

## OE Midterm assignment, 2017

Wé cildra<sup>1</sup> biddað þé, éalá láréow, þæt þú tæce<sup>2</sup> ús sprecaþ leden rihte, forþám ungelærede<sup>3</sup> wé syndon ond gewæmmodlice wé sprecaþ.<sup>4</sup>

*We children ask you, oh teacher, that you teach us (=to teach us) to speak Latin correctly, because we are unlearned and speak corruptly (=ungrammatically).*

Hwæt wille gé sprecaþ?

*What do you want to speak (about)?*

Hwæt réce wé hwæt wé sprecon, búton hit riht spræc sý<sup>5</sup> ond behéfe, næs ídel oþþe fracod.

*What do we care (=does it matter to us) what we speak, except that (= as long as) it is correct and useful language, not frivolous or impious (unseemly).*

5 Wille gé béon beswungen on leornunge?

*Do you wish to be flogged while you learn?*

Léofre is ús<sup>6</sup> béon beswungen for láré þænne hit ne cunnan. Ac wé witon þé bilewitne<sup>7</sup> wesana ond nellan onbelæden swincgla ús, búton þú béo<sup>8</sup> tógenydd fram ús.

*It is dearer to us (=we would rather) to be beaten than not to know (our lessons). But we know you to be kind and not want (nellan) to submit us to flogging unless you are compelled to (by us).*

Ic áxie þé, hwæt sprycst þú? Hwæt hæfst þú weorces?

*I ask you, what do you say? What is your work (what have you of work?)*

Ic eom geanwyrde munuc, ond ic singge ælc<sup>9</sup> dæg seofon tída mid gebróþrum, ond ic eom bysgod on rádinga ond on sange, ac þéahhwæþere ic wolde betwénan leornian sprecaþ on ledengereorde.<sup>10</sup>

*I am a professed monk, amnd each day I sing the seven canonical services with the brothers, and I am occupied (busy) reading and singing, but nevertheless I want to (would) in the meantime learn to speak in the latin language.*

Hwæt cunnon þás þine<sup>11</sup> geféran?

*What do these your companions know (what skills do they have)*

Sume sint yrþlingas, sume scéphyrdas, sume oxanhyrdas, sume éac swylce huntan, sume fisceras, sume fugeleras, sume céapmenn, sume scéowyrhtan, sealteras, bæceras.

*Some are ploughmen, some shepherd, some oxherds, some also hunters, some fishermen, some fowlers, some merchants, some cobblers (shoemakers), salters (salt-makers), bakers.*

Hwæt sægest þú, yrþlingc? Hú begæst<sup>12</sup> þú weorc þín?

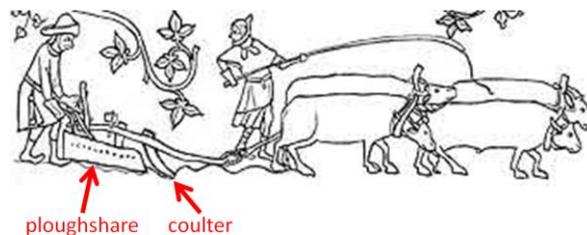
*What do you say, ploughman? How do you go about your work?*

Éalá, léof hláford, þearle<sup>13</sup> ic deorfe. Ic gá út on dægræd þýwende oxan tó félða,<sup>14</sup> ond iucie<sup>15</sup> hí tó syl.

*Lo, dear lord, greatly must I labour I go out at dawn driving the oxen to the field, and yoke them to the plough.*

Nis hit swá stearc<sup>16</sup> winter þæt ic durre lútian æt hám for ege hláfordes<sup>17</sup> mínes, ac geiukodan oxan, ond gefæstnodon scære ond cultre mid þære syl, ælce dæg ic sceal erian fulne æcer<sup>18</sup> oþþe máre.

*It is not such har winter that I dare stay at home (=However hard the winter I dare not ) for (fear of) the eye of my lord; but the oxen having been yoked and the share and coulter fastened to the plough, each day I must plough a full acre or more.*



Hæfst þu ænigne geféran?

*Have you any companion?(NB singular - ænigne)*

Ic hæbbe sumne cnapan þýwende oxan mid gádisene, þe éac swilce nú hás is for cylde ond hréame.

*I have a (some) boy driving the oxen with a goad (gadiron), who is now also hoarse because of the cold (chill) and shouting*

Hwæt máre dést þú on dæg?

*What more to you do on a day?*

Gewislíce þænne máre ic dó. Ic sceal fyllan binnan oxan mid híg, ond wæterian hig, ond scearn heora<sup>19</sup> beran út.

*Certainly then I do more. I have to (shall) fyll the oxen's bin (manger) with hay, and give them water, and bear out their dung.*

Hig! hig! Micel<sup>20</sup> gedeorf is hit.

*Oh dear ! It's a lot of work.*

Géa léof, micel gedeorf hit is, forþám ic neom fréoh.

*Yes, sir (my lief lord), it's great labour, for I am not free.*

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- (1) *cildra*, noun, neuter plural of *cild* boy. Two possibilities: (1) genitive plural -ra after *wé*: ‘we of the children’; or (2) nominative plural—the form should be *cildru*, but this spelling indicates late weakening of this unstressed ending [ʔʏldrə]. This second possibility was the one I gave in class. — The vowel of *cild* was lengthened in late OE to *ī* in front of -ld, but not in front of -ldr-: *cīld*, *cildru*. The vowel difference is retained in Modern English [ʃaɪld - ʃɪldrən].
- (2) *tāce*, verb, 2nd person singular present subjunctive of *tācan*, teach.
- (3) *ungelārede*, strong adjective, nominative masculine plural of *ungelāred*: unlearned, untaught (not neuter, although *cild* is neuter). *Gelāred* is the past participle of *lāran* to teach. accusative
- (4) *sprecaþ*, verb, 1st person plural (*we*) present indicative of *sprecan*, speak.
- (5) *sȳ*, verb, spelling for earlier West Saxon *sīe*, 3rd person singular present subjunctive of the S-verb to be. Icelandic *sé*.
- (6) *ūs*, pronoun, dative plural of *wē*, to or for us. Nominative *wē*, accusative *ūs* or *ūsic*, dative *ūs*, genitive *ūre*.
- (7) *bilewitne*, strong adjective, masculine accusative singular of *bilewit* kind, mild. (the -ne ending should tell you it is accusative: “við vitum þig mildan vera.”)
- (8) *bēo*, verb, 2nd person singular subjunctive of the B-verb to be, *bēon*. Compare (5) above, which is the S-form.
- (9) *ālc*, pronoun, masculine accusative singular (indefinite, or strong) of *ālc* each; this can be seen because *dæg* is masculine. We would expect *ālcne*. Could it be an old instrumental? Not weak, as some said (the weak ending would be -an, but I think *ālc* is always strong).
- (10) *gereorde*, noun, feminine dative (or possibly accusative) singular of *gereord*, language (from *reord* f., voice; the Icelandic word *rödd* has dropped the *r*).
- (11) *þīne*, possessive adjective, nominative masculine plural of *þīn* (*geferan* is nominative masculine plural). Icelandic *þínir*.
- (12) *begāst*, verb, 2nd person singular (*þú*) present of *begān*, go about, practice, perform.
- (13) *pearle*, adverb, much, hard.
- (14) *fēlda*, noun, masculine dative singular of *fēld*, field. Earlier *feld* with short vowel, and so it might be here (same lengthening as in *cild*, see (1))
- (15) *iucie*, verb, 1st person (“I yoke”) singular present of *iukian*, *iucian*, *iugian*, *geocian* (many spellings), to yoke.
- (16) *stearc*, strong adjective, masculine nominative singular, severe (because *winter* is masculine nominative singular)
- (17) *hāfordes*, noun, masculine genitive singular of *hlāford*, lord (originally *hlāf-weard*, loaf-ward.) Became *laverd* in Middle English, whence Icelandic *lavarður*; later *laurd* and *lord*.
- (18) *æcer*, noun, masculine accusative singular of *æcer*, acre, open field. The accusative case is shown by the -ne ending on *fulne*. Icelandic *akur*.
- (19) *heora*, pronoun, their, genitive plural of *hī* or *hí*, they. Other spellings such as *hīra*. The modern form *their* is from Norse *þeirra*.
- (20) *micel*, strong adjective, much, neuter nominative singular (*gedeorf*, labour, is neuter). Icelandic *mikill*.