

A Study of the *Book of Margery Kmepe*

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INTRODUCTORY

1. Text

IN her Prefatory Note to *The Book of Margery Kempe*, edited by Prof. Sanford Brown Meech for the Early English Text Society, 1940, reprinted 1961, Miss Hope Emily Allen reveals her indebtedness to Colonel Butler-Bowden for the privilege of announcing in *The Times* (December 27, 1934) his memorable discovery of the volume among his treasures and also for her subsequent chances given to study it in the manuscript and later in the rotographs.

The manuscript remains the sole extant one. Its contents has been transmitted to us in its final form, which the priest gave it who had a large share in writing down (the "proym" Book II and perhaps certain parts of Book I) or revising the book (Book I). The "proym" informs us, in two passages, that it was written in 'anno domini m. cccc. xxxvj,' or, to be more exact, 'on the day next aftyr Mary Maudelyn', i. e. 23 July. The year in which the priest wrote down Book II is given as 1438 (221/7-9). For the composition of the whole text, however, we owe much also to Margery's first amanuensis mentioned by the priest in his proym as 'a man dwellyng in Dewchlonde which was an Englyschman in hys byrth & sythen weddyd in Dewchlonde & had þer boþe a wyf & a chyld,' who 'hauyng good knowlache of þis creatur & of hir desyr,... cam in-to Yngland wyth hys wyfe & hys goodys & dwellyd wyth þe forseyd creatur tyl he had wretyn as meche as sche wold tellyn hym for þe tym þat þei wer to-gydder.' He died afterwards. Then came the priest 'whiche þis creatur had gret affeccyon to,' so that 'sche comownd wyth hym of þis mater & browt hym þe boke to redyn.' The priest calls the

language of her first book neither good English nor Dutch, i. e. German, being so ill-written. He also tells the reader how he had delayed nearly four years fulfilling his promise to read and rewrite it, because of her ill repute. Then there is one Salthows who wrote the manuscript, as we learn from the postscript in the same hand as the text (f. 123 a) : Ihesu mercy quod Salthows 'Jesus' mercy, says Salthows.'

Finally, but most important, Margery herself comes in as the original narrator of her religious experiences.

From what has been said above, it is evident that we are concerned with four persons in considering the language of our book. At first the priest was among those who abhorred Margery's friendship, but afterwards he came to believe her and eagerly wrote down her dictated words. He quotes as a similar case Maria de Oegines, born c. 1177 at Nivelles in the diocese of Liège. He is impressed with her devotion, saying it is more than he can write how she worshiped and magnified our Lord Jesus Christ for his holy visitations and his comfort.

For all the uniformity there is in the language of the book, despite occasional variations, we owe a great deal to our priest, who rewrote the first book and continued the second. Though he finds that the original writer of the first book did not write very clearly or 'openly,' he knows that the latter expressed himself in true language, which he has transferred into his book with the help of God and the narrator of the whole treatise.

A few examples of variant sounds and spellings may be quoted in passing. The preterite verb 'saw' is spelled either 'sey,' 'saw,' or 'say': And þan sche sey sextene men wyth sextene scorgys, 191/6-7 (Cap. 80); Whan sche saw þis petows syght. 191/11-12 (Cap. 80): þan þe creatur say owr Lord fallyn down by hys Modyr 24-25 (Cap. 80). The variations here may be due to the same hand, however, for they all occur in the same passage. The lowering of a short high vowel is evidenced in 241/31 Whil sche was þer abydyng schepying iiij or iiij days; 241/35-36 þe wech personys abedyn schepying as sche

dede (Bk II, Cap. 8), besides 231/3 for þe most *partye* of þe schipgyng (BK II, Cap. 3). The weakening of vowel and consonant will be seen in 193/26-27 Ioseph ab Armathy, cf. the usual form 'of' as in 194/12 Ioseph of Aramathy. Anaptyx is sometimes found besides the normal form: 72/18 hys discipulys; 72/14 disciplys, 31/24 dyscyples. Metathesis, however, is the usual form in 131/3 thryste, 235/16 thrist, 239/19 thryst and 74/19 a-thryste. The displacement of a consonant is seen in 249/24 in-to þe werdys ende, 2/10 werdly, besides worlde and wordly, which are common in Book One.

Excrescence of a consonant occurs in Prayers 249/25-6 as a-nemst (=anent) any erdly mannys loue, apparently the only instance of this phenomenon.

Other variations observed are morphological, especially differences in verbal forms. We have 'cuttyd' for 'cut' in: 62/14-5 They cuttyd hir gown so schort þat it come but lytil be-nethyn hir kne (Bk I, Cap. 26). In the singular we have 'kytt,' as in: 208/9-10 & kytt þat *precyows* body.

2. Cultural Context

In spite of the miscellaneous hands that had their several roles in the formation of the book in question, the central figure remains Margery Kempe, native of Lynn, the daughter of a prominent citizen, who married another citizen, and spent most of her life in that town.

The age in which she lived may be said to have been one of religious tradition, when England had produced famous saints and a great literature of the faith. She had sent into the world her own mystics, James Hilton, Richard Rolle, Julian of Norwich and others. She had also come under the influences of continental mysticism, though they were only felt among a minority of religious thinkers.

Dame Jelyan, Margery's great contemporary, is mentioned in Bk I, Cap. 18: ' & þan sche was bodyn be owyr Lord for to gon to an ankres in þe same cyte whych hyte Dame Ielyan. & so sche dede & schewyd hir þe grace þat God put in hir sowle of *compunccyon*, contricyon, swetnesse & deuocyon, *compassyon* wyth holy meditacyon

& hy contemplacyon, & ful many holy spechys & dalyawns þat owyr Lord spak to hir sowle, and many wondirful reuelacyons which sche schewyd to þe ankres to wetyn yf þer wer any deceyte in hem, for þe ankres was expert in swech thyngys & good counsel coud ȝeun. Þe ankres, heryng þe meruelyows goodnes of owyr Lord, hyly thankyd God wyth at hir hert for hys visitacyon, counselyng þis creatur to be obedyent to þe wyl of owyr Lord God & fulfylln wyth al hir mygthys what-euyr he put in hir sowle yf it wer not a-geyn þe worshep of God & profyte of hir euyn-cristen, for, yf it wer, þan it wer nowt þe mevyng of a good spyryte but rapar of an euyl spyrit.' Etc., etc.

Of the contemporary religious literature she was familiar with, she speaks in the following lines, Cap. 58: 'He,' a certain priest who met Margery in Lynn in a certain period of time of her life, 'red to hir many a good boke of hy contemplacyon & oper bokys, as þe Bybyl wyth doctowrys þer-up-on, Seynt Brydys boke, Hyltons boke, Bone-ventur, Stimulus Amoris, Incendium Amoris, & swech oper.' Miss Hope Emily Allen reminds us, in her Prefatory Note to her edition of our Book, of the particular importance of 'The Revelations of St. Bridget' among the contemporary continental mystic literature. Bona-ventura mentioned in the above quotation is another continental name, but Hilton is English and so is the author of the celebrated *Incendium Amoris*, Richard Rolle of Hampole. Other great continental names before M. Kempe's time are St. Mechthild v. Hackborn (*The Book of Spiritual, alias Special, Grace*) and St. Catherine of Siena (*The Dialogo*, called *Orchard of Syon* and *The Lyf* printed by Wynkyn de Word c. 1493). Among other native contributions to the English mystic tradition of the mediaeval times Miss Allen has expressly noted the anonymous author of the early Middle English *Ancrene Riwe*.

In Cap. 62, Bk I (p. 153 / 35-154/1), the priest refers to 'þe Prykke of Lofe,' þe ij chapitulo and 'Bone-uentur' as its author, but *Stimulus Amoris*, as it is called in Latin, is a fourteenth-century compilation by an unknown hand according to the authority. He follows

it up with a reference to Richard Rolle of Hampole, the hermit, whose *Incendium Amoris* afforded him some evidence for the creditability of Margery's religious experiences.

3. Margery's Life

Margery Kempe's religious life may, in part, be explained pathologically, though much remains unexplained unless we give due credit to her mystical constitution of mind. Certain pathological symptoms are recorded in her Book which will account for part of her peculiar mentality. Many times and in many places she saw many white things flying about her on every side as thick as motes in the sun (Cap. 35, Bk I, p.88/6f.). She confesses that at one time she was not so merry or glad, for she suffered no tribulation, as on the day when she did. Occasionally, too, she was a victim to 'a great sickness in her head and then in her back.' People in her company were often disgusted with her manner, for she took to too much weeping: Cap. 26, Bk I, p.61/11-18-20 And þei wer most displeyd for sche wepyd so mech & spak alwey of þe lofe & goodnes of owyr Lord as wel at þe tabyl as in oþer place. Weeping and crying, however, was a peculiar trait which never left her and which she shared with some other mediaeval mystics of fame, Mary of Oignies (c. 1177-1213), for example, who lived in a cell near the church of Oignies, practising great austerities.* This gift of tears is the subject of many passages in her Book, where her important religious experiences are told.

In Cap. 18, Bk I. p. 43/1-8, St. Paul is quoted as saying that the Holy Ghost makes us ask and pray with mournings and weepings unspeakable and plenteous. Other passages contain similar justifications for the tears. Cap. 19, Bk I, p.46/28-30 for teerys wyth lofe is þe grettest zeft þat God may ȝevyn in erth...

* The priest also records a similar case: Cap. 62, Bk I, p. 153/10 f. Also, Elizabeth of Hungry cryed wyth lowde voys, as is wretyn in hir tretys. St. Elizabeth of Hungary (b. 1207) was daughter of King Andrew II of Hungary and wife of Landgrave Ludwig IV of Thuringia and a Franciscan.

Love was the paramount cause of her abundant tears: Cap. 64, Bk I, p.158/6-7 Wher is a bettyr token of lofe þan to wepyn for þi Lordys lofe? Sometimes it was for contrition that she shed her tears: Cap. 26, Bk I, p. 61/1f. abundawnt teerys of contricyon for hir owyn synnes and sumtyme for oþer mennys synnes also. Other passages bear witness also to the fact that her tears were often caused by her sense of contrition, for in Book II she tells a young man in part that "þe cawse of hir wepyng & sobbyng was hir gret vnke(n)dnes azens hir Maker, wher-thorw sche had many tymys offendyd hys goodnes, & gret abhominacyon þat sche had of hir synnys cawsyd hir to sobbyn & wepyn." More often, however, it was through her uncontrollable sense of sweetness coming from her direct communion with Jesus, an almost physical sense of joy, that she went into an ecstasy of lachrymosity: Book I, Cap. 17, 40/1-6 Her dalyawns was so swet, so holy, & so devout þat þis creatur myt not oftyn-tymes beryn it but fel down & wrestyd wyth hir body & mad wondyrful cher & contenawns wyth boystows sobbyngys & gret plente of terys, sumtyme seyng "Ihesu, mercy," sum-tyme "I dey." Here is a strange interplay between fact and fancy. Her experience of religious emotion mounts high even into a state of devout prayers, as when she cries in these words: Prayers of the creature 249/1-4 hafe mercy of me þerfor & grawnte me in þis lyfe a welle of teerys spryngyng plenteuwsly, wyth þe which I may waschyn away my synnys throw þi mercy & þi goodnes.

Her fit of crying used to visit her without her control, at her houseling before the altar or whenever God worked in her mind the grace of contrition and devotion, as she professes: Bk I, Cap. 57, 139/20f. þan was sche howselyd aftyr þis tyme at þe hy awter in Seynt Margaretys Chirche, & owr Lord visited hir wyth so gret grace whan sche xulde ben howselyd þat sche cryed so lowde þat it myth ben herd al a-bowte þe Chirche & owte of þe Chirche as sche xulde a deyid þerwyth.... Bk I, Cap. 57, 140/8-17 þe Passyon of owr Lord Crist Ihesu, ..., wech syght & gostly beheldyng wrowt be grace so feruently in hir mende, wowndyng hir wyth pite & compassyon,

þat sche sobbyd, roryd, & cryed, and, spredyng hir armys a-brood, seyð wyth lowde voys, "I dey, I dey," þat many man on hir wonderyd & merueyled what hir eyled. Bk I, Cap.62, 154/23-9 Thus was sche slawnderyd, etyn, & knawyn of þe pepil for þe *grace* þat God wrowt in hir of contricyon, of deuocyon, & of compassyon, thorw þe 3yft of which gracys sche wept, sobbyd, & cryid ful sor a-geyn hir wyl, sche myth not chesyn, for sche had leuar a wept softly & preuily þan opynly 3yf it had ben in hyr power.

Another occasion recorded for her sore weeping and crying was when she saw in imagination a great violence done by the Jews to the blessed body of our Lord. Bk I, Cap. 80, 191-192.

In spite of her propensities towards apparent hysteria, she had her own winning ways that gained the sympathy of people. Her recorded life witnesses the fact that she lived in constant communion with the Highest, in denial of the world. In her *Prayers* she entreats our Lord, just as He showed his compassion to the woman who was caught in the act of adultery, 'so verily mot þu dryuyn a-wey alle myn enmijs fro me, boþin bodily and gostly, þat I may stondyn a-lone by þe & make my sowle ded to alle þe joyis of þis world & qwyk & gredy to hy contemplacyon in God.' (253/18-22) Her manner of living was admirable in the eye of the priest who wrote down her words into the Book. Bk I, Cap. 31, 79/11-20 Sche told hym of hir *maner* leuyng, of hir felingys, of hir reuelacyons, & of þe *grace* þat God wrowt in hir sowle be holy inspiracyons & hy contemplacyons, & how owyr Lord dalyed to hir sowle in a *maner* of spekyng. Ðan þe worshepful clerke seyð þat sche was mech beholdyn to God, for he seyð he had neuyr herd of non swech in þis worlde leuyng for to be so homly wyth God be lofe & homly dalyawnce as sche was, thankyd be God of hys 3yftys, for it is hys goodnes & no mannys meryte.

However, her days were not quite exempt from the dangers of persecution and trial. 'Fowle thowtys & fowle mendys of letchery' sometimes harassed her (Bk I, Cap. 59, 144-145). Bk I, Cap. 76 tells us how her husband fell and broke his headbones, and how he lived the rest of his years in Margaret's tender care. This happened during

their life of avowed chastity. She was often deserted by her company during her journey abroad, once on the occasion of her pilgrimage to Rome (Capp. 30, 40 etc.) and later in her voyage towards England back from Germany (Bk II, Cap. 5, 236/16-18).

In all her trying hours there was always extended a helping hand towards her to show her the mercy of our Lord, as it seemed to her. It was a broken-backed man who as it had been prophesied by an anchor, a man called Richard of Ireland, was to lead her from England to Rome, when she was deserted. Bk I, Cap. 30, 76/2 ff. And, whan þei wer gon a-wey fro hir, þan owyr Lord Ihesu Crist, þat euыр helpyth at nede & neuыр forsakyth hys seruaw[nt þat] trewly trostith to hys mercy, seyde to hys creatur, "D[rede] þe not, dowtyr, for I xal ordeyn for þe ryth wel & br[ynge] þe]/in safte to Rome & hom a-geyn in-to Ingland wyth-owtyn ony velany of þi body 3yf thou wilt be clad in white clothys & weryn hem as I seyde to þe whil þu wer in Ingland." (Her habit of wearing a white clothing later proves another cause of persecution to her.) It was always the spiritual comforts God awarded her for her patient sufferings and meekness of the heart that bore her up against the shames and wonderings that had beset her. (Bk I, Cap. 40, 99/25-30.)

4. Her Belief

Margery's belief in God had taken a very positive and palpable shape in that she was constantly listening to His own voice and she was sure it was not the evil spirit that addressed her, for in His speech she invariably gained strength and comfort: Bk I, Cap. 87, p. 215/3-6 & sche stably & stedfastly beleuyde þat it was God þat spak in hir sowle & non euyl spiryt, for in hys speche sche had most strength & most comfort & most encresyng of vertu, blissyd be God. It was on the strength of this inner voice that she rested in assurance of the virtue of her weeping: Bk I, Cap. 86, p. 213/11-15 And þefor drede þe not, dowtyr, thou þe pepyl wondyr why þu wepist so sor whan þu receyuyest me, for, 3yf þei knew what grace I putte in þe þat tyme, þei xulde rapar wondyr þat þin hert brost not a-sundyr. Bk I,

Cap. 88 also tells us how Our Lord told her that He was very pleased with her writing of the book, though during this period, she was less inclined to say her prayers than in her earlier years, being set more devoutly on meditation. Hers was an eminently positive sort of religion, in which one saw God face to face and spoke to Him in direct communion: Bk I, Cap. 85, p. 208/21-29 & a-non in þe syght of hir sowle sche sey owr Lord standyng ryght up ouyr hir so ner þat hir thowt sche toke hys toos in hir hand & felt hem, & to hir felyng it weryn as it had ben very flesch & bon. & þan sche thankyd God of al, for thorw þes gostly sytys hir affeccyon was al drawyn in-to þe manhod of *Crist* & in-to þe mynde of hys Passyon vn-to þat tyme þat it plesyd owr Lord to 3euyn hir vndirstondyng of hys <in> vndirstondabyl Godhed. The last words in this paragraph "understandable Godhead" typically point to the nature of Margery's religious beliefs and convictions.

It is particularly characteristic of Margery's religious experiences that she gained them through the medium of some signs and tokens revealed to her on several occasions. One of such characteristic tokens was 'a flawme of fyer' or 'þe fyer of loue' as she calls it, known also to her predecessor, Richard Rolle of Hampole, the Hermit. It was a hot and comfortable flame of fire, the burning heat in the breast not unlike that of the material fire, as she explains: Bk I, Cap. 35, p. 88/27-33 & þat was a flawme of fyer wondir hoot & delectabyl & ryth comfortabyl, nowt wastyng but euyr incresyng, of lowe, for, thow þe wedyr wer neuyr so colde, sche felt þe hete brennyng in hir brest & at hir hert, as verily as a man schuld felyn þe material fyer 3yf he put hys hand or hys fynger þerin. She was afraid, when she first felt this fire burning in her breast, but then she knew it was the fire of love or the heat of the Holy Ghost that purged all her sins: Bk I, Cap. 35, p. 88/33-89/2 Whan sche felt fyrst þe fyer of loue brennyng in her brest, sche was a-ferd þerof, & þan owr Lord answeyrd to hir mend & seyde, "Dowtyr, be not a-ferd, for þis hete is þe hete of þe Holy Gost, þe which schal bren a-wey alle þi synnes, for þe fyer of lofe qwenchith alle synnes."

Another kind of token she used to witness concerns her physical hearing, very much similar to what Richard called 'canor' as against 'calor.' So in Bk I, Cap. 36, 90/34f. we read: Thys creatur had diuers tokenys in hir bodily heryng. On was a *maner* of sownde as it had ben a peyr of belwys blowing in hir ere. Sche, beyng a-basshed *per*-of, was warnyd in hir sowle no fer to haue, for it was þe sownd of þe Holy Gost. & þan owyr Lord *turnyd* þat sownde in-to þe voys of a dowe, & sithyn he *turnyd* it into þe voys of a lityl bryd which is callyd a reedbrest þat song ful merily oftyn-tymes in hir ryght ere. & þan schuld sche euyr-mor han gret grace *aftr* þat sche herd swech a tokyn. Such tokens accompanied about twenty-five years which went into the writing of Margery's book. And they were the tokens of Our Lord's love for her, as she was internally told : 91/9 Be þes tokenys mayst þu wel wetyn þat I loue þe, for þu art to me a very modir & al þe world for þat gret charite þat is in þe, etc. Sometimes the signs were such natural signs as lightning, thunder and rain, which gave her a warning against some steps of action on her part. Some may think it might have been her own personal interpretations. However it may be, it was her habit of mind to think in terms of such signs and tokens as came to her.

She was a visionary by nature. The vision she most often had was that of Our Lord's Passion, which caused her extraordinary fits of weeping and crying. Bk I, Cap. 78, p.184/34-185/6 Sche had many an holy thowt of ovr Lordys Passyon & beheld hym in hir gostly syght as verily as he had ben a-forn hir in hir bodily syght. *Perfor* myth sche not *wythstondyn* wepyng & sobbyng, but sche must nedys wepyn, cryin, & sobbyn whan sche be-held hir Sauyowr suffyr so gret peynys for hir lofe. Another passage (in Cap. 79) records a vision of a dialogue between the Son and the Mother about the sorrow of parting at His death. Again in Cap. 81, Margery describes in a vivid tone her vision of Our Lady in swooning after the Crucifixion.

She frequently had feelings and revelations that came true afterwards. It was so in the case of the removal of the Prior of Lynne, who afterwards was sent again to Lynne. (Cap. 71.) She was

sometimes prophetic about the life and death of people: Bk I, Cap. 78, p. 185/37-40 And þan many tymys owr Lord Ihesu Crist wolde sey to hir, "Dowtyr, her is þis day a fayr pepil, and many of hem xal ben ded er þis day twel-monyth," etc. She had it in her feeling whether people should live or die, or should be saved or condemned (cf. Bk I, Cap. 23, p. 54/32-38).

For all her trust in her feelings, she was sometimes in great doubts. Cap. 89, p. 220/9-15 For sumtyme þat sche vndirstod bodily it was to ben vndirstondyn gostily, & þe drede þat sche had of hir felyngys was þe grettest scorge þat sche had in erde & specially whan sche had hir furst felyngys, & þat drede made hir ful meke for sche had no joye in þe felyng tyl sche knew be experiens wheþyr it was trewe er not. She was well aware of the difficulties of spiritual experiences, the interpretations of which usually depend upon the less palpable grounds of intuition.

It is remarkable to see how deeply entrusted she was in the love of our Lord. She confesses that her joy in His love was such that it would relieve her of all kinds of fear even though she were in Hell, if she could weep and mourn for it as she did on earth, and that Hell would be a sort of Heaven then. 215/30ff. And oftyn-tymys sche seyde to owr Lord Ihesu, "A, Lord Ihesu, syn it is so swet to wepyn for þi lofe in erth, I wote wel it xal be ryght joyful to be wyth þe in Heuyn. Þerfor, Lord, I prey þe, late me neuyr han oper joy in erthe but mornynge & wepyng for thy lofe. For me thynkith, Lord, þow I wer in Helle, 3yf I myth wepyn þer & mornyn for þi lofe as I do her, Helle xuld not noyin me, but it xulde be a maner of Heuyn, for thy lofe puttyth a-wey al maner of drede of owr gostly enmye,... (Cap. 87)

In all these confessions she seems to yearn for a blissful union with God, which is the ultimate goal of every religious experience. To her, who says (Cap. 22, p. 50/26ff.), "A, der God, I haue not lovyd þe alle þe days of my lyue, & þat sor rewtyth me; I haue ronnyng a-wey fro þe, & þow hast ronnyng aftyr me; I wold fallyn in dyspeyr, & þu woldyst not suffer me," God, in her vision, replies, "A, dowtyr,

how oftyn-tymes haue I teld þe þat thy synnes arn for3oue þe & þat we ben onyd to-gedyr wyth-owtyn ende?" In a later stage, it is recorded, she was in constant communion with the Most High: Cap. 72, p.172/11-13 So be processe of tyme hir mende & hir thowt was so ioyned to God þat sche neuyr for3ate hym but contynually had mende of hym & behelde hym in alle creaturys. And again, elsewhere (Cap. 77, p. 182), our merciful Lord promises her that "I xal make þe buxom to my wil þat þu xalt criyn whan I wil, & wher I wil, bothyn lowde & stille, for I teld þe, dowtyr, þu art myn & I am thyn, & so xalt þu be wyth-owtyn ende."

The Language of the *Book of Margery Kempe*

Our study of her language will be restricted here to its vocabulary and syntax, especially its structural and semantic aspects.

A. Vocabulary

Some of the structural features of vocabulary may first be noted in the formation of certain compounds, e. g. euyn-cristen. *MED.* notes that most of the compounds in *even* are renderings of Latin words with *co*-prefix. Euyn-cristen (Cap. 18, 42/22 *profyete* of hir euyn-cristen, Cap. 57, p. 141/34 myn euyn-cristen sowlys) can be classed together with other ME. compounds like even-disciple, even-eldre, even-knight, even-nexete, etc. and may be rendered by fellow-. Euyn-cristen as a loan compound befits the general situation of remarkable religious feeling, because of its foreign formation.

One of the commonest intensives in M. Kempe is *al*, which occupies the same position in compounds and phrases : al-to-betyn 472 and al modyr-nakyd 190. (The N. E. D. 's first quotation for modyr-nakyd is from the year cl400. The passage in M. Kempe would supply the second quotation for the word.) Al good and al lofe occur with reference to the nature of God : 203/21-3 Dowtyr, þu seyst þat it is to me a good name to be callyd al good, & þu xalt fynnden þat name is al good to þe ; 203/23-6 And also, dowtyr, þu

seyst it is wel worthy þat I be callyd al lofe, & þu xalt wel fynden þat I am lofe to þe, for I knowe euery thowt of thyn hert.

This manner of distribution and collocation ('owr merciful Lord') may more or less determine the use of words in realizing their reference to particular sectors of the speaker's experience.

In other contexts, some words alternate with others or are found in consociation with others, forming together certain larger fields of meaning: (a) 230/6-7 Help us & socour us, Lord, er þan we perischyn er dispeyrin; (b) 197/34 so gret swem & heuynes.

The vocabulary of M. Kempe in the fields of her religious, mystic, and psychic experience may be studied in terms of such syntagmatical and paradigmatic arrangement, which helps each word in its own context to realize its particular meaning.

Godhead is defined, in her language, both as a hidden God and an immanent God. In the first of these definitions, it is obvious, she is influenced by contemporary theology represented as in Julian of Norwich's *A Cloud of Unknowing*, which harks back to *Deonyse Hyd Diuinitie*. The phrase 'an hyd God' occurs in 30/24-31 And, þow I wythdrawe sumtyme þe felyng of grace fro þe eyþyr of spech er of wepyng, drede þe not þerof, for I am an hyd God in þe þat þu schuldyst haue no veynglory & þat þu schuldyst knowyn wele þow mayst not han terys ne swych dalyawns but whan God wyl send hem þe, for it arn þe fre 3yftys of God wyth-owtyn þi meryte & he may 3eue hem whom he wyl & don þe no wrong. "Immanent" is not the exact word with which she collocates "God," but her expression is much simpler: Neuyr-þe-les whersoeyr God is Heuyn is, & God is in þi sowle, etc. (31/7f.)

These collocations tend to indicate different aspects of semantic relations in which the term "god" stands in Kempe. The terms that are found in a collocation are sometimes equivalents and sometimes contrastive, in each case serving to determine their meaning in a different way: þer was a dyner of gret joy & gladnes, meche mor gostly þan bodily, for it was sawcyd & sawryd wyth talys of Holy Scripture (Cap. 70, 170/21-3). Equivalents: joy & gladnes, sawcyd

& sawryd. Contrastive : mor gostly þan bodily.

Some of the terms that express M. Kempe's more important religious experiences stand in consociation, not exactly in the relation of equivalence, but in correlation. Cap. 22, 51/31f. I xal take þi sowle fro þi bodd (*sic*=?body) wyth gret myrthe & melodye, wyth swet smellys & good odowrys.

These experiences of smell and sound are expounded more extensively in another passage : Cap. 35, 87/31-88/2 Sum-tyme sche felt swet smellys wyth hir nose ; it wer swettar, hir thowt, þan euyr was ony swet erdly thyng þat sche smellyd be-forn, ne sche myth neuyr tellyn how swet it wern, for hir thowt sche myth a leuyd þerby 3yf they wolde a lestyð. Sum-tyme sche herd wyth hir bodily erys sweche sowndys & melodijs þat sche myth not wel heryn what a man seyð to hir in þat tyme les he spoke þe lowder. And again : Cap. 78, 185/33-37 Sum-tyme sche herd gret sowndys & gret melodijs wyth hir bodily erys, & þan sche þowt it was ful mery in Heuyn & had ful gret languryng & ful gret longyng pedyr-ward wyth many a stille mornyng. Cap. 89, 219/10-13 And also sche herd many tymys a voys of a swet brydde syngyn in hir ere, and oftyn-tymys sche herd swet sowndys & melodijs þat passyd hir witte for to tellyn hem. This corresponds to Richard's experience of *clamor*.

Another physical term that forms collocations with terms for religious experience is "fire," *calor*. Cap. 29, 88/33-89/2 Whan sche felt fyrst þe fyer of loue brennyng in her brest, sche was a-ferd þerof, & þan owr Lord answeyrd to hir mend & seyde, "Dowtyr, be not a-ferd, for þis hete is þe hete of þe Holy Gost, þe whech schal bren a-wey alle þi synnes, for þe fyer of lofe qwenchith alle synnes. This reminds us also of a similar usage in Richard Rolle of Hampole.

The following description of a related experience contains the phrase 'a flawme of fyer a-bowte hir brest,' which also indicates its physical nature : Cap. 89, 219/1-5 Also, whil þe forseyd creatur was occupyd a-bowte þe writyng of þis tretys, sche had many holy teerys & wepingys, & oftyn-tymys þer cam a flawme of fyer a-bowte hir brest ful hoot & delectabyl, and also he þat was hir writer cowde

not sumtyme kepyn hym-self fro wepyng.

One of the commonest words in the *Book of Margery Kempe* is certainly "love." It occurs most often in the collocations "the love of God," "the gift of love," and other similar phrases. Cap. 21, 49/11-15 *þer* is no 3yft so holy as is *þe* 3yft of lofe, ne no þing to be so mech desyred as lofe, for lofe may purchasyn what it can desyren. & *þerfor*, dowytyr, þow mayst no bettyr plesyn God þan contynuly to thinkyn on hys lofe. Cap. 17, 39/19-28 sumtyme alle thre Personys in Trinyte & o substawns in Godhede dalyid to hir sowle & informyd hir in hir feyth & in hys lofe how sche xuld lofe hym, worshepyn hym, & dredyn hym, so excellently þat sche herd neuȝr boke, neȝȝr Hyltons boke, ne [B]ridis boke, ne *Stimulus Amoris*, ne *Incendium Amoris*, ne *non oper þat euȝr* sche herd redyn þat spak so hyly of lofe of God but þat sche felt as hyly in werkyng in hir sowle yf sche cowd or ellys mygth a schewyd as sche felt.

In some collocations, God and love stand in the actor-action relation and in others, in the action-goal relation, as usual : Cap. 64, 157f. Dowytyr, þu knowist not how meche I lofe þe ; Cap. 87, 218/23-4 þat þu art as sekyr of my lofe as God is God. Cap. 64, 158/22f. "Nay, nay, dowytyr, for þat thyng þat I lofe best þei lofe not."

A peculiar instance of collocation is found in the following : Cap. 18, 45/12f. & for þis creatur teld hir þat sche had to fele *lofe of affeccyon* to hir gostly fadyr.

Other collocations indicate a meaning-relation which refers to the typically mystic situation in which Margery Kempe was placed under contemporary religious influences : Cap. 36, 90/24-26 & *þerfor* þu mayst boldly take me in þe armys of þi sowle & kyssen my mouth, myn hed, & my fete as swetly as thow wylt (Christ is addressing Margery).

In the second type of linguistic relations, words alternate with one another, in several different ways, in a similar context or situation. In other words, lexical units may alternate within the same framework of a sentence in different meaning-relations that are logically implied in language as constants, such as synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy,

etc.

It is quite well known that synonymous expressions frequently alternate in Shakespeare without apparent distinction in meaning (Bridget Cusack, "Shakespeare and the Tune of the Time," in *Shakespeare Survey* 23 : *Shakespeare's Language*, pp. 1-12). A Shakespearian character may say "(be) called" in several different modes : Know sir, that I am call'd *Hortensio* (*T. Shrew*, IV, ii, 21) ; my name is *Broome* (*Merry Wives*, II, ii, 167) ; a Seruant nam'd *Lucilius* (*Timon*, I, i, 111), etc. But in a few instances, the difference in the choice of expression is brought about by the difference in style in the language of a specified speaker, as when Lucentio's father is made to say : My name is call'd *Vincentio* (*T. Shrew*, IV, v, 55). Here the speaker belongs to an older generation. In the same way, Pistol distinguishes himself from other characters by using a similar phraseology, with an additional trick of inversion: My name is *Pistol* call'd (*Henry V*, IV, i, 62).

It seems, however, that the presence of synonyms in the *Book of Margery Kempe* is called for by no such stylistic necessity. They are mere alternatives, for there is more or less unity in the style of the narrative in this book.

A stylistic feature remains in the mediaeval tradition of synonymous pair-words. It is in this linguistic context that words and phrases are often found in synonymic meaning-relation in the *Book*.

1. Synonyms in the framework of pair-words (coordination).

Cap. 18, 42/29 stabyl & stedfast in þe rygth feyth & þe rygth beleue. Cap. 47, 114/14 þe ryth feyth & ryth beleue. Cap. 24, 56/6-7 sad in hys langage and dalyawns. Cap. 27, 64/12 wroth & in gret angryr. Cap. 31, 78/35 hir cher & hir cuntenawns. II. Cap. 10, 247/5, schort cher & heuy contenawnce. Cap. 41, 98/20 sodeyn sorwe & heuynes. II. Cap. 3, 229/23 sorwe & care j-now. Cap. 41, 99/3 solas & comfort. 99/4 be sygnys & tokenys. 99/7-8 gret lofe & gret fauowr. Cap. 42, 101/25 gresely & greuows. Cap. 52, 128/29 witte & wisdom. Cap. 66, 161/25 buxom & bonowr to my wil & to my byddyng. Cap. 80, 192/37

schakyd & schoderyd. Cap. 70, 170/21 gret joy & gladnes. Cap. 71, 171/26 ful glad & joyful Cap. 86, 214/13 al maner joye & blysse. Cap. 73, 175/1-2 al hir joy & al hir blysse. II. Cap. 3, 230/6 Help us & socowr us, Lord. 229/21 her craft & her cunnyng. II. Cap. 5, 234/20-1 a man fryke & lusty to gon.

2. Synonyms in coordinate relation may also stand asyndetically.

Cap. 24, 56/5-6 an amyabyll *persone*, fayr feturyd, wel faueryd in cher & in cuntenawns. Cap. 35, 88/27 a flawme of fyre wondyr hoot....., of lowe.

3. Synonyms in disjunctive relation.

Cap. 73, 175/3 sche xulde neuyr han joy ne blys. Cap. 80, 193/6 as well as he cowde er myth.

4. Words in pairs sometimes differ so widely in meaning that they may be said to be in the meaning-relation of hyponymy or "allonymy."

(a) In coordinate relation: Cap. 18, 43/4-5 *wyth mornynggys & wepyngys* Cap. 42, 101/27 gret drede & heuynes. Cap. 52, 124/1 callyng hir "loller" & "heretyke." Cap' 80, 192/11 a long nayle, a row & a boistews.

(b) In disjunctive relation : II. Cap. 3, 230/7 er *þan* we perischyn er dispeyryn.

Even in such cases the words are found so related that they form a common area of consociation, or a lexical field.

B. Syntax

A brief survey of the *Book of Margery Kempe* will end with an impression that we are here concerned with the syntax of a written text based on speech, which is a foregone conclusion from what we already know about the origin of the book. It is also corroborated by the proofs supplied by the materials we have collected about the use of certain syntagmatic markers and the main features of syntactic constructions in its language.

1. Use of certain syntagmatic markers.

1.1 a(n), article : noun-marker. An indefinite article 'a' sometimes behaves irregularly, for it is prefixed before a plural noun in

the following example : II. Cap. 10, 245/31-3 Fro London sche went to Schene a iij days be-forn Lammas Day for to *purchasyn* hir pardon þorw þe *mercy* of owr Lord. Occasionally it is placed before an adjective without its headword, which precedes the whole group : Cap. 80, 192/9-11 a long nayle, a row & a boistews. Cf. Cap. 28, 72/5 whyl sche iij wekys was in Ierusalem.

1. 2 Genitive : case-marker. The genitive case is either inflected or uninflected : Cap. 26, 61/2-3 oper mennys synnes. Cap. 27, 63/6 þe Popys legate, Cap. 67, 163/14 Seynt Margaretys Cherche. 164/30 owr Lordys Passyon./Cap. 57, 141/8-9 & þat is *mercy* whch I aske for þe pepil synnes. Cap. 58, 142/33 what *maner* woman sche was. Cap. 86, 214/13 al *maner* joye & blysse. II. Cap. 10, 248/14 al *maner* synne & wikkydnes.

In other examples, the uninflected genitive is replaced by the 'of'-phrase : Cap. 57, 141/11-12 I aske nowe *mercy* for þe synne of þe pepil, as I wolde don for myn own. Cap. 214/23 swech *maner* of thowtys. This last type is more in the nature of colloquial speech.

1. 3 Preposition : phrase-marker. Instances of the end-placed preposition are not uncommon : Cap. 24, 57/4-6 The *preste*, trustyng it xuld be as þis zong *man* teld hym, lent hym syluer wyth good wyl to helpyn hym wyth. Cap. 54, 133/6-7 & meche pepil had gret *compassyon* þat sche was so euyl ferd wyth. Cap. 30, 75/25-6 'Worshepyd be alle þo holy placys in Ierusalem þat Crist suffyrde bittyr peyn & passyon in,'/26-29 þu schalt haue þe same pardon as 3yf þu wer *þer* wyth þi bodily *presens* bothyn to þi-self & to alle þo þat þu wylt 3euyn it to./31-32 "Drede þe not. dowtyr, *þer* schal no *man* deyn in þe schip þat þu art in."

The concatenation of the verb and preposition group as a semantic unit seems to have grown out of this end-position of the preposition. An example in point follows : Cap. 67/163/32-34 Lo, Margery, God hath wrowt gret *grace* for vs & sent us a fayr snowe to qwenchyn wyth þe fyr. (=to qwenchyn þe fyr wyth)

1. 4 Conjunction : clause marker. The uses of some conjunctions in the *Book* are highly colloquial in nature, particularly so when its

language leans more towards expressiveness and polysemy than towards logic of the matter.

and, adversative. The coordinate conjunction 'and' often implies an adversative statement: Cap. 13, 28/17-18 "Why lawhyst þu, broþel, & art þow gretly despysed?" Cap. 11, 23/18-20 "Alas, ser," sche seyde, "why meue 3e þis mater & haue we ben chast þis viij wekys?"

after, prep. & conj. II Cap. 9, 245/19-22 Sche was so comforyd in þe swet dalyawns of owr Lord þat sche myth not mesuryn hirself ne gouerne hir spirit after hyr owyn wyl ne after discrecyon of oper men, but after þat owr Lord wolde ledyn it.

as for, pleonastic='as.' The earliest quotation given by the O.E. D. for this use is from the year cl449 Pecock. Cap. 79, 188/31-32: And þer xal 3e be coronnyd as for Qwen of Heuyn, as for lady of al þe worlde, & as for Empres of Helle. Our quotation (1436) is more than ten years earlier.

for, conj., coordinate & subordinate. (1) Cap. 66, 162/9-11 Than had sche many a scorne & meche reprefe for sche eate flesch a-geyn. (2) II Cap. 4, 236/18-21 Sche seyde þan to hym þat had ben hir gyde, "Iohn, 3e forsakyn me for non oper cawse but for I wepe whan I se þe Sacrament & whan I thynke on owr Lordys Passyon..." / 'for þat' : Cap. 35, 86/11-15 "Dowtyr, I am wel plesyd wyth þe in-as-mech as þu beleuyst in alle þe Sacramentys of Holy Chirche & in al feyth þat longeth þerto, & specialy for þat þu beleuyst in manhode of my Sone & for þe gret compassyon þat þu hast of hys bittyr Passyon." Here again we have an instance of 'for' governing a nominal construction either in the form of a nexus or a substantive, cf. 'after' above.

les þan='unless.' Cap. 1, 1/20-22 And euyr sche was turned a-zen a-bak in tym of temptacyon, lech vn-to þe reedspyr which boweth wyth euery wynd & neuyr is stable les þan no wynd bloweth. Cap. 24, 55/28f. For a lytil hastynes, hym-self defendyng as he myght not chesyn les þan he wold a be ded thorw pursute of hys enmys, he smet a man or ellys tweyn, wher-thorw, as he seyde, wer ded or ellys lyche for to be ded. Cap. 40, 96/39-97/4 Þan wold he no lengar

suffyr hir to beggyn hir mete fro dore to dore, but preyid hir to eten wyth hym & hys felawshap, les þan good men & women be þe wey of charite & for gostly comfort wolde preyn hir to mete. This was a very common turn of expression in Margery's time (OED. 1422 tr. *Secreta Secretarum*).

like as='just as'. Cap. 59, 145/2-4 & so þe Deuyl bar hyr on hande, dalyng vn-to hir wyth cursyd thowtys liche as ovr Lord dalyid to hir be-forn-tyme with holy thowtys. The OED. quotes from c1380 Wyclif.

þat, conj. Its polysemy marks the varied colloquial uses of this conjunction. Cap. 29, 72/11-12 al þe wey þat sche went. 72/35-37 þat='for that' : & I am wel plesyd wyth þe, dowtyr, for þu stondist vndyr obedyens of Holy Cherk & þat þu wylt obey þi confessor & folwyn hys counsel. Cap. 63, 156/31-32 "I am not worthy þat þu xuldist schewyn sweche *graces* for me." Cap. 89, 220/4-9 Sum-tyme sche was in gret heuynes for hir felyngys, whan sche knew not how þei schulde ben vundir-standyn many days to-gedyr, for drede þat (rel.) sche had of deceytys & illusyons, þat (cj.) hir thowt sche wolde þat (cj.) hir hed had be smet fro þe body tyl God of hys goodnesse declaryd hem to hir mende.

wyth-owtyn, prep. & conj. *Prayers of the creature*. 250/23-25 Lord, þu seist þi-self þer xal no man comyn to þe wyth-owtyn þe ne no man be drawyn wyth-owtyn þu drawe hym. This usage persists today in vulgarism.

2. Syntactic Constructions.

2.1 Syntax and Distaxy.

Syntactic sequences, which are usually linear in arrangement, are occasionally disturbed by displacement of certain elements of a sentence, that is, by distaxy. Such elements may be the subject, the object, or a functional unit such as the relative particle. Colloquial style frequently provides instances of distaxy caused by after-thoughts, as compared with the more prepared forms of discourse preferred by logical style.

Subject : Cap. 80, 192/12-14 Hys blisful Modyr beheldyng & þis

creatur how hys *precyows* body schrynyd & drow to-gedyr wyth alle senewys & veynys in þat *precyows* body...

Object and the appositive clause: *Prayers* 248/14-20 Whan sche had seyð "Veni creator *spiritus*" wyth þe versys, sche seyð on þis maner, "The Holy Gost I take to witnesse, ovr Lady, seynt Mary, þe Modyr of God, al holy cowrte of Heuyn, & alle my gostly faderys her in erth, þat, þow it wer possibyl þat I myth han al knowyng & vndirstondyng of þe *preuyteys* of God be þe tellyng of any deuyll of Helle, I wolde not."

Relative : II Cap. 9, 246/3-7. A 3ong man which beheld hir cher & hir *cuntenawns*, meuyd thorw þe Holy Gost, went to hir, whan he myth goodly, be hym-self alone, wyth feruent desir to haue vndirstondyng what myth be þe cawse of hir wepyng, to whom he seyð,....

2. 1. 1 Expansion of the sentence : the written style. The writer of the *Book* sometimes assumes the style of an objective observer, recording the facts in due order and expanding his sentence into a formidable length with relatives and participles. Cap. 57, 139/33-140/17 On a Good Fryday, as þe sayd creatur behelde *prestys* knelyng on her kneys & *oper* worschepful men wyth torchys brennyng in her handys be-for þe Sepulcre, deuowtly *representyng* þe lamentabyl deth and doolful beryng of ovr Lord Ihesu Crist aftyr þe good custom of Holy Cherch, þe mende of ovr Ladijs sorwys which sche suffryd whan sche behelde hys *precyows* body hangyng on þe Crosse & sithyn berijd be-for hir syght sodeynly ocupijd þe hert of þis creatur, drawyng hir mende al holy in-to þe Passyon of ovr Lord Crist Ihesu, whom sche behelde wyth hir gostly eye in þe syght of hir sowle as verily as þei sche had seyn hys *precyows* body betyn, scorgyd, & *crucifyed* wyth hir bodily eye, which syght & gostly beheldyng wrowt be *grace* so feruently in hir mende, wowndyng hir wyth pite & compassyon, þat sche sobbyd, roryd, & cryed, and, spredyng hir armys a-brood, seyð wyth lowde voys, "I dey, I dey," þat many man on hir wonderyd & merueyled what hir eyled.

2. 1. 2 Choice of forms in syntax. In the nature of language, different forms are sometimes syntactically equivalent in function. On

the one hand, blending of such equivalent forms takes place, resulting in a hybrid formation. On the other, the speaker or the writer makes choice of different forms in different situations, though there is no syntactic difference of value between them.

Mixed form of narration: Cap. 58, 142/14-21 On a tyme, as þe forseyd creatur was in hir *contemplacyon*, sche *hungryd* ryth sor aftyr Goddys word & seyde, "Alas, Lord, as many clerkys as þu hast in þis world, þat þu ne woldyst sendyn me on of hem þat myth fulfillyn my sowle wyth þi word & wyth redyng of Holy *Scriptur*, for alle þe clerkys þat *prechyn* may not fulfillyn, for me thynkyth þat my sowle is euyr a-lych hungry....."

To *bid* + 'that'-clause/the infinitive: Cap. 65, 161/26-7 and bydde thy gostly fadyrs þat þei latyn þe don aftyr my wyl. 30-1 Dowtyr, I badde þe fyrst þat þu xuldist leeuyn flesch mete & non etyn. 33-5 Perfor now I bydde þe þat þu resort ageyn to flesch mete. --162/13f. Owr Lady, aperyng to hir sowle, bad hir gon to hir *confessour*....

2. 2 Parataxis and hypotaxis.

Both types of sentence structure are well developed in Margery Kempe. Occasionally the paratactic type persists even when the logical relation which underlies the surface points to the hypotactic.

Cap. 73, 175/10-11 Wolde 3e I xulde see þe Modyr of God deyn & I xulde not wepyn ? (=I should not weep though I should see the mother of God die)

Cap. 80, 192/24-5 (Our Lady) "Alas, 3e cruel lewys, why far 3e so wyth my swete Sone & ded he 3ow neuyr non harm?" (=though he never did you harm)

Related to parataxis is apposition : & I telle þe trewly it is trewe euery word þat is wretyn in Brides boke. Cap. 20, 47/33.

A clause, variable in form, may sometimes stand in apposition to a preceding noun :

Cap. 67, 164/34-36 Sithyn he ledde hir to an awter & askyd what was þe skylle þat sche cryed & wept so sor.

II Cap. 9, 245/38-246/2 þei þat seyn hir wepyn & herdyn

hir so boistowsly sobbyn wer takyn wyth gret merueyl & wonder what was þe ocupasyon of hir sowle.

3. Predication.

The main elements of the predicate are the verbs, auxiliaries and such particles as 'a' which forms part of the verbal predicate.

3. 1 Auxiliaries.

The auxiliary 'mown' occurs after another auxiliary 'xal' in the following example: Cap. 22, 52/22-24 Dowtyr, whan þu art in Heuyn, þu xalt mown askyn what þu wylt, & I xal grawnte þe al þi desyr. This is paralleled nowhere else, so far as I see, cf. Mustanoja, *A Middle English Syntax*, 453, 494-5.

Other common auxiliaries are may, my(g)th, (will), wolde, xal, xulde, haue, had, do, dede. They require no special mention here except perhaps for certain uses of 'xulde' (should) and 'do.'

Cap. 22, 53 eyur to dwellyn wyth me in joy & blysse, which non eye may se. Cap. 28, 69 sche wolde kepyn it in as mech as sche myth. Cap. 35, 89/ 13-14 but God xal neuyr partyn fro þi sowle. Cap. 39, 96/16 for I xal neuyr disceyuen þe. Cap. 44, 107/16 ...slawndryd hir, & born hyr on hande þat sche xulde a seyð thyng which þat sche seyð neuyr. Cap. 34, 103/10 þe same childe þat God hath sent me I haue browt hom. Cap. 57, 141/ 20 Lorde, I wolde I had a welle of teerys.

'Xal' and 'xulde' usually occur in the futuric context for all persons : II Cap. 2. 224/29-31 þan wrot sche letterys to hym, seying þat whedyr he come be londe er be watyr he schulde come in safte be þe grace of God.

'Xulde' also occurs in a final clause: Cap. 19, 46/1-3 Be-forn þis creatur went to Ierusalem, owyr Lord sent hir to a worshipful lady þat sche xuld spekyng wyth hir in cownsel & do hys eraend vn-to hir.

In other instances, 'xulde' is iterative in aspect :

Cap. 6, 18/9f. An-oþer day þis creatur schul[d] zeue hir to medytacyon, as sche was bōdyn be-for, & sche lay styлле, nowt knowyng what sche mygth best thynke. II Cap. 2, 224/

8-10 Sithyn, for he xulde be þe mor diligent & þe mor besy to folwyn owr Lordys drawyng, sche openyd hir hert to hym.

In 'that'-clauses after the verbs like 'to bid,' the auxiliary 'xulde' alternates with a verb in the subjunctive :

Cap. 66, 161/26-7 and bydde thy gostly fadyrs þat þei latyn be don aftyr my wyl. 30-1 Dowtyr, I badde þe fyrst þat þu xuldist leeuyn flesch mete & non etyn,... 33-5 þerfor now I bydde þe þat þu resort ageyn to flesch mete.

The auxiliary 'do' is causative in many instances :

Cap. 18, 45/16-17 Than owyr Lord bad þis creatur don wryten a lettyr & send it hir (=a widow). Cap. 31, 78/12-15 The forseyd creatur had a ryng þe whech owyr Lord had comawndyd hir to do makyn whil she was at hom in Ingland & dede hir *gravyn þerup-on*, "*Ihesus est amor meus.*" Cap. 69, 169/6-7 And, dowtyr, I do þe to wetyn þat þu xalt spekyn to Maistyr Aleyn a-geyn as þu hast don be-forn. Cap. 81, 195/27-29 Seynt Iohn wolde a don hym comyn in, & Petyr wolde not tyl owr Lady bad hym comyn in. II Cap. 7, 238/5-7 þe worthy woman grauntyd hir al desyr, & dede hir etyn & drynkyn wyth hir, & made hir ryth good cher. 240/11-12 "What wenyst þu for to gon wyth me ? Nay, I do be wel to wetyn I wyl not medelyn wyth þe."

3. 2 Uses of 'a,' 'an.'

Another grammatical peculiarity is the use of 'a,' 'an' as a verbal formative. Their nature is by no means simple, for they are poly-semantic to say the least. In many instances, they are a tense-marker, being perfective in sense and obviously derivable from the auxiliary 'have.' But elsewhere, they are non-grammatical and their etymology is dubious. The orthography indicates their origin from spoken language.

3. 2. 1 'a'=have.

This particle forms a perfect infinitive to go with a preceding auxiliary. Instances abound :

Cap. 19, 47/11-12 þat thyng I bad xuld a be don for þe

sowle it is not don. Cap. 30, 74/6-8 Whan sche cam to þe Flood of Jurdan, þe wedyr was so hoot þat sche wend hir feet schuld a brent for þe hete þat sche felt. Cap. 49, 118/1-3 For þe forseyd Thomas Marchal feryd meche þat sche xulde a be brent. Cap. 71, 171/13-15 sche felt a wondyr swet sauowr & an heuynly þat hir thowt sche myth a leuyd *þerby wythowtyn* mete or drynke 3yf it wolde a *contynuyd*. Cap. 80, 191/11-13 Whan sche saw þis petows syght, sche wept & cryd ryth lowde as 3yf sche xulde a brostyn for sorwe & peyne. Cap. 85, 206/28-9 hir eyne wer euyr to-gedirward as þow sche xulde a slept. II Cap. 3, 231/19 for ellys sche myth a deyde for colde.

It also forms a prepositional perfect infinitive :

Cap. 49/21-22 I haue ben in gret *peril* for 3ow. I was in poynt to a ben put in *preson* for 3ow. Cap. 67, 162/31-3 an hydows fyer & greuows ful lekely to a brent þe parysch chorch dedicate in þe honowr of Seynt Margarete.

Cap. 71, 171/37 Neuyr þe-lesse he wend hymself to a gon & was al *purueyd þerfor*. Cap. 87, 215/7-10 Dyuers tymys, whan þe creatur was so seke þat sche wend to a ben ded & *oper* folke wende þe same, it was answeyrd in hir sowle þat sche xulde not deyin buþ sche xulde leuyn & far wel, & so sche dede. II Cap. 1, 221/16-21 The seyde creatur had a sone, a tal 3ong man,... whom sche desyryd to a drawn out of þe perellys of þis wretchyd & vnstabyl worlde 3yf hir power myth a tēnynd þerto. II Cap. 2, 228/20 þer was non so meche a-geyn hir as was hir dowtyr, þat awt most to a ben *wyth* hir.

More examples : (a) Cap. 30, 75/13-15 : Cap. 73, 174/21-2 ; Cap. 74, 177/20-2 ; Cap. 76, 179/22-3 ; Cap. 83, 202/23 ; Cap. 88, 217/13-7 ; II Cap. 5, 233/16-7 ; II Cap. 7, 240/15-6 ; 241/11-13, 17-20 ; 242/ ; II Cap. 9, 242/14-7 ; 244/4-7 ; (b) Cap. 31, 78/21 ; Cap. 80, 194/7-11 ; Cap. 88, 217/12-3 ; II Cap. 3, 229/14-7 ; II Cap. 4, 231/29-30 ; II Cap. 6, 236/8-12 ; II Cap. 7, 238/10-12 ; 240/6-8.

The particle 'a' sometimes occurs after 'had' or 'had leuar' and we meet some difficulty in cases where 'a' follows 'had.'

Cap. 13, 27/22f. (she wept) also jn so mech þat hyr husbond went a-way fro hir as he had not a knowyn hir & left hir a-loon a-mong hem. See also below under 'an.'

Cap. 66, 162/21-3 And hir *grace* was not discredyde but rapar encresyd, for sche had leuar a fastyd þan an etyn 3yf it had ben þe wyl of God. Cap. 69, 168/11-4 & þat was to hym ful peynful, for, as he seyde to sum personys, he had leuar a lost an hundryd pownd, 3yf he had an had it, þan hir communicacyon, it was so gostly & fruteful. Cap. 87, 215/28-30 Sche had leuar a *seruyd* God, 3yf sche myght a leuyd so long, an hundred 3er in þis maner of lyfe þan oo day as sche be-gan fyrst.

3. 2. 2 'an'=have, This form seems to be euphonic, for it is prevocalic. It also occurs before verbal forms beginning with an 'h.'

Cap. 26, 61/29-30 & sche desyred gr[etly] her lofe 3yf sche myht an had it to þe plesawns[of God]. Cap. 28, 69/19-22 &, as sone as sche *parceyved* þat sche xulde crye, sche wolde kepyn it as mech as sche myht þat þe pepyl xulde not an herd it for noyng of hem. 29/29-31....but þei knewyn ful lytyl what sche felt, ne þei wolde not beleuyn but þat sche myht an absteyn hir fro crying yf sche had wold. Cap. 75, 178/14-6 And, whan *oper* folke cam to hir (=a demented woman), sche cryid & gapyd as sche wolde an etyn hem & seyde þat sche saw many deuelys a-bowtyn hem. Cap. 88, 217/2-3 for þu woldist ellys an had to gret affeccyon to hys persone.

Cap. 80, 194/7-8 gretly desyryng to an had þe *precyows* body be hir-self a-lone. Cap. 82, 198/6-7 as 3yf sche had be þer in hir bodily *presens* for to an offeryd wyth owr Ladys owyn persone.

'An' after 'had' or 'had leuar' :

Cap. 41, 99/27-30... for les þan sche had an had sweche

gostly comfortys it had ben vnpossybyl hir to a boryn þe schamys & wonderyngys þe which sche suffyrd pacyently & mekely for þe grace þat God schewyd in hyr. Cap. 84, 203/27-8 3yf þu haddist an had many chirchys ful of nobelys,.... II Cap. 9, 243/21-2 Sche, not answeyng, passyd forth as sche had not an herd.

Cap. 62, 154/26-9...sche wept, sobbyd, & cryid ful sor a-geyn hir wyl, sche myth not chesyn, for sche had leuar a wept softly & preuily þan opynly 3yf it had ben in hyr power.

The forms like 'had an had' could hardly be regular formations, unless they are taken to have been analogically formed after the type 'wolde a had.'

The explanation, given by W. Franz in his *Die Sprache Shakespeares in Vers und Prosa*, §708, which derives 'had a' from the ME. form *hadde*, which often appears as 'had of' in Modern English literature, is not always satisfactory, for it fails to account for such forms as : had not a known, had not an herd, had leuar a lost.

3. 3 Impersonal construction.

One of the characteristically Middle English forms of predication is the impersonal construction of the verb. It generally refers to a statement of an event rather than an action. The impersonal verbs appear in three different stages of development that the English language has witnessed : the pure impersonal form, the verb with its pronominal subject 'it,' and the personal form. To different degrees, these forms often serve as an appropriate medium of describing the narrator's extraordinary religious experiences.

Cap. 31, 78/21-3 as it happyd hir to be herberwyd in a good mannys hows... Cap. 42, 101/33-5 And sithyn it happyd an Englischman to come to þis creatur & swor a gret oth. II Cap. 1, 221/25-7 So on a tyme it happyd þe modyr to metyn wyth hir sone þei it wer a-geyns hys wille & hys entent as þat tyme. II Cap. 7, 238/17-9 þan it happyd hir to metyn wyth tweyn men of London goyng to-London-ward.

Cap. 69. 168/24-6 þan long aftyrward it happyd hir goyng in þe stret to metyn wyth þe seyð doctowr & non of hem spak o word to oper. Personal: II Cap. 7, 240/31-3 þei happyd to comyn vndyr a wodys syde, bisily beheldyng yf þei myth spyin any place wher-in þei myth restyn.

Cap. 6, 18/32-3 "ȝys dowtyr," sche seyde, "folwe þow me, þi *seruyse* lykyth me wel.

Cap. 53, 130/9-10 "Me ouyr-thynkyth þat I met wyth þe, for me semyth þat þu seyst ryth good wordys." (=I regret)

Cap. 57, 139/28-9 And þan he, turnyng a-geyn to hir, xulde minystyr hir as hym awte to do.

Cap. 86, 211/9-10 & þerfor it semyth hym (=þe Holy Gost) to sittyn on a white cuschyn, for he is ȝeuar of alle holy thowtys & chastite. (=it beseems) Cap. 33, 82/12-3. hir thowt þat þe preste whch seyð Messe semyd a good man & deuowte.

Cap. 86, 213/19-21 & þerof þe pepil hath gret wondyr, but it thar no wondyr be to þe,... (=it needs) Cap. 21, 51/6-9 Þow þart drede no grevows peynes in þi deyng, for þu xalt haue thy desyre, þat is to haue mor mynde of my Passyon. þan on þin owyn peyne.

Cap. 33, 82/12f. hir thowt þat... (*see above sub* semyd)

Cap. 72, 173/4-7 ȝyf sche saw hem deyin, hir thowt sche saw ovr Lord deyin & sum-tyme ovr Lady, as ovr God wolde illumyn hir gostly syth of ondirstondyng. Cap. 84, 202/15-7 Sche was loth to gon, for it was pestylens-tyme, & hir thowt þat sche wolde for no good a deyd þer. Personal : Cap. 72, 173/9-10 & sche thowt in hir mende þat God toke many owt of þis worlde whch wolde a leuyd ful fawyn.

Cap. 84, 202/8-10 þe creatur thowt sche wolde not gon tyl an-*oper* ȝer, for sche myth euyl duryn þe labowr.

3.4 The subjunctive mood.

The use of the subjunctive mood in the *Book* is formulaic, and no more need be said on this point here.

Cap. 57, 142/5 *spede 3yf I may*. In the so-called substantive clause : Cap. 29, 73/3-5 *I comawnde þe in þe name of Ihesu, dowtyr, þat þu go vysite þes holy placys & do [a]s I byd þe,...* Cap. 84, 202/14-5 "*Dowtyr, go forth to þe hows of Denney in þe name of Ihesu, for I wole þat þu comfort hem.*" *Prayers*, 251/20-1 *Haue mercy vp-on hem & be as gracyows to her sowlys as I wolde þat þu wer to myn.*

The latter use was to revive in journalistic English in the late Modern English period.

3. 5 The object.

Verbs take their object sometimes in different ways from what they now do.

Double object : II Cap. 9, 247/19-20 *Sche proferyd hym to aqwityn hys costys be þe wey homward.*

Reflexive object : Cap. 26, 62/9 & *mekyn hir on-to hem* (=humble herself). Cap. 9, 247/23-4 *Whan sche was come hom to Lynne, sche obeyd hir to hir confessowr.*

'Had leuyr' may govern either the perfect infinitive or the *þat*-clause: Cap. 87, 215 *Sche had leuar a seruyd God,...* (*see above* 3.2.1) Cap. 67, 164/28-30 "*I had leuyr þan xx pownde þat I myth han swech a sorwe for owr Lordys Passyon.*

The nature of the cognate object as object is sometimes questioned, for it often approaches an adverbial in function, but it is more like a real object in the following examples :

Cap. 3, 230/1-2 *...haue mende of thy many-fold mercy & fulfille þi behestys þat þu hast behite me.* Cap. 60, 148/12-7 *Whan hir crying was cesyd, sche seyde to þe preste, "Sir, hys deth is as fresch to me as he had deyde þis same day, & so me thynkyth it awt to be to 3ow & to alle Cristen pepil. We awt euyr to han mende of hys kendnes & euyr thynkyn of þe dolful deth þat he deyde for vs.*

3. 6 Concord.

Some nouns and pronouns behave irregularly in terms of number. 'Pepil' is singular in : Cap. 78, 185/6-7 *Than xulde sche preyn*

for al þe pepil þat was leuyng in erth... 185/37-40 "Dowtyr, her is a fayr pepil, and many of hem xal ben ded er þis day twel-month,"...

In the last example, 'pepil' is referred to by a plural pronoun in the following clause. In the example that follows, it is qualified by 'meche' instead of 'many': Cap. 54, 133/6-7 & meche pepil had gret *compassyon* þat sche was so euyl ferd wyth.

The pronoun 'it' occasionally introduces a noun in the plural number: Cap. 54, 132/21-2 Sche seyde, "My Lorde, saue *3owr* reuerens, it arn lesyngys alle þe wordys þat þei sey." Cap. 65, 161/1-2 ...for þi terys arn awngelys drynk, & it arn very pyment to hem.

In the expression 'I it am,' inversion explains the unusual sequence of words: Cap. 79, 189/38-9 And ovr Lord askyd, "Whom seke 3e?" And þei seyde a-geyn, "Ihesu of Nazareth." Our Lord answeryd, "I it am."

3. 7 Negation.

Cumulative negation is the usual type here, as it is generally the rule in Middle English.

Cap. 24, 57/19-21 Sche seyde sche supposyd þat he wold no mor se hym, ne no mor he dede neuyr aftyr. Cap. 32, 81/33-82/1 In no-thing þat þu dost, dowtyr, ne seyst, þu mayst no bettyr plesyn God þan beleuyn þat he louyth þe,... II Cap. 5, 234/5-6þer schulde no man neypyrr betyn hem ne robbyn hem ne seyn non euyl worde to hem. II Cap. 8, 242/32-3 ...sory & heuy in maner þat sche had no felaschep ne þat sche knew not þe wey.

4. Sub-structures.

Clausal, gerundial, infinitival, and participial constructions as the sub-structures of a sentence here are in part traditional and formal, and in part based on the speech rhythm.

4. 1 Clausal constructions.

In a dubious case of a *þat*-clause, we have more probably an adverbial clause in the deep structure than an object clause which seems to be implied.

Cap. 84, 202/6-8 The Abbas of Denney, an hows of nunmys,

oftyntymys sent for þe sayd creatur þat sche xulde come to speke wyth hir & wyth hir sisterys.

Our examples show that the determinative force of relatives was still uncertain at this period.

Cap. 62, 155/1-2 I thank almythy God what-þat-euyr he sendith me. Cap. 79, 188/7-9 ...my deth xal turne me to gret worschep & 3ow & al man-kynde to gret joye & profyte whiche þat trustyn in my Passyon & werkyn þerafter.

Note the presence of *þat* after the relative. Cf. *þe* *whiche*.

The contact clause is pretty frequent.

Cap. 15, 33/14-16 ...þan þe forseyd man () was holdyn so holy a man & þat sche trustyd so mech up-on uttyrly repreuyd hir, and fowely despysed hir, & wold no forþer gon wyth hir. Cap. 81, 195/13-5 I telle þe certeyn was þer neuyr woman in erth () had so gret cawse to sorwyn as I haue,... Cap. 83, 200/7-11 & on a day þe preistys cam to hir & askyd 3yf sche wolde gon too myle fro þen sche dwellyd on pilgrimage to a cherch () stod in þe feld,... 30-2 Also þer wer nunnys () desiryd to haue knowlch of þe creatur & þat þei xulde þe mor be steryd to deuocyon.

Kata-koinou construction : Cap. 19, 46/31-3 Also þer was a wedow preyd þis creatur to preyn for hir husbond & wete yf he had any nede of help.

II Cap. 8, 241/28-30 þer was a good woman had hir hom to hir hows, þe which wesche hir ful clenly...

The following apparently subjectless relative construction may also be explained as a blending due to spoken language :

II Cap. 1, 221/3-4 and þe preiste of whom is be-forn-wretyn had copijd þe same tretys after hys sympyl cunningg,... II Cap. 7, 239/35-9 þei, goodly consentyng, receyued hir in-to her wayn, rydyng alle to-gedyr tyl he comyn at a good towne wher þe sayd creatur parceyuyd þe worschepful woman of London of whom is be-forn-seyd. *Prayers* 248/1-2 Thys creatur, of whom is tretyd be-forn, vsyd many 3erys to be-

gynnyn hir *preyerys* on þis *maner*.

This seems to be a peculiar grammatical feature of the writer who distinguishes himself from his predecessor by spelling *preistys* for *prestys*.

The use of *þer* as a relative continues the early Middle English usage : II Cap. 6, 236/28-9 *þer* cam *preistys* to hir, *þer* sche was at oste, of þat cuntre.

4. 2 Gerundial constructions.

The gerund still retains its original substantive force.

Cap. 77, 181/33-4... for *grettar* peyn may I not suffyr in þis worlde þan be put fro þi holy worde heryng. And, 3yf I wer in *preson*, my most peyn xulde be þe forberying. Cap. 46, 111/22-3 &, wyl þe lettyr was in wrytyng, þe osteler cam vp to hir chawmbyr in gret hast... Cap. 89, 219/13-4 And sche was many tyme seke whyl þis tretys was in writing,... Cap. 63, 156/6-8 & so slawnder & bodily angwisch fel to hir on euery syde, & al was encresyng of hir gostly comfort.

4. 3 Participial constructions.

The participle frequently occurs in a construction modelled after the Latin formula. The style is conventional.

Cap. 23, 53/12-3 þe creatur beyng in hir *preyers* hauyng mende of þis *mater*, *Crist* seyde vn-to hir spyrite. II Cap. 223/18-22 Hys modyr being in a chapel of owr Lady thankyng God of þe grace & goodnes þat he schewyd to hir sone & hauyng desyr to sen hem 3yf sche myth, a-non it was answeryd to hir mende þat sche xulde seen hem alle er þan sche deyid. 221/30-222/1 He not consentyng but scharply answeryng a-geyn, sche, sumdel meuyd wyth scharpnes of spyrty, seyde,...

The same construction seems to lie in the following examples, where we find 'hir' instead of the expected 'she.'

Cap. 16, 37/11-2 Ful benyngly & mekely he suffred hir to sey hir entent & 3af a fayr answer, hir supposyng it xuld ben þe bettyr.

It would be correct to say, however, that we have an instance of the gerund in the following:

Cap. 16, 37/24-6 And he was ryth glad of hir comyng
hom & held it was gret myracle hir comyng '& hir goyng to
& fro.

The following example, again, is an instance of loan syntax from the Latin language:

Participle within a relative clause: II Cap.9, 244/14-22 *þer*
was on worschepful woman whеч specially schewyd hir hy
charite bothyn in mete & drynke & *oper* rewardys zeuyng,
in whoys place on a tyme sche beyng at þe mete wyth *oper*
dyuers *personys* of diuers condicyons, sche vnknowyn on-to
hem & þei vn-to hir, of þe whiche summe wer of þe Carde-
nals hows (as sche had be relacyon of *oper*), þei haddyn
a gret fest & ferdyn ryth wel.

The whole sentence, periodic and involved, points to the formal, rhetorical style.

4. 4 Infinitival constructions.

Both the simple and the prepositional infinitive may form part of a low-grade nexus construction, as in Modern English. The construction occurs after the predicate verb as well as the predicative.

Prayers 250/25-7 And *þerfor*, Lord, yf *þer* be any man
vn-drawyn, I *prey* þe drawe hym aftyr þe.

Cap. 78, 186/5-6...I xal make hem to knowe þe trewth whan
þei arn dede & owt of þis world. *Prayers* 249/31-2 Lord,
make my gostly fadirs for to dredyn þe in me & for to
louyn þe in me.

Cap. 36, 90/10-11 For it is conuenyent þe wyf to be homly
wyth hir husbond. Cap. 79, 188/19-22 A, derworthy Modyr,
what wolde 3e bettyr þan *þer* I am kyng 3e for to be qwen,
& alle awngelys & seyntys xal be buxom to 3owr wil.

The nexus may sometimes be formed by the verbal element alone. Typical is the 'hear say'-type.

Cap. 15, 33/27-30 *Whan þe Bysshop was comyn hom & herd seyn how swech a woman had abedyn hym so long to speke wyth hym*, a-non he sent for hir in gret hast to wetyn hir wylle. Cap. 27, 63/1-3 Than þis creatur & hir felawshep was come to *Constawns*, sche herd tellyn of an Englysch frer, a maystyr of diuinite & þe Popys legat, was in þat cite. Cap. 27, 65/28-9 whan þei herdyn sey þat sche was come to Boleyn er þan þei, þan had þei gret wondyr,... 'Herd seyð': Cap. 29, 73/31-3 And on of þe frerys askyd on of hir felawshep 3yf þat wer þe woman of Ingland þe which þei had herd seyð spak wyth God. Cap. 58, 143/10-12 *Whan þe sayd creatur herd redyn how owr Lord wept, þan wept sche sor & cryed lowde, þe preyste ne hys modyr knowyng no cawse of hyr wepyng.*

Cap. 63, 154/30-32 Than summe of hir frendys cam to hir & seyð it wer mor ese to hir to gon owt of þe town þan abydyn þerin, so meche pepyl was a-geyn hir.

5. Word-order.

Deviaton in word-order is frequent. The general tone created by such deviation is often conversational.

The verb in a dependent clause: Cap. 63, 157/4-6 *Lo, dowtyr, I haue grawntyd þe þin owyn desyr, for þu xuldist non oper Purgatory han but in þis werld only.*

Inversion in a conditional clause: Cap. 18, 41/19-21 *And we arn preservyd fro many myschevys & dyseyses which we schuld sufferyn & worthily for owyr trespas ne wer swech good creaturys a-mong vs.*

Extra-position: Cap. 66, 161/35-162/3 "A, blisful Lord, þe pepil, þat hath knowyn of myn abstinens so many 3erys & seeth me now retornyn & etyn flesch mete, þei wil haue gret merueyl and, as I suppose, despisyn me & scornyn me perfor." Cap. 73, 175/29-31 & þe same pardon þat was grawntyd þe befor-tyme, it was confermyd on Seynt Nicholas Day, þat is to seyn plenowr remission,...

The elements in junction deviate from the normal word-order for

various reasons.

i) Attribute in post-position : Cap. 18, 44/18-9 Than þis creatur in a *maner compleynyng* seyð to þe ankyl ('hermit'), "Good ser, what xal I do?..." Cap. 80, 192/9-11 a-non aftyr sche beheld how þe cruel Iewys leydyn hys *precyows* body to þe Crosse & sithyn tokyn a long nayle, a row & a boistews,...

ii) Position of the adverbial and the object : Cap. 6, 19/8-9 "Dowtyr, me semyth," seyð Elysabeth, "þu dost ryght wel þi *deuer*." (Predicator+Adv.+O.) Cap. 18, 42/15-7... for þe ankres was expert in swech thyngys & good counsel coud ȝeun. (O+Predicator) Cap. 29, 72/5... whyl sche iij wekys was in Ierusalem. Cap. 30, 75/9-10... for sche was iij wekys in Ierusalem & in þe cuntreys *þer*-a-bowtyn.

iii) Mention has already been made above (B.1.3) of the end-placed preposition: Cap. 44, 104/3-5 & þan sche *purposyd* hir fullych to weryn white cloþis, saf sche had neiþyr gold ne syluer to byen wyth hir clothyng. (V+Prep+O) 10-13 Þan sche seyð to þat worshepful man, "Wolde God, ser, þat I myth fyndyn a good man which wolde lendyn me ij nobelys tyl I myth payn hym a-geyn to byen me clothys wyth." (V +O₁+O₂+Prep)

6. Syntax of speech.

From the foregoing citations there gradually emerges an outline of syntax in the language of the *Book*, which is in several features based on the flow of speech rather than the rigid rules of written language. A few more illustrative examples will be in order at this point.

6.1 The subject repeated.

The use of an anaphoric subject is very common: Cap. 34, 85/32-3 For þis *preste* þat is thyn enmy he is but an ypocryte. Cap. 44, 105/25-8 And þan þei þat be-forn-tyme had ȝouyn hir bothyn mete & drynke for Goddys lofe now þei put hir a-vey & bodyn hir þat sche xulde not come in her placys for þe schrewyd talys þat þei herd of hir. Cap. 83, 200

/1-3 Tweyn *preistys* which had gret trost in hir maner of crying & wepyng, neuyr-pe-lesse þei wer sumtyme in gret dowte whedyr it wer deceyuabyl er not. II Cap. 9, 247/16-8 Sche spak fayr & *preyd* for Goddys lofe þat he wolde not be displesyd, for þei þat louyd hir for God er sche went owte þei wolde louyn hir for God whan sche come hom.

6. 2 Asyndetic relative construction.

Besides our examples above of the contact clause and the *kata-koinou* construction, we may add the following : Cap. 31, 79/29-30 & *þer* was a lady was comyn fro Rome to purchasyn hir pardon. Here is the type of construction which persists in colloquial English to-day.

Also : Cap. 52, 123/11-3 Ther was a monke xulde *prechyn* in 3orke, þe which had herd meche slawndyr & meche euyl langage of þe sayd creatur.

6. 3 Use of 'and' in hypotactic relation.

The paratactic construction is the more primitive, and therefore, the more conversational type, employed even when the logical relation thereby expressed is hypotactic.

Cap. 52, 123/13-5 &, whan he xulde *prechyn*, *þer* was meche multitude of pepil to heryn hym, & sche present wyth hem.

'And' may sometimes replace a relative constrution in speech :

Cap. 31, 79/9-11 & *þer* sche met wyth a Frer Menowr, an Englyschman, & a solempne clerke he was holden.

6. 4 Anacoluthia.

A sudden change of syntax in the middle of a sentence is quite a common feature of everyday speech, which rhetoric has termed anacoluthia.

Cap. 29, 72/13-5 In þe Mownt Syon is a place wher owyr Lord wesch hys discyplys fete, & a lityl *þerfro* he mad hys Mawnde wyth hys disciplys. Cap. 40, 96/19-23 Than thorw þe prouysyon of owr mercyful Lord Crist Ihesu *þer* was comyn a preste, a good man, owte of Inglonde in-to Rome wyth *oper* felawshep speryng & inqwyring diligently aftyr þe

seyd creatur whom he had neuyr seyn be-forn, ne sche hym. Cap. 42, 100/25-30 Sche, fallyng on hyr knes, receyued þe benefys of hys blyssing, & so *départyd* a-sundyr whom charite ioyned bothyn in oon, thorw þe which þei trostyd to metyn a-geyn, whan owr Lord wolde, in her kindly cuntre whan þei wer passyd þis wretchyd wordelys exile. Cap. 42, 100/31-4 And whan þei wer a lityl wey owte of Rome, & þe good preste, which as is before-wretyn þis creatur had receyued as for hir owyn sone, had mekyl drede of enmyis. (*Dele &.*) Cap. 52, 128/16-8 Than a good sad man of þe Erchebischopys meny askyd hys Lord what he wold 3eun hym & he xulde ledyn hir.

Cap. 80, 191/4-6 An-*oper* tyme sche saw in hyr contempla-cyon owr Lord Ihesu Crist bowndyn to a peler, & hys handys wer bowndyn a-bouyn hys heuyd. Cap. 81, 195/17-21 And hir thowt sche herd owr Lady cryin a-non wyth a lamentabyl voys & seyde, "Iohn, wher is my Sone Ihesu Crist?" & Seynt Iohn answeyrd a-3en & seyde, "Der Lady, 3e wetyn wel þat he is ded." After a participial phrase : Cap. 85, 208/16-20 An-*oper* tyme, þe seyde creatur beyng in a chapel of owr Lady sor wepyng in þe mynde of owr Lordys Passyon & swech *oper gracys* & goodnes as owr Lord ministryd to hir mynde, & sodeynly, sche wist not how sone, sche was in maner of slep. (*Dele &, =sodeynly.*)

The conjunction *þat* is redundantly repeated in : And þe thryd tokyn is þis, dowytyr, þat what creatur will takyn as mech sorwe for my Passyon as þu hast don many a tyme & wil sesyn of her synnys þat þei xal haue þe blys of Heuyn wythowtyn ende. (Cap. 77, 183/14-18.)

And again: Cap. 84, 204/20-4... for þe holy teerys & wepyngys þat þu hast wept for hem, *preying* & *desyrng* þat 3yf any preyer myth bryngyn hem to *grace* or to Cristyndom þat I xulde heryn þi *preyer* for hem yf it wer my wille.

6. 5 Speech rhythm.

The undulating flow of sentence construction often suggests the actual inflection of the speaker's voice, now it stops and eddies, now it moves on and takes up the broken-off thread of the narrative again.

Cap.50, 119/24-5 And þe ances wolde not receyuen hir, for sche had herd telde so mech euyl telde of hir. Cap. 61, 149/5-9 Her xal comyn a woman to *3owr sermown* þe which oftyntymes, whan sche herith of þe Passyon of our Lord er of any hy deuocyon, sche wepith, sobbith, & cryeth, but it lestith not longe. (=þe which... wepith)

The writer himself, the priest, often waxes very eloquent and weaves out breathlessly a long-winding periodic sentence without a flaw.

Cap.33, 83/21-37 The *preste* had gret trost þat it was þe werk of God, &, whan he wolde mystrostyn, owyr Lord sent hym swech tokenys be þe forseyd creatur of hys owyn *mysgouernawns* & hys leuyng, þe which no man knew but God & he, as owyr Lord schewyd to hir þe reuelacyon & bad hir tellyn hym, þat he wist wel *þerby* hir *felyngys* wer trewe.

C. Style

1. Poetic function.

In our study of the style of Margery Kempe's or rather her scribes' language, we shall concentrate our attention on one of its main aspects, the poetic or aesthetic function, since prominence lies on its message.

1. 1 At the phonological level.

Alliteration seems to be one of the commonest means of expression at this level.

Cap. 21, 48/31-4 *þerfor* is it no synne to þe, *dowtyr*, for it is to þe *rapar* mede & meryte, & þow xalt haue neuyr þe lesse *grace*, for I wyl þat þow bryng me forth mor frwte. Cap.17, 41/29-30 He fleth al fals *feynyng* & *falshede*. Cap. 21, 50/13 þe maters wer so hy & so holy.

Cap. 24, 57/11 *grawntyng* hym good lofe & leue vn-to þe

day which he had *promysed* to come a-geyn. Cap. 29, 72/31-3 "Þu comyst not hedyr, dowtyr, for no nede but for meryte & for mede, for thy synnes wer for-3ouyn þe er thow come her, & þerfor þu comyst hedyr for incresyng of þi mede & of þi meryte." Cap. 32, 80/37-8 heryng of hir contricyon & *compunccyon*. Cap. 35, 87/20 buxom & bonyr (= 'kind & gentle'). 87/22 boþe in wel & in wo. Cap. 44, 107/12-3 wyth lowde cryingys and schille (= 'sonorous, shrill') schrykyngys. II Cap. 10, 245/35-8 Sche had plentivows teerys of *compunccyon* & of *compassyon* in þe rememorawns of þe bittyr peynys & passyons which owr merciful Lord Ihesu Crist suffyrd in hys blissyd manhod.

Alliteration in these examples is employed as a medium of linking up two associated terms in a pair, so that the idea may be stressed.

1. 2 At the lexical level.

The new style introduced into the language here reflects the taste of the age, which preferred the ornate to the simple style. Some of the rhetorical devices used by the writer are antithesis, contrast and repetition.

Antithesis : Cap. 85, 207/30-1 "Dowtyr, haue mynde of þi wykkydnes & thynk on my goodnes." Cf. 207/33-208/1.

Contrast : Cap. 63, 157/11-4 & I xal 3euyn þe good a-now to louyn me wyth, for Heuyn & erde xulde rapar faylyn þan I xulde faylyn þe. And, 3yf oþer men faylyn, þu xalt not faylyn. 14-5 And, thow alle thy frendys forsake þe, I xal neuyr forsakyn þe. Cap. 64, 158/5-6 3yf þu wilt be buxom to my wyl, I schal be buxom to thy wil.

Repetition : Cap. 10, 23/1-4. For þei þat worshep þe þei worshep me ; þei þat despysyn þe þei despysyn me, & I schal chastysen hem þerfor. I am in þe, and þow in me. And þei þat þeryn þe þei heryn þe voys of God. Cap. 22, 52/24-6 I haue telde þe be-for-tyme þat þu art a synguler louer, & þerfor þu xalt haue a synguler loue in Heuyn, a synguler reward, & a synguler worshep. Cap. 23, 53/9-10 Ther cam

onys a vykary to þis creatur, *preyng* hir to *prey* for hym...
 30 & *preyde* hir to *prey* for a woman. Cap. 74, 176/18-20
 þan seyð ovr Lord, "Trewly, dowtyr, I loue þe as wel, &
 þe same pes þat I ʒaf to hir (=Mary Mawdelyn) þe same pes
 I ʒeue to þe. An article repeated: Cap. 18, 41/30-1 he askyð
 of us a lowe, a meke, & a contryte hert wyth a good wyl.

Synonyms may be repeated in order to bring out the idea more clearly.

Cap. 24, 55/6-11. The *prest* which wrot þis boke for to
preuyn þis creaturys felyngys many tymes & dyuers tymes
 he askyd hir qwestyons & demawndys of thyngys þat wer
 for to komyn, vn-sekyr & vncerteyn as þat tyme to any
 creatur what xuld be þe ende, *preyng* hir, þei sche wer loth
 & not wyll to do swech thyngys,...

Another form of repetition is the figura etymologica: Cap. 10, 29/
 32-30/1.

Sche ymagyned in hir-self what deth sche mygth deyn for
 Crystys sake. Cap. 29, 71/34-72/2 Sche was so ful of holy
 thowtys & medytacyons & holy contemplacyons in þe Passyon
 of owyr Lord Ihesu Crist & holy dalyawns þat owyr Lord
 Ihesu Crist dalyed to hir sowle...

The figure of repetition, if not intentionally rhetorical, may often
 be a common feature of everyday speech.

Cap. 29, 73/18-20 "...And *perfor*, dowtyr, ʒyf þu wylt be
partabyl in ovr joye, þu must be *partabyl* in owyr sorwe."
 (=if you wish to be capable of partaking in our joy, etc.)

1. 3 At the syntactical level.

The cumulative use of similar phrases is another common feature.

Cap. 85, 209/18-9 but it was mor sotyl & mor softe & mor
 esy to hir spiryt to beryn... 24-6 þe creatur had þan a newe
 gostly joye & a newe gostly comfort, wheche was so merue-
 lyows þat sche cowde neuyr tellyn it as sche felt it. Cap. 86,
 213/4-11 Dowtyr, be not aschamyd to receyuyn my *grace*
 whan I wil ʒeuen it þe, for I schal not ben a-schamyd of þe

þat þu xalt ben receyued in-to þe blys of Heuyn, þer to be rewardyd for euery good thowt, for euery good word, & for euery good dede, & for euery day of contemplacyon, & for alle good desyrys þat þu hast had her in þis world wyth me euyrlestyngly as my derworthy derlyng, as my blissyd spowse, & as myn holy wife. Also : 214/7-13.

Euphuistic parallelism is not unknown here.

J. Ly ly : In my opinion it is a homely kinde of deling to preferre the curtesie of those he neuer knew, before the honesty of those among whom he was born. Cap. 29, 72/18-21.

Cumulation of elements and parallelism may contribute to the building up of periodic sentences, which with the aid of other stylistic means often give the impression of great eloquence.

Cap. 65, 159/25-160/9 And þerfor, dowtyr, thank me hyly of þis gret charite þat I werke in thyn hert, for it is myself, al-mythy God, þat make þe to wepyn euery day for thyn owyn synnes, for þe gret compassyon þat I zeue þe of my bittyr Passyon & for þe sorwys þat my Modyr had her in erde, for þe angwischys þat sche suffyrd & for þe teerys þat sche wept, also, dowtyr, for þe holy martyres in Heuyn (whan þu heryst of hem, þu zeuist me thankyngys wyth crying & wepyng for þe grace þat I haue schewyd to hem, and, whan þu seest any lazerys, þu hast gret compassyon of hem, zeldyng me thankyngys & preysyngys þat I am mor fauorabyll to þe þan I am to hem), and also, dowtyr, for þe gret sorwe þat þu hast for al þis world þat þu mythyst helpyn hem as wel as þu woldist helpyn þi-self boþe gostly & bodily, & forþermor for þe sorwys þat þu hast for þe sowlys in Purgatory þat þu woldist so gladly þat þei wer owt of her peyn þat þei mythyn preysyn me wyth-owtyn ende.

Another eloquent passage occurs in *Prayers* 251/39-252/1-25.

1. 4 Coupling.

Emphasis in rhetorical effect is often realized by means of

coupling one stylistic device with another in multiple ways.

A dyad may be reinforced by linking alliteration : Cap.18, 42/26-31 Also he meuyth a sowle to al chastnesse, for chast leuars be clepyd þe temple of þe Holy Gost, & þe Holy Gost makyth a sowle stabyl & stedfast in þe rygth feyth & þe rygth beleue.

Parallelism is usually expressed in a dyad: Cap. 22, 52/20-2 Du hast be despysed for my lofe, & þerfor þu xalt be worshepyd for my lofe. Cap.18, 43/1-6 Seynt Powyl seyth þat þe Holy Gost askyth for vs wyth mornynngys & wepyngys vnspekable, þat is to seyn, he makyth vs to askyn & preyn wyth mornynngys & wepyngys so plentyvowsly þat þe terys may not be nowmeryd.

A triad is a less common form : *Prayers* 249/13 As for my crying, my sobbyng, & my wepyng. A quadruple form is still less common, but not unknown:

Prayers 249/14-6 as wistly as þu knowist what scornys, what schamys, what despitys, & what repreuys I haue had þerfor.

2. Cultural context.

Needless to say, phraseology is partly traditional and partly due to the convention of the day when it is current. Traditional are also some biblical formulas and the proverbial sayings.

2. 1 Phraseology of the time.

Cap.44, 107/16... slawndryd hir, & born hyr on hande (= 'accused her') þat sche xulde a seyð thyg which þat sche seyð neuyr. II Cap. 1, 222/23-5 Sche, takyng lityl heed of her wordys, let it passyn forth as sche had no fors (= 'took no heed') tyl he wolde comyn & preyn for grace hys-self.

Asseverative phrase : *Prayers* 248/26-32 As wistly as it is not my wit ne myn entent to worschepyn no fals deuyl for my God, ne no fals feith, ne fals beleue for to han, so wistly I defye þe Deuyl, & al hys fals counsel, and al þat euyr I haue don, seyð, er thowt, aftyr þe counsel of þe Deuyl,

wenyng it had be þe counsel of God & inspiracyon of þe Holy Gost.

2. 2 Biblical formulas.

answeryng, said : Cap. 52, 126/18-9 Sche, answeryng þerto, seyde, "I preche not, ser, I come in no pulpytt." II Cap. 10, 247/7 He, answeryng ful shortly, seyde, "I do 3ow wel to wetyn... Cf. *St. Matthew*, 15. 3. (A Græcism.)

Cap. 52, 128/30-1 thankyng be to God. Cap. 54, 134/24 thankyd be owr Lorde.

The following examples of rhetorical expression are probably echoes of the teachings of the Bible :

Cap. 63, 156/34-6 "It is my worschep, dowtyr, þat I xal do, and þerfore I wil þat þu haue no wyl but my wyl. 156/36-157/1 Þe lesse prise þat þu settyst be thy-selfe, þe mor prise set I be þe, & þe bettyr wil I louyn þe, dowtyr.

2. 3 Proverbial lore.

Cap. 32, 82/4-7...for it schal be verified in þe comown prouerbe þat men seyn, 'He is wel blyssed þat may sytten on hys wel-stool (= 'stool of prosperity') & tellyn of hys wo-stool.'

In concluding, we may add that Margery Kempe's remarkable spiritual visions, remarkable though they are for their mystic implications, are told here in simple everyday language, shot through with occasional rhetorical flourishings, but quite free from esoteric metaphorical jargon.

Postscript.

If Margery Kempe had inherited anything of the religious beliefs characteristic of St. Caterina da Siena in the previous century, it was perhaps her deep-rooted sense of God's love and her inveterate sin-consciousness. A few lines of quotation from the latter may sufficiently convince the reader of the presence of some common features between the two mystics' views. St. Caterina wrote in *Il Libro* :

"Molto è piacevole a me il desiderio di volere portare ogni pena

e fadiga infino alla morte in salute dell'anime. Quanto più sostiene, più dimostra che m'ami ; amandomi, più cognosce della mia verità; e quanto più cognosce, più sente pena e dolore intollerabile dell'offesa mia."('Come molto è piacevole a Dio el desiderio di volere portare per lui.')

I have only seen R. K. Stone's *Middle English Prose Style: Margery Kempe and Julian of Norwich* (The Hague, 1970), a recent work relevant to our subject, after my article was printed.

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E R R A T A

P.1,1.1 Read *Kempe* for *Kmepe*

P.1.1.8 Read Butler-Bowdon for Butler-Bowden

P.13,11.16-17 Read: in *The Cloud of Unknowing*

Dele: Julian of Norwich's