rather than the N ⟨a⟩.

In his analysis of the *Reeve's Tale*, Tolkien lists only one other important phonological change marking the clerks' Northern accent, substitution of N ⟨k⟩ for SM ⟨ch⟩. According to Tolkien, in three (possibly four) lines of the clerks' dialect, Chaucer makes such a change, substituting N ⟨slik⟩ for his usual SM ⟨swich⟩ or ⟨such⟩ to help characterize the speech of his two Northern students. The Wakefield Master makes the same switch—in the other direction, of course. In line 203 Mak uses ⟨sich⟩ rather than the usual Northern ⟨swilk⟩, ⟨slyke⟩, or ⟨slik⟩. Though Mossé and Trusler each list ⟨sich⟩ as a possible Northern form, Mak's use of the SM ⟨k⟩ ending rather than the more common N ⟨ch⟩ ending further emphasizes the Southern quality of his accent.¹⁰

Both Chaucer and the Wakefield Master make use of grammatical dialect markers as well as phonological features. The most important grammatical differences involve verb forms, especially endings, though both poets also use characteristic pronoun forms to mark dialect. The ending for the third person singular present indicative (and the imperative plural) was a key dialect feature for both poets. As Tolkien points out, Chaucer changes the characteristic SM ⟨-eth, -th⟩ ending to N ⟨-es or -s⟩ in eighteen cases in the *Reeve's Tale*. Mak uses the SM ⟨-eth, -th⟩ at least twice. In line 204, Mak commands the shepherds to "Goyeth hence"; in line 213, after threatening them with flogging, he says he'll tell "how ye doth" once they are punished for their insubordination toward him. The usual Northern form for "go" was ⟨goys⟩, the ⟨y⟩ indicating a long preceding vowel, not a diphthong.¹¹ Thus Mak's ⟨goyth⟩ would be pronounced like Chaucer's ⟨gooth⟩. Mak's ⟨doth⟩ is also a correct South-Midlands form; the usual Northern forms were ⟨thou dos⟩ or ⟨doyst⟩ or ⟨ye dos⟩, while Chaucer's South-Midlands forms were ⟨thou doth⟩ or ⟨ye don⟩ or ⟨doon⟩. The Wakefield Master may also have written SM ⟨walketh⟩ for N ⟨walkys⟩ in line 197 and SM ⟨hath⟩ for N ⟨has⟩ in line 198. But since neither of these is a rhyme word, an important clue because of the play's complex rhyme scheme, it is impossible to tell if the Northern forms are the poet's or a scribe's.

In addition to the N ⟨-es, -s⟩ ending for SM ⟨-eth, -th⟩, Tolkien lists twelve other examples of a change in the verb "to be," another key grammatical feature both poets use to create contrasting dialect. In line 201 Mak chooses the form ⟨ich be⟩ rather than N (and SM) ⟨I am⟩, clearly an attempt at dialect. Cawley identifies ⟨ich be⟩ as a form from the "far south."¹² Chaucer never uses this combination.¹³

Tolkien presents other dialect characteristics involving verbs in the *Reeve's Tale*: twenty examples of the Northern form of the past participle, eleven uses of N ⟨sal⟩ for SM ⟨shal⟩, and around twenty-five other miscellaneous verbal changes, usually involving a change in the root vowel. Because Chaucer often omits the characteristic SM ⟨y-⟩ prefix for past participles and often includes the ⟨-n⟩ ending for past participles of strong verbs, making many of his usual past participles indistinguishable from Northern forms, this dialect feature is a rather weak marker. In any case, Mak never adds the SM ⟨y-⟩ prefix; his only past participle, ⟨sond⟩, already has the SM ⟨o⟩, as noted earlier. Mak does, however, use a Southern form for "shall," reversing Chaucer's Northern ⟨sal⟩ in the *Reeve's Tale*. In line 211, Mak says, "Ich shall make complaynt," choosing SM ⟨shall⟩ over N ⟨sal⟩. But ⟨shall⟩ was becoming common in the North, too; the Wakefield Master uses both ⟨shall⟩ and ⟨sal⟩ in his miracle plays. This,

like the past participle markers, was disappearing as a dialect feature. Still, Mak chooses the more Southern ⟨shall⟩ rather than Northern ⟨sal⟩.

One other verb in Mak's dialect lines deserves brief comment. In line 206, Mak says, "I must haue reuerence." A scribe may have substituted N ⟨must⟩ for the poet's original SM ⟨moot⟩; Mak might even have said, "Ich moot haue reuerence." But because ⟨must⟩ is not a rhyme word, this conjecture may be stretching Mak's Southern tooth a bit.

In addition to altering verb forms to create dialect, both Chaucer and the Wakefield Master use characteristic pronoun forms as key dialect features. Chaucer's clerks use N ⟨thair⟩ and ⟨thaim⟩ at least twice, possibly three times, instead of SM ⟨hir(e)⟩ or ⟨hem⟩. The reeve in his narration uses the Northern forms at least four additional times, for though the clerks were from the "fer north," the reeve too was from the north—at least north of London. Chaucer describes him in the "General Prologue" as a man from Norwich in Norfolk. The poet further characterizes the reeve's speech with the personal pronoun ⟨ik⟩ rather than SM ⟨I⟩. This creates perhaps the most amusing correlation between the use of dialect in Chaucer and the *Second Shepherd's Play*, for the most obvious feature of Mak's accent is his use of ⟨ich⟩ in lines 201, 207, and 211, rather than N ⟨I⟩. For Chaucer, ⟨ik⟩ was clearly a Northern feature; for Mak, it was Southern. And both were correct, for Norfolk is south of Wakefield—as well as north of London. The derivation of ⟨ich⟩ is Scandinavian; it was used most commonly in the area of the old Danelaw, north and east of London.¹⁴

While phonological and grammatical markers are the most common features in both the clerks' and Mak's use of dialect, both contain examples of lexical markers as well. Tolkien lists twenty-one Northern lexical items in the clerks' speech, plus another seven that may be Northern, or at least non-South-Midlands, usages. While Mak uses no exclusively South-Midlands words, he does alter his tone with four words from a level of diction appropriate for his pose. Though ⟨lording⟩ (line 202), ⟨presence⟩ (205), ⟨reuerence⟩ (206), and ⟨complaynt⟩ (211) would all be perfectly familiar to the shepherds, all have a formal tone that contrasts nicely with the shepherds' speech—especially in lines 215 and 216, where the first shepherd suggests the Mak "take outt that sothren tothe, / And sett [it] in a torde!" Mak's own use of ⟨thwang⟩, line 211, is equally colloquial. Mak's ⟨thwang⟩ is an obviously Northern word, used deliberately, I think, for its comic effect.

Just as the use of contrasting dialect in this passage from the *Second Shepherd's Play* reveals dialect features of interest to the philologist, it also reveals stylistic features of interest to the literary critic—or even the director

or actor interested in staging a revival of the play. Mak's Northernism, ⟨thwang⟩, and a second possible Northernism in his dialect lines, ⟨foore⟩ (196), present philological questions that relate to both style and staging.

Perhaps Mak's use of N ⟨thwang⟩ rather than SM ⟨thong⟩, meaning "to flog with a thong or rope" (*OED*), is an error in the dialect, like the Northern use of ⟨foore⟩ rather than SM ⟨ferde⟩. Or perhaps the Wakefield Master needed both Northern forms for the rhyme, as both are rhyme words. Tolkien lists seven such errors in the clerks' dialect, all apparently caused by the requirements of rhyme, plus twenty-two other possible errors in dialect because of scribal discrepancies between various manuscripts.¹⁵ But it is also possible that neither of Mak's Northernisms is an error. Mak's ⟨thwang⟩ does rhyme in an amusing way with the shepherds' ⟨wrag⟩ and ⟨land⟩, all emphatically Northern usages with the important phonological feature (N ⟨a⟩ for SM ⟨o⟩) discussed above. With ⟨thwang⟩ Mak injects a colloquial Northern word as if to signal his anger at the shepherds' increasing insults, as well as, perhaps, his own admission that the dialect joke has run its course.

The use of ⟨foore⟩ may have similar implications for the actor or director. It is obvious when Mak exclaims in line 201, "What! ich be a yoman," that he has adopted an accent. But where should the actor begin using the accent? Mak enters, as have each of the other shepherds, with a soliloquy, complaining in lines 190 through 194 of his condition. When the first shepherd asks, "Who is that pypys so poore?" (line 195) he seems to refer to Mak's complaint, a poor "pyp[ing]" compared with the shepherds' noisy song that immediately precedes Mak's entrance. Like the frozen birds in *Gawain and the Green Knight*, "that pitously there piped for pyne of the colde,"¹⁶ Mak pipes a poor tune—but to himself, without a Southern accent, as the Northernisms all indicate. In lines 190 through 193 Mak uses N ⟨starnes⟩ for South-Midlands and Chaucer's ⟨sterres⟩, N ⟨tharnys⟩ (which means "is lacking"), N ⟨harnes⟩ ("brains"), and N ⟨barnes⟩ ("children"); three of these Northern words do not appear in Chaucer, even in South-Midlands forms.¹⁷

An actor could perhaps assume that Mak answers the first shepherd with a Southern accent, beginning in line 196. But ⟨foore⟩ in line 196 may offer a reason to delay the use of dialect for three more lines. Mak's response in lines 196 through 198 contains only the slightest indication of a contrasting dialect in ⟨lo⟩ and ⟨not⟩ rather than ⟨la⟩ and ⟨na⟩, as noted earlier. The usual SM past tense for ⟨faren⟩ was derived from the similar word ⟨feran⟩: Chaucer uses ⟨ferde⟩, meaning "fared," not the Northern form ⟨foore⟩. Because ⟨foore⟩ is a rhyme word, the choice of a Northern form

is clearly the poet's, not a scribe's. Mak also uses the Northern verb endings <walkys> (197) and <has> (198) within the lines. Though these may be scribal emendations, it is more likely that they are the poet's original word choices, for the mood of these three lines is very much in tune with the poor piping of Mak's opening complaint. It isn't until the third shepherd snatches Mak's cloak, as the stage direction indicates, that Mak arrogantly adopts his "sothren tothe" with "ich be a yom[o]n" in line 201.

A larger question raised by the dialect passage is why the Wakefield Master bothers to use a contrasting dialect in the first place. The obvious answer, of course, is for its comic effect, as Mak assumes—with flaws—a false accent. Cawley suggests that this use of dialect "must have had for a Northern audience precisely the same comic appeal that the Northern dialect of John and Aleyn in the *Reeve's Tale* had for a Southern audience. . . . It is a welcome change to find a Northerner enjoying himself at the expense of the Southerner's linguistic habits, and so reversing the situation found in the *Reeve's Tale*."¹⁸

However, although both uses of dialect were no doubt amusing to their audiences—and their authors—in neither case is the use of dialect necessarily condescending, as Cawley implies. In the *Reeve's Tale* two crafty students trick an almost equally crafty miller. Perhaps the reeve wishes to increase his insult to the miller on the pilgrimage by having his fictional counterpart gulled by two country boys from the "fer north," but the clerks are also Cambridge students, a fair match for even the cleverest of millers. Chaucer's attitude toward the clerks' dialect may not be condescending at all; as N. F. Blake points out in his response to Tolkien's article, "In the fourteenth century a standard language had not developed, and the patronizing attitude to speakers of non-standard varieties developed even later than the standard itself."¹⁹

This may be overstating the case a bit, especially in view of John of Trevisa's comments noted earlier, describing the "strange wlaffyng, chytteryng, harryng and garryng" of various dialects in 1385.²⁰ In any case, Chaucer seems to be amusing himself and his audience with the use of dialect for its own sake rather than using it merely to poke fun at the clerks. The *Reeve's Tale* is narrated by a reeve with a slight Northern accent, from Norwich. Two of its main characters speak with obvious accents from the "fer north," Northumberland. Like the other tales, its fictional audience is a group of pilgrims from many parts of England, walking through Kent. And like the other tales, its author and original audience were courtiers from the London area, real "greatt lordyng[s] . . . of the kyng."

While the Wakefield Master's use of dialect is certainly not this complex,

the brief dialect joke in the *Second Shepherd's Play* may help draw attention to a possible detail concerning the religious significance of the play. Struck by the liveliness of the elaborate sheep/baby trick that occupies much of the play, many critics have failed to stress the emphatic Christian message that the play presents. Baugh and Malone, for example, write, "*The Second Shepherd's Play* as a shepherds' play is an artistic absurdity; as a farce of Mak the sheep-stealer it is the masterpiece of the English religious drama."²¹ Hardin Craig also expresses this idea, implying that the *Second Shepherd's Play*, though wonderful as a play, is not typical of the miracle plays because it is a farce or a comedy, not a properly sober religious play.²²

But twentieth-century attitudes toward religion may have affected these judgments. As Baugh, Malone, and Craig would have been the first to admit, the medieval mind was permeated with religion, as well as the notion of correspondences between the various ordered hierarchies of religious, social, political, clerical, and even natural and physiological systems.²³ The Wakefield Master's original audience would not merely have laughed at a sheep disguised as a newborn babe in the midst of a Nativity play: such a device would have been an obvious symbol of Christ's role as the sacrificial lamb of God, transformed from god to man—or even to sheep—in order to save mankind. They would have seen a special significance in the shepherds' two acts of kindness, first returning to give gifts to Mak's "child" and then merely tossing Mak in a canvas rather than hanging him as a sheep-stealer. These acts of kindness demonstrate that the shepherds deserve to witness the Nativity, as they are allowed to do in the final segment of the play. Members of the Wakefield Master's original audience would not have considered the obvious anachronism naive, as early fifteenth-century shepherds are somehow transported back in time to become witnesses of the original Nativity. They would have seen it as an indication of their own potential worthiness to live up to Christ's teachings, as do the shepherds in their charity and mercy.

Perhaps a few members of Mak's original audience might even have noticed that he is indeed "a yoman . . . of the kyng, . . . sond from a greatt lordyng." If the major Christian message of the play is to demonstrate that the three shepherds deserve to witness the Nativity, Mak could be seen as an instrument of God sent to test the shepherds. If this is the case, the importance of the dialect joke, in addition to amusing its audience, was to help draw attention to the religious significance of the *Second Shepherd's Play*.

The Wakefield Master's skillful and amusing use of dialect is one mea-

sure of the poet's stylistic and literary sophistication. His elegant use of rhyme is another, since each group of nine lines contains thirteen rhyme words in a complex metrical structure (indicated on the copy of the passage in the appendix). Even the errors in Mak's dialect may be a measure of the poet's skill: Mak is a shepherd pretending to be a yeoman from the south, not, as in the *Reeve's Tale*, a clerk speaking his own dialect.

Such skill seems to contradict a lingering misconception about the medieval miracle plays. Though many critics are coming to recognize the sophisticated nature of some of the miracle plays, especially those by the Wakefield Master, others would still agree with Pollard's left-handed compliment: "As a dramatist it is difficult to praise [the Wakefield Master] too highly, if we remember the limitations under which he worked, and the feeble efforts of his contemporaries and successors."²⁴

Both linguistic and historical evidence indicate that the Wakefield Master's contributions to the Wakefield/Towneley Cycle should be dated between 1400 and 1420.²⁵ The manuscript, which shows evidence that it was copied from the original, dates from around 1450, establishing an upper limit for the date of the play.²⁶ By 1400 or 1420 the miracle play had developed as an elaborate art form. Glynne Wickham, Martial Rose, and John Elliot, for example, have all described the growing complexity and artistry of the miracle cycles.²⁷ Wickham cites evidence that the cycles were "major civic events," then concludes, "If, by the start of the fourteenth century, performance of the plays warranted recognition as a major civic event, it is likely that they were already becoming spectacular."²⁸

By the date of the *Second Shepherd's Play* more than a century later, the miracle plays must have been spectacular indeed. Far from the simple presentations implied by E. K. Chambers' description of the staging area as a "small, moveable stage or 'pageant',"²⁹ miracle plays apparently approached a certain level of professionalism in production. Wickham notes that specialists known as "Pageant Masters" were hired, at least in York, to oversee the production and train the actors, themselves semi-professionals chosen for their acting skill rather than their guild membership.³⁰ According to Rose, actors traditionally played the same parts year after year, enhancing the professional quality of their performances.³¹ The level of performance and spectacle must have surpassed the efforts of Bottom the Weaver and his bumbling mechanicals, though, after coaching from the Pageant Master, Bottom himself might have made a good Mak, able to pull off the dialect joke.

The Wakefield Master's dialect joke is a reflection in microcosm, like

a leaf from an illuminated manuscript, of the skill of the poet, mirroring the sophistication of the play as a whole as well as the artistry and spectacle of the medieval miracle cycle. Like Chaucer's use of dialect in the *Reeve's Tale*, it also implies a surprisingly sophisticated audience, one whose members would recognize a "sothren tothe" when they heard one. As early as 1378, when Wycliff wrote his *De Officio Pastoralis*, the York Cycle was already famous; Wycliff refers rather casually to the use of "the English tunge . . . in the pleye of Yorke."³² In the *Miller's Tale* Chaucer describes Absolon, the love-lorn parish clerk, as having played Herod in a miracle play. Clearly, by the early fifteenth century the miracle play was a highly developed and popular art form, drawing its audience from many parts of England as well as from local towns and villages. It is easy to imagine some of the visitors, like Chaucer and Wycliff (a Yorkshireman who lived most of his life in Oxford and London), speaking English with a Southern accent, enjoying the Wakefield Master's dialect joke at their expense. Such visitors, like the members of Chaucer's Canterbury pilgrimage, must have flocked to the yearly festivals of drama, themselves creating an ear in the local population for an authentic "sothren tothe." The sophisticated dialect jokes in both the *Reeve's Tale* and the *Second Shepherd's Play* are a measure of the increasing awareness and mix of dialects in late Middle English, as well as the artistry of the two poets.

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Kathleen Irace will receive her doctorate from the University of California, Los Angeles, in March 1991. Her article "Reconstruction and Adaptation in *Q Henry V*" will appear in *Studies in Bibliography* 44 (1990); her "Origins and Agents of *Q1 Hamlet*" will be printed in *The "Hamlet" First Published (Q1, 1603): Origins, Form, Intertextualities*, Thomas Clayton, ed. (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1991).

APPENDIX

The Dialect Passage from the *Second Shepherd's Play*
(Based on a collation of Cawley's and Pollard's texts)

- 190 *Mak.* Now, Lord, for thy naymes sevyng [ms. vij],/ a \
that made both moyn and starnes b /
- 191 Well, mo then I can neuen, / a \
thi will, Lorde, of me tharnys; b /
- 192 I am all vneuen / a \
that moves oft my harnes. b /
- 193 Now wold God I were in heuen, / a \
for ther [ms. the.] wepe no barnes b /
- 194 So styll. c (2)
- 195 *1 Pastor.* Who is that pypys so poore? d --
- 196 *Mak.* Wold God ye wyst how I foore! d --
- 197 Lo, a man that walkys on the moore, d --
- 198 And has not all his wyll. c --
- 199 *2 Pastor.* Mak, where has thou gone [ms. gom]? / a \
Tell vs tythyng. b /
- 200 *3 Pastor.* Is he commen? Then ylkon / a \
take hede to his thyng. b /
- Et accipit clamidem ab ipso.*
- 201 *Mak.* What! ich be a yoman [yomon], / a \
I tell you, of the kyng, b /
- 202 The self and the some, / a \
sond from a greatt lordyng, b /
- 203 And sich. c (2)
- 204 Fy on you! Goyth hence d --
- 205 Out of my presence! d --
- 206 I must haue reuerence. d --
- 207 Why, who be ich? c --
- 208 *1 Pastor.* Why make ye it so qwaynt? a \
Mak, ye do wrang. b /
- 209 *2 Pastor.* Bot, Mak, lyst ye saynt? / a \
I trow that ye lang. b /
- 210 *3 Pastor.* I trow the shrew can paynt, / a \
the dewyll myght hym hang! b /
- 211 *Mak.* Ich shall make complaynt, / a \
and make you all to thwang b /

212	At a worde,	c (2)
213	And tell euyn how ye <i>doth</i>	d --
214	<i>I Pastor.</i> <u>Bot</u> , Mak, is that sothe?	d --
215	Now take outt that sothren tothe,	d --
216	And sett in a torde!	c --

Key to marks:

\	long	<u>word</u>	Northern form of word
/	line	<u>word</u>	SM or W form of word
--	short line	<i>word</i>	elevated diction
(2)	line with two stresses	[word]	addition or emendation

NOTES

1. John of Trevisa, "The English Language in 1385," in his translation of Higden's *Polychronicon*, quoted in Ferdinand Mossé, *A Handbook of Middle English*, trans. James A. Walker (1952; Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1968), 286.

2. Angus McIntosh and Michael Samuels, eds., *Linguistic Atlas of Late Medieval English* (Aberdeen: University Press, 1986). Earlier works include J. P. Oakden, *Alliterative Poetry in Middle English: The Dialectical and Metrical Survey* (1930; Manchester, England: Archon Books, 1968); Samuel Moore, *Historical Outlines of English Sounds and Inflections*, rev. Albert H. Marckwardt (1935; Ann Arbor, Michigan: George Wahr Publishing Co., 1960); Ferdinand Mossé, *A Handbook of Middle English*; A. C. Baugh and Thomas Cable, *A History of the English Language*, 3rd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1978).

3. Margaret Trusler, "The Language of the Wakefield Playwright," *Studies in Philology* 33 (1936): 15-39; A. C. Cawley, ed., *The Wakefield Pageants in the Towneley Cycle* (Manchester, England: Manchester University Press, 1958).

4. F. N. Robinson, ed., *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1957); A. C. Baugh, ed., *Chaucer's Major Poetry* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1963).

5. J. R. R. Tolkien, "Chaucer as a Philologist: *The Reeve's Tale*," *Transactions of the Philological Society* (London: Philological Society of London, 1934), 1-70. Specific details concerning Chaucer's use of dialect in the *Reeve's Tale* are from Tolkien's article, unless otherwise noted.

6. The passage is based on a collation of editions of the play from A. W. Pollard and G. England, eds., *The Towneley Plays* (London: Early English Text Society, Oxford University Press, 1897); and Cawley's edition, cited earlier.

7. Pollard, 124.

8. Cawley, 131.
9. Cawley, 131.
10. See Mossé, 412, and Trusler, 20.
11. See Mossé, 412.
12. Cawley, 131.
13. See *A Concordance to the Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, John S. P. Tatlock and Arthur G. Kennedy, eds. (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1963); and Mossé, 76ff.
14. See Baugh and Cable, 90-104.
15. See also N. F. Blake, "The Northernisms in *The Reeve's Tale*," *Lore and Language* 10 (1979): 1-8. Blake attacked Tolkien's methods: Tolkien's rendering of the tale is composed of a collation of Northern features in six manuscripts, with doubtful or conjectural Northernisms shown in italics. Blake believed many of the Northern features Tolkien discussed were added by scribes rather than eliminated by them, as Tolkien argued.
16. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, J. R. R. Tolkien and E. N. Gordon, eds. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1925), line 747.
17. Definitions unless otherwise noted are from the *Middle English Dictionary*, Samuel Moore & Assoc. (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press, 1951-present [in progress]); information concerning Chaucer's vocabulary is from the *Chaucer Concordance* cited above.
18. Cawley, 131.
19. Blake, 7.
20. John of Trevisa, "The English Language in 1385."
21. Kemp Malone and Albert C. Baugh, *A Literary History of England: The Middle Ages* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1948), 281.
22. Hardin Craig, *English Religious Drama of the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955), 234.
23. Many studies deal with these medieval commonplaces. Among the most accessible are Isabel Rivers, *Classical and Christian Ideas in English Renaissance Poetry* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1979) and E. M. W. Tillyard, *The Elizabethan World Picture* (New York: Vintage, 1942). Both discuss the effects of these medieval ideas on the Renaissance. I am indebted to Prof. Edward Condren, UCLA, for suggestions concerning the religious significance of the *Second Shepherd's Play*.
24. Pollard, xxx.
25. See Cawley, 130; and Glynne Wickham, *Early English Stages: 1300-1600*, vol. 1, 1300-1576 (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1959), 155ff.
26. Cawley, xii.
27. Wickham, passim; Marital Rose, ed., *The Wakefield Mystery Plays* (New York: Norton, 1961), 19-55; John R. Elliot, Jr., "Medieval Rounds and Wooden O's: The Medieval Heritage of the Elizabethan Theatre," *Stratford-Upon-Avon Studies*, vol. 16: *Medieval Drama* (London: Edward Arnold, 1973), 223-6.

28. Wickham, 162.
29. E. K. Chambers, *The Mediaeval Stage* (London: Oxford University Press, 1903), 2:133.
30. Wickham, 297, 300.
31. Rose, 24.
32. John Wycliff, *De Officio Pastoralis*, in *The English Works of Wycliff*, F. D. Matthew, ed. (London: Early English Text Society, 1902), 429.