ROLLE'S *EGO DORMIO*
IN MANUSCRIPT TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN 155[1]

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1. Introduction

Richard Rolle of Hampole, a hermit in Yorkshire, was born about 1300 (perhaps a year or two earlier) at Thornton Dale, near Pickering. He lived between circa 1300-1349 and is particularly known because of his various religious writings. No extant copy of his writings can be dated before the last quarter of the fourteenth century. One of his texts is *Ego dormio*, allegedly written to encourage a lady to lead a more spiritual life. In some of the manuscripts the text is addressed to a friend or a nun, but in others there is no addressee. Although we do not know who the recipient of this treatise could be, it has been suggested that it was written for a secular lady, possibly Margaret of Kirby (Ogilvie-Thomson 1988: lxvii and Watson 1991: 330). This must have been the first of the four epistles that he wrote, since the concept of the degrees of love seems not to be so elaborate as in other writings.

There are several extant manuscripts of *Ego dormio* of which the most relevant ones are kept in:

London, The British Library:
    Arundel 507
    Additional 22283 (Simeon MS.)
    Additional 37790

Cambridge:
>   Cambridge University Library Dd V 64
>   Magdalene College, Pepysian 2125

Oxford, The Bodleian Library:
>   Rawlinson A 389, which contains two different versions of the same text, usually known as Rawlinson 1 and Rawlinson 2
>   English Poet a 1 (Vernon MS.)

There are some others in:
>   The Library of the Marquess of Bath: Longleat 29
>   London, Westminster School: MS. 3
>   Paris, Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève: MS. 3390
>   Dublin, Trinity College: MS. 155
>   Tokyo: Takamiya 66. This manuscript was named Gurney by Allen (1931 [1988]), because it was owned by Hudson Gurney of Keswick Hall in the 19th century. Later, it was on extended loan to the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge and was then known as Bradfer-Lawrence 10 (e.g., Amassian 1979; Amassian – Lynch 1981). However, it is now in the possession of Professor Takamiya from Keio University, so it will be referred to as Takamiya 66.

All these texts are written in English. There is just one Latin translation of *Ego dormio* which is extant in the following manuscript: Gonville and Caius College 140/180. Many of the English texts have much in common, as some of the most important works by Rolle can be found in the same manuscript. The text in CUL Dd V 64 has always been considered the most authoritative. In fact, it has been the most widely used one in the different editions that have been published: Indeed, Allen (1931 [1988]: 61-72) edited the text in CUL Dd V 64 emended with reference to Rawlinson 1; while Horstmann (1895: 50-61) used the same manuscripts as Allen did, but emended with Rawlinson 2, Bodleian English Poet a 1 and BL Arundel 507. On the contrary, Ogilvie-Thomson did not transcribe the text from CUL Dd V 64, but from Longleat 29 (1988: 26-33).

For the Latin text Amassian and Lynch (1981) used the only extant manuscript in Latin and compared it with the edition made by Allen based on CUL Dd V 64. Among others, Colledge (1962: 143-154) produced a modernized version of the English text.

The other manuscripts (BL Additional 22283, BL Additional 37790, Pepysian 2125, Westminster School 3, Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève 3390, Takamiya 66 and TCD 155) have never been edited and little information is available about the language or the manuscripts themselves. Regarding the Trinity College Dublin 155, Professor Scattergood is currently working on a catalogue in which he deals with the following topics: 1) Contents; 2) Illustrations

and decoration; 3) Technical description; 4) History; 5) Discussion. The only part of the text which has been published so far is two lyrics included in Ogilvie-Thomson (1988: 220-222), because they differ considerably from the other lyrics of *Ego dormio* reproduced in the different manuscripts.

The *Ego dormio* text shown here varies from the others in a very significant way. Although the question of source manuscript has not been completely solved, even if Ogilvie-Thomson mentions at some point that Longleat 29 and TCD 155 had a common ancestor (1988: lxxiv), because both exhibit the same deviant expressions, in most manuscripts the text is basically the same with minor variations. Undoubtedly, each manuscript shows to some extent those linguistic features which are present in the scribe's original dialect, but the text itself is not altered, except in the case of TCD 155, Takamiya 66 and very slightly in Pepysian 2125. It is a well-known fact that the demand for some books during the fourteenth century (and late thirteenth century) was such that the old scriptorium system was unable to cope with a wider readership. Outside workers had to be hired to increase the speed of copying texts and these scribes produced manuscripts with their own spelling systems, carrying out a scribal translation from one dialect into another.

There is evidence that such scribal translations became more and more common as the Middle English period progressed. The reason for this adduced by Smith is that "literacy in the vernacular was becoming much more widespread in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. In such circumstances, the old monastic orthography and the discipline associated with it must have been impossible to sustain. New spelling systems, based upon practices developed in individual schools and parishes rather than on those of a few monastic centres, came into use" (1992a: 55). However, there is still no spelling norm to imitate, which explains the spelling variants found in the different regional areas.

We cannot date *Ego dormio* exactly but, as Rolle seems to have died in 1349, the text must have been written sometime before. Allen considers the approximate date to be 1343, when Rolle used alliteration for his *Gastly Gladnesse* (1931 [1988]: 60). Most of the manuscripts were either copied in the late 14th century: Sainte-Geneviève 3390, BL Additional 22283, Bodleian Library English Poet a 1, CUL Dd V 64; beginning of the 15th century: BL Arundel 507, TCD 155, Westminster School 3, Bodleian Library Rawlinson 1 and Rawlinson 2; or at some other time in the 15th century: Longleat 29, Takamiya 66, Pepysian 2125 and BL Additional 37790.

Since the span of time from the first to the last ones is not wide, one should not expect the text to differ, but for the local varieties of the different scribes who copied them. In this way, linguistic variation between them is likely to reflect the choice of different regional forms by scribes coming from several parts

of the country. As Laing (1992: 568) has suggested "texts surviving from the same period in more than one version can be of great help to the historical dialectologist", since the comparison of different copies of a single text turns out to be an excellent way of identifying dialectal discriminants. The more parallel texts there are available, the better, as they are likely to help in supplying a full range of dialectal discriminants.

In addition to the language, the TCD 155 diverges from others in the sense that it is not just a copy of the original, actually it is a version of it. Apart from some passages, which are obviously deviant, e.g., the omission of some lines appearing in other manuscripts, the lyrics also show differences: the first lyric is divided into two, a new lyric is inserted almost at the end of the text and the second lyric is omitted altogether, so the text ends before others. And what is special about TCD 155 is that the text departs in such a way from the others that the meaning is preserved, but there are many omissions, interpolations and unique variants. The reason adduced by Ogilvie-Thomson for this alteration is that it seems to be an attempt to adapt it for a male reader. Thus, there are many masculine pronouns in the expansions, and the details of women's clothing and the references to wooing, marriage or virginity have been either modified or eliminated (Ogilvie-Thomson 1988: lxx). This also explains the substitution of *frend* in TCD 155 for *syster*, which appears in other manuscripts, e.g., CUL Dd V 64.

2. Description of the manuscript[2]

The treatise referred to above is now kept in Dublin, Trinity College MS. 155, vellum bound in leather. The leaves measure approximately 15.7 x 11.0 cm. The size of the manuscript is far smaller than the size of such large volumes as *The Book of Kells* or *The Book of Durrow*, both in Trinity College Dublin. The whole manuscript gathers different religious writings, in such a way that it could have been designed for personal use rather than on the altar, unlike the ones mentioned above. With the exception of the initial capital and some rubrication which will be commented on later, there are no ornamental elements. From this plainness of appearance it can be concluded that the book seems to have been a utilitarian text. The leaves of the manuscript must have been bigger and were cropped and the edges gilded. The writing block measures approximately 12.7 x 8.5 cm and it can be observed how the margins are really scarce particularly in the middle section due to the binding process. Generally speaking, the manu-

script is well preserved. Some of the pages have suffered severe water damage, especially the first folio where several words became blurred or disappeared as a result of the action of water. The first page also presents a crease in its upper right part, which makes reading quite difficult at that point. There are some other minor spots on some other pages, but the manuscript is quite legible on the whole, except at the specific places mentioned above.

The text is placed at the very beginning of the manuscript from folio 1r to folio 9v. This manuscript, like the other manuscripts containing *Ego Dormio*, includes some other religious writings, some by Rolle. TCD 155 includes *The form of living* (but in an usually ordered form), *Ihesu Swete now wole iche syng* ... (in verse) and a version of the English *Oleum Effusum (olium efusum)*. The ruling is in a single column throughout and the writing begins above the second line except for the first page, where it starts above the first line. Thus, all pages contain 25 lines, except the first one which contains 26. Pricking is clearly observed on the edges. The whole text is in brown ink, although it could have been some other colour originally, as can be seen on fol. 5r, where there are two words which appear in black. As happened in many other cases, the ink could have been originally black, but has turned into brown with the passing of time. Rubrication is also employed with different purposes: either for capitals, to fill in certain letters (like the space between the minims of <m>, fol. 1r, line 3), to underline sentences written in Latin, like *Resistite diabolo 7 fugiet a vobis* (fol. 6r, line 3), or occasionally to underline some words like *seraphyn* (fol. 1v, line 6).

The manuscript shows two different practices regarding pagination: on the one hand, we can see foliation: in black ink (handwriting) at the top right, where only the recto side of the folios is marked, and on the other, pagination: each side is numbered separately as in modern books with printed numbers. This recent pagination was made according to modern editorial policies, in such a way that fol. 1r is page 1, but fol. 1v is page 2, fol. 2r is page 3, etc. It was paginated in June 1916 and verified in September 1950, as can be read in the manuscript.

The script is anglicana. This can easily be observed in the form of the letter *a* with a two-storey form and a double-lobed *g* resembling number eight. The treatment of letters is particularly remarkable in some individual cases. We can find three different kinds of <s>: a long <s> used mainly at the beginning of words, a two-compartment <s> basically at the end and a sigma-type one at the beginning of words, especially when <w> follows. There are, however, some exceptions to this general practice. Regarding the letter *r* two different kinds are found, one of them similar to the one we use nowadays, which is the most widespread, although in some specific words a long version of *r* is employed. Concerning other characters, *thorn* and *y* are quite distinct; *g* and *yogh* are both used, although *yogh* tends to appear when we would find <gh> in modern English or in some words like *ʒif*.

In addition, there are some usual abbreviations, like *thorn* with a superscript, as in þᵗ to mean *that*, wᵗ for *with*; an apostrophe often substitutes the sequence *-er*, e.g., þ'*fore* ('therefore') or *oþ'* ('other'); *they* and *thou* are often abbreviated as þ", although they can also be expanded as *þei* or *þou*, respectively. We can also find the tiranian note for the conjunction *and*, as well as the omission of some letters usually marked with a macron above the previous letter. The macron very often stands for a nasal, while a *p* with a stroke across the descender appears instead of *per, par* or *pro*. Similarly, the words *Jesus* and *Christ* are always abbreviated into *Ihsu* or *Ihū* and *Cste*.

3. Additions and marginalia

There are some additions due to involuntary omissions on the part of the scribe. Thus, the word *is* is added (fol. 3r, line 25), e.g., "man worlde haue mynde on þe peyne þat ⁱˢ ordeyned for synne". On fol. 5r (line 22) we find "so muchel wat ᵉᵘᵉʳᵉ we in þis worlde are". On fol. 7r (lines 6 and 8) some additions are superscribed: "more þan ᵐᵉ may telle" and the second one "go spitte in ði ᶠᵉʸʳᵉ face".

Insertion of just one letter can also be observed, e.g., in *worlde*, where the letter *d* was missing and it is placed in the wrong position, in an apparent metathesis, which does not usually occur in the other cases where the *d* appears inside the word. This superscript *d* appears on fol. 1v (line 14) and fol. 5v (line 18). This superscriptum over the word involved is made without any mark acknowledging the place of the insertion. There are some other minor additions, but not many can be found in the text.

Regarding marginalia, in the right margin of the first folio the catalogue number of the manuscript in TCD was written in pencil. In the upper margin of folio 8v there is a word in brown ink probably indicating the name of the previous proprietor, and a pointing hand has also been drawn on fol. 5v in the left margin to draw the reader's attention to what is written there. On fol. 3r in the bottom margin there is some doodling, which could be the result of the scribe's testing of the ink.

4. Language and localization of the text

Although Rolle originally wrote in the Northern variety, the manuscript does not reflect the language of that area. Others, like CUL Dd V 64, show more prototypical features of this variety than this one. In fact, it can be said that this manuscript did not preserve many of the original Northern characteristics, while others did. If we revise the prototypical features which are expected to be found in a text written in the North of England, almost none of them is present.

In this way, the reflex of Old English *ā* appears as <o> in holy, also holly, or onely and holdes and many other words which originally contained that vowel. Regarding verb inflexion, present participles end in *-ing*, rather than in *-and*,

e.g., *sittynge, goynge* or *metynge*. 3rd pers. pronouns are *þei, hem* or the possessive *her* rather than *þai, þem* or *þeir.* The 2nd pers. pronoun appears as *þou*, once spelt *thow*, and 3rd pers. sg. neuter *hit*, while there is one instance of *it*. Verb endings for the 3rd pers. sg. are usually in thorn instead of *-s*, although there are some exceptions, e.g., *schewes* (fol. 1r, line 3), *holdes* (fol. 3r, line 3) or *contenes* (fol. 1v, lines 2, 3 and 4). Some words do not show the typical velarization of other manuscripts; so instead of *mykel, whilk, swilk* or *kirk*, we find palatalization of forms, e.g., *much/mich, whoche, suche* or *church*. <y> is very often used for <i> as in *hym, fynde* or even in unstressed syllables, e.g., *wrytyn*. Fluctuation between the use of <o,u> can be found in some words like *loue*, which is present in two ways: a) as *loue*, which functions both as verb and noun with this spelling, while in the form *luf* has a nominal function; or b) as *luf* or *lufe,* used as a noun.

Old English <y> normally appears as <y> or <i>, as in *yuel, myrþe, bisy*, but <u> is found occasionally in *murþes* and *lust*, and <e> in *euel*. The preferred vowel in unstressed inflexional syllables is *e*; however, *i/y* is frequent in gen. sg., especially in *goddis*. Initial and medial *sh-* is always spelt as *sch*, e.g. *schal* or *flesche*, except for the lyric where we find *falshede*. We also find there the unusual *it*, instead of *hit*. Earlier <ht> is spelt both as <gt> (*thogt*) or <ȝt> (*miȝt*), and initial [j] appears always as <ȝ>, as in *ȝif, ȝefe*.

To summarize, some of the scribal spelling practices can be seen in the following table, where the modern English equivalent is given next to the form which appears in the manuscript.

The methodology follows the original guidelines established by McIntosh and Samuels in conjunction with the production of *A linguistic atlas of Late Mediaeval English* (1986, 1: 7). Thus, several items are selected to record the different forms. The chosen items, of which just a selection is shown, comprise four classes of evidence: purely graphological, e.g. the use of *thorn* or *th* in words like *þei : thei*; phonological, to examine some specific features like velarization versus palatalization as in *swilk: suche;* morphological, where the ending for the 3rd pers. sg. can be in *thorn/th* or *-s*, as in *conteneth: contenes;* and lexical (*poison: venym*). The latter feature is not so much represented in the text, given that there are not many different synonyms for the same concept. Some other items were included as well, since the forms can be useful to deduce the provenance of the manuscript.

Table 1. Linguistic evidence from TCD 155

ITEM	TCD 155
self	selfe
shall	schal
much	muche(l), michel, myche
which	whoche
such	suche
if	ʒif
both	boþe
the	þe
when	whan, when
it	hit (it)
his/him	his/hym, him
they	þei
them	hem
their	her
though	þouʒ
through	þourʒ, þoruʒ
burning	brennynge
holy	hol(l)y
love	luf(e), loue
evil	yuel (euel)
busy/business	bisy, bysy/bysynesse
mirth	myrþe, murþe
church	churche
thing	þing, þyng

Concluding remarks

All these characteristics demonstrate that the language of the text is far from being Northern. The team of the *Linguistic atlas of Late Mediaeval English* analysed some folios of this manuscript, which also includes other writings by Richard Rolle, like *The Form of Living, Olium efusum* and *Ihesu swete now wole iche syng*, and came to the conclusion that, because of the linguistic features of the text, it was copied in Staffordshire.

Apart from the spatial localization of the text, we can clearly conclude that this manuscript shows both innovations and archaisms, which are to a great extent the result of the need for hiring non monastic workers who could provide copies of the demanded texts of the period. As Smith (1992b: 586) pointed out,

following Benskins and Laing (1981: 72-75), the combination of conservative and innovative graphemes reflects the constrained language of scribes who had a range of variables for the same item that could be activated under certain circumstances by the forms of their exemplars.

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