KARL LUICK'S *HISTORISCHE GRAMMATIK* AND MEDIEVAL ENGLISH CONSONANT CHANGES

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ABSTRACT

The fragments of Karl Luick's *Historische Grammatik der englischen Sprache* published during his lifetime which contained an account of the development of English vowels and diphthongs have long served as a theoretical source successfully exploited by a host of historical phonologists. Much less known is the final part of the grammar dealing with consonants, edited and published a few years after Luick's death by Friedrich Wild and Herbert Koziol (1940). The acceptance by linguists of the part of the grammar devoted to the history of English consonants was not immediate. The article describes the circumstances which determined such an undeservedly lukewarm reception of this important study.

1. Some personal reminiscences of the past

More than two decades ago three scholars of historical English, Professors Gero Bauer, Jacek Fisiak and Dieter Kastovsky, launched an idea to celebrate the hundred twentieth anniversary of the birth of Karl Luick, an eminent scholar of English, former Professor of Vienna University, the author of numerous studies on the history of English, and in addition to his other merits, the scholar who wrote the hitherto best study of English historical phonology concealed under the misleading title *Historische Grammatik der englischen Sprache*. Because Luick died in 1935, that event was also to commemorate the 50th anniversary of his death. The plans to organise a special conference on that occasion materialised between 15-18th September, 1985, as the Luick-Symposium held at Schloss Liechtenstein near Vienna. Papers at the meeting were presented by scholars such as John Anderson, Klaus Dietz, Richard Hogg, Manfred Markus, Donka Minkova, Herbert Penzl, Herbert Pilch, Matti Rissanen, Robert Stockwell, and others. Although Roger Lass failed to appear to present his paper in person, his contribution was added to the volume of

proceedings, which came out three years later as a special publication whose title *Luick revisited* announced a new fresh look at the rich linguistic legacy of the great Austrian scholar. During the three-year span between the date of the venue and the publication of the book Austrian linguistics suffered a serious loss due to the untimely death of Professor Gero Bauer, the co-editor of the volume, who died in 1988, the same year when *Luick revisited* was published.

By a mere coincidence the present writer, who also attended the symposium, completed at that time his post-doctoral dissertation which came out under the title *A critical survey of a historical phonology of English vowels* (*with special reference to Karl Luick's* Historische Grammatik der englischen Sprache). The monograph appeared in book form a year before *Luick revisited* saw the light. The title of the study clearly announced that the monograph was confined to the history of English vowels.

Curiously, the imposing volume *Luick revisited*, with its more than four-hundred and fifty pages and twenty-five articles, could as well deserve the title "A critical survey of a historical phonology of English vowels". If we exclude the four introductory papers in Part one, the one commemorating Luick by Bauer, and those depicting his work on phonology (Fisiak), dialectology (Dietz) and syntax (Fries), the remaining articles belonging to Part two will represent the following areas: vowel phonology (17), consonant phonology (1), morphology (2), syntax (1). Since the non-phonological papers refer to Luick's scattered minor studies on morphology and syntax, it is evident that of the 18 papers written with some reference to *Historische Grammatik* only one paper, by Alfred Bammesberger, discussed the issue of consonants.

Because the sections on English consonant changes by Luick were available for a long time, especially after the full text the grammar was reprinted in 1964 simultaneously in Germany (Stuttgart: Tauchnitz), United Kingdom (Oxford: Blackwell) and the United States (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press), it is surprising that scholars of English were reluctant to contribute papers on the evolution of the consonantal system in English. It must be emphasised that the number of books and papers in all linguistic literature on only one change, the Great Vowel Shift, outnumbers significantly all studies on the history of English consonants.

In the sections of the paper which follow I shall try to suggest an answer to the question why scholars have favoured the analyses of English vowel changes at the expense of consonants. It can be emphasised here that the proportion between these two areas of English phonology is not drastically different if we take into account contributions in journals or anthologies of other scholars who wrote about historical changes in English vowels and consonants. Also, attention will be focussed on how Luick's findings, as described in the chapter on consonants, were received by scholars working in the area of the history of English.

2. Luick's historical phonology of English

Scholars and students interested in the evolution of the English language, particularly phonology and morphology, know that the best source of knowledge on how English pronunciation evolved is the above-mentioned book having an eye-attracting title *Historische Grammatik der englischen Sprache*, i.e. 'Historical grammar of the English language'. But in spite of its imposing size and its 1126 pages, not counting those containing bibliography, "Nachwort", and a long index, many readers find the grammar disappointing because the title announces something which the book does not contain, i.e. chapters on morphology, normally an indispensable part of any historical grammar of English. Apart from that the book is not easy to read as Luick's language is rather heavy, matter-of-fact and syntactically complicated (cf., for instance, his *Untersuchungen zur englischen Lautgeschichte* of 1898). It is sufficient to look through lists of references and bibliographies to find that in many of them books in German are lacking, although Luick's studies must be consulted if reference is made to Open Syllable Lengthening, the Great Vowel Shift or various quantitative processes in English.

As regards other historical studies of English, the only one more or less comprehensive grammar before Luick, a two-volume monograph having exactly the same title as Luick's grammar, the one by the German scholar Max Kaluza (Berlin 1901), discusses both phonology and morphology. A comparison of the structure of the two grammars will show that Kaluza arranged the text chronologically and discussed changes in English with reference to the three periods, Old, Middle and New English, each chapter containing sections on vowels, diphthongs, consonants and on morphology.

Luick's presentation of historical data in his *Historische Grammatik*, differs from Kaluza's arrangement of his grammar since the Austrian scholar gives priority to a description by topic. Consequently, after a general introduction (pages 1-92), the part which follows is called "Lautgeschichte" ('history of sounds') and begins with "first main part" (I. Hauptteil), called "Die Entwicklung der Laute" ('The evolution of sounds'). Readers will be surprised not to find the expected "second main part", because Luick never managed to even begin working on it. The existing "first main part" is split into chapters, of which chapter one (1. Kapitel), "Die Entwicklung der Sonanten", goes on to page 796 of volume two, this being the final page of the part of the grammar which was published during Luick's lifetime (the last, 9th fascicle in 1929), six years before his death. Thus, chapter one is confined to the description of vowels and diphthongs from Proto-Indo-European until the 20th century. The account of Pre-Old, Old, Middle, and New English vowel changes continues until page 796 in the second volume of the grammar's two-volume publication of 1940.

The fragment of the grammar which follows an account of English vowels and diphthongs, and simultaneously the one on which our attention is focussed, describes the evolution of consonants. Having the heading "Zweites Kapitel" (i.e. 'Chapter two'), it was edited by Luick's former students, Friedrich Wild and Herbert Koziol in 1940 and published by Tauchnitz in Stuttgart.

3. Luick's other works on consonants

It comes as a surprise that the "Zweites Kapitel" of *Historische Grammatik* is Luick's practically only contribution among his more than one hundred articles and several books on the history of English which discusses the evolution of consonants. The only other study of the processes of consonantal change is his 13 pages-long paper of 1935 on palatalisation, published in the year of his death. Curiously, the paper is not listed in the comprehensive "Bibliography of Karl Luick's writings", which opens the earlier-mentioned anthology *Luick revisited*. Thus, apart from the paper on palatalisation, the only existing Luick's study of consonants is a minor publication on "Stimmhaftes *h*" ('voiced *h*') which deals with synchronic phonetic rather diachronic phonological problems.

As regards "1. Kapitel", the one discussing the history of English vocalic nuclei, the situation was strikingly different since before and during the time of publishing the Lieferungen (i.e. 'fascicles') from 1 to 9 of his historical gram-mar Luick completed no less than 38 papers and two books entirely devoted to vowel change in English, which means that chapters on vowels in *Historische Grammatik* enjoyed having a solid theoretical foundation. The same cannot be said about his account of consonants which does not seem to reach the high scholarly level of the chapter discussing "Die Entwicklung von Sonanten", where "Sonanten" refers to vowels and diphthongs. Moreover, a careful reader will discover immediately that the fragments of Chapter two describing the earliest periods are more detailed than those dealing with Middle and New Eng-lish. This proves that the data on the later periods of the history of English which Luick gathered were not complete. How then did the author himself see the prospects of publishing the material he had collected?

In the "Nachwort" to the final version of the *Historische Grammatik* of 1940 Friedrich Wild makes a reference to the author's testament. In his last will, dated July 16, 1933, i.e. two years before his death, Luick specified clearly that only those parts of the collected materials could be published which met the editorial requirements. It should be recalled that the last fascicles describing English vowels saw the light in 1929. It means that the scholar had a chance to publish at least one fascicle during the ensuing years when he was still active as a linguist, but his work on the subject must have slowed down. Nevertheless, Wild received the legacy in the form of two fascicles not completely ready for

printing, with single pages containing Luick's comments. The only two sections fully ripe for publication was an account of Proto-Indo-European and West Germanic consonant changes.

As is well known, the major part of Chapter two, i.e. sections on Middle English and a large part of the text on New English consonants, were prepared for print by Herbert Koziol. The major problem was that in the draft version of the material relevant to Late Middle English and New English consonants the data concerning the former period were intermingled with those relevant to the latter period, and vice versa (see, for instance, §§737, 762). As a consequence, the editors decided to split the longer fragments of the text into smaller chunks and insert them in the appropriate chronological segments of Chapter two,

Another shortcoming of Luick's material was that his latest notes on consonants contained references to linguistic literature from the beginning of the twentieth century, which means that around the year 1909 the author of the *Grammatik* practically abandoned working on the chronologically later history of English consonants. This reflects the fact that, although the part of his work on vowels had a strong dialectal bias, the materials he left completely ignored both the current and the later research on the non-standard varieties. Likewise, unlike Chapter one, which contained numerous references to American English, Luick's account hardly takes into consideration the evolution of consonants on the other side of the Atlantic. In spite of these problems the chapter on consonants became for the first time available in print in the early part of 1940, following the outset of World War II.

4. The structure of chapter two of *Historische Grammatik der englischen Sprache*

Before discussing the major issues of the historical phonology of consonants let us concentrate on the structure of the part of Luick's grammar under discussion. Thus, Chapter two (Zweites Kapitel) "Die Entwicklung der Konsonanten" ('The development of consonants'; with a minor inconsistency in the form of the numeral) retains, on the whole the construction of Chapter one, describing vowels, with a small discrepancy in the title of its section B ("vom elften bis ins fünfzehnte Jahrhundert" in Chapter one, but "vom 11. bis ins 14. Jahrhundert"), a difference which does not seem to have any serious significance for the account. The history of English consonants is split into three sections, symbolised as A, B and C, respectively dealing with the three basic periods of the language history.

The initial section A discusses changes of consonants in Proto-Indo-European, Common Germanic, West Germanic, Anglo-Frisian and pre-Old English (797-873). A separate subsection describes consonants in the early loanwords (873-881). Then follows an account of consonants in the documented

periods of the history of English which is split into three subsections. Curiously, the presentation of Old English developments (881-930) contains a subsection on consonants in loanwords from Scandinavian, a part of the history of English sounds which in other historical grammars is discussed as a segment of Middle English changes (cf. Wright 1924, Jordan – Crook 1974 or Fisiak 1968). Apart from this, Luick discusses processes such as the early consonant gemination, early changes in consonant clusters, continuations of the earlier palatalisation processes, metatheses and distant assimilation as well as several other minor developments.

Section B, which discusses the post-Conquest period (933-1012) contains the accounts of Early Middle English changes of consonants in word initial position (word-initial fricative voicing, cluster simplification and the rise of the pronoun *scho*), further, simplification of consonant clusters in other positions, as well as changes being continuations of the earlier processes. Here belong palatalisations and transformations of velar fricatives, devoicing of final plosives, metatheses, loss of [n] in unaccented syllables, transformations of some newly created sequences of consonants, processes of spirantisation and despirantisation, and an occasional loss of the semivowel [w], as in *swylc > such*, etc. After describing the phonology of consonants in French and Latin loanwords, the chapter concentrates on quantitative changes, processes affecting syllable structure, elimination of consonant clusters different from those discussed earlier, changes in unaccented syllables, devoicing of word-final fricatives and loss of the semivowel [j] before [i]. A description of Late Middle English influences of the liquid [r] completes the history of consonant evolution in the medieval period.

An account of consonant changes during the final phase of Middle English and in Early New English can be found in section C (1013-1126). That part of the grammar provides a description of Late Middle English shifts of quantity, including geminate simplification, metatheses, distant assimilation and dissimilation, various qualitative changes, including modifications of word-final homorganic clusters, loss of consonants with velar articulation ([x, l, r]), continuations of earlier changes, haplology, transformations in the sequence consonant + [j] leading to the rise of new palatal sounds, loss of plosives in certain consonant sequences, loss of [h], modifications of the initial clusters with [w]. To the chronologically last developments belong changes of obstruents, simplification of the word-initial clusters *wl-*, *wr-*, *kn-*, *gn-*, insertion of [j] and [w], and a general loss of the liquid [r] in the non-prevocalic position. The final sections of the chapter, called "Ganz junge Vorgänge", discuss developments occurring during Luick's lifetime.

The above listing of processes taking place in the evolution of English consonants which found their reflection in Luick's historical grammar proves that the editors, Wild and Koziol, did an excellent job making the great Austrian

scholar's legacy available to the linguistic world. It might seem that the publication of the full version of English historical phonology, as this would be the most suitable version of the title corresponding best to the contents of the *Grammatik*, would exert a significant impact on research in the field of English pronunciation history. However, the expected reception of the new material published in 1940 was to a large extent disappointing. The reasons why the publication of the new chapters, those on consonants, was not an immediate success and found only very limited reflection in the linguistic literature of the post-war decades, were manifold. In what follows an answer will be sought to why the reaction to such an important linguistic achievement both in Europe and in America was even less than lukewarm.

5. Chapter two of *Historische Grammatik* and studies of English historical phonology during World War Two and in the post-war period

The editorial work on the three final fascicles, from 10th to 12th, of the *Grammatik* were initiated soon after Luick's death in 1935. The clean version of the typescript was ready in Vienna some time before the end of the ill-fated year 1939. The date appearing on the final page of Friedrich Wild's "Nachwort" is precise: "Wien, am 29. Februar 1940". Europe was then in the state of war and scholarly communication between Germany-Austria which, following the Anschluss, formed a single political unity, and the Western countries was violently interrupted. The articles on English historical phonology, very few in number, which appeared in print in the early 1940s were obviously written in the late 1930s, so the lack of direct references to the final sections of the *Grammatik* even in German studies was a logical consequence of the situation in Europe. The *Linguistic bibliography* published in Utrecht, Holland, whose first volume contained a list of publications from the war period 1939-1945 mentions relatively few works on English historical phonology, of which only several items describe the evolution of consonants. As could be expected such publications were released in Germany and neutral countries like Sweden and the United States. The States, however, joined the war in Europe in December 1941 and thus the scholarly contacts between Germany and the New World were broken for the several years to come.

Among the few articles on English consonants published in the time of war some allude to Luick's study and thus can be considered the first contributions whose authors had the opportunity to consult Chapter two of *Historische Grammatik*. The earliest reference to the chapter on consonants I was able to identify was that in Emrik Slettengren's paper "On the development of initial *sc*" in the Scandinavian journal *Studier i modern sprakvetenskap* of 1943, whose author refers the reader to §681 of Luick's grammar for the data concern-

ing the palatalisation of that word-initial cluster in Old English. Unfortunately, Slettengren confused §681, which discussed the assimilatory change [vn > mn], as in *stefn > stemn* 'voice', with §691 ("Die Lautgruppe sk") in the grammar where palatalisation of the cluster is discussed in detail. The question arises whether this minor slip of the pen indicates that, although referring to its contents, Slettengren had no access to the published version of the grammar and used second-hand information.

In the following year, 1944, we find references to the "Zweites Kapitel", this time correct, in Herbert Penzl's article "A phonemic change in Early Old English", published in the journal *Language*. As said earlier, because the United States joined the war relatively late, American university libraries were able to order and purchase directly from Germany the copies of Luick's full edition of the grammar before hostilities between the States and Nazi Germany began at the end of 1941. This, however, does not mean that the material in Chapter two was extensively exploited by other American scholars of English. It should also be kept in mind that Professor Herbert Penzl, at that time involved with the University of Illinois, was, like Luick, an Austrian. Of the very few American studies from the period entirely devoted to the historical phonology of consonants even fewer refer to Chapter two. To these belong Watson's paper on "Non-initial *k* in the North of England", to be discussed in section 6 below in more detail.

In spite of expectations the references to the chapter on consonants of scholars in Germany are rather late. In his paper on alliteration, Flasdieck (1950) rejects Luick's hypothesis (§§618, 633, 637, 696) of the Indo-European aspirated velar stop [gh] becoming a stop in Germanic and palatalizing to [j] before front vowels, a hypothesis disagreeing with the views held by the majority of scholars on Germanic. Although an ardent admirer of Luick, Flasdieck considered his claim to be ungrounded, not supported by any evidence. On the contrary, writes Flasdieck, the change of the corresponding voiceless velar stop [k] to [tʃ] "suggests the parallel derivative [ʤ]" from earlier [gj] (< IE [gh]). But Luick's hypothesis found a defender, Koziol (1951), who believed that the development of the voiced and voiceless velar stops before front vowels might have followed different paths. As regards the British Isles, references to Chapter two (Luick 1940: §693) are found in Stanley's paper (1952-1953) on metathesis. In Scandinavia, Bertil Sundby (1956), questioned Luick's statement (1940: §761) that the Middle English dialectal change [w > v] (e.g. *water > vater*, etc.) and, vice versa, [v > w] (e.g. *valey > waley*), was not triggered by an impulse from the outside. The change [w > v], generally assumed to have occurred in the North, reflected, according to the Swedish scholar, a Scandinavian influence, an explanation even not considered by Luick.

6. Luick's account of consonants and the Prague School phonology (Josef Vachek)

In the 1960s, the interest in the material of Chapter two seemed declining, but in that period frequent references to Luick can be found in the studies of Josef Vachek, together with Bohumil Trnka one of the last representatives of the Prague School, for whom the Austrian scholar was an authority. Vachek's series of papers on peripheral change in English published in the 1950s and 1960s like "Some less familiar aspects of the analytical trend in English" (1961) and particularly "On peripheral phonemes of Modern English" (1964) and many others (see the anthology of Vachek's studies published in 1976) were to a large extent written with reference to Luick's findings, especially his theories of vowel evolution. On the whole, Vachek derived his hypotheses on the rise and decline of peripheral (and not only peripheral) phonemes from Luick, without much criticism. It was only occasionally that Vachek criticised the statements of the Austrian scholar.

One of such controversial issues where Vachek disagreed with Luick was the case of Early Old English spellings apparently indicating word-final devoicing, such as *lamp* 'lamb', *heafut* 'head', *kyninc* 'king', or a later Old English form *sint* 'are', where the graphemes corresponding to voiceless plosives replaced the original graphemes standing for voiced plosives. According to Luick (1940: §653), the <p t c> spellings were not indicators of a complete devoicing of the three plosives, but rather they were used to symbolise a "stimmlose Lenis", i.e. a voiceless lenis consonant. Perhaps, claimed Luick, a complete devoicing occurred only in words with modified spellings, while a vast majority of voiced plosives in analogously structured other words, especially those where the plosive stood word-finally after a stressed vowel followed by a liquid or a nasal, preserved the spellings <b d g> unchanged, although the corresponding sounds replaced the feature "voiced" by "voiceless", simultaneously retaining the feature "strong", or "fortis". In Luick's interpretation such sounds continued to be variants of the corresponding voiced plosives /b d g/.

This hypothesis reveals Luick's reluctance to treat such spellings as signs of the general devoicing of word-final obstruents in Germanic (and also Slavonic) languages. Examples of complete obstruent devoicing are plenty in the case of changes like in OE *burʒ* > *burh* 'town' or PGmc *hlaß* > *hlaf* 'loaf', etc. Vachek (1961) maintains that conservative spellings apparently indicating voiced pronunciation, like <b d g>, are frequently retained due to, as he calls it, "morphematic analogy", a phenomenon widely found in the systems of modern Slavonic languages. Further, he calls attention to unchanged spellings of Old English plurals like *wulfas* 'wolves', where the grapheme <f> is retained, although the fricative becomes fully voiced. Further on, Vachek refers to Luick's explanation why Modern English retains voiced [d] in words like *field*, *wind*, etc. in the

standard speech, although occasional forms in Old English and regional forms in Middle English contained final <-t>-spellings.

   Luick sought the reasons for the survival of voiced plosives in analogy ("die stimmlose Lenis war durch Ausgleich wieder beseitigt worden"; Luick 1940: §713). Commenting upon that hypothesis, Vachek finds it "too mechanical", and suggests an explanation taking into account "the conditions prevailing in the entire system of English during the critical period." One of such forces inhibiting full devoicing could be the danger of homonymic clash with words possessing original voiceless stops. Such a danger was especially eminent in a language like English, which contains many minimal pairs where the feature of voice is a chief distinguishing factor, like in *back* : *bag*, *let* : *led*, *cap* : *cab*, or *use* [z] v. : *use* [s] n., etc. A process of final devoicing leading to a large number of homonyms consistently carried through would adversely influence communication between speakers of English In sum, the hypothesis of analogical levelling suggested by Luick to explain the failure of devoicing in items like *field*, *wind* etc. could be accepted as an instrument but not a motive of the revaluating change in question.

7. Sample analysis: *Thames*, *adze*, etc. and problems of fricative voicing in Old and Middle English

One of the principal rules a reader of Old English texts acquires is that concerning the articulation of fricatives. In brief, between vowels or between a vowel and a voiced sound, the fricatives spelt <f þ/ð s> are assumed to have undergone voicing and should be articulated as lenis consonants, i.e. [v, ð, z], which, however, do not have the status of the voiced phonemes and are treated as allophones of the corresponding fortis, or voiceless, consonants. This also implies that the same graphemes in word-initial and final positions correspond to the voiceless fricatives [f θ s]. However, the neat rule of intervocalic voicing was questioned in *Historische Grammatik* (1940: §§639, 703), where Luick launched a hypothesis infringing its universal status. According to his amendment, voicing operated only when the fricative stood in the syllable directly following another syllable with a stressed vowel. Thus, voicing is natural in items like OE *wulfas* (pl. of *wulf* 'wolf'), *mūþas* (pl. of *mūþ* 'mouth'), or *hūse* (infl. *hūs* 'house'), as well as in borrowings (cf. OE *scrīfan* 'shrive' < L *scrībere*), but is not to be expected in words such as Pre-OE **triuwiþu* > OE *trēowþ* 'fidelity, truth', with the West Germanic suffix **-iþu* also present in the proto-forms of nouns like OE *hāēlþ* 'health', *fÿlþ* (< **fūliþu*) 'filth', and in other words now surviving as *tilth*, *strength*, *length*, *mirth*, *wrath*, *bliss*, all with the original fricative in a voiced context.

Luick's hypothesis of the failure of fricative voicing in the voiced context when after unstressed syllables is usually opposed on the grounds that in several words, adduced below, the voiceless fricatives did become voiced, although the context inhibited such voicing. Here belong items such as:

1) OE *adesa* > ME *adese* > MoE *adze* 'a tool'

OE *clǣnsian* (< *klainisōjan*) > ME *clense* > MoE *cleanse* [klenz]

OE *Tamese* > ME *Tem(e)ze* > MoE *Thames* [temz]

The Pre-Old English form *klainisōjan* raises some doubts. According to Luick, the dental fricative [-s-] failed to become voiced because the vowel in the preceding syllable was not stressed. But unlike the other two forms, *adesa* and *Tamese*, *klainisōjan* was a tetrasyllabic word in which, in all probability, the syllable with long [o:] received a secondary stress and thus the preceding <s> would be articulated as voiced, a phenomenon resembling the operation of Verner's Law (cf. Bammesberger 1988), which might explain the current pronunciation with the voiced fricative [z]. It is to be noted that another verb with an analogous structure, OE *mǣrsian* 'make famous', from *mǣre* 'famous', also has a voiced fricative, while in OE *cursian* 'curse', the grapheme <s> must have corresponded to a voiceless fricative. This situation resembles the current reading rule concerning root-final voiced fricatives in plurals like *clothes* [kləʊðz], *mouths* [maʊðz], *paths* [pɑːðz], as opposed to voiceless fricatives after the preceding short root vowels in, e.g., *cloths* [klɒθs] or *moths* [mɒθs]. As regards the rise of the voiced pronunciation of <s> in *Thames* and *adze*, they can be explained as caused by the voicing of [s] in later Middle English.

Although Luick's hypothesis concerning limitations of voicing were adopted by structurally-oriented scholars, like Moulton (1954: 21: "The voicing of medial voiceless spirants affected those following a stressed vowel, but not those following an unstressed vowel."), Campbell (1959: 180, note 1) considered that rule doubtful because "this leaves isolated exceptions, each of which has to be separately explained away". The "isolated exceptions" mentioned by Campbell included OE *clǣnsian*, *siþe* (< *siȝiþi*) 'scythe', *adesa* 'adze' and *Temese* 'Thames'. But it was Luick's, not Campbell's hypothesis, which was supported by "satisfactory and solid evidence" (cf. Dekeyser 1976: 440).

Another problem connected with the interpretation of fricative spellings to be mentioned here briefly is the employment of now the grapheme <b>, now the grapheme <f> in the Epinal and the Corpus glossaries, in intervocalic and word-final positions, as in *giaban* 'give', *stæb* 'staff' which apparently contrast with *halfe* 'half', and the reverse spelling *ceber* 'chafer', where <b> appears for <f> (CG). Because in later texts the grapheme <f> began to be consistently used

in both positions, scholars such as Sievers, Bülbring, Kluge and Wright maintained that the variation indicated a phonetic change, i.e. "the voicing of the labiodental spirant between voiced sounds". In Luick's interpretation this change in all probability constituted "a change from a voiced bilabial spirant, indicated by *b*, to a voiced labiodental spirant, indicated by *f*…" (cf. Penzl 1944: 85).

Likewise controversial is the chronological conditioning of word-initial voicing of fricatives (cf. Fisiak 1985). The dating of the process ranges from the so-called Continental Period of English, when the tribes which used dialects from which the English language arose still inhabited the Continent (Sweet 1988: 139; Bennett 1955), to the 14th century (cf. Jordan – Crook 1974: 154). Those who believe that the change was early find support in the fact that analogous changes occurred in Old High German and Old Low Franconian around the end of the 10th century. Thus, while Flasdieck (1958) and Brunner (1965) assign the change to the end of the Old English period, Luick (1940: 933) treats it as a Middle English development which took place after the Norman Conquest, although he agrees with Jordan that the change was initiated in Kent.

However, the authors of the two most prestigious accounts of Middle English phonology, Jordan and Luick, differ in some respects. This time the bone of contention is the usual rendering in spelling of word-final [v] as <f(f)> (cf. *gif(f)* 'give', *lif(f)* 'live'), a grapheme sometimes also found word-medially, as in inflected *giffis*, *luffis*, and the occasional rendering of word-final [z] by <s(s)>, as in *rīss* 'rise', *rāss* pt. 'rose', in the North and the North Midland. Luick regarded such spellings to be a purely graphic phenomenon ("eine rein graphische Erscheinung"; Luick 1940: 1008), because the surviving dialects exhibited voiced fricatives in this position. However, Jordan (1974: 153-154), Berndt (1960: 183), Fisiak (1968: 61) and others consider such spellings as a real reflection of the process of devoicing. The consistency with which such graphemes appear make the hypothesis of Luick's opponents more acceptable.

Another controversy concerns the explanation of changes affecting the pronunciation of OE *ceafor*, phonemically /'ʧæɑfor/, but pronounced with the intervocalic voiced fricative [v]. Since the contemporary form of the word, *chafer* ['ʧeɪfə], contains voiceless [f], Jordan invented an ad hoc rule which devoiced cluster initial voiced fricative [v], thus [vr > fr]. But according to Luick's hypothesis the voiceless pronunciation [f] must have been due to a transfer from the Old English unattested form *ceaffras*, reflecting West Germanic gemination before [r]. This explanation of the rise of the voiceless fricative [f] in *chafer* seems better grounded (cf. Lucas 1991).

To summarise it can be stated, that Luick's theories, like the one concerning changes of fricatives, although apparently solid, cannot be always acclaimed uncritically as the later research has shown.

8. Another sample analysis: Affrication in Northumbrian English

The hypothesis stemming from the studies of Morsbach, Bülbring, Pogatscher, Kluge and others that the North of England lacked the process of palatalisation of [k] was usually exemplified by forms like *kirk* 'church' or *rig* 'ridge', generally considered to be typical of the North. Although such views were repeated in various handbooks of the history of English, the existence of the dialect with non-palatalised [k] was questioned as early as the end of the 19th century by Wyld (1899: 143; cf. Pak 1972), who, after studying more than one hundred Middle and New English texts stated that "… not only are there plenty of *ch* forms in Northern texts, from a very early date in ME, but that there are perhaps quite as many *k* forms in the South". Certain items in Wyld's list, like *chide*, *child*, *cheap*, *cheek*, *chicken*, *teach* and *wretch* were found to occur in texts from both the alleged *k*-full and *k*-less areas. That apparent inconsistency is usually explained as caused by dialect contacts. Wyld's view found support in the study of Gevenich (1918) who based her account of *k*-words on an examination of a corpus of place names, i.e. elements which are not subject to dialectal borrowing. Gevenich's theory was supported, although with some reservation, by Ekwall (1919).

But Luick's explanation of this complicated issue was only partly confirmed by the data from Watson's (1947) early post-war article which referred to the fates of [k] and an alleged failure of its affrication/palatalisation in Northumbrian Old English. The evidence helpful in formulating such conclusion was obtained from the examination of place names in the six counties, formerly situated in historical Northumbria. Among his examples, Watson found no instances of names with [ʧ] in absolute word-final position in the original counties of Northumbria, which led him to the conclusion that word-final [k] remained unchanged in Northumbrian Old English, although its voiced equivalent, [g], exhibits traces of palatalisation (cf. *Bridge Carr* in East Riding Yorkshire). However, he identified the effect of assibilation, the affricate [ʧ], word-medially

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Almost exactly the same view was voiced by Luick in both *Historische Grammatik* (1940: §§685, 701) and his only paper on consonant palatalisation (1935) referred to earlier. According to him, forms with non-palatalised [k] survived in the North not because of being unaffected by assibilation, but due to the influence of Scandinavian, a language then characterised by lack of palatalisation. However, in his view the impact of Scandinavian and the retention of [k] were confined to consonants in word-initial position, while the survival of the velar stop word-medially and finally could be a result of language-internal processes. Thus, a syncope of a final front vowel in an unstressed position might have been responsible for the failure of palatalisation to occur. In sum, Luick assumed that in word-final position [k] became assibilated in all dialects.

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in Northumberland, thus partly supporting Luick's hypothesis. But as regards Watson's claim concerning the total absence of palatalized [k], i.e. [ʧ], in Northumbria it is rather Luick's account which is correct since such forms are found in the northerly area: cf. *Prestwich*, *Horwich* or *Reddish* in Lancashire. These examples come from Pak's (1972), study of place names which also contains names with medial affricate, like *Roughbirchworth* (WR Yorkshire, recorded as *Bercewrde* in the *Domesday Book*), which supports Luick's statement of events.

The above shows that Luick's original interpretation preserved its value in spite of counterevidence adduced by his successors. This means that his hypotheses, always based on rich phonological evidence, remain valuable in spite of the lapse of time.

9. Consonants in *Historische Grammatik* and in other standard comprehensive accounts of English historical phonology

In the last section an effort is made to confront Luick's account of consonants in Chapter two with analogous accounts of consonant developments in various classic historical grammars produced after the publication of the full version of his *Historische Grammatik* in 1940.

The first major publication in the post-war period appeared in Germany in 1951. It was a reworked version of Sievers's Anglo-Saxon grammar, published as *Altenglische Grammatik*, a title suggested by Karl Brunner, the editor of the volume. Although the section on consonants (around 60 pages long) contains very few references to other studies, it acknowledges Luick's interpretation of the voiceless fricatives in Old English, a problem debated in section 5 of the present paper (173, 175, 177). Also, references concern Luick's account of the evolution of the cluster <sc> (179), fates of the velars (180-182), palatalisations (185), critical evaluation of Luick's account of the evolution of the semivowel [j] (189), shift of the yogh to [h] (191), and consonant gemination (203-204). In sum, the grammar exploits the material in Luick's Chapter two quite frequently and not uncritically.

For the sake of completeness another important book, Kökeritz's *Shakespeare's pronunciation* (1953), ought to be mentioned, although it contains only two or three formal references to Luick's chapter on consonants.

The imposing two-volume edition of Wilhelm Horn's monograph reworked and edited by Martin Lehnert, which came out in 1954 under the eccentric title *Laut und Leben. Englische Lautgeschichte der neueren Zeit (1400-1950)* would rather disappoint Luick's fans, because in spite of the incredible length of volume two containing an account of consonants, roughly 550-pages long, the book hardly acknowledges the existence of Luick's grammar. The presence in

the bibliography of an entry referring to the Wild and Koziol edition of 1940 and a couple of scattered references to pages in *Historische Grammatik* are the only items of interest.

An important two volume publication covering the period of two hundred years of New English phonology was contributed in 1957 (second edition in 1968) by Professor Eric J. Dobson of Oxford University. His volume two of the monograph, *English pronunciation 1500-1700*, almost totally based on the evidence from the grammarians of the period under scrutiny, contains a relatively short section on consonants (90 pages, as compared with around 480 pages describing vowels). Although Dobson's criticism of Luick's theories on the evolution of vowels is well-known, he practically ignores the existence of Chapter two making only one or two references to that part of *Historische Grammatik*. This is disappointing considering Dobson's frequent references to Wyld, Jordan, and even to the New English grammar by Wright and Wright.

Two years after the appearance of Dobson's book, Oxford University Press published in 1959 the well-known *Old English grammar* by Alistair Campbell, with around 35 pages on consonants. Although the section on consonants is short its author refers to Chapter two on several occasions, when discussing assibilation (176-178), devoicing/voicing of consonants (180), and various assimilations (194-195). But it should be emphasised that Campbell's grammar lacks any criticism of Luick's data.

Another book, published in 1960, Berndt's monograph *Einführung in das Studium des Mittelenglischen unter Zugrundelegung des Prologs der "Canterbury Tales"*, was yet another historical study whose title promised more than the book really contained, as it was merely an account of Middle English phonology based on Chaucer's language. The section on consonants with its around 60 pages contains just a few scanty references to the contents of Luick's Chapter two.

The year 1960 also saw the publication of Brunner's *Die englische Sprache* (vol. one) containing, apart from a historical introduction, a description of the historical phonology of English. Its chapter on consonants, 55 pages long ("Der Konsonantismus"), included references to Luick's paper on palatalisation of 1935 and to the relevant sections of the *Grammatik* (363), *h*-spellings (364), dissimilations (375), and the change [n > m] in loanwords from French (413). Brunner's references to Luick's Chapter two contained no critical assessment of his theories.

A very important event was the publication in 1974 of the English version of Jordan's *Handbuch der mittelenglischen Grammatik*, whose last German edition came out in 1968, long after Jordan's death. The translation was made by Eugene J. Crook from Florida State University who also prepared its revised version under the title *Handbook of Middle English grammar: Phonology*. In the preface, Crook emphasises that "Karl Luick's Historische Grammatik der

englischen Sprache … relies on Jordan to a great degree for his treatment of the consonants" (Jordan – Crook 1974: vii). Sections on consonants are scattered in three places: 152-195 (native consonants), 222-228 (French consonants), and 247-253 (15th century). Because Jordan's grammar was written before the completion of Luick's, reference to Chapter two should be sought in the extra material enclosed by Crook in square brackets. However one can find only one such insertion, which concerns the change [w > v] (156).

The last book to be reviewed with reference to Luick's chapter on consonants is Hogg's *A grammar of Old English*. Its volume one contains only an account of phonology, with more than 50 pages describing consonants. Beside numerous references to Campbell's grammar, a number of comments on Luick's Chapter two can also be found. Thus Hogg refers to Luick when discussing palatalisation (260-261, 263, 275), assibilation (272), assibilation of [sc] (271), fricative voicing (283-284), development of velars (289), gemination (294), consonant loss (297), epenthesis (298), assimilation (300-301), and consonant shifts (306).

Summing up, the attitudes of the authors towards Luick' s chapter on consonants vary from an almost total ignorance of the fact that the book exists, through mere referring to certain portions of the *Grammatik*, to full exploitation of this excellent source of data (especially Brunner, Hogg).

10. Concluding remarks

The above discussion of problems connected with the reception of Luick's chapter on consonants in his *Historische Grammatik der englischen Sprache* can be briefly summarised as follows:

1) The reception of the chapter on English consonants was not as favourable as the reception of the chapter on vowels. Because the full version of the grammar was published at the outset of World War II, a wider exploitation of data from chapter two belongs to the period from around 1950 onwards.
2) Chapter two offers materials linguistically less interesting than chapter one because major phonological developments in English concern vowels, e.g. Open Syllable Lengthening or the Great Vowel Shift.
3) The consonantal processes whose account in *Historische Grammatik* provoked most controversies among historical linguists proved to be palatalisation, assibilation and changes of the feature "voice".

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